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NEGOTIATING BELONGING IN EXILE: A STUDY OF DIARIES OF KINDERTRANSPORT REFUGEES

by

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Declaration

I, Monja Stahlberger, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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Abstract

The Kindertransport holds a key position in twentieth century refugee movements. Much attention has been paid to the implementation and organisation of the scheme. To date, there has not been an extensive investigation of unpublished ego-documents that were written around the time of the Kindertransport but rather these sources have often been utilised as supporting material. Diaries of Kindertransport refugees can be used in an endeavour to understand the lived experience of these refugees in their early years in Britain. Aiming to question the notion of binary and mutually exclusive cultural identities and senses of belonging, examining diaries gives us indications of transnational identities and changing notions of belonging of Kindertransport refugees. By bringing together the diaries and analytical concepts derived from theories of transnationalism, everyday theory, memory studies, and diary studies, this thesis highlights the Kindertransport refugees' fluid and hybrid senses of belonging. Investigating the diary as a practice and a material object, underscores the diary's role in analysing changing notions of belonging. The diary becomes a tool which is used to manifest a sense of self and identity. The practice of writing and decorating the diary suggests not only agency but also an exercise of mindfulness in otherwise often overwhelming times. The Kindertransport refugees' direct engagement with belonging in their diaries shows how their sense of identity, self, and integration are dependent on processes of homemaking, remembering their lives before exile, and navigating new experiences. The diarists base their understanding of belonging on spatial aspects such as their countries of origin and countries of refuge, but they also expand their notions of belonging by reflecting on the sense of belonging to a particular social group or feelings of non-belonging. Utilising forms of remembering in their writing can further amplify their understanding of what it means to belong or not belong as they engage with feelings of *Heimweh* or nostalgia for their country of origin to also make sense of their lived experiences in their country of refuge. Emphasising the translingual nature of the diaries highlights how integration and notions of belonging are negotiated on a content level in the diaries as well as through the Kindertransport refugees' use of language. Everyday practices and encounters not only shed light on the multifaceted exile experiences but the diary entries also reveal narrative strategies that show the agency of the Kindertransport refugees in their everyday lives and, with this, an active attempt to make sense of displacement, exile, and new everyday experiences. This research contributes to the field of exile studies by revealing the fluid nature of belonging among Kindertransport refugees, challenging the idea that spatial binaries govern the negotiation of belonging. It offers a new perspective on the Kindertransport experience, using personal diaries as windows into the refugees' evolving identities and notions of belonging.

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This thesis is dedicated to the Kindertransport refugees and their families. I am deeply honoured that I was able to tell a small part of their stories and bring to light some of the complexities of the Kindertransport, the experiences of the child refugees and their elusive senses of identity and belonging. It has been the most interesting and rewarding three and a half years in which I got to know the nine Kindertransport refugees in a unique way – as the children who came to the UK many decades ago rather than the adults, they grew up to be.

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Introduction

The Kindertransport and Diaries

Jennifer Craig-Norton argues in *The Kindertransport: Contesting Memory* that '[t]estimonies demonstrate that for many Kindertransportees, identity […] was a fluid construct never wholly resolved in their lifetimes. […] [T]he quest to fit in was lifelong, involved multiple uprootings, and remained forever elusive'.[1] It is exactly this idea of belonging remaining elusive and in flux that this thesis examines by analysing traces of transnational identities and the changing notions of belonging in the diaries of nine Kindertransport refugees. Diaries, as a primary source, offer a gateway to understanding the lived experience and emotions of the Kindertransport refugees growing up in exile. Focusing on the immediacy of the diary creates a space for analysis removed from the potentially retrospective evaluation of events. Thereby, this thesis aims to further illuminate aspects of identity and belonging within the scope of research that investigates private rather than institutional files of the Kindertransport. Here, the focus lies on documents written during the war and immediate post war years.

Particularly when faced with significant and extreme changes to one's circumstances and environment, senses of belonging that have been long established and manifested can be questioned. Due to displacement, refuge, and exile, the various ideas of belonging of an individual are often renegotiated and redefined. By bringing together diaries of Kindertransport refugees in the context of the paradigms of transnationalism, everyday theory, memory studies, and diary studies, this thesis highlights the fluidity and hybridity of belonging and sheds light on how the young refugees negotiated it. With this, this thesis contributes to wider efforts in migration and exile studies that overthrow the idea that spatial binaries govern the negotiation of belonging. In previous studies working with memory sources of Kindertransport refugees, identities have been portrayed as positively constructed over the lifespan, with interviewees stating that they identify as British and Jewish or German and Jewish.[2] Such portrayals omit the multifaceted character of identity and belonging by

[1] Jennifer Craig-Norton, *The Kindertransport: Contesting Memory* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2019), p. 229.

[2] See: Ujjwal Krishna, Jody Harris, and Rebecca N. Mitchell, 'Exploring the Integration of Child Refugees in the United Kingdom: The Case of the Kindertransport', *Jewish Historical Studies*, 51.1 (2020), 119–41 (pp. 127, 138–39, 141) <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.jhs.2020v51.009>.

relying on static ideas of national or religious belonging rather than both concepts being in constant negotiation over a lifespan. This thesis turns away from the spatial concepts of identities and belonging being constructed as local, national or multinational towards a more open interpretation of belonging that moves beyond space and place and can ultimately be seen as transnational as well as multidimensional.

The Kindertransport in Scholarship

To this day, the Kindertransport is widely celebrated in British culture as a humanitarian rescue mission that brought roughly 10,000 children to the UK between December 1938 and September 1939, until the outbreak of war put an end to it.[3] Nowadays, the term Kindertransport not only refers to the rescue mission, but has also become its own field of scholarship studying the cultural and transcultural, social, economic, and political aspects of the operation and its impact. Various publications have focused on the organisation of the scheme, investigated the role of the government and aid organisations as well as analysed the cultural representation of the Kindertransport.[4]

The Kindertransport, as an historical event, has been widely discussed and written about and many different narratives have unfolded ranging from celebratory accounts to more critical evaluations. Barry Turner's *... And the Policeman Smiled: 10,000 Children Escape from Nazi Europe* published in 1991 is one of the early extended publications on the Kindertransport following the organised reunion events in the late 1980s that commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the Kindertransport.[5]

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[3] Anthony Grenville, for example, argues in his introduction that 'the highly emotive image of young Jewish children being rescued from Nazi terror and persecution [...] dominates public awareness of the Kindertransport today' and that 'the British [...] have come to see and celebrate the Kindertransports as evidence of their humanity and generosity'; see: Anthony Grenville, 'The Kindertransports: An Introduction', in *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938-39: New Perspectives*, ed. by Andrea Hammel and Bea Lewkowicz (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2012), pp. 1-14, (p. 1).

[4] Going into detail about the organisation and policies that enabled the Kindertransport but also excluded other age groups of refugees and exiles would exceed the scope of this project. Numerous studies examine these aspects critically, for example, Tony Kushner's *Remembering Refugees: Then and Now* (2006), Louise London's *Whitehall and the Jews 1933–1948: British Immigration Policy and the Holocaust* (2000), and Bernard Wasserstein's *Britain and the Jews of Europe, 1939-1945* (1979), just to mention a few. The studies raise questions not only on the relationship between the Kindertransport refugees' official status as exiles/transmigrants and their own perception of it, but also on the individual identity performance and development compared to the identities (as transmigrant, as more adaptable to society etc.) that were imposed on them.

[5] Barry Turner, *... And The Policeman Smiled: 10,000 Children Escape from Nazi Europe* (London: Bloomsbury, 1990).

While he was in the unique position to access materials that have since been closed to other researchers, his book falls short of a critical examination of the history and the impact of the scheme. The often-positive voices that are portrayed in his book omit the multifaceted experiences of the individuals in favour of an attempt at a generalised, all-encompassing, and positively constructed narrative. This thesis will provide a more critical approach by highlighting how the Kindertransport affected the individual diarists and what this meant for their negotiation of senses of belonging.

Starting in the late 1990s, other studies with a more critical approach in comparison to Turner were published. Rebecca Göpfert's *Der Jüdische Kindertransport von Deutschland nach England 1938/39* (1999), for example, is one of the first extensive studies of the Kindertransport written in German that examines the emotional side of the separation of the children and their parents as well as the bureaucratic side of organisation.[6] She uses retrospective memory sources such as interviews as well as archival material including institutional records. Her study already touches on the impossibility of giving an all-encompassing account as well as the various conditions of defining the Kindertransport refugees' identities.[7]

Another German publication written by Claudia Curio focuses on diaspora and the influence of the shared experience in resisting this diaspora within the Kindertransport refugee community in *Verfolgung, Flucht, Rettung: die Kindertransporte 1938/39 nach Großbritannien* (2006). She offers a German and English perspective highlighting the institutional and organisational aspects before moving to a discussion of the diaspora of the Kindertransport community where she argues that at some point in their lives, the Kindertransport refugees were all confronted with feelings such as 'Heimweh, Einsamkeit und Entwurzelung'.[8] Particularly these aspects are worth exploring further and, while writing extensively

[6] Rebekka Göpfert, *Der Jüdische Kindertransport von Deutschland nach England 1938/39: Geschichte Und Erinnerung* (Frankfurt; New York: Campus, 1999).

[7] In reference to how the Kindertransport refugees were identified, Göpfert states that 'Nach den Antisemitismuserfahrungen in Deutschland und der frühen Trennung von den Eltern folgte in Großbritannien häufig eine Stigmatisierung als Deutsche und Juden sowie die ständige Erwartung nach Dankbarkeit gegenüber ihren Gasteltern und ihrem Gastland' (p. 13); and furthermore, she argues that the different cultural environment had an impact: 'Das Essen schmeckte anders, die Häuser waren anders gebaut, es herrschten andere Sitten im Umgang untereinander; dazu kam, dass zahlreiche Kinder in einem anderen Milieu – sei es die soziale Schicht, das Alter oder die Religion der Pflegeeltern – landeten, als sie es von zu Hause gewohnt waren' (p. 119); see Göpfert, *Der Jüdische Kindertransport von Deutschland nach England 1938/39.*

[8] Claudia Curio, *Verfolgung, Flucht, Rettung: die Kindertransporte 1938/39 nach Großbritannien* (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2006), p. 145.

about the diaspora of the Kindertransport community, a focus on these issues immediately after the Kindertransport is missing in her monograph. Both studies by Göpfert and Curio remain two of the few expansive investigations of the Kindertransport published in German.

Evidently, publications on the Kindertransport written in English dominate the field and cover a wide range of subjects. Anthony Grenville highlights in his 2012 introduction to *The Kindertransport 1938/39: New Perspectives* that '[t]he impact of this forced emigration on the Kindertransportees differed from child to child, varying according to the almost infinite permutations of individual experience, of character and temperament, and sheer chance'.[9] Accordingly, in recent years, there has been a greater effort to add to Kindertransport scholarship by highlighting individual experiences, looking at specific institutions or individuals who were detrimental for the success of the Kindertransport, and by emphasising different source materials such as archival records and oral histories. And yet, Andrea Hammel, in her 2019 article 'Narrating the Margins and the Centre: Kindertransportees' Stories of National and Religious Belonging', argues that Kindertransport scholarship still struggles with efforts to show the multifaceted nature of the Kindertransport:

> Kindertransport research seems to be suffering from a desire to find a definitive story of an experience that was representative for over ten thousand individual child refugees, as well as countless others who assisted them or were otherwise affected by the scheme.[10]

While Hammel's observation certainly is true, there are a few investigations that focus on particular groups. Frances Williams, for example, analyses the marginalised voices of those Kindertransport refugees who were sent to Scotland in her monograph *The forgotten Kindertransportees: The Scottish experience* (2013).[11] While highlighting how the formative years in Scotland influenced the development of the children, the study also brings in aspects of diaspora and displacement. Vera Fast's monograph *Children's Exodus* (2010) introduces individual stories of Jewish Orthodox children which contribute to the understanding of the many aspects of the Kindertransport and the later lives of the refugee children she focused on. She highlights issues regarding

[9] Grenville, 'The Kindertransport: An Introduction', p. 9.
[10] Andrea Hammel, 'Narrating the Margins and the Center: Kindertransportees' Stories of National and Religious Belonging', *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, 37.3 (2019), 203–28 (p. 204).
[11] Frances Williams, *The Forgotten Kindertransportees: The Scottish Experience* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013).

prevailing tensions between assimilation to British culture and society and the expression of the Kindertransport refugees' Jewish identities, with many still feeling like outsiders in the Anglo-Jewish community even many years later.[12] Williams and Fast add to a more nuanced picture of the Kindertransport by focusing on particular groups of refugees.

Key issues the Kindertransport refugees experienced, according to these studies, are stigmatisation, survivors' guilt, and the feeling of not showing enough gratitude to the host country and host families. Additionally, the displacement of the Kindertransport refugees through an early separation from the parents, transplantation to a foreign country with an unknown language, and feelings of loneliness contributed to the subsequent trauma.[13] The variety of the different organisations and administrative bodies that the children encountered – amongst them the Jewish Aid organisations, the Quakers – and the Refugee Children's Movement – led to different selection processes which in turn emphasises that there is no general Kindertransport experience.[14]

Jennifer Craig-Norton's monograph *The Kindertransport: Contesting Memory* (2019) is one of the most recent extended studies on the Kindertransport. Drawing on archives and a variety of Kindertransport memory sources, she presents material; personal and official, that contests and challenges the mainstream narratives of the Kindertransport as a model response to a refugee crisis.[15] Her methodology suggests that the use of memory documents can reveal underexplored aspects of the Kindertransport. However, while Craig-Norton touches on questions of identity development of the Kindertransport refugees in terms of national and religious identities, she falls short of a more detailed analysis of their changing senses of

[12] See for example: Vera K. Fast, *Children's Exodus: A History of the Kindertransport* (London; New York: Tauris, 2011), pp. 37–38, 42, 51, 54–55.
[13] Göpfert, *Der Jüdische Kindertransport von Deutschland nach England 1938/39,* p. 13.
[14] This aligns with a general trend in exile studies that shifts the focus onto individual experiences which has been suggested by a number of scholars, including Inge Hansen-Schaberg who states that 'In der Exilforschung geht es um die Aufarbeitung von einzelnen Lebensgeschichten und Kollektivbiografien und zugleich auch um die mit diesen Menschen vergessenen oder verdrängten Ideen und Werke, wissenschaftlichen Ansätze und kulturellen Leistungen'; see Inge Hansen-Schaberg, 'Exilforschung - Stand Und Perspektiven', *Exil*, Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, 42, 2014, 9–38 (p. 10); and the collective volume published by the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies *Exile and Everyday Life* which follows the line of enquiry that has 'been looking for alternative perspectives within the field of exile studies, which have included a move away from concentrating on well-known exiles towards a focus on so-called 'ordinary' refugees'; see *Exile and Everyday Life*, ed. by Andrea Hammel and Anthony Grenville, Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies (Leiden; Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2015), p. xi.
[15] Craig-Norton, *The Kindertransport: Contesting Memory,* p. 7.

belonging which seems to be a central concern in many other studies. For example, in their article 'From Europe to Antipodes', the historians Simone Gigliotti and Monica Tempian raise the question of whether the refugees from Nazi Germany had 'already been denied their sense of belonging to their birthplace by Nazi propaganda before their flight'.[16] Although posing this question draws attention to an issue concerning identity that exiles and refugees often faced, it simultaneously reinforces the idea that belonging is based on the spatial binaries of *Herkunftsland* and *Fluchtland* that this thesis is arguing against.[17] By offering a detailed analysis of diary entries, this thesis goes beyond the usual contextualisation of experiences within the organisational framework of the Kindertransport and moves towards an interpretation of how belonging and identity manifests itself within everyday life and the writings of the Kindertransport refugees. Thereby, I aim to provide an investigation that focuses primarily on the unfiltered experiences of the Kindertransport refugees as they perceived them at the time without the retrospective evaluations that memoirs provide.

Two of the most recent studies published on the Kindertransport scheme highlight the importance of this research focus on the children's own voices. These publications are Andrea Hammel's *The Kindertransport: What Really Happened* (2023) and *National and Transnational Memories of the Kindertransport: Exhibitions, Memorials and Commemorations* (2023) by Amy Williams and Bill Niven. While Hammel's monograph aims to give a balanced account of the Kindertransport, its organisation, historical background, and impact, Williams and Niven shift the focus towards Kindertransport memorialisation in the country of origin and the countries of refuge. Both publications make significant contributions to not only Kindertransport scholarship by further illuminating the critical aspects of the scheme, its implementation and effects, but also to the contextualisation of the Kindertransport within a wider current discourse on child migration and refugee movements.

Hammel suggest in *The Kindertransport: What Really Happened* that in order to understand the impact of the Kindertransport, 'we also need to hear from [the Kindertransport refugees] in their own voices – in diaries and letters written at the

[16] Simone Gigliotti and Monica Tempian, 'From Europe to Antipodes: Acculturation and Identity of the Deckston Children and Kindertransport Children in New Zealand', in *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938-39,* ed. by Hammel and Lewkowicz, pp. 103–24 (p. 110).
[17] In this thesis *Herkunftsland* and country of origin, as well as *Fluchtland* and country of refuge are used interchangeably. This decision is based on both word count restrictions and style.

time, or through oral […] testimony or written text recorded in later life'.[18] Amy William's doctoral thesis and the subsequent book that she published with Bill Niven focus on oral testimonies and other artistic representations which also builds on the idea that the voices of the Kindertransport refugees are central to any investigation of the scheme and its impact.[19] Niven and William critique the lack of representation of the experience of the Kindertransport refugees in some exhibitions, namely the new Holocaust galleries in the Imperial War Museum in London.[20] Adding to this, I argue that by focusing, as Hammel also suggests, on resources written by Kindertransport refugees, we can get unique insights into the experience and impact of the Kindertransport. Evidently, primary sources that were written at the time of the Kindertransport have not been a central concern of researchers and thus an investigation of material such as diaries written during the 1930s and 1940s is needed.

Source Material: Diaries

The diary presents itself as a source that, in the context of the Kindertransport, has been relatively underexplored and thus warrants further and more detailed analysis. A qualitative investigation of the diaries written by Kindertransport refugees highlights the opportunities these documents hold as a source to better understand the impact of the Kindertransport experience on individual negotiation processes of belonging. Andrea Hammel already identified the strength of such source material in her 2015 article '"Liebe Eltern!" – "Liebes Kind!": Letters between Kindertransportees and their Families as Everyday Life Documents': '[r]esearch on the Kindertransport can fall back on a large number of memory documents but far fewer contemporary records. Diaries and letters are two genres that depict the everyday life of the child refugee'.[21] She recognises the importance of ego documents in a research context with regards to the authors constructing and telling life stories. Yet, since her article was published

[18] Andrea Hammel, *The Kindertransport: What Really Happened* (Medford: Polity Press, 2024), p. 145.
[19] See for example, Amy Williams, 'Memory of the Kindertransport in National and Transnational Perspective' (Nottingham Trent University, 2020), pp. 46, 71-72; Amy Williams and Bill Niven, *National and Transnational Memories of the Kindertransport: Exhibitions, Memorials, and Commemorations* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2023), pp. 38, 44-46.
[20] A Williams and Niven, *National and Transnational Memories of the Kindertransport*, p. 29.
[21] Andrea Hammel, '"Liebe Eltern!" - "Liebes Kind": Letters between Kindertransportees and Their Families as Everyday Life Documents', in *Exile and Everyday Life,* ed. by Hammel and Grenville, pp. 155–72 (p. 155).

there has not been an extensive exploration of this particular source material in the field of Kindertransport scholarship.

In their 1999 essay collection *Marginal Voices, Marginal Forms: Diaries in European Literature and History* Langford and West highlight different dichotomies that are inherent to the diary as a genre:

> the diary, as an uncertain genre uneasily balanced between literary and historical writing, between the spontaneity of reportage and reflectiveness of the crafted text, between selfhood and events, between subjectivity and objectivity, between the private and the public, constantly disturbs attempts to summarize its characteristics within formalized boundaries.[22]

This resistance to categorisation of the diary as a form is crucial as the diary's characteristics allow a multifaceted analysis that draws on different paradigms such as belonging, transnationalism, and memory studies. Langford and West go on to point out '[t]he diary has frequently been dismissed as being a practice caught in the banality of everyday existence.'[23] I argue however, that it is exactly its character of a practice within the everyday existence that makes it such a valuable resource, which is similar to Jennifer Sinor's argument that '[d]ailiness, the act of writing in the days rather than of the days, is the single quality that marks the diary as a distinct form of writing'.[24] Therefore, diary writing as a form but also as a practice take on a special role within a discourse on everyday life. Furthermore, if '[t]he ordinary, the superficial, and the everyday are the materials out of which the writing of culture gets done', then the diary as a form of everyday narration and writing of the ordinary informs and contributes to our understanding of culture and daily life.[25]

Consequently, diaries offer a gateway to an analysis of an individual's life that is – to some extent – direct, unmediated, and unfiltered. Kathryn Sederberg states that '[u]nlike other forms of life writing, such as memoir, which creates narrative coherence through its retrospective gaze, the diary consists of repetitive text segments

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[22] 'Introduction: Diaries and Margins', in *Marginal Voices, Marginal Forms: Diaries in European Literature and History*, ed. by Rachel Langford and Russell West-Pavlov (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), pp. 6–21 (p. 8).
[23] Langford and West-Pavlov, ' Introduction: Diaries and Margins', p. 6.
[24] Jennifer Sinor, 'Reading the Ordinary Diary', *Rhetoric Review*, 21.2 (2002), 123–49 (p. 123) <https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327981RR2102_01>.
[25] Ben Highmore, 'Obligation to the Ordinary: Michel de Certeau, Ethnography and Ethics', *Strategies*, 14.2 (2001), 253–63 (p. 254).

(entries) that create ruptures in the narration of a life'.[26] Furthermore, she argues that diaries 'allow for an unfinished and open writing of the self.'[27] These statements are crucial as it highlights the potential of the source material to negotiate and write about aspects of self and belonging. The diary as a form and everyday practice provides the opportunity for the diarist to situate themselves in time. Paperno highlights this relation between the self and time, stating 'the time told continuously, in private, allows the diarist to attain knowledge of the self.'[28] Looking at the representation of the self and cultural identities over time, as recorded in the various consecutive entries of the diaries, then emphasises many aspects of personal development which can be traced based on the dated entries. Sederberg argues here that '[d]iarists used their writing in an attempt to "grasp" or bring order to time, seeking figures, models, and metaphors for temporality, and thus the ability to imagine and describe the experience of time.'[29] This can be seen as a negotiation strategy to make sense not only of the historical circumstances and their experiences but also of the self. The diary therefore is an object that offers space for an analysis of transformation, change, and identitarian flux.

Philippe Lejeune emphasises that a diary captures parts of a life, not the whole, but focusing on the practice of writing itself enables researchers to study between the lines:

> [B]efore becoming a text, the private diary is a *practice*. The text itself is a mere by-product, a residue. Keeping a journal is first and foremost a way of life […]. Journals only follow one or two of the many threads making up the fabric of life; written for oneself, journals are filled with implicitness, and kept irregularly.[30]

Therefore, while diaries cannot offer a conclusive and complete overview of an individual's life, they still yield valuable information about certain aspects of everyday life and about representation of self and belonging in a cultural and transnational context. As researchers, when working with diaries, we need to be careful not to attempt to fill in the gaps but rather focus on the fragmentary writings and what they can tell us about different aspects and discourses relating to our research focus.

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[26] Kathryn Sederberg, 'Writing through Crisis: Time, History, Futurity in German Diaries of the Second World War', *Biography*, 40.2 (2017), 323–41 (p. 330) <https://doi.org/10.1353/bio.2017.0019>.
[27] Sederberg, 'Writing through Crisis', p. 324.
[28] Irina Paperno, 'What Can Be Done with Diaries?', *The Russian Review*, 63.4 (2004), 561–73, (p. 566).
[29] Sederberg, 'Writing through Crisis', p. 339.
[30] Philippe Lejeune, *On Diary*, ed. by Julie Rak and Jeremy D. Popkin (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), p. 31.

Furthermore, Lejeune dedicates a section of his article 'The practice of writing a diary' to the reflective function. He states:

> Paper is a mirror. Once we have projected ourselves onto paper, we can step back and see. And the image of the self that takes shape has the advantage of developing over time: via both repetition and change, revealing contradictions, errors, and all the biases that allow us to start reexamining our certainties.[31]

While it is crucial not to overemphasise the children's ability of reflection and re-examination in their diaries, Lejeune's observation can still be applied to their writings to some extent. Hammel states that 'children record events rather than emotions' but also emphasises that individuals are 'able to write about [their] emotional reactions to the events' in their lives.[32]

Ultimately, the diary as a resource enables us to question common perceptions of belonging, everyday life, memory, and identity. Desirée Henderson provides a useful starting point to approach the diary as a source material in *How to Read a Diary*.[33] She suggests some critical questions readers should keep in mind about the medium itself, the structure, and the ways in which the individuals write. Some of the questions she lists include: 'Does the diarist incorporate visual images or materials within the text […] [and] do these relate to the diary's content?';[34] 'How does the diary contribute to the author's construction of their subjectivity and identity';[35] and 'Why does the diarist write [and] what motivates them?'.[36] Her guide serves as an inspiration to the questions I pose to the diaries of the Kindertransport refugees, which cover: What can Kindertransport diaries tell us about their experiences in exile and how these impacted their negotiation of belonging? To what extent are belonging and identity negotiated and constructed in the diaries through memory and language? What opportunities do these diaries hold for researchers who seek to understand everyday life and its shaping circumstances on belonging? While Henderson's 'interpretive strategies that will enable readers to […] make sense of a diary's contents [and] to appreciate its defining conventions' certainly build a good foundation of the analytical

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[31] Philippe Lejeune, 'The Practice of Writing a Diary', in *The Diary: The Epic of Everyday Life*, ed. by Batsheva Ben-Amos and Dan Ben-Amos (Indiana University Press, 2020), pp. 25–38 (p. 31) <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvxcrxgp>.
[32] Hammel, 'The Future of Kindertransport Research', in *The Kindertransport to Britain 1938-39,* ed. by Hammel and Lewkowicz, pp. 141–56 (p. 146).
[33] Desirée Henderson, *How to Read a Diary: Critical Contexts and Interpretive Strategies for 21st-Century Readers* (London; New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2019).
[34] Ibid., p. 35.
[35] Ibid., p. 68.
[36] Ibid., p.166.

approach of this thesis, to answer the guiding research questions the diary as a practice and source, this has to be linked to the key paradigms of this thesis to fully reveal underexplored negotiation strategies of belonging and identity.[37]

Key Paradigms and their Definitions

Before turning to the thesis outline, I want to provide the theoretical background on the key concepts of this study which comprises belonging, identity, and transnationalism. These three concepts need to be clearly defined as they build the basis for the following considerations and analysis of the diaries.

Belonging and Identity

Belonging and identity – two central concepts of this research – are inherently linked and in flux. Stuart Hall's definition of cultural identity gives an indication of this by stating that 'we should think […] of identity as a "production", which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation'.[38] For Hall, cultural identity is, on the one hand, a collective identity anchored in a shared history, and, on the other hand, it recognises similarities as well as differences:

> Cultural identity […] is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. […] Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power. […] [I]dentities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past.[39]

Cultural identity, and here I am extending this to personal identity as well, hence, remains in a state of constant negotiation. Building on Hall's understanding, this thesis uses a multidimensional definition of belonging which, according to Linda Shortt, means:

> [p]eople can belong in different ways to a variety of objects of attachment, ranging from anchorage in a physical or imagined place, real or imagined group, or a cultural practice or tradition, to a more abstract grounding in a

[37] Ibid., p. xii.
[38] Stuart Hall, 'Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation', *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, 36 (1989), 68–81 (p. 68).
[39] Ibid., p. 70.

> remembered or prospective time in space.[40]

Looking at belonging in this sense allows for an investigation of changing notions of identity, memory, the everyday, home, and subsequently also of belonging itself. Furthermore, Shortt suggests that 'increased transnational movement […] opened up the contemporary understanding of home as an intimate site of belonging' and goes on to argue that 'global movement has reworked the home into a multidimensional and mobile construct that can involve more than one location'.[41]

To better understand how belonging and identity transcend binary ideas of space and place, this study makes use of the substantial research on the concepts and their reciprocal relationship. As already alluded to in Shortt's and Hall's definitions of belonging and identity respectively, we have to employ a dynamic understanding of both that highlights a constant negotiation and renegotiation process. For Shortt, 'narratives of belonging articulate the longing to belong […], foregrounding belonging as a process which changes individuals and places'.[42] While her definition focuses on a very spatial understanding of belonging and home, I suggest that her observations, particularly regarding the tension between the idea of belonging and its lived reality, can be extended to other dimensions of belonging which are not exclusively linked to spaces.

According to Nicola Wood and Louise Waite, belonging signifies an emotional attachment:

> Belonging and 'longing to be' (…yourself, accepted, respected, included…) are powerful and emotive imperatives that inform the ways in which lives are lived and futures are made. They can shape politics, inspire caring communities and lead to social wellbeing; but conversely, they can also create social division, encourage prejudice and provoke violence. […] [T]he power of belonging lies, somehow, in the emotional (and emotive) qualities of its attachments and affiliations.[43]

Their approach suggests that belonging is not just constructed and implemented in positive ways but can also bring to light notions of non-belonging and exclusion which, in turn, can be used as methods to negotiate one's own senses of belonging.

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[40] Linda Shortt, *German Narratives of Belonging: Writing Generation and Place in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Legenda, 2015), p. 1.
[41] Ibid., p. 3.
[42] Shortt, G*erman Narratives of Belonging,* p. 15.
[43] Nichola Wood and Louise Waite, 'Editorial: Scales of Belonging', *Emotion, Space and Society*, 4.4 (2011), 201–2 (p. 201).

Vikki Bell argues in *Performativity and Belonging* that 'the term "belonging" allows for an affective dimension – not just be-ing, but longing'.[44] She goes on to point out how different discourses, for example religion, society, and gender, constantly shape and reshape identities.[45] Fundamentally, Bell's suggestion highlights the multifaceted nature of belonging and identity. While her study gives a broader overview of how identities are embodied and affected by various discourses and ultimately shows how belonging as a performative act produces certain effects within these discourses, Bell, at the same time emphasises that '[b]elonging is an achievement at several levels of abstraction'.[46] Her observation points towards the social as well as individual dimension of belonging and its performative character.

In the chapter 'Belonging' in *Affective Societies* Dominik Mattes, Omar Kasmani, Marion Acker, and Edda Heyken create a link between belonging, processes of homemaking, and transnationalism based on spatiality:

> Much of contemporary theory on mobility, transnationalism, and globalization conceives "the migrant" as the embodiment of "borderless belonging": fluid, transitory, un-rooted, and un-mappable. However, people's longing for and practices of creating a "home" in a new place amidst experiences of displacement stand in stark contrast to such conceptions.[47]

Placemaking as well as references to the country of origin hence are two essential qualities when looking at belonging and are not mutually exclusive, as Mattes et al. go on to point out that 'such mobility may contribute towards feelings of in-betweenness or multi-sited forms of belonging'.[48] While their statements emphasise the spatial dimension of belonging, they already allude to the emotional and affective dimension of belonging through the connection between places, practices, and memory. This assumption offers a starting point for the analysis of fluid notions of belonging and how these are displayed and written about in the diaries of Kindertransport refugees.

Transnationalism

The other major concept concerning this research is transnationalism, which draws attention to the global and cross border connections that become visible in the diaries

[44] Vikki Bell, 'Performativity and Belonging: An Introduction', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 16.2 (1999), 1–10 (p. 1).
[45] Ibid., pp. 1–2, 4, 8, 10.
[46] Ibid., p. 3.
[47] Dominik Mattes and others, 'Belonging', in *Affective Societies: Key Concepts*, ed. by Jan Slaby and Christian von Scheve (New York: Routledge, 2019), pp. 300–309 (p. 302).
[48] Ibid.

as the Kindertransport refugees negotiate cross-border experiences. For Vertovec, transnationalism as a concept in migration studies allows us to view both how the migrants maintain a connection to their countries of origin as well as 'the ways in which [they] adapted themselves in their place of immigration'.[49] He advocates for more investigation into 'long-term strategies of belonging amongst migrants' to tackle questions of migrant identities and inform discourses on citizenship.[50] His approach suggests that individuals actively engage in processes of negotiating senses of belonging and that these processes can happen collectively as well as on an individual level.

Building on Vertovec's idea of transnational communities, I argue that his ideas can be utilised to understand practices within the Kindertransport refugee community. Transnational communities can draw attention to cross border practices that reinforce the connection to the country of origin by maintaining their native language, adhering to traditions or keeping in touch with relatives and people there. Simultaneously, individuals within transnational communities can also establish a link between migratory mobility, integration, and local, national, and international identifications. Christine Barwick argues in this regard that these relationships can signify transnational ways of belonging that 'capture the practices that signal or enact an identity which demonstrates a conscious connection to a particular group'.[51] Demonstrations of connection or belonging, as I aim to show in the following investigation, is not limited to one particular group or idea but rather is dynamic. Levitt and Glick Schiller go into further detail here and state that some 'individuals have some sort of connection to a way of belonging, through memory, nostalgia or imagination, they can enter the social field when and if they choose to do so' and refer they to these individuals as 'someone who had access to a transnational way of belonging'.[52] Such perspectives enable us to view the diaries as gateways to understanding and investigating transnational ways of belonging and multiple senses

[49] Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism* (London; New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 13.
[50] Steven Vertovec, 'Transnationalism and Identity', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 27.4 (2001), 573–82 (p. 576) <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830120090386>.
[51] Christine Barwick, 'Transnationalism and Intra-European Mobility among Europe's Second Generation: Review and Research Agenda', *Global Networks*, 18.4 (2018), 608–24 (p. 611) <https://doi.org/10.1111/glob.12181>.
[52] Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller, 'Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society', *International Migration Review*, 38.3 (2004), 1002–39 (p. 1011) <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2004.tb00227.x>.

of belonging by utilising a multidisciplinary approach combining theories on transnationalism with memory studies, language theory, and everyday theory.

The concept of transnationalism helps us understand that the Kindertransport refugees display and negotiate various senses of belonging in their diary entries. Taking the in-betweenness of the migrants, and in this thesis more specifically Kindertransport refugees, as a signifier for the dynamic nature of identity negotiation and belonging, I suggest that the transnational lens expands the analytical possibilities of the entries. We can focus on the changing and in-flux notions of identity and belonging.

Thesis Outline

This thesis is divided into five chapters, each including a brief outline of further relevant theoretical considerations. Starting with a showcase of the primary material, the first chapter sets out to explore the different ways in which diary writing as a practice and the diary itself as an object can contribute to our analysis of changing notions of belonging of Kindertransport refugees. Here, I am drawing on Desirée Henderson's suggestions on how to approach the diary as a medium and text, as well as Philippe Lejeune's notion of diary writing as an everyday practice.

By focusing on diary entries that deal with the direct engagement of the Kindertransport refugees with notions of belonging, the second chapter "Writing about Belonging" discusses the central paradigm of this thesis in greater detail. The chapter aims to show the immediate and unfiltered perception of the Kindertransport refugees regarding integration and belonging in various instances. It sets out to expand on the different local, national, and transnational dimensions of notions of identity and belonging that are written about in the diaries, showing how the Kindertransport refugees' understanding of belonging goes beyond binaries such as country of origin and country of refuge. This will provide a basis for further and more nuanced explorations of belonging in the following chapters by looking at various aspects that emerge but are not directly expressed.

The third chapter "Memory" aims to foreground the layers of expressions and reflections on memories of the country of origin and their experiences in the country of refuge so far. It shows how the deployment of memory in the diaries helps us understand the transnational character of the diarists' experiences and outlines how memory creates reference points for the Kindertransport refugees which become

important in their negotiations of belonging. Drawing on theoretical considerations on memory studies by Jan and Aleida Assmann and Astrid Erll, this chapter explores how communicative memory as well as cultural memory tie into the negotiation of different senses of belonging.[53] Memory, according to Erll, can be understood as 'both the practice of remembering and reflection on that practice'.[54] It is therefore not only a temporal process but also a way of constructing narratives through the act of remembering. While Jan and Aleida Assmann as well as Erll focus on a more collective form of memory, their approaches are nonetheless important as they draw attention to the very act of recording memory and how remembering works on an individual level.

The fourth chapter "Language in the Diaries" highlights different aspects of the use of language, with a particular emphasis on the translingual character of the diaries of the Kindertransport refugees. The communicative practices that the Kindertransport refugees display in the way they write about their language use shows how some of these practices transcends the boundaries of one language. Looking at their ability to cross over into different linguistic territories shows that the integration process on a language level can be different to what they describe on a content level in their entries. Investigating their entries about language but also how they use language will enable us to see a link between memory, everyday life, and belonging and how these aspects can be reflected in language.

In the fifth and final chapter, I turn to a contextualisation of the diary within the everyday life of the Kindertransport refugees as well as an analysis of how they write about their everyday experiences. Everyday life practices and experiences are a central theme in the diaries of the Kindertransport refugees and thus a focus on their everyday life, its manifestation, portrayal and practice ultimately allows a shift away from the memory of Kindertransport to the lived experience of emigration and of life in a new environment.[55] De Certeau states in *The Practice of Everyday Life* that his book 'is part of a continuing investigation of the ways in which users [ordinary people]

[53] Publications consulted here include: *Kultur und Gedächtnis*, ed. by Jan Assmann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988); Aleida Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume: Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses* (München: C.H. Beck, 1999); Astrid Erll, 'Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction', in *A Companion to Cultural Memory Studies*, ed. by Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 2008), pp. 1–15 https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110207262; Astrid Erll, *Memory in Culture*, trans. by Sara B. Young, Palgrave Macmillan Memory Studies (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).
[54] Erll, *Memory in Culture*, p. 1.
[55] See: Hammel, 'The Future of Kindertransport Research', pp. 145-146.

– commonly assumed to be passive and guided by established rules – operate'.[56] Building on this argument, I suggest that the use of everyday life as an analytical tool illuminates the agency of the Kindertransport refugees and thus reveals underexplored aspects of their exile experience.

[56] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), p.xi.

Primary Material and Short Biographies

The diaries that form the corpus of this investigation were selected for a number of reasons ranging from representation concerns to accessibility issues. Due to the Covid pandemic and travel restrictions research trips in Britain as well as abroad were difficult to plan and execute between September 2020 and May 2021. Many archives also took this as an opportunity to digitise their physical holdings and, as of spring 2024, some of the collections have now been made available online while some are still being digitised.[57] Furthermore, physical collections have also been added to archives, like the Imperial War Museum, since the start of my research.[58] While I tried to the best of my abilities to incorporate different class, gender, national and religious backgrounds as well as different placements, the choice of corpus was limited to diaries that were available and relevant to my research questions. Some archival holdings listed as diaries turned out to be calendars rather than personal journals.[59] I also read diaries of child refugees who emigrated to the UK and Ireland with their parents or other adult family members as well as diaries of child refugees who arrived in Britain after initially fleeing to other countries such as Belgium or the Netherlands. While looking comparatively at the different experiences of child refugees whose emigration process was different, I decided to focus on diaries written by Kindertransport refugees who came straight to Britain or Ireland as an extensive investigation of them as a primary source has not been done to date.

In early May 2021, I was able to start my primary research in the archives of the Wiener Holocaust Library and the Imperial War Museum in London. Further

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[57] The US Holocaust Memorial Museum holds an extensive collection of Kindertransport refugees' files. Examples for collections that have become available online now include Norman Miller, 'Norman A. Miller Family Papers, Series 1; File 11: Diary of Norman A. Miller 1939-1951', United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2016.203.1 <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn537182?rsc=29652&cv=3&x=1129&y=932&z=1.9e-4> and Frederic Zeller, 'Series 1. Biographical Materials: Frederic Zeller Diary 1939 December - 1939 April', United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2017.576.1 <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn594850#?rsc=173705&cv=0&c=0&m=0&s=0&xywh=-268%2C895%2C2092%2C1492>. Two example for collections that is still being digitised include Gisela Eden: 'Gisela Eden Papers', United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2013.476.1 <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn86677> and Erika Stolz, 'Stolz and White Families Papers', United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2018.447.2 <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn709529>.

[58] Collections include Clive Teddern, 'Private Papers of C Teddern', Imperial War Museum, Documents.15482,

[59] See for example Regina Morgenstern, 'Morgenstern and Merkur Families Papers, File 2: Morgenstern, Regina: Diary 1945', United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2017.101.1 <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn555298?rsc=27655&cv=0&x=933&y=1293&z=1.5e-4>.

research then became possible at The Keep Archive at the University of Sussex and the University Archives at the University of Leicester in summer 2021. I was also able to access a private archive after a reply to my call for diaries in the AJR journal. While an insight into a wider spread of local experiences in different places in Britain, especially Wales and Scotland would have been desirable, this also offers the opportunity for further investigation with a specific focus on the Kindertransport refugees' experiences in the different home nations.

The nine diaries which build the corpus of this study were mainly written between 1935 and 1947 with some later entries reflecting on previous entries and experiences or summarising the diary. The Kindertransport refugees this thesis focuses on differ in age, gender, religious affiliation, and in their background. These distinctions are also expressed in the ways in which they use and write in their diaries. All quotations are unedited and transcribed to the best of my ability from the documents found in physical archives and online archives, therefore spelling mistakes have been kept in the quotes and I refrained from using [sic] to indicate these mistakes for the ease of the reader. After each biography, the bibliographical information is provided. In future citations, the diaries are referenced by surname, first name initial (if applicable) followed by their first name and the word 'diary', for example 'Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 5'. Where possible page numbers or image numbers are given to locate the entries more easily.

Elisabeth Ornstein

Elisabeth Ornstein was born on the 8 November 1927 in Vienna, Austria. Her diary is held at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC as a physical copy and it is digitally accessible in their online database. In the following, the scan numbers are included in the footnotes to make it easier to locate the entries again. In the early 1930s, Elisabeth's mother Hildegard converted to Catholicism. Both Elisabeth and her younger brother Georg were baptised and subsequently attended Catholic schools. Their father Dr Paul Ornstein had stopped practising the Jewish religion long before he met Hildegard. They had a nanny, Emmy Burgmann, who gifted Elisabeth the diary. After the annexation of Austria in 1938, then eleven-year-old Elisabeth and Georg were sent to live with their uncles in Frankfurt due to the

increasing antisemitism in Vienna but returned a few months later, after their uncles were arrested and deported on Kristallnacht. While Hildegard and Paul tried to leave Austria as a family, the Jewish Refugee Children's movement found two families in Great Britain, each agreeing to take one of their children in. Elisabeth would be living with the Cook family in London and her brother Georg was placed with the Parrot couple in Scotland and was later moved to a family who lived closer to Elisabeth. Both left Vienna on a Kindertransport in January 1939. Also in 1939, Elisabeth's parents obtained visas for the United States and left for Buffalo in January 1940. Elisabeth travelled on the H.M.S. Antonia to join her parents in September 1940 with Georg joining them a few days later as he travelled on a different ship. Paul took a medical qualification exam and after passing it, he changed the family name to Orsten. Elisabeth's diary starts in January 1939. The first entries are written in Sütterlinschrift. Her diary captures her time in London, Frieth, and Henley on Thames, as well as her journey to the US and her first few days there. There are some later entries in 1941 and 1944 where she reflects on her journey and experiences. Elisabeth has also written a memoir called *From Anschluss to Albion: Memoirs of a refugee girl 1939-1940* which was published in 1998.

Orsten, Elisabeth, 'Elisabeth Orsten Papers: Series 3: Diary 1939-1944; File 1: Diary and Key 1944', United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2000.417.1 https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn98646#?rsc=129335&cv=42&c=0&m=0&s=0&xywh=-829%2C-127%2C3538%2C2524

Kurt & Fritz Seelig

The diaries of the brothers Kurt and Fritz Seelig are held at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York and are accessible online via the Centre for Jewish History web archive. Kurt's diary has image numbers included and, where possible these are referenced in the footnotes. Fritz's diary has small page numbers at the bottom of each page. However, during the scanning process of the diary, some of these numbers as well as the pages in general have become illegible. Where possible, page indications have been given in the footnotes. The brothers grew up in Schwedt/Oder near the Polish border. They left together from Berlin on a Kindertransport in April 1939. Their parents emigrated to Quito, Ecuador in 1941. Kurt and Fritz joined them there in 1943. After the war, Kurt emigrated to the US while Fritz, who by then had changed his name to Frank, stayed in Quito and became a businessman while their parents returned to

Berlin. Kurt was born on 9 April 1929. He was one of twelve Jewish children placed in the Schlesinger Hostel, opened by Dr Bernard Schlesinger who was a well-known English paediatrician. He started his diary on 28 August 1939, which marks the day that he was told he was being evacuated out of London and placed in a family in the countryside village Brookmans Park in Hertfordshire. His last entry was on the 1 July 1940. In his diary, Kurt discusses his daily life which includes cinema trips, schoolwork and scores of sport matches. He sometimes comments on current historical events. He also includes postcards and newspaper clippings in his diary. The Kurt Seelig collection held at the Centre for Jewish History also includes a photocopy of Fritz Seelig's diary which is of fairly poor quality. Fritz, who was fourteen when he arrived in the UK, was first placed with a family in Hendon, North London and later attended a school in Westgate on Sea. Fritz started his diary on 19 April 1939, the day he left Germany. The last entry of his diary is on 17 June 1940. Fritz also writes about his daily life but due to being a few years older, his style is more advanced.

Seelig, Fritz, 'Kurt Seelig Collection (AR 11115): Fritz Seelig Diary, 1939-1940', Leo Baeck Institute, Box: 1, Folder: 3 <https://archives.cjh.org/repositories/5/archival_objects/684105>

Seelig, Kurt, 'Kurt Seelig Collection (AR 11115): The Schlesinger Hostel, 1938-1999', Leo Baeck Institute, Box: 1, Folder: 4 <https://archives.cjh.org/repositories/5/archival_objects/684107>

Edith Jacobowitz

Edith Bown-Jacobowitz was born in Berlin on 16 September 1924. The archives of the Imperial War Museum in London hold Edith's personal papers including her diary. She left her parents with her eleven-year-old brother Gert on a Kindertransport when she was just 15 years old. She never saw her parents and close relatives again. Her diaries span from September 1938 to May 1944 with a later entry in July 1949. She records her experiences of her emigration to Northern Ireland, her time in a refugee hostel in Belfast and on Millisle Farm in County Down. She expresses her emotions as well as concerns for her parents who were trying to leave Germany. In 2014, Edith's memoir *Memories and Reflections: A Refugee's Story* was published.

Bown-Jacobowitz, Edith, 'Private Papers of Mrs E Bown-Jacobowitz', Imperial War Museum, Documents.6478

Ilse Grünwald

Ilse Grünwald was born on 20 January 1924 in Vienna and grew up as an only child. Ilse's father was also from Vienna but left the family and had emigrated to Zurich in Switzerland by 1938. In December 1938, Ilse emigrated to England on a Kindertransport as a 14-year-old teenager. Her mother stayed behind in Austria, hoping to join Ilse once she had settled in England. However, she did not obtain a permit and died in 1941 after being deported to a concentration camp in Poland. Ilse's first few days were spent in a refugee camp at Dover Court, where many children were initially placed after arriving in the UK if a home had not been found or was not yet ready. Ilse refused to attend the boarding school that the Jewish Refugee Committee had organised for her. She briefly stayed in Tunbridge Wells before living in various hostels and shared accommodation in London. She took on many different jobs in factories and worked as a waitress. She started writing her diary, which she received as a birthday present, in January 1935 and continued with some regularity to write entries until August 1947. The first entries are written in Sütterlinschrift. Her entries deal with homesickness, getting used to the new situation and general worries of a teenage girl as well as the reality of war and life in London during the war. The diary is held at the Wiener Library in London.

Shatkin, Ilse, 'Ilse Shatkin: Diary and Papers 1929-1946', 2012, Wiener Holocaust Library, 1844 <https://wiener.soutron.net/Portal/Default/en-GB/RecordView/Index/71224

Leopold Weil

Leopold Weil was born in Karlsruhe, Germany on 13 March 1925. His father died in 1937 and his mother emigrated to the US where she remarried and later lost contact with him. In England, Leopold anglicised his name and started calling himself Leonard. It is not clear when he changed his name from Leopold Weil to Leonard Lawrence. He went to school in Milan until 1938 and was fluent in Italian. In 1939, he emigrated to the UK on a Kindertransport. He was first placed in a camp near Ipswich in Suffolk. He later moved to London to work as a tailor. Leonard was naturalised as a British citizen in 1947. A copy of his diary is held at the Wiener Holocaust Library. The first part of the diary from 1939 to 1941 is written in Italian and from October 1941 onwards in German. It covers the period from October 1939 to August 1943 with a varying degree of frequency of the entries. He often reflects on previous entries and

how he has changed since writing them. Leonard also records political and historical events.

Lawrence, Leonard, 'Leonard Lawrence: Diary and Notes 1939-1943', 2007, Wiener Holocaust Library, 1730/2 <https://wiener.soutron.net/Portal/Default/en-GB/RecordView/Index/151230>

Ingeburg Sigler

Ingeburg Marion Sigler was born on 2 February 1927 in Chemnitz. Ingeburg's diary, which is held at the Imperial War Museum in London, spans from June 1938 to April 1942. Her diary is mainly written in German with occasional English entries or sentences and contains many hand-drawn illustrations. She wrote in the diary with some irregularity, particularly in the period between November 1938 and August 1939, when she arrived in England. After that she attempted to write weekly, mostly on the weekends. Both Ingeburg and her brother Gert came to England on a Kindertransport only a few weeks before the outbreak of war. While the family history does not give conclusive evidence of who organised the Kindertransport for her and Gert, it is speculated by their descendants that it was their uncle Leon who had emigrated to England by that time. After the war, Ingeburg stayed in London before moving to Rome and ultimately settling down in Israel.

Sigler, Ingeburg, 'Ingeburg Sigler Diary', Private Archive Nick Sigler

Hannah Weinberger

Hannah Hickman was born as Hannah Gertrud Weinberger on 3 February 1928 in Hof, Bavaria.[60] Her parents were Karl and Ruth Weinberger and she was the oldest of three children. In the early 1930s, many of Hannah's relatives managed to emigrate to the US, Holland, and Switzerland while her parents decided to stay in Würzburg for the time being. Her cousin put the Weinberger family in touch with Nell Gill, a teacher living in Bristol, who agreed to let Hannah stay with her until her family obtained visas for the US. However, her family never managed to get the papers, and they were all killed in the Holocaust, so Hannah stayed with Nell Gill. In 1944, she received an offer

[60] The information on *The Keep* website says Hannah was born in 1923. Her memoir *Let One go Free* however states that she was born in 1928.

for a place at Westfield College London to study German and French. She was naturalised in 1947 and became a British citizen. Hannah married in 1950 and settled in Cheshire. She published an autobiography titled *Let One Go Free* in 2003. Her diary only covers a few months, from September to December 1941, and mostly focuses on her everyday life, school and friends. Her personal papers are accessible at the Keep archive at the University of Sussex.

Hickman, Hannah, 'Diary [Red Booklet]', The Keep - University of Sussex Library, Weinberg Papers

Helga Bejach

Helga Bejach was born on 11 of August 1927 and is the youngest of three daughters of Dr Curt Bejach. Their mother died when Helga was three years old. In August 1939, the two youngest girls, Helga and Irene, aged 12 and 13 respectively, arrived in England while their older sister Jutta stayed behind in Berlin where she got in 1944. Their father Curt was deported to the concentration camp Theresienstadt and ultimately to Auschwitz, where he perished in 1944. Frederick and Mary Attenborough, parents of Richard, David, and John, took the two girls in. As Frederick Attenborough was principal of University College Leicester from 1932 to 1951, they lived on campus. Helga attended a boarding school in Chalfont and then a dance school in Cornwall where she stayed during term time. In 1946, Irene and Helga emigrated to the US joining their aunt and uncle. Jutta and her husband survived the war and eventually emigrated to New York in 1949, where they were reunited with the rest of the family members. Helga's diary, which is part of a larger collection held at the University of Leicester archives, spans from 1 January 1944 to 31 of December 1946. It is written in English and mostly focuses on her days at the dance school, recording lessons and practice.

Bejach, Helga, 'Helga's Daily Diary January 1944 – 1946', Leicester University Library: Special Collections, ACC 2019/21

Chapter 1
Diary Writing

Introduction

Diary writing as a practice and the diary itself as a material object can reveal underexplored elements relating to the representation and negotiation of life-stories and the self. This chapter intends to investigate the practice of diary writing by drawing on the diaries of Kindertransport refugees and their practices. The aim is to show how this relates to their ongoing negotiation of belonging, identity, experiences and coming to terms with life-changing events. Furthermore, this chapter also highlights the diary as an everyday object and will investigate its materiality and composition. Crucially, the diary takes on different functions: it is a mediator between past, present, and future but, at the same time, it is also a matrix for recounting personal experience in a historical or social context.[61]

In her research on refugee diaries, Kathryn Sederberg considers the practice of keeping a diary as a cycle of reading, remembering, and constructing life-stories.[62] This suggests we should pay particular attention to entries, especially first entries, that incorporate a statement of motivation and to entries of self-reflection and self-orientation. The diary provides its user with the opportunity to write with regularity about everyday experiences while at the same time creating a fragmentary narrative as it highlights the impossibility of covering every aspect of a life. If we consider the diary as a reflecting practice that can be seen as a performative means of constructing life-stories, then the materiality of the diary, its paratext and additional objects also must be seen as aspects of tactics in the diarist's attempt to piece together a narrative of experiences that are still being formed.

This chapter not only examines the practice of diary writing but also the aspects that contribute to the composition of the diary as an object: materiality, decorations, and additional materials. The extraordinary diligence some of the Kindertransport refugees showed when writing or even carefully crafting entries further emphasises aspects of their changing circumstances. By looking at the practice of diary writing, the diary as a material object, and any additional material or decorations, we can better

[61] See for example, Paperno, 'What Can Be Done with Diaries?', pp. 565–66, 572.
[62] Kathryn Sederberg, 'Writing of Home and "Heimat" - German and Austrian Refugee Diaries, 1933-1945' (London, 2022).

understand the different ways in which the Kindertransport refugees used their diaries to make sense of their experience and emotions.

Theoretical Considerations

According to Lejeune, the diary has four distinct functions: expression, reflection, memory, and the pleasure of writing.[63] These functions highlight that the diary, while a tool to write about emotions and experiences, is also a representation of those emotions and experiences itself. In this regard, Lejeune also emphasises that 'the diary offers a space and time protected from the pressures of life. You can take refuge in its calm to "develop" the image of what you have just lived through'.[64] While this illustrates that the diary as a representation of experiences offers a space for reflection and mediation, it also shows that, as researchers, we need to be aware of how the experiences are represented, which informs the analysis of the entries.

By analysing diaries, we can better comprehend the depiction and negotiation of belonging and identity. Anchored in the everyday, the practice of writing the diary and the diary's content can give us insights into the diarist's processes of negotiating concepts such as self and belonging as well as life itself. Utilising the diary as a space for self-reflection and resolutions can then reveal how the diarist uses the diary not only as a method to record events but also as a tool for representing personal change.

The diary, according to Batsheva Ben-Amos and Dan Ben-Amos, 'is the literature of the mundane — but at times, of the sublime'.[65] This prompts us to delve into the notion of the diary as an aesthetic object. This aesthetic not only lies in the entries, the style and register, and the language used in the text, but also in the visual presentation of the diary. Adding this aesthetic dimension to the analysis of diaries then shows how the diary, as a form and a medium, represents the changing notions of self, belonging and the negotiation of experiences, not only through the written entries but through its whole appearance. Joe Moran points out that '[d]iaries were thus conspicuously tactile objects with specific textual and visual conventions. Even those who kept their diaries in simple notebooks often gave considerable thought to the look

[63] Philippe Lejeune, 'How Do Diaries End?', *Biography*, 24.1 (2001), 99–112 (p.105).
[64] Ibid., p. 107.
[65] 'Introduction', *The Diary: The Epic of Everyday Life,* edited by Batsheva Ben-Amos, and Dan Ben-Amos, Indiana University Press, 2020, p. 15.

and feel of the repository of their writings'.[66] The aesthetic aspects of the diary as well as the practice of writing itself therefore yield information on how life is captured by the particular diarist.

On the basis of these considerations, I will investigate how the diary as a source represents the negotiation of experience, belonging, and identity of Kindertransport refugees through its form, its composition, and through the practice of writing. Firstly, I will concentrate on the practice of writing a diary by emphasising the diarist's intentions and motivations. To do so, I will analyse the beginnings of the individual diaries, which often outline the purpose of writing, before moving on to the use of the diary as a space for resolutions and self-reflections. The second part of this chapter turns to the materiality of the diary, describing the appearances of the diaries as well as highlighting any additional material objects, ornamentations, and similar aspects. The aim is to provide a visual insight into the primary material and showcase the different ways in which the Kindertransport refugees kept and wrote in their diaries.

The Practice of Writing a Diary

Diary writing serves many purposes – it can construct narratives and identities, be an attempt to give coherence to a life or serve as an autobiographical act of self-expression. The intricacies of the practice itself and question of why the Kindertransport refugees wrote their diaries highlight their attempts to make sense of new experiences and life-making. Lejeune emphasises that a diary captures parts, but not the whole, of a life, but focusing on the practice of writing itself enables researchers to read between the lines.[67] Therefore, the diary yields valuable information about certain aspects of everyday life as well as about representation and negotiation of belonging. Examples that showcase the practice of writing and keeping a diary itself offer a gateway to further analyse the entries through highlighting purposes, motivations, and even performative means of constructing or re-evaluating the self that is portrayed in the diary.

The practice of keeping a diary in extraordinary times, as Sederberg states, can be seen as 'fragmentary writings that accompany daily life during wartime'.[68]

[66] Joe Moran, 'Private Lives, Public Histories: The Diary in Twentieth-Century', *Journal of British Studies*, 54.1 (2015), 138–62 (p. 144).
[67] Lejeune, *On Diary*, p. 31.
[68] Sederberg, 'Writing through Crisis', p. 326.

Sederberg goes on to point out that '[i]n such a period of crisis, the writing practice can be therapeutic, fulfilling a need for regularity and order'.[69] Thus, diary writing as an everyday exercise can give stability and continuity to the diarist during the time of writing while, at the same time, paradoxically creating a fragmentary narrative for the readers. The conscious decision to include or exclude certain aspects and experiences therefore can give us insight in the different notions of belonging that are emphasised.

Beginnings

Often, diaries start with a statement of purpose about the individual's motivation to write a diary.[70] Therefore, it is vital to investigate the first entries of the diaries that were selected for this study. While Desiree Henderson, in her monograph *How to Read a Diary*, urges us to 'learn to read the middles instead of only focusing on the beginnings or endings', however she does concede that beginnings can 'provide a lens through which to interpret the text that follows'.[71] This, though, is only one of the many gateways from which we can approach these texts. I believe that looking at the openings will allow us to contextualise further entries, particularly the ones concerned with self-reflection, within the statements of motivation or the circumstances in which the diary was started by the Kindertransport refugee. As Lejeune points out, 'the beginning is always a decision to *start* writing'.[72]

A common assumption is that beginnings are an occasion for self-reflection and self-orientation. These beginnings are not limited to starting a diary but can also stem from other instances such as a new year or school year, a birthday or anniversary. Dates with such significance can also coincide with an individual starting a new diary or calendar as an annual practice.[73] For example, Helga Bejach uses a calendar as a diary to record her thoughts, activities, and emotions. As such, her diary starts at the beginning of a new year and her entries on New Year's Day also reflect these new beginnings. She writes in 1944, '1944 New Year. Life boring as usual'; in 1945, 'The

[69] Ibid., p. 333.
[70] Desirée Henderson argues in *How to Read a Diary* that such statements or declarations can give readers of the diary insight into 'the writer's intent, their choice of content or format, and their views of themselves as writers'; see Henderson, *How to Read a Diary,* p. 77.
[71] Ibid., pp. 78 & 80.
[72] Lejeune, *On Diary*, p. 170.
[73] Henderson highlights this in her discussion of beginnings, endings, and middles; see: Henderson, *How to Read a Diary*, pp.77-80; and Lejeune argues in his 2020 article that 'People keep a diary in times of crisis, during a phase of life, or to chronicle a voyage. They begin, let it slide, and then pick it up again'; see Lejeune, 'The Practice of Writing a Diary', p. 25.

