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Black GI Children in Post-World War II Europe

edited by
Ingrid Bauer and Philipp Rohrbach

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Reviews

Ingrid Bauer / Philipp Rohrbach

Editorial

This volume of *zeitgeschichte* goes back to the international workshop "Tabooed History: The Life Stories of Black GI Children in Europe" that took place in Vienna in November 2017. The workshop brought together scholars, journalists, and activists from various countries – including Austria, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and the United States – who conduct research on this topic in the contexts of World War II and postwar Allied occupation. The workshop aimed to create a network for the exchange of preliminary findings and to discuss commonalities and differences in the social as well as political treatment of children born to Black GIs and White local women. In particular, the workshop focused on these children's personal experiences with racism and social exclusion in societies that defined themselves as White as well as their peculiar situation of being simultaneously visible and invisible; of standing out individually as the Other on account of their skin color, yet at the same time not being recognized as a social group. The workshop also intended to serve the initiation of further collaborative projects, including among other things the acquisition of authors for a volume of the journal *zeitgeschichte*.

The workshop was initiated and held in the framework of the research project "Lost in Administration" (LIA), which was based at the Center for Jewish Cultural History at the University of Salzburg[1] (from 2013 to 2017) and pursued the goal of exploring the Austrian dimension of the tabooed and suppressed history of Black 'occupation children'. The research project focused on two key aspects: First, it aimed on the basis of sources from Austrian and American archives to determine as exactly as possible the number of these children and to reconstruct their

1 This project was financed by the Future Fund of the Republic of Austria. Albert Lichtblau (from the University of Salzburg) served as the academic head of the project while Ingrid Bauer (also from the University of Salzburg) acted as academic advisor. The project team consisted of Philipp Rohrbach and Niko Wahl, who were supported in the individual project phases by various research associates, including Marion Krammer, Regina Fritz, and Vanessa Spanbauer. Since 2018, Philipp Rohrbach and Ingrid Bauer have been conducting further archival and interview-based research as well as analyzing the sources collected hitherto.

treatment by both the Austrian and American authorities as well as the appertaining state (welfare) politics. Second, through the creation of narrative biographical (video) interviews, the project aimed to document the children's multifaceted and widely unknown life stories, thereby also to establish a basis on which to pursue further scholarly research.

In their biographical research, the Austrian project team had experiences comparable to those of some of the contributors to this volume, what the historian Lucy Bland in her contribution on British war babies described as the experience of being " both investigator and engaged participant": In conducting their research, the project team was careful to remain sensitive to the concerns of the interviewees. Aside from the scholarly exploration of their life stories, the interviewees were especially invested in finally having their voices heard and their stories inscribed into public memory. Having discovered for the first time through this research project that there were other individuals with a similar background, the interviewees were also particularly invested in communicating with one another.

Within the Austrian context, these concerns were addressed in a large exhibition entitled "SchwarzÖsterreich. Die Kinder afroamerikanischer Besatzungssoldaten" (Black Austria: The Children of African American Occupation Soldiers), which was developed in parallel to the research project and in cooperation with the interviewees.[2] The exhibition was shown in Vienna for four months in 2016 and drew considerable public attention, both in the media – all the major Austrian newspapers reported on the exhibition and there were also numerous international reviews[3] – and in the number of visitors, with altogether about 17,000 people attending the exhibition. In the framework of the exhibition, a three-day networking meeting also took place in Vienna, which brought together the Austrian and American interviewees (the latter consisted of children had been given up for adoption in the United States by the Austrian authorities). This network continues to be a point of ongoing contact to this day, including also the establishment of

2 The exhibition, which was shown in the Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art, was created in collaboration with the artist Tal Adler (Israel/Vienna/Berlin) and was supported by the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI), which is dedicated to research, documentation, and dissemination on all questions relating to antisemitism, racism, and the Holocaust, including its antecedents and aftermath. Another important cooperation partner was the journalist and editor-in-chief of "Fresh – Black Austrian Lifestyle Magazin", Vanessa Spanbauer.

3 A particularly noteworthy example is the review by Kira Thurman from the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor, which not only discusses the exhibition in detail, but also compares the life stories of Black Austrian GI children with those of their peers in West Germany: <https://networks.h-net.org/node/113394/discussions/135319/exhibit-review-thurman-black-austria-children-african-american%20> (30 October 2020).

contact with the younger generation of Black Austrians and/or Austrians of Color and their lived realities.

This volume of *zeitgeschichte* presents the most up-to-date research findings on the topic "Black GI Children in Post-World War II Europe". It focuses on Austria and Germany, where U.S. troops were stationed as an occupying force from 1945 onward, but also includes a focus on the United Kingdom, where U.S. troops were stationed from 1942 to 1945 as an Allied force. By the end of the war, about ten percent of the U.S. troops stationed in Europe were African American, albeit that Black U.S. servicemen with other roots, for example originating in the Carribean or Central America, also served in the racially segregated units. The contributions in this volume therefore do not always use the term "African Americans", but rather refer more generally to "Black GIs". Concerning the number of children of war and occupation who were born as a result of relations between Black U.S. soldiers and White local women, the contributions are based on the following figures: around 2,000 in the United Kingdom, around 5,000 in West Germany, and around 400 in Austria. Although these children thus constituted a very small group in each of their respective countries – also only making up a tiny percentage of the total number of so-called occupation children – they were very publicly visible in postwar societies on account of their skin color, a society that highlighted their foreign Black roots, thus emphasizing the heritage of their fathers and not that of their White mothers.[4]

The authors of the contributions collected here examine the manner in which these 'mixed-race' children and their mothers were treated by their societies and the respective authorities. They moreover assess the experiences and self-understandings of the individuals affected and discuss their experiences growing up, their frequent placement in care as wards of the state, and the strategy practiced by the youth welfare agencies of giving these children up for adoption abroad. This also opens up a transatlantic perspective and raises the question of what positions and initiatives existed in the United States with regard to these "brown babies," as they were called in the African American press. Within the African American community, for example, the adoption of these children by Black couples was often interpreted as resistance against White supremacy.

This special volume of *zeitgeschichte* also takes into account the discussion currently being held in the field of Critical Race Studies regarding appropriate and non-discriminatory language. This includes a critical usage of the terms Black and White, not merely as a description of ostensible skin colors, but also as social categories and constructs, the attributions and various effects of which

4 See Heide Fehrenbach, "Of German Mothers and 'Negermischlingskinder': Race, Sex, and the Postwar Nation," in *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949–1968,* edited by Hanna Schissler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 164–186, 177.

need to be taken into account: specifically concerning what it means to be White or Black in a society dominated by White privilege. The authors of the contributions collected here have adopted various approaches to achieve such a reflective distance: either the consistent capitalization of the terms Black and White or the use of "Black" as a nominalized "political term",[5] which has by today become an empowering self-definition for BIPoC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color). This kind of self-positioning also becomes evident in the case of the Black GI children examined in this volume, who now self-consciously use the term Black as a form of resistance and in contradistinction to racist exonyms imposed from outside.

Finally, the editors would like to thank Tim Corbett for his translations and/or copy-editing of the contributions in this volume, as well as Béla Rásky and the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI), who made a significant financial contribution to the realization of this volume.

5 Marion Kraft (ed., trans.), *Children of the Liberation: Transatlantic Experiences and Perspectives of Black Germans of the Post-War Generation* (Oxford: Peter Lang 2020), Introduction, 3.

Articles

Kelly Condit-Shrestha

American Fathers, German Mothers, and "Brown Babies": The Intersection of Race, Empire, and Kinship in U.S. Transnational Adoption

I. Introduction

In the early occupation period post-World War II (1945–1949), it is estimated that approximately three percent of the 94,000 children born within the Allied powers' four German occupation zones were mixed-race "brown babies" with African American GI fathers.[1] While not a particularly large number, within the global Cold War context of race and democracy,[2] these children received enormous attention, domestically and overseas.

This article, through an examination of the transnational social positioning of the children of African American GIs and white German women – juxtaposed with the adoptions and relations between white American GIs and white German women – highlights the intersections of race, empire, and transnational formations of family, in both postwar U.S. and West German societies. In particular, this article explores the significance of the "brown babies" debates in the African American press and argues that postwar U.S./West German family-making, via adoption and military bride marriages, initially reinforced transnational discourses of white supremacy – and eventually acted as a symbolic nexus for recuperating African American and West German sovereignty.

Historians have well documented the emergence of white German and African American GI transnational liaisons and subsequent youth populations amidst domestic and international U.S./West German concerns pertaining to race,

1 Vernon W. Stone, "German Baby Crop Left by Negro GI's," *The Survey* (1949): 579–583; "Brown Babies Adopted by Kind German Families," *Jet*, 8 November 1951, 14–16; Benjamin E. Mays, "My View," *Pittsburgh Courier,* 3 May 1958, 9 A; Petra Goedde, *GIs and Germans: Culture, Gender, and Foreign Relations, 1945–1949* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 111; Heide Fehrenbach, *Race After Hitler: Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 1–2, 8–14, 74–75.

2 See, for example, Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001); Brenda Gayle Plummer (ed.), *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights, and Foreign Affairs, 1945–1988* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

kinship, sovereignty, and nation-building.[3] Embedded within this literature – alongside recollections in memoirs, documentaries, and newsletters – former child adoptees, as well as their birth and adoptive kin, provide compelling first-person accounts that allow for nuanced glimpses into the interiority of those experiences.[4] Adoptee and critical adoption studies scholar Rosemarie Peña's research explores what she identifies as Black German/U.S. adoptee childhoods and adult community, search, and reunion experiences, from historic and (sometimes auto-) ethnographic perspectives.[5]

Building on this research, my work engages with the aforementioned literature through the purview of cultural history, critical race, critical adoption, and critical kinship studies in order to highlight and reexamine how the intimate experiences of post-World War II U.S./West German family-making (and family-breaking) rendered (trans)national significance. This article begins by contextualizing the logic of transnational "white supremacy" that foundationally informed both the intimate and geopolitical relations between West Germany and the United States. The second half of the article centers on African Americans' resistance to this narrative and the central role that dual-heritage Black German occupation babies – West Germany's "brown babies" – played in these politics.[6] Ultimately, West Germans' engagement with overseas adoption and

3 Goedde, *GIs*; Fehrenbach, *Race*; Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria, "'Germany's 'Brown Babies' Must Be Helped! Will You?': U.S. Adoption Plans for Afro-German Children, 1950–1955," *Callaloo* 26 (2003) 2: 342–62; Brenda Gayle Plummer, "Brown Babies: Race, Gender, and Policy after World War II," in *Window*, edited by Plummer, 67–91; Maria Höhn and Martin Klimke, *A Breath of Freedom: The Civil Rights Struggle, African American GIs, and Germany* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

4 See, for example, Doris McMillon, *Mixed Blessings: The Dramatic Story of a Woman's Search for Her Real Mother* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985); May Opitz et al. (eds.), *Showing Our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992); *Brown Babies: The Mischlingskinder Story*. DVD. Directed by Regina Griffin. 102 min., United States: Regina Griffin Films, Inc., 2010; Daniel Cardwell, *A Question of Color* (Charleston: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2010); Rosemarie Peña, "Black Germans, Reunification and Belonging in Diaspora," in *Black Anthology: Adult Adoptees Claim Their Space*, edited by Susan Harris O'Connor MSW et al. (Charleston: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016), 13–20; Marion Kraft (ed., trans.), *Children of the Liberation: Transatlantic Experiences and Perspectives of Black Germans of the Post-War Generation* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2020).

5 See, for example, Peña, "Black Germans," 13–20; Rosemarie Peña, "From Both Sides of the Atlantic: Black German Adoptee Searches in William Gage's Geborener Deutscher (Born German)," *Genealogy* 40 (2018) 2: 1–10; Rosemarie Peña, "Stories Matter: Experiences of Black German Adoptees in the U.S.," in *Children*, edited by Kraft, 243–281.

6 On terminology: I thank Rosemarie Peña for educating me on the nuances of dual-heritage Black German American adoptee identity terminology. On the capitalization of "Black," see Marion Kraft, "Introduction," in *Children*, edited by Kraft, 3. "Occupation children" was a common postwar reference to children fathered by U.S. servicemen who occupied a country

eventual domestic-national assimilation expected Black German occupation children to perform imaginative futures for West Germany, in relation to the United States.

II. Transnational Endeavors in White Supremacy

Evidence of West German prejudice and disregard toward the country's mixed-race children and their African American fathers is well documented.[7] For example, in November 1949, the Munich-based periodical, *Der Simpl*, circulated degrading and stereotypical images of "African" men and white German women with their mixed-race babies throughout the country.[8] Earlier that year, in May 1949, the African American newspaper, *Pittsburgh Courier*, published a telling compilation of West German citizens' "true confessions" regarding the nation's "problem of the 'brown babies.'" As one grandfather expressed, kinship ties could not protect his mixed-race granddaughter. He lamented that perhaps death would be a kinder experience:

> "I am 76 years old. Of my eight living children, seven do not come and see me or talk with me any more [....] It is impossible to take her out on the street because already now at her age she is constantly called names and molested in the worst possible way [....] If I cannot live to see that she is adequately taken care of before I close my eyes, then I want to take her with me when I go."[9]

Speaking to the transnational racial discourse that united white German nationals and U.S. occupying soldiers in racist sentiment, a widowed mother of one such baby wrote to a military chaplain: "They are always to be recognized by their outward appearance and I must hear many a hard word full of hatred from Germans and white Americans, too."[10] As historian Heide Fehrenbach details in

during or after World War II. See, for example, "Occupation Children Citizens," *New York Times*, 13 November 1945, 6; Darrell Berrigan, "Japan's Occupation Babies," *Saturday Evening Post*, 19 June 1948, 24–25; Fehrenbach, *Race*, 69–80. This rhetoric evinces the widespread understanding of these children as a consequence of, if not American empire, then U.S. military-supremacist international relations (as opposed to the humanitarian framing that a refugee or orphan status connotes). I also utilize the language of "brown babies" and "mixed-race" to maintain historic, scholarly, and popular cultural relevance.

7 See, for example, May Opitz, "Afro-Germans After 1945: The So-Called Occupation Babies," in *Showing*, edited by Opitz et al., 81–82, 93–94; Helga Emde, "An 'Occupation Baby' in Postwar Germany," in ibid., 101–103; Höhn, *GIs*, 103–104; Lemke Muniz de Faria, "Germany's 'Brown Babies'," 343–344.

8 "German Press Slurs Tan Yanks," *Pittsburgh Courier*, 12 November 1949, 7.

9 P. L. Prattis, "'Brown Babies' In Germany: 'True Confessions' of German Women Disclose their Helplessness and Need," *Pittsburgh Courier,* 14 May 1949, 2.

10 Ibid.

her seminal research: "German understandings of race came to resemble those informing postwar American social science and liberalism,"[11] wherein West Germany was "democratized by a Jim Crow army of racially segregated" occupation systems.[12] Due to the pressures of these many hardships, some West German women were "willing to give their children away temporarily or permanently."[13]

In regard to West Germany's mixed-race children, U.S. white supremacist ideologies emerged in both public and private spheres. For example, in December 1952, *Ebony* magazine reported on an "American officer [who] severely reprimanded a German school principal who pleaded on the air for couples who could afford to adopt brown babies to do so. [The officer] accused the educator of […] 'mongrelizing the race' [and] 'sabotaging white supremacy.'"[14] As the author pointed out: "More than one German child has been taught to shout [racially derogative terms] by American soldiers who neglect to tell them the meaning of the words."[15] In a more private example, in 1951, Lois McVey, Child Welfare Division administrator of the U.S. Displaced Persons Commission, actively pursued West German authorities for information about the number and availability of white German "orphans" and occupation children for adoption to the U.S.[16] On the other hand, in her meeting with West Germany's federal Interior Ministry, McVey proposed that mixed-race Black German children be sent to Central or South America. As McVey conveyed, in these Latin American countries, as opposed to the U.S., "issues of race [would] hold less significance."[17] This recommendation fell in line with U.S. nineteenth and early-twentieth-century nation-building precedents: out-migration as a strategy for removing or assimilating undesirable children from its body politic.[18] It also reflected the United

11 Fehrenbach, *Race*, 8. Fehrenbach's intention "is not to argue that postwar Germans learned antiblack racism from American occupiers" (45) – nor is it my argument that postwar Germany developed as a direct foil to U.S. race politics. While I emphasize U.S. influence, I wish to also highlight the transnational dialogue and "transfer of cultural logic" between West Germany and the United States.

12 Heide Fehrenbach, "Of German Mothers and 'Negermischlingskinder': Race, Sex, and the Postwar Nation," in *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949–1968*, edited by Hanna Schissler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 167. See also Höhn, *GIs*.

