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Essay

The Kindertransport Everyday: The Complexities of Domestic Space for Child Refugees

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Abstract: Analysis of refugee experiences often stands in the context of broad and visible experiences, despite the accounts of child refugees consistently recalling their experiences through domestic, everyday experience. Over 80 years since the Kindertransport, the autobiographical literature bears witness to the lived realities of Kindertransport refugees, standing as memorials to their alternative experiences of the Holocaust. This paper addresses accounts shared through autobiographical texts, arguing that the Kinder constantly negotiated their identity performance in response to new 'home' spaces, creating new relationships with space in the homes of others. This article discusses spatial theory and identity performance to analyse the ways in which domestic spaces were a defining factor in the Kinder's experiences and identity development, and likewise, how the Kinder's experiences shaped their perceptions of domestic space. Everyday experiences exert affective impacts through repetitive encounters, and the Kindertransport saw children immersed in new everyday norms. Entering new, shared spaces during childhood, the Kinder experienced long-lasting impacts on identity development as they became distanced from familiar norms and suddenly immersed in new alternatives. Kinder found themselves with limited privacy in seemingly private homes as they entered into already-inhabited domestic environments. Blurred boundaries between public and private within these spaces contributed to an unusual constancy of performance as the Kinder were constantly before an audience.

Keywords: Kindertransport; refugee; spatial; domestic; identity

1. Introduction

The Kindertransport is a prominent moment of British public history invoking pride in the country's perceived generosity and action. It involved around 10,000 children from then Nazi-occupied territories becoming refugees between December 1938 and May 1940 as they travelled without their parents to Britain. The majority of children who participated arrived in Britain and stayed throughout the duration of the Holocaust often moving between various houses, schools, or hostels across the country. At the end of the Holocaust, some returned to the countries which they had fled—despite many children barely recognising these places as home; some stayed in Britain; and some moved elsewhere to start anew. Despite this prolonged experience, the Kindertransport is often considered as the moment of transport itself—the specific journey from Nazi-occupied territories to Britain rather than the ongoing period of life which came to form the children's experience of the Holocaust.

Typical public memorials for Kindertransport refugees are often very passive—some of the most known include statues at train stations in London, Berlin, Vienna, and other similar sites across Europe, along the routes taken by the Kinder. These memorials all follow a similar format: young children beside train tracks, with suitcases or teddies, and stoic expressions on their faces. Similar images can be found in other media relating to Kindertransport refugees, such as the front covers of novels and educational websites, and have come to broadly represent the Kinder. These are not necessarily incorrect depictions— almost 10,000 children did pass through train stations with a suitcase in hand as part of

the Kindertransport; however, they are incomplete depictions. They represent a public perception of a brief moment of the Kindertransport: young children, generally at the lower end of the '17 and under' age bracket, confident in their newfound safety. However, what they do not show is children upset after a long journey, confused about where they are going or why their parents are not with them. These representations crucially overlook the long-term reality of the Kindertransport. The Kinder did not step off of the trains and disappear, but rather continued to live and adapt, living with strangers in a foreign country with new expectations and language, for several years. After going through a traumatic upheaval throughout a large period of their formative years, is this arrival really the key moment to be memorialised, with no other context in sight? With their experiences of the Holocaust starting prior to the journey with the gradual escalation of persecution in their hometowns, continuing throughout the duration of the Holocaust with life in the UK, and ending after the official end of the Holocaust as children of the Kindertransport negotiated decisions of where they should live and call 'home', discoveries of the fates of friends and relatives, and complicated considerations of their individual and national identity and how they felt about the state which they had been forced to flee. The moment shown in public, passive memorials is just a moment in this, whilst the Kinder lived with an everyday experience of upheaval and uncertainty across a period of years, impacting their relationships with space and sense of self.

This article will examine Kinder's own accounts of their experiences as children, arguing that every day and domestic moments had a strong impact upon their overall experiences and identity development, notably more so than the impact of the far more visible and memorialised moments of travel and arrival. A wealth of relevant literature has been studied by the author of this article, from self-published memoirs intended primarily for the author's grandchildren, published autobiography, biography and other factual materials from author's who were not themselves Kinder, and works of autobiographical fiction. Three published texts form the focus of this article: Lore Segal's *Other People's Houses* (2018), Ruth Barnett's *Person of No Nationality* (2010), and Vera Gissing's *Pearls of Childhood* (1994). They have been chosen for their comprehensive coverage of life before, during and after the 'Kindertransport' experience, strong personal tones presenting the authors' own perceptions of their experiences, and inclusion to varying extents of materials from their time as refugees (such as photos, letters, and diary entries).