Beginning of a new year. Prost Neujahr! Cold weather is getting better thank goodness. I am dying to go out again' and in 1946, 'The New Year has certainly started with cold weather. Went to tea to Sheila's then we went to see "the wicked Lady". Not a good picture. Tried on Auntie's red evening dress for 21st party'.[74] Similarly, but less limited by the chosen form, Hannah Weinberger started her diary at the start of a new school year in 1941: 'Gestern fing das neue Schuljahr an. Bin nun in der Senior School, das heist, eine von den älteren in den höheren Klassen'.[75] She then turns to some considerations on jazz music. Both girls start their diaries on a date that signifies a new beginning, a date they have chosen to begin their diaries at, but which does not necessarily indicate change for them. For Helga, though there is a change in calendar year, the content of her entries does not seem to change. For Hannah, the new school year also does not appear to show a change in her everyday activities.

Out of the nine diaries included in this study, Ilse Grünwald's diary can be considered as the oldest, as it dates to January 1935 and it is not known whether any of the other Kindertransport refugees in this study wrote diaries dating back to an earlier time. However, we can assume that only Leopold, who is a similar age to Ilse, could have kept a diary dating back to before 1935 based on the Kindertransport refugees' dates of birth and when they likely developed the ability to write.[76] Ilse received her diary on her eleventh birthday on 6 January 1935 and wrote her first entry on the same day (*Image 1*).

[74] Bejach, *Helga's Diary*.
[75] Hickman, *Hannah's Diary*.
[76] Leopold actually states in the first entry available to us that it is his first diary and that he has kept it for seven months and is, at the moment of writing the entry on 20 October 1939, rereading the diary: Il mio primo diario, e come fara questo. Sono gia otre sette mesi che faccio il mio diario, ed i al tempo che cantrollo in quali punti i buono ed in quali devo miglioralo. (my translation from the Italian into German: Mein erstes Tagebuch und wie es das machen wird. Ich mache mein Tagebuch seit mehr als sieben Monaten und überprüfe zu diesem Zeitpunkt, an welchen Punkten ich gut bin und in welchen ich es verbessern muss). It is not known to us what happened to the earlier entries; see Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*.

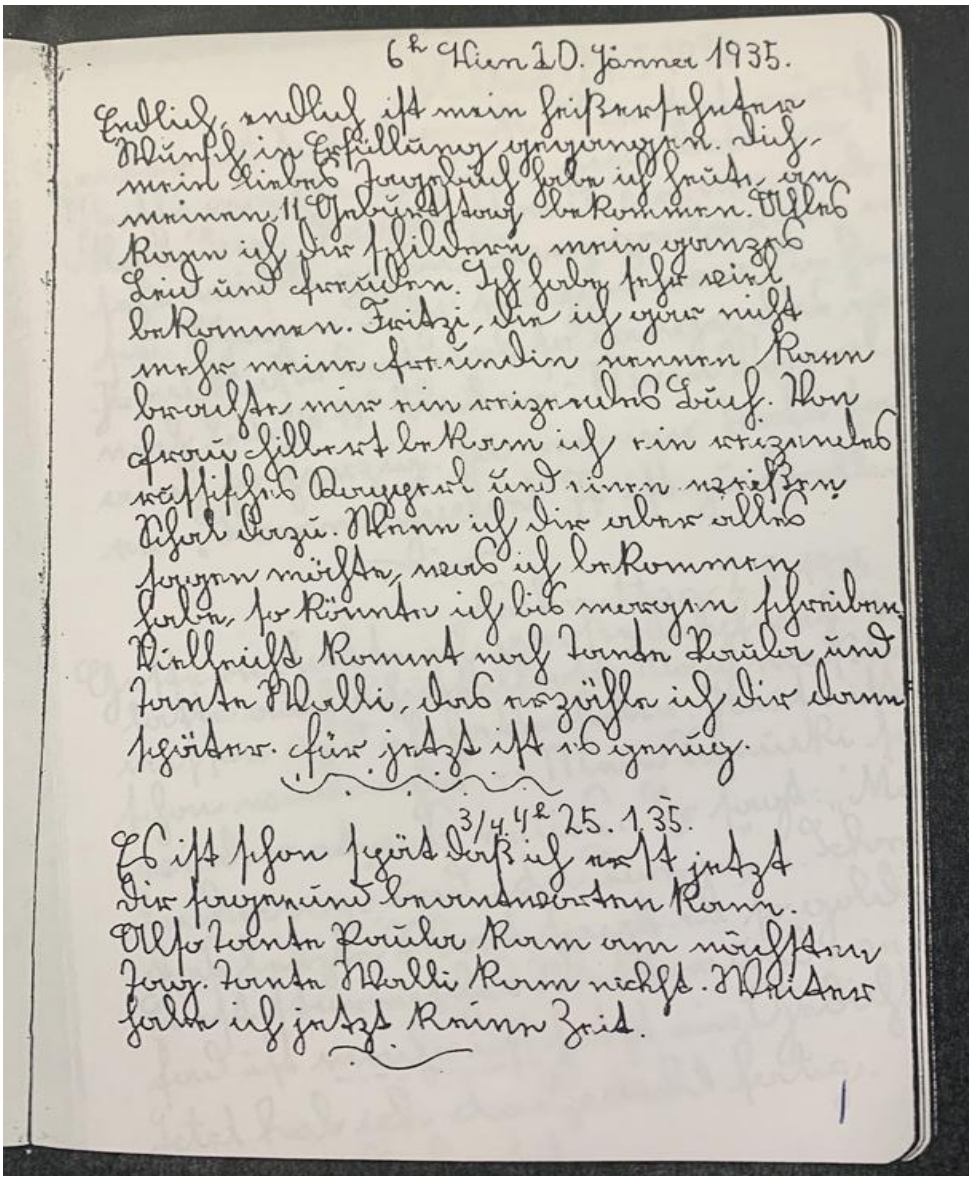

Image 1, Shatkin, Ilse's Diary, p. 1

She includes a statement of purpose as well as emphasising the desire she had to keep a diary, and her entry highlights her excitement about receiving it as a gift:

> Endlich, endlich ist mein heißersehnter Wunsch in Erfüllung gegangen. Dich, mein liebes Tagebuch, habe ich heute zu meinem 11. Geburtstag bekommen. Alles kann ich dir schildern, mein ganzes Leid und Freuden.[77]

Ilse addresses the diary directly as if she was talking to a person. Henderson argues that 'the well-known phrase "Dear Diary" demonstrates how this device can grant the text a status, an identity, and even a name distinct from the author's'.[78] By using the

[77] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p. 1.
[78] Henderson, *How to Read a Diary*, p. 69.

address ‘mein liebes Tagebuch’, Ilse utilises the possessive to express a deep personal connection to the object.

Similarly, Elisabeth Ornstein starts her diary with the address ‘Liebes Tagebuch’. In her first entry, from an undated day in January 1939, the eleven-year-old girl writes:

> Wien Januar 1939 Vergiß mein nicht!
> Ich liebe Dich!
>
> Liebes Tagebuch!
> Du mußt nun schön verschwiegen sein, denn ich will alles geheime Freud u. Leid meines tiefsten Herzensgrundes dir anvertrauen. Gräme dich nicht wenn ich dir nicht täglich alles erzähle, denn du erscheinst mir nicht als ein Tagebuch sondern als ein Mensch dem ich alles sagen darf. Und auch deshalb bist du mir wert, weil du von einem meiner liebsten auf Erden bist. Ich will mich bemühen dir nur Gutes sagen zu können. Mein Geheimbuch!
>
> Liesl.[79]

Often assumed as typical of diary entries, Elisabeth addresses her diary with ‘Liebes Tagebuch’.[80] As in Ilse’s case, this use suggests that the writer is addressing the diary as if they were talking or writing to someone directly. Again, Henderson’s observations further emphasise the importance of this address:

> The practice of addressing the diary is designed to create an interlocutor for the diarist and, while this audience might may be imaginary, it functions in many ways like a conventional textual audience: establishing a motive and justification for writing, a pretext for expository passages, and an invitation for response, even if unrealized.[81]

Both girls also include declarations of purpose in their first entries. Ilse states that she will use the diary to write about everything that comes to her mind, no matter if it is positive or negative. Elisabeth even has some expectations of the diary which also give us insight about the intentions of her writing and the purpose of her diary, further emphasised by her calling it a ‘Geheimbuch’. This corresponds to Lejeune’s idea of confiding in the diary:

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[79] Orsten, *Elisabeth’s Diary,* scan 5.
[80] Philippe Lejeune investigates the origins of “Dear Diary” in his chapter ‘O my paper’ tracing the use of an imaginary addressee back to a series of samplings between 1762 and 1834. He concludes that often diarists do not start every entry with an address and that they address the diary occasionally within the text. While his investigation focuses on French diaries, he suggests that perhaps ‘fancy stationary’, as he calls it, which includes notebooks with the word diary printed or embroidered on the cover that were sold in England since the nineteenth century presupposed a more natural relationship to address the diary with ‘dear diary’ (p.100); see Lejeune, *On Diary*, pp. 93-101.
[81] Henderson, *How to Read a Diary*, p. 69.

> Paper is a friend. By using it as a confidant, you can release your emotions without troubling someone else. Your disappointments, your fits of anger, your sorrows, your doubts - but also your hopes and joys - the paper lets you give them a first airing without any restraint.[82]

The diarist can utilise diary writing as a personal and individualistic practice or activity which allows them to narrate their experiences and emotions. Due to the diary offering a space for self-reflection and narrating one's own life, the diarists are often confronted with the retrieval of memories and moments of self-analysis. There is, therefore, a cathartic element to keeping a diary, with the exercise often suggested as an adjunct to therapy.[83]

In addition to the text, the eleven-year-old Elisabeth includes a little drawing of two birds which seem to be talking to each other saying 'Vergiß mein nicht!' and 'Ich liebe Dich' which are written in Latin script, unlike the entry itself which is written in Sütterlin script. At the top of the page, there is an inscription reading, 'Meinem lieben Lieserl zum Andenken an Ihr Fräuli Emmy Bürgmann' (*Image 2*).

[82] Lejeune, 'The Practice of Writing a Diary', p. 30.
[83] see, for example, Sharon Hymer, 'The Diary as Therapy: The Diary as Adjunct to Therapy', *Psychotherapy in Private Practice*, 9.4 (1992), 13–30 <https://doi.org/10.1300/J294v09n04_02>.

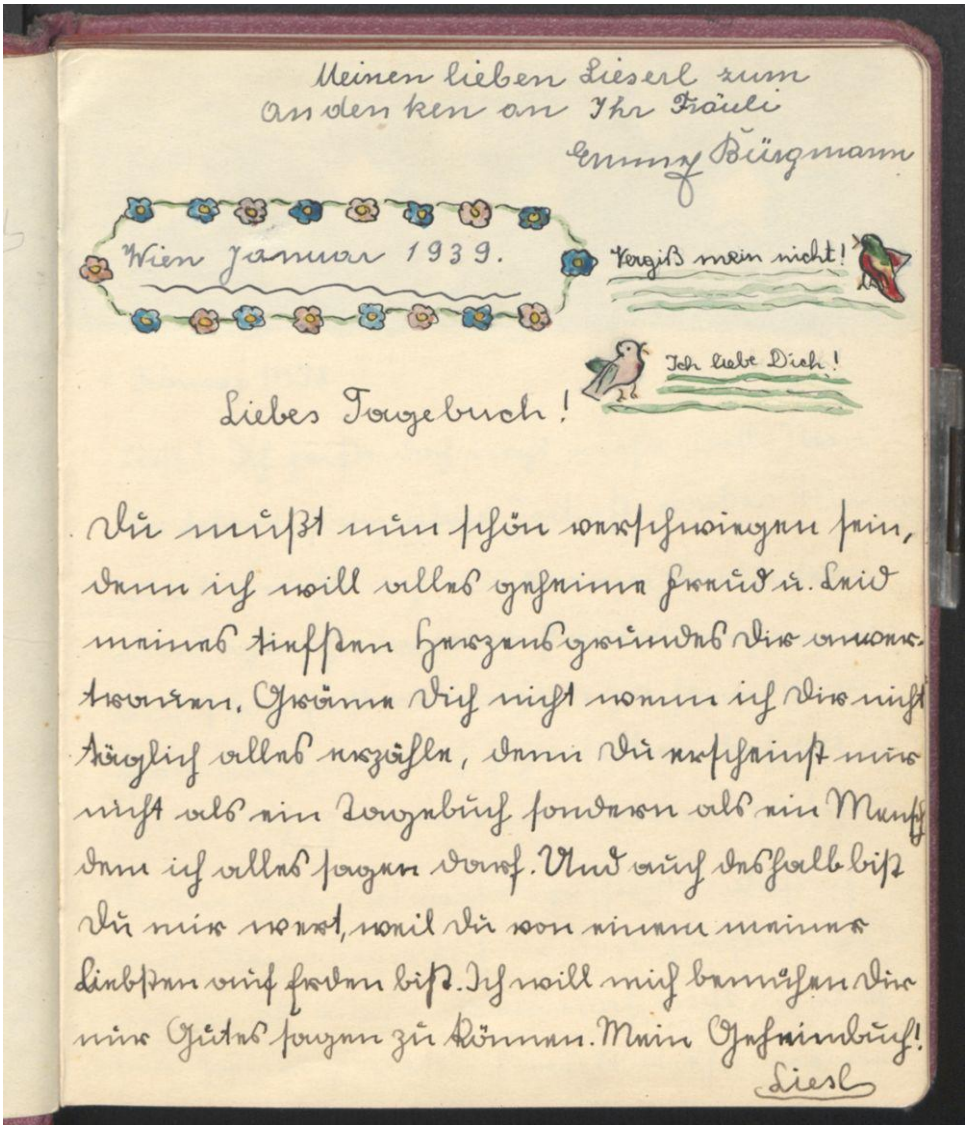

Image 2, Orsten, Elisabeth's Diary, scan 5

This gives us, as readers, an idea as to why Elisabeth started this diary at the age of eleven. Her nanny, who she calls Fräuli, gave it to Elisabeth before she left Austria on a Kindertransport in January 1939. We can connect the inscription and the drawings by interpreting the conversation between the birds as Elisabeth and Fräuli parting and the child being asked not to forget her nanny.

Ten-year-old Kurt Seelig's first entry covers the events of several days. We can assume this entry was written between 28 August and 3 September 1939 as his next was written on 4 September:

> Am 28. August 1939 wurden wir am Morgen geweckt, es war Sieben Uhr. Keiner wusste was los ist, Susi Bermann hat uns da erzählt das wir alle zur Schule kommen solten. Wir alle sagten es sind Ferigen, sie sagte "Das wir fertig sind wenn Krieg kommt. […] Wir hatten keinen richtige Unterricht bis zum 1 September 1939.
> <u>Die Reise von der Schule.</u>

> Wir haben uns alle in der Halle versammelt. Der Schulmeister Mr Durban hat uns wieder alle aufgerufen. Nach einer langen Weile kamen die Busse von London transport. […] Ich will jetzt mal ein paar Bilder zeigen von der evacuation. Auf der anderen Seite ist erste Trupp und dann auf der nesten Seite ist die evacuation in der letzten Zeit.[84]

Kurt was clearly prompted by an event to start keeping a diary – the event in question being the evacuation from London to the countryside. Interestingly, he did not start his diary when leaving Berlin on a Kindertransport but rather chooses a different historical event with significant impact on his life. The eight-year old's entry is very detailed in his description of the events leading up to the children's journey out of London during the evacuation which was organised by the school. He then continues to write about the day itself and how they left London on buses. Kurt's entry has many spelling mistakes and the sentences are very short, both of which can be attributed to his language proficiency on account of his age. Furthermore, some of these mistakes show how his language acquisition is influenced by aural and oral ways of picking up the language. For example, 'nesten' is misspelt and while the word is still very close to the German 'nächsten', an approximation to the English word 'next' is visible here and hence the misspelling can be seen as an example of the linguistic influence of English. Such instances will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four. What follows are two pages with newspaper clippings of the evacuation which will be analysed in detail later in this chapter. He continues the entry:

> Wir sind von Bahnhof losgangen. Wir sind in den Zug gegangen, in dem Zuge waren auch noch andere Schulen von Hornsey. Wir haben auf dem Weg zu Hatfield ein paarmal der Zug angehalten. Wir kamen in Hatfield an. Es stieg aus als erster Mr Telfort und „King". King hatte die Fahne von der Schule, auf dieser Fahne stand[85]

The last sentence was left unfinished. On this page, Kurt also included the label he was given for the evacuation process. The front has the initials H.E.C. 3 written on it and the back 'Kurt Seelig – Highgate Council School Hornsey'. On the top of the next page, Kurt explains that 'Das Schild hatte jeder auf seinem Rücken'. Again, the entry reads very matter-of-factly. What is noticeable is that he left the last sentence 'King hatte die Fahne von der Schule, auf dieser Fahne stand' unfinished before he glued his label into the diary. Underneath the label, Kurt explains that 'King war ein Junge von

[84] Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*, pp. 2-4.
[85] Ibid, image "verso".

der Schule'. There is a possibility that this explanation was added after the entry was written as the ink is darker. However, this could also be due to it being covered by the label and less exposed to sunlight. In any case, Kurt including this information suggests that the diary could have been intended to be read by other people or he anticipated forgetting who he was referring to here as the nickname of the boy from school is also how Kurt referred to the monarch.

This part of Kurt's entry aptly highlights the fragmentary character of the writings of a diary. Rather than producing a whole narrative of events, Kurt writes disjointed entries that accompany his everyday life. These fragments might seem disconnected at times but prompt us to focus on these interruptions and contemplate them. Diary writing, according to Lejeune, entails accumulating fragments, here particularly illustrated by the scrapbook-like character of Kurt's diary combining textual and visual elements.[86] Kurt's diary is a mixture of fragments and repetitions, a list of events presented without narrative structure. In the abovementioned entry, Kurt leaves a sentence unfinished, includes an explanation, and adds a physical object. Paired with the short descriptive sentences, these fragments prompt the reader to think about the composition and process of writing of this entry.

The next part of the entry is separated from the above by a line. Kurt, then ten years old, carries on describing the evacuation process for several pages until moving on to a detailed description of his new host family named Grant. He seemingly writes down every impression and piece of information he had at the time, without going into any detail about his feelings or emotions. Yet, Kurt's attention to detail suggests that this event had a great impact on him. While he dedicates a lot of time to retelling the events of the evacuation to the countryside, the political situation is also part of this long entry:

> Der Krieg! Wir haben uns langsam eingelebt. Wir haben am 2 September gehört das Adolf Hitler und sein Militer in Polen einmarschiert ist, wir dachten gleich das dann der Krieg vor der Tür steht, Es kam der zweite September und noch kein Krieg. Am 3 September 1939 haben wir im Auto gespielt, es kam mit einmal der Sohn an das Auto und sagte uns, das 3. September 1939 – 11 Uhr der Krieg beginnt. […] Ich habe ein Auto angehalten und habe gefragt ob ich bis zur Ecke fahren kann? Er sagte Ja. Es wollten alle den Krieg halten aber Hilter ging Poland, da war der Krieg da. Ich zeige ein Bild von the King, Mr Chamberlain and Hitler.[87]

[86] Lejeune, *On Diary*, p. 12.
[87] Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*, pp. 12-13.

Here, the entry ends with the pictures of King George V, the Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, and Adolf Hitler. Again, Kurt includes explanatory captions. His first entry covers several days and is very descriptive without including any direct statements of purpose for writing a diary or any terms of endearment. However, as Andrea Hammel argues in 'The Future of Kindertransport Research', 'Kurt Seelig's diary shows the immediacy of a young boy's life represented in a way that young children often write diaries: children record events, rather than emotions.'[88] His writing style, paired with the added material objects, are indicative of an eight-year-old boy who was aware that significant change was happening in his life. While it is not abundantly clear as to why Kurt started keeping a diary in his opening entry, it nevertheless becomes apparent that he realised that he wanted to keep a written record of the events of the evacuation and the beginning of the war, and that this might help him to negotiate his experiences.

Kurt's older brother Fritz, who was fourteen in 1939, started his diary a few months before him. While Kurt was prompted to start writing his diary when being evacuated to the English countryside, Fritz's first entry is on the day of his Kindertransport, on 19 April 1939, when he was fourteen years old:

> 19.4.39 Abreise aus Berlin
> vom Schlesischen Bahnhof mit Transport (50 Kinder) um 8.47 Uhr mit D-Zug. In Bentheim wurde unser Wagen ausgehängt. Wir standen dort 2 ½ Std. Weiterfahrt mit FD-Zug. Ankunft in Hoek van Holland 22.40 (G.Z.).[89]

This first entry is very short, and Fritz only describes the train journey from Berlin to Hoek van Holland without any information about his feelings. He does not start his diary with a statement of purpose, yet we can assume that he was motivated to record the Kindertransport and the separation from his parents. However, despite the significance of the event and the expected emotional confusion and uncertainty, Fritz's entries remain concise and without detailed descriptions of his feelings. In fact, the other entries on the first pages of the diary are written in a similar style.[90] Only in later entries do we see more negotiations of his feelings, as his matter-of-fact tone is

[88] Hammel, 'The Future of Kindertransport Research', p. 146.
[89] Seelig F., *Fritz's Diary*, p. 1.
[90] To entries on the first and second pages of Fritz's diary are all fairly similar, almost resembling bullet points. On 21 April 1939, he writes 'Abends Kino'; to indicate that he did the same thing a day later, on 22 April, he just uses the shorthand sign ditto marks; on 23 April, he writes 'Sah Kurt wieder' and on 27 April 'Nachmittags Kino'; see Seelig, F., *Fritz's Diary.*

replaced by more emotional reflections on his new situation. This will be highlighted further in later chapters.[91]

While the diaries which are part of this study show that the Kindertransport refugees recorded seemingly mundane events, they were clearly aware of the extraordinary circumstances of their personal situations and the significance of the global events which they were living through. Particularly the beginnings of Kurt's and Fritz's diaries illuminate this awareness, as they were motivated to start keeping a diary by the extraordinary circumstances they found themselves in. The diaries of the Kindertransport refugees were written in extraordinary circumstances, yet, as we can see in multiple examples, they still wrote about ordinary events and with an emphasis on their everyday experiences. Within some entries, though, there is still reflection about the reality of war and the historical circumstances they find themselves in. Therefore, I argue that Sinor's observations on the ordinary diary require rethinking. The binary of ordinary and extraordinary diaries does not hold up, as the medium of the diary is inherently focused on the everyday but also governed by the social, political, and cultural circumstances of its writer.[92]

Looking at the diaries that seem to have been started around the time of their refuge facilitated by the Kindertransport scheme or their early months in exile, there appears to be a trend in the motivation and intention of the children. They were, to some extent, aware that their experiences and the events of the time were something worth writing about. Here, it does not necessarily make a difference whether the diary was given to them by someone, or whether they started writing out of their own accord. Beyond the corpus of this study, retrospectively, many Kindertransport refugees actually have stated that they started keeping a diary due to this being a time of great change in their lives. Vera Gissing, a former Kindertransport refugee from Czechia

[91] Hammel argues in 'The Future of Kindertransport Research' that Fritz as the older brother shows more emotional depth than Kurt. While this is not evident in the first entries of both their diaries, it becomes obvious later on in their diaries. Kurt's entries become shorter and focused on ordinary life. Fritz, in contrast, 'records more emotions and he writes about his memories of his parents'; see Hammel, 'The Future of Kindertransport Research', p.146.

[92] Jennifer Sinor argues that the ordinary diary is a text that focuses on the mundane rather than the literary and it can be perceived as boring and plain (123). While, as discussed earlier, her suggestion to read the diary through the lens of the daily rather than the literary offers a distinct gateway to an analysis focusing on the connection of everyday activities and circumstance with the practice of writing a diary, her emphasis on the ordinary opposed to the extraordinary creates a binary that needs to be overcome to understand the potential that diaries of the Kindertransport refugees hold; see Sinor, 'Reading the Ordinary Diary'.

(formerly Czechoslovakia), writes in her memoir *Pearls of Childhood* about receiving her diary:

> That evening father gave me a beautiful leather-bound book. […] 'Use it as a diary', he [said]. 'I am sure you will send us lots of letters, but it would be nice if you also kept a record of your activities, thoughts and feelings. I purposely chose a diary without dates, for there may be days and weeks when you have nothing to write about, and other times when you fill pages and pages. […] Just think how lovely it will be when you are back home and we can all sit together and relive your experiences through your diary'.[93]

Vera's memory of her father giving her the diary hints at different aspects of diary writing but it also highlights her motivation for writing. While there is no unedited version available of Vera's diary, her reflection on receiving the diary and her memory of the reasons why she was given it underpin the claim that the Kindertransport refugees often started writing a diary due to the significance of their circumstances. While the Kindertransport was often the catalyst, other events of great change were also used as motivation to start keeping a diary, as we are able to see in Kurt's diary.

Resolutions and Self-Reflection

While statements of purpose are often included at the beginning of a diary, the middle, as Henderson refers to it, offers the diarist a chance of constant re-evaluation and re-consideration.[94] Owed to its form, the diary, according to Lejeune, is discontinuous, full of gaps, allusive, and repetitive.[95] However, particularly due to the implicit and allusive nature of the diary, entries about the practice of diary writing and the purpose and opportunities of it reveal aspects about the diarist that can help us understand other entries which are not as explicit and also shed light on their writing conditions.

As the name 'diary', or 'Tagebuch', suggests, the form might imply a regularity in writing entries. Many of the Kindertransport refugees attempt, in the beginning, to write in their diaries regularly, almost daily, and highlight when they have not written in a while. Twelve-year-old Elisabeth, for example, writes on 23 July 1940:

> Dieses Mal werde ich bei meinem Vorsatz bleiben, u. jeden Tag in dich schreiben liebes Buch. Heute ist der erste Ferientag. Ferien habe ich nicht gerne, besonders wenn sie so lange sind wie nun – zwei Monate.[96]

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[93] Vera Gissing, *Pearls of Childhood: A Unique Childhood Memoir of Life in Wartime Britain in the Shadow of the Holocaust* (London: Robson Books, 1994), p. 34.
[94] Henderson, *How to Read a Diary*, p. 80.
[95] Lejeune, 'The Practice of Writing a Diary', p. 170.
[96] Orsten, *Elisabeth's* Diary, scan 45.

She highlights that writing in the diary every day is a resolution for her. The entry conveys a degree of guilt for not writing more often as she addresses the diary directly when saying that she has not written in a while. There are other instances in her diary where she attempts to write with some regularity: on 19 April 1940 she writes, 'ich [...] dachte daß ich doch in Deutsch und in Zukunft täglich schreiben müsse'.[97] However, what is interesting about the entry on 23 July is that she kept up the regularity of daily entries for over a month after deciding on it. This is also when the twelve-year-old starts writing about more mundane activities and some of her entries are significantly shorter than others, reflecting, what Lejeune calls, the many threads making up the fabric of life.[98]

Other Kindertransport refugees also emphasise their attempt to write in their diaries regularly. Ingeburg Sigler, who writes not daily but weekly, notes on several occasions that she has not been able to write into her diary. For example, on 10 November 1940 she writes 'Ich konnte letzten Sonntag nichts schreiben weil mein Tagebuch schon eingepackt war', on 6 December 1940 'Gestern hatte ich keine Zeit zu schreiben deshalb schreibe ich jetzt', and on 8 June 1941 'Jetzt sind zwei Wochen vergangen seit ich das letzte mal schrieb'.[99] These are all indications for the fragmentary character of the diary.

While these statements only briefly explain why Ingeburg is writing with some irregularity, there is an entry on 28 March 1940 in which the thirteen-year-old goes into more detail:

> Immer mehr habe ich jetzt Schule und immer weniger Zeit für mein Tagebuch. Übrigens ist heute mal wieder Donnerstag. […] Ich war 2 mal in der Stadt und habe ungeheuer viel erlebt. Ich schreibe es in allen meinen Briefen aber nicht in mein Tagebuch. Denn etwas was ich (~~sehnlicht~~) schreiben möchte kann ich ja doch nicht schreiben.[100]

The significant part here is the hesitation of writing about something that she feels like she cannot write about. The intimacy that is often attributed to the relationship of the diarist and the diary is missing. It is unclear what Ingeburg is referring to exactly, but she clearly feels uncomfortable being unable to confide in anyone, not even the diary. The lack of opportunity to express herself fully in the diary subverts the intended

[97] Ibid., scan 39.
[98] See Lejeune, 'The Practice of Writing a Diary', p. 25.
[99] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.
[100] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.

purpose of this form and makes us question Ingeburg's unwritten motivation of keeping a diary which she feels like she cannot write about. However, she continues to write weekly in the diary and her writing seems to become more open and reflective of her experience.

Leopold Weil, then age sixteen, writes about taking up diary writing again after over a year of inactivity. He writes his first German entry on 12 October 1941:

> Ich habe mir immer schon vorgenommen (bei immer meine ich die letzten paar Monate) wieder mein Tagebuch aufzunehmen. Diesen Entschluss habe ich immer wieder verschoben, weil ich wirklich nicht viel wusste zu schreiben, oder wenigstens war es nicht etwas das mich drängte, dass ich von meiner Brust bringen wollte. Denn wenn ich meine Gefühle und Gedanken hier niederschreibe ist zu mir ähnlich wie wenn jemand seinem besten Freund seine Taten bekannt macht danach leichtes Herzen seiner Arbeit nachgeht. Auf alle Fälle was ich sagen wollte bis jetzt und was mein Gefühl befahl erst nach diesen einleitenden Sätzen niederzuschreiben ist das ich jetzt etwas habe, das ich dir mein Tagebuch, erzählen will. [101]

Similar to the construction of an opening entry, Leopold includes a statement of purpose and motivation, outlining what he intends to write about. He also addresses the diary directly and states that his relationship to it is like a friendship. This corresponds to what we observed about Ilse's and Elisabeth's diaries and their beginnings. What is different, though, is that Leopold explains that his lack of writing in the diary was due to having nothing worth writing about. Contrastingly to Ingeburg and Elisabeth, Leopold does not want to write about his everyday life experiences. He reiterates in the entry the reasons for starting his diary in the first place:

> Wenn ich mein Tagebuch zuerst begann, vor 2 ½ Jahren, schrieb ich, als Begründung, dass ich ein Andenken der damaligen bewegten Zeiten davon machen will, dass ich mich dadurch im italienisch üben will, und drittens, dass ich mich mit der Tagesbuchs Hilfe erziehen werde in Charakter, im Benehmen, sodass ich durch meine eigene Anstrengung ein nützlicher und wertvoller Mensch werden soll. Ich möchte sagen, dass ich damals nicht richtig wusste die Bedeutung, von was ich sage, aber ich habe es von einem Instinkt von Recht geschrieben. Überhaupt war dieser Instinkt (ich wage nicht zu sagen ‚ist statt ‚war') so stark dass obwohl ich alle meine Gedanken und Aktionen und Meinungen zu jener Zeit in meinem Tagebuch festhielt, nichts unaufrichtiges oder unwahres in meinem Tagebuch zu finden ist, oder vielleicht besser gesagt nichts, dass ich zu der betreffenden Zeit nicht glaubte oder das meinen Charakter falsch wiederspiegelte, obwohl ich weiß dass mir jemand sehr glauben wüsste um es für Wahrheit zu nehmen, dass ich alles was ich schrieb aufrichtig glaubte. Ich meine wegen meinem gewechselten Charakter.[102]

[101] Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*.
[102] Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*.

His motivations for keeping a diary correspond to the ideas of writing in an important time of the diarist's life. According to Lejeune, 'for individuals, keeping a diary has become a potential way of living through or conducting a particular period of their lives'.[103] We can see that this was clearly one of Leopold's motivations and that, now having something to write about, he takes up diary writing again. Furthermore, while he reiterates that what he wrote was truthful, Leopold also highlights that he believes it does not reflect his character. This can be due to a change in character, norms and values, which he explicitly mentions in his entry but also due to the process of '[w]riting [which] always entails certain choices, ordering in and ordering out'.[104] Perhaps, Leopold remembers situations slightly differently and thinks that the entries are not fully representative of his character and personality. However, it has to be said that the diary does not claim to be a full representation of the diarist, rather it gives fragmentary images of their life.

The following few entries, written by then sixteen-year-old Edith Jakobowitz, are examples of a diarist's attempt to narrate their own life stories and their practices of life-making as well as the impossibility of doing so. On 22 April 1941, she writes:

> Mein altes Tagebuch ist voll mit Schmerze. Ich habe mir vorgenommen künftig Tatsachen und reale Dinge zu schildern. Das soll nicht heissen, dass ich gefühllos schreibe.[105]

Here, she tries to create a clear division between the negative emotions she experienced and her reality. Starting a new notebook allows Edith to refocus the narration of her life-story by basing it on 'reale Dinge'. This implies that her previous diary was, to some degree, laced with imagination and unrealistic events.

The practice of keeping a diary, for Edith, does not entail following a daily routine but rather functions as a way to reflect on her emotions. She often starts entries by stating a long time has passed since she last wrote and summarises what has happened. On 22 October, for example, she writes:

> Eine Ewigkeit zwischen den Eintragungen. Sie enthält wohl die schönste Zeit meines Lebens. […] Ich habe eine Sehnsucht, die mit Worten kaum ausgedrücken ist. Darum muss ich wieder zum Tagebuch Zuflucht nehmen. Es ist mir von je her ein treuer Freund gewesen.[106]

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[103] Lejeune, 'The Practice of Writing a Diary', p. 29.
[104] Sinor, 'Reading the Ordinary Diary', p. 130.
[105] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[106] Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*.

Between mid-1942 and January 1944 there is no record of Edith keeping a diary and we can assume that she only resumes keeping a diary in 1944 as she, then aged nineteen, writes on 4 January 1944:

> I haven't written a diary for long. I always wanted to, but there was always something between. But such a lot of things have happened and are still happening, that I felt like bursting sometimes.[107]

This again points towards the therapeutic aspect of the diary that entails offering an outlet for emotional reflection to the diarist.

Ultimately, these intentions show that the Kindertransport refugees who kept a diary are aware of the peculiarities and characteristics of diary writing. Drawing on Henderson, who argues that 'breaks or interruptions in the relay or in the diarist's established pattern of writing often provoke apologies and explanations', we can assume that they try to explain, for example, changing circumstances in their lives.[108] Furthermore, for some of the Kindertransport refugees, there is a sense of obligation to write in the diary as they are addressing the diary like another person to whom they owe something.

Reading diary manuscripts encourages an awareness of the unusual but powerful modes of self-expression that paper documents contain, and which may only be visible or legible to a person holding the text in their hands.[109] Lejeune suggests that the diary as a medium allows the diarist to reflect on their experiences, contemplate them, and consider their future decisions in a contained and different environment.[110] Leopold Weil, aged fifteen, reflects on what he has written so far on 4 September 1940 and writes:

> Ho riletto adesso le prime pagine del mio diario, e ho il sentimento che devo presentare le mie escusse al mondo che ero possibile per use di avere idee ai fanciulleschi e cretine. Alludo alla mia paura de avevo che farse non potere diventare un contadino, ad a mie idee in general. Ci passo vedere con una chiarezza che prima non sapevo esistere.[111]

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[107] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[108] Henderson, *How to Read a Diary*, p. 78.
[109] Ibid., p. 34.
[110] See Lejeune, 'How Do Diaries End?', p. 107.
[111] Lawrence, *Leopold's* Diary: English translation of the Italian: I have now reread the first pages of my diary, and I have the feeling that I must present my excuses to the world that it was possible for me to have ideas for the childish and idiots. I am referring to my fear that I would not be able to become a farmer, to my ideas in general. I can see it with a clarity that I did not know existed before.

The ability to re-read and re-evaluate his own choices is important to Leopold. In this entry in particular, it is noticeable that he has an intended reader in mind who is not his future self. Stating that he feels the need to make excuses for his previous entries highlights this. What becomes clear is that Leopold's own change in circumstances has led to a change in character which he now expresses in his diary. This entry is arguably a form of self-reflection but also of self-narration. While he states that he has gained some clarity, he also emphasises his change and growth.

There is another entry displaying a similar practice within Leopold's diary. On 4 March 1942, the then seventeen-year-old writes about the diary allowing him to trace his personal development:

> Es ist beinahe unglaublich wie viel ich mich in zwei Jahren entwickelt habe. Ich merke es an meinem Tagebuch. Es ist ein wirklicher Spiegel. Wie viele Stadien ich durchging um zu meiner jetzigen Geistesverfassung zu gelangen.[112]

Evidently, Leopold continuously re-reads his entries and re-evaluates not only them, but his self-orientation and his personal development too. His norms and values, in particular, are key aspects he often comes back to in his entries. It is interesting to see how he combines the practice of diary writing and his self-reflections, and how this makes aspects of his character development traceable. Applying Lejeune's ideas, we could say that, for Leopold, keeping a diary means 'to take pleasure in writing, since one also writes because it is... pleasant. It is good and pleasant to give shape to what you live, to make progress in writing, to create an object in which you recognize yourself'.[113]

Fifteen-year-old Ilse Grünwald writes about the opportunity of self-exploration and expression in her entry on 9 October 1939:

> Übrigens habe ich mich in der letzten Zeit sehr gut kennengelernt. Und alles was hier steht und hier stehen wird stimmt haargenau. Denn mit meinem Tagebuch bin ich ganz offen. Ali [a friend] hat wirklich recht wenn er sagt, dass das Tagebuch eine Stütze für schwache Menschen ist. Denn wenn ich in einer traurigen oder glücklichen Stimmung einmal bin und ich schrieb [...] das alles […] wird mir viel leichter. Das ist Tatsache. Aber ich bin jetzt ganz vom Thema abgekommen.[114]

Ilse links instances of self-discovery to the practice of diary writing. Paperno argues that 'time told continuously, in private, allows the diarist to attain knowledge (and

[112] Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*.
[113] Lejeune, 'How Do Diaries End?', p. 107.
[114] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p. 83.

hence possession and control) of the self: the narrative template of such a diary allows a continuous self-construction'.[115] Hence, the correlation between self-exploration and discovery and diary writing Ilse establishes in her entry suggests that the diary itself has provided her with a space to do this. However, she also developed an uncertainty about how much she might rely on her diary and what that means for her character. Nonetheless, Ilse acknowledges that the practice of diary writing in general has a positive impact.

The diary evidently contains moments of "looking back"; focusing on the past. What sets these considerations of the past apart from other forms of writing about the past is their immediate relevance to the writing present. For example, sixteen-year-old Edith Jakobowitz writes on 20 February 1941:

> Komisch wie einem so Sachen einfallen. Das kommt nur davon weil man Zeit hat nachzudenken. Man ist dadurch so zermürbt. Allein sein ist scheußlich. Ich lese dieses Buch von a-z und stelle fest, dass sich fast alles geändert hat.[116]

The entry highlights the autobiographical act of diary writing that combines memory and self-reflection.

Another form of self-reflection and self-orientation can be found in the endings of the diaries.[117] More than three years after her last entry, then seventeen-year-old Elisabeth Ornstein, who has by then moved to America, examines her diary again. In her last entry, written on 30 December 1944, she reflects on her whole diary:

> The old year is drawing to a close, and so among these symbols of the journey through life – symbols painted several years ago quite unconscious of their significance – I shall now add the last few lines to this diary. […] On rereading everything that has so far been written there I found a very sensitive, unhappy, self-centred, always introspective and confused child. That child has now grown into a woman – or the beginnings of one. She is still sensitive and too self-centred but thanks to the help of her friends and the providence of God she is no longer confused and developing. […] What is going to become of her in the years to come she doesn't know. She hopes that she will be able to do what she considers is not "drawing the line" and giving all in return for everything.[118]

[115] Paperno, 'What Can Be Done with Diaries?', p. 566.
[116] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[117] The endings of diaries are the subject of Lejeune's analysis in his 2001 article 'How Do Diaries End?'. He highlights the various ways the diarist can utilise to close the diary and identifies four distinct endings which are a voluntary and explicit stop, destruction, rereading, and publication but there are also many possible reasons for Lejeune why the diary might come to an end; see Lejeune, 'How Do Diaries End?', 99–112.
[118] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 153.

Her reflections reveal interesting thoughts about her own personality and development that she has noticed upon re-reading her diary. It can be assumed that without the diary, she would have not had the opportunity to reflect on her experience the same way as she does now. Drawing on Lejeune, who argues that 'closure can come at the end of a period (a week, a month, a year), and include a summary (information) and/or an assessment (appreciation) of the period coming to a close', we can read Elisabeth's last entry as a written reflection on the Kindertransport experience and how this has impacted her life as it was portrayed in the diary.[119] What is illustrated well in this entry is the ability to construct an image of oneself and the various modes of self-expression the diary presents, which offer the diarist a space for personal growth, self-improvement, and maturation.[120] We can see that Elisabeth uses the third person pronoun in her entry when reflecting on her younger self's experiences, clearly trying to emphasise the difference between the person she used to be and the person she has become.

Similarly, Edith also reflects on her former self by using the third person in an additional entry in 1989 when she was sixty-five:

> It is not given to everyone to write in a diary 50 years old, but that's what I'm doing. To sum this little book up: A disturbed and vain little girl in shock most of the time, never coming to terms with what she considers + probably is, a very inferior situation. A few years older, she might have made real mistakes. As it was, she was too frightened. Nothing in the book speaks of the love + care which was still emanating from her mother, grandmother + Hugo. The latter could surely have saved himself if we – Gert + Edith, had not held him up. Forgive us for our selfishness.[121]

Strikingly, this entry highlights the contrast between retrospective evaluations, often found in memoirs, and diary entries that connect past, present, and imagined futures. Comparing this backwards-looking entry to other entries taken from Edith's diary that are about self-reflection and the practice of writing a diary shows that here, she distances her present self from her past self without looking ahead.[122]

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[119] Lejeune, 'How Do Diaries End?', p. 101.
[120] Henderson, *How to Read a Diary*, p. 160.
[121] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[122] In the entries where she mentions self-reflection and the changes in her circumstances directly, Edith often actually refrains from elaborating on them and rather refers to her previous entries. For example, in her entry on 27 June 1940, Edith reflects on arriving in Belfast exactly one year ago: 'Heute vor einem Jahr bin ich in Belfast angekommen. Es ha sich in der Zeit wirklich viel geändert. Doch das kann man ja in den anderen Blättern nachlesen'; see Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.

Both Elisabeth's and Edith's final entries draw attention to the question of how diaries end. In general, some diary endings deal with taking up writing again, reflect on reasons for irregular writing, or highlight a pattern of when the authors write. These observations are also applicable to the Kindertransport refugees' diaries used in this study, which we see have different endings. While as shown above, Edith and Elisabeth write a summary of their diaries and reflect on the entries many years later, Ingeburg's, Kurt's and Fritz's diaries end abruptly. While there was a decrease in detail and regularity of the brothers' entries, neither mentions a reason why they would stop writing. These kinds of endings emphasise the continuous nature of the diary as they draw attention to a sense of open-endedness that the diary as medium conveys and which contributes to an understanding of the diary portraying fragments of a life-story that is still being written. Furthermore, more concrete endings, such as running out of space as in Ilse's case, can illuminate the inherent tension of the past, writing present and future which is emphasised by the diarist not knowing what will happen next. Twenty-three-year-old Ilse writes in her entry on 7 August 1947: 'Das Buch bald aus, was wird das Zukünftige bringen? Ich hoffe weniger Tränen'.[123] This, in turn, suggests that the diary can be used as a space to negotiate experiences and senses of identity and belonging.

The analysed diary entries ultimately highlight instances of self-reflection and self-orientation. The entries themselves can be seen as incisive moments that promote new beginnings in the sense of re-aligning the writer's norms and values, in the case of Leopold, or in the sense of realising the importance of the diary itself, like we have seen in the case of Ilse. All these observations relate to Lejeune's argument on diary writing and the self. He states:

> Paper is a mirror. Once we have projected ourselves onto paper, we can step back and see. And the image of the self that takes shape has the advantage of developing over time: via both repetition and change, revealing contradictions, errors, and all the biases that allow us to start re-examining our certainties.[124]

While it is crucial not to overemphasise the Kindertransport refugees' abilities of reflection and re-examination in their diaries, Lejeune's observation can still be applied to their writings to some extent as shown.

[123] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p. 189.
[124] Lejeune, 'The Practice of Writing a Diary', p. 31.

Materiality of the Diary

The presentation and physical form of the diary can contribute to understanding its meaning and purpose. What notebook or journal was used; how does the handwriting look; are there any additional objects in the diary? This subchapter investigates both the material object of the book used to keep a diary and the illustrations, clippings, and similar material on the pages. Henderson also discusses this in her monograph:

> [d]iarists do not only make meaning through language or writing, they also make meaning through their creative use of the space of the pages. Equally, they make meaning through visual images: drawings, diagrams, maps, photographs, newspaper clippings, and so forth.[125]

Therefore, it is crucial to look at these aspects as 'paying attention to those spaces and images within a diary is another means of unlocking its meaning'.[126] This suggests that it is not only the content itself but also the diary as a physical object and any additional material that enables us to uncover underexplored aspects of diary writing. Henderson goes on to point out, 'it is the interplay between image and text that constitutes the meaning of the diary, inviting the readers to read between and across the two modes of representation'.[127] To illustrate the differences and uniqueness of each diary, this subchapter is divided into two sections. Firstly, the appearance of all nine diaries is briefly described and script or language switching is mentioned if applicable.[128] Secondly, additional material objects, decorations and sketches are discussed. This subchapter focuses on the care and diligence applied when writing the entries that is noticeable. This highlights that the diary as a physical object carries meaning as it reveals further information on the practice of keeping a diary itself and can, in some cases, support the content.

Ilse Grünwald started her diary in January 1935, aged eleven, and the book came to a close in 1947, when she was twenty-three. She started writing in Sütterlin script, moved to Latin script on 17 August 1938, while continuously writing all her entries in German. The pages are almost always full, with entries not necessarily

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[125] Henderson, *How to Read a Diary*, p. 80.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid., p. 82.
[128] Markus Schiegg and Lena Sowada define the term 'script switching' as describing 'a change of script ["script" in handwriting is equivalent to "typeface" in printing] within a handwritten text' in their 2019 article 'Script switching in nineteenth-century lower-class German handwriting'; see: Markus Schiegg and Lena Sowada, 'Script Switching in Nineteenth-Century Lower-Class German Handwriting', *Paedagogica Historica*, 55.6 (2019), 772–91 <https://doi.org/10.1080/00309230.2019.1622574>.

starting on a new page. The Wiener Library only has the diary as photocopied material, so we are unable to determine how Ilse's diary looked from the outside. However, the composition of the entries still gives us some clues. It seems that Ilse wrote in one notebook over the whole timespan of the diary which also highlights the irregularity with which she must have written. There is a brand logo on the last page of the notebook 'Drexler & Strobl. München'.[129] The notebook pages are numbered with a pencil which suggests that this has been added later, potentially for the ease of reading the photocopies as they are made up of a collection of loose papers.

Leopold Weil wrote his first entry in October 1939, after the start of the war and after arriving in the UK. His diary is mainly written in Italian and German with a few entries in English. As with Ilse's diary, Leopold's is also only accessible as a collection of loose paper copies at the Wiener Library, so again, we do not know anything about the look and appearance of the notebook. His individual entries also do not start on a new page, but he creates a continuous flow of entries over the pages, only separating them by including the dates with bigger spacing between the last line of the previous entry and the first of the new entry. He stops writing into his diary between September 1940 and October 1941 which is emphasised by him leaving two pages blank. This also highlights the change of language more clearly.

[129] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p. 189.

Fritz Seelig, aged fourteen, started his notebook diary in April 1939, indicating as much on the first page with the inscription, 'Tagebuch begonnen am 19 April 1939. Fritz Seelig' (*Image 3)*.

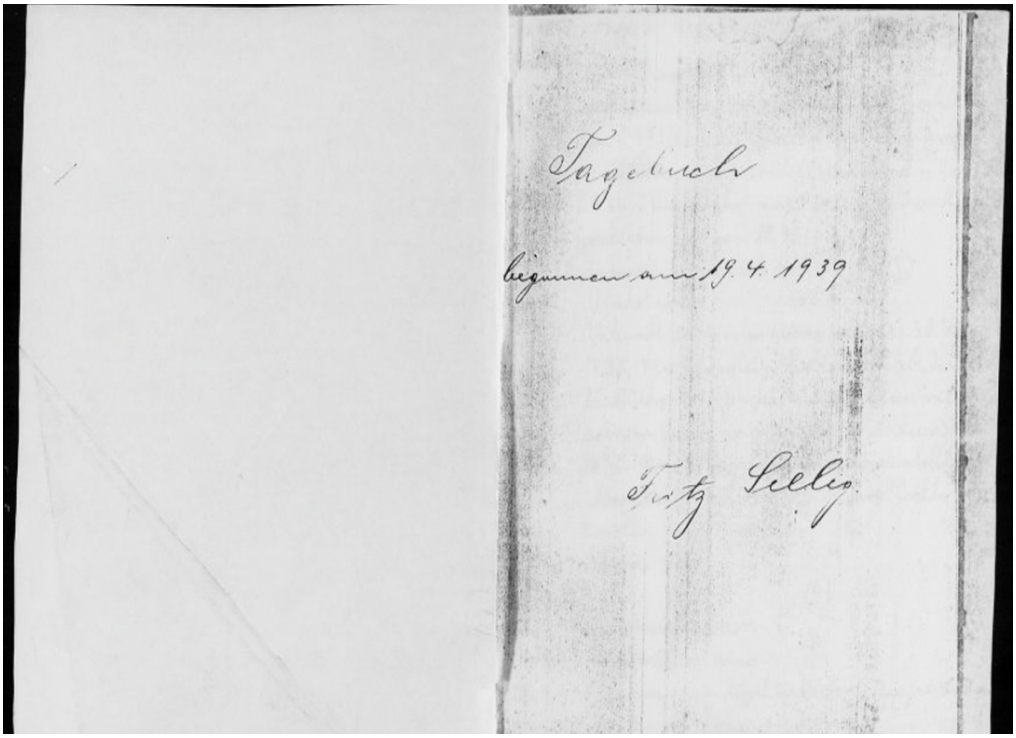


Image 4, Seelig, F., Fritz's Diary

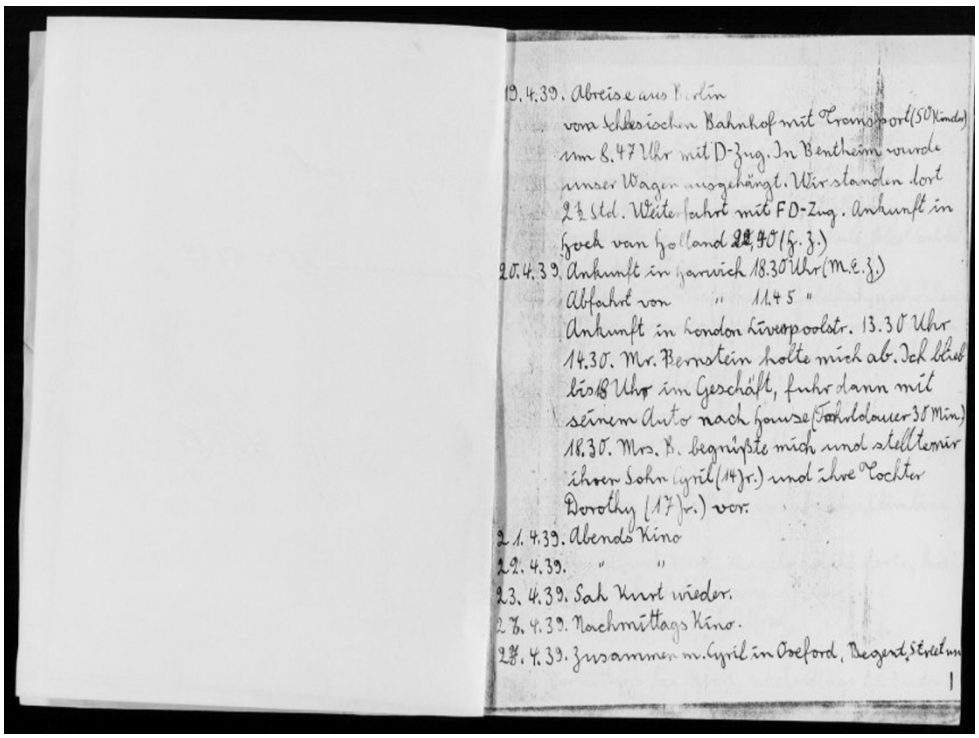

19.4.39. Abreise aus Berlin
von Schlesischen Bahnhof mit Transport (50 Kinder)
um 8.47 Uhr mit D-Zug. In Bentheim wurde
unser Wagen ausgehängt. Wir standen dort
2½ Std. Weiterfahrt mit FD-Zug. Ankunft in
Hoek van Holland 22.40 (g. Z.)
20.4.39. Ankunft in Harwich 18.30 Uhr (M.E.Z.)
Abfahrt von " 11.45 "
Ankunft in London Liverpoolstr. 13.30 Uhr
14.30. Mr. Bernstein holte mich ab. Ich blieb
bis 18 Uhr im Geschäft, fuhr dann mit
seinem Auto nach House (Fahrdauer 35 Min.)
18.30. Mrs. B. begrüßte mich und stellte mir
ihren Sohn Cyril (14 Jr.) und ihre Tochter
Dorothy (17 Jr.) vor.
21.4.39. Abends Kino
22.4.39. " "
23.4.39. Sah Kurt wieder.
24.4.39. Nachmittags Kino.
25.4.39. Zusammen m. Cyril in Oxford, Begegnet Stratm

Image 3, Seelig, F., Fritz's Diary

The diary spans a little over one year with his last entry being on 17 June 1940. Fritz always leaves the left-hand page blank and only writes his entries on the right-hand side. He starts a new entry by putting down the date near the left side of the page, creating a small margin (*Image 4)*. It is not decorated at all. It is also unclear whether his last entry was on the last page of the notebook or whether he just stopped writing in it.

Ingeburg Sigler's diary is more elaborately decorated with ornamentations, doodles and images, with memorabilia also included in its pages. It starts in May 1937 and her last entry is in April 1942. She creates a visual incision between her life in Germany and her life in England by including one page with just the word England in Latin script written on it. This stands out as it not only interrupts the flow of the entries but is also written in a different type of script as compared to the entries written in Sütterlin script. While her entries written in Germany are mostly just decorated with ornamentations framing the page, her entries in England include sketches and pressed flowers. When looking at the black and white photocopies of the material, we can see that Ingeburg writes into a different notebook from September 1941 onwards. The

diary has been partly redacted, either by Ingeburg herself or her family members who have passed it on to the archive.[130]

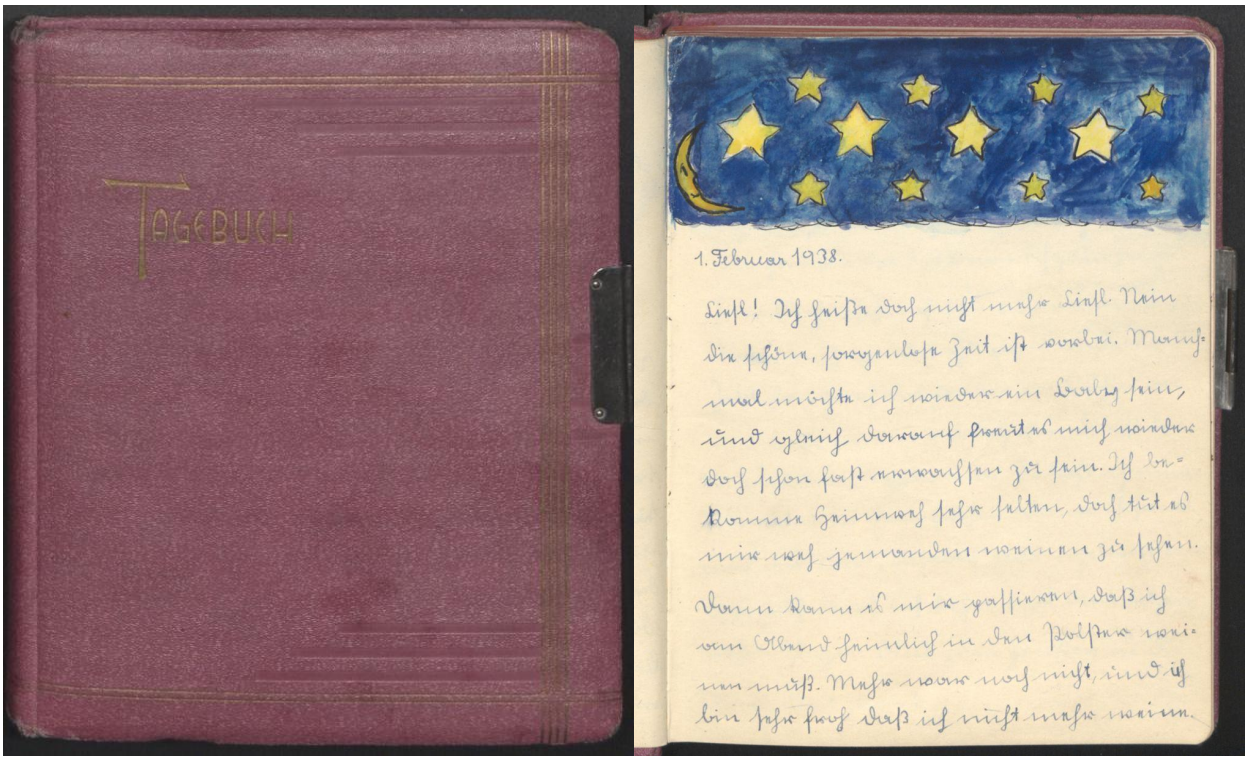


Image 5, Orsten, Elisabeth's Diary, scans 1 & 7

Elisabeth Ornstein's diary is also decorated with ornamentations, almost as if they are supposed to be page headers. The diary itself is a red booklet with a gold embellishment on the cover and 'Tagebuch' written on the front page and appears to have a locking system (*Image 5*). Elisabeth's early entries are predominantly written in Sütterlin script except the dates which are in Latin script. Until her entry on 19 April 1940, the left-hand page was left blank and she only used to write her entries on the right-hand side. There is another blank page between her entries on 22 April 1940 and 23 July 1940 which is also when she switched from Sütterlin script to Latin script. After her penultimate entry on 3 July 1941, written in English, she leaves several pages blank with only sketches on them. There is one final entry from 30 December 1944, several pages after the previous entry, where Elisabeth reflects on her diary and life.

[130] I will not go into detail about the redactions of Ingeburg's diary. It is interesting to note though that someone has edited the diary. Her nephew, Nick Sigler, told me that his family had gone through the diary before giving it to the Imperial War Museum Archive.

Image 6, Bown-Jacobowitz, Edith's Diary

Edith Jakobowitz kept several diaries (*Image 6*) with an irregular frequency of entries. The longest diary of her collection is a red booklet with a golden lock and 'Tagebuch' printed on the cover in golden letters. The first page shows the date when she started the diary by stating 'Edith Jakobowitz, Berlin 21 September 38', including a photo of Edith with the additional note 'So sehe ich also am 12.1.39 aus'. She also wrote in several notebooks on later dates. One of them is a blue notebook with a handwritten note on the cover in Sütterlinschrift reading, 'Tagebuche für Edith Jakobowitz'. This blue notebook does not include any dates, only a few entries in Sütterlinschrift. Included in her collection is a green notebook with the printed inscription 'The Ulster Series. Made in Ulster. Exercise Book' and the handwritten additions 'Diary. Edith Jakobowitz'. The first entry in this notebook was written on 21 April 1941. The final notebook in the collection is a grey one without anything written or printed on the front page. The first entry was on 4 January 1944 and the last one on 1 July 1949. While Edith kept several diaries, she used to write into them very infrequently.