13 Prattis, "'Brown Babies,'" 2.

14 "Some Officers Create More Racial Strife in Germany," *Ebony*, 1 December 1952, 78.

15 Ibid.

16 Fehrenbach, *Race*, 141.

17 Quoted in ibid., 141–142.

18 I am here referring to the United States' history of orphan trains, Black Codes, and child placements in American Indian boarding schools. See, for example, Charles Loring Brace, *The Dangerous Classes of New York and Twenty Years' Work Among Them* (New York: Wynkoop & Hallenbeck, 1872); Theodore Brantner Wilson, *The Black Codes of the South* (Alabama:

States' interwar year proposals for dealing with overseas Jewish people in need of refuge.[19]

In reference to the United States, I use the language of white supremacy to describe the racial hierarchies embedded in the nation's policies concerning rights to citizenship and discourses centered on national belonging. Specific to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, white supremacy was grounded in the legal and cultural fabric of American life through its recent histories of slavery, settler colonialism prefaced on Indigenous genocide, immigration policies that gave preference to northern and western Europeans, the continued linkage of U.S. naturalized citizenship to "free white persons," and the introduction of the nation's first race-based immigration exclusion act in 1882.[20] Through the transformative geopolitics encompassed in the U.S. Civil War, American westward expansion, World War I, World War II, and the subsequent Cold War, the United States continued to consolidate a national identity defined by increasingly robust imaginings of its white-citizen-nation visage, to better embrace working class persons, southern and eastern Europeans, Catholic and Jewish people, and eventually (as detailed in the following section), former Nazi West Germans.[21]

Perhaps not dissimilarly, West Germany experienced a similar white-nation cultural expansion through the state's post-Nazi rehabilitation to (better) embrace white Jews and other formerly persecuted central and eastern Europeans (such as Polish people and other Slavic minorities)[22] under its postwar rubric of

University of Alabama, 1965); Brenda J. Child, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900–1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

19 The United States, United Kingdom, and Czechoslovakia attempted to negotiate emigration terms for German Jews into such countries and territories as Palestine, the Philippines, Canada, and Kenya. See, for example, G.E.R. Gedye, "Prague Arranges Exodus of 10.000: Palestine, Canada, and South American Countries," *New York Times*, 5 January 1939, 5; "Hails Palestine Refuge," *New York Times*, 12 February 1939, 36.

20 Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1975); Jean M. O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Donna R. Gabaccia, *Foreign Relations: American Immigration in Global Perspective* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012); Matthew F. Jacobsen, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882–1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

21 Thomas R. Hietala, *Manifest Design: American Exceptionalism and Empire* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1985); Kelly Condit-Shrestha, "Adoption and American Empire: Migration, Race-making, and the Child," PhD dissertation (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2017); Gabaccia, *Foreign Relations.*

22 On the relationship between German nationalism and the state's "white" minorities, see, for example, Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State: Germany, 1933–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 25–27, 56, 66–68, 72–73, 130–135; Fehrenbach, *Race*, 76–78, 80, 102. A supplementary argument can also be made that this

white supremacy "in [their] traditionally white land."[23] Highlighting this postwar West German white-national rubric, Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria eloquently emphasized in her pioneering research:

> "The debate over the fate of Afro-German children as it was articulated in Germany and the U.S. between 1945 and 1960 reveals the particular importance attached to these children solely on the basis of their skin color. These children were confronted less with national moral feelings of resentment as children of an occupying power, or illegitimate children, than with racial prejudices. Their skin color, features, and hair structure led Germans […] to declare these children different and foreign."[24]

Here, I do not mean to rearticulate an inaccurate assessment of German national identity as "Aryan" or homogenous,[25] but instead aim to highlight the continued, albeit transformed, existence of racial-cultural hierarchies despite acute debates, very real investments, and fastidious delineations away from Nazi racism that occurred in the postwar period regarding these children.

The Society for Christian and Jewish Cooperation (SCJC), founded in 1948, had by 1952 come to spearhead the movement "to (re)educate the German public away from a racist response to the Black German children in their midst […] particularly in regard to their integration […] now that they were entering school."[26] Ironically, in spite of the transnational influence of U.S. racism and Jim Crow systems of occupation, West Germany was in fact explicitly denied the

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postwar rehabilitation was paved by the wartime and postwar expulsion, emigration, and wartime murder of the aforementioned minorities, so that they were less in number to "embrace." Fehrenbach, *Race*, 77–78, 89; Norman M. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth Century Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002).

23 World Brotherhood, Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit, *Protokoll der Arbeitstagungen über das Schicksal der farbigen Mischlingskinder in Deutschland* (Wiesbaden: World Brotherhood, 15–16 August 1952, 3–4. Quoted in Fehrenbach, "Of German," 170. Here, I aim to highlight West Germany's postwar consolidation of a "white" national identity – a culture of national belonging tied to whiteness, comparable to the transformations expressed in the United States. For further reading on the historic and contemporary consolidation of German national identity as "white," see, for example: Fehrenbach, *Race*, 10–11, 94–96, 128, 181; Marion Kraft, "Re-presentation and Re-definitions: Black People in Germany in the Past and Present," in *Children*, edited by Kraft, 11–19, 48–52. On resistance to this racial-national consolidation and/or continuation of "white-ethnic" prejudice, see footnote 22 as well as, for example, Höhn, *GIs*. Importantly, my purpose is not to dismiss West Germany's Nazi history or postwar politics concerning other victims of the Third Reich. Burleigh and Wippermann highlight, for example, the Sinti and Roma, the mentally ill, physically disabled, homosexuals, women, and the "asocial." *The Racial State*, xiii, 3, 46–50, 54–55, 113–97.

24 Lemke Muniz de Faria, "Germany's 'Brown Babies'," 358.

25 See, for example, Lora Wildenthal, "Race, Gender, and Citizenship in the German Colonial Empire," in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in the Bourgeois World*, edited by Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 263–284.

26 Fehrenbach, "Of German," 169–170.

opportunity of institutionalizing segregationist legislation by the Allied powers. The West German Basic Law followed suit, so that it was unlawful to racially discriminate against West Germany's mixed-race Black children.[27]

Nonetheless, despite these legal parameters and work toward a cultural sea change intended to evince post-Nazi rehabilitation, prior to 1952 and the decision to allow school-age "brown babies" to integrate, the proposed "solutions" to West Germany's brown baby "problem" illustrate how racial tensions continued to inform policy discussions.[28] For example, in 1947, a Protestant missionary group proposed that these children be provided segregated religious schooling, to then be sent to Africa as future missionaries.[29] Around the same time, a number of West German officials proposed that the children's West German citizenship be rescinded and urged, instead, that the United States embrace these children as American citizens, based on their paternity.[30] Following the foundation of West Germany as a sovereign state in 1949, in a survey of 600 white German mothers with mixed-race children, "many [believed] that to take their Negro German offspring to the United States would solve the problem."[31] By 1950, there was public discussion surrounding the inauguration of "colonies" for the children similar to those established for interwar child refugees.[32] In November of that same year, West Germany's Interior Ministry requested that all of its youth welfare agencies "comment on the question of the 'deportation of mixed-race negro children to Africa.'"[33] Come 1951, emigration, or in the words of the Interior Ministry, "deportation of Mischlingskinder [mixed-race children] to the homeland of their fathers,"[34] soon became the state's preference and official policy toward its "foreign-looking"[35] child population. During this time, the Ministry impressed upon U.S. officials that "brown babies" belonged with "their own kind"[36] in the United States. For birth mothers who did not wish to

27 Ibid., 175.
28 See, for example, Lemke Muniz de Faria, "Germany's 'Brown Babies'," 349–350.
29 Fehrenbach, *Race*, 140–41.
30 Fehrenbach, "Of German," 175.
31 Stone, "German," 583.
32 Fehrenbach, *Race*, 133. On interwar refugee children who resided in overseas children's colonies, see, for example, "'Adopt' Refugee Children," *New York Times,* 16 July 1939, 19; Célia Keren, "Autobiographies of Spanish Refugee Children at the Quaker Home in La Rouviére (France, 1940): Humanitarian Communication and Children's Writings," *Les Cahiers de Framespa* 5 2010, <https://journals.openedition.org/framespa/268> (5 November 2020); Tara Zahra, *The Lost Children: Reconstructing Europe's Families after World War II* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 47–48, 56.
33 Lemke Muniz de Faria, "Germany's 'Brown Babies'," 343.
34 Quoted in Fehrenbach, *Race*, 141–142.
35 Until 1952, dialogue surrounding West Germany's "brown babies" emphasized their "foreign-looking" appearance. Ibid., 94.
36 Quoted in Fehrenbach, "Of German," 175.

relinquish their children, an emigration plan was proposed to include the mothers' migration as well.[37] In 1952, West Germany's press lauded African American "mammies" as the ideal custodians for West Germany's "brown babies"[38] and child out-migration – via U.S. international adoption – was canonized as the state's ideal "solution" via the widely circulated, and now globally recognized film, "Toxi," whose closing scene depicts the Black German child protagonist reunited with her African American GI father and taken "home."[39]

As mentioned above, amidst these popular discursive milestones and the continued pursuit toward successful emigration strategies, 1952 was also the year that West Germany decided that these mixed-race Black German children were to be welcomed into public school. Here, we see the conflict, tensions, and ambiguity that emerged within the context of West German postwar principles of racial liberalism, continued commitments to white supremacy, and the practices and policies that were then proposed and enacted to deal with these children.[40] To this end, it is perhaps worth noting that, when examining postwar West Germany's official adoption policy – the white supremacist, racial legal language from the Nazi era remained intact.[41] From the U.S. side, the policies and practices put into place with regard to white and Black German children (and adults) were far less ambiguous.

37 Ibid., 185, *n*41.

38 Quoted in Fehrenbach, *Race*, 141.

39 Since the film's 1952 release, "Toxi" has become synonymous with dual-heritage Black German occupation children. Lemke Muniz de Faria, "Germany's 'Brown Babies'," 355, 361 n24. Some scholars refer to West Germany's promotion of international adoption of its mixed-race children as the "'Toxi' solution." See, for example, Fehrenbach, *Race*, 136–137.

40 For further reading, see Fehrenbach, "Of German," 175–78; Fehrenbach, *Race*, 156–60. It is also important to note that despite Germany's policy of school-integration, the children's futures were still highly debated: "With their enrollment in first grade the mixed-race children [….] stand out because of their color. Some [display] behavioral problems [….] parents, teachers, and everybody face difficult imminent tasks." *Das Parliament,* 19 March 1952. Quoted in Ika Hügel-Marshall, "Crossing Borders, Overcoming Boundaries," in *Children*, edited by Kraft, 173. See also Allan Gould, "Germany's Tragic War Babies: Children of Negro GI and Frauleins Face Nazi-like Bias as they Reach School Age," *Ebony*, 1 December 1952, 74–78.

41 Edmund C. Jann, *The Law of Adoption in Germany* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Library of Congress, 1955), 8; "Military Government, United States Area of Control, Germany; Law No. 59: Part 1: Article 1: Basic Principles; Part XIV: Article 81: Re-Establishment of Adoptions," *The American Journal of International Law* 42 (January 1948): 11, 42. See also Fehrenbach, *Race*, 137–140. On the continuation of race research in postwar Germany based on the colonial era and eugenic theories, see Kraft, "Re-presentations," 28–30; Fehrenbach, *Race*, 80–88.

III. From Nazis to White Germans: Making Friends, Making Family

The first internationally adopted children from West Germany were adopted conditionally, through the legislation that allowed their military bride mothers' marriages. West German women – and their children – were not allowed to apply for legal integration into American families until, in accordance with U.S. imperial motives, U.S. foreign policy began to shift with West Germany transformed from a World War enemy to a Cold War ally. The marriage ban was thus lifted "on the heels of an announcement that [instructed soldiers] to forget their war-time 'hate the German' indoctrination, and to help the Germans rebuild their country."[42] This newfound credo was known as the "Be Kind to the Germans" policy.[43]

In early December 1946, General Joseph T. McNarney, European Theatre Commander and Military Governor of the U.S. occupied territories, repealed the marriage ban between American servicemen and German women. On 11 December 1946, Army Colonel George S. Eyster formally announced the dissolution of the ban. The response was immediate. The day of the announcement, an Army spokesperson predicted that a '"German war brides' transport might sail soon for the [U.S.]" and the Army confirmed that during the previous week, "2,500 [U.S.] war veterans had applied for permission to have German girls enter the United States to marry them."[44] By 19 April 1948, two months prior to the enactment of the Displaced Persons Act – which scholars point to as the official marker of the first wave of U.S. international adoption – the American Red Cross (ARC) was in steady collaboration with the International Social Service (ISS).[45] In 1948, the ISS, along with the ARC, provided intake and home service policies related to "war brides," "acknowledged illegitimate children," and combining the two: "fiancées, *only* during the period in which plans are being made by the veteran to bring an acknowledged child to this country, and the mother is accompanying the child."[46] The first German children adopted by U.S. citizens post-World War II were thus

42 "U.S. Army Ends Ban On German Brides," *New York Times*, 12 December 1946, 22.

43 Delbert Clark, "M'Narney Defends War Brides' Visas," *New York Times,* 22 December 1946, 32.

44 "U.S. Army," 22.

45 Following World War II, the ISS emerged as one of the United States' leading adoption agencies, eventually placing a large number of children following the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Catherine Ceniza Choy, *Global Families: A History of Asian International Adoption in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).

46 "Home Service – American Red Cross Intake and Service Policies, February 2, and April 19, 1948," International Social Service-American Branch papers, Box 19, Folder 32: "American National Red Cross: 1946–1963," Social Welfare History Archives, University of Minnesota Libraries. Emphasis in the original.

"occupation children" adopted by American military personnel stationed in West Germany.

On 27 March 1947, the marriage of 27-year-old Peter Rupeka of Hempstead, New York and 21-year-old "Fraulein" Erika Schaefer became the first military and state-sanctioned American/German nuptials since the marriage ban lifted the previous winter. Rupeka, a former Army Sergeant of the 508th Parachute Battalion, had lived in occupied Germany for approximately two years. The *New York Times* described Rupeka and Schaefer's romance as follows:

> "He met his attractive blue-eyed, brown-haired bride while sightseeing in Frankfort's bomb-damaged zoo in September, 1945. He stayed on in Germany as a War Department civilian employee after his Army discharge, in the hope of some day being permitted to marry her. They were married in a brief civil ceremony by the Frankfort rituals in both English and German."[47]

Here, the American reader witnessed a telling tale of love. Erika Schaefer was not a faceless German enemy, but a young and attractive bride. The war-torn and devastated Frankfurt, rather than standing as a symbol of German/American distrust or animosity, was instead the dramatic and romantic backdrop for the young lovers' meeting. Following his discharge, ex-GI Rupeka's remainder in Germany, in the U.S. zone of occupation, was not a symbol of U.S. military occupation or American empire, but an admirable symbol of a young man's devotion to his hopeful bride. Importantly, Schaefer's description as beautifully "blue-eyed" and "brown-haired" marked her implicitly as white, thus connoting her tacit assimilability into U.S. society. When Rupeka and Schaefer were wed, their ceremony was conducted in both English and German. Rather than brand Schaefer as foreign or threatening, her German language and culture were celebrated. Rupeka and Schaefer's bilingual ceremony served to highlight the ancestral bonds and common heritage that Americans and the U.S. nation-state had historically claimed with Germany and other nations of Western Europe.

Following Rupeka, U.S. military officials estimated that another 6,000 marriages would take place within a year.[48] Ultimately, between March 1947 and June 1950, 14,175 West German women entered the U.S. as "alien spouses" of "citizen members of the [U.S.] armed forces."[49] An additional population was included in

47 "Ex-GI Weds a German in Occupation Zone," *New York Times*, 28 March 1947, 5.

48 Ibid.

49 Table 9 A, "Alien spouses and alien minor children of citizen members of the United States armed forces admitted under the Act of December 28, 1945, by country or region of birth: years ended June 30, 1946 to 1950," United States Department of Justice, *Annual Report of the Immigration and Naturalization Service*, Washington, D. C., for the fiscal year ended 30 June 1950.

the primarily female count of 2,010 "alien fiancées or fiancés."[50] It was through these unions that the first West German adoptees came to the United States, too. The War Brides and Fiancées Acts explicitly tied adopted West German children to their mothers' legal status. Between March 1947 and June 1950, 750 internationally adopted West German children arrived in the United States as "alien minor children of citizen members of the [U.S.] armed forces."[51] One such child was 5-year-old Elke Rogers. On 26 July 1947, Elke was one of 36 other children who arrived on the army transport Zebulon B. Vance alongside their "war bride" mothers and adoptive U.S. military fathers.[52] Symbolizing the lengths to which West Germans had been transformed into American friends, Elke's birth father had been a German soldier, killed fighting Soviet forces during the war. Despite the family's Wehrmacht affiliation, Elke's mother married American Marion S. Rogers "while he was serving with the occupation forces in Germany."[53] Following Rogers' discharge, the newly formed family traveled together on the Zebulon B. Vance to their new home and life in California.