2. Autobiographical Accounts: Negotiating Domestic Space

Many children participating in the Kindertransport would not have had a full understanding or even awareness of the broader international and political contexts that their personal situation sat within, or the extent of the danger which they and their families faced. Children are often shielded "not only from brutal speech and frightening news, but from apprehension and pain" and "in order to protect them and serve their best interests" (Bok 1978, p. 10) in attempts to "play down . . . dangers about which nothing can be done" (p. 11). This left them with a minimal understanding of the events precipitating their departures. For younger children, in particular, it would have been difficult to comprehend events outside of their personal experiences, and the effects that these could have on their own lives. Adults were generally aware of developing ideologies and political situations—specifically the rise of Nazism in Germany and early efforts of the Nazi party to simultaneously gain land and power and oppress groups which they determined to be inferior, dangerous or corrupting to the Nazi ideal—fuelling the acts of persecution culminating in Kristallnacht and, ultimately, the Holocaust. Many children, on the other hand, would have been unaware of, or not fully informed about this broader context despite being witness to these events as the combination of limited basic understanding and the impacts of trauma prevent them from processing events around them. For these children, the changes to their everyday lives caused by acts of persecution often appeared as personal punishments against them and those around them, and each would have been experienced through a personal, domestic perspective, such as restriction from public

leisure spaces, and beatings and name calling in school (Fast 2010, p. 6)—as opposed to the political, international, and ideological systems that they were a part of. Children's understanding of the persecution which they were facing, lacking the political context understood by older victims, consisted of changes to school life and home routines, being 'bullied' (persecution occurring through public humiliation and attacks), and consequently, being limited in movement and activity outside of the home, and forced to move to shared and cramped communal living (amongst other forms of persecution) prior to fleeing with the Kindertransport. Andrea Hammel highlights that, despite being directly impacted by the persecution taking place, "it is difficult to analyse what effect the National Socialist antisemitic policies had on children" (Hammel 2010, p. 132). The focus more often lies on the experiences of adults, and retrospective accounts of children rarely explicitly acknowledge antisemitic policy. In autobiographical literature, specifically published autobiography and memoir, survivors of the Kindertransport often recount how, as children, they felt that they were having their freedoms taken away, being picked on personally, or being punished for bad behaviour as opposed to falling victim to a widespread system of oppression and persecution: Ruth Barnett recalls believing that she was sent away for being "exceptionally bad" (Barnett 2010, p. xiv) and Vera Gissing describes thinking "perhaps they don't want me, perhaps they've changed their mind" as she awaited collection in England (Gissing 1994, p. 38). Rather than explicit address of anti-Semitic policy, accounts are told from the perspective of everyday experience, through the personal experiences of those unaware of the societal contexts which have shaped them and interpreted through more familiar contexts, such as being told off for being naughty at home, which the child is able to apply as a logical schema to understand unfamiliar experiences. This gives an opportunity for insight through autobiography into the impact of antisemitic policy on children prior to joining the Kindertransport; although not explicitly engaging with such policy, it gives insight into children's perceptions of the consequences of policy. Children, such as Ruth Barnett, were considered "too young to be told things" (Barnett 2010, pp. 3–6) and Vera Gissing recalls being aware of terminology around the broader context but being "too young to be afraid of words like 'Nazism', 'invasion', 'antisemitism', 'Hitler'" (Gissing 1994, p. 24) demonstrating her lack of understanding of the contexts surrounding her experience. This lack of understanding and consequent personalisation of events extended beyond the initial experiences of persecution prior to fleeing and into the children's experiences of the Kindertransport, after their arrival in Britain. When a young child is sent away by their parents and perceives this as a rejection, it is difficult to explain away with ideas which, to the child, are entirely abstract. Their experience of the Holocaust thus became something that happened to them personally, with no understandable explanation, in contrast to the more informed perspective of adults around them or the vast scale introduced by hindsight afforded to contemporary fictionalised or non-autobiographical factual accounts.