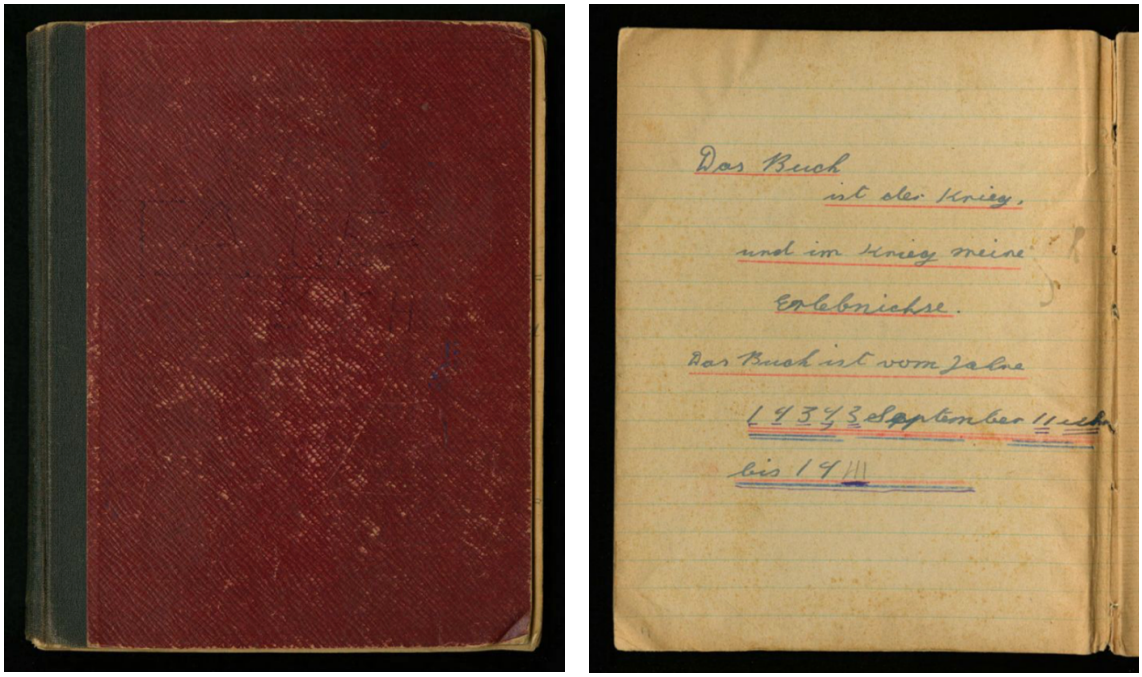
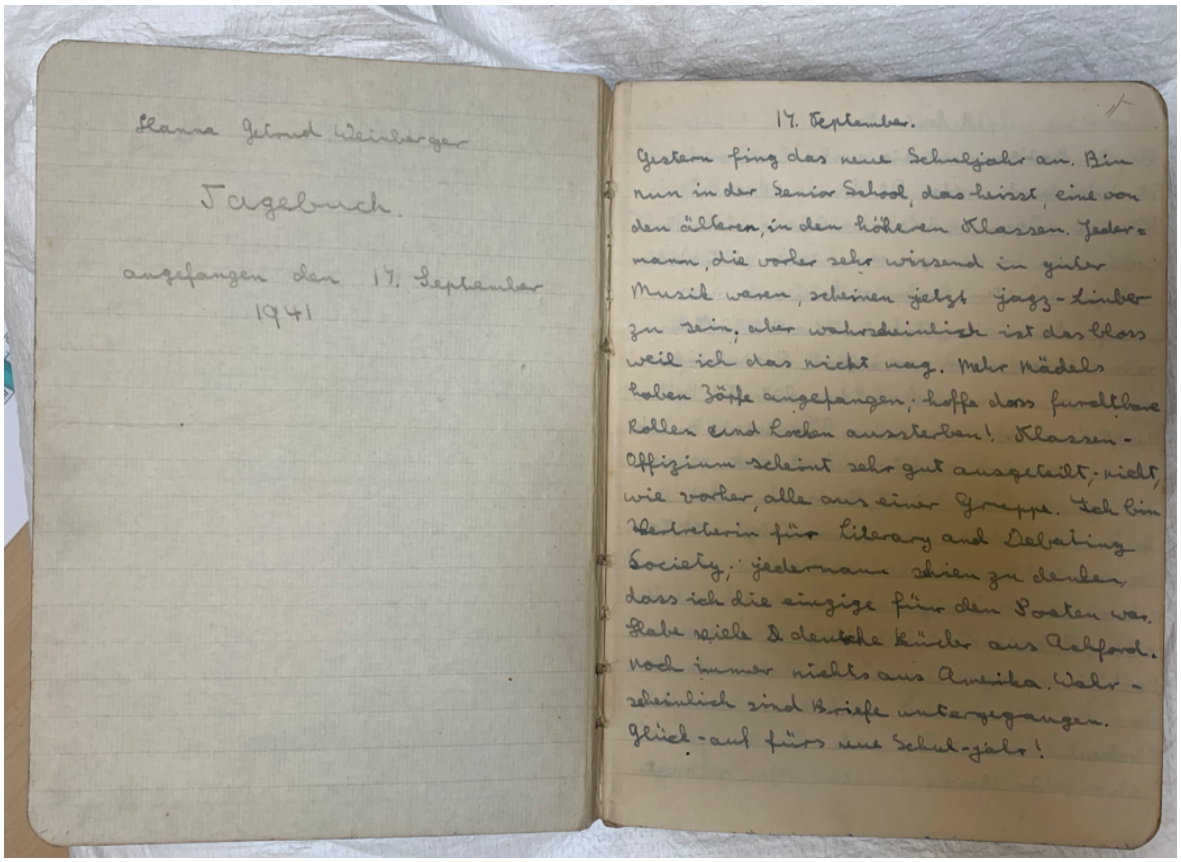


Image 7, Seelig, K., Kurt's Diary

Kurt Seelig's diary spans entries from September 1939 to July 1940 and includes some additional material such as photographs, postcards, and newspaper clippings. It is a little booklet with a red cover. The word 'Tagebuch' was once written on the cover by hand in capital letters but has almost faded completely (*Image 7)*. This suggests that Kurt has used an exercise book or some other form of notebook as a diary rather than a booklet that was designed to be a diary. Some of the pages are left blank which could suggest that Kurt, then eleven years old, stopped writing after his last entry in July 1940. We can assume that he did not start a new diary because there are some postcards and other images included in the remaining pages which seem to have been added later. However, this assumption is not conclusive as we are not provided with specific dates. The first page reads, 'Das Buch ist der Krieg, und im Krieg meine Erlebnichse. Das Buch ist vom Jahre 1939 3 September bis 1941'.[131] The dates are underlined in red and blue while the sentence is only underlined in red. We can assume that this has been added later because if we compare the handwriting from the note and the last entry, we can see that it has changed, however, we cannot be sure when this was added. Contrary to the dates of the entries, the note states that the diary spans

[131] see Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*, p. 1.

from 3 September 1939 to 1941. However, the first entry seems to have been written about events starting from 28 August 1939 and the last on 3 July 1940.


Hanna Gertrud Weinberger

Tagebuch.

angefangen den 17. September 1941

17. September.

Gestern fing das neue Schuljahr an. Bin nun in der Senior School, das heisst, eine von den älteren, in den höheren Klassen. Jedermann, die vorher sehr wissend in jeder Musik waren, scheinen jetzt jazz-Liebhaber zu sein, aber wahrscheinlich ist das blos weil ich das nicht mag. Mehr Mädels haben Zöpfe angefangen; hoffe dass furchtbare Rollen und Locken aussterben! Klassen-Offizium scheint sehr gut ausgeteilt, nicht wie vorher, alle aus einer Gruppe. Ich bin Sekretärin für Literary and Debating Society; jedermann schien zu denken, dass ich die einzige für den Posten war. Habe viele Deutsche Bücher aus Ashford, noch immer nichts aus Amerika. Wahrscheinlich sind Briefe untergegangen. Glück-auf fürs neue Schul-jahr!

Image 8, Hickman, Hannah's Diary

Hannah Weinberger's diary is relatively short compared to the other diaries of this study, keeping a notebook from only 17 September to 31 December 1941. However, it still gives insight into the everyday life of the then thirteen-year-old two years after leaving Germany on a Kindertransport. The first page reads 'Hanna Gertrud Weinberger Tagebuch. Angefangen den 17 September 1941' (*Image 8)*. It is written in cursive handwriting, though not the German cursive style of Sütterlin that other Kindertransport refugees have used. The entries are only separated by leaving one line blank and using the date as a heading. She only wrote on less than half the pages in the notebook before suddenly stopping.

Helga Bejach's diary is a calendar spanning three years of her life, from 1944 to 1946 and all her entries are written in English. Each page is dedicated to one date and has five rows which could each be used for one year at a time (*Image 9*). However, Helga sometimes uses two or more rows for one entry on that day in a particular year. She often writes in her diary every day. As she uses a calendar, her entries are a mixture of descriptive and emotional but, almost always, the entries are very brief. She also

included telephone numbers and addresses on the dedicated pages at the back of the booklet. The diary mainly consists of plain handwritten entries except for two tickets, a cinema ticket and another ticket to a show.

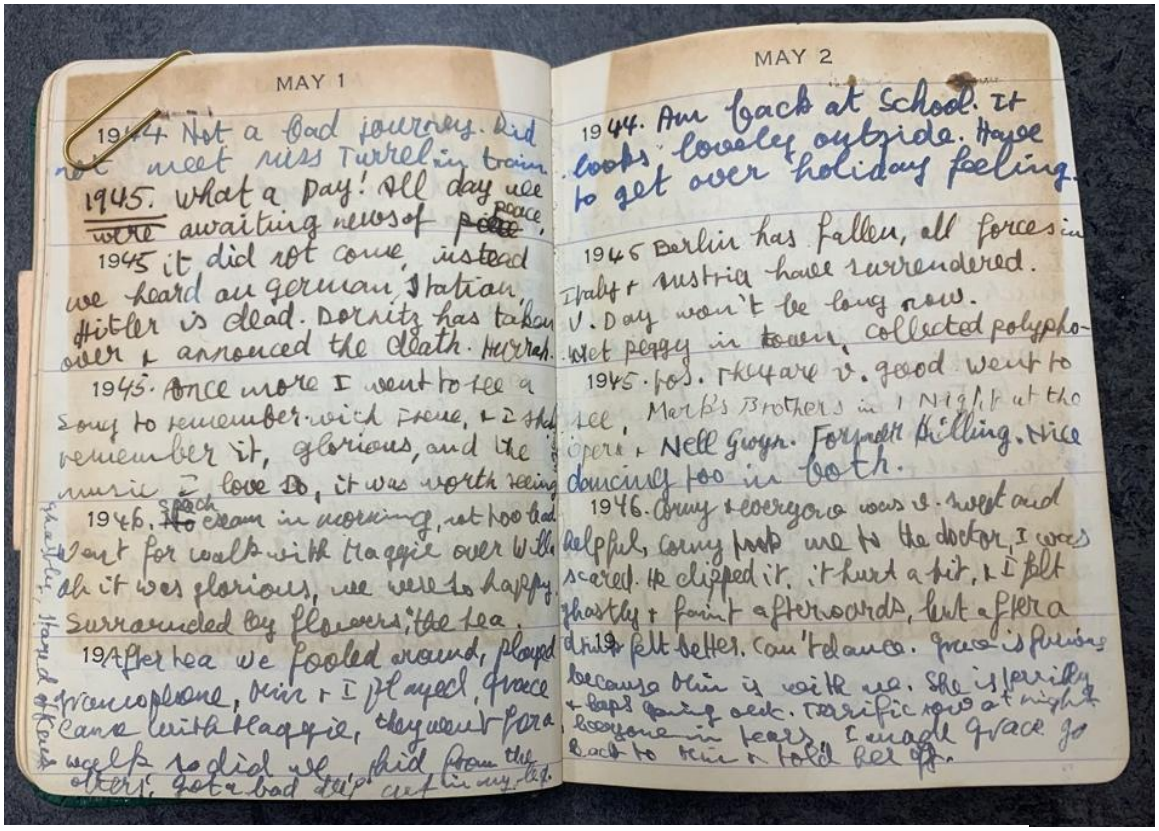


Image 9, Bejach, Helga's Diary

What these differences illustrate is how each of the diarists' approach to diary writing is different: they have their own way of composing entries and their frequency varies. Looking at the descriptions of each diary and its composition and appearance raises questions about the use of images and objects, the diary as an object itself, and the practice of writing; namely how the diary is utilised to negotiate experiences and feelings and how additional material can underscore this process. The differences in length of the diaries and frequency of entries also stand out. The observed individuality of the diaries, their looks, and their compositions suggests that we cannot make generalised assumptions.

Some common trends can be identified. All diaries that were started in the German cursive handwriting called Sütterlin script ended up being written in Latin script. This shows that not one Kindertransport refugee chosen for this study continued the practice of writing in the German cursive script. Schiegg and Sowada point out that Sütterlin script was taught at schools in Prussia and throughout the German Reich for

a significant number of years during the 1920s and early 1930s.[132] There is an argument to be made, according to both authors, that choosing to write in a distinct script is an expression of cultural identity and script-switching is an expression of adapting to a new environment, particularly when related to emigration.[133] There are, of course, also observations to be made on the use of language, however, this will be discussed further in Chapter Four "The Use of Language in the Diaries". Interestingly, mostly diaries written by girls include entries written in Sütterlin script. While this certainly cannot be seen as representative for all Kindertransport refugees or conclusive evidence for a gendered reading of the appearance, it raises questions on the composition and design of the diary as an object in relation to gender which should be explored in further research.

Another aspect that stands out in multiple diaries is the use of exercise books or other forms of notebooks that are not designated diaries. In all the diaries analysed in this thesis, when the Kindertransport refugee owns a proper diary, including features such as a lock and a printed inscription of 'Tagebuch' on the front, this coincides with the diary being given to them as a present.[134] However, most of the diaries that I am looking at for this study seem to be repurposed exercise books or notepads. This could be an indication for a lack of resources or limited access to stationery. For example, while Edith's first diary is an actual diary with a lock, she continues writing in exercise books when it is full. It is likely that Edith did not have the money to replace her old diary with a similar specially designed diary and used an exercise book that was given to her instead. Looking at Kurt's, Fritz's and Hannah's diaries, they decided to start a diary for a particular reason and just used whatever material was available. This interpretation is supported by the opening entries of the diaries which were discussed earlier.

While there are no conclusive trends regarding gendered choices of what stationary to use as a diary, it is likely that girls were given specially designed diaries as gifts whereas it was not deemed a suitable present for a boy. Overall, the craftsmanship of diary keeping can be seen as a performative practice as Moran argues

[132] Schiegg and Sowada, 'Script Switching in Nineteenth-Century Lower-Class German Handwriting', p. 776.
[133] See, for example, Schiegg and Sowada, 'Script Switching in Nineteenth-Century Lower-Class German Handwriting', pp. 787, 789–90.
[134] Ilse, Edith, and Elisabeth all write at various points in their diaries that the diary was given to them as a present. The entries where they mention this are analysed in the following section below on 'Beginnings of the Diary'.

in his exploration on diary keeping in twentieth-century Britain: 'diaries were […] conspicuously tactile objects with specific textual and visual conventions. Even those who kept their diaries in simple notebooks often gave considerable thought to the look and feel of the repository of their writings'.[135]

Composition, Objects, and Decorations

Some of the diaries, as mentioned above, include drawings, photographs or other material objects. This use of images and material objects can help us uncover further aspects of the diary as an object as well as of the practice of diary writing. Henderson states in *How to Read a Diary* that:

> [d]iarists also use visual images to make meaning within their diaries. Many writers insert materials in their material diaries using them like scrapbooks […]. Some turn their diaries into archival repositories, inserting letters or newspaper clippings that illustrate their lives. Others paste […] items such as pressed flowers or memorabilia. […] Many diarists also illustrate their diaries […] they draw, sketch, and paint within the pages of their diaries.[136]

Following Henderson's suggestions of what other materials can be found in a diary, this section looks at selected additional objects and sketches in the diaries and analyses their function.

Kurt Seelig's diary includes not only various photos and newspaper clippings, but also several postcards. He was eight years old at the time of writing most of his diary and uses a very descriptive style with few reflections of his emotional response to the historic events. Interestingly, Kurt inserts captions next to the newspaper clippings or other material objects he includes in his diary. As Andrea Hammel argues in her article 'The Future of Kindertransport Research', his diary has 'the appearance of a holiday scrap book'.[137]

Kurt's first entry is a good example of combining a description of events with additional material. He includes newspaper clippings to illustrate points he is making or events he is writing about. The following *Image 10* and *Image 11* are taken from his first entry which was written at some point between 28 August 1939 and 3 September 1939. Before glueing in the newspaper clippings, he writes about the evacuation from London to the countryside and introduces the additional material by stating, 'Ich will

[135] Moran, 'Private Lives, Public Histories', p. 144.
[136] Henderson, *How to Read a Diary*, p. 82.
[137] Hammel, 'The Future of Kindertransport Research', p. 145.

jetzt mal ein paar Bilder zeigen von der evacuation. Auf der anderen Seite ist erste Trupp und dann auf der nesten Seite ist die evacuation in der letzten Zeit'.[138] Each newspaper clipping has a caption; the first one reads, 'Das ist die evacuation in der ersten Zeit' and the second says, 'Das sind die Leute in der letzten Zeit'.

Image 10, Seelig, K., Kurt's Diary

Image 10 shows the folded and unfolded pictures of the newspaper clipping of the 'evacuation in der ersten Zeit'. The unfolded clipping is of a photo of a family leaving the city. It looks very calm and organised. On the folded clipping, Kurt has written, 'es ist nicht wahr' in capital letters. Perhaps he is referring to the orderly depiction of the evacuation.

[138] Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*, p. 4.

Image 11, Seelig, K., Kurt's Diary

Image 11 shows the folded and unfolded newspaper clipping about 'die Leute in der letzten Zeit'.[139] Contrary to this caption, the photo depicts luggage piling up on the London railway stations rather than people being evacuated. The captions of the clippings also make it unclear what he is actually referring to when he states that these were from the 'erste Zeit' and 'letzte Zeit'. We can assume that he means the first evacuation when saying 'erste Zeit' when comparing it to his use of 'letzte Zeit' which potentially refers to the last days of people trying to get out of the city before the war started. However, we cannot be certain about this.

His phrasing is striking as well. It is not clear whether Kurt is addressing his diary or an unknown reader which could be a third person or his future self when he states that he wants to show these pictures. The issue of the intended reader becomes relevant again when considering the captions and additional information provided by Kurt in some entries. For example, in *Image 12* we can see the newspaper clipping of the prime minister with the caption, 'Das ist das Bild von Mr Chamberlain'.[140]

[139] Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary,* clipping folded.
[140] Ibid., handwritten note.

Image 12, Seelig, K., Kurt's Diary

This caption is clearly explanatory and therefore raises the question of why he includes it. According to Lejeune, diaries are best understood as addressing a future self or an unknown reader in the future.[141] Based on this theory, the caption Kurt added here – but also the other captions on different pages – can be seen as an aid to his own memory but will also help a potential outside reader to understand his entries. When the diarists write their entries, they create a dialogue between themselves and external information which is kept as such. Such additional information that is glued in can get lost over time and the captions will also indicate what was lost and where it used to be in the diary.

After Kurt's last entry, there are several pages with postcards glued on. There are five pages with two postcards on each page depicting various sights and scenery of Newcastle on Tyne (*Image 13).*

Image 13, Seelig, K., Kurt's Diary

Presumably, as Kurt glued the postcards into the diary, there is nothing written on the back of them. This suggested that he might have used these postcards to remember a trip to Newcastle on Tyne instead of using photos. There is no explanation or

[141] See, for example, Lejeune, *On Diary*, pp. 23–25.

description included and the following pages are also of postcards but this time from other locations, including places in Germany and Austria which evidently could not have been recent trips. There is one page with loose postcards which could mean that Kurt intended to also glue these into the diary but for an unknow reason, did not do so. This further emphasises the scrapbook character of Kurt's diary. People who create scrapbooks often have a collection of material they want to include but sometimes they just do not have time to finish the scrapbook. We can assume that Kurt not only stopped writing in his diary at some point but also that he did not continue to scrapbook. However, whether he included all the materials while he was still writing his diary or if he took up the practice of scrapbooking, especially when glueing in the postcards, later remains unclear. Overall, Kurt's diary has many qualities of a scrapbook as it includes photos, letters, postcards, clippings, and other souvenirs. Usually, the purpose of a scrapbook is to preserve personal or family history, but Kurt's diary also focuses on wider historical events in some of his entries as well as in the additional material included.

Ingeburg Sigler also includes some material objects in her diary. On 1 June 1938, the then eleven-year-old writes after a wedding, 'Da habe ich noch schnell ein paar Visitenkarten gestibitzt um sie ins Tagebuch zu legen'.[142] Interestingly, as shown in *Image 14*, the wreath on the card looks similar to her ornamentation on the first page of the entry about the wedding, so we can conclude that the inclusion of the card and her decorating the diary entry are connected.

[142] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary.*

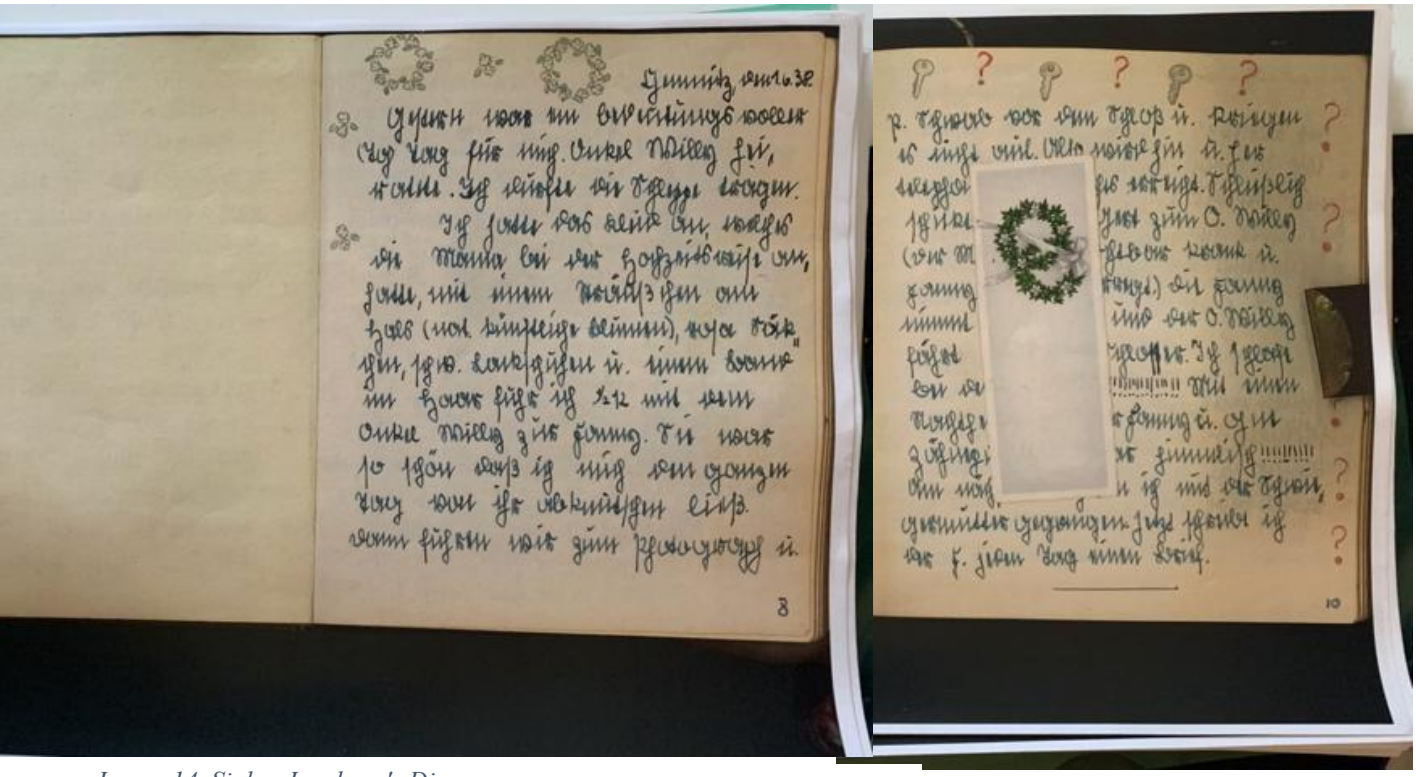


Image 14, Sigler, Ingeburg's Diary

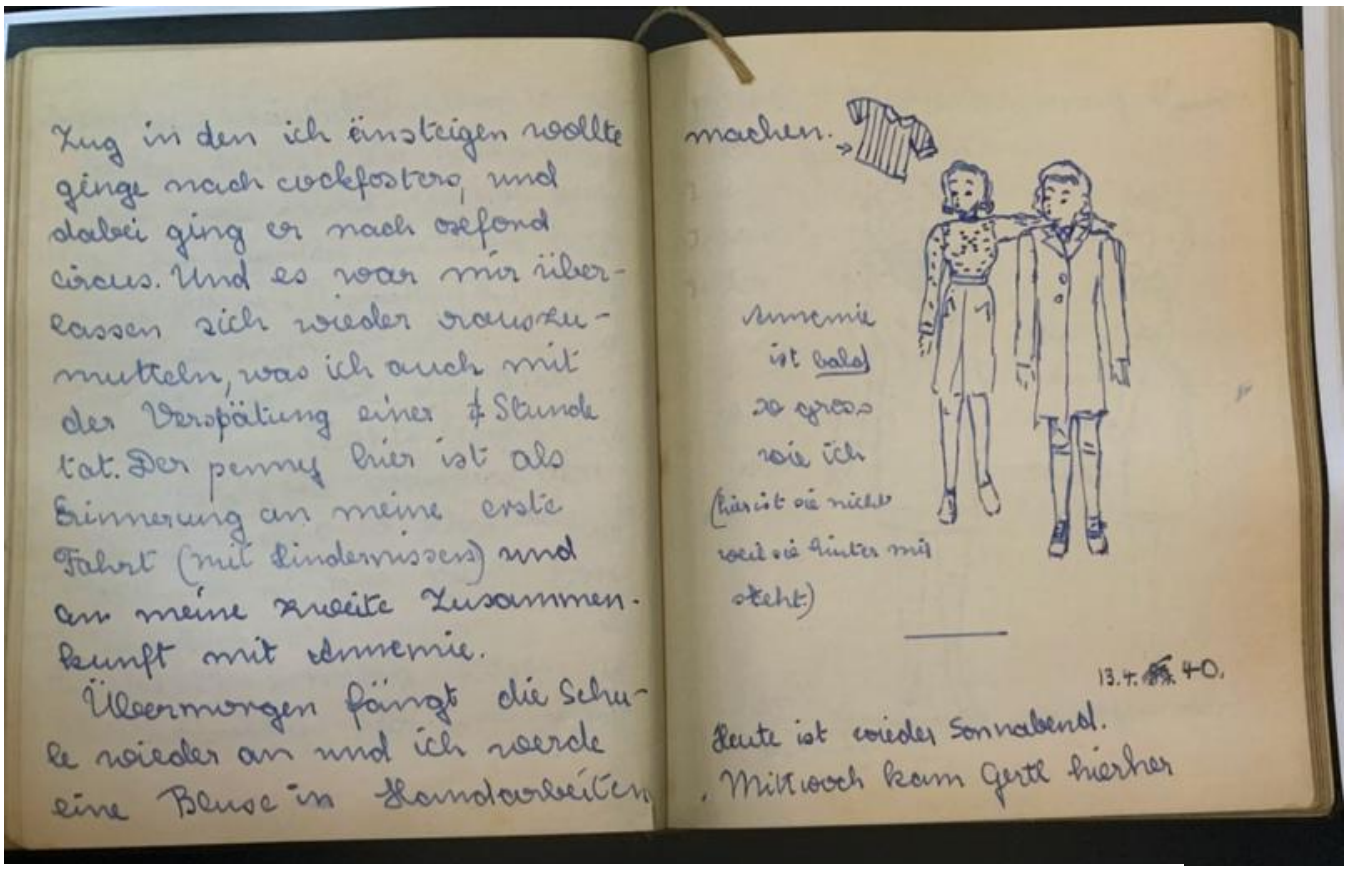


Image 15, Sigler, Ingeburg's Diary

On 6 April 1940, she writes in her diary 'Der Penny hier ist als Erinnerung an meine erste Fahrt (mit Hindernissen) und an meine zweite Zusammenkunft mit Annemarie'. However, there is no penny actually attached to the entry. Presumably, it used to be there as she explicitly states that she included the penny 'als Erinnerung'. *Image 15* shows that there is string or yarn attached to the page, which might be for the penny but the copies of the diary do not show this so we cannot be certain about this.

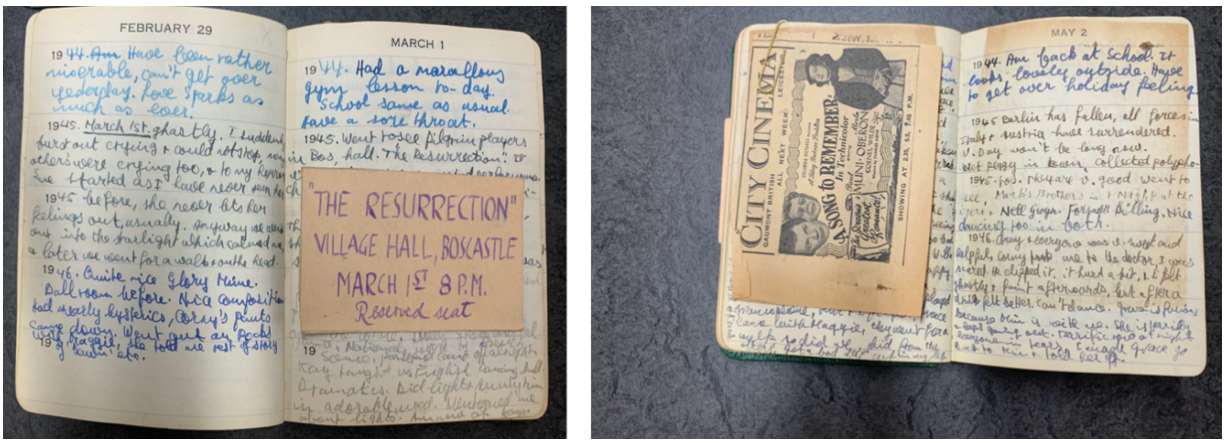


Image 16, Bejach, Helga's Diary

Helga Bejach's diary does not include many additional objects. However, she has added two tickets to her diary (*Image 16)*. These tickets are presumably of great significance to Helga due to her making a point of including them and not any other material in her diary, indicating that she clearly wanted to remember both of those events. The entry on 1 May 1945 is particularly interesting in this regard. Helga, then age seventeen, writes:

> What a Day! All day we were awaiting news of peace, it did not come, instead we heard on German station Hitler is dead. Dornitz has taken over and announced the death. Hoorah. Once more I went to see 'A song to remember' with Irene & I shall remember it, glorious, and the music I love too, it was worth seeing.[143]

She states that she went to see the film again which corresponds to her entry on 30 April 1945 where she already mentions having seen it. However, she chooses to include the ticket with the entry on 1 May 1945. This could mean that for Helga, the news of Hitler's death and her seeing the film with her sister Irene are now events that are connected and that she wants to remember the happiness and positive emotions she felt on that day.

[143] Bejach, *Helga's Diary.*

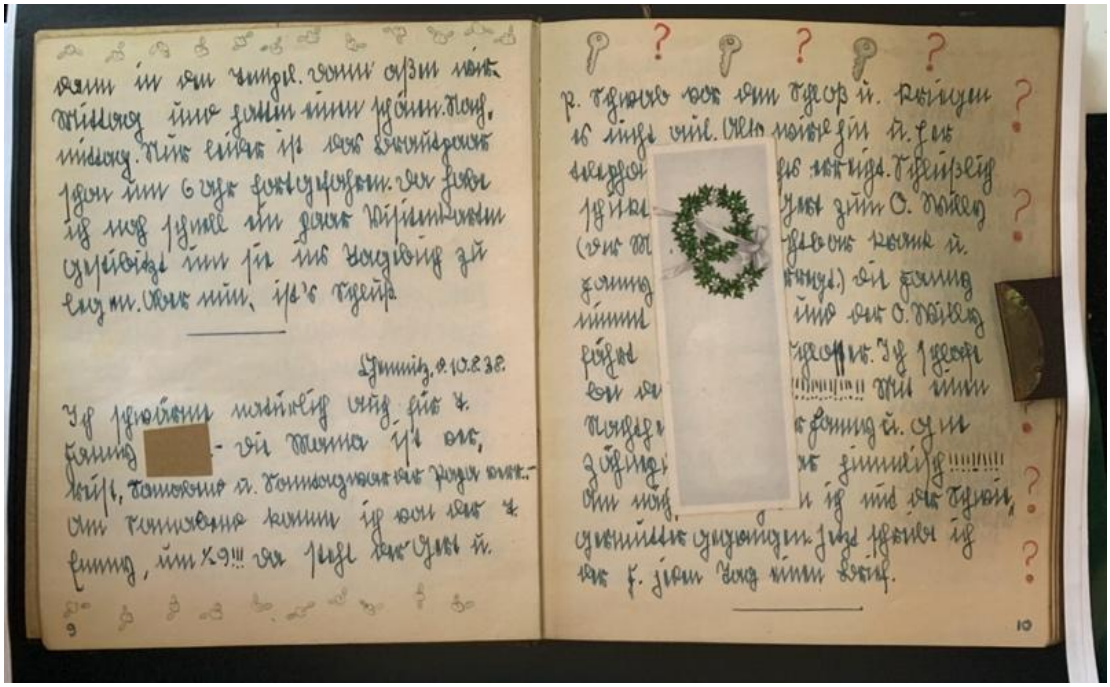


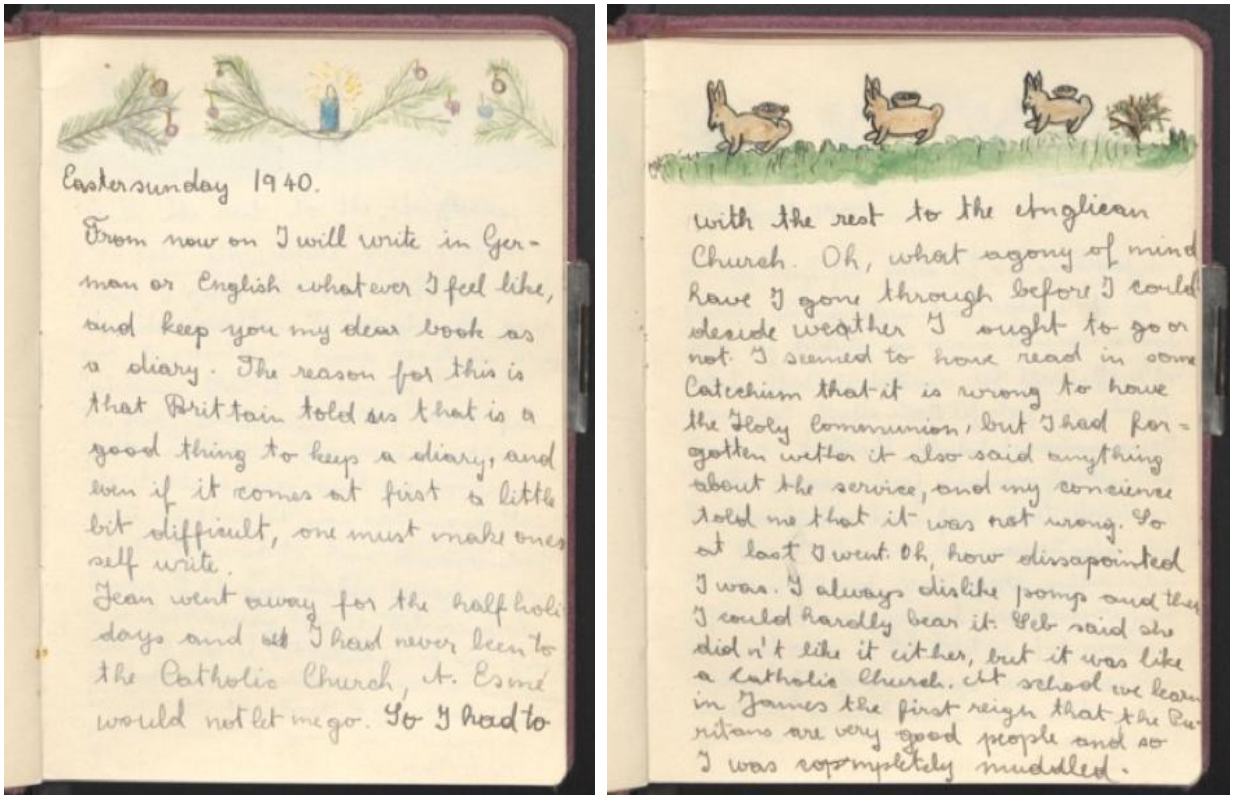
Image 17, Sigler, Ingeburg's Diary

Now looking at the decorations into more detail, we can see that Ingeburg's diary is the most elaborately decorated one of the nine diaries. Some pages of her diary have ornamentations in the page margins framing the entry. She also includes many drawings to further emphasise some aspects or to visualise the content of her entries. *Image 17* shows the ornamentations of two diary pages. What we can see is that the left-hand side and the right-hand side are decorated differently. As highlighted earlier, the card we can see in *Image 15* was taken from a wedding. The entry starts on the page before and is decorated with a wreath (*Image 12)*. The tiny flower ornamentations are presumably also inspired by the wedding. The page with the question marks and keys as ornamentations support the content of the entry relating to Ingeburg, her brother Gert and a friend being unable to open a lock: 'Da steht der Gert u. P. Schwab vor dem Schloss u. kriegen es nicht auf. […] Die Fanny [presumably her uncle's wife] nimmt mich auf und O. Willy [her uncle] fährt nach einem Schlosser'.[144]

Another example of ornamentations and drawings supporting the content of the entry can be found in Elisabeth Ornstein's diary. The top of the pages of her entries are elaborately decorated with drawings. While some are more detailed than others, it is evident that Elisabeth cared greatly about these ornamentations and drawings – even the pages after her last entry have drawings at the top but not text. When she started

[144] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.

writing her diary, Elisabeth only wrote on the right-hand page which are also the pages that have drawings on them.


Eastersunday 1940.

From now on I will write in German or English whatever I feel like, and keep you my dear book as a diary. The reason for this is that Brittain told us that is a good thing to keep a diary, and even if it comes at first a little bit difficult, one must make oneself write.

Jean went away for the half holidays and as I had never been to the Catholic Church, A. Esmé would not let me go. So I had to

with the rest to the Anglican Church. Oh, what agony of mind have I gone through before I could decide whether I ought to go or not. I seemed to have read in some Catechism that it is wrong to have the Holy Communion, but I had forgotten whether it also said anything about the service, and my conscience told me that it was not wrong. So at last I went. Oh, how disappointed I was. I always dislike pomp and this I could hardly bear it. Peb said she did n't like it either, but it was like a Catholic Church. At school we learn in James the first reign that the Puritans are very good people and so I was completely muddled.

Image 18, Orsten, Elisabeth's Diary, scans 35 & 37

Image 18 shows the diary entry that twelve-year-old Elisabeth wrote on Easter Sunday 1940. While the drawing in the first page could, on first glance, be interpreted as some kind of Christmas decoration, the sketch on the second page shows three rabbits with small bowls or baskets for the easter egg hunt on their backs that can be linked to the Easter Bunny. It is therefore unclear as to when Elisabeth drew these sketches and decorations: the Christmas imagery suggests that she could have been drawn in advance. Elisabeth herself reflects on this many decades later in her memoir:

> These two pages are dated 'Eastersunday 1940', though the coloured drawing at the top of the first page consists of pine-branches, decorated with Christmas ornaments and a burning candle. The second page, somewhat more appropriately, has three rabbits hopping across the lawn, each carrying a basket of Easter eggs. In fact, that Sunday afternoon, our large garden was the setting for a traditional Easter egg hunt, an activity which I had not encountered before coming to England.[145]

[145] Elisabeth M. Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion: Memoirs of a Refugee Girl 1939-1940* (Cambridge: Acorn Ed, 1998), p. 92.

Whether the drawings were added before, during, or after writing the entry remains unclear even when looking at Elisabeth's memoir. At a later point, she states in her memoir that on 4 August 1940 she 'painted a little, which might well have involved decorating pages of the diary'.[146] This suggests that Elisabeth used to decorate her diary separately, at least on some occasions, therefore making it an activity separate to diary writing.

It also highlights that ornamentations do not necessarily have to correspond to the text as there are multiple pages in Elisabeth's diary where the drawings on the top of the page do not correspond to anything that she is writing about in her entries. Similarly, some of Ingeburg's ornamentations do not correspond to the content of her entries. Nonetheless, both girls including these decorations and ornamentations show the love and care they attribute to using their diaries and that they also care about its appearance. Ultimately, this practice indicates a form of mindfulness as they might have dedicated time to contemplate and decorate their diaries. Whether this was done separately to writing the entries or at the same time does not necessarily signify different degrees of craftsmanship but rather emphasises different approaches to the practice. Arguably, the practices of diary writing as well as decorating convey a sense of leisure which suggests the idea of mindfulness even further.

As mentioned earlier, Ingeburg's diary changes appearance after her Kindertransport to England. The visual change, as well as the time between the entries, indicates that her move to England has had a significant impact on her. On 27 August 1939 she writes, 'Nun habe ich schon mindestens ½ Jahr nicht in mein Tagebuch geschrieben'.[147]

[146] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion*, p. 104.
[147] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.

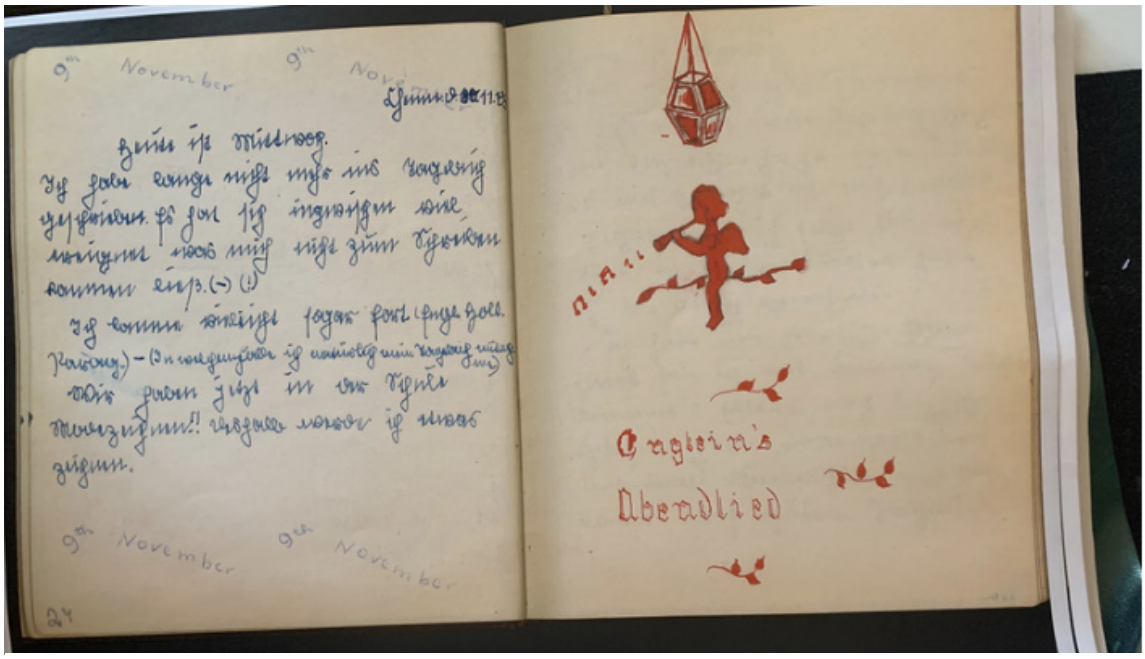


Image 19, Sigler, Ingeburg's Diary

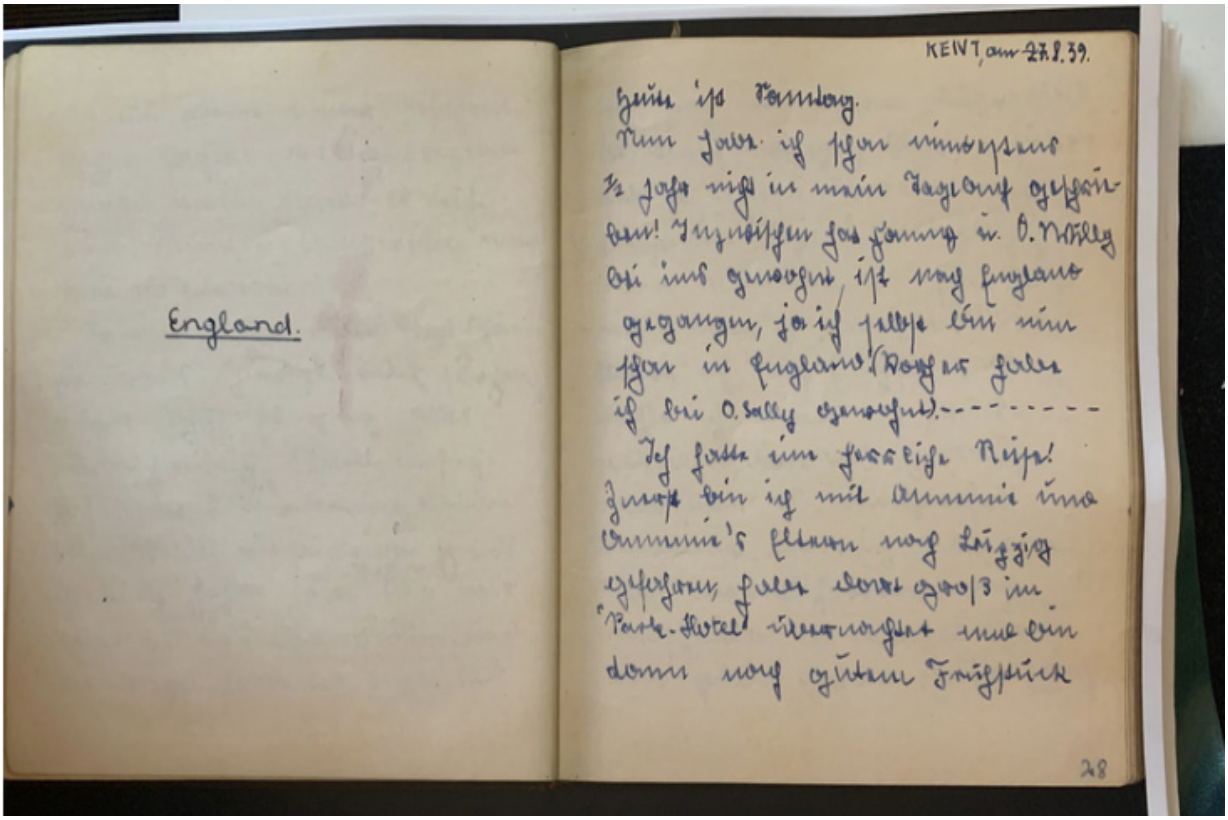


Image 20, Sigler, Ingeburg's Diary

As *Images 19* and *20* highlight, the change is emphasised by the single word 'England' written on an otherwise blank page. While beforehand all pages in her diary were decorated with ornamentations similar to the ones shown in earlier, the first page of Ingeburg's first entry in England is just text. We have already discussed how decorating can be seen as an aspect of leisure and, therefore, the lack of illustrations and ornamentation in Ingeburg's diary suggest an insecurity and sense of instability in her life. The significant upheaval, change in circumstances and need to adapt, we can assume, may have caused her to use her diary in a different way.

Another noticeable aspect is that Ingeburg presumably added the multiple '9th November' (*Image 19)* to the entry on 20 November 1938 after the fact as this is the English way of writing a date. She also states, 'Ich habe lange nicht mehr ins Tagebuch geschrieben. Es hat sich inzwischen viel ereignet, was mich nicht zum Schreiben kommen ließ (-) (!)'.[148] This entry touches on the political and social marginalisation that particular groups of German citizens experienced in the months leading up to *Pogromnacht* without explicitly mentioning it. The significance of the date only became evident after some time had passed, so it is possible that Ingeburg added '9th November' on the pages when rereading her diary or when restarting it several months later.

She stopped writing in her diary for several months and took it up again on 27 August 1939 when she was living in Kent. What immediately stands out when comparing the entries that were written in Germany and the entries written in England is that Ingeburg does not continue to include the ornamentations after moving to England and instead now includes sketches and drawings. This can be seen as a means of further emphasising events and experiences which she describes in the entries. Often, Ingeburg draws sketches of her and her friends, particularly Annemarie.

[148] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.

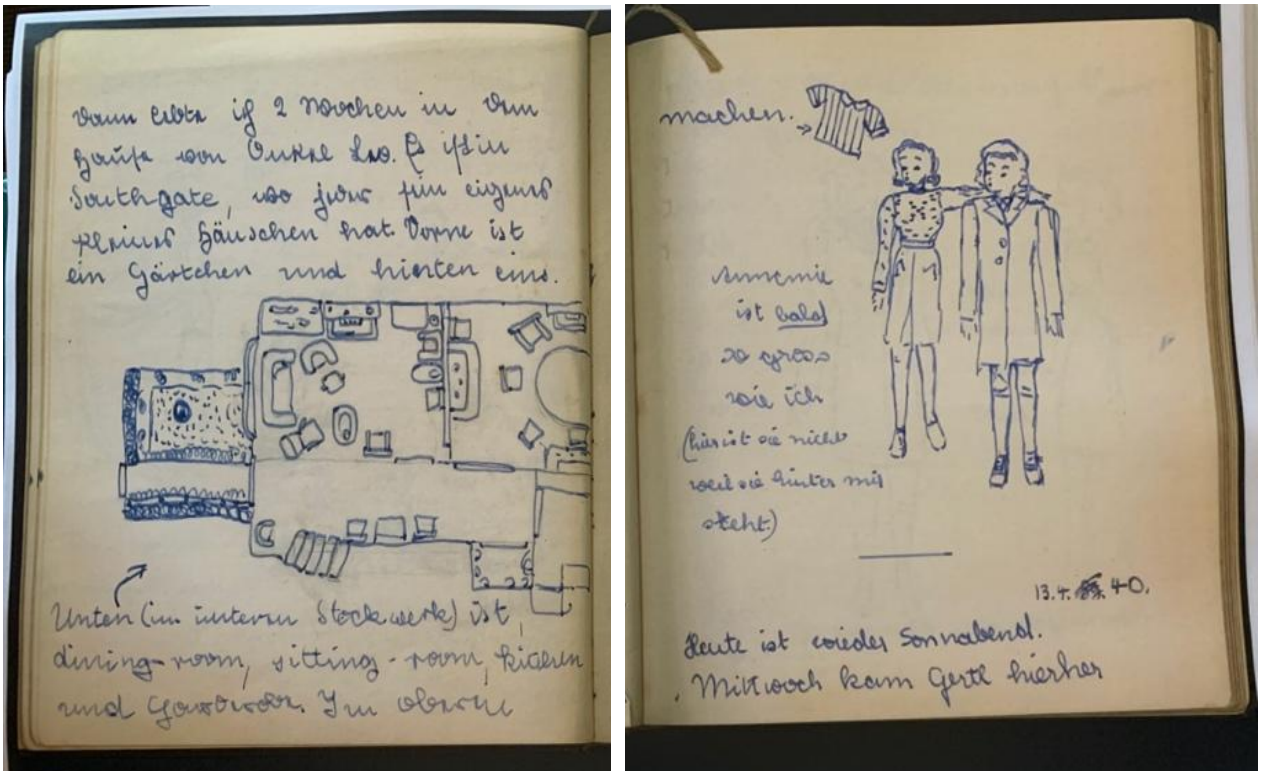


Image 21, Sigler, Ingeburg's Diary

The first sketch in *Image 21* is of her uncle Leo's house in Southgate. Ingeburg writes:

> Dann lebte ich 2 Wochen in dem Haus von Onkel Leo. Es ist in Southgate wo jeder sein eigenes kleines Häuschen hat. Vorne ist ein Gärtchen und hinten eins. Unten [with an arrow pointing to the sketch] (im unteren Stockwerk) ist dining room, sitting room, kitchen und Garderobe'.[149]

She carries on describing the rest of the house but does not include another sketch. Ingeburg's emotions of excitement and curiosity that are evident through the text are enhanced by the sketch of the house. While there are certainly diaries that utilise such visual aspects even more, Ingeburg's diary gives us an insight into the different ways in which she was trying to come to terms with her new situation and, ultimately, it reinforces Lejeune's idea of the diary acting as a trace:

> almost always handwritten, in the first person, colored by the distinctive effects of individual handwriting. It is a trace on a medium […]. Sometimes, this written trail is accompanied by other traces—flowers, objects, diverse signs plucked from daily life and transformed into relics—or by drawings and designs.[150]

[149] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.
[150] Lejeune, 'The Practice of Writing a Diary', p. 28.

Integral to Lejeune's interpretation is the word 'trace'. The materiality of the diary and any additional objects included in it become traces bridging past, present, and future. They draw the attention to the methods of storytelling and create fixed reference points: 'A diary is a series of traces. It presupposes an intention to mark out a period of time by means of reference points'.[151] By including additional material, particularly newspaper clippings or tickets, these reference points anchor the entries in a particular time and place. The traces highlight the fragmentary character of the diary, not only in the sense of the snapshots of everyday life they provide but also the fragments of time dedicated to decorating and crafting the diary as a material object. The diary ultimately becomes a tool of memory by the act of creating a personal archive of memories and experiences, and of accumulating traces.

Compared to diary entries that solely consist of text elements, the additional materials and sketches give us even further insight into the diarists' practice of writing and crafting the entries. The addition of detailed decorations, sketches or newspaper clippings suggest more time and thought was spent on crafting individual entries. Furthermore, the use of images, sketches, objects, and ornamentations can help the diarist express feelings, emotions, and experiences that they are otherwise unable to just through their words. Julia Watson argues in this regard that '[t]he visual or visual-verbal diary, by contrast, communicates feelings and perceptions that may be not only unvoiced but inarticulable in ordinary language'.[152] On the one hand, items such as postcards, photographs, and tickets are objects of attachment and therefore highlight the sentimental value of the experience they are linked to. The sketches, drawings, and decorations, on the other hand, can highlight the emotional state at the time of writing more clearly. Additionally, the decorating and crafting of the diary, as well as the writing can then be seen as a personal practice of expressing emotions in different ways.

Conclusion

Looking at the different aspects that constitute the diary as a form and diary writing as a practice reveal different modes of self-expression and attempts to figure out how the diarists write or express their experiences. Various studies argue that the practice of

[151] Lejeune, 'The Practice of Writing a Diary', p. 28.
[152] Julia Watson, 'Visual Diary as Prosthetic Practice in Bobby Baker's *Diary Drawings*', *Biography*, 35.1 (2012), 21–44 (p. 24) <https://doi.org/10.1353/bio.2012.0005>.

diary writing has a positive impact on the diarist's mental health.[153] In the case of this study, understanding the possibilities that the diary holds, how it is constructed and how events are narrated contribute to our comprehension of the texts and how they should be read and approached.

The diary as an object and the practice of writing function as tools of retaining or sometimes even manifesting an identity that has become challenged by refuge and exile. Constructing life-stories that connect past, present, and an uncertain future allows the Kindertransport refugees to negotiate their new experiences by focusing on one of the many threads of life.

This chapter has highlighted the different appearances of the diaries and thereby further emphasised the importance of looking at the individual experiences and the various ways in which the Kindertransport refugees come to terms with the changes. Hammel states that 'children record events rather than emotions' but also emphasises that some Kindertransport refugees are 'able to write about [their] emotional reactions to the events in [their] life'.[154] This has become visible in the diaries examined in this study as they all show the different degrees of emotional engagement. Furthermore, particularly the beginnings of the diaries can give us an idea of what direction and emotional engagement the diarist indicates in their writings.

Understanding how, why, and when the Kindertransport refugees write in their diary is vital for further analysing their entries as we get an idea of the circumstances in which they were composed. It has become clear that we have to decipher the code of the diary, or as Lejeune states, 'it affords valuable time to understand; little by little one assimilates the non-said, one picks up the code, one notices the gaps, one begins to read between the lines'.[155] These modes of reading the entries and recognising the allusiveness and implicitness equip us with the necessary tools to analyse those which follow in the next chapters. Crucially, this chapter explored the various ways of constructing narratives of the self and, to extend this to this thesis's aim, of belonging. How the Kindertransport refugees write about belonging and the different aspects that

[153] Some examples of studies highlighting the positive impact of keeping a diary or journal include Christina M. Karns, William E. Moore, and Ulrich Mayr, 'The Cultivation of Pure Altruism via Gratitude: A Functional MRI Study of Change with Gratitude Practice', *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 11 (2017), 1–14 <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2017.00599>; Shawn Achor, *The Happiness Advantage: The Seven Principles That Fuel Success and Performance at Work* (London: Virgin, 2011); William Burnett and David J. Evans, *Designing Your Life: How to Build a Well-Lived, Joyful Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2016).
[154] Hammel, 'The Future of Kindertransport Research', p. 146.
[155] Lejeune, *On Diary*, p. 41.

contribute to their understanding of the concept is the subject of the following chapters. Outlining the techniques and practices of writing and crafting a diary, as I have done in this chapter, lays the groundwork for further analysis on the concepts of belonging, memory, the use of language, and the depiction of the everyday - concepts all touched upon in the entries that were just presented.

Chapter 2
Writing About Belonging

Introduction

For many years, exile studies and migration scholarship discussed concepts of belonging as spatial binaries, for example by dividing analytical approaches into life before migration in the *Herkunftsland* versus after migration in the *Fluchtland*. When a wave of autobiographical reflections on the Kindertransport emerged in the late 1980s, these binaries were also found in texts on the history and organisation of the scheme as well as in ego-documents of former Kindertransport refugees. However, as shown in the literature review, Kindertransport scholarship in recent decades in particular has aimed to highlight that the impact of the migration scheme was more complex than the often-portrayed narrative of child and adolescent refugees from German territories leaving their lives and sometimes families behind to start new lives in Britain.[156] Therefore, it is vital to highlight that, while the established spatial binaries of *Herkunftsland* and *Fluchtland* remain the same, the concept of belonging to these binaries and how we define belonging needs to be reviewed. The binary assumption of an unambiguous changing sense of belonging relating to a before and after the Kindertransport and a flight from Nazi terror to safety does not reflect the multifaceted experiences of the Kindertransport refugees. This chapter, therefore, argues that, while these binaries exist on a spatial level, when talking about notions of belonging, our understanding has to be more fluid and dynamic.

Diaries can explore the negotiation process of belonging based on a multitude of factors such as immediate experiences, interpersonal relations, and cultural concerns. The key paradigms set out in the introductory chapter showed that notions of belonging and how they relate to concepts such as nationalism and transnationalism as well as migration and exile have changed. Now, we are working with a fluid notion that enables us to consider a variety of factors constituting not only an individual's own understanding of belonging but also how they perform and enact it. What the

[156] Andrea Hammel argues that, while the legacy of the Kindertransport is often used as a positive example of the UK's humanitarian efforts during World War II, research has shown that the legacy of the Kindertransport should be seen more critically. (See for example: Andrea Hammel, 'The 1938 Kindertransport Saved 10,000 Children but It's Hard to Describe It as Purely a Success', *The Conversation*, 22 November 2018 <https://theconversation.com/the-1938-kindertransport-saved-10-000-children-but-its-hard-to-describe-it-as-purely-a-success-107299> [accessed 27.10.2023]).

current theoretical considerations on belonging all have in common is that they advocate for seeing belonging as affective, performative, and fluid.

This chapter aims to explore how the Kindertransport refugees negotiate and write about their changing notions of belonging. It discusses various reflections on their life in the *Herkunftsland*, drawing not only on notions of *Heimweh* connected to the *Herkunftsland* but also on belonging and placemaking in the *Fluchtland.* While the chapter structure is based on the spatial binary of the country of origin and country of refuge, it will become evident that when considering questions of belonging, this binary is not adequate to describe the negotiation processes. The subchapter on the Kindertransport refugees' relationship to the *Herkunftsland* investigates how they write about their country of origin after they arrive in the UK. It highlights how, for some, *Heimweh* can impact upon forming new attachments and how others write about co-existing senses of belonging. Lastly, the subchapter also looks at entries expressing a sense of belonging through dissociation with their current surroundings, which in turn, can be seen as an affirmation of belonging to the *Herkunftsland*. The second subchapter, which focuses on the diarists' relationship to Britain as the country of refuge, first draws on entries pertaining to belonging to a community of refugees, before moving on to processes of 'home-making' in Britain. Finally, various entries showing forms of hybrid, fluid, and transnational belonging are analysed. Belonging, as written about in the diaries, is crucially not an either-or but a development that displays shifting and co-existing senses of belonging. By looking at the various ways the Kindertransport refugees write about and negotiate belonging in their diaries, it becomes evident that it is not binary but dynamic.

