

Memory of the Kindertransport in National and Transnational Perspective

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Nottingham Trent University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

January 2020

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Abstract

To date, scholars have mainly focussed on the history of the Kindertransport. This thesis is the first to examine extensively how the Kindertransport has been remembered in Britain, and to compare British memory of this event with memory in the other English-speaking host nations which took in the refugee children (Kinder), namely America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. ‘Kindertransport’ is understood here as referring not just to the actual rescue of children with mainly Jewish origins from Nazism that took place between 1938 and 1940, but also the effects it had, such as transplantation to strange environments. There is yet to be a true exploration of how the memories of the Kinder and these nations’ memories of the Kindertransport developed. Any comparison of these various host countries must consider the degree to which memory of the Kindertransport is not uniform, and the extent to which it is shaped by factors such as the role of these countries in the Second World War, and – above all – nationally conditioned memory discourses. Increasingly, according to memory scholars, Holocaust memory operates in a transnational, even global network. This thesis will assess this expectation against the empirical evidence. Is it more the case that host nations remember the Kindertransport in essentially *national* terms, even where they are aware of its transnational history? In order to assess this question, this thesis will examine a representative cross-section of different genres including testimony, museum exhibitions, memorials, and novels. I argue that the Kindertransport is much more nationally focussed and celebratory in Britain than in other host nations, where this memory is more transnational in focus. However, there are signs that national memory in Britain is beginning to develop in a more self-critical direction.

Acknowledgments

This thesis is dedicated to the Kinder and their families. It has been a privilege, indeed an honour to be able to meet and speak with Kinder over the past eight years. I have been granted invaluable opportunities to take part in conversations which have helped me gain an insight into the story of the Kindertransport from those who experienced it first-hand as well as from those who have a family connection to this historical event. It was when I was writing my undergraduate dissertation that I had the pleasure of interviewing Kinder for the first time. It is an experience that has never left my thoughts. I have been very lucky to connect with survivors and their families from all over the world and even refer to them as friends. Their stories, friendship and openness are something which I treasure as we have shed many tears together but we have also shared many priceless moments of joy and happiness. I am so grateful to the Kinder and their families for sharing their memories, thoughts and feedback with me over these last few years. I would like to particularly thank the following Kinder: Bernd Koschland, Ruth Barnett, Hanna Zack Miley, Fred Barschak, John Fieldsend, Frank Meisler, Susi Bechhöfer, Joe Stirling, Harry Bibring, Susanne J. Medas, Ruth David, Hans R. Weinmann, Ruth Parker, Dame Stephanie Shirley, Hanna Singer, Frank and Erika Baumann, Bronia Snow, Keith Lawson, Berta Klipstein, Lord Alfred Dubs, Henry Herner, Robert A. Shaw, Edith Horton, Hans Levy, Lady Milena Grenfell-Baines, Lore Robinson, Rosa M. Sacharin, Dorothy Fleming, Benjamin Abeles, Peter Kurer, Lisl Malkin, Julia Schwartz, Joe Stirling, and Father Francis Wahle. I would also like to recognise the help and support I have received from second generation Kinder: Tamara Barschak, Anita H. Grosz, Tamara Meyer, Rachel Dahill-Fuchel, Simon Schachter, Michelle Saunders, Helen and Debora Singer, Stephanie Berrys, Donna Levinsohn, Judith E. Elam, Vikky Pickett, Richard Aronowitz-Mercer, Tim Locke, Jody Fox, Danny Kalman, Lisa Fox, Jane Day, Hamish Lawrence, Judy Shrewsbury, Janet Merkur, Michael Zorek, Gail Levine, Cathy Hounsell, Miriam Lewin, Anna Ferris, Simon Burne, Lisa Kollisch, Jeremy Smilg, Tania Barnett, Mary Allen, Diane Fairfax, Lisa Beth Aronson, Simon Lukes, and Peter Suchmann.

My interest in the Kindertransport started with my undergraduate studies. One particular standout moment was when I first met Tamara Barschak, her father, Fred and brother, Aaron at the 75th Kindertransport anniversary event in London in 2013. We were introduced to one another while we were standing next to Frank Meisler's Kindertransport memorial, *The Arrival*, outside Liverpool Street Station. Tamara embraced me straightaway, she was overjoyed that someone was researching this topic. Within minutes we found ourselves in deep discussion about the Kindertransport as we walked to Belsize synagogue which is not far from the train station. After the ceremony and introductions Fred, Tamara's father gave an impromptu speech about Lord Baldwin, how grateful he was to the British public and how he desperately missed his parents and younger brother who were all murdered in the Holocaust. My heart wept as so many Kinder on that day talked about how they were denied a life without their loved ones. Tamara reminded me how she was deprived of knowing her grandparents which is also heart-breaking. I knew then that I would be connected to the Kinder and their families for many years to come.

I have greatly benefited from the tutelage and encouragement from my supervisors Professor Bill Niven and Dr. Karl Wilds. Bill Niven has supervised my undergraduate, masters and PhD studies and I am immensely grateful to the many influential discussions we have had over these many years. It has been an absolute privilege to study under his supervision. His guidance is very much appreciated and it has been a wonderful experience to see how my research has developed under such a brilliant, kind and thorough mentor. Karl Wilds has also been a great support throughout this project and I have learnt a lot from his comprehensive approach to academic research. I am also grateful to Kevin Gould who helped me obtain my

first bursary to work as a researcher at Nottingham Trent University. I am thankful to all the staff at this institution. I am particularly appreciative of Midlands4Cities/AHRC's support because they awarded me my PhD scholarship which has allowed me to make meaningful connections with Kinder and their families in five different nations. I am thankful to all the staff at Midlands4Cities/AHRC and in particular to Susanna Ison who has given me a platform to develop and share my ideas. I would also like to thank Ms Hamilton and Mr Rosten-Smart for their support during high school and Sixth Form.

My research has benefited from communications and invitations to conferences from the following scholars, authors and practitioners: Viv Parry, Anna Hirsch, Barbara Winton, Robbie Simons, Caroline Sharples, Andy Pearce, Tony Kushner, Helen Peters, Miriam Halahmy, Norbert Wiesneth, Andrea Hammel, Caroline Slifkin, Jenny Wüstenberg, Karen Stuke, Clare Weissenberg, Olivia Marks-Woldman, Lucy Wilcox, Imogen Dalziel, Alex Maws, Alasdair Richardson, Sarah Williams, Chris Harris, Elena Merkulova and her class of students, Elizabeth Blauw, Arielle Berger, Linda Parker, Ron Coleman, Mehzebin Adam, Kirsty Robson, Marilyn Moos, Lee-Anne Smith, Daniel Adamson, Gill Thompson, Agnes Grunwald-Spier, Jordan Hobbs, Jenny Watson, Sara Jones, Isabel Wollaston, Hannah Briscoe, Caroline Cormier, Catrina Kirkland, Luke Andrews, Karen Porter, David Cain, Tabitha Runacres, and Izzy Morath.

I have also been aided by many institutions, libraries, research centres, archives and I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the wonderful staff at: Nottingham Trent University's Clifton Library, the Wiener Library, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Jewish Holocaust Centre, the Montreal Holocaust Museum, the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand, the Sydney Jewish Museum, Azrieli Foundation, Hands On London, World Jewish Relief, the Association of Jewish Refugees, Jewish Child's Day, the Imperial War Museums, the Manchester Jewish Museum, the British Library, the National Holocaust Centre and Museum, the Empathy Museum, the Holocaust Education Learning Centre, the Jewish Museum London, the Museum of Jewish Heritage, Journey to Justice, the Warth Mills Project, Genocide80Twenty, the Juedische Museum Augsburg, PhotoWerkBerlin, Museum of Childhood Ireland Project, Harwich Haven History, and the Kindertransport Dialogue.

Throughout this PhD I have been fortunate to work alongside some inspirational colleagues which has enriched my PhD experience. Thank you to: Siân Liddle, Tara Coltman-Patel, Jeannette Rodgers, Ruth Brittle, Suzy Harrison, Helen Drew, Stacey Griffiths, Eddie Cheetham for the joy of your company. Thank you also to former peers who attended Nottingham Trent University: Grace Lewin, Alex Hinsley, Lauren Rachel Smith, James Meyjes, Tom Fitt, and Alex Kavanagh who enabled me to embark upon the most enjoyable years while I studied for undergraduate and Masters degrees.

On a personal note I am indebted to my family and friends who have steered, comforted and emboldened me throughout my life. Thank you to Steph Brookes and Victoria Moore for your friendship and bigheartedness. To Sarah Sweeny and Paven Rayat who showed me around New Zealand and Australia. My parents and grandparents have supported my every ambition and dream in life and I am beyond grateful to them. I am in awe of their work ethic, their devotion and dedication to their children, their care and respect for others, and their endless support and belief in my and my sister's achievements however small or big they may be. Thank you to my Dad, Nevil, my Mom, Barbara and my sister, Chloe for everything that you have done for me and continue to do, I cherish you so much.

There are those to whom this thesis is dedicated who will never read it. These are Kinder who have sadly passed away. They are remembered in these pages and in my heart. This thesis is also dedicated to children and adults past and present who find themselves in lands which are unfamiliar to them. Their stories will not be forgotten.

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Abbreviations

AF	Azrieli Foundation
AJR	Association of Jewish Refugees
ANZAC	Australian and New Zealand Army Corps
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BL	British Library
BLSA	British Library Sound Archive
ECO	Environment and Conservation Organisation
EM	Empathy Museum
HCNZ	Holocaust Centre of New Zealand
HELC	Holocaust Education Learning Centre
HET	Holocaust Educational Trust
HH	Harwich Haven: Surrender and Sanctuary Project
HMD	Holocaust Memorial Day
HTP	Holocaust Testimonies Project
IWM	Imperial War Museum
IWMN	Imperial War Museum North
IWMS	Imperial War Museum South
IWMs	Imperial War Museums
IWMSA	Imperial War Museum Sound Archive
JC	Jewish Chronicle
JHC	Jewish Holocaust Centre
JML	Jewish Museum London
MHM	Montreal Holocaust Museum
MJH	Museum of Jewish Heritage
MJM	Manchester Jewish Museum
MM	Migrant Museum
NHCM	National Holocaust Centre and Museum
OTC	The One Thousand Children
RCM	Refugee Children's Movement
RVTA	Refugee Voices Testimony Archive
SF	Shoah Foundation
SFVHF	Shoah Foundation Visual History Foundation
SJM	Sydney Jewish Museum
USHMM	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
V&A	Victoria and Albert Museum
WJR	World Jewish Relief
WL	Wiener Library
WMP	Warth Mills Project
WRB	War Refugee Board

Introduction

Focus

This thesis sets out to examine how the Kindertransport has been remembered in Britain, and to compare British memory of this event with memory in the other English-speaking host nations which took in the refugee children (Kinder), namely America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. ‘Kindertransport’ is understood here as referring not just to the actual rescue of children with mainly Jewish origins from Nazism that took place between 1938 and 1940, but also the effects it had, such as transplantation to strange environments. There is yet to be a true exploration of how the memories of the Kinder and these nations’ memories of the Kindertransport developed. Any comparison of these various host countries must consider the degree to which memory of the Kindertransport is not uniform, and the extent to which it is shaped by factors such as the role of these countries in the Second World War, and – above all – nationally conditioned memory discourses. Increasingly, according to memory scholars, Holocaust memory operates in a transnational, even global network.¹ This thesis will assess this expectation against the empirical evidence. Is it more the case that host nations remember Kindertransport in essentially *national* terms, even where they are aware of its transnational history? In order to assess this question, this thesis will examine a representative cross-section of different genres including testimony, museum exhibitions, memorials, and novels.

Historically, the Kindertransport was a series of transnational events as many Kinder embarked upon multiple journeys from their lands of birth through different countries of transfer (journeys across different national borders – Germany through to Holland for example), and arrived in many different host countries.² For example, some 10,000 Kinder

¹ See Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, *Holocaust Memory in the Global Age* (Temple University Press: Philadelphia, 2006).

² See Barry Turner, ... *And The Policeman Smiled: 10,000 Children Escaped from Nazi Europe* (Bloomsbury: London, 1990), and A. J. Sherman, *Island Refuge: Britain and Refugees from the Third Reich 1933-1939* (Frank

journeyed from Germany, Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia to Holland, Holland to Britain, then from Britain to America, Canada, or even as far away as Australia.³ Other Kinder started their journeys in Germany and Austria heading for Belgium or France,⁴ and some Kinder even departed from Czechoslovakia for Sweden.⁵ Twenty Jewish children, known today as the Deckston Children, travelled from Bialystok, Poland to New Zealand via Britain.⁶ There are also nine known Kinder who travelled to New Zealand via Britain during and after the Second World War. Two other Kinder journeyed to New Zealand initially but later moved to Australia. To describe the Kindertransport as a movement from threat to safety is too simplistic. This would be to neglect other historical dimensions, because while some Kinder moved from threat to safety, others then moved towards another threat. This new threat came in the Kinder's host nation (Britain) as some of the older Kinder were later categorised as type B and C enemy aliens and interned, and some were even deported overseas as internees.⁷ Understanding the broader transnational character of the Kindertransport may potentially bring to our attention a more complex and problematic history than is suggested by defining it as a movement from threat to safety. For example, it was reported that one Kindertransportee who was relocated to

Cass & CO. Ltd.: Essex, 1994) for examples of the characteristics of the transnational history of the Kindertransport.

³ It is difficult to estimate how many Kinder were sent to Canada and Australia as enemy aliens. It is generally thought that between 400-500 Kinder were interned in these nations. Some of these Kinder later moved back to Britain, re-arriving after they were released from their internment. Around 1,000 Kinder would fight alongside Britain during the Second World War. It is also difficult to determine how many Kinder journeyed to America, before, during and after the Second World War.

⁴ See Sebastian Steiger, *The Children of Château de La Hille* (Lexographic Press: Chicago, 2017), and Nancy Lefenfeld, *The Fate of Others: Rescuing Jewish Children on the French-Swiss Border* (Timbrel Press: Clarksville, 2013).

⁵ For more information about Kinder who travelled to Sweden, see Pontus Rudberg, *The Swedish Jews and the Holocaust* (Routledge: London, 2017); Gülseren Sengezer (dir.), *Kindertransports to Sweden* (post-production, 2018); and Uri Berliner, 'A Toy Monkey that Escaped Nazi Germany and Reunited a Family', *npr*, 14th November 2018, at <https://www.npr.org/2018/11/14/663059048/a-toy-monkey-that-escaped-nazi-germany-and-reunited-a-family?t=1579179104103> [accessed 16th January 2020].

⁶ See Mike Regan, Bob Pope and Susan Isaacs (eds), *The Deckston Children Legacy: From Institute to Trust – The Deckston Contribution to the Wellington Hebrew Congregation* (New Zealand Jewish Chronicle Publications: Wellington, 2005).

⁷ See Rachel Pistol, *Internment During the Second World War: A Comparative Study of Great Britain and the USA* (Bloomsbury: London, 2019), and John Presland, *A Great Adventure: The Story of the Refugee Children's Movement* (Bloomsbury: London, 1944) for examples of studies which explore the internment of Jewish refugees by the British Government.

Australia committed suicide when he discovered that his mother had been murdered in the Holocaust.⁸ A comprehensive narrative of the Kindertransport would include often overlooked aspects such as the thirty Kinder who were killed while fighting in the British forces, as well as the Kinder who experienced physical and economic exploitation.⁹ Likewise, the stories of the Kinder who were deaf, mute and blind would also be included within a complete narrative.¹⁰

Historiography

Kindertransport History

There is a need for the current thesis because, to date, most English-language secondary literature produced on the Kindertransport centres on the history of the Kindertransport itself, rather than its memory.¹¹ The most significant historical studies have discussed the origins of the Kindertransport, who the different organisations and individuals were who aided the Kinder's flight to freedom and how they continued to support them, how the Kinder were rescued, where the children were housed, how they were received by their host nation, the care they received in their host nations such as health care, education, training and employment, and what religious support was accessible to them.¹² These studies have also reflected upon how the many rescue operations were funded, why and how the Kinder's lives were restricted

⁸ Vera K. Fast, *Children's Exodus: A History of the Kindertransport* (I. B. Tauris: London, 2011), p. 69.

⁹ Fast, *Children's Exodus*, p. 74.

¹⁰ For more information about deaf, mute and blind Kinder, see 'Senchal, Anne (1 of 3) Holocaust Survivors Centre Interviews', *Europeana Collections*, at http://www.europeana.eu/portal/en/record/2059209/data_sounds_C0830X0080XX_0001.html [accessed 20th April 2019]; 'Senchal, Anne (1 of 3) Holocaust Survivors Centre Interviews', *British Library Sounds*, at <https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Jewish-Holocaust-survivors/021M-C0830X0080XX-0001V0> [accessed 20th April 2019]; and 'Holocaust Documentary on Kindertransport Captioned for the Deaf Community', *Signtalk*, at <http://www.signtalk.org/files/signtalk/holocaust.htm> [accessed 20th April 2019].

¹¹ This thesis considers the discussion of the Kindertransport within English-language publications. There are, however, a number of important publications in German on the historiography of the Kindertransport. See, for instance: Rebekka Göpfert, *Der Jüdische Kindertransport von Deutschland nach England 1938/39: Geschichte und Erinnerung* (Campus: Frankfurt am Main, 1999), and Wolfgang Benz, Claudia Curio and Andrea Hammel (eds), *Die Kindertransporte 1938/39: Rettung und Integration* (Fischer: Frankfurt am Main, 2003).

¹² See Agnes Grunwald-Spier, *The Other Schindlers: Why Some People Chose to Save Jews in the Holocaust* (The History Press: Stroud, 2011); David Kranzler, *Holocaust Hero: Solomon Schonfeld* (KTAV: Jersey City, 2004); Naomi Shepherd, *Wilfrid Israel, German Jewry's Secret Ambassador* (Halban: London, 2017); and Barbara Winton, *If It's Not Impossible... The Life of Sir Nicholas Winton* (Matador: Kibworth Beauchamp, 2014) for information about individuals who rescued the Kinder from Nazism.

during the Second World War, the internment and resettlement of some Kinder to new lands, the immigration policies put in place by the host nations, the Kinder's later naturalisation as well as their further emigration after the Second World War, and who became their legal guardians.¹³ While British historians briefly refer to the Kinder's movements beyond Britain, it is a Canadian historian, Vera Fast, who provides the most detailed history about these transnational journeys. Fast's analysis moves beyond the discussion of the multiple journeys which brought the Kinder to their first host nation as she also reflects upon how some Kinder made further journeys to other host nations. For example, she explains how some Kinder were sent from Britain to Canada and Australia as internees.¹⁴ Her research therefore explores the far-reaching journeys the Kinder embarked upon before, but also during the Second World War. Moreover, Fast's work is significant because she outlines how 'by 1947, some 1,451 *Dunera* internees had returned to Britain, 165 had emigrated to other countries, 13 had died and 913 had decided to remain in Australia'.¹⁵ Kinder were thus prepared to or were even made to make yet further journeys from one host nation to another as they either travelled from Australia back to their original host nation (Britain) or to their third host nation such as Canada or America, for example. Fast also highlights how some Kinder returned to their former homelands after the war.¹⁶ This journey suggests a Kindertransport 'in reverse' whereby the Kinder travelled back to their countries of birth either to be reunited with family, to dedicate

¹³ For historical works on the Kindertransport, see Anthony Grenville, *Jewish Refugees from Germany and Austria in Britain 1933-1970: Their Image in AJR Information* (Vallentine Mitchell: Edgware, 2010); Norman Bentwich, *They Found Refuge: An Account of British Jewry's Work for the Victims of Nazi Oppression* (Cresset Press: London, 1956); Louise London, *Whitehall and the Jews 1933-1948* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2000); Alan Gill, *Interrupted Journeys: Young Refugees from Hitler's Reich* (Frank Cass: Ilford, 1994); Amy Zahl Gottlieb, *Men of Vision: Anglo-Jewry's Aid to Victims of the Nazi Regime 1933-1945* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson: London, 1998); Jennifer Craig-Norton, *The Kindertransport: Contesting Memory* (Indiana University Press: Bloomington, 2019); and Chad MacDonald, "'We Became British Aliens': Kindertransport Refugees Narrating the Discovery of Their Parents' Fates', *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History* 24:4 (2018), pp. 395-417.

¹⁴ Fast, *Children's Exodus*, p. 72.

¹⁵ Fast, *Children's Exodus*, p. 73.

¹⁶ Fast, *Children's Exodus*, p. 178.

memorials or to speak with school children about their experiences. These movements have taken place since 1945 up until the present day.

Other non-British historians such as Alexandra Ludewig, Simone Gigliotti, Monica Tempian, and Suzanne D. Rutland have focussed on the ‘second’ Kindertransport from Britain to countries such as Australia and New Zealand.¹⁷ Their research is to a degree comparative because it explores the Kinder’s internment in Britain compared to their internment in other English-speaking host nations. Gigliotti and Tempian’s work also looks at specific groups of Kinder such as those who made their journeys to New Zealand in 1939-40 and 1946, as well as the Deckston Children who arrived in 1935 and 1937.¹⁸ Their research suggests that New Zealand’s Kindertransport scheme needs to be seen in relation to the Kindertransport which reached British shores, as some Kinder later left Britain for New Zealand. Judith Tydor Baumel-Schwartz and Andrea Strutz have also discussed how for some Kinder, America and Canada became their new homes, and how some refugee children had journeyed to America before the Kindertransport to Britain was under way. Baumel-Schwartz reflects upon why the Wagner-Rogers Bill did not pass Congress, which could have brought around 20,000 Jewish children from Continental Europe to America.¹⁹ Ludewig highlights how the different national histories of the Kindertransport are connected, because Canada and Australia, for example, assisted in accepting and interning those classified as enemy aliens in Britain when British

¹⁷ See Alexandra Ludewig, ‘The Last of the Kindertransports. Britain to Australia, 1940’, in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), pp. 81-102, and Suzanne D. Rutland, ‘A Distant Sanctuary: Australia and Child Holocaust Survivors’, in Simone Gigliotti and Monica Tempian (eds), *The Young Victims of the Nazi Regime: Migration, the Holocaust and Postwar Displacement* (Bloomsbury: London, 2016), pp. 71-90.

¹⁸ Simone Gigliotti and Monica Tempian, ‘From Europe to the Antipodes: Acculturation and Identity of the Deckston Children and the Kindertransport Children in New Zealand’, in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), p. 103.

¹⁹ Judith Tydor Baumel-Schwartz, ‘Jewish Refugee Children in the USA (1934-45): Flight, Resettlement, Absorption’, in Simone Gigliotti and Monica Tempian (eds), *The Young Victims of the Nazi Regime: Migration, the Holocaust and Postwar Displacement* (Bloomsbury: London, 2016), pp. 16-17.

internment camps exceeded their capacities.²⁰ As Strutz makes clear, some Kinder who ‘had [...] escaped from Nazi Germany on *Kindertransports*’ and who had made their journeys to Britain later travelled to their second or even third host nation because they were resettled elsewhere as enemy aliens, or they moved to other countries when they were later regarded as friendly aliens.²¹ Gigliotti and Tempian discuss how some Kinder moved during the war within their first host nation to be reunited with family members, while others found new foster homes in their second host nation with their extended family or with foster parents, or were housed in hostels.²² Likewise, Kinder who were reunited with family members in their first host nation (Britain) then moved with them to a second host nation (America) during and after the war.

Kindertransport Memory in Britain

There has been little comparative research into how memory of the Kindertransport has developed either in the English-speaking host nations or in the non-English speaking host nations. Those studies which do address the memory of the Kindertransport largely focus on British memory of this historical event.²³ Historians such as Tony Kushner, Andrea Hammel and Caroline Sharples have argued that there is a British national narrative of the Kindertransport that consists of the following features: rescue, successful integration, redemption, gratitude, heroism and salvation.²⁴ Jennifer Craig-Norton uses the terms ‘dominant national narrative’ and ‘redemptive narrative’ when discussing Britain’s memory of the Kindertransport.²⁵ She also contends that ‘a Kindertransport narrative of rescue, salvation, altruism and integration [which is] essentially [a] blemish-free success story emerged before

²⁰ Ludewig, ‘The Last of the Kindertransports’, p. 85.

²¹ Andrea Strutz, “‘Detour to Canada’: The Fate of Juvenile Austrian-Jewish Refugees after the “Anschluss” of 1938’, in Simone Gigliotti and Monica Tempian (eds), *The Young Victims of the Nazi Regime: Migration, the Holocaust and Postwar Displacement* (Bloomsbury: London, 2016), p. 39.

²² Gigliotti and Tempian, ‘From Europe to the Antipodes’, p. 111.

²³ See Francis Williams, *The Forgotten Kindertransports: The Scottish Experience* (Bloomsbury: London, 2013).

²⁴ Jennifer A. Norton, *The Kindertransport: History and Memory*, Masters dissertation, California State University, 2010, pp. 2-4.

²⁵ Norton, *The Kindertransport*, pp. 2-4.

the end of the war'.²⁶ Several myths about the Kindertransport have also developed, according to these scholars. Among these myths are the beliefs that 'it was somehow a British government scheme'; that the Kinder came here to stay, rather than as 'temporary transmigrants' expected to move on to Palestine or America; that Britain wholeheartedly welcomed the Kinder, while in fact, the last transport that came to Britain via ship in May 1940 from Holland was 'fired at by both the Nazis and the British'; and that there were sufficient funds to finance these rescue operations, while in reality many refugee organisations struggled to support and care for the refugee children.²⁷ Likewise, 'the plight of [the Kinder] became more obscure, lost in more important narratives relating to the military situation' during the Second World War.²⁸ According to Anthony Grenville, the British see the Kindertransport 'as part of the story of their "finest hour" in the war against National Socialism'.²⁹ If Grenville is right, then the Kindertransport has become one *lieu de mémoire* around which British political, social and cultural memory of the Second World War has crystallised. For Pierre Nora, such 'realms of memory' provide a focal point for national identity. In contrast to history, memory of an event shapes the view of that event to correspond to a need for a sense of community in the present.³⁰

The secondary literature suggests that British memory of the Kindertransport is narrow. Kushner highlights how 'only recently and incompletely [...] has a recognition taken place of the *Kinder* at a level of post-war collective memory in Britain'.³¹ He also contends that Britain's memory is 'more about "the British" and less about the experience of being a child

²⁶ Jennifer Craig-Norton, *Contesting Memory: New Perspectives on the Kindertransport*, PhD dissertation, University of Southampton, 2014, p. 23.

²⁷ Tony Kushner, 'The Big Kindertransport Myth', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 15th November 2018, at <https://www.thejc.com/news/news-features/the-big-kindertransport-myth-kindertransport80th-anniversary-1.472542> [accessed 14th January 2020].

²⁸ Kushner, 'The Big Kindertransport Myth'.

²⁹ Anthony Grenville, 'The Kindertransports: An Introduction', in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), p. 2.

³⁰ See Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past* (Columbia University Press: New York, 1996).

³¹ Tony Kushner, *Remembering Refugees: Then and Now* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2006), p. 142.

refugee’.³² According to Kushner, Britain’s national narrative of the Kindertransport overwhelmingly focuses on the positives rather than the more negative aspects such as internment, abuse, disorientation and separation.³³ Sharples also highlights how ‘the story of the Kindertransports [...] fits very neatly into the popular mythology of Britain “standing alone” against the Nazi menace during the Second World War’.³⁴ Therefore, both Kushner and Sharples agree that Britain’s memory of the Kindertransport is selective as the emphasis is placed on the rescue and arrival of the Kinder in Britain. The difficulties the Kinder faced in terms of adapting to a new way of life, of how some Kinder ran away from their foster families as well as how they progressed into their adulthoods, and moved to other host nations have been rather marginalised by the British national narrative of the Kindertransport according to these scholars. Kushner has also shown how Britain liked to contrast itself favourably with other countries: ‘Britain, and its child refugee movement, becomes a shining example of help given in contrast to restrictions elsewhere, especially America’.³⁵ This image of Britain as a safe haven has, according to Kushner, ‘been internalised within recent British memory work’.³⁶

Some consideration has also been given in the secondary literature to how Kinder themselves remember the Kindertransport and whether their individual testimonies have reinforced, adapted, challenged or even contested the British national narrative. Kushner contends that ‘a narrative has emerged, encouraged by many of the former children themselves and *Kindertransport* associations, that has become increasingly mythical’; thus it does not

³² Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 170.

³³ Tony Kushner, *The Battle of Britishness: Migrant Journeys, 1685 to the Present* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2012), p. 119. Jeremy Josephs with Susi Bechhöfer, *Rosa’s Child: The True Story of One Woman’s Quest for a Lost Mother and a Vanished Past* (I.B. Tauris Publishers: London, 1996) is a graphic example of how one Kind was physically and mentally abused by her foster family. The book also painfully describes how Bechhöfer’s twin sister died shortly after her arrival in Britain.

³⁴ Caroline Sharples, ‘The Kindertransport in British Historical Memory’, in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), p. 21.

³⁵ Kushner, *The Battle of Britishness*, p. 130.

³⁶ Kushner, *The Battle of Britishness*, p. 130.

‘present the scheme in its fully complexity’.³⁷ According to Kushner, ‘escape’, ‘parental sacrifice’, ‘painful separation’, ‘the journey itself, one of danger, fear and uncertainty’, and ‘light and hope to counter the darkness of Nazism and persecution’ are tropes of the *Kinder* narrative that have remained constant while other tropes have changed over time.³⁸ Some *Kinder*, Kushner writes, were ‘told to be positive in what [they] wrote down’.³⁹ Therefore, ‘the *Kindertransport* has been instrumentalised to show generosity is integral to the British character’.⁴⁰ However, Kushner also suggests that more recent autobiographies have not been ‘afraid to give voice to those who felt lost, lonely and rootless as well as to those who felt at home in Britain’.⁴¹

Despite the fact that there has been some research into British memory of the *Kindertransport*, to date we do not have a sustained exploration of how this memory has manifested itself. Nor do we know for sure whether the positive British narrative identified by historians has always been present. If it developed, then when, and why? In fact, we cannot be entirely sure whether this positive British narrative is as dominant as historians claim. This claim, then, needs to be assessed, and this assessment is a central aim of the following dissertation. We also need to ask whether there have been more critical trends in British memorialisation or commemoration of the event, reflecting developments in the historiography of the *Kindertransport*. If so, when did these more critical trends begin, and what form have they taken or do they take? Furthermore, few if any scholars have looked beyond British memory of the *Kindertransport*. For example, although Kushner has reflected upon the development of Britain’s memory of the *Kindertransport* and how it ‘became a safe story, put together neatly and with a redemptive ending’, he does not explore how *Kindertransport*

³⁷ Kushner, *The Battle of Britishness*, p. 124.

³⁸ Kushner, *The Battle of Britishness*, p. 126.

³⁹ Kushner, *The Battle of Britishness*, p. 128.

⁴⁰ Kushner, *The Battle of Britishness*, p. 138.

⁴¹ Kushner, *The Battle of Britishness*, p. 129.

memory might have developed similarly or differently in other national contexts.⁴² This thesis will seek to fill gaps in current research by providing a detailed analysis of cultural memory of the Kindertransport not just in Britain, but also in the other English-speaking host nations, examining four key genres: testimony, museum exhibitions, memorials, and novels.⁴³

Holocaust Memory in Other Host Nations

Very little has been written on memory of the Kindertransport in America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. For this reason, I draw on the broader secondary literature of memory of the Holocaust, particularly as it relates to the intake of Jewish refugees, as a framework for approaching the representation of the Kindertransport in these countries. I begin here by looking at Canada's national memory of the Holocaust. Aleida Assmann has argued that national memory is often 'constructed around heroic deeds and heroic suffering'.⁴⁴ With respect to traumatic events, national narratives provide 'effective protection shields against those events that a nation prefers to forget'.⁴⁵ Assmann suggests that a nation remembers itself in three ways, focusing on victory, resistance and victimhood; 'everything else [therefore] lies outside the scope of those memory perspectives and is conveniently forgotten'.⁴⁶ However, Canadian memory of the Holocaust is more complicated because it can be self-critical as well as self-congratulatory. Jason Chalmers argues that 'there is no single historical narrative used to engage Canada in Holocaust memory, but rather a set of several – both positive and negative – over-lapping narratives'.⁴⁷ The positive narrative is based around the fact that Canada was part of the Allied Forces and that victory over the Axis powers ensured the Holocaust came to

⁴² Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 165.

⁴³ For a discussion of cultural memory, see Jan Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', in Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (eds), *Cultural Memory Studies. An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (De Gruyter: Berlin and New York), pp. 109-118.

⁴⁴ Aleida Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', *European Review* 22:4 (2014), p. 553.

⁴⁵ Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', p. 553.

⁴⁶ Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', p. 553.

⁴⁷ Jason Chalmers, 'Canadianising the Holocaust: Debating Canada's National Holocaust Monument', *Canadian Jewish Studies* 24 (2016), p. 156.

an end.⁴⁸ This narrative suggests that ‘Canadians not only fought to end WWII – and by extension, the Holocaust – but in many cases paid the ultimate sacrifice for the cause’.⁴⁹ Moreover, in this narrative ‘Canadian soldiers are presented as having both suffered with and suffered for the Jewish victims of the Holocaust’.⁵⁰ A second narrative identified by Chalmers recalls ‘the role that Canada played in becoming a home to survivors after the War [as] Canada is presented as a champion of the Jewish people and all those who suffered at the hands of the Nazis’.⁵¹ Although rescue is central to Canada’s national memory of the Holocaust according to Chalmers, it is its post-war rescue of Jewish survivors which is emphasised, while in Britain pre-war rescue tends to be the focal point.

The negative narrative in Canada’s memory is based around its failure to help Jewish refugees in, before and during the war. For example, Chalmers discusses how ‘Jewish refugees were prevented from entering the country during the war, a course of action that indirectly contributed to the deaths of thousands of migrants’.⁵² Although Canada became home to many survivors after the war, Canada also has its own guilt to bear.⁵³ The voyage of the *St. Louis*, for example, is presented as a ‘black mark upon the nation [as] the country’s responsibility for the fate of those on board the vessel is framed as an undisputed fact and the incident is perceived as the paradigmatic example of the country’s underlying attitude towards European Jewry’.⁵⁴ In November 2018, the Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, ‘stood in Parliament [...] and apologized for Canada’s decision to turn away [the refugees on board the *St. Louis*] on the eve of the Holocaust 79 years ago, saying it reflected years of regrettable anti-Semitic foreign policy’.⁵⁵ Trudeau went on to state that ‘we refused to help them when we could have. We

⁴⁸ Chalmers, ‘Canadianising the Holocaust’, p. 156.

⁴⁹ Chalmers, ‘Canadianising the Holocaust’, p. 156.

⁵⁰ Chalmers, ‘Canadianising the Holocaust’, p. 157.

⁵¹ Chalmers, ‘Canadianising the Holocaust’, p. 157.

⁵² Chalmers, ‘Canadianising the Holocaust’, p. 158.

⁵³ Chalmers, ‘Canadianising the Holocaust’, p. 158.

⁵⁴ Chalmers, ‘Canadianising the Holocaust’, p. 158.

⁵⁵ Catherine Porter, ‘Trudeau Apologizes for Canada’s Turning Away Ship of Jews Fleeing Nazis’, *The New York Times*, 7th November 2018, at

contributed to sealing the cruel fates of far too many at places like Auschwitz, Treblinka and Belzec. We failed them. And for that, we are sorry'.⁵⁶ Canada has thus self-critically acknowledged and expressed regret for its strict immigration policies towards refugees in the 1930s and 1940s. According to Chalmers, Canada's different memory narratives – in one, Canada appears as the Allied hero, in another, as antisemitic – are not in competition despite being so much at odds with each other. Both are 'necessary to reproduce the national myth because it relies upon contrasting who Canadians are with who they have been. Thus, both histories can be mentioned in the same breath'.⁵⁷

Canada seems able to negotiate its contrasting national narratives of the Holocaust according to Chalmers research. Canadians, as Chalmers argues, have 'the ability to tolerate a hydra-headed memory that simultaneously views Canada as both the "good guy" and the "bad guy"',⁵⁸ in contrast to Britain which only wants to be represented as a hero. However, although Trudeau, as pointed out above, has made a public apology for Canada's decision to turn away the *St. Louis* and its passengers, Canada has never apologised for the internment of Jewish refugees during the Second World War. One aspect which Chalmers does not explore in his detailed examination of Canada's national memory of the Holocaust is how Canada was a place of internment for thousands of internees who were sent from Britain as enemy aliens.

In the case of America, rescue before and during the Holocaust is understood as a complex topic, especially pre-war rescue because both America and Canada limited their intake of refugees during this period. Both countries remember the Evian Conference negatively as neither country wanted to admit Jews who were considered to be racially undesirable. A

<https://www.google.co.uk/amp/s/www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/world/canada/trudeau-apology-jews-st-louis.amp.html> [accessed 14th November 2018].

⁵⁶ Porter, 'Trudeau Apologizes for Canada's Turning Away Ship of Jews Fleeing Nazis'. For a general discussion of the culture of regret, see Jeffrey K. Olick, *The Politics of Regret: On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility* (Routledge: London, 2007).

⁵⁷ Chalmers, 'Canadianising the Holocaust', p. 160.

⁵⁸ Chalmers, 'Canadianising the Holocaust', p. 160.

particularly good example of a critical and wider ranging reflection on America's refugee intake at the time is provided by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM).⁵⁹ This Museum has also published a critical volume on the fate of the *St. Louis*, whose passengers were not allowed to disembark either in America or Canada.⁶⁰ Memory of rescue in America also focuses on the scheme which could potentially have resulted in America's version of the Kindertransport, the Wagner-Rogers Bill, which did not pass congress.⁶¹ At the same time, America remembers its acts of rescue and solidarity, such as the evacuation of British children to its shores.⁶² It was estimated in American newspapers 'that more than 200,000 unaccompanied British children [may have] come to the United States for the duration of the war'.⁶³ America's memory of the rescue of Jewish children is broad, reflecting upon the many movements of different groups of refugee children to America before and during the war, and on the different individuals and organisations involved in caring for the refugee children. For example, Gilbert and Eleanor Kraus travelled to Vienna to help fifty children to escape to America after the Anschluss; they made the arrangements for their travel by acquiring their affidavits, and the children arrived in America in June 1939.⁶⁴ Jewish children who had fled into France, Spain and then Portugal also travelled to America during the 1940s, for example, and a lesser known group, the 'One Thousand Children' (OTC), were also unaccompanied children who travelled to America from Europe. The OTC did not exist in the 1930s or the 1940s, rather they were established in 2000, yet this group gave 'survivors who were

⁵⁹ See 'Americans and the Holocaust', *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, at <https://exhibitions.ushmm.org/americans-and-the-holocaust/main> [accessed 15th September 2018].

⁶⁰ See Sarah A. Ogilvie and Scott Miller (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum), *Refuge Denied: The St. Louis Passengers and the Holocaust* (University of Wisconsin Press: Madison, 2006).

⁶¹ For further discussion about the Wagner-Rogers Bill, see Lambert M. Surhone, Miriam T. Timpledon, Susan F. Marseken (eds), *Wagner-Rogers Bill* (VDM Publishing: Saarbrücken, 2010).

⁶² See Michal Ostrovsky, "'We Are Standing By": Rescue Operations of the United States Committee for the Care of European Children', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 29:2 (2015), pp. 230-250.

⁶³ 'The Immigration of Refugee Children to the United States', *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, at <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-immigration-of-refugee-children-to-the-united-states> [accessed 14th September 2018].

⁶⁴ Steven Pressman, *50 Children: One Ordinary American Couple's Extraordinary Rescue Mission into the Heart of Nazi Germany* (HarperCollins: New York, 2014), p. 199.

unaccompanied child refugees a way to understand and share their experiences'.⁶⁵ America's and Canada's memory of rescue is also similar with regards to how they remember their post-war rescue of European Jewry because this memory is much more positive than memory of pre-war rescue.

But American memory of the Holocaust departs from Canadian and British memory because it focuses more upon the notion of 'ethnic identity' in terms of

a way to assimilate immigrants from many countries into America, so that they could become something called American. As we know, 'American' is very much a matter of being ethnic American: Irish-American, Polish-American, German-American, Russian-American, Jewish-American, or African-American.⁶⁶

Memory of the Holocaust in America therefore fits into the melting pot myth, because those who arrived in America were regarded as immigrants as they had to have immigration visas. In contrast to Canadian memory of the Holocaust, American memory has a more redemptive aspect. Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider argue that the Holocaust, through its 'Americanization', was 'removed from its exclusively European point of reference' and 'de-territorialized'.⁶⁷ In their discussion of the USHMM, they claim that this museum was designed to transform the 'European-based culture into part of mainstream American culture'.⁶⁸ Situating this museum on the Mall in Washington forged a link between 'the history of Jewish suffering and contemporary political and cultural institutions in America'.⁶⁹ America comes to stand for 'everything that negates the Holocaust'.⁷⁰ According to Peter Novick, the "Americanization" of the Holocaust has involved using it to demonstrate the difference between the Old World and the New, and to celebrate, by showing its negation, the American

⁶⁵ 'The Immigration of Refugee Children to the United States'.

⁶⁶ 'The Americanization of the Shoah: Yad Vashem Interview with Prof. James E. Young', *Yad Vashem*, 1998, at http://www.yadvashem.org/odot_pdf/Microsoft%20Word%20-%203879.pdf [accessed 14th September 2018], p. 3.

⁶⁷ Levy and Sznaider, *Holocaust Memory in the Global Age*, p. 153.

⁶⁸ Levy and Sznaider, *Holocaust Memory in the Global Age*, p. 153.

⁶⁹ Levy and Sznaider, *Holocaust Memory in the Global Age*, p. 153.

⁷⁰ Levy and Sznaider, *Holocaust Memory in the Global Age*, p. 153.

way of life'.⁷¹ American memory of the Holocaust thus tends to veer between an open acknowledgement of past failings, and a tendency to celebrate America as an ideal new home for refugees.

According to Jessica Caldwell, New Zealand developed awareness of the Holocaust relatively late in comparison to America, Australia and Britain.⁷² Given New Zealand's very small Jewish survivor community, this may not be so surprising. Two important factors in this development were debates in the 1980s around the issue of Nazi war criminals living in New Zealand, and around comparisons between the Holocaust and the 'Maori' Holocaust as it was called. According to David B. MacDonald, memory of the Holocaust in New Zealand has 'functioned as a new way of interpreting Maori experiences'.⁷³ New Zealand's approach to the Holocaust then might seem to have evolved self-critically, but there are gaps, especially as concerns New Zealand's memory of its response to Jewish refugees. Those refugees who reached New Zealand prior to the outbreak of the Second World War faced prejudice and were regarded as undesirable immigrants. Moreover, as Ann Beaglehole has pointed out, New Zealand 'was unwilling to take a more generous stand' to help refugees prior to the war.⁷⁴ Many were denied entry. Beaglehole also argues that New Zealand's own version of the Kindertransport, the Deckston Children, fits within this context. Although 20 Polish-Jewish children were rescued to New Zealand (on a private initiative between 1935 and 1937), the government blocked a third transport. According to Beaglehole, the Deckston Children

⁷¹ See Peter Novick, *The Holocaust and Collective Memory: The American Experience* (Bloomsbury: London, 1999).

⁷² See Jessica Caldwell, *Holocaust Consciousness in New Zealand 1980-2010: A Study*, Master of Arts Thesis: Victoria University, Wellington, 2011.

⁷³ David B. MacDonald, *Identity Politics in the Age of Genocide: The Holocaust and Historical Representation* (Routledge: London, 2008), p. 104.

⁷⁴ Ann Beaglehole, 'The Response of the New Zealand to Jewish Refugees and Holocaust Survivors, 1933-1947', *The Holocaust Centre of New Zealand*, at http://www.holocaustcentre.org.nz/uploads/1/1/5/2/115245341/ann-beaglehole-jewish-refugees-in-nz_1_.pdf [accessed 24th September 2018].

struggled to adapt to life in New Zealand.⁷⁵ Some of these children would later leave New Zealand for Australia.

While New Zealand remembers the rescue of the Deckston Children and of 733 Polish Children after the war,⁷⁶ it does not really recall its restrictive refugee policies. Until recently, too, it has not remembered the Kindertransport. Claire Bruell though has reflected upon this much less well-known group of nine Kinder who made their journeys to the other side of the globe, during and after the war. Some of these Kinder had been helped by Sir Nicholas Winton, who rescued over 600 children from Czechoslovakia. As previously stated, at least two Kinder later moved to Australia. Bruell also highlights how one Kind travelled from their home in continental Europe to Britain and then later moved from Newcastle to New Zealand in 1941.⁷⁷ It could be argued however that New Zealand never really knew about this very small number of children until the survivors themselves and the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand started to remember.

In New Zealand and Australia, national memory tends to coalesce around ANZAC Day (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps), when all Australians and New Zealanders are remembered who died in wars and conflicts (particularly the First World War, but also the Second World War). According to Kennedy and Graefenstein, the Sydney Jewish Museum's exhibition 'Serving Australia: The Jewish Involvement in Australian Military History' both reinforces the centrality of this collective memory and extends it by focusing on the contribution of Jews to the Australian Military.⁷⁸ In Australia, Jewish communities regularly

⁷⁵ Ann Beaglehole, 'Annie and Max Deckston', *The Holocaust Centre of New Zealand*, at http://www.holocaustcentre.org.nz/uploads/1/1/5/2/115245341/annie_and_max_deckston.pdf [accessed 24th September 2018].

⁷⁶ Tina White, 'Children of Little Poland Remember 75 Years Since Their Arrival', *Manawatu Standard*, 2nd November 2019, at <https://www.stuff.co.nz/manawatu-standard/lifestyle/117046957/children-of-little-poland-remember-75-years-since-their-arrival-in-pahatua> [accessed 21st November 2019].

⁷⁷ Claire Bruell, 'Kindertransport and New Zealand's Kindertransportees', *The Holocaust Centre of New Zealand*, at <http://www.holocaustcentre.org.nz/uploads/1/1/5/2/115245341/kindertransportfinalv2.pdf> [accessed 24th September 2018].

⁷⁸ Rosanna Kennedy and Sulamith Graefenstein, 'From the Transnational to the Intimate: Multidirectional Memory, the Holocaust and Colonial Violence in Australia', in Jenny Wüstenberg (ed.), *Locating Transnational*

remember ANZAC Day. Australian Holocaust memory of the Second World War also focuses on the fate of the Dunera Boys. Some of these boys were also Kinder. In September 1940, over 2500 ‘enemy aliens’ were brought to Australia from Britain on board the HMT *Dunera*. The majority were Jewish refugees. Memory of the *Dunera* in Australia has tended to emphasise the fact that many of the refugees opted to remain in Australia, ‘making a significant contribution to the nation’s economic, social and cultural life’.⁷⁹ Some ‘550 [refugees] volunteered for the 8th Australian Employment Company; the others mostly returned to England’.⁸⁰ Thus it is implied that Australia was more welcoming than Britain, and accounts of the *Dunera* often stress the ‘appalling’ treatment of the refugees by the British soldiers on the ship.⁸¹ But while Australian memory thus celebrates the place of Jews in Australian history and society, it is also critical of the nation’s restrictive and hostile immigration policies towards refugees prior to and after the Second World War.⁸² Moreover, as Kennedy and Graefenstein maintain, in Australia ‘Holocaust memory has been used as a critical platform for assessing ongoing human rights struggles’ as well as the ‘human rights violations [...] against Indigenous peoples since British colonization’.⁸³ New Zealand and Australia’s memory of the Holocaust has been described as being multidirectional,⁸⁴ as is well demonstrated by the case of William Cooper. Cooper was an Aboriginal activist. In 1938, following Kristallnacht, he led a delegation of the Australian Aboriginal league who protested outside the German Consulate in Melbourne about the persecution of Jewish people by the Nazis. Remembering Cooper has

Memory: How ‘Unbound’ Remembrance is Embedded in Public Spaces, special edition of International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society 32:4 (2019), p. 410.

⁷⁹ ‘Defining Moments: Dunera Boys’, *National Museum Australia*, at <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/dunera-boys> [accessed 23rd November 2019].

⁸⁰ ‘Serving Australia: Jewish Involvement in Australian Military History’, Sydney Jewish Museum, date unknown.

⁸¹ ‘Defining Moments’.

⁸² For an account of post-war antisemitism in Australia, see Suzanne D. Rutland, ‘A Study of Conflicting Images in the Australian Media: Holocaust Suffering and Persistent Anti-Jewish Racism’, in Shirli Gilbert and Avril Alba (eds), *Holocaust Memory and Racism in the Postwar World* (Wayne State University Press: Detroit, 2019), pp. 91-116.

⁸³ Kennedy and Graefenstein, ‘From the Transnational to the Intimate’, p. 404.

⁸⁴ Kennedy and Graefenstein, ‘From the Transnational to the Intimate’, p. 404.

highlighted positive Jewish-Aboriginal relations.⁸⁵ Both in New Zealand and Australia, in more recent years memory of the Holocaust has become bound up with a self-critical reflection on indigenous genocide.⁸⁶

It is also necessary here to reflect briefly on Britain's wider national memory of the Second World War. British memory centres on 'standing alone' and offering heroic resistance to Hitler, and memory of the Holocaust fits into this. The focus tends to be on the Kindertransport, and the liberation of Bergen-Belsen by British troops, although the nation also hosted many other refugees, such as the 4,000 Basque Children (Los Niños) who arrived in Britain in 1937 after escaping the Spanish Civil War. Britain, moreover, became a shelter for refugees who came to this country with domestic visas as well as the many professionals who took refuge here before the outbreak of war. Likewise, many survivors such as the hundreds of children who survived the death camps came to Britain after the war to rebuild their lives.⁸⁷ Today they are known as The Boys but girls were also helped to come to Britain. Sharples and Olaf Jensen have pointed out that, because Britain was 'geographically removed from the killing sites, unencumbered by occupying Nazi forces and neither perpetrator nor collaborator in the crimes of the Third Reich', it did not have to endure 'the same painful, soul-searching questions as Germany, Austria or the former occupied territories'.⁸⁸ The Holocaust therefore 'was, and remains, a distant event for the British population'.⁸⁹ Awareness of the Holocaust in Britain developed slowly, as there was a 'collective amnesia' and 'silence' after the war.⁹⁰ When the national memory did develop some forty years after the event, it suggested a nation

⁸⁵ MacDonald, *Identity Politics in the Age of Genocide*, p. 95.

⁸⁶ See Neil Levi, "'No Sensible Comparison?'" The Place of the Holocaust in Australia's History Wars', *History and Memory* 19:1 (2007), pp. 124-156.

⁸⁷ See Martin Gilbert, *The Boys: The Story of 732 Young Concentration Camp Survivors* (Phoenix: London, 2003) for more information about the post-war Kindertransport which rescued children and teenagers who had survived the death camps.

⁸⁸ Caroline Sharples and Olaf Jensen, 'Introduction', in Caroline Sharples and Olaf Jensen (eds), *Britain and the Holocaust: Remembering and Representing War and Genocide* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2013), p. 2.

⁸⁹ Sharples and Jensen, 'Introduction', p. 2.

⁹⁰ Sharples and Jensen, 'Introduction', p. 6.

which, because it had rescued and sheltered many refugees and been one of the liberators, was at 'ease with its self and its history'⁹¹ – so much at ease in fact that the Holocaust risked fading from public view because the national memorial in Hyde Park 'blends into the landscape' and is therefore unnoticeable.⁹² On the other hand, in 2015 the then Prime Minister, David Cameron, announced the Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission Report which pledges that Britain will continue to remember the Holocaust so that memory is passed down to future generations. Moreover, in 2017, the winning proposal for the new National Holocaust Memorial and Education Centre was revealed. Designed by the team led by Sir David Adjaye, it will be built in the Victoria Tower Gardens next to the Houses of Parliament by the River Thames. This location is found at the heart of Britain's political sphere. It is thus more visible than the memorial in Hyde Park, emphasising Britain's commitment to remembering the Holocaust.

However, Sharples and Jensen point out that 'there are also fears that making the Holocaust a part of Britain's national story will inevitably encourage a sense of Britain's moral superiority, thereby ensuring that representations of the Holocaust fail to progress beyond rhetoric of a glorious, heroic war against evil Nazism'.⁹³ Britain's memory of the Holocaust may thus continue to reinforce the narrative of good (Britain) versus evil (Germany). Andy Pearce argues that 'Britain has reason to be proud of the Kindertransport, and the post-war contribution of the Kinder deserves recognition', yet Britain still chooses to remember certain 'elements' over others.⁹⁴ Jensen contends that 'even the Holocaust can be used as a pillar for a unifying national spirit: the *Kindertransports* symbolise the effort made by the nation to help

⁹¹ Olaf Jensen, 'The Holocaust in British Television and Film: A Look Over the Fence', in Caroline Sharples and Olaf Jensen (eds), *Britain and the Holocaust: Remembering and Representing War and Genocide* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2013), p. 117.

⁹² Sharples and Jensen, 'Introduction', p. 5.

⁹³ Sharples and Jensen, 'Introduction', p. 6.

⁹⁴ Andy Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain* (Routledge: London, 2014), p. 217.

the European Jews and the war was won “as quickly as possible” to end the Holocaust’.⁹⁵ Sharples and Jensen also suggest that Britain’s memory of the Holocaust is limited, as it marginalises many of the questionable and problematic aspects such as the occupation of the Channel Islands and the ill-treatment of refugees. Their study therefore reflects upon Britain’s failings and omissions. These include the British government’s weak response to information about the persecution of Jews, the deportation of refugees as enemy aliens from Britain to countries such as Australia and Canada, and the post-war handling of Nazi war criminals, as well as the treatment of survivors in Palestine by British troops.

Transnational Memory

In recent years, scholars have turned their attention increasingly to transnational memory: the idea, in other words, that memories are not bounded by the nation state, but move across borders.⁹⁶ Memory, in other words, ‘travels’.⁹⁷ This interest in transnational movement can be traced back to the notion of cosmopolitan memory as developed by Levy and Sznajder. According to these scholars, shared memories of the Holocaust ‘provide the foundations for a new cosmopolitan memory transcending ethnic and national boundaries’.⁹⁸ They further argue that transnational memory cultures have the ‘potential to become the cultural foundation for global human rights politics’.⁹⁹ In a recent influential book, Michael Rothberg outlined his theory of ‘multidirectional memory’, which draws attention to the ‘dynamic transfers that take place between diverse places and times during the act of remembrance’.¹⁰⁰ Rothberg’s

⁹⁵ Jensen, ‘The Holocaust in British Television and Film’, p. 117.

⁹⁶ See, for instance, Chiara de Cesari and Ann Rigney (eds), *Transnational Memory: Circulation, Articulation, Scales* (De Gruyter: Berlin, 2014), and Jenny Wüstenberg (ed.), *Locating Transnational Memory: How ‘Unbound’ Remembrance is Embedded in Public Spaces, special edition of International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 32:4 (2019).

⁹⁷ Astrid Erll, ‘Travelling Memory’, *Parallax* 17:4 (2011), pp. 4-18.

⁹⁸ Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder, ‘Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory’, *European Journal of Social Theory* 5:1 (2002), p. 88. See also Levy and Sznajder, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*.

⁹⁹ Levy and Sznajder, ‘Memory Unbound’, p. 88.

¹⁰⁰ Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford University Press: Stanford, 2009), p. 12.

particular focus is on ways in which memories of colonialist crimes and memories of the Holocaust can fruitfully interact.

The history of the Kindertransport is in itself clearly a transnational one. The refugee children crossed different borders and were subject to different contexts that shaped their transit, reception and integration. One could therefore argue that any memory of this event must also be transnational: that, in other words, memory of the Kindertransport needs to be understood not merely in national, but also transnational terms. This thesis will indeed point to examples of the movement of Kindertransport memorialisation across borders, as for instance in the case of the Frank Meisler and Flor Kent memorial networks, discussed in Chapter Two. In the course of my thesis, I will also discuss the representation of the Kindertransport in relation to issues of contemporary human rights, and the current refugee crisis. Furthermore, I will use the expression ‘personal transnational memory’ to refer to the essentially transnational nature of the subjective memory of Kindertransportees. Finally, in my discussion of the representation of the Kindertransport in literature, I apply the term ‘transcultural memory’ to the depiction of characters with hyphenated or hybrid memories – these characters feel neither just German nor British, for instance, but a mixture of the two, an identity which crosses cultures.¹⁰¹

However, representing the transnational history of the Kindertransport does not automatically equate to transnational memory. An exhibition, for instance, which represents the movement of Kinder from Germany to Britain, but overlooks subsequent journeys, may risk creating a redemptive narrative; focusing on these other journeys would reveal that, for many Kinder, trauma did not end when they reached British shores. What looks at first sight like a transnational narrative (moving from Germany to Britain) may actually be a national one

¹⁰¹ For a discussion of transcultural memory and hybridity, see Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, ‘The Transnational Dynamics of Local Remembrance: The Jewish Past in a Former Shtetl in Poland’, *Memory Studies* 11:3 (2018), pp. 301-314. For transcultural memory more generally, see Susannah Radstone, ‘What Place is This? Transcultural Memory and the Locations of Memory Studies’, *Parallax* 17:4 (2011), pp. 109-123.

– or one could perhaps speak of the ‘renationalisation’ of a transnational perspective. The incorporation of such a perspective then does not always relativise or criticise national representation. According to Sharon Macdonald, not only was Britain’s first Holocaust Memorial Day in 2001 largely framed in national terms, there was also ‘an attempt to revise the nation itself *as cosmopolitan*’.¹⁰² Macdonald points out that, during the event, ‘the nation was referenced both directly and indirectly’ by drawing for instance on images of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen and the rescue of children on the Kindertransport.¹⁰³ ‘The “national” character of the event even trumped its potential Jewishness’.¹⁰⁴ The Holocaust, Macdonald continues, was “‘lifted out” of a specific Jewish reference’.¹⁰⁵ While the 2001 Holocaust Memorial Day did commemorate other genocides such as those in Bosnia, Cambodia and Rwanda, this, according to Macdonald, served rather to strengthen the sense of national agency – despite appearing to be a ‘clear cosmopolitanising move in Levy and Sznajder’s sense’.¹⁰⁶ She also contends that ‘the depiction of Britain as a haven for those escaping persecution [...] served to support a portrait of Britain as multicultural’.¹⁰⁷ What Macdonald says of Holocaust Memorial Day in 2001 could well apply to commemorations on this day ever since.

Aleida Assmann also has reservations about the concept of transnational memory, claiming that ‘moving directly from nationalism to the global sphere of media circulation is [...] a problematic step that covers up many problems that are challenging and vexing memory studies at the present stage’.¹⁰⁸ Assmann discusses how ‘memory is taken all too easily beyond all boundaries if we focus directly on a cosmopolitan community that is composed of none other than humanity itself’.¹⁰⁹ Transnational memory is then ‘a beautiful idea [but] we also

¹⁰² Sharon Macdonald, *Memorylands: Heritage and Identity in Europe Today* (Routledge: London, 2013), p. 203.

¹⁰³ Macdonald, *Memorylands*, pp. 203-204.

¹⁰⁴ Macdonald, *Memorylands*, p. 204.

¹⁰⁵ Macdonald, *Memorylands*, p. 204.

¹⁰⁶ Macdonald, *Memorylands*, p. 204.

¹⁰⁷ Macdonald, *Memorylands*, p. 204.

¹⁰⁸ Assmann, ‘Transnational Memories’, p. 548.

¹⁰⁹ Assmann, ‘Transnational Memories’, p. 548.

need to acknowledge that some borders continue to exist and are even re-erected by new memory-communities'.¹¹⁰ Still, Assmann does refer to a 'dialogic memory' which, she suggests, has a special relevance for Europe: 'it could produce a new type of nation-state that is not exclusively grounded in pride, but is transnationally sensitive to its neighbours, accepting the dark legacies of an entangled history of violence'.¹¹¹ This transnational memory could 'credibly back up the protection of human rights in the present and support the values of a civil society in the future'.¹¹² Ideally, then, one could argue, a transnational memory of the Kindertransport would encourage us to empathise with refugees today which in turn would inspire us to act with regards to helping those in need find safety. As I will point out in the course of the thesis, where the full transnational history of the Kindertransport is presented, the problems associated with constant uprooting become clear, so that a sensitive transnational memory in relation to questions of diaspora is encouraged.

Secondary Literature on the Kindertransport in Various Genres

While analysing representations of the Kindertransport with reference to different national and transnational memory frameworks, this thesis will also explore these representations in different genres. Examining representations across genres will allow for a broad scope of investigation, enabling me to identify patterns and at the same time to take into account possible differences that may be genre-based rather than linked to specific memory discourses. I will also explore whether patterns play out differently across genres. This thesis has four chapters which examine how the Kindertransport is represented, in turn, in oral testimonies and written autobiographies, museum exhibitions, memorials, and novels. I analyse these cultural forms because my chosen genres are used across all five of the host nations at the centre of this thesis.

¹¹⁰ Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', p. 548.

¹¹¹ Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', p. 553.

¹¹² Assmann, 'Transnational Memories', p. 553.

As a result, I will not only be able to analyse how each host nation remembers the Kindertransport, but also to compare how these memories are presented within but also across several genres. Although there has recently been an upsurge in the number of plays produced which explore this theme, such as Diane Samuels' *Kindertransport* (1995), Hershey Felder's *The Pianist of Willesden Lane* (2012), Fingers Crossed Theatre's *Central (Story) Line* (2018), and Timothy M. Kolman's *The Roses in June* (2017), these plays are mainly by British and American writers.¹¹³ While comparing these would enable me to compare how Britain and America remember the Kindertransport, I would not be able to use plays to compare how Britain and Australia present this historical event. The four genres selected are representative.

There has been some secondary literature on representations of the Kindertransport in the genres I will be examining. Beginning with testimony, scholars such as Steven Pressman, Bruell, Gigliotti and Tempian have reflected on its significance in their studies about Kinder who escaped to New Zealand. But they use testimony not as a resource for memory, rather they present more historical perspectives.¹¹⁴ The same is true of Strutz, who has analysed testimony to explore the different historical journeys Kinder embarked upon such as from Britain to Canada. She focuses on the experiences of Josef Eisinger, who first came to Britain on a Kindertransport in March 1939 and 'ended up in [...] Yorkshire on a remote and primitive farm (without running water, and hardly any electricity)'.¹¹⁵ She states that Eisinger 'felt very lonely and uprooted there, because he had no one to share his worries and fears with him'.¹¹⁶ Eisinger was later transferred to the Isle of Man when he was categorised as an enemy alien, and then sent to Canada as an internee. Eisinger then emigrated from Canada to America in 1953. Strutz's research underscores the transnational history of the Kindertransport. To a degree, she

¹¹³ Diane Samuels, *Kindertransport* (Nick Hern Books: London, 2008).

¹¹⁴ See Bruell, 'Kindertransport and New Zealand's Kindertransportees', and Gigliotti and Tempian, 'From Europe to the Antipodes', for examples of how historians have engaged with testimony.

¹¹⁵ Strutz, 'Detour to Canada', p. 38.

¹¹⁶ Strutz, 'Detour to Canada', p. 38.

argues that Canada's memory of the Kindertransport is more transnational than Britain's because Canada was at the very end of some Kinder's journeys.

Craig-Norton's research into Polish Kinder who travelled to Britain does use testimony from a memory perspective, as she reflects upon how 'language and cultural differences were [...] immediate problems' for the Kinder and how it was 'religious and national identity [which] posed life-long conflicts for many of these children'.¹¹⁷ Their memory of life in their home countries, in other words, caused tensions as they tried to adapt to their new host nations. Craig-Norton argues that testimony from Polish Kinder has shown that they 'faced perhaps the greatest challenges to national and individual identity of all the *Kinder*' because they came to Britain as 'double refugees'.¹¹⁸ These Kinder were 'German born, German speaking, but not German citizens', but when they 'arrived from Poland [they] were impelled by wartime Britain's undifferentiated suspicion of foreigners to embrace Polish nationality as a matter of necessity and many contended with uncertain identity for the rest of their lives'.¹¹⁹ Craig-Norton explores the complex and shifting identities of the Kinder, pointing out that the Kinder's 'struggle for identity has not been fully explored in [the] historiography' due to 'the persistence of a one-dimensional celebratory narrative' as well as the 'lack of available sources to which intellectual vigour might be applied'.¹²⁰ My thesis, while it will provide the first comparative exploration of testimony across the host nations, builds on the work of Craig-Norton and Strutz because their work helps us to understand how the Kindertransport is remembered in different countries. I have also benefited from Sharples' discussion of refugee

¹¹⁷ Jennifer Craig-Norton, 'Polish Kinder and the Struggles for Identity', in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), p. 29.

¹¹⁸ Craig-Norton, 'Polish Kinder and the Struggles for Identity', p. 29.

¹¹⁹ Craig-Norton, 'Polish Kinder and the Struggles for Identity', p. 29.

¹²⁰ Craig-Norton, 'Polish Kinder and the Struggles for Identity', p. 29.

writings on the Kindertransport memoirs, which examines the relationship between history and memory.¹²¹

In terms of representations of the Kindertransport in museums, I was able to trace next to no secondary literature, beyond brief references. However, my analysis of these representations in museum exhibitions builds on more general secondary literature on the exhibitions concerned. Thus, I relate my exploration of the presentation of the Kindertransport in London's Imperial War Museum South (IWMS) to Tom Lawson's discussion of the museum's Holocaust exhibition within which the Kindertransport exhibit is situated.¹²² There is a similar absence of secondary literature when it comes to memorials. Kushner, however, does provide a very critical, if brief analysis of Meisler's Kindertransport memorial at Liverpool Street station. He argues that it was a 'bitter, but unintended, irony that Frank Meisler's sculpture of the *Kinder* at Liverpool Street station was initially entitled "Statue of Liberty"', given that Meisler's parents were murdered in the Holocaust, and that the Statue of Liberty in America neighbours Ellis Island, 'symbolic now of racist restrictionism in the age of mass migration'.¹²³ Kushner goes on to remark that it is 'hard to conceive that such connections were intended in Meisler's naming of his tribute to Britain or to tell from his memorial that the country never intended to provide permanent refuge to these children'.¹²⁴ On the other hand, Kushner does not analyse Meisler's other sculptures which are found in the Kinder's former homelands and countries of transit, or how these memorials relate to one another. Nor does he consider whether they present different national memories of the Kindertransport.

¹²¹ Caroline Sharples, 'Reconstructing the Past: Refugee Writings on the *Kindertransport*', *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History* 12:3 (2006), pp. 40-62.

¹²² See, for instance, Tom Lawson, 'Ideology in a Museum of Memory: A Review of the Holocaust Exhibition at the Imperial War Museum', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 4:2 (2003), pp. 173-183.

¹²³ Kushner, *The Battle of Britishness*, p. 138.

¹²⁴ Kushner, *The Battle of Britishness*, p. 138.

As far as novels are concerned, there is secondary literature on literary representations of the Kindertransport, although this is rarely comparative.¹²⁵ Sue Vice, Andrea Hammel, Julia K. Baker, Phyllis Lassner and Marianne Hirsch have focussed on an individual novel or novels.¹²⁶ Most secondary literature though has tended to focus on W. G. Sebald's acclaimed novel *Austerlitz* (2001). While this is probably the most radical of all Kindertransport novels, it is not a focus of my thesis, which discusses only English-language novels.¹²⁷ But it does share features in common with such novels, such as absence and loss.¹²⁸ Thus Hirsch explores the complex relationship between the narrator and protagonist in *Austerlitz*, showing how they are both trying to piece together 'fragments' of the history as well as the memory of the Kindertransport through 'objects, images, and documents'. She also reflects upon how this material, instead of 'authenticating' a memory, can instead 'blur or relativize truth and reference'.¹²⁹ Moreover, Hirsch's analysis of *Austerlitz* is important because she unpicks the complexities of the Kindertransport by portraying how some Kinder struggled to adapt to a

¹²⁵ My decision to explore this subject goes back to the time of my MA dissertation, when I analysed novels across a range of countries, highlighting that there were significant differences between memory of the Kindertransport in certain host nations such as Britain, America, Canada, Sweden, and memory in Germany. See Amy Williams, *The Fictionalisation of the Kindertransport: A Conventional or an Unconventional Narrative?*, Masters dissertation, Nottingham Trent University, 2015.

¹²⁶ For texts which explore Lore Segal's novels, see Julia K. Baker, 'From Other People's Houses into Shakespeare's Kitchen: The Story of Lore Segal and How She Looked for Adventures and Where She Found Them', in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), pp. 185-204, and Lorena Silos Ribas, 'The Experience of Space in Lore Segal's *Other People's Houses*', in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), pp. 205-218.

¹²⁷ For examples of secondary literature on *Austerlitz*, see Martin Modlinger, "'You Can't Change Names and Feel the Same': The Kindertransport Experience of Susi Bechhöfer in W. G. Sebald's *Austerlitz*", in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), pp. 219-232, and Jean-Marc Dreyfus, 'L'absence et la Trace: Kindertransport, Nuit de Cristal et Opération Meubles dans "Austerlitz"', *European Review of History* 19:3 (2012), pp. 355-366. For a good set of essays on Sebald's handling of history in his literary works, see Anne Fuchs and J.J. Long (eds), *W.G. Sebald and the Writing of History* (Königshausen & Neumann: Würzburg, 2007). *Austerlitz* appeared first in German and subsequently in English. For the novel, see W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (Hanser: Munich, 2001), and, in English translation (by Anthea Bell), W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (Penguin Books Ltd.: London, 2011).

¹²⁸ Marianna Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust* (Columbia University Press: New York, 2012), p. 40.

¹²⁹ Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory*, pp. 41-44.

new way of life, and how their identities were stripped from them not once but twice, as some foster parents anglicised the Kinder's names in their host nation. However, although Hirsch explores memory of the Kindertransport in Britain and Germany, she does not touch on how the Kindertransport is remembered in other host nations.

In a recent essay on Kindertransport research, Andrea Hammel provides an overview of current and future directions for many different areas of research, discussing archives, diaries and databases as well as novels. Here, she makes the point that fictional works based on the Kindertransport are now part of 'popular culture'.¹³⁰ She gives three examples of novels which have been recognised worldwide, namely Nicole Krauss' *Great House* (2010), Alison Pick's *Far to Go* and Jake Wallis Simons' *The English German Girl* (2011), and she stresses the fact that these works are by American, Canadian and British authors.¹³¹ Although Hammel discusses how these authors explore the theme, she does not consider whether or not any similarities or differences in their approach might be linked to the fact that they come from different countries.¹³² Phyllis Lassner also focuses on how Jewish-British fiction has explored the Kindertransport theme, especially with regards to female authors. Her work is significant because she contends that the British national narrative of the Kindertransport has tended to be male-dominated. We remember key figures such as Sir Nicholas Winton, Rabbi Solomon Schonfeld, Lord Stanley Baldwin, Viscount Herbert Samuel and Clement Attlee, yet female rescuers such as Geertruida Wijsmuller-Meijer, Doreen Warriner, Bertha Bracey, and Maria

¹³⁰ Andrea Hammel, 'The Future of Kindertransport Research: Archives, Diaries, Database, Fiction', in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), p. 150.

¹³¹ Also see Nicole Krauss, *Great House* (W.W. Norton & Company: New York, 2010), Alison Pick, *Far to Go* (House of Anansi Press: Toronto, 2010), and Jake Wallis Simons, *The English German Girl* (Polygon: Edinburgh, 2011).

¹³² Stephanie Homer has also explored how the Kindertransport is represented in fictional and non-fictional works. See Stephanie Homer, *Remembering, Representing, and Re-imagining the Kindertransport: An Analysis of Literary Genres*, PhD dissertation, University of London, 2020, and Stephanie Homer, 'Kindertransport Memoirs: Between Formulating Knowledge of a Painful Past and Containing Traumatic Impact', *German Life and Letters* 72:4 (2019), pp. 484-498.

Scholka have been overlooked or even ignored.¹³³ This thesis will also consider whether some genres feature female voices more so than others. Lassner reflects upon themes such as rootlessness, hyphenated identities, wandering, and identity. Like Hirsch, Lassner brings British and German memory of the Kindertransport into focus by exploring identity as an ‘unresolved tension’ – Anglo-Jewish and German-Jewish for example.¹³⁴ Nevertheless, Lassner’s work is ultimately British-focused; there is no comparison to how other host nations remember the Kindertransport.

Approach

So far, I have argued that, while historians have identified a positive, even celebratory narrative underlying British memory of the Kindertransport, to date there is no individual study which examines when, and indeed if, this narrative emerged, what forms it has taken, how it operates, or if it has been challenged. Likewise, while some comparative historiographical work has been done on the wider movement of the Kinder across different countries, very little has been written on memory of the Kindertransport particularly in the other host nations. I decided to focus on the five host nations (Britain, America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand) because there are many features in common for Kinder who were sheltered in these countries: all learned the English language, they had to adapt to new surroundings such as new homes, new schools, and new friends, and it was the Kinder themselves who held the first reunions. This thesis is aware that there were other non-English speaking host nations such as Holland, Belgium, France and Sweden. It is also important to note that some refugee children travelled to Palestine before, during and after the Second World War. The main aim of this thesis, however, is to explore memory of the Kindertransport in the English-speaking host nations,

¹³³ See Sybil Oldfield, “‘It is Usually She’: The Role of British Women in the Rescue and Care of the Kindertransport Kinder”, *Shofar* 23:1 (2004), pp. 57-70.

¹³⁴ Phyllis Lassner, *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust: Displaced Witnesses* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2008), p. 49.

not least because there is a greater wealth of material to examine. This thesis will thus ask the following questions: How does each host nation remember the Kindertransport? Does each host nation remember the Kindertransport in certain ways? If so, in which ways? To what degree does memory of the transports in these host nations reflect the transnational character of the Kindertransport? Is it an issue of country or genre with regard to how we understand what the differences and similarities are? How does each genre present the Kindertransport?

In seeking to answer these questions, I use a range of sources. For the chapter on testimony, my analysis draws on published material, such as edited volumes of testimony and autobiographies by Kinder, but also on unpublished oral history interviews held at Holocaust Centres and other institutions in Britain, and the other host nations under discussion in this thesis. I also consult online archives. My research visits within Britain, as well as to America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand enabled me not just to consult Kindertransport testimony, but also to study first-hand the representation of the Kindertransport in museum exhibitions, the subject of Chapter Two, and view all the memorials discussed in Chapter Three in person. Sources used for Chapter Four on novels are all in the public domain. My assessment of the material discussed in my thesis is based throughout on a consideration of how what I refer to as the ‘positives’ and ‘negatives’ of the Kindertransport are represented, and how the balance or imbalance between these affects interpretation and reflects the intention behind representations. Among these ‘positives’ are: rescue from Nazism, welcome, the chance for a new start, a continuing childhood through foster parents and schooling, professional opportunities, integration into the community, founding a new family and launching a prosperous career. The ‘negatives’ fall into various categories: pre-Kindertransport negatives, such as the experience of antisemitism and discrimination in the Kinder’s countries of origin, the horror of Kristallnacht, the trauma of separation from family members and the often harrowing departure for new lands; Kindertransport negatives, namely the experience of the

journey itself and of dislocation; and post-Kindertransport negatives, such as the continuing pain of separation from loved ones, abuse in foster homes and hostels, bullying, antisemitism in British society, internment, and further displacement through imprisonment overseas. Furthermore, the negatives often revolve around loss, which is a theme that is constant throughout the Kinder's experiences. The positives can be understood as what the Kinder gained, while the negatives can be defined as what the Kinder lost: identity, home, family, and country. Distinctions between positives and negatives, however, are not always easy to draw. While acquiring a new identity, such as British, may be deemed a positive, retaining a split identity (for instance, German and British, or Jewish and German and British), can be experienced as negative or positive depending on the individual. While the process of integration may seem positive, the identity struggles of many Kinder show it was not easy.

Overall my argument will be that, while a positive British narrative of the Kindertransport has been largely dominant since the 1990s, this was not the case before. For example, Chapter One shows that although the first history of the Kindertransport (the Refugee Children's Movement's 1944 report) was certainly very positive in tone, when Karen Gershon's *We Came as Children: A Collected Autobiography of Refugees* was published in 1966, a more complex and often critical narrative emerged. It is significant that this volume appeared just after the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem (1961) and the Auschwitz trials in Frankfurt (1963-1965) as Holocaust memory was entering public consciousness around the western world during this period. The awareness of the Holocaust may have heightened sensitivity to the traumatic experience of rupture suffered by many Kinder. However, the topic of the Kindertransport hardly featured in British cultural memory of the Nazi period in the 1970s. In fact, it was not until the 1980s – following the showing of the American television series *Holocaust* (1978) – that the Holocaust generally established itself as a strong focus of European and American memory. The importance of the Holocaust for British, indeed global

memory was enhanced by the Stockholm Declaration (2000), and the establishment of Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) in many countries. Since the inauguration of Britain's HMD in 2001, the Kindertransport has played a key role in many of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust's events. For example, the theme featured strongly in 2006 with the 'One Person Can Make a Difference' campaign, in 2014 with the 'Journeys' campaign, in 2016 with the 'Don't Stand By' campaign and in 2019 with the 'Torn from Home' campaign. At the same time, in Britain under the Thatcher administration, a triumphalist view of British history began to take root and intensify. So while increasing Holocaust consciousness was one reason the Kindertransport became important to British memory in the 1980s/1990s, another was that, understood as a valiant rescue effort, it served as a key example of proud British heritage. Also in the 1980s/1990s, the first reunions of Kinder took place – Kinder started to emerge from the shadows cast by the terrible suffering of those who had endured Auschwitz. This is also the time when the first museum exhibitions about the Kindertransport start to appear. These early exhibitions are certainly in keeping with the desire to present positive stories. As Chapter Two explores museum exhibitions have been less inclined to incorporate more challenging and distressing stories into their spaces.