Gosling et al. define 'Private Living Spaces' (PLS) in the context of "residential environments . . . within contemporary urban life" (particularly of teenagers as they tend to spend more time in this space, making it "more-than a bedroom") and university dormitory rooms as spaces of safe retreat, privacy, and personalisation (Gosling et al. 2015, pp. 53–54). Refugees often lack this (semi-)permanence in residential space, spending short periods of time in each space before transitioning into another, whether during a prolonged journey from origin to destination, or with repeated uprootings after arrival in the destination country. They often also lack the privacy and control associated with PLSs, required to share space and at times with repeated changes in whom the space is shared with. In an ongoing state of impermanence, versions of living spaces and how they are experienced can vary. This variety exhibits not only in refugee living spaces varying from the societal norms experienced by non-refugee counterparts, but also between refugees and between different spaces during a single refugee's experience. Many Kinder moved between family homes with other children or childless adults, hostels or foster homes, or boarding schools, and so the space could be shared with one or two people, or tens to hundreds; they may stay in one host space for days or for years; and the relationships with others sharing

the space may differ greatly. These varying spaces in turn offer opportunities for varying levels of personalisation of space to occur. In the context of refugee narratives, it may be more appropriate to establish an alternative to PLSs, in reference to the spaces which refugees find themselves, which are not wholly personal, but as personal as possible given the circumstances. These spaces do not entirely fit to Gosling et al.'s definitions of PLSs: they are often not intended for a single "designated individual", may allow for minimal personalisation, and continuity is often unlikely, for example, but they will often offer more of these aspects than any other space inhabited by refugees throughout their experience. Such spaces offer versions of privacy as refugees are exposed to a minimal audience, offer more opportunity than other spaces for out-of-role activities (although in some cases the performative requirements can be heightened in such spaces as will be further discussed) and allow for intended and unintended personal expression. Such spaces I shall refer to as Substitute Living Spaces (SLSs), as they are not fully Personal Living Spaces but the nearest substitute available given the circumstances. Gosling et al. strive to define PLSs in terms of what the places contain, developing an inventory of items and characteristics within PLSs. This material perspective becomes problematic in refugee contexts in which the inhabitants of the PLS or SLS have been unable to bring many (if any) material possessions with them and often lack the means or authority to physically alter to any significant extent the place which they inhabit. Furthermore, the objects and attributes included in the inventory are inapplicable in the context of many refugee experiences: to determine that a place cannot have the properties and associations of a PLS (such as security, privacy, and regulated social interactions) for a refugee because it does not contain, for example, a desktop computer (Gosling et al. 2015, p. 68), beauty equipment or flowers (p. 72), piggy banks or sex toys (p. 73) would be highly inappropriate given living situations often lacking basic necessities. As such, the inventory itself will not be engaged with in this article; the concept of Personal and Communal Living Space itself remains essential, and so the overarching concept and qualities of PLS, and the importance of such space will be considered, particularly in terms of relationships with, and uses of space as opposed to the bare materiality of place.

Hannah Arendt's 1978 chapter 'On Appearance' in *Life of the Mind* situates appearance as an ongoing, subconscious performance essential to existence, arguing that a perceiver is not essential to the developments of appearance and that appearance is rather an ongoing process regardless of audience, developing in interaction with settings and prior experience. She argues that "not only do appearances never reveal what lies beneath them of their own accord but also, generally speaking, they never just reveal; they also conceal . . . they expose, and they also protect from exposure, and, as far as what lies beneath is concerned, this protection may even be their most important function" (Arendt 1978, p. 25), articulating the defensive potential of performance. The act of performing appearances allows individuals to hide elements which would be deemed less desirable and instead present an adherence to the established societal norms within the space which is presently inhabited. Judith Butler's 2004 discussion of performativity (written specifically in the context of gender identity but offering arguments applicable to identity performance more generally) offers a development upon Arendt's discussions of appearance: Butler establishes (gender) identity as a "stylized repetition of acts" established in reflection of established norms to develop a desired identity image. These theorists present performance as a constant, ongoing activity which presupposes the perceiver, and so continues even in the absence of an audience. Whilst this performance is ongoing, PLSs offer, amongst other functions, a "back region" for "out-of-role activities" (Gosling et al. 2015, p. 52), a type of backstage space away from any actual audience. In this back region, although performance continues, the performance is allowed to shift away from that required for a public stage and explore alternatives. They simultaneously offer a space for freedom and one for "the communication of social identity . . . [and] intended and unintended personal expression" and "can serve as a window onto the attitudes, behaviours, life histories, identities, and personalities of the residents" (p. 52); they offer a space for freedom from, or preparation for, performance in the presence of an audience. It is important to note Arendt's assertion that the perceiver is not essential to