Relationship to *Herkunftsland*

Looking at the Kindertransport refugees' relationship to their country of origin highlights the continuous influence that various aspects of the *Herkunftsland* have on the negotiation process of belonging. Building on Mattes et al., who argue that 'references to left-behind places […] play an important role, whether in the form of people's practical engagement in local diasporic communities or particular (institutionalized) forms of remembering and memorializing their places of origin', I argue that entries reflecting on the Kindertransport refugees' lives in the the country of origin and experience of *Heimweh* shed light on their relationship to the countries

of origin after arriving in Britain on a Kindertransport.[157] Concepts and ideas crucial for the analysis are safety and security, *Geborgenheit*, and nostalgic notions of home. These concepts are inherently linked as we can see in the Duden's definition on *Heimweh* which is a 'große Sehnsucht nach der fernen Heimat oder einem dort wohnenden geliebten Menschen, bei dem man sich geborgen fühlte'.[158] First treated as an illness which could ultimately lead to death, the discourse around *Heimweh* changed towards seeing it as a kind of 'Trennungsschmerz' and thus more as an emotional response to separation rather than an actual disease.[159] However, as Juliane Brauer argues, there were multiple classifications of *Heimweh*, connected to either male hysteria, female suffering or childhood anguish, with the latter accommodating a semantic shift:

> Heidis Geschichte diente daher als Lehrbeispiel dafür, wie das kindliche Heimweh als legitime und notwendige Phase im Sozialisationsprozess verstanden werden könne: Es brauche nur die richtige Erziehung, um dieses Heimweh zu überwinden.[160]

These considerations show that *Heimweh* can be defined in multiple ways and that experiencing such emotions was differently understood depending on gender and age. Based on definitions, such as Duden's, we can assume that *Heimweh*, in mainstream discourse, is most often used to describe feelings of longing for the familiar when absent, which is still very much connected to children missing their families on their first summer camp or school trip. This subchapter aims to focus on the emotional relationship to the *Herkunftsland* by providing both a discussion of the mostly nostalgic notion of their home as well as a perspective on the *Herkunftsland* that is rooted in everyday experiences of the Kindertransport refugees. The aim is to highlight the strong link between *Heimweh*, not only as an emotion but also as a cultural construct, and the process of negotiating belonging.

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[157] Mattes and others, 'Belonging', p. 302.
[158] 'Heimweh, Das', *Duden* <https://www.duden.de/rechtschreibung/Heimweh> [accessed 1 December 2022].
[159] see Brauer, Juliane, 'Nostalgie und Heimweh. Zum politischen Gehalt von Heimatgefühlen', *Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History*, 18 (2021), 151–65 (pp. 153–55) <https://doi.org/10.14765/ZZF.DOK-2294>.
[160] Brauer, 'Nostalgie und Heimweh', p. 156.

Heimweh hindering new attachments

Heimweh can hinder the Kindertransport refugees from forming new attachments in the *Fluchtland*. Ilse Grünwald's diary entries, for example, highlight such instances. She was fourteen years old when she left Vienna on a Kindertransport in December 1938. Over the course of her diary from 1935 to 1947, her strong bond to her city of origin is expressed in multiple entries and emphasises the spatial dimension of Ilse's understanding of (national) belonging. In one of her first entries after her Kindertransport to England, she writes about her physical separation from Vienna by starting her entry with the statement 'Ich bin jetzt hier in England und kann mir gar nicht vorstellen, daß mich ein ganzes Meer von Wien trennt'.[161] The distance between her and Vienna, which she focuses on, illustrates her longing. We can read Ilse's entries about Vienna as her expressing feelings of still belonging to her place of origin. She depicts Vienna as a 'left-behind place', to use Mattes et al.'s term, which Ilse inscribes with distinct notions of home and belonging in a social but also spatial way.

Her entries mentioning Vienna can be read as encompassing both feelings of *Heimweh* and a longing for a distinct place. Her nostalgic notions of Vienna signify a strong sense of belonging to the place, even after she left it, which can be connected to Brauer's argument that links the loss of a familiar place with *kindliches Heimweh:*

> Die Kinder und Heranwachsenden litten am Verlust des konkreten Ortes der Heimat als sozialem Anker und familiärem Geborgenheitsraum, nicht so sehr an der Einsicht in die Vergänglichkeit des Lebens.[162]

Brauer draws on two aspects of *Heimweh*, one that entails the longing for a specific place and one that highlights a temporal dimension here. I suggest that Ilse's entries about Vienna show that both of these aspects can be true at the same time which will become clearer in the following examples.

Longing for a past time and place as well as people who they separated from is a recurring issue in the diaries of some Kindertransport refugees. Often these longings are connected to feelings of isolation or loneliness. Ilse also emphasises her loneliness in an entry on 15 August 1939:

> Es ist wirklich nicht mehr zum aushalten. Paul schreibt sehr nett und fühlt sich auch einsam. Wenn er weg ist, habe ich ihn nicht so lieb, als wenn ich mit ihm zusammen bin. [...] Ich habe jetzt solche Sehnsucht nach Mutti, Wien und allen meinen alten Freunden, dass ich manchmal glaube ich sterbe bald. Ich heul mir

[161] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p.94.
[162] Brauer, 'Nostalgie und Heimweh', p. 157.

> jeden Tag die Augen aus und es wirkt nichts. Ich sitze den ganzen Tag zu Hause und helfe im Haushalt. Daraus besteht jetzt mein Leben. Ich hab gar keine Unterhaltung und bin so entsetzlich einsam und verlassen und niemand hat mich lieb. Was ich diese 8 Monate, die ich jetzt hier bin, gelitten habe (d. h. es hat noch nicht aufgehört und wird mit jedem Tag ärger und es werden schon nervöse körperliche [...] daraus) das wünsche ich meinem bösesten Feind nicht.[163]

This entry reveals several things about Kindertransport refugees who experienced *Heimweh.* Firstly, these emotions are unbearable for Ilse, which reminds us of an early understanding of *Heimweh* as an illness. Secondly, she establishes that she is not the only Kindertransport refugee who felt this way by mentioning Paul. Thirdly, we can see here that *Heimweh* can take on several forms: loneliness, longing for a particular person or place, and a strong emotional expression of these sentiments. Ilse's entry exemplifies the interconnectedness of the various definitions and symptoms of *Heimweh* that have been circulating over many centuries, while not contributing much to determining how her sense of belonging is negotiated.

How her sense of belonging is negotiated becomes evident in later entries, particularly through emphasising the separation from her mother and longing for a particular feeling of *Geborgenheit* that only the mother can provide. Ilse struggled with this often, for example, on 15 March 1940, she writes in an entry:

> Ich hab seit 17.1. von Mutti keine Post und bin so verzweifelt wie ich es gar nicht schildern kann und sehe vielleicht deshalb so schrecklich schlecht aus. Ich habe so plötzliches Heimweh und möchte wieder bei meiner Mutti sein, ohne sie gehe ich zu Grunde. Und so lange keine Post. Ich werde wahnsinnig.[164]

Here, Ilse creates a direct connection between *Heimweh,* being with her mother, and feelings of belonging. Similarly, if not even more, she longs for her assistance and guidance. The lack of correspondence makes it even harder as there is no way of knowing what is going on in her mother's life. Furthermore, as highlighted earlier, for Ilse, experiencing *Heimweh* is directly linked to symptoms of physical and mental illness and therefore the effect of the negative emotions becomes visible in her appearance.

Interestingly, for Ilse, there is not only a connection between *Heimweh* and her mother, she actually specifically experiences *Heimweh* for her. In her entry on the

[163] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p. 110.
[164] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*., p. 122.

declaration of war on 4 September 1939, she states 'Wann werde ich meine Mutti wiedersehen, ich kriege immer schreckliches Heimweh nach ihr'.[165] This highlights the social dimension of *Heimweh* as a form of longing for *Geborgenhei*t and security that can only be provided by a specific person or group of people. This is further emphasised in an entry on 16 June 1940, where she states 'Von Mutti höre ich selten, sie hat bald Geburtstag und ich habe noch immer entsetzliche Sehnsucht und man kann nicht schreiben'.[166] Despite being 19 years old at the time of writing this entry, her longing for her mother has not changed: on 30 November 1943, Ilse writes

> Eigentlich gar nichts Neues, meine Großmutter (Vaters) bei den Nazis gestorben – meine Mutter verschollen, habe alle ihre Briefe aufgehoben und fange immer an zu weinen, so wie mir einer unterkommt. Denke Tag und Nacht an sie.[167]

Her continued longing for her mother is likely connected to the childhood trauma of separation and the fact that by 1943 reports of deportation and concentration camps were already circulating. The fear about what had happened to her mother without having any clarity or recent correspondence, therefore, contributes to her emotional response to the letters. In many of Ilse's diary entries, some of which are shown above, we can see the irreparable rupture that was created by the loss of her home, Vienna, and the loss of her family, particularly her mother. In this example, she emphasises the importance of her mother over her father as she does not even mention him again after briefly referring to him in brackets.

Ilse's entries highlight the strong connection between *Heimat, Geborgenheit*, and childhood. In relation to this, writing about Max Frisch, Blickle states that '[h]e [Frisch] does not specifically list childhood as belonging to Heimat. But all the images he conjures up as examples of a sense of Heimat [houses where he grew up, homeland, native landscape, local dialect] are from his childhood'.[168] Similar associations are drawn by Ilse in her entries. Her sense of belonging is strongly linked to her *Heimat* and, with that, to the innocence of childhood.

Edith, originally from Berlin, often reflects on the life she has left behind in Germany and expresses that she experiences *Heimweh,* particularly for her mother.

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[165] Ibid., p. 117.
[166] Ibid., p. 126.
[167] Ibid., p. 158.
[168] Peter Blickle, *Heimat: A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2002), p. 135.

Her entries show that feelings of *Heimweh* do not necessarily have to be connected to the *Herkunftsland* itself, but they highlight that *Heimweh* can also have a more particular focus on missing a specific person, who, in Edith's case, is her mother. According to Duden, the longing for a 'dort [Heimat] wohnender, geliebter Mensch' is a big part of what constitutes *Heimweh* and therefore Edith's longing for her mother shows that she is experiencing a particular form of *Heimweh*.[169] The then fifteen-year-old teenager writes on 26 November 1939:

> Heute hat mich das Heimweh gepackt. Mutti, ich habe Sehnsucht nach Dir. Du allein hast mich lieb in einer uneigennützigen Weise. Wie lange schon habe ich kein Kosewort mehr von Dir gehört. Edithchen, meine grosse Tochter. Meine Muttchen, meine kleine Mutti.[170]

A striking aspect of this entry is Edith addressing her mother directly as if she was writing a letter to her. Furthermore, she includes a couple of sentences of an imagined or remembered exchange between her and her mother. By changing the narrative form of the diary entry, Edith creates a shared intimacy between her and the imagined mother which reinforces the idea that Edith's sense of belonging is strongly connected to her mother. The attempt to create false security and stability by including the imagined conversation after expressing the wish to hear the pet name her mother used for her further emphasises her longing and *Heimweh*. The exclamation 'Du allein [her mother] hast mich lieb in einer uneigennützigen Weise' emphasises the *Heimweh* by showing that she has not found new *Geborgenheit* and with that belonging.

This is not an isolated incident and, thus, we can determine that Edith's relationship with her mother and her yearning for her actively impacts upon her negotiation of belonging and integration into the refugee community at Millisle Farm.[171] A few weeks after the entry analysed above, on 14 December 1939, she states:

> Mutti, ich habe Heimweh nach Dir. Kein gutes Wort hört man mehr. Alles stößt mich rum. Lieber Gott, du kannst doch helfen. Wann finde auch ich dieses etwas wonach ich mich sehne? Soll ich mich noch mehr abschließen? Ja, ich denke, dass das das Beste sein wird. In der Einsamkeit erst wird man groß. Wen meint er damit? Die meisten Menschen leben doch gesellig? Und der Krieg nimmt kein Ende. Was soll das sein. Ich weiß nicht? Ich habe solche Sehnsucht nach Frieden. Und Hanukkah? Ist vorbei.[172]

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[169] Reference to what constitutes Heimweh according to the Duden's definition: 'Heimweh, Das'.
[170] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[171] Millisle Farm was a sanctuary for Jewish exiles and refugees from Nazi Germany where adults and children lived together in a mostly self-sustained environment. It was located in County Down in Northern Ireland.
[172] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary.*

Both entries highlight the emotional distress and loneliness that is associated with a nostalgic notion and memory of the *Herkunftsland* and her longing for her mother. Furthermore, this particular entry shows that it is not only the nostalgia that hinders Edith in forming new attachments, but that she also expresses a feeling of lacking something and longs for an unspecified feeling or sentiment. The combination of the nostalgic *Heimweh* for her mother and the longing for something to look for in the future suggests a shift in the relationship between nostalgia and belonging, as Brauer argues:

> Als Gefühlsdisposition in der Gegenwart [ist] […] Nostalgie nicht mehr so sehr eine emotionale Orientierung in Raum und Zeit [...] (wie es der ursprüngliche Wortsinn und Gebrauch nahelegt), sondern mit der Frage nach Identität und Zugehörigkeit verbunden [...]. Nostalgie bezeichnet [...] die Sehnsucht nach Sicherheit und Vertrautheit in einer sich rasch verändernden Welt. Damit steckt in dem Gefühl der Nostalgie nicht nur der innerliche, intime Weltzugang, sondern auch der Anspruch auf eine planbare und erwartbare Zukunft.[173]

This shows that for Edith, the longing for *Geborgenheit* and security is not only rooted in an experience of *Heimweh* and longing for the past, but that she is also searching for those feelings in the present and future, asking 'wann finde auch ich dieses etwas wonach ich mich sehne?'.

Drawing on the pedagogical aspects of *Heimweh* as something to be overcome during childhood and adolescence, fifteen-year-old Edith's considerations of how to respond to those emotions reflect the wish for personal growth while also emphasising a lack of guidance.[174] Particularly the entry on 14 December 1939 shows desperation and anguish. Rather than utilising the potential of the diary for creating a new self and life story, Edith's entries draw attention to the hardship and trauma she feels she is experiencing. This is further emphasised in later entries when she draws attention to a lack of *Geborgenheit*. She writes on 15 June 1940 'So sitzt man da, liest Bücher. Wenn ich nur einen da hätte wie Vati oder Mutti, Tante Meta, Hugo oder James. Dann wäre alles besser. Stattdessen —— gar nichts'.[175] In her entry, Edith emphasises the loss of social stability that she is experiencing and that nobody can replace the people that were left behind. Despite not directly stating that she feels homesick, the entry sheds light on her longing for specific people. Any other activities, such as reading, cannot

[173] Brauer, 'Nostalgie und Heimweh', p. 152.
[174] Brauer highlights that experiences of 'kindliches Heimweh' play a role in the 'Sozialisationsprozess von Heranwachsenden'; see: Brauer, 'Nostalgie und Heimweh', pp.156-57.
[175] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.

replace the emotional support and feelings of belonging she experienced when being with them. Her longing for them ultimately also stops her from forming new meaningful attachments and senses of belonging in the UK.

A few months later, she writes on 17 September 1940, a day after her sixteenth birthday:

> Ich glaube den schwersten Geburtstag meines Lebens habe ich gestern verlebt. Ich bin so kaputt an Leib und Seele, dass es nicht zu beschreiben ist. [...] Wie Gedankenlos doch die Menschen sind. [...] Komisch, warum sind die Leute so komisch. Ich habe von all dem so ein Heimweh und möchte heulen wie ein kleines Kind. Lieber Gott gibt mir Kraft und Mut. Wenn ich doch jemanden hätte.[176]

The emotional turmoil Edith is experiencing is well illustrated in this entry. It is not only her current circumstances that make her exclaim that she is 'so kaputt an Leib und Seele' but also her *Heimweh* and longing for a person to whom she relates closely. She also establishes a clear relationship between *Heimweh* and early childhood. For Edith, there is a strong link between her *Herkunftsland* and her happy childhood. This was already hinted at in an earlier entry from 26 November 1939 when Edith writes about longing to hear a *Kosewort* from her mother. Here, these sentiments stand out even more when she exclaims that she 'möchte heulen wie ein kleines Kind'. In this regard, Peter Blickle argues '[t]he many attributes that […] Heimat and childhood have in common include the fact that they can both become instruments of repairing cracks in one's feeling of identity'.[177] Edith's references to childhood, therefore, express a longing for innocence and *Geborgenheit* which, in turn, would help her make sense of the new situation and emotions she is experiencing. She writes about *Heimweh* in this entry by describing a lack of stability and belonging in her present time which keeps her from forming new attachments. Her feelings of non-belonging to the community linked with her longing for love and care from an unspecified other person suggest an internal confusion regarding interpersonal relations and a sense of belonging to a past time.

Her sentiments do not seem to change much. In her entry on 10 February 1941, Edith writes again about feeling homesick:

> Ich komm kaum weiter. Ich warte noch auf mein Permit. Ich bin so müde und kaputt und habe solch Heimweh. Ich kann nicht schlafen. Eine fürchterliche

[176] Ibid.
[177] Blickle, *Heimat*, pp. 135–36.

> Woche habe ich hinter mir. Warum ist alles so schwer. Hier steht die Invasion bevor, alles macht sich darauf gefasst. Aber das muss man den Engländern lassen: Sie sind kalt und tapfer.[178]

In Edith's entries, we can see the correlation between experiencing *Heimweh* and how it hinders her from developing new, perhaps co-existing, senses of belonging. However, the entry from 10 February suggests that her sense of belonging seems to have shifted slightly. While there was little indication of respect or admiration for the people of her host country in earlier entries, she now admits that she thinks of them as 'tapfer'. To say that she has changed her view completely would be an overstatement. Yet, the entry shows that there is a development taking place and that the complete hindrance of forming new attachments has made way for a potentially more open mindset.

Co-existing Sense of Belonging

While Edith's and Ilse's diaries show that experiencing *Heimweh* can continuously block the negotiation of a new attachment, eleven-year-old Elisabeth Ornstein's diary shows that *Heimweh* and new senses of belonging can start to coexist over time. Particularly the first entry in England alludes to these efforts of negotiating a new environment. She states in the entry on 1 February 1939:

> Liesl! Ich heiße doch nicht mehr Liesl. Nein die schöne, sorgenlose Zeit ist vorbei. Manchmal möchte ich wieder ein Baby sein, und gleich darauf freut es mich wieder doch schon fast erwachsen zu sein. Ich bekomme Heimweh sehr selten, doch tut es mir weh jemanden weinen zu sehen. Dann kann es mir passieren, daß ich am Abend heimlich in den Polster weinen muß. Mehr war noch nicht, und ich bin sehr froh, daß ich nicht mehr weine.[179]

The entry highlights the loss of familiarity and security. Yet, she claims that she does not experience *Heimweh* often despite also admitting to crying sometimes. This creates a discrepancy between the content of the entry and the emotions it conveys. It can be assumed that Elisabeth is trying not to let feelings of *Heimweh* impact upon her settling into a new place. The contrast she creates when stating 'manchmal möchte ich wieder ein Baby sein, und gleich darauf freut es mich wieder doch schon fast erwachsen zu sein' can be read as implying a negotiation between the childhood attachment to the

[178] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[179] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 7.

Herkunftsland and an attempt to negotiate new environments, which she sees as an act of growing up.[180]

Elisabeth reflects on this entry in her memoir from 1998, particularly regarding her identity. She writes:

> I lament that I have lost the familiar name of 'Liesl', suggesting that thereby I have really lost my identity, but nevertheless insist that I am seldom homesick. However, I admit that if I have seen anyone else crying, this sets me off, and then I weep secretly at night into my pillow. I am glad that I do not cry more often! Despite these natural sentiments, the literary note is already creeping in for the passage opens with a rhetorical exclamation.[181]

Perhaps, what Elisabeth calls the 'literary note' of her entries is a method of making sense of her situation and, by writing in this way, she tries to come to terms with her changing circumstances. Her literary note can be read as an attempt to distance herself from these emotions and experiences by trying to actively shape the narrative represented in the diary. Elisabeth utilises different forms of distancing herself in the entry by drawing a distinction between her nickname Liesl and her new persona, thereby creating a before and after the Kindertransport, and by contrasting *Heimweh* with some form of empathy for others. Creating a new narrative identity who is 'schon fast erwachsen' and experiences 'Heimweh sehr selten' contributes to her efforts of negotiating her new environment.

After this first entry in England, Elisabeth writes about other instances in which she overtly and covertly was confronted with negotiating different senses of (national) belonging. One example of the negotiation of different national and local belongings can be found in her entry on 26 August 1940, when the then twelve-year-old writes:

> Die Anderen nahezu weinten wenn wir darüber sprachen dass London gebombt war, und ein großes Feuer dort gewesen war. Ich konnte nicht weinen. Weinte ich nicht genug 19. August wenn ich hörte das Wien und Frankfurt gebombt waren?[182]

This entry visualises a conflicted understanding of belonging. It can be read as an expression of feeling like an outsider due to Elisabeth's use of the juxtaposition of 'die Anderen' versus 'ich'. Her being upset that Frankfurt and Vienna had been bombed shows a form of national and local belonging to her country of origin as she emphasises a sadness for the destruction of the two cities. Due to her personal connection to both

[180] See, for example, Blickle, *Heimat*, p. 131.
[181] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion,* p. 70.
[182] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 62.

cities, Elisabeth feels a stronger emotional bond and hence she cried for Vienna and Frankfurt but not London. In fact, there is no emotional connection with London mentioned at all. Yet, her word choices and the grammar structure of the entry also hint at her assimilating to her English surroundings, which is supported by a subconscious change in her language. For example, she uses 'gebombt' as well as 'wenn' instead of 'als'. Ultimately, this entry shows that Elisabeth's notion of belonging is extended by her living situation. Despite clearly showing that she still has a strong bond with Germany and Austria as well as her expression of feeling like an outsider ("Die Anderen" versus "I"), she also exhibits traces of multinational or transnational belonging through her use of language.[183]

Expressions of national and cultural belonging to the *Herkunftsland* can trigger an emotional response and therefore put into view various forms of attachment not only to the country of origin but also in relation to the *Fluchtland*. For example, Elisabeth's connection to the culture and practices of her country of origin remains strong even after living in England for more than a year. On 20 April 1940, she states:

> Ich ging ganz flott und sang: "Nun Ade du mein lieb Heimatland" und wenn ich zur letzten Strophe kam, brach into Tränen. Ich war den ganzen Morgen niedergedrückt gewesen und nun war ich um so mehr.[184]

The entry alludes to Elisabeth's general emotional state at the time. Her diary entries before and after do not give any explicit indication as to why she felt 'niedergedrückt'. However, the entries reference feelings of exclusion ('Aber die beiden [neighbours] wispern so viel zusammen, daß auch diese Freude von mir genommen ist')[185] and anger ('Ich war in einer solchen Wut daß ich zum Frühstück nicht sprechen konnte')[186]. This suggests that Elisabeth's general emotional state was in turmoil and that this might have contributed to her experiencing *Heimweh*.

Her choice of song that she writes about in the entry suggests that Elisabeth is missing her *Herkunftsland*. The folksong dates to 1848 and its lyrics tell the story of someone leaving their *Heimatland*. Presumably, the song resonated with Elisabeth as she can draw parallels between her own circumstances and emotions and the lyrics:

> Nun ade, du mein lieb' Heimatland,
> Lieb' Heimatland, ade!
> Es geht jetzt fort zum fernen Strand,

[183] Chapter Four focuses on the interconnectedness between language and belonging in more detail.
[184] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 41.
[185] Ibid., scan 40.
[186] Ibid., scan 42.

Lieb' Heimatland, ade!
|: Und so sing ich denn mit frohem Mut,
Wie man singet wenn man wandern tut,
Lieb' Heimatland, ade! :|

[...]

Begleitest mich, du lieber Fluss,
Lieb Heimatland, ade!
Bist traurig, daß ich wandern muss,
Lieb' Heimatland, ade!
|: Vom moos'gen Stein am wald'gen Tal,
Da grüß ich dich zum letzten Mal,
Lieb' Heimatland, ade! :|

Looking at the lyrics, we can actually see differences between the protagonist's experience of leaving the 'Heimatland' and Elisabeth's situation.[187] The protagonist in the song can say goodbye to their 'Heimatland', something that then twelve-year-old Elisabeth may not have had the chance to do. Furthermore, the song suggests that there was an active choice of the protagonist to leave, whereas the choice was made for her. Both however remain connected to the 'Heimatland'. As she states in her entry, the last stanza causes her to well up. Particularly the line 'Da grüß ich dich zum letzten Mal' stands out, as this line expresses the definitive separation of the protagonist and their 'Heimatland' which is something Elisabeth can relate to. The song culminates in a final goodbye where the protagonist and the Heimatland itself both feel sad about the inevitable separation. For Elisabeth, the reality of war and with that the uncertainty of when / if she will see her 'Heimatland' again, paired with the emotions conveyed in the song, make her experience a longing for her *Herkunftsland*, causing her to tear up.

However, through her use of language, Elisabeth creates a rather paradoxical sense of *Heimweh* as she writes about her emotional response to singing the traditional German folksong while using a clearly anglicised syntax and vocabulary. For instance, her use of 'wenn' is based on the English use of 'when' and she actually writes 'brach into Tränen' rather than 'brach ich in Tränen aus'. This is further emphasised when looking at the handwritten entry as she writes most of the entry in the German cursive handwriting (Sütterlin) except for the title of the song and the word 'into'. This shows that Elisabeth, while experiencing a longing for her *Herkunftsland*, displays a shifting

[187] 'Heimatland', in this paragraph, is referred to in quotation marks as it is the term used in the song.

sense of belonging through, for example, adapting to the new language in the *Fluchtland*.

In her entry titled 'Erinnerungen' Elisabeth reflects 'Später habe ich oftmals geweint, und sehr für jemand gewünscht, der mir helfen könnte. An Mamas Geburtstag habe ich viel geweint und viel an sie, Wien, Velden und Frankfurt gedacht'.[188] This is only a short passage hinting at experiencing *Heimweh* or longing for a particular place. However, we can see that it is above all her mother who Elisabeth is thinking about. While, admittedly, her mother's birthday makes her think about her in the first place, there is an element of choice depicted in the entry that isolates the mother from the rest of the family as she does not write that she thought about her parents or family. In another entry, Elisabeth writes about a slight change in her character and habits. On 27 July 1940, the then twelve-year-old girl states:

> Ich kann mich noch an die zehn Gebote aber nur an die 1., 2. 5., 6. Grundwahrheiten erinnern. Ich habe zwei vergessen. Auch benütze ich viele Schwerworte u. bin unordentlich. Mama wird wenig Freude an mir haben u. ich wünsche ernstlich daß ich niemals nach England gewesen haben soll.[189]

This is an illustration of worries connected to being away from one's own family and in a different cultural and religious environment. Interestingly, while she worries about her use of swearwords which she calls 'Schwerwörter', her syntax and vocabulary are becoming increasingly anglicised. The use of 'Schwerwörter' highlights this as Elisabeth presumably picked up the English term 'swearword' and Germanised it rather than knowing the actual German term for it. Her anxiety and guilt about how her mother would react to her changing culminates in the statement 'ich wünsche ernstlich daß ich niemals nach England gewesen haben soll'. What Elisabeth essentially implies here is that she sees herself in a fluid state of her identity which is, as established, linked to a sense of belonging. Her religious and cultural identity as well as her sense of belonging are challenged by her forgetting two of the 'Grundwahrheiten', by her changing and using swearwords, and by her being in England.

Ingeburg Sigler, who arrived in the UK on a Kindertransport in 1939 at the age of twelve, also displays a development of shifting and co-existing senses of belonging in some of her diary entries. For example, she writes on 18 May 1940:

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[188] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 23.
[189] Ibid., scans 47 & 49.

> Heute werde ich vielleicht ziemlich allein sein. Da werde ich "Bibi" lesen und in Erinnerungen schwelgen. Manchmal habe ich so ein komisches Gefühl, besonders wenn die Sonne scheint. Da wünsche ich, dass alles wieder wie früher wäre. Doch suche ich dieses Gefühl zurückzudrängen und lieber Gott danken, dass ich so glücklich bin, so ein zu Hause zu haben.[190]

The entry conveys different senses of belonging in various ways: Ingeburg writes about loneliness, reading, and reminiscing. The set phrase 'in Erinnerung schwelgen' suggests a nostalgic and romanticised notion of those memories. What stands out is the contradiction between longing for a past time and trying "dieses Gefühl zurückzudrängen' which highlights the coexisting sense of belonging. She clearly misses her old, carefree life but also feels a duty to be grateful for her new home.

Her choice of book is also interesting. She is reading a novel from the coming-of-age series 'Bibi' by Danish author Karin Michaelis. The series tells the story of Bibi, a stationmaster's daughter who has lost her mother. She enjoys her freedom and goes on train excursions on her own. Since these books had been published between 1929 and 1939, we can assume that she already owned at least some of the books before coming to England. Yet, the theme of freedom and agency in the novels stands in contrast to the loneliness Ingeburg writes about. In another entry on 1 June 1940, her mother's birthday, Ingeburg reminisces again:

> Mami's Geburtstag […]. Ich stand leise auf und holte mir einen gewissen Kasten mit gewissen Briefen darin welche ich alle las. Ausserdem war da noch ein gewisses Bildchen welches ich in meinem gas-mask case trug.[191]

The combination of her memories and physical objects reminding her of home (Kasten mit Briefen, Bildchen in Gaßmaske) embedded in her everyday life in exile seems to suggest an openness to negotiate new forms of belonging that can coexist with Ingeburg's previous understanding of belonging.

On 13 or 14 June 1940 (here Ingeburg indicates that she is unsure about the date), she states 'Ich habe ein Bild von Mama gezeichnet. Ich denke es sieht ihr sehr ähnlich'.[192] The entries highlight how important it is for Ingeburg to remember her mother and maintain a close relationship with her despite her forced absence. Particularly in 1940, receiving letters from the parents got more difficult and Ingeburg now relies more strongly on her memory of her mother. Carrying the 'gewisse

[190] Sigler, *Ingenburg's Diary.*
[191] Ibid.
[192] Ibid.

Bildchen' with her in her gas mask further emphasises how important the closeness to her mother was to her and how much she longs for it, particularly in scary and uncertain situations such as the ones she would have been in when wearing a gas mask. While it is not known what little picture she is referring to or what is seen on it, we can assume that it is a picture which includes her mother, based on the context of the entry. For Ingeburg, her sense of belonging is strongly linked to attachment figures who provide her with a sense of comfort and security.

Helga Bejach is always particularly reminded of home on holidays such as the Easter days, suggesting that these occasions remind her of happy memories. On 1 April 1945 she states 'Easter Sunday. One does not celebrate it here. […] Irene [her sister] and I went for a long walk after lunch. Talked about old times. Kinderheim, great fun, lived it all over again'.[193] On 21 April 1946, then eighteen-year-old Helga writes 'Easter Sunday but no sign of it here, no atmosphere at all. To think back at the lovely Easters at home… Cleared out and got things ready for Saturday'.[194] While Helga does not clearly state her emotions, she arguably felt homesick in these instances not least because in one of the entries she also writes about reminiscing with her sister Irene. This, again, shows a connection between *Heimweh,* memory, and feelings of security and *Geborgenheit.*

The entries analysed above allude to various factors that contribute to feelings of *Heimweh*. Evidently, there is an interconnectedness between experiencing *Heimweh* and the use of memory in the diaries. Memories of the country of origin will be analysed in further detail in chapter three. What these entries show is that despite *Heimweh* and nostalgic notions of the *Herkunftsland*, the Kindertransport refugees start writing about developing, and sometimes even already co-existing, notions of belonging that are attached to the *Herkunftsland* and the *Fluchtland*.

Expressing Belonging through Dissociation from Current Surroundings

Nostalgic notions of the *Herkunftsland* and memories connected to these notions shed light on processes of negotiating belonging, through experiencing non-belonging in a new environment. Comparing the new situation to old experiences leads, in many instances, to the Kindertransport refugees expressing belonging through dissociation

[193] Bejach, *Helga's Diary.*
[194] Ibid.

from the *Fluchtland*, thereby highlighting a sense of belonging to the *Herkunftsland*. According to Wood and Waite, '[b]elonging can be a useful resource for minimising conflicts between people, but it can also be a crucial basis for intergroup tensions and exclusionary or discriminatory behaviour'.[195] Such negative reflections of the host country that can be found in some diary entries can be seen as the diarist making sense of these tensions and, with this, they dissociate themselves from the society and people in their host country. With Denis-Constant Martin and Nira Yuval-Davis, Kalpana Kannabiran, and Ulrike Vieten, identities can be defined as narratives that allow people to tell stories.[196] These stories often consist of notions of belonging which, as the two argue in their respective works, are 'contested, fluid and constantly changing but are [also] clustered around some hegemonic constructions of boundaries between 'self' and 'other''.[197]

The unknown and unfamiliar environment of the *Fluchtland* can cause misconceptions and foster prejudice which can also be linked to forms of non-belonging. Then fifteen-year-old Ilse Grünwald writes five months after her Kindertransport to England on 2 April 1939

> Ich bin von London und den Engländern schrecklich enttäuscht. So ein einfältiges und stupides Volk ist mir noch nicht untergekommen. Sie beten und essen den ganzen Tag. Das ist ihr Leben und so eines sollen auch wir führen. Da sterbe ich noch lieber. [...] Wenn sie den ganzen Tag beten, stößt es mich nur ab, weil ich das nicht ernstnehmen kann. Und sie sind in allem so schrecklich altmodisch.[198]

Ilse does not mention if a specific experience caused her to form this opinion. However, she points out that the common everyday practices of the English people are what prompt her to write that they are a 'einfältiges and stupides Volk'. Ilse's entry reveals an understanding of national belonging based on an idea of othering by creating an 'us' versus 'them', and on an even more individual level an 'I' versus 'Engländer'.

The Kindertransport refugees sometimes negotiate their belonging directly by engaging with forms of non-belonging and establishing agency by opposing, for example, integration processes. This conscious decision to establish a sense of

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[195] Wood and Waite, 'Editorial: Scales of Belonging', p. 201.
[196] See Denis-Constant Martin, 'The Choices of Identity', *Social Identities*, 1.1 (1995), 5–20 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.1995.9959423>; *The Situated Politics of Belonging*, ed. by Nira Yuval-Davis, Kalpana Kannabiran, and Ulrike Vieten (London; Thousand Oaks, CA.: SAGE, 2006), pp. 1–14 <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10218161> [accessed 14 June 2022].
[197] Yuval-Davis, and others, *The Situated Politics of Belonging*, p. 2.
[198] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p. 104.

belonging by emphasising non-belonging in the form of failed integration or by talking about closer relations to different places, communities, or cultures is also visible in Ilse's diary. In some cases, the bond to a local community or place is stronger than the bond to a nationality, country or even a city. Ilse was fourteen years old when she left Vienna on a Kindertransport in December 1938. Over the course of her diary from 1935 to 1947, her strong bond to the city is expressed in multiple entries from her teenage years to early adulthood. On 14 December 1944, the then twenty-year-old writes:

> In 3 Tagen werden es 6 Jahre, daß ich aus Wien weg bin. 6 verschwendete Jahre, die ich größtenteils mit Tränen, allein sein und unglücklich sein verbracht habe. 6 Jahre in diesem gräßlichen Lande. Wenn man mir das vorher gesagt hätte, ich wäre aus Trübsinn gestorben. Denn trübsinnig kann man hier werden. Wie ich alles drum geben würde um wo anders zu leben. Wie meine besten Jahre verdorben sind…[199]

Her idea of belonging is strongly connected to an emotional dimension. Building on Wood and Waite's claim that 'spaces and spheres of life where familiar certainties are disrupted or challenged; where belonging is perceived to be under threat' evoke questions of what it means to belong or not belong, it can be argued that England has become a place connected to negative experiences for Ilse, where her ideas of home and affiliation to a community were challenged.[200] She does not seem to have many positive feelings towards England as her exile experience is depicted as mostly negative and upsetting. Vienna, on the other hand, is a meaningful place for Ilse which she connects to positive memories suggesting that Vienna as a place, but also as a construct in Ilse's imagination, has become a manifestation of Ilse's idea of belonging to a defined somewhere. Based on Shortt's statement that a place 'can be a remembered or imagined location', this suggests that Ilse constructs Vienna as a remembered but also, to some degree, imagined and romanticised place.[201] She utilises her memory of a place and her imagination of what it felt like to belong and opposes the positive affective dimension to her negative experience in England.

Ilse often situates her negotiation of the concept between the ideal of belonging and her exile reality. On 13 May 1945, Ilse, then aged twenty-one, writes:

> Alle fahren weg, ich wollte, ich hätte eine Zukunft. Möchte gerne heiraten. Bin sehr fed up mit allen. Vielleicht zurück nach Wien? Die Russen sind dort. Wo

[199] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p. 161.
[200] Wood and Waite, 'Editorial: Scales of Belonging', p. 201.
[201] Shortt, *German Narratives of Belonging*, p. 9.

ist Mutti? Möchte gerne fort.[202]

Here, Ilse expresses a desire to leave London but also acknowledges that her hometown Vienna is not an option. The distinct temporal dimension of this entry stands in contrast to the commonly assumed function of a diary. Rather than having a positive outlook on life, Ilse's entry shows that, for her, there is no way back to the past, that she is faced with an uncomfortable present, and assumes that she has no future. Kathryn Sederberg explores such temporal notions in what she defines as crisis diaries in her investigation of diaries of German citizens towards the end of the second World War. She argues that we have to 'extend our understanding of the crisis diary by focusing on how diary writing reflects shifts in temporal frameworks, as horizons of past, present, and future change'.[203] While it has to be highlighted that labelling Ilse's diary a crisis diary would be an exaggeration, her writings nonetheless exhibit qualities that Sederberg and Lejeune both attribute to the crisis diary, particularly regarding aspects of temporality. For example, Sederberg argues that '[a]t the end of the war, [the] state of uncertainty is often experienced as crisis, as diarists describe situations in which time feels somehow different, more intense, and anxiety-provoking'.[204] Ilse expresses uncertainty and anxiety in the entry by emphasising her hopelessness.

In this entry, we can clearly see a change in how Ilse writes about belonging. What previously was presented as dissociation from England and thereby reinforcing her Austrian, and more specifically Viennese, belonging, is now much more based on feelings of non-belonging. She implies traces of a transnational idea of spatial belonging when she emphasises "möchte gerne fort" without further specifying where she wants to go. This could mean that Ilse has developed a more open understanding of spatial belonging. Her strong sense of belonging to her *Herkunftsland* and Vienna has given way to an openness to form new notions of belonging to an undefined elsewhere. While it seems as if she has not developed an attachment to England, her sense of belonging has shifted and widened. A promising and positive outlook on life plays a vital role in Ilse's definition of belonging, particularly in connection to social and financial security, a priority which we can assume based on her wish of 'möchte gerne heiraten'.

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[202] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p. 166.
[203] Sederberg, 'Writing through Crisis', p. 323.
[204] Ibid., p. 330.

Similar to Mattes et al.'s observations to the effect that 'feelings of un-belonging prove to be the affective source and driving force' in narratives of belonging in German literary texts, it becomes visible in Ilse's entry that her feelings of un-belonging have become a driving force in her wish to leave.[205] The entry actually highlights multiple expressions of forms of un-belonging or non-belonging: she is still in London while everyone else seems to be leaving; compared to others she does not think she has a future; she does not know where to go. This signifies a loss of a notion of home and with that belonging. Vienna is not a viable option for Ilse any more after the end of the war due to allied occupation. With regards to the loss of home, Friederike Eigler argues it is 'the perceived or real loss of social stability and transparency, and of a sense of community, all tied to a specific locale'.[206] Evidently, the narratives of belonging and non-belonging in the selected examples have a very England- and more specifically London-centric perspective. It can be assumed that, in their early years of exile, the children were not able to differentiate between different local forms of identity and belonging within Britain, as the culture, language, and practices of the whole country felt alien to them, no matter where they were placed.[207]

New Forms of Belonging in Britain

In the *Fluchtland*, the Kindertransport refugees all had very different experiences, as their diaries show. How they individually dealt with aspects such as integration, settling in, and getting used to new environments impacted how they wrote about new or shifting notions of belonging. Changing and co-existing notions of what constitutes a home, or varying forms of social stability, enable the diarist to also reflect on their feelings of belonging in the *Fluchtland*. As seen in the previous subchapter, while some forms of attachment to the *Herkunftsland* can hinder them from forming new attachments and developing fluid senses of belonging at first, some diarists develop more hybrid notions of belonging over time. These are not only expressed in entries reflecting on past time spent in the *Herkunftsland* but also in entries dealing with situations and experiences in the *Fluchtland*.

[205] Mattes and others, 'Belonging', p. 306.
[206] Friederike Eigler, *Heimat, Space, Narrative: Toward a Transnational Approach to Flight and Expulsion*, Studies (Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2014), p. 2.
[207] Further investigation into forms of local belonging to Britain, a comparative investigation of letters, diaries and memoirs of child refugees who have extensive literary remains would reveal more detailed information on this.

Belonging to a Refugee Community

In their report on discrimination and ACEs, Hammel, Homer and Grosz emphasise that 'with impending war and a potential invasion, anti-Semitic and anti-alien feelings were openly expressed' in Britain.[208] Some of the Kindertransport refugees had to deal with moments of marginalisation or saw themselves forced to reflect and think about their refugee status and consequently also forms of belonging, not only in a national sense but in terms of belonging to the refugee community. An obvious argument for discrimination and marginalisation would therefore be their status as refugees. This, paired with their everyday experiences, plays a vital part in their negotiation of belonging, not only in positive ways.

The first example that expresses reflections of belonging to a community of refugees is taken from Edith Jakobowitz's diary. She writes on 29 January 1940:

> Gestern Nachmittag hatten wir eine Debatte. Der eine Junge schimpfte wie ein Rohrspatz über sein Dasein als refugee. [...] Manfred P sagt, optimistisch bleiben sei das Beste. Das Ganze wäre eine Übergangszeit. Eines Teils hat er recht. Andersteils kann er gut reden: Er studiert und lernt was. Und ich? Und gar Gert? Ne, rosig schaut das nicht gerade aus.[209]

While there is a sense of belonging within Edith's group which is created by their shared refugee status, the opinions on this matter differ. In their chapter 'Belonging', Mattes et al. point out the difference between affiliation and belonging by emphasising the various effects of the two terms. They suggest that "affiliation" describes a formalised membership to a community or group, etc. whereas "belonging" emphasises an emotional and social dimension.[210] Despite their shared experience, it can be argued that, within their group, they all have different feelings of belonging to the refugee community and the identity that is connected to this group. For Edith, the group is not homogenous, as she identifies different positions based on education but also on the way they talk about their 'Flüchtlingsdasein'. Edith opposes the two boys, the one who complained and the one who advocates for being optimistic and eventually situates herself in an in-between. While she states that one 'schimpfte wie

[208] Andrea Hammel, Stephanie Homer, and Anita Grosz, *Discrimination and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in the Lives of Child Refugees of the 1930s: Learning for the Present and the Future* (Aberystwyth: Aberystwyth University, June 2022), p. 5.
[209] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[210] Mattes and others, 'Belonging', pp. 301–2.

ein Rohrspatz', she also points out that the other one 'kann gut reden'. Using these colloquialisms, she also creates a form of belonging through language as she resists an anglicisation of her language use in this particular example by using a German way of expressing herself. Similar to what was highlighted in the previous subchapter, Edith displays almost a resistance to developing new forms of attachment to the *Fluchtland* and to the refugee community at Millisle Farm.

Furthermore, the entry reveals other aspects that impact upon feelings of security and stability often associated with belonging, as Edith highlights that her future does not look bright. This outlook indicates desperation, which is not likely to change and thereby stands in contrast to positive emotions commonly associated with belonging such as security, which can be understood in a social sense but also in an educational or economic one. For Edith, the unpromising situation she finds herself and her brother in, as opposed to Manfred P who 'studiert und lernt was', creates a feeling of non-belonging which is strongly linked with the lack of prospects for the future. This could be seen as an indicator of a longing for a nostalgic notion of home and familiarity, which is again linked to the interconnectedness between *Heimat* and childhood that Blickle advocates for and that was already visible in her other entries as analysed in the previous subchapter.[211]

Thinking about their lives as refugees and exiles also points to an interconnectedness of negotiating belonging, their own understanding of their exile identities, and their agency. In Edith's entry, this is, for example, expressed by Manfred P suggesting that it is an 'Übergangszeit' and subject to change. Furthermore, Elzbieta Rokosz-Piejko suggests in her article 'Child in Exile':

> If an exile accepts his status as a permanent outsider, he or she can derive benefits from it. Lack of belonging can give an exile distance from both the culture of the country he has left and the culture of the country he happens to live in, and thus an endless area of analysis. As belonging not only gives one the pleasures of comfortable safety and enjoyment of one's place in the social structure but also bears some responsibility […], an exile can […] escape that responsibility. Nevertheless, there is a price to be paid – the feeling of dislocation and longing for being 'at home'.[212]

[211] Blickle, *Heimat*, pp. 131–32.
[212] Elzbieta Rokosz-Piejko, 'Child in Exile - Mary Antin's and Eva Hoffman's Versions of Exiled Childhood', in *Exile: Displacements and Misplacements*, ed. by Wojciech Kalaga and Tadeusz Rachwał, Literary and Cultural Theory, v. 11 (Frankfurt am Main; New York: P. Lang, 2001), pp. 173–81 (p. 181).

Everyday practices and experiences in exile that are connected to belonging, non-belonging, as well as exile and refugee identities, show the agency of the Kindertransport refugees. They can situate themselves in an in-between of *Herkunftsland* and *Fluchtland* based on their notions of belonging to a refugee community that can also hint at fluid notions of belonging. Guo and Dalli state that '[t]he drive to belong appeared to promote the children's agency to learn about how to be and behave in their new cultural setting'.[213] While their observation offers a perspective on the agency of children in the integration process into a new country, this can also be applied to learning how to behave and act in a new community such as a refugee group. In the entry, it becomes visible that the adolescent and child refugees discuss different perceptions of their new reality. Furthermore, Edith's entry also reveals that it is possible to overcome the constraints of the refugee existence and actively participate in the culture or society of the country of exile, while also maintaining a connection to the culture and practices of the country of origin and creating their own sphere. As readers, we assume that Manfred P participates in the cultural and religious practices of the refugee farm at which he lives. There was a sense of community amongst the people living on Millisle farm.[214] At the same time, many of the residents of the farm studied, worked or volunteered in the local communities in County Down or in Belfast. This participatory culture at Millisle Farm that Edith is also entangled in provides a space for reconsidering aspects of belonging that are not tied to binary understandings of the *Herkunftsland* and *Fluchtland*.

Hammel, Homer and Grosz highlight that shared experiences and peer support contributed positively to the exile experiences of some individuals. They note that 'many older children found invaluable support from other refugees in a hostel setting, there was a sense of shared experience and a feeling of being "in the same boat"'.[215]

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[213] Karen Guo and Carmen Dalli, 'Belonging as a Force of Agency: An Exploration of Immigrant Children's Everyday Life in Early Childhood Settings', *Global Studies of Childhood*, 6.3 (2016), 254–67 (p. 263) <https://doi.org/10.1177/2043610616665036>.

[214] Various articles and reflections on Millisle farm highlight the efforts to build a community. The self-sustained environment would not have been achievable, had the farm not been run as a co-operative space similar to the kibbutz principle. She argues that 'sharing as they did past harrowing experiences, and understanding each other's underlying feelings of homesickness, loss and anxiety about the fate of their families, inevitably the refugees were closest to each other', which highlights the strong sense of community that developed at the farm over time. (see: Marilyn Taylor, 'Millisle, County Down - Haven from Nazi Terror' <https://www.historyireland.com/millisle-county-down-haven-from-nazi-terror/>).

[215] Andrea Hammel, Stephanie Homer, and Anita Grosz, *Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the Child Refugee of the 1930s in the UK: History Informing the Future* (Aberystwyth: Aberystwyth University, June 2020), p. 11.

This was not only the case for hostels but also for other places where refugees regularly interacted. Seventeen-year-old Leopold Weil writes on 12 May 1942:

> Das [Kartenspielen und Klatsch und Tratsch Abende] hat sich geändert. In erster Stelle verdanke ich das der Jung Österreich, an zweiter Stelle einem gewissen Buchladen in White Church Street und an dritter Stelle dem Fakt, dass ich unter menschenwürdigen Bedingungen wohne und lebe.[216]

Leopold's idea of belonging is based on norms and values as well as social relations and living conditions. His overall mood in the entry is very positive as he seems happy that things have changed in his everyday life. The three aspects he mentions that caused this change, *Jung Österreich*, the bookshop and his improved living conditions, all signify different aspects of home and belonging ranging from community to cultural stimulation to safety and security.[217] His entry can be linked to general observations made by scholars such as Hammel, Grosz and Homer who argue:

> The combination of a secure cultural base and shared experience when in contact with other refugees from a similar background, and the daily contact with British work, characters, and values, enabled these refugees to be connected to both their Continental background and simultaneously establish a new independent adult life in Britain.

This certainly was the experience of many child and teenage refugees living in such conditions. The shared experience of refugee life combined with everyday life in Britain enabled them to find ways to integrate themselves whilst maintaining a connection with their national, religious, or cultural heritage, thereby emphasising co-existing ideas of belonging. Arguably, this becomes visible in Leopold's entry through his highlighting of his membership of a refugee community as well as places in London that impact upon his personal development (the bookshop).

Despite not being Austrian, *Jung Österreich (J. Ö.)* plays a vital role in Leopold's new understanding of self and belonging as the organisation provides him with a support network that gives him a sense of stability and ultimately leads to him displaying hybrid notions of belonging. Young Austria, which is the name of the organisation as it is known today, rather than Leopold's translation of it as 'Jung Österreich', was an organisation founded in 1938 by refugees from Austria to Britain:

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[216] Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*.

[217] For aspects of what constitutes belonging, see, for example, Yuval-Davis and others, *The Situated Politics of Belonging*, pp. 3–4; Michael Ignatieff and Amy Gutmann, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2001); Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism* (London: Vintage, 1994).

'Throughout the Second World War Young Austria offered its members support and practical help, organised social and cultural activities and worked for the reestablishment of an independent democratic Austrian state after the end of the war'.[218] On 12 May 1942, Leopold goes on to explain who *Jung Österreich* are and why the organisation matters to him:

> Über das J. Ö. gibt es vielleicht nicht allzuviel zu sagen. Wir sind eine Bande von kameradschaftlichen jungen Leuten, von 16 bis an die Anfang 20er. Wir wissen was wir wollen. Wir wissen wie das Leben zu nutzen und freundlich zu gestalten. Wir sind eine Einheit. [...] [Unser Ziel ist es] usere respektive Heimat sei es welches Land es will wiederzugestalten im Geiste des Fortschrittes, des Friedens, Liebe, Kameradschaftlichkeit von der individuellen bis zur internationalen.[219]

In this excerpt of his diary entry, we can see that a national dimension of belonging is not essential to Leopold's understanding of the concept. For him, political and sociological aspects that can constitute a particular notion of belonging are more important and these seem to be values he shares with the rest of the members of Young Austria. Based on opposition towards fascism, Leopold defines his belonging according to mainly political values and claims that 'unsere respektive Heimat' will be whichever country's constitution is built on progress, peace, love and comradeship.[220] As Mattes et al argue, 'the notion of "belonging" distinctively accounts for the *practice* and *performance* of commonality, reciprocity, and mutuality'.[221] Hence, we can assume that for Leopold, belonging to a particular group is based on shared experiences, values, and ideas and is rooted in relations to others rather than a national or local space.

Yet, his use of the word *Heimat* reveals an interesting aspect of his underlying sense of belonging. *Heimat,* for Leopold, becomes a mobile construct that is not connected to a particular place of origin. His place of birth, his *Herkunftsland*, is merely a place on a long list of places that he might have called *Heimat* once. Instead, the concept of *Heimat* has a temporal dimension to it which, in Leopold's case, can be

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[218] Sonja Frank, Charmian Brinson, and Marietta Bearman, 'Young Austria: Austrian Refugees in Britain 1938 – 1947' (Austrian Cultural Forum London, 2015) <https://www.acflondon.org/events/young-austria-austrian-refugees-britain-1938-1947/> [accessed 22 August 2022].
[219] Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*.
[220] Leonard mentions in the same diary entry one of the aims of Young Austria: 'Was wir wollen ist dem Faschismus mit all unsere Kraft entgegenzustemmen und zu siegen' (see Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*).
[221] Mattes and others, 'Belonging', p. 301.

argued is linked to the present and future rather than the past. Traditionally understood in a more closed way, home and *Heimat* in particular suggest a nostalgic notion of place which is certainly not completely lost in this example here but rather Leopold's changing notion of belonging contributes to a more open and mobile understanding of the term. In the entry, his understanding of *Heimat* combines traditional aspects of a form of national belonging, as *Heimat* is still a fixed place and country, with a new, dynamic understanding that includes values such as progress and international companionship. The entry thereby also reflects general efforts to move beyond the commonly associated connotations of *Heimat* which Friederike Eigler outlines in her article 'Critical Approaches to *Heimat* and the "Spatial Turn"':

> The concept of Heimat, properly historicized and theorized, presents a productive occasion […] [for the] analysis of contextualized representations and narrative creations of space by considering intersections of local, national, and transnational.[222]

Looking at Leopold's ideas of what constitutes a new *Heimat* for the members of Jung Österreich, these ideas indicate this intersection. It can be argued that by choosing to use *Heimat* to describe this potential new place of settlement, Leopold makes a conscious decision to link the 'respektive Heimat' not only to the norms and values he lists but also to the connotations that are inherent to the term itself. Evidently, Leopold connects the term to its connotations of spatial orientation and offering a social unit, but also expands the term by including an international dimension. This shows that Leopold's notions of belonging and home are open and dynamic rather than fixed by merely spatial conditions.

Leopold's understanding of belonging in terms of social relations also becomes visible in an entry about his familial relations. Commonly associated with well-being factors, family belonging plays an important part during childhood and adolescence.[223] While the lack of familial stability was seen as a traumatic factor impacting the fundamental ideas of belonging, some Kindertransport refugees grew apart from their families during their years in exile. This is, for example, expressed in Leopold's diary. He tries to establish a form of non-belonging by highlighting his unstable relationship

[222] Friederike Eigler, 'Critical Approaches to "Heimat" and the "Spatial Turn"', *New German Critique*, 115, 2012, 27–48 (p. 47).
[223] In their empirical study, King and Boyd examine various forms of family belonging and the factors impacting such as family constellation, age, gender, etc; see: Valarie King and Lisa M. Boyd, 'Factors Associated with Perceptions of Family Belonging Among Adolescents', *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 78.4 (2016), 1114–30 <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12322>.

with his mother, who emigrated to the US. On 4 March 1942, sixteen-year-old Leopold writes:

> Meine Bande nach Außen sind zerbrochen. Meine Mutter hat vor 8 Monaten in USA wieder geheiratet und seitdem bekam ich einen Brief. Sicher will sie nichts mehr mit mir zu tun haben sonst würde sie schreiben. Ich bin gar nicht so furchtbar traurig darüber.[224]

His idea of belonging is, at least to some extent, linked to attachments to an outside which in this case seems to be his familial or social relations. However, we can assume that there is also a degree of disappointment as well as defiance involved in his entry. While he states that he is not 'so furchtbar traurig darüber', it seems as if he is trying to convince himself that he does not need his mother to define his own understanding of belonging.[225] By writing this down, Leopold develops a sense of belonging that is not dependent on familial relations. Therefore, what we can see here is that Leopold's notions of belonging have shifted and that a development of new senses of belonging is taking place.

Looking at both the entries of 4 March and 12 May shows a shift or even reversal of spheres of intimacy. The refugee and exile community 'Jung Österreich' seems to have become his inner circle, whereas his family is referred to as an 'außen'. This illustrates that belonging and the factors that constitute belonging for Leopold are constantly changing and re-evaluated. Thereby, he subverts static notions of belonging which are linked to familial relations and ancestry, ultimately also challenging aspects of national and local identities. With the shift of what Leopold considers as his inner circle and the group or community he most belongs to, the change in Leopold's understanding of what constitutes belonging becomes even more visible. While he cared for familial relations earlier on in his diary, now a different set of norms and values is attached to his understanding of 'Heimat' and belonging.

The previous examples showed that forms of attachment can change over time and new senses of belonging can be added to an individual's understanding of the concept. This is also the case in Elisabeth's diary. She shows that she developed new

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[224] Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*.

[225] In this entry on 4 March 1942, we can see a shift in Leopold's feelings towards his mother. While before he was planning on moving to the US to live with her (see his entries on 4 and 9 September 1940) and felt that he should think about her more (see his entry on 12 October 1941), he then starts to turn away from his mother. For example, additionally to his entry on 4 March 1942, on 28 August 1942, he states that he is not homesick for his mother after she hasn't written in over 7 months (Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*).

senses of belonging in England when she reflects on her leaving the UK in her entry on 3 July 1941, which is written in English:

> In addition to all this, I had all my living friends, and by this phrase I mean those friends whom I loved because they were among me and not because I had once loved them, and only remembered that I had left all my friends behind and had just finished the most trying time of my life – the time I spent on the ship the HMS Antonia.[226]

In this part of the entry, then thirteen-year-old Elisabeth emphasises how important proximity and interactions between friends are for her understanding of belonging, which suggests that she longed for stability in her social network. This is not necessarily a big refugee community in Elisabeth's case, as she was integrated into family life in the countryside. However, the entry still provides us with valuable insight into the affective dimension of belonging, particularly when the diarist can reflect upon experiences directly connected to it. As argued by Mattes et al., belonging in the sense of a dynamic social location 'brings into view the multiplicity of affective relations that become relevant in processes of displacement, replacement, inclusion and exclusion in migratory and other contexts'.[227] Ultimately, the question of belonging in a spatial as well as social sense is covertly asked by Elisabeth, after she had to uproot her life for a second time. While the assumption might be made that joining her family after two years of separation could contribute to an easier transition, the diary entries show that Elisabeth struggled to come to terms with her further migration and joining her parents in Buffalo on multiple levels. Certainly, belonging for Elisabeth has a social and spatial dimension which are both linked to local and national ideas of belonging, as well as being based on interpersonal relations, all of which goes to make up a multifaceted understanding of belonging for Elisabeth.

Entries that express forms of belonging to a community of refugees and, at the same time, also deal with other forms of belonging to a social group or community in general, highlight an interconnectedness between various factors that can constitute one's own notions of belonging. What links these entries with one another is that they deal with different instances of inclusion and exclusion, with notions of stability and attachment, and with the children's changing ideas of the centre of their lives. Ultimately, the entries show that the Kindertransport refugees constantly negotiate

[226] Orsten, *Elisabeth's* Diary, scans 92 & 93.
[227] Mattes and others, 'Belonging', p. 300.

their belonging based on their experiences, which are impacted by the reality of war and refuge.

Considerations of Home

It was already hinted at that what constitutes a home or *Heimat* for the Kindertransport refugees was subject to change, as seen in Leopold's entries. This suggests that a more detailed analysis of their considerations of the home and how they write about it in their diaries is needed. Starting from the assumption that 'home' can be regarded as a multidimensional and mobile construct, diary entries dealing with various notions of home then yield valuable insight into forms of local, national, and even transnational belonging.[228] Home can be an idea that is linked to emotions such as security and safety as well as stability, as the previous subchapter already suggested. The construct of a home is therefore inherently linked to feelings of belonging and not just to the spatial binaries of *Herkunftsland* and *Fluchtland*. Therefore, the assumption is that when the children write about "home", "Heim" and "Zu Hause" in their new surroundings of the *Fluchtland*, they are simultaneously also writing about notions of belonging in their country of refuge and displaying shifting senses of belonging.