By comparison, while marriages such as that of Sergeant Rupeka and Erika Schaefer, and adoptions such as that of Elke Rogers, were celebrated by the American media, it was common knowledge that African American GIs were refused legitimization of their unions. For example, in a 1949 survey of 500 African American servicemen, over half expressed the desire to marry their German partners – but, having submitted the requisite paperwork, at the time of the study "110 were pending, 57 had no response, 91 had been disapproved, and only 22 had been approved."[54] As the author of the survey noted, it was "American custom, in almost every instance, [that] intervened to prevent such a union. Even when a child was expected, or had been born, requests for permission to marry were disapproved on racial grounds. Army officials turned down thousands of such requests."[55] For example, when Walter Dawson, a thirty-year-old African American soldier, sought to claim his own child, he was brought up "on charges of being illegally in the U.S. Zone and kidnaping his own 24-day-old baby."[56] Dawson and his West German fiancée were denied the right to marry by the U.S. military. Dawson was also forbidden from adopting his own child. Instead, he was brought up on legal charges.[57]

50 Table 9B, "Alien fiancées or fiancés of citizen members of the armed forces of the United States admitted under the Act of June 29, 1946, by country or region of birth: years ended June 30, 1947 to 1950," ibid.
51 Table 9 A.
52 "39 War Brides Arrive," *New York Times,* 27 July 1947, 22.
53 Ibid.
54 Stone, "German," 583.
55 Ibid.
56 "German Press," 7.
57 Ibid.

On 28 November 1947, in addition to those children adopted via the War Brides and Fiancées Acts, the U.S. occupation government approved the United States' first postwar adoption-specific legislation. As described in the United Nations' Annual Report on Child and Youth Welfare:

> "[The] 1947 provision was made for adoption of children by [U.S.] citizens in the German courts of the U.S. zone. Military Government Law No. 10, effective 1 December 1947, provides for the adoption of children in German courts by a person serving with or accompanying the armed forces of one of the United Nations or a national connected with the military government, or a dependent of either [….] Prior to this law, adoptions could not take place in the [U.S.] zone, since German courts had no jurisdiction with respect to American or allied nationals."[58]

On 25 June 1948, the Displaced Persons Act was enacted "[t]o authorize for a limited period of time the admission into the United States of certain European displaced persons for permanent residence."[59] In accordance with President Truman's 1945 directive and the United States' self-positioning as a humanitarian leader, the act introduced a new legal clause, regarding "eligible displaced orphans" who could "be issued special nonquota immigration visas, except that the number of such nonquota immigration visas need not exceed three thousand."[60] Reminiscent of their nineteenth-century counterparts, these children, defined as under sixteen years of age, qualified for "orphan" status so long as it was decided that their parents had "disappeared."[61] Locating U.S. empire in this law, these children also needed to be "in [the Allied occupation zones of] Italy […] Germany or Austria […] on, or before the effective Date of this Act."[62] Through the Displaced Persons Act, of the 4,066 "foreign children" adopted by U.S. citizens, 500 were placed with U.S. personnel stationed overseas, an untold number of whom were the progeny of U.S. occupation servicemen. Of the total number of children, 1,156 (28 percent) originated in occupied Germany.[63]

However, as different avenues to internationally adopt West German children began to increase and broaden, African American GIs and Black German children continued to be restricted. The idea and practice of including white ethnic Germans as part of America's global family, particularly through the lens of

58 United Nations, Department of Social Affairs, *Annual Report on Child and Youth Welfare* (New York: United Nations Publications, 1949), 219.

59 Displaced Persons Act of 1948, ch. 647, *Stat.* 62.

60 Ibid.

61 Who could be defined as an "orphan" was thus open to quite a bit of discretion. As adoption scholar Richard H. Weil has contextualized, the legal understanding of this clause "has remained broad enough to include abandoned single parent children." "International Adoptions: The Quiet Migration," *International Migration Review* 18 (1984) 2: 279–282.

62 Displaced Persons Act.

63 Only Greece surpassed the numbers of adopted West German children. Weil, "International," 279–282.

military brides and adopted children, fulfilled U.S. national imperatives of constructing itself as a humanitarian nation of immigrants without challenging its foundations of white supremacy. The rejection of African American GI marriages and adoptions revealed the limits held by a benevolent construction of U.S. international relations. Signifying a rupture in American Cold War empire, in opposition to (white) American expectations, a "crisis" surrounding U.S./German "brown baby" child placements soon emerged. This crisis provided an intimate perspective into the breadth and limits of a U.S. Cold War identity as both humanitarian and non-racist. Ultimately, the United States' African American community disallowed a white-only humanitarian discourse through the elevation and claiming of "brown babies" as equally save-able.

IV. Black Adoption as Black Resistance

The exact number of Germany's "brown babies" remains contested, but it is widely accepted that approximately 5,000 mixed-race Black German children were born during the ten-year occupation period (1945–1955).[64] According to records at the Social Welfare History Archives (SWHA) at the University of Minnesota Libraries, this number reached upwards of 7,000 by the 1960s.[65] The number of these children adopted by (primarily) African American U.S. citizens during the two decades following the war (1945–1965) is even more uncertain. The field of contemporary German studies has long evinced that the majority of Black German children born during this time remained living with either their mothers or other extended kin,[66] yet respected scholars often reference a 1968 citation that estimates nearly all of West Germany's "brown babies" were able to find homes with American families.[67]

Marriages between African American GIs and white German women, as well as military government Law No. 10, allowed African American servicemen to claim

64 See footnote 1. See also Lemke Muniz de Faria, "Germany's 'Brown Babies'," 344; Alexis Clark, "Overlooked No More: Mabel Grammer, Whose Brown Baby Plan Found Homes for Hundreds," *New York Times*, 6 February 2019 <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/06/obituaries/mabel-grammer-overlooked.html> (29 May 2020).

65 Cited in Clark, "Overlooked."

66 Luise Frankenstein, *Soldatenkinder: Die unehelichen Kinder ausländischer Soldaten mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Mischlinge* (Munich: Wilhelm Steinbach, 1954); Klaus Eyfferth et al., *Farbige Kinder in Deutschland. Die Situation der Mischlingskinder und die Aufgabe ihrer Eingliederung* (Munich: Juventa, 1960).

67 This citation estimates that as many as 7,000 mixed-race Black German occupation children were adopted in the two decades following World War II. See, for example, Fehrenbach, *Race*, 133; Peña, "Black Germans," 13. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the editors of this volume for their generous sharing of expertise, scholarly suggestions, and insights into the German-language literature, which helped me think through these numbers.

their paternal children or to adopt their wives' children who were fathered by another American GI. Between 1948 and 1962, and under the 1948 Displaced Persons Act, the Act of 29 July 1953, the 1953 Refugee Act, and the Act of 11 September 1957 – the special U.S. legislation provisions most often referenced in regard to the emergence and continued practice of postwar international adoptions – the total number of *all* West German children adopted through these immigration acts was only 1,845.[68] Thus, while we only have access to the aggregate numbers, the institutional racism that governed the military-adoption allowances discussed above, and the fact that scholars continue to estimate a number much greater than 1,845 in reference to Black German children adopted during this nearly identical time period, strongly suggest that a high percentage of these children were adopted *outside* of the special military and subsequent immigration legislation. In this way, African American prospective adoptive parents turned mainly to legal loopholes such as foreign court petitions and adoptions-by-proxy in order to successfully adopt children.

The Reverend Harry Holt – a Midwestern evangelical minister who adopted eight Korean children and, according to several narratives, single-handedly institutionalized the mass migration of Korean children into white American families – is known as the "founder" of proxy adoptions, following his initiatives after the Korean War.[69] However, before Reverend Harry Holt and South Korea, there was Mrs. Mabel Grammer and West Germany. Grammer, an African American journalist, was a contributing writer for the *Afro-American* in Baltimore, Maryland. Locating U.S. military empire in her narrative, Grammer's husband, Oscar, was an American serviceman – an army chief warrant officer who was stationed in Mannheim (1950–1954) and Karlsruhe (1959–1965). Together, they adopted twelve Black German children. Not unlike Holt, Grammer was touched by the plight of children languishing in postwar society and made it her personal mission to find them homes with American families. Frustrated by the slow pace and correctly perceived racism of official placement agencies, Grammer recognized a legal loophole that allowed American families living or traveling abroad (such as military families) to petition for adoption through the foreign courts. For those U.S. families who could not travel to West Germany, in

68 Weil, "International," 280.

69 On the indelibility of the "Harry Holt" narrative, see, for example, Ji-Yeon Yuh, "Moved By War: Migration, Diaspora, and the Korean War," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 8 (2005): 277–291; Jae Ran Kim, "Scattered Seeds: The Christian Influence on Korean Adoption," in *Outsiders Within: Writing on Transracial Adoption,* edited by Jane Jeong Trenka et al. (Cambridge: South End Press, 2006), 151–162; Laura Briggs, *Somebody's Children: The Politics of Transnational and Transracial Adoption* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 153, 156, 158; Maggie Jones, "Why a Generation of Adoptees is Returning to South Korea," *New York Times Magazine,* 14 January 2015.

order to circumvent the Refugee Relief Act (which required that prospective parents undergo an extensive agency approval process), Grammer represented these families in West German courts by proxy. During her tenure – and Oscar's two postings in West Germany – Mabel Grammer facilitated the adoptions of 500 West German children into African American families.[70] Viewed through this lens, African American adoptions of West Germany's "brown babies" was an act of resistance, a resistance to U.S./German white supremacy by both elevating "brown babies" to that of equal sentimental value to their white baby counterparts and, as prospective adoptive parents, demanding African Americans' equal rights to adopt, save, and raise children from abroad.

African Americans' humanitarian responses to the "brown baby" crisis empowered the community to both claim and perform ideal Cold War American citizenry. Through international adoption, African Americans very publicly positioned themselves as the American nuclear family ideal, created through the white normalized paradigms of love, responsibility, and compassion.[71] It was in this regard that, while the first internationally adopted "brown baby" brought to the U.S. was indeed West German, the popular press chose to instead focus on a later adoption story from the United Kingdom.

The first "brown baby," little Johnny Hine Chilkutt, was 16 months old when he arrived from West Germany in Ohio on 26 December 1948, "just a few days after [Frank Chilkutt, his father] was discharged from the Army."[72] But since Johnny's unwed father failed to meet the legal standards to formally adopt his son, Chilkutt's aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Bedford Mitchell, embraced this responsibility. Thus, while the first in practice, a secondary kinship adoption failed to arouse media attention and Johnny Hine Chilkutt became but a footnote in the U.S. "brown baby" narrative.

Instead, it was the international adoption of three-year-old Leon Lomax, Jr. from England, also adopted to Ohio, but by his GI father and faithful American wife, that captured the nation's imagination. Thus dubbed "[t]he first 'Brown Baby' adopted by an American couple to reach America," with little mention of the Lomax's second son, the story of Leon Lomax, Jr. became the story of African American nuclear family and humanitarian citizenship.[73]

In line with African Americans' strategic international race politics, Lomax Sr.'s obvious unfaithfulness in producing Leon was framed as a race-empowering

70 Clark, "Overlooked"; Fehrenbach, *Race,* 147–156; *Brown Babies*, Griffin (dir.); Lemke Muniz de Faria, "Germany's 'Brown Babies'," 354–358.

71 Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988).

72 "Ohio Claims Three 'Brown Babies,'" *Pittsburgh Courier,* 12 March 1949, 3.

73 Robert M. Ratcliffe, "'Brown Baby' Adopted; Arrives in U.S.," *Pittsburgh Courier*, 12 February 1949, 1.

mission. The *Pittsburgh Courier*, describing how "Lomax met and wooed an English girl," relayed how she,

> "like other English girls, had been told by white [American] soldiers that Negroes were monkeys […] subhuman [….] Lomax made it his business, wherever he went, to convince the English that Negroes were equal to and, in many instances, superior to other races. Lomax won."[74]

In this narrative rendition, Lomax Sr. was a Black patriot, his love affair characterized as a triumphant act of anti-racism, an act of resistance against the spread of white American racism abroad. As another news article deduced, Leon was "far more than a beautiful child. He [was] something of a symbol."[75] In this way, the plight of "brown babies" became a political cornerstone in the African American political movement to highlight the hypocrisy of U.S. racism and the nation's purported Cold War role as a humanitarian world leader, which ultimately revealed the limits of U.S. benevolent supremacy abroad.

The circumstances surrounding Black German occupation children could be indelibly capitalized to criticize U.S. domestic and foreign relations. The United States' lack of responsibility toward its "brown babies" became a central part of African Americans' political strategy to illuminate the shortcomings of U.S. race relations. As *Pittsburgh Courier* journalist J. A. Rogers wrote regarding the children's "plight":

> "We Americans pride ourselves on being humanitarian […] but it makes a big difference in many of the best of us when it comes to so-called race [….] If Americans are to lead the world in democratic conduct they will need a tremendous amount of broadening. There is a vast difference between how [the nation] regard[s itself] and how the rest of the world does."[76]

Private citizen R. D. Pittman, Jr. echoed Rogers's sentiment in his letter to the editor, where he noted that the "blame" for the children's state of affairs fell on the United States: "America will soon find that it is not very popular with the peoples of the world when she says one thing and practices another."[77] In be-

74 Ibid., 4.

75 "Portrait of Leon: Brown Baby," *Pittsburgh Courier*, 19 February 1949, 13. On Leon Lomax, Jr. see also Lucy Bland, *Britain's 'Brown Babies': The Stories of Children Born to Black GIs and White Women in the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 168–170.

76 J. A. Rogers, "Rogers Says: Only the Hard-Hearted Will Not Be Touched by Plight of 'Brown Babies,'" *Pittsburgh Courier*, 28 May 1949, 15.

77 R. D. Pittman, Jr., "All of Us to Blame For 'Brown Babies,'" *Pittsburgh Courier,* 3 September 1949, 21. As U.S. citizen Shirley Session also highlighted in her letter to *Ebony* magazine: "[German citizen] Mr. Lissner […] can so courageously withstand the 'pressure' exerted upon him in his fight for his brown son [….] Surely if he, considered a foreigner to our way of life, can understand and love the individual for himself and not reject him because of the color

seeching Americans to take responsibility for the welfare of its overseas mixed-race children, African American leaders and everyday citizens pressured the U.S. government to make good on its democratic and humanitarian claims at home and abroad. Media coverage such as these internationalized U.S. race debates by placing them in the very public and highly publicized global Cold War arena.

This activism occurred abroad, as well. In West Germany, with the approval of Munich's Chief Mayor Thomas Wimmer, African American ex-boxer Al Hoosman instituted the organization "Help for Colored and Parentless Children" to support the "thousands of 'love babies' born to American GIs and Fräuleins."[78] As Hoosman emphasized in his interview with *Ebony* magazine, "his organization [worked] on behalf of '*all*' GI fathered children, white and brown [….] 'As an organization founded by a Negro, we want to show the world that we, as a people are not always looking for aid from the white man, but will aid him too.'"[79]

In a subversive critique of U.S. segregation and Jim Crow laws, it was also not uncommon for the African American press to portray Europeans as more racially liberal, and to place at least some blame for noted European prejudice on transplanted American racism and military discrimination. For example, illustrating European (including West German) tolerance toward and sometimes love of African Americans and their progeny, periodicals such as the *Afro-American*, *Pittsburgh Courier*, *Jet*, and *Ebony* printed such stories as "Survey Shows Most Europeans Want to Keep Tan Babies," "Fraulein Mothers of 'Brown Babies' Love 'Em Fiercely," "Brown Babies Adopted by Kind German Families," and "We Adopted a Brown Baby."[80] Indeed, a widely cited 1949 *Survey* study detailed the "racial equality" practiced by Germans and asserted that for mothers of mixed-race children, "not only [was] infanticide unthinkable, but even separation – rarely considered."[81] By presenting a strong counternarrative to that of German white supremacy and anti-Black racism, African Americans also created a rupture in the believability of the (white) German/American friends narrative, to question how close postwar West Germany and the U.S. really were.

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of his skin, why cannot we, as Americans, recognize a person thusly?" "Letters to the Editor," 1 July 1953, *Ebony* 6.

78 Hoosman also played the African American GI father in the aforementioned film, "Toxi." "Big Brother to Brown Babies," *Ebony,* October 1959, 35.