the created appearance. Appearances presuppose perception and are an ongoing process, always in construction. Upon the end of a presented appearance, the individual is not simply without appearance but rather has replaced it with an alternative, "tak[ing] up for its own account the ontological function of the first . . . the disillusion is the loss of one evidence only because it is the acquisition of another evidence" (p. 26). As such the individual is permanently mid-performance, presenting an appearance even if that appearance is only for the sake of itself and the presupposition of potential spectators. However, the appearance in the absence of an external audience is arguably for the sake of the performer and lacks any consequence in the case of the performance of an inappropriate identity, whether in efforts to explore potential appearances or in the belief that it is somewhat more true to the individual than that displayed to an audience. The appearances shown in PLSs, spaces either without or with only a select audience, may offer a valuable insight into the realities lived by the residents, whether into who they believe they are or who they may wish to be perceived as.

Upon their arrival in Britain, the Kinder stayed with adults or families—some of whom were known by the children, others who were wholly unknown and had stepped forwards as sponsors with the scheme. Such living arrangements presented complex dynamics as children moved into spaces which had previously been defined by others without their inclusion, and into which they must integrate. Yi-Fu Tuan defined space and place as overlapping terms but with important differences: place is defined as "a reality to be clarified and understood from the perspectives of the people who have given it meaning" (Tuan 1977, p. 387), arising when "mere location"—the 'space'—"become[s] place" (p. 389). This highlights the difference between a bare physical spatiality, a geographical point without meaning, and that same spatiality tied with interaction and experience to develop a meaningful location. Spaces can become unexpected places as experiences within them do not necessarily align with expectations. Space must be combined with experience of it contributing to a changeable and personal interpretation of place for the inhabitant. The 'becoming' of place is crucial when considering living spaces for refugees, as the physical space itself is rarely reminiscent of that which the refugee associated with prior, homely living places. Whilst the physical space can vary greatly, both between those experienced by refugees and in Gosling et al.'s study, and amongst refugee experiences themselves, the use and experience of these differing places can lead to the development of similarly meaningful places. It is in this crucial defining of space to create place that the intricate domestic dynamics between refugees and hosts arise. This cohabitation between the Kinder and unfamiliar adults contributed to often complex power dynamics developing within living spaces as children lived alongside adults in spaces which adults may consider to be private but place children in a position of greater publicity. Ted Kilian (1998) argues that "spaces cannot be categorized [sic] as inherently 'public' or 'private'", but that publicity and privacy are rather "expressions of power relationships in space and, hence, both exist in every space" (pp. 115–16). Public space is established as one which not only allows contact of a type "neither intimate nor anonymous", but rather as a feeling of "togetherness" (Kilian 1998, p. 116), but also offers representation, in terms of power dynamics within a space and the extent of the individual's inclusion within said space. Private space requires "the ability to exclude, the ability to limit contact" without which an individual is "at the mercy of the power of others" (p. 125). A crucial interaction exists between publicity and privacy in any space as exclusion and access are controlled even in seemingly public spaces, and perspectives of a given space may offer interpretations of it as both public and private. Kilian offers the example of a workplace which the owner perceives to be private as they are able to control the overall use and access, whereas workers view it as public due to visibility and management intervention. This analogy demonstrates the inequality of perception, with an individual's power shaping their understandings of space and privacy. In the experience of many Kinder, adults maintained control of their space, choosing how the space is used, what they and others in the living space can access, and who has access to the space—including the choice to allow the Kinder into their own living space. To the

host, this largely remains a private space. The child sharing this space is subject to the decisions of the host who controls how the child can use the space and who the child must share the space with, and also to the host's intervention as they control behaviours within the living space. The adult has the ability to exclude and to limit contact, and so finds the space to be private; the child lacks this ability and so is "at the mercy of the power of others" (Kilian 1998, p. 116), leading living spaces to be perceived as public spaces for these children. These differing perceptions of the same place position each inhabitant in a different relationship with both the space and the other inhabitants, as they consider and negotiate their differing levels of control and visibility.