After arriving in the UK on a Kindertransport in early 1939, Elisabeth Ornstein lived with the Cook family. Originally from London, the children of the family were evacuated to the countryside where their governess Seb looked after them. Elisabeth had a difficult time adjusting to family life in the countryside, particularly since she did not get along with Jenny, Esme Cook's daughter, who was closest in age to Elisabeth.[229] However, Elisabeth had a close relationship with Seb, as she spent a lot of time with her.[230] She also admired the oldest daughter, Rosemary, who went to boarding school and thus did not live with the rest of the family except during brief visits. On 2 August 1940 Elisabeth, then twelve years old, writes:

> Heute ging Rosemary und später Seb nach London. [...] Ich stand lange u. schaute nach dem Autobus den Seb nach London trug. Bis ich ihn nicht mehr sehen konnte. Dann kehrte ich langsam heimwerts, zu einem Heim welches ich

[228] Shortt, *German Narratives of Belonging*, p. 3.

[229] There are multiple instances in the diary where Elisabeth expresses dislike for Jenny or issues they were having. For example, on 1 January 1940 she writes 'Ich hasse Jenny nun', on 7 August 1940 she writes '[…] und wenn sie [Jenny] ein Geschirrtuch nahm, stieß sie mir ins Gesicht.', and on 27 August 1940 she writes 'Heute gingen wir schwimmen Wir hatten J. [Jenny's] Mantel welcher nun mir gehört. J. sehr unhöflich darüber'; see Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scans 17, 54, and 62.

[230] For example, Elisabeth writes on 28 August 1940 'Ich sage zu Seb dass ich nichts mehr von J. nehmen würde. Sie spricht mit Mrs C. darüber', and, on the same day, 'Gehe aus mit Seb u. beide Puppen wie gewöhnlich spreche über USA'; see Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 63.

nicht kenne. - - -[231]

In this entry, Elisabeth's uncertainty about the concept of *Heim* is expressed. Presumably, Rosemary's and Seb's departure is connected to Elisabeth's statement of returning to a 'Heim welches ich nicht kenne' due to her thinking about this on her way back from the bus stop. We can assume that she dramatises the situation as the two people she is closest to in the household have left for London and thus she feels more isolated and lonelier than usual. This stands in contrast to the idea of the home-making process, understood as 'entering into a productive relationship with place and time' to negotiate an 'emotional attachment and engagement with places, for example, feeling at home, experiences of familiarity, or feeling safe'.[232] Rather, a paradoxical notion of *Heim* and 'nicht kennen' is created here. The anonymity and unknown that is implied by her use of 'nicht kennen' stands in direct opposition to an understanding of home that implies feelings of security, acceptance, and belonging. Fundamentally, Elisabeth thereby highlights that she feels she does not belong to the place she calls *Heim* in either a spatial or an emotional sense. This in turn suggests that belonging and the concept of home have become detached for Elisabeth, that the *Heim* as a living space is not connected to feelings of belonging per se and that the notion of *Heim* may have lost its meaning for her.

The contrast is further emphasised by the conscious choice of using the word *Heim* rather than, for example, 'Haus' or 'zurück'. Elisabeth foregrounds the disconnect between her current situation and those feelings of security and belonging implied in the term *Heim*. This assumption is based on the distinctions drawn between the concepts of 'home' and 'house'. The architectural historian Joseph Rykwert, for example, argues in his 1991 article 'House and Home' that '[s]ome distinction between home, the situation- with its implication of well-being, stability, ownership – against a rather more inert notion of the house, persists in most languages'.[233] Looking at Elisabeth's entry, this definition of home, which Rykwert equates to the German *Heim* to some extent, illustrates that the *Heim* she is talking about does not have these

[231] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 51.
[232] Mattes and others, 'Belonging', p. 302.
[233] Joseph Rykwert, 'House and Home', *Social Research*, 58.1 (1991), 51–62 (pp. 51, 54).

qualities.[234] For Elisabeth, the *Heim* arguably is then no longer at the centre of her belonging or even perceived as a situation that implies stability and well-being.

However, Elisabeth's notions of home changing do not necessarily need to have a negative effect on her senses of belonging per se. The example shows that her notions of belonging have become more fluid, as they are no longer linked to a particular space such as a *Heim*, but rather to concepts and ideas of what else can constitute belonging. Her use of anglicised syntax and vocabulary highlights that Elisabeth is developing new and hybrid senses of belonging. Therefore, co-existing senses of social and local belonging are negotiated in her entry and Elisabeth is ultimately in the process of rethinking how home and belonging are related in her own understanding of the concepts.

This shows that definitions of 'home' such as the one Rykwert proposes do not enable us fully to understand the changing idea of home and its dynamic and fluid characteristics. Therefore, it should have become obvious that a rethinking of the definition of home is needed. However, even Rykwert's observation linked with Shortt's idea of home being a multidimensional concept does not quite seem to encompass the negotiation and redefinition of what Elisabeth experiences in this situation. Rather, we have to look at Elisabeth's considerations of home from multiple angles and contextualise not only the spatial dimension of home but also take into account her emotional and affective response to her renegotiation process of what a home is. Ultimately, this example from Elisabeth's diary shows that we must not only rethink definitions of home but also of belonging. The disconnect illustrated in her entry between notions of home and feelings of familiarity and security challenges previous investigations and definitions of the term and conclusively highlights an issue with the term *Heim* / 'home' per se. Therefore, moving to defining senses of belonging through multiple angles and simultaneously moving away from purely spatial definitions can enable us to see various senses of belonging as emerging, developing, and co-existing.

This is not an isolated example. Other Kindertransport refugees that were placed in foster families also experienced difficulties getting used to a new home

[234] Rykwert argues that 'German might seem to provide the closest and the easiest translation into English: Heim is, after all, almost a homonym of "home"- yet the grammatically neuter Heim has a feminine Heimat, for which the English word is not really the "mother country," "motherland" which the dictionaries offer but the now more common "fatherland," which has a romantic and quite unarchaic sound; so that the familiar word acquires an alien association'; see: Rykwert, 'House and Home', p. 53.

environment and were thereby confronted with rethinking predominant ideas of what constitutes a home for them. Ten-year-old Kurt Seelig from Schwedt an der Oder writes on 23 December 1939: 'In eine andere Familie gekommen. Es hat mir erst nicht sehr schön gefallen aber danach war es schön'.[235] We can see that after an initial period of adjustment, Kurt admits that 'danach war es schön'. His idea of belonging in a sense of 'home' or *Heim*, without using these words per se, relates to not only feelings of security but also familiarity. This can further be emphasised when looking at his entry on 29 December 1939. He writes 'Ich nach Hause zu Grants gekommen. Nachmittag hatten wir eine Party von der Schule (mit Geschenken)'.[236] The entries show that Kurt, even though he does not explicitly write about it, has actively created a notion of 'home' at the Grants' house based on his everyday activities and engagements.[237] The entry on 29 December particularly highlights this as we can interpret him mentioning the party at school as an expression of being integrated into a community. This signifies an ability to adapt to new environments, at least to some extent, and suggests that Kurt can create a feeling of security and belonging by participating in the family's daily routines. Mattes et al. argue that the process of 'making a home' 'in a literal and metaphorical sense is an essential performance of belonging' by pointing towards emotional attachment to a place.[238] So when Kurt writes about 'nach Hause kommen' and his everyday activities, he expresses that the Grants' house and, with it, the surrounding communities are places and spaces with which to build an emotional attachment.

Fritz Seelig can compare his exile experience to his younger brother Kurt's situation. Both brothers left Berlin on a Kindertransport on different dates and lived in England. The ten-year-old was soon evacuated to the countryside to live with a family. Then fifteen-year-old Fritz, on the other hand, first lived with a family but then moved into a shared accommodation where he lived with other refugee boys. Fritz sometimes writes about Kurt's situation. For example, in January 1940, Fritz writes:

> Kurt selbst hat sich gar nicht verändert, bis auf sein Englisch das bedeutend besser geworden ist. Er spricht nur sehr durcheinander und benutzt nicht die

[235] Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*, p. 21.
[236] Ibid, p. 22.
[237] Kurt often writes about activities like cinema visits or trips with the daughter of his foster family, Jeanne. See, for example, Kurt's entries on 21 October 1939 (Bin mit Jeanne nach Enfield gegangen), 4 November 1939 (Wir sind mit Jeanne in der Kino gegangen. Wir sahen The Spy in Black), 21 December 1939 (Wir haben von Grants die Geschenke bekommen), and 22 December 1939 (Ich bin mit Jeanne ins Kino gegangen) in Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*, pp. 17, 18, 20.
[238] Mattes and others, 'Belonging', p. 302.

> richtigen Zeiten. Er wird aber auch noch das lernen. Er fühlt sich in dem Haus vollkommen zu Hause und die Leute, besonders die Tochter, sind reizend nett zu ihm.[239]

Fritz's care for his brother's living situation and ability to communicate in English illustrate a strong familial bond and a sense of protectiveness. Furthermore, Fritz also emphasises that Kurt has not changed much, which can be read as a statement of relief. What is interesting about this entry is that Fritz states that Kurt feels at home in the house. Both brothers use the phrase 'zu Hause' over a phrase linked with *Heim*, which is an interesting observation in so far as this shows that despite the stem 'Haus', 'zu Hause' can express something completely different.[240] 'Zu Hause' expresses a form of belonging similar to terms such as 'Heim', 'daheim' and 'heimisch' while not sharing the same word stem. Arguably, the phrase 'zu Hause' can be used in a more liberating way as opposed to the backward-looking stem 'heim-' which is linked to nostalgic and romanticised notions of 'home'.[241] Fritz's and Kurt's use of the phrase therefore can be seen as them turning away from the traditional understanding of 'home' and *Heim* towards an open definition of belonging.

These examples show that diary entries dealing with various notions of home yield valuable insight into forms of changing notions of home and, by extension, belonging. Static definitions of 'Heim', 'zu Hause', and similar terms and phrases are replaced by more dynamic understandings of the concepts. The entries highlight that there is a shift in what constitutes a 'Heim' or a 'zu Hause' for the diarists and thus also illuminate aspects of the fluidity of belonging. The development of new senses of belonging and how the Kindertransport refugees negotiate these in their everyday lives in the *Fluchtland* becomes visible in these entries. While their emotional attachment to the *Herkunftsland* often seems to be an underlying factor when reflecting on new experiences of changing and shifting notions of belonging, it is exactly this attachment that also emphasises the fluidity and hybridity of their understanding of belonging.

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[239] Seelig, F., *Fritz's Diary,* p. 36.

[240] Rykwert argues that 'home' is the family whereas 'house' means shelter; see Rykwert, 'House and Home', p.54.

[241] Godela Weiss-Sussex explores this notion of 'Zuhause' or 'Zu Hause' as a 'Ort der Ankunft und der Befreiung, der gewählten Behausung' which is detached from the nostalgic concept of 'Heimat' in the sense of 'eines Umfeldes früher Sozialisation, Verwurzelung oder Grundlage ihrer Identität'. She suggests that the term 'Zuhause', in the case of her examples, implies a 'behütetes Umschlossensein' and a 'Zugehörigkeit [...] zu der frei gewählten und aktiv zu gestaltenden Verbindung' of a community or people with similar aims, values etc; see Godela Weiss-Sussex, *Jüdin und Moderne: Literarisierungen der Lebenswelt Deutsch-Jüdischer Autorinnen in Berlin (1900-1918)* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), pp. 176-78.

The selected examples highlight that their experiences and memories of their countries of origin can, in fact, help (and not only hinder – as discussed earlier) them forming new attachments.

(Trans-)National Belonging

The development and negotiation of belonging and home highlights how various forms of attachment and senses of belonging can develop over time and also co-exist. Expressing different understandings and associations of national and local belonging would be another way to illustrate this point. Instances where the Kindertransport refugees express issues concerning other migration journeys or experiences of multiple host countries or locations give insight into the local, national, and transnational dimensions of their understanding of belonging. For example, in Elisabeth's case, the additional process of relocation prompted her to reconsider her notions of belonging. She joined her parents who had managed to emigrate to Buffalo, however, she also did not have a very close relationship with them. We can assume that Elisabeth engaged with her own notions of belonging before and during the process of further migration. On her journey, the twelve-year-old meets a woman in Montreal and writes in her diary on 28 September 1940:

> Eine alte Frau ging vorbei und sprach zu uns [the other refugees who were on the boat from Britain to Canada]. Sie dachte uns sehr heldenhaft und mutig. Sie sagte, dass es uns hier gefallen würde und als wir England gerne hatten, würden wir am Ende des Krieges zurück gehen. Wir sprachen mit ihr einige Zeit und ich glaube sie dachte uns Englisch. Ich wünschte ich wäre.[242]

Elisabeth's desire to be English presumably stems from a longing for some consistency as she is in the process of further migration, uprooting her life twice within two years. Such experiences are often considered severe and sometimes even traumatic for children.[243] The encounter with the 'alte Frau' bears significance as it not only

[242] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scans 88 & 89.

[243] Multiple studies have investigated the effects of uprooting, forced migration and exile in child development. For example, Pérez et al. introduce an interdisciplinary framework to investigate factors that influence the integration and adaptation process of migrant children; see: Isabela E. Perez, Rachel Wu, Carolyn B. Murray, and Diamond Bravo, 'An Interdisciplinary Framework Examining Culture and Adaptation in Migrant Children and Adolescents', *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 2021.176 (2021), 13–39 <https://doi.org/10.1002/cad.20405>.The reports by Hammel, Grosz and Homer look particularly at the impact of the Kindertransport experience and ACEs and link both, considerations of childhood development and ACEs with the Kindertransport, exile and forced migration; see: Hammel, Homer, and Grosz, *Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the Child Refugee of the 1930s in the UK*; Hammel, Homer, and Grosz, *Discrimination and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in the Lives of Child Refugees of the 1930s.*

indicates Elisabeth's internal struggle with coming to terms with further migration and belonging, but it also expresses a desire to belong somewhere or to something. The importance of this conversation is further emphasised in Elisabeth's memoir which was published in 1998:

> It took me thirty years of living […] to develop a sense of humour in me! It took me even longer to accept who I was. For my desire to be English, which had surfaced during a brief conversation with the old woman in Montreal, represented more than just longing for a chance to return to England after the war. On a far deeper level, it expressed profound dissatisfaction with who and what I was.[244]

This excerpt of her memoir manifests that Elisabeth experienced a state of uncertainty about her identity and belonging when faced with further migration. The ongoing negotiation of "who I was" therefore is already hinted at in the diary entry of 28 September 1940 and continued to occupy Elisabeth throughout her lifetime. Compared to earlier entries where she differentiates between her nostalgic longing for her *Herkunftsland* and her experiences in the *Fluchtland* – which were analysed earlier – this entry illuminates the shift that has occurred over time regarding Elisabeth's understanding of belonging and its fluidity.

Adding to the previous example, Elisabeth's subsequent diary entries reveal more internal confusion and dissatisfaction after her migration to the US, thereby hinting at co-existing notions of belonging that are reconsidered. After joining her family in Buffalo, Elisabeth reflects on her migration journey. Her diary often situates itself between immediate and retrospective reflections and offers a space to renegotiate her experiences. Often these reflections are influenced by particular experiences, emotions or thoughts at the time of writing. This allows her to think about shaping events and other issues. For example, in her entry on 3 July 1941 written in English, the thirteen-year-old Elisabeth looks back on her time in England:

> Now that I had really left England or rather the few days that I knew that I was leaving I had felt myself bound closer to all in England than ever before in my life. The reason was a very simple one - I had no one else to turn to. At that moment I put every other passion aside and only felt a great loving for them all – even Jenny.[245]

Here, Elisabeth expresses a fondness for England and, when faced with change, explores her connection to the country. This reflection does not mean that Elisabeth

[244] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion*, p. 140.
[245] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 93.

wishes she was of English or British nationality but rather shows a deep dissatisfaction with her writing present. Furthermore, the uncertainty about joining her parents which she expressed in other entries also contributes to her questioning her belonging and emphasising the fluid state of the various notions.[246] But rather than seeing this as a negative expression of uncertainty of belonging, we should regard this as a developing shift away from spatial notions of belonging towards a more open understanding of the concept.

The phrase 'I had no one else to turn to' hints at a social notion of belonging. Therefore, based on the assumption that belonging entails an element of longing and yearning, to use Probyn's and Bell's terms, we can assume that Elisabeth longed for someone who could at least relate to her experience to some extent. In her memoir from 1998, Elisabeth reflects on the above-mentioned excerpt of the entry, written on 3 July 1941, to the effect that she is 'glad that at the end, the "great loving" wiped out so much of the supposed hate, for I am sure that there never was any directed towards me – impatience, frustration, and intermittent, understandable jealousy perhaps, but nothing worse'.[247] This reflection further reinforces what we have seen in her diary entries, namely that her notions of belonging have shifted since arriving in the UK on a Kindertransport. She states that she has 'felt [herself] bound closer to all in England than ever before' which shows that she has developed a sense of belonging to her *Fluchtland*. Whether this has replaced her sense of belonging to her *Herkunftsland* or is co-existing remains unclear in this entry. However, we can assume that she had other strong connections which she does not elaborate on when she states that she 'put every other passion aside'.

Reworking one's understanding of belonging, particularly in a local and national sense, in diaries can be seen as an ongoing process and practice, as the diary offers a space for reflections which are often connected to previous entries. For example, Elisabeth's overall verdict in her reflective and backward-looking entry on 3

[246] On 16 September 1940, after receiving the news that she will leave for the US, Elisabeth writes: 'Ich konnte mir nicht mehr helfen, ich warf mich auf ihr Bett u. weinte wie ich hoffe das ich niemals wieder so weinen werden soll. Sie war sehr gut u. ließ mich ausweinen, dann tröstete sie mich'; on 17 September, we can see the impact of the immanent change, when she writes: 'Heute morgen konnte ich nicht essen. Noch viel weniger wenn ich hörte das ich nun gleich mit Aunt Esme zu Londen gehen müße. Ich zitterte die ganze Zeit u. wußte nicht was ich tat'; see Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scans 75-76, 78.
[247] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion*, p. 140.

July 1941 on her time in England seems positive. She compares her emotions of travelling to the UK as a Kindertransport refugee to her further migration to the US:

> Besides in `39 I wanted to go to England in `40 I did not want to go to America. Now let us try calmy to analyse the situation. There was I, a young girl of not quite 13, leaving a country in which I had lived nearly two years and which I truly loved, even if I did not care for or hated a great many of its people. In addition to that, I was going to a country toward which I was already strongly prejudiced, and I was going to meet my parents again, parents to which I was attached but in whose midst I had always felt lost.[248]

The entry points towards a national dimension of belonging due to Elisabeth reflecting that she was leaving England which she 'truly loved' but 'did not care for or hated a great many of its people'. Here, she separates the nation from its people by implying that, while she presumably had some bad experiences with British and particularly English people, there is still a positive dimension to her exile experience in Britain, the country. Due to her ability to cross-reference and re-evaluate previous conceptions and thoughts, changing notions of belonging arguably become more obvious, not only to us readers but also to Elisabeth herself as the diarist. Furthermore, the fondness she expresses for the *Fluchtland* also highlights a shift from binary notions of belonging to a more hybrid sense of belonging. For her, feelings of belonging are not attached to a spatial entity, but rather that the various aspects of (social, spatial, emotional) belonging add to how she understands the concept and where she situates herself.

There is a sense of gratitude that is conveyed by her statement in the diary entry.[249] Such feelings of gratitude are commonly expressed by the Kindertransport refugees in other forms of life writing and oral histories.[250] Often the gratitude (that is portrayed in life writing written in later life) can be connected to their retrospective evaluations as well as the popular narratives surrounding the Kindertransport. Many recent studies advocate for focusing on narratives beyond the mainstream that also portray the trauma and negative experiences, thereby almost moving too far in the

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[248] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 92.

[249] Jennifer Craig-Norton argues that 'archival sources can confirm and substantiate many commonly reported aspects of Kinder experience such as the exploitation of girls as unpaid domestics and the imperatives of gratitude that were explicitly and implicitly demanded of refugee children'; see Jennifer Craig-Norton, 'Archives and the Kindertransport: New Discoveries and Their Impact on Research', *Jewish Historical Studies*, 51.1 (2020), 1–15 (pp. 5–6).

[250] Annabel Cohen and Barbara Warnock state in their article that many Kinder, over their lifetimes, felt gratitude towards their rescuers which contributes to a 'distorted' reflection of the Kindertransport experience; see Annabel J Cohen and Barbara Warnock, 'The Experiences of Kindertransportees and Their Parents: Evidence from the Archives of The Wiener Holocaust Library', *Jewish Historical Studies*, 51.1 (2020), 33–50 (p. 36).

other direction. However, it is true that the children who experienced trauma were often expected (by parents, guardians, and institutions) to show gratitude to their country of refuge. The Kindertransport refugees, as we can see in the diary entries, exhibit some feelings of gratitude themselves which are not caused by feelings of being 'the lucky ones', but by being thankful in that moment or after some reflection. Elisabeth, for example, highlights these feelings in her entry reflecting on her exile in Britain only one year after leaving the country.[251] At the same time, this entry highlights that Elisabeth, contrary to some other children who developed resentments due to always having to be thankful, manifested a positive connection with the country of refuge and exile which enabled her to have a co-existing sense of belonging.

Another aspect that ties into the assumption that Elisabeth displays multiple, co-existing forms of belonging is that Elisabeth states that she 'was already prejudiced' against the US. This can be seen as her adapting to the way European but more specifically British media represented the United States. Studies on Anglo-American relations suggest that the social, political, and economic relations between the two nations were problematic at the time and that there was mutual hostility between the two countries in the interwar period.[252] Elisabeth chooses to express a dislike for the country she currently lives in by emphasising that she 'did not want to go to America' and was not given a choice. Elisabeth's lack of agency in this situation combined with the assumed prejudice she had internalised about America arguably made her develop negative feelings towards the US and resulted in her emphasising a sense of not-belonging there and longing for Britain at the same time.

Conclusion

Belonging is articulated and expressed in the diaries in multiple ways. The direct engagement of the child and adolescent diarist with notions of home, family and community, integration and marginalisation, refugee reality and national identity clearly highlight their negotiation and renegotiation of the concept of belonging. What

[251] Vera Fast explains how children were reminded by their parents to be thankful for their host families or refugee organisations taking them in. These reminders to always be grateful suggest 1) that children were aware of this particular expectation and 2) that they sometimes developed a resentment because of these expectations. See: Fast, *Children's Exodus,* pp. 48–49.

[252] For more information on UK-US relations in the inter-war period see, for example, Kevin Smith, 'Reassessing Roosevelt's View of Chamberlain after Munich: Ideological Affinity in the Geoffrey Thompson-Claude Bowers Correspondence*', *Diplomatic History*, 33.5 (2009), 839–64 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7709.2009.00815.x>.

these examples all have in common is that they illuminate the fluidity of belonging and the interconnectedness between aspects constituting belonging. The various notions of belonging presented and reflected upon in the diaries of the Kindertransport refugees reveal that ideas of home, national, and social belonging are constantly re-evaluated and in flux.

Forms of national and local belonging keep being expressed throughout the various diaries, but to the diarists they are not exclusively tied to a real place. The spatial aspect of belonging is not the only factor they consider when dealing with questions of how or where they belong. Particularly the social and emotional dimensions of belonging contribute to the children's negotiation of place and (social) location. Fundamentally, what became evident looking at the selected diary entries is that belonging cannot be easily defined and that a multiplicity of factors impacts upon the ongoing negotiation process. While the above-mentioned examples all highlight instances where the children overtly deal with questions of belonging, they also point towards other factors such as memory, language and particular social connections to their countries of origin. The interconnectedness between direct discussions of and reflections on notions of belonging and these other factors justifies the focus of the next chapters, as it has become clear that belonging and the above-mentioned factors stand in a reciprocal relationship with one another.

The examples have shown that while the children have their own understanding of belonging, it is impacted by their circumstances, such as their living situation, their education, or their free time activities. Adding to this, I suggest that their notions of belonging are also impacted by what Yuval-Davis et al. define as factors of politics of belonging such as age, gender, and ethnicity.[253] Simplifying their argument and reducing it to an individual level of the diarist rather than looking at it in relation to society, I propose that different instances of belonging and non-belonging in the diaries are influenced not only by outside circumstances but also by the children's age, gender, sense of religion, and ability to understand the reality of war and exile.

Ultimately, what we can see in the entries are, on the one hand, attempts to remember and write the *Herkunftsland* while trying to make sense of a new situation and, on the other hand, efforts to develop a familiarisation with the *Fluchtland* by writing about making a new home and negotiating an estrangement from the

[253] Yuval-Davis, and others, *The Situated Politics of Belonging*, pp. 7–8.

Herkunftsland. The Kindertransport refugees' senses of belonging are therefore hybrid, shifting, and co-existing, and the clear distinction between belonging to the *Herkunftsland* and the *Fluchtland* respectively does not prevail other than in a spatial sense based on life chronology. Expanding our understanding of belonging beyond its spatial qualities illuminates the complexity of the concept itself. It becomes necessary to not only redefine belonging as a fluid concept but also to build on current research into considerations of what constitutes home and belonging by including a more international and transnational perspective.

Chapter 3

The Use and Representation of Memories

Introduction

Defining belonging proves to be elusive and is far from static, as the previous chapter has shown. Building on the idea that belonging is constructed through a multitude of aspects, including memory and nostalgia, this chapter delves into the nuanced role of memory in shaping the sense of belonging, examining how children in exile reference and utilise memory in their diaries. This analysis unravels the layers of recalling memories and representing memories of the Kindertransport refugees' home country and adopted refuge. The aim is to map out how memory functions as a meaning-making tool for the Kindertransport refugees crucial to their negotiation of belonging, and to demonstrate how the use of memory in the diaries unveils a transnational and multi-scalar dimension in the diarists' experiences.

This chapter is divided into a brief theoretical framework section, to outline the underlying connections between belonging and memory, and two subchapters, dealing with memories and forms of remembering that refer to different circumstances and time frames. The first subchapter investigates memories of the countries of origin and of the time before the Kindertransport. The multifaceted nature of belonging and the fluidity of the concept play crucial roles in this section. The second subchapter analyses diary entries that deal with a form of comparative memory, where the Kindertransport refugees compare experiences of the host country with memories of their lives before the Kindertransport.[254] The negotiation of belonging that is implied in the use of memories in diary entries is linked with a process of making sense of the new situation and environment in exile. Some of the entries provide other interesting gateways to an analysis, most strikingly the English sentence structures and anglicisation of their writings. Such aspects, however, are discussed in later chapters.

Theoretical Framework: Memory Studies

Memory studies have always been intrinsically linked to ideas of cultural, national, and local senses of belonging and identity, as forms of memory, particularly collective memory, have an impact on the negotiation of these concepts in communities.

[254] In this chapter, the term 'comparative memory' or 'comparative memories' will be used to refer to instances where the diarist compares experiences of the country of refuge to memories or ideas of the country of origin or their lives before the Kindertransport.

Jan and Aleida Assmann as well as Astrid Erll, for example, are prominent scholars in the field of memory studies, whose work has contributed significantly to understanding the relationship between cultural memory, cultural identity, and belonging. They distinguish between two types of memory. Communicative memory refers to the memories which individuals share in everyday conversation, while cultural memory involves the memories that are institutionalised and passed down through generations.[255] Although their approaches mainly focus on collective and cultural memory, both draw attention to the connection to individual forms of memory and on how personal narratives are interlinked with social bonds and interactions.[256] Their approaches to memory are crucial to this chapter in so far as they suggest how the processes of memory enters a reciprocal relationship with the world surrounding the individuals and thus sheds light onto the various ways in which the memory of the Kindertransport refugees is impacted by cultural, political, and social aspects.

Moving beyond the notion of the nation-state, Ann Rigney and Chiara de Cesari argue that 'that national frames are no longer the self-evident ones they used to be in daily life and identity formation'.[257] For them, the concept of multi-scalar memory refers to the idea that memories exist across different scales of time and space. Instead of viewing memory as a fixed and singular entity, this concept emphasises the diverse and dynamic ways in which memories operate across various levels.[258] Their observations build on the overarching idea that there is a transnational and transcultural dimension of memory which transcends cultural as well as national boundaries. This suggests that memories, collective and individual, are not isolated within specific cultural contexts but rather that they are influenced by interactions between cultures.

Memory Studies have played an important role in Kindertransport scholarship, particularly in studies focusing on ego-documents. In her monograph *The Kindertransport in Literature: Reimagining Experience*, Stephanie Homer emphasises that 'processes of memory (individual, social, collective, and cultural memory)

[255] See, for example, Jan Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', pp. 110-11 in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. by Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 2008), pp. 109–18, (p. 110-11); Erll, *Memory in Culture*, p. 28-30

[256] See, for example, J Assmann, 'Communicative and Cultural Memory', p. 111 and Aleida Assmann, 'Transformations between History and Memory', *Social Research*, 75.1 (2008), 49–72 (48, 52-54).

[257] 'Introduction', in *Transnational Memory: Circulation, Articulation, Scales*, ed. by Chiara De Cesari and Ann Rigney (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), pp. 1–26 (p. 2).

[258] See, for example, *De Cesari and Rigney, Transnational Memory,* pp. 5-6, 18, 20.

influence the creation of narratives'.[259] While Homer's study is concerned with how the memory of the Kindertransport experience is represented in different literary genres, her observations on the relationship between memory and narratives are nonetheless also relevant for the form of the diary. Namely, she highlights how memories inform the narration in a particular genre and how the form of the genre impacts the representation of these memories. On a similar note, Petra Rau emphasises the importance of narrative in identity construction and processes of making sense in memoirs.[260] I argue that this interconnectedness between memory, construction of identity, belonging, and narrativisation that Homer and Rau advocate for can be found in other forms of life-writing, specifically the diary, which was already touched on in the theoretical framework chapter.

The deployment of memory in diaries can be understood not only as a mere effort to record memorable events but as an opportunity to negotiate how these memories shape the diarist's present circumstances. Memory researcher and former child refugee Eric Kandel alludes to this in an interview published in *Der Spiegel* in 2003; he states that 'Erfahrungen und Erinnerungen' enter a reciprocal relationship.[261] Michael Rothberg's influential theory on multidirectional memory also touches on this relationship as he observes the bringing together of memory and lived experience.[262]

What these investigations of memory all have in common is that they argue that memory is something that is mediated and can also be selected, constructed, and narrated. Thereby, the memories in the entries allow the diarists to engage in identitarian meaning-making processes that, for us readers and the diarists themselves, also reveal different aspects that constitute belonging, such as space and place but also culture, faith, and social relations. Particularly for memories of Kindertransport refugees, this interdependency can reveal important aspects of their exile experience

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[259] Stephanie Homer, *The Kindertransport in Literature: Reimagining Experience* (Oxford; New York: Peter Lang, 2021), p. 2.

[260] Petra Rau, '"Stories We Tell Ourselves in Order to Live" - Postmemory and the Uncertainty of Interpretation in Family Memoir' (presented at the Rethinking Flight, Persecution, Destruction and War: How Do We Define Postmemory Now, Aberystwyth, 2022).

[261] Eric Kandel, '»Wissen, wie der Geist funktioniert«', *Der Spiegel*, 28 April 2003 <https://www.spiegel.de/wissenschaft/wissen-wie-der-geist-funktioniert-a-cae9dad4-0002-0001-0000-000026950172> [accessed 18 March 2023].

[262] Rothberg suggests that we should regard memory 'as subject of ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing; as productive and not privative': Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), p. 3.

as this highlights the difference between direct memories of the country of origin and comparing memories of the country of origin to experiences in the country of refuge.

In 2012, Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering investigated another interconnectedness: memory and imagination. They argue that 'imagination fills in the gaps where memory fails so that our life stories contain markers of memory fleshed out by the mnemonic imagination'.[263] This approach suggests that memory and imagination which reciprocally inform each other help us understand live events better, not just in a community but also on an individual level.

To bring these theoretical considerations together with the central concerns of this thesis, transnationalism and belonging, I suggest also taking the national or cultural values that are inherent to forms of memory into account. They can impact the children's ongoing negotiation of belonging in a national, transnational, and cultural context. In this regard, Caldicott and Fuchs argue in their introduction to *Cultural Memory* that '[j]ust as memory may be individual or collective, the concept of 'culture' may be objective or subjective'.[264] This correlation between individuality and collectivity of memory and culture is what enables a gateway to the investigation of memories in diaries according to the understandings of belonging and forms of identity they reveal.

Memories of the Country of Origin

In this section, diary entries that delve into the memories of Kindertransport refugees regarding their countries of origin are examined. While the primary focus is on capturing the Kindertransport refugees' experiences and recollections related to their homelands, it is essential to underscore that their present reality in exile influences how they portray and contemplate these memories. Additionally, within this subchapter, diverse approaches to the deployment of memory are explored. Recording events and memories is inherent to the form of the diary. This makes it even more noteworthy when specific passages explicitly foreground the process when the diarist clearly differentiates between recording memories and writing a daily entry.

[263] James Eric Siburt, 'The Mnemonic Imagination: Remembering as Creative Practice Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.', *The Journal of American Culture*, 36.4 (2013), 402–402 (p. 402) <https://doi.org/10.1111/jacc.12093>.
[264] 'Introduction', in *Cultural Memory: Essays on European Literature and History*, ed. by C. E. J. Caldicott and Anne Fuchs (Oxford; New York: P. Lang, 2003), p. 14.

Ingeburg Marion Sigler's Diary

Ingeburg Marion Sigler was twelve years old when she left her hometown Chemnitz on a Kindertransport to England in August 1939. The entry to be analysed in the following is from September 1941 when she was 14 years old. It is about the specific memory of her older brother Gert leaving Berlin on a Kindertransport to the UK in January 1939. She writes about this event almost two years after he left Germany. The questions that arise are why Ingeburg writes down this particular memory and how this can be connected to a fluid and uncertain understanding of belonging at the time of writing this entry. The assumption is that Ingeburg's entry allows for a connection between writing memories and Freud's investigation of childhood memories that conceal other, often repressed memories. She, then aged fourteen, writes the undated entry titled 'Erinnerung' in September 1941:

> Erinnerungen I.
> Ich glaube es war an einem Freitag morgen das Mama und Papa nach Berlin fuhren, um sich von Gert zu verabschieden. Sein Transport ging an einem Montag. Am Freitagabend rief Gert ~~in~~ Chemnitz an, um mir zu sagen, dass ich am Sonnabend alleine nachkommen sollte. Als ich dort ankam war es spät Nachmittag deshalb packten wir nur noch einige Sachen ein und fuhren dann in die Stadt zum Bahnhof, um wieder heimzufahren. Jedoch Mama sagte, dass ich noch über Sonntag bleiben sollte, da ich gerade erst gekommen war. Um acht Uhr ging der Zug für Mama und Papa, es gab einen rührenden Abschied auf dem Bahnsteig und dann standen wir zwei alleine.
> Ich übernachtete in Gerts Schule und hatte viel Spass mit all den Jungen. Nächsten Tag (Sonntag) war viel Lauferei und wir beiden waren fast immer zusammen. Die Zeit rückte näher der Abfahrt meines Zuges. Gert kam mit mir ins Abteil und wir knutschten uns richtig ab, dann gab es einen Ruck und Gert lief noch lange dem Zug nach. Ein halbes Jahr später traf ich ihn wieder in LLandegveth Newport.[265]

The entry falls between her entries on 11 and 14 September 1941. It is not clear whether her 'Erinnerungen' passage was written on the same day as the previous entry or in the days in-between, thereby removing it from a distinct temporal classification. It is also unclear what prompted Ingeburg to remember this day as it is not the anniversary of Gert's transport, nor does she mention any trigger that reminded her of this memory.

However, by contextualising the entry within the previous and following entries, we can assume that migration and resettling was something she was concerned with. On 11 September 1941, Ingeburg writes that she and Mrs Hyams were looking

[265] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary.*

for a new place to live, as their contract had been terminated recently. Perhaps, having to resettle prompted her to think about other instances of resettlement, in particular, when her brother Gert left Germany. In the entry on 14 September 1941, it becomes clear that migration as a topic ,in general, is on her mind. She writes:

> Neulich hatte ich einen komischen Traum. Ich träumte ich war in Chemnitz und Papa war über die Grenze geflohen und Mama und ich packten alle unsere Sachen zusammen um nachzufahren.[266]

Presumably, as she was thinking about moving and migration, fourteen-year-old Ingeburg then also wrote about a memory relating to those topics. However, it is also interesting to note that it is not the memory of her last days in Germany but her brother Gert's. This suggests that Ingeburg chose to not write about her own migration and subsequent exile but rather to focus on an event that she perceived as less traumatising but still incisive. Clearly, her hometown and life with her family are still very present in Ingeburg's memory and thus the first instance of separation of the family, her brother leaving on a Kindertransport, can be seen as a factor of Ingeburg dealing with the impact of the exile and war reality, as well as her own feeling of belonging and not-belonging. Ingeburg likely felt that she was sent away again due to having to look for a new place to live with Mrs Hyams which emphasises notions of uprootedness and instability. While, as defined in the previous chapter, the concept of home (and by extension also the concept of belonging) is understood to be more open, mobile, and multidimensional, such a definition still requires a degree of stability and familiarity.[267] These aspects seem to be missing when looking at Ingeburg's situation. Her memories and dreams signify an uncertainty of belonging but also emphasise the affective dimension of longing.[268]

At a first glance, it seems as if her memories of that event are quite positive. She had 'Spaß mit all den Jungen'. The inevitability of saying goodbye to Gert, especially the parents' goodbye is shortly described in a subordinate clause. While Ingeburg might have not known at the time whether she would see her parents again, by the time she writes the diary entry she still doesn't reflect on negative emotions connected to the goodbyes. The overarching emotional tone of the entry seems

[266] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.
[267] Here, I'm referring to the definition of home derived from Linda Shortt's work. For reference, please also see Linda Shortt, *German Narratives of Belonging'*, p. 3.
[268] Here, I'm referring to the aspect of belonging of 'being' and 'longing' as argued for by Vikki Bell, 'Performativity and Belonging', p. 1.

positive. We might read this entry through the lens of Freud's idea of memories that mask repressed emotions or other memories, as the tone and content mostly conceal the severity of the situation. In his chapter 'Childhood and Concealing Memories' in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life,* Freud argues that

> [t]he indifferent childhood memories owe their existence to a process of displacement. It may be shown by psychoanalysis that in the reproduction they represent the substitute for other really significant impressions, whose direct reproduction is hindered by some resistance.[269]

In this case, the term 'indifferent' is not appropriate to refer to Ingeburg's memory but rather a notion of everydayness suggests that the recounted memory could be referred to as more trivial than the memory it is a substitute for. Such trivial concealing memories then, as Freud points out, have an associative connection to the contents of the underlying memory that is met with resistance. [270] In the entry here, this notion is illustrated by Ingeburg's negotiation of the positive and negative affective dimensions of this particular memory. While the separation from her brother certainly can be seen as a first incision in her structured everyday life, the way she recounts Gert's final days in Berlin omits these feelings.

Looking at the entry 'Erinnerungen I', we can draw associative connections to images representing the Kindertransport: farewell scenes at the train stations and family members running after trains.[271] It can be argued that Ingeburg utilises the theme of departure to reflect on the feelings of separation and longing for familial stability. The setting of the train station is a reoccurring place in her memory and is strongly connected to departures and, with this, change. The affective and emotional dimension of notions of belonging is central to this thesis and thus Ingeburg's underlying feelings of separation manifested in the multiple references to trains and train stations can be understood as hinting at negotiation of ways of belonging and not-belonging. Not only does she include many references to trains in her entry, but she also creates a link between her parents leaving Berlin and the indefinite separation of the siblings and their parents: 'Um acht Uhr ging der Zug für Mama und Papa, es gab einen rührenden Abschied auf dem Bahnsteig und dann standen wir zwei alleine'.

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[269] Sigmund Freud, *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, trans. by A. A. Brill (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2003), pp. 57–58 <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=1154786> [accessed 7 February 2022].
[270] Ibid., p. 58.
[271] See Grenville, 'The Kindertransport: An Introduction', pp. 1–2, 9, 11.

What we see here is that Ingeburg writes about the separation from the parents and how the children are now 'alone'. This stands in contrast to fundamental notions of belonging such as familiarity, home, security, and safety.[272] Thus, her memory of this incidence of parting can be understood as her negotiating the lack of a stable concept of belonging by reflecting on the initial parting.

Taking this thought further, we can draw a connection between repressed memories and concealing memories that Sigmund Freud investigated. He distinguishes between concealing memories and repressed memories of events that happened before, after or at the same time, thereby suggesting multiple temporal dimensions of the relation between them. In this example, Ingeburg remembers the last days the family were all together, thereby creating a contrast between a sense of familial belonging and her current situation of being separated from them. She deploys memory to make sense of her situation and emotions. Interestingly, she does not focus on her own separation from her parents which could be argued is a repressed memory in this case. So, building on Freud's theory of concealing memories, Desirée Henderson states that 'sometimes diarists communicate […] through absences, omissions, or erasure'.[273] Ingeburg perhaps does this by not focusing on her own transport and separation from her parents. In her memory, the parents are leaving the siblings and they are now on their own. At the same time, she depicts a strong bond between her and her brother. She states 'wir beide waren fast immer zusammen' and by remembering this detail, stresses a feeling of mutual dependence and support which they relied on since coming to the UK.[274]

Ingeburg's attention to detail is also striking. Gert's transport was in January 1939, so more than two years later, she still remembers that 'Um acht Uhr ging der Zug für Mama und Papa'. Remembering this detail is indicative of the rupture the subsequent longer separation from their parents caused. Elizabeth Kensinger points out in her investigation 'Remembering the Details' that 'the event details we recall are often shaped by our current mindset and moulded by thoughts and experiences that

[272] Various studies on belonging highlight the importance of the characteristics such as 'home', 'safety', and 'stability' when it comes to various notions of belonging. For example: Yuval-Davis and others, *The Situated Politics of Belonging*, pp. 1–2, 4 [accessed 14 June 2022]; Wood and Waite, 'Editorial: Scales of Belonging', pp. 201-02; and further extended studies such as Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging*; Ignatieff and Gutmann, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*.
[273] Henderson, *How to Read a Diary,* p. 84.
[274] Their relationship is illustrated in 'Light in Darkness Light: An Incomplete Story of the Sigler-Heineberg Family' which was written and edited by Nick Sigler and is in the family's private possession.

have occurred between the original event and the moment of remembering'.[275] Based on this assumption, Ingeburg's memory and her remembering specific details but omitting other things is likely to be shaped by her Kindertransport and exile experience.

Leopold Weil's Diary

The next entry I want to focus on is from Leopold Weil's diary. Born on 15 March 1925 in Karlsruhe, Leopold left Germany on a Kindertransport on 25 August 1939 when he was just fourteen years old. On 10 November 1939, Leopold states his intent to copy an essay he had to write for a class assignment into his diary. It is not possible to tell how much of the passage was part of the essay and how much he edited it, nor does he state what the exact assignment was. He claims his essay was the best of the class and that they created a collection of essays to commemorate 10 November 1938. He then writes 'La letter è così'. Due to his efforts to maintain his language proficiency in Italian which he acquired during his years at a boarding school in Milan, his entries between 1939 and 1941 are written in Italian. In his entry on 10 November 1939 however, he continues with the diary style entries from August 1939 which are written in English:

> 20. August 1939
> I sit on a chair near the window and observe the events in the street, for it is a very tedious day and I don't know how to entertain myself. I sit, of course, behind the curtains, because I don't want to give an occasion to street boys to point at me and to deride me.
> I hear a song, and a troop of Hitler boys turns into the street. Always they must march and march and march again. It is nearly impossible to live.
> Every Jew must be afraid of a Hitler boy as if for a very great guilt we were driven away from the community and outlawed.
> Yes, we are driven away like animals, but where is our guilt?
> Several months ago we applied for my emigration to England, Holland or Sweden. At the first answer I have I shall go away from Germany, no matter what the country will be, only to be far from this hell.
>
> 21st August 1939
> God thank! my permit has come. At the 25th the transport with which I must go departs. I am so glad I can't describe it.
>
> 25th August 1939

[275] Elizabeth A. Kensinger, 'Remembering the Details: Effects of Emotion', *Emotion Review*, 1.2 (2009), 99–113 (p. 99) <https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073908100432>.

> At five o'clock my train started with it other ten boys and girls who left, like me, Germany.
> My mother went with me to the station. There we separated for years…
> My sisters had to remain in Germany till my mother could apply for them. There was no other way.
> My father died two years ago, suffering from the wounds he received in the war. He fought for the country, which now sends us out.
> Just before the Dutch frontier the transport had 90 persons. We were all glad when we passed the frontier. At 12 and thirty we reached Hook van Holland. We went on board but for long time we couldn't sleep. Part of the boys were seasick, part full of thought. But all we were happy to go on English and free ground.[276]

The nature of the entries is mediated as Leopold wrote them in connection to a school assignment. This matters as the mediation processes allow for changes, re-evaluations, and stylisation. Leopold is able to portray and retrospectively emphasise particular details differently to what he might have written on the actual dates. If the school assignment was to write diary entries or produce a different form of text is not known to us. From the Italian part of the entry on the 10th of November, we can assume the assignment was connected to the children's emigration and to *Pogromnacht*. Writing the assignment or parts of it down as a diary entry suggests that Leo wanted to record them on a more personal level as these events carry meaning for him. This assumption builds on Philippe Lejeune's argument on narrative identities where he argues that by sorting through experiences and writing them in a diary the diarist gives them a narrative identity.[277] While for Lejeune this organisation process happens through recording memories for rereading and remembering daily, I argue that in Leopold's case, the late recording of this memory and being able to mediate it, he creates a narrative identity which helps him to make sense of a significant experience with immediate reflections but also allows for later re-evaluation.

A notable feature of these diary entries is the blending of timelines in the narrative. Expressions like 'God thank!' create a sense of immediacy, capturing the essence of the moment, while other portions of the entries distinctly look back in time. Leopold's retrospective entries involve a deliberate effort to recreate events with a commitment to truthfulness. He, for example, writes that his father fought in the war, clearly referring to the First World War. By November 1939, the Second World War was already declared, however, Leopold's entries predate its start and so there is no

[276] Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary.*
[277] See Philippe Lejeune, 'The Practice of Writing a Diary', pp. 29–30.

need to clarify in his entry which war he is talking about. He tries to avoid reflecting on his last days in Germany and rather attempts to recount the events as if they were happening at that moment. This mediated form removes the temporal structure and certainty of the diary as a form of dated consecutive entries.[278] These entries, in particular, defy the notion of a continuous temporality of the diary as Leopold creates entries that allow him to narrate a specific episode of his life within the continuous structure of the dated entries, thereby rupturing the notion of time and temporality of the diary and of memory.[279] The entries are recording events as if they were happening right now and yet also have moments of reflection. For example, he states in the entry describing events on the 25th of August 1939 that his mother accompanied him to the station where 'we separated for years'. At this point, however, he has only been in England for a few months. The retrospective and reflective aspects stand in contrast to the immediacy he tries to convey in these entries. This shows that, despite his best efforts of trying to construct entries without the impact of his experience, Leopold's writing present allows him to lace the entries with reflective notions.

On a content level, Leopold's entries illustrate a troubled relationship with his country of origin. He calls the country 'hell' and is ecstatic when he receives his permit to leave on a Kindertransport. His memory of Germany is influenced not only by the exclusion and persecution he himself has been exposed to as a Jewish boy in Nazi Germany but also by the injustice Leopold feels his father has incurred, as he died from the results of injuries he sustained in the First World War. The language use appears emotive with phrases like 'He fought for the country, which now sends us out'. Leopold does not rely on his own experience but also on the experiences of other people. This affective way of dealing with memory supports the mediated character of the entry. Furthermore, it also highlights an affective dimension of deploying certain memories. Jan Assmann argues that in this regard:

> Wenn die Erinnerungen über affektive Bindungen von außen in uns hineinwachsen, wächst eben vieles in uns hinein, was das kollektive Leben bewegt. […] sodaß jemand offenbar […] glauben kann, etwas erlebt zu haben,

[278] Lejeune, *On Diary*, p. 179.

[279] Reinhard Koselleck states that memory is recalled in a non-chronological way and argues for a differentiation of historical categories which he calls 'space of experience' and 'horizon of expectation'. He advocates for a connection between the constitution of histories and human agency based on experiences and expectations and concludes 'with this, however, nothing is yet said about a given concrete past, present, or future history'. (see: Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time.*, trans. by Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), p.269 <http://www.myilibrary.com?id=287186> [accessed 6 April 2022]), and J Assmann, *Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis: Zehn Studien* (München: C.H. Beck, 2007), p. 14.

> was er in Wahrheit nur gehört, gelesen und über kolletive und kommunikative Prozesses in sich aufgenommen hat.[280]

Jan Assmann refers to an act of remembering something that was never really experienced by the individual in question, but his observations can also be related to mixing one's own memories with collective and communicative ideas that impact and shape particular memories. It is possible to read Leopold's entry with Jan Assmann's suggestion in mind and helps us understand the impact that the experiences of others can have on an individual's memory.

While it should be emphasised that Leopold is writing this in retrospect and mediating his memories, he utilises the entries to construct his own cultural and, to some extent, religious identity against a form of national identity. It is important to note that Jewishness, especially when it was assigned through the Nuremberg Laws, is not necessarily defined by religious terms but rather as ethnic and cultural.[281] However, Leopold highlights his efforts of being part of the Jewish religious community and what part the Jewish religion plays in his life in several entries.[282] This is not to say that other aspects of Jewish identity did not influence his negotiation process but rather that various notions of Jewishness contributed to Leopold's own understanding of what it means to be Jewish. For example, he contrasts his Jewish identity with the Hitler Youth and thereby also with a nationalistic connotation of identity. The contrast between him and a distinct other, a 'we' and a 'them', is very stark in the entries: 'I don't want to give an occasion to street boys to point at me and to deride me', 'Every Jew must be afraid of a Hitler boy as if for a very great guilt we were driven away from the community and outlawed', 'He fought for the country, which now sends us out'. Here, the construction of a certain cultural identity that is arguably built on a sense of ethnoreligious belonging is illuminated through Leopold's reference to Jewishness and how he opposes the ethnoreligious group to a new form

[280] J Assmann, *Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis*, p. 14.
[281] See, for example, Fast, *Children's Exodus,* pp. 1–3, 6, 9.
[282] On 12 Ocotber 1941 Leopold writes extensively about Yom Kippur: 'Ich möchte kein Spötter mehr sein, nein, nein, ein tausendmal nein! Ich möchte mit Ehrlichkeit sagen können, wie an jenem Jom-Kippur im Camp, an dem ich alleine auf die Felder ging, um in Einsamkeit meine Ehrfurcht für Gott, Natur [...] zu lassen'. In the same entry he later writes 'Heute ist ein schöner Tag, voll Ruhe: Erew Jom Kippur. Das größte, heiligste Fest der Juden. Ich hatte gute Gelegenheit mich vorzubereiten' (Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*).

of German national identity that was created during the Third Reich, which was grounded in a specific ideological idea, the Gleichschaltung policy.[283]

The tone of Leopold's entries yields interesting aspects in terms of the literarisation and deliberate mediatisation of the diary entries, particularly the entry of the 20 August. For example, Leopold utilises different literary and stylistic techniques. The phrase 'for it is' is often used in sentences to support or reinforce a statement made earlier and Leopold uses this phrase to justify him sitting by the window. The repetition in 'Always they must march and march and march again', on the one hand, illustrates the physical, repetitive quality of marching, and, on the other hand, reflects his overall mood as the repetition also emphasises the tediousness Leopold describes earlier in the entry. Furthermore, he states 'it is nearly impossible to live' but as readers, we are left wondering to who this statement applies. The ambiguity of this statement supports the mediated character of Leopold's narration. He also uses a rhetorical question 'Yes, we are driven away like animals, but where is our guilt?'. In this particular entry, through the deployment of memory of the events but also stylistic devices, Leopold creates an emotional contrast between the Germans, especially the Hitler Youth, which are represented as automated and cruel, and him and his ethno religious community whom he describes as powerless. Therefore, we can assume that he defines his belonging to the ethnoreligious group through contrast.

Leopold's entries also reinforce some common perceptions of the Kindertransport, such as the relief when crossing the border or notions of freedom when arriving in England: 'We were all glad when we passed the frontier. […] But all we were happy to go on English and free ground'. We can assume that Leopold's positive experiences in exile shaped his reflections on the days before he left Germany. Therefore, it can be argued that his memories of the events and his feelings are impacted not only by a new sense of belonging but also by other experiences acquired in exile further emphasising the mediated aspect of the entries. Leopold's memories and his current sense of belonging enter a tandem relation which enables him to create notions of non-belonging to a national or local community without explicitly comparing his experiences in his country of origin to new ones in the country of refuge.

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[283] Pier Carlo Bontempelli sketches the Gleichschaltung policy as well as the ideological principles of national identity in chapter five "German Studies in the Years of National Socialism" in the monograph *Knowledge Power and Discipline : German Studies and National Identity*; see: Pier Carlo Bontempelli, *Knowledge, Power, and Discipline: German Studies and National Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004). pp. 96-7, <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10151242> [accessed 17 June 2022]).

Rather, he implies this contrast through, for example, stating that the refugee children 'were happy to go on English and free ground'.

His entries about his last days in Germany reveal, as pointed out above, many aspects of Leopold's identity negotiation in relation to cultural, religious, and national identities without explicitly taking on a retrospective gaze. However, his experiences since leaving Germany still influence his writing and representation of self in those entries thus contrasting these entries with his usual entries. Leopold's and Ingeburg's entries provide insight into the multi-layered processes of remembering and simultaneously highlight ongoing negotiations of self, identity, and belonging through mediated entries. Henderson points out that '[r]ecognising the multi-layered nature of the textual self teaches us to pay attention to those moments when fragmentation or multiplicity becomes evident'.[284] These passages of writing about the active process of remembering, more so than other entries, offer a gateway to the different aspects of changing notions of belonging. They show how the memories of the country of origin are impacted by the diarist's current circumstances such as living situation, social interactions, etc. Their different forms of retelling a memory illustrate how child diarists aim to find ways to give events shape, form and meaning through various degrees of self-reflexivity.

Remembering Life before Exile

The interconnectedness between memory and imagination as well as the unreliability of direct memory can also be found in the diaries. The questions that arise are to what extent are these memories influenced by wishful nostalgia or negative experiences, and what does this reveal about their notions of belonging in their writing present. Fuchs and Caldicott point out this present mindedness of memory stating that '[s]ince we always remember the past from the perspective of our contemporary world, our memories are located in the in-between of the present and the past'.[285]

I suggest that narrated and mediated memories mix experience, memory, and imagination. For example, eleven-year-old Elisabeth from Vienna writes on 2 February 1939:

> Ich möchte den Stefansdom sehen. Wie macht man das? Wenn ich zum Fenster hinaussehe, sehe ich den Turm einer Kirche. Aber die Gegend sieht ganz anders

[284] Henderson, *How to Read a Diary*, p. 65.
[285] Caldicott and Fuchs, 'Introduction', p. 12.

> aus. Jetzt hauche ich das Fenster ein bisschen an und bilde mir ein darauf den Dunst des Stefansdoms zu erkennen. So stehe ich einige Minuten in dem Eckchen. Dann schreckt mich das Wort 'Elisabeth' aus meinen Träumen und ich kehre mit dem letzten reumütigen Blick zum Fenster in die Wirklichkeit zurück.[286]

The St Stephan's Cathedral itself can already be seen as a site of memory for the Viennese people as it is one of the city's landmarks. While we can assume that there was a noticeable difference between the church tower Elisabeth sees and the St Stephan's Cathedral's tower, Elisabeth's memory and longing allow her to project the image of the Stephansdom into her mind. She uses literarisation to emphasise the differences between her real and imagined environment. Like the dusty, misty picture she describes, her memory of the St Stephan's Cathedral in Vienna seems distant and clouded. She can't see her memory of Vienna clearly anymore and thus she highlights the misty, clouded atmosphere in her entry, thereby visualising how her own memory functions, ultimately showing how she slowly loses the connection to her life before exile. Yet, she still emphasises the wish to stay connected to the memories of Vienna but cannot quite seem to figure out how. The question 'Ich möchte den Stephansdom sehen, wie macht man das?' then becomes a placeholder for a more general problem of having reliable and clear memories. The entry becomes reflexive as she negotiates between her reality (e.g. 'Die Gegend sieht ganz anders aus') and her fantasy ('bilde ich mir ein').

While Elisabeth states almost sixty years later in her memoir that the entry 'is such an obvious example of self-dramatisation, that I [Elisabeth] seem to remember dimly realising this myself in the very act of writing', the retrospective gaze she takes in her memoir allows for an evaluation with the history of World War Two and the Holocaust in mind.[287] This reinforces the aim of this thesis to highlight the issues and difficulties the Kindertransport refugees faced at the time without the retrospective influence. Reading Elisabeth's entry on the St Stephan's Cathedral as an expression of memory and longing emphasises the ongoing negotiation of belonging in a new environment. The memory and her sense of belonging can be seen as connected with the life left behind and the loss of the innocence of childhood.

In contrast to Elisabeth's memory which is represented as unclear and tainted by self-dramatisation, the following example illustrates how diarists sometimes try to

[286] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 9.
[287] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion,* p. 70.

emphasise the accuracy of their memory by basing them on a historic event. Fritz Seelig, then fourteen years old, writes in November 1939, influenced by a discussion of the events of the night of the 9 November 1938:

> Nach langer Zeit will ich doch wiedermal ins Tagebuch schreiben. Am letzten Freitag haben wir sehr, sehr viel zurückgedacht an die Zeit, die wir vor einem Jahr in unserem 'Vaterland' verbracht haben. Ich kann mich noch ganz genau an jene Tage erinnern, die ich nie in meinem Leben vergessen werde.[288]

Interestingly, talking about this date motivated him to write in his diary again after some time. He even starts his entry by stating that 'nach langer Zeit will ich doch wiedermal ins Tagebuch schreiben'. What follows is him recounting that a 'wir' are talking about *Pogromnacht*, but what he does not write down is what they actually talked about, as he probably deemed it not necessary. He is writing in his private diary and, as he states, he will always remember 'jene Tage […], die ich nie in meinem Leben vergessen werde'. In his entry, Fritz creates a collective voice by using 'wir' and 'unserem' when remembering the 'Vaterland'. This suggests that the other boys Fritz used to live with at the time of the entry felt a similar distance to Germany as a home nation. This is emphasised by putting 'Vaterland' in quotation marks. Fritz's entry shows that, for him and his friends, the national belonging has become secondary. While the 'wir' and 'unserem' convey a certain degree of creating a collective based on citizenship and nationality, the quotation marks manifest that Fritz does not agree with the term and notion of Vaterland. This creates an in-between state, a notion of national belonging and not-belonging in Fritz's group due to the ostracisation and persecution experienced in the country of origin. On the one hand, this in-between state is shown by the use of the word 'Vaterland' and the collective national identity the children share. On the other hand, they remember a traumatic experience that had a lasting impact on some of the children's understanding of national belonging based on the experience of discrimination and marginalisation which is implied in the reference to *Pogromnacht*.

Similar to Fritz, sixteen-year-old Edith Jacobowitz who was placed in Northern Ireland also writes about *Pogromnacht*. Compared to Fritz, she describes her memory of the day in more detail in her entry on 10 November 1940:

> Heute vor zwei Jahren wurde von Rath ermordet. Heute vor zwei Jahren zerschlug man den Juden Deutschlands all ihren Besitz. Heute vor zwei Jahren saßen ums Radio und hörten Goebbels zu. Wir hatten Geld zu zahlen. Wir

[288] Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*.