The opening chapter on testimony will examine the way in which this positive narrative began to assert itself, and the ways in which complex testimony was simplified and made to fit. At the same time, the chapter will show how, in the last ten years or so, Britain's narrative has come under critical pressure. The following chapters on museum exhibitions and memorials explore the ways in which the positive narrative has left its mark, and how problematic aspects of the Kindertransport are sometimes acknowledged but simultaneously undermined. The final chapter on novels, in turn, focuses in part on the use of the conventions of children's novels by British authors to convey an uplifting view of the Kindertransport. The chapters on exhibitions, memorials and novels, however, also demonstrate recent trends

towards a more critical take on the Kindertransport in Britain, even if the positive narrative remains very strong.

All chapters also compare across countries, showing, for example, that museum exhibitions and memorials in America or Australia, while also presenting the Kindertransport as in some respects positive, often pose more challenging questions. Generally, too, I argue, non-British host countries present the wider transnational history more than is the case in Britain, and in terms that link it more strongly to questions of human rights and cosmopolitan Holocaust memory. The transnational history is presented more in these other host nations because there was further movement to these nations. That this is presented more critically is because the Kinder often journeyed there as internees and so nations such as Canada and Australia reflect not just on the rescue of refugees but also on the poor treatment to which they are then sometimes subjected. Thus the Kindertransport is placed within a context of inaction to aid refugees. However, there are moments where some representations of the Kindertransport in non-British host nations are positive as these nations also remember how the Kinder have contributed greatly to their new societies.

Chapter One

Reflecting on Experience: The Kindertransport in Testimony

Introduction

I begin with the genre which is perhaps the closest to the event itself: testimony.¹ This chapter sets out to explore testimonies across the host nations with a view to ascertaining how the Kindertransport is represented. It also asks to what extent testimony can be understood in terms of national and transnational memory as outlined in the introduction to this thesis. While testimony can be found in different forms – diaries, letters, interviews, autobiographies, memoirs, videos, recorded and archived unpublished accounts – my aim is not to reflect upon the differences between these subgenres. Rather this chapter considers whether any patterns emerge across these various forms which would shed light on how testimony is constructed and used. In this chapter, individual testimony is used to mean published individual autobiographies, as well as unpublished individual written accounts stored by institutions; collective testimony is used in reference to edited volumes which combine testimonies from around the globe. While diaries and letters are not the focus of this chapter, I do refer to how these early forms of testimony compare with later testimonies.

This chapter explores how Kinder tell their stories. However, Kinder are not always free to express themselves in their own terms as others can influence the shape of their testimonies. For example, Kindertransport testimony is edited in books which present collections of testimony. The editors have their own story to tell which may influence how the material is presented. Later in the chapter I argue that British institutions structure their interviews in a chronological order so there is little room for the Kindertransportee to construct

¹ For general studies on Holocaust survivor testimony, see Henry Greenspan, *On Listening to Holocaust Survivors: Recounting and Life History* (Praeger: London, 1998), and Lawrence L. Langer, *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory* (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 1991).

their own telling of the story which may otherwise jump from one event in the past to another in the present. While this chapter is concerned with national general trends it is also aware that individual Kindertransport testimony develops over time. Knowledge that the Kinder acquire over time can influence how they remember thus their testimony can become more and more detailed as the years progress.² The present day can have many effects on Kindertransport testimony because as Kinder feel more accepted and respected they are more at ease with sharing their stories. Today they might be more open to speaking about certain experiences which they had suppressed for a long time. If an individual has gone on to have a successful career for example they might look back on their life in positive terms. Their later success in life becomes a lens through which they see their whole life.³ Many Kinder have also told their stories on multiple occasions, in different locations, to different audiences and in different formats as stated above. Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore how individuals present their stories through different forms of testimony, towards the end of the chapter I do reflect upon how one former Kind's (Hanna Zack Miley) testimony has developed over time as well as the challenges she has faced when presenting her story within a book format compared to an audio book, the risks of translation, how she recounts her story to different groups around the world by speaking freely or reading from her book, and what lessons she has drawn from her own story.

In examining testimony, this chapter will show that while there is indeed a positive British national narrative of the Kindertransport, it was not always dominant: the history of this narrative is one of emergence and re-emergence. I begin with a discussion of the 1940s' publications of the Refugee Children's Movement (RCM), arguing that it was here that the narrative historians identify as the congratulatory British narrative was first established. The

² Rebekka Göpfert, *Der Jüdische Kindertransport von Deutschland nach England 1938/39: Geschichte und Erinnerung* (Campus: Frankfurt am Main, 1999), p. 26.

³ Göpfert, *Der Jüdische Kindertransport von Deutschland nach England 1938/39*, pp. 24-25.

chapter considers how this narrative then gave way to more critical perspectives present in testimony – which was, apart from the occasional novel, the only significant form of cultural engagement with the Kindertransport until the 1980s. The chapter shows that the Kinder's memories recounted in the first edited volume of testimony published in 1966 are far-reaching and critical. These testimonies did not correspond to the positive RCM narrative but instead forged their own line of inquiry, presenting a much broader transnational perspective. The Kinder's memories which result from their transnational experiences are presented as shifting in this first collection of testimonies because often the Kinder were caught between several worlds: while the old home gave way to new home, this was not always the end of the journey, as then came internment and movement to other lands. This volume did not place Kindertransport testimony within a progressive narrative of the Kindertransport. To a certain extent, this is also true of collective testimonies published in the 1990s and 2000s.

The chapter goes on to maintain that the celebratory view of the Kindertransport – what historians have identified as the British narrative – began to assert itself in the 1990s. The institutional memory developed by the RCM in the 1940s now re-emerged as a national memory. This can be demonstrated by considering three key factors. Firstly, collective testimonies from the late 1980s and early 1990s show that Kinder started to think more in national terms. Secondly, Kindertransport testimony collected by institutions such as the Imperial War Museums (IWMs) and the British Library's (BL) Sound Archive in the 1980s and 1990s presents the Kindertransport to Britain in largely positive terms and says little about other nations. These institutions gathered testimony within the framework of oral history projects designed to highlight the contributions of British citizens, including refugees and Holocaust survivors, to Britain's national history. The same positive take on the Kindertransport is also typical of testimony as used in documentaries and museum exhibitions from the 1990-2000 period. As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, the positive British

narrative is limited in focus in several ways. It downplays the domestic negatives such as exploitation, abuse, and internment. It is also not concerned with migration beyond British shores or remigration to former homelands. The positive British narrative instead focuses on the arrival of Kinder to Britain prior to, during and after the Second World War. As a result, the traumatic story of deportation to Canada and Australia, for instance, is usually omitted. Testimony is used within British museums in a manner which lends support to a positive national image. For example, Tony Kushner considers how the Imperial War Museum Sound Archive (IWMSA) ‘interviews on refugees were circumscribed by the attempt to place them in a specifically *British* context of war’.⁴ Kushner also suggests that these interviews ‘domesticated [the] much more complex experience’.⁵ While the chapter up to this point considers testimony in a British context, I then go on to explore Kindertransport testimony deposited with institutions in America (e.g. Shoah Foundation (SF)) and in other non-British host nations such as Canada (Montreal Holocaust Museum (MHM)) and Australia (Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC)). Here, I ask to what extent this testimony reflects the national Holocaust discourse in these countries as outlined in the introduction to my thesis, and explore differences to the image of the Kindertransport conveyed in British testimony.

This chapter argues that autobiographies published in Britain and other host nations discussed in this thesis offer a particularly critical perspective on the Kindertransport.⁶ Identity in these autobiographies, but also sometimes in earlier testimonies and edited volumes, can be unstable, as parts of the Kinder are left behind in their former homelands. While some Kinder embrace a new national identity, others feel a sense of not belonging anywhere, or develop a

⁴ Tony Kushner, ‘Oral History at the Extremes of Human Experience: Holocaust Testimony in a Museum Setting’, *Oral History* 29:2 (2001), p. 88.

⁵ Kushner, ‘Oral History at the Extremes of Human Experience’, p. 88.

⁶ The Kinder’s autobiographies are also part of a more general trend within refugee literature which is questioning the way in which we welcome refugees, particularly in the West. See Nina Nayeri, *The Ungrateful Refugee* (Canongate Books: Edinburgh, 2019), and Nujeen Mustafa with Christina Lamb, *Nujeen: One Girl’s Incredible Journey from War-Torn Syria in a Wheelchair* (Williams Collins: Glasgow, 2016) for examples of non-Kinder authors who challenge the notion of gratitude.

hybrid identity. Kindertransport testimonies do not necessarily promote a story of successful national integration. The Kinder's narratives can move backwards and forwards in time and across geographical boundaries, highlighting the diasporic experience in all its complexity. One could argue, then, that testimonies present a personal transnational memory of the Kindertransport. Over recent decades, reunions and anniversary events serve to create a bond between Kinder, as many child survivors share their stories with one another during these commemorative occasions. In this instance, as Kushner suggests, 'the memory of the *Kindertransport* has indeed become truly international'.⁷ Today, Kinder draw wider ethical conclusions from their transnational experiences. They help raise an awareness of the issues which arise from their memories, and they reflect upon what we are remembering as the key elements of the Kindertransport. In this sense, Kindertransport testimony partakes of the transnational trend towards 'cosmopolitan memory' of the Holocaust, whereby memory of Nazi antisemitism and the Holocaust contributes to the growth of human rights' discourse.⁸

The final part of the chapter reflects upon why many Kinder have decided to publish their stories more recently. For example, do child survivors feel 'a sense of urgency in relation to capturing their experiences before it is too late'?⁹ Individual Kinder have recently used their testimony as a platform to encourage us to be more sympathetic towards refugees today, drawing links between their personal stories and current events because of the hostile environments in Britain and America, as the number and reporting of antisemitic attacks has increased.¹⁰ By contrast, individual testimonies and references to the Kindertransport have been instrumentalised by politicians for their own ends. Thus the 'political leaders arguably at

⁷ Tony Kushner, *The Battle of Britishness: Migrant Journeys, 1685 to the Present* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2012), p. 129.

⁸ Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, 'Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory', *European Journal of Social Theory* 5:1 (2002), p. 88. See also Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age* (Temple University Press: Philadelphia, 2006).

⁹ Michele Langfield, 'Memories of Jewish Child Refugees in Australia', *History Studies* 16:3 (2010), p. 81.

¹⁰ See the House of Lords Library Briefing, 'Impact of "Hostile Environment" Policy Debate on 14 June 2018' for more information about the hostile environment position of the UK Home Office.

least in part [...] responsible for fostering a climate in which hostile feelings towards refugees can grow, Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn, have also laid claim to the Kindertransport to bolster their own ethical credibility'.¹¹ Sadly, the British government has been reluctant to admit more refugees. This is rather ironic given that Britain's national narrative of the Kindertransport remembers British hospitality and charity.¹²

While this chapter explores general trends in Kindertransport testimony, I am aware as indicated earlier that the testimony of every individual may develop in different ways over time. For example, when writing their autobiographies – particularly more recently – Kinder find a voice that is recognisably their own, whereas institutional expectations may influence the Kinder's testimonies.

The Emergence of Kindertransport Testimony

The Kinder's experiences were first noted down in the RCM annual reports during and after the Second World War, as well as in contemporary newspapers and magazines such as *Picture Post*.¹³ The voice of the Kinder was used to 'claim legitimacy for the RCM and its actions'.¹⁴ As Kushner argues, 'right from the start, rather than acknowledge the inherent problem with the scheme, policy was couched in the most positive and humane terms'.¹⁵ Therefore, the RCM 'started in defensive mode'.¹⁶ The organisation used 'the condensed diary entries of Leo W., [who was] fourteen-years-old'.¹⁷ Kushner states that the RCM may have had some 'input' with regards to Leo's diary.¹⁸ For example, the diary's 'tone is almost apologetic and the build up

¹¹ Bill Niven and Amy Williams, 'The Dominance of the National: On the Susceptibility of Holocaust Memory', *Jewish Historical Studies: Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* 51 (2019), pp. 142-165.

¹² Amy Williams and Bill Niven, 'Britain remembers the Kindertransport But Is in Danger of Forgetting its Lessons', *The Conversation*, 10th September 2019, at <https://theconversation.com/britain-remembers-the-kindertransport-but-is-in-danger-of-forgetting-its-lessons-123227> [accessed 13th September 2019].

¹³ Tony Kushner, *Remembering Refugees: Then and Now* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2006), p. 150.

¹⁴ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 150.

¹⁵ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 149.

¹⁶ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 149.

¹⁷ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 150.

¹⁸ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 150.

towards gratitude provides a comforting narrative'.¹⁹ This clearly promotes a positive view of Britain's role in the Kindertransport, as the emphasis is placed on British generosity and hospitality. It seems that what became the British narrative started out as an institutional narrative which was celebratory from the start as the RCM 'was anxious both in terms of its contemporary reputation, and [...] for the sake of posterity, to justify its actions'.²⁰ Thus, any negatives were quickly downplayed. Moreover, as Kushner notes, even the trauma of separation seems to be 'mitigated' in Leo's diary in favour of stressing the 'patriotism and good citizenship of German Jewry'.²¹ Leo's diary supports a positive narrative of welcome because it 'has a redemptive ending': 'we were happy to be on English and free ground'.²² In terms of the use of testimony in *Picture Post*, the magazine did reflect upon the Kinder's anxieties with regards to adapting to a new way of life but the overall narrative 'focused [...] on emphasising that the children had a future' in Britain.²³ Therefore, the RCM encouraged a positive narrative of the Kindertransport to take hold because any negativity around the actions of the RCM could have jeopardised the narrative of the Kinder's successful integration into British society.

According to Kushner, 'it was to be another two decades before attention would again focus on the *Kinder*' – 'their stories lost in different post-war narratives of the Nazi era'.²⁴ David Cesarani stated that 'the world lost interest in what had happened to' the victims of the Holocaust after the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg.²⁵ It seemed that 'by the late 1940s, even the Jewish communities of Israel and the Diaspora seemed reluctant to engage with the recent past'.²⁶ Moreover, as Cesarani argued, 'due to the onset of the Cold War, efforts to resolve the economic and political issues stemming from the implantation of genocide were

¹⁹ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 150.

²⁰ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 149.

²¹ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 150.

²² Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 150.

²³ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 153.

²⁴ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 160.

²⁵ David Cesarani, 'Introduction', in David Cesarani and Eric J. Sundquist (eds), *After the Holocaust: Challenging the Myth of Silence* (Routledge: London, 2012), p. 1.

²⁶ Cesarani, 'Introduction', p. 1.

quietly discontinued'.²⁷ However, 'historians broadly concurred that this trend was reversed by the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in 1961-62 [and] the 1967 Israel-Arab war' because they 'revived in Jews the memories of threatened extermination and made Jewish youth in particular more sympathetic towards what their elders had endured'.²⁸ During this period, Karen Gershon, a former Kind, published her remarkable collection of Kindertransport testimonies *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (1966). But this volume did not lead to a major rediscovery of the Kindertransport even though it was well received at the time.²⁹ Rather 'Gershon's volume was an isolated reminder of the *Kinder* in the first decades after the war'.³⁰ Why, then, did memory of the Kindertransport re-enter public consciousness? Kushner claims that 'in the late 1970s and early 1980s, oral history projects, including the Imperial War Museum and Manchester Jewish Museum reflected a general growth of interest in the refugee movement in the Nazi-era'.³¹ This also reflected 'the growth of non-elitist history'.³² Cesarani further suggested that 'the public at large was similarly jolted by the television mini-series "Holocaust", shown around the world in 1978-79'.³³ Then, in 1996, Bill Williams along with students and the curator of the London Jewish Museum created the first Kindertransport exhibition entitled *The Last Goodbye: The Rescue of Children from Nazi Europe*.³⁴ While this thesis mainly focuses on how the Kindertransport has been represented in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries, it is important to note previous exhibitions, as Williams' exhibition responded to and 'went alongside a growing number of memoir publications'.³⁵ During this period, more and more Kindertransport testimony was being

²⁷ Cesarani, 'Introduction', p. 1.

²⁸ Cesarani, 'Introduction', p. 1.

²⁹ Tony Kushner, 'The Big Kindertransport Myth', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 15th November 2018, at <https://www.thejc.com/news/news-features/the-big-kindertransport-myth-kindertransport80th-anniversary-1.472542> [accessed 15th November 2018].

³⁰ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 162.

³¹ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 162.

³² Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 162.

³³ Cesarani, 'Introduction', p. 1.

³⁴ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 162.

³⁵ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 163.

recorded because many of the Kinder had ‘reached the end of their careers’.³⁶ Therefore, ‘retirement provided both the time to reflect as well as the incentive to record for future generations before it was too late’.³⁷

Increased interest in Kindertransport testimony was ultimately the result of the first Kinder reunions in the late 1980s and early 1990s. These commemorations coincided with the ‘process of popularization’ around Holocaust consciousness in Britain which ‘began in earnest in the mid-1990s’.³⁸ For the first time, many Kinder discovered that they were not alone. It was the Kinder themselves who saved this memory from the verge of extinction. It was to take almost another thirty years before another anthology of testimony was published, this time by Bertha Leverton and Shmuel Lowensohn. Their collection of Kindertransport testimonies *I Came Alone: The Stories of the Kindertransports* (1990), as will be explored later, was the result of one of the first Kindertransport reunions. *We Came as Children* and *I Came Alone* did not present a purely positive narrative, unlike the RCM reports. Rather, they placed critical and positive aspects side by side, generating a more ambivalent narrative. Because the focus was not placed on creating a generally positive impression, the testimonies were not required to come to any conclusions. As ‘the Kindertransport was becoming part of the national history and heritage of Britain and was more generally connected to what were by then the beginnings of the huge growth in interest in the Holocaust’, further testimony was published which was also quite critical in nature.³⁹ Several edited volumes appeared, including Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer’s *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* (2000); Wendy Whitworth’s *Journeys: Children of the Holocaust Tell Their Stories* (2009); and The Child Survivors’ Association of Great Britain’s *We Remember: Child Survivors of the*

³⁶ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 163.

³⁷ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 163.

³⁸ Andy Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain* (Routledge: London, 2014), p. 2.

³⁹ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 163.

Holocaust Speak (2011).⁴⁰ However, Phyllis Lassner suggests that ‘many refugees did not even consider their stories sufficiently connected or pertinent to the history and moral lessons imparted by Holocaust memoirs’.⁴¹ Kindertransport testimony is valued by institutions and charities such as the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust and Holocaust Educational Trust who have both used Kindertransport testimony in their teaching material, advertising and commemorative events.⁴²

In recent years, Kindertransport testimony has highlighted the incompleteness of Britain’s history of the Kindertransport, because while some Kinder have discussed their successful adaptation to life in their new homeland, others express frustration and longing as they are unable to return to their former lives: it is not possible to reconnect to these any more. However, the Kinder have not always been the driving force behind Kindertransport memory in Britain. In the last two decades, other genres such as museum exhibitions and memorials have also come to prominence (see the following two chapters). At times, they coopt the Kinder’s testimonies to fit into the positive British narrative. Andy Pearce argues that ‘a key engine for [Holocaust consciousness in Britain] was cultural and political institutionalisation, which accelerated in the late 1990s and reached an apex in 2000-2001’.⁴³ The Kinder’s differentiated views were gradually subsumed as the positive narrative of the 1940s re-emerged in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Collections of Testimony

⁴⁰ See Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer (eds), *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* (Bloomsbury: London, 2017), Wendy Whitworth, *Journeys: Children of the Holocaust Tell Their Stories* (Quill Press: London, 2009), and The Children Survivors’ Association of Great Britain, *We Remember: Child Survivors of the Holocaust Speak* (Matador: Kibworth Beauchamp, 2011).

⁴¹ Phyllis Lassner, *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust: Displaced Witnesses* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2008).p. 19.

⁴² See the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust website, at <https://www.hmd.org.uk> [accessed 4th January 2019], and the Holocaust Educational Trust website, at <https://www.het.org.uk> [accessed 4th January 2019] for more details about how they use Kindertransport testimony.

⁴³ Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain*, p. 2.

One of the most important functions of the collected edited volumes about the Kindertransport is to reconstitute family ties. For instance, Leverton and Lowensohn's *I Came Alone* 'is dedicated to the memory of all the parents who made the supreme sacrifice of sending their children away never to see them again'.⁴⁴ The edited volumes listed above not only highlight the Kinder's awareness of their family heritage, they also reflect upon the Kinder's struggles with identity. The volume *I Came Alone* highlights a transnational dimension because it explores the collective experience of exile, showing how Kinder moved from country to country in search of safety. Likewise, this edited volume as well as many others show how the Kinder reconstitute their lives around loss. These collective autobiographies then are not only about the Kinder bearing witness or becoming aware of their past; they are also written for the families they lost.⁴⁵

The 1960s

As previously mentioned, Gershon's *We Came as Children* was the first edited Kindertransport testimony volume to be published. It was 'composed of the comments of 234 former child refugees to Britain who arrived on the *Kindertransport*'.⁴⁶ Gershon placed adverts in 'major newspapers, putting [her] in touch with over three hundred people of whom [she] interviewed about thirty'.⁴⁷ She asked Kinder 'to write an outline of their refugee lives', but it later 'seemed better to concentrate on the subjects which form the chapters'.⁴⁸ This volume has an especially collective nature because Gershon 'arranged her material in short paragraphs, each of which – marked with ¶ – represents a new and unnamed voice'.⁴⁹ Because of this editorial choice, the

⁴⁴ Bertha Leverton and Shmuel Lowensohn, *I Came Alone: The Stories of the Kindertransports* (The Book Guild: Lewes, 1996), p. 5.

⁴⁵ Although there are many collections of Kindertransport testimony, I have decided to examine the three main edited volumes which present the most important features I would like to discuss within this chapter.

⁴⁶ Sue Vice, *Children Writing the Holocaust* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2004), p. 41.

⁴⁷ Karen Gershon, 'Foreword', in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 9.

⁴⁸ Gershon, 'Foreword', p. 9.

⁴⁹ Vice, *Children Writing the Holocaust*, p. 41.

collective voice seems stronger than the individual ones because the testimonies present a shared experience. At the beginning of her book, Gershon discussed her motivations for collecting Kindertransport testimony. She explained that

at the time of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first children's transports I discovered that most of the documents of those days have been destroyed, and that many of the people who were concerned with [their] rescue no longer remember the events clearly or, like Anna Essinger, are dead.⁵⁰

She also stated that the testimonies were compiled 'in gratitude and as an explanation'.⁵¹ As Sue Vice argues, this volume gives thanks 'for the haven offered to over ten thousand children who came to Britain before the war on children's transports' and provides 'an explanation [...] of why many of the children chose to stay at the war's end'.⁵² Kushner comments that 'it is telling that Gershon's account was confined within the nation state' because Gershon focuses on those who stayed in Britain after the war.⁵³ But Gershon's edited volume places the Kindertransport in a wider context as she presents to the reader the different movements of refugees to Britain prior to the outbreak of war. For example, she herself came to Britain 'through Youth Aliyah'.⁵⁴ There is also reference to Kinder who 'were brought by their mothers who came as domestic servants' as well as to how 'others came with both their parents'.⁵⁵ It would not be correct to draw a direct link between the positive RCM narrative and Gershon's volume. While some testimonies in the volume are positive, it is the 'lack of easy adaption emphasized in Gershon's text' which shows how the book presents a more balanced view of the Kindertransport.⁵⁶

There is at times a sense of detachment within the volume between the Kinder and their own Kindertransport experiences. This might be because many of the Kinder were still coming

⁵⁰ Gershon, 'Foreword', p. 9.

⁵¹ Gershon, 'Foreword', p. 9.

⁵² Vice, *Children Writing the Holocaust*, p. 41.

⁵³ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 160.

⁵⁴ Gershon, 'Foreword', p. 9.

⁵⁵ Gershon, 'Foreword', p. 9.

⁵⁶ Vice, *Children Writing the Holocaust*, p. 41.

to terms with those experiences – the volume appeared only twenty-five years after the event. The volume also creates a certain distance between the text and the reader, because the testimonies are anonymised. Vice argues that ‘the very notion of the children’s voices as a chorus implies that they are not the central figures in the action, but a part of its background’.⁵⁷ She goes on to state that ‘although the way of representing the *Kindertransport* experience in *We Came as Children* is an individualized one, it is indeed not personal’.⁵⁸ However, even if the anonymised voices here suggest a collective experience, there is no indication that this experience has a national dimension in the sense of the positive British narrative. If anything, the anonymity implies that the Kinder were struggling still to understand their own experiences and make sense of them – and to rediscover themselves. Furthermore, this volume looks back to the Kinder’s lives in their countries of birth as much as it depicts the Kinder’s time in Britain.

The volume is structured around different themes, which suggests that there was some need to segment the Kinder’s memories into significant moments in time such as the journey, arrival, new homes, school, internment, wartime, death and survival. In Chapter Three, I argue that British memorials focus on a specific part of the *Kindertransport* journey: arrival. But *Kindertransport* testimony presents a broader view of the *Kindertransport* process. While the volume *We Came as Children* opens with departure, the testimonies presented in no way suggest that departure meant a sense of adventure; rather the emphasis is placed on how Kinder reflect upon how their parents felt. One anonymous Kind talks about how

[their] mother insisted on kissing [them] over and over again, and [they] got impatient with her demonstrativeness, not realising of course that this was to be the final parting. [They] have often wondered since what she must have felt as the result of [their] impatience. [They] were eleven years old.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Vice, *Children Writing the Holocaust*, p. 41.

⁵⁸ Vice, *Children Writing the Holocaust*, p. 41.

⁵⁹ Anonymous Kind, ‘The Children’s Transports’, in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 19.

This passage points to a lasting feeling of guilt as well as grief: departure is the moment of total loss, as the Kind was never reunited with their mother. Features of the Kindertransport which we identify today as being well established aspects of the celebratory British narrative are often absent from this volume; where they are present, they have different connotations. For example, departure is not necessarily presented as a movement towards freedom. One Kindertransportee states that ‘some children [they knew] who went to Holland were later returned to Germany and used for medical experiments’.⁶⁰ Public memory of the Kindertransport tends to be centred around the Kinder who found refuge in different host nations which were far away from the horrors of the Holocaust. But Gershon’s volume shows that some Kinder were not always safe in their host nations such as Holland, as some Kinder came into direct contact with the perpetrators. Gershon’s book makes us aware that some Kinder were even deported from the German border with Holland back to their homelands even though their names were on a Kindertransport list.

The reader also gains an insight into the different types of treatment Kinder received when they arrived in Britain. One Kind discusses their negative experience of how ‘prospective foster-parents were usually shown round at mealtimes, when we sat, boys and girls separately, according to age. The people walked down the rows of children, picking out this one and that, rather like a cattle market’.⁶¹ Another Kind talks about how their ‘position was somewhere between that of a poor relative and a domestic servant, without the privileges of the one or rights of the other’.⁶² However, the volume also shows how some Kinder successfully adapted to life in Britain as one Kindertransportee remarks how they ‘recall one particular occasion at school when [they were] the only member of [their] class able to spell the word “beautiful”

⁶⁰ Anonymous Kind, ‘The Children’s Transports’, in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 21.

⁶¹ Anonymous Kind, ‘The Reception Camps’, in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), pp. 39-40.

⁶² Anonymous Kind, ‘New Homes’, in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 63.

correctly; the teacher said that she thought it remarkable that the only pupil to spell the word correctly was a foreigner'.⁶³ While this collection of testimonies explores how some Kinder learned English and made new school friends, it also makes clear that some Kinder were constantly being moved from institution to institution, as another Kind writes about how he 'went to five different schools'.⁶⁴ The Kindertransport is presented as an ongoing process because arrival in Britain did not always mean stability. While some Kinder were loved and cherished for by their foster families, others were maltreated and neglected.

Although Gershon's volume focuses on the testimonies of the Kinder who remained in Britain, the transnational history of the Kindertransport is not forgotten. While the RCM had an agenda, Gershon's book aims to present an honest and open account of what the Kinder experienced. It is true that the RCM reports acknowledge the fact that some Kinder moved beyond British shores to find new homes. But the deportation of Kinder 'to Australia and Canada', as well as how it became difficult and even 'arduous' to keep in contact with those who were interned overseas are aspects only cursorily addressed in John Presland's *A Great Adventure: The Story of the Refugee Children's Movement* (1944).⁶⁵ Here we read that 'the adolescents were among the first to be released by this country, but unhappy problems still remain with respect to some of those deported'.⁶⁶ Kinder who were relocated to other host nations, however, were not released immediately, spending months imprisoned. Kinder's struggles during their internment are downplayed in the RCM report because the three paragraphs which address internment conclude with how 'a number of the Movement's boys [...] joined the Pioneer Corps and at a later stage nearly all branches of the Army were opened

⁶³ Anonymous Kind, 'Early Schooldays and Internment', in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 87.

⁶⁴ Anonymous Kind, 'Institutions', in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 70.

⁶⁵ John Presland, *A Great Adventure: The Story of the Refugee Children's Movement* (Bloomsbury House: London, 1944), p. 13.

⁶⁶ Presland, *A Great Adventure*, p. 13.

to them'.⁶⁷ The emphasis is placed on the Kinder's patriotism for their new host nation. Thus, the transnational history of the event seems to a degree to be diminished by the report. Gershon's book on the other hand puts forward more detailed accounts of internment. For example, one Kindertransportee states that

if one ignored the barbed wire, the group of buildings was very prettily situated, in front the beach and the sea, at the back an ornamental lake and gardens and beyond the hills. But one could not ignore the barbed wire, we were quite literally fenced in. We had lost our liberty, but not, paradoxically our freedom. Those first few days were the most depressing of my life. It was my first – and so far only – experience of being imprisoned. For the first time I became fully conscious of how utterly alone I was in the world. The few friends I had made were either in the same position or could not help me anyway. This was the only time when I strongly felt that emotion which is usually called 'homesickness', but the emotion turned sour since there was no home for which to be sickening. I had no idea what had happened to my father since the fall of France, my mother interned in darkest Hungary and I cooped up in this place, which, should a German invasion be successful, would have become a concentration camp.⁶⁸

Another Kind talks about how

half the boys in [their] hostel, about forty, between the ages of seventeen and eighteen were interned to Australia. Later some of them joined the British Army, others settled in Australia and others were able to emigrate to the U.S.A. Some lost their lives after the boat that took them to internment was sunk.⁶⁹

We Came as Children not only depicts the Kinder's desperation, loneliness and solitude during the time of their internment. It also draws attention to how the Kinder were aware of the different movements of other Kinder to other lands. This sense of further relocation though is toned down in the reports of the RCM. Gershon's volume shows that some Kinder were deported from British shores because of their national identity as they were regarded as being German, for example – i.e. as the enemy. Stripped of their nationality by the Nazis, the Kinder's identities later became problematic in their host nation. This complicates the notion of arrival

⁶⁷ Presland, *A Great Adventure*, p. 13.

⁶⁸ Anonymous Kind, 'Early Schooldays and Internment', in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 95.

⁶⁹ Anonymous Kind, 'Early Schooldays and Internment', in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 96.

because here it does not have positive connotations as arrival is the start of new departures to other forms of internment in another host nation.

The chapters entitled 'Death and Survival', 'Facing the Future', 'Facing the Past' and 'Summing Up' make clear what the Kinder have lost. Gershon's book suggests that some Kinder are between worlds: refugee and citizen. It is as if the Kinder have not completely settled into life in Britain, rather the reader is left with a sense of ongoing displacement. One Kind for example discusses the difficulties with regards to being reunited with their parent. They state that their 'mother (non-Jewish) still lives in Hamburg. [They] visit each other occasionally but the years [they] were separated have proved too great a gulf to be bridged'.⁷⁰

Another Kindertransportee writes that the

bitterness about lost opportunities is only second to that about having been cut off so suddenly and for ever from one's family. Loss of education, from about a year before I left Germany to nearly another year after coming to England, plus the months wasted while having to learn English when I finally did go to a village school before I could again begin to have even basic education – this loss made it extremely difficult for me and of course many others to get anywhere at all in later life. One did not appreciate it then, but this double loss of parents and education inevitably wrenched one's life to a lower and extremely limited path.⁷¹

We Came as Children draws our attention to how some Kinder prospered in Britain. For many, the painful memories of the past continued to haunt them. Unlike the positive RCM narrative, Gershon's book does not edit out these more negative experiences of the Kindertransport. Rather her volume suggests a condition of rootlessness, something that Gershon understood first hand. Kushner for example refers to how 'Gershon herself wrote in a later edition of the collective biography [...]: "I feel more at home in Israel than I do in England, but I don't feel at home there either, and that is worse, because I still expect to be able to feel at home"'.⁷² Gershon's own testimony as well as that found in her edited volume indicate that, in the 1960s,

⁷⁰ Anonymous Kind, 'Death and Survival', in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 116.

⁷¹ Anonymous Kind, 'Facing the Future', in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 119.

⁷² Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 161.

the Kinder's identities were still continually in flux as the boundaries between refugee and citizen are still being negotiated.

Many of the Kinder in Gershon's volume reflect upon what home means to them, and in some cases, home appears to be a dream. Below is just a small selection of these reflections:

home is where your nearest and dearest are – if you've got any. If you haven't there is no home.

My home is a house not a home. What I remember is a dream of home.

My life changed completely when I became a refugee. The direct results for me were the loss of the parental home, lack of a satisfying career, an early marriage with consequent loss of religious contact and lastly material shortcomings in the early days of my independence and marriage. For my children it has meant lack of contact with their grandparents and other relations, which had so enriched my own childhood.

I don't think I'd be any better off in any other country. Feel I don't really belong anywhere.

I still live like a refugee in a bed-sitter in Hampstead. This is partly because I lack any sense of permanency.⁷³

Even after two decades of living in Britain, some Kinder did not feel settled. Home, physically, emotionally and mentally appears as something which is beyond their reach, something which they lost in their childhood: it is hard to rebuild a home when the foundations are fragmented. The testimonies in Gershon's volume reflect a personal transnational memory of the Kindertransport. They provide examples of the traumatic geographical and emotional upheaval the Kinder experienced, and ascribe to this a significance that historiography does not. They bring a sensitivity to human distress, highlighted through the full range of experiences discussed in Gershon's book. Personal transnational memory makes us more aware of the need to recognise where the Kinder came from as well as where they made new homes. The celebratory British narrative which came to dominate later expects the Kinder to identify themselves as British. But Gershon's book points up how complicated the identities of Kinder

⁷³ Anonymous Kind, 'Summing Up', in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), pp. 153-155.

are. This sense of being in limbo, and the fact that the issue of home is not resolved for many of the Kinder reflects the diasporic condition. Gershon's book reminds readers that, while Kinder were expected to integrate into British society, this demanded tremendous sacrifices such as the loss of one's mother tongue, traditions and in some cases even religious beliefs. Her book also suggests that Britain was to a degree a hostile or at least difficult environment, as some Kinder were not made to feel welcome, were taken advantage of and treated poorly by their foster families, or were not able to adjust to life because they were relocated several times. It is this sense of restlessness and insecurity which permeates the volume. *We Came as Children* also presents loss in transgenerational terms: the reader discovers what the Kinder's children have lost, as many never knew their grandparents or members of the extended family.

In the final chapter of *We Came as Children*, 'Summing Up', Kindertransportees provide answers to the question: what was it like to be a refugee? This last chapter thus moves us beyond the history of the Kindertransport because Gershon is interested in the refugee experience as a whole. One might expect to see the quotations in 'Summing Up' in a modern-day publication about the refugee crisis today:

a refugee is someone who is not wanted in one place and given shelter in another out of pity. He is therefore forced to choose between death and charity.

As long as he wishes to return to his country of origin he remains a refugee even to himself. But once he ceases to feel the urge to return he just becomes an uprooted individual in an at best indifferent alien community.

A refugee is a person without a country and as soon as he can grow roots and create a home in a new country and accept this country it becomes a part of his life. I feel that England is my home, although the English will never accept me as one of themselves. The English differ in this from other nations, and make me very conscious of being foreign. But being foreign is not the same as being a refugee.⁷⁴

This volume does not present the transition from refugee to immigrant or citizen because some Kinder still reflect upon their refugee status. This sense of longing for a former home reflects

⁷⁴ Anonymous Kinder, 'Summing Up', in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 150.

⁷⁴ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 150.

how some of the Kinder did not totally identify with their new home. For example, Kinder write that

I am still a refugee because my roots are where I am not.

I am still a refugee because I have never found contentment or peace.

I am still a refugee because the scars inside me are too deep, and on so many occasions each year they are opened afresh.

I am still a refugee because I still feel different. I can't seem to feel at home here or anywhere else. I react differently to situations, my whole attitude to life is different from that of the people around me.⁷⁵

The overall narrative developed in *We Came as Children* contrasts to the positive RCM narrative, which suggests that the trajectory of rescue is entirely positive. In Gershon's volume, the process of integration is fraught and fractured. While it includes some positive stories, many of the testimonies show the Kinder struggling to come to terms with the loss of their families and former lives in their lands of birth, at the same time as processing their experiences in their new homelands. As Vice writes, 'if *We Came as Children* is a "thank-offering to Britain" it is an ambivalent one'; the book covers 'a huge spectrum of emotional, aspirational and educational experience'.⁷⁶ This volume is unique for its time because it reflects more generally on the condition of being a refugee. Even when the Kinder suggest that they no longer feel like a refugee the welcoming narrative is not strongly present within the edited volume as many of the Kinder talk about how they could only integrate into British society by breaking ties with their former homelands. The Kinder's loss – loss of home – loss of family – loss of identity – is depicted in way which makes the reader aware of the need to respect human rights – the respect for family life and home.

The 1980s and 1990s

⁷⁵ Anonymous Kinder, 'Summing Up', in Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 160.

⁷⁶ Vice, *Children Writing the Holocaust*, p. 43.

That it took until the 1980s for the next volumes of Kindertransport testimony to emerge may have several reasons. Lassner argues that ‘the story of a difficult or conflicted experience might not be received well by the nation that saved their lives’.⁷⁷ Any ‘ambivalence could all too easily be seen as a sign of ingratitude, especially in light of the first Kindertransport histories which celebrated how the children were welcomed and integrated into the Anglo-Jewish and British communities’.⁷⁸ Lassner goes on to state that ‘for the Kinder who stayed on after the war, social and economic success depended on submitting to the pressures embedded in this welcoming narrative’.⁷⁹ On the other hand, a focus on how ‘the Kinder experienced their adaptation favourably’ may not have met readers’ ‘expectations of the Holocaust’, as the emphasis here is placed on ‘deprivation and suffering’.⁸⁰ However, between the 1960s and the 1980s, there are few clear signs of the ‘welcoming narrative’ to which Lassner refers, and to which the Kinder would have been expected to conform.⁸¹ Moreover, the Holocaust in the sense of what Pearce has called ‘Holocaust consciousness’ did not feature strongly in British cultural discourse until the 1980s.⁸² The ‘silence’, then, is not easy to explain, and may have more to do with the fact that Kinder were simply trying to go about their lives and find their feet. When more and more Kinder did start to tell their stories, increased Holocaust consciousness in Britain did not necessarily mean they might be expected to focus on negatives. It is worth noting that the TV series *Holocaust* was shown in the same year Margaret Thatcher came to power (1979). Thatcherism was ‘marked by repeated and reactionary appeals to Britain’s so-called glorious past’.⁸³ In Britain, memory of rescue during the Kindertransport

⁷⁷ Lassner, *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust*, p. 22.

⁷⁸ Lassner, *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust*, p. 22.

⁷⁹ Lassner, *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust*, p. 22.

⁸⁰ Lassner, *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust*, p. 22.

⁸¹ Between 1945 and 1991, for instance, there were no history books on the Kindertransport the publication of which might have encouraged Kinder to talk about their past. Although scholars do suggest that the positive British narrative is continuous from the end of the war, they do not provide evidence to support this.

⁸² Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain*, p. 1.

⁸³ Keith A. Crawford, Stuart J. Foster, *War, Nation, Memory: International Perspectives on World War II in School History Textbooks* (Information Age Publishing: Charlotte, 2008), p. 156.

could therefore unite remembering the Holocaust with remembering supposedly positive British values such as openness and tolerance. One of the best-known early histories of the Kindertransport, Barry Turner's ... *And the Policeman Smiled: 10,000 Children Escaped from Nazi Europe* (1991), demonstrates how testimony could be used to support a positive interpretation of the Kinder's life in Britain. The chapters entitled 'Home from Home', 'War Effort' and 'After the War', for example, present testimony which suggests Kinder adapted 'with ease and enthusiasm' to a different way of life'.⁸⁴ They also discuss how some Kinder defended their new host nation with their lives as well as how, after the war, some Kinder went on to open successful businesses.

The shift in Kindertransport testimony in the late 1980s and early 1990s can be seen in the later edited volumes because, while they were still transnational in perspective, they portrayed the Kinder as more integrated into their new homelands. This might be because, by now, the Kinder genuinely felt more rooted in their new nations. Kinder may have started to think in more national terms because they felt like citizens rather than refugees – not just because of an expectation that they feel 'grateful'. Although a sense of loss remains throughout these later books, it is not as strong as in Gershon's collection, and a positive overall view of the Kindertransport is often present.

There is a contrast between how Gershon structured *We Came as Children*, and how the editors of later Kindertransport testimony volumes structured theirs. Vice argues that Leverton and Lowensohn's *I Came Alone*, for example, 'appears barely edited' compared to Gershon's volume.⁸⁵ Likewise, Vice also notes that Harris and Oppenheimer's

Into the Arms of Strangers [...], based on the 1999 documentary film of the same title, resembles *I Came Alone* in giving precisely the information withheld by *We Came as Children*: not only is each 'witness' identified throughout, but a biography is supplied for each at the book's end. The text is both subjective and highly personalized. The editorial strategies of *Into the Arms of Strangers* were clearly strict, including the choice

⁸⁴ Barry Turner, ... *And the Policeman Smiled: 10,000 Children Escaped from Nazi Europe* (Bloomsbury: London, 1990), p. 117.

⁸⁵ Vice, *Children Writing the Holocaust*, p. 43.

of interviewees, and result in the text's narrative seamless despite its several contributors. Both *I Came Alone* and *Into the Arms of Strangers* by their conventionality emphasize the formal importance and innovation of *We Came as Children*.⁸⁶

Into the Arms of Strangers and *I Came Alone* can be seen as an extension of the first reunions. But while the reunions demonstrated how the Kinder are part of a larger group, the testimonies in Leverton and Lowensohn's volume are more individual in character, unlike the more collective voice presented in Gershon's volume. This is reflected by the contrasting titles *We Came as Children* and *I Came Alone*. Gershon's volume verifies a collective experience rather than an individual one, as it documents an historical event as well as the Kinder's responses to it. Later edited volumes present the individuation of Kindertransport testimony. However, while *I Came Alone* divides the testimonies with three asterisks (***), thereby stressing individual stories, it does not entirely separate them from one another. The collective voice is not so much lost, as presented in a new way. Recent volumes such as the volume *Behind the Rose: Stories Behind the Roses Dedicated in the Holocaust Centre's Memorial Gardens* (2011), which I discuss in detail in Chapter Two, highlight the intensifying need to individualise testimony as each survivor's story appears on a new page. This confirms Mary Fulbrook's argument that in the "era of the survivor", as she terms it, 'the life stories of survivors themselves [have taken] centre stage'.⁸⁷ Fulbrook maintains that 'the focus shifted in subtle but important ways' from the "era of the witness" in the 1960s and 1970s to the "era of the survivor" as

survivor accounts [...] began to be seen as valuable in their own right, conveying experiences over a lifetime, recording not only the period of persecution but also the irretrievably lost world of 'before' and the implications of the catastrophe for the life 'after'. Accounts were significant no longer primarily as a record of horrors but also for what they could say about the survivors themselves.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Vice, *Children Writing the Holocaust*, p. 43.

⁸⁷ Mary Fulbrook, *Reckonings: Legacies of Nazi Persecution and the Quest for Justice* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2018), Kindle location 8165-8172.

⁸⁸ Fulbrook, *Reckonings*, Kindle location 8007.

While Fulbrook uses the phrase ‘era of the witness’ in relation to those who testified at the Eichmann and Auschwitz trials, this witnessing of a historical event also accords with the principle behind Gershon’s volume because it is less about the individual voice and more about the collective voice which broke the silence and brought back memory of the Kindertransport from the verge of the abyss. Later edited volumes present more individualised accounts. This coincided with how the Kinder were becoming established members of society and public figures. Volumes such as *I Came Alone* show that testimony became more personalised as Kinder started to create a bridge ‘joining their formerly denigrated selves up with their present selves’.⁸⁹ This personal reflection on the Kinder’s ‘internal worlds’ was to a degree encouraged by the later reunions.⁹⁰

It is striking that the Kinder start to see their experiences in relation to the national contexts in which they are living. Kinder who live in Britain, America, Israel, Australia, Nepal, France, Germany and Canada contributed to *I Came Alone*. This is presented in both positive and negative ways as the Kinder reflect upon their own personal experiences of adjusting to life in a particular nation. For example, Lorraine Allard, who travelled from Germany to Britain on a Kindertransport, discusses how her ‘guardians saved [her] life, but they were very different to [her] parents in every way. They were not at all affectionate to [her] or to each other’.⁹¹ Allard’s testimony shows how she was thankful to her guardians for taking her in, but her story also suggests that she was ‘homesick’ and ‘felt utter emotional loneliness and hopelessness’.⁹² This combination of gratitude and despair is further highlighted as she talks about how she ‘had no further schooling in Lincoln, but eventually won a scholarship to the Lincoln School

⁸⁹ Iris Guske, *Trauma and Attachment in the Kindertransport Context: German-Jewish Child Refugees’ Accounts of Displacement and Acculturation in Britain* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing: Newcastle Upon Tyne, 2009), p. 39.

⁹⁰ Guske, *Trauma and Attachment in the Kindertransport Context*, p. 41.

⁹¹ Lorraine Allard, ‘(Sulzbacher, Fürth), London, UK’, in Bertha Leverton and Shmuel Lowensohn (eds), *I Came Alone: The Stories of the Kindertransports* (The Book Guild: Lewes, 1996), p. 13.

⁹² Allard, ‘(Sulzbacher, Fürth), London, UK’, p. 5.

of Art'.⁹³ Marion Marston's testimony is critical of the treatment that she received in Britain. She states that 'to [her] utter disbelief and dismay', her guardians 'abandoned [her] and ceased paying [her] school fees' because 'they felt unable to be responsible for' her 'due to [...] (the war situation)'.⁹⁴ Marston was 'shattered' by this experience.⁹⁵ She goes on to say that her first foster family 'were a wealthy Jewish family'.⁹⁶ She remembers how 'when they went on a shopping trip to Oxford Street', she waited 'for them in the car', and 'they came out loaded with parcels for themselves, never thinking of getting anything for [her], then thirteen years old'.⁹⁷ Marston's testimony shows how some foster parents were uncaring. She moved several times, and she also became an evacuee, which further emphasises how she was constantly displaced as she was passed from one foster family to another. Walter Glückman on the other hand writes about 'a success story' because 'out of terrible circumstances something good and positive has come' and many of 'the ex-Ealing hostel boys still hold their monthly meetings'.⁹⁸ While these testimonies draw attention to the complexity of the Kindertransport, some Kinder did start to think more in national terms in the late 1980s and early 1990s because Kinder like Ruth Jacobs had by then 'managed to establish a home'.⁹⁹

I Came Alone is also clearly aware of the Kindertransport as a transnational experience. The volume is conscious of the whole extent of diaspora as it indicates how the Kinder journeyed to many different nations. This is further reinforced by the fact that at the start of each testimony, readers learn where the child came from and where they live now. For example, Ilse Richtman who came from Schächter, Vienna, writes about how she remained in Britain

⁹³ Allard, '(Sulzbacher, Fürth), London, UK', p. 5.

⁹⁴ Marion Marston, '(Dreyer, Halle), London, UK', in Bertha Leverton and Shmuel Lowensohn (eds), *I Came Alone: The Stories of the Kindertransports* (The Book Guild: Lewes, 1996), p. 211.

⁹⁵ Marston, '(Dreyer, Halle), London, UK', p. 211.

⁹⁶ Marston, '(Dreyer, Halle), London, UK', p. 211.

⁹⁷ Marston, '(Dreyer, Halle), London, UK', p. 211.

⁹⁸ Walter Glückman, '(Berlin), Elstree, Herts., UK', in Bertha Leverton and Shmuel Lowensohn (eds), *I Came Alone: The Stories of the Kindertransports* (The Book Guild: Lewes, 1996), p. 122.

⁹⁹ Ruth Jacobs, '(Heber, Vienna), London, UK', in Bertha Leverton and Shmuel Lowensohn (eds), *I Came Alone: The Stories of the Kindertransports* (The Book Guild: Lewes, 1996), p. 156.

during the war while her ‘brother was interned in 1940 and sent to Australia on the infamous *Dunera*’.¹⁰⁰ It was ‘unknown’ to Richtman that her brother had been deported to Australia, but she was later reunited with him in 1947.¹⁰¹ This volume makes us aware of how some siblings who travelled together on the Kindertransports were separated from one another not just once, but twice. This is significant because we see the Kinder being further and further dislocated from their homelands as well as from their families. Kate Lewin’s testimony makes clear that for some Kinder, arrival in Britain was only temporary as they moved to other nations during the war. Lewin discusses how she travelled from Berlin to Britain on a Kindertransport. Both of her parents escaped to Britain but her ‘father was [later] interned on the Isle of Man’.¹⁰² Then, in 1940, she left Britain with her family for America. She ‘stayed in New York throughout 1947, [and] then came to France, intending to stay for a year and [has], with some interval, been living there ever since’.¹⁰³ *I Came Alone* reconstructs the story of the lives of the Kinder around the theme of loss, but it is also about finding a place to call home. While this volume depicts the extensive journeys Kinder made prior to, during and after the war, we also discover how they rebuilt their lives in new lands. Gershon’s *We Came as Children*, by contrast, suggests that home is lost in another time and place. In *We Came as Children*, many of the testimonies present a matter of fact account, which suggests that Kinder were unable to fully confront their feelings. More optimistically, *I Came Alone* draws our attention to the transnational family networks which developed because of the first reunions.¹⁰⁴

Harris and Oppenheimer’s *Into the Arms of Strangers* opens with the perspective of the foster family: Lord Richard Attenborough writes how his parents helped many refugees, and

¹⁰⁰ Ilse Richtman, ‘(Schächter, Vienna), East St Kilda, Australia’, in Bertha Leverton and Shmuel Lowensohn (eds), *I Came Alone: The Stories of the Kindertransports* (The Book Guild: Lewes, 1996), p. 260.

¹⁰¹ Richtman, ‘(Schächter, Vienna), East St Kilda, Australia’, p. 260.

¹⁰² Kate Lewin, ‘(Berlin), Paris, France’, in Bertha Leverton and Shmuel Lowensohn (eds), *I Came Alone: The Stories of the Kindertransports* (The Book Guild: Lewes, 1996), p. 188.

¹⁰³ Lewin, ‘(Berlin), Paris, France’, p. 188.

¹⁰⁴ Bertha Leverton, ‘Dear Friends and Readers’, in Bertha Leverton and Shmuel Lowensohn (eds), *I Came Alone: The Stories of the Kindertransports* (The Book Guild: Lewes, 1996), p. 9.

even adopted two girls from Germany. This is strikingly different from the two volumes already discussed, which open with the Kinder's stories. At first glance, this volume would appear to be self-congratulatory in tone because the focus is placed on 'generosity' and the 'acts of kindness of the British people'.¹⁰⁵ However, it also stresses the need for 'tolerance and compassion for those less fortunate than we are', which links to human rights' discourse.¹⁰⁶ There is a multidirectional aspect to this volume because Lord Richard Attenborough reflects upon how 'in a world of Kosovos and Rwandas, [the Kindertransport] is a lesson that is still relevant to us all'.¹⁰⁷ Although Gershon's volume considers what it feels like to be a refugee, *Into the Arms of Strangers* uses memory of the Kindertransport more explicitly to encourage us to learn from the past to help those in the present. This is emphasised, for instance, through Inge Sadan's testimony towards the end of the book, when she talks about how she has 'a soft spot for anybody who's in trouble'.¹⁰⁸ She goes on to say that,

living in Israel, I feel for the new immigrant. I feel for the Russians, and the Ethiopians, and anybody who's new, especially if they come without their families. [...] I just wish that people would learn, especially now with Kosovo and the Yugoslav experience, and Africa.¹⁰⁹

Lord Richard Attenborough also talks about how 'grateful' he was 'for the experience of taking two refugee children into [his] family, as this experience 'clearly shaped [his] attitudes and development'.¹¹⁰ For example, he discusses how 'if [he] had not had the beginning [he] did, if [he] had not known Irene and Helga. [He doubted] that [he] would have had the passion and the determination to demonstrate those feelings of [compassion and tolerance] through [his]

¹⁰⁵ Lord Richard Attenborough, 'Preface', in Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer (eds), *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* (Bloomsbury: London, 2017), p. xii.

¹⁰⁶ Attenborough, 'Preface', p. xii.

¹⁰⁷ Attenborough, 'Preface', p. xiii.

¹⁰⁸ Inge Sadan, 'Living With the Past', in Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer (eds), *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* (Bloomsbury: London, 2017), p. 251.

¹⁰⁹ Sadan, 'Living With the Past', p. 251.

¹¹⁰ Attenborough, 'Preface', p. xiii.

work'.¹¹¹ This volume draws our attention to how the Kinder have a significant impact on the lives of their rescuers and foster families, a perspective not found in all genres.

Into the Arms of Strangers places the testimonies of Kinder in a more historical context compared to *We Came as Children* and *I Came Alone*, because the introduction by historian David Cesarani provides a detailed account of the transnational history of the Kindertransport. Cesarani points out how the Kinder 'all felt that they had lost the innocence of childhood too soon' as 'the uprooting had left them without a clear-cut sense of belonging and [sic] a feeling that all attachments were precarious'.¹¹² Many Kinder possess personal transnational memory because their mental worlds focus on both host nation and country of origin. Some of them even experienced several new homelands. Loss is part of their condition, and drives their memories. The Kinder reflect upon their feelings of isolation as many were unable to form close bonds because of their painful experiences. This is presented in all three edited volumes but this volume also draws particular attention to the Kinder's sense 'of guilt that so many others – including their parents – had not been so lucky'.¹¹³ Even when a parent/s had survived, some Kinder felt guilty because in some cases it was difficult to re-establish a close relationship with their parent/s. Kurt Fuchel, for example, reflected upon how he 'felt caught in the middle' of his parents and foster family, and how he 'didn't want to get too close to either at that moment'.¹¹⁴ He had been sent to Britain to live with strangers who grew to love him.¹¹⁵ The relationship with his parents had been fractured because his 'parents let go of a seven-year-old and got back a sixteen-year-old'.¹¹⁶ Fuchel's story makes us aware of the painful character of

¹¹¹ Attenborough, 'Preface', p. xiii.

¹¹² David Cesarani, 'Introduction', in Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer (eds), *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* (Bloomsbury: London, 2017), p. 19.

¹¹³ David Cesarani, 'Introduction', p. 19.

¹¹⁴ Kurt Fuchel, 'None to Comfort Them', in Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer (eds), *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* (Bloomsbury: London, 2017), p. 234.

¹¹⁵ Fuchel, 'None to Comfort Them', p. 234.

¹¹⁶ Fuchel, 'None to Comfort Them', p. 234.

diaspora: he is pulled back to an old home (with his parents) while losing a new home (with his foster parents). Home is not presented as a stable concept.

This volume, like Gershon's *We Came as Children*, segments the testimonies according to different themes such as life prior to the war, Kristallnacht, parting, foster families, letters, finding visas for their families, war, deportation, and life after the war. Because it follows a similar chronological organisation to Gershon's, a collective voice often emerges. For example, the chapter entitled 'The 9th of November' presents a cumulative impression of how the Kinder's safety came under threat as many of the Kinder talk about 'broken windows', being unable to attend school, and how their fathers were 'sent to Buchenwald'.¹¹⁷ This chapter shows that the Kinder were aware of the increased violence towards Jews under National Socialism and how their parents became increasingly fearful for their wellbeing. Chapter Seven, 'On the Shoulders of Children', is remarkable because it highlights how the Kinder themselves tried to help their families escape persecution. Many of the testimonies reflect on how difficult it was to obtain visas and permits for parents to come to Britain. Franzi Groszmann visited the Rothschild estate to ask Baron Rothschild for a work permit for his father. Groszmann writes how 'without hesitation, [Baron Rothschild] said to me, "Would he work on a chicken farm?" I said, "He'll do anything"'.¹¹⁸ The testimonies reveal how the Kinder felt responsible for rescuing their family members from Nazism and took on the role of rescuer in the hope that this would save their families. The narrative of threat to freedom is complicated because many of the testimonies show that escape in some cases meant the ability to help organise another escape. The Kinder are constantly thinking of their parents in continental Europe. This collective voice shows the struggles the Kinder faced in terms of adapting to a new life in Britain while looking back to their old lives in their former homelands.

¹¹⁷ Jack Hellman, 'The 9th of November', in Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer (eds), *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* (Bloomsbury: London, 2017), pp. 62-63.

¹¹⁸ Franzi Groszmann, 'On the Shoulders of Children', in Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer (eds), *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* (Bloomsbury: London, 2017), p. 177.

On the other hand, we do become more aware of the diverse experiences of the Kinder in *Into the Arms of Strangers* despite the thematic grouping of reactions. Later chapters such as 'Into the Arms of Strangers' and 'War and Deportation' present many different experiences of adjusting to life in Britain. For example, Leverton discusses how 'the family who took [her] chose [her] as a maid'.¹¹⁹ She goes on to say that 'for me the culture shock was very great. Also, the fact that my clothes were better than the wife's. She took great exception to that. She took the clothes and all'.¹²⁰ Leverton's testimony does not correspond to the positive British narrative because she moved from threat to safety to a new kind of uncertainty as she was exploited as a servant. By contrast, Jack Hellman recalls happy memories of being able to play again with local children. He writes that

when it was time for dinner, they said, 'We'll see you tomorrow.' I was so excited. I was absolutely so exuberant. I ran into my house mother and told her, 'Somebody who's not Jewish wants to see us tomorrow'. I mean, we were absolutely just flabbergasted.¹²¹

Here, Hellman reflects on this moment as a joyous occasion because he felt accepted. These later chapters do not create a consistent impression rather the Kinder's assimilation into life in Britain is presented in different ways. Many of the edited volumes of Kindertransport testimony present the positives and the negatives side by side, but these later volumes are moving towards a more positive view of the Kindertransport overall. This reflects the emergence of what historians have called the positive British narrative. The influence of this narrative becomes particularly clear when analysing how testimony is used in other contexts.

The Use of Testimony in British Institutions

There are many British institutions which store and collect Kindertransport testimony. In this section of the chapter I explore the main national institutions, but I am aware that other

¹¹⁹ Bertha Leverton, 'Into the Arms of Strangers', in Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer (eds), *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* (Bloomsbury: London, 2017), p. 147.

¹²⁰ Leverton, 'Into the Arms of Strangers', pp. 147-148.

¹²¹ Jack Hellman, 'Into the Arms of Strangers', in Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer (eds), *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* (Bloomsbury: London, 2017), p. 140.

institutions hold testimony collections. Caroline Sharples has argued that ‘generally, the Kindertransport memories are optimistic’.¹²² This is certainly true when we consider testimonies deposited with or gathered by British institutions. In these testimonies, the focus is often national, compared to the edited volumes of testimony, or individual autobiographies, which are more transnational in nature (see later in the chapter). While positive and negative aspects are addressed, it is noticeable that interviewers try to ‘guide’ interviewees towards providing an account that fosters or protects a positive British Kindertransport narrative.

Each institutional repository has its own methodology for conducting interviews but all initially understood the audience of the witness testimony to be the Kinder themselves as well as their families. Many of these interviews were also initially conducted for the institutions’ own record as they sought to document the stories of the general public.¹²³ With the advances in digital technology the role of the institutions changed as their collections became valuable centres for researchers and students to learn about the lives of Kinder. The testimonies housed with institutions have become a mosaic of the ordinary voices which make up Britain and are therefore national in tone as they reflect upon the contributions of Britons to their society. In terms of how the individuals were selected for these interviews there is no evidence to suggest that a systematic methodology was applied as people often found out about the interviews by word of mouth, through community connections or by general advertisements. Moreover many Kinder felt compelled to come forward to be interviewed so that their testimony was not forgotten.

The Imperial War Museums¹²⁴

¹²² Sharples, ‘Kindertransport’, p. 27.

¹²³ For more information see for example ‘Collecting Testimonies’, *USC Shoah Foundation*, at <https://sfi.usc.edu/collecting> [accessed 12th June 2020].

¹²⁴ See Chapter Two for a discussion of the IWMS ‘Holocaust’ exhibition within the context of the museum’s positive representation of Britain’s role in past wars.

The IWMs house around 33,000 recordings of oral testimony; 1,000 of these interviews have been conducted with survivors of the Holocaust. Some of the first ‘interviews to approach the topic were conducted for the Sound Archive project entitled *Britain and the Refugee Crisis, 1933-1947*, which commenced recording in 1978’.¹²⁵ The IWMs are a good example of British institutions downplaying the negatives because while ‘the interviewee was permitted to lead the narrative with varying degrees of influence from the interviewer, [it was the interviewer] who would interject most often to encourage the interviewee to elaborate or to encourage the narratives chronological development’.¹²⁶ Thus, when Nora Danzig, who came to Britain on a Kindertransport in 1939, talks about how strict her guardian was in Britain, especially in respect of table manners, the interviewer intervenes to say: ‘yes, I expect there were a lot of cultural differences’.¹²⁷ In this way, she effectively dismisses strictness as a question of culture. When Danzig starts to talk about air raids during the war, the interviewer steers her back to a discussion of her arrival in Britain, asking her ‘how impressed’ she was by British red buses.¹²⁸ Danzig is encouraged to speak positively of her first impressions.¹²⁹ The interviewer intervenes in a similar way when interviewing Ruth Sellers, who also arrived on a transport in 1939. When Sellers begins to recount how cold it was in the ‘holiday camp’ after she arrived in Britain, the interviewer interrupts with the question ‘what was your first impression of Britain apart from the cold [...] arriving and seeing the country, what impressed you most?’¹³⁰ And when an anonymous interviewee tells how his feeling of being frightened at school in Germany continued when at school in Britain, the interviewer puts this down to his having lived through Kristallnacht but does not ask about possibly negative effects of school in Britain. Either the

¹²⁵ Madeline White, ‘A Musicological Approach to Collecting Oral Histories: A Case Study of the Holocaust Collections at the Imperial War Museum’, *The Journal of Holocaust Research* 33:2 (2019), p. 145.

¹²⁶ White, ‘A Musicological Approach to Collecting Oral Histories’, p. 147.

¹²⁷ Imperial War Museum Collections, Catalogue Number 30087: Interview with Nora Danzig (Interviewer: Lyn Smith), 2007.

¹²⁸ IWM Collections, Catalogue Number 30087.

¹²⁹ IWM Collections, Catalogue Number 30087.

¹³⁰ Imperial War Museum Collections, Catalogue Number 30130: Interview with Ruth Sofie Sellers (Interviewer: Lyn Smith), 2007.

interview is steered in a positive direction, or negatives addressed by the interviewees are played down and explained away. The shaping of testimony in a positive direction is not always a feature of the IWM's collection of Kindertransport testimony. At times, interviewees are free to relate whatever they want, and can be negative. Kindertransportee Michael Hellmann, for instance, speaks of his terrible time when interned at Warth Mills in 1940.¹³¹ But often interviewers do steer the testimony.

The British Library

Interviews included in the BL's two oral history projects, 'The Living Memory of the Jewish Community (C410)' and 'The Holocaust Survivors' Centre Interviews (C830)' also suggest a trend towards a more positive framing of Kindertransport memory. 'The Living Memory of the Jewish Community' project gathered 185 audio testimonies between 1987 and 2000.¹³² 'It was initiated by National Life Stories based in the British Library's oral history section and funded by a number of organisations including the Harold Hyam Wingate Foundation, the John S. Cohen Foundation and the Porjes Charitable Trust'.¹³³ The second project 'was a National Life Stories collaborative project with the Jewish Care Holocaust Survivors' Centre, a Jewish social centre in north London for survivors who were in Europe during the Second World War or who came to the UK as refugees. The project ran between 1993 and 1998 and gathered a total of 154 audio life story testimonies'.¹³⁴ There are 1818 items in the collection. The framework of these national life stories projects, are about how people built Britain, including refugees, shows an institutional remit to be positive.¹³⁵

¹³¹ Imperial War Museum Collections, Catalogue Number 34045: Interview with Michael Hellmann (Interviewer: Victoria Howarth), 2011.

¹³² 'Jewish Survivors of the Holocaust', *The British Library*, at <https://sounds.bl.uk/Oral-history/Jewish-Holocaust-survivors> [accessed 15th September 2019].

¹³³ 'Jewish Survivors of the Holocaust'.

¹³⁴ 'Jewish Survivors of the Holocaust'.

¹³⁵ For more information about the British Library's interview framework see 'National Life Stories', *The British Library*, at <https://www.bl.uk/projects/national-life-stories> [accessed 12th June 2020].

While not all interviews fit the positive trend, there are some general patterns which can be identified within this collection of testimonies which do. For example, much of Professor Sir Peter Hirsch's interview focuses on his outstanding career as a researcher. The interviewer on several occasions asks questions which help shape Hirsch's answers in a positive way: 'why do you think it was such a successful group?', 'how successful has it been since those early origins?', 'did you see it being that successful at the start when...?', 'how important was it actually seen to publish early on in your career at that point, how important...?'¹³⁶ These leading questions encourage a positive shape to the interviewee's narrative.

Other interviewers also encourage the interviewee to talk about successful integration. Philip Engleberg is asked whether his adult education classes 'increased [his] feelings of I am somebody and I've made something of my life'.¹³⁷ The interviews are structured in a way that Kinder are encouraged not to look back to the trauma they experienced, but rather look forward to how Britain provided opportunities for them to flourish. This is particularly so in the case of Ernest Marchand's testimony, because the interviewer focuses on his success in Britain despite all the difficulties he faced prior to his arrival. Take the following question: 'you were talking about the kindertransport [sic] and you were saying that people don't think about or care about where they actually came from. They are thinking more about where their life started when they came here?'.¹³⁸ This question invites Marchand to stress detachment from his former homeland and underscore a clear connection to and affection for the new homeland.¹³⁹ Marchand responds by stating how he has 'no great attachment to where [he] came from. [He

¹³⁶ British Library Sound Archive, Code C1379/84: Interview with Professor Sir Peter Hirsch (Interviewer: Dr Thomas Lean), 2012-2013.

¹³⁷ British Library Sound Archive, Code C410/070/07-03: Interview with Philip Engelberg (Interviewer: Isle Sinclair), no date.

¹³⁸ British Library Sound Archive, Code C410/061/01: Interview with Ernest Marchand (Interviewer: Louise Coutts), no date.

¹³⁹ BLSA, Code C410/061/01.

has] no attachment even to German literature. And it's completely meaningless to me where [he] came from. And to all [his] friends it's the same'.¹⁴⁰ As Chapter Two will demonstrate, British museum exhibitions tend to focus on arrival whereas institutional testimonies focus more on integration. The positive narrative here works through emphasising educational and social possibilities, and playing down hindrances. The techniques used in museum exhibitions help to reinforce the notion of Britain as a haven. But institutional testimony moves beyond this as Britain is not only presented as a refuge. It is also regarded as a land rich in opportunities. The Kinder are presented as having few or no bonds with their former homelands, and as completely absorbed into the new land. Emphasising integration prevents us from seeing isolation, marginalisation and stigmatisation. Thus, the positive national narrative is affirmed because focusing on integration over time shows the continuation of the success story.

National Holocaust Centre and Museum

Examples of a positive 'steer' in institutional testimony can also be found at the NHCM. For example, in an interview conducted for the NHCM with Bob Rosner, the interviewer David Turner asks leading questions which draw out the positive aspects of the Kindertransport and discourage discussion of the more negative ones. The interview with Rosner was conducted in 2005, and was later published by the NHCM in 2006. Towards the end of the interview, Turner asks Rosner a question about his career: 'just to conclude your story, when you came out of the army, you were able to take up your career as a successful architect?'¹⁴¹ Rosner's achievements in Britain are the focus of this interview. It is implied that any hardships Rosner did face were in Austria and not in Britain. Britain then is presented as the nation which supported and even nurtured Rosner's career as an architect. Turner continues to place emphasis on the notion of success as he also asks the question: 'from what you have just said,

¹⁴⁰ BLSA, Code C410/061/01.

¹⁴¹ Bob Rosner Interviewed by David Turner, *One of the Lucky Ones: Rescued by the Kindertransport* (The Holocaust Centre: Newark, 2006), p. 32.

it suggests that not only do you have an official document that declares you are a naturalized British citizen, but that emotionally, too, you belong here. Would that be a fair summary?’¹⁴² This question invites Rosner to produce a positive answer. Of course, this is how he may genuinely feel as he talks about how he ‘was doing [his] bit for [his] country’, but these positive replies are arguably stimulated by these leading questions.¹⁴³ Turner also says: ‘you mentioned that Hull was quite heavily bombed during the war. Did it ever seem to you that you had escaped from one kind of danger and were exposed to another?’¹⁴⁴ Danger is not presented in terms of whether Rosner experienced any antisemitism in Britain; rather, danger is something which is associated with the Germans. This threat comes from a familiar enemy.

The interview seeks to shape Rosner’s story into a progressive narrative because instead of posing questions such as, ‘what was school like in Austria?’, or ‘what was school like in Britain?’, Turner asks: ‘could you tell us a little about your schooling here and how different it was from what you’d been used to?’¹⁴⁵ Presumably Turner is looking for a particular answer which presents Austria in a negative light and Britain in a positive one. Therefore, Rosner focuses on how ‘good’ his education was in Britain and how his guardians ‘encouraged [him] to not only learn English, but actually to use it to read’.¹⁴⁶ The positive British Kindertransport narrative is clearly present within this interview: it celebrates Rosner’s successful integration into British society. The linear shape of the interview reflects a progressive narrative because while at times Rosner’s memories seem to leap around, he is constantly being restrained as his memories are made to fit into a more directed structure. On several occasions, Turner stops Rosner mid-thought by asking him to go back over a particular theme or move forward to

¹⁴² Rosner Interviewed by Turner, *One of the Lucky Ones*, p. 33.

¹⁴³ Rosner Interviewed by Turner, *One of the Lucky Ones*, p. 33.

¹⁴⁴ Rosner Interviewed by Turner, *One of the Lucky Ones*, p. 18.

¹⁴⁵ Rosner Interviewed by Turner, *One of the Lucky Ones*, p. 17.

¹⁴⁶ Rosner Interviewed by Turner, *One of the Lucky Ones*, p. 17.

explain how he succeeded in school.¹⁴⁷ The interview concludes with several illustrations, and one in particular, a photo with the Queen, further promotes the celebratory British narrative.

The NHCM's 'The Journey' exhibition (2008) also confirms the positive British narrative in certain respects. Chapter Two reflects upon this exhibition in detail, but here I would like to make a general point about 'The Journey' as it relates to the use of testimony at the NHCM. Kindertransport testimony is found in each of the immersive rooms, and responds to these surroundings. As with *We Came as Children* and *Into the Arms of Strangers*, testimony is divided up over themes in this exhibition. However, there is a significant difference. While the first five rooms (e.g. relating to home and school life) reflect upon the Kinder's lives in their former homeland, only the last three rooms recall the Kinder's experience in Britain. The edited volumes by contrast focus more on the Kinder's lives in their new host nation(s). There is a sense of looking back to a past life within the edited volumes, whereas the testimony is used in the rooms of 'The Journey' to create more of an immediate sense of the threat posed by Nazism to Jewish children living in Germany. But while the exhibition places Kindertransport testimony within the framework of Nazi persecution and rescue, visitors nevertheless leave the exhibition feeling pride because they have learnt that Britain saved the Kinder.

Following the launch of 'The Journey', Wendy Whitworth's edited volume *Journeys: Children of the Holocaust Tell Their Stories* (2009) was published under the auspices of the NHCM to complement it. The testimonies of Kinder who contributed to this volume can also be found in the exhibition. But the message of a positive outcome is not supported so much by the edited volume. Instead, the volume overall acts as a warning and encourages us not to stand by when we see injustice. For example, Harry Bibring states that

because of my experiences, my son and grandchildren are all very aware of the dangers of racism and what they can lead to. They know that if you hear one person discriminate

¹⁴⁷ Rosner Interviewed by Turner, *One of the Lucky Ones*, pp. 10-19.

against another just because he is a different colour or follows a different religion, you have to stand up and say, 'STOP!' If you don't, it can lead to what became the Holocaust.¹⁴⁸

Likewise, Steven S. Mendelsson talks about why he thought it was important for school children 'to understand what it means to be looked down upon and considered a second class-citizen'. Mendelsson's message was one of inclusion as he told 'the children to make friends with everyone at school – it doesn't matter what colour their skin, hair and eyes are. We all have the same right to get on with our lives'.¹⁴⁹ Kinder have taken on the responsibility of raising moral awareness, as they have all faced discrimination. While 'The Journey' draws attention to past discrimination in Germany, the edited volume *Journeys* reflects more upon the significance of the Kindertransport today. There is a sense of urgency in Bibring and Mendelsson's testimonies as they call for action to confront discrimination and racism. This is not the only example of the NHCM using an edited volume to complement the memorial site in a way which encourages further critical reflection, as I explore in Chapter Three.

The Association of Jewish Refugees

After the launch of the 2002 'Continental Britons: Jewish Refugees from Nazi Europe' exhibition at the Jewish Museum London (JML), created by Anthony Grenville, Carol Seigel and Bea Lewkowicz, as well as Lewkowicz's film *Continental Britons*, the Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR) Refugee Voices Testimony Archive (RVTA) was formed. The AJR have represented Jewish refugees who fled from continental Europe to Britain since 1941. From 2003 to 2008, and from 2015 to the present, the RVTA has sought to interview refugees from Germany and Austria who live in all areas of Britain. In the first round of one hundred and fifty interviews, thirty-five Kinder were interviewed, and since 2015 there has been a

¹⁴⁸ Harry Bibring, 'I Couldn't Speak a Word of English', in Wendy Whitworth (ed.), *Journeys: Children of the Holocaust Tell Their Stories* (Quill Press: Laxton, 2009), p. 23.

¹⁴⁹ Steven S. Mendelsson, 'Hot Tea and Egg Sandwiches', in Wendy Whitworth (ed.), *Journeys: Children of the Holocaust Tell Their Stories* (Quill Press: Laxton, 2009), p. 137.

concerted effort to include the voices of Kinder who came to Britain with their parents. The project was inspired by the development of the history from below methodology whereby ordinary people as well as high achievers were interviewed.¹⁵⁰

As this thesis has pointed out, Kinder did not only come from Germany and Austria. The RVTA has to a degree overlooked the experiences of Kinder from Czechoslovakia and Poland. However, there are several interviews with other refugees who came to Britain via Shanghai, Palestine and the *St. Louis* as well as those who later joined the British forces in the Middle East after fleeing from the Soviet Union in 1941. The focus is not placed on Britain as a second host nation but a new home which highlights how it is in Britain that Jewish refugees made new lives for themselves. The topics covered in the interviews are: '[the refugee's] settlement, the obstacles they encountered, their sense of belonging, identity and their religious affiliation, as well as their professional development, their attitudes to Britain and to their countries of birth, as well as their reflections on their experiences and messages for the future'.¹⁵¹ While the project tries 'to enable an individual to narrate his/her life story and reflect on his/her experiences' the focus is very much national still as the archive is about British-Jewish voices and the Jewish community's impact on British society. Likewise, while the interviewer asks open-ended questions such as 'could you please describe...?, What was it like...?, how do you remember...?' many of the answers are positive in tone.¹⁵²

The AJR's recent 'Kindertransport: Remembering & Rethinking' (2019) podcast uses testimony from the RVTA. While the negatives are presented in greater detail in the podcast, which suggests a movement towards a more complicated perspective, the positives still overcome the negatives in the first four episodes. For example, 'Episode One: The Journey' begins with arrival, focusing on the journey to Britain and British kindness. While the podcast

¹⁵⁰ See 'About Refugee Voices', *The Association of Jewish Refugees*, at <https://www.ajrrefugeevoices.org.uk/refugee-voices> [accessed 9th June 2020].

¹⁵¹ 'About Refugee Voices'.

¹⁵² 'About Refugee Voices'.

presents the depth of Kindertransport testimony, the Kindertransport is presented as a movement from threat to safety which of course it was, but as this chapter has demonstrated, Kinder moved beyond British shores: they were rehomed several times. In ‘Episode 4: First Impressions’, there is reference to how the British government were not going to provide funding, but this is soon qualified by a reference to how the British public raised a large sum of money as part of the Lord Baldwin Appeal to help the refugees. Furthermore, while mention is also made of physical abuse, this topic is not picked up on in any detail as the episode goes on to focus on how the cuisine in Britain was different to food in continental Europe.

At the end of ‘Episode Four’, though, the podcast reflects upon internment, moral dilemmas, the confusion of both the Kinder and the process of the Kindertransport as a whole, domestic service, and dispersal to other parts of the British Isles, which is also addressed at the end of ‘Episode 5: Dovercourt’. The later episodes of the podcast explore themes such as ‘internment/military service’, ‘maintaining/losing Jewish identity’, ‘learning parents’ fate’, and ‘memory and relevance today’. These themes are critically addressed. ‘Episode Six: Identity’ of the podcast shows that the culture and traditions of incoming refugees were often not understood or appreciated by Britons. In ‘Episode Eight: Enemy Aliens’ the focus is placed on that fact that for many refugees it was incomprehensible to be interned by the nation which rescued them. The penultimate episode, ‘Episode Nine: Twenty-Five Words’ explores how the Kindertransport cannot just be understood as a process of being adopted by a new country but also needs to be seen as process of loss given that most Kinder lost family in the Holocaust. The podcast series is moving in a direction which appears to be more critical than previous AJR publications on the Kindertransport.¹⁵³

The Use of Testimony in Other Host Nations

¹⁵³ See ‘Podcasts’, *Association of Jewish Refugees*, at <https://www.ajrrefugeevoices.org.uk/podcast> [accessed 31st July 2020].