79 Ibid.

80 "Survey Shows Most Europeans Want to Keep Tan Babies," *Afro-American*, 27 November 1948, 5; "Fraulein Mothers of 'Brown Babies' Love 'Em Fiercely," *Pittsburgh Courier*, 1 July 1950, 12; "Brown Babies Adopted," 14–16; Erich Lissner, "We Adopted a Brown Baby," *Ebony*, 1 May 1953, 36–40, 43–45.

81 Stone, "German," 579–583. For further discussion regarding the "positive" coverage of Germans' reception to its "brown babies," as well as to African American GIs, see, for example, Goedde, *GIs*, 108–112; Michael Cullen Green, "A Brown Baby Crisis," in *Black Yanks in the Pacific: Race in the Making of American Military Empire after World War II* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 88–89.

To this end, West German citizens likewise utilized African American political strategies surrounding "brown babies" to challenge U.S. empire in West Germany. For example, in 1951, the West German periodical *Stern* lauded African American initiatives to internationally adopt mixed-race Black German children in the "fight against white bureaucracy in America [....] in a country where racial segregation is exercised with unrelenting rigor."[82] In highlighting U.S. race problems and African Americans' struggles to internationally adopt, West Germany was able to strategically critique the United States' purported supremacy *in all things*, particularly in the realm of humanitarian culture and within the safe and acceptable Cold War discourse that made criticisms of U.S. race politics both highly acceptable and particularly embarrassing.

V. Recuperating Sovereignty

In the immediate postwar period, international (and often Christian) institutions tried very hard to get involved in West Germany's child welfare reconstruction, including that of adoption and child placement. However – and in contrast to South Korea, for example – strong state laws mediated these attempts and prohibited the wholesale takeover of its child welfare and adoption system by foreigners – including adoption agencies and individuals, whether religious or not.[83]

In 1955, the Allied Statute of Occupation ended in West Germany and, upon reclaiming its independence, one of the state's earliest acts was to demand legal redress for West German women whose children had been fathered by American servicemen. Before 1955, the U.S. military actively sought to prevent West German women from making paternity claims. However, once the occupation officially ended, West Germany demanded child support from American fathers. West Germany succeeded in part and it was decided on 6 May 1955 (for any birth on or following that date) that American servicemen could be brought to West German civil courts for paternity suits. By publicly questioning the United States' military and humanitarian role abroad and presenting Americans' material wealth as hypocrisy, West Germany was able to strategically utilize the United States' purported capitalist supremacy in its own favor, by making U.S. occupation children an economic and human rights issue.[84]

By the turn of the decade, for those children sent abroad, Germany strategically redirected their outflow, so that overseas adoptions to Denmark surpassed

82 Quoted in Fehrenbach, *Race*, 134.
83 Fehrenbach, *Race*, 137–139.
84 Ibid., 30, 68–73, 76; Zahra, *The Lost*, 159.

those to the United States.[85] Similar to the state's demand for U.S. paternity care, with this public gesture, West Germany demonstrated its sovereign right to choose where exactly to relinquish its mixed-race children for adoption. Pointedly, and in plain view of the global Cold War community, this choice was not the United States.[86] Instead, as documented by Heide Fehrenbach: "By the early 1960s […] reports of successful [brown baby] integration increasingly downplayed the social significance of race in the Federal Republic and in effect initiated a tendency to de-race the nature of the postwar 'Mischling' difference."[87] For those Black German children who remained, whose mothers actively resisted their relinquishment, West German officials took great pains to evince the mixed-race German children's integration into West German schools and society. The African American press, in turn, was able to utilize what Fehrenbach highlights as "a shift in West German public discourse […] that declared racial integration accomplished […] and reeducation closed"[88] in favor of its own anti-racist work. For example, in a November 1960 *Ebony* article, "Brown Babies Go To Work," the author documented the "frictionless move, which followed painstaking ground work by West German youth authorities and employers" to integrate its "brown baby" youth population into its work force.[89] Ultimately, the author declared that "[a]s a whole, the country has risen to the challenge," and quoted, for example, Dr. Dorothea Struwe, a Nuremberg youth agency official: "The incidents in Little Rock (Ark.) have caused much indignation in Germany. I hope that no one will ever have reason to tell us Germans to clean up before our own door. It is essential that our colored children can expand and develop their talents and abilities so that they will be firmly rooted in our community."[90] Over time, criticisms such as these helped West Germany to level the playing field with the United States, to legitimize and maintain its postwar sovereignty, and to resist further U.S. incursions in a very public manner.

85 *Brown Babies*, Griffin (dir.); Fehrenbach, *Race*, 160–166.

86 Fehrenbach, "Of German," 178–179.

87 Ibid., 179. On initial concerns over the 1952 integration of Black German occupation children into German public schools, see, for example, Lemke Muniz de Faria, "Germany's 'Brown Babies'," 350–351.

88 Fehrenbach, "Of German," 180.

89 "Brown Babies Go To Work," *Ebony,* November 1960, 97–100, 102, 104, 106, 108.

90 Ibid. On how Germany functioned "paradoxically as a yardstick against which the success of the democratic process in the U.S. was measured," see Lemke Muniz de Faria, "Germany's 'Brown Babies'," 352.

VI. Conclusion

The incorporation of white German children, alongside their military bride mothers, into American families helped to ease tensions and build relations between West Germany and the United States by allowing the American public to reimagine Germans as friends, as *family*, and to put the war behind them. Importantly, the extension of U.S. white citizenship ideals to include white German women and children helped to transnationally strengthen and expand the United States' system of racial hierarchies based on white supremacy.

However, the Black German children of African American GIs and white German women ruptured this transnational racial fantasy – and granted West Germany an ample opening to disrupt America's Cold War visage of benevolent humanitarianism. The international adoption of Black occupation children by African Americans followed the trend of Civil Rights activists' transnational politics, wherein African Americans found, to some degree, reciprocal nation-building partners with white Germans. Whether these West German citizens wanted to rebuild a white supremacist German nation or truly had anti-racist humanitarian motives, white Germans' support of African American adoption aided Black activism. Even those African Americans who did not support the overseas adoption of Black German children into U.S. families were able to connect with their circumstances. For example, in a June 1950 *Pittsburgh Courier* article entitled "Our Own 'Brown Babies' Beg Foster Home," the author asked:

> "So you think they've got a problem to find foster homes and to get people to adopt the 'Brown Babies' in England and Germany? Brother, the Family and Children's Service says there is a scarcity of foster homes and people who want to adopt a number of the little brown babies who were born right here in Pittsburgh or Allegheny County."[91]

For many African Americans, the adoption of Black Germans represented both race-based and nationalist responsibility, as well as a highly visible and sensitive political venue through which to expose and criticize American racism. However, the plights of these children also provided a useful foil to that of their domestic brethren in the U.S., a criticism that included African Americans within its critique. It is also here that the current literature on "brown babies" is benefitting from the necessary insights of Black German adoptee scholars. As Rosemarie Peña asserts: "Race is a complex and nuanced topic in the Black German context. The transnational adoptions of biracial children into African American families must also be considered transracial since the research reveals that many Black Germans believed they experience(d) race and racism, particularly during their

91 "Our Own 'Brown Babies' Beg Foster Home," *Pittsburgh Courier*, 10 June, 1950, 2. See also "The Problem of America's Brown Babies," *Ebony*, 1 December, 1959, 65–68, 70, 72.

1960s' childhoods, different from their African American peers."[92] "Brown babies" abroad and at home were not just distinctive by nationality, but in how they were read racially, culturally, and socially – not just by nation-states, but by their birth and adoptive kin. "Brown babies" were important Cold War symbols; Black Germans, adopted and residing throughout the world, live with the real-life import of these historic geopolitics.[93]

92 Peña, "From Both," 2.
93 See footnote 4.

Philipp Rohrbach

"This Has Finally Freed the Welfare Agency from a Considerable Burden": The Adoption of Black Austrian Occupation Children in the United States

I. Introduction

In February 2000, an American lawyer contacted the child welfare agency of the City of Salzburg by email. Her client M.R., who was born in Salzburg in 1956 to a Viennese woman and a Black[1] American occupation soldier, had run into trouble with the law in the United States.[2] As a small child, her client had been a ward of the municipal child welfare agency in Salzburg. He spent the majority of his younger years in a state children's home in Taxham and in 1962 was given up by the Salzburg welfare authorities for adoption abroad to a Black couple living in Washington, D.C. In the late 1990s, M.R. was sentenced to a jail term of several years for a property crime. As he had never been naturalized in the United States, he now risked being deported to the country of his birth when he finished serving his prison sentence.

His lawyer hoped to discover the name of her client's biological father in the files of the Salzburg municipal child welfare agency: As the child of an American citizen, her client had a claim to citizenship and could not be deported. However, M.R.'s welfare file only registered that the father had been "an American negro soldier […] whose name" the child's mother was "not able to state". The lawyer's strategy thus turned out to be a dead end.

M.R. is one of about 350 to 400[3] individuals who were born to Black American soldiers and local women in Austria between 1945 and 1956. These children were born into a post-National Socialist society that defined itself as White and denied them any form of belonging to their homeland on the basis of their skin color. As

1 This article capitalizes the terms Black and White, except in direct quotes. For more information, please refer to the editorial.

2 M.R.'s biography was reconstructed on the basis of his welfare file in the Salzburg City Archive and augmented by additional research by the author: Stadtarchiv Salzburg (StArSbg), Archiv nach 1945, M.R., Box-Nummer 4398.

3 Niko Wahl, Philipp Rohrbach and Tal Adler, *SchwarzÖsterreich. Die Kinder afroamerikanischer Besatzungssoldaten* (Vienna: Löcker, 2016), 46.

a result of nationalist and/or 'moral' attitudes as well as the aftereffects of racist Nazi patterns of thought, they and their mothers had to struggle with ostracism and discrimination in Austrian postwar society. The children's mothers – who were frequently abandoned by the fathers, albeit not always voluntarily – were accused by broad segments of society of committing treason and of having offered themselves up for sale. The children that emerged from their liaisons were reviled as 'bastards' and as 'children of the enemy'.

The degree to which the mothers and their children were able to assert themselves in an often hostile environment and to make ends meet in a postwar society characterized by severe shortages depended among other things on whether they could rely on those near to them, especially their families, for support. After all, the young women had not infrequently been orphaned as a result of the war, had fled dysfunctional family environments, or been ostracized from their families and localities on account of their contacts to Black soldiers. They and their children often lived from hand to mouth.[4]

Aside from all other attendant pressures, the mothers had to deal with the welfare authorities, as their children, who were for the most part born out of wedlock, were legally treated as wards of the child welfare agency until they came of age. This guardian function was often performed by male officials, who accused the women of leading loose lives and of possessing questionable sexual morals, and believed them incapable of adequately living up to their responsibilities as mothers. A not insignificant proportion of these women eventually bowed to this official pressure and felt compelled to give their children up temporarily or for good. Peter N. reported as a case in point:

> "My mother was […] put under a lot of pressure after my birth to […] give me up for adoption. They kept coming back and saying: Yes, that would make so much more sense and it's crazy anyway […] growing up there and it would be much better if she […] gave me up for adoption. There were these actual, how can I put it, as I only discovered later, these actual organizations dedicated to 'placing' the children of GIs. Well, […] it was noticeable. But thank goodness my mother said: 'No!'"[5]

Many of the children ended up in foster families, were adopted, or placed in child welfare institutions. Others – as in M.R.'s case, and often on the instigation of the child welfare agencies – were eventually given up for adoption abroad in the United States.

These children's existence and their fate were for a long time excluded from the collective memory of the Second Republic. A broader public awareness of their life stories was only generated with the dissemination of initial findings

4 For more information, see Ingrid Bauer's contribution in this volume.

5 Interview with Peter N., born 1954, conducted by Philipp Rohrbach, 19 August & 30 October 2015, Graz/Austria, 03:09:16, LIA Collection.

from the research project "Lost in Administration" (LIA), which was based at the University of Salzburg from 2013 to 2017 and was dedicated to research on the biographies of precisely this group of individuals and their societal as well as (welfare) political treatment. This project led in the short term to the publication of scholarly articles[6] as well as the exhibition "SchwarzÖsterreich. Die Kinder afroamerikanischer Besatzungssoldaten" (Black Austria: The Children of African American Occupation Soldiers), which was shown for four months at the Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art in 2016, where it attracted more than 17,000 visitors as well as widespread media coverage. These engagements offered the broader public an insight into the life stories of this group of individuals, who on account of their color have always stood out as the Other while at the same time remaining invisible as a social group. A special focus of this project lay on the biographies of people who had grown up in Austria with their biological mothers and/or relatives, with foster parents, or with adoptive parents. Black Austrian children who were given up for adoption in the United States only played a marginal role in this context. While the adoption in the United States of Black West German occupation children along with the accompanying (socio-) political debates in the West German and American/African American context have been widely researched,[7] this topic remains entirely unexplored in Austria to date.

This article focuses on the adoption of Black Austrian occupation children in the United States and, as such, it is embedded in the broader context of Austrian children who were given up for adoption abroad. These adoptions were primarily

6 See Philipp Rohrbach and Niko Wahl, "Bandbreiten der Erinnerung. Lebensgeschichten im Forschungs- und Ausstellungsprojekt 'Lost in Administration/SchwarzÖsterreich'," in *Außerordentliches. Festschrift für Albert Lichtblau*, edited by Regina Thumser-Wöhs et al. (Vienna–Cologne–Weimar: Böhlau 2019), 211–225; Philipp Rohrbach, "Besatzungskinder" – Die Kinder alliierter Soldaten und österreichischer Frauen, *Erziehung und Unterricht* 3–4 (2018): 210–217; Regina Fritz et al., "'Guter Dauerpflegeplatz gesucht.' Kinder afro-amerikanischer GIs und österreichischer Frauen in der Besatzungszeit," in *Besatzungskinder. Die Nachkommen alliierter Soldaten in Österreich und Deutschland*, edited by Barbara Stelzl-Marx and Silke Satjukow (Vienna–Cologne–Weimar: Böhlau 2015), 207–217; Regina Fritz et al., "Diskriminiert–Abgelehnt–Vergessen. Kinder afroamerikanischer GIs und österreichischer Frauen nach 1945. Ein Projektbericht," *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft (OeZG)* 25/1+2 (2014): 359–367.

7 Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung. Afrodeutsche "Besatzungskinder" im Nachkriegsdeutschland* (Berlin: Metropol, 2002); Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria, "'Germany's 'Brown Babies' Must Be Helped! Will You?': U.S. Adoption Plans for Afro-German Children, 1950–1955," *Callaloo 26* (2003) 2: 342–362; Heide Fehrenbach, *Race After Hitler: Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Silke Hackenesch, "'I Identify Primarily as a Black German in America.' Race, Bürgerrechte und Adoptionen in den USA der 1950er Jahre," in *Kinder des Zweiten Weltkrieges. Sigmatisierung, Ausgrenzung, Bewältigungsstrategien*, edited by Elke Kleinau and Ingvill C. Mochman (Frankfurt–New York: Campus, 2016), 115–135.

instigated by the child welfare agencies in Vienna, Upper Austria, and Salzburg, in other words: those provinces that made up the U.S. zone during the occupation period in Austria, which lasted from 1945 to 1955. It explores the broader (welfare) political debates that took place during this period on the federal level, in which the question concerning these children's adoption abroad was embedded, and demonstrates that the children who were given up for adoption by the welfare agencies in the U.S. occupation zone, especially in the first postwar years, mostly belonged to destitute women with no one to support them. The welfare agencies thereby aimed to relieve themselves of the cost of supporting these women and their children. Over the course of the 1950s, different developments began to take shape. While the Viennese welfare agencies in particular began rejecting adoptions abroad, the authorities in Salzburg clung to this policy even after the end of the occupation period, a policy that was both racist and directed against members of the lower classes. The mothers of the Black GI children in many cases came from rural backgrounds, from working-class families, and/or from economically and socially disadvantaged segments of society.

In the following, I will trace the emergence of these two policies on the basis of important milestones in their development. At the same time, I will reveal how the treatment of Black occupation children was discussed and practiced in the intervening years.

II. Occupation Children as Wards of the Austrian Child Welfare Agencies

Around 20,000 children are estimated to have been born to Austrian women and Allied soldiers from France, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and the United States in Austria during and immediately following the occupation period.[8] However, no official figures exist. Based on the information provided by the child welfare agencies, it nevertheless seems clear that at least 5,000 of these children had American fathers.[9]

Due to the Austrian Citizenship Law,[10] the majority of the children born out of wedlock automatically received their mothers' citizenship. At the same time, they

8 Barbara Stelzl-Marx, *Stalins Soldaten in Österreich. Die Innensicht der sowjetischen Besatzung 1945–1955* (Vienna–Munich: Böhlau–Oldenburg, 2012), 104.