> hatten keins mehr. Das Geschäft mußte geschlossen werden, es kam kein Geld mehr ins Haus. Kurz: der Anfang vom Ende.[289]

Edith's memory mixes historical events with everyday details, collective experience with her personal and, with her writing present in mind, concludes 'Kurz: Der Anfang vom Ende'. Through the deployment of memory in this entry, Edith illuminates how her life and also the lives of many others subsequently changed. Like Fritz, Edith creates a collective voice by using 'wir' but the 'wir' in Edith's entry is of the past. While Fritz remembers the event with a group of people who shared his experience, Edith remembers a shared experience on her own. For Fritz, the memory of *Pogromnacht* creates a bond with the other children who experienced *Pogromnacht*, but they don't share the same memories. For Edith, the memory of a shared experience with her family stands in contrast to her being on her own now which is emphasised by 'der Anfang vom Ende'. Despite the different circumstances of the memory, both entries deal with the traumatic experience of *Pogromnacht* and support an assumption that negative emotions make memory more accurate than positive emotions when relating it to specific dates and events.[290]

When it comes to remembering life before their exile, the various Kindertransport refugees approach and represent their memories differently. However, in each entry, memory and affective responses to the remembered highlight how the Kindertransport refugees utilise the deployment of memory to make sense of their contemporary circumstances as well as their experiences in the country of origin. Caldicott and Fuchs observe in this context that '[m]emory as a relationship to a meaningful past can […] change according to the emerging needs of an individual. […] This goes some way towards explaining why we forget, rediscover, and revise aspects of our personal and collective pasts'.[291]

This interconnectedness also reveals aspects of belonging. Memory, when utilised in this way, can be regarded as part of enacting the 'ways of belonging' that Levitt and Glick-Schiller defined:

> [w]ays of belonging refers to practices that signal or enact an identity which demonstrates a conscious connection to a particular group. These actions are not symbolic but concrete, visible actions that mark belonging […]. Ways of

[289] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[290] For a more detailed discussion of the link between memory and emotions, particularly how negative experiences impact the reliability of memory, see Kensinger, 'Remembering the Details'.
[291] Caldicott and Fuchs, 'Introduction', p. 12.

> belonging combine action and an awareness of the kind of identity that action signifies.[292]

Experiencing a connection or sometimes even a disconnection to a particular group as shown in the above mentioned examples highlights how belonging is intrinsically tied to social interaction. The deployment of memory and remembering becomes a practice of reflecting on belonging that allows the diarist to illustrate connections to life before exile, family, and local and national communities. At the same time, in some cases, they can distance themselves from these aspects and groups through sketching and reflecting on specific memories. Ultimately, the Kindertransport refugees' use of memory highlights how memories of the country of origin can influence their understanding of belonging and identity, as narrating these memories enables them to create certain versions of self: 'memories are not static representations of past events but "advancing stories" through which individuals […] forge their sense of identity. […] [M]emories offer heavily edited versions of the self and its world'.[293]

Reminiscences through Comparison

The Kindertransport refugees often compare their experiences gathered in exile against memories of their lives in their countries of origin. This can be explained by Erll who argues that 'our memories are often triggered as well as shaped by external factors' and, furthermore, points out that individual memory forms a process of 'the selectivity and perspectivity inherent to the creation of versions of the past according to present knowledge and needs'.[294] This interconnectedness between past and present that Erll emphasises leads to the assumption that memories and reminiscences in particular are impacted by the diarists writing present. The aim is to investigate whether the Kindertransport refugees used modes of comparison which enable a transnational reading of negotiations of belonging. As this thesis sets out to combine the paradigm of transnationalism with diaries as a primary source to explore ideas of the negotiation process of belonging, this subchapter allows an analysis that adds a transnational point of view. As pointed out in the theoretical framework section, notions of transnationalism are linked to the migrant and exile experience and are rooted in ties

[292] Levitt and Glick Schiller, 'Conceptualizing Simultaneity', p. 1010.
[293] Caldicott and Fuchs, 'Introduction', pp. 12–13.
[294] Erll, 'Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction', p. 5.

to the countries of origin.[295] Therefore, looking at how experiences and memories of the country of refuge are represented through a connection to memories of the country of origin is crucial to understand how they negotiate belonging.

In an entry in January 1940, then twelve-year-old Elisabeth Ornstein summarises a year of not writing in her diary. The entry titled 'Erinnerungen' is a total of nine pages long but here, rather than dealing with a specific memory, it functions as a 'Rückschau'.[296] Elisabeth's entry mainly focuses on her life in England. Yet, she also connects her experiences in the country of refuge to memories of her country of origin. This aspect first becomes apparent on the first page of this entry when she writes:

> Ich glaube daß ich in jener Zeit vieles zu ernst nahm, z. B. ich war ganz ernst ob ich eine neue Puppe wollte oder nicht und sprach lange mit Seb darüber.[297]

In this section of the entry 'Erinnerungen', Elisabeth reflects on the time around her last entry, almost one year previously. Her example is that she was talking to Seb about a new doll. Remembering this particular detail which must have taken place at some point in February or March 1939 shows that Elisabeth attributed significance to the discussion about the doll. However, as readers, we do not learn of the outcome straight away. Elisabeth's doll Trude which she took from Vienna to England is also mentioned in her memoir and played a significant role in her childhood. She writes in her memoir which was published in 1998:

> I arrived in England, wearing my father's parting gift and clutching a large celluloid doll with moveable limbs, called Trude. Only much later, as an adult did I learn from my English foster mother that when she came to Bloomsbury House expecting to collect an eleven-year-old girl, she saw Trude before becoming aware of me and said to herself with considerable surprise 'But I thought that the child would be bigger!'[298]

Even in 1998, the doll is still an important object to which Elisabeth connects memories. The questions that arise are what meaning Elisabeth attributed to Trude and why she also seems to put significance on the discussion of whether to buy a new one or not. Her doll Trude clearly was an object of attachment which she associates with comfort. These associations are often drawn between children and their attachment to

[295] see Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism*, p. 61.
[296] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scans 15-31.
[297] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 15.
[298] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion*, p. 7.

toys. In 1953, Donald Woods Winnicott coined the term transitional objects for items used by children, particularly toddlers and infants in particular circumstances.[299] More recently, Benjamin Garber and Dana Prescott investigated the importance of such transitional objects for children in connection to family law in a 2020 article and conclude:

> Much as our courts may be caught up in understanding how today's rapidly evolving technology might ease separation and transition difficulties, nothing can ever replace the simple magic of a beloved blanket, a tattered and worn Teddy bear, or that special Barbie doll.[300]

Transitional objects, therefore, play a vital role in understanding children's emotional responses to changing circumstances in their early lives. While Winnicott's theory and Garber's and Prescott's article focus on younger children, we can still draw parallels to Elisabeth's situation. The separation and transition from her life in Vienna to her life in England is manifested in her relationship with an object of attachment and ultimately in memories of her life before exile. In her memoir, Elisabeth touches on the fact that her doll Trude is loosely associated with the loss of childhood. She points out that 'in the New World [further migration to the US in 1940], however, circumstances forced me to be far more grown-up than I really was, and consequently poor Trude disappeared without a trace shortly after my arrival there'.[301] When Elisabeth writes about her serious discussion about getting a new doll in her diary entry, she doesn't mention whether that is to replace an old one or to get a second one. We only learn later in her entry on 28 August that she kept both dolls: 'Gehe aus mit Seb u. beide Puppen wie gewöhnlich spreche über U.S.A. Falle auf Knie. Ergebnis: Werde Träger für Trude machen'.[302] The two dolls represent her old and new lives, her connection to childhood in Vienna and a new beginning in England. However, as the entry itself is a retelling of what happened several months ago, Elisabeth simultaneously reflects that she took this too seriously and recognises that it was just a doll and not as significant as first thought. While this realisation might suggest that

[299] For more information on the psychological meaning of transitional objects see D. W. Winnicott, 'Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena; a Study of the First Not-Me Possession', *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 34.2 (1953), 89–97.
[300] Benjamin Garber and Dana E Prescott, 'On the Value of Teddy Bears and Barbie Dolls: The Place of Children's Transitional Objects in Family Law', *Southwestern Law Review*, 49.2 (2020), 189–214 (p. 214).
[301] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion*, p. 7.
[302] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 63.

reading the doll passage of the entry as an indicator of her in-between state between native country and host country is overstated, her evaluation of taking things like this too seriously actually further adds to the assumption of Elisabeth's identity being in flux.

The second example is taken from Fritz Seelig's diary. The fourteen-year-old writes on the 7 September 1939:

> Heute ist Rosch-Haschana. Meine Gedanken sind viel bei den Lieben in Deutschland. Wir haben hier Gottesdienst, aber lange nicht so schön als in Schwedt. Ohne Eltern ist dieses Fest, am Anfang eines Kriegs nicht schön.[303]

The Jewish holiday prompted Fritz to remember how he used to celebrate it before his Kindertransport to Britain. His exile reality is foregrounded by emphasising the 'ohne Eltern ist dieses Fest, am Anfang eines Kriegs nicht schön'. The immediacy of the experience of celebrating the holiday in Britain with a 'Gottedienst' is closely connected to his memory as he states that it was 'aber lange nicht so schön als in Schwedt'. There is an argument for a nostalgic notion of his memory as he states that some of the reasons why the service, for him, was not as good as the ones at home were because it was the beginning of war and his parents were not there. This might suggest that the political circumstances, as well as his emotions, influence how he remembers spending this Jewish holiday. Here, we again see the link between the temporal character of diary writing in relation to memory as Fritz's writing present informs his act of remembering. This relates to transnational notions of belonging in so far as it makes visible two aspects of transnationalism: a continued attachment to a nation, or in this case, a local place connected to familial care and the process of making sense of migration and cross-border experiences.[304]

Another example relates to contrasting spaces and places from their memories to the experiences and impressions the children gathered in Britain. Fourteen-year-old Leopold, from Karlsruhe who went to boarding school in Milan, writes a remark about the traffic in Ipswich in his entry on 5 November 1939:

> Sono rimasto molto sorpreso dal traffico. È una città di 80.000 abitanti, ma il traffico è come Corso Vittori Emanuele a Milano, senza esagerazione. Anche gli edifica sono come in una grande città con tutti i grandissimi negozi.[305]

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[303] Seelig, F., *Fritz's Diary*, p. 24.

[304] See Sallie *Westwood* and Annie Phizacklea, *Trans-Nationalism and the Politics of Belonging* (London; New York, N.Y: Routledge, 2000), p. 2.

[305] See Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary* – English translation: I was very surprised by the traffic. It is a city of 80,000 inhabitants, but the traffic is like Corso Vittori Emanuele in Milan, without exaggeration. Even the buildings are like in a big city with all the big shops.

We can see that Leopold compares his experiences in Ipswich against reference points he gathered before his migration. Ipswich is his only experience of a bigger English town because he has been staying in a camp that was established for the refugee children and therefore, he might perceive the town to be busier and bigger than it is. In 1936, Milan had a population of nearly 1,116,000 so the comparison between the Italian city and the English town seems disproportionate.[306] So when Leopold states that his comparison is 'senza esagerazione', we can assume that he is excited about Ipswich being as lively as Milan. This excitement is also informed by his everyday reality as war and exile stand in contrast to busy roads and 'grandissimi negozi'. Hence, the accuracy of his comparison is not what the memory of Milan actually refers to. Instead, the entry illustrates how Leopold's perceptions in the writing present are linked to memories and ultimately highlights instances of transnationalism: a German refugee boy from Karlsruhe compares Ipswich to Milan in a diary entry written in Italian. The connection between memories of a place and immediate experiences gained in a new environment then also hints at transnational and hybrid identities as Leopold is expanding his horizon. This can be explained through Vertovec's investigation of transnationalism and identity where he argues that a transnational understanding of belonging is concerned with transnational networks, cross-border connections, and contact with the place of origin.[307]

Another interesting aspect of the multi-layered deployment of memory is that it blends the boundaries between individual memory, cultural memory, and imagination or fantasy. This is particularly the case in self-stylised and mediated entries. While these aspects also ring true to memories of the country of origin, as pointed out in the subchapter above, mixing memories with experiences of the country of refuge highlights this even more. In the following entry, Elisabeth, then twelve years old, writes an entry about the events on 3 August 1940 but connects her experience with memories and reminiscences:

> [N]achher hatten wir einen Picknick. Tee, Kuchen, Schokolade u. Milch!! Ich heiße das nicht Picknick. Butterbrot, Käse od. Wurst u. Lemonade war's was ich wollte. Wir hatten einen wunderschönen Ausblick – aber es war nur eine englische

[306] For information on the population development of Milan see 'Population', *Time Series: Italian Natioanl Institute of Statistics* <https://seriestoriche.istat.it/index.php?id=1&no_cache=1&no_cache=1&tx_usercento_centofe%5Bcategoria%5D=2&tx_usercento_centofe%5Baction%5D=show&tx_usercento_centofe%5Bcontroller%5D=Categoria&L=1&cHash=5dc94093f50e10c9e55a034d4c6ba123> [accessed 8 April 2022].
[307] See Vertovec, 'Transnationalism and Identity', pp. 573–74.

> Landschaft. Für mich war's als ob der Fluß in der Zukunft einmal blutig sein würde, Die Angler bekamen wilde Soldaten, die Friedsamen Spaziergänger wildes Bauernfolk flüchtend...[308]

This entry is not about a specific memory but shows how memories can influence how experiences are perceived and impact the diarist's way of writing about everyday experiences. This passage mixes elements of what Elisabeth remembers from her life before exile with a fantasy which can be understood as projecting affective notions of memory onto her current situation.

The complexity of the combination of frustration over the picnic food and the landscape give us an idea of what Elisabeth imagines the war experience to be like. The first instance of complaining about the picnic food seems trivial compared to the second part of the entry. The first part, however, does not signify Elisabeth being ungrateful but should be regarded in conjunction with her imaginative description of the landscape. The general frustration and anger over the situation of leaving a country of origin and childhood is represented using exclamation marks, underlining 'englische', and the imagery of a peaceful landscape being attacked. The association between the reality of war and the English landscape leads to her imagining the river turning bloody and the people turning into soldiers and fleeing farmers. However, this could suggest that Elisabeth makes an imaginary association between the lost homeland and when German soldiers marched into Austria. Such a reading further emphasises the interconnectedness between memory, imagination, and experience that Keightley and Pickering advocate for:

> Imagination and imaginative engagement are of vital importance in acts and processes of remembering. […] They enable us to establish continuities and shifts in the trajectories of our experience over time, and creatively transform memory into a resource for thinking about the transactions between past, present and future.[309]

This connection not only reveals observations about the function of memory and imagination but also furthers an understanding of how belonging can be negotiated through this interplay.

The imaginative, fantasy-like passage mixed with the description of the daily activities can be read as a contrast between belonging and not-belonging. She reflects

[308] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 52.
[309] Emily Keightley and Michael Pickering, *The Mnemonic Imagination: Remembering as Creative Practice*, Palgrave Macmillan Memory Studies (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 1.

on this entry in her memoir published in 1998 and writes that 'my lament that the landscape before me is only an English one suggests that once again I am feeling homesick, a supposition which is re-enforced by my references to quite different picnics long ago in Austria.'[310] She highlights that her writing was impacted by an affective reaction to her daily activities and experiences. This narrative technique reflects the complex interplay between negotiating senses of belonging and the daily challenges of non-belonging in a new environment. It captures the tension between the desire for a sense of home and the realities of displacement.

Another way to approach this entry is by looking at the contrast she creates regarding food which also reveals a deeper connection between food and national and cultural identities. Anna Nyburg dedicates her article 'Food in Exile' to this topic and states that 'for one group of people in Britain between 1933 and 1945, food was more than a means of staying alive or mere fuel: the German-speaking refugees to this country'.[311] Nyburg contextualises this in a wider discourse on food and national identity:

> Anthropologists have made studies of the role of food in forming one's cultural identity, and one does not of course have to be an anthropologist to understand that having to eat new and unfamiliar food or food prepared in a strange new way underlines the sense of loss of one's homeland and way of life.[312]

The differences in food and drink are highlighted in many ego documents of Kindertransport refugees as we can see various degrees of coming to terms with a shift in diet in memoirs, testimonies, and diaries.[313] These range from the individual just mentioning that British people drink tea with milk to noticing differences in how food was prepared and what food was cooked.[314] Similar instances are also recorded in some diaries. If the difference of food in exile signifies the loss of one's homeland and way

[310] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion*, p. 104.
[311] Anna Nyburg, 'Food in Exile', in *Exile and Everyday Life*, ed. by Grenville and Hammel, pp. 173–90 (p. 173).
[312] Ibid., pp. 173–74.
[313] In episode 4 'First impressions' of the podcast Kindertransport: Remembering and Rethinking Alex Maws points out that 'food comes up a lot, perhaps not surprisingly. These were children from some of the great cities of continental Europe confronted with mid-20th century British cuisine. You can imagine it would have made an impression': Alex Maws and AJR, 'Episode 5: Dovercourt', Kindertransport: Remembering and Rethinking, 10:02 – 10:22.
[314] For example: Fanni Bogdanow remembers in an interview: 'I'll tell you what was the first thing that I noticed. The different way in which Mrs Clement cooked the vegetable from the way my mother cooked them. […] My mother always cooked a variety of vegetables and Mrs Clement thought cabbage was very good for you, so we had cabbage every day. […] I just noticed it because it was different from what my mother had done, you see'. (Alex Maws and AJR, 'Episode 4: First Impressions', Kindertransport: Remembering and Rethinking, 10:24-10:55).

of life, as Nyburg argues, the picnic as an event refers to memories of lives left behind as it not only revolves around food but also around place, community, and culture.[315] Thus, Elisabeth's shock about the food served at the picnic is not only about the food itself but also about its connotations. The exclamation marks emphasise Elisabeth's frustration about the different picnic cuisines which is further illustrated by her contrasting the food which was served to what she would have hoped for and notes 'Ich heiße das nicht Picknick'. Elisabeth's picnic experience is not compared to a particular memory but to a form of cultural memory of the cuisine of Austria and the frustration and anger represented in the entry then, additionally to the observations above, also emphasises the sense of loss of familiar surroundings.

The mixing of memory and imagination is a feature of some of Elisabeth's entries. We already saw this to some extent in an earlier analysis of her entry about St. Stephan's Cathedral. In another entry titled 'Erinnerungen' written in February 1940, Elisabeth also combines experience, memory and fantasy:

> Die Kirche in welche ich in London ging habe ich niemals gern gehabt; sie war so groß und alles war so pomphaft. Ich liebe ein kleines, trautes, stilles Kirchlein, wo nur wenige Personen sind, und wo an einem kleinen Seitenaltar man sich aussprechen kann.[316]

In this quote, Elisabeth's use of language when comparing churches contrasts a sense of anonymity by using words such as 'groß' and 'pomphaft' to terms like 'kleines', 'trautes', and 'stilles' that evoke *Geborgenheit*. However, the words she uses are reminiscent of clichés connected to the atmosphere of Christmas carols and small, cosy churches, rather than an actual memory of a church she used to go to.[317] The ending '-lein' on 'Kirchlein' also contributes to the sense of cosiness.[318] While this entry doesn't reflect a memory per se, we can see the influence of religious and cultural memory. The internalised associations of church, community, and *Geborgenheit* that simultaneously are memory and imagination illuminate how forms of cultural memory

[315] Alexander Lee gives an insightful summary of the evolution of picnic and picnic culture in his article 'The History of the picnic. From high life to country living'; see Alexander Lee, 'The History of the Picnic. From High Life to Country Living', *History Today*, 69.7 (2019) https://www.historytoday.com/archive/historians-cookbook/history-picnic) [accessed 14 April 2022].
[316] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 23.
[317] In the German version of 'Silent Night' / 'Stille Nacht' uses the words 'traute' and 'stille': 'Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht, alles schläft, einsam wacht nur das traute, hochheilige Paar'. Other Christmas carols coming to mind in connection to the adjectives used to describe the church include 'Es ist ein Ros entsprungen', 'Alle Jahre wieder', and 'Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her'. The lyrics include similar adjectives such as 'zart', 'flein', and 'klein'.
[318] Here, a more detailed linguistic analysis would be possible.

are collective and individual. Borrowing from Jan Assmann's idea of memory being a social phenomenon and individual memory being socially mediated, I suggest that Elisabeth's entry symbolises a form of kinship based on shared values and ideas.[319] This reading is possible due to Elisabeth using words connected to cosiness but also the tranquil and reflective atmosphere of Christmas which imply shared religious and cultural values. She conveys an underlying idea of what the expectation of church and community might have been back in Austria.

At the same time, she contrasts this imaginary church with her experience of a church in London. The adjectives she uses to describe the London church create feelings of alienation in a foreign city as she is comparing the different church practices. There seems to be an underlying sense of longing for what was left behind and the uncertainty of whether she will return give this part of the entry a nostalgic notion. At the same time, this entry is not about a direct memory but rather a stylised comparison created by feelings of belonging and not-belonging through word choices: 'Groß' and 'pomphaft' stand in a contrast to 'trautes', 'kleines', and 'stilles' as well as the idealised image of a 'Seitenalter [wo] man sich aussprechen kann'. The nostalgic image of a small church evokes positive emotions that can be seen as a form of longing for this particular sense of cosiness and security. Years later, Elisabeth even reflects on this entry in her memoir:

> The heroic code seems to have given way to the romantic one here […]! How else can I explain this sudden longing to pray in a little church with dim religious light, considering that all the religious edifices I had ever encountered in Vienna were just as 'big and stately' as the London church I now professed to dislike?[320]

The earlier observations are therefore supported by Elisabeth stating that she does not have a memory of a 'kleines, trautes, stilles Kirchlein'. Rather, the entry suggests that she projects her feelings of isolation and loneliness onto the big churches in England and creates a romanticised and nostalgic idea of a church in her home country where she would feel secure.

The affective dimensions of belonging and memories of the country of origin are often visible in entries that deal with the loss of familial stability. In some entries, it becomes evident that the Kindertransport refugees create a connection between their current living situations in exile and positive memories of family life before exile and

[319] See J Assmann, *Religion und kulturelles Gedächtnis*, pp. 1–2.
[320] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion*, p. 75.

emigration. For example, the brothers Fritz and Kurt Seelig both arrived in the UK on a Kindertransport. Kurt was first placed in the Schlesinger Hostel[321], but he was soon evacuated to the countryside and lived with a family. The older brother Fritz, on the other hand, was first placed in the Bernstein family but sent to live elsewhere as Mrs Bernstein had asked the committee in Bloomsbury House to find a new place for Fritz.[322] The uncertainty and negative emotions caused by such relocations impacted on the children. In Fritz's case, he had the comparison to Kurt's life in a family when he visited him. On 4 January 1940, Fritz writes during his stay with Kurt's host family:

> Als wir dann Mittag aßen, kam ich mir wieder mal ganz anders vor: In einem schönen warmen Wohnzimmer, an einem sauber gedeckten Tisch mit schönem Essen zu sitzen erweckten Erinnerungen an das Elternhaus in mir.[323]

Fritz uses emotional language such as 'schönen', 'warmen', 'sauber'. The use of language paired with the memories of his family home reveals Fritz's longing for the sense of *Geborgenheit* he used to have with his parents. Here, unlike in the example taken from Elisabeth's diary, the actual memory of the family home causes Fritz to create a nostalgic notion of home as often, in such cases, the children focus on moments that are connected to positive emotions. We can assume that Fritz expresses a sense of familial belonging which he is not experiencing in his everyday life in exile as he states that he felt 'wieder mal ganz anders'. His description of the scene and use of emotional language can be interpreted as Fritz also comparing this to his own experiences in exile which seem to be different from this one. Furthermore, the longing for his parents and cosiness is connected to this nostalgic notion of the parental home which in turn impacts his exile experience.

Other children, like Ilse from Vienna, were never placed in families and thus lacked the love and care they sometimes longed for. Ilse was generally unhappy in England and in her hostels in London which she often contrasts with her life in Vienna. On 3 September 1942, then eighteen-year-old Ilse writes:

> […] aber seit ich in England war, habe ich nicht eine Stunde erlebt, wo ich Gott dankte am Leben zu sein. (Außer wenn mich Bomben fast getroffen hätten und zufällig woanders niederkrachten). Solche Stunden, sogar Tage und Wochen hatte ich oft in Wien und ich glaube nicht, daß das nur Kindheitsträume sind und das auch Erwachsene oft überglücklich sein können.[324]

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[321] For information on the Schlesinger Hostel see: Seelig, 'Kurt Seelig Collection (AR 11115): The Schlesinger Hostel, 1938-1999'.
[322] See for example Seelig, F., *Fritz's Diary*, pp. 12–13, 17–18.
[323] Seelig, F., *Fritz's Diary*, p. 36.
[324] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p. 172.

Emphasising her dislike for England and longing for Vienna, Ilse contrasts the two places again, as she often does in her diary. What is different about this entry compared to most is that she seems to acknowledge that she might have a romanticised image of Vienna as she assumes that others might refer to such memories and notions as 'Kindheitsträume'. Thereby, she recognises, at least to some degree, that her memories of Vienna might be different to the reality. At the same time she states, however, that she believes that the positive experiences she had there also ring true to adults. Rather than realising that this romantic idea of Vienna had already ceased to exist when she was still there, she omits the negative memories and replaces them with only positive ones that she is sure still ring true. Ilse writes about the impact National Socialism and the annexation had on her immediate family and friends: many people emigrating, amongst them her father and school friends, her own uncertainty about whether she will leave Austria, and that some had to leave their flats and houses.[325] Her memory of Vienna is therefore always in contrast to the negative lived experiences of her writing present and linked to a lack of *Geborgenheit,* lacing the memories with a nostalgic notion of Vienna. Furthermore, she is not remembering a specific event but rather creates an idealised version of life before exile in her memory.

Similar to the previous examples of Elisabeth's and Fritz's diaries, Ilse does not write about memories of her place of origin directly but creates an atmosphere of cosiness that is opposed to her lived experience in exile. For the other two diarists, their generalised image of life before exile is slightly tainted by their recall bias and they reflect on different aspects that constitute belonging, such as family life and feelings of *Geborgenheit*. Ilse, in contrast, makes clear that she feels like she does not belong here and establishes her continued local and national belonging which is not linked to a nation-state but rather created out of positive memories.

Another entry in Ilse's diary which was written almost two years before the previous example, also manifests a dimension of local belonging that is connected to the memories of a place. When she was sixteen years old, Ilse wrote on 16 June 1940:

> Das Stadionbad vergesse ich nie und ebenso wenig wie die Zeiten wo ich Gott dankte daß das Leben so wunderschön ist. London bringt mir immer neue

[325] Here, I am summarising entries on the reality of annexation and German occupation as well as Jewish discrimination and Antisemitism in Vienna. See for example, 17 August 1938 (pp.66-68), 22 August 1938 (p.71), 17 November 1938 (pp.84-86) in Ilse Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*.

> Enttäuschungen. Ich war einmal öffentlich baden es war entsetzlich, (Eines der schönsten Bäder in Hampstead) und gehe nie mehr.[326]

Ilse associates happy memories with this particular place. She draws a connection between a time when she enjoyed life and this specific place, the Stadionbad. In contrast, while she also links her experiences in London with a specific place, a swimming pool in Hampstead, she mainly emphasises how she dislikes her life in London. This mode of comparison illustrates how Ilse romanticises specific places while others are tainted by bad emotions. She lets her overall feelings towards a place, be that Vienna or more specifically the Stadionbad, impact her impressions of a very specific place. As already seen in other examples, there is no specific memory that the diarist writes about but the implication of positive memories being connected to, in this case, a place creates a reference point to which she compares her current circumstances and experiences.

Generally, the use of memory and the act of remembering in connection to experiences acquired in exile often creates an atmosphere of longing. This notion builds on Vikki Bell and Elspeth Probyn's definition of belonging as discussed in the introduction. It is exactly this affective dimension of *being* and *longing* that they advocate for that allows for an analysis of nostalgia as well as a feeling of *Geborgenheit*.[327] Especially in entries addressing the affective dimension of belonging, memories are influenced less by notions of national or local identity and more by factors such as family, places, objects, and communities. These entries underscore the connection between memory, imagination, and lived experiences. When the Kindertransport refugees draw comparisons, a prevalent theme is the nostalgia for their lives before exile, their entries highlight that belonging transcends a specific culture or nation, and ultimately show that, as Linda Shortt puts it, 'people can belong in different ways'.[328]

Conclusion

Memories in the diaries of the children illuminate a strong connection between subjective and collective forms of remembering as well as between processes of

[326] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p. 126.
[327] See Bell, 'Performativity and Belonging', pp. 1–2; Elspeth Probyn, *Outside Belongings* (New York London: Routledge, 1996), p. 13.
[328] Shortt, *German Narratives of Belonging*, p. 1.

remembering the country of origin and comparing memories to experiences in the country of refuge. This results in acts of remembering that are informed by and laced with notions of local, national, and cultural belonging. We can see the intersection of cultures and customs of the countries of origin and the country of refuge and thereby establish a transnational dimension of the deployment of memories in the diary entries analysed above. Indeed, the transnational dimension of the deployment and use of memory in the diaries is not only based on reflecting on cultural differences but also highlighted through the affective dimension of belonging that the children manifest in these diaries. This is particularly highlighted in entries where memory is used to create some sort of nostalgic, wishful idea of the country of origin.

The varying ways in which the Kindertransport refugees incorporate memory actively in their writing shows that they utilise forms of remembering to make sense of their lived experiences in the context of war, exile, and refuge as well as of everyday life. Through their memories, the children create links to their lives before exile and, at the same time, use these reference points to negotiate change. While the nostalgic ideas and memories of life in the country of origin are dominant in the examples mentioned above, we can also see that, for some, memories of the country of origin are less positive and are therefore reflected upon in a negative context. Particularly Leopold laces the entries written during his last days in Germany with negative connotations of that time and covertly utilises his experiences in exile to create a comparison. Both the nostalgic dimension of memory as well as the negative ways of remembering reveal how memories and the negotiation of belonging are connected. This can be expressed, on the one hand, through an on-going connection to the country of origin which signifies a continued comparison of experiences and memories of both countries. On the other hand, particularly when writing about the negative feelings towards the country of origin, the diarist can be informed by the different culture, communities, and experiences in the country of refuge.

Overall, the analysis showed how memory of the home country shapes the writing present and how experiences of the country of refuge can impact memories and reminiscences of the country of origin. While there clearly is always a link to the writing present, memories of the lives before exile are often about specific events, objects, places, or people. Sometimes, when the diarists consciously state that they are writing about particular memories, those memories are detailed, and the writer tries to represent them as truthfully as possible. The diaries of the Kindertransport refugees

are understood to be primarily written for personal and mostly private use, perhaps to share with family members should they be reunited, therefore, the children writing 'Erinnerungen' are actually making sure that they themselves remember the events by writing them down.

Furthermore, there is a clear distinction between direct memories and comparative memories. Hence, the entries that pit English experiences against often nostalgic memories of home reveals that the children are in a constant process of negotiating belonging as they try to make sense of their new situations. Looking at how memory functions in diaries to negotiate belonging highlights the difficulties the children faced at various points during their stays in Britain. The comparison between the known and the unknown when memories are connected to experiences acquired in the UK often create a sense of longing for something that was left behind in the countries of origin, such as familiar places, family, or culture. Particularly interesting is that mostly, the memories of the country of origin they connect their experiences in exile to are not real or specific memories. Instead, the children write about cliches or general observations hinting at an ongoing connection to internalised forms of local, national, or cultural belonging.

In conclusion, the examined diaries do not explicitly reveal fully established transnational identities, but rather, they shed light on the dynamic nature of Kindertransport refugees' sense of belonging. These diaries illustrate how their understanding of home is constantly evolving. By delving into the use and representation of memories in the entries, we uncover a connection between their everyday experiences in exile and the emotional ties they maintain with their countries of origin. The reliability of their own memories remains in question as we could also clearly see that the affective dimension of memory impacts their representation and narration. While some entries seem to be more accurate than others using historical or geographical facts and language, all memories actually reveal more about the internal processes of identity negotiation and changing notions of belonging rather than recounting events from the past. Indeed, what the analysis has shown is the intricate connection that exists between memory, experience, belonging, and exile.

Chapter 4
Language Use in the Diaries

Introduction

Diaries usually use an informal language and can reflect the personality of the person writing them. The diaries can give us insight into how language changes over time. In some of the previously analysed entries, we have already seen some changes in the diarists' use of language, vocabulary, and repertoire. While the analysis of those previous entries has primarily focused on other aspects, this chapter sets out to explore the use and change of the language within the diaries of the Kindertransport refugees to illustrate the translingual character of their writing. This can range from developing or expanding their register to eventually changing and shifting the language used to write their entries.[329] The aim is to illuminate the use of language in a cultural and transcultural context which allows us to contextualise the overarching research questions on negotiating belonging.

The chapter is divided into three sections. Firstly, the relevant theoretical considerations on language, trans- and multilingualism, and experience of language are outlined and contextualised within Kindertransport scholarship. The second section draws on these considerations by analysing the ways in which the Kindertransport refugees write about language and how they deal with the new everyday language environment. They reflect on their ability to speak and write German and / or English but also sometimes highlight the function and purpose of using one over the other. Hence, this section not only analyses entries that explicitly consider the different languages but also looks at the instances where awareness of language use is present and language shifts occur. The third subchapter is concerned with entries that combine both German and English, displaying a hybrid form of language use. Here, the focus lies on the gradual as well as fluctuating aspects of translingualism by analysing features such as borrowing, code-switching, and

[329] Susan Samata argues that 'language shift is described by sociolinguists as a process happening over two to three generations' and rather focuses on 'language attrition[which] has examined the ways in which speakers can lose the ability to access their languages through processes of attrition'; see: Susan Samata, *The Cultural Memory of Language*, Contemporary Applied Linguistics, volume 5 (London; New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), p.1. However, in this thesis language shift, as highlighted by Suzanne Romaine, can also occur when faced with voluntary or involuntary migration and this does not necessarily include a process over several generations but can happen to the first-generation migrants as well; see Suzanne Romaine, 'Multilingualism', in *The Handbook of Linguistics*, ed. by Mark Aronoff and Janie Rees-Miller (Hoboken, NJ; Boston, MA: Wiley, 2017), pp. 551-52.

syntactical approximation from German and English, and how the Kindertransport refugees write about their experiences. It should become evident in both subchapters that the Kindertransport refugees experience parallel processes of integration on a language and a content level and that they negotiate belonging on both of those levels.

Theoretical Considerations

Categorising language as static would lead to a misunderstanding of its impact on identity formation, as a static nature suggests a dichotomy of monolingual and multilingual identity, of before and after the acquisition of a second language. To understand the negotiation of belonging and the ambiguity of it for the Kindertransport refugees, we need to focus on translingual characteristics and strategies rather than static categories like bi- and multilingualism. While bi- and multilingualism share many similarities and are often defined as the ability to speak or have varying proficiency in two or more languages,[330] I suggest that translingualism, where languages cross freely, offers a more open approach to analysing language use in the diaries of the Kindertransport refugees.[331]

Trans- and multilingualism have been at the centre of many studies on migration, globalisation, literature, and culture over the past two decades. At the same time, the focus has been shifted from a primarily linguistic viewpoint towards a more multidisciplinary understanding of language and its functions. Valentine et al., for example, 'explore the role that choice and use of language play in how young people make sense of their identities and affiliations within the specific situated context of everyday encounters'.[332] Looking at the ways in which the Kindertransport refugees utilise language in their diaries and everyday lives can reveal how they negotiate senses of belonging on both a content and language level in their writings.

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[330] Talking about bi- and multilingualism in his monograph *Bilingual: Life and Reality* published in 2010, François Grosjean identifies various forms of language change such as language decline, shifts, and mixing and highlights how bilinguals negotiate between these bilingual behaviours. While he does not use the term multilingualism, he draws on the similarities between both terms and insists that they can be used synonymously. What becomes evident in his discussion is the static nature of both terms and thus such considerations reinforce why we approach the language use through a lens of translingualism; see François Grosjean, *Bilingual: Life and Reality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

[331] For a more detailed and expanded discussion on the differences and similarities of bi- and multilingualism, see the literature review in: Larissa Aronin and D. M. Singleton, *Multilingualism*, Impact: Studies in Language and Society, v. 30 (Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins Pub. Co, 2012).

[332] Gill Valentine, Deborah Sporton, and Katrine Bang Nielsen, 'Language Use on the Move: Sites of Encounter, Identities and Belonging', *Transactions*, 33.3 (2008), 376–87 (p. 376).

Krishna, Harris, and Mitchell emphasise difficulties that the Kindertransport refugees faced in terms of their English language acquisition:

> Most of the Kinder […] point out that most of the English they learnt was self-taught and imbibed by interacting with peers, with limited to non-existent institutional and structural support, such as specialized English language classes targeted at non-native speakers. Similarly, for each Kinder, the process of learning English was accompanied by a decline in the quality of their native language (German and Czech) skills, except to an extent in cases where the Kinder either returned to the care of their birth parents or relatives or were raised by German-speaking foster families.[333]

The authors highlight the lack of a structured language teaching and learning approach and therefore emphasise the importance of other ways the Kindertransport refugees improved their second language acquisition. Difficulties of learning the new language are compounded by the trauma of displacement, as Brigitta Busch reminds us in her article 'Expanding the Notion of the Linguistic Repertoire: On the Concept of *Spracherleben* —The Lived Experience of Language':

> Relocating the center of one's life, within a country, or from one country or continent to another, always means a change both in the life world (Lebenswelt) and in the linguistic environment with whose practices, discourses, and rules one is familiar. […] [C]hanging location and language can also be experienced as a hardship or as a source of ongoing emotional stress— sometimes even leading to traumatization or to re-invoking earlier traumatic experience. This is particularly likely in cases of forced displacement, and if the situation after emigration continues to be experienced as precarious, uncertain, or even hostile.[334]

This leads to a display of mixing what is familiar and recognisable with what is new and unknown. The use of language in the country of refuge is therefore, in the Kindertransport refugees' early years in exile, marked by negotiating their experience of language as well as trying to maintain some of the register that is familiar by utilising hybrid ways of writing.

Steven Kellman alludes to processes of negotiating new experiences and notions of belonging through language in his article 'Translingualism and the Literary Imagination', stating that '[t]he creation of a new voice means the invention of a new

[333] Krishna and others, 'Exploring the Integration of Child Refugees in the United Kingdom', p. 138.
[334] Brigitta Busch, 'Expanding the Notion of the Linguistic Repertoire: On the Concept of Spracherleben —The Lived Experience of Language', *Applied Linguistics*, 2015, 1–20 (p. 1) <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amv030>.

self'.[335] Utilising language to reflect and negotiate new experiences can therefore help negotiate new senses of belonging and manifest particular ideas and values connected to it.

How the Kindertransport refugees reflect on their experiences and how they use language can thus reveal aspects of their negotiation of belonging in their everyday lives. This, according to Brigitta Busch, becomes particularly visible when looking at the speakers' repertoire which she defines as being 'understood as a whole, comprising those languages, dialects, styles, registers, codes, and routines that characterize interaction in everyday life'.[336]

Since the diarists of this study are different ages and genders, it should be reiterated here that the Kindertransport refugees differ in both their linguistic abilities and their narrative competence. Therefore, any generalisations of what is observed should be made cautiously. It should also be mentioned here that the excerpts taken from these diary entries have been transcribed to the best of my knowledge, where I have retained the original spelling and sentence structure. As already stated, the analysis includes the children's spelling mistakes.

Writing about Languages

At one point or another, most Kindertransport refugees explicitly write about using different languages, focusing on a new, acquired language or trying to maintain their mother tongue. This observation adds a new aspect to the analysis of the impact and experience of exile and the Kindertransport, that directly illuminates the constant and ongoing process of negotiating identity and belonging. This happens through not only the children's changing perceptions of memory and home but also their everyday experiences and use of language. Focusing on the lived experience of language and language learning can illuminate how the language development and adaptation of the Kindertransport refugees serves as a factor in how belonging was constructed, in particular through expressing feelings of inclusion and exclusion.

One example expresses an awareness of language use and making an active choice on which language to write in can be found in Elisabeth's diary. The then twelve-year-old writes in her entry on Easter Sunday 1940:

[335] Steven G Kellman, 'Translingualism and the Literary Imagination', *Criticism*, 33.4 (1991), 527–41 (p. 533).
[336] Busch, 'Expanding the Notion of the Linguistic Repertoire', p. 5.

> From now on I will write in German or English whatever I feel like and keep you my dear book as a diary. The reason for this is that Brittain[337] told us that is a good thing to keep a diary, and even if it comes at first a little bit difficult, one must make oneself write.[338]

This is the first entry Elisabeth writes in English before returning to writing in German until she ultimately fully switches to English in her entries after emigrating to the US. In this entry, she states an intention of writing in either language which suggests that she wanted to maintain her German but also become more proficient in English by utilising the practice of keeping a diary. Additionally, it seems that Elisabeth, by deciding to use both languages for her entry, shows how her sense of belonging and identity can be seen as fluid, as she does not make a decision but rather embraces the possibility of writing in German or English as she pleases.

Less than a month later, Elisabeth switches back to writing her entries in German rather than switching between the two and she states in her entry on 19 April 1940:

> Einige Tage her hatte ich einen Brief von Fräuli in welchem sie sagte daß sie hoffe ich schreibe in mein Buch wie verabredet. Und so bekam ich Gewissensbisse, und dachte daß ich doch in Deutsch und in Zukunft täglich schreiben müsse.[339]

Again, her entry draws on the interconnectedness between language acquisition and maintenance and the daily practice of diary writing. For Elisabeth, it is not only the irregularity here that causes her 'Gewissensbisse'. We can assume, as she mentions she should write 'doch in Deutsch', that she also feels bad about writing her last entry in English and thereby not adhering to the promise she made to Fräuli. She alludes to this in her memoir published in 1998:

> This [the entry on Easter Sunday 1940] is the only English entry in the main part of the diary because a few days later on Friday, 19 April, I switch back to my tidy German script, explaining that I have had a letter from Fräuli, in which she urged me to keep my diary as promised. Her reminder has given me qualms of conscience, and therefore, I decided to write only in German, and to do so every day.[340]

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[337] Elisabeth explains in her memoir that 'the mistress for English and History was known as "Brittain", which was actually her family name' (see: Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion*, p. 83).
[338] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 35.
[339] Ibid., scan 39.
[340] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion,* pp. 92–93.

These feelings of guilt highlight how language use is linked to feelings of belonging or non-belonging to a community or a specific group and that it can foster or maintain connections between people. Even though the diary is a private document, Elisabeth's motivation and intentions to write in the diary impact the ways in which she uses language and eventually her choice of which language to write in. Both entries actually point towards Elisabeth being motivated by suggestions made by other people when it comes to choosing which language to write in. Based on this, there is a correlation between her motivation and the function of diary keeping in exile as a document to be shared with loved ones at home later.[341]

Ingeburg, at the age of fourteen, also switches from German to English in an undated entry in September marked 'Date unknown'.[342] The content of the entry is not different from her other entries, and she does not state why she is writing it in English.[343] We can only assume that she writes the whole entry in English as she wants to conceal what she writes about her crush Peter as he is not mentioned in the other entries. In her following two entries she switches back to German but includes English sentences when writing. On 18 October 1940, which she states was a Sunday, she ends the entry with an English statement in brackets: '(things with Peter are going on as usual)'.[344] And, on 20 October 1940, which she states is a Sunday, she also switches to English while writing[345]:

> Heute ist Sonntag.
> Ich habe grade eine schrecklich lange Zeit Schularbeiten gemacht und bin nun endlich fertig. […] Onkel Leon will versuchen es einzurichten, dass ich evacuiert werden kann (weil so viele Bomben in der Nähe waren), my opinion on this part not being developed properly I better not write anything until things happen. (Which I hope they do not, because of Peter.) I'm making him feel a bit uncertain about my feelings.[346]

Perhaps being faced with another form of uprooting and having to move to the countryside prompted the switch, as she was overwhelmed by the situation and this

[341] The correlation between motivations for starting a diary and the functions of a diary written in exile was alluded to in Chapter One 'Diary Writing' where I discussed the motivation for and intention of diarists to keep or start a diary and how they sometimes have intended readers in mind.
[342] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.
[343] In the entry Ingeburg writes about having a cold, provides a recap of the week, having a visitor, and about a boy called Peter. In the other entries preceding and following this one, she also writes about visitors, school, and her weekly activities.
[344] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.
[345] As both dates are close together, Ingeburg either made a mistake when writing either the day of the week or the date of entry on 18 October 1940, as the Sunday was 20 October.
[346] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.

internal confusion is displayed in her writing. The following entry dated 10 November 1940 covers everyday experiences and is also in English before switching back to German, stating:

> Heute ist Sonntag.
> Jetzt bin ich evacuiert. Ich konnte am letzten Sonntag nichts schreiben weil mein Tagebuch schon eingepackt war.[347]

This change back to German raises the question whether the evacuation has caused her to return to writing in her mother tongue because she is coming to terms with the new situation or whether she consciously chooses the languages based on her intended reader. Building on the assumption that some diary entries from the Kindertransport refugees that were written in German were intended to be shared with loved ones at home after being reunited, English entries or passages arguably do not have the same effect and can be seen as reflecting more private thoughts in Ingeburg's case. It seems as if her German entries are written in a way that allows them to be read by others, whereas the English passages signify private thoughts – like in the entry above when she voices her opinion on having to move to the countryside.

In 1944, then nineteen-year-old Edith starts a new diary, this time in English. While she does not state that she has forgotten German, we can assume that she writes in English as she feels more proficient and eloquent in it now than in German as she is using it every day.[348] Completely changing from one language to another is not uncommon in the diaries of the Kindertransport refugees. The trajectory of becoming more proficient in the new language or one language taking over can be illustrated when looking at earlier experiences and encounters with language when they first arrived in their country of refuge. In her memoir, Edith summarises a letter she wrote to her aunt and uncle on 26 June 1939:

> A lot of local people are sorry for me, when they hear what happened to my parents. None of them speak German. That does not help me. We have very few newspapers, and then only Belfast ones. I would be pleased to have a newspaper in German or English, that told us more about the world. To read in English or speak is no problem.[349]

The fact that nobody is speaking German seems to create a sense of alienation and non-belonging despite the language not seeming to be a problem.

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[347] Ibid.
[348] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[349] Edith Bown-Jacobowitz, *Memories and Reflections: A Refugee's Story*, (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014), p. 47.

Despite the language seemingly not being a problem for the Kindertransport refugees, some were subjected to negative experiences when attending British schools as they could be identified as foreign or outsiders. Reflecting on the past year in her entry on 1 January 1940, Elisabeth includes a paragraph on her education and school where she states:

> Ich wurde von der Klosterschule weggenommen, weil ich mich mehrmals über das Betragen der Kinder beklagt hatte. [...] Die Kinder waren nicht besonders nett, die Lehrerin wurden von den gemeinen Kindern Pränke gespielt und man konnte sehr wenig lernen. Aber wirklich war ich nur da um besser englisch zu lernen, was auch der Fall war.[350]

The entry illustrates that she did not get along well with the other children and this, in turn, can be seen as an experience of non-belonging when looking at the content. Yet, how she writes about this experience shows she has improved her English and picked up some words which she Germanised like 'Pränke' ('pranks'). Another example where Elisabeth covertly reflects on feelings of non-belonging is when she writes about playing with two other children in the neighbourhood on 19 April 1940 stating 'Aber die beiden wispern so viel zusammen, daß auch diese Freude von mir genommen ist'.[351] In both entries, she implies that she was not well integrated in either the school or the community by highlighting otherness. While these instances do not overtly mention language, we can assume that Elisabeth faced issues based on her nationality and language abilities. According to Eva Maria Thüne's observation, many Kindertransport refugees identified certain difficulties in the process of learning English which had an impact on their negotiation of belonging:

> If a speaker continues to perceive his or her accent as problematic in a given language community, they may think they do not belong, while feeling that their Spracherleben is weighed down with a negative element that comes not only from their personal competence but also from the perception and interaction with the language community.[352]

Despite not directly discussing and reflecting on instances where she was marginalised because of their language, the diary entries of Elisabeth show that her negotiation of belonging is impacted by this kind of negative *Spracherleben*.[353] What Thüne does not

[350] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 25.
[351] Ibid.*,* scan 40.
[352] Eva-Maria Thüne, 'What the Kindertransportees Tell Us about the Acquisition of English', *Jewish Historical Studies*, 51.1 (2020), 165–82 (p. 180) <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.jhs.2020v51.011>.
[353] Thüne discusses various instances in memoirs and other testimonies of Kindertransport refugees where they mention negative experiences in the country of refugee based on their language proficiency

consider in her article and what does not come through in her interviews is the translingual dimension of the way the Kindertransport refugees use language. Elisabeth, in the aforementioned examples, shows first signs of translanguaging by borrowing words from English.

Fully switching to English can happen over time when the Kindertransport refugees use their German less and less in their everyday life, which in some cases can be tied to not wanting to be identified as German due to the war. National and cultural belonging are often tied to a certain language and, according to Yildiz, as the language 'constitutes a key structuring principle that organizes […] the construction of individuals […] as well as of imagined collectives such as cultures or nations'.[354] Particularly in exile, many refugees were aware of this inherent connection between nationality and language and wanted to avoid facing hostility by not speaking German. On 23 August 1940, twelve-year-old Elisabeth, for example, writes about an encounter with soldiers:

> Heute viele Soldate marschten in Autos vorbei u. einige, wenn sie zurückkamen winkten mir nach. Ich fühlte daß wenn sie wüßten daß ich nicht Engländerin sei würden sie nicht wie das zuwinken.[355]

While this entry does not mention language per se, one of the reasons she could be identified as someone from Germany is through her language. At the same time, she uses an anglicism in the entry writing 'wie das' – 'like this'.

Furthermore, Elisabeth's family anglicised their name after emigrating to the US from Ornstein to Orsten which suggests, while she does not mention it in her diary or memoir, that they also switched to speaking only English. This change is also present in her diary. In an entry on 3 July 1941, around nine months after arriving in the US, Elisabeth, then thirteen years old, writes:

> I've forgotten all my German dear diary, I haven't had time to write till now and besides I'm in a temper, in trouble, in a fix, in anything else you would like to call it. But more of that later.[356]

By starting her entry with the information that she has forgotten all her German, she shows that this aspect is important as it marks a pause in the regularity of her diary

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and being German; see Thüne, 'What the Kindertransportees Tell Us about the Acquisition of English', pp. 166-67, 169-70, 173-76, 181.

[354] Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue: The Postmonolingual Condition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), p. 2.

[355] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 60.

[356] Ibid.*,* scan 91.

writing. On the other hand, the entry also illustrates that she has gained significant proficiency in English as she lists several colloquialisms for being in a difficult or embarrassing situation.

Yet, there are also instances where the Kindertransport refugees seem pleasantly surprised that they have maintained their mother tongue. Thirteen-year-old Hannah writes on 31 December 1941 after re-reading her diary:

> Ich habe gerade das noch kleine Tagebuch durchgelesen und bin ganz erstaunt, dass mein Deutsch noch so gut ist.[357]

This observation highlights that Hannah was certainly aware of the difficulties that come with being in a different language environment. While Hannah has not experienced a full decline in her native language, she is still aware of this possibility and her surprise at how she has managed to maintain her German further shows that language decline and completely shifting to a second language is a real possibility and challenge the Kindertransport refugees faced.

In Leopold's case, there are multiple shifts that can be observed. He starts his diary on 20 October 1939 in Italian, includes an English entry which seems to be based on a school project (as discussed in Chapter 3 'The Use and Representation of Memory'), and on 12 October 1941, he switches to German where he explains:

> Wann ich mein Tagebuch zuerst begann, vor 2 ½ Jahren, schrieb ich, als Begründung, dass ich ein Andenken der damaligen bewegten Zeiten davon machen will, dass ich mich dadurch im italienisch üben will, und drittens dass ich mich mit der Tagesbuchs Hilfe erziehen werde in Charakter, im Benehmen, sodass ich durch meine eigene Anstrengung ein nützlicher und wertvoller Mensch werden soll.[358]

He highlights that one of the reasons for keeping a diary is to maintain and even improve his Italian by writing in his secondary language which is a widely recognised practice when it comes to second language acquisition.[359] Presumably, as it became harder to maintain German and Italian at the same time as learning English, he switched to keeping his diary in German.

Suzanne Romaine points out in this regard that '[i]n some cases shift occurs as a result of forced or voluntary immigration to a place where it is not possible to

[357] Hannah Hickman, *Hannah's Diary*.
[358] Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*.
[359] Looking into language teaching strategies and diary writing would go beyond the scope of this investigation but scholars of pedagogy and language teaching have highlighted that keeping a diary can be beneficial to language learners; see for example: Carol Severino, '"Multilingualizing" Composition: A Diary Self- Study of Learning Spanish and Chinese', *Composition Studies*, 45.2 (2017), 12–31.

maintain one's native language' and further states that '[w]here large groups of immigrants concentrate in particular geographical areas, they are often better able to preserve their languages'.[360] Arguably, the placement of the Kindertransport refugees therefore could have had a significant impact on their language proficiency and how well they maintained German. If we are looking at the nine diaries that build the primary material of this thesis, we can see that this assumption, at least partly, holds up. For example, Ilse and Edith lived with other refugees and therefore had more opportunities to speak German than Helga and Hannah who were placed in foster families and thus language shifts occur very late in their diaries. Elisabeth, on the other hand, who was also placed in an English foster family, displays a decline in her German grammar and syntax. On 11 August 1940, for example, she writes 'Ich war nachher so kalt dass ich für einen Spaziergang mit Seb ging'.[361] Here, she anglicises the preposition of 'Spaziergang' corresponding to the English one 'to go for a walk' rather than using 'auf', the phrasal verb 'spazieren gehen' or instead using the verb 'machte' and no preposition at all. She actually acknowledges such a shift in her memoir written in 1998 referring to her entry on 19 April 1940:

> The next paragraph switches to my own family and shows that I am beginning to think in the language I now use everyday day. In the first sentence when writing "I am waiting for letters", I make use of the preposition 'für', obviously translating "for" from English instead of using the correct German "auf".[362]

Here, Elisabeth's use of language in her diary is clearly in flux and dynamic, thereby highlighting the influence of her everyday language environment and how it subconsciously finds its way into her language use.

Arguably, diary writing in their first language can be seen as a way for the Kindertransport refugees to maintain their ability to speak and write German to some extent, as there was no other means of practising it daily. However, as they did not receive any German lessons in school or by guardians, grammar and spelling mistakes are common in their diaries. Yet, the diary can certainly take on an educational function if utilised as a way of improving one's writing abilities. This does not necessarily have to be the Kindertransport refugees' mother tongue and instances where they write about trying to improve their English are also actively recorded. For example, thirteen-year-old Ingeburg points out in her entry on 13 April 1940 'Ich lese

[360] Suzanne Romaine, 'Multilingualism', p. 551.
[361] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 56.
[362] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion*, p. 93.

jetzt das Buch "Wuthering Heights" (englisch)'.[363] This puts an emphasis on how they find ways to improve their second language and that often they rely on creative means to do that. Similarly, Kurt's and Fritz's entries on their various cinema visits also illustrate how often they actively engage with the language of their host country in free time activities.

Multilingualism, Translingualism and Hybrid Writing

There are several aspects that emphasise how the Kindertransport refugees negotiate belonging on a language level rather than a content level in their diaries including script switching, borrowing, and translingual grammar use. Here, I am following Busch's line of inquiry where she asks, 'how linguistic variation can serve to construct belonging or difference' and how their language use reflects advancing integration.[364] While her approach refers to spoken rather than written language, the question remains how language use in writing can show how belonging is negotiated, and integration is fostered on the language level of the entries rather than how the diarists describe it.

Before turning to the aspects concerning translingual writing, I want to emphasise the significance of script and script switching when it comes to language and belonging, as certain scripts can be an expression of a shared identity or belonging to a community.[365] Edith starts her diary on 21 September 1938 with an entry in cursive writing and switches to *Sütterlinschrift* for the following entries. Conversely, Elisabeth and Ilse start their diaries in *Sütterlin* and switch to more standard cursive later on. Arguably, this switch can serve as a visual marker between a writing practice that is connected to their lives in their country of origin and the standard practices in their country of refuge.[366] Often the switch is accompanied by a break in writing in the diary regularly which can range from a few weeks to several months. This furthers the assumption that script switching is connected to the growing time span of living in their country of origin and using a script that was commonly taught and used in their

[363] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary.*
[364] Busch, 'Expanding the Notion of the Linguistic Repertoire', p. 3.
[365] see, for example, Schiegg and Sowada, 'Script Switching in Nineteenth-Century Lower-Class German Handwriting'pp. 774–75; Peter Unseth, 'Sociolinguistic Parallels between Choosing Scripts and Languages', *Written Language & Literacy*, 8.1 (2005), 19–42 (pp. 19–20) <https://doi.org/10.1075/wll.8.1.02uns>.
[366] Laura Hobson Faure also highlights how script switching from Sütterlin to a more standard cursive can function as a visual marker for the distance between their lives now and their pre-war lives; see: Laura Hobson Faure, 'Exploring Political Rupture through Jewish Children's Diaries: *Kindertransport* Children in France, 1938-1942', *Journal of Modern European History*, 19.3 (2021), 258–273 (p. 259).

country of refuge for other daily activities and tasks. But it is not only the script switching from *Sütterlin* to standard cursive when writing German that stands out. Elisabeth, for example, switches to standard cursive when writing an entry in English on Easter Sunday 1940 and then back to *Sütterlin* for her next entry on 19 April 1940 written in German which illustrates an awareness of using different scripts. She also switches to a standard cursive in some entries when using foreign words or formal elements such as names and titles like Mrs Cook or Ms Hoskin.[367] Forms of script switching can therefore demonstrate the 'effect of the long-term influence of a new language and culture' and thus reveals varying degrees of in-flux notions of belonging.[368]

Having looked at the visual level of the diary entries briefly, I now want to turn to analysing instances of language borrowing and code-switching.[369] Seemingly subconscious word choices or practices, particularly when written in a different language from the rest of the entry, show how their everyday environment and the language that is surrounding them impacts the writing of the Kindertransport refugees. For example, Edith writes '6 May 41' instead of '6 Mai 41' in her entry which seems to be an unwitting mistake as she writes '22 Mai 41' above her next entry. She makes a similar mistake in July when she uses 'July' instead of 'Juli' and does not include the full stop after the number, which is usual practice in German. Thereby, she illustrates how everyday routines and exposure to the language of the country of refuge can subconsciously find its way into writing.[370] Writing days or months in English but continuing the entry in German can also be found in Leopold's diary.[371] Furthermore, as Holub argues that 'language forms not only one element of identity but becomes an inherent expression of identity as such', the apparently subconscious use hints at the fluidity of the diarist's sense of belonging and identity.

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[367] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scans 15, 40-41.
[368] Schiegg and Sowada, 'Script Switching in Nineteenth-Century Lower-Class German Handwriting', p. 790.
[369] In this thesis, the term borrowing is defined as the process of adopting words from another language, often a second language and thus seen as the result of cultural and social interaction between language groups. Borrowing can happen in different kinds of ways such as adapting the loanword from the source language to the target language – in this thesis it is most often that the Kindertransport refugees Germanise a word – and it can also add a word from the source language and not change anything about it.
[370] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[371] See, for example, Leopold's entry on 14 October 1941 where he writes 'Tuesday, October 14 1941' in Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*.

One form of how this can be expressed is diarists adding new words or phrases to their repertoire as they try to find new ways to write about their experiences of war and exile. Kindertransport refugees like Ingeburg Sigler and Kurt Seelig use English words within their German entries as they pick up on them during their interactions with others in the country of refuge as well as hearing, seeing or reading them in newspapers, on the radio, on billboards etc. Specific German words for events, objects, and topics linked to the war might not have been known in German or, alternatively, the English words such as 'war', 'air raid', or 'shelter' were more readily available to them than their German translations. The code-switching and borrowing of words that happen here signify an expansion of their repertoire.

On some occasions we can see that Kindertransport refugees Germanise words. On 5 September 1939, Kurt writes 'Lenchen Pick ist rum gekommen und sagte: "Wir sollen uns alle da und da mieten'.[372] Here, Kurt potentially picked up an English word and spelled it in a way that he thought was German. This illustrates the perceptiveness and awareness of the language environment around him, and his efforts to expand his vocabulary and repertoire. The English word 'meet' which he writes down as 'mieten' is closer to him than the German 'treffen' as presumably 'meet' is used often in his everyday environment. Kurt uses interlingual homophones that sound similar but have different meanings. The German 'mieten', therefore, becomes a false friend here and Kurt connects two words in his repertoire based on their similarities in sound and spelling.

Similarly, on 14 November 1941, then thirteen-year-old Hannah notes 'Am half-term gingen wir wandern' and again, on 18 November, she starts the entry writing 'Wie gesagt, am half-term wurden wir Wandervögel'.[373] Half-term here is clearly a word that she has no German equivalent for and therefore she uses the English one in her diary like a proper noun. Picking up on these new concepts displays a level of understanding of and competency in English which 'is naturally crucial to integrate effectively in the fabric of the wider community'.[374]

Other examples from Kurt's diary include words like 'Squardführer' and 'squard', 'London transport' and 'evacuation' (in his first entry), and 'Boardschool'

[372] Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*, p. 15.
[373] Hickman, *Hannah's Diary*.
[374] Krishna and others, 'Exploring the Integration of Child Refugees in the United Kingdom', p. 124.