Shoah Foundation – America

Interviews conducted by the SF in America, the Musée de l'Holocauste (Montreal Holocaust Museum, MHM), and the Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC), Melbourne help us gain historical information about the Kindertransport. This is of course the case with interviews conducted in Britain, too, but there is little evidence of the interviews in other host nations being driven by a specific Kindertransport narrative – perhaps because the Kindertransport is seen as a less important part of the history of these nations than in Britain. However, the interviews may be informed by memory of the Holocaust more generally in these nations.¹⁵⁴

Another aspect to reflect upon with regards to an institution's methodology is how they gather testimony. For example, do they conduct the interviews themselves or do they use other sources? The SF conducted most of the bulk of its 55,000 interviews from 1994 to 1999. But it also houses those led by several other institutions, organisations and charities such as those conducted by the Kindertransport Association in America and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). Although this chapter is specifically focussed on the SF testimonies it is noteworthy to discuss how other American institutions have a similar methodology to the SF. The USHMM testimony came into being because of Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List* (1993).¹⁵⁵ The museum also 'conducts its own interviews, and also actively collects testimonies produced by individuals and institutions such as libraries, archives, and local Holocaust research centers'.¹⁵⁶ Similar to the SF the USHMM gives more

¹⁵⁴ As in Britain, there are one or two edited volumes in America including; Philip K. Jason and Iris Posner, *Don't Wave Goodbye: The Children's Flight from Nazi Persecution to American Freedom* (Praeger: Westport, 2004); Michele M. Gold, *Memories That Won't Go Away: A Tribute to the Children of the Kindertransport* (KIP: place of publication unknown, USA, 2014); and Jason Hensley, *Part of the Family: Christadelphians, the Kindertransport, and the Rescue from the Holocaust*, Volume One (Hensley: place of publication unknown, USA, 2016), and Volume Two (Hensley: place of publication unknown, USA, 2017). These collections of testimonies though appeared much later than British collections of testimony. While they provide detail about individual and group rescue efforts, they do not present a particular narrative of the Kindertransport or reveal anything about how it is remembered.

¹⁵⁵ For more information see USC Shoah Foundation, *Testimony: The Legacy of Schindler's List and the USC Shoah Foundation* (HarperCollins Publishers: New York, 2014).

¹⁵⁶ 'Oral History', *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, at <https://www.ushmm.org/collections/the-museums-collections/about/oral-history> [accessed 12th June 2020].

freedom to the interviewee.¹⁵⁷ The USHMM guidelines say: ‘allow yourself to follow the interviewee’s lead and put your questions aside for parts of the interview. You may find that what the interviewee is telling you will prompt new questions that you had not even considered’.¹⁵⁸ These guidelines also provide guidance for the interviewer. For example, the guidelines state that ‘during the interview itself’ the interviewer should ‘not plan to ask one question after another as they are listed on the page [because] often an interviewee will anticipate and answer [the interviewer’s] questions [so] there will be no need [...] to ask them’.¹⁵⁹ Moreover if the interviewer is ‘overly concerned about having the interviewee answer [their] specific questions, [they] will be distracted from what the interviewee is telling [them]’.¹⁶⁰ Rather the interviewer should ‘allow [themselves] to follow the interviewee’s lead and put [their] questions aside for parts of the interview [as] the interviewee [may] prompt new questions that [the interviewer] had not even considered’.¹⁶¹ Furthermore, the guidelines suggest that ‘one of the best sentences [the interviewer] can use during the interview to elicit details is, “Tell me more about that”’.¹⁶² Similarly to the USHMM the SF also conducts pre-interviews, gathering ‘specific biographical information about the interviewee’.¹⁶³ The SF also advises the interviewer that ‘comments (except for questions) should be kept to a minimum’.¹⁶⁴ This approach contrasts with interviews housed at the BL, for example, where the interviewer comments on the interviewees’ successful integration into British society. While British institutions also ask questions which invite further reflection, they are more interviewer-led

¹⁵⁷ ‘Oral History Interview Guidelines’, *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, at <https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/20121003-oral-history-interview-guide.pdf> [accessed 12th June 2020].

¹⁵⁸ ‘Oral History Interview Guidelines’.

¹⁵⁹ ‘Oral History Interview Guidelines’.

¹⁶⁰ ‘Oral History Interview Guidelines’.

¹⁶¹ ‘Oral History Interview Guidelines’.

¹⁶² ‘Oral History Interview Guidelines’.

¹⁶³ ‘Interviewer Guidelines’, *USC Shoah Foundation: The Institution for Visual History and Education*, at <http://sfi.usc.edu> [accessed 15th June 2020].

¹⁶⁴ ‘Interviewer Guidelines’.

than interviewee-led. Therefore, the interviews are often steered towards corroborating what the nation did for the Kinder rather than allowing the Kinder to freely narrate their story.

The SF interviews offer a unique transnational perspective because American, Canadian and British Kinder, for example, were interviewed as part of this collection. Speaking of the collection, Diane L. Wolf claims that testimonies can be seen as ‘transnational narratives par excellence’ because ‘they speak of cultural multiplicity’, of ‘fluid and multiple selves’ and of ‘the creation of double – or multidiasporic existences’. Holocaust testimonies, she continues, are ‘both homeless and global [...], about dislocation and transnational existences’.¹⁶⁵ Charles Kurt’s SF testimony, for example, recalls his transnational Kindertransport journey from Vienna to Brussels to Houston.¹⁶⁶ While Kurt’s interview is to a degree structured, there is flexibility: Kurt is free to recount his personal story at his own pace. The SF’s methodology takes into account the need for flexibility and the Kind’s need to tell their story in their own words. For example,

one week prior to the interview, the interviewer meets with the survivor or witness to fill out a pre-interview questionnaire seeking detailed biographical information about the interviewee. During that preliminary meeting, the interviewer explains the format and prepares the interviewee to think about what he or she would like to say. The time spent working together on the questionnaire also helps establish a rapport that carries over to the videotaped interview.¹⁶⁷

That basic facts are written down beforehand allows for a freer structure. This approach allows Kurt to move forwards and backwards in time and space, as he not only talks about his personal transnational journey to safety but also his mother’s too. Throughout the interview, there is a sense of constantly being in a state of limbo, as Kurt did not know when he would be reunited with his mother who had already travelled from Vienna, to Britain and then to America. Kurt

¹⁶⁵ Diane L. Wolf, “‘This Is Not What I Want’: Holocaust Testimony, Postmemory, and Jewish Identity”, in Howard Wettstein (ed.), *Diasporas and Exile: Varieties of Jewish Identity* (University of California Press: London, 2002), p. 192.

¹⁶⁶ Shoah Foundation Visual History Foundation, Code 55140: Interview with Charles Kurt (Interviewer: Bernice Blum), 1993.

¹⁶⁷ ‘Collecting Testimonies’.

talks about his disappointments, as he had to wait a long time before continuing his journey from Belgium to America in 1940. But he also talks about several reunions. The first of these was when his mother was able to travel through Belgium on her way to Britain. Then, later, Kurt was able to journey to America where his mother was waiting for him. His personal transnational experience is told in parallel to his mother's. This reflects the broad diasporic experience of the Kindertransport, as the Kinder did not forget about what was happening to their loved ones. Kurt's interview not only highlights the transnational nature of the Kindertransport through his wider movements across different national borders, it also shows how he learnt several new languages as a result. Thus, in his first host nation (Belgium), Kurt learnt French, while in his second host nation (America), he then learnt English. Kurt's interview accords with American memory of the Holocaust because his story fits into the melting pot myth as America becomes a shelter for those fleeing Europe. For example, Kurt talks about his pride serving in the military. Kurt remarks that he 'owe[s] this country something' which suggests that he felt very integrated into American society.¹⁶⁸ Although this interview presents both the positive and negative aspects of the Kindertransport, there seems to be a need to conclude the interview positively, similarly to British Kindertransport interviews. This bears out what I discussed in the introduction to this thesis as America became home.

Many of the interviews are with Kinder who at some point moved from Britain to America. They are often very critical of Britain, and throughout the SF testimonies one has the sense that interviewers encourage interviewees to elaborate on negative aspects of their experiences in both Germany (or Austria) and Britain before they came to America. In Chapter Two, I identify a certain competitiveness in American museums, as Britain is portrayed in a more negative light than America. This is noticeable in some SF testimonies, too. Thus, Dave

¹⁶⁸ SFVHF, Code 55140.

Lux talks about the terrible physical beatings he suffered at the hands of a rabbi in Britain, and how he experienced antisemitism in this nation. While he also relates that relatives in America gave him the ‘cold shoulder’ when he arrived there, he soon goes on to say how he found a job ‘almost instantly’ and that – prompted by the interviewer – the Americans treated him ‘great’ in his new work environment.¹⁶⁹ Some interviewees do find fault with America, too: thus Elsbeth Lewin criticises the American Jewish community and President Roosevelt for not doing enough to help Jews in Europe during the Nazi period.¹⁷⁰ But negatives, where mentioned, are usually overcome. Ilse Lindemeyer describes how, on the Isle of Man, where she was interned, she had to share a bunk with a ‘devout Nazi’.¹⁷¹ Arriving later in New York, she thought the Americans were ‘barbarians’ because they had radio commercials, but she goes on to describe her time in America very positively.¹⁷² Similarly, Ralph Samuel describes his initial disappointment when he came to America after Britain at the age of twenty-seven expecting the streets to be ‘paved with gold’, only to find that America was not ‘interested’ in him.¹⁷³ But he soon found a job as a land economist and ‘never looked back’.¹⁷⁴ As he says, he went to America to make his fortune, and his dream came true.¹⁷⁵ The American national Holocaust narrative, although more self-critical than the British, has a redemptive dimension, and this is true of some of the SF interviews. Towards the end, interviewees are encouraged to pass on ‘lessons’, or invited to make comments, and while most talk of the importance of remembering the Holocaust, some also feel the need to express gratefulness to America. Arthur

¹⁶⁹ Shoah Foundation Visual History Foundation, Code 13251: Interview with Dave Lux (Interviewer: Sue Steinberg), 1996.

¹⁷⁰ Shoah Foundation Visual History Foundation, Code 10818: Interview with Elsbeth Lewin (Interviewer: Marlene Glassman), 1996.

¹⁷¹ Shoah Foundation Visual History Foundation, Code 44293: Interview with Ilse Lindemeyer (Interviewer: Adrienne Berger), 1998.

¹⁷² SFVHF, Code 55140.

¹⁷³ Shoah Foundation Visual History Foundation, (No Code): Interview with Ralph Samuel (Interviewer: Peter Ryan), 2002.

¹⁷⁴ SFVHF, (No Code).

¹⁷⁵ SFVHF, (No Code).

Adler, for instance, stresses that ‘my family, my children, my grandchildren should never forget how they came here and how good this country was to them’.¹⁷⁶

*Musée de l'Holocauste, Montreal Holocaust Museum – Canada*¹⁷⁷

Like the SF interviews, the MHM interviews also depict the broader transnational history of the Kindertransport.¹⁷⁸ For example, Kind A talks about their movements from Vienna to Holland, their further journey to Britain, their placement in several hostels and foster families, their evacuation, and their later internment in both Britain and Canada.¹⁷⁹ Canadian Kinder tend to think comparatively, as Kind A compares their experiences of internment in Britain to Canada. The Kindertransportee discusses the process of internment in Britain first. They were taken to the local police station where they were questioned by two Scotland Yard officers. They describe how ‘rough’ the policemen were with them as they tried to find out whether they were drawing an image of a particular bridge for espionage purposes.¹⁸⁰ Kind A was moved from the police station to Bury St. Edmunds to Liverpool where on arrival they were ‘pushed to get out of the [train carriage by] police [who] were very rough’.¹⁸¹ Kind A states that the police ‘used to kick with their feet, they thought they had to have the Germans or something’.¹⁸² Kind A also talks about standing next to the Kaiser’s grandson, Prince Frederick of Prussia in the roll call at a camp near Liverpool, as well as being told that they were not allowed to be depressed in the camp.¹⁸³ They were threatened and told to ‘act happy’.¹⁸⁴ The interviewer asks

¹⁷⁶ Shoah Foundation Visual History Foundation, (No Code): Interview with Arthur Adler (Interviewer: Nancy Campus), 1996.

¹⁷⁷ I have decided to refer to the Kinder as Kind A and Kind B because while I have access to these testimonies, the Montreal Holocaust Museum requested that the Kinder remain anonymous. This is also why I am using the pronoun ‘they’ rather than ‘he’ or ‘she’.

¹⁷⁸ Canadian Kindertransportees have also been interviewed by the Alex Dworkin Canadian Jewish Archives and the Concordia University Centre for Oral History. These testimonies are stored with the Shoah Foundation.

¹⁷⁹ Montreal Holocaust Museum, Code WHT-450: Interview with Kind A, 2008.

¹⁸⁰ MHM, Code WHT-450.

¹⁸¹ MHM, Code WHT-450.

¹⁸² MHM, Code WHT-450.

¹⁸³ MHM, Code WHT-450.

¹⁸⁴ MHM, Code WHT-450.

Kind A to describe in detail what the different camps were like in Britain, how many people were housed in them, how they passed the time in the camp, and where the camps were in relation to each other. This open dialogue highlights how a chronological narrative does not always show that life in Britain is leading to a steady improvement: Kind A reflects upon his traumatic experiences within the camps because he was unable to eat the food on many occasions as they kept Kosher. Later Kind A was taken from Douglas, Isle of Man to Canada. Kind A's interview confronts a difficult and controversial topic – the internment of refugees by Britain and Commonwealth nations – which suggests that the MHM interviews are open to reflecting upon the negatives in several nations. Kind A goes on to discuss their internment in Trois-Rivières (Three Rivers), Canada, and how, on arrival, they were placed with Nazi sympathisers. Kind A explains that they were searched more than once on arrival in Canada. The interviewer asks if they were searched again at the camp in the province of Quebec, which suggests that the interviewer is not trying to avoid discussion about the negatives in Canada. Kind A also states that he was later given a prisoner uniform when they were moved to another internment camp in Canada. The interviewer asks these follow-up questions: 'how did that look?' and 'What colour was the fabric?'¹⁸⁵ The interviewer is continually asking additional questions after Kind A's talks about their internment in Canada which further emphasises that there is not the same agenda in Canada to downplay the negatives as often as in the cases of Britain and America.

SF interviews do present negative aspects of the Kindertransport but these are often overcome by a portrayal of the opportunities provided by America. The MHM interviews are much more graphic in their representation of negatives. For example, Kind B talks about how they were 'always hungry' in Britain and that they were 'literally a slave' because they were

¹⁸⁵ MHM, Code WHT-450.

forced to do domestic work for their extended family.¹⁸⁶ Moreover, the MHM interviews are more dialectical in nature because the positives are not presented so as to imply an overcoming of the negatives. The structuring of the relationship between positives and negatives is different in the MHM interviews compared to the SF ones, because a negative often comes before and after a positive, whereas many SF testimonies tend to present a negative which is soon mitigated by a positive. Kind B discusses how their new foster family gave them half meals, but they then speak about how their cousin brought them a cherry cake, which they still like to this day; this thought in turn is soon interrupted as they then recall how their new foster family made them ‘wash the first meal up’.¹⁸⁷ Another example of how the negatives are not pushed aside is when Kind B reflects upon how their grandmother used to serve a particular biscuit and how, in Britain, she stole this type of biscuit from her foster parents for one year and eleven months because their foster family ‘kept [them] short of money [...] and food’.¹⁸⁸ A positive memory gives way to a negative experience. The interviewer does not interrupt or try to steer the Kind towards a positive answer as the interviewer allows them to talk freely and openly. Moreover, Kind B later talks about how they are ‘still a Jew in Berlin and [they] will never be anything else’.¹⁸⁹ Again the interviewer does not probe for another answer as they do not ask about whether they feel Canadian or not.

Jewish Holocaust Centre – Australia¹⁹⁰

The JHC’s approach to Kindertransport testimony gives the survivor more control over the interview process because the interviewer mainly asks follow-up questions.¹⁹¹ The noticeable absence of leading questions may be the reason, or at least one reason why, in the JHC’s

¹⁸⁶ Montreal Holocaust Museum, Code WHT-200: Interview with Kind B, 1996.

¹⁸⁷ MHM, Code WHT-200.

¹⁸⁸ MHM, Code WHT-200.

¹⁸⁹ MHM, Code WHT-200.

¹⁹⁰ There is also material deposited with the Jewish Online Museum and the Sydney Jewish Museum.

¹⁹¹ Steven Cooke and Donna-Lee Frieze, *The Interior of Our Memories: A History of Melbourne’s Jewish Holocaust Centre* (Hybrid Publishers: Ormond, 2015), p. 135.

testimonies, the positive and negative aspects are presented in a more balanced way than in British institutional testimonies. It is, of course, difficult to know whether British Kinder might also have recounted their experiences in a more balanced way if they had not been asked leading questions. The JHC's Australian testimonies mirror individual autobiographies, which I will discuss later in the chapter, because the interviews do not follow a chronological order; rather the survivor is freer to change course, redirecting their attention to events which do not necessarily follow on from one another.

From 1992, the JHC started to record Holocaust testimonies. 'The video Holocaust Testimonies Project (HTP), had multiple purposes'.¹⁹² 'These included: the preservation of Holocaust memories; to educate the young about the Holocaust, with the aim to prevent discrimination, racism and other genocides; to reignite the lives of the communities that existed before the Holocaust and for survivors to leave a legacy of the Holocaust to their children and family'.¹⁹³ Many of these testimonies focused on 'survivors who lived under the German sphere of influence from 1933 to 1945'.¹⁹⁴ By 1995, the JHC had introduced a registration form which meant that 'the conditions of availability and access could be specified by the interviewee through a Release Form'.¹⁹⁵ During this period, 'there was a conscious decision to include a focus on survivors' pre- and post-Holocaust life' in the interviews.¹⁹⁶ By focusing on factors such as 'life before the war, family details, the war years, postwar lives and migrant experience, adjustment and reflections, [the interviews] allowed for a [broader] view of the survivor's life'.¹⁹⁷ Therefore, some survivors 'had complete control over the interview content which was carefully organised and well prepared by [them]'.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹² Cooke and Frieze, *The Interior of Our Memories*, p. 125.

¹⁹³ Cooke and Frieze, *The Interior of Our Memories*, pp. 125-126.

¹⁹⁴ Cooke and Frieze, *The Interior of Our Memories*, p. 134.

¹⁹⁵ Cooke and Frieze, *The Interior of Our Memories*, p. 134.

¹⁹⁶ Cooke and Frieze, *The Interior of Our Memories*, p. 134.

¹⁹⁷ Cooke and Frieze, *The Interior of Our Memories*, p. 134.

¹⁹⁸ Cooke and Frieze, *The Interior of Our Memories*, p. 135.

In British institutional interviews, Kindertransportees are often encouraged to think in progressive terms. But in the JHC testimonies, there is less intervention by the interviewer. As a result, the survivor's memories are able to move more freely, often in a way that is not chronological or linear in any other way. Their thoughts seem to move by association and from theme to theme. For example, Robert Newman starts his interview by talking about his family, but then moves ahead in time to the moment when he was arrested during Kristallnacht. Newman also talks about his schooling in Germany, and how his teacher said that he would 'never be any good for anything'.¹⁹⁹ He then redirects the interview towards his time in Australia, and how he wanted to become a farmer, comparing his experiences of working with animals in Germany and Australia.²⁰⁰ Henry Grant is also aware that he is 'chopping and changing' when he talks about his pre-war and post-war life.²⁰¹

Another reason for this movement across space and time in JHC testimonies is that Australian Kinder, like Canadian Kinder, naturally think in terms of comparisons which draw attention to their transnational experiences. For instance, the Kindertransport is presented not as a single movement from threat to safety, but as a process of repeated displacement as the Kinder lose one new home after another. The interviews conducted by the JHC are similar to those held at the MHM because arrival in Britain and Australia is not portrayed as a positive event. Rather, arrival in both cases is traumatic and difficult. But the interviews reveal that, as Kinder started to feel more at home in these countries, they began slowly to settle into a new way of life – not once, but twice. This trajectory is different to the positive British narrative because positive and negative elements in terms of adapting to life in a new country hold equal weight. For example, Hans Friend says that he 'was terribly unhappy that week when [he]

¹⁹⁹ Jewish Holocaust Centre, Code JHCAVA1191: Interview with Robert Newman (Interviewer: Freda Hodge), 2008.

²⁰⁰ JHC, Code JHCAVA1191.

²⁰¹ Jewish Holocaust Centre, Code JHCAVA1210: Interview with Henry Grant (Interviewer: Freda Hodge), 2010.

arrived' in Britain.²⁰² For Friend, arrival brought with it a sense of overwhelming guilt because his father 'had to die ironically so that [he] could survive', otherwise he may not have been given a place on the Kindertransport.²⁰³ But Friend also states that he later 'loved living in London'.²⁰⁴ When his sister who escaped to Australia contacted him after the war to come and live with her, he did not want to leave Britain. Arriving in Melbourne, he was 'terribly unhappy' and 'lonely'.²⁰⁵ The interviewer then asks him 'how did you find Australia or practically Melbourne compared to London after you came here?'.²⁰⁶ Friend's response is: 'first I hated it [...] I found Melbourne like a village compared to London'.²⁰⁷ Yet gradually he was 'glad' to live in Melbourne.²⁰⁸ Travelling to London many years later, Friend says he was 'disappointed' to find it was 'dirty' and had 'changed'.²⁰⁹ The testimonies gathered at the JHC present a transnational comparison between Britain and Australia. We gain an insight into how Kinder adapted to life in these two nations, as well as into unexpected restrictions unique to Australia. It is this open juxtaposition of positive and negative aspects which differentiates these interviews from British interviews. Hans Friend's testimony further shows that resettlement from Britain to Australia was not an unproblematic process, because his qualification as a Fellow of the British Optical Association was not recognised in Australia.²¹⁰ He had to take up his studies again in Australia even though he had completed his training in Britain. Therefore, while he benefited from the opportunities provided in each nation, Friend also struggled with adapting to life in yet another country because he was not able to practise his profession until he was able to fulfil these further requirements.

²⁰² Jewish Holocaust Centre, Code JHCAVA0836: Interview with Hans Friend (Interviewer: Michael Oliver), 1996.

²⁰³ JHC, Code JHCAVA0836.

²⁰⁴ JHC, Code JHCAVA0836.

²⁰⁵ JHC, Code JHCAVA0836.

²⁰⁶ JHC, Code JHCAVA0836.

²⁰⁷ JHC, Code JHCAVA0836.

²⁰⁸ JHC, Code JHCAVA0836.

²⁰⁹ JHC, Code JHCAVA0836.

²¹⁰ JHC, Code JHCAVA0836.

The JHC interviews accord with Australian memory of the Holocaust because of the explicit and more consistent focus on human rights such as tolerance and personal freedom then and now, which is different to British memory of the Kindertransport. The interviewer asks the Kind whether they would like to leave a message for future generations at the end of the interview. The Kind is free to respond or not. Erich Cahn responds by saying that we should not ‘find faults in people, faults are easy to find, good points are much harder to find, look for good points in people’.²¹¹ Earlier in Cahn’s interview, he reflects on how ‘freedom should be very much appreciated’ and how in Australia freedom is not always appreciated ‘enough’.²¹² While British interviews can also ask similar questions, in the case of the JHC, there does not seem to be any implicit pressure to answer positively. For example, Friend is asked whether he experienced antisemitism in Britain and Australia and he openly discusses his experiences in both nations. The question does not invite a tendency in the answer: Friend is free to talk about how he experienced antisemitism in both nations.

Documentaries

The positive British Kindertransport narrative also clearly materialises in British documentaries. But before examining the use of testimony in these films, I want to turn attention first to one of the first documentaries which featured Kindertransport testimony, which was American.²¹³ As previously stated, the edited volume *Into the Arms of Strangers* is based on the documentary which bears the same name (*Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* (documentary, 2000)).²¹⁴ Both follow a similar structure, comprising a multitude of perspectives including those of the Kinder, their rescuers, their parents and their

²¹¹ Jewish Holocaust Centre, Code JHCAVA1100: Interview Erich Cahn (Interviewer: Philip Maisel), 2002.

²¹² JHC, Code JHCAVA1100.

²¹³ There are several documentaries which feature Kindertransport testimony. These include Sue Read, *Children Who Cheated the Nazis* (documentary, 2000), and Melissa Hacker, *My Knees Were Jumping* (documentary, 1996). I have decided to examine the three documentaries which present the most important features I would like to discuss within this chapter.

²¹⁴ See Mark Jonathan Harris, *Into the Arms of Strangers* (documentary, 2000).

foster families. Kushner argues that, in the documentary as well as in the edited volume, ‘Britain emerges as the hero, with America as the (minor) villain for refusing to emulate the scheme in 1939’.²¹⁵ Attention is drawn to the failure of the Wagner-Rogers Bill but ‘nowhere is it asked why Britain excluded [the Kinder’s] mothers and fathers’.²¹⁶ Kushner also points out there are moments in the documentary when ‘even the losses were minimised with some of the children featured reunited with their parents after the war’, despite the fact that this was ‘not a very typical experience’.²¹⁷ However, the documentary was also critical of Britain. It reflected upon the Kinder’s struggles of adapting to life in Britain, for example, which is not always discussed in British documentaries (see later in chapter). As *Into the Arms of Strangers* shows, rescue did not liberate the Kinder from their trauma because many faced other uncertain journeys in their host country: some were exploited, some were deported, and even when reunion was possible, many Kinder felt estranged from their parents and as well as foster families. The documentary and the edited volume contradict the easy message of integration which typifies the positive British narrative. There is also a transnational dimension to the documentary because we see the Kinder’s further movements as well as how their stories are formed around loss. This documentary is significant because it presents an American perspective which not only critiques American actions but also British actions.

In 2012, *Kindertransport: A Journey to Life* was shown on *BBC Newsnight*. This British documentary coincided with the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport. While the start of the documentary hinted at some of the more negative aspects of the Kindertransport, as Eve Willman talked about how her foster mother ‘would have liked [Eve] to do [the] housework’, the overall narrative focused on Britain’s generosity.²¹⁸ This welcome narrative was further

²¹⁵ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 166.

²¹⁶ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 166.

²¹⁷ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 165.

²¹⁸ Maria Polachowska, ‘Kindertransport: A Journey to Life’, *BBC Newsnight*, 1st December 2015, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqP0uVSj3bQ> [accessed 16th July 2019].

reinforced as the documentary placed emphasis on Frank Meisler's Kindertransport memorial in London which, as Chapter Three will point out, paints a positive picture of arrival. Meisler himself was interviewed for the film, and said: 'the British government in allowing 10,000 children to come, although without their families and so on, that was a display of humanity, and I think that in itself what a good act which deserves thanks and commemoration'.²¹⁹ Unlike *Into the Arms of Strangers*, where the negative elements hold their weight, *Kindertransport: A Journey to Life* marginalised the negatives because the emphasis was placed on the Kinder's contributions to British society. Moreover, Britain's role as saviour remained unchallenged as the topic of internment was not covered. Although Bernd Koschland draws attention to how many Kinder 'emigrated to various places', the transnational perspective was also overlooked by this documentary.²²⁰ The documentary appeared twelve years after the release of *Into the Arms of Strangers* and used Kindertransport testimony in a more simplified way than the American documentary.

First shown in 2014, University and College Union's *Journeys to Safety: Memories of the Kindertransport* reflected a preconceived understanding of the Kindertransport as the title of the documentary suggested that safety equalled protection. As previously argued, emphasising the theme of rescue overlooks the question whether the Kinder's lives in their host nations were comfortable or even tolerable. The painful separation of the Kinder from their families quickly gives way to an emphasis on the Kinder's first impressions of Britain. Ruth Barnett and John Fieldsend recalled being confused and frightened by the British red double-decker buses but this was conveyed through humour.²²¹ Likewise, Lord Alfred Dubs discussed

²¹⁹ Polachowska, 'Kindertransport'.

²²⁰ Polachowska, 'Kindertransport'.

²²¹ Interview with Ruth Barnett and John Fieldsend, in 'Journeys to Safety: Memories of the Kindertransport', *University and College Union*, 21st January 2014, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qduycstt9oE> [accessed 19th July 2019].

how ‘impressed’ he was to see women marching and women in the army in Britain.²²² The focus of this documentary was mainly placed on Britain as a welcoming nation which cared for the Kinder. This was reinforced when Lord Alfred Dubs stated he was ‘well treated by this country’.²²³ Of course this is true in some cases, but not all Kinder were embraced by those who were entrusted to look after them. The documentary presented a one-sided view of rescue which depicted the Kindertransport as a success story. It concluded positively, with the statement that individuals and organisations ‘were not asked, nor were they called’, and they ‘often at great personal risk to themselves [...] gave hope to the [Kinder] and the families they left behind’.²²⁴ But while many individuals selflessly worked to help those in need, others took advantage of those who sought refuge. This side of the story of the Kindertransport was not reflected in the documentary.

Unlike British documentaries, British plays such as Diane Samuels’ *Kindertransport* (1992) as well as Fingers Crossed Theatre’s *Central (Story) Line* (2018) have drawn on testimony in producing fewer positive images of the Kindertransport. For example, ‘Samuels’ play explores the tension between mother and daughter when the former returns from the camps. Neither can overcome their trauma based on the guilt of survival on the one hand and anger at being abandoned on the other. It leads to the daughter suppressing all recognition of her origins’.²²⁵ The loss of self which I explore in detail in Chapter Four is central to this play because the character of the Kind can only integrate into British society if she closes off a part of her former self. The play does not present a progressive positive narrative, rather it focuses on the sacrifices refugees make to fit into a new society. *Central (Story) Line* is a play which draws connections between the Kindertransport and the current refugee crisis, presenting a

²²² Interview with Lord Alfred Dubs, in ‘Journeys to Safety: Memories of the Kindertransport’, *University and College Union*, 21st January 2014, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qduycstt9oE> [accessed 19th July 2019].

²²³ Interview with Lord Alfred Dubs, in ‘Journeys to Safety’.

²²⁴ ‘Journeys to Safety’.

²²⁵ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 165.

more multidirectional perspective. Like the edited volumes, these plays offer a more multifaceted view of the Kindertransport.

Individual Written Accounts Deposited with Institutions in New Zealand and Canada

Before turning attention to individual autobiographies, I want to reflect upon whether individual testimonies deposited with organisations such as the Azrieli Foundation (AF) in Canada, and Claire Bruell work which is housed at the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand (HCNZ) chime with the national narratives of Canada and New Zealand. While this thesis has previously discussed institutional testimony in Canada and Australia, there is little institutional testimony to my knowledge in New Zealand. Therefore, it is difficult to make an informed judgement about institutional memory. While the Kinder who made new homes in New Zealand have been interviewed by the SF, there is a dearth of testimony lodged in institutions in New Zealand. Kinder who journeyed to New Zealand have been interviewed by the Holocaust Oral History Project in Auckland (1999-2002), but I have not been able to access these interviews.²²⁶ Nevertheless, Bruell has provided a document on the HCNZ's website which gives a brief overview of each individual's story. The overviews explore the Kinder's transnational journeys to New Zealand. Thus, Ilse Brauer née Goldschmidt journeyed from Britain to Chile, then to Argentina before arriving in New Zealand in 1973. Other Kinder such as Liesl Green née Simon arrived much earlier in New Zealand as she came in 1941. The overviews are very matter of fact, it does not seem as if the institution (HCNZ) or Bruell is trying to present a particular image of the Kinder's life in New Zealand. Many of the overviews talk about the Kinder's careers, families and deaths in New Zealand. They do not focus necessarily on positives or negatives.

²²⁶ See 'Holocaust Oral History Project', *Auckland Museum*, at https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collections-research/collections/record/am_library-manuscriptsandarchives-3368?k=%22Holocaust%20Oral%20History%20Project%22&dept=manuscripts%20and%20archives&ordinal=0 [accessed 4th January 2019].

There are also only one or two testimonies hosted by the National Library of New Zealand (NLNZ), and a *Diaspora by Design: Jewish Refugee Architects and Wellington City* report by Chloe Fitzpatrick which incorporates testimony from an interview with former Kind, Robert (Bob) Fantl. He ‘escaped as a child and came to be highly influenced by the Jewish architectural modernists in New Zealand’.²²⁷ Although the report critiques New Zealand’s immigration policy, the rise of antisemitism in the nation during the 1930s and how refugees were categorised as enemy aliens, it does not explore Fantl’s individual story in any great detail. Despite this it could be argued that the report does place Fantl’s testimony within New Zealand’s national Holocaust memory discourse because it argues that Fantl’s impact along with other refugee architects ‘on Wellington’s cultural and architectural life was tremendous’ because ‘they played an integral role in modernising a British colonial city into an international one’.²²⁸ Moreover, Fantl and other refugee architects ‘expressed concern about the situation for Maori within New Zealand’.²²⁹ While the report does not ‘focus [...] on the relationship between Refugee Architects and Maori culture’, it is significant Fitzpatrick mentions how Fantl commented on how he felt that Maori architecture and culture was under threat as Western design was imposed.²³⁰ Fantl’s empathy for New Zealand’s indigenous population may result from his own experience of discrimination during the Nazi period, but it may also be linked to New Zealand’s greater self-critical openness to its own history of discrimination. The NLNZ also hosts an interview with Fantl from 2006 which comments on how he escaped Czechoslovakia on a Winton Transport in 1939, and then later joined his mother and sister in New Zealand in 1940.²³¹ Towards the end of the interview, the focus is placed on Fantl’s

²²⁷ Chloe Fitzpatrick, *Diaspora by Design: Jewish Refugee Architects and Wellington City*, no date, p. 1.

²²⁸ Fitzpatrick, *Diaspora by Design*, p. 3.

²²⁹ Fitzpatrick, *Diaspora by Design*, p. 3.

²³⁰ Fitzpatrick, *Diaspora by Design*, p. 3.

²³¹ See ‘Interview with Robert Fantl’, *National Library*, at <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/35854209?search%5Bi%5D%5Bcentury%5D=1900&search%5Bi%5D%5Bsubject%5D=Wellington+Region&search%5Bpath%5D=items&search%5Btext%5D=henderson+family> [accessed 6th January 2020]. See also ‘Life Story – Architect and Environmentalist Bob Fantl Dies’, *Dominion Post*, 13th

campaigning to protect wildlife. Fantl was a founding executive member of New Zealand's Environment and Conservation Organisation (ECO), which is committed to protecting the human right to a healthy environment.²³² It would be an overstatement to suggest that these interviews present an institutional memory but they nevertheless seem to chime with general patterns in New Zealand's memory of the Holocaust.

To fully comprehend the New Zealand SF testimonies, one would need to consider American Kindertransport testimony in relation to Kindertransport testimony in New Zealand which is beyond the scope of this thesis, as I am not exploring American responses to New Zealand Kindertransport testimony. However, Simone Gigliotti and Monica Tempian have examined these SF oral testimonies in their study which compares the experiences of the Deckston Children with the Kinder who travelled to New Zealand. They reflect upon Fantl's experiences as well as on Eric Simon and his sister, Liesl Green's emigration to New Zealand during the war and Walter Freitag's later journey to this country in 1946. They explore how difficult it was for these Kinder to adapt to life in yet another nation as they moved from continental Europe, to Britain and then to New Zealand. Gigliotti and Tempian's research shows how the Kinder found it difficult to establish relationships with the local Jewish community, and how they were regarded as foreigners and outsiders. For example, they conclude that 'the narrative of the Simon children emerges as a story of deprivation and survival, as they battled with a new environment on their own – unconnected, isolated from others of a similar background'.²³³ As for Fantl and Freitag, Gigliotti and Tempian suggest that they had different experiences to the Simon children because they were more connected to their

April 2016, at <https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/78828334/life-story--architect-and-environmentalist-bob-fantl-die> [accessed 6th January 2020].

²³² For information on ECO, see at <http://www.eco.org.nz/> [accessed 6th January 2020].

²³³ Simone Gigliotti and Monica Tempian, 'From Europe to the Antipodes: Acculturation and Identity of the Deckston Children and the Kindertransport Children in New Zealand', in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), p. 113.

fellow refugees, and they had family members who supported them so were not so secluded or lonely. Gigliotti and Tempian also argue that the Kinder ‘describe their life-stories with an emphasis on family background, escape to England, further migration and settling in New Zealand, concluding that they made every effort to pick up the pieces of a painfully disrupted life’.²³⁴ This may of course be the case, but as with other SF interviews, in the testimony referenced by Gigliotti and Tempian, the interviewer often guides the Kind to end the interview positively so to emphasise successful integration. It is, however, not possible to deduce from this whether an interview conducted with a New Zealand institute would end similarly or not. It is interesting that Gigliotti and Tempian suggest that the Kinder ‘lay no claim to fully becoming New Zealanders’ as they reflect upon ‘the fragility of identity’.²³⁵ For example, Freitag’s interview shows how he has a hyphenated identity (something discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four), as he describes being a New Zealander, an Israeli and a German as he feels connected to all three lands.²³⁶ This interview accords with a trend within novels because the Kind oscillates between cultures.

To my knowledge, there is only one autobiography published by a New Zealand Kind: Eva Hayman’s *By the Moon and the Stars: A Heart-rending, Wartime Story of a Young Czech Exile’s Lonely Struggle to Grasp the Meaning of Life and Love* (1992). I reflect upon this book here instead of in the following section about individual autobiographies because it echoes Freitag’s testimony. Hayman writes that part of her ‘heart had to remain not only in the country of [her] birth but also in the country of [her] deliverance’.²³⁷ Moreover, she is also “‘a Kiwi with an accent’”, as she will ‘never lose [her] Czech lilt’.²³⁸ Both Hayman and Freitag’s accounts suggest that having a hyphenated identity is positive, because they feel attached to

²³⁴ Gigliotti and Tempian, ‘From Europe to the Antipodes’, p. 114.

²³⁵ Gigliotti and Tempian, ‘From Europe to the Antipodes’, p. 115.

²³⁶ Gigliotti and Tempian, ‘From Europe to the Antipodes’, p. 115.

²³⁷ Eva Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars: A Heart-rending, Wartime Story of a Young Czech Exile’s Lonely Struggle to Grasp the Meaning of Life and Love* (Random Century: Auckland, 1992), p. 130.

²³⁸ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. 130.

their former homelands, their host nation and their new homeland. Unlike the positive British national narrative where the emphasis is placed on becoming British, in these two accounts, it is not about becoming a New Zealander, but someone who is able to freely alternate between different national identities. Hayman's autobiography in particular focuses on her deep-rooted connection to her former homeland, Czechoslovakia. It combines extracts from diaries written by her childhood self from 1939-1945 with later comments made by her adult self. She explains that she started her new diary that she kept to document her Kindertransport experience the day before she travelled to Britain with her sister, Vera. The first diary entry is as follows: 'I will write this new diary in England; I am compelled to leave my old diary at home. We leave tomorrow night and will arrive in England on 1 July. How I wish that the rest of this diary could be written here, how I hope that I will be allowed to return soon, very soon, to my homeland'.²³⁹ Hayman wrote this entry while she was still in Czechoslovakia, which shows how she longed to return even before making her departure. In contrast to the positive British narrative which emphasises progression from one national identity to another, Hayman's autobiography highlights how she 'remained fiercely patriotic and was determined to return' to Czechoslovakia 'in order to help rebuild the country that was [her] home'.²⁴⁰ Britain did not become her home, as Hayman journeyed back to Czechoslovakia after the war and later made a new home in New Zealand. Her book is not about gaining a British identity, as her identity is a combination of the three nations which were homes to her. The focus on returning to a former homeland is also an aspect which is overlooked by the positive British narrative because it contradicts the notion of acquiring a new life and identity in Britain.

Hayman's autobiography also links to a more general trend in more recent Kindertransport autobiographies which this chapter will shortly address because it centres on

²³⁹ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. 11.

²⁴⁰ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. 117.

personal loss. Hayman closed the chapter on her Kindertransport story when she heard ‘the devastating news of [her] parents death in concentration camps [...] after the war in 1945’.²⁴¹ Her diaries ‘ceased on that day’ when she received news of her parents’ murder in the Holocaust.²⁴² Reopening the chapter some fifty years later, she ‘felt the pain again’.²⁴³ It is striking that her autobiography comes to a similar end. This circular narrative around her parents’ murder and her last written words in the diary are not only a farewell to her childhood, but also to her parents. This sense of loss resonates in her final two sentences: ‘this great gift, received so abundantly from my parents, will for ever remain part of my being, gracing the joys and struggles of my life. Thus, my mother and father live on in my memory, for, like a beacon, in a secret corner of my heart, my love shines for them’.²⁴⁴ While Hayman’s final words show strength, they also express the immense agony of a child’s and an adult’s grief at losing loved ones. The autobiography relives the ‘scenes of fifty years ago’, but it also explores how the experience of the Kindertransport ‘affected the rest of [Hayman’s] life’.²⁴⁵ Hayman speaks of how it was a ‘supreme task’ to carry on after the war without her parents.²⁴⁶ This ‘void’ and ‘absence’ are also reflected in other Kindertransport autobiographies from other host nations, as many Kinder try to reconstitute their story.²⁴⁷ Hayman’s autobiography is not only a Kindertransport story, as there are several references to the Holocaust and the murder of family members. This shows how Kindertransport autobiographies are related to Holocaust writing, because the reader not only becomes aware of the Kinder’s losses such as their separation from family and from homeland, being stripped of their nationalities, culture and language, but also of the loss of their family.

²⁴¹ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. ix.

²⁴² Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. 114.

²⁴³ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. 114.

²⁴⁴ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. 131.

²⁴⁵ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. 131.

²⁴⁶ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. 119.

²⁴⁷ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. 123.

Although this chapter has explored institutional memory with regards to Canada, oral testimonies are not the only testimonies to be deposited at institutions in Canada. For example, the AF established the Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program in 2005 which collects the memories and diaries written by Holocaust survivors who live in Canada. The AF hosts nine Kindertransport memoirs and diaries in its collection.²⁴⁸ I have decided to reflect upon these testimonies here because they are essentially individual accounts donated to an institution but not gathered by it. Because these are individual writings, they reflect a more personal and kaleidoscopic approach as they often appear in the form of a scrapbook or an extended essay. For example, Gerry Waldston's 2009 scrapbook entitled *...When I was Seventeen...* is an amalgamation of his later reflections about his life and a two-week diary that he kept during his internment in Canada in 1940. It is in part a memento to his family and a contemporary account of his experiences during the war. While Waldston was putting some memorabilia together, he came across his diary from the period of his life when he was relocated to Canada from Britain. The diary opens with the monotony of life in the camp in Monteith, Ontario which was 'built like a prison'.²⁴⁹ Waldston is critical of his internment in both Canada and Britain, which bears out my argument about Canadian oral testimonies because the negatives are not moderated by the positives. The diary states that 'when [Waldston and his fellow internees] finally stepped onto Canadian soil, [they] felt a lot better' and they received food parcels from the Red Cross.²⁵⁰ But Waldston also remarks how he was displaced yet again when he arrived in Canada as 'they shoved [them] through' different areas; their 'hearts dropped into [their] pants'.²⁵¹ Waldston is cynical in his description of the camp uniform when he writes: 'why the red stripes and the red circle? Very simple! In their infinite wisdom, the fashion designers for

²⁴⁸ This chapter reflects upon two memoirs from this collection as the remaining seven are currently anonymised but they share similar features to the two memoirs analysed here.

²⁴⁹ Gerry Waldston, *...When I was Seventeen...* (Azrieli Foundation, Canada, 2009), p. 6.

²⁵⁰ Waldston, *...When I was Seventeen...*, p. 8.

²⁵¹ Waldston, *...When I was Seventeen...*, p. 8.

the army developed a very visible target on the prisoners, in case he escaped, giving the sharpshooter a large enough area to take aim at'.²⁵² As previously mentioned, he likens the camp to a prison because of the barbed wire and insufficient food. He also remarks that the kitchen staff went on strike. In terms of his internment in Britain, Waldston also presents a critical perspective: he was forced to sleep on the floor in army barracks for two weeks and he was later separated from his father who was also classified as an enemy alien.²⁵³ He describes his journey from Britain to Canada in horrifying detail. He and his fellow internees 'were driven like cattle into the boat, under heavy guard [...] a slave ship could not have had better equipment'.²⁵⁴ He also notes that he travelled to Canada among 700 German prisoners who were 'continually given preference' over the Jewish internees on board.²⁵⁵ Moreover, the diary states that out of the 3,500 people on board the ship, there was only room for 1/8 of them in the lifeboats.²⁵⁶ Waldston's reflects negatively about his experiences in both his host nations.²⁵⁷

Vera Kittel née Posener's memoir *A Story of Hope and Survival* (no date) is also in the AF collection. This memoir also adopts a critical perspective because Kittel reflects upon how, although Britain saved her and her sister's lives, it was very difficult for them being categorised as enemy aliens. But her memoir accords more with autobiographical writings by Kinder from other host nations because of the focus on sadness and hope as well as loss and joy.²⁵⁸ For example, Kittel states several times how hard it was to adapt to life in two different nations (Britain and Canada). Her story explores her loss of education, of her homeland and her parents and how alone she felt in Britain as she was separated from her sister. These are themes which are common in individual autobiographies which I will reflect upon shortly. Kittel's memoir

²⁵² Waldston, ...*When I was Seventeen*..., p. 13.

²⁵³ Waldston, ...*When I was Seventeen*..., p. 7.

²⁵⁴ Waldston, ...*When I was Seventeen*..., p. 7.

²⁵⁵ Waldston, ...*When I was Seventeen*..., p. 7.

²⁵⁶ Waldston, ...*When I was Seventeen*..., p. 7.

²⁵⁷ Waldston also wrote a more detailed account which is untitled that echoes his earlier scrapbook.

²⁵⁸ Vera Kittel, *A Story of Hope and Survival* (Azrieli Foundation, Canada, no date), p. 16.

also shows how she has created an international family as Fred, her husband and her daughter Margaret were born in Europe: ‘I was born in Germany, Fred in Czechoslovakia and Margaret in England. Our grandchildren were born in Canada. And all the great-grandchildren were born in Asia’.²⁵⁹

Sharing Experiences with Family and the Public

In this final section, I argue that, over the last two decades, a number of autobiographies have been published by former Kinder which reflect in a particularly critical way on aspects of the Kindertransport. This may in part be a response to, or seen as a parallel process to developments in Kindertransport historiography and some exhibitions. These individual works are therefore part of a gradually evolving critical trend identifiable across the genres examined in this thesis. Moreover, while at times these testimonies chime with the national narratives, the national characteristics operating within them are woven together and contrasted with other elements which allow for a richer perspective to flourish. Kinder are taking possession of their own stories after years of the topic being treated in other genres in ways which sometimes diluted the diversity and complexity of their stories. Unlike the chronologically ordered collective voice of the edited volumes, individual testimonies interweave stories from the present with those from the past, leaping from page to page, creating parallel narratives. There is a sense of shifting borders within the Kinder’s own minds as their memories move freely across time and space. The edited volumes of testimony contrast with this, because while the testimonies in these show the diasporic experience, they are framed within a forward-moving dynamic. The edited volumes from the 1990s onwards tend to conclude with the nation embracing the Kinder, even though they struggled to find new homes away from their loved ones. It is individual testimony which reflects a personal transnational memory of the Kindertransport, because

²⁵⁹ Kittel, *A Story of Hope and Survival*, p. 36.

Kinder not only recall their movements to different places, they also draw ethical conclusions from their experiences.

As Andrea Hammel writes, the Kindertransport is a subject which ‘is still very much alive within the refugee community and their descendants’, especially in Britain:²⁶⁰ ‘the prominence of the Kindertransport in British public consciousness is also steadily increasing’.²⁶¹ It is no surprise, then, that over the last two decades more and more Kinder have come forward to write and record their individual stories. But this is not the only reason. As Hammel points out, ‘one of the difficulties with research on the Kindertransport is the search for authentic material and paucity of archival material that has survived and is accessible’.²⁶² To understand how the Kinder ‘felt at the time of arrival in [their host nations]’, we have to ‘turn to other sources than institutional files’.²⁶³ While letters and diaries are extremely valuable sources which reflect directly on the Kinder’s experiences, autobiographical writing over the last twenty years provides an essential insight into how Kinder frame this event many years later. Moreover, the Kinder’s autobiographies are part of a wave of capturing stories of migration. As previously discussed, Hayman’s *By the Moon and the Stars* is a good example of an amalgamation between a diary and an autobiography as she has edited and translated her diaries from 1939-1945 and in places she has ‘interspersed the entries with summaries of events’.²⁶⁴ Hayman kept several diaries in Czech while she was in Britain as her father had asked her to keep a record of their time apart, but when Hayman discovered that her parents had been murdered in the Holocaust, she put her diaries away as they were intended for her parents to read.²⁶⁵ Hayman writes that: ‘for years and years the pain in my heart forbade me to

²⁶⁰ Andrea Hammel, ‘The Future of Kindertransport Research: Archives, Diaries, Databases, Fiction’, in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), p. 141.

²⁶¹ Hammel, ‘The Future of Kindertransport Research’, pp. 141-142.

²⁶² Hammel, ‘The Future of Kindertransport Research’, pp. 142.

²⁶³ Hammel, ‘The Future of Kindertransport Research’, pp. 145.

²⁶⁴ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. 9.

²⁶⁵ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. ix.

touch the journals into which I had poured my soul'.²⁶⁶ She decided to open them some forty years later to tell her children about her experiences: 'it was [...] from the vantage point of a secure life in New Zealand, [she] felt ready to re-read [her] story and to grasp the lessons learnt from a lonely youngster who survived'.²⁶⁷ Through rereading her diaries and writing down her story Hayman was ever conscious of 'the firm bond binding [her] to [her] parents'.²⁶⁸ She writes that 'it is a loving bond; yet it has never let [her] be free'.²⁶⁹ As with Gershon's early edited volume, individual Kinder feel compelled to write down their experiences to pay tribute to their parents' love and memory. There is also a need to connect the different generations as the Kinder provide a link between their children and the grandparents they never knew.

While these life histories reflect the Kinder's own desires to share their stories, they also result from a growing public interest in or even requests to read individual stories. As previously mentioned, many Kinder decided to give expression to their stories for their families so that they had a record of the family history. Equally, many Kinder were 'persuaded' to write their stories down so that they are 'made available to a wider readership'.²⁷⁰ For example, Hayman's intention to write her story down 'was strengthened in 1988 when [she] attended a reunion in England of those who escaped the Nazi terror in [her] country'.²⁷¹ Kinder have also written their individual stories down in response to current events such as the Iraq war, the Israel-Palestine crisis, rising levels of antisemitism, immigration issues and Holocaust memory more generally. For example, Leslie Baruch Brent writes that

like many others I have never been able to forgive Tony Blair for having led this country into a disastrous and misconceived (as well as illegal) war in Iraq, and I have not hidden my critical views of some of the actions taken by successive Israeli governments in the West Bank and in Gaza. Rightly or wrongly I felt that my autobiography should not be

²⁶⁶ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. ix.

²⁶⁷ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. ix.

²⁶⁸ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. 3.

²⁶⁹ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. 3.

²⁷⁰ Leslie Baruch Brent, 'Writing the Life of a Kindertransportee: Memories and Challenges', in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), p. 173.

²⁷¹ Hayman, *By the Moon and the Stars*, p. ix.

exclusively concerned with just my own affairs but also provide an opportunity for remembering people I have encountered in my life who I admired and who influenced me, and who, in some instances, sunk unjustly into oblivion.²⁷²

For his part, Lord Alfred Dubs, a British Labour politician and former member of Parliament, ‘as a former child refugee himself’, was inspired to talk about his experiences because of ‘his sense of anger at the political inaction’ in Britain to help refugees today.²⁷³ Many Kinder like Lord Dubs feel it is their responsibility not only to remember the Holocaust but also to ensure that we learn from it.²⁷⁴ It is in part this feeling of moral duty which has driven Kinder to write about their stories in the hope that they enhance political awareness of issues around immigration and prompt supportive action. Kinder around the world are united in this common goal. For example, Aryeh Neier, an American human rights activist and former Kind who co-founded Human Rights Watch, has written about how asylum saved his life and how today he hopes that ‘the US doesn’t turn its back on refugees’.²⁷⁵ As an advocate for human rights, Neier has shared his story because ‘the antagonism to refugees that [President Donald Trump] has generated will not soon disappear’ without challenging the ‘nationalistic and xenophobic’ attitudes within American society.²⁷⁶ Neier writes that the President

has banned all migrants to the US from several predominantly Muslim countries, suggesting that they are terrorists; he has labeled Mexican migrants rapists; and he has described the arrival of those fleeing violence in Central America as ‘an invasion’.²⁷⁷

²⁷² Brent, ‘Writing the Life of a Kindertransportee’, p. 174.

²⁷³ Amelia Gentleman, “‘It is a Disgrace to Europe’: Former Child Refugee Lord Dubs on the Calais Camp”, *The Guardian*, 5th September 2016, at <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/sep/05/disgrace-to-europe-former-child-refugee-lord-dubs-calais-camp> [accessed 1st August 2019].

²⁷⁴ Gentleman, “‘It is a Disgrace to Europe’”.

²⁷⁵ Aryeh Neier, ‘I Fled Nazi Germany. I Hope the US Doesn’t Turn Its Back on Refugees’, *The Guardian*, 1st July 2019, at <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jul/01/i-fled-nazi-germany-i-hope-the-us-doesnt-turn-its-back-on-refugees> [accessed 1st August 2019].

²⁷⁶ Neier, ‘I Fled Nazi Germany’.

²⁷⁷ Neier, ‘I Fled Nazi Germany’.

By talking about his past experiences, Neier makes clear that there is still much hostility towards migrants and asylum seekers today.²⁷⁸ I will return to these connections between the Kindertransport and the current refugee crisis later in the chapter.

*Individual Autobiographies*²⁷⁹

A striking feature of the recent Kinder autobiographies is that the Kinder present their lives as a coming to terms with constant flux. Of course, Kinder who travelled to America for example have, on a personal level, a stronger sense of transnational memory because their journeys were more far-reaching. However, while many Kinder who came to Britain did not move as far as Kinder who made further movements to America, they reflect on their further displacement around the British Isles (thus many became double refugees when they later also became evacuees). Some Kinder who came to Britain though did move beyond British shores during or after the war as some migrated further or travelled back to their former homelands. The Kindertransport was not a uniform process: individual autobiographies reveal how different Kinder made very different journeys as some Kinder made more journeys than others. The emergence of these personal transnational memories makes it harder, perhaps even impossible for us to ignore the negative aspects of the Kindertransport: the more extensive the process of uprooting, the greater the suffering of the Kinder. Regardless of what country the Kinder journeyed to, many autobiographies do not present the Kindertransport as a movement from threat to safety, but as an ongoing process of rupture and removal from familiar settings. In the case of Britain, they also challenge the successful narrative of accommodation.

²⁷⁸ Also see Ivan A. Backer, *My Train to Freedom: Boy's Journey from Nazi Europe to a Life of Activism* (Skyhove Publishing: New York, 2016).

²⁷⁹ To my knowledge, there is only one published Australian Kindertransport autobiography: Vera O'Brien, *Journey to Life* (Sydney Jewish Museum: Sydney, 2008) as well as an unpublished memoir housed at the Sydney Jewish Museum. Unfortunately I have not been able to access them. O'Brien first journeyed to New Zealand before arriving in Australia. I have above provided an example of a New Zealand Kindertransport autobiography. Leonore Ball née Freitag, a Kind who travelled to New Zealand has written an unpublished autobiography (1993) which I have not been able to access. In terms of Canadian autobiographies, I have examined individual memoirs placed with institutions.

The title of John Fieldsend's autobiography, *A Wondering Jew* (2014), provides one example of how British Kinder are helping to rethink the positive British narrative. This title evokes a sense of questioning, of loss, of movement, of religious spirituality, of new beginnings, of changing directions, and of developments over time. From the beginning of the book, the reader is presented with Fieldsend's wider view of his life, which is complex. Fieldsend's identity is shown to be fluid, as if he belongs nowhere and everywhere at the same time. It is this mix of 'wondering' and 'wandering', this constant mental and physical movement, which questions the positive British Kindertransport narrative.²⁸⁰ Fieldsend's autobiography does not present a progressive narrative as he writes that 'on the journey that we call life [...] we experience many changes. We can't choose our starting points and many of the changes are beyond our control'.²⁸¹ His autobiography details how, when he thought his 'life seemed to be settling down again', he was faced with yet another change.²⁸² This image of being constantly unsettled in one's host nation contrasts with the positive British narrative because the focus is not placed on feeling at home but on the many obstacles refugee children face once they were *in* their new homes.

Ruth Barnett's autobiography, *Person of No Nationality: A Story of Childhood Separation, Loss and Recovery* (2010), also critiques the positive British narrative because Barnett's story reflects upon how safety resulted in being stripped of your identity. Barnett talks about how, in 1949, she received a letter from her mother. She wanted to take her children back to Germany. But Barnett was extremely confused. She thought her mother was dead, because 'otherwise she would have rescued [her] from' the 'cruelty' of her foster parents.²⁸³ Barnett discovered that she 'was not eligible for British nationality because [she] was under

²⁸⁰ John Fieldsend, *A Wondering Jew* (Radec Press: Oxford, 2014), p. 174.

²⁸¹ Fieldsend, *A Wondering Jew*, p. 174.

²⁸² Fieldsend, *A Wondering Jew*, p. 37.

²⁸³ Ruth Barnett, *Person of No Nationality: A Story of Childhood Separation, Loss and Recovery* (David Paul: London, 2010), p. 105.

18', so she had to apply for travel papers which 'had "PERSON OF NO NATIONALITY" typed in big letters across the top'.²⁸⁴ In 1949, Barnett 'went through the original Kindertransport experience a second time, this time in reverse'.²⁸⁵ Her 'identity was completely fragmented', not only because she felt 'cut off and lost' from her first Kindertransport experience but also because of what resulted from it.²⁸⁶ Barnett's autobiography is not about successful integration but the trauma of being separated at such a young age from one's parents, and the ensuing consequences of this estrangement. In contrast to the positive British Kindertransport narrative, Barnett did not come to feel 'English': although she 'spoke the language [she] would never be fully English, because [she] wasn't born in England'²⁸⁷. Barnett goes on to say that she was not 'English, and certainly not German; there was only Jewish left [...] the trouble was that [she] had no idea what it meant to be Jewish'.²⁸⁸ As with Fieldsend's account, it is this position of being in limbo, of not knowing where you belong, which shows the Kinder's struggles to come to terms with their personal Kindertransport experiences. Barnett's autobiography also moves beyond arrival on the Kindertransport as it describes different arrivals and continual displacement as she moves from one foster home to another. Her autobiography is also about journeys of return, and being uprooted yet again, this time in the post-war period. These wider movements highlight her personal transnational experience as she not only moved around Britain during the war, she continued to move beyond and back towards British shores in the post-war years. The process of family reunification and repatriation to Germany was difficult and painful for Barnett. Nevertheless, she seems to be more at home in her hybridity today as she speaks with British and German children about her

²⁸⁴ Barnett, *Person of No Nationality*, p. 106.

²⁸⁵ Barnett, *Person of No Nationality*, p. 107.

²⁸⁶ Barnett, *Person of No Nationality*, p. 112.

²⁸⁷ Barnett, *Person of No Nationality*, p. 132.

²⁸⁸ Barnett, *Person of No Nationality*, p. 132.

experiences. For example, she writes that ‘severed roots that had been rejected for decades can then be reclaimed, and wounds can begin to heal’, suggesting she can reclaim her past.²⁸⁹

As previously discussed, many of the Kinder’s memories range freely over time and space, which is also a characteristic of the testimonies gathered by Canadian and Australian institutions. This zig-zag movement in the case of institutional testimonies is associated with the Kinder’s different lives in different nations as their memories move associatively by comparing their experiences in often two or three countries. Individual autobiographies though move thematically through time and space. Hanna Zack Miley’s *A Garland for Ashes: World War II, the Holocaust, and One Jewish Survivor’s Long Journey to Forgiveness* (2013) is a good example of how past and present stories are interwoven through the theme of loss. Miley moves associatively, linking her different memories through different points in her life characterised by loss. The intensity of different kinds of loss drives her thoughts. While loss could be presented in a chronological way, her book suggests that the theme of loss binds her memories together in a way which makes it difficult to separate the processes of departure, arrival and return because she longs for the ‘love [...] in the family where [she] stayed the longest’, her biological family who she was never reunited with.²⁹⁰ The theme of loss is a constant – the loss of one’s ‘parents and then all that is familiar, language, culture [and] the loss of security’.²⁹¹ Miley’s ‘early experiences in Britain only added to [her] losses [as] there was an environment of fear, people around [her] were afraid that Germany would invade [so she] hid [her] German connection.’²⁹² ‘As the war continued, that sense of danger connected to [her] German identity only increased, even though [she] was a Jew, a member of the victimized’.²⁹³ Miley’s autobiography reflects upon her ‘long journey from bitterness and hate

²⁸⁹ Barnett, *Person of No Nationality*, p. 210.

²⁹⁰ Author’s correspondence with Hanna Zack Miley on 14th October 2019.

²⁹¹ Author’s correspondence with Miley on 14th October 2019.

²⁹² Author’s correspondence with Miley on 14th October 2019.

²⁹³ Author’s correspondence with Miley on 14th October 2019.

to forgiveness and freedom', implying that the Kindertransport is a difficult process even if the journey does end with hope.²⁹⁴ It is not understood as a narrative of threat to safety, but as a journey where the Kind is 'cast into the unknown'.²⁹⁵ Like Barnett's, Miley's autobiography is about a movement from keeping 'the past at arms' length' to connecting with one's past, roots and origins.²⁹⁶ Yet this remembering brings with it a 'heart-rending pain' because of the 'unbearable' reality of losing one's family.²⁹⁷

Miley, who is an American-British Kindertransportee, begins her autobiography by recalling a flight she took in 2008 from Cologne to London. It suddenly 'dawns on [her] that almost seventy years ago [she] travelled this same route, albeit under very different circumstances'.²⁹⁸ Miley states that 'scenes from the past flicker[ed] before [her] eyes like an old-fashioned movie reel' as she remembered 'a little girl, scrunched into a corner of a train carriage, trying desperately to hold in [her] panic'.²⁹⁹ These emotional scenes of departures past and present highlight an interchange of thoughts around themes of loss, parting and relocation over her lifetime. Miley's memories jump forward to the seventieth reunion of the Kindertransport, only to then quickly move backwards in time as she looks at Frank Meisler's Kindertransport memorial in London. She notices 'the poignancy of the abrupt end of the steel railway line at the base of the sculpture' which takes her 'back to the instrument of [her] sudden separation from all that was warm and familiar'.³⁰⁰ Later within Miley's autobiography, in the course of three pages, she switches focus from 1992, to 2003, and then back to 2001: she talks first about the time of her parents' early lives and where they came from, before moving on to when she was reunited with Lisbet Ernst, who was her family's former live-in maid. Miley

²⁹⁴ Author's correspondence with Hanna Zack Miley on 14th August 2019.

²⁹⁵ Hanna Zack Miley, *A Garland for Ashes: World War II, the Holocaust, and One Jewish Survivor's Long Journey to Forgiveness* (Outskirts Press: Denver, 2013). p. 4.

²⁹⁶ Miley, *A Garland for Ashes*, p. 26.

²⁹⁷ Miley, *A Garland for Ashes*, pp. 13-17.

²⁹⁸ Miley, *A Garland for Ashes*, p. 3.

²⁹⁹ Miley, *A Garland for Ashes*, p. 3.

³⁰⁰ Miley, *A Garland for Ashes*, p. 6.

states how Ernst took her hand and led her back to her past.³⁰¹ While this movement in time and space is about rediscovery, it is still filled with a sense of loss because Miley has “no memory of such a person”.³⁰²

Miley reflects on her ‘own fogbound memoryscape’ because her new encounters in the present with people who recall stories from the past ‘caused a few of [her] own memories to emerge, fogbound, into the light’.³⁰³ She remembers an ‘earliest awareness’ of her mother’s tenderness when she ‘was lying in [her] cot’, but this tender memory is soon connected to loss because she states how these ‘small, daily incidents in [her] family life’ reminded her of how her parents ‘could never have imagined what was to come’.³⁰⁴ As with some of the SF testimonies, Miley’s autobiography has two parallel narratives: Miley’s own personal Kindertransport experience, and the story of the fate of her parents. In both cases the narratives are driven by loss. For example, Miley describes her Kindertransport journey as one of physical and emotional ‘displacement’ because in 1939 her ‘body [occupied] a small space among all other Jewish children [and her] mind and emotions [went] into hibernation’, she was ‘number 8814’.³⁰⁵ She also has ‘an inward conversation with [her] parents’ throughout the book, which reflects on how her ‘heart was closed to [them]’ for some years as she felt abandoned by them, as well as on how she cherishes them and keeps their memory alive.³⁰⁶ Today, politicians use the Kindertransport to focus on positive lessons, lessons that relate to rescue. It is difficult though to take much that is positive when one of the outcomes of the Kinder’s lives is an overwhelming sense of loss.³⁰⁷

³⁰¹ Miley, *A Garland for Ashes*, p. 16.

³⁰² Miley, *A Garland for Ashes*, p. 16.

³⁰³ Miley, *A Garland for Ashes*, p. 23.

³⁰⁴ Miley, *A Garland for Ashes*, p. 25.

³⁰⁵ Miley, *A Garland for Ashes*, pp. 89-93.

³⁰⁶ Miley, *A Garland for Ashes*, p. 199.

³⁰⁷ For examples of other Kindertransport autobiographies, see: Hannah Hickman, *Let One Go Free* (Quill Press: Newark, 2003); Hanna Bandler, *A Less Ordinary Life* (Inform Print: North Harrow, 2014); Dame Stephanie Shirley written with Richard Askwith, *Let It Go: My Extraordinary Story* (Penguin Books Ltd.: London, 2012); Phyllida Scriven, *Escaping Hitler: A Jewish Boy’s Quest for Freedom and His Future* (Pen & Sword History: Barnsley, 2016); Jeremy Josephs with Susi Bechhöfer, *Rosa’s Child: The True Story of One*

The Development of Kindertransport Testimony: A Personal Case Study

This section of the chapter outlines an example of how one Kind's testimony can develop. I am aware that other Kinder's testimony may develop similarly or differently to this individual example. There are noticeable developments in Miley's testimony as she continues to research and engage with the Kindertransport.³⁰⁸ Miley's testimony has not only changed over time as she also adapts it depending upon the context. For example, when Miley speaks to a German audience, especially school children she 'wonder[s] what is their families' story [...] what has been the silence?'³⁰⁹ She states that 'Germans come to the story so differently' to American audiences because, for Germans, 'it's almost like an act of repentance', whereas she sometimes feels that Americans approach the story from a 'distance': they are instead 'watching this sceptically' as 'they do not have these personal strings attached to it'.³¹⁰ These different environments have led Miley to reflect upon what she is doing in these spaces, as she 'tries to be very sensitive to where they are and their situation'.³¹¹ In Germany in particular Miley focuses on the topic of 'healing and how [she] can be a benefit for children and how can [she] be something in their lives'.³¹² Miley's testimony has reached out to family members of former

Women's Quest for a Lost Mother and a Vanished Past (I.B. Tauris Publishers: London, 1996); Margaret M. Dunlop, *Goodbye Berlin: The Biography of Gerald Wiener* (Birlim Ltd.: Edinburgh, 2017); Helmut Heckscher and Zahara Heckscher, *Uprooted and Replanted: The Memoir of Helmut Heckscher from Hamburg to the Kindertransport to America* (Xlibris: Bloomington, Indiana, 2017); David H. Herschler, *Kindertransport: A Lifelong Journey of Survival and Redemption: The Story of Ralph W. Mollerick, A Kind* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing: Scotts Valley, 2017); George Shefi, *The Way of Fate: A True Story from the Kindertransport* (Independently published, 2017); Eva Figs, *Little Eden: A Child at War* (Persea Books: New York, 1978); Bernard Kessler, *Memories: Real or Imagined: My Life and Times* (Independently published, 2019); Ruth David, *Child of Our Time: A Young Girl's Flight from the Holocaust* (Bloomsbury: London, Oxford, New York, 2003); Vera Gissing, *Pearls of Childhood: A Unique Childhood Memoir of Life in Wartime Britain in the Shadow of the Holocaust* (Robson Books: London, 1994); and Frieda Stolzberg Korobkin, *Throw Your Feet Over Your Shoulders: Beyond the Kindertransport* (Devora Publishing: London, 2008).

³⁰⁸ See 'Reflections on the Kindertransport: Parts One to Four', *YouTube*, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzyw9eQG9PI> [accessed 22nd June 2020].

³⁰⁹ Author's interview with Hanna Zack Miley on 17th June 2020.

³¹⁰ Author's interview with Miley on 17th June 2020.

³¹¹ Author's interview with Miley on 17th June 2020.

³¹² Author's interview with Miley on 17th June 2020.

perpetrators to help them to face their own pasts, which is a dimension that highlights how testimony can function in the present.

Miley's testimony has taken on new shape for Miley herself as well as for the audiences she speaks with because as she is asked new questions or finds new information, she incorporates this into her story. Miley travelled with a group of friends to Chełmno extermination camp where they learned about her family story in more detail. This trip happened during the time Miley was writing her book. Since then Miley has travelled back to Germany to speak on several occasions. During one event, Miley read a passage from her book which emotionally reveals what happened to her parents. The event she attended coincided with the day that her parents were gassed in Chełmno. After the event a member of the audience approached her and asked for forgiveness for their grandfather who had been stationed at Chełmno when her parents were murdered. Miley and the grandson of a Nazi went on to exchange artwork as a process of healing. This is not mentioned in her book as it happened after it was published. This is an example though of her long journey of reconciliation as well as how testimony is a process of healing for Miley as she discovers and reimagines her story. It also shows how Miley chooses what parts of her book to share with audiences.

In a recent interview I conducted with Miley, she spoke about how her testimony moves beyond her book through other media. For example, Miley's testimony has not only been presented in a book format but also through social media platforms and her audio book; her story has been read out by speakers at international events. Miley speaks about how her story is 'alive' and 'still living': it goes on evolving as she continues to research and have new experiences.³¹³ For many years Miley was silent; she was a reluctant writer and speaker. Today though Miley is aware of the relevance of her experience in the present day as she considers

³¹³ Author's interview with Miley on 17th June 2020.

the views of people she is talking to.³¹⁴ She also has a desire to be understood.³¹⁵ For example, Miley writes about her responses to the transnational impact of her book. She writes: ‘I had a deep longing for my story to be told in the German language [as] much of my healing has taken place in Germany in the presence of close German friends and it is fulfilling and redemptive to tell the story in the heart language of German readers and I treasure the effects I see in German lives’.³¹⁶ Miley’s story could be understood as a voyage of discovery. This was especially the case during a recent conversation with Miley. Here, she stated that listening to the audio recording of her book ‘deepened [her] connection with [her parents]’ as the audio recording progressively uncovered her parent’s fate.³¹⁷ In a recent YouTube series about ‘Reflections on the Kindertransport’, Miley draws her own conclusions from her personal story. She states:

I was an unaccompanied child refugee and my hope is that my story will evoke compassionate care for children who are experiencing loss and trauma today. How many years will it take for each child to find healing from their losses? My story is also a warning at this time where far right beliefs and contempt for the other is spreading like a virus.³¹⁸

Miley’s personal reflections not only shows how her own testimony is constantly developing and impacting audiences as it also speaks to general trends in recent Kindertransport testimony which are seeking to present the Kindertransport in all its complexity and see its wider effects in the present.

Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, when the Kinder are in control of narrating their own Kindertransport experiences, a more complicated picture is the result. Kinder alert us to the issues which arise from their memories, and, despite their sense of loss, they have also used

³¹⁴ Author’s interview with Miley on 17th June 2020.

³¹⁵ Author’s interview with Miley on 17th June 2020.

³¹⁶ Author’s correspondence with Hanna Zack Miley on 20th June 2020.

³¹⁷ Author’s correspondence with Miley on 20th June 2020.

³¹⁸ ‘Reflections of the Kindertransport: Part Three’, *YouTube*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=onxdqx3ZH_g [accessed 22nd June 2020].

their testimonies to inspire us to act to help refugees today. However, while more recent autobiographies present critical and transnational elements, it seems that on a political level in Britain, the positive British Kindertransport narrative still dominates, sometimes in dubious ways. For example, on World Refugee Day 2019, Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the Labour Party, referred to the Kindertransport as an event which Britain could be ‘proud’ of and said that we should continue to ‘pursue these values, humanity, acceptance and fairness’.³¹⁹ By referring to Lord Dubs’ experiences, Corbyn used the Kindertransport to claim legitimacy for how Britain acted in the past as well as in the present towards refugees, and declare his own commitment to help refugees today. Yet his speech was delivered shortly ‘after Labour peer Lord Falconer criticised the party’s disciplinary process for failing to stamp out antisemitism’.³²⁰ Corbyn’s speech sent a welcoming message, yet many Jewish people in the Labour Party feel discriminated against and are unhappy at what they see as the Party’s delays in dealing with the problem.³²¹ In May 2019, Theresa May, British Prime Minister at the time, mentioned Sir Nicholas Winton in her resignation speech ‘in a reference to members of her party who [...] refused to vote for her Brexit deal’.³²² She ‘quoted him telling her that “compromise is not a dirty word”’.³²³ Effectively, May instrumentalised the memory of Winton in support of Brexit. This was all the more ironic and inappropriate as May, as Home Secretary, had been central to the process of introducing the ‘hostile environment’ policy towards migrants.³²⁴ Winton’s

³¹⁹ Mathilde Frot, ‘Corbyn Video Calls for Rejection of “Language of Hate”, Citing Kindertransport’, *Jewish News*, 20th June 2019, at <https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/corbyn-video-calls-for-rejection-of-language-of-hate-citing-kindertransport/> [accessed 21st September 2019].

³²⁰ Frot, ‘Corbyn Video Calls for Rejection of “Language of Hate”’.

³²¹ See, for instance, Rowena Mason, Matthew Weaver and Frances Perraudin, ‘Seventy Labour Staffers Give Statements to Antisemitism Inquiry’, *The Guardian*, 6th December 2019, at <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/dec/05/seventy-labour-staffers-give-statements-to-antisemitism-inquiry> [accessed 17th December 2019].

³²² Jewish Chronicle Reporter, ‘Daughter of Kindertransport Founder Criticises May Over Resignation Speech’, *The Jewish Chronicle*, 26th May 2019, at <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/daughter-of-kindertransport-founder-criticises-may-over-resignation-speech-1.484734> [accessed 21st September 2019].

³²³ JC Reporter, ‘Daughter of Kindertransport Founder Criticises May Over Resignation Speech’.

³²⁴ See Sonya Sceats, ‘Theresa May’s Legacy is the Hostile Environment – How Can She Evoke Nicholas Winton in Her Resignation Speech?’, *The Independent*, 25th May 2019, at <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/theresa-may-resigns-hostile-environment-nicholas-winton-immigration-windrush-scandal-a8929966.html> [accessed 17th December 2019].

daughter, Barbara Winton, pointed out that May's admiration for Winton 'has not led to following in his footsteps in relation to today's child refugees'.³²⁵ Therefore, it seems that Kindertransport testimony has had very little impact with regards to the political sphere because while some politicians use the Kindertransport to urge us to do more to aid refugees today, little is being done to address hostilities towards certain groups in Britain as well as bringing more refugee children to these shores.

By and large, Kindertransport testimony has always been more multivocal and reflective than the positive British national narrative might suggest. This chapter has explored how British Kindertransport testimony in the 1960s was complicated and transnational in its nature from the beginning. Later edited volumes began to reflect a more positive view of resettlement as Kinder felt more at home in Britain in the late 1990s and 2000s, but they did not shy away from reminding the reader of negative aspects. Despite the coopting of testimony by British museums, documentaries and politics, testimony in autobiographical form has if anything become even more nuanced over the last ten years. The difference between the testimonies of the 1960s and the late 2000s is that Kinder from around the world are drawing even more ethical conclusions from their transnational experiences. There also seems to be a greater need today to warn people about stereotyping, antisemitism, intolerance and the neglect that many refugee children face as hostility levels towards refugees have not decreased. While Kindertransport testimony often shows the negative and positive aspects of the Kindertransport side by side, this is far less the case with the representation of the Kindertransport in other genres. The following chapters will discuss the coming to prominence of the British narrative in museum exhibitions and memorials, as well as compare representations of the Kindertransport in British museums and memorials with those in America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

³²⁵ JC Reporter, 'Daughter of Kindertransport Founder Criticises May Over Resignation Speech'.

Chapter Two

Representing the Kindertransport in Museum Exhibitions

Introduction

As indicated in the previous chapter, the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport developed over time. While it emerged in the late 1940s, it receded subsequently, only to become dominant from the 1990s onwards. One of the strongest ways this narrative is communicated is through museum exhibitions, which is the focus here. The argument that will emerge from this chapter is that many British museum exhibitions tend to present a positive view of the Kindertransport. While museum exhibitions do simultaneously indicate the existence of the negatives, they often immediately minimise them in contrast to testimony, which presents a more balanced view as the positives and negatives are given equal weight.¹

To understand why British museum exhibitions tend to focus on the positives, we need to consider two particular factors. The first is the evolution of a particularly patriotic British memory of the Second World War during the late Margaret Thatcher and John Major era (1975-1997).² The second is the emergence of Holocaust memory in Britain. ‘The Holocaust Exhibition’ at the Imperial War Museum South (IWMS), which was developed in the 1990s, was opened in 2000, the same year as the Stockholm Holocaust declaration was proclaimed. It is ironic that the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport became dominant at a time when there was a global ‘move towards positioning the Holocaust within a wider frame of “Man’s inhumanity”’.³ According to Andy Pearce, in the 1990s the Holocaust was integrated into British museums and culture. He goes on to state that it was encased ‘in a universal frame’,

¹ For reasons of focus, this chapter reflects upon how the Kindertransport is represented in physically available exhibitions only. Although online exhibitions are an underresearched area of the Kindertransport, this is beyond the purview of this thesis.