Within the living space, each inhabitant is visible to one another and in a constant reciprocal state of perception. Hannah Arendt establishes appearance as an ongoing, subconscious performance essential to being, and asserts that people are "subjects and objects—perceiving and being perceived—at the same time" (Arendt 1978, p. 26). Appearances exist not in isolation as a display for a single spectator, but in interaction with their setting and the appearance of others around them, as in an act, thus making appearance a flexible, interdependent performance reliant on—and subject to—perception, experience and circumstance. The circumstance of a refugee finding themselves to be highly visible, observed and lacking control in a space which other inhabitants perceive to be private has a great impact on performances of appearance. Whilst the setting that they inhabit is shared, their perceptions of this setting and their experiences of and prior to the present moment differ greatly, and so too do the performed identities. Pressure is placed on the children, whether intentionally or not, to constantly adhere to a set of expectations new to them, which does not necessarily allow space for the ongoing effects of the upheaval and trauma which they have experienced. Following Arendt and Butler's discussions, the act of performing appearances allows individuals to hide elements which would be deemed less desirable and instead present an adherence to the established societal norms within the space which is presently inhabited. They develop "a constructed identity, a performative accomplishment which the mundane social audience, including the actors themselves, come to believe and to perform in the mode of belief" (p. 901). With consistency of intentional performance, the identity which is performed may become more deeply ingrained to become (a part of) the individual's identity. Whilst this repetition of acts is a process seen across all groups as people perceive their audience and alter their performances accordingly, it may become problematic in the case of child refugees who are constantly subject to an audience even in spaces perceived by others to be private. With a constant audience they must also constantly perform, which presents two potentials: to more deeply engrain the developing performed identity, or to prompt internal conflict between the performed which the individual feels to be artificial or forced, and underlying sense of self. This is further problematised as children are often moved between various living spaces and so between various expectations, thus requiring repeated changes to the acts performed in order to fit in; as one series of acts becomes embedded, the transition to new expectations and a new series of acts, and the ceasing or altering of the previous repetition of acts, becomes more difficult. Thus, children must develop mechanisms to ease this required performance whilst maintaining an adherence to required norms of each living space.

The Kinder were rarely alone in their living spaces. They shared this space with strangers who have become their hosts, occasionally friends, and also other refugees who were living with the same host family. Whole living spaces often feature designated private spaces within them, such as an individual bedroom, but the broader entirety of the living space, the 'Communal Living Space' (CLS) hosts several people. In most general contexts, communal living space would be considered a private space: it is private in that it is not public; the space is indoors offering physical privacy and it is not freely accessible, with inclusion in the space controlled by the inhabitants. While CLSs are shared with other inhabitants, inhabitants often have balanced and consistent claims to the space and are familiar with one another, such as a family group who live together, and so it is private to

the group of inhabitants. This sense of familiarity and consistency is lost in many refugee living arrangements. As refugee children are grouped or allocated to those that they have never met, CLSs become public spaces (as defined by Kilian 1998) for the children as they lack control over the space and find themselves on display to an unfamiliar audience for whom they must perform an expected identity. In such CLSs, the need to perform is perhaps heightened in comparison to explicitly public spaces due to the intimacy of CLSs despite the seemingly increased privacy. In a more highly populated or physically larger public space, individuals may be more able to blend in and gain a sense of anonymity, whereas in the intimate domestic setting of CLSs the individual remains clearly visible and easily observed.