9 Ingrid Bauer, "'Leiblicher Vater: Amerikaner (Neger)'. Besatzungskinder österreichisch-afroamerikanischer Herkunft," in *Früchte der Zeit. Afrika, Diaspora, Literatur und Migration*, edited by Helmut A. Niederle et al. (Vienna: Universitätsverlag, 2001), 49.

10 See § 3 of Gesetz vom 10. Juli 1945 über den Erwerb und Verlust der österreichischen Staatsbürgerschaft (Staatsbürgerschaftsgesetz), Staatsgesetzblatt für die Republik Österreich Nr. 60, 81–86, 82.

were automatically placed – on the basis of a youth welfare law dating from the Nazi era[11] (which had been cleansed of its eugenic and racist aspects in 1945)[12] as well as the Youth Welfare Law enacted in 1954[13] – under the official guardianship of the (district) child welfare agency, meaning that they also became a matter of public record. As a result, mothers and children were 'administered' by welfare agents, who judged them according to their homesteads and behaviors, imposing measures as they saw fit. Aside from these often normative functions, the child welfare agents were also responsible for taking action to improve the material conditions of their wards. Thus, one of their central tasks was chasing up alimony from the children's fathers – insofar as they were known. If necessary, the agencies tried to enforce alimony payments through the courts,[14] though this was not possible with Allied fathers as they were not subject to Austrian jurisdiction.

This presented the Austrian authorities with two problems: On the one hand, the mothers constituted a group who were treated with particular suspicion as the authorities regarded them generally as being indecent and immoral. On the other hand, this presented the authorities with a budgetary problem. If the mothers were not able to provide for the material needs of their children, the welfare agencies either had to contribute financial aid or place their wards in foster homes and institutions. In either case, the costs had to be covered by the welfare budget of the respective province. This led very quickly to the Austrian authorities seeking to relieve their budgets by negotiating with the occupation powers over the payment of alimony, as will be demonstrated in the following with regards to the Austrian/U.S. side of these negotiations.

11 See § 29 (1) of Verordnung über Jugendwohlfahrt in der Ostmark, 20 March 1940, Deutsches Reichsgesetzblatt Teil 1, Nr. 52, 519–530, 523.

12 See in detail the Verfassungsgesetz vom 1. Mai 1945 über die Wiederherstellung des Rechtslebens in Österreich (Rechts-Überleitungsgesetz – R-ÜG.), Staatsgesetzblatt für die Republik Österreich Nr. 6, 12; the Kundmachung der Provisorischen Staatsregierung vom 12. Juni 1945 über die Aufhebung deutscher Rechtsvorschriften auf dem Gebiete des bürgerlichen Rechtes und der bürgerlichen Rechtspflege (4. Kundmachung über die Aufhebung von Rechtsvorschriften des Deutschen Reiches), Staatsgesetzblatt für die Republik Österreich Nr. 20, 37–40, 39; and the Kundmachung der Provisorischen Staatsregierung vom 3. Oktober 1945 über die Aufhebung deutscher Rechtsvorschriften auf dem Gebiete des bürgerlichen Rechtes und der bürgerlichen Rechtspflege (29. Kundmachung über die Aufhebung von Rechtsvorschriften des Deutschen Reiches), Staatsgesetzblatt für die Republik Österreich Nr. 190, 298–299, 298.

13 See § 17 (1) of Bundesgesetz vom 9. April 1954, womit Grundsätze über die Mutterschafts-, Säuglings- und Jugendfürsorge aufgestellt und unmittelbar anzuwendende Vorschriften über die Jugendwohlfahrt erlassen werden (Jugendwohlfahrtsgesetz – JWG.), Bundesgesetzblatt für die Republik Österreich Nr. 99, 18 May 1954, 507–515, 511.

14 The legal basis on which fathers can be induced by the court to pay alimony is § 1042 in combination with § 166 of the Allgemeines bürgerliches Gesetzbuch (ABGB), Justizgesetzsammlung Nr. 946/1811. I thank Philipp Selim for his consultation on various legal aspects covered in this article.

III. Discussions over Alimony for Austrian Children Fathered by American GIs

In July 1946, the Federal Ministry of Justice received a letter from Vienna's Municipal Department 11 – the city's child welfare agency – which in hindsight marked the beginning of a prolonged discussion over alimony payments from Allied soldiers stationed in Austria. In this letter, the head of the municipal child welfare agency referred to the rising number of cases in which female Austrian citizens were citing "a member of the armed forces of one of the occupation powers as the father of their children born out of wedlock".[15] In Vienna alone, the number of children fathered by Allied soldiers in the first year after the end of the war reached three digits. In these cases, the fathers' legal status presented "an insurmountable obstacle" to the child welfare agency as the children's legal guardian. The officials were not able to promote the interests of their wards as they were unable "to summon the fathers named by the children's mothers and to either move them to recognize paternity of their own accord or to have paternity legally proven through the courts".[16]

In response to this letter, the Office of Foreign Affairs in the Federal Chancellery (Bundeskanzleramt Auswärtige Angelegenheiten, BKA/AA) instructed the Austrian representative offices in the United Kingdom, France, the Soviet Union, and the United States to collect information concerning the payment of alimony by Allied fathers.

The American response arrived in January 1947 in the form of a communiqué from the U.S. Department of State to the Austrian envoy in Washington, D.C., which was relayed from the BKA/AA to the Federal Ministry of Justice in March:

> "The government of the United States is aware of the ordeal suffered by these individuals whom the municipal government of the City of Vienna is seeking to protect. However, according to the recognized principles of international law, the United States military personnel as members of an occupying power enjoy extraterritoriality and immunity from Austrian jurisdiction. The government of the United States regrets that it is not able at this time to relinquish this immunity."[17]

15 Schreiben der Mag. Abt 11.-Jugendamt vom 20. Juli 1946 an das Bundesministerium für Justiz, Betreff: Ausländische Staatsangehörige bezw. Angehörige einer Besatzungsmacht als a.e. Kindesväter, GZ 11.622/46, Österreichisches Staatsarchiv/Archiv der Republik (OeStA/AdR), Justiz BMJ Zivilrecht, Angehörige der Besatzungsmächte als Kindesväter; Unterhaltsangelegenheiten.

16 Ibid.

17 Schreiben des Bundeskanzleramtes Auswärtige Angelegenheiten vom 26. März 1947 an das Bundesministerium für Justiz, Betreff: Angehörige der Besatzungsmacht als ausserehelichе Kindesväter, GZ 10 937/47, OeStA/AdR, Justiz BMJ Zivilrecht, Angehörige der Besatzungsmächte als Kindesväter; Unterhaltsangelegenheiten.

Although this communique was a clear rejection on behalf of the U.S. State Department, this did not keep the Austrian authorities from pursuing this topic repeatedly over the following years. For example, the possibility was explored of suing the children's fathers in American courts. To this end, the child welfare agencies repeatedly demanded that the number of American children of the occupation be ascertained.[18]

Since this approach did not produce results either, an initiative by the Federal Ministry of Social Administration in 1953 presented the next significant stage in the discussion, namely to generate awareness in the United States for the plight of the children of the American occupation forces and their Austrian mothers. Upon request by the BKA/AA, the Austrian Embassy in Washington, D.C. agreed to take on this task, while also emphasizing that they required information concerning the number of children and their fathers to substantiate their arguments. The Ministry of Social Administration responded by issuing a circular decree at the beginning of 1954[19] in which the agencies of the individual provincial governments were instructed to share as much relevant information as possible with the ministry. The agencies were also prompted to assess the living conditions of the children and their mothers as well as the mothers' lifestyles and to provide information on what forms of support (monetary or otherwise) they required. The results of these investigations were relayed to the Austrian Embassy in Washington, D.C. in the form of 1,200 completed surveys.[20] However, this strategy also remained fruitless as there was no central registration system in the United States through which the fathers, even in cases where their identities were known, could be located. Moreover, a legal enforcement of alimony demands was not possible if the mother and child were not residents in the United States. In a resigned memo, the Ministry of Social Administration noted in November 1956 that all steps in this direction had to be "unfortunately regarded as completely hopeless".[21]

18 See for example Erlass des Amtes der o.ö. Landesregierung vom 16. September 1949 an alle Bezirkshauptmannschaften, die Magistrate Linz und Steyr und an die Stadtverwaltung Urfahr, Betreff: Erfassung und Unterstützung der Kindesmütter ehelich und unehelich geborener Kinder nach Kindesvätern, die Angehörige der USA Streitkräfte sind, Archiv der Stadt Linz (AStL), PrA 1930–1956, GZ 001-2-1, 1948–1951, Erlässe, Verordnungen, FA.

19 Runderlass des Bundesministerium für soziale Verwaltung vom 25. Februar 1954 an die Ämter der unterschiedlichen Landesregierungen, Betreff: Alimentationsverpflichtung gegenüber Vätern, die in den USA leben, Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv (OÖLA), Landesverwaltung seit 1945 ("Amt der Landesregierung seit 1945"), Jugendwohlfahrt, Alimentationsforderungen gegenüber Vätern, die in den USA leben, MF 11.452_731-1957.

20 Schreiben des Bundesministerium für soziale Verwaltung vom 28. November 1956 an die Ämter der verschiedenen Landesregierungen, Betreff: Alimentationsforderungen gegenüber Vätern, die in den USA. leben, Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv (WStLA), M.Abt. 207, A1–Allgemeine Registratur, X, Zahl 122/1956.

21 Ibid.

The consequences of this lack of financial support from the American fathers, particularly in combination with the often sparse allowances granted by the child welfare agencies, had an impact that lasted beyond the end of the occupation period. This becomes evident in the following entry in the welfare case file of a Black Upper Austrian child of a GI from 1958:

> "The child's mother lives with her four children in just two small rooms in a semi-dilapidated private barrack for which she has to pay 200 schillings per month. […] The apartment is very sparsely furnished, especially lacking bedsheets and bedding for the children. […] The children's mother receives 460 schillings per month in welfare support and child support, which does not even suffice to cover her modest living expenses. Instead of milk, the children only get tea to drink and the meager income rarely allows for the procurement of fruit and vegetables. […] The two colored children J. and E. are pleasant to look at but […] attract everyone's attention. The children's mother looks very sick. She is skinny and her face is a fallow yellowish color. […] The child's mother is very attached to her children, keeps them clean, and makes every sacrifice for them. I think she is also starving."[22]

IV. Adoptions Abroad as a Means to Cut Maintenance Costs

The Austrian authorities' attempts to extract maintenance payments from the fathers for the children of the American occupation were intended to improve the living conditions of the mothers and their children but also – a key issue for the authorities – to relieve the social budget. Another strategy of the child welfare authorities in the first postwar years was to put up numerous children in their care (namely children born out of wedlock, orphans, refugee children, and of course occupation children) for adoption abroad, as all mandatory welfare contributions from the authorities and federal provinces automatically ceased following successful adoption.

These adoptions were facilitated either with the help of international aid programs, through private initiatives and mediation efforts by domestic and foreign NGOs, or through direct adoption requests submitted by foreign couples to the child welfare agencies. The records of the welfare agencies and corresponding newspaper reports reveal that many of these children were placed with adoptive parents in affluent European countries, in South America – among other places Venezuela[23] – or in the United States.

In cases where the children were not parentless or orphaned, the mothers' consent to give their children up for adoption was not infrequently obtained

22 Amtsbericht vom 14. 4. 1958, J.W., 8. 03. 1954, AStL, Jugendamt, Amtsvormundschaft.

23 See for example "Waisenkinder nach Südamerika," *Wiener Tageszeitung*, 20 November 1949, 3; "1000 Kinder fliegen nach Venezuela," *Wiener Kurier*, 11 December 1950, 3.

under pressure, as the example of a Black child living in an institution in Salzburg reveals. The often difficult and complicated living situations of the people affected were portrayed tersely in the official documentation:

> "The child's mother practically never concerned herself very intensively with this child. Altogether, she only had her in care for four weeks. In the remaining time, she never once paid alimony for the child. When the child welfare agency tried to find suitable negro or *Mischling* adoptive parents [the latter meaning mixed-race; this term originated in colonialist and later in Nazi discourse] for the *Mischling* child, the child's mother […] declared her love for the child and would not even consent to the placement of this child with suitable adoptive parents by the child welfare agency, claiming that she wanted, 'when her circumstances allow it at a later point in time, to place the child in an institution in Austria.'
>
> On 31 August 1960, the mother declared to the undersigned court that she had 22 months previously given her general consent to adoption – without knowledge of specific adoptive parents – to Mr. Punz, the official guardian at the municipal child welfare agency, as she was told that this would rule out any further obligations concerning alimony payments for the child."[24]

In cases where they deemed it appropriate, the welfare authorities tried to convince the mothers to give their children up for adoption. As the above-cited quotation demonstrates, they did so by applying a combination of social and financial pressure, by searching for adoptive parents abroad, even though the mothers actually did not wish to give up their children, while promising relief from the debts that had amassed due to unpaid alimony. Over the course of the occupation period, the authorities worked together with various private and civilian organizations, especially with regard to placing Austrian children with adoptive parents in the United States.

IV.1. Adoptions of Austrian Children in the United States

The early activities of American aid organizations with regard to the placement of orphans and refugee children in the United States were coordinated by the "United States Committee for the Care of European Children" (USCOM), which was founded in New York in 1940. The main aim of this organization, whose activities were officially recognized by the U.S. government,[25] was to bring chil-

24 StArSbg, Archiv nach 1945, C.R., Box-Nummer 4809.

25 Memorandum Concerning Official Basis of the Program of the United States Committee for the Care of European Children, Inc., 1953, Social Welfare History Archives at the University of Minnesota (SWHA), International Social Service United States of America Branch, Series 4. Other Organizations, 1946–1979, United States Committee for the Care of European Children, Inc., 1945–1956 (Box 23, Folder 27).

dren from Europe to the United States who had lost their families during the war or were affected by poverty, persecution, or discrimination. Until its disbandment in 1952, the USCOM acted as an umbrella organization to coordinate the activities of American aid organizations as well as their cooperation with American military authorities and European welfare organizations. All remaining open cases, mostly affecting people earmarked for immigration to the United States under the "Displaced Person Act" – including GI children –, were then taken over by the "International Social Service" (ISS).[26]

Founded in Geneva in 1920, the ISS[27] is a non-denominational, independent and internationally active organization dedicated to assisting in international adoptions and migration.[28] In the 1950s and 1960s, it worked together with local welfare authorities in a number of European countries and was supported "with regard to both legal and financial matters" by the U.S. State Department.[29] The ISS had already become active in Austria in 1950,[30] where it had offices in several provincial capitals, including in Vienna, Linz, and Salzburg.[31]

While the adoption of Austrian children in the United States and the associated counseling, mediation, and supervision activities fell under the remit of the ISS, it was also possible – as documented in numerous newspaper articles, child welfare agency files, and official records – for American couples to adopt children in situ in Austria by turning directly to the Austrian authorities and agencies:

> "A Mrs. M.K. appeared here [in Linz] today, the wife of C.K., an American lieutenant stationed in Zell am See […] expressing her wish to adopt as soon as possible an infant (boy or girl) up to two months of age that had been fathered by an American.
> The couple K. does not have children, the man is 42, the woman 34 years old. […] A negro child is out of the question.
> Should a child matching these criteria come into question, whose care through adoption appears advisable, please make this known without delay. The inquiries into the

26 Letter from D. Dodds, (ISS Munich), dated 7 April 1952, to J. Douine (ISS Naples), E. Laursen (ISS Bremen), J. Rutherford (ISS Trieste), and F. Windsor (ISS Salzburg), regarding: Assumption of responsibility by ISS for European end of work previously carried by U.S. Committee for the Care of European Children, ibid.

27 When it was founded, the organization was called International Migration Service. It was renamed International Social Service in 1946.

28 See Lemke Muniz de Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung*, 93.

29 Ibid, 94.

30 Internationaler Sozialdienst Österreich, Abschlussbericht, 1950–1977, 5, SWHA, International Social Service United States of America Branch records, Series 6. Country Files, 1923–1977, 1980s, Austria (Box 44, Folder 9).

31 Report on Activities of ISS Austrian Branch, April-September 1955, SWHA, International Social Service United States of America Branch records, Series 6. Country Files, 1923–1977, 1980s, Austria, Correspondence, 1949–1972 (Box 28, Folder 5).

adoptive parents are being undertaken here. No objections to their suitability are anticipated."[32]

It is not clear why the couple excluded a Black adoptive child from the outset – whether this was a result of racism or because the couple came from a segregated U.S. state – yet this case demonstrates the contested role that skin color played in adoption. In the Austrian context, this contested role of skin color always also entailed a hidden agenda, which is nevertheless hard to uncover since – unlike in West Germany – there was never a broader public debate on this question in Austria.