² See, for instance, Geoff Eley, ‘Finding the People’s War: Film, British Collective Memory, and World War II’, *The American Historical Review* 106:3 (2001), pp. 818-838, especially pp. 818-823.

³ Andy Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain* (Routledge: London, 2014), p. 117.

relating it to human rights discourse.⁴ However, while the IWMS has a universal dimension to its 'Holocaust Exhibition', parts of it, especially the Kindertransport section, associate memory of the Holocaust with British achievements – the rescue of Jews from Nazism. The IWMS sensitises us to the horror of the Holocaust as a universal tragedy, but the Kindertransport section has a positive character which makes it possible to extract something uplifting from the history of the Holocaust. Britain's appropriation of the Kindertransport fits into Britain's patriotic view of the Second World War. This chapter reflects upon how the IWMS places the Kindertransport within a context of British successes during and after the war.

This chapter will also argue that, over the last few years, there has to a degree been a reframing of the positive British national narrative of the Kindertransport as temporary and travelling exhibitions have begun to challenge it. This bears out the argument in Chapter One: new exhibitions as well as recently published individual autobiographies are more nuanced because critical and transnational aspects carry more weight. While these new exhibitions are not permanent ones, so are not yet central to British Kindertransport memory, there is a gradual movement towards rethinking the self-congratulatory narrative of rescue in Britain.

The Kindertransport is most strongly present within British museum exhibitions from the 1990s onwards, as this was the period when many museums started to engage with the topic. There is a much greater focus on the Kindertransport in British museums compared to other host nations. Therefore, it makes sense to turn attention first to Britain. Because there are many different museums which feature the Kindertransport, I have decided to group them into three categories. These comprise: war museums, Jewish museums, and Holocaust museums. While it is important to consider the remits and agendas of different types of museums, it is also important to reflect upon the very nature of what a war museum does compared to a Jewish museum, for example, as this may also affect how the theme is displayed to visitors. Towards

⁴ Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain*, p. 117.

the end of the British museums' section, I will consider how the Kindertransport is represented in other host nations. I argue that exhibitions in the other host nations accord with the national Holocaust discourses in these countries.

British War Museums

The IWMs (North and South), which are in Manchester and London respectively, represent Britain's role in the First and Second World Wars as well as in more recent conflicts. To an extent, they also explore stories from the countries which were formerly part of the British Empire, highlighting how there can be a transnational focus as well as a national one operating within the museums. However, IWMs only represent parts of Britain's wartime history, especially with regards to the Holocaust and the Kindertransport. Tom Lawson, for example, notes that visitors to the IWMS (Imperial War Museum South) might expect to encounter a debate about the problem of genocide in the British Empire because contemporaneous with the Holocaust memory boom came the growing interest and reflection upon the implications and consequences of Empire.⁵ Yet according to Lawson, there is little engagement with this discussion within the museum.⁶ In the case of the Kindertransport, there is a recognition of parts of the transnational history as well as of the more negative aspects within the IWMs. But it soon becomes clear that the museums employ various techniques to limit the transnational history and deconstruct the negatives so that the positive British narrative dominates. In this chapter, I will be examining the use of focus, narrative, physical arrangement, contrast, lighting, aesthetics, colour, design, and display features to downplay the negatives so that the positive narrative can emerge more sharply.⁷ However, later within the chapter I also discuss

⁵ Tom Lawson, 'The Holocaust and Colonial Genocide at the Imperial War Museum', in Caroline Sharples and Olaf Jensen (eds), *Britain and the Holocaust: Remembering and Representing War and Genocide* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2013), p. 160.

⁶ Lawson, 'The Holocaust and Colonial Genocide at the Imperial War Museum', p. 160.

⁷ For a further discussion about how museums employ these techniques, see Barry Lord and Gail Dexter Lord (eds), *The Manual of Museum Exhibitions* (AltaMira Press: Lanham, 2001), and Elizabeth Bogle, *Museum Exhibition: Planning and Design* (AltaMira Press: Lanham, 2013).

how such techniques are sometimes used to emphasise the negatives, making it harder to ignore them.

The IWMS, according to Lawson, ‘remains implicitly involved in the glorification of British military adventures’.⁸ Therefore, ‘with the establishment of the exhibition [in 2000] the Holocaust was admitted to this official national memory, built (according to the IWM) on military might’.⁹ The Kindertransport is not placed within a neutral narrative because the IWMS frames memory in a positive way. As I will discuss below, ‘throughout the exhibition the visitor is [...] presented with the reflections of a group of Holocaust survivors whose testimonies serve to augment the main narrative’, but the IWMS marginalises the more negative aspects of the Kinder’s testimonies. According to Lawson, in the IWMS ‘there are implicit assumptions behind the organisation of material and information which, because of the value attached to some events, provide an interpretation of the Holocaust which can ultimately live up to its location in the Imperial War Museum’.¹⁰

Both IWM exhibitions place emphasis on certain parts of Britain’s history of the Kindertransport, such as how the Kinder were received, and first integrated into British society. They do not really address the wider history of the movement of Kinder beyond British shores to former parts of the British Empire such as Australia and Canada. This feeds into the positive British national narrative of the Kindertransport as well as of the Holocaust because Britain looks inwards rather than outwards. The Kindertransport as well as the Holocaust emerge ‘as a good news story for Britain’ as the nation’s view of itself as a rescuer and a liberator largely go unchallenged throughout the exhibitions.¹¹ Thus, visitors are not invited to question the positive narrative of the Kindertransport because, as I will argue, any critique found within the

⁸ Tom Lawson, ‘Ideology in a Museum of Memory: A Review of the Holocaust Exhibition at the Imperial War Museum’, *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 4:2 (2003), p. 174.

⁹ Lawson, ‘Ideology in a Museum of Memory’, p. 175.

¹⁰ Lawson, ‘Ideology in a Museum of Memory’, p. 176.

¹¹ Lawson, ‘The Holocaust and Colonial Genocide at the Imperial War Museum’, p. 161.

exhibitions is neutralised. Therefore, the narrative of the Kindertransport within these museums 'fits into a more widespread culture of Holocaust memory in Britain' because visitors leave the museums with a sense that 'Britons can feel good about their past and present'.¹²

Imperial War Museum South

The Kindertransport is presented within different contexts and locations within the IWMs, resulting in different readings of the theme. The IWMS' 'Holocaust Exhibition' appears to situate the Kindertransport within a conventional chronology of the Holocaust. Thus, the Kindertransport is found after the sections which focus on the rise of Hitler and the Nazi party, the first concentration camps and boycotts, and the Nuremberg Laws.¹³ However, this linear narrative is then disrupted when visitors reach the part of the exhibition which deals with Kristallnacht and the Kindertransport. Here, visitors can choose one of two alternative routes. They can leave the 'Kristallnacht' section to one side and walk towards the Kindertransport section, or they can view 'Kristallnacht' and then loop back around to the Kindertransport. The space is so organised that visitors are certainly encouraged to approach the Kindertransport section first. It occupies a larger area, and is higher: the piled suitcases and television screen, showcasing documentary footage of the Kinder arriving, loom large above it. By contrast, the layout of the artefacts within the 'Kristallnacht' section draws visitors' eyes downwards. Some visitors, if they do not loop back, may bypass 'Kristallnacht' altogether. This creates a particular impression as the Kindertransport is shown as a high point of the exhibition. I am aware that not everyone may take this particular route. For instance, one visitor stated that she

¹² Lawson, 'The Holocaust and Colonial Genocide at the Imperial War Museum', p. 161.

¹³ Prior to this there was little reference to the Kindertransport and the Holocaust at the Imperial War Museum South. See Suzanne Bardgett, 'The Genesis and Development of the Imperial War Museum's Holocaust Exhibition Project', *The Journal of Holocaust Education* 7:3 (1998), pp. 28-37; Tony Kushner, 'The Holocaust and the Museum World in Britain: A Study of Ethnography', *Immigrants and Minorities: Historical Studies in Ethnicity, Migration and Diaspora* 21:1-2 (2002), pp. 13-40; and Suzanne Bardgett, 'The Depiction of the Holocaust at the Imperial War Museum since 1961', *Journal of Israeli History: Politics, Society, Culture* 23:1 (2004), pp. 146-156.

went to the 'Kristallnacht' section and not the 'Kindertransport section' because she moved in a straight line and did not look across.¹⁴ However, two other interviewees took the same route as I did and were immediately struck by the Kindertransport section which gives support to my point that there is a strong pull towards it.¹⁵ These two interviewees agreed that the Kindertransport presented in this manner seems to detract from the brutality of one of the first tragedies of the Holocaust. It is presented as the happy outcome of a negative event, supporting the positive British narrative. Prior to this section, visitors had been presented with a German perspective, highlighting how the Nazis wanted to expel Jews from German society. But then they encounter a British perspective about rescue and arrival. This is one of the first examples of a museum exhibition using contrast as well as diverting visitors' attention to emphasise a particular understanding, as criticism of Germany is used to highlight Britain's achievements as the nation became a sanctuary for many Kinder. Germany on the other hand wanted to force out people with Jewish heritage. Therefore, 'the Holocaust is awarded a redemptive role for Britain and Western culture and history; after all Nazism was defeated by the Allies, something visitors are reminded of simply through the context of the IWM itself'.¹⁶

In the IWMS' 'Holocaust Exhibition', the Kindertransport is found within the section entitled 'Thousands Seek Refuge', implying that the Kindertransport was not unique because many refugees tried to escape Nazi persecution prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. Visitors are first confronted with a map which documents the number of Jews who fled from Greater Germany between 1933 and 1939 to different countries around the globe. The map shows that America gave shelter to the largest group of Jewish refugees, whereas Norway and Denmark received the least number. Britain, in contrast to these nations, is shown to have taken in 55,000 Jewish refugees. There is no discussion of whether Britain could have taken in more

¹⁴ Author's interview with Imogen Dalziel on 13th June 2020.

¹⁵ Author's interview with Bill Niven and Alex Hinsley on 25th July 2020.

¹⁶ Lawson, 'Ideology in a Museum of Memory', p. 182.

refugees, or why it did not allow many of the Kinder's parents to accompany their children to safety. Rather, the numbers presented by the map show that although Britain did not receive the largest number of Jewish refugees, it did take in more compared to the countries geographically closer to Germany such as Belgium and France. Here is a second example of using a particular technique such as the visual presentation of information to bolster the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport because visitors leave thinking that Britain indeed did much more than others.

As visitors move towards the subsection on the Kindertransport, they are presented with text panels and objects from former Kinder such as books, photographs and a copy of the magazine *Picture Post*. The title of the subsection ('10,000 Children Reached Safety in Britain') places emphasis on Britain as a rescuer omitting mention of Britain's role as a transit country. The layout and title reinforce each other, because although the Kindertransport is found within the wider context of escape, it appears to the left of the 'Thousands Seek Refugee' section. This disjuncture highlights a shift from the transnational history which focuses on how many different countries gave shelter to refugees, towards a national narrative about Britain's role in the Kindertransport. Jennifer Craig-Norton writes of the 'uncomplicated redemptive narrative of the Kindertransport [which] rests on the fact that Great Britain did something when the rest of the world did little, thus securing life for 10,000 children and their descendants'.¹⁷ Her view is borne out by the IWMS' 'Holocaust Exhibition', because it focuses on Britain's successes compared to the roles played by other host nations. However, 'while the British government legitimately deserves credit for acting to save these children, the majority of whom would undoubtedly have perished at the hands of the Nazis', overwhelmingly focusing on Britain as 'home' simplifies the narrative as some Kinder travelled far beyond British shores

¹⁷ Jennifer A. Norton, *The Kindertransport: History and Memory*, Masters dissertation, California State University, 2010, p. 4.

to find new homes.¹⁸ The technique of omitting particular parts of the transnational history is used to promote the positive narrative of rescue. If the exhibition reflected upon further movements, it would have to acknowledge that Britain did not become a home to some Kinder.

This edited telling of history is also supported by the main text panel, as it reads:

with public opinion shocked by Kristallnacht Britain relented and agreed to take in Jewish children, provided they would not be a burden on the state. Desperate parents flooded Jewish organisations in Germany with applications. Charitable organisations in Britain particularly the Refugee Children's Movement arranged travel – the so called Kindertransports – and accommodation. The last of these Kindertransports left Berlin on 31st August 1939 – the very eve of the war. Many of the 9,345 children who arrived in Britain never saw their parents again.¹⁹

The fact that Britain interned some Kinder and even deported them to internment camps abroad is not featured within any text panel. Therefore, another method which ensures the positive narrative remains strong is to overlook or conceal certain aspects of the Kindertransport (see later in the chapter).

However, the exhibition does refer to how many Kinder felt confused and distressed on arrival in Britain. For example, the *Picture Post* magazine from 17th December 1938 relates how Herbert Holzinger's arrival in Britain was not 'a great adventure', which contrasts with the message of the Refugee Children's Movement 1944 report by John Presland. Rather Holzinger talks about how his

first day in Birmingham was hell. It suddenly hit me that we were in a foreign country without knowing the language, without relatives or friends, and I was trying desperately to be brave as a thirteen-year-old boy was expected to behave. I spent most of that day in and out of the toilet so that no one could see the tears rolling down my cheeks.²⁰

The Kindertransport is not presented here as a smooth process because there is a degree of disorientation. This chaos seems to be external as well as internal as many children did not understand the processes of relocation. Likewise, those in charge of helping the children did not always know how to comfort them. The *Picture Post* piece places emphasis on the Kinder's

¹⁸ Norton, *The Kindertransport*, p. 4.

¹⁹ 'The Holocaust Exhibition', Imperial War Museum South, 2000.

²⁰ 'The Holocaust Exhibition', IWMS.

dislocation from their homes and families. Holzinger's account also stresses the Kinder's fears and anxieties with regards to being separated from their former lives, and how difficult it was not knowing the language and local customs. While these more distressing aspects are presented, the positive British narrative is ultimately supported by this artefact because the magazine's photographs show the Kinder starting to play again in Britain. There is a careful choice of eye-catching images which draws the visitors' eyes towards the positive images rather than the text. The exhibition stresses that it was in this country that the Kinder's childhoods could continue.

After the Kindertransport, visitors encounter newspaper quotations relating to the Evian Conference and the British Mandate in Palestine. However, printed as they are on panels attached to the side of the Kindertransport display, they are not easily found. The newspaper quotes read as follows:

1. Daily Express, 23 August 1938

...dreadful are the afflictions of the Jewish people ... Every warm heart must sympathise deeply with them in their plight ... Certainly there is no room for the Jews in Britain, where we have 1,800,000 of our own people out of work and biting their nails. But places must be found for the Jews. There are plenty of uninhabited parts of the world where, given a touch of Christian spirit, they may yet find happy homes.

2. Daily Herald, 26 August 1938

If this is coming to the help of the refugees, then what would the nations do if they mean to desert them?

3. Evening News, 13 July 1938

Every country is privately determined not to become the spiritual home of the Great unwanted ... Money we will provide, if need be, but the law of self-preservation demands that the word 'Enter' be removed from the gate.

4. Danziger Vorposten, 4 July 1938

We note that sympathy is shown to the Jews so long as it encourages agitation against Germany, but no country is prepared to remove central Europe's cultural defeats by accepting a few thousand Jews. The conference has therefore vindicated the German Policy towards the Jews.²¹

²¹ 'The Holocaust Exhibition', IWMS.

There is here some engagement with the more negative aspects of Britain's response to the persecution of Jews. However, placing these quotes next to the Kindertransport implies a division between 'children as "desirable" immigrants and, at least by implication, of adults as "undesirable" immigrants'.²² The newspaper quotes also make visitors aware that Britain was concerned about 'Arab unrest' and as a result placed 'strict limits on Jewish immigration with the 1939 White Paper on Palestine'.²³ The physical arrangement of material serves to conceal these more critical moments, and they are outweighed by the essentially positive narrative of the Kindertransport because it occupies a more central space, enabling the narrative of rescue to come through stronger.

To return to how testimony is used within the exhibition, the technique of contrast is used to further reinforce the positive narrative of rescue because reflection upon the difficulties Kinder faced is connected solely to events in Germany and Austria. Visitors learn about Helga Kohn-Wertheimer and Ruth Hirsch's personal experiences under Nazism. For example, we learn how Kohn-Wertheimer had to hide in a cupboard during Kristallnacht and how her uncle was taken to a 'work camp', as well as how Hirsch had to leave school at thirteen and become a clerk, and how her family had to stay with her non-Jewish grandparents for fear that her father would be arrested.²⁴ Because there is no discussion about how they adapted to life in Britain, visitors move on feeling content knowing that the children arrived safely. However, visitors do discover that Hirsch 'was sent to work as a maid at a boarding school in Bournemouth'.²⁵ Hirsch's story implies how not all Kinder were adopted by loving families, rather some were exploited (although it is not clear whether Hirsch was paid for her work or not). On the other

²² Bill Niven and Amy Williams, 'The Role of Memory in the Negotiation of the Refugee Crisis', *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Blog Seeking Protection*, 20th November 2018, at <https://holocaustremembrance.blog/2018/11/20/the-role-of-memory-in-the-negotiation-of-the-refugee-crisis/> [accessed 15th January 2019].

²³ 'The Holocaust Exhibition', IWMS.

²⁴ 'The Holocaust Exhibition', IWMS.

²⁵ 'The Holocaust Exhibition', IWMS.

hand, the positive narrative is reinforced by Kohn-Wertheimer's story because Kohn-Wertheimer, her mother and her aunt all managed to journey to Britain eventually, highlighting how the nation became their refuge. We are not informed whether Kohn-Wertheimer was able to live with her mother and aunt, or whether she was separated from them in Britain. By focusing on acts of salvation rather than subsequent integration, the positive narrative goes mainly unchallenged.

Visitors are also introduced to the testimonies of Margareta Burkill, an Austrian lady living in Cambridge who took charge of the welfare of many Kinder; Henry Fulda, who fled Nazi Germany in 1939 and was then interned as an enemy alien by the British government on the Isle of Man; and Walter Fliess, who came to London in 1933 and was also later interned as an enemy alien in Britain before being deported to Australia on board the *Dunera*. Burkill's testimony confirms the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport because she states that there was an 'electric current' that swept across Britain as every village said that 'we must save the children', everyone wanted to help.²⁶ Yet Fulda's testimony also has critical moments because he points out how he and his fellow internees were regarded as spies. This criticism is also supported by Fliess' testimony, as he describes how the passengers were ill-treated by their guards. However, it is not made clear that these guards were in fact British, or that Kinder were deported on board the *Dunera* from Britain to Australia with Nazi sympathisers: negative aspects are not fully explored. Fliess does state that passengers were robbed of their belongings, beaten, and one even committed suicide on board. Visitors may not register these more critical moments, however, because this testimony is not found within the main Kindertransport section but to the side of it. Moreover, it is only accessible if visitors use the two white telephones provided.

²⁶ 'The Holocaust Exhibition', IWMS.

The IWMS' 'Holocaust Exhibition' supports the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport because notions of salvation and gratitude dominate. For example, the subsections located near the Kindertransport such as 'Kristallnacht' and 'Euthanasia' encourage visitors to reflect upon how Kinder journeyed to freedom while other children faced extermination. Caroline Sharples and Olaf Jensen have argued that 'pointing to the "rescue" of Jewish children [...] accentuates Britain's preferred self-image as a haven for the oppressed'. They go on to contend that 'mythologising the notion of Britain "standing alone" in the fight against Nazism' offers something of a "safe" story with clear-cut heroes and villains and a redemptive, victorious ending'.²⁷ This is very much the case with the presentation of the Kindertransport in the IWMS' 'Holocaust Exhibition'. While it seems that the exhibition admits some criticism as it acknowledges the difficult reception process, the narrative comes to an abrupt halt: the Kinder's lives during and after the war are left uncommented. The incompleteness of the narrative prevents links being drawn to subsequent fates of Kinder and other children from 1940 onwards.

Imperial War Museum North

The theme of the Kindertransport at the Imperial War Museum North (IWMN) first appears outside the main exhibition space in the 'Mixing It: Changing Faces of Wartime Britain' exhibition, which explores how 'the Second World War saw the most remarkable and large scale emigration of peoples to Britain in its history'.²⁸ Britain's view of itself as a country of immigration, a view we associate more with the contemporary period, is projected back into the representation of the Second World War. For example, the exhibition – which opened in 2015 – aims to illustrate how the 'population became more diverse' throughout the Second

²⁷ Caroline Sharples and Olaf Jensen, 'Introduction', in Caroline Sharples and Olaf Jensen (eds), *Britain and the Holocaust: Remembering and Representing War and Genocide* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2013), p. 3.

²⁸ 'Mixing It: The Changing Faces of Wartime Britain', Imperial War Museum North, 2015.

World War, but ‘when the war ended, awareness of this diverse wartime population was lost and has played little part in Britain’s public memories of the war’.²⁹ This inclusive perspective integrates forgotten histories and places a premium on diversity. But while the ‘Mixing it’ exhibition explores forgotten aspects of Britain’s wartime history, it takes a largely positive view of the Kindertransport. For example, while quite rightly acknowledging the bravery of the many different nationalities of those who fought alongside Britain during the war such as Polish, Czech, Slovak, Norwegian and Chinese nationals as well as former Kinder, the exhibition does not clearly state that many Kinder who fought for Britain were previously interned by the British. Testimony is used to validate the positive British narrative. Thus, the story of Kind Peter Sinclair describes how ‘he volunteered for the Royal Fusiliers in 1943 [as well as how] in 1945 he was [later] posted to a German prisoner-of-war camp in Essex as an interpreter’.³⁰ The focus is placed on the Kinder’s defence of their new host nation during the war. Although the exhibition suggests that the identities of British citizens and refugees became less differentiated as many Kinder served in the Pioneer Corps, it glosses over how many Kinder were interned. On the other hand, the exhibition does state that refugees were sent to Australia and Canada from Britain, yet this narrative is presented more generally: there is no connection made to Kinder who fell into this category of enemy alien. The testimonies of Susanne Medas and Sue Pearson further reinforce the positive view as they confirm the flight to freedom narrative discussed in the introduction to this thesis.

The Kindertransport is also located in four different areas throughout the ‘Main Exhibition Space’, with visitors first encountering the Kindertransport in ‘Silo One’ about the ‘Experiences of War’. The focus of the first section is on refugees, evacuees, internees, prisoners of war, and recruits. Connections are drawn between the Kindertransport and the

²⁹ ‘Mixing It’.

³⁰ ‘Mixing It’.

evacuee experience, as the exhibition suggests that both groups of children were plunged into unfamiliar circumstances due to war; both were victims, both fell under adult protection, and they were relocated and cared for by strangers in times of strife. The definition of the Kindertransport presented is limited, however, as it does not mention all the Kinder: the Czech Transport and the three transports which left Poland, for instance, are not included. This uncomplicated definition simplifies the process of rescue or resettlement as it does not explore identity conflicts. In Chapter One, for example, I reflected upon Kinder having constantly shifting identities, from innocent refugee child, to enemy alien, to friendly alien, then to survivor and later to citizen.

The following part of the exhibition, which is found underneath the exhibits relating to the Kindertransport, discusses evacuee children. It reads:

the largest movement of people ever witnessed in Britain began on 1 September 1939 when over 1 million children were evacuated from towns and cities likely to be heavily bombed. In 1940, when Britain was threatened by invasion, the Government sent 2,664 children overseas. Others went privately. Many were happy in their new lives. Others were badly mistreated. The Government scheme ended after 73 child evacuees died when the ship *The City of Benares* was torpedoed on 17 September 1940.³¹

When comparing the descriptions of the Kindertransport and the evacuee experience, a hierarchy becomes visible. The evacuee experience is presented as a worse experience than the Kindertransport, as evacuee children who journeyed abroad to America came in direct threat of enemy fire and some even perished because of the dangerous crossing across the Atlantic. Yet as the scholar Edward Timms has pointed out,

the ordeals of Evacuees were in a minor key compared to those of the *Kinder*. Evacuation was a coordinated response to a temporary emergency. The Kindertransport was a desperate attempt to escape impending genocide. Those who came to England [...] undoubtedly experienced difficult times. But those who stayed behind [such as the Kinder's parents and siblings], perished [...] in the Holocaust.³²

³¹ 'Main Exhibition Space', Imperial War Museum North, 2002.

³² Edward Timms, 'The Ordeals of Kinder and Evacuees in Comparative Perspective', in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), p. 138.

Timms also notes that both Kinder and evacuees suffered, as their physical safety was threatened: they were removed and separated from their homes and families during their formative years, their identities were diminished as they had to wear a luggage label, they were relocated to new and strange places and lived with foster parents, and they were placed in new schools and had to adapt to new religious practices.³³ Yet Kinder endured ‘more extreme forms of alienation’, because they experienced a change of language, of country, of name, of national allegiance, and many lost communication with their parents.³⁴ Moreover, the exhibition does not reflect upon how Kinder became double refugees, as some Kinder also became evacuees. To a degree, the Kindertransport is absorbed implicitly into an evacuation narrative which merges these two identities as both Kinder and evacuee children are seen as victims protected by Britain. But these comparisons downplay the wider impact of the Kindertransport. For example, the Kindertransport experience lasted years compared to the evacuee experience, and many Kinder were never reunited with their families. The exhibition here also promotes the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport because emphasis is placed on the flight to freedom: there is little reflection upon the new threats Kinder experienced in Britain. This is also implicitly supported by the inclusion of Wilfred Owen’s poem *Anthem For Doomed Youth* (1917), which visitors encounter as they exit ‘Silo One’. The poem highlights how it is the young who are most vulnerable during war and conflict, and they are sometimes the first victims to die. It is a solemn poem which suggests that this could happen to anyone. The inclusion of the poem implicitly erases distinctions between the Kinder and other younger British citizens: they are blended into a collective victimhood.

The Kindertransport also appears in the ‘Action Station’ section of the IWMN’s ‘Main Exhibition Space’. Here, visitors can click on a television screen to learn more about what

³³ Timms, ‘The Ordeals of *Kinder* and Evacuees in Comparative Perspective’, p. 129.

³⁴ Timms, ‘The Ordeals of *Kinder* and Evacuees in Comparative Perspective’, p. 129.

refugees take with them on their journeys. For example, we learn that Ruth Sellers brought a photograph of her father, her birth certificate, a piano book, and her mother's wedding veil and myrtle. Visitors are then encouraged to think about what items they would take with them if they had to make a similar journey. However, there is no reflection on whether these objects would be safe in a particular place of refuge. For example, some Kinder had their belongings taken away from them by their foster families in Britain. Addressing this would awaken negative associations with having your property looted by the Nazis.

The Kindertransport is not found within the 'Holocaust' section of the exhibition, as the focus here is placed on the liberation of the camps, which also confirms the positive British narrative of the Holocaust because the exhibition places emphasis on Britain's pre-war and post-war rescue operations. However, the Kindertransport appears again in the 'Time Stack' section, which displays items from former Kinder. One of these items is the now iconic suitcase. The description that accompanies this suitcase reads as follows:

Vernon Fischer [...] lived in Breslau where his father was arrested and taken to Buchenwald. He and his mother obtained places on the Kindertransport, a rescue mission to relocate predominantly Jewish children from Nazi Germany before the war. When war broke out Vernon Fischer and his mother were classed as enemy aliens and were interned in one of the camps on the Isle of Man. After six months they moved to Manchester where they helped with war work and survived the Manchester Blitz.³⁵

While this description relativises the positive national narrative because it shows that some Kinder were interned by the British government, it does not undermine it. Moreover, this reference to internment only becomes visible if the visitor presses a button which brings the suitcase and the text into view. The negative story of internment is reduced to a footnote, as it is at the IWMS (see my earlier discussion of the telephone display). Also, the reference to the Manchester Blitz makes it clear that the real threat came from the Germans.

³⁵ 'Main Exhibition Space', IWMN.

The positive stories of successful post-war integration are presented within the IWMN but the more negative experiences of individuals are excluded from representation. If we consider the ‘Legacies’ section of the exhibition, visitors are presented with testimonies which draw attention to the complexities of the Kindertransport. Celia Jane Lee’s testimony shows how even if a parent survived, their relationship with their child sometimes ‘never recovered from the years [...] spent apart’.³⁶ Marjorie Prince’s testimony draws attention to how some Kinder moved beyond British shores during the war, as the exhibition states that she made a six-week voyage from Britain to Australia on board the *SS Nestor* in 1940. Yet while these two testimonies shed a critical light, they are not easy to access: you have to click through the display to see them. John Silberman’s testimony – which essentially represents his life as a success story as he set up a successful business and was later awarded an OBE for his part in resolving a strike in 1979 – reinforces the positive narrative as the focus is placed on the achievements of the Kinder in Britain. These more critical and transnational elements are often quickly passed over, as in the IWMS. The striking wall of suitcases at the end of the exhibition reinforces how Kinder repaired and rebuilt their lives in Britain.

British Jewish Museums

The Jewish Museum London (JML) and the Manchester Jewish Museum (MJM) present a particular community-based memory of the Kindertransport which constructs Jewish and regional identities. While they partake of other positive British narratives such as the triumphant narrative of war, they also celebrate the relationship between the Jewish community and Britain. Rickie Burman writes that ‘increasingly, Jewish museums [are becoming resources] not only [...] for learning about Judaism but also for Holocaust education’.³⁷

³⁶ ‘Main Exhibition Space’, IWMN.

³⁷ Rickie Burman, ‘Presenting Judaism: Jewish Museums in Britain’, *European Judaism: A Journal for the New Europe* 36:2 (2003), p. 23.

Therefore, 'Jewish history and religion are closely interwoven'.³⁸ For example, the JML explores how Jews have contributed to British society – 'the place that has become home'.³⁹ The theme of successful integration is a key within these museums which supports the positive narrative of rescue because Britain not only becomes a shelter to those in need but also a place where Jewish beliefs and practices flourish. There is also a transnational element within the JML's 'History: A British Story' exhibition (2010), because there is an awareness of the 'diverse roots' of the Jewish community as Jews from all over the world have migrated to Britain.⁴⁰ But again, the main emphasis is placed on Britain as a homeland compared to Jews moving beyond these shores. The Kindertransport appears at the very start of the exhibition, stressing its centrality to the British-Jewish narrative of migration. Visitors discover that many journeys to Britain began in 'hope or despair': movement towards Britain is portrayed as a positive, as Jews escaped persecution in other lands to re-establish their lives in Britain.⁴¹ A recurring theme within British museum exhibitions is that of Jewish identity in terms of victimhood. Britain is presented as protecting innocent, defenceless and vulnerable refugee children.

As visitors start their journeys around the JML exhibition, they discover Britain's complex history of inclusion and exclusion of Jews from its shores, from the Medieval period to the post-war period, as well as how Jews were gradually granted equal rights and integrated into British society. However, the exhibition also depicts how Jews created their own charities, schools and social clubs, which suggests that while Jews were incorporated into British society, they also had to hide their faith until they could freely and openly practise it. Visitors are told that religious practices continued, as well as many cultural traditions such as Yiddish theatre. Many immigrants also continued to eat Eastern European cuisine, a reminder of a former home.

³⁸ Burman, 'Presenting Judaism', p. 23.

³⁹ 'History: A British Story', Jewish Museum London, 2010.

⁴⁰ 'History'.

⁴¹ 'History'.

A celebratory British-Jewish narrative builds throughout the exhibition and comes to a climax with the Kindertransport and the birth of Israel. For example, the sections entitled 'For King and Country', 'Between the Wars' and 'Radical Women' explore the 'patriotism' of many Jewish immigrants to Britain.⁴² The first section discusses how 50,000 Jewish men served in the British Armed Forces during the First World War, how 2,000 gave their lives for their country, and how 'the war changed the status of Jews who were not British subjects' as 'a new law required immigrants to register with the police'.⁴³ In the First World War, German and Austrian Jews were classified as enemy aliens and as a result could have been interned or deported by Britain. Yet despite the changes in the law, the narrative on display suggests that Jews supported their new homeland and were supported by it. This successful integration narrative is further shown by the second section. It suggests that there were new opportunities for Jews between the wars as the children of immigrants spoke English as their first language and mixed within wider society. As section three shows, some even entered and challenged the political framework of the nation.

The exhibition presents the basic history of the Kindertransport. It also at times points to more critical moments such as how some Kinder struggled to adapt to life in Britain and suffered greatly as a result. These more critical moments, however, are outweighed by a focus on the more positive elements such as the fact that the Kindertransport was an interfaith rescue operation where Jewish and non-Jewish organisations came together to help mainly Jewish refugee children. The physical arrangement of material also reinforces this positive perspective as the artefacts on display help to reduce the significance of the negatives. For example, the oversized, brightly coloured 'Thank You' Card to Mr and Mrs Bond, the Dovercourt manager and his wife, that was created by Kinder places emphasis on the children's appreciation. This

⁴² 'History'.

⁴³ 'History'.

artefact seems to dominate the Kindertransport section and in doing so, the focal narrative is one of gratitude. Similarly to the IWMs, the more critical aspects seem to be hidden or put in the shadow by the aesthetics, layout and artefacts exhibited. For example, the story of the *St. Louis* is concealed within a drawer. In the 'In Battle and Blitz' section, the narrative of successful assimilation of Kinder and other refugees is underpinned by the text as there is a reference to the fact that over 60,000 Jewish refugees served in the Armed Forces, underlining the sacrifice and loyalty of the Jewish community. Moreover, while visitors are told that 27,000 Jewish refugees were interned by Britain, they are not told that around 1,000 of these internees were Kinder. The narrative of the JML chimes with the narratives on display at the IWMs because the museum suggests that Kinder shared the same challenges British citizens faced on the home front as well as in the Forces. At the same time, the JML presents a British-Jewish congratulatory narrative because it reflects upon the specific contributions of Jewish refugees such as how some refugees were recruited into the intelligence service because of 'their linguistic and cultural knowledge and fierce motivation to fight'.⁴⁴

The Jewish community's positive relationship with Britain is further shown by the following section about 'Rebuilding Lives'. This tells how the British government agreed to take in children who had survived the concentration camps. A letter from the Refugee Children's Movement to Hilde Schindler foregrounds the successful relationship between Jewish refugees and Britain, as it suggests that Britain would not abandon these refugee children; rather it continued its efforts to care for and support them into the post-war period. The exhibition also confirms Britain's memory of the Holocaust because there is a focus on liberation as well as on how British organisations tried to locate and reunite refugee children with missing relatives in Europe after the war. There is some criticism in terms of the British Mandate of Palestine, as the exhibition states that Britain 'set strict limits on immigration' and

⁴⁴ 'History'.

that 'Holocaust survivors who tried to get to Palestine illegally were detained or forcefully returned to Europe'.⁴⁵ However, the overall focus is placed on the fact that Israel was founded, creating a positive ending, for it is in Britain and Israel that Jews found new homes. The message visitors leave with is one of renewal, repair and the replenishment of life due to British-Jewish collaborations.

Like the JML, the MJM explores the local and national histories of the Jewish community, but this museum places these stories within a more religious context because the exhibition occupies the upper balcony of the Sephardi Synagogue.⁴⁶ The religious aspect of the exhibition derives both from its location within a religious space and from the focus on the Jewish community's continued charitable and philanthropic work. Thus, the Kindertransport is placed within a tzedakah context.⁴⁷ The rescue of innocent refugee children becomes part of a religious obligation. The obligation is not only about the goodwill and kindness of British society, but also part of living a spiritual life, for tzedakah is performed regardless of one's financial standing; it is mandatory. The Kindertransport is therefore seen in the context of the righteousness and fairness of the Jewish community, especially in Manchester. The British-Jewish narrative of generosity chimes with the positive British rescue narrative because the focus is placed on British hospitality. This is also a topic covered by the JML as there is a World Jewish Relief (WJR) collection box displayed in the 'Judaism: A Living Faith' exhibition which is on the first floor. WJR was originally named the Central British Fund and helped many of the Kinder in Britain. This part of the 'Judaism' exhibition shows that memory of the Kindertransport is also influenced by WJR's continued work within the Jewish community, as well as by its responses to humanitarian crises worldwide, extending beyond

⁴⁵ 'History'.

⁴⁶ Tony Kushner, *Remembering Refugees: Then and Now* (Manchester University: Manchester, 2006), p. 24.

⁴⁷ Tzedakah is the Hebrew word for philanthropy and charity. It also refers to righteous behaviour and justice.

the Jewish community. Therefore, celebratory local narratives feed into a positive national narrative which suggests cohesion and unity.

The exhibition similarly to the JML places the Kindertransport within a wider context of Jewish migration to Britain. For example, visitors learn about the influx of Jews from Eastern Europe due to the pogroms in Russia in the early 1900s. Visitors also discover that the Manchester Jewish community gave shelter to those who were journeying further to places such as America via Liverpool. This aspect of further migration though is ignored in respect of the Kindertransport as the focus is placed on refugee children who stayed in Britain. For example, to the left of the Holy Ark, visitors find a small glass case which contains two Kindertransport documents. The first is Gerd Breitbarth's passport. The caption reads:

child's passport issued to Gerd Israel Breitbarth in Berlin on 18th May, 1939. Gerd was brought out of Germany a few days later through the sponsorship of the Spedding family, non-Jews living in Sheffield. For three years he was brought up a Christian in Sheffield, even singing in the church choir. At the age of 13, however, he was reunited with his mother, who had settled in Manchester, and returned to the Jewish faith.⁴⁸

This part of the exhibition is significant because it addresses the complex relationships between Jewish refugees and non-Jewish guardians. The exhibition tries to balance out the negative of forced conversion with the positive of a Jew being able to recover his Jewish identity. The emphasis is placed on Breitbarth's later return and renewed sense of belief in the Torah. The second Kindertransport object exhibited is the Harris House Diaries, a collection of writings by German and Austrian Jewish women who were housed in a hostel in Southampton between 1939 and 1940. This artefact supports the positive British national narrative of the Kindertransport because the pages on display highlight the women's successful integration into British society as they noticeably write in the English language.⁴⁹ The pages also attest to how they enjoyed their time in Southampton and how they wanted to concentrate on a happy

⁴⁸ 'Main Exhibition', Manchester Jewish Museum, 1984.

⁴⁹ Kushner, *Remembering Refugees*, p. 156.

future.⁵⁰ The MJM and the JML both present progressive narratives because they suggest that whenever Britain moved forward socially and politically, Jews were involved. These exhibitions are embedded in a forward-thinking narrative of the Second World War because they indicate how Jews were not only saved by Britain but also how they were an integral part of Britain's fight against Nazism. Thus, these Jewish museums highlight how Jews prosper in Britain.

British Holocaust Museums

While the Holocaust is absolutely and indisputably a horrific experience, within the IWMs, the Holocaust is part of a wider exhibition landscape which emphasises victory, pride and glory over destruction, death and loss. This environment encourages visitors to look for the positives. But the dedicated Holocaust museums in Britain seem less inclined to focus on the positives as they do not have the wider imperial history to take account of. The negatives are instead stressed more strongly. This might also be because there is a 'transformative potential' with regards to how Holocaust museums shape their narratives.⁵¹ For example, Holocaust museums use a 'language of activism' which 'appears in connection to the central goals to memorialise'.⁵² If we consider the mission statements of British Holocaust museums, they 'present us with the promise of performativity, as museums aspire to mobilise the agency of their visitors'.⁵³ The National Holocaust Centre and Museum (NHCM), for example, 'encourage[s] personal responsibility and the promotion of fairness and justice but also challenge[s] learners to take positive action'.⁵⁴ This museum promotes a narrative which

⁵⁰ 'Main Exhibition', MJM.

⁵¹ Diana I. Popescu, 'Memory Activism and the Holocaust: Memorial Institutions of the 21st Century', in Robert R. Janes and Richard Sandell (eds), *Museum Activism* (Routledge: London, 2019), p. 329.

⁵² Popescu, 'Memory Activism and the Holocaust', p. 330.

⁵³ Popescu, 'Memory Activism and the Holocaust', p. 330.

⁵⁴ 'Our Vision', *The National Holocaust Centre and Museum*, at <https://www.holocaust.org.uk/our-vision> [accessed 28th September 2019].

suggests that the public has ‘a role of social responsibility’.⁵⁵ Therefore, you cannot downplay the negatives if you aspire to encourage visitors to be upstanders today because they need to be informed about the Holocaust in all its complexity. The IWMs could be seen in the same context because they too represent the Holocaust in their exhibitions. However, the aim of these museums is to help audiences understand the causes of war as well as to ‘develop a deeper understanding of its effect on the world’, which is a much vaguer remit.⁵⁶ Survivors of the Holocaust were instrumental in their support with regards to the development of British Holocaust museums, which might be one reason why these museums are more nuanced as their stories are presented in all their complexities; they are not framed in the same way as they are within the IWMs.

It is important to note though that the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport does not disappear altogether in British Holocaust museums. The specific focus of these museums is on how we need to revisit the theme of the Holocaust in the present to stop genocide happening again. One way Holocaust exhibitions do this is by providing a graphic account of the Holocaust itself. However, Roger I. Simon notes that ‘unfortunately there is ample evidence that awareness and moral assessment of previous unjust violence and brutality does not automatically constitute a bridge for linking the past and the present so as to diminish the recurrence of injustice’.⁵⁷ And indeed, often Holocaust exhibitions convey positive messages as well. Although British Holocaust museums can sensitise us to the fates of refugees past and present, ‘it is [also] important to be conscious of limitations’ when it comes to national memory.⁵⁸ Sharon Macdonald argues that while ‘we are witnessing a growing Europeanisation and/or cosmopolitanisation of memory’, memory can also be “re-territorialised” or “co-

⁵⁵ Popescu, ‘Memory Activism and the Holocaust’, p. 329.

⁵⁶ ‘About IWM’, *Imperial War Museums*, at <https://www.iwm.org.uk/about> [accessed 29th September 2019].

⁵⁷ Roger I. Simon, ‘Afterward: The Turn to Pedagogy: A Needed Conversation on the Practices of Curating Difficult Knowledge’, in E.T. Lehre, C. E. Milton and M. Patterson (eds), *Curating Difficult Knowledge: Violent Past Public Places* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2011), p. 207.

⁵⁸ Niven and Williams, ‘The Role of Memory in the Negotiation of the Refugee Crisis’.

opted’”.⁵⁹ British Holocaust museums at times qualify these values of ‘we must all act today’ in favour of endorsing notions of Britain defending the defenceless and British generosity. This feeds into the myth of Britain standing alone, ‘in which Britain is depicted as separate from the rest of Europe and even as a solitary adversary of Germany’.⁶⁰ This self-celebratory perspective is not only depicted in museums. Macdonald suggests that, during Holocaust Memorial Day, ‘the nation [is] strengthened by being cast as hero; through modes such as reports from refugees in Britain, reference to Britain’s military role in trying to resolve ongoing conflicts, and analogies implied with Britain’s role in World War II’.⁶¹

There are two permanent exhibitions at the NHCM. One, ‘The Journey’, is designed specifically for primary school children, while the second exhibition caters for a wider audience. ‘The Journey’, which opened in 2008, is the only exhibition which is solely dedicated to the Kindertransport, unlike most of the exhibitions within this chapter, as they present the Kindertransport within a certain section of the exhibition.⁶² The NHCM places the Kindertransport within a pedagogical context as the museum’s main audience is school children. Although other museums place the Kindertransport within their own pedagogical framework, the NHCM is different in the sense that its remit is ‘to think critically, respect those beyond our own community, to stand up, to speak up, to challenge and to act’.⁶³

This becomes immediately visible on entering ‘The Journey’. Visitors first watch a short film about the journeys refugee children make today to find safety. The Kindertransport in this opening video is lifted out of its historical context and compared to other refugee experiences. Visitors are stimulated to think about how refugee children around the world leave their homes because these spaces are no longer safe. We are also introduced to the stories of

⁵⁹ Sharon Macdonald, *Memorylands: Heritage and Identity in Europe Today* (Routledge: London, 2013), p. 189.

⁶⁰ Macdonald, *Memorylands*, p. 205.

⁶¹ Macdonald, *Memorylands*, p. 204.

⁶² Although the Für das Kind (For the Child) Museum in Vienna is the world’s first dedicated Kindertransport Museum, I will not be discussing this museum because it is located in Austria, a former homeland.

⁶³ ‘Main Exhibition’, National Holocaust Centre and Museum, 2017.

other children, who had to endure the horror of the Holocaust. Seeing the Kindertransport in purely positive terms becomes difficult when visitors are made aware of the dangers other children faced in continental Europe. After watching the video, visitors are encouraged to imagine journeying back in time when they enter a lift which takes them down into a typical German-Jewish home in the 1930s. This journey down into the exhibition picks away at the sediments of history as visitors are invited to consider how difficult life was for Kinder before their departure.

The exhibition is an immersive experience. There is little text, although digital display screens explain the pseudo-original sets as visitors walk through. School groups usually rely on a facilitator – a special guide provided by the NHCM to accompany them through the exhibition. In the first room, visitors are introduced to a composite character called Leo Stein. Stein is a fictional Jewish boy who is an archetypal embodiment of survivor testimonies which visitors can listen to by touching digital screens. The first three rooms – which include a typical German-Jewish home in Berlin, a school room in Berlin, and a section of a street and shops (showing the impact of Kristallnacht) – explore how the Kinder's lives were badly affected by Nazism in their homelands. For example, we are told that some Kinder were bullied by their peers, and had to leave familiar surroundings such as their school environment because their identities were regarded as being problematic. Because 'The Journey' focuses to a considerable extent on the suffering endured by Jews in Nazi Germany prior to Kristallnacht, it can be used to make schoolchildren aware of the signs and effects of racial and other forms of discrimination, in line with the NHCM's mission. The final rooms, including a tailor's shop with a hidden space, a train and a ship, reflect upon the painful decisions adults made, and how these choices affected the Kinder. Here, visitors discover how difficult it was to say goodbye to one's loved ones. Thus, we are introduced to the theme of the breaking up of families.

The last part of the exhibition is the refuge room. While there are testimonies and artefacts from many different child survivors of the Holocaust present within the various rooms, it is this room in particular which focuses on very different stories of survival. The rescue of the Kinder in the 1930s is set alongside the later arrival of other child survivors of the Holocaust in the post-war period (notably the Windermere Boys), drawing attention to the fact that many children did not escape Nazi persecution – and that those who did were badly scarred by their experiences. However, to what degree the different fates of Jewish children are made clear is also dependent on the facilitator. And while the facilitator will reflect on the journeys children made to safety as well as how many children stayed behind in continental Europe, visitors are not usually encouraged to interpret the train room in the context of deportation as well as the Kindertransport. School groups typically move from the tailor's shop, to the train, back to the hidden room in the tailor's shop, and then bypass the train the second time round as they move on to the ship, which leads into the refuge room. If the facilitator revisited the train after visiting the hiding place, the Kindertransport would be seen in relation to the 1.5 million Jewish children who were deported and murdered in the death camps. That she or he rarely does so may be due to a fear of confronting younger visitors too directly with the Holocaust.

A similar caution, perhaps, might explain that fact the exhibition is approached from a railway track and platform which immediately draws attention to arrival. This and the fact that the exhibition is located in a building outside of which we see milk cans and a red letter box conveys an almost rosy impression of Britain as a safe haven. This would certainly chime with the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport, but the message of ultimate safety may need to be communicated due to the target audience, for fear of shocking younger children. Any uncomfortable suspense generated by following the narrative of the exhibition is essentially taken away by this setting, especially if visitors are unaware of the history of the

Kindertransport. Overall, in ‘The Journey’ exhibition, positive views of the Kindertransport are not mobilised in the same way as they are in the IWMs. Even if the facilitator does not reflect explicitly upon the contrast between the Kindertransport and the deportations to the camps, this contrast is implicit in the final refuge room, encouraging reflection on loss. Links to the other refugee crises in the opening film also set out to encourage reflection: on the need to act on memory of the Kindertransport.

The ‘Main Exhibition’, which was opened in 2000 and remodelled in 2017, places the Kindertransport in two contexts. The first is flight. Although this is not unusual, the ‘Cry For Help’ section of the exhibition questions whether Britain was fully prepared to grant refuge to Jewish refugees. Therefore, criticism is present from the start of the exhibition because this section explores the complex relationship between admitting and excluding Jewish refugees. It also reflects upon how restrictions were placed on refugees when they arrived in Britain, as demonstrated by the display of the text about the 1919 Aliens Act, which had ramifications for refugees during the Second World War. Similarly to the IWMS, the Kindertransport is found before ‘Kristallnacht’. Yet this reverse chronology does not blend out Kristallnacht, as Kristallnacht, here, seems to overshadow the Kindertransport. For example, the focus is placed on closing doors, isolation and violence against Jews and Jewish property. Although the exhibition does include self-congratulatory and even competitive moments – Britain is shown to be sheltering Kinder and 287 *St. Louis* passengers, in contrast to other nations such as America and Australia – these have little impact. The exhibition places more emphasis on Britain’s reluctance to aid refugees. While Britain’s restrictive immigration policy is not explicitly seen in relation to whether Britain could have saved other refugees, the exhibition does juxtapose the themes of being saved, and children being relocated to confined and cramped spaces. This juxtaposition is further reinforced by the technique of spatial organisation, because the Kindertransport is found next to the ghetto part of the exhibition.

Visitors move from an open space to a narrow passage which leads into the ghetto. This movement makes visitors physically aware of the restrictions faced by many children who were trapped in continental Europe. Because the Kindertransport is sandwiched between Kristallnacht and ghettoization, the exhibition invites visitors to reflect upon the narrow line between flight and the eradication of life. Therefore, while the Kindertransport is presented as a positive because former Kinder such as Vera Löwyová were sheltered by a Christian family, highlighting the generosity of the British public, this positivity is minimised because of the effect of the Holocaust. Visitors discover that Löwyová never saw her parents again. Thus, the Kindertransport is also seen in relation to total loss.

Secondly, the Kindertransport also appears towards the end of the exhibition in the 'Resilience' section. Here, the exhibition seems to accord with the positive national narrative because the main message is about survival and liberation. Yet on second glance, this positive message is counteracted by the personal stories and artefacts on display. Ellen Rawson's entry paper highlights the narrative of rescue because it shows the determination of her parents to save her.⁶⁴ But the text that accompanies this artefact states how Rawson's parents were murdered in the Holocaust.⁶⁵ The exhibition suggests that when we remember the survivors' resilience, we also need to remember the loss they experienced. This critical take is also shown by Leon Greenman's story, as he experienced continued antisemitism in Britain after the war.⁶⁶ Although Greenman is not a Kind, his story exemplifies how many survivors did not always have positive experiences in Britain. The final room of the main exhibition also critiques the narrative of welcome when we are informed that Britain was 'initially reluctant to allow more refugees' into the country after the war.⁶⁷ This negativity around liberation in terms of how Britain granted 'temporary' refuge to survivors because it was thought that they would migrate

⁶⁴ 'Main Exhibition', NHCM.

⁶⁵ 'Main Exhibition', NHCM.

⁶⁶ See Leon Greenman, *An Englishman in Auschwitz* (Vallentine Mitchell: London, 2001).

⁶⁷ 'Main Exhibition', NHCM.

‘on to a third country’ casts a questioning light on the Kindertransport, too: it shows that Britain was hesitant to shelter Jews prior to and after the war.⁶⁸ The self-congratulatory narrative is not present here even though the focus is placed on rescue, because Britain’s actions towards refugees are questioned. In the ‘Stories of Survival’ section, visitors learn for example that Ruth David, a former Kind, was separated from her siblings during the war and that her parents were murdered in the Holocaust. Therefore, the exhibition reflects upon how refuge did not prevent the dispersal of one’s family. Likewise, the courage and kindness shown by individual rescuers such as Rabbi Schonfeld are contrasted to how few Jews ‘were rescued from their impending fate’.⁶⁹

The Kindertransport is also viewed in a critical light in the final exhibition room through the addition of a recent digital exhibit created in collaboration with Nottingham Trent University, ‘Legacies of the Holocaust’ (launched in 2017). This digital exhibition explores the difficulties children faced in Britain, such as economic exploitation and physical abuse, and it specifically looks at how around 1,000 Kinder were interned as enemy aliens. Visitors also learn that Kinder were relocated to other host nations as internees. In addressing the complex transnational history of the Kindertransport, the digital exhibition invites a critical take because the focus is placed upon the Kinder’s further displacement to parts of the former British Empire. The fact that the focus extends beyond 1945 to reflect upon the Kinder’s lives after the war, their return journeys to their former homelands, the first reunions and memorials, as well as upon passing on memory to the next generation shows how some recent exhibitions are moving in new directions because marginalised aspects of the Kindertransport are included (see later in chapter). In some respects, the remodelling of the end of the main exhibition

⁶⁸ ‘Main Exhibition’, NHCM.

⁶⁹ ‘Main Exhibition’, NHCM.

corresponds to this digital exhibition because memory of the Kindertransport is used to help sensitise us to other refugee crises, such as in Syria.

Nevertheless, in certain respects the 'Main Exhibition' at the NHCM does end positively – in keeping with the objective of Holocaust exhibitions to teach visitors about values such as tolerance, compassion and acceptance. This positive ending is already suggested by the use of colour contrast. As visitors exit the 'Greenman Gallery' and encounter the 'Courage to Care' and 'To Challenge and To Act' sections, the dark colours used in the 'Greenman Gallery' give way to brighter hues. This movement from darkness to light suggests a progressive shift which corresponds to the positive focus in these sections on rescue and liberation – in accordance with the British narrative. The main exhibition concludes with British values, as the focus is placed on Britons who had the courage to care and act to help Jewish refugees. This contrasts with the transnational focus of the digital exhibition, which moves beyond a British perspective because the emphasis is placed on how the Kindertransport and the Holocaust were forgotten and then remembered in many different countries. While both exhibitions (digital and main) explore the negative aspects of the Kindertransport, the conclusion to the 'Main Exhibition' risks renationalising this transnational perspective because it stresses a British moral urgency to help refugees.

The recent inauguration of The Holocaust Exhibition and Learning Centre's (HELC) exhibition 'Through Our Eyes' in 2018 rethinks the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport because it places it within the context of total loss. Unlike the NHCM's 'Main Exhibition' which ends positively, 'Through Our Eyes' concludes with 'The Book of Loss'. Visitors listen to the Jewish prayer, El Malei Rachamim, which is usually recited at a gravesite or burial service. Thus, the exhibition ends by mourning the dead. It also reflects upon the survivors' pain and suffering as they remember their families who were murdered in the Holocaust. This exhibition stresses universal values of freedom, peace and respect; visitors do

not leave with an overwhelming sense of British generosity. The exhibition starts with rupture, whereas the NHCM's 'The Journey' exhibition, for example, starts with arrival. This generates a sense of security in contrast to the HELC exhibition, which focuses on the parting of families. For example, visitors are introduced to Martin Kapel's story which draws attention to how Kinder 'were forcibly deported from Germany into Poland in an event known as the Polenaktion'.⁷⁰ The exhibition relativises the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport because it stresses how some Kinder were uprooted prior to their departure on the Kindertransport; many German-Polish Kinder became double refugees. The Kinder's further displacement is also shown by Edith Goldberg's story, as we discover that Goldberg and her sister lived with different foster families in Britain. As visitors move towards 'Kristallnacht', we are also told that the Nazis 'came for [her] father and uncle in the middle of the night'.⁷¹ The narrative on display therefore draws attention to how Kinder and their families were being constantly uprooted. Moreover, notions of parting and separation dominate the 'Kindertransport' section because after the 'Kristallnacht' section, visitors discover that Goldberg's mother tried to 'leave but she had all these old people' to look after.⁷² The emphasis on the splitting up of families prior to departure, but also when they arrived in Britain creates a sense of estrangement which is highlighted by the aesthetics: we see a large photograph of a refugee girl on arrival at Harwich on 2nd December 1938, holding onto her doll, standing isolated from the rest of the 'Kindertransport' section. This single image evokes abandonment, as the child waits unaccompanied. The imagery used does not suggest that the Kindertransport was an adventure but a lonely and painful process. Arrival is therefore not seen as a celebration even though visitors know that the child has been rescued; rather arrival solidifies the separation of families because the child is absolutely alone.

⁷⁰ 'Through Our Eyes', The Holocaust Exhibition and Learning Centre, 2018.

⁷¹ 'Through Our Eyes'.

⁷² 'Through Our Eyes'.

After the ‘Kindertransport’ comes the ‘Settling In The UK’ section, which further complicates the theme of rescue because visitors read that instead of Kinder successfully and effortlessly fitting into British society, they ‘faced huge challenges’.⁷³ For example, many Kinder were worried about their families ‘trapped’ in Greater Germany. For many Kinder, the ‘Red Cross letters [which were] limited to 25 words, became a lifeline’.⁷⁴ Likewise, the Kinder’s surroundings were ‘unfamiliar’ to them and many ‘were homesick’.⁷⁵ The testimonies of Kinder which are incorporated into the main text of the exhibition via the digital interactive screens or presented on luggage labels attached to suitcases further communicate how the Kindertransport was a traumatic experience. For example, Leisel Carter’s testimony recounts how she was force fed by her foster family. She explains how ‘they held [her] down’ and how she ‘wasn’t happy there’.⁷⁶ This exhibition does not omit or simplify the more negative aspects from the Kinder’s testimonies, and in doing so, it critiques the positive narrative because it states that while some Kinder ‘grew close to their foster families [...] others lived with foster parents who treated them badly or simply didn’t understand their needs’.⁷⁷ This is reinforced by the fact that the exhibition focuses on how refuge did not mean freedom. While the ‘Enemy Aliens’ section does not specifically address the fact that Kinder were also interned, it does point out that ‘many internees were Jews who had fled the Nazi regime’, and that some internees faced ‘dangerous journeys to Canada and Australia, where they were held until they were no longer considered a threat’.⁷⁸ Although the exhibition reframes the national experience because of the critical take on the Kindertransport, it remains a nationally focused exhibition. Transnational elements such as the Kinder’s journeys to other host nations are not explored.

⁷³ ‘Through Our Eyes’.

⁷⁴ ‘Through Our Eyes’.

⁷⁵ ‘Through Our Eyes’.

⁷⁶ ‘Through Our Eyes’.

⁷⁷ ‘Through Our Eyes’.

⁷⁸ ‘Through Our Eyes’.

The focus is placed on rescue to Britain, even though this rescue is shown to be not without complications.

British Temporary and Travelling Exhibitions

There has been an upsurge in temporary and travelling exhibitions over the past ten years as museums seek to ‘widen the reach of their brand, increase access to collections and assist in sharing [...] works with [other] cultural organisations that would not otherwise showcase [...] works in large-scale exhibitions’.⁷⁹ Museums have changed the way they see their role because the museum experience does not start the moment a visitor sets foot in the museum space; learning can commence beforehand, and continue after the visitor has left the grounds of the museum. Temporary and travelling exhibitions provide a way for the museum to go into classrooms and other venues through their outreach programmes to showcase their work. They also provide an opportunity to collaborate with academics, charities and individuals to develop new material which might be difficult to place within the existing permanent exhibition due to cost and space.

From 2013 to 2020, over twenty temporary and travelling exhibitions were opened in Britain which featured the Kindertransport. This section will examine key examples of these types of exhibitions.⁸⁰ Recent temporary and travelling exhibitions have responded to

⁷⁹ Adrian Murphy, ‘Temporary and Touring Exhibitions: Reaching Out to New Audiences’, *Advisor: Museums + Heritage*, at <https://advisor.museumsandheritage.com/features/temporary-and-touring-exhibitions-reaching-out-to-audiences/> [accessed 15th June 2020].

⁸⁰ Other temporary and travelling exhibitions include: ‘At the End of the Tunnel: Kindertransports from Berlin 80 Years On’, PhotoWerkBerlin, 2019; ‘“Still in Our Hands”: Kinder Life Portraits’, Association of Jewish Refugees, 2019; ‘Saved: Football and the Kindertransport’, Harwich Haven History, 2018; ‘Where Is My Home?’, Lucy Wilcox, 2019; ‘Responding to the Present by Remembering the Past’, Midlands4Cities Cohort Development Funded Project, 2018; ‘A Proposed Exhibition on the Kindertransports from a British and German Perspective’, Global Heritage Funded Project, 2018; ‘Re-thinking the Story of the Kindertransport: Testimony, Artefacts, Identity’, Midlands4Cities Student Development Funded Project, 2017; ‘We Must Save the Children: Cambridge & the Kindertransport’, creator of the exhibition unknown, 2016; ‘Remembering – Exploring the Kindertransport 80 Years On’, Simon Schachter, 2020; ‘Gathering the Voices Mobile Exhibition’, The Gathering the Voices Association, 2014; ‘The Holocaust – Remembering for the Future’, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, date unknown; and ‘Against All Odds: Britain and the Rescue of Jewish Children’, Adina Abecasis, 2020.

contemporary events, commemorations and debates within the public and political spheres. In doing so, they reflect upon new developments in the historiography of the Kindertransport in terms of the growing awareness of the internment and abuse Kinder experienced in Britain.⁸¹ They also consider how memory of the Kindertransport is being used today, drawing parallels between the Kindertransport and the current refugee crisis. These exhibitions are created by institutions, individuals and public history groups, depicting a variety of perspectives. This diverse presentation of the Kindertransport places the theme in different categories. For example, while the exhibitions discussed so far placed the Kindertransport within the context of British and British-Jewish history, new temporary and travelling exhibitions situate the theme within the context of migrant history and local and regional histories.

There are signs that long-established institutions such as the Wiener Library (WL) and the JML are moving in a more critical direction, but at times they continue to stress the self-celebratory British narrative of rescue. The exhibitions created by individuals and public history groups, which are usually the travelling exhibitions, are the most critical, and they give greater weight to survivor voices. It is no longer the exclusive preserve of museums to create exhibitions, as individuals and groups are articulating their own relationship to the Kindertransport. Overall there is a general move towards a more critical stance, and there is engagement with complex ethical issues. This more critical stance may partly be due to the awareness of the current refugee crisis, because problematic aspects of this crisis have triggered a reassessment of past refugee experiences. Because we are not necessarily learning from the positive aspects of the Kindertransport, there is a turn towards a greater engagement with the

⁸¹ See Jennifer Craig-Norton, *The Kindertransport: Contesting Memory* (Indiana University Press: Bloomington, 2019), Tony Kushner, 'The Holocaust in the British Imagination: The Official Mind and Beyond, 1945 to the Present', *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History* 23:3 (2017), pp. 364-384, and Tony Kushner, 'The Holocaust and the Museum World in Britain: A Study of Ethnography'.

more negative aspects. As Chapter One demonstrated, Lord Dubs' voice is not necessarily being listened to as Britain has limited its intake of refugee children.⁸²

The WL and Migrant Museum (MM) do not have permanent exhibitions. Rather they both feature temporary exhibitions which respond to anniversaries and recent debates. Their recent exhibitions have reflected upon Brexit and the current refugee crisis. The WL has created three recent exhibitions featuring the Kindertransport: 'Child Refugees: Five Portraits from the Kindertransport', 2013, 'Dilemmas, Choices, Responses: Britain and the Holocaust', 2016, and 'A Bitter Road: Britain and the Refugee Crisis of the 1930s and 1940s', 2016.⁸³ The first of these, 'Child Refugees', coincided with the 75th anniversary of the first Kindertransport to Britain and suggested that 'the closer you look at any individual's story, the less they conform to our received ideas' of the Kindertransport.⁸⁴ In some ways, this exhibition presented a balanced picture of the Kindertransport because it took into account the Kinder's 'sense of sadness for lost family, lost childhood and lost innocence', while stating that this 'persisted alongside a sense of good fortune at having escaped alive with the opportunity to build a better future'.⁸⁵ The exhibition also reflected upon current portrayals of refugees, as the ages of some refugee children have been questioned and in some cases refugees have been depicted as pirates

⁸² See 'Lord Dubs Warns Johnson Not to Use Child Refugees as Brexit "Bargaining Chips"', *BBC*, 15th January 2020, at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-politics-51129720/lord-dubs-warns-johnson-not-to-use-child-refugees-as-brexit-bargaining-chips> [accessed 16th January 2020]; Arj Singh, 'Lord Dubs Says Minister' Pledge to Protect Child Refugees "Not Watertight"', *HuffPost*, 14th January 2020, at https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/child-refugees-lord-dubs-brexit_uk_5e1dedc4c5b6da971d1dcede?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAEP6TmxAx4uWzMRy_y0A28GZ5um43qB_xKAxLagoKRgO5CMxbBzxSzkST2tsf9TiSrxteOgG97xCABx6c4_FFmcGZS0sB6v69qkh42KjgFp8ftqRXzXBC7P_5h77kuKpyb6bhSdqrJPzEAVX0IwylkSuwNJ4d9_YD26azUc1CZqh [accessed 16th January 2020]; and Jack Mendel, 'Lord Dubs "Bitterly Disappointed and Angry" at Scrapping of Child Refugee Pledge', *Jewish News*, 20th December 2019, at <https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/lord-dubs-bitterly-disappointed-and-angry-at-scrapping-of-child-refugee-pledge/> [accessed 16th January 2020].

⁸³ Also see 'Shattered: Pogrom, November 1938', Wiener Library, 2017, and 'Berlin – London: The Lost Photographs of Gerty Simon', Wiener Library, 2018, for other exhibitions which reference the Kindertransport.

⁸⁴ 'Child Refugees: Five Portraits from the Kindertransport', Wiener Library, 2013.

⁸⁵ 'Child Refugees'.

and terrorists.⁸⁶ For example, the exhibition stated that ‘not all Kinder could be described as children in today’s terms’ as some were seventeen years old when they came to Britain.⁸⁷ It was also critical of how ‘some families were looking for a servant rather than a child to care for’.⁸⁸ However, the exhibition still supported the positive narrative because it emphasised how ‘a significant number’ of Kinder ‘went on to forge successful careers’, with some even winning Nobel Prizes.⁸⁹ While the exhibition considered the lack of interest in the Kindertransport prior to the first reunions, the positive narrative remains strong because the testimonies of the Kinder were outweighed by the more positive elements. Although the exhibition drew awareness to the ‘thriving social community in the UK, Israel and the USA’ as well as the Second and Third Generation Networks, these more transnational elements were essentially a footnote as the focus was placed on the Kinder’s successful integration into British society.

The two WL exhibitions opened in 2016 raised more challenging issues. The ‘Dilemmas’ exhibition, for instance, posed the following questions: ‘did antisemitism affect British attitudes towards refugees before the war? What did the British government know and how did it respond?’⁹⁰ The exhibition also suggested that while

‘ordinary’ Britons had sympathy for persecuted Jews during the Holocaust [they] were often reluctant to identify them as a special case of Nazi persecution [as] the murder of the Jews was viewed within the context of civilian suffering in wartime [...] the British public were predominantly focused on supporting the war effort.⁹¹

Britain’s internment of Jewish refugees who had previously been imprisoned in concentration camps in Germany prior to their arrival in Britain was also discussed. But while the Kindertransport was seen in relation to British hostility towards refugees, the positive British

⁸⁶ See Carly McLaughlin, “‘They Don’t Look Like Children’: Child Asylum-Seekers, the Dubs Amendment and the Politics of Childhood”, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44:11 (2018), pp. 1757-1773, and Simon Goodman, ‘Questions over Age of Refugee Children Show How Ugly Britain Has Become’, *The Conversation*, 20th October 2016, at <http://theconversation.com/questions-over-age-of-refugee-children-show-how-ugly-britain-has-become-67335> [accessed 30th September 2019].

⁸⁷ ‘Child Refugees’.

⁸⁸ ‘Child Refugees’.

⁸⁹ ‘Child Refugees’.

⁹⁰ ‘Dilemmas, Choices, Responses: Britain and the Holocaust’, Wiener Library, 2016.

⁹¹ ‘Dilemmas, Choices, Responses’.

narrative of the Kindertransport was still supported by this exhibition. Otto Deutsch's testimony for example focused on the 'wonderful welcome' he received.⁹² The second 2016 WL exhibition, 'A Bitter Road', placed the Kindertransport within the history of migration. This exhibition was critical in that the focus was placed on how Kinder 'were dependent on the generosity of strangers and more susceptible to abuse and exploitation'.⁹³ Likewise, while those who were 'placed in youth hostels found some camaraderie [they] were still separated abruptly from the familiar'.⁹⁴ Although the exhibition argued that many 'Jewish refugees integrated into British society', it also stated that many others found it 'difficult or even impossible'.⁹⁵ The exhibition concluded with images of media reports presenting refugees as 'floods', which further underscored a critical take on Britain's history and memory of saving refugees.⁹⁶ It also explored how the language of migration can be 'dehumanising' as well as how 'a symbiosis between media and policy contributes to the perception of migration and immigration as crisis: a perpetual, intractable problem'.⁹⁷ The narrative of the Kindertransport was therefore placed within a context of contemporary inaction in the face of the refugee crisis today. The exhibition criticised how the language of migration 'often has the power to corrupt thought and action', which questioned whether we have learnt from history.⁹⁸ It also questioned 'why [...] some waves of migration elicit sympathy and others hostility'.⁹⁹

The MM's exhibition 'No Turning Back: Seven Migrant Moments that Changed Britain', 2018 responded to 'the EU referendum result and ongoing Brexit negotiations'.¹⁰⁰ It reflected upon 'Britain's relationship with the world' and Britain's 'uncertainty about

⁹² 'Dilemmas, Choices, Responses'.

⁹³ 'A Bitter Road: Britain and the Refugee Crisis of the 1930s and 1940s', Wiener Library, 2016.

⁹⁴ 'A Bitter Road'.

⁹⁵ 'A Bitter Road'.

⁹⁶ 'A Bitter Road'.

⁹⁷ 'A Bitter Road'.

⁹⁸ 'A Bitter Road'.

⁹⁹ 'A Bitter Road'.

¹⁰⁰ 'No Turning Back: Seven Migrant Moments that Changed Britain', Migrant Museum, 2018.

migration' past and present.¹⁰¹ The exhibition opened with the expulsion of Jews from British shores in 1290. This moment of expulsion is set in relation to the centuries-long discrimination against Jews in Britain and elsewhere which escalated to the mass deportation of Jews to central Europe during the Nazi period. While this critical perspective explored how Britain can be a hostile environment for minority groups, the exhibition also focused on the return of Jews to British shores some 400 years later. The spatial organisation of the material at times undermined the forcefulness of the negative moments. Above this particular section, for instance, was a quote from Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg which reflected upon the impact of marginalisation, ghettoisation and the denial of equal rights on the British-Jewish community. However, this quote and several other negative quotes were positioned above the visitors' eye line. The Kindertransport part of the exhibition was situated in between three significant dates which comprised: '1685 – Huguenots seek refuge in Britain – Are refugees welcome?', '1905 – Aliens Act – Who do we let in?', and '1952 – First passenger jet flight – Does mass travel make the world a smaller place?' But the Kindertransport section did not engage with the questions raised by these dates and events. The presentation of the Kindertransport followed a display on the evacuation of the Basque Children. Both these historical events were framed positively because the emphasis was placed on the successful assimilation of refugee children into British society. The personal stories of Dame Stephanie Shirley, a former Kindertransportee, and Cai and Feli Martinez, two former Basque Children, bolstered the self-congratulatory narrative as Britain was presented as a 'romantic place' where Kinder and Basque Children thrived.¹⁰² Although the exhibition did challenge Britain's relationship to its history of migration insofar as it considered how the nation's actions 'brought people together' but also 'moved people apart', the positive perspective prevailed as the exhibition concluded

¹⁰¹ 'No Turning Back'.

¹⁰² 'No Turning Back'.

with the 2011 census which revealed the ‘rise of mixed-race Britain’.¹⁰³ The Kindertransport was therefore placed within a trajectory which suggested that Britain was welcoming to everyone regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion and background.

Two recent temporary photography exhibitions which were launched during Refugee Week in 2019 also placed the Kindertransport within the context of Britain’s history of migration. The ‘You, Me and Those Who Came Before’ and the ‘Refugees, Newcomers, Citizens: Migration Stories from Picture Post 1938-1956’ exhibitions presented a multidirectional approach which suggested that past, present and future Britain welcomes all those ‘escaping war and persecution’.¹⁰⁴ Both exhibitions emphasised that while refugees indeed face hardships in Britain they nonetheless go on – in the words of the ‘You, Me and Those Who Came Before’ exhibition – to enrich ‘our culture and communities for generations’.¹⁰⁵ While the ‘Refugees, Newcomers, Citizens’ exhibition, in relation to the Kindertransport, argued that the incoming children were admitted as temporary ‘guests, with no provision for family reunification, no public funding, and with the aim that they would ultimately be re-settled elsewhere’, the focus was placed on how these outsiders became insiders because they were embraced by British society.¹⁰⁶

There are three other examples of exhibitions which present the negatives in detail. Each of these reflects upon the internment of Kinder in Britain. One of these is the temporary exhibition ‘Remembering the Kindertransport 80 Years On’ (JML, 2018). The others are travelling exhibitions: ‘A Thousand Kisses: Stories of the Kindertransport’ (Harwich Haven: Surrender and Sanctuary Project (HH) and the WL, 2018), and ‘Leave to Land: The Kitchener Camp Rescue, 1939’ (Clare Weissenberg and Kate Pettitt, 2019). Generally, the ‘Leave to

¹⁰³ ‘No Turning Back’.

¹⁰⁴ ‘You, Me and Those Who Came Before’, Julian Edelstein, 2019.

¹⁰⁵ ‘You, Me and Those Who Came Before’.

¹⁰⁶ ‘Refugees, Newcomers, Citizens: Migration Stories from Picture Post 1938-1956’, Mike Berlin and Amanda Hopkins, 2019.

Land' exhibition challenges the notion that rescue equates to security. For example, visitors discover that

Horst Spies was imprisoned in Buchenwald in November 1938. He was released when his parents (who did not survive the war) secured him a *Kindertransport* place. Horst next stayed in Dovercourt – a holiday camp housing hundreds of refugee children until foster homes were found. It was especially difficult to house teenage boys.¹⁰⁷

Spies was not taken in by a loving foster family but instead was moved from camp to camp, which suggests that he experienced continued displacement in Britain. The exhibition also states that some of the Kinder were 'prisoners' on board the *Dunera* which transported enemy aliens to Australia from Britain. Although there is a sense of continued suffering within this exhibition, the negatives are partly counterbalanced by reference to the fact that many of those who were interned became British citizens. There is an emphasis on how the Kinder fought for their host nation as many joined the Pioneer Corps of the British Army.

The Empathy Museum (EM) is a travelling museum which 'explores how empathy can not only transform our personal relationship', but also 'help tackle global challenges such as prejudice, conflict and inequality'.¹⁰⁸ The 'A Mile in My Shoes' exhibition, 2019, which resembled 'a shoe shop where visitors [were] invited to walk a mile in someone else's shoes – literally' reflected upon 'loss and grief' as well as on 'hope and love'.¹⁰⁹ As in 'You, Me and Those Who Came Before', the use of Lord Dubs' positive testimony about the welcome he received in Britain and his commitment to helping today's refugees supports the positive British narrative. While visitors were encouraged to engage with personal refugee stories which created a sense of empathy through identification, the exhibition did not seek to inspire empathy through a critical lens on history. As a result, the positive British narrative dominated because the emphasis was again placed on British achievements as the nation continues to help refugees. Overall, however, although the travelling and temporary exhibitions discussed above

¹⁰⁷ 'Leave to Land: The Kitchener Camp Rescue, 1939', Clare Weissenberg and Kate Pettitt, 2019.

¹⁰⁸ 'About', *Empathy Museum*, at <http://www.empathymuseum.com> [accessed 9th September 2019].

¹⁰⁹ 'About'.

do continue to present the positive elements of the Kindertransport, the negatives are presented in much more detail compared to earlier exhibitions. Gradually, a more complicated British memory of the Kindertransport is emerging in exhibitions.¹¹⁰

American Holocaust and Jewish Museums

In the words of the then American President, Jimmy Carter, The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) ‘depicts the lives of “new Americans”, but it [...] also reinforce[s] American’s self-idealization as haven for the world’s oppressed’.¹¹¹ At first glance, the USHMM seems to present a positive national perspective which is not too dissimilar to Britain’s because the emphasis is placed on America as a shelter for those in need. According to James E. Young, the purpose of the museum was to ‘plot the Holocaust according to the nation’s own ideals’.¹¹² Because the Holocaust is ‘defined as the ultimate violation of America’s Bill of Rights and as the persecution of plural groups, [it] encompasses all the reasons immigrants – past, present, and future – have for seeking refuge in America’.¹¹³ Thus the museum suggests ‘what it means to be American by graphically illustrating what it means not to be American’.¹¹⁴ American and British museums, when representing the Holocaust, both present a national claim to universal values. In the case of America, this discourse is particularly clear in the USHMM, because here America is seen to be championing these values. ‘The Holocaust’ exhibition, 1993 seems to put an American stamp on the refugee story because it suggests that America not only empathises with the victims of the Holocaust but also offers them a new homeland where they can rebuild their lives. This creates a tension with

¹¹⁰ For more information about recent discussions around diaspora and migration in museums, see Laurence Gouriévidis (ed.), *Museums and Migration: History, Memory and Politics* (Routledge: London, 2014), and Jennifer Craig-Norton, Christhard Hoffman and Tony Kushner (eds), *Migrant Britain: Histories and Historiographies: Essays in Honour of Colin Holmes* (Routledge: London, 2018).

¹¹¹ James E. Young, ‘Memorials and Museums’, in Peter Hayes and John K. Roth (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (Oxford University Press: Oxford and New York, 2010), p. 504.

¹¹² James E. Young, ‘America’s Holocaust: Memory and the Politics of Identity’, in Hilene Flanzbaum (ed.), *The Americanization of the Holocaust* (The John Hopkins University Press: London, 1999), p. 73.