The ongoing sense of publicity in CLSs leads to an ongoing requirement for performance. For Kinder living with host families, houses often became a space of constant visibility, and thus, a requirement to constantly either adhere to the established norms associated with this space, or to face implications of deviation from these established norms. The visibility of refugees in this stage combined with the power dynamics in place, with hosts controlling a space which the Kinder enter into, heightens the need for an appropriate performance. Whilst individuals are generally able to perform the identity or appearance which they desire, in refugee contexts they often must perform the appearance required. Cultural elements which must be conformed to often require more active considerations for refugees than those discussed by Butler in the context of gender performance, as Butler discusses idea of "deeply entrenched or sedimented expectations of gendered existence" (Butler 2004, p. 904) and asserts that "embodied selves [do not] pre-exist the cultural conventions" (p. 906). Refugees must adapt to cultural expectations which are entrenched in those that they live amongst but not entrenched in themselves as they are newly introduced to these cultural norms whilst already embodying alternative conventions associated with their origin. Expectations are often placed on child refugees to appear as meek and respectable figures who are grateful for the support which they receive, a performance which rarely aligns with the reality of any child, but particularly one who has undergone extensive trauma. Normal patterns of children's behaviour, including tantrums and habits which would be expected under usual circumstances, are often viewed as problematic and ungrateful behaviours in refugees. When living with hosts, children are entering into a space already owned and controlled by the adult inhabitants. Christopoulou and de Leeuw identify family contexts as the spaces in which identity must be negotiated for migrants as "obvious cultural tensions between the 'old' and the 'new' world" meet within the living space (Christopoulou and de Leeuw 2005, p. 114). With the existing inhabitants controlling the space, the 'new' culture holds dominance and refugees entering this space must thus integrate themselves to established customs and expectations. This may be complicated by a lack of communication of expectations, as host inhabitants may consider them to be an unspoken norm of behaviour; a lack of understanding of expectations as they are not clearly communicated or the reasoning not offered; or due to contradicting expectations which the children were previously accustomed to. Levels of privacy or control over space can vary. Ruth Barnett recalls being "furiously" scolded by the Steads for wetting the bed at the age of 4 years when sleeping in the cellar to shelter from air raids, "[thrown] face down on the wet bed . . . and then belted" (Barnett 2010, p. 24); Vera Gissing perceived her host mother to feel "frightened . . . that the refugee she had brought into her house to protect from persecution was talking back to her and watching her out of melancholic and conscious eyes (1994, p. 89). These children were expected to maintain an appearance of gratitude, good spirit, and perfect behaviour. Whilst these traits may be pleasant in children, they place unrealistic expectations on children, particularly those coping with upheaval and trauma. With the shared environment of host living spaces, these expectations become a constant pressure on children. They are criticised or, in worse cases, such as that of Ruth, violently punished for failure to adhere to these idealised expectations, placing a requirement on the children to adhere to these expectations rather than a desire to do so.

Whilst expectations of performed identities and behaviours developed in communal living spaces can be problematic for children, these spaces can also present children with positive encounters. Although Ruth Barnett's experience with the Steads was traumatic, her experience with the next host family, the Goodrickes, did not present the same challenges. The Goodricke's home allowed for freedom and privacy, both of which were lacking from her experience with the Steads. Although the Goodricke's house was "much smaller" than the Stead's, its location on a farm allowed great freedom. Ruth's first recollection of the Goodricke's house places emphasis on elements of freedom and trust: she recalls the barn which was "an ideal hide-out", that "Mrs Goodricke told Martin to open the front door. . . . people didn't lock their doors. It was quite safe", the Goodrickes "encouraged [the children] to have proper conversations", and, while there were rules, the Goodrickes "would explain, if [Ruth] asked why things had to be done the way they said", and were "opposed to aggression" (Barnett 2010, pp. 41–42). The ideas of spatial and personal freedom are aligned as Ruth shifts from discussing the privacy of hiding spaces and freedom of unlocked doors to encouragement to engage in conversation and transparency around rules and expectations. The rural setting of the Goodrickes' house leads to the blurring of boundaries of the living space. Whilst in the Stead's house, publicity seeped into the seemingly private living space, with the Goodrickes privacy and living space rather extended beyond the confines of the house. Everyday life spread from indoors to out, as the children moved beyond the yard as they "were allowed to cross the road in front of the house, and go across the cherry orchard, to play in the stream" (p. 50). With the children moving further afield, but not being joined by any others who were not part of the family, these outdoor play spaces became a safe extension of the living space. In the context of this spatial and personal freedom, Ruth refers to her time with the Goodrickes as her "family life" (p. 45), suggesting a level of comfort and familiarity which allowed Ruth to develop an understanding of the Goodrickes living space as a private one in which observation and intervention were minimal.