IV.2. The Absence of Broader Public Debates on the Future Perspectives of Black Austrian Occupation Children

In the Federal Republic of Germany, the 1950s witnessed repeated broader public debates, on the future perspectives of Black occupation children. As the historian Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria demonstrated, these essentially reflected three different positions:[33]

1. The children should be given up for adoption in the United States so that they could grow up among 'their own kind'.
2. The children should be raised and educated in segregated institutions in the Federal Republic.
3. The children should (to put it in modern terms) be integrated into the majority society. Their 'integration' would serve not least of all as evidence to the world that Germany had overcome the racist heritage of the Nazi period. This latter position reflected the liberal spectrum of West German society.

In Austria, no such broader public debates occurred. Instead, the fate of the Black occupation children was decided autonomously by the welfare authorities of the various provinces in the U.S. occupation zone as well as by the respective provincial governments.

Evidence of the specific attitudes and implementation practices prevailing among these welfare authorities can be gleaned primarily from the annotations in

32 Schreiben des Amtes der o.ö. Landesregierung vom 19. Mai 1951 an die Bezirkshauptmannschaften und Magistrate (Abteilungen Jugendwohlfahrtspflege) (nördlich der Donau: im Wege der Zivilverwaltung Mühlviertel), Betreff: Adoption eines Säuglings, der einen Amerikaner zum Vater hat, AStL, PrA 1930–1956. GZ 001-2-1, 1948–1951, Erlässe, Verordnungen, FA.

33 On the debates in the Federal Republic regarding the future perspectives of the Black German occupation children, see Lemke Muniz de Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung*; and Fehrenbach, *Race After Hitler.*

the files of the child welfare agencies,[34] comments made in correspondence between authorities, as well as sometimes in individual statements made by senior bureaucrats in the welfare system. An analysis of these sources reveals the extent to which developments differed between the respective provinces. While the authorities in Salzburg increasingly pursued adoptions abroad, Vienna increasingly favored 'integrating' the affected children into local society. Reports in newspapers of various political leanings, which began appearing in greater number from the early 1950s onward and mostly concerned individual fates, also reveal that a (partly) public interest in the existence of Black occupation children was beginning to emerge. The Vienna-based socialist papers played a particularly prominent role in this respect, as they not only reported empathetically about the situation of these children and their mothers, but – as the following excerpt from the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* shows – they also emphasized the attitude displayed toward these children by the Viennese welfare authorities:

> "The officials of the Viennese child welfare agency and especially its head, Professor Tesarek, can get seriously infuriated when asked about the negro children. A negro child – what is that? We only know of children with blond or black hair, with blue or brown eyes, with or without freckles, with light or dark skin – but negro children, we know of no such thing!
> Indeed, it is only estimated that there are eighty colored children born to French or American fathers living in Vienna. They are not separately categorized in a statistic or index, they are not specially supervised or cared for, they are just like any other children."[35]

Somewhat boldly, the author furthermore claimed that the Viennese are such a "cosmopolitan people" that "they have absolutely no understanding for racial slogans".[36] However, as the following article reveals, there was a notable discrepancy between the progressive attitude displayed by the Viennese authorities in the 1950s and the reality of growing up in Viennese society at this time:

> "A few days ago, an ad appeared in the *Wiener Zeitung* seeking foster or adoptive parents for a small *Negermischling* [a "negro mongrel"]. The young mother, who had hoped thereby to be freed from the undesired consequences of her relationship with an American negro soldier, was to be disappointed: She did not receive a single response. Although a succession of occupation children had already been taken in by Austrian and American families, there has to date not been a single case of somebody applying to adopt a mulatto baby."[37]

34 On the terms used in the files of the Salzburg child welfare agency, see Bauer, "'*Leiblicher Vater: Amerikaner (Neger)*'".
35 "Vater von 30.000 Wiener Kindern," *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, 28 October, 1953, 5.
36 Ibid.
37 "Dreihundert farbige Besatzungskinder," *Das Kleine Blatt*, 4 March, 1950, 1–3.

The research findings of LIA also demonstrate that Black children were not only confronted with exoticization and racism in everyday life, they were also much more likely to be adopted by socially marginalized groups such as single women or Roma and/or Sinti families,[38] meaning that they were difficult to place. As Susanne S. recalled about her Viennese adoptive mother:

> "So, […] I was adopted when I was five, when she had already been caring for me for so long. I would like to add that at this point in time […] the rules stipulated […] that people needed to be married in order to even apply to adopt. But since I was […] black and nobody wanted me, she was approved anyway and was allowed to adopt me even though she was single."[39]

Evidently, despite all the verbal openness of the Viennese welfare agencies, another picture emerges on the social level, where attitudes and practices differed markedly.

IV.3. Protests against Adoptions Abroad

The 1950s witnessed increasing protests against the adoption of Austrian children abroad as well as the adoption of Austrian children by foreign parents, including against the black market that had emerged in this context. Although these protests were initially incited by the communist press in pursuit of their anti-American agenda in the midst of the Cold War, the criticisms raised by no means lacked real substance and in fact revealed genuine problems. In late 1951, the Graz-based communist daily *Die Wahrheit* printed a letter to the editor in which the author raised serious allegations against the "Kinderaktion Venezuela", an initiative that placed Austrian children up for adoption:

> "In Venezuela, the children have to work on farms in the interior of the country under the most difficult conditions. […]
> These are orphans whose parents either died during the war or thereafter. Previously, they had to be cared for by the Austrian or West German governments, which already left something to be desired. Now, these governments have divested themselves of these children."[40]

38 Of the individuals interviewed for the project LIA, there were altogether four individuals who were adopted domestically in Austria. Two of these were adopted by a (Roma-) Sinti couple, one by a publican couple, and one by a single woman.

39 Interview with Susanne S., born 1949, conducted by Philipp Rohrbach, 6 December 2013 & 4 August 2014, Vienna/Austria, 03:13:20, LIA Collection.

40 "Kinderverschleppung nach Übersee," *Die Wahrheit*, 14 November 1951, 5.

The role of the Austrian child welfare agencies was also repeatedly criticized in this context, as they were involved in trade and trafficking that according to the communist newspapers was largely operated by Americans:

> "An unbelievable case of trafficking in children is currently a hot topic in Linz. With the knowledge and toleration of the Austrian authorities, an American soldier can nowadays take two children from a young Austrian mother and send them to America."[41]

The background to this story was that a woman in Linz had temporarily handed her two small children over to the local child welfare agency as she was at that point in financially dire straits and unable to care for them. The children eventually ended up with an American couple in Wels who wished to adopt them. The child welfare agency and the guardianship court – so claimed the author of the article – had agreed to this suggestion against the will of the mother, as they had ostensibly been put under pressure by the American occupation authorities while at the same time pursuing their own interests, namely the relief of their budget:

> "The child welfare agency in Linz, in total disregard of its responsibilities as an Austrian authority that is supposed to protect the interests of the Austrian citizenry, entered into this agreement willingly and eagerly, as, so it obviously calculated, if the American takes these Austrian children to America, the child welfare agency won't have to pay for them anymore."

This case continued to be the subject of such reports until the Austrian Supreme Court forbade the adoption in 1952.[42] The criticisms against such adoptions[43] – which did not only occur in Upper Austria – eventually led to a discussion about a potential stop to foreign adoptions.

V. The Demographic Impetus to Halt Adoptions Abroad

In January 1955, the Austrian Ministry of Social Administration sent a memo to the agencies of all provincial governments that prompted a new twist in the above-cited discussions and ultimately impacted on the adoption of Black children in the United States. According to this memo, "adoption requests from foreigners who wish to adopt Austrian children" were on the rise.[44] "With regard

41 "Zwei Kinder nach Amerika verkauft," *Österreichische Volksstimme*, 19 December, 1951, 4.

42 See "Österreichische Kinder sollen in die USA verschleppt werden," *Österreichische Zeitung*, 19 December 1951, 3; "Linzer Kinder vor Verschleppung gerettet," *Volksstimme für Niederösterreich*, 6 June 1952, 6.

43 Der Baby-Export, *Der Abend*, 12 March 1952, 3.

44 Schreiben des Bundesministerium für soziale Verwaltung vom 7. Jänner 1955 an die Ämter der Burgenländischen, Kärntner, Niederösterreichischen, Oberösterreichischen, Salzburger,

to the shortage of births in Austria", the memo continued, "the relinquishment of Austrian children abroad for the purpose of adoption is to be largely curtailed".[45]

The ministry therefore intended to "ask the Office of Foreign Affairs in the Federal Chancellery [BKA/AA] to instruct the Austrian authorities abroad neither to approve nor to pass on to the domestic Austrian authorities requests from foreigners to adopt Austrian children".[46] The responsible agency of the Viennese provincial government responded to this statement from the Ministry of Social Administration a few weeks later:

> "In the first years following the end of the war, the Austrian authorities in all the states impacted by the war were faced with the problem of reintegrating all those children who had become homeless or parentless through wartime events back into a family unit as quickly as possible in order to prevent widespread neglect. Due to the general uncertainty and the unfortunate economic situation still reigning at the time, the situation arose that there were not enough Austrian families available to take in these children. Hence, they were given up to foster or adoptive families abroad.
> Through the slow relaxation and improvement of the general economic situation, this problem has been replaced by another problem: managing the declining birth rate in Austria. Among other efforts, it is thus also the duty of the public sector to only give up children who cannot be kept in their own families, and whose potentially still living parents have rescinded their natural rights in favor of adoptive parents, to Austrian families in order to keep them in the country. […]
> The provincial government of Vienna therefore takes the position that the placement of Austrian children with foreign adoption candidates should neither be carried out nor approved."[47]

Like the Viennese provincial government, the Upper Austrian government also welcomed the suggestion of the Ministry of Social Administration.[48] In April 1955, the ministry informed the responsible agency of the Upper Austrian provincial government that the BKA/AA had already begun at the beginning of the month to ask "all Austrian representative bodies abroad" to generally reject adoption applications.[49]

The province of Salzburg was the only one to take a different path: In 1958, the provincial government reminded all of its child welfare agencies of its "order of

Steirischen, Tiroler, Vorarlberger und Wiener Landesregierung, OÖLA, Landesverwaltung seit 1945 ("Amt der Landesregierung seit 1945"), Jugendwohlfahrt, MF 11.520 268/6.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

47 Schreiben vom Amt der Wiener Landesregierung vom 2. Februar 1955 an das Bundesministerium für soziale Verwaltung, Betreff: Adoption von Ausländern, ibid.

48 See Schreiben des Amtes der o.ö. Landesregierung vom 15. Jänner 1955 an das Bundesministerium für soziale Verwaltung, Betreff: Adoption für Ausländer, ibid.

49 Schreiben des Bundesministerium für soziale Verwaltung vom 23. April 1955 an das Amt der Oberösterreichischen Landesregierung in Linz, ibid.

August 31, 1955, No. 11.163/LAD/1955", in which it had "pointed out that intercountry adoptions of Austrian children should not be encouraged." Nevertheless, as the communiqué continued, the provincial government continued to receive "applications from the various Jugendämter [child welfare agencies] for consent to an intercountry adoption, particularly for America. Therefore this order has again to be called to your attention." With specific regard to the Black children of GIs, however, the agencies received a positive response, as the letter concluded: "An intercountry adoption can only be welcomed in cases of negro/Austrian children."[50]

This approach – namely to prohibit adoptions abroad as a matter of principle while continuing to approve the adoption of Black GI children – was clearly motivated by racist attitudes. These attitudes were put demonstratively on display in the book "Salzburg – Kleinod Österreichs" (Salzburg – Austria's Jewel), which was published by the provincial government in 1955. This book listed the costs incurred by the occupation children down to the smallest detail, finally remarking with specific regard to the Black children that "the conflicts that will undoubtedly arise between the *Mischling* children and their environs" would have to be monitored in future "so that they do not become a disruptive element in their surroundings".[51] The logical consequence for the Salzburg provincial government was to remove this "disruptive element" from Austria by giving the children up for adoption abroad.

VI. The Child Welfare Authorities in Salzburg, the ISS, and Mabel Grammer

While the provinces of Vienna and Upper Austria thus generally ceased giving Austrian children up for adoption abroad at this point, Salzburg continued to do so in part. An article in the *Bild Telegraf* from September 1955 reveals that the municipal child welfare agency in Salzburg had placed about 300 occupation children, both White and Black, with adoptive parents during the occupation period.[52] As the U.S. troops were set to depart Austria soon, the city wished to

50 This letter from the Office of the Salzburg Provincial Government, No. 12.589/IIIc-1958, Re: Intercountry adoption, was only accessible in English translation in a copy created by the ISS, SWHA, International Social Service United States of America Branch records, Series 6. Country Files, 1923–1977, 1980s, Folder Austria, Adoptions, 1955–1973 (Box 28, Folder 4).

51 Die Salzburger Landesregierung (ed.), *Salzburg – Kleinod Österreichs. 10 Jahre Aufbau 1945–1955* (Salzburg: Verlag des Alpen Journal, 1955), 143–144.

52 "Ein Kind kostet nur 60 S für Stempelgebühren," *Bild-Telegraf*, 1 September 1955, 8. The publication *Salzburg – Kleinod von Österreich* spoke of 335 children who were adopted or

"take care of as many cases as possible," as quickly as possible, in the time remaining.[53]

While discussions regarding a stop to adoptions abroad were still ongoing, the child welfare agency in Zell am See contacted the ISS branch in Salzburg to find American adoptive parents for two Black children from Salzburg. A staff member of the ISS in Salzburg subsequently turned to the ISS branch in the United States in March 1955 with the following letter (written in English):

> "Enclosed kindly find a note for which we would greatly appreciate your assistance 'according to the statements of the Jugendamt Zell/-See', for which is asked to find rom. cath. [Roman Catholic] adoptive parents. The father of this baby is a Neger, therefore the child a half-breed, as the mother is Austrian, white complexion. Since it is the first case of this kind referring to you, we beg you to let us know, on principle, which statement you need for handling such matters. […]
> The Landesjugendamt (country official guardianship [correctly: provincial child welfare agency]) requested to help them by finding adoption placements for half-breed children, which the mother's [sic] of those baby's [sic] release for adoption. […] We are afraid here in Austria for the future of these neger-children. It will be very difficult for them to get a master [in the sense of a teacher or instructor] or give them any chance in professional life. They will always remain outsiders which have to suffer in point of view, economic and psychic [psychologically]. It is impossible in Austria to find adoptive parents. The American Consulate here informed us that in America there should be even white families, who are adopting half-breed children. Besides, there are mixt [sic] couples in USA which would be suitable for an adoption. We shall welcome your comments or questions as to any of the above and thank you in advance for your precious help."[54]

A few months later, the following response from the United States arrived:

> "I am sorry for the long delay in replying to your letter […] about a possible adoptive placement for P. and also your letter about K. We had been giving careful consideration to these cases along with other cases of Negro children to see if it is possible for us to offer service finding adoptive placements for them. As you can imagine we have a number of children that are half Negro in Korea, Japan, Germany and now in Austria. It is not easy in the United States to find adoptive homes for Negro children as there are large numbers of Negro children in foster homes and institutions in this country needing adoptive placements. Adoption has not been a popular custom with the Negro

legitimized ex post facto through marriage. In these cases, the children were presumably cared for. See Salzburger Landesregierung, *Salzburg – Kleinod*, 143.

53 "Ein Kind kostet nur 60 S für Stempelgebühren," *Bild-Telegraf*, 1 September 1955, 8.

54 Letter from A. Karpferer (ISS, Austrian Branch), dated 8 March 1955, to the ISS (American Branch), SWHA, International Social Service United States of America Branch records, Case Records, Cases 3782-37944 (Box 28, 37663).

> families as many of them are in the lower income groups in this country. We, however, will be glad to do whatever we can to find families for these two children."[55]

The ISS thus became the official point of contact for the Salzburg authorities with regard to the often drawn out process of putting children up for adoption in the United States. However, this cooperation with the ISS was obviously not enough for the Salzburg authorities. Following the end of the occupation – as newspaper ads in the Baltimore-based newspaper *Afro-American*[56] as well as the respective welfare files reveal – they also worked together with the Black journalist Mabel Grammer to find American adoptive parents for Black children.