¹¹³ Young, ‘America’s Holocaust’, p. 73.

¹¹⁴ Young, ‘America’s Holocaust’, p. 73.

universal values because the exhibition focuses on specific group rights to a homeland, be that in America or Israel. Identity is not presented as a cosmopolitan concept as the exhibition does not talk about the 'global self', rather identity is discussed in terms of being American-Jewish. The exhibition was created at a time when 'American Jewish groups [were] establish[ing] a clear cut ethnic identity between the 1960s and the 1990s'.¹¹⁵ While Natan Sznaider argues that 'Jews in America can be everything: Jewish, Americans, loyal to Israel or none of the above', the museum focuses on becoming American.¹¹⁶ The exhibition presents the Americanization of the future of Jews because it is in this nation where Jews are free.

On the other hand, the USHMM also presents a self-critical narrative of America's actions during the Holocaust, especially its role in the rescue of refugee children. For example, the exhibition maintains that America 'could have absorbed many more' refugees because the 'government remained callous in its unwillingness to help'.¹¹⁷ While the USHMM does give more weight to the negatives compared to British museums, the main exhibition nevertheless begins and ends on a progressive note which focuses on the gratitude of survivors for America's post-war rescue efforts.¹¹⁸ So, while the USHMM is critical of America's pre-war rescue of refugees, it praises itself for its post-war liberation and resettlement of survivors. In doing so, the pre-war failings are to a degree outweighed. The self-congratulatory British narrative is strong throughout the British museums because of the emphasis on arrival on the Kindertransport; this moment overcomes any events which precede it. In contrast, the American narrative moves from self-critical to positive because the focus is placed on new beginnings when the Kinder arrived in America.

¹¹⁵ Natan Sznaider, 'The Americanization of Memory: The Case of the Holocaust', in Ulrich Beck, Natan Sznaider, and Rainer Winter (eds), *Global America?: The Cultural Consequences of Globalization* (Liverpool University Press: Liverpool, 2003), p. 176.

¹¹⁶ Sznaider, 'The Americanization of Memory', p. 176.

¹¹⁷ 'The Holocaust', United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1993.

¹¹⁸ Young, 'America's Holocaust', p. 78.

The portrayal of the Kindertransport does not sit within a traditional chronology of the Holocaust as it appears towards the end of the exhibition. Where we would expect to find the Kindertransport, we instead find a critical perspective on how American ‘efforts to rescue Jewish children failed [as] the Wagner-Rogers Bill [...] died in the Senate in 1939’.¹¹⁹ The exhibition draws attention to the failure to rescue refugee children as well as to how the passengers’ of the *St. Louis* ‘request for asylum went unanswered’.¹²⁰ The omission of the Kindertransport theme from this section may suggest that the event is not seen as part of American history. There is no contrast made between how Britain accepted around 10,000 children and how America’s similar rescue scheme was blocked by the Senate.

The Kindertransport is found in the ‘Children in the Holocaust’ section after liberation, and before the section about bystanders and displaced persons. The narrative which runs parallel to the Kindertransport is ‘The Killers – The Quest for Justice’. The Kindertransport is shown as a unique experience because 1.5 million children were murdered in the Holocaust. Rescue is presented alongside the contrasting experiences children faced during this period – visitors learn about the different fates of children from those who ‘emigrated with their parents to safety in unfamiliar lands’, to those who ‘became beggars and food smugglers’ in the ghettos, and those who ‘went directly to the gas chambers’.¹²¹ Overall, the emphasis is placed on how many children were unable to flee to safety. The Kindertransport is not seen purely in terms of British history if we look more closely at the exhibition. Peter Ney’s story and his artefacts highlight one personal Kind’s experience. His items include a toy car, track and petrol station. The accompanying text states that:

in December 1938, 7 year old Peter Ney left his parents and this toy car set behind when he left Germany on a children’s transport to England. The following year, he reunited with his parents and immigrated to the United States, where his toys were waiting.¹²²

¹¹⁹ ‘The Holocaust’, USHMM.

¹²⁰ ‘The Holocaust’, USHMM.

¹²¹ ‘The Holocaust’, USHMM.

¹²² ‘The Holocaust’, USHMM.

The text implies that it was not in Britain but in America that Ney was able to continue his childhood. British achievements to save refugee children are played down here: the Kindertransport is used to support the narrative of new departures from Europe to America. While the exhibition is prepared to confront the negatives with regards to the Wagner-Rogers Bill, it also suggests that America soon learnt from its mistakes as on January 22nd, 1944, the War Refugee Board (WRB) was established. The exhibition states that although ‘the U.S. government [...] undertook no practical measures aimed at rescue’ prior to the establishment of the WRB, President Roosevelt did give the ‘Executive Order’ to set up the organisation.¹²³ The text also explores how ‘the WRB helped rescue tens of thousands of Jews in Europe; the figure may have been as high as 200,000’.¹²⁴ There is a delay with regards to how the negative impression is counteracted because it is only towards the end of the exhibition that negatives are trumped by the positives. This is further reinforced by the emphasis on how American cultural life ‘benefited’ due to the incoming of refugees from Greater Germany.¹²⁵

The narrative of the birth of Israel follows on from the Kindertransport section. This chronological reorganisation places the Kindertransport within a context of coming to terms with the past as well as ‘a much odder [context of America being a] “privileged witness” to the suffering of Jews in the Holocaust’.¹²⁶ The Kindertransport is placed within a thematic space which suggests that while America needs to confront its history of inaction, it also did its part to support the regeneration of Jewish life. The positive British narrative tends to be introverted while America’s national narrative is outward-looking, but also nationalistic. Britain tends to disregard the negatives of the Kindertransport straight away but America admits its faults only to later suggest that it has learnt from its errors. The negatives seem to be counterbalanced

¹²³ ‘The Holocaust’, USHMM.

¹²⁴ ‘The Holocaust’, USHMM.

¹²⁵ ‘The Holocaust’, USHMM.

¹²⁶ Sznajder, ‘The Americanization of Memory’, p. 180.

because America is regarded as a protector of nations; the focus on America's post-war rescue of Jews is used to reduce the importance of its strict quota system in the pre-war period.

The Museum of Jewish Heritage, New York (MJH) credits Britain for rescuing Jewish children, whereas the USHMM renationalises the narrative of the Kindertransport to fit into an American narrative about post-war rescue. However, the MJH also suggests that the '*Kindertransport* was not the first attempt to give children a better life' because 'the Youth *Aliyah* sent young Jews to Palestine starting in 1934 – though in 1939, Britain severely limited their number'.¹²⁷ Therefore, while the 'Core Exhibition' praises Britain for taking in the Kinder, it also critiques Britain's rescue efforts as it depicts how the nation restricted access to Palestine. This criticism is further emphasised when the exhibition states that 'these and other programs offered families a heart-breaking choice: whether to face a dangerous situation together, or send their children to an unknown fate in a foreign land', which suggests that Britain made it difficult for families to remain together.¹²⁸ There is little criticism, however, of America's role in rescuing children, which supports the narrative of Jewish refugees being welcomed to America. This narrative is not dissimilar to the one present within British Jewish museums, as the focus is placed on the successful integration of Jews into society. On the other hand, the MJH, similar to the USHMM, adopts a more competitive approach than British Jewish museums. For example, in the MJH, the British narrative of rescue is largely elided because visitors do not find any documentation that draws attention to the Kindertransports to Britain. Rather, visitors are presented with Fred Rosenthal's boarding pass, symbolising the efforts of the American Friends Service Committee. The organisation of material underscores the fact that although the Wagner-Rogers Bill was rejected, child refugees were still rescued to America as organisations and groups such as the Œuvre de Secours aux Enfants and Quakers

¹²⁷ 'The Core Exhibition', Museum of Jewish Heritage, 1997.

¹²⁸ 'The Core Exhibition', MJH.

brought children to America via Portugal in the 1940s. Even those artefacts which are connected to Kinder who travelled to Britain come to be renationalised because they are placed within an American context of rescue: they attest to how some Kinder left Britain for America. Moreover, visitors also encounter a bowl which was sent to a refugee in Shanghai by the American Joint Distribution Committee through the International Red Cross. The focus is therefore placed on America's support of Jewish refugees at home and abroad.

This competitive narrative comes to a climax towards the end of the exhibition as visitors are told that while 'Britain's Jewish community is old and well established [...] there are growing concerns that many in the community [...] are becoming alienated from their Jewish roots'.¹²⁹ As in the USHMM, the Kindertransport is viewed from a perspective of rebirth because the focus is on how many survivors in the post-war period made America and Israel their new home – including some of the Kinder who first went to Britain. Both exhibitions reflect upon how Jews wanted to make 'a fresh start abroad'.¹³⁰ When the USHMM exhibition states that Europe was a 'Jewish Graveyard',¹³¹ this is of course true, but the use of this term also serves to emphasise the value and importance of 'rebirth' in America. Although there is some critical reflection upon America's rescue of survivors after the war in the MJH, as the exhibition text explains that 'immigration to America was slow', the negatives are soon qualified because the following sentence critiques Britain as it 'blocked' entry into Palestine 'which closed the door to Jews'.¹³² So while movement towards a new home (America) may have been time-consuming, it is presented in a positive light because America is seen to be providing survivors with a new start to life away from the horror they had experienced in lands far away. Britain on the other hand is shown to be creating obstacles and even deporting

¹²⁹ 'The Core Exhibition', MJH.

¹³⁰ 'The Core Exhibition', MJH.

¹³¹ 'The Holocaust', USHMM.

¹³² 'The Core Exhibition', MJH.

‘immigrants it caught to Cyprus’ after the war.¹³³ The exhibition not only congratulates America for opening its doors to refugees in the post-war period, even though this was an unhurried process, it also suggests that Jewish revival centres around America and Israel. America is regarded as the defender of Israel, whereas Britain is shown to be the nation which turned Jews away. Furthermore, the exhibition implies that America and Israel share many commonalities compared to Israel and Britain as they ‘both see themselves as lands of refuge and freedom’.¹³⁴

Although both British and American Jewish museums explore how the Jewish communities in these nations continued to aid refugees for many years after the war, the MJH takes a more multidirectional approach. The exhibition shows how the American-Jewish community fought alongside those fighting for civil rights as they wanted a ‘just society’ where racism and discrimination did not exist.¹³⁵ The MJH also connects memory of the Holocaust to memory of the genocide in Darfur, as the ‘American Jewish World Service and other Jewish organizations, motivated by Judaism’s imperative to pursue justice’ funded ‘relief programs in Sudan and Chad’.¹³⁶ Although the Kindertransport does not occupy a central role in America’s memory of the Holocaust compared to Britain’s national memory, in the American museums discussed here it is interpreted so as to fit into an American narrative about how the nation continues to safeguard Jewish heritage. Although Britain’s national narrative tends to ignore the negatives of rescue efforts, America does recognise some of them such as the failure of the Wagner-Rogers Bill, yet it disregards the fact that some Kinder found it difficult to adapt to life in their second host nation. The narrative on display at the MJH essentially presents America as a place of refuge.¹³⁷

¹³³ ‘The Core Exhibition’, MJH.

¹³⁴ Young, ‘America’s Holocaust’, p. 79.

¹³⁵ ‘The Core Exhibition’, MJH.

¹³⁶ ‘The Core Exhibition’, MJH.

¹³⁷ Three recent temporary exhibitions also depicted America as being a new homeland for Kinder. These are: ‘Auschwitz: Not Long Ago. Not Far Away’, Museum of Jewish Heritage, 2019; ‘Children Left at the Station: A

Canadian Holocaust Museums

The Kindertransport would seem to lend itself particularly well to Canadian memory of the Holocaust because Canada remembers how it interned many Jewish refugees as enemy aliens, yet it also reflects upon how many refugees remained in Canada and became part of the community there. Compared to British and American approaches to the Kindertransport, Canada does not try to resolve contradictions in its view of rescue. Visitors to the Musée de l'Holocauste Montréal (the Montreal Holocaust Museum, MHM) encounter a portrayal in which the Kindertransport is not placed within a trajectory of rescue equalling sanctuary and protection. Rather it is placed within a context which is more open to interpretation. While the MHM exhibition acknowledges that the Kindertransport saved the lives of many Kinder, it also discusses how many nations were reluctant to rescue Jewish refugees as well as how slow they were to release those categorised as enemy aliens from internment camps during the war.

The MHM, like the HELC, addresses the theme of the separation of families. Visitors are confronted with a text which raises difficult issues such as 'whether one goes or one stays', as well as 'how one goes and how one stays'.¹³⁸ Before the representation of the Kindertransport comes the 'In Search of Safety' section, which reflects upon the Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann's observation 'that the world was divided between countries where Jews may not live and countries they may not enter'.¹³⁹ The Kindertransport is situated within the context of how 'countries around the world were shutting their gates' instead of offering asylum to those in danger.¹⁴⁰ The Kindertransport is not fitted into a positive narrative which focuses on how a particular country opened its doors to Jewish refugees. Instead, it is placed

Tribute to the Children of the Kindertransport', Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust, 2018, and 'Kindertransport – Rescuing Children on the Brink of War', Yeshiva University Museum and the Leo Baeck Institute, 2018.

¹³⁸ 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors', Montreal Holocaust Museum, 2003.

¹³⁹ 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors'.

¹⁴⁰ 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors'.

within a broader context; its significance is reduced because it is seen in relation to the unwillingness of many nations to react with any urgency to assist Jewish refugees. While the exhibition acknowledges how the Nazis placed many bureaucratic obstacles in front of those wanting to leave, it also suggests that countries such as America also made it difficult for Jewish refugees to flee to safety as they had to overcome the ‘paper walls’ and strict quota arrangements enforced by other nations.¹⁴¹ For example, we discover how ‘in 1938, Bella Fromm wrote to a friend [explaining that], “so far [she had] gathered a collection of 23 of the necessary documents and still [she needed] more to leave”’.¹⁴² Likewise, visitors are informed that many refugees ‘needed to be sponsored before they would be allowed into a new country’.¹⁴³ Rescue is not presented as an uncomplicated process, rather the exhibition criticises Canada, Britain and America’s restrictive policies towards refugees. This is further reinforced by the fact that the exhibition stresses how many countries offered ‘temporary refugee’ to the incoming refugees; they were regarded as transmigrants who would later move to other host nations.¹⁴⁴

The exhibition further critiques Britain’s role in the Kindertransport because it suggests that ‘Britain would accept very few Jewish refugees, but they would take in a limited number of children’.¹⁴⁵ While the exhibition recognises Britain’s actions in helping the Kinder, it also argues that these ‘young people [...] faced loneliness and [struggled] growing up without their families, never knowing if they would see them again’.¹⁴⁶ The Kindertransport is not coopted as it is in Britain into a positive narrative which centres on altruism and compassion; rather the narrative presented focuses on the painful splitting up of families and the isolation felt by many Kinder on arrival. The objects on display also attest to this sense of loss. Miriam Gruenfeld’s

¹⁴¹ ‘The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors’.

¹⁴² ‘The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors’.

¹⁴³ ‘The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors’.

¹⁴⁴ ‘The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors’.

¹⁴⁵ ‘The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors’.

¹⁴⁶ ‘The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors’.

story highlights how her parents sent their fourteen-year-old daughter to Britain with her childhood belongings to remind her of her childhood with them. This sense of a lost childhood is also shown by the section about the Youth Aliyah transports to Palestine because the focus is placed on being sent ‘alone to an unfamiliar land’.¹⁴⁷ Britain’s treatment of child refugees in Palestine is critiqued as the exhibition states that ‘Jews who entered the country illegally, including children, were imprisoned by the British in detention camps’.¹⁴⁸ This sense of confinement is also shown through the aesthetics as well as the text, because the images which accompany this passage present children looking through ship portals and wire-gridded windows. Travel is not presented as an adventure, because attention is drawn towards the sometimes constricted and unfamiliar spaces refugee children experienced during their journeys to their host nations. Britain, America and Canada’s responses to the plight of Jewish refugees is further critiqued, because while the exhibition acknowledges the ‘ejection of Jews from any economic or social participation’ in German society, it also suggests that these three nations did little to accept more refugees.¹⁴⁹ In this context, the fact that Kristallnacht comes after the Kindertransport further supports this narrative of indifference towards aiding refugees prior to the outbreak of war. While this distorts the historical chronology, as in the IWMS, in this case the Kindertransport does not detract from the horrors of Kristallnacht rather it is understood as part of Canada’s inaction to help refugees before the war.

The narrative of the exhibition corresponds to Canada’s memory of the Holocaust because it presents a self-critical perspective which centres on Canada’s ‘prejudicial restrictions’ and reluctance to ‘participate in the Evian Refugee Conference’.¹⁵⁰ At the same time, it questions world responses and concludes that there were many ‘empty acts’ as many nations were unresponsive to the dilemma Jews were facing in Greater Germany. Thus not

¹⁴⁷ ‘The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors’.

¹⁴⁸ ‘The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors’.

¹⁴⁹ ‘The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors’.

¹⁵⁰ ‘The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors’.

only does the exhibition criticise Canada's 'restrictive immigration policy', it also draws critical attention to the fact that America 'favoured certain groups over others'.¹⁵¹ Britain and Australia's actions are also questioned because Britain's White Paper 'closed Palestine's borders' and Australia's announcement 'that it had no racial problem and would not import one' is presented as an example of nations disinclined to accept refugees.¹⁵² While the USHMM is critical of America's late responses to the Holocaust when it states that, even after having 'received confirmed reports of the Nazi mass murder of Europe's Jews', it 'undertook no practical measures aimed at rescue' until the establishment of the War Refugee Board in 1944, the MHM seems to be even more self-critical of Canada's responses.¹⁵³ For example, the exhibition states that there were boycotts of Jewish businesses in Quebec, restrictions were imposed on Jews across Canada in terms of them being able to gain access to universities, jobs and housing, and there were members of groups such as the Ku Klux Klan in most provinces in Canada.¹⁵⁴ While the USHMM is critical of its role as a rescuer, America is presented as a hero towards the end of this exhibition because the nation is shown to be the protector of Jewish people, but the MHM presents Canada as both as a hero and as villain. The exhibition does not shy away from discussing Canada's failings as visitors discover that there were signs displayed in hotels which read "'No Dogs or Jews Allowed'".¹⁵⁵ The MHM reflects upon Canada's 'hydra-headed memory'¹⁵⁶ because it discusses antisemitism in Canada and how Canada refused asylum to passengers on board the *St. Louis*, as well as how individuals such as Soul Hayes lobbied the government to change its restrictive immigration policy, and how Canadian athletes refused to take part in the 1936 Olympics.

¹⁵¹ 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors'.

¹⁵² 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors'.

¹⁵³ 'The Holocaust', USHMM.

¹⁵⁴ 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors'.

¹⁵⁵ 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors'.

¹⁵⁶ Jason Chalmers, 'Canadianising the Holocaust: Debating Canada's National Holocaust Monument', *Canadian Jewish Studies* 24 (2016), p. 160.

The MHM views the Kindertransport in terms of Canada's failure to react because the exhibition also describes how 'long after England had released their interned Jews, Canada finally freed the remaining prisoners in December 1943, after pressure from the Canadian Jewish community'.¹⁵⁷ While Canada criticises the British for deporting Jewish refugees to Canada, it is also extremely critical of its own role in the internment of refugees. Canada's rescue of Jewish children from France is also critiqued here, because while 'the Canadian United Jewish Refugee and War Relief Agencies attempted to bring Jewish children from Vichy [...] Canadian government delays and red tape were so persistent that eventually the rescue mission failed and the children were deported to death camps'.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, the exhibition not only reflects upon Canada's failures, and the consequences of its actions and inaction. The exhibition finds fault with Canadian, American and British responses after the war, too, pointing out how these nations still enforced restrictive immigration policies, making it difficult for survivors to reunite with families. The MHM also reflects upon the 'overcrowded' Displaced Persons Camps, and how survivors struggled to adapt to life in new countries.¹⁵⁹ Unlike the USHMM, the 'Leaving Europe' section at the MHM exhibition does not congratulate Canada, Britain or America for rescuing Jews after the war; rather the focus is placed on how difficult it was to rebuild a life 'out of the ruins'.¹⁶⁰ The final section of the exhibition, 'The Montreal Survivor Community', also presents an open-ended perspective because the positives are not used to bolster a positive narrative of rescue. While visitors discover that 'between 1947 and 1950, 40,000 Jewish displaced persons immigrated to Canada', as well as how Montreal has one of the 'largest communities of Holocaust survivors in the world', Canada is not presented as a celebrated rescuer.¹⁶¹ Although visitors are made

¹⁵⁷ 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors'.

¹⁵⁸ 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors'.

¹⁵⁹ 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors'.

¹⁶⁰ 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors'.

¹⁶¹ 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors'.

aware that survivors made new homes in Canada, it is their determination and fight against antisemitism and Holocaust denial which is remembered. The conclusion to the exhibition is not at all one of praise for Canada's rescue efforts. It ends with 'a warning to the world: Never Again'.¹⁶² While recently there has been a more critical trend in British museum exhibitions featuring the Kindertransport, it seems that this more complex perspective was always there with regards to Canadian museums.¹⁶³

Australian Holocaust and Jewish Museums

In contrast to British and American museums discussed in this thesis, Canadian and Australian museums present negative aspects of the Kindertransport in such a way that they are not cancelled out by the positives. These museums are more aware of the difficulties of relocation as well as the complexities around identity. Their emphasis on overcoming intolerance at home and mitigating the effects of diaspora draws attention to these difficulties. British and American museums do not depict the theme of arrival as a difficult moment, but Canadian and Australian museums do, because Kinder arrived in these host nations as enemy aliens. The narratives here are about movements from danger to places which were regarded as safe but instead became places where new threats arose. The Kindertransport is therefore placed in a trajectory of constant threat. Because Canadian and Australian museums show the full diasporic history of the Kindertransport, they highlight how even those who were saved did not always find solace in their host nation/s. As I argued in the introduction to this thesis, the national Holocaust narratives of Canada and Australia are self-critical, and this is borne out by the representation of the Kindertransport. In the case of Australia, the self-critical representation of the Kindertransport is explicitly connected to displays focusing on the plight of refugees in other

¹⁶² 'The History of the Holocaust Told by Survivors'.

¹⁶³ Another exhibition which presents this self-critical perspective is "'Enemy Aliens": The Internment of Jewish Refugees in Canada, 1940-43', Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre, 2012.

historical contexts. The Australian museums link our understanding of the Kindertransport to the discourse of human rights, and to the transnational memory of the Holocaust which informs this discourse. In contrast to British and American museums, there is no attempt to ‘renationalise’ these universal values by suggesting they are inherently Australian. In the case of the Sydney Jewish Museum (SJM), for example, the museum’s architecture physically links the Holocaust and human rights (see later in chapter). That said, Australian museums do emphasise how, once the nation integrated the refugees – the outsider as ‘our own’ – a sense of belonging is created. This relationship between the enemy alien/friendly alien and the nation is not necessarily placed within a redemptive narrative, however, because integration is presented as a continuation of the difficult process of being transplanted to a new country.

The Jewish Holocaust Centre, Melbourne (JHC) was established under the patronage of Yad Vashem, Jerusalem in 1984. While the JHC reflects upon Australia’s actions during the Holocaust, it also explores Jewish diaspora. The permanent exhibition places the history of the Kindertransport within a broader context about how many Jews during the Holocaust were dispersed from their homelands. The Kindertransport, seen from this perspective, is less about finding a new home as it is in British museums, and more a symptom of a wider Jewish loss of homeland. Accordingly, the exhibition does not portray the Kinder as fully integrated into life in the different host nations. Visitors are introduced to Lore Oschinski’s story about how she was interned in Britain and how her family were separated from one another. The text panel reads as follows:

in 1939 [...] 15-year-old Lore Oschinski was sent by her concerned parents Herta and Richard, with the assistance of the Belgium Red Cross, from her hometown of Berlin to the relative safety of Brussels. She lived with her aunt and uncle, Alfred and Edith Oschinsky, and attended a local school in Uccle, Brussels. With war looming she then travelled to England in August 1939 under the sponsorship of the Jewish Refugees Committee.

Lore landed at Dover shortly before World War Two broke out, and was allowed exemption from immediate internment. In May 1940 she was interned for ten months,

along with thousands of other ‘enemy aliens’, at Rushen Camp for women and children on the Isle of Man.

Lore’s mother fled Germany with assistance from the Quakers and made her way to England but her father was unable to leave and ultimately took his life in August 1942.¹⁶⁴

The exhibition also states that, in 1947, Oschinski anglicised her name to Oliver. While she had been unable to adapt fully to life in her first host nation – Belgium – it was in her second host nation (Britain) that she grew into a new way of life and started a career in nursing.¹⁶⁵ Her adaptation to life in Britain was not without its complications either, though: she was interned because she was regarded as an outsider. A sense of being constantly uprooted is created as Oschinski is shown to have been further and further distanced from her homeland and family. Oschinski’s twenty-first birthday card, given to her by her mother in 1944, also reinforces how her life was disrupted, because Oschinski’s mother wrote inside the card that she hoped her ‘life is as interesting but less stormy than the first part’.¹⁶⁶

The JHC exhibition opens with the ‘Vanished World’ and concludes with ‘Remember – *Zachor*’, generating a sense of loss. This is also present within the Kindertransport part of the exhibition, which is found within the section about the different fates of ‘Children’ in the Holocaust. The main text panel here states that

along with the massive upheaval of their lives, child survivors were robbed of their childhood. Losing family members and witnessing such horrors at a tender age left permanent psychological scars. Many survivors are still haunted by the loss of their siblings and childhood friends, murdered while still so young.¹⁶⁷

This powerful sense of loss is also reinforced by the final sections of the exhibition, ‘From Silence to Dialogue’, ‘To Life, To Life, L’Chaim’ and ‘Remember - *Zachor*’, as the focus is placed on ‘lost years’, ‘lost opportunities’ and ultimately the ‘loss of Jewish life’.¹⁶⁸ The

¹⁶⁴ ‘Permanent Exhibition’, Jewish Holocaust Centre, 2011.

¹⁶⁵ ‘Permanent Exhibition’, JHC.

¹⁶⁶ ‘Permanent Exhibition’, JHC.

¹⁶⁷ ‘Permanent Exhibition’, JHC.

¹⁶⁸ ‘Permanent Exhibition’, JHC.

exhibition ventures beyond the history of the Kindertransport because we also learn about how difficult it was for survivors to talk about their experiences after the war, as well as how there was a public silence for many years as many nations were not ready to listen to the testimonies of survivors.¹⁶⁹

The JHC has produced many temporary exhibitions which provide ‘an opportunity to commemorate key events, tell personal survivor stories and reach new audiences’, and which ‘also respond to a broadening focus at the JHC to include other genocides’.¹⁷⁰ In 2006, for example, the ‘Shelter From the Storm: Jewish Refugees to Australia 1933-1945’ exhibition, funded by the Federal Government Fund, drew connections between ‘the “Howard Government’s cruel and heartless policy of issuing temporary protection visas”’ and Australian ‘racially-based criteria that discriminated against non-British applicants’ in the 1930s and 1940s.¹⁷¹ While Steven Cooke and Donna-Lee Frieze argue that the exhibition supported a ‘positive narrative about adjusting to life in Australia’, they also write that the exhibition explored ‘the problems faced by refugees, especially children’.¹⁷² For example, the exhibition featured an ‘excerpt from [a] statement by Ben Lewin on behalf of the Dunera Boys, May 1941’ which posed the following question:

what charge is brought against us and what makes us deserve months after months of life behind barbed wire, separation from wives, children, parents and friends... by the repeated wrecking of our existence and stigmatization by prolonged detention?¹⁷³

This part of the exhibition appeared just before a section on ‘The Universal Plight of the Refugee’. Memory of the Dunera Boys, of whom some were Kinder, was directly connected to how refugees ‘deserve to be treated properly’ and how ‘we diminish ourselves by the way

¹⁶⁹ ‘Permanent Exhibition’, JHC.

¹⁷⁰ Steven Cooke and Donna-Lee Frieze, *The Interior of Our Memories: A History of Melbourne’s Jewish Holocaust Centre* (Hybrid Publishers: place of publication unknown, 2015), p. 117.

¹⁷¹ ‘Shelter From the Storm: Jewish Refugees to Australia 1933-1945’, Jewish Holocaust Centre, 2006.

¹⁷² Steven Cooke and Donna-Lee Frieze, ‘Shifting Responses to Antisemitism and Racism: Temporary Exhibitions at the Jewish Holocaust Centre’, in Shirli Gilbert and Avril Alba (eds), *Holocaust Memory and Racism in the Postwar Period* (Wayne State University Press: Michigan, 2019), p. 341.

¹⁷³ ‘Shelter From the Storm’.

we treat them'.¹⁷⁴ The story of the Dunera Boys and, ultimately, the narrative of the Kindertransport were used to illustrate how Australia was violating human rights in the present as well as in the past, the very human rights 'of which Australia is a signatory'.¹⁷⁵ For example, visitors were told that 'in Australia, many refugees are now held in detention to endure austere and humiliating conditions and extended periods of limbo while their claims are examined'.¹⁷⁶ This unquestionably critical stance called for governmental action. The exhibition challenged the notion of Australia being a place 'where democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law prevail'.¹⁷⁷ The fact that this exhibition was government sponsored suggested that Australia as well as other nations have a responsibility to help those who are suffering, as the 'measure of an advanced culture must surely be in how it treats the vulnerable, how it heeds its international obligations and the moral underpinning of its policy towards refugees'.¹⁷⁸ Memory of the Kindertransport was connected to transnational memory of the Holocaust which is linked to facilitating and aiding refugees today.

The SJM has four permanent exhibitions which explore Australia's reactions to 'The Holocaust', 'The Holocaust and Human Rights', the history of the Australian-Jewish community and the history of Australian Jews who served in the armed forces. While each exhibition reflects upon the contributions Jews have made to Australian society, they also explore the prejudices and injustices Jews faced in Australia. The portrayal of the Kindertransport is very much shaped by the SJM's overall narrative, which is symbolised by the museum's interior design. A sculptured staircase in the form of a Star of David zig-zags over three floors, creating a central void. The Star can be understood as 'either whole or broken, serving as a framing metaphor for both the Holocaust (broken) and the Jewish (whole) aspects

¹⁷⁴ 'Shelter From the Storm'.

¹⁷⁵ 'Shelter From the Storm'.

¹⁷⁶ 'Shelter From the Storm'.

¹⁷⁷ 'Shelter From the Storm'.

¹⁷⁸ 'Shelter From the Storm'.

of the exhibition'.¹⁷⁹ In addition to representing the fractured nature of Jewish integration in Europe as well as in Australia, the iconography highlights a transnational influence in terms of the way we remember the Holocaust. It links the history of the Holocaust to 'The Holocaust and Human Rights' exhibition on the top floor, visualising the fact that images of Jewish suffering have become a universal signifier for human suffering more generally.¹⁸⁰ 'The Holocaust and Human Rights' exhibition, 2018 focuses on contemporary human rights' issues pertaining to refugees and asylum seekers, people with disabilities, indigenous people and the LGBTIQ+ community.¹⁸¹ The zigzag design, the 'brainchild of Sydney architect Michael Bures',¹⁸² recalls Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin and the National Museum of Australia in Canberra, which, according to Neil Levi, 'seems to indicate a relationship between the histories of the Jews in Germany and the Aborigines in Australia'.¹⁸³ The history of the Kindertransport is spread over several points in 'The Holocaust' exhibition, 2017. We discover what life was like before, during and after the Kindertransport. These stories are not found together, rather they are scattered around the exhibition. In some cases, there is a physical barrier between the different sections. For example, the rescue of the Kinder is separated from the internment of refugee children by a wall. In keeping with the SJM's emphasis on fracture, the Kindertransport is thus not seen as one seamless narrative, but as a broken process. The SJM also aligns the history of the Kindertransport with that of the Holocaust, because parallels are drawn between the incarceration of Kinder in internment camps and children imprisoned in the ghettos.

¹⁷⁹ Alba Avril, *The Holocaust Memorial Museum: Sacred Secular Space* (Palgrave Macmillan: Houndmills and Basingstoke, 2015), p. 145.

¹⁸⁰ See Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder, 'The Holocaust and the Foundation of Cosmopolitan Memory', *European Journal of Social Theory* 5:1 (2002), pp. 87-106.

¹⁸¹ 'The Holocaust and Human Rights', *Sydney Jewish Museum*, at <https://sydneyjewishmuseum.com.au/holocaust-and-human-rights/> [accessed 8th October 2019].

¹⁸² Avril, *The Holocaust Memorial Museum*, p. 145.

¹⁸³ Neil Levi, "'No Sensible Comparison?'" The Place of the Holocaust in Australia's History Wars', *History and Memory* 19:1 (2007), p. 131.

The Kindertransport first appears in the 'Fear and Flight' section. As with the MHM, the focus is placed on the restrictive immigration policies of Australia in 1938 as well as on Britain's White Paper of 1939. This critical perspective continues as the 'Saving Children' section reflects upon Australia's failure to rescue Jewish refugee children. The main text panel reads as follows:

in the pre-war years thousands of parents, who could no longer protect their families in Nazi Germany, made the agonizing decision to send their children abroad unaccompanied. These *Kindertransporte* saved more than 18,000 children. Some found refuge in Switzerland, Sweden, Holland, Palestine and the USA. A few came to Australia and New Zealand. England received the largest group of 10,000. Children and parents remained in contact via letters, hoping to be reunited soon. While many children experienced their journey as a great adventure, others suffered ill treatment, abuse and forced conversion to Christianity. Most never saw their parents again.¹⁸⁴

The SJM reflects the difficult history of the Kindertransport because it considers how Kinder travelled to multiple countries to escape persecution. The Kindertransport tends to be presented from an English-speaking perspective, but this exhibition shows that the language of rescue is not specifically English, as Kinder were also rescued by non-English speaking nations and learnt other languages such as French, Dutch, Swedish and Hebrew. In seeing the broader transnational history of the Kindertransport, we also see how Kinder had to adapt to cultures which were as unfamiliar to them as they were to their host countries. We also discover how the fates of Kinder differed: those who fled to Holland, for example, later came under German occupation. Although the exhibition does not specifically explore this in any detail, the Kindertransport is brought back into the orbit of the Holocaust because some Kinder who had fled from Greater Germany between 1938-1939 were later captured in their host nations and deported. The Kindertransport and the Holocaust are also connected in the 'Torn Apart' and 'Forced Apart' sections which present the individual stories of Hansi Gruschka and Beate Beer, whose parents were murdered in the Holocaust. As with the HELC, a sense of disintegration is

¹⁸⁴ 'The Holocaust', Sydney Jewish Museum, 2017.

conveyed, for instance when we learn that Gruschka's family were separated from one another. His sister and father escaped to Palestine, while his mother stayed behind to care for his grandmother and was later 'deported to Theresienstadt and then to Auschwitz'.¹⁸⁵ The perspective on the Kindertransport is broadened because the parents' fates are brought into focus. While the fates of the parents are not always overlooked in British exhibitions, this focus tends to be marginal because while Britain rescued the Kinder, it excluded many of their parents. Unlike British exhibitions, the SJM reflects upon how 'Australia was not keen to offer refuge' to adult as well as child refugees.¹⁸⁶ This self-critical view is further reinforced because in praising British and American aid, the exhibition suggests that Australia did little to help those at risk. Moreover, the main text panel points out that the 'quota was set for 15,000 refugees to enter over the next three years via family, Australian Jewish Welfare Society or other sponsorship' and 'only 9,000 Jews from Central Europe found a safe haven' in Australia by 1939.¹⁸⁷

This self-critical outlook is also present in the 'Enemy Aliens' section, where the history of the Kindertransport also appears in the 'Ghetto' section of the exhibition. This may seem a strange blurring of chronology. Most exhibitions typically place the Kindertransport before any sections on ghettos to contrast the safety accorded to some children with the incarceration later suffered by others. The arrangement of material in the SJM encourages us to reflect upon how escape did not always mean freedom because many refugees continued to face discrimination even when they were 'safe'. The aesthetics of the exhibition create an atmosphere of confinement and captivity, because the 'Ghetto' section is separated from the main exhibition. This sense of enclosure is also strengthened by the lighting as visitors are plunged into darkness, making the space seem smaller. Text and aesthetics combine to create

¹⁸⁵ 'The Holocaust', SJM.

¹⁸⁶ 'The Holocaust', SJM.

¹⁸⁷ 'The Holocaust', SJM.

empathy with the refugee children who were interned in their host nations as well as in ghettos in occupied lands. This critical perspective is further emphasised by the text as visitors discover that Australia interned refugees as well as ‘Australia-born persons of alien descent [...] together with Germans who were National Socialists and antisemites’.¹⁸⁸ We are also told that ‘the deportees were interned in remote camps in Hay (New South Wales) and Tatura (Victoria) and released gradually’.¹⁸⁹ However, while Britain is criticised for deporting 2,542 men to Australia on board the *Dunera*, Australia is presented as a refuge as well as a prison because out of the 1,750 Dunera Boys ‘over 800 [...] elected to remain in Australia [and] 550 volunteered for the 8th Australian Employment Company’.¹⁹⁰ In seeing the wider transnational history of the Kindertransport, Australia’s national memory does not overlook the negatives of this historical event.

However, there is a degree of self-congratulation because the exhibition suggests that, while the *Dunera* affair was ‘once criticized as a scandal, [it] is today viewed as a success-story [because] the Dunera Boys [who were] once unwanted refugees, made significant contributions to Australia’s multicultural society’.¹⁹¹ Thus, Australia is seen to benefit from the culture the Dunera Boys brought with them. We also learn about the resilience of the Kinder because they created their own community within the internment camps. For example, they forged lifelong friendships, some served in the Australian Army while others created artworks from the limited materials available such as wood and toilet paper. Yet these positive stories do not detract from the negative aspects because while the exhibition shows that the Dunera Boys adapted to life in Australia, it also shows they were isolated from wider society, unable to communicate with the outside world, and their movements were restricted. Furthermore, these refugees were guarded by the Australian Army. It is no coincidence then that the ‘Enemy

¹⁸⁸ ‘The Holocaust’, SJM.

¹⁸⁹ ‘The Holocaust’, SJM.

¹⁹⁰ ‘The Holocaust’, SJM.

¹⁹¹ ‘The Holocaust’, SJM.

Aliens' section is opposite 'Segregation', because while Jews in Europe were forced into the ghettos, alienated from the rest of the population on account of their faith, they were also separated from wider society in their host nations because of their nationalities. The final part of the exhibition further brings into focus the complexities of rescue and adaptation: while it reflects upon how many survivors after the war found refuge in Australia, it also argues that many Jews were excluded from seeking refuge as they were still regarded as 'undesirable'.¹⁹² Australia's narrative of welcoming refugees is also questioned because the exhibition points out that 'an estimated 4,000 to 5,000 Nazi War Criminals found sanctuary in Australia', while many were never brought to justice.¹⁹³ Therefore, while it is made clear that many refugees were able to rebuild their lives in Australia, the focus is not on national pride for helping refugees, but more on the problems accompanying adaptation to life in Australia.

Holocaust Centre of New Zealand

Perhaps because so few Kinder migrated to New Zealand, the topic is less present there. However, the Kindertransport is not forgotten, as it is featured in the 'Permanent Exhibition' (2006) at the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand (HCNZ). The HCNZ was 'founded by a small group of Holocaust survivors [and] children of survivors and refugees'.¹⁹⁴ It aims 'to remember and honour those killed in the Holocaust – in particular, the families of survivors in New Zealand'.¹⁹⁵ Another objective of the Centre is to highlight the relevance of the Holocaust to New Zealand because survivors prior to, during and after the war emigrated to this nation. The exhibition communicates this history through individual survivor stories, creating a survivor-driven narrative as the focus is placed on how survivors journeyed to New Zealand and how they made new homes there. The exhibition also reflects upon the nation's actions and inaction

¹⁹² 'The Holocaust', SJM.

¹⁹³ 'The Holocaust', SJM.

¹⁹⁴ 'HCNZ History', *National Holocaust Centre of New Zealand*, at <https://www.holocaustcentre.org.nz/hcnz-history.html> [accessed 4th October 2019].

¹⁹⁵ 'HCNZ History'.

in response to refugees. It does not, overall, promote either a self-congratulatory or self-critical narrative of New Zealand's reactions to the Holocaust, however, because the purpose of the exhibition is to inform and educate visitors about survivors who came to New Zealand. There is no vested interest in encouraging a particular narrative of the Kindertransport because it is not a well-known event in New Zealand.

The exhibition opens with a timeline of events in Europe as well as in New Zealand. The timeline makes the critical point that between 1935 and 1939 'trade between New Zealand and the Nazi regime increase[d]', yet at the same time we are told that Annie and Max Deckston organised for around 20 children from Bialystok, Poland to be relocated to New Zealand between 1935 and 1937.¹⁹⁶ New Zealand's actions towards refugees are explored in the timeline because visitors discover that between '1933-1946 approximately 1,100 Jewish refugees and displaced persons from Europe gain[ed] sanctuary in New Zealand'.¹⁹⁷ Visitors also learn that between

1939-1945 refugees, mainly Jewish, coming from countries at war with New Zealand are classified as 'enemy aliens'. Their activities are restricted, their professional qualifications unrecognised and their actions are subject to surveillance. Some are interned on Somes – Matiu Island in Wellington Harbour.¹⁹⁸

Yet these more critical moments do not overshadow the focus on rescue and survival. For example, visitors are also introduced to a set of stories which focus on how individuals survived the Holocaust and later moved to New Zealand. The section on the Kindertransport is found after the testimonies of those who survived the death camps. Priority is therefore given to the testimonies of the death camp survivors: their testimonies document the extreme trauma they experienced. However, the fact that the account of the Kindertransport and the Deckston Children follows on from these testimonies also lends weight to these events, which attest to the role New Zealand played in welcoming refugees. In setting these two sections side by side,

¹⁹⁶ 'Permanent Exhibition', Holocaust Centre of New Zealand, 2006.

¹⁹⁷ 'Permanent Exhibition', HCNZ.

¹⁹⁸ 'Permanent Exhibition', HCNZ.

the HCNZ could be drawing attention to New Zealand's ambivalent policy of inaction and action when it came to rescuing Jews fleeing from Nazi persecution.

The theme of the Deckston Children seems to dominate over that of the Kindertransport simply because the section about the Deckston Children is larger. This might be because more Deckston Children came to New Zealand compared to Kinder, and these children arrived before the Kinder made their journeys to this nation. Also, the rescue of the Deckston Children relates to New Zealand's role in the Holocaust whereas the Kindertransport is only indirectly connected to New Zealand's rescue efforts. The themes of rescue and survival though are not presented as uncomplicated. For example, the testimonies of Eileen Deckston née Chaja Sierota and Blanche Pross née Blumke Porozowski show that a new identity was imposed upon them when they arrived in New Zealand as their names were anglicised.¹⁹⁹ The exhibition also states that the Deckston Children were placed in a Jewish orphanage in New Zealand which was very strict in imposing religious observances.²⁰⁰ The theme of arrival is not presented in a positive light as it is in British museum exhibitions because the focus is placed on the children's separation and dislocation from their homelands. We are informed that when Deckston arrived, her date and place of birth were unknown. Her former surname translates as the Polish word for orphan, which further reinforces the notion of loss. While Deckston's story ends positively, because we are told that she went on to be a mother, a grandmother, a great-grandmother and citizen of New Zealand, the trauma she experienced in her childhood is not overcome by her adult experiences. The positive and negative aspects are not jostling for dominance rather they are presented in a balanced way. Pross' testimony suggests that rescue did not always end well as survivors continued to suffer in their host nations because they were separated from their families. For example, her testimony reveals that 'one brother was possibly one of three boys

¹⁹⁹ 'Permanent Exhibition', HCNZ.

²⁰⁰ 'Permanent Exhibition', HCNZ.

who hanged themselves outside the orphanage when Nazi soldiers arrived’ and that ‘one cousin survived Auschwitz and later migrated to Israel [and] in 2009, another distant cousin was found in America’.²⁰¹ The story of the Deckston Children is seen in relation to the murder of their family members in continental Europe, as visitors are informed that the Bialystok Ghetto was cleared in February 1943, and the remaining Jews were deported to Treblinka and Majdanek. The three panels which showcase the Deckston Children are found next to images of railway tracks and piles of suitcases, which further indicates the many different fates of children during this period. In this context, the Deckston Children and the Kinder are seen as the ‘lucky ones’.

New Zealand is not only presented as a home to refugees but also as a transit country because some of the Deckston Children left New Zealand for Australia after the war. Likewise, Britain is presented as a transit country because many of the Deckston Children and the Kinder travelled via Britain to New Zealand. This theme of further travel is also present in the Kindertransport section as the main artefact is a suitcase. Although this section is brief, it draws attention to family separation even on the Kindertransport itself. Thus while Walter Freitag and his sister, Lore, both travelled on Kindertransports to Britain, they did so separately. The exhibition to a degree picks up on the positive British narrative because the journey is described as ‘an exciting adventure’.²⁰² However, this section also presents the wider movements some Kinder made, because the Freitag children later moved from Britain to New Zealand in 1946 to be with their aunt and uncle.²⁰³

The exhibition concludes with the ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’, which creates a lasting impression because visitors look back at the exhibition through the lens of a human rights’ perspective. The Kindertransport, in an understated way, is not only placed within the context of victimhood and survival, but also of how a nation is conscious of the

²⁰¹ ‘Permanent Exhibition’, HCNZ.

²⁰² ‘Permanent Exhibition’, HCNZ.

²⁰³ ‘Permanent Exhibition’, HCNZ.

importance of reaching out to those in danger. In 2017, the HCNZ launched its ‘Upstander’ campaign which encourages visitors to stand up to bullying and discrimination.²⁰⁴ These universal values are not renationalised in the same way they are in Britain and America, because New Zealand is not seen to be championing them; rather this concluding section is more individually focused, as individuals pledge to not stand by. Therefore, the exhibition is less concerned with projecting an image of itself as the nation that has committed itself to human rights; it is part of a larger entity. The exhibition instead lets the individual biographies speak for themselves, there is no attempt to nationalise these personal stories.

Conclusion

The representation of the Kindertransport in museum exhibitions corresponds to the national Holocaust discourses in each of the host nations. British museums tend to place the Kindertransport in a positive framework which reflects the self-congratulatory narrative of rescue. However, recent temporary and travelling British exhibitions engage more closely with the traditions of Kindertransport testimony, resulting in a more complex narrative. Likewise, the more critical historiography is also filtering down into these exhibitions which makes it increasingly difficult to see the Kindertransport in a purely positive way. The British Kindertransport narrative is gradually being opened out because these new exhibitions are more multidirectional. Although there is a general movement towards a more critical British memory of the Kindertransport and the Holocaust as these new exhibitions do not employ techniques which cancel out the negatives, the positives are still very much in the foreground. Even the EM, which unequivocally connects the Kindertransport with the refugee crisis as visitors are encouraged to identify with a personal refugee experience, does not focus much on the nation’s

²⁰⁴ See ‘Being an Upstander’, *Holocaust Centre of New Zealand*, at http://www.holocaustcentre.org.nz/uploads/1/2/2/4/122437058/upstander_activity.pdf [accessed 16th January 2020].

past failings. Overall, both American and British museums place emphasis on the Kinder's successful integration and how the nation effectively facilitated this process. Human rights discourse is not ignored by these museums but it is treated in a different way compared to museums in Australia, Canada and New Zealand. Because Australian and Canadian national memory of the Kindertransport and the Holocaust is aware of the wider transnational movements of Jewish refugees, as well as of the struggles and fears refugees faced in terms of adapting to life in their new host nation/s, this memory is based on national failings to aid those in need. Arguably, these more self-critical perspectives lend themselves better to a more compassionate response to refugee crises in the present than the self-celebratory character of British Kindertransport memory does.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁵ For more on this argument, see Bill Niven and Amy Williams, 'The Dominance of the National: On the Susceptibility of Holocaust Memory', *Jewish Historical Studies, Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* 51 (2019), pp. 142-165.

Chapter Three

The Memorialisation of the Kindertransport

Introduction

The current chapter turns attention to the representation of the Kindertransport in memorials. In many ways, the function of a memorial is quite different to that of a museum exhibition, because a memorial typically commemorates, mourns and remembers an honouree, a group or a nation.¹ By contrast, museums usually have a more pedagogical function.² But despite the differences between these two genres, there are common patterns which emerge across them.³ In the previous chapter, I argued that the positive British Kindertransport narrative has been largely dominant within museum exhibitions. This is certainly the case, too, with British memorials to the Kindertransport; in fact, Kindertransport memorials in Britain seem to have developed in a similar way to museum exhibitions. Generally, for example, they seek to commemorate proudly Britain's response to Nazism (see later in the chapter). They also remember great figures such as Sir Nicholas Winton and Major Frank Foley, as well as ordinary Britons who cared for the Kinder.⁴ In other words, these memorials present notions of national pride and self-celebration as the focus is placed on British historical achievements to aid

¹ For a good discussion of the relationship between memorials and mourning, see Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1995).

² See, for instance, Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and Education: Purpose, Pedagogy, Performance* (Routledge: London, 2007).

³ Although museums can also have a memorial function (see Paul Williams, *Memorial Museums: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities* (Berg: Oxford, 2007)), a memorial tends to focus on a particular moment in contrast to a museum exhibition which presents a broader scope. Likewise, while memorials can also imitate museums because they can incorporate artefacts into their design (see Pnina Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public: The Für das Kind Memorial Series', *Prism* 6:5 (2014), pp. 68-74), their role is not necessarily pedagogical, which is usually the case with museums.

⁴ For an excellent biography of Sir Nicholas Winton, see Barbara Winton, *If It's Not Impossible... The Life of Sir Nicholas Winton* (Matador: Kibworth Beauchamp, 2014). See also William Chadwick, *The Rescue of the Prague Refugees 1938-39* (Matador: Kibworth Beauchamp, 2010). For a biography of Frank Foley, see Michael Smith, *Foley: The Spy Who Saved 10,000 Jews* (Biteback Publishing: London, 1999).

refugees.⁵ These memorials thus stand in a celebratory and heroic tradition also typified by the over 350 memorials dedicated at the National Memorial Arboretum in Britain. These memorials commemorate the sacrifices, hard work and dedication of British military associations, charitable organisations, emergency services, fraternity groups and individuals. The *Memorial to Heroic Self-Sacrifice* in London can also be seen through this positive lens as it commemorates ordinary people who died saving the lives of others and who might otherwise have been forgotten.

Often British Kindertransport memorials are more concerned with Britain's own image of itself as a haven for those seeking refuge than with the actual experiences of the Kinder themselves. This is reinforced by the emphasis on arrival because often British memorials serve as physical historical markers of welcome. While arrival is also a significant topic in museums, they also focus on the journey, the process which led to emigration, and antisemitism under Hitler. In this chapter, I argue that, in Britain, Kindertransport memorials imagine this event as the moment where one traumatic crossing ended and where a new and more positive journey began. With regard to the historical record, more negative moments of the Kindertransport have been overlooked by many British memorials, in a manner which recalls the marginalisation of such moments in British museums. But memorials embody the positive message even more forcefully than museum exhibitions because they typically 'remember the past according to a variety of national myths, ideals, and political needs'.⁶

While Kindertransport memorials have generally been limited in their focus, as they do not commemorate episodes such as evacuation, internment and relocation, this is not to say that the redemptive narrative has remained completely unquestioned. Chapter Two explored the influence of Holocaust memory on British museums, and it has also left its mark on some

⁵ Memorials can also be hopeful: thus the *Statue of Liberty* in New York stands for freedom and equality, and has come to symbolise a nation's pride in welcoming those who now call America their home.

⁶ James E. Young, *Holocaust Memorials and Meaning: The Texture of Memory* (Yale University Press: London, 1993), p. 1.

British Kindertransport memorials. Memorialising the Kindertransport in the context of the Holocaust can make us more aware that while some children were rescued, around 1.5 million children were murdered. It also reminds us of the families of Kindertransportees who were not rescued. On the other hand, as was demonstrated in Chapter Two in the case of museums, remembering the Kindertransport in this context can also serve to accentuate the value of British rescue efforts. That a more reflective discourse in Britain around the Kindertransport is emerging is shown by the recent adaptation of existing memorials. Thus Frank Meisler's Kindertransport memorial in London was temporarily modified in response to the current refugee crisis (see later in chapter). As James E. Young has argued, as 'new generations visit memorials under new circumstances and invest them within new meanings', there seems to be 'an evolution in the memorial's significance, generated in the new times and company in which it finds itself'.⁷ If we consider the wider contexts that Kindertransport memorials are situated within, their meanings can change. Such contexts include commemorative events, memorial networks, memorial activism, reenactments, books, websites and social media. All of these have impacted on the way British Kindertransport memorials can be read.

Young identified in Germany a new form of memorial emerging in the 1980s which he calls countermonument.⁸ By this he meant memorials which break with celebratory traditions by commemorating critically the negative aspects of a nation's past (Holocaust, fascism). This chapter will consider an example of a German countermonument (*Stolpersteine* or *Stumbling Stones*). While Britain does not have any comparable countermonuments as the nation remembers the Kindertransport positively through traditional forms of memorialisation, recent memorial activism does raise issues which takes us beyond the purely celebratory. Although

⁷ Young, *Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*, p. 3.

⁸ James E. Young, 'The Counter-Monument: Memory against Itself in Germany Today', *Critical Inquiry* 18: 2 (1992), pp. 267-296.

this activism does not contradict the basically positive message of British Kindertransport memorials it nevertheless sheds a questioning light.

In the previous chapter, I explored how museums employ various techniques to limit the transnational history and elide or marginalise the negative aspects of the Kindertransport so that the positive British narrative dominates. In this chapter, I examine how different kinds of memorials – figurative and abstract, plaques, benches, memorial gardens, quilts, networks – portray the Kindertransport and how different representational techniques are used to convey the respective message. For example, this chapter considers how benches and memorial gardens invite the viewer to directly identify and share a great person's life as they can sit next to their statue. Plaques can identify a location with an event in ways which encourage certain interpretations and memorial networks invite us to think more transnationally. Many British memorials are traditional in type and style which accords with well-established British commemorative customs. Memorials in other host nations are more abstract, creating the possibility for a more critical engagement with the theme compared to more conventional British memorials.

It is also important to consider the intended effect of these memorials and how visitors interact with them. While this is not the focus of this thesis this chapter nevertheless briefly reflects upon how British memorials tend to trigger an honouring memory as they help us express our admiration for the rescuers and inspire us to help refugees today. Memorials in other host nations as well as those found in Germany aim to bring the Kindertransport into the broader memory of the Holocaust because they remember those who were murdered as well as those who were saved. I argue that the intention of these memorials is to critically engage with the positive character of the Kindertransport. In terms of visitor responses this chapter considers how and why memorials are used by individuals, charities and organisations on certain days such as Holocaust Memorial Day. Other external factors such as reneactments

are studied to highlight how these events make the memorials more relevant today as the activities around them bring out their messages more powerfully in contrast to viewing them in isolation.

This chapter will follow a similar structure to the previous chapter because, as with museum exhibitions, there are also a greater number of memorials in Britain compared to other countries. I have also decided to group the memorials into categories in my analysis because they have different functions and aesthetics which may lead to a different reading of the Kindertransport theme. For example, figurative memorials present facial expressions: they literally look the visitor in the face. By contrast, memorial gardens tend to have little text and the visitor may not be sure what they represent.

British Memorial Plaques

Memorial plaques (ceramic, metal, wood) are normally attached to a surface, mostly a wall or a bench, and commemorate an individual, group or event associated with the building to which they are attached. In this way, they connect the built environment directly with the history of those who lived and operated within it. Associating a name with a building gives weight to the building (significant people lived here) but also to the people, because they are remembered in a way that integrates them with their immediate environment. This traditional form of memorialisation is often found in places of worship such as a church, for example. Commemorative plaques can also be part of larger memorials which may include other features such as a sculpture (see later in chapter). Here, I wish to explore how individual memorial plaques represent the Kindertransport.

Britain has its own signature memorial plaques, as the blue plaque English Heritage Scheme is a public commemorative project which creates a link between a location and a famous person, event, or former building, serving as a historical marker. Several of the British memorial plaques to the Kindertransport are modelled after this scheme and therefore accord

with this traditional understanding of memorial plaques, as many of them portray a sense of gratitude and triumph.⁹ They are not imagined as Holocaust memorials, but as memorials which commemorate rescue and arrival. This is an important aspect of the different ways Britain and Germany remember the Holocaust, a point to which I will return later in the chapter.

One of the first British memorials to commemorate the Kindertransport was a parliament plaque unveiled by the then speaker of the House of Commons, Betty Boothroyd, in the Palace of Westminster on 14th June 1999. It was dedicated by surviving Kinder

in deep gratitude to the people and Parliament of the United Kingdom for saving the lives of 10,000 Jewish and other children who fled to this country from Nazi persecution on the Kindertransport 1938-1939.¹⁰

The message of the plaque is one of thanks, as it shows the Kinder's gratitude towards Britain and its citizens for rescuing them. But while it acts as a blessing of thanksgiving as it resonates with the Jewish prayer Birkat HaGomel, traditionally recited after one has survived a dangerous journey, the Kinder's gratitude is redirected to promote a positive national narrative. The plaque not only underlines the importance of the Kindertransport in British history, it also integrates it into parliament's own memory of its interventions. Britain's memory of the Kindertransport is placed within a progressive framework, with the plaque implying there is a bond between the people and parliament, as well as a responsibility to support one another. That this plaque is found at the very heart of Britain's central political institution suggests that this is a privileged memorial. The Palace of Westminster is transformed into a place of sanctuary for those escaping persecution: Britain is sanctified because it becomes a haven to those seeking refuge. The memorial places emphasis on the Kinder's arrival in Britain and attests to their successful integration. It invites Britons to keep imagining that moment of

⁹ For more on the Blue Plaque Scheme, see Howard Spencer, *The English Heritage Guide to London's Blue Plaques* (September Publishing: Tewkesbury, 2016).

¹⁰ 'Parliament Plaque', *Association of Jewish Refugees*, at <http://www.ajr.org.uk/kindertransport> [accessed 30th October 2017].

arrival – one in which the threats the Kinder experienced in their homelands are finally behind them and a new life awaits them in Britain.

The memorial made a private memory public. As Andy Pearce notes, ‘prior to the late 1970s memorial practices were principally confined to the Jewish community’ who installed ‘memorial plaques in synagogues’.¹¹ The fact that public Kindertransport memorialisation remained minimal in Britain and in other host nations in the post-war period seems to accord with trends previously identified with regards to Kindertransport testimony. Prior to the 1990s, there was little engagement with this event, but as the first reunions developed and the Kinder started to share their stories with one another as well as their friends and families and the wider public, the first memorials started to appear. It was the Kinder themselves as well as the Kindertransport Committee of the Association for Jewish Refugees (AJR) who were instrumental in creating this memorial and other Kindertransport memorials (see later in chapter). The plaque seems to serve two interests: firstly, the Kinder are visibly able to thank Britain for saving them; secondly, the impression is created that Britain always took an active and effective role in rescuing the Kinder. The plaque retrospectively suggests that parliament was always united in its support of the Kindertransport, and that the scheme was government funded from its inception. But while the government agreed to take in Kinder from Greater Germany and simplify the entrance procedure for them, it was not solely responsible for funding the operation. As Vera K. Fast notes: ‘the opinions expressed in the British House of Commons were not unanimous’ in their support of aiding refugee children.¹² Rather, many different refugee organisations and committees as well as families had to find sufficient funds to support the children. The plaque creates a strong suggestive link between the Kindertransport and parliament, overplaying its role in the rescue operation. It also constructs a positive view

¹¹ Andy Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain* (Routledge: London, 2014), p. 89.

¹² Vera K. Fast, *Children’s Exodus: A History of the Kindertransport* (I.B. Tauris: London, 2011), pp. 19-20.

of the home front, suggesting that everyone rallied together. But as the testimony explored in Chapter One showed, the situation was much more complicated.

It is striking that the first public memorial to the Kindertransport was opened at a time when the Kinder's memories were starting to be coopted by museum exhibitions and documentaries and framed within a more simplified narrative of the Kindertransport. As I argued in the previous chapters, the positive British narrative starts to become dominant in the late 1900s and early 2000s. The traditional memorial plaque seems to lend itself to a celebratory narrative, so it appears to be natural to use this type of memorial to remember not only the Kinder but also the triumphs of the British government and people. The aesthetics of the parliamentary memorial plaque, for example, suggest the courage and compassion of those who acted to save the children. The background is a golden colour and the writing is white, symbolising light, goodness, and safety. The memorial's message is one of hope, and of not standing by when crisis arises. However, its emphasis on the goodness of the British public who brought the Kinder into their homes homogenises the Kinder's diverse experiences.

The memorial plaque was rededicated at a commemorative tea in parliament on 20th November 2013. This event coincided with the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport to Britain. The AJR was also active in this remembrance service. The ceremony gave expression to the gratefulness of the Kinder, but the emphasis on thanks also rather implied that gratefulness was the expected reaction. The new Speaker of the House, John Bercow, was invited to preside over the rededication. He reflected upon his own personal family heritage of migration to British shores, expanding the narrative of gratitude as the next generation acknowledged the nation's role in allowing other refugees entrance, shelter and a future away from persecution. The rededication service did consider the broader historical context of the Kindertransport. Sir Erich Reich made reference to MP Philip Noel-Baker, who, on 21st November 1938, had urged parliament to support an 'immediate concerted effort amongst the

nations, including the United States of America, to secure a common policy'.¹³ However, given the subsequent failure of the proposed Wagner-Rogers Bill in America, this reference implicitly reinforced the point that it was only Britain which actually rescued Jewish children.¹⁴

Another memorial plaque which features the positive British national narrative of the Kindertransport can be found outside Lowestoft Train Station. Unveiled in 2010, it commemorates the arrival of the Kinder in this town. The plaque reads:

in December 1938, Lowestoft Station was the arrival point of a Kindertransport train. The train transported mainly Jewish children as refugees, escaping persecution prior to the outbreak of World War II.¹⁵

In specifically remembering a community's involvement in the Kindertransport, this memorial provides a good local example of the national memory paradigm. The plaque evokes a sense of regional and local pride, as this community actively helped Kinder who came to the area. Many of the children who arrived at this station went to the Pakefield Holiday Camp nearby, and the Kinder found accommodation in various places within the area such as St. Felix School, for example.¹⁶ Most importantly, though, the memorial documents a site of arrival. This particular moment commemorates the Kinder's entrance into Lowestoft.

Since the memorial's inauguration, it has continued to be a site of remembrance. For example, in 2017 the memorial played a key role in the local community's Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) commemorations. The mayor, Nick Webb, the chairman of Waveney District Council, Mark Bee, and members of Waveney Youth Council placed wreaths to remember the Kindertransport. The use of the memorial on this day placed it within a wider context. On HMD, Britain remembers the Holocaust as well as subsequent genocides. In Lowestoft, the

¹³ 'Kindertransport Plaque Rededicated', *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance*, 26th November 2013, at <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/news-archive/kindertransport-plaque-rededicated> [accessed 13th January 2020].

¹⁴ 'Kindertransport Plaque Rededicated'.

¹⁵ Mark Boggis, 'Town Gets Ready to Remember Those Who Died in the Holocaust', *Lowestoft Journal*, 26th January 2017, at <http://www.lowestoftjournal.co.uk/news/town-gets-ready-to-remember-those-who-died-in-the-holocaust-1-4863541> [accessed 30th October 2017].

¹⁶ 'Ceremony Offers Opportunity for Reflection', *East Suffolk Council*, 18th January 2019, at <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/news/ceremony-offers-opportunity-for-reflection-2/> [accessed 27th May 2019].

2017 HMD commemorative event made possible a critical framing of the Kindertransport: journeys of arrival in Britain were seen in relation to journeys to the death camps such as Auschwitz, and the fact that many Kinder never saw their parents again.¹⁷ However, while HMD events may call into question the positive narrative of the Kindertransport on one day in the year, this contextualisation is not necessarily present on other days, or when visitors view the memorial in isolation. Overall, it is the positive British narrative that is at the forefront because the memorial stresses rescue.

Similarly to the Lowestoft plaque, the memorial bench and plaque unveiled in 2011 at Harwich's harbour also remember the Kinder's arrival in Britain. This memorial recalls the moment where many of the Kinder took their first steps on British soil. The first half of the plaque reads as follows:

At 5.30 AM on 2 December 1938 the *SS Prague* docked at Parkeston Quay. On board were 196 children, the first arrivals of what would become known as the 'Kindertransport'.

Over the next 9 months some 10,000 children arrived in the UK crossing the North Sea to escape Nazi persecution throughout Europe. The majority of the children were Jewish and most entered this country through the port of Harwich. The ships carrying the children sailed past this point.

Those with homes to go to went straight off the boat by train to Liverpool Street Station in London. The local community cared for those who had nowhere to go. Many were temporarily housed in tiny chalets at the local Warners holiday camp. Other children were accommodated at the Salvation Army hostel and some were taken in by local families. The oldest was 16 years. A few were babies carried by other children.

None were accompanied by their parents.¹⁸

Here is another example of a local memorial which promotes a positive view of the Kindertransport. The emphasis on arrival evokes a sense of British friendliness, kindness and openness towards refugees. The memorial also stresses a spirit of responsiveness because it suggests that the Kinder came to Britain because of a collective determination to rescue those

¹⁷ 'Lowestoft Marks Holocaust Memorial Day with Service', *BBC*, 27th January 2015, at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-suffolk-31001231> [accessed 27th May 2019].

¹⁸ *The Kindertransport*, Harwich, 2011.

in need. The memorial was ‘paid for and partly organised’ by Garry Calver, Harwich and District councillor.¹⁹ In the *Daily Gazette*, Calver stated:

I believe that Harwich should be very proud of its role in the Kindertransport. Every one of the children would have sailed past the spot where the memorial bench is to stand as they reached the safety of England. I am very grateful to everyone who has played a part in ensuring the story is not forgotten.²⁰

While the memorial symbolises the community’s common objective to remember its own part in the Kindertransport, it also implies that arrival equalled security. The theme of arrival is moulded into a success story because arrival is regarded as a watershed moment; the Kinder have escaped. Aspects such as the Kinder’s puzzlement and disorientation at being in a strange place play no part in the memorial. It is ironic that the memorial focuses on British compassion given that the Kindertransport effectively separated the children from their parents. The article in the *Daily Gazette* also explains that the memorial ‘was designed after a reenactment of the Kindertransport passed through Harwich in 2009’.²¹ Some of the Winton Children took part in this commemoration and spoke about their experiences. The memorial bench was unveiled ‘by John Gottesmann, from the Colchester Synagogue, and Eric Dobson, a Harwich man who befriended the Jewish children when they arrived in the town’.²² Those who attended the unveiling included ‘members of Harwich Town Council and the Merchant Navy Association’ which highlighted the local interest in and significance of the Kindertransport in the local area.²³

This memorial plaque, however, introduces two perspectives. The first is that of the positive British national Kindertransport narrative, as described above. The second is an individual Kindertransportee’s perspective in the form of a poem by Karen Gershon:

¹⁹ Caroline Tilley, ‘Harwich: Memorial for Kindertransport Children 2nd March 2011’, *Daily Gazette*, at http://www.gazettenews.co.uk/news/local/harwich/8884445.Harwich__Memorial_for_Kindertransport_children/ [accessed 30th October 2017].

²⁰ Tilley, ‘Harwich: Memorial for Kindertransport Children’.

²¹ Tilley, ‘Harwich: Memorial for Kindertransport Children’.

²² Tilley, ‘Harwich: Memorial for Kindertransport Children’.

²³ Tilley, ‘Harwich: Memorial for Kindertransport Children’.

‘MY FATHER’

I search my childhood continually for my father as I searched the town for him on the day our synagogue burned all my finds are worthless because I cannot know whether life or make believe put these fragments into my mind

I can see him only through death, but when he was living he must have been like my sons, once young and with hope confident of his future an adventurer not a victim he was proud and respected when I was a child on his lap

Of six million Jews every man has the face of my father I pity mankind because I feel pity for him he survives in whatever on earth cries but for mercy but the loss of his personal life is his and mine²⁴

A positive understanding of the Kindertransport is challenged by this second section because it is about how families were separated from one another, as well as the trauma caused by this separation. Gershon’s poem is about the complexity of memory, of piecing together one’s history from fragments of a lost past. It is also about murder in the Holocaust. But while the memorial has clearly been influenced by Holocaust memory, at the same time its ambivalence is problematic. Because it has a welcoming element at the collective level, and a valedictory one at a personal level, it privatises grief and pain and ensures it is offset by a focus on the greater community spirit which led to the rescue of Kinder such as Gershon.

The fourth Kindertransport memorial plaque to reflect upon was unveiled in 2012. It acknowledges the refugee children who were accommodated at Rowledge House near Farnham and those who cared for them. The plaque reads: ‘a Jewish Bachad Hostel was established here in 1934 by Shalom and Edie Marcoritch for 32 evacuees, refugee and Kindertransport children’.²⁵ It therefore shows how people came together to establish new homes for the Kinder, and draws parallels between Kinder and evacuee children. In doing so, it illustrates how the Kinder were treated similarly to British citizens during the Blitz. There is a sense of kinship created which reinforces the recognition of the Kinder as British citizens today. The

²⁴ *The Kindertransport*, Harwich.

²⁵ See ‘Surrey as a Place of Refuge’, *Exploring Surrey’s Past*, at <https://www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/themes/subjects/military/holocaust-memorial-day/refuge/> [accessed 5th January 2019].

plaque may have been consciously styled after the English Heritage Scheme which took over from the London blue plaques scheme. Its background is blue and the writing is white, mirroring this long-established style of commemoration. The plaque thus echoes the celebratory tradition of commemorating British heritage.

In 2017, a memorial plaque was unveiled to commemorate Otto Schiff, who ‘was responsible for administering the emigration of tens of thousands of Jewish people from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia before the Holocaust’.²⁶ The plaque can be found in the reception foyer of 14 Netherhall Gardens, London, where Schiff worked.²⁷ The property was ‘originally destined to be his family home [but] he converted the mansion into offices in the 1930s to confront the refugee crisis’.²⁸ Schiff was head of the Jewish Refugee Committee, which was established in 1933 and later renamed the German Jewish Aid Committee. This organisation was then renamed again as the Central British Fund. It is estimated that Schiff assisted in the rescue of an estimated 60,000 people; he was awarded a CBE from King George VI for his work.²⁹ His house became a care home after his death in 1952, and was renamed Otto Schiff House. The memorial plaque acknowledges ‘his lifelong work on behalf of the Jewish refugees in both world wars’.³⁰ Schiff’s legacy of supporting refugees, the efforts of the Anglo-Jewish community, and the various organisations that Schiff helped to establish and fund are commemorated by the memorial. The plaque celebrates Schiff’s values, presenting him as an extraordinary humanitarian.³¹

²⁶ Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR), *Otto Schiff House Plaque Press Release*, 2017, p. 1.

²⁷ AJR, *Otto Schiff House Plaque Press Release*, p. 1.

²⁸ AJR, *Otto Schiff House Plaque Press Release*, p. 3.

²⁹ AJR, *Otto Schiff House Plaque Press Release*, p. 3.

³⁰ Justin Cohen, ‘Plaque Honours Philanthropist Who Supported Victims of Nazis’, *Jewish News*, 17th July 2017, at <http://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/plaque-honours-philanthropist-who-supported-victims-of-nazis/> [accessed on 20th February 2018].

³¹ Another plaque was dedicated to Schiff by the AJR at Woburn House in 2019. Woburn House served as the base for the Jewish Refugees Committee between 1933-1939 which Schiff founded and directed. See ‘AJR Pays Tribute to Otto Schiff’, *AJR*, 18th December 2019, at <https://ajr.org.uk/latest-news/ajr-pays-tribute-to-otto-schiff-2/> [accessed on 13th January 2020], and ‘Plaque Scheme’, *AJR*, at <https://ajr.org.uk/ajr-plaque-scheme/> [accessed 16th January 2020].

However, Schiff's work was subjected to criticism in 2014 in an article that called into question his actions as head of the refugee committee. Geoffrey Alderman challenged the celebratory narrative around Schiff, stating that: 'as head of the German Jewish Aid Committee, [Schiff] saw to it that as few Jews as possible were given refuge in Great Britain'.³² The publication of this article prompted a response from Anthony Grenville in the AJR newsletter. Grenville dismissed Alderman's claims as false.³³ While Grenville acknowledged that 'Britain could have taken more refugees', his article reinforced the myth that 'Britain was alone' in rescuing Kinder.³⁴ While there were indeed restrictions with regards to those who were granted refuge in Britain, it seems unfair to place sole blame on Schiff, as there were many barriers put in place by the British government. However, Alderman raises an important point: Britain should be more aware of its shortcomings as well as its successes. Memorialisation can be a sensitive topic, because not everyone might regard the honouree as a hero. While the memorial itself accords with the positive British narrative, the discussions around it challenged this celebratory perspective. Recently, other historians and reporters such as Tony Kushner and Rosa Doherty have also questioned the British celebration of rescue, highlighting how those who were assimilated in their country of birth or those who were willing to assimilate into British society were regarded as desirable refugees compared to those who were more orthodox.³⁵

Memorial plaques in Britain tend to present a one-sided view of the Kindertransport. Even though plaques have occasionally encouraged discussions about Britain's need to engage

³² Geoffrey Alderman, 'Do We Really Need Cameron's Holocaust Commission', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 7th February 2014, at <https://www.thejc.com/comment/columnists/do-we-really-need-cameron-s-holocaust-commission-1.52435> [accessed on 20th February 2018].

³³ Anthony Grenville, 'Otto Schiff: In Defence', *AJR Journal* 14:6 (2014), p. 2.

³⁴ Grenville, 'Otto Schiff', p. 2.

³⁵ See Tony Kushner, 'The Big Kindertransport Myth', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 15th November 2018, at <https://www.thejc.com/news/news-features/the-big-kindertransport-myth-kindertransport80th-anniversary-1.472542> [accessed on 15th November 2018], and Rosa Doherty, 'Fit, Bright, Not too Jewish - Kindertransport Policy for Which Children to Save from the Nazis Revealed', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 19th April 2019, at <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/fit-bright-not-too-jewish-uk-kindertransport-policy-revealed-1.483126> [accessed on 19th April 2018].

with the more ambivalent aspects, the positive Kindertransport narrative remains strong. That the theme of arrival is so central suggests there is some reluctance to move past this moment as this would mean acknowledging Britain's failures as well as successes. Although the 1970s Kitchener Camp memorial plaque located on the wall of the Barbican gate in Sandwich might seem critical because it commemorates those who were taken to this 'transit camp', the memorial focuses on the '5000 men [who] found refuge [in Britain] from Nazi persecution on the Continent'.³⁶ Many of these men were incarcerated in concentration camps in Germany prior to their escape to Britain. Although these men, and some Kinder, were housed in a British camp, the memorial suggests that this was a haven for them where they were always to exercise freedom of choice. For example, the memorial states that 'during the Second World War most of them volunteered to fight for the Allied cause'.³⁷ Therefore, the memorial communicates a sense of gratitude because these men defended their host nation.³⁸ The memorial overlooks the fact that some Kinder were interned as enemy aliens: some of the internees in the camp were later sent to the Isle of Man and even as far away as Australia. Similarities to the museums: the more negative aspects are downplayed.

As stated above, several memorial plaques have been initiated or supported by the AJR. In 2013, the AJR established its own plaque scheme which aims to establish 'permanent memorials to some of the most prominent Jewish émigrés who fled Nazi oppression and found refuge in Britain as well as places and buildings with a strong connection to the Jewish refugees'.³⁹ Thus far, the AJR has dedicated plaques to Sir Hans Krebs (2013), Sir Ludwig Guttman (2013), The Cosmo Café, 'a restaurant and famous meeting place of Jewish refugees on the Finchley Road' (2013), Rabbi Dr Leo Baeck (2015), Sir Rudolf Bing (2016) and (2017),

³⁶ Clare Weissenberg, 'Kitchener Camp', *Kitchener Camp*, at <http://www.kitchenercamp.co.uk> [accessed 10th May 2019].

³⁷ Weissenberg, 'Kitchener Camp'.

³⁸ Weissenberg, 'Kitchener Camp'.

³⁹ 'Plaque Scheme'.

Lord Frank Schon (2016), Otto Schiff (2017) and (2019), Anna Essinger ('Tante Anna') (2018), The Bell Hotel, a meeting place for Jewish refugees from the Kitchener Camp (2019), Belsize Square Synagogue (2019), Professor Sir Ernst Chain (2019), Milein Cosman and Hans Keller (2019), and the British Embassy in Berlin in dedication and memory of the consular officials who issued visas which helped thousands of Jews escape Nazi Germany and Austria from 1933 to 1939 (2020).⁴⁰ These plaques are also similar to the English Heritage Scheme (blue background with white writing) and place emphasis on solidifying the relationship between the Jewish community and Britain in the present by recalling solidarity in the past.

In Chapter Two, I argued that British Jewish museums present narratives which were about successful integration, and it seems that the AJR as a British Jewish institution also wants to promote this narrative of gratitude and Jews flourishing in Britain. The AJR is encouraging this positive perspective in a way which accords with the British imperial tradition of heroic memorial plaques recalling great male figures. This male-dominated memorial discourse focuses on men who thrived in Britain and not on others who may have struggled to adapt to life in a new country. There are few memorials thus far which are dedicated to women. There is also a lack of reference to Polish and Czech Jewish refugees as most of the memorials commemorate German and Austrian Jews. The AJR are effectively promoting the positive British narrative of rescue because these plaques symbolise a sense of belonging and acceptance, which seems too limited a view to adopt. Memorialisation of the Kindertransport, however, would not have developed without British-Jewish organisations such as the AJR and WJR. They naturally want to express thanks and emphasise the integration of Jews into Britain. But it seems this positive message has gradually been turned into one of British humanity and pro-Jewishness generally during the Nazi period. This is well demonstrated by the

⁴⁰ 'Plaque Scheme'.

parliamentary plaque as well as the memorial plaques which resemble the traditional blue plaque British heritage scheme.