(on 3 January 1940).[375] The use of these words, amongst others, shows that Kurt adds new terms to his register to reflect on his experiences in a new environment and everyday life. For Kurt, the constant language shifts in his diary signify that he is trying simultaneously to maintain his first language and expand on his register by adding words and phrases from his developing second language. Evidently, in Kurt's case, these new terms are sometimes incorrectly spelled. This highlights that he is feeling his way towards how they might be spelled after picking up on them in oral use such as conversations or perhaps the radio. Utilising social, aural, and oral learning styles can improve the performance of an individual in second language learning.[376] Thus, these spelling mistakes in Kurt's diary illustrate a learning technique that is based on his surroundings and everyday experiences and signifies Kurt's active engagement with the language he encounters daily. Additionally, this expansion of the Kindertransport refugees' repertoire also draws attention to what Samata argues is 'an undefinable, perhaps overlapping, area between incomplete acquisition and attrition, some point at which acquisition wanes and attrition begins' as they are exposed to both languages.[377] The Kindertransport refugees display a perceptiveness to their new language based on expanding their repertoire and picking up words from their everyday language environment and thereby also highlight how they are developing a sense of belonging on a language level.

This assumption is further supported by the diary entries of the Kindertransport refugees showing how they pick up colloquialisms, turns of phrases, and other specific words to expand their vocabulary and write about their experiences. For example, sixteen-year-old Ilse writes on 15 October 1940:

> Von meinen Eltern seit Mai nichts gehört, Ali verschollen, Geni schreibt nicht, Ich bin fed up mit dem ganzen verpfuschten Leben![378]

Other examples of her using the phrase 'fed up' can be found in her entries from 13 May 1945 ('Alle fahren weg, ich wollte, ich hätte eine Zukunft. Möchte gerne heiraten.

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[375] Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*, p. 3, 4, 7, 23.
[376] Mahdi Moenikiaa and Adel Zahed-Babelanb published a case study on learning styles and their roles in the second language learning of the students investigating the impact of written and verbal learning styles on 120 students learning a second language and highlight how 'social, verbal, and aural learning styles have a suitable performance in second language learning'; see: Mahdi Moenikia and El Zahed-Babelan, 'The Role of Learning Styles in Second Language Learning among Distance Education Students', *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2.2 (2010), 1169–1173 (p. 11773), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.03.167>.
[377] Samata, *The Cultural Memory of Language*, p. 5.
[378] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p. 129.

Bin sehr fed up mit allem'),[379] 29 August 1945 ('Geni ist auch fed up'),[380] and on 30 June 1947 ('Bin sehr fed up allein zu sein, weiß wirklich nicht mehr was los ist').[381] It seems to have become part of her repertoire as she uses the phrase multiple times in her entries.

'Being fed up' is not the only English phrase that she picked up on or uses in her diary. For example, in her entry on 30 June 1947, Ilse states:

> Mein Landlord hat mich ausgesperrt und mir fürchterliche Sachen angetan um mich loszuwerden. Bis ich zur Polizei ging, weil ich weiter keinen Rat wusste und keine Flats oder Zimmer zu haben waren. Alles kam zusammen. Ich habe immer richtige "ups and downs".[382]

This entry illustrates both an expansion of her vocabulary through using English terms she either might lack the German term for or choose to use the English one (here, she uses 'landlord' and 'flat') and an expansion of her repertoire through adding new phrases ('ups and downs') that allow her to illustrate her emotions in a different way. Writing in German but using English words and phrases emphasises Ilse's everyday reality.

Another example of hybrid writing that is an instance of code-switching rather than borrowing can be found in Ilse's entry on 14 April 1940:

> Es sind noch 2 andere Spanier hier und viele wollten schon weggehen mit mir but I am not interested at all.[383]

As highlighted previously, using English in the diary can be a sign of the diarist wishing to keep this information more private than the German parts if their diary is supposed to be shared later on, perhaps when reuniting with family. This does not necessarily mean that the diarist is excluding a potential reader deliberately but suggests that there are particular ways of voicing one's emotions that are closer to their everyday experience and environment. Therefore, the code-switching can be seen as a display of which language is more easily accessible to the diarist and, at the same time, this switching between languages in one sentence signifies a proficiency in both. It illustrates a translingual use of language as she is moving through languages and thereby breaks down a binary assumption of languages being static.

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[379] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary,* p. 166.
[380] Ibid., p. 170.
[381] Ibid., p. 183.
[382] Ibid., p. 181.
[383] Ibid., p. 114.

Looking at the use of English words and phrases within the German entries can reveal patterns in those variances. Taking Ingeburg's diary entries as examples, we can see how she uses English expressions to voice her personal opinion,such as in her entry on 22 September 1940:

> Diese Woche begleitete er [an unnamed boy from her former class] mich fast jeden Tag bis nach Hause und einmal merkte es T. Claire (But I really do like him).[384]

Ingeburg, then aged thirteen, moves between languages and uses English to write about more private thoughts and feelings. For Ingeburg, this is also not an isolated occurrence either and, like Ilse, she uses English sentence parts on several occasions. On 3 December 1940, she writes:

> Öfters gehen wir Handball spielen. Da sind so viele Sachen die ich schreiben müsste, aber I can't be bothered.[385]

Arguably, Ingeburg feels that this particular expression fits her emotions better and she chooses to use this instead of a German equivalent. In her next entry on 8 December 1940, she includes English phrases in a similar way:

> Gert ist fallen in love mit mir. Aber ich bin fed up mit all dem love Kram und möchte nur hören was er mir über Max sagen will.[386]

Like Ilse, Ingeburg has picked up the phrase 'fed up', which she uses in the entry to emphasise her frustration.

The switching between and mixing of languages highlights how translingual language use offers greater opportunities to express oneself. Yet, what the diaries often do not reveal are the motivations or reasons for writing parts in English or including specific phrases. For example, on 26 January 1941, Ingeburg writes: 'Diese Woche sollte ein neues Mädchen kommen u. Brigitte & I sleep together in einem Bett, aber es wurde abgesagt'.[387] There is no apparent reason as to why Ingeburg uses English terms here rather than German as we can assume that the German words for what she is describing are known to her because they are part of her everyday life. We can only assume that she makes a conscious choice here to write 'sleep together' instead of 'schlafen zusammen' as the rest of the sentence is in German.

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[384] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.
[385] Ibid.
[386] Ibid.
[387] Ibid.

Arguably, it is very impressive how some Kindertransport refugees managed to maintain their German throughout the war and their years in exile. While Ilse, for example, spent a significant amount of time with other refugees, her everyday life took place in a mostly English-speaking language environment. We can notice an increased use of English terms in 1947, as seen in the entry above, as well as in other entries such as the one on 13 April 1947, where she writes 'Geh sehr viel aus lately und gable mir viel Männer auf.'[388] Another example is her entry on 19 May 1947, where Ilse states 'Ich mich schon verheiratet gesehen mit Auto und flat'.[389] These excerpts suggest that Ilse, while still mainly writing in German, has developed a sense of multiple belongings, by mixing both German and English in her diary, despite what she might argue on a content level. While Ilse's diary shows an increase in using English words in later years, she maintains a high standard of German writing.

Similar observations can be made for Leopold's diary as he continues to write his entries in German. We notice an increase in grammar mistakes but not in the use of English words in his later entries in 1943. This is not the case in other diaries written in German that cover several years – like Elisabeth's, Inge's, and Edith's diary – as we can see a clear decrease in their German writing abilities, particularly in their grammar use as well as a complete shift into English at some point as discussed earlier in this chapter.

What all these examples have in common is that they show that the Kindertransport refugees, in their everyday life in their country of origin, were used to a repertoire. However, since coming to their country of refuge, they have expanded this repertoire by including new terms and phrases for experiences, concepts, and objects and, with this, display translingual qualities as well as fluid senses of belonging.[390] The multidimensionality and hybridity of their language use highlights this translingual character. Borrowing words from a new language as well as mixing languages shows that the Kindertransport refugees adjust to their new environment and express their new experiences by expanding their repertoire. In this regard, Busch points out:

> The linguistic repertoire can be understood as a heteroglossic realm of constraints and potentialities: different forms of language use come to the fore, then return to the background, they observe each other, keep their distance from

[388] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, p. 180.
[389] Ibid., p. 179.
[390] See, for example Busch, 'Expanding the Notion of the Linguistic Repertoire', p. 5.

> each other, intervene or interweave into something new, but in one form or another they are always there.[391]

Her observations also link to ways of negotiating not only language but also belonging. The multiplicity and hybridity allow for a new way of writing about and reflecting on their experiences.

Including phrases and words in another language in the entries can also happen the other way round and thereby hint at a nostalgic use of German. Helga, whose diary is written entirely in English, includes a particular German colloquialism and some German words which remind her and us readers of her country of origin. On 1 January 1945, the seventeen-year-old writes 'Prost Neujahr! Cold weather is getting better thank goodness' using the traditional German way of wishing a happy new year.[392] Evidently, she does not use German very often as this is one of the few examples alongside her referencing celebrating New Year's Eve with 'Sandkuchen, Glühwein, etc.' and using words like 'Apfelstrudel' in her entry on 25 December 1944 and 'Weihnachtsfeier' in her entry on 24 December 1946.[393] What becomes apparent when looking at the dates is that Helga often refers to German terms during the Christmas period, which suggests that she links her new experiences of celebrating Christmas and New Year in England and America to her childhood memory of spending this period in Germany. According to Thüne, a nostalgic use of German can be seen as a way to 'resist losing their first language, German, which in a way was their last bond with their parents and their previous childhood'.[394]

Such nostalgic use can also show that some particular experiences and emotions are still easier to express or write about in German than in English which, over the years, has often become closer to the Kindertransport refugees than their native language. Stephanie Homer argues in this regard that 'a clash in culture and language was not uncommon, and some Kinder experienced extreme homesickness which they were unable to express in a new language'.[395] As alluded to in the previous chapter on memory, the Kindertransport refugees deploy memory in their diaries to negotiate their new experiences and contextualise them within their own experiences.

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[391] Busch, 'Expanding the Notion of the Linguistic Repertoire', p. 17.
[392] Bejach, *Helga's Diary*.
[393] Ibid.
[394] Thüne, 'What the Kindertransportees Tell Us about the Acquisition of English', p. 167.
[395] Homer, *The Kindertransport in Literature: Reimagining Experience*, p. 53.

Here entries such as the ones from eleven-year-old Elisabeth on 1 and 2 February 1939 as well as Ilse's entries on, 2 January 1939 and 21 January 1942 can be used to illustrate how a nostalgic tone can encompass a difficulty with coming to terms with their new everyday reality and ultimately how they utilise language to negotiate these new senses of belonging and non-belonging.[396]

It is not only the content of the entries that shows a link between nostalgia and their writings but also the use of idiomatic expressions. Including phrases and words that are generally recognised as idiomatic expressions emphasises a continued connection to the German language and ways of speaking and writing. Ingeburg, for example, exclaims in her entry on 6 April 1940 that 'das ist mir in diesem Falle furchtbar wurscht' and writes on 21 July 1940 'Es giesst in Strömen, es platscht gegen die Fensterscheiben'.[397]

Another interesting aspect of the diaries is the decision by some of the diarists to include quotes or statements from others in one language over the other. Some decide to translate the statements, and some include them as they remember them. For example, Ilse writes on 14 April 1941:

> Letztes Mal als ich ihn [Fenni, her ex-boyfriend] gesehen habe, waren seine letzten Worte: "Well, I was very pleased to see you again and if somebody wants to take you out again, look for someone better than last time. Goodbye." […] Der Zug ist schon gestanden so waren seine allerletzten Worte: "I'll try to see you." Aber er ist seit 4 Wochen nicht mehr gekommen.[398]

Using English in these instances shows that Ilse, aged seventeen, recognises the everyday language environment that she experiences. Linking both – her native language and her new language which she is faced with every day – in her diaries highlights her bilingualism and how she negotiates various forms of belonging to different groups. Thirteen-year-old Hannah, on the other hand, tends to translate

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[396] The diary entries referred to here have been analysed in more detail in previous chapters and therefore only the relevant excerpt is included here. Elisabeth writes on 1 February 1939: 'Liesl! Ich heiße doch nicht mehr Liesl. Nein die schöne, sorgenlose Zeit ist vorbei. Manchmal möchte ich wieder ein Baby sein, und gleich darauf freut es mich wieder doch schon fast erwachsen zu sein' and on 2 February 1939: 'Wenn ich zum Fenster hinaussehe, sehe ich den Turm einer Kirche. Aber die Gegend sieht ganz anders aus. Jetzt hauche ich das Fenster ein bisschen an und bilde mir ein darauf den Dunst des Stefansdoms zu erkennen', see Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scans 7 & 9; Ilse writes on 2 January 1939: 'Ich bin jetzt hier in England und kann mir gar nicht vorstellen, daß mich ein ganzes Meer von Wien trennt' and on 21 January 1942:. 'Das Leben ist sehr traurig. Vor 7 Jahren hatte ich mir meinen 18. Geburtstag etwas anders vorgestellt. […] Wer glücklich sein will kann es auch. Aber ich glaube es nicht'; see Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, pp. 94 & 145.

[397] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.

[398] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, pp. 113–14.

statements from people in her diary or paraphrase them. On 9 October 1941, she writes 'Frl. P. sagt, dass das 'Cello sehr gut ist' und dass meine Fehler nur gewöhnliche Anfangsfehler sein'.[399] Similarly, Elisabeth also translates statements such as in her entry on 1 January 1940 writing 'Ich kann mich nun erinnern wenn ihre Mutter mir beim Tanzen helfen wollte und Jenny zu mir wisperte "Nicht zu lange, Mama ist müde".'[400] Writing the diary in a different language to the one the people around you use further helps to keep it private and secret.

Looking at the use of titles such as Mr, Mrs and Ms as well as Herr, Frau, and Fräulein also reveals how the Kindertransport refugees approach this decision differently. Kurt uses English titles. While Mr, Mrs and Ms/Miss are commonly used by him instead of Herr, Frau and Fräulein, it is interesting that, when he mentions King George VI in an entry in early September 1939, he also uses '[…] ein Bild von *the King*' instead of '[…] ein Bild von dem King' or even '[…] ein Bild von dem König'. *The King* has then become a semantic unit in Kurt's vocabulary which, for him, will only be attributed to the King of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This then not only has semantic meaning to him but also adds a pragmatic level as it requires a context that contributes meaning to this semantic unit. Similarly, Helga chooses to use 'uncle' and 'aunt' or 'auntie' instead of 'Onkel' and 'Tante' but keeps the endearing term 'Vati' when writing about her father, such as in her entry on 27 April 1945 'I do hope Jutta is safe and Vati' or on 19 May 1944 where she notes a 'message from Vati and Jutta'.[401] Such choices of mixing languages 'on an everyday basis can also affect the long-term relationships of languages in contact'.[402]

Our understanding of language is dependent on syntax as well as semantics and pragmatics. So, moving away from a detailed consideration of the vocabulary and, to some extent semantic and pragmatic use of language, this subchapter now turns to structural aspects of the Kindertransport refugees' writings that highlight how their syntax and grammar is slowly becoming more English.[403] Generally, English syntax is governed by grammar rules adhering to the sequence of subject, verb, and object in

[399] Hickman, *Hannah's Diary.*
[400] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 17.
[401] Bejach, *Helga's Diary*.
[402] See Suzanne Romaine, 'Multilingualism', p. 551.
[403] Syntax, in this thesis, is primarily understood in the broader sense of sentence structure and word ordering.

a sentence or clause, while German syntax can vary more due to the use of grammatical cases beyond pronouns, giving it a wider range.

Most often, the structural approximation to English syntax becomes noticeable in the Kindertransport refugees' use of prepositions and word order. Ten-year-old Kurt's diary, for example, illustrates this in several entries such as the one on 4 January 1940 where he notes: 'Frank kommt heute. Ich gehe zu Cockfosters um ihn zu mieten'.[404] Kurt uses 'zu' as preposition meaning 'to' in English which is commonly used when referring to the act of going to a place while the German preposition would be 'nach'. To use 'zu' as a preposition for a place in German, 'zu' would need a determiner like 'dem', 'der' etc, hence, in this entry and based on Kurt's word choices, the grammatically correct German preposition would be 'nach' as it does not require a determiner before the place. This example shows that Kurt's use of his first language is influenced by his second language learning process. The entry highlights that his syntax is becoming more English. As both languages are closely related through their Germanic roots, this often does not influence grammatical correctness of the sentence structure per se. Another similar example can be found in Elisabeth's diary in her entry on 11 September 1940 where she writes: 'Gingen für Picknick mit Dunlops am Nachmittag'.[405] Here, twelve-year-old Elisabeth could have used 'picknicken' as a verb but rather she uses a sentence structure and preposition that sounds like a literal translation from 'Went for picnic'. On 12 August 1940, she writes: 'Am Morgen wenn ich in's Dorf ging um meine Seide zu holen, wartete ich 2 ½ Studen für das Geschäft zu öffnen'.[406] Again, Elisabeth uses the wrong prepositions which correspond more to the English than the German prepositions.

When reading the diaries, we notice that the Kindertransport refugees start adhering to an English sentence structure despite writing in German. This adaptation occurs over time rather than immediately and suggests that their everyday encounters with the English language have a subtle and subconscious impact that only becomes noticeable when comparing different entries from different months or even years. On 28 August 1940, she writes: 'Am Nachmittag sie [Jenny, the youngest daughter of her host family] lehrt mich Fahrrad reiten, obwohl es ihr schwer wird nicht ungeduldig zu

[404] Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*, p. 23.
[405] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 73.
[406] Ibid., scan 56.

werden'.[407] She writes in a way that mixes English and German syntax. While the verb in the infinitive is still placed at the end of the clause, she puts the subject at the start which in the grammatically correct German sentence would come after 'lehrt'. It should also be mentioned that, on a vocabulary level, she changes 'Fahrrad fahren' to a literal translation of 'riding a bike'.

These syntactic changes illuminate how English gradually becomes a closer reference point in the Kindertransport refugees' use of language than German. It is not only the vocabulary that is often more accessible to them but also the grammar and sentence structure. Pragmatic, semantic as well as syntactic convergence to English then emphasises that the everyday *Spracherleben* of the Kindertransport refugees impacts how they write in their diaries and that using English and German is not a separate but rather a translingual process.

Conclusion

The use of language in the diaries can signify the varying degrees in which the Kindertransport refugees felt a sense of belonging and integration. Analysing the language in the diaries then illuminates how individual Kindertransport refugees write about language. Furthermore, the analysis has shown how language can be seen as a mirror of the varying stages of the integration of the Kindertransport refugees. The Kindertransport refugees often display translingual qualities in their diaries and utilise methods such as borrowing or code-switching in their diary entries. With this, they expand their vocabulary and while some of them record that they have forgotten their ability to speak and write German, they are arguably just not as proficient in it anymore as they used to be. Yet, as we can see in some examples written in English, there are certain words that the Kindertransport refugees still use in German.

The Kindertransport refugees' use of language in their diaries during their early years in Britain emphasises that a shift and change in language use is inevitable to some degree. Eva Maria Thüne argues that '[t]he price of learning English so quickly was often that German was forgotten, a price which many seem to have paid willingly enough' and emphasises that, often, it resulted in English monolingualism while also mentioning that their German was forgotten or 'somehow hidden away'.[408] More

[407] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 63.
[408] Thüne, 'What the Kindertransportees Tell Us about the Acquisition of English', p. 167.

generally, language shift and language death, for Romaine, are the results of bilingualism 'as a stage on the way to eventual monolingualism in a new language.'[409] Such an exclusionary and binary narrative however should be resisted and efforts to resist are shown in the diaries of the Kindertransport refugees. What these examples should have shown is that such a narrative does not hold up and that the use of language is much more fluid and dynamic than Thüne's and Romaine's statements suggest. Theories of trans- and multilingualism play a crucial role when analysing the hybridity of language use in the diaries. Looking at the manifestation of trans- and multilingualism in the form of hybrid writing then also allows us to draw connections between the deployment of language and notions of belonging through language. Some children show both a multilingual (languages are still distinct) and translingual (languages cross freely) use of language in their diaries. The last section looks at all the diaries used in this study and whether the diarist shifts languages or sticks to their mother tongue in the overall course of writing the diary. The diaries that were initially written in German and later shifted to English yield valuable information on negotiations of belonging and identities in flux. However, it is important to emphasise that these shifts are often rooted in changing circumstances in the exile experience and therefore it becomes necessary to highlight the interconnectedness of the deployment of language, the exile experience and the Kindertransport refugees' understanding of belonging.

Particularly the aspects of repertoire and register, of multi- and translingualism, and of language use often illuminate a fluid change as the Kindertransport refugees adjust to their new environment. However, for some this change was experienced as more problematic. For example, Hannah Weinberger actually reflects on this years later in an article stating that '[w]ith hindsight I now realise that the neglect of my native language was one aspect of my loss of identity, which was a real though unacknowledged part of my situation, in spite of all the kindness shown to me'.[410] She not only attributes language as a characteristic of national belonging and identity but also touches on the lasting impact that the language shift and change had over time. While this is certainly not discussed or shown in the diaries to the same extent and the diaries show translingual qualities rather than language death, Hannah's observation

[409] Romaine, 'Multilingualism', p. 551.
[410] Hannah Hickman, 'My Inner Language', The Keep - University of Sussex Library, Weinberg Papers SxMs182/4/7.

certainly draws attention to the challenges and opportunities that are connected to the use of language and how these are related to changing notions of belonging.

Chapter 5
Everyday Life

Introduction

Everyday life during the war was often accompanied by feelings of anxiety and deprivation. The contrast between the ordinary and the extraordinary became particularly visible during wartime as the mundane and the exceptional were shaping experiences of everyday life. The 2015 Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies titled *Exile and Everyday Life* and its ten contributions addresses this by 'show[ing] experiences of loss, strategies of adaptation and the creation of a new identity and life'.[411] However, despite the initial assumption that the war and exile impacted the everyday lives of the Kindertransport refugees, many of them lived relatively ordinary lives. This paradox underscores the ability of the Kindertransport refugees to maintain a semblance of normalcy even in the midst of extraordinary circumstances.

In general, everyday life discourses are ways of organising knowledge in relation to (social) practices. In essence, they act as tools for social construction and as a framework for our understanding of the ordinary. Everyday practices are a conscious decision of the individual within everyday life and they take on distinct functions. Michel de Certeau states in *The Practice of Everyday Life* that users are 'commonly assumed to be passive and guided by established rule'. [412] He continues to argue that looking at the ways in which individuals operate and behave can reveal their agency within an everyday life discourse. In this chapter, I suggest following a similar approach to investigate the varying degrees of agency the Kindertransport refugees display in their diaries.

De Certeau's influential approach to everyday life theory aims to resist or even subvert the repetitiveness of everydayness through everyday practices and experiences which become a tool of resistance and change. He points out that '[m]any everyday practices (talking, reading, moving about, shopping, cooking, etc.) are tactical in character. And so are, more generally, many "ways of operating"'.[413] Everydayness, for de Certeau, seems to refer to the qualities, experiences, and routines associated

[411] See book description of *Exile and Everyday Life*, ed. by Hammel and Grenville.
[412] De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p. xi.
[413] Ibid., p. xix.

with ordinary life which are governed by dominant societal, economic and political structures. It encompasses the mundane aspects and the routine activities that are part of day-to-day life and keep people from developing agency. In contrast, everyday practices are ways in which the individual can challenge or subvert the senses of everydayness. For example, '[t]he reader negotiating another's text, the pedestrian traversing the panoptic city' and many more all show how consumers (users) actively engage with and manipulate the spaces around them until they finally subvert the strategies implemented by the dominant intuitions.[414] The ways of using those structures, or in de Certeau's terminology the ways of operating within those spaces, are the active practices of everyday life.

Andrea Hammel suggested using everyday theory as an approach to understanding the Kindertransport experience in her 2015 investigation of letters between Kindertransportees and their families: she argues that letters, and I'm extending this to diaries, reveal underexplored aspects of the lives of the children but also show how they dealt with everyday constraints and adapted to them:

> focusing on everyday life does not just foreground how individuals' lives were impacted and determined by the repressive social forces of the time, but it also reveals the agency and imagination of individuals in resisting those forces of everydayness.[415]

In other words, lived everyday experience and negotiations of the self within this experience provide a space for resistance against the repressive forces of everydayness and change within the spaces of everyday life. This, in turn Hammel argues, reinforces the idea to view the Kindertransport refugees as rounded individuals with agency rather than them being in the various passive roles, such as the beneficiaries of British hospitality that were, and still are, constructed for them.[416]

Drawing on the definition of everyday life stipulating the everyday as, on the one hand, a series of practices that express agency but also, on the other hand, as bringing 'the most repeated actions […] that make up […] day to day' into focus, this chapter sets out to explore how the Kindertransport refugees write about and represent their everyday lives.[417] Defining the everyday as 'an entangled field of diverse

[414] Ronald Bogue, 'Review: The Practice of Everyday Life by Michel, de Certeau, Steven F. Rendall', *Comparative Literature*, 38.4 (1986), 367–70, (p.368).
[415] Hammel, '"Liebe Eltern!" – "Liebes Kind", p. 160.
[416] Ibid.
[417] Ben Highmore, *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory: An Introduction* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 1.

practices and conventions where various "ways of doing" can be carved out through the agency of individual practice' suggests that the experiences and activities written about in the diaries shed light on the agency of the Kindertransport refugees as well as their processes of making sense of their new everyday lives.[418] Their new, unfamiliar, and extraordinary experiences of war and exile often become part of their everyday lives and thereby emphasises that the everyday ranges from being extraordinary to tedious.[419] The tediousness in particular can be found within the everydayness which relies on the repetitive forces of often uninspiring, subconscious and mundane experiences and actions. Ultimately, everydayness, the ordinary, and the mundane, as well as the extraordinary make up the fabric of everyday life and the ways in which the Kindertransport refugees negotiate and express these experiences, actions, and practices is what this chapter aims to investigate. The everyday and the ordinary are not synonymous but rather feed into each other; ordinary refers to the practices and circumstances of everyday life that may be described as routine, habitual, or normal.[420] Examples of these aspects include but are not limited to school, household chores, free time activities, interpersonal relations, and interactions.

Jennifer Sinor provides a definition of diary writing as a daily occurrence in her article 'Reading the Ordinary Diary':

> Dailiness means that the diary does not cohere around an organizing event or principle, but by documenting the everyday, makes these measured (and typically unmarked) moments available for the diarist's use. Dailiness also prevents the privileging of some events over others instead always resting in the middle.[421]

Arguably, Sinor's observations stand in contrast to the qualities that Sederberg attributes to wartime and refugee diaries such as creating a narration of a life. However, the diaries of the Kindertransport refugees yield both elements of the construction of life stories and a refusal of shaping the daily into a coherent narrative.[422] Ordinary activities become important aspects in the lives of the children, providing them with stability and regularity and highlighting the focus on personal aspects of their entries.

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[418] 'Introduction: Questioning Everyday Life', in *The Everyday: Experiences, Concepts, and Narratives*, ed. by Justin Derry and Martin Parrot (Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), (pp.1-17), p. 7.
[419] See: Highmore, *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory*, p. 17; and Derry and Parrot, 'Introduction: Questioning Everyday Life', p. 10.
[420] See, for example, Derry and Parrot, 'Introduction: Questioning Everyday Life', p.1.
[421] Sinor, 'Reading the Ordinary Diary', p. 123.
[422] Ibid., p. 124.

This chapter aims to investigate how the Kindertransport refugees write about everyday life and how this impacts their sense of belonging. According to Lise Herslund different aspects and parts of everyday life are essential for negotiating belonging as she argues that there are 'different spheres in everyday life to which individuals can feel a sense of belonging: work life, leisure life and home life, and belonging to the neighbourhood'.[423] By analysing how the Kindertransport refugees write about these aspects, we can not only look at their agency within everyday life but also on how they negotiate their relationality within areas of everyday life.

The first subchapter 'Writing the Personal and Writing the Historical in Everyday Life' investigates how the Kindertransport refugees negotiate their changing everyday lives based on new experiences and impacts of war and exile. It features discussion of entries dealing with the impact of war, their refugee identity and on the relationship with their families. These three sections focus on the ways in which the Kindertransport refugees write about the relationship between their personal experiences and the historical and political circumstances. The second subchapter 'Writing Daily Life' foregrounds the actions and (religious) practices that constitute our understanding of everyday life and are often considered as ordinary or even mundane. The two sections – the first one on ordinary lives and daily activities and the second one on religion – both explore how the Kindertransport refugees negotiate the everyday and agency as well as everydayness and enforced inactivity.

While we can certainly approach the analysis by looking at the binaries of ordinary lives and extraordinary historical developments and circumstances, Lauren Berlant's idea of 'Cruel optimism' also plays a vital role in situating the negotiation of belonging in diary entries on the ordinary aspects of everyday life. She argues:

> [We can think] about the ordinary as a zone of convergence of many histories, where people manage the incoherence of lives that proceed in the face of threats to the good life they imagine. Catastrophic forces take shape in this zone and become events within history as it is lived.[424]

Arguably, the diaries of Kindertransport refugees can be seen as a materialisation of this zone as they write about adjustment to life-changing events while maintaining a focus on experiences that are not primarily concerned with the historical developments

[423] Lise Herslund, 'Everyday Life as a Refugee in a Rural Setting – What Determines a Sense of Belonging and What Role Can the Local Community Play in Generating It?', *Journal of Rural Studies*, 82 (2021), 233–41 (p. 234) <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2021.01.031>.
[424] Lauren Gail Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), p. 10.

of war. Ultimately, looking at the diary entries through both the lens of a binary distinction between ordinary and extraordinary aspects of everyday life during wartime, and the lens that *Cruel Optimism* suggests can reveal different ways of negotiating belonging through (cultural) practices and the processes of making sense of their experiences.

Writing the Personal and Writing the Historical in Everyday Life

The Impact of War

The diaries of the Kindertransport refugees can be classed with other wartime diaries as valuable resources depicting both personal experiences and historical circumstances. Both aspects seem to be interwoven in their diaries and often entries combine reflections on everyday life with remarks about life during wartime.

Then fifteen-year-old Ilse Grünwald from Vienna writes a three-page entry on 4 September 1939, a day after war was declared:

> Paar Neuigkeiten. – Ich war [bei] einem Abend, da hab ich ein paar Leute […] wiedergesehen. Auch Fanni und Annemarie. Trude in Palästina und ich habe schon 2 ½ Monate keine Nachricht mehr von ihr. Außerdem bin ich nicht mehr bei den Meyers seit 11 Tagen. Das Committee hat plötzlich gefunden, daß ich nicht mit Jungen zusammenwohnen darf. Wegen einem ganz gemeinen unbegründeten Tratsch über Wolli und mich. Die Leute haben eben keine anderen Sorgen. Es hat mir trotz allem entsetzlich leid getan. Wolli war eine Woche in Birmingham und ich konnte mich nicht einmal verabschieden. Jetzt sehe ich erst, daß ich ihn doch sehr lieb gehabt hat und wenn mir mies war hat er mich sehr oft getröstet, manchmal sogar ohne es zu wissen. Er war ein sehr guter Junge und es geht mir schrecklich ab. Übrigens hab ich ihn schon paar mal auf die Stirn geküsst, er mich auch; wie er weggefahren ist, hat er einen ‚Abschiedskuß' verlangt, den er nicht gekriegt hat, als hätte er es geahnt, daß wir uns nicht mehr sehen werden. Jetzt bin ich ganz im Zentrum in einer Art Boardinghouse, habe ein schönes Zimmer momentan allein, aber später kommen noch andere. Es sind lauter Wiener hier und ich werde mein ganzes englisch verlernen. Von Mrs. Meyer hab ich 2 Tage bevor sie auf Urlaub gefahren ist weg müßen. Sie hat schon gezahlt u. alles u. es verfällt. Nicht einmal die Woche haben sie mich gelassen, daß war so grenzenlos gemein. Ich hab ihr geschrieben und sie hat mir bis jetzt nicht geantwortet, was ich komisch finde, da sie das gewöhnlich nicht tut. – Hier krieg ich 2 Schilling die Woche, ob später auch weiß ich nicht u. hab nichts zu machen außer meinem Zimmer. Ich sitze nach wie vor mit den anderen Mädels die nichts zu tun haben herum. Einmal war ich im Austria Klub und da war gar nichts los. Und jetzt das Wichtigste: Seit gestern ist Krieg. Ich kann es jetzt noch gar nicht fassen. In der Nacht um 3 Uhr mussten wir aufstehen weil die Sirenen waren. Sonst hab ich […] nicht viel davon gehört. [...] Es wird immer schrecklicher. Was habe wir verbrochen, dass man uns so straft. Wann werde ich meine Mutti wiedersehen, ich kriege immer so schreckliches Heimweh nach ihr. London

> wird man als erste Stadt bombardieren, vielleicht sterbe ich. Ein bissel tuts mir leid. Wenn ich am leben bleibe, was habe ich von meiner Jugend? Der Krieg dauert viele viele Jahre und dann sind meine schönsten Jahre weg und ich bin alt und grau. Ich schau ja schon jetzt wie 20 aus von vielen Sorgen u. denken. Was hab ich wirklich von meinem Leben, ich hab noch nicht schönes gehabt. Und meine goldene Mutti, nach der ich mich so sehne. Es ist wirklich zum verzweifeln. Genia ist auf 3 Wochen weg, sie versprach mir zu schreiben. Ich hab bis jetzt noch nicht gekriegt. Aber mir ist schon alles egal. Auch Paul schrieb ich 2 Karten, bis jetzt keine Antwort. Ob die Post schuld ist?! Wolli ist mit der Schule weg glaube ich, I am not sure. Ob ich ihn je wiedersehe? Ich bin tottraurig und unglücklich. Jetzt hab ich wirklich keinen Menschen mehr.[425]

There are several things that stand out in her entry but the most prominent one is her focus on seemingly ordinary events and aspects of a teenage girl's life rather than the start of the war thereby defying our expectations as readers. However, the events and experiences she writes about are in no way ordinary or common to Ilse. This suggests that a binary idea of ordinary and extraordinary within everyday life does not prevail and that we should rather focus on the relationship between personal, political, and historical aspects and events. While Ilse mainly writes about her personal experiences, the historical circumstances impact her negotiation of these experiences in her everyday life.

The entry follows a chronology of events rather than focusing on historical news about the declaration of war immediately, thus making it a conscious choice of emphasising the personal aspects of her immediate experiences over the historical. This can be attributed to these events and experiences being closer to her and perhaps easier to make sense of. While the reality of war was a relatively new concept to the Kindertransport refugees, daily and sometimes even mundane activities and observations were arguably more recognisable and familiar. This is not to say that the experiences Ilse writes about seemed mundane to her but rather shows that there is a disconnect between the expectations of us readers of her diary and the historical and political situation we are expecting to see highlighted and the reality of what Ilse actually foregrounds and focuses on: she attempts a chronological narration of her life story where she writes about personal aspects that are closer to her horizon of experience before also reflecting on the reality of war. By first emphasising what could be dismissed as a usual experience of teenage love and dramatizing this situation, Ilse

[425] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary*, pp. 115-117.

negotiates complex emotions of loss and sadness through a lens on the personal rather than the historical.

Emphasising these personal experiences can be seen as a vehicle to negotiate these unknown, new emotions due to the political events unfolding. Even when she starts writing about the war later in the entry, her focus is still on the personal impact this political development might have. Indeed, it seems that by focusing on her personal perception and the personal impact, Ilse manages to write about complex situations impacting the regularity and order of her everyday life. The very act of writing here can be seen as an attempt to create structure in an unfamiliar and disrupted everyday reality: writing about her teenage flings, the gossip in the community, and other similar aspects are tactics to resist the uncertainty and desperation brought about by the war. Sederberg argues in this regard that '[i]n […] a period of crisis, the writing practice can be […] fulfilling a need for regularity and order'.[426]

Ilse's statement '[d]ie Leute haben eben keine anderen Sorgen' further emphasises her attempt to narrate her life as ordinary and mundane. While she refers to a time before war broke out, her use of this set phrase after 3 September 1939 supports the assumption that Ilse puts an emphasis on the chronology of events by writing as if she was living in ordinary times. This suggests a longing for a form of ordinariness. However, the way she writes about these ordinary, personal experiences stands in contrast to the way she writes about her deteriorating mental health. Ilse utilises everyday language to create a sense of ordinariness, such as in the abovementioned statement or with words like 'Tratsch' and 'es geht mir schrecklich ab'. At the same time, she also writes about the trauma and desperation caused by the war and her exile experience. For example, she states 'London wird man als erste Stadt bombardieren, vielleicht sterbe ich. Ein bissel tuts mir leid. Wenn ich am Leben bleibe, was habe ich von meiner Jugend?'.[427] This excerpt is particularly interesting as it illustrates her deteriorating mental health since coming to Britain. Her tone suggests that death is not much worse than being in her current situation. The way in which she expresses almost an acceptance of death and destruction suggests a restricted affective response towards the reality of war. In the following sentences she further emphasises her focus on the personal aspects by connecting the duration of a war to her being 'alt

[426] Sederberg, 'Writing through Crisis', p. 333.
[427] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary,* p. 117.

und grau' when it eventually ends. Another example is her shift from the desperation caused by the war, going from stating 'Es ist wirklich zum verzweifeln' to exclaiming 'Aber mir ist schon alles egal' only a couple of sentences later after complaining about not receiving a letter from a friend. Not only do these instances highlight a sense of self-centredness and inability to see the bigger impact, but they also hint at a disconnect between moments of resistance and moments of resignation.

Her entry also highlights a disparity between activity and inactivity. In order for the everyday to yield agency, it needs a series of practices which can range from doing the dishes to social interactions. However, due to the political situation these practices are impeded by an enforced inactivity connected to rules and regulations during exile as well as the outbreak of war. For example, despite Ilse's efforts to maintain a form of regularity and stability within her everyday life – particularly expressed through the practice of diary writing itself and her discontent for the enforced inactivity – she seems to constantly be faced with new challenges and contradictory opinions. The apparent contradiction between her desire for activity and the enforced inactivity she is experiencing highlights how Ilse is struggling to negotiate everyday life in a sense that is not based on a series of practices and routines that express agency. There is no work to keep Ilse busy or entertained implying a sense of inactivity and being stuck. Furthermore, she hints at a desire for something to happen which stands in contrast to the severity and desperation she displays a few lines later when writing about the declaration of war. The war and Ilse's daily experiences and circumstances cause discontent and lead to signs of depression and anxiety. Indeed, the whole entry is laced with hints of internal struggles such as the unfamiliarity of her new environments and how she tries to overcome some of these struggles, for example, going to the Austrian Club to try and connect to others from her country of origin. Yet, she is also aware of the negative impact this might have, as she also voices being apprehensive about living with other refugees as she 'werde [ihr] ganzes englisch verlernen'. There seem to be a few discrepancies in Ilse's narration in this entry which further supports the disparity between activity and inactivity.

The personal focus illuminates how Ilse, aged fifteen, negotiates different relationships and experiences within her everyday life. While her everyday reality seems to be disrupted by the political situation and its impacts, the ways in which she writes about her personal experiences and relationships highlights a sense of agency. Despite the enforced inactivity due to being unable to express agency through various

practices, the very act of diary writing can be seen as a practice that allows her to gain some form of agency. Particularly her reflections on relationships with other people suggest an active negotiation of these relationships. Evidently, the focus on her personal experiences and relationships seems to be the cause of anxiety and desperation she displays in the entry. While it can be argued that this emphasis can function as a mediator between the uncertainty and severity of the political situation and her horizon of experience, it also becomes clear how the personal feeds into the political. Ilse's reflections on the war are not separated from her personal experiences and its impact on her directly. While life in exile for Ilse might share a lot of the common emotional concerns of her life to what her life as a teenage girl in Vienna would have looked like, her experience of uncertainty, feelings of isolation, and identity struggles are exacerbated by the severity of the unique political situation.

Having said this, there are other diaries that correspond more to our expectations as readers where the political and historical reality dominates the diarist's reflections and causes them to reflect on other issues and write about these differently. Some examples of how they can write differently about the reality of war and how it is manifested in their everyday lives can be found in Edith's diary. She reflects on the changing political circumstances and her fears and uncertainty of the future. In a diary entry on 22 April 1941, Edith, aged sixteen, states:

> Ich glaube, dieses Pessach werden sich alle merken. Es war ein entsetzlicher Luftangriff auf Belfast. Viele Häuser wurden in die Luft gesprengt und bei den meisten Türen und Fensterscheiben zerschmettert. Wir haben hier verhältnismäßig wenig davon gehört.[428]

Edith's entry highlights how she negotiated belonging based on senses of inclusion and exclusion. She displays an awareness of the tragedy of Belfast being bombed but also highlights that her community on the farm was not impacted by it. While this might seem that Edith creates a sense of 'us on the farm' versus a 'people in the city', her entry on 26 June 1941 paints a different picture:

> Heute hat Deutschland und Russland den Krieg erklärt. Hier war alles halb närrisch vor Freude. Die meisten denken nicht nach, was das bedeutet. Das ist Blut, Blut und nochmal Blut. Mein Gott es ist verrückt. Alles mordet um des Geldes Willen. In dieser Zeit, wo ich so nötig Halt brauche, bin ich allein. Ich habe mir heute ein bisschen über Kommunismus, Faschismus und Sozialismus erzählen lassen. Vieles ist mir klarer geworden. […] Das Wort Gott wird ab heute aus meinem Lexikon gestrichen und stattdessen etwas anderes gesucht.

[428] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.

> […] Heute muss ich mir auch bewusst sein, dass das Wiedersehen mit meinen Eltern eine fast aussichtslose Sache ist. In unseren Tagen gibt es keine Wunder mehr.[429]

In this entry, like in her other entries that have been analysed in previous chapters, Edith displays many negative emotions in her writing, such as hopelessness and desperation. Here, the cruelty of war and its brutal consequences as well as a lack of a supportive community lead her to conclude that she is alone which also leads to a crisis in faith. However, Edith shows agency here by turning away from religion. The entry implies a form of resistance as she is looking for her own new belief system. She also takes on a more pacifist or even sophisticated viewpoint in contrast to the others who just wanted the Germans defeated. Rather than also being 'närrisch vor Freude', Edith highlights how the war in general will cause more destruction and pain before ending and shows that she is also aware that even the defeat of the German troops will mean many more deaths.

Both Ilse and Edith were around fifteen years old when war was declared. They both display similar traits in their entries as they reflect on their desperation, futures, and how their everyday lives will change due to the war and its direct impact on their personal experiences. However, Edith mainly approaches these reflections from looking at the political and historical circumstances and then relating it to more personal issues. Ilse, on the other hand, often reflects on her personal experiences that help her make sense of the situation she finds herself in. While she states that 'das Wichtigste' is the declaration of war, it seems that all her personal experiences of teenage heartbreak, moving house, and feeling isolated and alone are almost as severe as the political situation.[430] Furthermore, she quickly relates writing about the war to writing about its impact on her personal everyday life, whereas for Edith, the political causes a deep-rooted faith crisis. What both diarists have in common is that they are able to write about and reflect on their everyday lives, the personal, and the political in a way that displays emotional depth and breath.

Another example of how the Kindertransport refugees negotiate the personal and the political in their entries can be found in Elisabeth's diary. After receiving news about her parents' emigration plans, the then twelve-year-old writes on 2 January 1940:

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[429] Ibid.
[430] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary,* p. 116.

> Wie glücklich bin ich doch heute, so glücklich. Das sind die besten Neuigkeiten für Jahre. [Meine Eltern] Fahren am 3. Jan von Triest nach USA. Krieg hat mein ganzes Leben verändert und ich hatte die Hoffnung aufgegeben daß ich sie jemals wiedersehen würde, aber Gott hat es nicht so gewollt. Und ich hoffe bald wieder mit meinen Eltern zu sein.[431]

Evidently, the personal and political are also foregrounded in this entry by connecting her parents' news about their emigration with her reflection on the impact of war and exile on her own life. The interconnectedness between the personal and the political is emphasised as Elisabeth not only relates her feelings of hopelessness to the outbreak of war but also how her parents' news about their emigration is an expression of god's power. Interestingly, in her memoir from 1998, Elisabeth's reflections on this entry paint a different picture:

> Clearly, I was relieved to learn that my parents would really be safe soon since there had already been several false starts earlier. [...] Even if their safety was very much on my mind, I had no real desire to join them, for the United States seemed terribly far away, and I was very happy at my English school. Hence, my pious desire to be reunited soon with my parents was suitably expressed for my own edification rather than with any real wish that it might happen immediately.[432]

This reflection warns us readers to be cautious when reading diaries and memoirs as it emphasises their character as narratives that are moulded by the authors.

Kurt Seelig's entry on the declaration of war highlights how the abilities of being able to write and reflect on the political and personal differ based on factors such as age and gender when compared to the other three diarists. The ten-year-old Kurt Seelig's diary, according to Andrea Hammel, has 'the appearance of a holiday scrap book. But the dramatic political situation is not far from the boy's mind'.[433] In his opening entry written between 28 August and 3 September 1939, he includes a section on the outbreak of war:

> Der Krieg!
> Wir haben uns langsam eingelebt. Wir haben am 2. September gehört das Adolf Hitler und sein Militer in Polen einmarschiert ist, wir dachten gleich das dann der Krieg vor der Tür steht. Es kam der zweite September und noch kein Krieg. Am 3 September 1939 haben wir im Auto gespielt, es kam mit einmal der Sohn an das Auto und sagte uns, das 3. September 1939 – 11 Uhr der Krieg beginnt. Michael Maybaum und ich sehr erschrocken. Wir sind zu Lenchen Pick gegangen, um ihr das mitzuteilen. Sie wusste es schon. Sie sagte uns wollt ihr in die Kirche gehen? Wir sagten: "Ja". Wie der Gottesdienst um war sagte mit

[431] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary,* scan 33.
[432] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion,* p. 87.
[433] Hammel, 'The Future of Kindertransport Research', p. 145.

einmal der Priester, es ist Krieg da, und bitte gehen Sie nach Hause.[434]

Kurt focuses on a chronology of events in his whole entry. He starts the entry with his evacuation on 28 August 1939 and ends on 3 September 1939. Hammel refers to Kurt's style as showing 'the immediacy of a young boy's life represented in a way that young children often write diaries' by writing more matter-of-factly rather than emphasising emotions.[435] The entry seems to list activities rather than reflect on experiences, and for us readers this creates a sense of omission. Rather than elaborating on his emotional response to the news, he writes about the actions he takes, such as telling a friend and going to church. This not only creates a contrast between the historical situation and Kurt's personal perception of it but also shows us readers how despite the threat of war he continued with everyday activities. While he states, on 2 September, he thought that 'der Krieg vor der Tür steht', he writes about seemingly carefreely playing in the car when he received the news about the war. Indeed, Kurt's entry, due to the matter-of-fact tone, seems to jump between ordinary everyday activities and extraordinary observations and events.

Ilse's and Kurt's diary entries about the declaration of war show that the extraordinary historic events are perhaps not as easy to write about and to reflect on as more ordinary experiences such as their relationship with others, their new surroundings, their living situations and so on. While both Kindertransport refugees have in common that their everyday activities and experiences show ways of operating to try and resist the dominant forces of historical developments and the constraints of exile, the ways in which they write about it differ. For us readers, Kurt's and Ilse's everyday experiences and practices might at times seem in character for their ages and sometimes even unremarkable – for example the teenage flings, waiting for work, playing in the car, or going to church – and suggest an attempt to navigate ordinary aspects of everyday life within a time of crisis, the personal impact of these practices and actions is more complex. Lauren Berlant argues in *Cruel Optimism:*

> A traumatic event is simply an event that has the capacity to induce trauma. […] [M]ost such happenings that force people to adapt to an unfolding change are better described by a notion of systemic crisis or "crisis ordinariness" and followed out with an eye to seeing how the affective impact takes form, becomes mediated. Crisis is not exceptional to history or consciousness, but a process embedded in the ordinary that unfolds in stories about navigating

[434] Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*, p. 12-13.
[435] Hammel, 'The Future of Kindertransport Research', p. 146.

what's overwhelming.[436]

In the cases of the Kindertransport refugees, the traumatic event can be their Kindertransport itself, the outbreak of war, or any form of crisis connected to the loss of stability and familiarity. Berlant's approach suggests that the individual tries to find ways to adjust to the historical developments and thereby moves away from a discourse on trauma after catastrophe towards narratives of adjustment focusing on the personal impact rather than the wider political issues.[437] While the trauma of the Kindertransport refugees cannot be separated from their experiences and reflections, viewing their diary entries through the lens of adjustment and adaptation enables us to look at their experiences based on everyday practices and activities.

This, in turn, allows us to read the entries as an expression of what is closer to the Kindertransport refugees' range of experience. While the historical developments are often included in the Kindertransport refugees' diary entries, their focus shows that ordinary activities still govern their everyday reality. Kurt Seelig writes on 9 April 1940, his eleventh birthday:

> Ich gehe zu Frank wo ich mit ihm spazieren gegangen bin. Die Deutschen haben Denemark und Norway angegriffen. Eine schöne Geburtstagsfreude. Ich bin mit Frank in das Kaffee gegangen wir hatten Eis, jeder 2 Brötchen mit Butter und ein Topf von Tee. Dann sind wir in das Kino gegangen, wo wir sahen "The stars look down" Ich habe bekommen ein Brief von den Eltern, von Frank Schreibpapier einen Füller und Tinte. Von Tante Ruth ein Lesezeichen und eine Zaubermappe. Von Schlesinger Marken und ein Brief.[438]

His entry combines the recording of historical developments with the recording of his daily activities. Both are written about in the same manner which, similarly to the entry analysed earlier, is very matter-of-fact. Kurt clearly does not reflect on his experiences on a deeper emotional level in his entries. Rather, the diary, for him, is a means to record activities. He rarely displays personal opinions in his entry, but here he includes the sarcastic note 'eine schöne Geburtstagsfreude' in response to the new developments in the war. In general, the way Kurt writes about the war suggests that news about the war has become a regular feature of his everyday life. It is worth drawing attention to some of the features that were discussed in the previous chapter. Kurt's writing sounds anglicised in parts: his use of 'Topf von Tee' rather than 'eine

[436] Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, p. 10.
[437] Ibid., pp. 8–9, 11.
[438] Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*, p. 32-33.

Kanne Tee' reads like a literal translation from the English term that he has presumably read on the menu. Instead of regarding Kurt's mixing of German and English as confusion and lack of knowledge of either language, it can represent the start of Kurt developing a certain use of language that reflects the intersection between his native and acquired language as discussed in chapter four on language.

That the war has become part of the Kindertransport refugees' everyday life becomes even more evident when looking at the regularity with which some of them write about air raids. For example, Ingeburg attempts to write in her diary every Sunday. Particularly in the month of August, she records many of the air raids she has experienced and thereby shows how they have almost become part of daily life in wartime Britain. In an entry on 5 August 1940, she states:

> Ben macht jetzt öfters air raid Übungen mit mir wobei er mich von unten nach oben bringt und vom Boden aufs Sofa trägt.[439]

This shows that there was a feeling of having to be prepared and knowledgeable in case an air raid was to happen. It even suggests that air raids occur regularly, and these practices might be very useful in the future. It also displays a degree of agency as Ben and Ingeburg are taking charge of their own preparedness for when the air raids actually take place. Two weeks later, on 18 August 1940, she records:

> Diese Woche hatten wir 4 air-raids (nichts passierte in unserer Gegend). Der erste dauerte 5 min. der 2. War Freitag als wir gerade lunch haben wollten. Wir gingen in die Shelter, setzten uns auf die Gasmasks und aßen. […] Dann war ein air-raid Freitagabend und einer heute Mittag. Dienstag hatten wir high-jump, ich bin ungefähr 6. gewesen (von ung. 14).[440]

This entry shows how familiar they seemed to have become with air raids as Ingeburg writes about everyday practices that are considered usual within a context of war, such as eating lunch in a shelter. Thereby, she highlights a sense of being unfazed by the air raids and how they have become part of her everyday life. While this might be an extraordinary thing to us readers, her plain description of the event emphasises how embedded in everyday life the air raids are and how carrying on with normal activities such as eating lunch reveals a degree of agency. There is a note on nothing more serious having happened in her area, which could mean a degree of relief, but she does not dwell on this aspect in this entry. The normality of it is further highlighted by her

[439] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary.*
[440] Ibid.

just listing when the air raids took place during the last week before mentioning her coming sixth in the school's high jump event.

Arguably, for thirteen-year-old Ingeburg, the extraordinary aspects of life in wartime are starting to become ordinary experiences that are part of her everyday life as a week later, on 25 August 1940, she recalls:

> Wir kamen erst um 11 Uhr nach Hause u. als ich gerade schlafen wollte, kam wieder ein air raid. Ben hörte sogar Bomben u. Rolf sah ein Feuer, aber ich war so müde (u. hatte eine Wut auf die dämlichen Nazis) dass ich bald wieder raufging u. noch nicht mal beim all clear aufwachte.[441]

The situation she describes here seems quite severe. There is a degree of awareness of what would happen if she was directly affected by an air raid but in this particular entry, she was too tired to be overly concerned about it. Interestingly, Ingeburg does not often write about the Nazis in her diary and rather focuses on events and experiences closer to her everyday life, such as receiving letters or daily activities. In this entry, however, she states she has a 'Wut auf die dämlichen Nazis'. There is an element of resistance portrayed by Ingeburg through, on the one hand, the tone she uses to write about it and, on the other hand, the actions she describes in her entry.

Her tone when writing about the air raids in her previous entries is very unemotional and matter of fact. By seemingly recording rather than reflecting on them, she creates a form of resistance, as she tries to narrate the experience as not having a major impact on her life and emotions. Portraying the air raids as part of her everyday life by writing about them in the same way she writes about other aspects of her week, she takes agency in constructing a narrative of resistance to the effect of the war. Even when the air raids seem to get more severe, Ingeburg still tries to portray them as unbiasedly as possible to maintain a sense of unaffectedness. On 1 September 1940, she states:

> Heute ist Sonntag (there is just an air-raid on)
> Diese Woche waren mindestens 3 air-raids pro Tag. Z.B. vorgestern Nacht waren so viel Explosionen, dass wir erst mal ne Weile unter die Treppe gingen. Einmal nachmittags war ein deutsches und 2 englische Flugzeuge grade über unserem Haus (und ich hielt mir die Ohren zu).[442]

Evidently, the air raids, while part of her everyday reality, are concerning and perhaps even anxiety inducing from an objective point of view. However, Ingeburg does not

[441] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary.*
[442] Ibid.

reflect on the potential emotional impact. Yet, despite her not going into detail about it, her choice of words and the regularity with which she writes about them implies that Ingeburg does think about it often. In her entry on 8 September, Ingeburg exclaims:

> Gestern waren wir bei Hirschens und dort hörten wir Bomben und anti-aircraft guns. Abends war der ganze Himmel rot weil ein Riesenfeuer im East End war. Ich hoffe nur dass sie bald damit aufhören denn es ist wirklich schon Zeit![443]

The expectation and hope that the air raids should stop soon can be seen as another expression of resistance. She still describes the experience of air raids very objectively but also reveals, through her wording, that she is fed up with it. Therefore, the emotion she expresses is not fear but annoyance which, in turn, highlights her agency as she is not expressing the stance of a passive victim. The series of entries and excerpts mentioning air raids suggests a form of cruel optimism: there is a hint in the entry of Ingeburg hoping for a peaceful future, despite the persistent violence and insecurity that surrounds her.

The Kindertransport refugees have their own individual response to the reality of war and how it impacts their everyday lives. Their response to these changing circumstances allows us to register changes in their experience of time and in their negotiation of belonging and how they revise the horizon of that experience. When faced with disruption, the everyday, as Ben Highmore highlights, becomes a site of negotiation:

> [T]he everyday becomes the setting for a dynamic process: for making the unfamiliar familiar; for getting accustomed to the disruption of custom; for struggling to incorporate the new; for adjusting to different ways of living. The everyday marks the success and failure of this process.[444]

In other words, the everyday can be the intersection of ordinary and extraordinary experiences and how the extraordinary aspects can become usual and familiar over time, such as the air raids during the war time.

Negotiating Refugee Identity

Not only are the constraints of war and its impact on and inclusion in their everyday lives highlighted in the diaries. Part of the Kindertransport refugees' everyday lives in

[443] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary.*
[444] Ben Highmore, *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory,* p. 2.

their *Fluchtland* was governed by their status as refugees. Often their circumstances and actions were influenced by outside forces such as the government or the refugee committee. Particularly in this sphere of everyday life, de Certeau's idea of practices and ways of operating manifests themselves and reveals the agency of the Kindertransport refugees. Everyday constraints, dominant economic, political, and social orders are partly resisted or even subverted by practices.

Overall, constraints can vary for the children. One of these can be issues caused by the refugee committee. The refugee committee was involved in the placement of children and had the power to move them from one place to another like in Ilse's case when she left the Meyer family and moved into a hostel as seen in her entry from 3 September 1939. In an earlier entry from 17 February 1939, Ilse writes also about her living situation:

> Mit Pauli [a friend from Vienna who also came to the UK on a Kindertransport] korrespondiere ich noch immer u. er ist goldig. Er hat eine Familie in M'ster [Manchester] für mich gefunden und das Comm. [Committee] rührt sich nicht. Gestern kam Frau Dora u. sagte mir ich muß in einer Boardingschool nach Ibswichs. Ich habe kein Nachtmahl gegessen u. kein Frühstück u. bin in der Nacht spazieren gegangen u. habe ununterbrochen geheult so wie in meinem ganzen Leben nicht u. schreckl. aufgeführt u. habe mich krank gestellt u. es hat alles nichts genützt. Daraufhin bin ich ganz allein nach London gefahren ins Comm. in die Bloomsburystreet. Eine Dame hat mich abgeholt die kein Wort Deutsch konnte. Dort habe ich mich schrecklich aufgeführt u. entsetzlich gekämpft, das kann man sich nicht vorstellen.[445]

This entry shows that, for Ilse, a sense of belonging is strongly connected to particular people as she wants to be close to Pauli. It becomes visible how she resisted the adult authority and power of the organising committee through enacting a performance by disrupting her own everyday routines and emphasising a personal and emotional dimension. The way she writes about the events shows that she is clearly aware of what she is doing and aims to evoke a response or reaction through her performance. While this particular display of agency is related to an exceptional occurrence and not based on her everyday practices but rather subverting them, the entry highlights her willingness and drive to actively implement resistance and change through various practices and actions.

Like many other refugees from Germany and Austria, particularly adolescent refugees that arrived on a Kindertransport were confronted with issues such as their

[445] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary,* p. 98.

ability to work, further migration, and internment. These experiences all caused anxiety and feelings of uncertainty or frustration. This was already hinted at in Ilse's entry from 4 September 1939 when she states that she '[sitzt] nach wie vor mit den anderen Mädels die nichts zu tun haben herum'.[446] Edith also writes about similar issues. On 18 May 1940, she reflects on her ongoing struggle to get a permit to work as a nanny:

> Nun ist es wieder so weit, dass ich zu Hause sitze. Ich habe kein Permit und kann deshalb nicht arbeiten. Dabei fahre ich doch nur mit den Kindern spazieren. Wie gesagt bin ich wieder im Home. Wenn ich das Permit nicht bekomme, werde ich wohl auf die Farm gehen müssen. Das ist bei dieser Kriegszeit nicht so schlimm. Hitler hat in der Zwischenzeit Dänemark, Norwegen, Holland, Belgien, Luxemburg geschnappt. Da er dabei nicht gestört wird, kann es sein daß auch wir eines Tages feindliche Flieger hier haben.[447]

Particularly the repressive forces of everydayness are illustrated here by Edith's emphasis on the externally imposed issues of daily life.[448] She focuses on the difficulties of receiving a permit to work as a refugee in Northern Ireland. There is a hint of frustration caused by her inability to work and the bureaucratic hurdles connected to it. Her use of phrases and words like 'wieder so weit' and 'doch nur' suggests, on the one hand, that this is a recurring issue and, on the other hand, that she does not appreciate that this is an issue in the first place. It is remarkable that Edith, like Ilse and Kurt, focuses on personal news and developments before mentioning the war. She complains about the inactivity that waiting for her permit has caused and perceives it as a shape of everyday life that she finds difficult to deal with as it stands in contrast to a series of ordinary and mundane practices making up everyday life that she was used to. It also seems like she does not really want to go back to Millisle Farm where many other refugees, amongst them her brother, lived but accepts that this might not be the worst outcome as the reality of war is not far from her mind. Furthermore, the sentence 'Wie gesagt bin ich wieder im Home' displays interesting aspects about her use of language. As discussed in the previous chapter, we can see that Edith has expanded her vocabulary and new terms and expressions find their way into her everyday language use.