Mabel Grammer accompanied her husband Oscar Grammer, an American soldier, to Germany twice, where she spent a considerable amount of time in the 1950s and 1960s.[57] In the 1950s, she established the so-called "Brown Baby Plan" together with the *Afro-American*, through which Black GI children were given up for adoption to Black American couples stationed in the Federal Republic as well as to couples in the United States via so-called proxy adoptions. This initiative was driven by her conviction that Black occupation children would be better off with African American adoptive parents in the United States than they would be in the former territory of the "Third Reich". While Grammer was nicknamed the "guardian angel of the occupation children,"[58] among other things, by numerous West German journalists on account of her adoption mediations, her activities were criticized by the ISS as well as by the Federal German and American authorities, as they claimed she was ignoring all legal, social, pedagogical, and psychological guidelines.[59]

M.R., whose case was discussed at the beginning of this article, was one of those children whose placement with a Black couple in the United States was mediated by Grammer via a proxy adoption in Salzburg. The municipal child welfare agency in Salzburg justified M.R.'s adoption abroad as follows:

> "Since his birth, […] the district welfare association in the City of Salzburg had to cover the entire maintenance costs for this child, who lives in the state children's home in Taxham.

55 Letter from S. T. Pettis, ISS (American Branch), dated 19 August 1955, to A. Kapferer, ISS (Austrian Branch), ibid.

56 *The Afro-American*, 29 November, 1958, 5.

57 "Overlooked No More: Mabel Grammer, Whose Brown Baby Plan Found Homes for Hundreds," *The New York Times*, 6 February 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/06/obituaries/mabel-grammer-overlooked.html> (20 May 2020).

58 Lemke Muniz de Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung*, 110.

59 For further information on Mabel Grammer and the motivations of numerous African Americans to adopt so-called 'brown babies', see Kelly Condit-Shrestha's contribution in this volume.

> The costs of his maintenance have since the beginning of 1956 already totaled 32,496.00 schillings.
> The child's mother constantly changes her address, has been arrested repeatedly for a variety of offenses, and has to date not once been able to contribute to the maintenance costs.
> The municipal child welfare agency was finally able to find a couple in America willing to take in and adopt this child, who is a negro *Mischling* and therefore has no hope for a future in Austria. This has finally freed the welfare agency from a considerable burden."[60]

Through first Grammer's and then the ISS's mediation, M.R. traveled to the United States in the fall of 1962. In a report submitted to the ISS shortly after his arrival, an American welfare officer described the first days following his arrival:

> "M. was somewhat nervous upon his arrival in New York, but he took the car ride to Washington without any undue alarm. He seemed delighted with his new home; he inspected each room several times. When put to bed in his room he began to cry, and there was intermittent crying all Sunday. The first crying episode was solved when Mr. P. took him in his lap to reassure him and then slept in the bed with him. […]
> M. was in a new environment; was missing his former surroundings and, being unable to converse with them, he was releasing his feelings through tears. […]."[61]

Another report from the spring of 1963 reveals that M. had adapted to his new surroundings and had overcome the language barrier.[62] It is thus all the more surprising that in 1966, as a letter reveals, M. was living in an institution in Washington, D.C., as he had not been able to adjust to his adoptive family and there had been difficulties between him and his adoptive mother. This ultimately meant that his adoption – which had been legally concluded in Austria – was never confirmed by a court in the United States. When the municipal child welfare agency in Salzburg was informed of this fact, it took the position in agreement with the ISS

> "that the *Mischling* child is better off in the USA than in Austria. However, as this underage child continues to hold Austrian citizenship, we request that he be registered as an 'Austrian' at the embassy there and that his accommodation, education, and professional training be monitored. We also request that someone look into the possibility of naturalizing him in the USA."[63]

60 Antrag des Stadtjugendamt Salzburg vom 23. August 1961 an die Staatsanwaltschaft Salzburg, StArSbg, Archiv nach 1945, M.R., Box-Nummer 4398.
61 Letter from R. S. Ward, dated 11 October 1962, to D. Adjemovitch, ISS (American Branch), ibid.
62 Letter from D. Adjemovitch, ISS (American Branch), dated 16 April 1963, to M. Weiss-Tessbach, ISS (Austrian Branch), ibid.
63 Schreiben vom 29. März 1967 an die Österreichische Botschaft in Washington, D.C, ibid.

As the further correspondence between the Austrian authorities and American welfare institutions in M.R.'s file reveal, which date until 1967, he finally managed to stabilize his life in the United States. After that, there was no more trace of him – until his conviction in the late 1990s mentioned at the beginning of this article, when it turned out that he had never been naturalized in the United States in the subsequent decades.

VII. Conclusion

The policies of putting children up for adoption abroad that were practiced in the first postwar years by the child welfare authorities in the provinces of Vienna, Upper Austria, and Salzburg in what was then the U.S. occupation zone demonstrate that all the authorities actively sought to find adoptive homes for the children under their 'administration' (children born out of wedlock, orphans, refugee children, and of course occupation children) – and not just the Black children. They did so on the one hand to live up to their social mission in the chaos of the postwar period and the associated economic and material shortages and on the other hand to relieve their social budget. They achieved their goal by working together with a range of initiatives, organizations, and private individuals.

In Austria – unlike in West Germany – there were no broad public debates about the future perspectives of Black occupation children during the occupation period. Thus, there was also no discussion about whether they should remain in their homeland or be given up for adoption in the United States. These decisions were taken by the welfare authorities of the various provinces and were subject to change over the course of the ten-year occupation period. One reason for the absence of any such discussion, to be sure, was simply the low number of children affected, somewhere between 350 to 400 Austria-wide.[64] However, this circumstance can also be explained by the fact that Austria officially rejected any responsibility for National Socialism and therefore, unlike the Federal Republic of Germany, did not feel the need to demonstrate to the world through the treatment of these children that it had overcome the Nazi era.

During the occupation period, these children were adopted in all three provinces, especially by Black American couples in situ in Austria. While the demographic discussion that emerged due to the negative birth rate in 1955 led to a general prohibition on adoptions abroad in the provinces of Vienna and Upper Austria, as Austrian children were to be retained for Austrian society, the province of Salzburg created legal possibilities and structures in the framework of

64 Wahl et al., *SchwarzÖsterreich,* 46.

this discussion that allowed for Black children to continue to be given up for adoption abroad, even after the end of the occupation period.

Evidently, the authorities in Salzburg were not of the opinion that these children should be kept within Austrian society, which explains why the children of Black GIs were given up for adoption to Black American couples in the United States by the Salzburg welfare authorities following the departure of the allied occupation forces in 1955.

The sources only allow us to speculate about the reasons for this policy: Throughout the entire occupation period, Salzburg was the center of the U.S. zone and the location of the U.S. Army's headquarters. The majority of the U.S. occupation forces were stationed in Salzburg in the 1950s, and the image of the province was shaped by the American occupation both in its positive aspects (such as modernization and lifestyle[65]) and negative aspects (such as the accusation that the U.S. forces were running brothels).[66] Moreover, Salzburg, a comparatively small province with a small population, had to cope with almost as many children born to U.S. soldiers as the federal capital Vienna had children of the Allied occupation altogether. The authorities' attempt to rid themselves of the Black children can be understood as an attempt to simultaneously rid Salzburg of the most visible legacy of the years of occupation – such as M.R.

The topic of intercountry adoptions of Black Austrian GI children to the United States was – as has been demonstrated here – embedded in a broad and entangled web of personal life trajectories, social policies and interventions by state agencies. Within this web, the question of skin color was even more complex. Although racism played a decisive role here, it was not the only factor determining the treatment of Black occupation children.

Nevertheless, M.R's story ultimately had a happy ending. Following a period during which it seemed likely that he would be deported to Austria when he finished serving his prison sentence, the U.S. immigration authorities' plans were thwarted: It turned out that M.R. had served in Vietnam as a member of the U.S. Army and had thus automatically rescinded his Austrian citizenship in accordance with the Austrian Citizenship Law. His lawyer argued that he could not be deported to the country of his birth under these circumstances, because he was now technically stateless. The responsible court ultimately agreed with this legal argument and M.R. was permitted to remain in the United States. M.R. was born in Salzburg, a citizen of Austria, but was never allowed to be an Austrian by the authorities in Salzburg.

65 Reinhold Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonisation und Kalter Krieg. Die Kulturmission der USA in Österreich nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik 1991).

66 See Ingrid Bauer, *Welcome Ami Go Home. Die amerikanische Besatzung in Salzburg 1945–1955* (Salzburg-Munich: Pustet 1998).

Lucy Bland

The War Babies of Black GIs and White British Women: Experiencing Racism and Exclusion and Searching for a Sense of Belonging

I. Introduction

Two wonderful recent memoirs by mixed-race women point to a couple of disconcerting questions they faced as children: "What are you?" and "Where are you from?" Tessa McWatt (born to parents of mixed heritage in the late 1950s in British Guiana) writes of how she desires "a new language of belonging. A *who-are-you* space to gather in with others, rather than a biological 'what' am I."[1] In relation to the second question, Hazel Carby (born to a white British mother and a Jamaican father in 1948) reflects: "When officials asked her [Hazel] where she was born and she replied Devon, England, they demanded to know where she had come from before that […] Being Black British was incomprehensible, an impossibility between two mutually exclusive terms."[2] Although a few years older than Carby and McWatt, the children born during World War II to white British women and Black American servicemen faced exactly these same unsettling, racist questions.

From 2014 to 2018, I researched the lives of these 'children' (now in their seventies), undertaking fifty-one interviews around the country. This led to the book *Britain's 'Brown Babies'*, which was published in May 2019.[3] 'Brown babies' was the name given at the time by the African American press to the children of Black[4] GIs and white women. Oral history interviews are at the heart of this book – personal memories of growing up in the late 1940s and 1950s as a mixed-race child in what was then a very white Britain. In the book, the interviews are combined with analysis of official records of central and local government and various organizations, reports from children's homes, newspapers (British

1 Tessa McWatt, *Shame on Me: An Anatomy of Race and Belonging* (London: Scribe, 2019), 233.
2 Hazel V. Carby, *Imperial Intimacies: A Tale of Two Islands* (London: Verso, 2019), 84.
3 Lucy Bland, *Britain's 'Brown Babies': The Stories of Children Born to Black GIs and White Women in the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019).
4 This article capitalizes the term Black consistently. For more information, please refer to the editorial.

and American), letters, and memoirs. Rather than solely repeating some of the book's contents, I want in this article to summarize my main findings but then combine some of the stories from the book with those of several other 'brown babies' who have contacted me since the book came out, as well as mention new developments in the lives of some of the original participants. I want in particular to focus on two themes: racism and exclusion as experienced by these children, and the question of belonging. I will look at the latter both in terms of authorities' attitudes as to whether the children should stay in Britain, i. e. whether they belonged, and to the search for and sometimes acquiring of a sense of belonging by the 'brown babies' themselves, including through locating American relatives. First though, the article will lay out the book's main findings and indicate what has so far resulted from the book's publication.

II. Main Findings and Some of the Consequences of the Book

During World War II, specifically over the period 1942–1945, three million GIs passed through Britain, although never that number at any one time. The American troops, largely stationed there to aid in the liberation of Western Europe, were based all over the country, but in greatest concentration in South and Southwest England, South Wales, East Anglia, and Lancashire. Approximately eight percent of these troops were African American, so in the region of 240,000 servicemen. This was a segregated army (and stayed segregated until 1948) and to address interracial tension amongst their servicemen, which they believed was largely due to white GIs' hostility towards relations between Black men and white women, the U.S. army authorities introduced segregation of leisure pursuits, too. Although Britain was formally opposed to U.S. military segregation, it did not interfere with these arrangements. Access to towns near American bases was given on different days for Blacks and whites, while other towns were permanently designated 'whites only' or 'Blacks only' for the war's duration. In many villages, pubs were also segregated along color lines, with dances held for Black GIs one evening, whites the next.

Pubs and dances were the main sites where local women met Black GIs. The mother of one of my interviewees, James A., met his father at a dance in Long Eaton, Derbyshire, on a 'Black night'. She went to the dance with a friend, despite having four children and a husband at home. As James expresses it: "probably she deserved to have a little bit of life for herself, having had four children rather quickly, one after the other."[5] While the British population were largely in favor

5 James A., born 1944, interviewed by Lucy Bland, 80 minutes, 19 April 2016, Ilkeston, Derbyshire.

of the Black GIs, finding them far politer and more modest than their white counterparts, who were seen as boastful and bumptious, they were generally not so keen on relationships between Black Americans and local women. While most Brits were committed to being friendly, polite, and welcoming hosts,[6] many, particularly British men and the older generation of both sexes, drew the line at sexual relations. Young women, however, often found the Black GIs very attractive and some entered into relationships with them. In addition to the Black GIs having better manners, part of the attraction was unfamiliarity, the vast majority of British people never having met a Black person before. Britain at the time was very largely a white country. An estimated 7,000–8,000 non-white peoples lived in Britain before the war, mostly concentrated in seaports.[7] The attraction of British women to Black GIs may have also related to the association of Black American culture with new forms of dance and cutting-edge modern music. As the African American magazine *Ebony* observed in 1946: "The average Negro GI had one advantage over his white army brother: he knew how to jitterbug. English girls love to dance."[8]

If British women in relationships with Black GIs went on to have a child, they faced a barrage of criticism. An estimated 2,000 mixed-race offspring were born of such relationships to women both single and married.[9] They were very largely born in areas close to where the Black GIs were sited, which were not usually large towns, Liverpool aside. Unlike white GIs, Black GIs, in this segregated army, were generally forbidden by their commanding officers to marry their white girlfriends. The rationale, if one was required, was that thirty out of the (then) forty-eight U.S. States had anti-miscegenation laws forbidding the marriage of Blacks and whites. Nearly half of the mothers of these babies, faced with the stigma of illegitimacy and a mixed-race child, placed their babies in children's homes. However, few of these children were adopted as adoption societies would not take a 'half-caste' (the term of the time) on their books, deeming them 'too hard to place'.

6 See Wendy Webster, "'Fit to Fight, Fit to Mix': Sexual Patriotism in Second World War Britain," *Women's History Review* 22 (2013) 4: 607–624.

7 It is impossible to arrive at exact numbers as the archives generally give no indication of a person's ethnicity. However, Ian R. Spencer, *British Immigration Policy since 1939: The Making of Multiracial Britain* (London & NY: Routledge, 1997), 3, estimates 7,000 Asian and Black people in 1939 while David Reynolds suggests the number was no more than 8,000. David Reynolds, *Rich Relations: The American Occupation of Britain* (London: Phoenix Press, 1996), 216.

8 "Fatherless Children Check the Liberalism of British," *Ebony,* 19 November 1946.

9 The leading and groundbreaking text on the presence of Black GIs in wartime Britain is Graham Smith, *When Jim Crow Met John Bull* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1987), but it only briefly mentions these children.

Key findings of the research include the realization of some of the difficulties faced by these children: illegitimacy; for those placed in homes, little likelihood of adoption; for all the children an extreme sense of difference, isolation, experience of racism, lack of role models and of a sense of belonging, especially given that the vast majority of them were growing up in predominantly 'white' geographical areas. Although many people from the Caribbean started to arrive in Britain in the late 1940s and 1950s, they were generally based in large towns and cities, not small towns and villages, where many of these mixed-race GI war babies grew up, and if and when these war 'babies' met them, they were not necessarily accepted, seen as not 'Black' enough and not West Indian. The 'brown babies' also had a strong desire to find their 'origins', given that they had little knowledge as children of their fathers. They often gained a greater sense of self-worth and racial pride if and when they found their birth fathers or U.S. relatives.

The findings of the research have been widely disseminated. In addition to the book, there have been articles, an exhibition in libraries (of seven six-foot pop-up banners), numerous talks (to universities, libraries, museums, government departments, and community groups), thirty local, national, and international radio and TV programs (including Radio 4's *Women's Hour*, CNN, and BBC World News), and articles, including in the online *The Conversation*, May 2019 (which has had over 56,000 reads, the majority in the United States), in *BBC History Magazine*, August 2019 (with a print circulation of 98,000), and from September 2020 an exhibition on the digital website *Mixed Museum*. A Channel 4 documentary and possibly a TV drama are in production, demonstrating ever-increasing interest. The people whose stories were recounted in one-on-one interviews have said that they have benefitted greatly from the cathartic process of telling their stories. And since everything written about each interviewee was shown to them for their approval, they feel a real stake in the final product, having contributed to that history-telling. To quote MR: "I can't thank you enough. It feels like vindication for what was a difficult start in life. My grandchildren will read it one day and hopefully learn about how it was in the words of us who lived it. If I could have put into words what I hoped for at the end of my life it would have been a book that told my story – you did that. Thank You." The wide dissemination of the research has led to additional mixed-race GI babies contacting me. For example, RC wrote: "Thank you for writing this book. It describes a part of Britain's social history that was almost lost and here, thankfully, is recovered. The story you tell speaks directly and personally to me in a way that other race-related social research has never done. I too was one of the 'brown babies'. I am utterly amazed by the insight that your book gives me into my own experience." The telling of these stories has also created a sense of community and, through encouraging DNA testing, has helped people find U.S. relatives.