While the Kindertransport has been adopted into the canon of what we, as Britons, feel we would like to honour and indeed to celebrate,⁴¹ in Germany the memorialisation of the Kindertransport is much more critical because Germany is aware that it was the country that forced the Kinder to leave whereas Britain sees itself as the rescuer. Daniela Sandler has argued that the internationally acclaimed *Stolpersteine* (*Stumbling Stones*) project created by Gunter Demnig ‘makes use of a conventional form – the memorial plaque, with inscriptions of names and dates [linked to the former residence of victims of the Holocaust] – in an unconventional way’.⁴² Sandler reflects upon how

instead of placing a reasonably sized plaque on the wall or post, each *Stolperstein* is a miniature memorial plaque on the ground, encrusted in pre-existing paving materials such as stone or cement. Unlike conventional memorial signs, the *Stolperstein* do not occupy a place of honor or high visibility. On the contrary, they are embedded in the floor, small, and hardly perceptible. They are routinely stepped on, sullied by heels and dirt – in a way, desacralized. But they are also pervasive. They insert the ceremonial act of remembering into the banal succession of everyday actions.⁴³

Not only do the *Stolpersteine* rethink the design and location of memorial plaques, they also change the way we interact with this type of memorial as the *Stolpersteine* are not within eye line. These memorials are Holocaust memorials. Thus they connect memory of those who escaped on the Kindertransport to those who were deported, committed suicide and murdered.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Many World War One memorial plaques for example honour the sacrifices of those who bravely fought and died for their country.

⁴² Daniela Sandler, *Counterpreservation: Architectural Decay in Berlin Since 1989* (Cornell University Press: London, 2016), p. 143.

⁴³ Sandler, *Counterpreservation*, p. 143.

⁴⁴ For examples of a Kindertransport *Stolpersteine* see Harriet Sherwood, ‘“A Victory Ride”: Cyclists to Retrace Holocaust Evacuees’ Journey for 80th Anniversary’, *The Guardian*, 14th June 2018, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/14/a-victory-ride-cyclists-to-retrace-holocaust-evacuees-journey-for-80th-anniversary> [accessed 25th October 2019]; ‘1.500. Stolperstein in Frankfurt verlegt’, *Hessenschau*, 22nd October 2019, at <https://www.hessenschau.de/gesellschaft/gedenken-an-nach-opfer-1500-stolperstein-in-frankfurt-verlegt, Stolperstein-frankfurt-100.html> [accessed 25th October 2019]; and Gudrun Mallwitz, and ‘Ein Stolperstein für das Mädchen mit dem Koffer’, *Berliner Morgenpost*, 14th July 2019, at <https://www.morgenpost.de/bezirke/tempelhof-schoeneberg/article226470889/Ein-Stolperstein-fuer-das-Maedchen-mit-dem-Koffer.html> [accessed 25th October 2019].

These memorials are part of the German countermemorial tradition because they are opposed to the positive notion of a memorial. Most of the Kindertransport *Stolpersteine* are found next to other *Stolpersteine* that commemorate the parents' tragic murder in the Holocaust. Therefore, these memorials are not placed within a positive context, quite the opposite: they appear to relativise the success of the Kindertransport because rescue is seen in relation to the many different fates of children and adults in the Holocaust. To date, however, while there are *Stolpersteine* in Germany and other European countries, there are none in Britain.

Often British visitors stand back at a distance and admire a memorial plaque. They physically look up to read the story of the honoree which is a sign of respect for their memory. In contrast the *Stolpersteine* impose themselves upon the visitor. The visitor physically responds to them by either stumbling over them or bending down to read them. Many visitors stop short and react with shock. Bill Niven states that visitors 'walk to a traditional memorial' but the visitors 'fall[s] over a stumbling stone, at least metaphorically. Pilgrimage is replaced by a sense of intrusion into your life: perhaps even a wake-up call' to which may compel 'Germans and others to confront the Holocaust literally on their own doorsteps'.⁴⁵ Niven has also explored how the *Stolpersteine* 'ask questions of the relationship between affected and unaffected neighbours, bystanders and victims, those who belonged and those who did not, and therefore take the issue of discrimination right into the heart of communities'.⁴⁶ Christina Morina and Krijn Thijs have also argued that the *Stolpersteine* raise questions about bystanderism.⁴⁷ As I stated in the introduction to this chapter British memorials are about promoting an honouring memory whereas the *Stolpersteine* are about relating personal stories

⁴⁵ Bill Niven, 'Changing Times: The Relevance of the Stumbling Stones Today', unpublished keynote given at the conference *Stones of Contention: Provocation or Mainstream Ritual? The Role of the Stolpersteine in Contemporary Remembrance Conflicts*, Berlin, 22 February 2019. A German translation of the lecture will be appearing under the title 'Im Wandel der Zeiten: Die Bedeutung der Stolpersteine heute', in Silvija Kavčič, Thomas Schaarschmidt, Anna Warda and Irmgard Zündorf (eds.), *Stolpersteine: Eine Bilanz* (Metropol: Berlin, 2020), no pagination as yet. The original paper is to be published in 2021.

⁴⁶ Niven, 'Changing Times: The Relevance of the Stumbling Stones Today'.

⁴⁷ Christina Morina and Krijn Thijs, *Probing the Limits of Categorization: The Bystander in Holocaust History*, (Oxford, 2018).

of the victims to local memory and ordinary German life. While they remember the lives, places of residence and murder of Jewish people they also remember that ordinary Germans stood by. Unlike British memorial plaques *Stolpersteine* in some Germany cities are band because ‘treading on the stones, passersby tread on names, something which is not only disrespectful to the dead, but could also be seen as a violation of the victims a second time – at least on a symbolic level’.⁴⁸ However Niven argues that ‘when [passersby] do tread on Stumbling Stones, this can bring us up short [as they] realise what [they] have done, and are reminded of the fragility of memory and the ever-present danger of “turning a blind eye”, even if in this case this was involuntary’.⁴⁹

British Memorial Gardens

Commemorative gardens embed memorials in a cultivated landscape setting. In this way, they create a peaceful contemplative environment and invite personal reflection. Connecting plants and nature with those remembered serves to honour them, but this also connects our memory to sense impressions that go beyond the memorial itself. Memorial gardens are living memorials as they represent growth, rebirth and regeneration as well as decay.⁵⁰ Memorial gardens are also organic memorials which change over time creating new meanings depending upon the season. They tend to be ‘more fluid than [...] enclosed memorials’.⁵¹ There is also a degree of flexibility to memorial gardens because they allow room for many different stories to coexist side by side.⁵² However, there can be an element of ambiguity in memorial gardens: their meanings may not always be clear to all visitors. Rather some visitors may find it difficult to identify the meaning of memorial gardens because of the lack of text or obscure layout of the memorials found within them. The typical features of memorial gardens in Britain are:

⁴⁸ Niven, ‘Changing Times: The Relevance of the Stumbling Stones Today’.

⁴⁹ Niven, ‘Changing Times: The Relevance of the Stumbling Stones Today’.

⁵⁰ Paul Gough, ‘Memorial Gardens as Dramaturgical Space’, *Journal of Heritage Studies* 3:4 (1998), p. 214.

⁵¹ Gough, ‘Memorial Gardens as Dramaturgical Space’, p. 214.

⁵² Gough, ‘Memorial Gardens as Dramaturgical Space’, p. 200.

flowers, benches, trees, water features, walkways, memorial plaques and figurative memorials. Memorials in gardens share the serenity of their environment and reflect its beauty. But there is a contrast between the beauty of flowers, for example, and the horror and death that is remembered in British Holocaust memorial gardens. British Holocaust memorial gardens highlight a distinction between the respect for life and the inhumanity of the Holocaust. This tension is not resolved: the gardens honour both the living and the dead.

Unveiled in 1983, the *Hyde Park Memorial Garden* was Britain's first Holocaust memorial. It was funded by the Board of Deputies of British Jews. The memorial garden is 'set back from surrounding footpaths [and] encircled by trees and foliage'.⁵³ There are several granite rocks located within the garden and the largest bears 'the words "Holocaust Memorial Garden"'.⁵⁴ 'Inscribed beneath [these words is] a verse from Lamentations 1:16: "For those I weep, streams of tears flow from my eyes because of the destruction of my people" – written in Hebrew and English'.⁵⁵ This memorial is not dedicated to Britain's achievements to rescue Jews; rather it is a memorial to commemorate those who were murdered in the Holocaust. The use of boulders is typical of British war memorials, and using them in this context situates the Holocaust within British memory of the Second World War.⁵⁶ This memorial though does not focus on the Kindertransport.

The traditional setting of the memorial *Rose Garden* at the National Holocaust Centre and Museum (NHCM) also integrates the victims of the Holocaust into the national framework of loss and sacrifice during the war. The roses for example symbolise belonging and British heritage. They also echo a Christian tradition of placing flowers on a grave site which rather qualifies the 'Jewish specificity' of the NHCM's focus as identified by Pearce.⁵⁷ These

⁵³ Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain*, p. 94.

⁵⁴ Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain*, p. 94.

⁵⁵ Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain*, p. 94.

⁵⁶ For a further discussion of the Hyde Park memorial, see Steven Cooke, 'Negotiating Memory and Identity: The Hyde Park Holocaust Memorial, London', *Journal of Historical Geography* 26:3 (2000), pp. 449-465.

⁵⁷ Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain*, p.103.

ecclesiastic overtones create a sense of British collective mourning. While the memorial garden focuses on individual Jewish loss, grief and honouring of the victims, as a whole it seems more to reflect Britain's will to remember the Holocaust. Pearce argues that the meaning of the garden's memorials is framed in such a way that they are 'accessible to Jews and non-Jews'.⁵⁸ Pearce also suggests that the NHCM with its garden approaches the Holocaust 'through a universal optic'.⁵⁹ There is indeed a public-private partnership within the memorial garden as all members of the public are welcomed. However, while the garden places the Kindertransport within the wider history of the Holocaust, it does not necessarily make connections to upholding ethical values today.

The design and layout of the garden have a formality to them. This standardisation is something common to British war grave sites.⁶⁰ Such uniformity creates a sense of equality but the writing on the plaques which accompanies the roses also 'adds [...] personalisation'.⁶¹ The memorial garden remembers not only survivors and victims, but also rescuers. While visitors may thus leave with a sense of hope even though the memorial is a place to grieve, focusing on what happened to the children who were not saved, or on the Holocaust more broadly, does question the significance of the Kindertransport in relation to mass death and the failure of Britain to help more than it did. For example, as visitors enter and exit the garden, they walk past the *Children's Memorial* which remembers the 1.5 children murdered in the Holocaust, and are encouraged to place a small stone in remembrance.⁶²

The memorial garden highlights the importance of individual memory because it is 'not shaped by historians or museum curators [rather the garden is] somewhere for victims and

⁵⁸ Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain*, p. 103.

⁵⁹ Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain*, p. 103.

⁶⁰ Gough, 'Memorial Gardens as Dramaturgical Space', p. 200.

⁶¹ Gough, 'Memorial Gardens as Dramaturgical Space', p. 200.

⁶² 'Children's Memorial', *The National Holocaust Centre and Museum*, at <https://www.holocaust.org.uk/childrens-memorial> [accessed 11th January 2020].

survivors to have a little dignity'.⁶³ This might create a sense of solidarity among the victims and their families because this group understands what it is like to experience injustice. Those who have a personal family connection with specific roses and plaques will have a richer understanding of them, creating a sense of pilgrimage because the memorial has a similar function to a cemetery. But those who do not have such a connection may not be able to fully understand the meaning of the garden. For example, as stated above, the roses are accompanied by small memorial plaques, and of the fifteen roses dedicated to the Kindertransport, only one plaque specifically mentions the word Kindertransport. Visitors with no prior knowledge of the individual or family members commemorated by the roses may miss the fact that they are Kindertransport memorials.

But David Brown's volume *Behind the Rose* (2011), published by the NHCM, facilitates a wider understanding of the garden. It also shows an institution's support for a more nuanced reading that results from knowledge gained from the book. The stories behind the roses found within the book make it difficult to view the Kindertransport in a purely positive way because the focus is placed on loss. It is hard to feel positive about rescue when so many children and adults were unable to make similar journeys to freedom. For example, within the edited volume *Kinder* such as Harry Bibring, Otto Deutsch, Ellen Rawson, and Susanne Pearson talk about how many of their family members were murdered in the Holocaust and how they do not have graves. The garden symbolises their resting place. It becomes a physical marker which remembers their story. Hana Eardley describes how:

the beautiful and delicately fragranced rose garden at Beth Shalom is, for [her], a great source of solace and consolation, a peaceful haven for the souls of so many wronged and innocent victims of the Holocaust who have no proper resting place.⁶⁴

⁶³ James M. Smith, 'Introduction', in David Brown (ed.), *Behind the Rose: Stories Behind the Roses Dedicated in the Holocaust Centre's Memorial Gardens* (The Holocaust Centre: Newark, 2011), p. xii.

⁶⁴ Hana Eardley née Kohn, 'The Kohn Family', in David Brown (ed.), *Behind the Rose: Stories Behind the Roses Dedicated in the Holocaust Centre's Memorial Gardens* (The Holocaust Centre: Newark, 2011), p. 50.

The memorial garden seems to have ‘adopted a less didactic approach, seeking to include the pilgrim/spectator within the narrative of the commemorative space’, resulting in a more complicated perspective.⁶⁵ But this commemorative space only becomes legible to the general public through reading the book.

There are over 2,000 memorial roses dedicated at the NHCM, representing 2,000 individual stories. Out of these, only a handful – in fact, under twenty roses – remember the Kindertransport. Brown’s book is useful in highlighting the wider history of the Kindertransport as well as showing the variety of individuals who have dedicated roses. Of the fifteen rose dedications to the Kindertransport, nine are dedicated from Kinder to their parents and extended family members. As with the plaque in the House of Commons, the garden and the book present the perspective of the Kinder themselves, as they mourn the murder of their families and friends. But the garden also accords with British memorial traditions because the emphasis is placed on the Kinder’s gratitude. The memorial book brings in many voices. We learn that roses are dedicated from a second generation foster family member to a Kind; from a third generation foster family member to two Kinder who were sisters; from a Quaker group to a Quaker rescuer, Bertha Bracey, who helped the Kinder; from second generation Kinder to their families who were murdered in the Holocaust; and from extended family members to Kinder and their parents. These individual perspectives show how diverse the Kindertransport experience was and how it affected many individuals. Different individual, national and transnational perspectives are synthesised in Brown’s book. It draws our attention to Michael Attenborough’s dedication to Helga and Irene Bejach, highlighting the care and compassion of British foster families, but it also makes clear that the sisters were never meant to stay in

⁶⁵ Gough, ‘Memorial Gardens as Dramaturgical Space’, p. 201.

Britain. They were en route to America, but after war was declared in 1939, they were unable to leave.⁶⁶

The personal stories behind the roses bring into focus the wider history of rescue and adaptation. Because the Kindertransport is placed within the context of the Holocaust, revealing the connections between family members who survived and those who were murdered, the book underscores the fact that it was not rescue that was the norm, but death. Many second and third generations of Kinder also reflect upon the family that they never knew. This sense of loss is emphasised further by the roses dedicated from the Kinder themselves to their families. For example, readers are introduced to William Kaczynski's rose, which he dedicated to the Bach and Kaczynski families, and which remembers his cousin Vera Happ who 'tragically [...] had escaped on a Kindertransport [but who later] died of meningitis aged 14, soon after her arrival'.⁶⁷ Likewise, roses dedicated from second generation Kinder Gerald Stern and Susan Mulroy to their family present wider circumstances of the Kindertransport. Stern's rose reflects upon how his family's home was destroyed, how his grandfather was taken to Buchenwald concentration camp, and how his father fled to Britain on a Kindertransport. Mulroy's rose dedication recalls how her father and his twin sister came to Britain on a Kindertransport only to be separated from one another. Her father and aunt later discovered that their grandmother had survived the Holocaust. Yet the hope of being reunited was 'never realised' because 'it was impossible for them to travel to Pilsen, and she felt unable to take up the generous offer of a home from [Hans and Hana's] foster mother'.⁶⁸ The Kinder's Czech language also 'lapsed' so they communicated with her grandmother in German.⁶⁹ Otto

⁶⁶ Michael Attenborough, 'Helga and Irene Bejach', in David Brown (ed.), *Behind the Rose: Stories Behind the Roses Dedicated in the Holocaust Centre's Memorial Gardens* (The Holocaust Centre: Newark, 2011), p. 10.

⁶⁷ William Kaczynski, 'Bach and Kaczynski families', in David Brown (ed.), *Behind the Rose: Stories Behind the Roses Dedicated in the Holocaust Centre's Memorial Gardens* (The Holocaust Centre: Newark, 2011), pp. 93-94.

⁶⁸ Susan Mulroy, 'The Kohns and Humbergers of Pilsen', in David Brown (ed.), *Behind the Rose: Stories Behind the Roses Dedicated in the Holocaust Centre's Memorial Gardens* (The Holocaust Centre: Newark, 2011), p. 51.

⁶⁹ Mulroy, 'The Kohns and Humbergers of Pilsen', p. 51.

Deutsch's story behind his rose remembers how he never said goodbye to his father and how he later travelled to Mali Trostinec, where his family were murdered, and said Kaddish (a prayer traditionally recited to remember the dead).⁷⁰ Harry Bibring's rose remembers how his mother was left by herself to organise his father's funeral. Bibring's father suffered a heart attack in a van when his father was sent to a concentration camp.⁷¹ Bernard Grünberg's rose also reflects upon loss because his mother had to give consent for Bernard to leave on a Kindertransport without his father's support, as he was in Buchenwald concentration camp at the time. Grünberg then explains how his father was released just before he left for Britain and 'managed to get on board [the train] and travel with [him] for about 20 miles until [they] reached the Dutch border'.⁷² The book presents a multifaceted perspective which makes it difficult to see this historical event in purely positive terms because survival and death are presented side by side. There is also a database which has recently been created by the NHCM. It tracks when the roses were dedicated, who dedicated them, and logs the message on the plaque placed next to the rose. The database is not publicly available, however. The virtual representation of the garden is yet to be appreciated.

The two memorial gardens which commemorate Sir Nicholas Winton explore another layer of the positive British Kindertransport narrative because they remember a rescuer as well as those who were rescued. Within the memorial garden in Princes Park, Golders Green, dedicated in 2018, there is a sculpture which depicts five children playing football, flying kites, sailing boats on a pond, climbing trees, and sliding down a slide. The memorial shows the Kinder's childhoods continuing in Britain, where they could play again. This stands as a

⁷⁰ Otto Deutsch, 'Deutsch Family', in David Brown (ed.), *Behind the Rose: Stories Behind the Roses Dedicated in the Holocaust Centre's Memorial Gardens* (The Holocaust Centre: Newark, 2011), pp. 45-46.

⁷¹ Harry Bibring, 'Lea Ester Bibring and Anna Cormuss', in David Brown (ed.), *Behind the Rose: Stories Behind the Roses Dedicated in the Holocaust Centre's Memorial Gardens* (The Holocaust Centre: Newark, 2011), p. 14.

⁷² Bernard Grünberg, 'Grünberg Family', in David Brown (ed.), *Behind the Rose: Stories Behind the Roses Dedicated in the Holocaust Centre's Memorial Gardens* (The Holocaust Centre: Newark, 2011), p. 76.

reminder that Britain continues to support the growth and development of all children who play in the park today. The positive British narrative is also fostered by this memorial because the focus is placed on the Kinder's successful integration into British society as well as on Sir Nicholas Winton's rescue efforts. At the inauguration of the memorial, the Mayor of Barnet stated that those in attendance were 'delighted to honour the extraordinary life and achievements of the late Sir Nicholas Winton [and that it was] particularly fitting as [there is a] large number of children from the Jewish community living in Barnet who can be inspired by this man's great heroism'.⁷³ Councillor Dean Cohen also asserted that 'Sir Nicholas Winton was a man of extreme courage who displayed immense bravery during the Second World War, saving hundreds of Jewish children'.⁷⁴ He went on to state that he was 'proud that the legacy of such an incredible humanitarian has been marked in this special way'.⁷⁵ The garden's simplicity and the sense of tranquillity created there feed into the notion that Sir Nicholas Winton was a 'humble hero', inviting a positive identification with a British rescuer.⁷⁶ The concept behind the memorial was put forward by the Raoul Wallenberg Foundation, 'whose mission is to develop education programmes and public awareness campaigns based on the values of solidarity, civic courage and the ethical cornerstones of the saviours of the Holocaust'.⁷⁷ Councillor Cohen suggested that Sir Nicholas Winton 'embodied these values and his example should continue to be recognised and remembered'.⁷⁸ The memorial garden crystallises the memory of Sir Nicholas Winton's rescue of Kinder from Czechoslovakia. It also invites identification as passers-by can sit in the garden and reflect upon his rescue efforts.

⁷³ 'Memorial Garden for Sir Nicholas Winton Opened in Golders Green', *Christians United for Israel*, 20th March 2018, at <https://www.cufi.org.uk/news/memorial-garden-for-sir-nicholas-winton-opened-in-golders-green/> [accessed 13th May 2019].

⁷⁴ 'Memorial Garden for Sir Nicholas Winton Opened in Golders Green'.

⁷⁵ 'Memorial Garden for Sir Nicholas Winton Opened in Golders Green'.

⁷⁶ Stephen Oryszczuk, 'Hendon Holocaust Garden may be Renamed in Honour of Nicholas Winton', *Jewish News*, 17th May 2016, at <https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/hendon-holocaust-garden-may-be-renamed-in-honour-of-nicholas-winton/> [accessed 13th May 2019].

⁷⁷ Oryszczuk, 'Hendon Holocaust Garden may be Renamed in Honour of Nicholas Winton'.

⁷⁸ Oryszczuk, 'Hendon Holocaust Garden may be Renamed in Honour of Nicholas Winton'.

The Sir Nicholas Winton memorial garden in Oaken Grove Park, Maidenhead, was opened in 2017 (Winton was a Maidenhead resident). It also evokes a sense of national pride by celebrating the memory and life of Sir Nicholas Winton through his love of gardens and flowers.⁷⁹ ‘The memorial garden is representative of the journey Sir Nicholas took, utilising symbolism throughout’.⁸⁰ For example,

the winding path represents the journey Sir Nicholas took and the twists and turns of the path are the challenges he faced. Railway sleepers have been laid like a railway track to symbolise the trains that took the children out of Prague to safety.⁸¹

The Kinder are also remembered within the memorial garden, because ‘in the first part of the path the yellow and black bamboo protects the children he saved (and now visitors) from evil spirits’.⁸² The ‘children from Courthouse Junior School and Furze Platt Junior School planted strawberry plants among the bamboo, to symbolise peace and spiritual purity, attributes that Sir Nicholas advocated’.⁸³ The then Prime Minister, Theresa May, was present at the opening of the garden, and she stated how she ‘had the pleasure of meeting Sir Nicholas and some of the grown up children who owed their lives and futures to him’.⁸⁴ She also said that ‘he was a man who devoted his whole life, day in and day out, to active goodness’ and that the garden ‘will inspire people, young and old, to come here, think about Nicky and be encouraged to help others’.⁸⁵ Visitors also read several quotes by Sir Nicholas Winton on the memorial plaques. Here again is an example of how selective quotations might be used in support of a positive British Kindertransport narrative. This landscape garden, where visitors are invited to ‘reexperience’ Sir Nicholas Winton’s difficult road to rescue, invites empathy and seeks to engage visitors emotionally rather than just commemorate a rescuer. It could be argued that the

⁷⁹ ‘Sir Nicholas Winton Memorial Garden Completed’, *Project Centre*, at <http://www.projectcentre.co.uk/sir-nicholas-winton-memorial-garden-completed/> [accessed 13th May 2019].

⁸⁰ ‘Sir Nicholas Winton Memorial Garden Completed’.

⁸¹ ‘Sir Nicholas Winton Memorial Garden Completed’.

⁸² ‘Sir Nicholas Winton Memorial Garden Completed’.

⁸³ ‘Sir Nicholas Winton Memorial Garden Completed’.

⁸⁴ ‘Sir Nicholas Winton Memorial Garden Completed’.

⁸⁵ ‘Sir Nicholas Winton Memorial Garden Completed’.

garden establishes a direct temporal and experiential connection between the historical figure and the present-day visitor or passer-by because the visitor stands and moves in a space symbolically linked to Sir Nicholas Winton's life and activities. There is an immediacy or connection created between the visitor and the memorial which is something that appears to be absent from more abstract memorials or memorial plaques, for example.

The Frank Foley trail connects with the memorial gardens to Sir Nicholas Winton because it honours another British hero who rescued Jews from Nazi persecution.⁸⁶ This memorial trail presents a less well-known aspect of the Kindertransport, as we are reminded that Frank Foley helped some of the Kinder's parents, such as Ruth Schwiening's father, flee to Britain.⁸⁷ The Foley trail consists of a plaque found on the war memorial in the Southwell Gardens, a figurative statue, a memorial plaque above the front door of the house where he was born, and a road which has been renamed after him. The trail passes through the memorial gardens, inviting visitors to imagine they are walking in the footsteps of Foley. This is like the Sir Nicholas Winton garden as visitors share his life trajectory – the memorial does not just honour an individual, it also asks visitors to share his experience by walking these same footsteps. While the Foley memorials within the gardens share similar characteristics to the Sir Nicholas Winton memorial gardens because they emphasise a moment in time – rescue – the fact that they are placed within the wider context of the trail also retraces Foley's life from birth to death. For example, the statue which was dedicated in 2018 is not far from Foley's grave in the local cemetery.⁸⁸ The artist behind the statue, Andy de Comyn, stated how the memorial presents 'Foley quietly seated on a park bench, just as he might have in Berlin in the

⁸⁶ 'Highbridge Honours Frank Foley with Statue', *BBC*, 24th September 2014, at http://www.bbc.co.uk/somerset/content/articles/2005/05/05/frank_foley_statue_unveiled_feature.shtml [accessed 13th May 2019].

⁸⁷ Ruth Schwiening, 'Sehnsucht – A Yearning', *AJR*, 1st January 2014, at https://ajr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2014_January.pdf [accessed 13th May 2019].

⁸⁸ Cathryn Costello, 'Work Starts on Statue of Frank Foley the "British Schindler"', *Ian Austin*, 8th December 2017, at http://www.ianaustin.co.uk/work_starts_on_statue_of_frank_foley_the_british_schindler [accessed 14th May 2019].

1930s: he is feeding a bird, which symbolises freedom and the people he helped, and a briefcase at his side hints at his MI6 work'.⁸⁹ The statue is located in the 'tranquil Upper Terrace of the Mary Stevens Park Tea Garden, and [...] visitors will be able to sit next to Major Foley and reflect on his heroism'.⁹⁰ The memorials to Sir Nicholas and Foley accord with British memorial traditions because they focus on the unsung hero.⁹¹ These two figures are accessible to all members of the public because they are presented as ordinary Britons who acted when they saw injustice. The positive British rescue narrative is dominant in these memorial gardens because they praise British efforts to help Jewish refugees before the Second World War. They celebrate the achievements of these two men but they also seem to concentrate British memory around male rescuers. There are no memorial gardens in Britain which specifically focus on the bravery of female rescuers.

British Figurative Memorials

Commemorative statues traditionally take figurative form. They are usually freestanding and are often situated in town centres or squares or at other focal points such as hilltops. There is not always a specific connection between the location and the person remembered, though there might be. Figurative memorials to the Kindertransport in Britain tend to be located near train stations, commemorating the Kinder's arrival. The memorials are therefore situated within a space used by travellers today. This potentially creates a bond between the memorial and passers-by because there is a sense of shared movement. This bond can be strengthened at certain times of the year when people gather around these memorials to commemorate, or rally

⁸⁹ Costello, 'Work Starts on Statue of Frank Foley the "British Schindler"'.
⁹⁰ Costello, 'Work Starts on Statue of Frank Foley the "British Schindler"'.
⁹¹ In 2009, the British government and the Holocaust Educational Trust (HET) set up the 'Hero of the Holocaust' award which has been awarded to both Sir Nicholas Winton and Frank Foley in recognition of their rescue efforts. For more information see, Caroline Sharples, 'The Kindertransport in British Memory', in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), pp. 15-28, and 'British Heroes of the Holocaust Honoured', *HET*, at <https://www.het.org.uk/news-and-events/691-british-heroes-of-the-holocaust-honoured> [accessed 17th January 2020].

around them during demonstrations (see later in chapter). Figurative memorials to the Kindertransport often present a positive message as they focus on rescue and welcome.⁹²

Commemorative statues can also recall local, regional or national figures – or imply that certain people should enjoy local, regional or national status in national memory. They anchor the achievements of a person within a community. Figurative memorials ask visitors to remember the honouree as he or she was. Commemorative statuary that is abstract in form is often reserved for memory of the Holocaust or other atrocities. This was not always so, and sometimes Holocaust memorials can still take figurative form (groups of huddled figures, deportees etc.). For example, Willi Lammert's memorial to *Jewish Victims of Fascism* (*Jüdische Opfer des Faschismus*) from 1985 located in the Old Jewish Cemetery in Berlin depicts a group of figures. But there prevails a sense that one should hesitate before representing Holocaust victims for fear this may be interpreted as voyeuristic or as disrespectful to the dead: often Holocaust memorials are about how we should remember, about our relationship to remembering, rather than directly about those remembered. That Frank Meisler and Flor Kent, for example, chose figurative statues may be because their memorials are not specifically Holocaust memorials. They align their memorials with traditional statuary – which often has a celebratory character. Their statues honour the Kindertransportees as well as the country which took them in. Any critical perspectives tend to be adopted by independent commentators: the memorials themselves tend to be positive. I will therefore examine the memorials in isolation to explore how they represent the Kindertransport before studying the wider contexts the memorials are placed within.

⁹² See Hampton School, *Kindertransport Sculpture*, 2018 for an example of a school's pride in creating and dedicating a memorial to former Kinder, especially Bea Green. Green's grandson, Bea, attends the school and the memorial was inspired by Green's story. For further information, see 'Kindertransport Sculpture', *Hampton School*, 29th January 2018, at <https://hamptonschool.org.uk/2018/01/kindertransport-sculpture/> [accessed 16th January 2020].

The first British figurative memorial to the Kindertransport was unveiled in 2003.⁹³ Flor Kent's *Für das Kind* (*For the Child*) stood outside London Liverpool Street Station where many of the Kinder journeyed to after arriving in Harwich. The memorial depicted a single young female Kind who stood next to a large glass suitcase which held memorabilia from former Kinder.⁹⁴ It was commissioned by World Jewish Relief (WJR), and was unveiled by Sir Nicholas Winton, Harry Heber (WJR), and Sir Erich Reich (chairman of the Association for Jewish Refugees (AJR) Kindertransport Committee). The memorial was later removed in 2005 and replaced with a sculpture by Frank Meisler in 2006 because the artefacts within the glass case started to decay.⁹⁵ In an email to the author of this thesis, WJR stated that the memorial 'evolved against a backdrop of Holocaust denial as well as issues of accountability and restitution'.⁹⁶ According to Pnina Rosenberg, Kent's memorial and the 'display of the *Kinder*'s mundane objects redeemed [the Kindertransport and the Kinder's stories] from the abyss of oblivion; they served as a "postmemory" bridge between history as it happened and as it is grasped by the memory of those who did not experience it'.⁹⁷ Because the suitcase was made from glass it was transparent, exposing the Kinder's

personal belongings to the public [which evoked] a sensation of abandonment and defencelessness, a metaphor of the *Kinder* themselves, who, within a very short time, were forced to replace their parents' shield with the mercy of strangers. Thus the public became part of the process of past reconstitution and was immersed in the duality of memory and history.⁹⁸

⁹³ There are few references to figurative British Kindertransport memorials in the secondary literature, although there is an awareness of Meisler's and Kent's memorials. See Caroline Sharples, 'The Kindertransport in British Historical Memory'; Isabel Wollaston, 'Remembering the Kindertransport', *Saving Humans*, November 2013, at <https://savinghumans.wordpress.com/2013/11/20/remembering-the-kindertransport-by-dr-isabel-wollaston/> [accessed 29th May 2019]; Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck, *Memorials as Spaces of Engagement: Design, Use and Meaning* (Routledge: London, 2016); Peter Matthews, *London Statues and Monuments* (Bloomsbury: Oxford, 2018); and Tony Kushner, *Journeys from the Abyss: The Holocaust and Forced Migration from the 1880s to the Present* (Liverpool University Press: Liverpool, 2017).

⁹⁴ Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public', p. 68.

⁹⁵ Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public', p. 69.

⁹⁶ Author's correspondence with World Jewish Relief on 25th October 2017.

⁹⁷ Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public', p. 68. For a discussion of postmemory theory, see Marianne Hirsch, *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust* (Columbia University Press: New York, 2012).

⁹⁸ Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public', p. 69.

The glass suitcase in a sense was an archive, presenting the history of the Kindertransport as it highlighted how the Kinder's lives were moved from one place to another.⁹⁹ The inclusion of artefacts such as photographs, toys, rucksacks, and books reflected Kent's wish to present historical documentation, as the memorial was dedicated during 'the Holocaust revisionism controversy in the David Irving case'.¹⁰⁰ The intention behind the memorial then was not only to remember the Kinder but also to provide evidence that this historical event took place. The fact that the memorial doubled as a small museum was not surprising considering this context. The memorial could be regarded as a combimemorial, a term coined by Bill Niven, which designates the 'integration of memorial, archival, and exhibition elements'.¹⁰¹ The aim of the memorial was to recreate the history of the Kindertransport and bring an awareness to the wider public rather than present a specific national narrative.

The statue shows a child standing with her arms by her side and head slightly tilted to one side while looking to the ground. In Chapter One, I discussed how some Kinder talked about how they were excited about their adventure to a new country, but this statue did not present this narrative; on the contrary, it suggested quite the opposite. Instead, the sculpture evoked a sense of bewilderment. This moment of arrival was not depicted as a joyful occasion, rather it was presented as a painful separation. The memorial was later relocated to the NHCM and placed at the start of 'The Journey' exhibition. The new location of the memorial is beside a recreation of a train track, station building, and country house: all the iconic images of arrival are present. For example, the tracks symbolise the children's journey to Britain, the station house illustrates the Kinder's first moments in Britain, and the museum's façade resembles a British property complete with a red post box. This new environment for the memorial emphasises arrival in a welcoming place. However, the statue viewed in isolation still tells a

⁹⁹ Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public', p. 69.

¹⁰⁰ Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public', p. 69.

¹⁰¹ Bill Niven, 'From Countermonument to Combimemorial: Developments in German Memorialization', *Journal of War & Culture Studies* 6:1 (2013), p. 75.

story of exhaustion and bewilderment. Because the memorial presents a disoriented child it chimes with the more complex narrative presented by the exhibition, as ‘The Journey’ reflects upon how Leo journeyed to Britain without his parents and younger sister. He arrives alone and questions who will be at the end of his journey and whether they will be nice to him. The memorial also reflects the Kinder’s vulnerability and helplessness.

Though a new memorial by Meisler was unveiled outside Liverpool Street Station, WJR still wanted to recognise Kent’s work. In 2011, another memorial was dedicated – also entitled *Für das Kind* – at Liverpool Street Station. This memorial now resides inside the concourse of the station, and the little girl has been joined by a little boy and a suitcase. The statue of the little girl is similar to the original. The statue at the NHCM was renamed *Für das Kind – The Remains*, while the memorial now at Liverpool Street Station is called *Für das Kind – Displaced*. This highlights not only the children’s displacement and dispersal around the British Isles, but also the original memorial’s relocation to a new and unfamiliar setting, as well as the new location of the new memorial, which is found inside the station rather than outside of it. The new memorial sits on a stone block and has a plaque on one side of the base. The aesthetics as well as the message of the memorial were altered because it now not only remembers the Kinder; it also celebrates ‘the greatness of ordinary people in extraordinary times’.¹⁰² The memorial plaque includes the transnational history of the Kindertransport, because it lists some of the stations where Kinder departed from in continental Europe. But while this transnational history is presented, it could easily be overlooked, because the plaque is not at eye level. Nor is it easily accessible, and the copper plaque is worn and has many marks on it, which makes for difficult reading. These transnational aspects are in any case not of significance in the memorial because the emphasis is placed on how ‘Liverpool Street

¹⁰² Flor Kent, *Für das Kind – Displaced*, London Liverpool Street Station, 2011.

Station was the main place of arrival and the meeting point for the children and their sponsors and foster families'.¹⁰³

The memorial also has a generational context because 'Kent made a body cast of 6-year-old Naomi Stern, the granddaughter of Ella Eberstark, a Czech *Kindertransport* survivor rescued by Nicolas Winton'.¹⁰⁴ Likewise, 'the boy is modeled after Sam Morris, great-grandson of the Viennese *Kind* Sara Schreiber, who was saved by the British Rabbi, Dr. Solomon Schonfeld'.¹⁰⁵ Rosenberg suggests that 'the fusion of time and generations [...] was also attested to by the fact that the girl wore the *Kindertransport* reunion pin' which symbolises the arrival and rescue of the Kinder in Britain.¹⁰⁶ This symbol of the boat on the pin is now synonymous with the 60th anniversary of the *Kindertransport* as it appears on the anniversary programmes. The statue of the little boy has a skull cap on, which immediately categorises him as being Jewish. While the expressions of the two figures suggest the painful nature of diaspora, visitors leave with a sense of hope because the emphasis is placed on the heroic actions of those who did not stand by.

Meisler's *The Arrival* was dedicated outside Liverpool Street Station in 2006.¹⁰⁷ This was Meisler's first memorial in his memorial network (see later in chapter). On 5th July 2005, there was a commemorative event at Clarence House to remember the *Kindertransport*. In attendance were WJR, former Kinder, and members of the British royal family such as Prince Charles. Meisler, himself a former Kind, was also there. The message of the memorial was 'to give thanks to the British government and British people [and] that Britain offered [a] safe haven' for refugee children.¹⁰⁸ Meisler's memorial comprises five individual statues of

¹⁰³ Kent, *Für das Kind – Displaced*.

¹⁰⁴ Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public', p. 70.

¹⁰⁵ Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public', p. 71.

¹⁰⁶ Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public', p. 70. For more on Schonfeld's role in rescuing children, see David Kranzler, *Solomon Schonfeld: The Untold Story of an Extraordinary British Orthodox Rabbi Who Rescued 4000 During the Holocaust* (Ktav Publishers: Jersey City, 2004).

¹⁰⁷ For Meisler's autobiography, see Frank Meisler, *On the Vistula Facing East* (André Deutsch: London, 1996).

¹⁰⁸ Author's correspondence with WJR on 25th October 2017.

children, a train track, and the children's belongings such as a teddy bear, a violin, and suitcases.¹⁰⁹ The statues of the children depict varying ages, which is historically accurate as children aged between infants and teenagers came to Britain on the Kindertransport. There are three statues of female figures, and two statues of male figures. Unusually, then, the female perspective is a focal point within this memorial, not only because there are more figures depicting females but also because of where and how these figures are placed within the overall sculpture. For example, one little girl is seated at the very front of the memorial: she is the first child figure that visitors see. Another female statue is standing in the centre of the memorial, she is the focal point for viewers' eyes. The third female is found at the very back of the memorial and she is the tallest statue. As previously discussed, the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport largely focuses on the experiences of males. Museum exhibitions, for instance, tend to present the perspectives of male rescuers such as Sir Nicholas Winton and Rabbi Schonfeld, while the NHCM relates the fictional account of Leo's diary. This thesis is not suggesting that British museums ignore female perspectives entirely. But there are no well-known British memorials recalling female rescuers. By contrast, a memorial plaque honouring British rescuer Doreen Warriner was recently unveiled in Prague,¹¹⁰ while a memorial to rescuer Geertruida Wijsmuller-Meijer can be found in Amsterdam.¹¹¹ In Britain there is a tendency to commemorate male figures in keeping with the masculine memorial tradition. Meisler's memorial on the other hand does bring the female perspective into the frame. The tallest of the female figures stands at the back of the group of statues watching over them.

¹⁰⁹ Pnina Rosenberg, 'Footsteps of Memory: Frank Meisler's *Kindertransport* Memorials', *Prism* 6:5 (2014), p. 92.

¹¹⁰ Ian Willoughby, 'Little-Known Hero Doreen Warriner Honoured in Prague: "She Did Something Amazing, But She Didn't Seek Recognition"', *Radio Prague International*, 30th April 2019, at <https://www.radio.cz/en/section/coraffrs/little-known-hero-doreen-warriner-honoured-in-prague-she-did-something-amazing-but-she-didnt-see-recognition> [accessed 11th January 2020]. See also Henry Warriner, *Doreen Warriner's War* (Book Guild Publishing: London, 2019).

¹¹¹ See Renee Ghert-Zand, 'Truus Wijsmuller Saved Thousands of Jews in WWII. Why Has No One Heard of Her?', *Times of Israel*, 25th October 2017, at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/truus-wijsmuller-saved-1000s-of-jews-in-wwii-so-why-has-no-one-heard-of-her/> [accessed 11th January 2020].

Although she is holding a suitcase in one hand, her other hand is slightly tilted to one side as if she were ushering the children into their small group. And the first memorial dedicated at Liverpool Street Station by Kent was a statue of a little girl. While it may have not been a conscious decision of Meisler and Kent's to present the female perspective more strongly, their memorials nevertheless counteract a frequent imbalance in representation of the Kindertransport.

The Arrival represents the dispersal of the Kinder to different areas of the British Isles as the statues look in different directions, signifying how not all journeys ended in London. The 'children's inquisitive look [is] devoid of fear and full of hope', which suggests a positive view of the Kindertransport.¹¹² Rosenberg suggests that 'Meisler's London memorial represents a turning point in the children's lives—a new chapter whose pages unfold a history of rescue, gratitude, and hope'.¹¹³ This exclusive focus on Britain as a haven is problematic, as not all the Kinder's experiences in Britain were positive. The title of the memorial and the plaque *Children of the Kindertransport* which presents 'an abbreviated version of the wording on [the] plaque [...] in the House of Commons' promotes a positive perspective because the focus is placed on starting a new life in Britain. The only physical reminders of the Kinder's former lives in their native lands are their possessions such as their suitcases and the names of the cities that they departed from, which are displayed around the memorial. But while there is therefore a transnational aspect to the memorial because arrival is connected to departure and movement from the Kinder's former homelands, this transnational element is subsumed into a redemptive national narrative of welcome. The fact that the memorial resides within *Hope Square* further reinforces the notions of national solidarity and unity.

¹¹² Rosenberg, 'Footsteps of Memory', p. 93.

¹¹³ Rosenberg, 'Footsteps of Memory', p. 93.

The opening chapter of this thesis pointed out that contrasts exist between testimony in individual autobiographies and institutional testimony. Contrasts exist, too, between testimony and memorials, because while Meisler's memorial accords with the positive British Kindertransport narrative, Sir Erich Reich's book *The Boy in the Statue* (2017) provides a more complicated picture. The young Erich Reich, as one newspaper puts it, was 'immortalised in Frank Meisler's monument': Meisler modelled one of the figures on him.¹¹⁴ But Sir Erich Reich informs readers that he 'can't remember when or how [he] arrived'.¹¹⁵ Rather he 'had blocked out what went before and for [him] life began, for all intents and purpose, not in the city of [his] birth, Vienna, but in Burchett House, Dorking'.¹¹⁶ Sir Erich Reich came to Britain on board the Polish ship *Warszawa* at the end of August 1939. He was four years old when he arrived with his brother Ossie. His brother Jacques had arrived in Britain in June 1939. Sir Erich Reich was separated from his brothers in Britain. It was only when he was eleven years old that he discovered that he in fact had two brothers, and that the people he thought were his real parents were actually his foster parents. Sir Erich Reich's testimony throws into relief the complexities of the Kindertransport because he remembers little about his arrival, his parents, and although he was later fostered by the Kreibich family he was first placed in a hostel. Moreover, his personal account prompts readers to consider the Kinder's distress and shock of being separated first from their families in continental Europe, then from siblings in Britain, and then from the foster families who cared for them. In contrast then to Meisler's memorial, which celebrates arrival, for Sir Erich Reich, arrival was not memorable at all, and did not necessarily lead to positive experiences. This more complicated perspective is not necessarily obvious when viewing the memorial in isolation.

¹¹⁴ Alex Galbinski, 'Sir Erich Reich: "I Belonged Nowhere, But Everywhere at the Same Time"', *Jewish News*, 2nd November 2017, at <https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/sir-erich-reich-i-belonged-nowhere-but-everywhere-at-the-same-time/> [accessed 8th December 2019].

¹¹⁵ Sir Erich Reich, *The Boy in the Statue: From Wartime Vienna to Buckingham Palace* (i2iPublishing: Manchester, 2017), p.19.

¹¹⁶ Sir Erich Reich, *The Boy in the Statue*, p. 19.

There are also several figurative memorials to those who rescued the Kinder. A memorial to Sir Nicholas Winton, for example, was unveiled in 2010 by the MP for Maidenhead, Theresa May. The statue depicts Sir Nicholas Winton sitting on a bench at the Maidenhead Train Station reading a book which contains images of the Kinder he rescued. The memorial accords with British traditions of commemorating Second World War heroes because it chimes with the notion of the modest hero. The figure of Sir Nicholas Winton as depicted in the memorial is understated. It is accessible, as anyone can sit next to him. He is sitting quietly reminiscing, there is no sense of self-praise. Likewise, the posture of the statue illustrates Sir Nicholas Winton's humbleness. The memorial was created by a local sculptor, Lydia Karpinska, and was commissioned by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council. The councillor, Derek Wilson, who put forward the motion to create a memorial to Sir Nicholas Winton's tremendous efforts to bring children from Czechoslovakia to Britain, stated that he was 'a true hero':¹¹⁷

we should never forget the contribution of the members of our community that put their own lives at risk. He is extremely modest but I felt it was important that in Maidenhead we recognised his achievements.¹¹⁸

He has become one of the most well-known British rescuers not only in Britain but also in other countries. The memorial reminds passers-by how he greeted the Kinder upon their arrival in Britain in 1939. The statue continues to greet travellers today, conveying a message of hope because the memorial remembers what one courageous individual can achieve – although Sir Nicholas Winton actually acted as part of a group, not all of whose members are so well remembered.¹¹⁹ The memorial seems to reflect on how Sir Nicholas Winton is reconnecting with his own story through cultural memory because he is depicted reading his own biography.

¹¹⁷ 'Statue for "British Schindler" Sir Nicholas Winton', *BBC News*, 18th September 2010, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-berkshire-11356875> [accessed 7th November 2017].

¹¹⁸ 'Statue for "British Schindler" Sir Nicholas Winton'.

¹¹⁹ Winton's helpers included Doreen Warriner, Martin Blake, and Marie Schmolka. See 'Marie Schmolka', undated, at <https://marieschmolka.org/about-marie-schmolka/> [accessed 13th January 2020].

The memorial chimes with the way the Kindertransport is generally memorialised in Britain. There is no doubt that Sir Nicholas Winton was a hero, but the memorial's attempt to cast him as self-effacing also reflects a trend towards glorifying a certain kind of Britishness: the unsung or quiet hero. Therefore, the memorial suggests that heroism is a natural quality in British people.

Figurative memorials to Frank Foley also suggest that ordinary Britons carried out extraordinary operations to save the lives of Jewish refugees. The figurative statue to Foley opened in 2005 in Highbridge Somerset presents iconic rescue imagery such as a ship, the front of a train with a cattle car, a house, a bridge, and a small female child. There is also an older male figure wearing a kippah, and a male figure who resembles Foley. Foley's position in the middle of the sculpture signifies his importance and heroic efforts. Although more negative aspects are implicit in the memorial, as the figure of the little girl seems to be holding on to her father's sleeve as well as clutching onto a building, which could testify to the painful separation of families, the figure of Foley with his visas in hand dispels the more negative aspects. The father's worried expression could be overlooked as these two figures have arrived safely in Britain. The sculptor behind the work, Jonathan Sells of Corfe Castle, explains the concepts behind the memorial as follows:

- the birds are symbols of the two people, father and daughter, being freed. Birds flying symbolise freedom and one of the birds has an olive branch depicting the dove of peace, as well as in the Noah's Ark story about newfound land. The wing of peace becomes the hand of friendship. The other bird appears out of the train's smoke symbolising the phoenix rising from the ashes: resurrection and rebirth.
- As Frank Foley stamps the visas of the Jewish man and his daughter, his look is one of proud defiance as he breaks and bends the rules, to help get these people out of Germany to freedom and life.
- The heads of the two men have been left joined to show the importance of empathy, understanding and communication between fellow human beings.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ 'Frank Foley Sculpture', *Jonathan Wells Sculptor*, 15th October 2015, at <https://www.jonathan-sells.com/project/frank-foley-sculpture/> [accessed 6th March 2018].

The memorial associates the Kindertransport with the flight of birds, freedom and peace – although many Jewish children that could not be rescued were soon to be murdered during the war. A new memorial commissioned to remember Foley in Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge, unveiled in 2018, mirrors the memorial to Sir Nicholas Winton in Maidenhead. The memorial created by Andy de Comyn depicts Foley sitting on a bench with a briefcase and a little bird perched on top which is remarkably similar to the memorial previously discussed. The bird symbolises freedom and the briefcase symbolises his work during the war.

Although many of the figurative memorials discussed in this thesis reflect the positive British narrative of rescue, one can detect a development towards a more critical perspective. For example, in 2018 the Warth Mills Project (WMP) unveiled a memorial to ‘the men interned at Warth Mills in 1940, and in particular those who lost their lives on the *SS Arandora Star*’ which was en route to Canada.¹²¹ The plaque on top of the memorial reads as follows: ‘dedicated to the men who were held at Warth Mills Internment Camp and who died when *SS Arandora Star* was struck by torpedo on the 2nd July 1940’.¹²² The memorial presents six suitcases of all shapes, sizes and colours stacked on top of one another. The suitcases here do not automatically suggest that travel was a positive because the cases ‘represent all the men who were interned [...] many of whom reported their possessions having been taken and never returned’.¹²³ Rescue here does not mean safety or shelter because these men were interned in their host nation. There is clearly an acknowledgment that Britain detained and imprisoned refugees who were categorised as enemy aliens. But it is not clear that this memorial is also a Kindertransport memorial. One only becomes aware of this fact through the WMP’s Twitter account. The memorial was dedicated around the 80th anniversary of the Kindertransport. During this time, the WMP tweeted about the memorial’s connection to the Kindertransport.

¹²¹ ‘Memorial Unveiling’, *Warth Mills Project*, at <https://www.warthmillsproject.com/memorial-unveiling/> [accessed 31st May 2019].

¹²² Warth Mills Project Twitter Account, 2018.

¹²³ WMP Twitter Account.

For example, the project discussed the stories of Henry Wuga (born Heinz Wuga) and Peter Midgley (born Peter Fleischmann), who in 1939 escaped from Germany to Britain on the Kindertransport.¹²⁴ Even though the boys were teenagers, they were arrested in Britain as they were regarded as enemy aliens.¹²⁵ The boys were then interned in 1940 ‘in a dilapidated, disused mill in Bury, Greater Manchester’ and later were ‘transferred to the Isle of Man’.¹²⁶ They were eventually released. ‘Peter joined the British army and, later in the war, found himself back at Warth Mills when it was serving as a PoW camp. This time he was working as an interpreter. He reported that conditions were vastly improved for PoWs’.¹²⁷ The WMP Twitter account also reflected upon the boys’ lives during the post-war period. For example, ‘after the war, Peter went to the Royal College of Art and exhibited at the V&A [Victoria and Albert Museum] and Royal Academy. In 1978, he had his first solo exhibition in Berlin [where] he was greeted by the mayor in the city of his birth’.¹²⁸ Peter Midgley died in 1991.¹²⁹ Wuga went on to work ‘in Glasgow in several high-end restaurants as a chef de partie. In 1944, he married Ingrid Wolff who had also arrived on the Kindertransport as a young Jewish refugee’ and ‘in 1999 [he] was awarded the MBR in recognition of his volunteer work as a ski instructor for the British Limbless Ex-Service Men’s Association’.¹³⁰ Overall these Twitter posts presented a positive story of integration, albeit one that does not bracket out the early treatment by British authorities.

Transnational Memorial Networks

Meisler and Kent’s memorials when viewed in isolation accord with the positive British narrative, but when they are placed within their transnational memorial networks, they take on

¹²⁴ WMP Twitter Account.

¹²⁵ WMP Twitter Account.

¹²⁶ WMP Twitter Account.

¹²⁷ WMP Twitter Account.

¹²⁸ WMP Twitter Account.

¹²⁹ WMP Twitter Account.

¹³⁰ WMP Twitter Account.

different meanings. Here, I understand a transnational memorial network as a set of memorials, created by the same artist which present the same theme, and are found in many different nations yet are still connected to one another. Since the memorials incorporate various national perspectives and reflect upon the roles of different nations (Britain, Holland, Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland), they highlight the more complex European history of the Kindertransport. In the introduction to this thesis, I suggested that, because the history of the Kindertransport is transnational, we might expect that memory would be as well. Yet as we have seen in the case of Britain, representations of the Kindertransport often begin with arrival in Britain. In the case of Britain the wider transnational history is often overlooked. The memorial networks, by contrast, reflecting as they do on the transnational history (prior to arrival in Britain, at least), do encourage a transnational memory of the Kindertransport. Indeed, they are an example of transnational memory at work because the idea for a memorial crossed borders to be realised in a number of countries. Recent memory theory draws our attention to the fact that memory ‘moves’ not only in space, but also across time.¹³¹ This is also exemplified by the Kindertransport memorial networks. Moreover, activism and reenactments around the memorials link memory of the Kindertransport to the current refugee crisis. They provide a good example of Michael Rothberg’s theory of ‘multidirectional memory’, according to which ‘dynamic transfers take place between diverse places and times during the act of remembrance’.¹³² Nationally focused narratives of the Kindertransport can encourage us to be more empathetic to the needs of refugees. Recent British exhibitions, for instance, have reflected upon how the Kinder suffered new injustices in their host nation. But when we are

¹³¹ For discussion and examples of transnational memory flows, see Chris Lorenz, ‘Another Time, Another Place. Time and Space in the Long Twentieth Century’, in Bill Niven and Stefan Berger (eds), *Cultural History of Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Bloomsbury: London, forthcoming, 2020); Jay Winter, ‘Memory, Power and Politics during the “People’s Century”’, in Bill Niven and Stefan Berger (eds), *Cultural History of Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Bloomsbury: London, forthcoming, 2020); Astrid Erll, ‘Travelling Memory’, *Parallax* 17:4 (2011), pp. 4-18; Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford University Press: Stanford, 2009); and Chiara de Cesari and Ann Rigney (eds), *Transnational Memory: Circulation, Articulation, Scales* (DeGruyter: Berlin, 2014).

¹³² Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 11.

presented with the wider transnational history, as well as with a ‘multidirectional’ context, this especially encourages empathy towards the Kinder’s further and further dislodgement from their lands of birth.

Flor Kent – London, Newark, Vienna and Prague

As previously mentioned, Kent’s memorials in Britain were dedicated in 2003 and 2011, and the *Für das Kind – Displaced* memorial makes reference to the other memorials in her network through a plaque. In 2008, Kent also opened a memorial in Vienna, followed by the unveiling of her memorial in Prague in 2009. Her memorial in Vienna, *Für das Kind – Wien*, is situated at the city’s Westbahnhof. It depicts a little boy sitting on a suitcase, and was dedicated on the 70th anniversary of the Anschluss.¹³³ Rosenberg notes that:

the placement of the single bronze boy in the middle of the active, noisy rail station that served then and still serves as the departure point to Western European countries emphasizes the solitude of each *Kind*. He and his huge suitcase sit on top of a rectangular pedestal. The boy’s legs hang in the air, too short to reach stable ground. In this minute detail, the artist delicately conveys detachment and displacement and poignantly accentuates the child’s sense of abandonment.¹³⁴

Kent’s memorials in Britain attest to the Kinder’s safe arrival, but the message of this memorial is quite different as it focuses on departure, marking the beginning of some of the Kinder’s journeys to their host nation. The emphasis is placed on how the Kinder’s lands of birth rejected them because of their Jewish background. The Kinder are cast as the other who must leave. The plaque at the front of the memorial in Vienna gives thanks to Britain for rescuing 10,000 Kinder, while the plaque at the back commemorates Rabbi Schonfeld, Sir Nicholas Winton, and the Christadelphians as well as the Quakers. While the memorial thus acknowledges those who rescued the Kinder, it also draws attention to the persecution the children experienced in their homelands. This stands in stark contrast to Kent’s Liverpool Street Station memorial, with

¹³³ Rosenberg, ‘When Private Becomes Public’, p. 71.

¹³⁴ Rosenberg, ‘When Private Becomes Public’, p. 71.

its implicit emphasis on Kinder becoming accepted and cherished members of society. The departure scene at the Westbahnhof highlights how alone the little boy is, there are no adults there to comfort him. The figure of the little boy looks distressed compared to the tired expressions of the children in Kent's memorial in London. This may be a reflection upon how some families were separated from one another even before the Kinder embarked upon their journeys. It may also be a comment on how some parents were not allowed on to the platform to say their goodbyes to their children.

Kent's *Für das Kind – Pro Dite* in Prague station depicts Sir Nicholas Winton 'holding a [male] child in his arms, with a refugee girl and a suitcase next to him'.¹³⁵ All the memorials in this network are placed within train stations where Kinder departed or arrived. Rosenberg states that:

Kent based the Prague memorial, like the others in the series, on real people and stories; thus Winton's life-sized figure was made in close cooperation with him as well as with an iconic photograph depicting him holding a child, three year-old Hansi Neumann.¹³⁶

The little girl seems to be 'estranged even from those who share her fate, even from her suitcase'.¹³⁷ That the female refugee is separate while the male refugee is held in Sir Nicholas Winton's arms suggests that the adult affords solace and support to the male while the female is marginalised. The painful nature of diaspora is presented by Kent's memorials in Prague and Britain because the solemn expression on the little girl's face does not change when she arrives in Britain. These two memorials reflect upon the Kinder's trauma of being transplanted from familiar surroundings to those which are unfamiliar. Kent's memorial in Vienna further reflects the Kinder's distress because the little boy is isolated.

Seeing the wider history of the Kindertransport within these memorials makes it difficult to see the Kindertransport purely as a success story. Rosie Potter and Patricia Ayre's

¹³⁵ Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public', p. 72.

¹³⁶ Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public', p. 72.

¹³⁷ Rosenberg, 'When Private Becomes Public', p. 72.

travelling exhibition ‘Für das Kind’ (2000-2003), created with Kent, also connected her memorial network to the fates of other children because the exhibition explored ‘the tragic fate[s] of those children interned and ultimately murdered’.¹³⁸ The exhibition presented 23 prints, an original suitcase and several artefacts. ‘The prints, [were] set in wooden box frames [...] that deliberately evoke[d] a traditional museum case [which] create[d] a direct linkage to Kent’s Liverpool Street Suitcase memorial’.¹³⁹ Rosenberg points out how poignant the venues were as the exhibition was displayed at ‘the Terezin Ghetto Museum (Czech Republic) (2003) and the Memorial Site of Mauthausen (Austria) (2005)’.¹⁴⁰ Rosenberg also notes that

a huge part of the Terezin Memorial’s collection are the suitcases of the internees, bearing inscriptions that serve as a source of information about their owners’ tragic itineraries. Contrasting those suitcases, which have become historical evidence, with those of the *Kinder* accentuates and highlights the humanitarian acts and courageous people who saved the *Kinder*.¹⁴¹

This project saw rescue of the Kinder in relation to those who were unable to make similar journeys. The exhibition thus set Kent’s Kindertransport memorial network within the context of the Holocaust.

Frank Meisler – London, Berlin, Gdansk, Rotterdam and Hamburg

The first Meisler memorial to be dedicated was the memorial at Liverpool Street Station which was unveiled in 2006. The second one, *Trains to Life – Trains to Death*, was opened in Berlin in 2008, the third memorial, *The Departure*, was unveiled in Gdansk in 2009, *Channel Crossing to Life* in Rotterdam was dedicated in 2011, and the fifth memorial, *The Final Departing*, was unveiled in Hamburg in 2015. These memorials are examples of transnational memory flow because the Gdansk memorial was inspired by the London memorial (see later in chapter). Astrid Erll developed the term ‘travelling memory’ which she understands as a

¹³⁸ Rosenberg, ‘When Private Becomes Public’, p. 73.

¹³⁹ Rosenberg, ‘When Private Becomes Public’, p. 73.

¹⁴⁰ Rosenberg, ‘When Private Becomes Public’, p. 73.

¹⁴¹ Rosenberg, ‘When Private Becomes Public’, p. 73.

‘metaphorical shorthand, an abbreviation for the fact that in the production of cultural memory, people, media, mnemonic forms, contents, and practices are in a constant, unceasing motion’.¹⁴² Indeed memory is seen to be travelling in the case of the Meisler network because the creation of one memorial stimulated the idea for another. At the same time, the national historical context of each memorial is crucial because the message of the memorials in Germany, for instance, differs to that of the memorial in London. In Germany, as much emphasis is placed on a different kind of departure – not just on a Kindertransport but also on a train in another direction, resulting not in rescue, but murder. Meisler’s memorials in Germany explore the centrality of guilt and shame in Germany’s remembrance culture, but his memorial in Britain reinforces national pride and a national welcoming of the outsider.¹⁴³ Meisler noted that ‘in the case of Berlin and Hamburg [he] emphasised the few children who were able to live and the many more who died in the Holocaust’.¹⁴⁴ Therefore, it is important to understand the memorials’ wider context such as their locations outside different train stations and a harbour port, and the national historical perspectives that they represent and reflect. Meisler’s Israeli background is also significant, because while he came to Britain on a Kindertransport and attended many Kindertransport reunions in Britain, he lived in Israel for much of his life. Therefore he is not necessarily a British artist.

Meisler’s memorial in Berlin shows two groups of children. The differences ‘between [these] groups [are] accentuated by the vivid, vigorous march forward of the rescued children, cast in brownish-golden hues, in contrast to the almost-black group of desperate and anxious children clinging to each other as they seek comfort’.¹⁴⁵ Rosenberg also notes the differences between the children’s possessions, as the objects of the children seem to reflect

their fate: a violin case and suitcases, one open and displaying its contents; and a

¹⁴² Erll, ‘Travelling Memory’, p. 12.

¹⁴³ See Susan Neiman, *Learning from the Germans: Confronting Race and the Memory of Evil* (Penguin Books Ltd.: London, 2019).

¹⁴⁴ Author’s correspondence with Frank Meisler on 31st October 2017.

¹⁴⁵ Rosenberg, ‘Footsteps of Memory’, p. 94.

broken, mutilated doll, in contrast to the intact toy held by the girl on the other end of the platform. The rescued children bear their *Kindertransport* tags; the deportees, a yellow badge with the inscription *JUDE* (Jew), which marks their future. By juxtaposing the *Kindertransport* rescue of 1938–1939 and the deportation to concentration camps from 1942 on, Meisler portrays not only the accelerated deterioration of the situation of the Jews but also the fate awaiting the Jewish children who were not saved. By employing an established symbol of the Holocaust, trains and railway stations, the artist alludes to their dual function during this period and may also be implicitly condemning the bystanders from the Free World, who did not change this unfavourable balance between the *Trains to Life* and *Trains to Death*.¹⁴⁶

Meisler's network offers a German perspective which explores rescue in relation to murder. The memorial in Berlin provokes the viewer to reflect upon the arrival of children at the death camps, fearful and huddled together. Yet the memorials in Berlin and Hamburg also present an older female figure comforting the other children: she seems to be trying to protect them by shielding them, though this seems futile as the children are being deported. The figure's protective stance takes on another meaning because it suggests that even children were not exempt from being persecuted. Their fates were not always in their own hands, they had to fend for themselves when they had been separated from their families, and they were not spared from the gas chambers. Meisler's network is critical because it explores the different fates of children in the Holocaust. The memorials in Germany suggest that ordinary Germans watched the *Kindertransports* leave, and saw families being separated from one another. They point to how Jewish property was seized (symbolised by the open suitcases piled up), as well as how the children who did not obtain places to travel on the *Kindertransport* had to wear the Star of David, and how their lives became ever more restricted and even came to an end. The network throws into relief the *Kinder*'s vulnerability; they seem quarantined and deserted. The journey is not presented as an adventure because the focus is placed on the *Kinder*'s rupture and estrangement from their homelands and families.

¹⁴⁶ Rosenberg, 'Footsteps of Memory', p. 94.

The memorial in Gdansk was ‘commissioned by the Mayor of the city after he saw Meisler’s sculpture in London’.¹⁴⁷ It is located ‘on the spot that not only commemorates the Gdansk children’s transport but also enabled the artist to close the circle that commenced with the London Arrival monument’.¹⁴⁸ Thus completing the transnational network, the memorial was opened ‘70 years after the first of four *Kindertransports* (from May 3rd to August 25th, 1939) left the Free City of Danzig to England, saving the lives of 130 children’.¹⁴⁹ There are similarities between the memorials in London and Gdansk because ‘the group [in Gdansk] resembles the five youngsters portrayed in *The Arrival*; yet, while those in London are staring curiously at their new surroundings, this Gdansk group, except for the young boy who bids his last good-bye to unseen accompanying relatives, is patiently awaiting the train, revealing no anguish or fear’.¹⁵⁰ Meisler suggests that the Gdansk memorial was a multilayered memorial:

[Gdansk] was a German city and the population was deported after the war. It was then populated by people from Eastern Poland. The Polish Mayor and authorities identified with historic Danzig, renovated the bombed city and continued the traditions of this ancient Hanseatic City. I regard it as very positive, but as someone who knew the original city and its inhabitants, it feels rather like a theatrical setting. What moved me deeply at the unveiling of the sculpture was a huge photograph of my mother and me as a child which hung over the entrance of the railway station where we erected the memorial. It was the station from which I left and from which my mother was a short time later deported and murdered in one of the camps.¹⁵¹

Because Meisler was aware of the city’s heritage, the memorial resonates with a rich multidirectional memory: in remembering the Kindertransport, Meisler was also recalling Jews murdered in the Holocaust, and post-war German and Polish deportees and refugees. Chris Lorenz argues that ‘multidirectional memory can only be spatially analysed in terms of “multiscalarity”’.¹⁵² Multiscalarity, according to Ann Rigney, ‘recognizes the existence of multiple, partly overlapping frameworks of memory including the intimate and local as well as

¹⁴⁷ Author’s correspondence with Meisler on 31st October 2017.

¹⁴⁸ Rosenberg, ‘Footsteps of Memory’, p. 94.

¹⁴⁹ Rosenberg, ‘Footsteps of Memory’, p. 94.

¹⁵⁰ Rosenberg, ‘Footsteps of Memory’, pp. 94-95.

¹⁵¹ Author’s correspondence with Frank Meisler on 30th June 2017.

¹⁵² Lorenz, ‘Another Time, Another Place’.

the regional and the global'.¹⁵³ Here, the memorial is placed within a broader context of dispersal from and to the city over a period of time. Meisler's memorial network not only presents the European history of the Kindertransport, it also retraces his own personal journey. It recreates 'his own final good-bye [to his parents] that took place, on this very spot, seven decades earlier'.¹⁵⁴ It could be objected that the memorial network does not include reference to parents. As Rosenberg writes, 'without the parents in the picture, there is no prompt to ask questions about the immigration policy in the UK that excluded them; thus, the good and benevolent image is left intact'.¹⁵⁵ But she goes on to say that 'the absence of the parents is engraved on the rescued children's memories and lies heavily on their conscience. Hence, Meisler brings the parents back to the arena, even if elusively'. 'Their phantom-like presence in the *Departure* memorial', Rosenberg concludes, 'is an unspoken, unseen, yet existing tribute to their unselfish act of bravery that gave a "second birth" to their offspring'.¹⁵⁶

The memorial in Holland shows the 'penultimate stop before arriving in England and the place that marked the *Kinder's* separation from the SS men who accompanied them to the Dutch border and sometimes treated the young immigrants very badly; hence, their first breath of freedom'.¹⁵⁷ The memorial was created in 'homage to the Dutch people who comforted the young refugees at this (turning) point in their exodus'.¹⁵⁸ The group of six children are depicted with their luggage, looking out across the water to Britain. But one 'child, [...] is isolated; he is sitting next to his suitcase, his hand on his head, pensive, as if contemplating his past and his future'.¹⁵⁹ Near to the little boy is a Dutch newspaper which documents the children's journeys. Rosenberg suggests that

¹⁵³ Ann Rigney, 'Remembrance as Remaking: Memories of the Nation Revisited', *Nations and Nationalism* 24:2 (2018), p. 249.

¹⁵⁴ Rosenberg, 'Footsteps of Memory', p. 94.

¹⁵⁵ Rosenberg, 'Footsteps of Memory', p. 95.

¹⁵⁶ Rosenberg, 'Footsteps of Memory', p. 95.

¹⁵⁷ Rosenberg, 'Footsteps of Memory', p. 95.

¹⁵⁸ Rosenberg, 'Footsteps of Memory', p. 95.

¹⁵⁹ Rosenberg, 'Footsteps of Memory', p. 95.

Channel Crossing brings to mind Moses and the Children of Israel at Mount Nebo, staring at the Promised Land, just before the Israelites' pilgrimage is over. Moses, like the parents, must remain behind, while the Israelites, like the children, journey to a new land. Intertwining the biblical exodus with that of these unaccompanied minors incorporates the 20th-century *Kinder's* exodus into the Jews' ancient chain of persecution, suffering, and hope.¹⁶⁰

This might be understandable from a Jewish perspective, but Rosenberg's reading serves to underpin the positive British narrative because Britain appears here as a homeland for all Jewish people where they can find salvation and liberation.

It is Meisler's final memorial in Hamburg which focuses on the moment of absolute separation. As in the case of the Berlin memorial, two groups of children are depicted. Two children are about to journey to Britain on the Kindertransport, whereas the larger group of children are about to be deported to the death camps. The Berlin memorial evokes a sense of dislocation; the fates of the children only seem to be connected through their different journeys via the railways. But the memorial in Hamburg suggests a connection as well as a disconnection between these two groups of children. For example, one of the Kindertransportee figures holds her hand out to the group of children who were unable to leave. The two groups are physically cut off from one another because there is a crack within the memorial which separates them. Yet while these two groups are denied a physical embrace they seem to be able to reach out mentally and emotionally. It is as if the figures of the Kinder are aware of the fates of those who were unable to flee. The memorial represents how the Kinder who were rescued to Britain remembered their siblings and friends who were trapped in continental Europe. It also suggests that the children who were deported thought about their siblings and friends, who were in different nations. The fates of other children are not forgotten because the memorial makes clear that many children were unable to make it to safety on the Kindertransports. This

¹⁶⁰ Rosenberg, 'Footsteps of Memory', p. 95.

memorial emphasises the physical division of families but it also implies that the mental and emotional bond was never broken.

Meisler's memorials in Hamburg and Berlin could be regarded as countermemorials because they both present countering messages as one side they show a movement of hope as for some children safety and security awaited them while the other side shows the murder and total loss of siblings and friends. There is a tension within the memorial which echoes the ideas of Young because these memorials contradict the positive message of rescue as many were not rescued. They warn visitors about being too optimistic with regards to the Kindertransport as more children were murdered compared to the amount who were saved. The negatives are not cancelled out as easily as they are in the London memorial because the visitor holds both rescue and murder in their minds.

While Meisler's network grapples with loss and parting, it is limited in scope. This is particularly the case because it ends at the point of arrival in Britain. There is no indication within the network that that moment of arrival was often traumatic, and was only one stage in a series of difficult moments for the Kinder. There is also no reference to why Britain originally only agreed to give temporary refuge to these children, or to the difficulties Kinder may have faced in Britain. In celebrating arrival, Meisler's memorial in London confirms the positive British narrative. By contrast, the memorials in Berlin and Hamburg present a self-critical German perspective which invites reflection upon how bystanders saw the trains leave. Meisler's memorial in Berlin combines negatives and positives and sets them in dialectical relation. Both this memorial and the one in Hamburg suggest that memory of rescue cannot be allowed to dominate over memory of murder, or of responsibility for that murder. Meisler's London memorial emphasises British memory of rescue, but does not reflect on whether more could have been done to rescue the Jews whose deaths are referenced in the German Meisler

memorials. Only on the plinth of the London memorial is attention drawn to departure, transit and arrival, and to the death camps.

Memorial Activism in Britain and Germany

Awareness of the broader European history of the Kindertransport and of potentially comparable contemporary events can lead to an interpretative reframing of national memorials. Although my thesis is not looking at audience reactions to memorials here I discuss how charities and other groups interact with them directly to change or shift their significance and the way audiences might react. Recent campaigns in Britain and Germany have used memory of the Kindertransport to try to bring about change in the present. In 2017 and 2018, for example, the British charity *Hands On London* with the support of the AJR and WJR draped the Meisler memorial in London in red winter coats which ‘draw attention to the need to support incoming refugees from Syria and elsewhere’.¹⁶¹ Therefore, ‘past and present issues around different refugee crises [were] connected’.¹⁶² This modification of the memorial also demonstrated how Kinder who were former ‘child refugees from the 1930s are helping other refugees and homeless now’.¹⁶³ The charity promotes ‘volunteering and community service as a central aspect of life in London’ as well as offering ‘diverse volunteer opportunities, which address a wide variety of issues such as: poverty, education, youth, disability and the environment’, and their work ‘support[s] charity/community groups and corporate partners with volunteer project design and implementation’.¹⁶⁴ Their campaign ‘Wrap Up London’ every November aims to collect as many coats as possible. These coats are distributed to the

¹⁶¹ Bill Niven and Amy Williams, ‘The Role of Memory in the Negotiation of the Refugee Crisis’, *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Blog Seeking Protection*, 20th November 2018, at <https://holocaustremembrance.blog/2018/11/20/the-role-of-memory-in-the-negotiation-of-the-refugee-crisis/> [accessed 8th June 2019].

¹⁶² Niven and Williams, ‘The Role of Memory in the Negotiation of the Refugee Crisis’.

¹⁶³ World Jewish Relief Instagram Account 15th November 2017.

¹⁶⁴ ‘Welcome to Hands On London’, *Hands On London*, at <https://www.handsonlondon.org.uk/about-us/> [accessed 28th November 2017].

homeless, the elderly and refugee charities across London. Because the campaign and the adapted memorial highlighted an awareness for the need to help refugees today, there was a ‘multidirectional’ aspect present. The Kindertransport was placed within a wider context of migration to Britain then and now. While the positive character of the British Kindertransport narrative was not really challenged because the focus was placed on British charity, the campaign did raise questions about how much help refugees are given today, especially when the British government was not taking in as many refugees as other countries.¹⁶⁵ The campaign ultimately did show how memorial activism can encourage visitors to actively respond to past and present crises by giving to charity today. Over the past four years over 75,000 coats have been donated.¹⁶⁶

In the case of Germany, images of children have also been central to attempts to awaken empathy for refugees.¹⁶⁷ As Niven and I have recently suggested memorials in Britain and Germany are being used in what we call ‘invocative memory’ where the past is invoked in order to encourage empathetic and charitable reactions to present emergencies.¹⁶⁸ A good example of this is the memorial activism around Meisler’s Kindertransport memorial in Berlin which draws attention to the experience of exile – of being driven out from a community. This theme was not always a focal point of German memorialisation. Niven argues that ‘while the Holocaust over the decades moved to the centre of German memory, the mass emigration of German and Austrian Jews which preceded the Holocaust remained a marginal feature of this

¹⁶⁵ See Alan Travis, ‘On Asylum and Refugees, Britain Left Europe Years Ago’, *The Guardian*, 1st March 2017, at <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/mar/01/how-britain-hard-stance-refugees-reshaping-european-policy> [accessed 5th November 2019], and David Hughes, ‘UN Tells Britain to Double the Amount of Refugees It Takes in to 10,000 Per Year’, *Independent*, 4th August 2017, at <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/un-uk-refugees-take-in-10000-per-year-immigration-pledge-government-theresa-may-crisis-a7876196.html> [accessed 5th November 2019].

¹⁶⁶ See Hands On London’s website for more details.

¹⁶⁷ Niven and Williams, ‘The Role of Memory in the Negotiation of the Refugee Crisis’.

¹⁶⁸ Bill Niven and Amy Williams, ‘Memory of the Kindertransport in Britain and Germany, and the Current Refugee Crisis’, *Diasporas: Circulations, Migrations, Histoire* 2 (forthcoming, 2020).

memory'.¹⁶⁹ He further states that 'exile tends to disappear behind the larger tragedy of the Shoah'.¹⁷⁰ Meisler's Kindertransport sculpture at Berlin Friedrichstrasse, as well as Libeskind's *Garden of Exile* at Berlin's Jewish Museum, could be seen as exceptions to this trend. But in 2014, the Centre for Political Beauty (CPB), an artists' collective which critically engages with German memorialisation, started up an action which suggested it was not enough simply to remember what happened to Jewish children under Hitler. Known for its 'provocative style of commemoration', the CPB 'staged a protest at the site of Frank Meisler's Berlin Kindertransport memorial against the German government's reluctance to continue taking in refugees'.¹⁷¹

In a kind of memorial activism, the CPB placed two blue shipping containers – which they called a *Memorial against the Dangers to Life and Fears of Death Experienced by Syrian Children* – within eyesight of the Kindertransport memorial in Friedrichstraße.¹⁷² What the CPB called a 'reanimation' of the Berlin memorial to the Kindertransport was designed to show how the Kindertransport can be 'used as a blueprint' for how we can help refugees today.¹⁷³ The containers showed photographs of Syrian children, and asked passers-by to choose one out of one hundred for rescue to Germany. To make it appear as if what was really an artistic stunt was in fact a genuine action, the CPB pretended that Germany's Family Ministry had started up a Federal Emergency Programme to bring in 55,000 Syrian children ('Federal Kindertransport Aid'),¹⁷⁴ and presented the containers as part of this programme. The Kindertransport memorial in Berlin reminds us that the Nazis and their supporters did not want to give Jewish children a future, and that they had to flee their homelands to find shelter. The

¹⁶⁹ Bill Niven, 'Jewish Exile in German Memory', *Voices from Exile: Essays in Memory of Hamish Ritchie* (Brill Rodopi: Boston, 2015), p. 278.