Differences between cultures and norms are often apparent within the living space. As living spaces are spaces of familiarity and consistency, elements of these which differ can especially stand out and cause difficulties as children attempt to integrate. Differences arise not only in the transition between origin and destination, as children adapt to new cultural norms, foods, and routines, but continue to appear as refugees move between different living situations, whether this be from hostels to 'host' families or between different hosts. This leads to an ongoing process of understanding and adapting to new norms. Homi Bhabha writes of the process of mimicking, adopting, and adapting for colonial persons as they move towards hybrid identities. Mimicry is defined by Bhabha (drawing on Freud) as "almost the same but not white" (Bhabha 1984, p. 130), as an individual copies the group which they desire to fit in with, but does not perform this with full accuracy. It is a form of "camouflage, not a harmonization [sic] or repression of difference but a form of resemblance that differs/defends presence by displaying it in part" (p. 131). Whilst the refugees discussed are not colonial persons, the considerations of behaviour and identity adaptation discussed by Bhabha are useful in this context. As children move to integrate with the destination culture, they may first be forced to mimic the behaviours that they find themselves surrounded by in order to avoid punishment; once settling into this culture, they may come to adopt some of these behaviours more naturally into their everyday performance, and ultimately adapt the behaviours in order to somewhat align the destination culture with their origin culture. As children are repeatedly moved between different hosts with slightly varying versions of the destination culture, the process of mimicking and adopting becomes cyclical, and at some points is deviated from as they return to performances of previously held expectations or move away from these expected behaviours altogether.

Difficulties with transitioning into new norms often lead to perceptions of children as naughty or insolent. Living with the Stead family, Ruth Barnett was refused food at dinner until she asked in perfect English (at the age of 4). Due to difficulty with this expectation,

her brother Martin would resort to stealing food from the pantry during the night; food was consequently poisoned under the basis of it being eaten by rats, but Ruth's brother "was not sure whether they believed there were really rats or were talking about [Ruth and her brother] as rats" (Barnett 2010, p. 22), and, thus, whether the poison was a trap for the children. The children were also expected to "do 'number two'" immediately after breakfast and at no other time and "were only supposed to go to the toilet after meals, even just for a pee" (p. 23). This led to Ruth being told off for not "doing 'number two'" immediately after breakfast and being told off for doing so more than once per day when she pretended to in the morning, then really did later in the day. As punishment for wetting the bed due to not being allowed to regularly use the toilet, Ruth was physically beaten and denied "nice food like chicken or sausages" at meals. This restriction of food led to Ruth eating food from the compost heap as her "body knew it needed protein" (p. 24) and again being punished through food as she was served only a mouldy cheese rind at dinner. Although Ruth "wanted so much to please" Mrs Stead (p. 21), she is unable to adhere to the expectations set within the household. Actions which arose as the consequences of difficulty adjusting to extreme new norms were perceived by the Stead's as punishable acts of disobedience. This cycle of restriction and punishment for behaviours unavoidable under the circumstances aligned with and reinforced Ruth's perception of her fleeing as punishment because she had "been so bad that [her] parents sent [her] away" (p. 17) and contributed to a long-term sense of rejection and feeling that she "wasn't good enough" (p. 52). The extreme visibility of Ruth in this publicised living space exerts a long-term impact on her self-perception and her familial relationships moving on from her time as a refugee.