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[446] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary,* p. 116.
[447] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[448] Hammel relates Lefebvre's approach to everyday life and everydayness to the experiences of Kindertransport refugees; see Hammel, '"Liebe Eltern!" - "Liebes Kind"', pp. 159–60.

She continues expressing issues about receiving a permit to work in her entry on 2 June 1940:

> Nun bin ich schon über drei Wochen wieder zu Hause. Weil ich kein Permit habe. Ich hatte bis jetzt nicht gewußt dass man zum Kinderwagenschieben ein Permit braucht. Erst hieß es in drei Tagen käme der Bescheid… und nun? In der Zeit habe ich hier im Haus geholfen. Was aber nie anerkannt wird.[449]

Here, we learn that it is not only the repressive forces of everydayness and boredom that cause Edith's frustration but also that there is a wider impact that her lack of work has on her negotiating this enforced inactivity. Her complaints about the inactivity show a form of resistance as her tone suggests that she is fed up with the situation. The entry hints at her maintaining a daily routine governed by the forces of everydayness as doing household chores is often perceived as mundane and repetitive. Presumably, she finds it increasingly difficult to negotiate this form of everydayness, and, through the act of writing and reflecting on it in her diary, she tries to implement a different form of agency. However, her agency here is very limited as the continued enforced inactivity due to the lack of receiving a permit prohibits other forms of agency in the sense of developing her own series of practices and activities, and she remains stuck in the everydayness of recurring housework.

The enforced inactivity also prompts her to develop negative feelings towards the responsible institutions, which becomes clear in her entry on 15 June 1940:

> Um alles richtig zu stellen: Italien ist nun auch im Krieg. Belgien und Holland überrannt. Ich bin schon satt von all dem. Darum trage ich mit dem Gedanken auf die Farm zu gehen. Das Permit werde ich wohl kaum bekommen. Ich bin wieder allein. Ach Mutti! Ich möchte dabei jemanden haben der mich gern hat. […] Aber was soll man denn machen, als von der Zukunft träumen. Es ist doch das einzige, was mich nährt weil die Gegenwart so hässlich ist. Ein Leben in Angst und Not. Nie ruhige Stunden. An den nächsten Tag darf man gar nicht denken. [450]

It has been almost a month since Edith, then aged fifteen, first mentioned waiting for her permit. The frustration has now turned into desperation and expressions of loneliness. She holds on to the idea of a better future, despite the cruel reality of the war that she experiences daily which in turn creates a contradiction between a distant future and the immediate future. The endless sense of waiting and the repetitive forces of everydayness as well as the recent developments in the war are written about in a

[449] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[450] Ibid.

way that emphasises Edith's annoyance but also her discouragement. Waiting – waiting for the permit, waiting for the war to end, waiting for someone 'der mich gern hat' – has become a recurring theme in her entries and reinforces a disconnect between Edith's perception of the present, her immediate future and an imagined better future.

As the war went on, refugees from German territories faced the possibility of internment.[451] This is also present in some in the diaries of the Kindertransport refugees. Teenagers were targeted with the threat of being interned as enemy aliens or even being deported. While no diarist of this study experienced internment themselves, some write about it in their diaries, showing that the status of being a refugee signified a degree of anxiety and uncertainty as they or their siblings and friends faced the constant threat of arrest and detention.

Ingeburg writes about her brother Gert's interment in three entries. On 24 July 1940, the thirteen-year-old teenager notes in her diary 'Sonst hat sich nicht viel ereignet, außer das Gert interniert ist (es ihm sonst aber ganz glänzend geht und T. Cl. [Aunt Claire] Und O. L. [Uncle Leon] froh sind ihn loszusein'.[452] This excerpt suggests Ingeburg is not yet aware of what internment might mean for her brother. The entry is almost humorous by mentioning the relief of her aunt and uncle of 'ihn loszusein'. This can be seen as using humour to mask her anxiety and fear for her brother. On 1 September 1940, her sentiment changes slightly as she writes in her entry during an air raid 'Vom Gert haben wir schon so lange nichts mehr gehört. Wenn er nur nicht nach Übersee abtransportiert worden ist. (Here is the all-clear)'.[453] Fear for her brother and the prospect of his deportation are expressed here. It seems that she has soon got used to these emotions as she does not mention his internment again until 14 February 1941, where she states: 'Aber am allerschönsten, Gert ist released und in Birmingham'.[454] Clearly, Ingeburg is relieved that her brother has been released, which suggests a strong bond between the siblings.

Judith Tydor Baumel-Schwartz claims that '[t]he internment and deportation escapades of 1940 are classic examples of the collective paranoia to which nations are

[451] Rachel Pistol offers an extensive investigation of the conflicting identities of the refugees that were caused by government policies such as tribunal classification to separate refugees from enemy aliens. She particularly focuses on the internment camps on the Isle of Man; see Rachel Pistol, 'Enemy Alien and Refugee: Conflicting Identities in Great Britain during the Second World War', *University of Sussex Journal of Contemporary History*, 16 (2015), 37–52.
[452] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary.*
[453] Ibid.
[454] Ibid.

prone at times of stress'.[455] Arguably, the apprehensiveness of the British public towards refugees, and sometimes even hostility, that grew as the war went on can be seen as counterproductive to creating new senses of belonging and attachment to their country of refuge. Rather, the refugees built stronger attachments amongst themselves based on shared experiences, which enhanced a sense of community amongst the exiles and refugees. Sixteen-year-old Ilse writes about the change in circumstances on 16 June 1940:

> Sämtliche refugees müssen einrücken, die anderen von den Jungens werden interniert. Ali [a friend from Vienna] auch seit paar Tagen, was mir schrecklich leid tut.[456]

This entry expresses that Ilse is upset about some refugees being either interned or enlisted. Particularly as Ilse knows someone personally, she feels more strongly about it. It could be argued that this entry hints at the complex negotiation of belonging as the refugees, amongst them many adolescent Kindertransport refugees, faced challenges of displacement but they might also experience a new sense of belonging by fighting for their country of refuge.

Evidently, the reality of war and its impacts such as air raids, internment and food shortages have become part of the Kindertransport refugees' everyday lives. Particularly the ones living in London or close to London like Ingeburg and Ilse were confronted with air raids. The age of the diarist also plays a vital role in how they depict and write about these aspects. Ilse is surrounded by people who would qualify for either internment or enlisting due to her being sixteen years old. Most people she associates with are of a similar age and therefore many of her male friends and acquaintances might have been interned. The Kindertransport refugees had to adapt to new living situations and circumstances and, therefore, implement tactics to maintain a sense of ordinary lives while also accepting the war as part of their new reality.

Maintaining Relationships with the Family

Having just looked at how the initially extraordinary and unfamiliar historical and political circumstances become part of the everyday lives of the Kindertransport refugees and how they negotiate complex emotions and experiences within their

[455] Judith Tydor Baumel-Schwartz, *Never Look Back: The Jewish Refugee Children in Great Britain, 1938-1945*, Shofar Supplements in Jewish Studies (West Lafayette, Ind: Purdue University Press, 2012), p. 194.
[456] Shatkin, *Ilse's Diary,* p. 125.

changing everyday lives, this chapter now turns to an analysis of instances when they write about maintaining personal relationships with their families, with the historical and political impact in mind. Looking at entries about letter writing and receiving can be a vital resource when analysing their everyday lives in exile in the context of the personal and the political. Andrea Hammel argues in her article '"Liebe Eltern"- "Liebes Kind"' that 'most often only the letters from the parents and relatives writing to the children have survived'.[457] She goes on to suggest that the diary as an additional source can reveal underexplored aspects of their emotional response to receiving those letters stating that '[o]ften the correspondents write about their pleasure when receiving letters and their longing for them'.[458] This, in turn, suggests that there is a sense of belonging to and longing for their family conveyed when the Kindertransport refugees write about receiving letters. On the other hand, the entries also shed light onto the political circumstances surrounding war, persecution, and refuge and their impact. Therefore, the entries can reveal the interconnectedness of the personal and the political within the everyday lives of the Kindertransport refugees as well as their negotiation of activity and enforced inactivity.

Particularly the aspect of longing for news from their country-of-origin shines through when the diarists record receiving letters in their diaries. Elisabeth, then aged twelve, writes in her entry on 19 April 1940:

> Ich warte nun für Briefe, Briefe, Briefe, die kommen nun von zu Hause sehr regelmäßig, aber ich möchte mehr. Neues daß ich bald gehen könne, daß sie Arbeit gefunden habe, irgendetwas aber nicht dieses schreckliche Warten.[459]

Despite the regularity of the correspondence with her family, especially her parents, Elisabeth longs for different news in the letters. This again links with the inactivity, highlighted earlier, that Edith and Ilse are complaining about and find difficult to negotiate in their everyday lives. While she hopes to be able to reunite with her parents soon, the entry highlights a juxtaposition between her longing to be reunited with her Austrian family and her assimilation to an English environment. In the first sentence of the example, she uses the preposition "für" rather than "auf" which shows that, as

[457] Hammel, '"Liebe Eltern!" - "Liebes Kind"', p. 156.
[458] Ibid., p. 161.
[459] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 40.

she points out in her memoir, she is 'beginning to think in the language [she] now use[s] every day'.[460]

At some point, Red Cross letters became the main form of communication between some Kindertransport refugees and their parents.[461] Ingeburg, for example, writes on 8 September 1940: 'Letzte Woche hatte ich einen Brief übers rote Kreuz von Mama, sagend dass sie gesund wären, vom 23. Juni! Außerdem hatten wir vom Gert [her brother] Nachricht'.[462] On 22 December 1940 she states 'ein Brief von Mama ist gekommen (durchs Rote Kreuz) und wurde von T. Cl. [her aunt Claire] beantwortet'.[463] Another example is from her entry on 2 August 1941, where she recorded:

> Heute habe ich einen roten Kreuz Brief von zu Hause bekommen. Der Inhalt war folgender: Geliebter Junge [presumably the letter is addressed to her brother Gert], vielen Dank für Deine Nachricht, lerne weiter fleißig. Wir sind gesund. Laßt bald wieder etwas von Euch hören. Innigste Küsse Eltern. Vati hatte unterschrieben. Datiert war der Brief vom 27. April aus Berlin-Erdnerstr. Ein Kleiner Lichtblick.[464]

She copies out the content of the letter to keep a record of it, highlighting the personal importance of receiving news from home. The way Ingeburg writes about the letter and its content shows that she is displaying a sense of cruel optimism by seeing the few lines as a good sign as opposed to the news and rumours about many deaths that were circulating around that time. However, Red Cross letters were hugely restrictive in their content and length, not revealing much information to Ingeburg:

> During the war, correspondence between Nazi occupied and Allied countries was prohibited. The Red Cross enabled families to maintain connections with loved ones who had stayed in Germany and were then unable to leave or had been deported by running a messaging service until the end of the war. Red Cross letters meant that families who were separated by the conflict could receive regular messages when the normal postal service was no longer possible.[465]

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[460] Orsten, *From Anschluß to Albion*, p. 93.
[461] Red Cross letters were a means to stay in touch with family members left behind in Germany or who had been deported though they often took several months to arrive at their destination. The messages could only be up to twenty-five words long and had to be written on a standardized form. The writers often feared censorship and had to conceal some messages; see: 'Red Cross Letters: Proof of Life in 25 Words or Less', *Jewish Museum Berlin* <https://www.jmberlin.de/en/red-cross-letters-proof-life-25-words-or-less> [accessed 7 December 2023].
[462] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary.*
[463] Ibid..
[464] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary.*
[465] 'Red Cross Letters' <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/affiliates/gjfa/collections/1939-1945-world-war-ii/red-cross-letter/> [accessed 6 December 2022].

Therefore, we can assume that the Kindertransport refugees had mixed emotions when receiving those letters. Presumably, there was some awareness of the issues that meant that the communication had to go via the red cross, however the content of the letters seems mostly positive.

While we can assume that the letters the Kindertransport refugees received tried to shelter the recipients from the bad experiences of their parents, some diary entries show that the diarists were still, to some degree, aware of the impact of the war on their parents' migration efforts, which again highlights an interconnectedness between the personal and the political within their everyday lives. Fritz Seelig, aged fifteen, writes about a letter he received from his parents in his entry on 28 March 1940:

> Heute morgen erhielt ich einen Brief von den Eltern. Ich erwähne diese Briefe hier nur so selten, weil sie meistens vom selben Inhalt waren, nämlich daß Chile immer noch gesperrt ist. In diesem Brief aber teilten mir die Eltern auch mit, daß sie noch nicht das Geld für die Passage haben.[466]

He continues the entry with his plan on how to help his parents with this problem. The entry shows that Fritz attributes significance to this letter as he normally does not mention the letters in his diary. Choosing to write about it therefore highlights the importance of his parents being unable to emigrate due to multiple factors. Furthermore, his own efforts to try and help them gives us insight into his fear for them and of not being reunited with them. Andrea Hammel alludes to this in her article "'Liebe Eltern" – "Liebes Kind"':

> Despite the attempts to spare the other correspondents' emotional turmoil, it was not uncommon that the parents living in difficult and threatening circumstances in Continental Europe asked their children for help: be it for household goods and food or more importantly for assistance in the emigration process.[467]

Arguably, knowing about the difficult circumstances in which their parents had to live contributed to a sense of responsibility that the children felt. This, in turn, suggests a notion of social obligation towards their parents and reiterates the desire of the Kindertransport refugees to be reunited with their families.

Furthermore, it highlights how the political situation had a direct impact on their everyday lives and that the children who were asked for help often reflect on their ability to do so and a sense of inactivity. Edith, for example, also writes about receiving

[466] Seelig, F., *Fritz's Diary*, p. 52.
[467] Hammel, '"Liebe Eltern!" - "Liebes Kind"', p. 163.

letters from her parents and the impact of the war on letter writing. On 29 January 1940, she reflects:

> Freitag bekam ich einen Brief aus Dessau über Schweden. Es sieht sehr mies aus, und allem nach geht es eher schlecht als gut. Was soll ich tun. Ich kann doch nicht helfen. Wie lange wird der Krieg dauern? Eine Schande, und das im 20. Jahrhundert.[468]

She clearly establishes a connection between her personal situation and the political circumstances as she writes about the broader political context of the time and displays an awareness of the impact of the war on the post and how she and her family are personally affected by this. At the same time, she reflects on her inability to take personal action to help her family in response to the political events impacting the family's health and well-being. The entry illuminates the intersection of the personal and political by the way in which she reflects on her feelings about the political situation and how it is affecting her own life and the lives of others, ultimately showing how political events can have an effect on personal experiences. This is again expressed in her entry on 10 November 1940, she states:

> Ich bekam durch das Rote Kreuz drei Briefe von den Eltern. In einem Brief bittet mich Vati um 60 Dollar. Die soll ich mir von Hurwitz verschaffen. Er braucht sie für die Reise nach Shanghai. Ich werde und muss ihm das Geld unter allen Umständen verschaffen. Selbst wenn ich mich dafür verkaufen müsste. 60 Dollar sind viel Geld. Ich bin so unglücklich. Gestern Abend sprach ich mit Meir [another refugee living on Millisle Farm] darüber. Er stimmte mir bei, dass ich alles tun müsste was in meinen Kräften steht.[469]

Such entries about receiving such letters shed light onto the changing relationship between the parents and the child, the longer the war goes on. The desperation of the parents presumably triggered a shift in the tone of their letters which is reflected in the diary entries of the Kindertransport refugees. The more overt and honest portrayal of the situation back in their country of origin then caused the children to display greater worry and anxiety for their parents which in turn impacted their everyday lives. Furthermore, the entries mentioning letters often demonstrate the ways in which the personal experiences of the Kindertransport refugees are intertwined with the political developments.

[468] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary.*
[469] Ibid.

Diaries often offer a fragmentary depiction of their everyday lives which are shaped, not only, by ordinary everyday activities but also by the reality of war and exile. However, there is a tension created for us readers due to the Kindertransport refugees often starting or foregrounding ordinary rather than extraordinary aspects. Therefore, there is a deviation between what we as readers expect from a particular entry and what we actually read. The ways in which the Kindertransport refugees write about the reality of war shows how, on the one hand, their everyday experiences are easier to reflect upon and negotiate and, on the other hand, that they often try to relate the historical developments to their personal circumstances and space of experience. Arguably, focusing on their daily lives rather than the historical developments can help maintain a sense of stability as well as provide a space to process the larger events unfolding around them. Yet, while diary writing is a form of personal expression that highlights experiences close to the diarist, their writing is often shaped by the broader political context and developments during the time of writing.

Writing about Daily Life

Despite the war being very present in many of their diary entries, the Kindertransport refugees also write about living relatively ordinary lives and doing mundane activities.[470] Sederberg discusses a link between her considerations on wartime and crisis diaries and Jennifer Sinor's article 'Reading the Ordinary Diary' stating that '[a]lthough this essay discusses diaries written during an extraordinary time […] Sinor's work is […] important for guiding how we read these sources, noting diarists' desire to create order and stability'.[471] Looking at the ways in which the Kindertransport refugees gain agency by writing about and reflecting on their everyday lives that are impacted by unusual and extraordinary as well as ordinary or even mundane experiences and activities allows us to address how they negotiate various notions of the everyday itself and their senses of belonging. The representation of dailiness and ordinary activities sheds light on how the Kindertransport refugees negotiate a new understanding of their everyday lives and how they utilise ordinary practices and activities to not only resist the repetitiveness of everydayness but also to mediate an enforced inactivity and rupture due to the impact of war and exile.

[470] Hammel states that 'we have to acknowledge that on a daily basis many children were pursuing relatively ordinary lives', see: Hammel, 'The Future of Kindertransport Research', p. 146.
[471] Sederberg, 'Writing through Crisis', p. 333.

Helga Bejach mainly writes about ordinary and sometimes even mundane aspects, highlighting her everyday experiences. On 3 January in three consecutive years, she writes:

> 1944 Dull life. I shall never be really happy in this house. Patricia makes me fed up.
> 1945 Nothing special. Did housework in morning as usual. Sorted out picture posts […] – drama pictures. Helped Aunty with coffee in afternoon. Joy is coming to tea tomorrow. In morning Aunty and I are buying clothes.
> 1946 Had hair permed. Was there from 2.30 – 6.30. Mrs Hinchcliffe was sweet, gave me x-mas cake & tea. Freezing cold weather.[472]

While we can see that the repetitive forces of everydayness certainly are expressed through boredom and frustration, the entries emphasise usual and ordinary activities. Statements such as 'Dull life' or 'Nothing special' that illuminate this are included and ultimately shape the narrative of Helga's daily life. The absence of event which seems to be created here suggests a sense of inactivity based on everydayness, despite being active and doing things.

While Sinor argues that the ordinary diary is 'marked by succession, repetition, and an absence of event', the Kindertransport diaries, as already highlighted, combine the features of what she calls 'measured and occasioned documents'.[473] The diaries cover mundane, ordinary aspects in the sense of measured representation as well as unusual occasions. This, for example, is illustrated in Helga's diary as it generally does not reflect on many political developments but rather focuses on the personal aspects. Helga's remarks on the war are few and far between, which makes it even more interesting to look at the way she writes about political aspects when she does, like on 5 May 1945, then age seventeen:

> Dull day, rained all the time, went with Irene to have pollyphotos taken. Letter, […] still no shipping coupons, blow, of course Irene is v. upset. – VE Day any time now. Mended socks for Patricia in afternoon. Had supper late.[474]

The emphasis on her personal experiences and emotions comes through here. The listing of events that Helga utilises in her entries reminds us of paratactic style. Sinor emphasises that this rhetorical use of parataxis is inherent to dailiness:

> As a rhetorical strategy, it denies privilege and hierarchy because there is no subordination within the phrases, clauses, sentences, or paragraphs. The reader

[472] Bejach, *Helga's Diary*.
[473] Sinor, 'Reading the Ordinary Diary', p. 129.
[474] Bejach, *Helga's Diary*.

> cannot tell which event within the sentence, or the paragraph was the most significant and, therefore, must grant equal weight to all.[475]

Perhaps it is the non-hierarchical structure of the entries that highlights how the political circumstances and extraordinary observations are put on a level with other more mundane and ordinary aspects and therefore emphasise how the ordinary experiences remain the focus of Helga's entries.

The act of writing itself as well as writing about the everyday as a series of practices and repetitive events creates a sense of continuity in the life of the diarist.[476] Portraying their lives as relatively ordinary by focusing on everyday activities and practices – for example housework, education or daily lives in their host families – creates a sense of structure. Hannah Weiberger, then age thirteen, writes on 17 September 1941:

> Gestern fing das neue Schuljahr an. Bin nun in der Senior School, das heißt, eine von den älteren in den höheren Klassen. Jedermann, die vorher sehr wissend in gutter Musik waren, scheinen etzt Jazz-Liebhaber zu sein, aber wahrscheinlich ist das bloß weil ich das nicht mag. Mehr Mädels haben Zöpfe angefangen; hoffe das furchtbare Rollen und Locken aussterben! […] Ich bin vertreterin für Literary und Debating Society. […] Glück-auf fürs neue Schuljahr![477]

As previously mentioned, this is the first entry in Hannah's diary. She jumps between observations on the new school year, music, and hairstyle trends which can all be considered as parts of everyday life. By emphasising her personal likes and dislikes for certain styles and music, Hannah utilises the diary as a space to reflect upon impressions and occurrences she encounters in her everyday life. This is further emphasised by her constant mention of her day-to-day school life that seems to build the focal point of her diary entries. On 18 September 1941, she writes:

> Heute hatten wir die erste Erdkundestunde und weder Frl. Lamb oder die Klasse mögen es, dass es bloss eine Stunde Erdkunde in der ganzen Woche gibt. […] Es wurde uns gesagt, dass wir jetzt in der Bibliothek sein dürfen, wenn wir irgend Freistunden haben – wie erwachsen das klingt. […] Man muss jetzt mit Karten das Mittagessen kaufen. Auch muss man selber seinen Platz decken, und ich werde sehen, ob wir nicht freiwillige Abwaschpartien

[475] Sinor, 'Reading the Ordinary Diary', p. 132.
[476] Sederberg states, for example, that '[i]t is thus not only the narrative itself that creates continuity but the ritual act of writing. In the sources [...] we can often observe this conflict between disruptive events brought about by wartime crisis and diarists' attempts to counteract these disruptions through writing', see: Kathryn Sederberg, 'Writing through Crisis', p. 333.
[477] Hickman, *Hannah's Diary.*

anfangen können.[478]

While going to school might be a repetitive activity, her observations about the geography lesson as well as the 'Freistunde' highlight her personal evaluation of particular aspects of her day. By reflecting on these activities and practices in her everyday life as well as mentioning ideas she has to engage in different parts of her day-to-day school life, Hannah displays agency in her diary entry. Arguably, she resists the repetitive forces of everydayness by highlighting slight changes in the familiar aspects and routines.

Her day-to-day school life features heavily in her diary, which is perhaps also due to her guardian Nell being a teacher herself. Adding to the early entries shown above, on 29 September 1941, she writes:

> Wir kriegen jeden Tag drei Hausaufgaben für jeden Wochentag und fünf im Wochenende (man sieht, wie senior wir geworden sind!); glücklicherweise sind aber zwei davon Geschichte, welche ich nicht nehme.[479]

This entry displays a sense of boredom of, or being fed up with, the repetitive aspect of everydayness like homework. This stands in contrast to the earlier excitement she seemed to have when writing about being in senior school. By stating the amount of homework that she receives each day and weekend, Hannah draws attention to how the initially new and exciting aspects of school quickly have become part of a routine. However, following on from this observation, Hannah shows in her entry that she can also utilise active strategies to resist the repetitive everydayness by engaging in many different activities, thereby displaying agency:

> N. [Nell] fragte mich gestern ob ich nicht lieber mit noch etwas anderem aufhörte, aber ich sagte nein. Ich muss doch alles tun was ich brauchen werde, und ich hab wirklich Zeit für alles, d.h. ich hätte Zeit, wenn ich sie ein bisschen besser austeilte. Aber eins kann ich nicht tun, und das ist mit meinem Lesen aufhören![480]

By following up on her reflections on the amount of homework with Nell's concern that she might be doing too many extracurricular activities, Hannah's entry sheds light on a contrast between activity and inactivity within daily life. While the repetitiveness of everyday routines can be perceived as imposing a lack of agency, inactivity, and perhaps even boredom, moments of engagement and excitement and series of

[478] Hickman, *Hannah's Diary.*
[479] Ibid..
[480] Ibid.

practices, in this entry expressed through a nod to Hannah's hobbies, can give the diarist agency within their everyday life. Interestingly however, the thirteen-year-old still seems to act within a certain sphere of expectation ('Ich muss doch' and 'was ich brauchen werde'), thereby questioning the degree of agency she has over these practices. This does not mean that Hannah lacks agency but rather suggests a future focused approach that she displays in her everyday life, hoping to make use of the activities and skills obtained at a later stage.

The importance of everyday structure, particularly in times of political unrest, is often illustrated in the diaries through a focus on ordinary, sometimes even mundane activities, experiences and practices that make up everyday life and can also form part of the repetitive structure of everydayness. On 29 January 1941, fifteen-year-old Edith writes:

> Immer wenn ich schreiben will, kommt was dazwischen. Das ist scheußlich. Montag: Naehen, Dienstag: Backen, Mittwoch: erste Hilfe. Naja![481]

It is interesting that she highlights that writing in her diary has to make way for other everyday practices. She lists her day-to-day schedule showing how it is ordered and structured by ordinary activities, thereby documenting her everyday life and maintaining a sense of stability. Edith's emphasis here on the ordinary aspects of everyday life shows that she tries to resist the rupture that was created by war and exile, which she writes about and discusses in other entries.[482]

Evidently, the structure of her day-to-day life is important to Edith as she expresses disappointment of missing out on her usual activities when she is ill in an entry on 12 February 1941:

> Nun liege ich den zweiten Tag im Bett. Es geht schon so so la la, aber eine scheußliche Nacht habe ich gehabt. Im Laufe des Tages den Schlaf nachzuholen, geht nicht. Erstens sind die Wände so dünn, dass man einen am Ende des Gangs hört, wenn man am anderen Ende an die Tür klopft. Zweitens geht alles sehr temperamentvoll zu. Es ist weiter nichts von Bedeutung los. Schade, dass ich heute Abend nicht in den Nähkurs gehen kann auch morgen muss ich den Kochkurs versäumen. Kann man nicht ändern. Hoffentlich

[481] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[482] Examples include Edith's entries on 14 December 1939: 'Und der Krieg nimmt kein Ende. Was soll das sein. Ich weiß nicht? Ich habe solche Sehnsucht nach Frieden. Und Hanukkah? Ist vorbei'; on 18 May 1940: 'Wenn ich das Permit nicht bekomme, werde ich wohl auf die Farm gehen müssen. Das ist bei dieser Kriegszeit nicht so schlimm'; and on 10 February 1941: 'Ich komm kaum weiter. Ich warte noch auf mein Permit'; see Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary.*

> bekomm ich mein Permit bald. Es ist anders zu scheußlich so lange zu warten.[483]

Edith, aged sixteen, uses everyday activities such as a 'Nähkurs' and a 'Kochkurs' to impose structure on an otherwise unbearable inactivity caused by waiting. This sense of inactivity is amplified by having to miss out on these structure-giving activities due to being ill, and she therefore expresses disappointment in being unable to participate in them. While the repressive forces of everydayness, waiting for her permit, and being ill convey a sense of being stuck, Edith expresses agency within her everyday life through various practices and activities.

Another diary that covers mundane aspects of day-to-day life is Elisabeth's diary. She often writes about her life in her foster family and particularly about her relationship to Jenny, their youngest daughter, who is closest to Elisabeth in age. They often have small disagreements or arguments like, for example, on 7 August 1940, when twelve-year-old Elisabeth writes:

> Heute etwas Komisches passierte. Jenny hat nun für Tage gewaschen u. wirklich sollte sie jeden anderen Tag trocknen. So ich begann zu waschen, wenn sie irgend etwas sagte u. ich antwortete die Rule ist so. Sie sagte es war nur so u. Gott sei Dank sei ich nicht Herr im Haus. Ich antwortete nichts u. wenn sie ein Geschirrtuch nahm, stieß sie mir in's Gesicht. Ich tat nichts darüber u. waschte ruhig ab. Dann sagte sie „Bitte lege die Teller den anderen Weg hin ". Ich sagte nichts aber tat's u. wenn ich es einmal vergaß sagte sie irgendetwas. Immerhin sie fürchtete das ich es Mrs C sagen würde, denn sie lies mich abwaschen u. nachher entschuldigte sich bei mir u. sagte das ich sie manchmal in eine Wut trieb u. fragte mich ob ich gerne mit den Enten zum Teich gehen würde. Ich konnte nicht ‚nein' sagen u. so ging u. es war scheußlich.[484]

Elisabeth writes about a very mundane household chore that the two girls are supposed to share: washing and drying the dishes. She writes about the injustice she feels about Jenny not sticking to the rules and never drying the dishes but also highlights how she takes agency by just starting with the dishes and not waiting for Jenny. The way she writes about this activity displays a sense of sibling rivalry as she voices a feeling of injustice but also highlights that Jenny 'fürchtete das ich es Mrs C sagen würde'. These are qualities often expressed in relationships between siblings, such as being a telltale and fighting about doing the least boring chore, and Elisabeth even states in an earlier

[483] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[484] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 54.

entry on 1 January 1940: 'Und ich sagte zu Tante Trudi nur, daß Jenny sei ein wenig zu mir wie ich zu Georg [her little brother]'.[485]

Evidently, Elisabeth and Jenny do not get along well as many of her entries show.[486] Making her relationship with Jenny the focal point of many entries highlights how Elisabeth is negotiating her own position in the everyday life of the Cook family. The diary furthermore becomes a tool to vent. On 18 August 1940, she describes an incident:

> Im Auto [back from a picnic] gab sie mir auf einmal ohne Riesen einen Stoß auf die Nase. Nach einer Weile sagte sie „Entschuldige mich. Ich meinte es nicht so hart zu sein. Tut es weh?" Ich sagte „Ja" u. wendete meinen Kopf. Seit Tagen hat sie nun wieder gewaschen. Heute in der Mitte fragte sie mich, ob ich es tun wollte ich aber sagte „Nein danke". Nach einer Pause fragte sie mich, ob ich beleidigt sein würde. Ich sagte ich wüßte nicht u. ich könnte nicht in die Zukunft sehen, obwohl ich ganz wohl wusste daß ich ihr niemals verzeihen werden könnte.[487]

This further highlights the sibling-like nature of their relationship but also expresses a very strong dislike for her. Writing about her experiences with Jenny can be seen as a way to process and make sense of their relationship, as well as to explore the everyday dynamics of family life. The entries then overall also provide a nuanced picture of Elisabeth's everyday experience of family life as a foster child and its complexities. While she does not mention any different treatment from Mrs Cook or the other members of the family, the constant quarrels with Jenny hint at a sense of anxiety of being ostracised as the foster child.

Writing about particular details of day-to-day life such as education, daily routines, and life in the foster family can help create a sense of normalcy. Hammel has previously discussed Kurt Seelig's diary arguing that

> They [children his age] like recording events that happen with some regularity: Kurt writes frequently about the films he saw at the cinema.[488]

[485] Ibid., scan 21.
[486] For example: 'Ich hasse Jenny nun' (1 January 1940); 'J. Wahr sehr nett u. das macht mich ungemütlich' (29 July 1940); 'Mrs C. ging zu London. Ich mache mir nichts draus daß sie geht aber ich wünsche sie würde J. mit ihr nehmen' (16 August 1940); 'J. [Jenny] sehr ungeduldig. Wirft Brotkruste nach mir' (1 September 1940); see: Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scans 15, 49, 58, and 65.
[487] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 58 & 59.
[488] Hammel, 'The Future of Kindertransport Research', p. 146.

Her observations resonate with what we can see in other diaries. That not only the practice of diary writing itself – as discussed in chapter 2 – but also writing about regular activities and practices can give the Kindertransport refugees stability.

Going to the cinema seems to be a regular activity for many of the Kindertransport refugees, particularly for the brothers Kurt, age ten, and Fritz Seelig, age fourteen, who, as shown above, often write about the activity. For example, Fritz writes about going to the cinema on 29 April 1939 ('Zusammen mit Familie B. im Kino "The Empire" zu dem Film "Four Feathers"'), on 5 May 1939 ('Kino "Sweetheart" (gut)'), on 7 May 1939 ('7 Uhr Kino "Command the women" und "Night alone" (schlecht)'), and 12 May 1939 (Freitag Abend Kino "Angels with dirty faces" and "Luck of the navy"').[489] All his entries on films are very short and concise. Sometimes he would add a comment on whether he liked the film or not but not every time. This is similar to his brother Kurt, who would once in a while add some information like in his entry on 14 December 1939 where he states 'Wir sind mit der Schule in das Kino gegangen, wir sahen "The Lion has wings" (Er war über die Luftwaffe)' or on 22 December 1939 stating 'Ich bin mit Jeanne in das Kino gegangen wir sahen "Confessions of a Nazi spy" es war schlecht'.[490] The reality of war is not removed from some of these entries as some of the films cover themes such as warcraft and the armed forces. There is a certain sense of irony here as they comment on the propaganda films, which should remind them of the political situation, but they actually focus on their personal impressions over the message of the film. Writing about the activity of going to the cinema with such regularity and including their own ratings, shows how the brothers try to resist an enforced inactivity due to the war and carry on with seemingly normal activities, thereby expressing various degrees of agency.

Sometimes the Kindertransport refugees write about a whole array of activities, not just going to the cinema, which highlights even more ways of resisting the imposed inactivity and the repetitiveness of everydayness. For example, on 11 August 1940, Ingeburg records in her diary:

> Diese Woche habe ich wieder einiges erlebt. Dienstag waren wir bei Harvey Nichols in Knightsbridge. Ich ass dort ein Eis und zeichnete jeden Stuhl. Donnerstag waren wir im Kino u. sahen zwei wunderschöne Filme: *Road to Singapore* u. *Wings of the Morning*. […] Annabella spielt eine

[489] Seelig, F., *Fritz's Diary*, p. 9.
[490] Seelig, K., *Kurt's Diary*, clipping folded & p. 20.

> Zigeunerstochter namens Maria. Sie spricht ein ganz komisches Englisch was ganz süß klingt.[491]

The seemingly ordinary activities are important to Ingeburg as they can give her a sense of living a relatively normal life for a girl her age. The recording of such events puts an emphasis on the present moment and immediate experiences. While the particular things she describes here seem to be something special and not occurring daily, the practices of eating an ice cream, going to the cinema, or drawing a chair can be considered as normal and familiar.

Another similar example can be found in Edith's diary in her entry on 25 January 1941:

> Gestern war ich in Belfast. Ich habe mir ein paar schöne Schuhe, ein Regencape und noch ein par Sachen gekauft. Nachmittags war ich im Kino zu 'A Womans Face'. Ein wunderbarer Film. Ich habe mich photographieren lassen u. die Bilder mit Bewerbungsschreiben eingeschickt. Sie sind gut.[492]

Here, contrary to her frustration about work permits that she experienced in Belfast or hospital visits, her trip is described positively. She highlights treats such as buying new clothes and going to the cinema. Despite these experiences being treats rather than ordinary everyday experiences, the manner with which she writes about them stands in stark contrast to the tone of her other entries that reflect on her loneliness and anxiety or the frustration about the work permit. It seems that her tone changes to a more positive one since she finds these experiences and activities easier to reflect upon and negotiate than the inactivity imposed by the restrictions of procedures for refugees and the war.

Religious Practices

Religious practices can also be seen as part of some of the Kindertransport refugees' everyday lives. The negotiation of their religious belonging impacts their feelings of stability and integration in a community or perhaps of feeling marginalised. In her article 'Narrating the Margins and the Centre', Hammel highlights the difficulties of finding adequate placements for the children that also catered for their religious needs.[493] At the same time, she also states that 'the majority of the Kindertransportees were Jewish, although approximately 20 percent came from families that did not

[491] Sigler, *Ingeburg's Diary*.
[492] Bown-Jacobowitz, *Edith's Diary*.
[493] Hammel, 'Narrating the Margins and the Center', pp. 217–18, 220, 222–23.

identify as Jewish but were persecuted as Jews'.[494] This combination of struggling to meet the religious needs of some but also looking at the religious background of others emphasises the complexity of religious identity and belonging of the Kindertransport refugees.

It becomes evident that in some of the diary entries the Kindertransport refugees were confronted with reflection of their own religious needs as well as their notions of religious belonging. One instance where we can see a diarist negotiating (ethno-)religious belonging can be found in Leopold's diary. Leopold Weil, then sixteen, writes on Yom Kippur in 1941:

> Es scheint mir, dass sich eine Welt vor mir eröffnet, hell und wahr, und dass ich, der verfolgte kleine Jude, das Recht habe hineinzuschreiten, unverzagt, in mein Eigentum, und mich baden in dem Licht der Weisheit und der Wahrheit, wahren Judentums, des uralten, immer lebenden und immer be-lebenden, heraus aus der Dunkelheit des Hasses und der Enggeistigkeit der Welt.[495]

In this entry, he creates a sense of ethnoreligious belonging to a specific group of the Jewish community by emphasising the aspect of persecution. Arguably, he creates a contrast between the ethnoreligious group and the reality of war, between the personal and the political.

Renegotiating one's own religion in relation to other faiths became part of the everyday lives of some children that lived in host families who belonged to a different faith group. In an entry written in English on Easter Sunday 1940, then twelve-year-old Elisabeth, who was christened Catholic, states:

> I had never been to the Catholic Church, A. (Aunt) Esme would not let me go. So, I had to with the rest to the Anglican Church. Oh, what agony of mind have I gone through before I could decide whether I ought to go or not.[496]

Here, Elisabeth expresses an internal confusion about her religious obligations as she tries to balance what she thinks is expected of her as a Catholic and what her host family who are Anglican do. In her entry she goes on to point out that she 'seemed to have read in some Catechism that it is wrong to have the Holy Communion, but [she] had forgotten whether it also said anything about the service, and [her] conscience told [her] that it was not wrong' and concludes that she can go to church with the Cook family.[497] We can see that Elisabeth tries to rely on what she has learnt about her

[494] Ibid., p. 203.
[495] Lawrence, *Leopold's Diary*.
[496] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scan 35 & 37.
[497] Ibid.

religious obligations and that she struggles to come to terms with participating in a service of a different denomination. Her experience of the service itself was disappointing and she states in her entry:

> Oh, how disappointed I was. I always dislike pomp and then I could hardly bear it. Seb said she didn't like it either, but it was like a Catholic Church. At school we learn in James the first reign that the Puritans are very good people and so I was completely muddled.[498]

Her internal confusion is expressed throughout the entry. Arguably, this confusion impacts Elisabeth's notions of religious belonging in so far as she is confronted with various religious affiliations at a time of her own religious uncertainty as she is unable to go to a Catholic Church. Presumably, a new religious environment paired with the English education she received make it harder for her to maintain and express her own form of religious belonging.

Similarly to emphasising belonging through feelings of non-belonging in a national and local sense, Elisabeth utilises the same technique for ethno-religious belonging. On 24 September 1940, she writes during her journey to the US:

> Ein Jude, denkend das ich von der jüdischen Religion bin, fragte mich zu einem Gottesdienst am Donnerstag. Glücklicherweise Gina war da u. sie antwortete für sich selbst u. wenn ich ihr sagte das ich kat. [katholisch] sei war sie sehr nett u. versprach es ihm zu sagen, wenn er mich früg. Ich war in der nächsten Abteilung des Zimmers, wenn ein Abend-Gottesdienst anging u. mir viel's schwer nicht at dem Priest zu lachen. Aber ich möchte nicht andere Leute's Religion verspotten. Es war nichts anderes den ein sehr sehr schnelles Murmeln von Hebräisch.[499]

This entry shows that Elisabeth still strongly identifies as Catholic and that there was the common assumption amongst the refugee community on the ship that many of them would be Jewish. Even though Elisabeth and her family only converted to Catholicism in the early 1930s, she does not seem to affiliate with the Jewish faith, nor does she seem to have had any kind of connection to the Jewish faith during her early childhood years. We can assume this based on her reaction to observing the Jewish service.[500]

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[498] Ibid.
[499] Orsten, *Elisabeth's Diary*, scans 84 & 85.
[500] It is worth mentioning that the entry yields interesting aspects about her use of language as we can see a mixture of German and English words as well as a change in grammar structure which has become more anglicised. However, such aspects are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four 'Use of Language in the Diaries'.

Conclusion

The everyday experiences of the Kindertransport refugees are shaped by several factors and, in turn, these experiences impact their negotiation of belonging. Narrating their everyday lives can be seen as, on the one hand, a tool to make sense of social, political, or historical circumstances and, on the other hand, as a method of self-reflection and discovery. Utilising the diary as an everyday object, as a mediator between past, present, and future and, at the same time, as a matrix for recounting personal experience in a historical or social context allows us to discover the various ways in which the Kindertransport refugees write about ordinary and extraordinary aspects of their everyday lives and the relationships they form. Their cultural background, the social structures in the *Fluchtland*, and the historical context influences their beliefs, values, and behaviours. Ultimately, the connections they build with others and the world around them define their everyday lives. Similar to Rose Sillars' argument in her article 'Doris Hart at the Metropolitan Opera' that 'all exiles [become] habituated by the patterns of [their] new life but the behaviour-patterns of the past remain', there is a visible negotiation between sense of belonging to the *Herkunftsland* and the *Fluchtland*.[501]

In their introduction to the collective volume 'Exile and Everyday Life', Hammel and Grenville mention that '[i]n some ways [...] ordinary everyday life is still something refugees were striving for in these extraordinary circumstances '.[502] The diaries of the Kindertransport refugees can be situated between describing ordinary life and extraordinary circumstances while negotiating new experiences. They write about their strategies to live relatively ordinary lives but also about their experience of being confronted with what it means to live in a time of war and refuge, which can be seen as a way for Kindertransport refugees to assert their own agency and identity. By documenting these experiences and feelings, the Kindertransport refugees were also able to establish their own perspectives and personal views in the face of the political events unfolding around them. In turn, it also becomes visible in the diary entries how the political context can shape the personal experiences of the Kindertransport refugees as some entries show how their daily routines and interactions are influenced by war and exile.

[501] Rose Sillars, 'Doris Hart at the Metropolitan Opera - The Triumph of the "Little People"', in *Exile and Everyday Life*, ed. by Hammel and Grenville, pp. 21–40 (p. 21).
[502] *Exile and Everyday Life*, ed. by Hammel and Grenville, p. xvi.

Reading diaries through the lens of everyday theory shows that despite ordinary experiences and activities being closer to the Kindertransport refugees, their entries undermine the idea that living relatively ordinary lives would mitigate their exile experiences. Indeed, in many of their entries the reality of war and its impact are not far from their minds. While they do not reflect on the historical developments to the same extent, all diaries are a testimony to the extraordinary historical circumstances they found themselves in. At the same time, the Kindertransport refugees also write about their more mundane experiences and expectations, such as school, free time activities, and crushes. This interconnectedness between both the ordinary and the extraordinary aspects of their everyday lives reinforces the idea that the everyday is more than just mundane practice but becomes a site of resistance and change.

More than just being passive, the Kindertransport refugees show agency and imagination in their everyday lives by implementing tactics and ways of operating to resist the social forces of dominating structures and the repetitiveness of everydayness. By writing about their experiences in their diaries and perhaps even examining their own reactions and responses to the personal and political events, the Kindertransport refugees show agency and gain a sense of control in their own lives.

While some of them seem to adapt a form of cruel optimism during war time with an unattainable idea of the future, which in turn might hinder them from forming new senses of belonging, others display tactics to overcome these limitations. The diaries reveal an ongoing tension between the desire for normality and the persistent reality of war. The diarists wrote about their daily lives, their routines, and their social interactions, but the ongoing struggles caused by the historical developments are also present in their diaries. Consequently, the entries often look at both their basic needs during wartime and their relationships, daily activities, and anxiety about the future. They display an ability to navigate relationships and attachments to both the country of origin and country of refuge, which influences their sense of belonging. Everyday life is where these relationships and attachments are most evident, as the Kindertransport refugees interact with at least one of the following daily: family, friends, people from their country of origin and from the country of refuge, and refugee organisations.

Evidently, the Kindertransport refugees pursued ordinary lives: they went to school or work, integrated into family life within their host families, took part in free time activities, and practised their religion. This is not to say that this applied to every

Kindertransport refugee, nor is this reflected in all the diaries. Often, the degree to which they were able to avoid feeling the full impact of the war depended on their age, gender, and living situation in the country of refuge. However, what all the diaries illustrate is that their everyday experiences were marked by a sense of both possibility and constraint, of activity and inactivity. We can clearly see a sense of agency in all these entries even though the content might suggest repetitiveness, inactivity, and boredom. However, through the very act of being what Sinor calls 'the ordering agent', the diarists display agency as they make decisions of how and what to write in the diary.[503]

[503] Sinor, 'Reading the Ordinary Diary', p. 130.

Conclusion

This thesis explored the multifaceted narratives within the diaries of nine Kindertransport refugees, seeking to unravel the intricate experiences and notions of belonging they write about. Questioning the spatial binaries which often govern definitions of belonging and drawing on theoretical considerations regarding transnational identity formation, memory and everyday life, the main findings of this thesis are: firstly, the diaries are a testament of life-stories that are constructed around negotiating complex emotions of the lives of the children and teenagers who write them, situated between ordinary concerns and extraordinary historical circumstances; secondly, that the diary writers' understanding of belonging is much more elusive, and fluid than those binary definitions assume.

The Kindertransport is, of course, a pivotal moment in the lives of the diarists and therefore puts into view how they question their identity and senses of belonging, which is the central concern of this thesis. It also became evident that the Kindertransport is far more than a rescue mission from threat to safety, from Nazi persecutions to sheltered lives in Britain, moving beyond the conception of a before and after the Kindertransport with a binary distinction between their lives in the *Herkunftsland* and *Fluchtland*. The diaries of the Kindertransport refugees invite us to reflect not only on the historical significance of the Kindertransport but also on the broader implications for understanding identity, displacement, and resilience in the face of adversity. Yet, what all the diaries also have in common is that they show that the Kindertransport refugees still lived relatively ordinary lives. While there are some instances where war, exile and the political situation is discussed, often they write about everyday situations and activities where they try to come to terms with the cultural differences and the unfamiliar language. Overall, it appears that their sense of belonging seems to be more tied to social and cultural norms rather than spatial or political aspects.

Having said this, this thesis also highlighted that we should not generalise the ways in which we analyse the Kindertransport experience. The diaries of the nine Kindertransport refugees all deal with very specific aspects of their lives and highlight just how different the circumstances of the Kindertransport refugees were. Elisabeth, who was placed in a foster family, mainly writes about everyday life at the Cook family and her relationship to them, whereas Edith, who lived on Millisle Farm (a refugee

farm in Northern Ireland), writes about the constraints of refugee life and life on the farm. Helga's diary is perhaps the most ordinary one of the nine diaries of this study as her entries focus on everyday activities, recording appointments, the weather and other mundane things. Ilse's diary combines teenage angst that you would expect from a diary of a thirteen to twenty-year-old girl with fear and anxiety caused by the historical circumstances. Similarly, Ingeburg's diary also covers many aspects of a teenage girl's concerns. The diary of Leopold is not just a site for reflecting on daily life, but he routinely re-evaluates what kind of self he is writing. The brothers Kurt and Fritz Seelig both use their diaries mainly as a means of recording everyday experiences but also reflect on their new situation in some entries.

Chapter One highlighted how the diaries become a valuable resource of self-expression, resistance, and agency. Analysing Kindertransport diaries as both a form and practice of self-expression reveals how diversely the diarists articulate their experiences of displacement, new environments, and changing circumstances. The diarists' differing motivations for keeping a diary and choices of what to write about also reveal aspects about their awareness of social, political and historical developments. Furthermore, the possibility of self-reflection and discovery allows the diarists to trace their identity development and fluid notions of belonging. This, in turn, emphasises the agency of the Kindertransport refugees in narrating their life-stories. Their diaries, as objects and writing practices, served as tools constructing these life-stories by connecting past, present, and an uncertain future. Examining various appearances of the diaries underscored the importance of the diary as a tool of individual experiences and ways refugees cope with change and negotiate a sense of belonging.

Chapter Two explored the diarists' explicit discussion of the concept of belonging by looking at their relationship to their *Herkunftsland* and their new bonds established in the *Fluchtland*. The diary entries demonstrate the complexity of belonging, challenging spatial distinctions between the country of origin and the country of refuge through negotiating co-existing feelings of belonging and non-belonging. Focusing on entries that deal with *Heimweh* and feelings of *Geborgenheit* experienced in the *Herkunftsland* reveals that these emotions can have a hindering effect on forming new attachments in the country of refuge. However, we were also able to see in some diary entries how the Kindertransport refugees establish new forms of belonging in the country of refuge, for example belonging to a refugee community,

belonging to a family or even by writing about expanding their understanding of 'home'. Ultimately, the diarists' senses of belonging are portrayed as hybrid, shifting, and co-existing, supporting, as proposed in recent studies, a redefinition of belonging as a fluid concept.

Chapter Three on memory illuminated how diaries reveal nostalgia for their lives before the Kindertransport, uncertainty of their present and future, and a kaleidoscope of emotions towards new everyday experiences. The ways in which the Kindertransport refugees write about memories of their countries of origin and reflect on new ones of their lives in the country of refuge highlights the transnational dimension of memory. Therefore, rather than focusing on the reliability of memory and the act of remembering, the chapter shifted the focus to the affective dimension of memory which is not always positive. The display of an intersection of different cultures and customs coming together in the entries of the Kindertransport refugees reveals how the diarists negotiate and make sense of their memories of their country of origin and their new lived experiences in the country of refuge. By embracing this intersection, the Kindertransport refugees not only actively remember their lives before the Kindertransport but also establish reference points to mediate change. This way of utilising memory in the diary becomes a way to not only negotiate the new experiences, but also senses of identity and belonging, ultimately building on the aspects of diary writing and writing about belonging discussed in the previous chapters.

The vital role that language plays in negotiating belonging has been outlined in Chapter Four. While the Kindertransport refugees sometimes write about issues with integration and feelings of non-belonging, looking at their use of language in the diaries showed that their linguistic integration is often further advanced than they themselves think. Similarly, to their use of memory, the ways in which they write reveal an intersection between knowledge gained in their countries of origin and acquired knowledge in the country of refuge. The chapter drew on theoretical considerations of trans- and multilingualism as well as repertoire which, as shown in the analysis, are all interlinked. Expanding their vocabulary and the ways in which they write about particular experiences and events since coming to their country of refuge highlights how the Kindertransport refugees displayed translingual qualities in their writing. Language shifts but also the hybridity of language use in general give us an indication of how belonging is negotiated on a language level. I argued that there is

an inherent connection between the deployment of language, the exile experience of the Kindertransport refugees, and their understanding of belonging.

In Chapter Five, an exploration of everyday life, the analysis emphasised that the diaries of the Kindertransport refugees are stories of emigration and changing circumstances as well as coming of age stories. While the war is not a prominent theme in every entry, all diarists deal at one point or another with the separation from their parents, their new and unknown environments, and how the war impacts their daily routines. Ranging from air raids to films on the war, entries mention the different ways in which the political situation has woven itself into the fabric of their everyday lives. Using diaries as a tool for self-reflection and sense-making, the Kindertransport refugees navigate ordinary and extraordinary aspects of their lives. Even though they clearly pursued ordinary lives, their entries also reinforce the idea that the everyday becomes a site of resistance against the impact of war on their everyday lives and against the repressive forces of everydayness. The Kindertransport refugees show agency and how they gain a sense of control in their own lives in response to personal and political events. Hence, the diaries demonstrate the refugees' agency and imagination in navigating relationships, attachments, and daily activities, shedding light on the ongoing tension between the desire for normality in the lives of teenagers and children, and the persistent reality of war.

The eighty-fifth anniversary of the Kindertransport in 2023 as well as the film adaptation *One Life* about Nicholas Winton have also contributed to a resurgence of widespread public interest in the scheme and childhood in exile.[504] Hence, not only multiple academic investigations, like the two mentioned above and Amy Williams' and Bill Niven's monograph (2023), were published, but there were also books about refugees and exile written for the general public, such as Andrea Hammel's books *Finding Refuge* (2022) and *The Kindertransport: What Really Happened* (2023).[505] While the Kindertransport has certainly gained more public and academic interest in the last decade, significant anniversaries like the eightieth and eighty-fifth anniversary are often connected to an increase in commemoration events, publications, and other media outputs such as radio specials or podcasts, making this research very timely.

[504] *One Life*, dir. by James Hawes, 2024.
[505] Hammel, *Finding Refuge: Stories of the Men, Women and Children Who Fled to Wales to Escape the Nazis* (Aberystwyth: Honno Press, 2022); Hammel, *The Kindertransport: What Really Happened*.

While diaries have often been used as additional material when analysing other ego-documents such as memories and oral testimonies, an expansive and detailed study focusing on them as primary material has not been done yet in the realm of Kindertransport scholarship. Recently, there has certainly been an increased effort to record the voices of Holocaust witnesses, as we are in a time where lived experience of World War II and persecution is in the process of being transformed into cultural memory. Therefore, it is ever more important to find new ways to preserve and reflect on these experiences. It also allows us researchers to focus more on the individual life-stories of the Kindertransport refugees, rather than trying to find an all-encompassing narrative. What the analysis has shown is that the diary as a source material can enable us to understand the Kindertransport refugees' everyday lives in exile emotionally. Thereby this thesis aligns with the most recent publications on the Kindertransport that shed light onto the multifaceted aspects of the implementation, impact, and legacy of the scheme as well as wider current research in exile studies. Sederberg's article 'Coming-of-age in exile: the refugee diaries of Thea Gersten and Erika Löbl, 1937–47' published in September 2023, for example, discusses the importance of the diary as a medium to understand emigration and refuge from Nazi Germany.[506] For her, the two published diaries illuminate life-making stories as well as documenting the effects of Nazi persecution. Drawing attention to the diary as a unique source, the article examines how the diary can be used as a tool to negotiate change brought by war and exile. This clearly shows that there is a need for investigating these kinds of documents. However, Sederberg's focus lies on published diaries which have undergone an editing process. While this is not necessarily a short-coming of Sederberg's argumentation, building on such work by looking at unpublished diaries further expands the pool of resources exploring the histories of war and exile in the twentieth century.

Another recent publication on childhood in exile is the collective volume *Innocence and Experience: Childhood and the Refugees from Nazism in Britain* (2024) edited by Charmian Brinson and Anna Nyburg which aims to shift the focus away from the Kindertransport to also include the experiences of other refugee children from

[506] Sederberg, 'Coming-of-Age in Exile: The Refugee Diaries of Thea Gersten and Erika Löbl, 1937–47', *Holocaust Studies*, 2023, 1–22 <https://doi.org/10.1080/17504902.2023.2251314>.

Nazi Germany.[507] What the different chapters show is how the exile landscape and experiences of the children that came with their families and those who arrived on a Kindertransport are often overlapping and interconnected, highlighting how they were raised and educated as well as understood and integrated – an aim that was also part of this thesis. While looking at different groups of child refugees from Nazi Germany is certainly a significant addition to the field of exile studies and thus draws attention to a gap in research, the collective volume also emphasises a need to understand the immediate exile experience of child refugees in greater detail. This is where research on unpublished diaries could make very helpful interventions. On the one hand, the diary as a physical object often makes visible where changes and additions were made and, on the other hand, it offers a perspective of the experience through the eyes of the Kindertransport refugees as children and teenagers. Rather than having gone through an extensive editing process and retrospective evaluations, the diaries shed light on how the refugees perceived the events as they happened. Particularly the contributions of the first section 'Dealing with Displacement' align with the suggestions and observations in this thesis, most significantly the relationship of the refugees to their *Herkunftsland* and *Fluchtland* as well as the importance of notions of belonging to various social groups and communities such as refugee communities.

Both publications, along with this thesis, stress a shift away from uniform exile experiences to children's individual experience of exile, their resilience, and their agency. Therefore, this thesis feeds into present-day discourses in exile studies and Kindertransport scholarship. By suggesting a cross-disciplinary approach to analysing the diaries, considering memory studies, everyday theory as well as language and transnationalism, the unpublished diaries of the Kindertransport refugees have been presented here as a unique resource to consolidate our understanding of the Kindertransport scheme, as well as its immediate effect and implications on the refugees' lives. Using materials such as ego-documents and other memory sources while taking archival records into account is a method that has recently been employed by many investigations into the effect of Nazi persecution.

Despite the unique insights the diary offers, we cannot ignore that the diary itself is a representation rather than historically accurate. For my research, it was

[507] *Innocence and Experience: Childhood and the Refugees from Nazism in Britain*, ed. by Charmian Brinson and Anna Nyburg (Oxford; New York: Peter Lang, 2024).

important to consider several factors that contribute to the construction of a narrative in the diaries which were already outlined in the introduction. It became evident during the analysis that the aspect of narrativisation can be utilised to further the analysis and interpretation of the diaries. For example, the diary is inherently subjective and reflects the personal experiences and emotions of the writer which, in turn, can introduce biases and selective interpretation. In this thesis, these subjective evaluations and descriptions of experiences and events were foregrounded, as one of the main aims of this research was to highlight the interconnectedness of individual experiences and negotiating notions of belonging. These biases, therefore, rather than being a hindrance, revealed how they can shape the narrative in ways that were sometimes not aligned with objective historical records. The chapters on memory, language and everyday experiences drew attention to how external influences such as societal norms, cultural expectations and political developments can impact how events are portrayed and experiences are negotiated. It was important that the analysis was not only based on the diaries themselves but was also informed by historical documents and theoretical considerations on the organisation of the Kindertransport scheme, methodological approaches to diary studies as well as other supplementary resources related to the diarists such as memoires and archival records. The diarists narrate the historical events and how they experienced them. But first and foremost, the diaries focus on the everyday life and how the writers negotiate everyday challenges. Each diary entry offers multiple ways of exploring the experience and emotions of the Kindertransport refugees.

Further research might focus on the representation of belonging over the course of the lifespan of the Kindertransport refugees and how the transnational forms of belonging become even more evident in later years of their lives. Building on the elusiveness of belonging and how it is represented in the diaries, other avenues to explore are notions of diaspora embedded in these narratives which underscores the representation of cultural memory. Challenging traditional notions of rootedness and fixed identity in not only diaries but other forms of life-writing could highlight the ability of refugees to adapt, resist and ultimately redefine notions of home and belonging. Other avenues to explore in the field of diary studies include perspectives on memory and biases that emphasise how cognitive biases can influence the diarist's representation of events, an investigation of the diaries and oral histories which can provide additional perspectives on accuracy, narrativisation and representation of

events, and examination of narrative means which could highlight particular storytelling techniques, the construction of timelines, and referential narration. The individual chapters of this thesis already suggested possible aspects for further research like further study of identity construction through narrativisation beyond notions of belonging, perhaps focusing more on self and a narrative identity or how the diarists use narrativisation to charge everyday occurrences with significance.

In conclusion, this thesis has argued that senses of belonging in the diaries of the Kindertransport refugees transcend static ideas of belonging and has shown that the Kindertransport was far more than a rescue mission from threat to safety. Moving beyond these binary conceptions of belonging and, indeed a binary conception of the Kindertransport, allows us to understand the impact that exile, refuge, and uprooting had on the children and teenagers. By analysing the complexities of the Kindertransport experience, the Kindertransport refugees' changing senses of belonging, and how they were manifested in their diaries, this thesis contributes a new angle to our efforts in learning from past refugee movements.

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