¹⁷⁰ Niven, 'Jewish Exile in German Memory', p. 278.

¹⁷¹ Niven and Williams, 'The Role of Memory in the Negotiation of the Refugee Crisis'.

¹⁷² 'Critical Reanimation of a Memorial', *Centre for Political Beauty*, at <http://politicalbeauty.com/kindertransport.html> [accessed 28th November 2017].

¹⁷³ 'Critical Reanimation of a Memorial'.

¹⁷⁴ Niven and Williams, 'The Role of Memory in the Negotiation of the Refugee Crisis'.

CPB wanted to highlight how the circumstances that led to the Kindertransport have parallels today. In pleading for modern-day Kindertransports to help today's refugees from Syria, the CPB called to attention the life or death situation that arises if governments deny entry to refugees. Germany remembers the Kindertransport as the result of exclusion. This new campaign stresses the need to learn from the past by adopting, by contrast, an inclusive approach to refugees today. The CPB campaign called for a kind of Kindertransport in reverse, whereby instead of refugee children fleeing Germany, they are rescued and helped by the nation. The relationship between the Meisler memorial and the two containers may have encouraged a reimagining of the Kindertransport because Meisler's memorial in this context was not just a historical reference as it became part of a wider conversation about today's treatment of refugees.

The positive British Kindertransport narrative does not necessarily suggest that Britain has a moral obligation to help refugees in the present. In fact, there is a risk that, in celebrating what we did in the past, we might become too self-satisfied. But *Hands On London's* campaign stressed that we have a responsibility to aid those in need. While the campaigns in both Britain and Germany did not rethink the national narratives of these countries, they did see the Kindertransport in relation to the current refugee crisis. Thus memorial activism implicitly linked memory of the Kindertransport to the need to act today.¹⁷⁵ Here I have pointed to examples of where memory has 'moved' across space, as the Kent and Meisler memorials exist in different nations. I have also shown that the campaigns around the Meisler network show that memory also 'moved' across time as the theme 'is [...] subject to ongoing negotiation, [and] cross-referencing'.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ A more detailed discussion about the recent memorial activism around Kindertransport memorials can be found in Amy Williams, 'Kindertransports in National and Transnational Perspective', in Laura A. Macaluso (ed.), *Monument Culture: International Perspectives on the Future of Monuments in a Changing World* (Rowman & Littlefield: London, 2019), pp. 131-141.

¹⁷⁶ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, p. 3.

Kindertransport Reenactments

Contemporary Kindertransport reenactments have also resulted in a broader awareness of the transnational nature of Meisler's memorial network, and have brought individual memory into the frame. Events such as the commemorative bike ride organised by WJR (2018), the production of *Suitcase* (2008), and Harwich Haven's (HH) train reenactment with school children as part of their 'Surrender and Sanctuary' project (2018) have also bridged the emotional distance between refugees then and now. In his case study on Kindertransport reenactments, Niven states that the memorial bike ride 'used [Meisler's memorial network] as staging posts: the journey began at the Berlin Friedrichstraße memorial, passed by the memorial at the Hook of Holland, and ended at London's Liverpool Street memorial'.¹⁷⁷ While Niven suggests that this reenactment 'discourage[d] absolute identification, as one cannot honour a person by becoming that person: the subject-position as the one "honouring" needs to be maintained', many cyclists may have developed their own personal relationship to the Kindertransport.¹⁷⁸ Setting out her concept of 'prosthetic memory', Alison Landsberg argues that empathy 'requires one to imagine the other's situation and what it might feel like, while simultaneously recognizing one's difference from her'.¹⁷⁹ Empathy, then, does not require the empathiser to actually become a different person but 'the experience of empathy requires an act of imagination – one must leave oneself and attempt to imagine what it was like for that other person given what he or she went through'.¹⁸⁰ Therefore, 'empathy is about developing compassion not for our family or friends or community, but for others— others who have no relation to us, who resemble us not at all, whose circumstances lie far outside of our own

¹⁷⁷ Bill Niven, 'On Motives for Reenactment: The Kindertransport as Case Study', in Vanessa Agnew, Julianne Tomann and Sabine Stach (eds), *Reenactment Case Studies: Global Perspectives on Experiential History* (Routledge: London, forthcoming, 2020).

¹⁷⁸ Niven, 'On Motives for Reenactment'.

¹⁷⁹ Alison Landsberg, 'Memory, Empathy and the Politics of Identity', *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 22 (2009), p. 223.

¹⁸⁰ Landsberg, 'Memory, Empathy and the Politics of Identity', p. 223.

experiences'.¹⁸¹ Accordingly, the commemorative bike ride may have offered the opportunity for participants to develop a close, imagined sense of connection with the long and difficult journeys undertaken by the Kinder, and with the experience of dislocation. In turn, this may then facilitate empathy towards past and present refugees as the reenactments help develop compassion towards those who need help.

The commemorative bike ride also had an intergenerational dimension because Kinder along with their families took part in the event. A good example of where empathy encouraged action is Philip Daltrop's motivation to take part in the ride from Berlin to London. Daltrop's WJR fundraising page states that his father and aunt were both former Kindertransportees. He wanted to take part in this reenactment to raise 'funds for WJR' as well as 'to raise awareness of the need of child refugees' today.¹⁸² Paul Alexander, a former Kind who 'now lives in Israel also [took part in the bike ride] alongside his son Nadav and grandson Daniel'.¹⁸³ Alexander told WJR that he felt the bike ride was 'a powerful symbol of victory over oppression'.¹⁸⁴ Ian Goldsmith, a second-generation Kind, took part in the bike ride because he did not 'know that his father and uncle were on the Kindertransport. It was only when he applied to [WJR's] archive to see if we had case files that could prove his German heritage that a whole new family history opened up to him'.¹⁸⁵ The reenactment bike ride, with the Meisler memorials as focal points, enabled several participants to relive or retrace the personal history of the Kindertransport within their family.

According to Niven 'there have [also] been other examples of connections between Kindertransport memorials and reenactment'.¹⁸⁶ Thus in 2008, to mark the 70th anniversary of

¹⁸¹ Landsberg, 'Memory, Empathy and the Politics of Identity', p. 223.

¹⁸² Philip Daltrop, 'Philip's Kindertransport Bike Ride 17-22 June 2018', *World Jewish Relief*, at <https://www.worldjewishrelief.org/philipkindertransportbike> [accessed 5th November 2019].

¹⁸³ 'Berlin to London: The Kindertransport Commemorative Bike Ride', *World Jewish Relief*, at <https://www.worldjewishrelief.org/news/739-berlin-to-london-the-kindertransport-commemorative-bike-ride> [accessed 8th June 2019].

¹⁸⁴ 'Berlin to London'.

¹⁸⁵ 'Berlin to London'.

¹⁸⁶ Niven, 'On Motives for Reenactment'.

the Kindertransport, the ‘street theatre’ production *Suitcase* was staged at London Liverpool Street Station before it began its tour of other British stations in 2013. *Suitcase* acted out ‘scenes from the Kindertransport to audiences who had bought tickets, but also to sometimes bemused passers-by’.¹⁸⁷ Audiences ‘stumbled’ across the performances, creating an element of surprise which invited reflection on what it must have been like to arrive suddenly in a strange country. Meisler’s memorial in London acted as a backdrop as ‘parts of the play were performed at [the] memorial’.¹⁸⁸ While the theme of arrival was strong during this reenactment, there was another dimension which moved beyond the positive British narrative. In being encouraged to identify with the Kinder by taking on their roles, children participating in the production learnt that, while for some Kinder this journey was an adventure, for others it was an experience fraught with difficulties. Children became aware of how many Kinder were ‘bewildered’ when they arrived in Britain.¹⁸⁹ Marie-Catherine Allard also argues that ‘by embodying Meisler’s bronze Kinders, the actors encourage the audience to reflect on the complex history of the mass evacuation of children’.¹⁹⁰ With regards to visitor interactions Allard discusses how ‘the audience is encouraged to participate by placing a label round their necks and singing the opening song with the actors’.¹⁹¹ This action reimagines the moment of arrival as the audience become acting members of the performance; they become the greeting committee and the foster parents which took the Kinder in. Moreover, this action may inspire the audience to help refugee children today as past and present events are connected.

¹⁸⁷ Niven, ‘On Motives for Reenactment’.

¹⁸⁸ Niven, ‘On Motives for Reenactment’.

¹⁸⁹ See *Suitcase*, at <https://suitcase1938.org/> [accessed 12th December 2019].

¹⁹⁰ Marie-Catherine Allard, ‘Modelling Bridges Between Past and Current Issues of Forced Migration: Frank Meisler’s Memorial Sculpture Kindertransport – The Arrival’, in Michael Berkowitz (ed.), *Jewish Historical Studies: transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* 51 (University College London: London, 2019), p. 102.

¹⁹¹ Allard, ‘Modelling Bridges Between Past and Current Issues of Forced Migration’, p. 102.

HH's reenactment also remembered the arrival of the Kinder as school children recreated the Kinder's train journeys from Harwich to London.¹⁹² 'The schoolchildren took on the identities of children before them, the aim being to bridge a historical, generational and experiential gap, and strengthening, ideally, their sense of affiliation with their localities'.¹⁹³ The reenactment was a kind of 'living commemoration' whereby the actors and viewers were encouraged to identify with the perspective of the Kinder.¹⁹⁴ Identification is one not just with rescue and arrival – the focus of the positive British narrative – but also with the mixed and complicated emotions of the Kinder, with their possible feelings as individuals, which the memorial does not really help visitors to understand. Activism and reenactments can help to bring this out more.

Memorials in Other Host Nations

America

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, there are few Kindertransport memorials in the other host nations. In the case of British memorials, a more complicated view of the Kindertransport often only becomes visible if visitors have access to related external resources such as books or social media. Equally, connections to the Holocaust are usually only made indirectly through other sources and outside perspectives. But memorials in America, Australia and New Zealand explicitly link the Kindertransport and the Holocaust. Kindertransport memorials in these other host nations are found within Holocaust museums, in contrast to most British memorials (with the exception of Kent's memorial at the NHCM). Placing these memorials within a Holocaust museum means that the Kindertransport is contextualised in

¹⁹² For more information about the reenactment, see '2018 Children Recreate 1938 Kindertransport Arrival', *Harwich and Manningtree Standard*, 9th December 2018, at <https://www.harwichandmanningtreestandard.co.uk/news/17281445.2018-children-recreate-1938-kindertransport-arrival/> [accessed 11th January 2020].

¹⁹³ Niven, 'On Motives for Reenactment'.

¹⁹⁴ Niven, 'On Motives for Reenactment'.

such a way that it becomes impossible not to see rescue in relation to murder. Because these memorials are firmly embedded within the context of the museums, they may take on a stronger pedagogical function. Kindertransport memorials in other nations are remarkably different to the ones in Britain because there is a greater emphasis on total loss compared to more positive aspects such as rescue and arrival. Memorials in America, Australia and New Zealand also tend to be more abstract, corresponding to new trends in Holocaust memorialisation which move beyond the human form.¹⁹⁵

Coinciding with the first Kindertransport anniversary event in 1989 as well as the establishment of the Kindertransport Association of North America in 1990, 'Anita [Grosz, Second Generation Kind] came up with the idea of making a Kindertransport memory quilt. The concept was to provide Kinder with avenues other than oral histories to express and share their experiences'.¹⁹⁶ Three quilts have been created, and they 'consist of blocks made by Kinder describing their experiences of the Kindertransports'.¹⁹⁷ The blocks were then sewn together by Anita's mother Kirsten, the wife of a former Kindertransportee. Individual stories were interwoven, as was the case with the first collections of testimonies, as blocks were sent to the Grosz family from North America, Europe, and Israel. The quilts therefore reflect how Jews from diaspora communities around the globe brought their religion, cultures, traditions and histories together when producing this memorial. The memorial chimes with American memory of the Kindertransport because the focus is placed on how it is in America and Israel that Jews were able to forge new homes and lives for themselves after the war. Thus Kirsten Grosz 'chose the dominant color to be the blue color of the flag of the State of Israel'.¹⁹⁸ The memorial places the Kindertransport within the wider history of the state of Israel as well as

¹⁹⁵ See Harold Marcuse, 'Holocaust Memorials: The Emergence of a Genre', *American Historical Review* 155 (2010), pp. 53-89 for more information about Holocaust memorialisation trends.

¹⁹⁶ Kirsten Grosz, 'Preface', in Anita Grosz (ed.), *Kindertransport Memory Quilt* (Hanus, Kirsten and Anita Grosz: Indiana, 2000), p. 18.

¹⁹⁷ Grosz, 'Preface', p. 19.

¹⁹⁸ Grosz, 'Preface', p. 20.

the experiences of Jews prior to, during and after the Holocaust because the individual stories are sewn onto a background of blue coloured material. This colour symbolises a common identity and expression and highlights what America and Israel symbolise: a coming together, unity.

Contributors were also asked to write an essay about their blocks. The essays were then published in a book entitled *Kindertransport Memory Quilt* in 2000. The quilt memorial is by survivors and their families for survivors and their families. The aim of this memorial was to provide a collective form of therapy through art and to pass memory on to the next generation. While the quilts seem to identify memory of the Kindertransport with certain moments such as the journey and the Kinder's gratefulness for being rescued, they also remember the murder of loved ones, and the loss of one's former homeland. Particular motifs also reoccur as many blocks present a boat, a train, a suitcase, a map, and a child. This composite memorial presents the transnational history of the Kindertransport, the personal experiences of the Kinder and how their children relate to this historical event today. The viewer becomes aware that memory of the Kindertransport is not specifically British, even though British Kinder contributed to the project as the stories of Kinder who settled in many different host nations are brought into the frame. The fact that this memorial has travelled and been exhibited in Britain, Czechoslovakia and America shows how memory of the Kindertransport exists in several different countries. The quilts are now on permanent display at the Holocaust Memorial Center, Michigan.

The memorial also presents more negative aspects such as internment. For example, Alexander Gordon and Henry H. Kahn's blocks show how some Kinder were interned and sent to Australia from Britain on board the *Dunera* during the war. Gordon's square was dedicated on Father's Day 1996 by his children Ron and Ora Gordon. 'The word "chai" meaning life in

Hebrew, is at the center of the square'.¹⁹⁹ The block remembers their father's rescue, how he anglicised his name, and how the next generation will never forget.²⁰⁰ There are also coloured trains around the word chai which symbolise their father's 'many narrow escapes [and] journeys through many countries'.²⁰¹ Consulting the book which provides further information about the quilts, the reader discovers how Gordon narrowly escaped the Gestapo and how he escaped from Germany to Britain when he was sixteen years old. Gordon's essay within the book also states how he experienced 'starvation and other cruelties [as well as how he was] kept in a refugee camp for more than one year'.²⁰² He was 'given two choices, to become an Australian citizen or return to England and become a British soldier, he chose the less "isolated" life and fought for England against the German homeland from 1941-1947'.²⁰³ This block highlights the complexities of the Kindertransport because it shows how many Kinder's lives were abruptly interrupted and how they were displaced several times. To 'remind us that the passengers of the Kindertransport were mere children', Ron and Ora decided to frame their piece with 'train patches in the primary colors red, yellow and blue, like the colors of a child's palette'.²⁰⁴ The block reflects upon loss and movement as well as the confinement Gordon experienced during his internment. In the book, the reader is also informed that for Ron and Ora Gordon, 'Israel is always with [them] in [their] hearts'.²⁰⁵ This feeds into the American narrative of the Holocaust because it suggests that it is the following generations who will rebuild Israel. There is a redemptive aspect to this memorial because Kinder such as Gordon later moved to America: it was in America that he put down new roots in the post-war period.

¹⁹⁹ Ron Gordon and Ora Gordon, 'Quilt 1, Square 18', in Anita Grosz (ed.), *Kindertransport Memory Quilt* (Hanus, Kirsten and Anita Grosz: Indiana, 2000), p. 71.

²⁰⁰ Gordon and Gordon, 'Quilt 1, Square 18', p. 71.

²⁰¹ Gordon and Gordon, 'Quilt 1, Square 18', p. 71.

²⁰² Gordon and Gordon, 'Quilt 1, Square 18', p. 71.

²⁰³ Gordon and Gordon, 'Quilt 1, Square 18', p. 71.

²⁰⁴ Gordon and Gordon, 'Quilt 1, Square 18', p. 72.

²⁰⁵ Gordon and Gordon, 'Quilt 1, Square 18', p. 72.

Henry Kahn's block also presents the transnational history of the Kindertransport because it tracks his movements between 1939-1946 from:

1. Cologne
2. London
3. Liverpool
4. Takoradi
5. Cape Town
6. Sydney
7. Hay
8. Sydney
9. Perth
10. Bombay
11. Madras
12. Cochin
13. Camden, NY
14. New York²⁰⁶

Kahn's discusses how he was sixteen when he arrived in Britain, how he lived with his foster family from February to September 1939, how he then moved into a one-room lodging at Finsbury Park, and how on 3rd July 1940 he was interned as an enemy alien. He was later sent to Campton Park, then moved to a camp near Hyton, and after this to Liverpool, where on 10th July he boarded the *Dunera*. After his internment in Australia, Kahn lived in Bombay for five years. He later sailed to America in 1946, served in the US army and has lived in New York ever since. The memorial quilts also explore how some Kinder journeyed to America during the war itself; thus Britain is not presented as a place of settlement but of transit as America becomes the new homeland. According to Kirsten Grodz, 'it is thought that at least 2,500 Kinder had emigrated to the US and Canada' during and after the war.²⁰⁷ The memorial quilts clearly have a transnational dimension to them. This is more obvious than the memorial roses as many of the blocks themselves present transnational journeys, although this is emphasised further by reading the accompanying book about the quilts.

²⁰⁶ Henry H. Kahn, 'Quilt 2, Square 18', in Anita Grodz (ed.), *Kindertransport Memory Quilt* (Hanus, Kirsten and Anita Grodz: Indiana, 2000), p. 132.

²⁰⁷ Grodz, 'Preface', p. 19.

The memorial quilts also commemorate the children who were unable to escape on the Kindertransports. For example, Hanus Grosz' block remembers the children who were left behind and who were deported to Terezin. The message of this block is similar to Meisler's *Trains to Life – Trains to Death* because rescue is seen in relation to murder. Other child survivors have also made memory quilts, such as the members of the '45 Aid Society. These quilts which were completed in 2015 remember child survivors who survived the death camps. This time, images of barbed wire, flames, wilting and decaying leaves, and broken family trees reflect the different experiences of the children who were not rescued prior to the war. The '45 Aid Society's quilts were also made by survivors and members of the second generation. They combine stories from many different nationalities such as German, Austrian, Polish, Romanian, Czech, and Hungarian. Contributors sent their squares to the Society from countries around the globe such as Israel, America, Canada and Britain. The '45 Aid Society also created a book which describes the stories behind the quilts. These memory quilts not only present a collective voice, they also present the wider context of what happened to children before, during and after the Second World War. Both memory quilts show that rescue was not a typical fate for many children during the Holocaust.

Australia and New Zealand

On 2nd November 2017, Viv Parry (Chair of the Child Survivors of the Holocaust, Australia) organised a memorial service which concluded with the dedication of a certificate of recognition to the Religious Society of Friends – Quakers. In attendance were former Kinder, members of the Jewish Holocaust Centre as well as of the Quaker community in Melbourne. The certificate was dedicated on behalf of the Child Survivors of the Holocaust Melbourne Group, the World Federation of Jewish Child Survivors of the Holocaust and descendants, and the Jewish Holocaust Centre. The memorial certificate gives thanks to the international work of the Quakers who were working in many different countries to help rescue Kinder. The

memorial echoes the basically positive character of the British narrative because it focuses on the successful rescue of the Kinder as well as the Kinder's gratitude. However, the memorial also presents a neglected aspect because it reflects upon the involvement of the Quakers in the Kindertransport. There are few Kindertransport memorials which remember how the Quakers pleaded with the British government to allow in Jewish children from continental Europe. This Australian memorial certificate does, and in doing so it recalls the wider history of the Kindertransport. The Quakers were instrumental in this rescue operation, as Quakers such as Samuel Hoare, the then Home Secretary, and MP Philip Noel-Baker urged the British government to help the Kinder. There is also an intergenerational context to this memorial because it was presented by Gary Peer whose mother was on a Kindertransport. This memorial also highlights how second generation Kinder are thankful to the Quakers for their work in helping refugees.

At first glance, it is not obvious that the button memorials in New Zealand and Australia also commemorate the Kindertransport. Schools in these countries collected buttons to remember the 1.5 million children who were murdered in the Holocaust. However, some of these buttons do represent Kinder as well as their rescuers. The buttons in each of these memorials represent an individual child. Each button is a different shape and size. Up until 2018, many of the memorial buttons collected by pupils of the Moriah School in New Zealand were stored at the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand (HCNZ). Some of these buttons were displayed within a memorial book. One button was donated by Sir Nicholas Winton. His button remembered the Kinder who escaped Czechoslovakia on the Kindertransport, and commemorated the final Winton Transport which was unable to leave due to the outbreak of war. In 2018, the HCNZ in partnership with the National Library (NL) opened a new button memorial. The buttons were moved from the HCNZ and placed within different sized tables. The memorial 'moves step by step from one button in its small cabinet to the largest unit, which

is overwhelming in size and weight, in the number of buttons it contains and in what they represent'.²⁰⁸ 'The industrial metal of the cabinets reflects the Nazi bureaucratic machine and the Holocaust's industrialised death camps; the red wheels echo a child's toy wagon'.²⁰⁹ The design of the memorial therefore reflected how many children were unable to escape persecution as the buttons 'are sealed in movable metal cabinets' which reflects how 'children were transported to their deaths by trains from all over Europe, most locked into overloaded freight cars with their families'.²¹⁰ The memorial gives a voice to those who cannot speak.

The memorial was created 'by young people to honour other young people who were killed in their millions in another place and time', and it also has an educational focus.²¹¹ There is an 'interactive education section' to the memorial as well as 'a reflective reading space'.²¹² Several key themes are explored by the memorial and teaching material, including:

- How an autocratic government relentlessly threatened and violated the rights of minority groups, including Jewish children, German children with physical and mental disabilities, and Roma (Gypsy) and Polish children
- How some people were courageously prepared to stand up and protect the human rights of minorities – that is, prepared to be Upstanders
- The need to be always aware and alert to protecting hard won human rights – especially freedom of speech, freedom to assemble and freedom to practice one's own religion
- The importance in a modern democracy such as New Zealand to respect and nurture diversity in all its forms – racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, religious, age and disability²¹³

Seven text panels accompany this memorial. These include an 'Introductory Panel', 'What Happened to Children During the Holocaust?', 'Stories of the Children', 'Of the Bystander Verses the Upstander', and 'Doing the Right Thing'. The Kindertransport is mentioned in panel two about the different fates of children. The main image of this panel shows four Kinder

²⁰⁸ 'Introductory Panel', Holocaust Centre of New Zealand, 2018.

²⁰⁹ 'Introductory Panel'.

²¹⁰ 'Introductory Panel'.

²¹¹ 'Children's Holocaust Memorial', *National Library*, at <https://natlib.govt.nz/visiting/wellington/childrens-holocaust-memorial> [accessed 10th June 2019].

²¹² 'Children's Holocaust Memorial'.

²¹³ 'Children's Holocaust Memorial', *Holocaust Centre of New Zealand*, at <https://www.holocaustcentre.org.nz/childrens-holocaust-memorial1.html> [accessed 10th June 2019].

waving goodbye before embarking upon their journeys to Britain. It is striking that the Kindertransport is not found within the traditional chronology of the Holocaust, as visitors first learn about those who were murdered in the death camps, then about children who were hidden and finally about children who were able to flee on the Kindertransports. The Kindertransport from the beginning is placed within the orbit of the Holocaust because the panel views it from the perspective of loss and death. The panel also focuses on the different stages of victimhood, as children were singled out by their teachers, lost their citizenship, were victimised at school, were starved and exposed to illnesses in the ghettos, were separated from their parents, were transported, and, in many cases, immediately gassed on arrival at the death camps. Visitors not only remember the Kinder who survived but also other children who were transported towards danger rather than safety.

The memorial buttons found in the Jewish Holocaust Centre (JHC) in Melbourne are displayed inside a clear long tube within the children's section of the exhibition. The buttons are found next to stories about how some children went into hiding, some experienced life in the ghettos, and others were murdered in the death camps. These buttons frame the Kindertransport in terms of the internment of children, because as the previous chapter discussed, visitors are introduced to Lore Oschinski's story and how she was interned in Britain as an enemy alien. As with the button memorial in New Zealand, the focus is on total loss as the memorial remembers the siblings, the cousins, and the friends of the Kinder who were murdered in the Holocaust.

Earlier in the chapter, I referred to memorial activism around the Meisler network, which called for visitors to remember those who fled Nazism or were victims of the Holocaust, and to not stand by today. This connects with the mission statements of Holocaust museums which I explored in Chapter Two. Although the Kindertransport memorials in America, New Zealand and Australia do not necessarily call for activism themselves, any more than British

memorials do, visitors to the museums approach these memorials from the context of museum activism. Richard Sandell writes that museums have a role ‘in shaping the social and political conditions within which human rights are negotiated, continually recast and disseminated, constrained or advanced’.²¹⁴ According to Sandell and Robert R. Janes, ‘this brings forth a moral imperative for museums to reflect and act’.²¹⁵ Kindertransport memorials in these other host nations could be viewed in the context of such activism because visitors bring with them the knowledge gained from visiting Holocaust museums. This knowledge makes it difficult to see the Kindertransport purely positively because visitors learn about the transnational history of the Kindertransport as well as what happened to children who were not able to obtain places on the Kindertransport, and they are encouraged by the museum to empathise with refugees today, which may lead to them acting today to help those in need.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that, in the British case, the national narrative of the Kindertransport remains strong because most of the memorials focus on the rescue and arrival of the Kinder as well as their successful integration into British society. The sentiment of gratefulness – which many (though not all) Kinder felt – is at times coopted by the positive British narrative and used to corroborate it. British memorials pinpoint parts of the Kindertransport process as they document the Kinder’s journeys around the British Isles. Therefore, they present a local memory of the Kindertransport as well as a national one. This is not necessarily the case in museum exhibitions. Themes such as heroism and resistance are also aspects which are reflected by the memorials more than in museum exhibitions. While most British memorials bear out what historians refer to as the positive British narrative, some

²¹⁴ Richard Sandell, ‘Ethics and Activism’, in Janet Marstine (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics: Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First Century Museum* (Routledge: New York, 2011), pp. 129-145, here p. 129.

²¹⁵ Robert R. Janes and Richard Sandell, ‘Posterity Has Arrived: The Necessary Emergency of Museum Activism’, in Robert R. Janes and Richard Sandell (eds), *Museum Activism* (Routledge: London, 2019), p. 6.

more recent ones move beyond this positive narrative as they reflect critically upon the Kinder's sense of estrangement, confusion and loneliness. Viewers are invited to imagine the range of possible reactions on the part of the Kinder, positive and negative. The memorials also present an intergenerational perspective which is not explored within museum exhibitions. Although many of these memorials echo more traditional forms of memorialisation, more recent memorials such as the memorial *Rose Garden* at the NHCM and the two memorials to internment reflect upon loss and the Kinder's further rupture from familiar surroundings. While the British Kindertransport narrative remains very positive, there are some hints it is developing in a more reflective direction because memorials like the *Rose Garden* as well as the Kent and Meisler memorial networks make it difficult to see the Kindertransport in a purely positive way: while we remember the children who survived we also remember the children who were unable to make it to safety.

The transnational optic may seem natural in the case of the other host nations because the Kinder had passed through many countries before they arrived there. But the memorials in these other host nations could also downplay the transnational aspect as is the case in Britain. The fact that these other memorials present the wider history suggests therefore that there is a greater interest in the process of the Kinder's displacement. As I discussed in the previous chapter, the theme of the Kindertransport in America, Australia and New Zealand tends to be placed within the wider context of the Holocaust. The memorials in these host nations accord with the memory discourses in each nation because rescue is seen in relation to murder. The scale of loss, separation and rupture becomes clearer when studying the memorials in non-British host nations, and in Germany. Because memorials in these other countries are found within the context of Holocaust museums, the Kindertransport and the Holocaust are implicitly linked continually. In Britain, with the exception of the NHCM, this connection only happens on certain days such as HMD.

Chapter Four

The Fictionalisation of the Kindertransport

Introduction

In this chapter, I ask the same question of literary fiction, specifically novels, as I did of testimony, museums and memorials: how do they represent the Kindertransport? This chapter will show that some British novels affirm the positive British narrative of welcome and adaptation. This is particularly true of children's literature. It is surely no coincidence that children's Kindertransport novels began to emerge around the time the positive British narrative was becoming visible in museums and memorials, and when the Kindertransport was being taught in schools:¹ children's novels lend themselves to the dissemination of the positive Kindertransport narrative, because they usually have an optimistic shape. While novels for adults can also convey a positive narrative of movement from one nation to another, they often present a more multifaceted view of the Kindertransport. From the beginning, adult Kindertransport fiction tended to be more critical because it understands the Kindertransport as leaving a difficult legacy of confused or conflicted identity resulting from the crossing of borders. More recent children's novels also adopt this more complicated view, because they reflect upon the Kinder's internal confusion of becoming first a refugee, and then an accepted member of society in a new land; one novel even connects the Kindertransport to the current refugee crisis. As this thesis has shown, over the past ten years there has been a general

¹ Since 2008 the National Holocaust Centre and Museum have run educational programmes for primary schools who visit 'The Journey' exhibition. Also see Carole Turner, 'The Journey: World War II Evacuees and Kindertransport – Working with the Holocaust Centre', *The History Association* (2013), pp. 29-30; 'Suitcase: Educational Booklet', at <http://suitcase1938.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Suitcase-Education-Pack.pdf> [accessed 22nd January 2020]; 'Vera's Journey', *The Holocaust Educational Trust*, at <https://www.het.org.uk/primary/veras-journey> [accessed 22nd January 2020]; and 'Kindertransport', *Harwich Haven History*, 2018, at <https://harwichhavenhistory.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Kindertransport-Resource-Pack-2018.pdf> [accessed 22nd January 2020].

movement in Britain towards rethinking the positive British narrative, and more recent children's and adult novels confirm this trend.

Although there are plenty of British Kindertransport novels, as far as I can tell there are around nine American novels and only one Canadian novel.² While there is an Australian novel by a former Kind, Walter Kaufmann, entitled *Beyond the Green World of Childhood* (1972), the author returned to Germany after the war and the novel only briefly depicts the Kindertransport to Britain in its final chapter, and does not reflect upon his experiences in Australia. Largely it conveys a boy's impressionistic view of his life in Germany. Because the novel is not set in Australia and does not even reference that nation it is difficult to say how the novel might relate to Australia's national memory discourse. To my knowledge there are no New Zealand Kindertransport novels. The one Canadian novel which depicts the Kindertransport on the other hand, Alison Pick's *Far to Go* (2010), does partly set the narrative in Canada, as well as in Britain and Czechoslovakia. The national memory narratives of the Holocaust in America and Canada are borne out in the few relevant novels. American novels, for example, do not place emphasis on arrival in Britain, instead they focus on how the characters either become assimilated into American society or how America comes to their aid. British and American novels about the Kindertransport often try to resolve tensions between belonging and not belonging, depicting a progressive trajectory. But the Canadian novel *Far to Go* presents an opposite movement, as time is not progressive but regressive: the narrator looks back to another time and place, trying to retrace her former life in Czechoslovakia as

² This thesis focuses on novels written in the English language about English-speaking host nations, but there are also many German and Austrian Kindertransport novels as well as a relevant Swedish trilogy, and one French novel. The most famous German novel is W. G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (Hanser: Munich, 2001). Recent German novels include: Ursula Krechel, *Landgericht* (Jung und Jung Verlag: Salzburg and Vienna, 2012); Renate Ahrens, *Das gerettete Kind* (Droemer Knaur: Munich, 2016); Linda Winterberg, *Solange die Hoffnung uns gehört* (Aufbau: Berlin, 2017); and Michael Göring, *Hotel Dellbrück* (Osburg Verlag: Hamburg, 2018). Austrian novels include Michael Köhlmeier, *Bruder und Schwester Lenobel* (Carl Hanser Verlag: Munich, 2018); and Eva Menasse, *Vienna* (Kiepenheuer & Witsch: Cologne, 2005). For novels about the Swedish Kindertransports, see Annika Thor, *Faraway Island* (Random House: New York, 2009); Annika Thor, *Lily Pond* (Random House: New York, 2011); and Annika Thor, *Deep Sea* (Random House: New York, 2015). Also see Marie Theulot, *Quais d'Exil, Vienna – Colchester 1939* (Quranian: place of publication unknown, 2012).

well as Pepik's life there. As a child, Kindertransportee Pepik is also depicted as looking back to his lost life in Prague. The novel confirms the Canadian national narrative of the Holocaust because it does not present an overwhelmingly positive narrative.

This chapter will focus on national trends as far as possible but it will also draw attention to wider commonalities across novels from different countries, a trend which is more typical of literature than other genres. It is noticeable that Kindertransport novels in general focus on themes which are not present in other genres examined in this thesis. For example, while themes such as insider versus outsider, rejection, and problems of identity are explored in testimony as well as in literary fiction, they are not present in museum exhibitions and memorials. In terms of the difference between testimony and fiction, novelists are sometimes able to stand further back from the process of the Kindertransport to reflect upon the trauma the Kinder experienced, as well as on complex issues of identity. While Kindertransport testimony presents a pervasive sense of loss, works of fiction invite greater reflection on the wider implications of being transplanted to an unfamiliar land for questions of integration, identity and memory. This chapter will therefore also draw out thematic similarities across literature in Britain and, as far as possible, America and Canada. But while more recent British novels are challenging the positive view of the Kindertransport because they reflect upon the negative dimensions as well as the positive ones, this reflection does not extend to the wider transnational history of the Kindertransport as movements beyond British shores are still largely overlooked.

Becoming British: The Positive Narrative in British Children's Novels

Children's literature follows certain conventions. For example, 'children's books are usually shorter [than adult novels], they tend to favour an active rather than a passive treatment, with dialogue and incident rather than description and introspection; child protagonists are the rule;

conventions are much used; [and] the story develops within a clear-cut moral schematism'.³ Moreover, 'children's books tend to be optimistic rather than depressive; language is child-oriented; plots are of a distinctive order; probability is often discarded; and [they speak] of [...] simplicity and adventure'.⁴ Children's Kindertransport fiction could be classified as Holocaust literary fiction. It is true that there is little or no discussion about the death camps in such novels: several novels about the Kindertransport inform the reader that the characters' parents were not able to accompany their child to Britain, but their fates are rarely explored in detail. Nevertheless, the novels sometimes reflect on the theme of the Holocaust, or at least this theme is there in the background. It is important to note that children's Holocaust literature often places emphasis on 'accurate and faithful' representations which are as close 'to the facts' as possible.⁵ The emphasis on authenticity and moral behaviour is important for children's literature generally because it has a pedagogical function. According to Lydia Kokkola, 'all writing about the Holocaust should adopt an ethical position that fosters resistance to fascist philosophy'.⁶

I begin by examining the more 'conventional' children's novels before reflecting upon those which offer more complicated representations of the Kindertransport. I use the term 'conventional' here to mean children's novels which use the standard tropes of children's literature in ways which support the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport. Many of these novels focus on themes such as arrival, friendship, unity within the community, British generosity and the Kinder's successful integration into British society. Therefore, the national discourse is stronger in children's novels compared to adult novels which are less nationally bound due to the representation of issues of trauma and identity which I explore later in the

³ Myles McDowell, 'Fiction for Children and Adults: Some Essential Differences', *Children's Literature in Education* 4:1 (1973), p. 58.

⁴ McDowell, 'Fiction for Children and Adults', p. 58.

⁵ Terrence Des Pres, 'Holocaust Laughter?', in Berel Lang (ed.), *Writing and the Holocaust* (Holmes & Meier: New York and London, 1988), p. 217.

⁶ Lydia Kokkola, *Representing the Holocaust in Children's Literature* (Routledge: New York, 2003), p. 11.

chapter. Scholars such as Tony Kushner and Caroline Sharples have described the Kindertransport as a ‘safe’ story because the focus is placed on innocent children, how these children then contributed to British society and how they feel a sense of gratitude to this nation for rescuing them.⁷ Many British children’s novels have picked up on how ‘the Kindertransport adds up to a source of great national pride within the British historical imagination’.⁸ Thus novels such as Adèle Geras’ *A Candle in the Dark* (1995), Irene N. Watts’ *Escape from Berlin*, a trilogy of novels which include *Good-Bye Marianne*, *Remember Me* and *Finding Sophie* (2013),⁹ and Marilyn Taylor’s *Faraway Home* (2013) depict the Kindertransport as a success story.¹⁰ These novels have happy endings; while the characters may struggle in their former homelands as well as in their host nation, they eventually overcome issues of identity, prejudice and loneliness as they are successfully integrated into British society.¹¹

Geras’ *A Candle in the Dark* opens with scenes of Kristallnacht in Germany, while *Good-Bye Marianne*, the first novel within the trilogy of *Escape from Berlin*, begins in a school setting when the protagonist is about to discover she is to be dismissed from school because she is Jewish. *Faraway Home* begins with the events of the Anschluss in Austria. These novels set up a ‘them and us’ contrast right from the beginning. For example, there are distinctions made between the characters who are categorised as being Jewish compared to those who are Aryan, as well as between those who are ‘evil’ (the Nazis) and those who are ‘good’ (Britons). *A Candle in the Dark* makes clear from the start that something has changed as life has been disrupted. Geras differentiates Clara’s Jewish family and friends from those outside who are

⁷ See Tony Kushner, *Remembering Refugees: Then and Now* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2006), and Caroline Sharples, ‘The Kindertransport in British Holocaust Memory’, in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), pp. 15-28.

⁸ Sharples, ‘The Kindertransport in British Holocaust Memory’, p. 21.

⁹ Irene N. Watts is a former Kind who first travelled from Germany to Britain before moving to Canada. I have included her novels in this section about British children’s novels because her novels focus on the Kinder’s former homelands and later host nation (Britain). Canada is only mentioned much later in the trilogy and is only a marginal topic.

¹⁰ This chapter uses the title of the omnibus edition (*Escape to Berlin*) for Irene’s Watts’ trilogy of novels.

¹¹ Also see Ann Jungman and Michael Foreman, *Matti’s Miracle* (HarperCollins: London, 2009).

destroying people's property. For example, Herr Stern, who works in her father's shop, arrives at the family home to convey the message that 'they have smashed all the windows. They have thrown the furniture into the streets [it is] lying upside down in the gutter'.¹² This sense of confusion and destruction is emphasised further by how 'they are burning everything; books, so many books, even the Holy Book, even the *Torah*. Nothing is sacred'.¹³ Those living in Clara's home share a common identity which is now under threat by those who are outside of the domestic setting. The 'they' object to the Jewish faith as well as Jewish objects and further to the presence of the Jew. They do not stop with the burning of the Torah as they also take 'away all the men they [...] find'.¹⁴ The men are rounded up and taken 'to a camp, to a prison' and no one 'knows when they will return'.¹⁵ Thus the novel explores the unwantedness of the Jewish characters. The characters' identities are reshaped because they become the outsider, they are no longer seen as German. This is further illustrated by the sign that reads '*Jews are not wanted as customers in this shop*' which leads Clara to question why 'everything was different'.¹⁶ The family's maid is also no longer allowed to work for them because 'working for Jewish families was frowned upon'.¹⁷ For Clara, the most distressing part was 'losing her best friend'.¹⁸ Clara therefore becomes the 'other' within her own homeland and is ostracised for being Jewish.

In Watts' *Escape from Berlin*, the protagonist, Marianne, is also subjected to discrimination when she is 'expelled' from school for being 'Jewish'.¹⁹ As Marianne reaches up to knock at the door, 'it was then that she saw the notice. She read the typed words nailed up for everyone to see, and felt colder and more alone than she had ever felt in her whole life'.²⁰

¹² Adèle Geras, *A Candle in the Dark* (A&C Black: London, 1995), p. 12.

¹³ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 12.

¹⁴ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 12.

¹⁵ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 12.

¹⁶ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, pp. 13-14.

¹⁷ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 14.

¹⁸ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 14.

¹⁹ Irene N. Watts, *Escape from Berlin* (Tundra Books: New York, 2013), p. 6.

²⁰ Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 5.

The notice read: ‘as of today, November 15, 1938, Jewish students are prohibited from attending German schools’.²¹ When she realises she will not be attending any more classes, she decides to visit the park where she defies Nazi rules as she contemplates sitting down on a bench ‘like a normal person’.²² However, there is something that prevents her from taking a seat. Her awareness of her Jewish background interferes with her sense of identity as a German. This in turn makes her feel ‘guilty’ as the thought of sitting on an Aryan bench is something which she is banned from contemplating.²³ Watts constructs her protagonist as a courageous child because she ignores the ‘hateful words’, but at the same time she also complies with the identity that the Nazis have forced upon her, as if she is not allowed or free to deviate from it.²⁴ The use of the word ‘normal’ illustrates that Marianne’s identity is somehow ‘abnormal’, underlining her internal conflict as she questions who she is. She knows that she is German but she is separated from German characters because of her Jewish identity – whether she identifies as being Jewish or not.

The character of Rosa in Taylor’s *Faraway Home*, who will later travel to Britain with her older brother, Karl, is also puzzled by events leading up to her departure. For example, she is confused by the ‘shouting’ outside.²⁵ Unaware of what is happening around her she asks her father if she could ‘join the parade’ outside as she was ‘wearing [her] dirndl’.²⁶ She ‘twirl[s] to show off her coloured skirt and embroidered blouse, the Austrian national dress she liked to wear’.²⁷ Rosa’s identity is nationally formed through the image of traditional clothing. Similarly, Marianne’s identity in *Escape to Berlin* is nationally shaped but this time it is created through the significance of foods that are associated with German culture as she goes to the

²¹ Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 6.

²² Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 7.

²³ Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 7.

²⁴ Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 7.

²⁵ Marilyn Taylor, *Faraway Home* (The O’Brien Press: Dublin, 2013), p. 12.

²⁶ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, p. 12.

²⁷ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, p. 12.

‘market stalls where [...] hot chestnuts, gingerbread, fresh-baked rolls, oranges and vats of sauerkraut’ were displayed’.²⁸ Moreover, Marianne becomes the embodiment of Berlin as it is referred to as ‘*her city*’: she is just as much a part of Berlin as Berlin is a part of her.²⁹ In *Faraway Home*, another example of how Rosa and Karl’s identities appear rooted in Austrian history is provided by the scene where their grandmother tells them that she has an ‘iron ring’; she had given her original wedding ring away to support the war effort. The children are also told that their grandfather was awarded the ‘Iron Cross for his courage’ in the First World War.³⁰ But with one page turn, their Austrian identities are cast aside by a Nazi SS officer who enters their home. He describes Rosa and her grandmother as ‘Jewish scum’ before dragging away her father and uncle Rudi to ‘scrub’ the pavement with toothbrushes; Rudi is then carted away to Dachau.³¹ These acts have a lasting effect on Karl. In the narrator’s words, Karl feels he has grown ‘suddenly older – as if his childhood had flown away from him’.³² The childhood self is forced into a state of limbo because, although the character still physically looks like a child, their carefree mental nature is lost. Therefore, ‘a new Karl’, who is described by the narrator as ‘harder’ and who expects ‘the worst’, replaces the old Karl.³³

After these scenes of chaos and wreckage, the authors turn their attention to the moment of departure. Geras’ *A Candle in the Dark* explores how parents tried to reassure their children by saying that they would ‘*all meet up again in England*’.³⁴ Clara’s father writes to her to explain she ‘*must be brave and good [...] and look after Maxi [her brother]*’ while they are in Britain.³⁵ The theme of departure is significant in terms of the positive British narrative because the emphasis is placed on hope and later reunion as well as adventure. Clara’s younger brother

²⁸ Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 38.

²⁹ Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 37.

³⁰ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, p. 17.

³¹ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, pp. 19-20.

³² Taylor, *Faraway Home*, pp. 22.

³³ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, pp. 22.

³⁴ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 29.

³⁵ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 29.

Maxi for example is ‘excited’ to be going on this journey.³⁶ Maxi hungrily says to Clara ‘let’s get in! [...] let’s find a seat. We can wave at Mama from the window’.³⁷ The Kindertransport is presented as a movement from threat to safety, underscoring the idea that everything was going to be rosy when the Kinder arrived in Britain. The novel depicts a mood of jubilation when the train reaches Holland as Clara describes how ‘every child who could reach a window was leaning out of it, and was smiling and shouting’.³⁸ On the ‘crowded’ platform, it appears that ‘everyone in Holland [...] was there to welcome them’.³⁹ Freedom and acceptance are soon on the horizon as the further away the characters travel from Nazi occupation, the more caring the people are towards them. Britain is regarded as a light at the end of a dark tunnel.

Upon arrival in Britain, the characters are portrayed as cheery children as if they are on an adventure rather than refugees who have just fled from persecution. British reactions to the new arrivals of refugee children are sympathetic and compassionate. Marianne and Sophie, for example, in *Escape to Berlin* are described as ‘poor little refugees’.⁴⁰ Other passers-by remark ‘what a shame’ and ‘look at that one. Sweet, isn’t she?’, which reinforces the notion of Britain welcoming the Kinder with open arms.⁴¹ This comparison to children on an adventure is briefly questioned when Marianne, on arriving at London Liverpool Street Station, feels that the children all looked “‘like animals at the zoo’” as the photographers kept shouting, “‘Smile’”.⁴² Gratefulness is forced upon them because they are encouraged to look thankful, happy and relieved. There is also some indication of hostility towards the Kinder as other British women comment: ‘more German refugees, I suppose. Surely they could go somewhere else?’⁴³ But this negative moment is soon overcome as integration is recognised as an immediate goal by

³⁶ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 32.

³⁷ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 33.

³⁸ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 38.

³⁹ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 38.

⁴⁰ Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 280.

⁴¹ Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 280.

⁴² Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 107.

⁴³ Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 280.

the Kinder characters. Thus Marianne states that the Kinder should ‘try to speak English all the time’.⁴⁴

The positive British Kindertransport narrative is most strongly present during the war itself, as the Kinder characters try to become as British as they can and are supported in this by the local population. They promptly and effortlessly adjust to a new school environment. For example, Maxi in *A Candle in the Dark* is welcomed into his new classroom by his teacher, Mrs Goodison, who says to the class, ‘children, this is Maxi Nussbaum, who comes all the way from Germany, which is a very long way away. Please look after him, and speak slowly because he is just learning how to speak English’.⁴⁵ The emphasis here is on how Britain becomes a safe haven for the Kinder because their childhood and schooling are able to continue in this nation unlike in their former homelands. Maxi then introduces himself to his new classmates. Mrs Goodison replies, ‘that’s very good indeed, Maxi!’ and she ‘beamed at him’ which shows how the British characters are very accommodating and hospitable towards the Kinder.⁴⁶ This acceptance of a foreign presence is also explored with regards to Clara and Phyllis’ friendship. Phyllis is the daughter of Clara and Maxi’s foster parents. Clara finds a candelabra while playing with a doll’s house. Later that evening, Phyllis finds Clara crying, and when she asks why she is so upset, Clara replies that she is ‘sick for home’ and that the candelabra reminded her of her ‘Menorah’ which was taken away from her family.⁴⁷ She then explains to Phyllis that it is ‘Hanukkah’, but this year she is not at home to light the Menorah.⁴⁸ Phyllis tries to calm Clara down and compassionately acknowledges that Clara ‘must miss [her] mum and dad dreadfully’.⁴⁹ Phyllis comforts Clara by taking her downstairs to the kitchen where she finds

⁴⁴ Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 280.

⁴⁵ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 59.

⁴⁶ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 59.

⁴⁷ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, pp. 73-74.

⁴⁸ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 74.

⁴⁹ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 75.

‘a box of matches’ and some ‘candles’.⁵⁰ She then hands Clara a candle so that she can ‘light it’ and ‘say [the] special prayer’ for Hanukkah.⁵¹ Although Clara and Phyllis celebrate two different holidays (Hanukkah and Christmas), they are united in their bonds of friendship. Phyllis is presented as the understanding friend who, although she does not recognise the language of the Hanukkah prayer, is nonetheless moved by it. Phyllis embodies an idealised version of Britishness – someone who is tolerant, caring and inclusive. The positive British narrative is affirmed here because Clara lost a best friend in Germany but she gains a new, more considerate friend in Britain. She is also free to practise her religious beliefs.

The themes of integration and acceptance are further reinforced in the final chapter of *A Candle in the Dark*, as the whole community comes together not only to celebrate the performance of the nativity play at the school but also to commend the ‘hospitality’ that ‘Mr and Mrs Baird’ have shown to both Clara and Maxi.⁵² Miss Pea opens the play by introducing the audience to Clara and Maxi; she then invites Clara onto the stage to sing a song before the play commences. Clara was going to sing ‘*Silent Night*’ but instead she explains to the audience that ‘today is one of the days of Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights, so [she is going to] sing a Hanukkah song’.⁵³ Her song brings ‘tears’ to Phyllis’ eyes as ‘the tune was filled with longing and sweetness, like a lullaby, and it made her feel sad’.⁵⁴ While most characters feel empathetic towards the Kinder’s plight, one character is less tolerant. Thus Eileen, who is another student remarks: ‘I don’t see [...] what this has got to do with the Nativity, do you? I’ve never heard of Hanu-whatever it’s called’.⁵⁵ But she is then told to ‘shut up [...] and [not] be so beastly!’⁵⁶ Again a negative is outweighed by a positive as other characters come to Clara’s defence. When

⁵⁰ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 76.

⁵¹ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 76.

⁵² Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 80.

⁵³ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 81.

⁵⁴ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 81.

⁵⁵ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 81.

⁵⁶ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 82.

Clara finishes her song, ‘everyone in the hall clapped and clapped. They didn’t seem to want to stop, ever’.⁵⁷ This enthusiastic expression of approval confirms the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport because the character of the Jewish refugee child becomes a fully accepted and cherished member of British society. Moreover, the novel ends with hope, as ‘the next day, the postman brought a postcard for Clara and Maxi’ which disclosed that their father was no longer in a camp and that their parents had visas and passports and would be travelling to England ‘on the fifteenth of January’.⁵⁸ Although Phyllis is pleased by the news, she is also ‘sad’ at the thought that her two new friends may have to leave shortly.⁵⁹ Clara and Maxi therefore have become part of the family as their British foster family have come to truly care for them.

The theme of integration is also reflected upon in *Faraway Home*. At first the characters find it difficult to assimilate into a new way of life but by the end of the novel they also are incorporated into British society and feel a sense of belonging. Karl explains to Rosa that a foster family are going to take her in and how they ‘will be like parents to her’ though Rosa frustratingly states that she ‘already [has] parents’.⁶⁰ Mrs Gould buys Rosa a new doll and hides the old one away in a box.⁶¹ Later, she cannot understand that Rosa ‘doesn’t seem to like the new doll we gave her’.⁶² When Rosa is hospitalised because of an accident, her foster parents bring her the doll and as they try to impose it upon her, ‘her face’, the narrator writes, ‘contorted, and with a violent movement she hurled [the doll] to the floor’ where its china face ‘smashed into pieces’.⁶³ Rosa refuses to embrace the new doll, shouting that she wants her ‘real doll, Mitzi, from home’.⁶⁴ The fact that her new doll has no name is symbolic because it shows

⁵⁷ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 82.

⁵⁸ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 82.

⁵⁹ Geras, *A Candle in the Dark*, p. 83.

⁶⁰ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, pp. 52-53.

⁶¹ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, p. 54.

⁶² Taylor, *Faraway Home*, p. 88.

⁶³ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, p. 151.

⁶⁴ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, p. 151.

Rosa's internal struggle as she is told she must adapt to British life on the one hand, while on the other she is desperately trying to hold on to her origins. Marianne in *Escape from Berlin* also has an identity forced upon her but this time it is due to her foster parents giving her a new name. She is renamed 'Mary Anne', which sounds more English – but Marianne was not consulted about the change.⁶⁵ 'Englishness' is involuntarily forced upon her. While conventional British children's novels do therefore include occasional portrayals of prejudice and of the enforcement of identity upon the Kinder – elements one would in such novels associate more with the 'bad Germans' – these are soon overcome by British community spirit. The novels suggest that in Germany, this kind of behaviour is the norm, but in Britain it is the exception and quickly challenged. For example, in *Faraway Home* the characters rally together as they are 'all in the same war now'.⁶⁶ Rosa and Karl's identities are brought closer to the locals as they are all suffering as a result of the war. Similarly to *A Candle in the Dark*, *Faraway Home* ends with hope because Ireland comes to the aid of Northern Ireland during the Blitz. After a night of struggling to contain the fires, the 'dawn was breaking, and the first birds [begin] to call'.⁶⁷ This transitional moment from darkness to light is significant because it suggests a new life and a renewed sense of faith that Rosa and Karl would be reunited with their family. Karl states that he:

would never forget about his family – he would never stop thinking about them, and hoping that the war would end and they would be reunited. But meanwhile, he had to carry on trying to make a new life. That was what refugees had to do.⁶⁸

Karl and Rosa's lives start again, this time in a country which does not want to expel them. This hopeful moment coincides with Passover, a time to celebrate but also remember the liberation of the Jewish people from an oppressor and the journey to a new homeland. This biblical story resonates with Karl and Rosa's own movement from threat to freedom because

⁶⁵ Watts, *Escape from Berlin*, p. 124.

⁶⁶ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, p. 206.

⁶⁷ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, p. 207.

⁶⁸ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, p. 209.

they too have had to adapt to a new way of life far away from their homeland. The novel ends optimistically as Karl returns to the farm and is reunited with his sister after running away. The narrator describes how everything is ‘bathed in the pearly morning light’ of the early morning sun.⁶⁹ In this ‘dream-like’ setting, Rosa comes running across the cobbles to meet Karl: the children have survived the air raids and are thankful to be together again. Thus the novel reinforces how life begins again in Britain.⁷⁰

Recently, a more critical trend in British children’s literary fiction in relation to the Kindertransport has emerged. Helen Peters’ *Anna at War* (2019) and Catherine Bruton’s *No Ballet Shoes in Syria* (2019) are two good examples.⁷¹ *Anna at War* sees rescue in relation to murder and reflects upon survivor guilt. *No Ballet Shoes in Syria* connects the Kindertransport to the current refugee crisis, offering a more multidirectional view. While these novels still end positively as the characters are able to rebuild their lives in Britain, negative aspects are given more weight as the authors show how integration is accompanied by new difficulties which are not easily resolved. Both authors reflect upon how the characters’ displacement continues in Britain, as well as how they can only assimilate if they close off part of their former self. It is striking that these novels do not present chronological narratives; rather they move around in time and space, something which is often associated with more adult literature (see later in chapter). This gives the reader an insight into how one loss can lead to another loss, and how the characters struggle to adapt to life in Britain.

⁶⁹ Taylor, *Faraway Home*, p. 210.

⁷⁰ For other Kindertransport novels targeted at younger audiences, see Emma Carroll, *Letters from the Lighthouse* (Faber & Faber: London, 2017), Jean Grainger, *The Star and the Shamrock* (Independently Published, 2019), Jean Grainger, *The Emerald Horizon* (Independently Published, 2020), and Gill Thompson, *The Child on Platform One* (Headline Review: London, 2020).

⁷¹ Also see Miriam Halahmy, *The Emergency Zoo* (CIP Group: Croydon, 2016), Miriam Halahmy, *Saving Hanno: The Story of a Rescue Dog* (Holiday House: New York, 2019), and Michael Bond, *A Bear Called Paddington* (HarperCollins Children’s Books: London, 2002). Both these authors also present a more multidirectional view of the Kindertransport because they set side by side the histories of human and animal refugees.

Anna at War begins in the present as the reader is introduced to Daniel, the grandson of a former Kindertransportee. His teacher explains to the class that they are going to learn about the Second World War. Daniel explains that his grandmother lived through this period. The teacher then asks: ““did your granny come to England as a refugee?””⁷² Other characters start to ask questions too, such as: ““was she a Nazi?””⁷³ Some children in the class assume that Germans who lived during the Second World War were all Nazis. But this image of a ‘bad German’ is soon contrasted with the idea of a ‘good German’ as Daniel reflects upon how his grandmother ‘spends a lot of time working with a charity that helps refugees settle in England, and she belongs to lots of clubs in the village’.⁷⁴ The emphasis here is placed on how his grandmother is integrated into British society as well as on her empathy towards other refugees today. After school Daniel visits his grandmother to learn more about her experiences. The focus shifts to the need to pass memory on to the next generation. His grandmother feels that Daniel should ‘hear’ her story because ‘there aren’t many [survivors] left, and it would be a shame if [their] stories died with [them]’.⁷⁵ The discussions at Daniel’s school trigger his grandmother’s personal memory. Two generations (first and third) are brought together as his grandmother enlightens him about her experiences. Growing societal interest in the Kindertransport provides a platform for the grandmother to speak. The grandmother moves backwards in her mind as she remembers the events leading up to her departure on a Kindertransport from Germany to Britain. She tells her story to her grandson as she remembers it. Her name is Anna Schlesinger.

Peters picks up on the key elements of the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport such as arrival, successful integration and British generosity. But she relativises these because more negative aspects such as internment and hostility towards

⁷² Helen Peters, *Anna at War* (Nosy Crow: London, 2019), p. 1.

⁷³ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 2.

⁷⁴ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 2.

⁷⁵ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 6.

refugees are given equal weight. For example, on arrival Anna reflects upon how she ‘felt sick with loneliness and longing’.⁷⁶ There is no sense of adventure, as Anna is consumed with fear and anxiety. She is concerned about her parents in Germany and how her new British foster family will receive her as well as where the baby she cared for during the journey will be taken next. The child was placed on to the train and Anna cares for it until they reach Britain, where the baby is taken away from her. She explains that she ‘hadn’t even said goodbye’.⁷⁷ Here, arrival is presented as a moment of further departure as Anna is separated from the child and she is ‘disappointed’ that she is not going to be staying in London.⁷⁸ Arrival also brings with it a ‘wave of guilt’ as Anna had promised to write to her parents on the train but she was unable to do so as she was caring for the child.⁷⁹ But there is a sense of ‘relief’, too, as Anna is introduced to her ‘kind foster mother’.⁸⁰

Anna thinks comparatively as she pictures the ‘beautiful apartment and all [the] lovely things’ inside it where she used to live, and contrasts this with her new home in Britain, which has ‘no electricity’ and no indoor bathrooms.⁸¹ She is ‘grateful’ to Britain for rescuing her but also feels ‘anger’ towards the British government because when war was declared, the government ‘immediately cancelled [her parents] visas’: ‘no German could travel to Britain anymore’, her ‘parents were trapped’.⁸² ‘How could the British government be so stupid, so heartless?’, she asks.⁸³ There is a constant oscillation between inclusion and exclusion throughout the novel. This is depicted in terms of Anna’s internal struggles between adapting to life in Britain and yearning for her former home, and of her difficulties in facing the external barriers she must hurdle to become accepted into society. For example, while at school Anna

⁷⁶ Peters, *Anna at War*, pp. 69-70.

⁷⁷ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 70.

⁷⁸ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 73.

⁷⁹ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 71.

⁸⁰ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 72.

⁸¹ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 80.

⁸² Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 96.

⁸³ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 73.

becomes a high achiever, some of her classmates call her a 'dirty Jew'.⁸⁴ Integration is presented as a fraught process as she is not welcomed at first. Her identity as a Jew is later questioned as some students suggest that she is 'not really Jewish' but is instead a Nazi spy.⁸⁵ Anna feels 'frightened' and asks: 'could what happened in Germany happen here too?'⁸⁶ Homesickness permeates the novel which is further reinforced when the Red Cross letters between her and her parents come to an abrupt halt. Anna feels further and further distanced from those she loves. This feeling of alienation continues as Molly, Anna's new foster sister, asks her to stop 'showing [her] up'.⁸⁷ Anna repeatedly tries to repay her foster family for the kindness they show towards her, but Molly wants her to be 'less eager' to help.⁸⁸ Anna battles with adapting to life because while she is grateful to her foster parents for caring for her, she 'didn't want to live with a strange family in a strange country'.⁸⁹ Even when Anna feels a sense of achievement or settlement, her enthusiasm is often reduced because she has to overcome yet another obstacle. For example, Anna finds a list which suggests that there is evidence for her being a German spy. She is fearful that she will be interned in a British prison camp. This suspiciousness and hostility towards her make her feel 'completely alone in the world'.⁹⁰

It takes an extraordinary act for her to finally be accepted by British society. She stops a German plot to assassinate the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill. This stark narrative development highlights the lengths Anna has to go to to prove her loyalty: only by endangering herself and winning acknowledgement from the highest level, Churchill himself, does Anna become a trusted member of British society. Anna becomes the heroine, but her resilience and her courage are set in relation to the nightmares and trauma she experiences. The positive

⁸⁴ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 103.

⁸⁵ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 104.

⁸⁶ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 104.

⁸⁷ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 111.

⁸⁸ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 111.

⁸⁹ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 112.

⁹⁰ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 120.

British Kindertransport narrative is challenged by the novel because the character has to overcompensate to fit into British society. The welcome narrative is rethought because there is a pattern of mistrust throughout the novel, and the character of the refugee child is constantly having to justify herself.

The now adult Anna concludes her recollection of her story by talking about how she continued to feel loss and guilt after the war. In 1946, she received a letter from Switzerland sent by her Uncle Paul. It explains that he had survived the Holocaust, but that her parents were murdered in Auschwitz in 1943. The narrative then moves into the present as Anna says to her grandson that, for her, ‘the future seemed utterly bleak and life didn’t seem worth living’.⁹¹ Anna desperately wanted her family and “‘didn’t know how to cope with that [sense of loss]’”.⁹² She explains that her Uncle Paul later travelled to Britain to be reunited with her. But she is greeted by someone she at first does not recognise. This reunion is presented as ambivalent, because while Anna is overjoyed to be reunited with her only surviving family member, Paul has changed because he looks thinner and older. Anna feels guilty ‘about being so lucky’.⁹³ She asks ‘why [she] survived, when so many people had died?’ and ‘what right did [she] have not only to be alive, but to win a scholarship to study in the most beautiful place in the world?’ (Anna wins a scholarship to Cambridge).⁹⁴ Although it may appear that the novel has a positive outcome, because Anna becomes a cherished member of British society, the frame story set in the present highlights how the positives have a negative dimension to them. For example, the novel ends with Anna’s ninetieth birthday party where she is reunited with the baby (now adult) she cared for on the Kindertransport train. While this aspect of the unresolved past appears to be resolved in the present, the novel suggests there is an irretrievable loss as the adult Anna talks about how she was never reunited with her parents, and how the

⁹¹ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 278.

⁹² Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 278.

⁹³ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 281.

⁹⁴ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 281.

1.5 million children who were murdered in the Holocaust are not here to recount their stories.⁹⁵

The novel concludes with how the Kinder were often ‘sustained and driven by advice their parents had given them in their final days together’.⁹⁶ But while Anna remembers her father’s advice to be cheerful, happy and brave, her past life is irrecoverable. Anna’s moving forwards and backwards in her mind only further reinforces her sense of loss, past and present.

Bruton’s *No Ballet Shoes in Syria* was inspired by Judith Kerr’s experiences. Bruton states that, after hearing Kerr (author and former refugee) speak ‘about the parallels between her story and the current situation in Syria’, she knew she had to ‘write about a child displaced from their home by war in Syria, fleeing across Europe, and seeking asylum in the UK’.⁹⁷ *No Ballet Shoes in Syria* explores the parallels between the experiences of Helena Rosenberg (Kind) and Aya Massoud (a Syrian refugee child), who both journey to Britain to escape persecution and war. It is striking that it is the Kind who initiates the process of integration for a fellow refugee. Helena and Aya share a bond as they both understand what it is like to be uprooted from one’s former home and to have to adapt to life in a different nation. The novel is about finding one’s feet again after a traumatic experience. The ballet shoes are symbolic of feeling grounded in a new society but they also express the international language of ballet which is recognised worldwide, as one of the judges at the Royal Northern Ballet School says to Aya: “‘ballet knows no borders’”.⁹⁸ Although Helena and Aya are refugees from two different eras, they both carry their stories with them through their dancing. Aya especially feels more liberated when she manages to integrate her memories into her dancing. The novel moves beyond the positive British national narrative because the focus is not placed on becoming British rather it is about past and present identities combining and merging together.

⁹⁵ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 281.

⁹⁶ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 295.

⁹⁷ Catherine Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria* (Nosy Crow: London, 2019), p. 263.

⁹⁸ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 215.

Helena becomes Aya's ballet teacher in Britain, and towards the end of the novel she explains to Aya how she travelled from Czechoslovakia to Britain on a Winton Transport. Helena's "'sister Elsa was supposed to come too'", but there had been some "'confusion at the station'" and "'there was only room for one'" of the sisters to leave on a Kindertransport.⁹⁹ Helena felt "'very angry'" at the time, as "'Elsa promised [her] that she would come on the very next train'" and that she would "'find [her] as soon as she got to England"'.¹⁰⁰ Although Elsa "'did get on the next train'", it was "'sent back [...] because war broke out that very day. The borders were closed and there was no escape"'.¹⁰¹ The adult Helena discusses how she feels guilty that her sister was unable to flee to safety. Her family were sent to Theresienstadt ghetto and later murdered in Auschwitz. Helena's story is set in relation to Aya's because the reader is informed that Aya sees 'herself' in Helena.¹⁰² She understands 'how lonely [it] must have been' as she has been separated from her father.¹⁰³ Before Aya arrived in Britain with her mother and younger brother, Moosa, the boat that her family travelled on had capsized.¹⁰⁴ Because there was not enough space for everyone on board the rescue vessel, Aya's father let go of Aya as she was pulled out of the water.¹⁰⁵ Aya's father also promises that he will travel to Britain and that the family will be reunited.

In Britain, Aya faces discrimination and is subjected to aggressive behaviour from some British citizens. For example, Ciara does not welcome Aya into her new ballet class. Ciara torments Aya for what she is wearing. In the words of the narrator, Aya 'wore leggings and an old T-shirt that she had been given at the detention centre in Bradford. It was a boys' style and several sizes too big for her. Her feet were bare and dirty inside an old pair of Mumma's

⁹⁹ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 223.

¹⁰⁰ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 223.

¹⁰¹ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 224.

¹⁰² Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 227.

¹⁰³ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 227.

¹⁰⁴ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 231.

¹⁰⁵ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 232.

sandals'.¹⁰⁶ Aya feels alienated and lost because she looks different to the other girls in her class.¹⁰⁷ Ciara objects to Aya's presence in the ballet school and shows no compassion. Unlike British museum exhibitions, the negatives are not bracketed off, because while Helena stands up for Aya, Ciara continues to look at Aya 'crossly'.¹⁰⁸ Later in the novel Ciara calls Aya a "refugee girl".¹⁰⁹ This insult makes Aya feel abnormal, as if she does not fit into this new society. The novel does not present Britain as a hospitable environment because Aya is bullied by Ciara. Another good example of bias towards refugees is when Aya's landlord shows himself "not interested in [Aya's] sob stories".¹¹⁰ She tries to explain that their paperwork has been lost, so she has not been able to pay the rent. The landlord retorts that it is: "not my problem! I'm sick of you refugees coming here and taking advantage".¹¹¹ Aya feels like 'a burden, an outsider' which does not suggest that integration into British society is swift or unproblematic.¹¹²

While some characters judge Aya because of her appearance and see her as the 'other', Dotty supports Aya and has the 'idea of putting on a gala show to raise money for the refugee centre'.¹¹³ The community come together to raise funds to help refugees today. Helena also encourages and reassures Aya throughout the novel. 'It turned out [that Helena] had offered to take [Aya and her family] in as soon as she met [them]. But there had been paperwork, and safeguarding measures, and more paperwork'.¹¹⁴ Here the former refugee comes to the aid of a current day refugee because eventually Aya and her family move in with Helena and her daughter, Sylvie. As I explored in Chapter Three, recent reenactments have also drawn connections between the Kindertransport and the current refugee crisis. Although the novel

¹⁰⁶ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, pp. 44-45.

¹⁰⁷ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 45.

¹⁰⁸ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 45.

¹⁰⁹ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 67.

¹¹⁰ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 58.

¹¹¹ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 58.

¹¹² Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 58.

¹¹³ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 191.

¹¹⁴ Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, p. 179.

and the reenactments are not necessarily critical of the positive British national narrative of the Kindertransport, they do move beyond this narrative because the emphasis is placed not on celebrating what Britain achieved in the past, but on how we cannot rest today: it is about learning to act.

General Readership

Problems of Identity: British Novels by non-Kinder

Kinder and non-Kinder may have different reasons for writing novels about the Kindertransport. In the case of Kinder, the influence of personal experience is important. Their literary texts explore personal trauma and adaptation; they are about defining the self in all its complexity. This is a topic I return to later in the chapter. Non-Kinder authors may have a more indirect, but nevertheless also very personal connection to the topic. As I discussed above, Bruton's meeting with a former child refugee inspired her to write her book. Peters similarly wrote her book after an encounter with a Kindertransportee which later led to the discovery that one of her husband's 'relatives, Elaine Blond, was a leading organiser of the Kindertransport in England'.¹¹⁵ Peters also 'watched documentaries, attended talks, listened to recorded interviews and read many memoirs of "Kinder"'.¹¹⁶ Non-Kinder authors, then, could be responding in their novels to cultural trends in the representation of the Kindertransport in other media. Certainly their engagement with recent Kinder testimony leads them to present complex representations of the Kindertransport. At the same time, broader cultural trends linked to national memory can leave their mark on literature by non-Kinder. As explored above, the positive national view of Britain's response to Nazism has strongly influenced children's Kindertransport literature. Adult novels by British non-Kinder also show this influence –

¹¹⁵ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 294.

¹¹⁶ Peters, *Anna at War*, p. 294.

though they are generally more critical. As I shall explore later in my analysis of Kindertransport novels by American non-Kinder, they incorporate Hollywoodised notions of redemption typical of American cultural memory.

One, perhaps unsurprising difference between children's fiction about the Kindertransport and novels aimed at a more adolescent or adult readership is that the themes presented within these novels are indeed adult. Jake Wallis Simons' *The English German Girl* (2011), Linda Newbery's *Sisterland* (2003) and Eliza Graham's *The One I Was* (2014), for example, explore more sensitive themes.¹¹⁷ These include abortion, stolen identity and denial of one's own past, themes that would be unsuitable for a younger readership. *The English German Girl* reflects upon the fractured relationship between the foster parents and the Kind. *The One I Was* and *Sisterland* focus on memory being passed on to the next generations, but the reader does not fully come to know who the characters are, as part of their identity is lost. In contrast to children's novels, where the characters become British, the more adult Kindertransport novels emphasise hyphenated or hybrid identities.¹¹⁸ The characters embody a mixture of an old and new identity, they do not become fully British in contrast to what the positive British narrative of integration suggests. The Kindertransport is therefore presented as an experience 'of loss, cultural disorientation, and uncertain fates [which] produced cognitive and emotional disjunctions that would not be resolved by the tremulous safety or security of Britain'.¹¹⁹

A similarity between fiction and testimony is that, in both cases, the Kindertransport becomes an 'experience of rescue [which] was a continuous disjunction between memories of

¹¹⁷ For other, more adult Kindertransport novels, see Richard Aronowitz, *An American Decade* (Clay Ltd.: St Ives, 2017), Richard Aronowitz, *Five Amber Beads* (Flambard Press: Hexham, 2006), Anita Brookner, *Latecomers* (Penguin Books Ltd.: London, 2010), Adèle Geras, *Cover Your Eyes* (Quercus: London, 2014), Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day* (Faber & Faber: London, 2005), Anna Jacobs, *Gifts for Our Times* (Hodder: London, 2017), Robert Barnard, *A Stranger in the Family* (Scribner: London, 2010), and Diney Costeloe, *The Girl with No Name* (Head of Zeus Ltd: London, 2016).

¹¹⁸ See Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (Routledge: London, 1994) for more discussion of hybridity.

¹¹⁹ Phyllis Lassner, *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust: Displaced Witness* (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2008), p. 6.

a stable self that were now unsustainable and a timorous self-hood in the present'.¹²⁰ According to Lassner, this is especially true of novels published by Kinder (see later in the chapter) because 'refugee writers create an "uncanny presence" by fusing memory and imagination in writing that cannot recapture their lost people and places. Families, friend, and communities are there and not there, alive in memory and imagined reconstruction or even in fantasies and allegorical fairy tales, but always disappearing once again in new realities'.¹²¹ Wolfgang Welsch provides a detailed dissection of the term transculturality on a microlevel, suggesting that as we migrate through different social worlds, we start to possess multiple identities and attachments.¹²² This internal multiplicity can lead to confusion and suppression of part of the self but it can also shape one's individual cultural identity through different reference points.¹²³ Building on Lassner and Welsch's thoughts, I argue that the characters in some adult Kindertransport novels develop a transcultural identity. They do not become British, but they do not remain German either, for example. They instead develop a mixed British and German identity.¹²⁴ This personal transcultural identity of the characters might correspond to a transnational memory on the part of the reader. Barbara Törnquist-Plewa's definition of transcultural memory is useful here as she understands 'transcultural memories as [...] the result of long cultural contacts, but they can also be an outcome of transformative experiences in shorter transcultural encounters, for example, in transcultural commemorative rituals and spaces'.¹²⁵ The fact that the characters remain caught between two worlds complicates the

¹²⁰ Lassner, *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust*, p. 6.

¹²¹ Lassner, *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust*, p. 4.

¹²² Wolfgang Welsch, 'Transculturality: The Changing Form of Culture Today', *Filozofski Vestnik* 22:2 (2001), p. 71.

¹²³ Wolfgang Welsch, 'Transculturality', pp. 71-72.

¹²⁴ Children's novels can sometimes also point to such a combination of identities. Thus Helena in *No Ballet Shoes in Syria* is still very much defined by her Kindertransport experience, but she is described as living in a large Victorian villa that evokes traditional Englishness (see Bruton, *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, Chapter 32).

¹²⁵ Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, 'The Transnational Dynamics of Local Remembrance: The Jewish Past in a Former Shtetl in Poland', *Memory Studies* 11:3 (2018), p. 302.

positive British narrative because the self is not fixed: it is not totally British or German, for example.

The narrative structure of Simons' *The English German Girl* closely resembles children's literature because of its straightforward linearity. The novel opens in 1933 and concludes in 1947. The events leading up to Rosa's departure on a Kindertransport mirror those in novels discussed above because Rosa is excluded from German society on account of her Jewishness. The departure scene is also similar to the more conventional children's novels because the emphasis is placed on how Rosa should be grateful to Britain for sheltering her.¹²⁶ But the moment of arrival plunges Rosa into a spiral of continual loss. Rosa is fostered by her extended family in Britain. They are practising Jews. As does Anna in *Anna at War*, Rosa thinks associatively, because she compares her new, stricter religious education in Britain to her less strict upbringing in Germany. She soon falls in love with her foster parents' son, Samuel, and discovers that she is going to have a baby with him.¹²⁷ Her foster parents are horrified by the news, claiming she has repaid their kindness with 'immorality'.¹²⁸ They state that they were doing her parents, 'Otto and Inga [...] a favour' because 'they are nice people', but Rosa has brought shame on both families.¹²⁹ Consequently, Rosa is forced to terminate her pregnancy. While she is not sure what to do, she tries to find the answer in Samuel. But he is too heavily medicated, due to his war injuries, to give an appropriate answer and he, like Rosa, is too young to understand what he describes as 'Ladies' matters'.¹³⁰ Rosa, feeling that she has been betrayed by Samuel, agrees to abort their child but she feels guilty for not following her parents' advice to be strong. She blames her 'weakness' in giving in to the pressure from her foster parents.¹³¹ The day after this tragic event is Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, marking

¹²⁶ Jake Wallis Simons, *The English German Girl* (Polygon: Edinburgh, 2011), pp. 130-131.

¹²⁷ Simons, *The English German Girl*, p. 233.

¹²⁸ Simons, *The English German Girl*, p. 234.

¹²⁹ Simons, *The English German Girl*, p. 234.

¹³⁰ Simons, *The English German Girl*, p. 247.

¹³¹ Simons, *The English German Girl*, pp. 248-250.

the day one atones for the sins of the past year. Rosa reflects on how she will atone for her decision for the rest of her life, because part of herself, her flesh and blood is lost.

Rosa then runs away from her foster home to create a new life for herself as a nurse. She is now completely alone – she has no baby, no family and no home. When Samuel finds out the truth, he too leaves home, only to be coincidentally reunited with Rosa at the hospital where she works. Rosa's losses, according to the narrator, 'appear in flashbulbs: the baby that might have been, her parents and brother and sister' who then slip 'into her mind like ghosts of the past'.¹³² Eventually, Rosa and Samuel forgive each other, keeping their promise that they made to each other – to get married. However, Rosa discovers that, following the operation, she is unable to have children of her own. This sense of rupture is taken further because the reader learns that she has in fact lost two children: the other child was a baby that was placed into her care on board the train that transported her to Britain, but then taken from her.¹³³ However, Samuel and Rosa track the unknown baby down. He was renamed Julian, as his first foster parents anglicised his name from Joachim to Julian. They did so without his consent. Although Rosa finds that 'the years have changed the boy unrecognisably', she knows that he is the same small boy that she protected.¹³⁴ The novel ends with the couple adopting the child. Julian asks Rosa whether she knew his parents. Rosa replies that she only saw his mother for a 'moment', which suggests that Julian and Rosa's former selves are lost because Julian has no memory of his life prior to the Kindertransport, and Rosa cannot bring back the part of herself she was forced to give up – her baby. She has also lost her parents. When Rosa and Samuel go to find the lists of names of those who were murdered in the death camps, the narrator states that Rosa is left with a 'vacuum': even though she feels some 'peace', she can never bring back her parents.¹³⁵ But Rosa and Julian are reunited: although a part of their former selves can

¹³² Simons, *The English German Girl*, pp. 266-267.