Difficulties with integration can often be seen when children are required to move between spaces associated with different status or class, leading to a repeated loop of learning new expectations, mimicking, and adopting these behaviours, or failing to engage with this loop and facing consequences of deviating from the expected norms. Lore Segal moved from an middle class home in Austria, to a similar class family in Liverpool, then to two working class families in Mellbridge, then an upper class household nearby. Moving from Austria to Liverpool, it is the change in freedom and visibility that Lore struggles with as she is constantly visible and has strict expectations of where and how she should spend her time. Moving from Liverpool to Mellbridge to live with the Hoopers, in contrast, it is ideas of class with which Lore struggles. She fits in well with the family but immediately decides that she wants to go to the "stuck-up school and talk la-di-da" rather than the Central School which the family's children attend (Segal 2018, pp. 151, 164) as she watches the school from the window, and struggles to understand why the children do not aspire to learn Latin and attend university (p. 163); she is shocked by the tolerance of bad behaviour and "afraid that it was somehow [her] fault" (p. 154); moving to the Grimsleys, another working-class household, Lore openly compares the norms of this household to prior experiences as she comments "in Vienna, I said, I had never been allowed to play with the street children" (p. 172), creating a clear distinction between herself and the children of the family and neighbours who she would not previously have been allowed to associate with. Lore's developing perceptions and understanding of class differences as she is immersed into varying households impacts her integration with each family as she determines the elements which she believes to be correct and most similar to her experience of her own family prior to fleeing.

With the Grimsleys, the power structure of the household differs from that of previous households and exerts a further impact on Lore's role and relationship. Rather than her previous experiences of rule imposed (in varying strengths) by adults, which Lore must adhere to, Lore takes on an almost parental role with the Grimsleys as she steps into an advisory position to the parents and distances herself from the "street children" (Segal 2018, p. 172). In her first encounter with the Grimsleys, Lore "made [Mrs Grimsley] sit down and questioned her about the house and family. Mrs Grimsley seemed anxious to please." and Lore is given the authority to decide whether she will live with the Grimsleys

(p. 171). When one of the children misbehaves, Mrs Grimsley asks Lore how to respond to his behaviour and Lore replies that his behaviour is shaped by "bad habits they picked up in the streets", a criticism of the Grimsleys' parenting; and Mr Grimsley "look[ed] guiltily" at Lore and offered an excuse when letting the children out to play. The parents of the family treat Lore as a peer whose opinion is to be respected, is in a position to make her own decisions, and will hold them accountable for their decisions. Lore's ease in this role as she steps in of her own accord to guide the parents is indicative not only of the maturing impact of her experience as a refugee, the societal influence of her perception of the domestic gender performance expected of her, but also of the impact of her status having come from a middle class family. When amongst those of similar class status to her own family, she is uncertain and reserved, whereas with families of lower class she becomes a figure whose opinion is trusted by parents and is confident to speak out, offer her thoughts and guide situations. As such she climbs the power structure in working class homes from a subject at the will of authority figures, to a member of the household able to actively engage, to a peer to the adults whose opinion is valued. Although in other contexts her elevated status may have positioned her closer to the privacy associated with control of a home space, the lack of rule and order within the Grimsley's home prevents any real sense of privacy from developing, rather a sense of containment. In this position of power yet confinement, Lore becomes increasingly distressed until she smashes her head through a window (p. 172). Although she has power in this role, she does not have an outlet for it as her needs are not met and minimal opportunities to enact this power are available. She does not wish to socialise with the children of the family, associating them with the "street children" with whom she was forbidden from playing and would not be respected as a peer, and is not an adult so whilst her input is valued she cannot fully align herself with the parents. She exists in a position liminal to the family, somewhere between the children and the adults but desiring alignment with neither, and drawing on her prior experiences to position herself separately from both groups. As a figure with more power in this living space, Lore had more power to maintain her pre-existing sense of identity aligning with the middle class experiences of her origin and the Levines, and with the working class, but respectful and organised experience with the Hoopers, leaving her feeling a lack of belonging whilst with the Grimsleys as her pre-existing identity aligned with neither the adults nor children of this household.

The Kinder's experience of living space was one of great impact upon their life throughout this period, shaping their understandings, attitudes and identities. Domestic space arguably became the space hosting the Kinder's version of the Holocaust, as they lived through their own version of experiences in this space, some directly related to the Holocaust, such as hearing news of it or receiving letters from family, and some less explicitly linked as they shaped their understandings of their own identities and roles based in their perceptions of their experiences as young children and came to terms with a drastic shift in their everyday lives during developmental years. These complexities of experience were furthered by (and contributed to) distortions of the boundary between public and private, as shifting power dynamics, relationships, and attitudes impacted the privacy of domestic space, and thus, the visibility of Kinder and the necessity of identity performance.

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