¹³³ Simons, *The English German Girl*, p. 362.

¹³⁴ Simons, *The English German Girl*, p. 362.

¹³⁵ Simons, *The English German Girl*, p. 335.

never be fully recovered because their relationships with their real parents can never be restored, their bond with one another helps them stay connected to the past. It also connects them to the future. The novel ends with Rosa's words:

in the future, she says, if there should ever be another war, and if we were faced with the same choice as my parents, promise me we would never send Julian away. Promise me we will keep him with us whatever happens, even if that means to the end.¹³⁶

In *The English German Girl*, the positive British narrative is rethought because the family unit is not presented as a conventional British family but as a British-German refugee family. The German and British sides of Rosa's experience and identity are brought together in the family she builds with Samuel and Julian. Despite this apparently positive outcome, the prevailing impression conveyed by this novel is one of broken connections.

Newbery's *Sisterland* opens in the present with a letter that Hilly writes to her friend Rashid while she is on a plane flying over Eastern Europe. Hilly is the granddaughter of Heidigran, who is a former Kindertransportee. The letter Hilly composes discusses a play she recalls her father talking about called *Dangerous Corners*.¹³⁷ Hilly explains that the play is about 'a group of people, family and friends, having a meal together at someone's house. One of them makes a chance remark about a musical box that's in the room'.¹³⁸ The play reveals how 'they've all told each other lies, and covered things up, and kept secrets from each other [which] pull the family apart'. They then become aware of each other's deceit.¹³⁹ The story of the play hints at what is to come in the novel because the Kind suppresses part of her identity, lying to her family about her past. The family only learn who she really is towards the latter half of the novel. The novel reflects upon themes such as forgetting versus remembering, speaking out versus staying silent, asking questions versus remaining ignorant. While the novel zig-zags in time and space when Heidigran explains her story, the narrative is also circular

¹³⁶ Simons, *The English German Girl*, p. 365.

¹³⁷ Linda Newbery, *Sisterland* (Definitions: London, 2003), p. 1.

¹³⁸ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 1.

¹³⁹ Newbery, *Sisterland*, pp. 1-2.

because Hilly reconnects with the past as her journey to Israel could be regarded as a pilgrimage to discover her family's history.

The childhood self is on the edge of being forgotten, lost in another time and another place in *Sisterland* because it has been painfully locked away for so long. Heidigran or Heidi tries to erase her memories of her former self. An analysis of the novel reveals three reasons which might explain this. The first is that she felt her parents no longer loved her. Due to Heidi's medical condition in the present (she has Alzheimer's), she has to abandon her home to live with her daughter's family so that they can care for her. The adult Heidi is left confused as she thinks they are 'taking [her] away again' because she 'must have done something bad'.¹⁴⁰ In a moment of traumatic repetition, she relates moving to a new home with her Kindertransport journey, experiencing it as a recurrence of displacement as she becomes estranged from familiar settings yet again. Heidi recalls feeling abandoned, and resentful at the fact that her parents sent her away. She is convinced her parents must have preferred her older sister, Rachel, to her and that 'she was no longer Mutti's darling'.¹⁴¹ But this thought is soon interrupted as her mind leaves the past and regains focus in the present. The time leaps in the narration draw attention to the loss of the childhood self because her mind becomes 'clouded with uncertainty'.¹⁴² The suppression of her childhood self becomes a way to protect herself from the grief and sorrow of not being reunited with her family.¹⁴³

The second reason for this suppression is that Heidi 'didn't understand' how 'Germany didn't want her' and how 'England didn't either'.¹⁴⁴ She feels that 'she was wrong and bad wherever she went'.¹⁴⁵ The framing of identity here shows the long-term effects of diaspora as Heidi does not feel at home anywhere. She encounters discrimination in both her native land

¹⁴⁰ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 44.

¹⁴¹ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 117.

¹⁴² Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 58.

¹⁴³ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 125.

¹⁴⁴ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 111.

¹⁴⁵ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 111.

and her adopted land. For example, when she attends an English school she is spat at and called a ‘filthy’ German.¹⁴⁶ She represses her German identity by not speaking German any more, so as to become more accepted into British society.¹⁴⁷ The narrator also tells the reader that Heidi distances her adult self from her childhood self by rejecting her Jewish faith. Her dismissal of Hebrew for the English language underlines how she thought that ‘Jews were bad’ and that ‘everyone’ hated them ‘even [...] in England’.¹⁴⁸ She therefore buries who she is within herself because she feels constrained by her German-Jewish identity. But her childhood memories can influence her subconsciously in the present. She demands that her granddaughter, Hilly, not be friends with her best friend, Reuben. Heidi exclaims that ‘he’s got a Jewish name’, so is someone not to be trusted, which shows how her childhood experiences are still haunting her.¹⁴⁹ The childhood self is only referred to a handful of times throughout the novel because Heidi cannot face the horrors of what happened to her as a child. To integrate, she feels that she must cast away her Jewishness, which suggests that to fit into British society Heidi needs to deny her past.

The loss of the childhood self is most evident when analysing the third reason: Heidi’s refusal to accept her sister when she comes to visit Heidi in London after the war. Throughout the novel, there is a reference to someone called Rachel, but it is unclear who she is. The reader eventually discovers that Rachel is in fact Heidi’s sister. A trail of melancholy follows Rachel throughout the novel, and this is only understood when Heidi reveals how her sister refuses ‘to be locked in the past’.¹⁵⁰ The adult Heidi remembers how she wanted ‘her new post-war life’ to be ‘happy’, but the arrival of Rachel shatters this hope because she brings with her the painful memories of Heidi’s past life.¹⁵¹ The child Heidi saw the news footage of people within the

¹⁴⁶ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 110.

¹⁴⁷ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 124.

¹⁴⁸ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 117.

¹⁴⁹ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 70.

¹⁵⁰ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 261.

¹⁵¹ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 261.

death camps, which in turn led her to dream about her sister ‘staring at her through a wire fence’ with ‘pleading’ eyes.¹⁵² These images traumatise Heidi, resulting in her never wanting to ‘go back’ to her former self.¹⁵³ When Heidi is reunited with Rachel, she is unable to control her thoughts as she thinks about the distressing images of ‘skeletal’ beings – she is scared of her sister.¹⁵⁴ It is ‘too late’ for her to rebuild her relationship with her sister because she has become naturalised – and now thinks of herself as British.¹⁵⁵ For example, Rachel keeps telling Heidi to speak German as she cannot understand her when she speaks English. Trying to become British though is not presented as a positive, because this distances Heidi from her sister.¹⁵⁶

Although the reader is aware that Heidi is a victim because she has been transplanted to a new land to escape Nazi persecution, her granddaughters are unaware of her past, and question whether she is a ‘racist’ or ‘a Nazi’ because she thinks that ‘Jews are dangerous to know’.¹⁵⁷ Her family fails to understand that her response is shaped by her unease at her Jewish identity, an unease that is particularly strong when her memories move backwards in time to when ‘she’s back in Germany in the Hitler time’.¹⁵⁸ Heidi lies to her family about who she is. She obtains four names throughout the narration: her birth name (Sarah Reubens), the name she gave herself (Heidi Schmitt), her adoption name (Heidi Thornton), and, finally, the name she gained through marriage (Heidi Richardson). This name changing reveals a constant attempt to suppress her childhood self by reconstructing new adolescent and adult identities so that she could be brought closer to the identities of British nationals. Rather than achieving a harmonious new British identity, however, or combining a German-Jewish and British identity,

¹⁵² Newbery, *Sisterland*, pp. 261-262.

¹⁵³ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 260.

¹⁵⁴ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 262.

¹⁵⁵ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 324.

¹⁵⁶ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 328.

¹⁵⁷ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 79.

¹⁵⁸ Newbery, *Sisterland*, p. 79.

Rosa struggles to cast her German-Jewish identity off and in the end represses it at great psychological cost. It is only when she becomes sick with Alzheimer's and loses control over her memory that recollections of her childhood involuntarily re-emerge. She cannot escape being the British-German-Jewish girl: this is inscribed into her childhood self. But it is a conflicted self, one she associates with tensions. However, her emerging memories trigger a search for the family past in her granddaughter in a manner which suggests that, in the third generation, it might be possible to combine identities more harmoniously.

Eliza Graham's *The One I Was* is an atypical Kindertransport novel. The protagonist takes on many different roles from victim to villain, because Benny is not who the reader thinks he is. Only when the adult Benny is dying of cancer does he feel that he needs to reveal his real identity. The loss of the self is illustrated through a switch from the first person to the third person narrative which creates a distance between the adult protagonist and his childhood identity. Benny explains that he has taken 'a coward's way out, but it's the only way [he] can return to the events of January 1939'.¹⁵⁹ Right from the start of the novel, the adult Benny distances himself from his childhood self when remembering his past. Benny is scared and ashamed when he travels back into that past because he is not a Jewish boy but 'an Aryan boy' who unsuccessfully tried 'to assist his Jewish friend [...] who wanted to travel on a Kindertransport to Britain'.¹⁶⁰ Benny's story is a story about an 'imposter'. Benny's real name is Rudi. He went to see his Jewish friend, Benny, who had been due to go on a Kindertransport, only to find that he had died of 'diphtheria'.¹⁶¹ Rudi hopes to bring a health certificate to another Jewish child at the train station, but ends up boarding the train himself to Britain. While Rudi assumes the identity of his friend and creates a new life in Britain, pretending to be someone else, his later adult self restores his friend's identity when he writes down his

¹⁵⁹ Eliza Graham, *The One I Was* (Moreton Street Books: London, 2014), p. 261.

¹⁶⁰ Graham, *The One I Was*, p. 261.

¹⁶¹ Graham, *The One I Was*, p. 261.

confession. We learn that Rudi was running away from his father because he was a Nazi sympathiser. He wanted to stay friends with his Jewish friend. *The One I Was* reflects upon the theme of reconciliation because Harriet, Benny's nurse, discovers 'his secret' but does not 'reject him'; rather she comforts him in his final hours.¹⁶² Identity is constantly shifting in this novel but, in contrast to those previously discussed, the author invites the reader to imagine that the son of a perpetrator is a victim too. In *Sisterland*, Heidi casts off her Jewishness to become British, but in *The One I Was*, Rudi assumes the identity of a Jew to justify his position as a victim. Rudi clings on to Benny's identity because it protects him; he escapes Nazi Germany and his father, and in Britain this stolen identity makes it possible for him to start a new life. Rudi's identity moves from German to German-Jewish to British. He rejects his former national identity but adopts a new religious as well as a new national identity in his host nation. The novel mirrors John Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (2006) because it too makes the son of a Nazi into a victim.¹⁶³ Michael Rothberg, in defining multidirectional memory, has written that 'memories are not owned by groups' any more than 'groups are "owned" by memories'. Graham and Boyne apply this principle by imagining second generation Germans as potential victims of the same discrimination suffered by Jews.¹⁶⁴

***The American Dream and Redemption: Novels by American non-Kinder*¹⁶⁵**

One aspect of American Holocaust memory reflected in recent American fiction is redemption. This chimes to a degree with some autobiographical writing from the 1990s by American Kinder. Thus Olga Levy Drucker in her memoir *Kindertransport* (1992) contrasts the less welcoming Britain with a much more positive image of America. Because both Segal and

¹⁶² Graham, *The One I Was*, p. 313.

¹⁶³ John Boyne, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (David Fickling Books: Oxford, 2006).

¹⁶⁴ Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford University Press: Stanford, 2009), p. 5.

¹⁶⁵ Also see Lois Metzger, *Missing Girls* (Penguin Books Ltd.: London, 1999), Meg Waite Clayton, *The Last Train to London: A Novel* (Harper Collins Press: forthcoming 2020), and Ellen Umansky, *The Fortunate Ones* (HarperCollins: New York, 2017).

Drucker portray the further transnational movements of the Kinder beyond British shores, the moment of arrival in Britain is not as significant as in British Kindertransport novels: rather Britain is regarded as a temporary refuge while America becomes the Kinder's permanent new home. In fact, in *Kindertransport*, arrival in Britain is depicted as a bleak moment, because Ollie is shocked that she will be staying in the 'poor section of London'.¹⁶⁶ Arrival in America is a completely different experience. Towards the end of the book, Ollie (Olga) receives a letter from her parents, who, by 1941, had managed to emigrate to the United States. The letter describes her parents' 'happy' entry into America because as 'the sun [came] up behind the skyscrapers', they 'stood by the rail [of the boat] and held each other's hand', knowing that they had escaped.¹⁶⁷ The letter paints a positive image of adaptation in America as Ollie's mother states: '*I can't think of a more wonderful country to be a citizen of than the U.S.A*'.¹⁶⁸ The emphasis here is placed on how 'the "dark days"' should be 'forgotten' because 'soon [Ollie] would go to America'.¹⁶⁹

Novels by American non-Kinder authors such as Jana Zinser's *The Children's Train* (2015), and Lauren B. Grossman's *The Golden Peacock* (2014) also reflect in their own way redemptive aspects of the American Holocaust narrative. Neither novel is set in America, but America appears as a kind of promise of better times to come. Thus in *The Children's Train*, America is referred to several times throughout the novel as some of the characters' main goal is to reach this nation. Protagonists such as Peter Weinberg feel 'happiness' and 'joy' when America declares war on Germany because 'it would change everything'.¹⁷⁰ America is presented as coming to the aid of refugees and Europe more generally. Another character in *The Children's Train*, Charlie Beckham, is pulled out of a Kindertransport train by his father,

¹⁶⁶ Olga Levy Drucker, *Kindertransport* (Henry Holt and Company: New York, 1992), p. 44.

¹⁶⁷ Drucker, *Kindertransport*, p. 113.

¹⁶⁸ Drucker, *Kindertransport*, p. 113.

¹⁶⁹ Drucker, *Kindertransport*, p. 114.

¹⁷⁰ Jana Zinser, *The Children's Train* (Boutique of Quality Books Publishing Company: place of publication unknown, USA, 2015), p. 228.

Arnold, before it departs.¹⁷¹ The scene shows the despair of Charlie's parents as they realise how final this parting could be.¹⁷² But this passage further implies that going to America would be the better outcome, as then the family would not be broken up.¹⁷³ The family are helped by Uncle Ernst, who manages to secure their place to go to America by boat.¹⁷⁴ Arnold exclaims they have “won freedom” and that God has granted “safe passage out of here”.¹⁷⁵ It is America which appears as the nation which can ‘save’ Charlie's family, not Britain.¹⁷⁶ This time “nothing can stop” Arnold, he “won't change [his] mind” as he did before when he pulled Charlie from the train.¹⁷⁷ On 1st September 1939, Charlie and his family arrive at the German port of Wilhelmshaven.¹⁷⁸ In the words of the narrator, ‘the lighted windows of the boat to America, waiting at the harbour, seemed to twinkle with the promise of a voyage away from the evil that plagued Germany's Third Reich’.¹⁷⁹ Again America is seen as a beacon of hope away from the horrors of Europe. Although the family wait anxiously to board the ship, there is also an atmosphere of excitement as Charlie ‘cheered’ as ‘the boat whistle blew’.¹⁸⁰ However, Charlie and his family are prevented from travelling to America: the Nazis arrive and seize the port because war has been declared. The family are then taken to Soblin ghetto.

That America is the hoped-for promised land is indirectly underscored by criticism of Britain in *The Children's Train*. Thus at Dovercourt, we read, ‘the volunteers lined [the Kinder] up like they were preparing for an auction of children’.¹⁸¹ One refugee, Tellis, uses the term ‘cattle market’: ‘the families come, look us over, and decide who they want to take home’.¹⁸²

¹⁷¹ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 94.

¹⁷² Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 94.

¹⁷³ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 94.

¹⁷⁴ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 156.

¹⁷⁵ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 156.

¹⁷⁶ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 156.

¹⁷⁷ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 157.

¹⁷⁸ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 170.

¹⁷⁹ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 170.

¹⁸⁰ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 171.

¹⁸¹ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 132.

¹⁸² Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 132.

Far from being welcomed as in the positive British narrative, the Kinder are scrutinised, and ‘feel uncomfortable’ as the foster parents examine them ‘for imperfections’.¹⁸³ The process ‘was too much to endure’ for Peter, who wanted to ‘hide’ away.¹⁸⁴ Peter desperately wants to stay behind at Dovercourt to find his sister, Becca, but a farmer and his wife want to ‘take this one’, so he is forced to leave for Coventry.¹⁸⁵ The farmer, Emil, claims that Peter “‘doesn’t look too Jewish’”, which suggests antisemitic prejudice, and that Peter could be quickly anglicised whether he likes it or not.¹⁸⁶ The Kinder are not free to adapt to British society on their terms, rather they are forced to integrate according to the speed and needs of their foster family. For example, Peter is required to sleep in the attic and become a farm hand because he looks fit to work.¹⁸⁷ His foster family are not sympathetic towards his needs. Emil tells him that “‘Germany didn’t want [him]’” so he “‘best take what [he is] offered’”.¹⁸⁸ Gratefulness is forced upon him, as it is on Lore in *Other People’s Houses*. Another Kind in *The Children’s Train*, William, finds it difficult to adjust to life in Britain as he is interned on the Isle of Man. Here, the novel focuses on re-arrival, as William returns to the British mainland after his imprisonment. This rearrival is not welcoming as William’s ‘friends [...] suddenly turned on him, beating him with their fists, and viciously kicking him’.¹⁸⁹ He is called a “‘dirty, lying Jew’” who tried to “‘trick’” people.¹⁹⁰ This anti-Jewish, anti-foreigner attack on William demonstrates that there is antisemitism in Britain, and that Britain “‘didn’t want [the Kinder] either’”.¹⁹¹ There is no sense of belonging or compassion as the Jews are blamed for starting “‘this whole problem’”, as a man William meets in a pub puts it.¹⁹² He goes on to remark that

¹⁸³ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 132.

¹⁸⁴ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 132.

¹⁸⁵ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 133.

¹⁸⁶ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 133.

¹⁸⁷ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 136.

¹⁸⁸ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 136.

¹⁸⁹ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 208.

¹⁹⁰ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 208.

¹⁹¹ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 209.

¹⁹² Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 209.

William “can’t be trusted” because he is German.¹⁹³ William replies that he was brought to Britain on the Kindertransport but instead of freedom and a refuge he “found the same human wasteland that [he] left”.¹⁹⁴ For Peter, “England and Germany are the same” because he was “imprisoned in both countries, for just being who I am”.¹⁹⁵ William feels totally rejected by British society. He is then killed in the Blitz. In the words of the narrator, the ‘German bombs could not distinguish between the Englishman and an enemy alien’.¹⁹⁶

Nevertheless, in keeping with my argument in the introduction to this thesis that American Holocaust memory is not without self-criticism, America is also criticised in *The Children’s Train*. For example, Marla and Sebastian, two characters instrumental in bringing Jewish children to Britain, hope that “the Yanks [...] will [...] take children, too” and that “the U.S. Congress will do something soon”.¹⁹⁷ But then they receive a letter informing them that “the Wagner-Rogers Bill to authorize the admission into the United States of a limited number of German refugee children [...] failed” because of “the fear it would overburden new social programs”.¹⁹⁸ Even though the scheme, in the words of Marla, “was supported by private funds”, the letter makes clear that the American government were concerned that refugees would “take American jobs”.¹⁹⁹ Marla condemns US senators as “cowards”; those who were working out of Bloomsbury House in Britain would receive “no help from the Yanks”.²⁰⁰ America is presented as turning its back on refugee children. While *The Children’s Train* is critical of America because of the Wagner-Rogers Bill, in *The Golden Peacock*, the narrator suggests that it took Japan to wake up America so that it could ‘no longer ignore what was happening in Europe’.²⁰¹

¹⁹³ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 209.

¹⁹⁴ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 209.

¹⁹⁵ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 209.

¹⁹⁶ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 209.

¹⁹⁷ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 58.

¹⁹⁸ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 135.

¹⁹⁹ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 135.

²⁰⁰ Zinser, *The Children’s Train*, p. 135.

²⁰¹ Lauren B. Grossman, *The Golden Peacock* (CreateSpace: place of publication unknown, USA, 2014), p. 130.

Overall, though, the condemnation of Britain is stronger. In contrast to British Kindertransport novels, where the Kindertransport is often presented as a kind of salvation, *The Children's Train* suggests that true redemption lies only in revenge. *The Children's Train* recalls Quentin Tarantino's film *Inglourious Basterds* (2009), because a former Kind returns to Europe to fight against the Nazis and save others from persecution. The film as well as the novel implies that 'those who were victims of Hitler could be re-imagined as righteous persecutors'.²⁰² Peter and his friend Marla begin to "smuggle Jewish children out of Germany and Poland" and Peter is also involved in an attempt to break into Soblin ghetto where Charlie is incarcerated.²⁰³ When Peter hears the news that America has joined the war he cannot 'contain' his 'smile': 'his surge of confidence from the news about the United States made him bold'.²⁰⁴ He feels encouraged and reenergised to continue his fight because America's involvement is seen as a turning point as the nation was now 'on Hitler's tail'.²⁰⁵ According to Mica, one of the other Jewish refugees Peter is working with, Hitler now had "the big guns to deal with" as "the Yanks have found their backbone".²⁰⁶ America is shown to be coming to the assistance of those in need now, in contrast to earlier in the novel. Peter along with his fellow Jewish resistance fighters goes on to attack a Nazi camp called Reinigen, and destroy the gas chamber there. He becomes, as the narrator puts it, 'the Kindertransport boy who escaped Germany' and then 'returned, and infiltrated a death camp dressed as a Nazi officer'.²⁰⁷ The rebels 'take off in different directions to execute their schedule of demolishing buildings and to strike a blow against Hitler for Reinigen and all Jewish people'.²⁰⁸ Peter becomes a

²⁰² Heidi Schlipphacke, 'Post-Holocaust Revenge Fantasies: Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*', *Presented at the Jan Karski Memory and Responsibility Conference*, 20th September 2014, at <https://ecommons.luc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=jankarski> [accessed 7th January 2019], p. 4.

²⁰³ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 227.

²⁰⁴ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 228.

²⁰⁵ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 228.

²⁰⁶ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 232.

²⁰⁷ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 320.

²⁰⁸ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 321.

rescuer, a liberator as he releases the prisoners. Although Peter remains in Britain and becomes an accepted member of British society (he is invited to play the violin for the King and the Prime Minister), he is still rooted in German culture because of his love for Mozart.²⁰⁹ Other characters such as Nora who sent her child, Stephen, on a Kindertransport want to leave Britain for America.²¹⁰

The Americanised moral revenge fantasy of *The Children's Train* is mirrored to a certain extent in Grossman's *The Golden Peacock*. It focuses on an American author who tips off the Simon Wiesenthal Centre in America about a possible Nazi living in London. The Nazi, Ralf, turns out to be a Jew, Max, who left on a Kindertransport ship that was sunk before it could reach Britain. Rescued by the Germans, and after losing his memory, Max – now as Ralf – becomes a Nazi murderer in Sobibor death camp. Later, he flees to Peru. It is only when he hears the Golden Peacock song that he remembers he is a Jew. *The Golden Peacock* is a distressing novel to read because of the graphic descriptions of physical violence committed against the two Kindertransportees, Jana and Max. And like *The One I Was*, it blurs the lines between victims and perpetrators. It is therefore part of a recent literary trend towards a deconstruction of victim-perpetrator binaries as the categories of perpetrators and victims are not presented as being absolute and separate. This trend is also noticeable in American Buchenwald novels. Thus Ellen Keith's *The Dutch Wife* (2018) and Jenna Blum's *Those Who Save Us* (2005) explore the ways in which victims or members of the resistance become implicated in perpetration through their relationships to SS men. *The Golden Peacock* goes further than exploring grey zones, because it actually turns a victim into a full-scale perpetrator. The problematic implication here is that Jews could just as easily have become Nazis, had they

²⁰⁹ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, pp. 355-356.

²¹⁰ Zinser, *The Children's Train*, p. 352.

not happened to have been Jews – this role inversion becomes possible in the novel only because Max loses all memory of who he is, and is mistaken for a German soldier.

Both *The Children's Train* and *The Golden Peacock* reflect upon the steps taken to deal with injustices. While *The Children's Train* explores physical revenge, *The Golden Peacock* addresses the issue of judicial retribution. Rainee Allen, the American author in the novel who goes in search of a former Kindertransportee in Britain, ends up helping to unmask Max (Ralf) as the murderous SS man at Sobibor, triggering a court case against Max which leads to his sentencing. It takes an American writer's curiosity to bring an SS man to justice, who otherwise would have gone unrecognised in Britain. *The Golden Peacock* is very critical of Britain's treatment of the Kinder. Jana's foster father, Mr Harvey, treats Jana horrifically, causing lasting physical and emotional damage. Mr Harvey in an inebriated state first tries to rape Jana. He then reaches for the fire poker and shouts: "I'll show you what you can do with a real poker, Jewish whore!"²¹¹ He proceeds to violate Jana as 'he rammed the iron poker up inside' her.²¹² 'He leaned over [her] laughing' and screams: "you'll never be able to bring another Jew into the world!"²¹³ This explicit and devastating scene casts an extremely negative light on how some British foster parents received the Kinder. Jana tries to stop the bleeding after this 'monstrous act'.²¹⁴ She feels as if he was killing her:²¹⁵ 'the pain piercing my heart would stay there forever'.²¹⁶ That day 'something had died inside me'.²¹⁷ Mr Harvey 'had revealed his true feelings and prejudice'.²¹⁸ He was anti-Semitic because 'he had taken in a Jewish child, yet obviously hated Jews'.²¹⁹ The abuse Kinder were subjected to is seen in parallel to the mistreatment of children in Germany, as Max painfully recounts "the horrors [he] went

²¹¹ Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 115.

²¹² Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 115.

²¹³ Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 115.

²¹⁴ Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 116.

²¹⁵ Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 115.

²¹⁶ Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 117.

²¹⁷ Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 117.

²¹⁸ Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 117.

²¹⁹ Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 117.

through””.²²⁰ Before Max was supposed to travel on a Kindertransport, he was sent to live in “an orphanage run by clergy””.²²¹ He “was separated from Jana””.²²² Max also talks about how “every few evenings, a boy was taken in the middle of the night. It happened to [Max] twice. [...] Twice they came for [him] and took [him] into their rooms’”.²²³ He is so traumatised by his experience that he trembles as he tries to tell his son what happened to him. “It is difficult for [him] to explain what they did to [him]””.²²⁴ In helping to uncover this terrible history as well as bring Max to justice, Rainee, the American, seeks to redress a silence and moral imbalance.

Longing and Loss: A Novel by a Canadian non-Kind

This chapter cannot speak of common patterns within Canadian Kindertransport fiction because there is only one novel which explores the topic. Although Alison Pick’s *Far to Go* (2010) is partly set in Canada, the representation of the Kindertransportee’s further movements to Canada does not emerge as the driving force behind the novel. Instead, the Kindertransport appears as an additional narrative, with the main focus being placed on the narrator’s own search to rediscover her childhood self. The narrator though, Lisa, strongly identifies with the experiences of the Kind, and is herself a researcher into the Kindertransport. There are several parallel narratives within the novel which explore: the narrator’s need to piece together her own fractured life as well as the lives of her family; Pepik’s (who is later renamed Joseph) Kindertransport journey from Czechoslovakia to Britain; Pepik’s parents’ desperate attempts to save their child, and their later deportation and murder in the Holocaust; and the family bond which unites the narrator with Pepik. For much of the novel, Czechoslovakia is the main backdrop. Although Pepik’s time in Britain and Canada is discussed, it is the events that take

²²⁰ Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 250.

²²¹ Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 250.

²²² Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 250.

²²³ Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 250.

²²⁴ Grossman, *The Golden Peacock*, p. 250.

place in pre-war and post-war Czechoslovakia which come to dominate the narrative. The novel is thus preoccupied with looking backwards to events in continental Europe and the fates of those left behind, rather than with looking forward to life in a new country. But while *Far to Go* is more about the tragic fates of those murdered in the Holocaust than the act of rescue, it nevertheless picks up on themes which are expressed in other Kindertransport novels, such as coming together, being an outsider, struggles with identity, death, loss, illness, friends who become enemies and collaboration. Pick's novel takes the theme of loss a step further than the novels so far discussed, because, while not directly comparing the Kindertransport trains to the trains which travelled to Auschwitz, she daringly invites associations in the reader's mind between these different fates. The distinction between trains to life and trains to death is blurred because Pepik is utterly distressed and traumatised as he travels into the unknown.

The novel begins with the narrator's description of a train which 'winds into forever: shiny red cars, black cars, cattle cars, one after another. A red caboose and a Princess Elizabeth engine. The livestock cars, loosely linked, like the vertebrae of some long reptile's spine. It reaches forward into the unknowable future, destined to move perpetually ahead, but with no destination in mind'.²²⁵ Part of this description reappears later within the novel in reference to Pepik's toy train. The toy train is a symbol through which to approach the past because through it the narrator imagines Pepik's Kindertransport journey. The language used also evokes references to trains in other directions. This association of the Kinder's experiences with the fates of other child victims of the Holocaust becomes clearer when the narrator Lisa, talking about her own research, makes the general observation that 'the children suffered the most'.²²⁶ She believes that the children who were sent to Auschwitz 'absorbed [...] their parents' fear like black milk [...] they were raised on it, fed on fear, until fear itself was in their bones, in

²²⁵ Alison Pick, *Far to Go* (Headline Review: Croydon, 2010), p. 3.

²²⁶ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 57.

their visible skeletons, where baby fat should have been'.²²⁷ She also states that while the Kinder 'got out [...] it wasn't easy for them either' because 'they were sent away from their families, from houses full of fighting they could not understand, and they blamed themselves. They were given away as Chamberlain gave away the Sudetenland. They thought they had done something terrible to merit this. Even when they were reassured otherwise'.²²⁸ In Lisa's view, all children 'soaked [...] up' fear, stress and tension as they all journeyed into the unknown.²²⁹ Another example of a striking association in the novel between the Kindertransport and the Holocaust comes in the episode where a Kind's name is removed from a Winton Transport list to make way for Pepik. Marta, maid to Pavel Bauer and his wife, realises that Pepik's father was able to get his son on to a transport out of Prague 'with a bribe'.²³⁰ Winton 'could use Pavel's money to further finance his altruism; Pepik is on the list and some other child was off'.²³¹ The family decides to not 'speak of this, or of the finite number of futures that could be secured, or about who might be lost because Pepik had been found'.²³² The suggestion that the names of the children on Winton's list could be manipulated recalls the influence some prisoner functionaries had on transport lists at Nazi concentration camps.²³³ But while there are these similarities with regards to crossing names off lists or adding others, this is not presented in the novel as a criticism; rather *Far to Go* explores the difficult choices many people made. The emphasis is placed on the desperation of Pepik's parents to save their son.

Far to Go does not represent the Kindertransport as a progressive movement from threat to safety because the narrator highlights how Kinder were utterly traumatised and unable

²²⁷ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 58.

²²⁸ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 58.

²²⁹ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 58.

²³⁰ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 236.

²³¹ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 236.

²³² Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 236.

²³³ See Bill Niven, *The Buchenwald Child: Truth, Fiction and Propaganda* (Camden House: Rochester, 2007).

to adapt because of the horrors they had witnessed. For example, although ‘there were families in England who gave up everything they had, and often what they did not have, to offer a tiny traveller some kind of home’, these ‘stories of love and heartbreaking humanity [...] are not the bulk of the stories’.²³⁴ Lisa essentially criticises the Kindertransport operation because ‘far more frequently [there] are cases of trauma and upset. The Kindertransport children who were sent out of Czechoslovakia often spoke no English. They arrived in a country with no desire for war, battling tensions about its own role in the conflict brewing across the channel’. Furthermore, ‘the children arrived in homes where money was scarce, to foster parents who had been shamed into taking them. At what we would now call a “critical developmental stage”, everything solid was pulled out from under them. Children do not forget that. It stays with them, a wall that goes up at the first hint of intimacy’.²³⁵ The focus is therefore placed on the deep internal grief of being separated from one’s family. The past forever haunts the Kinder.

Unlike many other Kindertransport novels, *Far to Go* does not depict the Kindertransport as a process of acquiring a new positive identity; rather there is no closure, no resolution, no way to overcome the trauma. A good example of this is how the author describes Pepik’s constant physical distress. Prior to Pepik’s departure Marta, the family’s maid, ‘was sure’ that ‘Pepik was dead’ as ‘he was burning up’.²³⁶ His body is unable to take in what is happening to him. At the train station, the scene of departure is not one of excitement or even forthcoming escape, rather the focus is placed on losing control over one’s own future. The narrator describes the train as ‘long and black, and entering it was like being swallowed by a snake. The snake had dislocated its jaw to take Pepik in, and now he was being worked down into its body, deep, to the tip of its tail’.²³⁷ Pepik is consumed by his experience, he feels trapped

²³⁴ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 59.

²³⁵ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 60.

²³⁶ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 245.

²³⁷ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 261.

and unsafe. He even tries ‘to get off the train’.²³⁸ This is not a movement towards a haven but a journey into the jaws of death. At the start of the novel, Pepik’s toy train is described as a reptile and a worm: both of these bury themselves underground. There are therefore signs from the beginning that Pepik will be unable to digest physically, mentally and emotionally what will happen to him. This is reinforced when the narrator graphically describes Pepik’s intense physical reactions to being separated from his family. Pepik vomits during his journey out of Prague, and in Britain becomes incontinent: he cannot control his bodily functions. Later, we learn that Pepik dies of cancer, which suggests he has been eaten up by his experiences.

This very negative view of the effects of the Kindertransport is best exemplified by the scenes where Pepik’s foster parents use him as a companion for their terminally ill child. Pepik essentially watches this young boy die; he is thrown into a new world which is full of grief and misery. Pepik thinks that he has been greeted by his foster mother, Mrs Milling, who he describes as being ‘soft and warm’ and ‘beautiful’.²³⁹ This lady shows care and affection, she feels physically moved to see him, as her ‘eyes were full of tears’.²⁴⁰ But this tender moment is quickly ended as Pepik is introduced to ‘the real Mrs Milling’, who immediately rifles through Pepik’s suitcase.²⁴¹ This invasion of privacy and utter disregard for Pepik’s feelings continue as she is unsympathetic towards Pepik when he moves into his new home. ‘Her face was a blank sheet of paper’, the narrator says, which emphasises how she is completely indifferent towards him.²⁴² Pepik sleeps near to Arthur, his new foster brother. He has to listen to ‘Arthur’s breathing [which] was raspy and irregular’, ‘it was like hearing a dead body come suddenly back to life’.²⁴³ ‘Pepik’s job [was] to help Arthur get better’, which is an enormous responsibility for someone who does not speak the same language as Arthur and who is a child

²³⁸ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 263.

²³⁹ Pick, *Far to Go*, pp. 273-274.

²⁴⁰ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 274.

²⁴¹ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 277.

²⁴² Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 278.

²⁴³ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 279.

themselves in a strange land.²⁴⁴ He cannot cope with the colossal pressure of having to look after Arthur and as a result he ‘wet the bed’ and vomits.²⁴⁵ Mrs Milling does not try to console Pepik; instead, she leaves him standing in the room ‘naked and uncovered’.²⁴⁶ Pepik is desperately unhappy, afraid and alone. He feels guilty because he had ‘fallen asleep at his post’ and that ‘he had failed’ his new family.²⁴⁷ While Pepik is sympathetic towards Arthur’s illness, the family makes no attempt to relieve Pepik’s pain and sorrow. Rather he is made to feel responsible for unintentionally disturbing Arthur.

The reader later discovers that Pepik is placed in an orphanage, but the narrator ‘never figured out’ why he was moved there.²⁴⁸ The novel implies that when Pepik has served his function as a companion, the foster family just decide to get rid of him. There is a gap in narration at this point indicated by the symbol (~), pointing to the absence of any discussion among the foster family as to whether an orphanage is the right place for Pepik. He becomes an obsolete object to be handed on without compassion to anyone who will take him. Pepik’s arrival in Britain is presented as a continuous process of despair. This cursory process of being taken in and then casually rejected by the foster family shows how Pepik cannot put down roots in this new society. In the course of the year that Pepik spends with his foster parents, he vomits on several occasions; ‘everything [...] that he had managed to bury inside him was being pulled up through his body, ripped out of his mouth’.²⁴⁹ Pepik’s last experience with his foster family highlights how threatened he felt. For example, Pepik feels that ‘the sharks were below him, his legs in their jaws’.²⁵⁰ He is being ‘pulled under’ by the desperate situation he finds himself in.²⁵¹ He is defenceless, exposed and vulnerable, which contrasts with how other, more

²⁴⁴ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 279.

²⁴⁵ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 280.

²⁴⁶ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 280.

²⁴⁷ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 281.

²⁴⁸ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 328.

²⁴⁹ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 284.

²⁵⁰ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 284.

²⁵¹ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 284.

conventional British novels depict Kinder becoming cherished members of society. Pepik's childhood self disappears from the narration when he enters the Catholic orphanage.²⁵² He becomes 'an empty shell', his story in Britain comes to an abrupt ending.²⁵³ He feels that he will never be found by his family, instead 'they would come from the east, looking for a ghost. Dragging their shadows behind them'.²⁵⁴

We encounter Pepik again only shortly before his death. He is located in Canada by the narrator, Lisa, who turns out to be his half-sister. Parts of Lisa and Pepik are still missing because there are gaps within their memories: neither of them has achieved a positive sense of identity. Lisa is a researcher 'in the Holocaust Studies department' at an unidentified institution in Montreal.²⁵⁵ She not only researches the oral testimonies of Kinder, but also tries to piece together her own biography. Lisa understands her own life through her relationship with the Kindertransport because it is the most parallel experience to hers. She gathers information from different archives to reconstitute her family's story because she does not have 'a single memory of [her] father'.²⁵⁶ She would give anything to envisage her father's gestures and 'the way he held a pen' but all she has 'is a list of names and dates'.²⁵⁷ As an academic, Lisa puts a distance between herself and the events of the Holocaust, and she strives to recreate the past on the basis of facts. But in the end, Lisa brings together fact and fiction to reconstruct her family's history because the information she desires has been lost. She is only able to complete the story by inventing sequences in the narrative to fill in the gaps. We discover that Lisa is the daughter of Marta, the family's maid and Pavel, Pepik's father. She is named after Anneliese, who is Pepik's mother. The novel suggests that Lisa and Pepik's story is one of a continual process of physical, emotional and mental movement which has led to disconnections. For example, Lisa

²⁵² Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 284.

²⁵³ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 285.

²⁵⁴ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 285.

²⁵⁵ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 291.

²⁵⁶ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 328.

²⁵⁷ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 328.

does not ‘know much about Pepik’s childhood [and] he himself remembered very little about his life in Prague or about the journey that brought him from Scotland to [Canada]’.²⁵⁸ They are both fragmented characters, as Lisa has ‘been taken apart one too many times, and the little cog at the centre of [her] chest has slipped into the gutter and been lost’.²⁵⁹ She does not feel Jewish because her mother was not Jewish, though her father was, and she does not have a child to pass memory on to: there is no generational transmission. While the family’s story is to a degree revealed, it remains on the verge of being forgotten because Lisa is the only living family member. As for Pepik, ‘the distance [he] travelled was hard to imagine. The train trips, the boat rides. Later, the aeroplanes. And those, of course, were only the geographical trips’.²⁶⁰ Because Pepik experiences many different ‘kinds of displacements’, he becomes a ‘jet-lagged, bedraggled voyageur’.²⁶¹ He is without identity. The reader is told that Pepik changed his name to ‘Joseph’ but we never come to know why this happened.²⁶² Lisa is confused as to what to call Pepik, so she uses both his names. Pepik is a child of diaspora, he is constantly uprooted. This makes it difficult to know who he is.

The choice of Canada as the setting for part of the novel seems almost arbitrary. We have no idea why Pepik ends up in Canada, and there is no suggestion that Pepik becomes Canadian. He is not integrated into this new society, rather he appears nationally homeless. There is no suggestion that Canada is a solution or an answer to the problems and trauma Pepik experiences. The trajectory of the novel is not mitigated by a national narrative as a personal trajectory of loss overrides any optimism. In this sense, then, the novel makes clear that a Kindertransport narrative in Canada has not yet crystallised. Nevertheless, it does chime with Canadian Holocaust memory more generally because it presents a negative image of the

²⁵⁸ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 327.

²⁵⁹ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 57.

²⁶⁰ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 294.

²⁶¹ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 294.

²⁶² Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 290.

Kindertransport and its legacy. Neither Canada or Britain are depicted in a positive way, and the novel's desolate conclusion reinforces how Pepik and Lisa's story 'isn't a story with a happy ending'.²⁶³ 'All [their family are] dead now', Pepik's cancer spreads 'everywhere; he was in so much pain' and Lisa regrets not being able to tell Pepik the family's story before he dies.²⁶⁴ We also discover that Pepik's cousin, Tomáš, who travelled from Vienna to Britain on a Kindertransport 'died in the bombings in London'.²⁶⁵ There are no happy endings for the Kindertransportee characters. The final page of the novel reemphasises the sense of overwhelming loss, referring to 'the train of memory' which is surrounded by 'ghosts' and 'shadows'.²⁶⁶ 'The train has no answers, only forward momentum', it is 'moving always ahead' but 'it never arrives'.²⁶⁷ This echoes the novel's opening sentence: 'THE TRAIN WILL NEVER ARRIVE'.²⁶⁸ This novel thus returns to the beginning in a circle, suggesting there has been no arrival – thus contradicting the positive British narrative, where arrival is a focal point. Although the characters arrive in Canada in real time, their internal clock moves in the 'opposite' direction.²⁶⁹ Their journeys never really come to an end because they are cut off from their pasts. They wander through life not knowing who they are.

Hyphenation to Hybridity: Novels by Kinder

Up to now, this chapter has reflected upon novels by authors who have no family link to the Kindertransport, with the exception of Watts' *Escape from Berlin*. Although this trilogy of novels is written by a Kind, it follows a more conventional structure because the novels are targeted at children. Novels by other British Kinder such as Kenneth Amberose's *The Story of*

²⁶³ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 307.

²⁶⁴ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 307.

²⁶⁵ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 326.

²⁶⁶ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 331.

²⁶⁷ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 331.

²⁶⁸ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 3.

²⁶⁹ Pick, *Far to Go*, p. 331.

Peter Cronheim (1962) and Karen Gershon's *The Bread of Exile* (1985), as well as by American Kind Lore Segal *Other People's Houses* (1964)²⁷⁰ are aimed at a more general readership and therefore deal with more sensitive and difficult themes as is the case with the novels I have discussed above. They also explore transcultural identity in a similar way. Authors who are less connected to the Kindertransport explore instable identity constructions, but while the characters' identities are not fixed in their novels, there is often a suggestion that they are becoming more stable towards the end. Novels by Kinder, on the other hand, often end with no resolution because the characters are caught between several cultural origins. In other words, the characters never stop moving psychologically. The Kindertransport experience is presented as an ongoing process because the Kinder do not feel completely settled into their new way of life. Survivors may feel motivated to represent their own Kindertransport experiences through the genre of literary fiction so they can openly explore the complicatedness of their identities. As with testimony, it was the Kinder themselves who first reflected upon the issue of diaspora in Kindertransport literary fiction. This continues in British, American and Canadian non-survivor literature published within the last ten years. In some cases more recent novels by non-Kinder are as complex as those penned by the Kinder.

Amberose's *The Story of Peter Cronheim* was the first Kindertransport novel to be published. The novel is often regarded as an example of the positive British narrative, but as this thesis has argued, there is little indication that this narrative was the prevailing perspective in the 1960s. Madelyn Travis indicates that the novel promotes 'a liberal, tolerant Britain providing a haven for assimilable Jews' because it was written at a time when this perspective was dominant.²⁷¹ In contrast, this chapter argues that there was little cultural reception of the Kindertransport in the 1960s, and when it was represented, the perspective was balanced. In

²⁷⁰ Also see Lore Segal, *Her First American* (The New Press: New York, 2004), and Lore Segal, *Shakespeare's Kitchen* (The New Press: New York, 2007).

²⁷¹ Madelyn Travis, *Jews and Jewishness in British Children's Literature* (Routledge: London, 2013), p. 61.

Chapter One, for example, I reflected upon how Gershon's *We Came as Children* shows how early Kindertransport testimony did not support a wholly positive view. I agree with Travis that *The Story of Peter Cronheim* 'concludes optimistically' because the protagonist makes new friends at his new English boarding school.²⁷² 'His new friend Peter Taylor', for example, brings a 'great feeling of relief' to Peter which makes him feel safe.²⁷³ But I disagree with Travis in that the novel does not depict a straightforward integration process. Peter is caught 'between two worlds'.²⁷⁴ The second to last chapter portrays Peter's nightmare of being taken off a Kindertransport train by a Nazi ticket collector. He fears he will be unable to leave Germany, worrying he may not have a valid passport.²⁷⁵ When, in his dream, Peter is told to exit the train with the ticket collector, he is convinced that 'this is the end' because 'he felt like a trapped animal watching the hunters approach'.²⁷⁶ His journey is one into 'darkness': 'at one end was his past life, and at the other end nothing that he could distinguish'.²⁷⁷ Although he does arrive safely in Britain, his later nightmare suggests that there is no hope at the end of the tunnel. Instead there is an empty space, a kind of limbo where he is all alone. He imagines 'himself floating, timelessly, between worlds, the one he knew and another one which he wouldn't be able to see or imagine until he was actually there'.²⁷⁸ He is described as a 'lucky boy' in his dream, but he remains fearful of being sent back to Germany:²⁷⁹ he does not feel at ease in Britain. Therefore, this first novel is different to the RCM narrative and the positive British national narrative which developed much later.

Gershon's *The Bread of Exile* 'is a fictionalized autobiography reflecting the emotional pain felt by refugee children during the war'.²⁸⁰ While Amberose's novel paints an ambivalent

²⁷² Travis, *Jews and Jewishness in British Children's Literature*, p. 61.

²⁷³ Kenneth Amberose, *The Story of Peter Cronheim* (Constable and Company: London, 1962) p. 159.

²⁷⁴ Amberose, *The Story of Peter Cronheim*, p. 152.

²⁷⁵ Amberose, *The Story of Peter Cronheim*, p. 152.

²⁷⁶ Amberose, *The Story of Peter Cronheim*, p. 153.

²⁷⁷ Amberose, *The Story of Peter Cronheim*, p. 152.

²⁷⁸ Amberose, *The Story of Peter Cronheim*, p. 152.

²⁷⁹ Amberose, *The Story of Peter Cronheim*, p. 153.

²⁸⁰ Alan L. Berger, 'Jewish Identity and Jewish Destiny, the Holocaust in Refugee Writing: Lore Segal and

picture of integration into British society, Gershon's novel takes criticism a step further by suggesting that the Kind protagonist can never escape because their Jewish identity is forever problematic.²⁸¹ Andy Pearce argues that *The Bread of Exile* recounts 'the darker, more uncomfortable, and traumatic aspects of some Kindertransport experiences'.²⁸² As in her edited volume *We Came as Children*, Gershon explores themes such as 'the loss of parents, home and native country', 'the experience of exile and adoptive nation', and 'new identities as British citizens'.²⁸³ Peter Lawson suggests that 'Gershon was driven by a survivor's sense of guilt' and a 'duty to bear witness'.²⁸⁴ Her work thus moves beyond the positive British narrative where the topic of survivor guilt is not a key element. Gershon recounts her experiences through many different genres such as individual and collective autobiographical writing, literary fiction and poetry, but there is a clear correspondence between these.²⁸⁵ Stephanie Homer for instance writes that

although Gershon fashions a protagonist with a different name in *The Bread of Exile*, there are clear similarities between the presentation of Inge in this novel and Kate, her third-person 'self' in her autobiography. Snippets of real experience and the feelings of loneliness and isolation that are persistent in her autobiography are reflected in her more fictional text: the clear memory of the anti-Semitic propaganda paper, *Der Stürmer*, at tram stops, and the conversation with a man on the street as they head to the station before her departure on the Kindertransport is recounted in both texts and is almost identical.²⁸⁶

It is striking that Gershon's fictional and non-fictional works have developed similarly as they challenge the positive British narrative because she consistently recalls more negative experiences. This more complex telling of the Kindertransport is not only presented in her

Karen Gershon', *Studies in American Jewish Literature* 11:1 (1981), p. 85.

²⁸¹ Lassner, *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust*, p. 52.

²⁸² Andy Pearce, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain* (Routledge: London, 2014), p. 178.

²⁸³ Peter Lawson, 'Broken Homes: Three "Kindertransport" Poets', *Critical Survey* 20:2 (2008), p. 100.

²⁸⁴ Lawson, 'Broken Homes', p. 89.

²⁸⁵ For works by Karen Gershon, see Karen Gershon, *A Lesser Child* (Peter Owen: London, 1994), Karen Gershon, *Selected Poems* (Gollancz: London, 1966), Karen Gershon, *A Tempered Wind: Autobiography* (unpublished manuscript, 1992), Karen Gershon, *Legacies and Encounters* (Gollancz: London, 1972), Karen Gershon, *My Daughters, My Sisters* (Gollancz: London, 1975), and Karen Gershon, *The Historical and Legendary Esther* (unpublished manuscript, 1980).

²⁸⁶ Stephanie Homer, *Remembering, Representing, and Re-imagining the Kindertransport: An Analysis of Literary Genres*, PhD dissertation, University of London, (2020), p. 178.

individual accounts as her edited volume *We Came as Children: A Collected Autobiography of Refugees* which I discussed in Chapter One also presents this more critical and diverse perspective. Lassner provides a detailed analysis of *The Bread of Exile* which highlights how the novel represents the Kindertransport as a continued process of discrimination. She discusses the passage where, prior to Inge and Dolph's journey to Britain on the Kindertransport, their father asks the German passport officer if he can change Dolph's name 'because the boy's name happened to be Adolf – though he had been Dolph to all who knew him long before the world had heard of Hitler'.²⁸⁷ Dolph's father wants his child to have an English name so that he will be safe in Britain but the passport officer replies: "don't worry, son, your passport will make it plain for all to see that you're a Yid".²⁸⁸ Following this, the narrator draws the reader's attention to how the officers made them aware that 'the English knew how to deal with the Jews [as] they had burned Jews in synagogues long before there was a German Reich'.²⁸⁹ As Lassner points to, 'links between the origins of Dolph's name [...] with Nazi terror, and also with medieval English pogroms'.²⁹⁰ Such links imply there cannot be any integration of Jews in these two nations. This contradicts the British welcoming narrative because there cannot be a process of integration if the Kinder are forever foreign. As testimony has shown, the welcome narrative comes to a stop when Kinder are interned, as they become enemy aliens, but here there is a suggestion that the Kinder were not wanted from the very beginning, because they were Jews. For Lassner, the above passage draws attention to the 'antisemitic history Britain shared with the continent'.²⁹¹

In *The Bread of Exile*, the Kinder characters' suppression of their Jewish identity is not in keeping with the positive British narrative: they have to hide a part of themselves in an

²⁸⁷ Karen Gershon, *The Bread of Exile* (Victor Gollancz: London, 1985), p. 9.

²⁸⁸ Gershon, *The Bread of Exile*, p. 10.

²⁸⁹ Gershon, *The Bread of Exile*, p. 10.

²⁹⁰ Lassner, *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust*, p. 52.

²⁹¹ Lassner, *Anglo-Jewish Women Writing the Holocaust*, p. 52.

attempt to fit in. This creates an estrangement from their own self and their lives in their former homelands. Nor does suppression lead to assimilation. As Lassner points out, Inge finds out she ‘did not share the background of the people who went’ to universities such as Oxford and Cambridge.²⁹² She is constantly made to feel different not only because of her status as a refugee, but also because of her gender: ‘she would not fit in [to these universities] twice over’ because she was female and these establishments did not take in many women.²⁹³ The novel also implies that Inge must scale down her expectations to become part of the new society she now finds herself in. The final sentence refers to a letter from another Kind, Rudi, which suggests she should not be ‘resenting that she was not getting what she wanted’ but ‘welcoming what she was getting, with the feeling that it was more than she had the right to expect’.²⁹⁴ In Gershon’s novel, the focus is placed not on how Kinder prospered in Britain, but on how they were unable to overcome prejudices.

The most well-known novel by an American Kind, Lore Segal’s *Other People’s Houses*, also presents the whole Kindertransport experience at times from a very critical perspective. Unlike Gershon, Segal has only written a novel about the Kindertransport. Segal takes a conscious choice to present her Kindertransport experience through a specific genre (fiction) which enables her to move beyond the facts.²⁹⁵ As Homer suggests, within her novel, Segal makes clear that ‘the purely factual recounting of experience was not satisfying enough, even at a young age [because] the reality of her upheaval was not conveyed [when she first attempted to write] an autobiographical account’.²⁹⁶ Fiction on the other hand as Homer states allows for a ‘deepening and darkening [of] her experience [because] autobiographical fiction

²⁹² Gershon, *The Bread of Exile*, p. 184.

²⁹³ Gershon, *The Bread of Exile*, pp. 183-184.

²⁹⁴ Gershon, *The Bread of Exile*, p. 184.

²⁹⁵ Leo Baeck Institute, New York Zoom Book Club Event, *Her First American by Lore Segal*, 14th July 2020.

²⁹⁶ Homer, *Remembering, Representing, and Re-imagining the Kindertransport*, p. 166.

proves to be a more fulfilling enterprise for Segal and allows her to re-examine her childhood “self” and reassess the distress she faced’.²⁹⁷ Homer also points to a key quote in Segal’s novel:

At the house after school, I had begun to write my autobiography, to let the English know, as I had promised my father, what had happened to us under Hitler. But when I came to write it down, I felt a certain flatness. The events needed to be picked up, deepened, darkened.²⁹⁸

Segal seems to only be able to fully describe with ‘gusto’ the horrors she experiences through literary fiction.²⁹⁹ However, Segal did contribute to the edited volume *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* which I reflected upon in Chapter One. Similarly to Gershon, Segal’s critical retelling of her Kindertransport experience in her fictional writing echoes her testimony as presented in the edited volume. Segal’s testimony and novel reflect upon the pressure she felt as a child ‘to save [her] parents, and grandparents, and [her] aunt and the twins’.³⁰⁰ As in her novel, in her testimony there is an aspect of reimagining, as she pictures herself as a child asking British adults to help rescue her parents. She recalls

one of the images that [she] came up with. In the flower bed at the back of the hut [at Dovercourt] there was a single rose still growing, and it had snow on it. [She] wrote that [her] parents were like this rose, still alive in a winter of snow and ice, and if somebody didn’t save them soon, they would die. It was not a particularly apt metaphor, but [she] was wonderfully proud of it. [She] was ten years old and turning into a writer.³⁰¹

With regard to Segal’s testimony, it is interesting to note how richly descriptive it is and how she constantly returns to literary devices such as metaphors to express herself.

The protagonist in Segal’s *Other People’s Houses*, Lore, who shares the same name as the author, is described as an Austrian Jew who was educated in England and lives in America. Lore’s Kindertransport journey is a movement from Austria to Britain, then to the Dominican

²⁹⁷ Homer, *Remembering, Representing, and Re-imagining the Kindertransport*, p. 166.

²⁹⁸ Lore Segal, *Other People’s Houses* (The New Press: London, 2004), p. 62. For the relevant page in Homer’s PhD see p. 166.

²⁹⁹ Segal, *Other People’s Houses*, p. 62.

³⁰⁰ Lore Segal, ‘On the Shoulders of Children’ in Mark Jonathan Harris and Deborah Oppenheimer (eds), *Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport* (Bloomsbury: London, 2000) p. 171.

³⁰¹ Segal, ‘On the Shoulders of Children’, p. 171.

Republican and finally to America. These wider movements present difficulties for Lore. Life is a series of adjustments. For example, Lore states that ‘I was beginning to love New York. I had given up describing everything in letters to London. England had never replied’.³⁰² When Lore first arrives in America, she often thinks back to her time in England. As she spends more time in New York, she becomes more distanced from her first host nation. Although she endeavours to readapt each time she is uprooted, this constant process of displacement suggests that she is never fully settled anywhere. Former homes become memories which blend into the background of her life. The novel ‘ends on a melancholic and rather pessimistic note’ because ‘although Lore acknowledges that she has finally found a stable home in the United States [...] the tone of anticipation of disasters, which can strike at any minute, that characterizes the novel as a whole, pervades it through to the end’.³⁰³

In contrast to Kindertransport novels by British Kinder, however, Segal suggests that new forms of identity can be found through hybridity – whereas British novels by Kinder explored earlier in the chapter either emphasise becoming British, or describe hyphenated identities. In *Other People's Houses*, Lore's different identities gradually blur into one another. She does not become any one of them but instead a mixture of cultures due to her transnational movements and living in other people's houses. This blending of identities is also presented through Lore's extensive search to find ‘her own space, a space where she is not going to be expelled from’, but instead somewhere she can feel safe and comfortable.³⁰⁴ Lore tries to make the apartment she shares with her mother and grandmother as homely as possible. For example, she purchases ‘sewed Chinese-red burlap covers’ for ‘the two couches’ and a ‘Danish

³⁰² Segal, *Other People's Houses*, p. 294.

³⁰³ Julia K. Baker, ‘From Other People's Houses into Shakespeare's Kitchen’, in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), p. 191.

³⁰⁴ Lorena Silos Ribas, ‘The Experience of Space in Lore Segal's *Other People's Houses*’, in Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (eds), *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938/39 New Perspectives: The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies* 13 (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2012), p. 214.

teakwood coffee table'.³⁰⁵ Lore appears to be at home in her hybridity because she can combine the new and old aspects of her life. Her family represents her childhood self, former homeland and traditions, but the American apartment and furnishings speak of her new life and her evolving sense of self as someone influenced by many different cultures. This is reinforced when she finally buys her own apartment because she furnishes her new home with an eighteenth-century English dining room table.³⁰⁶ Lore's design aesthetics as well as her identity are fluid as she draws on many cultural influences to create her home.³⁰⁷

More generally, Lore becomes the embodiment of transcultural identity because she expresses herself through different cultures and surrounds herself with people from many different backgrounds – Pakistan, India, Hungary, Israel, Germany and Austria.³⁰⁸ Likewise, she eats at Mexican and French restaurants, but she eats traditional Austrian food, too. Lore has to learn that to be American is to personify all these different aspects in one's self. She longs to meet 'real' Americans, but only when she meets Carter Bayoux, an African American, and understands his complex cultural heritage does she realise that American identity is a fusion of different cultures. Lore has a mosaic identity: her friends and the furniture she buys are individual but, in their totality, they reflect the diversity of American society and culture and of her own personal background. Segal indicates that to become American, the Kind, ideally, does not have to abandon any part of the self, because American identity is an amalgamation of many different cultures. *Other People's Houses* thus seems to bear out the 'melting pot' theory which characterises American understandings of immigration, also in relation to Jewish refugees and Holocaust survivors. As Stacy Warner Maddern puts it, the 'assortment of immigrant cultures [in America] produce[s] new hybrid social and cultural

³⁰⁵ Segal, *Other People's Houses*, p. 291.

³⁰⁶ Segal, *Other People's Houses*, p. 311.

³⁰⁷ Segal, *Other People's Houses*, p. 311.

³⁰⁸ Segal, *Other People's Houses*, p. 302.

forms'.³⁰⁹ Maddern goes on to say that the melting pot theory is 'most commonly used to describe the United States as a new world with a distinct new breed of people amalgamated from many various groups of immigrants. Because of this, the melting pot theory has become synonymous with the process of Americanization'.³¹⁰ *Other People's Houses*, for all its ambivalence, underlines this.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown how British children's novels portray the Kindertransport as a positive process in which any potential problems are quickly ironed out. British Kindertransport novels for general readers explore at greater depth issues of German-British-Jewish identity, and the conflicts that can arise in connection with these issues. But possible resolutions to these conflicts are handled ambivalently. Hyphenation in *Sisterland*, for example, is rejected by Heidi as she wants to be British. Hyphenation here means tension, whereas British identity means belonging. Heidi's granddaughter on the other hand combines her Jewish identity with her British identity more positively at the conclusion of the novel as she wants to reconnect with her Jewish heritage. Hyphenation is presented as being both positive and negative. British adult novels by non-Kinder can reflect positive national memory by suggesting that the Kinder either become British, or that their identities are, in the end, happily combined. Adult novels by American non-Kinder also explore frictions between different identities within the Kinder protagonists. At the same time, they show the influence of America's positive national memory of the Kindertransport. While American novels can be critical of America – for instance, of its failure to back an American Kindertransport scheme – America nevertheless becomes the hero. The notion of retribution within these novels reinforces how it is America which addresses the legacy of injustice, as it is only when America

³⁰⁹ Stacy Warner Maddern, 'Melting Pot Theory', in Immanuel Ness (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration* (Blackwell Publishing: Oxford, 2013).

³¹⁰ Warner Maddern, 'Melting Pot Theory'.

or American characters come to the rescue that justice prevails and the moral order is restored. In Chapter Two, I explored how American museum exhibitions concluded with a redemptive narrative as they suggest that it is America and Israel that became a new home for Jews after the war. Similar suggestions can be found in American novels by non-Kinder. While there is only one Canadian novel, it is openly critical of Britain but does not present life as improving in Canada as Pepik dies there. Illness pervades his life; no new nation can save him. Generally, novels by Kinder are even more frank in their portrayal of the often traumatic difficulties encountered during and after the Kindertransport. At the same time, Segal's novel *Other People's Houses* provides an example of a productive and positive hybridity, showing a merging of and interaction between the different national and religious identities of the Kinder that goes beyond any of the identity portrayals in novels by non-Kinder.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I set out to test the claim that there is a positive British national narrative of the Kindertransport which has become ingrained in British culture. While this claim has been made by scholars before, evidence is not always provided in the secondary literature, or, if it is, then usually with reference to very particular examples. I have tested it by exploring representations across four genres of cultural reception: testimony, museum exhibitions, memorials and literary fiction, specifically novels. I have argued, first of all, that the positive British narrative began as an institutional narrative of the Refugee Children's Movement (RCM) in 1945, but did not really become a national narrative until the 1990s. As Chapter One revealed, Karen Gershon's 1966 edited volume of Kindertransport testimony suggested a balanced view of the Kindertransport, because while some Kinder had started to adapt and feel accepted into British society, others still felt like outsiders. Gershon's edited volume concludes with a sad reflection on the price of integration, because for Kinder to no longer feel like refugees, they sensed they had to sever emotional and mental links with their former homelands, which suggests that the welcome they were given was not tolerant of difference.¹ In Chapter Four, I explored how the first Kindertransport novel by Kenneth Amberose also drew a more complicated picture of the Kindertransport: the protagonist was haunted by his experiences, which does not indicate a smooth transition into life in Britain.² There is no evidence to suggest, then, that the positive RCM narrative continuously dominated from 1945 to the present. By exploring collections of testimony in institutions, museum exhibitions, memorials and novels, this thesis has argued that the positive narrative became dominant as of the 1990s. I identified various reasons for the revival of interest in the Kindertransport in the late 1980s and early 1990s such as reunions, but a major factor was how Holocaust memory was coming to prominence alongside an

¹ See Karen Gershon (ed.), *We Came as Children: A Collective Autobiography* (Harcourt, Brace & World: New York, 1966), p. 168.

² Kenneth Amberose, *The Story of Peter Cronheim* (Constable and Company Ltd.: London, 1962).

increased British patriotism. As the Kinder began to recount their stories, these stories were gradually incorporated into museum exhibitions in ways which supported a celebratory narrative of rescue and liberation by the British government, British troops and British citizens.

In addition to tracing the emergence of the positive British Kindertransport narrative, my thesis is the first to examine how it is actually constructed. In Chapter Two, I explored how, in British museums, the negative experiences of the Kinder in their host nations prior to the Kindertransport – such as antisemitism in Nazi Germany, prejudice at school, Kristallnacht, incarceration in concentration camps, separation from family members, and the confusion of being sent away often unaccompanied – are presented so as to suggest an uplifting contrast between the horrors of life in Germany (or Austria) and the safety of life in Britain. While British museums also focus on the moment of arrival, in Chapter Three I argued that this is a particular focus of British memorials. Marking the point of arrival into Britain places emphasis on welcome and integration into the local, regional or national community, as well as on the prospect of a new and prosperous life. In Chapter Four, I discussed how children's novels about the Kindertransport also follow a positive trajectory, contrasting life in Germany with life in Britain. My thesis has also shown, then, that the positive narrative in some respects depends on depicting the overcoming of negative aspects. Most of the time, these negative aspects relate to the countries the children flee from, but the positive British Kindertransport narrative can also sometimes acknowledge the domestic negatives such as internment, abuse, separation from family members in Britain and relocation to several foster homes, hostels and schools. Here, the positive character of the British narrative is protected by downplaying or marginalising these aspects. My discussion of museums in Chapter Two showed how, in the Imperial War Museum South (IWMS), for instance, the topic of internment in Britain or Britain's reluctance to take in refugees was addressed in a very indirect way that was easy to overlook. In Chapter Four, in my discussion of children's novels particularly, I show that

literature – unlike museums or memorials – does occasionally address the theme of prejudice or hostility towards the incoming Kinder, but usually such moments are quickly dispelled by references to the community as overwhelmingly welcoming. The positives in Britain are used to trump the pre-Kindertransport negatives and the negatives of life in Britain after the Kindertransport. While many of the techniques employed to maintain the positive narrative are consistent across all genres discussed in this thesis, some techniques vary according to genre. Museum exhibitions, for example, organise space, and use lighting or listening devices to reduce the significance of the negatives.

However, my thesis has also shown that, over the last ten to fifteen years, some representations of the Kindertransport in Britain have placed greater emphasis on the negatives, without necessarily trying to reduce or undermine their importance for assessing the Kindertransport experience as a whole. This trend is noticeable across all the genres I have explored. While Kindertransport testimony has generally always been balanced in its perspective, there was a slight shift towards a greater focus on the positives in 1990s' testimony. But more recently, particularly in autobiographies by Kinder, this has given way to an even more critical view. National history museums such as the Imperial War Museums (IWMs) still promote a very positive view of the Kindertransport, but I point to travelling and temporary exhibitions in which the view is less positive. British Holocaust museums and Britain's memorial landscape have been impacted by Holocaust memory and new developments in the historiography which have given rise to a perspective on the Kindertransport framed by experiences of loss and mass murder. Certainly memorials such as Frank Meisler's in London predominantly celebrate arrival, but my discussion of memorials also points to the importance of memorial activism in generating greater critical reflection around the legacy of the Kindertransport. The current refugee crisis has also made it difficult to see the Kindertransport simply as something to be proud of: resting on the laurels of previous

achievements is not enough when there is a need to act today to aid others in need. My final chapter argues that, while the positive British Kindertransport narrative still dominates in children's literature, and is noticeable in some novels for adult readers, recent British novels reflect more on complex issues of loss and fractured or hyphenated identities – contrasting with the positive British Kindertransport narrative which suggests a straightforward move from being German to being British, for example. There is evidence, then, across all the genres examined here of a trend in Britain towards a more multifaceted depiction of the Kindertransport in which positives and negatives are set side by side in a balanced way.

This thesis has also examined the representation of the Kindertransport in non-British host nations. It is the first to look at Kindertransport memory in English-speaking host nations and to compare these representations to representations in Britain. I have argued that, although the Kindertransport has not crystallised in America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand into a prominent rescue narrative as it has in Britain, it features as an element in the way these countries remember their role in rescue before, during and after the Second World War. While I show that it would not be correct here to speak of trends, because the theme is not as intensely discussed as it is in Britain, this thesis has argued that the representation of the Kindertransport in these other countries chimes with their national Holocaust discourses. These discourses allow for more self-criticism of their role during the war and their failure to respond to the refugee crisis and the persecution of Jews. American self-criticism is counterbalanced by a focus on redemption, as I have shown in my discussion of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), where the main exhibition ends by emphasising that the true home for Jews is either America or Israel. This corresponds to a British tendency to present the Kindertransport within a redemptive narrative, as my analysis of the Jewish Museum London (JML) demonstrates. In Canada, Australia and New Zealand there is not the same impulse to present the negatives as overcome. Canada is particularly open to maintaining a more balanced

view. In my discussion of Alison Pick's novel *Far to Go* in Chapter Four, I pointed out that – in contrast to most novels by British or American authors, which present Britain or America as the promised land – Pick's novel does not represent Canada in any way as an ideal home.³

The transnational history of the Kindertransport is often more present in representations in America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand than in Britain. This may have to do with the fact that Kinder had often undergone several difficult journeys before they arrived in, say, America or Australia. But I contend that it is also connected to a deeper awareness of links between diaspora and human rights, at least in the case of Australia and New Zealand. Understanding the wider journeys undertaken by the Kinder can support what Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider have called 'cosmopolitan memory'. By contrast, Britain has a tendency to see human rights' discourse around the Holocaust and the Kindertransport in terms of British values.⁴ In the case of Britain, there is little focus on the wider journeys of Kinder beyond its shores, because this would compromise the positive narrative by contradicting the idea that Britain became the home to the Kinder.

Nevertheless, I have argued that, particularly in testimony, we can observe across all host nations – including Britain – a pattern of personal transnational memory. The personal transnational memory of Kindertransportees in British testimony, for instance, contrasts with the often nationally focused character of British Kindertransport commemoration. In recent years, as I have shown in my discussion of Kindertransport autobiographies, this personal transnational memory is coming more and more to the fore. Just as the positive British narrative of the Kindertransport is developing in a slightly more critical direction, so there are signs that it is opening out in a more transnational direction. These two processes are connected: the more

³ See Alison Pick, *Far to Go* (Headline Review: Croydon, 2010).

⁴ See Critchell, Kara, "'Proud to be British; and Proud to be Jewish": The Holocaust and British Values in the Twenty-First Century', *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History* (2018), pp. 1-23, and 'Britain's Promise to Remember: The Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission Report', *GOV*, 2015, at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398645/Holocaust_Commission_Report_Britains_promise_to_remember.pdf [accessed 14th January 2020], pp. 1-68.

the wider history is seen, the harder it is to be purely positive about the Kindertransport. National memory in Britain is therefore not fixed, but open to renegotiation. Another good example of a developing transnational dimension to British memory of the Kindertransport is provided by the Meisler and Kent memorial networks. My analysis of the Kent and Meisler's memorials in London show that, although these focus on arrival, our understanding of them can change when we see them in the context of the memorials in Germany and Prague: this brings to attention the wider transnational journeys children undertook before they got to Britain, and the suffering they underwent in their former homelands. Meisler's network of memorials in particular makes the visitor more aware that many parents and siblings went on journeys to their deaths – a transnational journey which stands in stark contrast to ones to Britain or even from Britain to Canada.

Similar indications of a tentative shift towards a transnational optic can be found in British travelling and temporary exhibitions. These not only focus on more negative aspects of the Kindertransport (such as internment), but also see the Kindertransport in terms of wider refugee movements to British shores and beyond. A good example, as my thesis argued, is the Migrant Museum's exhibition 'No Turning Back'. Here, the Kindertransport is viewed in a deeper historical context, beginning with the expulsion of Jews from Britain in 1290. The 'You, Me and Those Who Came Before' exhibition launched in 2019 also contextualises the Kindertransport within a history of refugee movements from many countries to Britain, extending to the present. Some British novels, too, set the Kindertransport in relation to past or recent refugee movements from other nations, such as Catherine Bruton's *No Ballet Shoes in Syria*, discussed in Chapter Four. Through this comparative perspective, critical questions can be asked about whether lessons have been learnt from Britain's history of taking in refugees.

In this thesis, I have reflected upon the representation of the Kindertransport in four genres. As my discussion shows, representation of this event is in many ways very similar

across these genres according to country. As a result, I was able to draw a number of conclusions about how Kindertransport memory operates in the different English-speaking host nations and link these conclusions to national memory patterns. At the same time, my thesis has shown that there are some differences of emphasis and focus between the genres under investigation, particularly in the case of Britain. For example, British memorials tend to highlight the moment of arrival, whereas museum exhibitions present the pre-Kindertransport history of Nazism and Kristallnacht before representing arrival. Novels, across several of the host countries concentrate more on problems of integration and identity conflicts. Testimony in all host nations, reflects more intensely than any other genre on questions of loss.

I have at times also looked beyond the four genres investigated to reflect upon other genres such as documentaries, plays, commemorations and political acts. But while I have explored them to a degree, there is room for further investigation. I was also not able to examine art works or poetry or film, for instance, as this would have been too much for a single PhD thesis to undertake in addition to the genres examined.⁵ This thesis is a comparative study, which might help to encourage further comparative studies within Kindertransport research but also more broadly with regards to how other acts of rescue are represented. For example, there is yet to be a comparison between how English and non-English host nations remember and represent the Kindertransport. More research is also needed to understand how the host nations (Britain, America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Holland, France, Switzerland, and Belgium), the home countries (Germany, Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia) and the transit nations (France, Holland, Belgium, Spain and Portugal) present the Kindertransport and whether these depictions accord with their national memory discourses. Furthermore, there is a need for comparisons between the cultural memory of the Kindertransport and that of the Basque Children, the Tehran Children as well as the Youth Aliyah Children who fled to

⁵ See Luke Andrews, *Dearest Otto* (short-film, 2018), and Sharon Walia, *The Movement* (documentary, 2018).

Palestine. Studies focussing on these comparisons would help better comprehend child exile and migration. This thesis has entirely focussed on first generation testimony, but in my discussion of novels I have touched on second generation representations of the Kindertransport. There are recent studies which have focussed on second generation testimony by Andrea Hammel, for example, but more work needs to be done comparing across nations with regards to how second and third generations remember and present the Kindertransport.⁶ Little is also known, moreover, about the role of the foster families themselves, and how they related to the Kinder and experienced the process of fostering either in Britain or in the other host nations which welcomed Kinder.⁷

In terms of my future personal research, I wish to explore the links between Britain (a host nation) and Germany (a former homeland).⁸ One of these links relate to how Kinder from Britain such as Ruth Barnett as well as other Kinder from America such as Hanna Zack Miley have been visiting Germany in recent years to talk with German audiences about the Kindertransport. It would be important to explore whether Kinder approach audiences in Britain and Germany similarly or differently, and what the reactions of the audiences are to the Kinder's stories. Another aspect to compare is British and German literary fiction on the Kindertransport. For instance, how do British children's novels compare with German

⁶ See Andrea Hammel, 'The Kinder's Children: Second Generation and the *Kindertransport*', in Simone Gigliotti and Monica Tempian (eds), *The Young Victims of the Nazis Regime: Migration, the Holocaust and Postwar Displacement* (Bloomsbury: London, 2016), pp. 239-256, and Andreas W. Daum, Hartmut Lehmann and James J. Sheehan (eds), *The Second Generation: Emigres from Nazi Germany as Historians* (Berghahn: Oxford, 2016).

⁷ There is an autobiography by Anna Chadwick, *Suzie the Little Girl Who Changed Our Lives* (Keystone Arts and Heritage Company, Cambridge, 2012) who became a foster sister to a Kind but there are few texts by foster siblings in other countries.

⁸ In 2019 I helped to create a new British-German Kindertransport exhibition entitled 'At the End of the Tunnel: Kindertransport from Berlin 80 Years On', PhotoWerkBerlin, 2019. For more information see 'Holocaust Studies Academics Open the First Kindertransport Exhibition in Berlin', *Nottingham Trent University*, at <https://www.ntu.ac.uk/about-us/news/news-articles/2019/08/holocaust-studies-academics-open-the-first-kindertransport-exhibition-in-berlin> [accessed 14th January 2020], 'Kindertransport: From Berlin to Aberystwyth After Fleeing the Nazis', *BBC*, at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-49349239> [accessed 14th January 2020], Hanna Zack Miley, 'Am Ende des Tunnels (At the End of the Tunnel)', *Eifel Fellowship*, 19th August 2019, at <https://eifel-fellowship.com/2019/08/am-ende-des-tunnels/> [accessed 14th January 2020], and Daniel Adamson, 'Exhibition Review: Am Ende des Tunnels', *Wiener Library*, 15th October 2019, at https://www.wienerlibrary.co.uk/?location_id=14&item=419 [accessed 14th January 2020].

children's novels?⁹ In Germany over the last few years, especially for the 80th anniversary, there have been many Kindertransport commemorations at a national and a regional level, and here it would be important to compare how this historical event was remembered in comparison to events in Britain. There have been a number of new exhibitions on the Kindertransport curated in Germany, but to date these have not been compared with parallel exhibitions in Britain.¹⁰ In addition to comparing British memory of the Kindertransport with memory in Germany, there is a need to compare German memory with Austrian, Czech and Polish memories of the Kindertransport. That British and German memory of the Kindertransport needs to be seen in relation is a principle guiding current attempts to bring the *Stolpersteine* (*Stumbling Stones*) project to Britain and connect stones commemorating the departure of Kinder to stones connecting their arrival and later departure from British shores.¹¹ This would certainly contribute to a more multilayered approach to the Kindertransport which, as this thesis has shown, is starting to develop in Britain.

⁹ A key example of a German children's novel is Anne C. Voorhoeve, *Liverpool Street* (Ravensburger Verlag: Ravensburg, 2008).

¹⁰ For examples of recent German exhibitions on the Kindertransport, see 'Kinder auf der Flucht 1939/2015', Jüdisches Museum Augsburg Schwaben, 2019, and "'Gerettet – auf Zeit': Kindertransporte nach Belgien 1938/1939', Lern- und Gedenkort Jawne, 2020. Also see Bill Niven and Amy Williams, 'The Role of Memory in Germany and Britain in the Negotiation of the Refugee Crisis', *Diasporas: Circulations, Migrations, Histoire 2* (forthcoming, 2020).

¹¹ For instance, *Stolpersteine* are being prepared by Harwich Haven History and the Lake District Holocaust Project.

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