This part of the story will be returned to at the end of this article when the focus is on the search for a sense of belonging.

III. Experiences of Racism and Exclusion

Many of the people I interviewed experienced racism and exclusion as children (and as adults). Given that the Black population of Britain just before the war was only 7,000–8,000, these 2,000 children born over three years represented an approximately twenty-five percent rise in British people of color.[10] They rarely had any Black or mixed-race role models in the areas in which they grew up and they were subjected to racist name-calling. For example, Pauline Nevins "would be skipping along the street, daydreaming as usual, when someone would call out, 'blackie' or 'N….r'."[11] At primary school, aged about seven, Gillian L. was also subjected to both of these derogatory names and remembers being compared with the only other mixed-race GI girl at her school:

> "These pretty little white girls put us up against the wall in the playground […] and stood in front of us, discussing us, to decide who was the prettiest […]. And then it was awful because they decided I was the prettiest, and the relief, but then the feelings, because Irene […] I was quite dark, and I'd got Black afro hair […]. [But] her lips were thicker than mine and her nose was different, and she was darker than I was."[12]

The white girls were judging who was closest to the white standard of prettiness and thereby excluding those who did not 'fit'; Gillian still remembers the horror of that moment and how bad she felt for Irene. Judgements about appearance were widespread. Monica R. remembers:

> "There were some other kids who were very cruel: 'You've got to stay on that side of the desk, I'm going to draw a line […] don't you come over my side […] you're not to touch me.'[…] '[Y]ou can't play with us' and bit by bit it began to dawn on me that this very dark skin that I had was a big problem with other people but nobody explained to me that my dad came from another country, that he was a different race […]. In 1950, I was five or six, to go to school, to walk down the streets in my town was horrendous, people just stopped me, laughed, pointed. I was made to feel like a complete outcast, like I was contaminated."[13]

10 See Bland, *Britain's 'Brown Babies'*, chapter 5.

11 Pauline Nevins *'Fudge': The Downs and Ups of a Biracial, Half-Irish British War Baby – A Memoir* (Self-Published, 2015), 5.

12 Gillian L., born 1945, interviewed by Lucy Bland, 80 minutes, 17 February 2017, Rugeley, Staffordshire.

13 Monica R., born 1944, interviewed by Lucy Bland, 83 minutes, 1 September 2014, Liverpool.

That sense of being an outcast was reinforced when these children were barred from friends' homes. Jennifer B. recalls one particular incident:

> "There was a girl that were very friendly, Wendy […]. And she told me where she lived and I went to call for her one night. And her mother opened the door. Oh, she went bananas. Oh, she went mad! I thought she were gonna have the door off the hinges. It's a good job my fingers weren't in the door, she'd have broke them! She went mad, she did. Anyway, when I got to school the next day, Wendy looked at me and I knew she were gonna say something. She went, 'Jenny!' I said, 'I know.' She says, 'Don't call for me again.' I said, 'No, you're alright. I wasn't going to anyway.'"

If she actually got into another child's house,

> "there were probably a grandma there, and the mother, or somebody. And the grandma'd sit there, weighing you up, you know, and her daughter'd come in and she'd go, 'You know she shouldn't be here, you know. She should be in a hot country. She don't belong here you know.' And I used to think, 'Oh, ey up, here we go.'"

Babs G.-W. had a similar experience. As a baby, she was sent to a Dr. Barnardo's home for four years, then fostered for several years, where she was subjected to racism in the neighborhood – Sudbury, Suffolk: "I'd never seen anyone that looked like me in the area and sometimes when I wanted to play outside with other children their parents wouldn't let them play with me and the kids would tell me 'my dad says I'm not to play with you'."[14] When Jennifer was about eight, in a shop across the road two women in headscarves were talking about her when she walked in: she heard one say "disgusting". She remembers that some shops were reluctant to serve her. And when she started school, one teacher looked at her hands and made her scrub them until they bled: her brown skin was read as dirt.[15] The sense of being an outsider was palpable – the children were told they did not look 'right' and were explicitly treated as if they did not belong.

Many teachers at schools were no better in the way they treated their mixed-race pupils. As Terry H. recalls:

> "I didn't really experience my identity until I was going to junior school, and people were calling me names which I didn't understand, because I was brought up predominantly in a white family, so from the inside I was a white person, but on the outside, to them, I was a Black person. And, even in the classes at school, the teachers themselves didn't help. Because they would refer to things about Africa, as part of being educated in geography. And they'll say something like 'Terry would you like to try and do an African dance?'"[16]

14 Babs G.-W., born 1944, interviewed by Lucy Bland, 80 minutes, 3 June 2014, Liverpool.
15 Jennifer B., born 1944, interviewed by Lucy Bland, 75 minutes, 14 December 2016, Leicester.
16 Terry H., born 1944, interviewed by Lucy Bland, 75 minutes, 14 December 2016, Leicester.

Babs's school was particularly awful:

> "There was a teacher in the school when I was in Sudbury, he was obviously very racist and I hated this school and one day […] he sat me at the back of the school classroom and he gave me a box of jigsaw pieces to play with and turned around and announced to the rest of the children that I didn't have the same ability to learn and so all I knew what to do was to play and they could be taught. I was about six or seven […]. Then there was a geography class and the children had to put together this […] it was like a plasticine model of a desert island scene which they made out of pipe cleaners and made palm trees […] and created climbers that were climbing for coconuts and he turned around and he said to these children when it was time to have a classroom break, we should go out and they should ask me to show them how I can climb a pole like a monkey […]. I was quite angry with him then and I just said to them 'I am not coming back to this school again.'"[17]

John S. likewise did not take racist abuse lying down:

> "When I was about eight years old […]. It was a snowy day […]. And we were playing football in the playground, and I just remember, I tripped him [friend Pete] up or something, or he fell over – a foul – and he got up and he called me a 'dirty N….r' […]. I punched him right on the nose, and I got a vivid memory of the blood on the snow. Well, my mum was summoned to the school, and we had to go before the headmaster. W.C Bennett, his name was. Prolific caner. And I remember my mum standing next to me and he said: 'What you have to remember, Mrs. S. […] is you *cannot* educate these people.' She shook and went white. And I saw tears coming down her face. Never said anything – don't forget, you respected headmasters […]. And then he caned me in front of her."[18]

For Terry, Babs, and John, schoolteachers underestimated their intelligence. The teachers of Terry and Babs assumed that the children would innately be able to "do an African dance" or "climb like a monkey" – a widely-held essentialist view of race which still persists, with assumptions about Black and mixed-race people 'naturally' being better at certain sports or "having the (musical) beat".[19] Some of the people who have contacted me since the book's publication have similar stories of their education being thwarted, although in James M.'s case it was not by the school but his unpleasant foster parents. From nine months of age, he lived happily in a nursery near Taunton, Somerset. But at age five he moved in with his new foster parents, living in poverty in a small dark cottage in a village in Cambridgeshire. They ill-treated him. His foster mother admitted she had 'asked for a little darkie' as she would get more money, since 'half-caste' children were defined as "hard to place" and thus fosterers were paid more. (Shockingly, in

17 Babs G.-W., interviewed by Lucy Bland, 3 June 2014.

18 John S., born 1945, interviewed by Lucy Bland, 85 minutes, 20 June 2016, Weymouth, Dorset.

19 See Adam Rutherford, *How to Argue with a Racist: History, Science, Race and Reality* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2020).

notes kept by children's homes for these individual 'brown babies', a child being 'coloured' was sometimes listed under a column headed *Handicaps*.) Aged ten, James was ahead at school, having learned to read and write early, and was studying for the 11+ (an exam which, if passed, would entitle him to go to a grammar school – a more academic school than the secondary modern). But his foster mother would not let him sit down in the house and then tore up his homework. She shouted at him: "little N….r bastard, you just want to be better than us!" Two or three weeks later, he was given more homework and she again went to rip it up but he pushed her arm away. She screamed and he ran out of the house. He hid all night in the hay bales of a nearby farm, not daring to go home as he feared for his life, such was the fury of his foster parents. He could not take the 11+ after that, and for years he stayed out every night until it was time to go to bed.[20]

Rose A., another wartime 'brown baby' who corresponded with me after reading my book, was also discouraged in her education as a child, although not initially, as for the first six years of her life she was looked after by her supportive grandmother, who taught her to read. But then her grandmother died and her mother took no interest in her schooling. At her secondary modern school, she was the only child of color (and indeed in every other school she attended) but thankfully the headmaster did not hold to the widespread racist assumptions about 'coloured' people's intelligence. He realized that she was bright and put her in for a 13+ exam. She transferred to a grammar school but her mother "thought it a terrible inconvenience," as pupils stayed at grammar schools until they were sixteen instead of leaving at fifteen to go into paid work. (The school leaving age in Britain was fifteen at the time.) Rose remained at school until the lower sixth form, cleaning, plucking chickens, and doing other jobs to pay her way. The headmaster enabled her to sit her A-levels a year early. She was offered a place at university but was told she could only get a minimum grant (nine pounds a term), as her mother refused to give her father's name or state whether he was alive or able to contribute to her upkeep. Her mother was poor and unmarried and against Rose going to university; Rose instead went into nursing. However, she did eventually get to university in her forties.[21]

There was the occasional teacher who well-meaningly tried to combat racism but misread the situation. Arlene N., born in 1944 and one of my original interviewees, relates the story of a new relief teacher for her class when she was about eight:

> "There was a boy called David who had the most awful stammer. He couldn't get words out at all, and he was asked to sit with me. And he'd said, no, he didn't want to. And this

20 James M., born 1945, interviewed by Lucy Bland, 80 minutes, 25 November 2019, Cambridge.
21 Rose A., telephone interview conducted by Lucy Bland, 85 minutes, November 2019.

> teacher –I can still feel the embarrassment – he brought me out to the front, and he sat on a desk and held my hands in both of his, and gave them a lecture on difference, and the fact that because I was a different colour, it shouldn't make any difference, and I can still smell the tweed of his jacket, and he smoked cigars, and when I get that smell, I'm right back into that classroom. And poor David sat there, trying to get it out, and eventually he said, 'I don't know what you're talking about, I just don't want to sit with a girl!'"[22]

This amusing story of Arlene N.'s well-intentioned (though misguided) supply teacher and the account of Rose A.'s supportive headmaster are not typical. Most schoolteachers underestimated the intelligence of Black and mixed-race children, a racist attitude that unfortunately carried on in British schools for many years.[23]

IV. Debating Whether the 'Brown Babies' Should Stay in Britain or Be Sent to the United States

From their birth onwards, government officials and others in positions of authority debated whether it was desirable for the 'brown babies' to remain in Britain or be sent to the United States. There were echoes here of the cases of children being sent by the British government and by children's homes to Australia and Canada in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[24] One person who was keen to get the children sent to the United States was Somerset Superintendent Health Visitor Celia Bangham. During the war, the Somerset county council had established a temporary residential nursery largely devoted to the care of the county's 'brown babies'.[25] Bangham wanted to find homes for these children but, faced with the reluctance of British adoption societies to take these children onto their books, she hoped for their adoption by their putative fathers, near relatives, or other 'coloured' families in the United States. There were in fact many Black Americans willing to adopt them.[26] As far as I can discover, Somerset county council was the only council to attempt to seek adoptions in the United States. Why they were alone in this is unclear, but Bangham appears to have taken this on as her special mission. On 13 December 1945, the Labour Home Secretary,

22 Arlene N., born 1943, interviewed by Lucy Bland, 100 minutes, 17 November 2016, Dundee, Scotland.

23 See Claire Alexander et al. (eds.), *The Runnymede School Report: Race, Education and Inequality in Contemporary Britain* (London: Runnymede, 2015).

24 See Gordon Lynch, *Remembering Child Migration: Faith, Nation-Building and the Wounds of Charity* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).

25 See Bland, *Britain's 'Brown Babies'*, 112–116.

26 See Bland, *Britain's 'Brown Babies'*, 163–170.

James Chuter Ede, met with Celia Bangham and Victor Collins, MP for Taunton, to discuss the U.S. adoption possibility. Chuter Ede was unenthusiastic: He worried about "the appalling discrimination made in many parts of the US against coloured people." He also explained the legal position on adoption: Under British law (the 1939 Adoption Act), children were only allowed to be sent abroad to live with British subjects or relatives. African American couples who came forward to adopt were thus excluded from consideration, and since they were only deemed 'putative' fathers (DNA testing for paternity did not come into being until the 1960s), the Black GI fathers were not considered relatives. Sending the children to the United States would thus necessitate an amendment to the Act. The Home Secretary simply announced that he "would consider what could be done constructively to deal with the matter".[27]

By November 1947, the British government had made what was referred as an 'Anglo-American agreement': A child would be permitted to travel to its putative father (or the father's relatives) in the United States, dependent on the arrangements being "in the best interests of the child".[28] (What the "best interest of the child" might be at any point in time depended – and still depends – on current ideologies and circumstances as well as who had/has the power to decide.) The arrangements for these particular transatlantic adoptions were to be undertaken by the International Social Service in the United States in cooperation with the Family Welfare Association in Britain.[29] According to the Foreign Office, the policy was to apply to 'coloured' children only, since white children were "an entirely different problem".[30] In what way they were "an entirely different problem" was not spelled out, but no doubt referred both to the greater ease in getting white children adopted in Britain and to the lesser likelihood that white American fathers would want to adopt their own children, since unlike Black GIs they had had the possibility of marrying the child's mother. However, the Home Office became worried about this overt exclusion of white children: There was "the need to avoid any suggestion that we in this country are trying to get rid of the coloured waifs left behind by the American occupation".[31] And yet getting "rid of the coloured waifs" appears to be precisely what they were intending.

27 W.M.G., 'Coloured Children of English Mothers and Negro Members of the United States Forces', 14 December 1945, FO371/51617, AN3/3/45, The National Archives (TNA).

28 J.E. Jackson, Foreign Office, to B. Lyon, Home Office, 16 December 1947, FO 371/AN3949/13/45, TNA; Margaret Kornitzer, *Child Adoption in the Modern World* (London: Putnam, 1952), 244.

29 Letter from Children's Branch, Home Office to Foreign Office, 21 November 1947, FO 371/AN3948/13/45, TNA.

30 J.E. Jackson, Foreign Office, to B. Lyon, Home Office, 16 December 1947, FO 371/AN3949/13/45, TNA.

31 Home Office to Foreign Office, 24 December 1947, FO 371/AN4342/13/45, TNA.

In January 1948, during parliamentary question time, Chuter Ede announced the government's policy change: "no obstacle should be put in the way of emigration of the children to the United States for adoption by relatives, if it is established in a particular case that this would be in the child's interests."[32] He neither mentioned that this contravened the Adoption Act, nor clarified whether the children were to be exclusively mixed-race. Presumably, Chuter Ede was consciously trying to avoid implying that they were 'trying to get rid of the coloured waifs'. U.S. adoptions appeared at last to be happening, although on a small scale.[33] However, the following year there was another about-face in Home Office policy: It refused to amend the Children Act of 1948, which had incorporated the regulations about prohibiting adoption overseas by non-relatives, and an official statement of explanation was released: "any implication that there is not a place in this country for coloured children who have not a normal life would cause controversy and give offense in some quarters."[34]

Why did the Home Office shift its position in 1949? Trinidadian journalist George Padmore, who was living in Britain at the time, informed American readers: "Ever since it became known that certain reactionary anti-Negro natives of Somerset were bringing pressure to try to get rid of coloured orphans left behind by American Negro soldiers, the League of Coloured Peoples [a British civil rights organization] and the Pan-African Federation in Manchester have protested to the British government against the plan to ship the unwanted orphans."[35] The Home Office may have been responding to pressure from these two Black groups, but of significance, too, was the passing of the 1948 British Nationality Act. Citizenship was henceforth granted to citizens of present and former British colonies, giving them the right to come to Britain and stay indefinitely.[36] While the government was clearly ambivalent about the arrival of many West Indians in June 1948 on the *Empire Windrush*,[37] when debating the British Nationality Act the following month, Chuter Ede pronounced: "we recognize the right of the colonial peoples to be treated as men and brothers with the

32 *Parliamentary Debates: Commons* (London: Hansard, 1948–49), col. 186, 29 January 1948.
33 See Bland, *Britain's 'Brown Babies'*, 167–170.
34 'Ban Adoption by US of Brown War Babies', *Chicago Defender,* 9 April 1949, 1; this is reproduced with slightly different wording in George Padmore, 'Decides Brown Babies Must Stay in England', *Chicago Defender,* 23 April 1949.
35 George Padmore, 'Decides Brown Babies must stay in England', *Chicago Defender,* 23 April 1949.
36 Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (London: Pluto Press, 1984), 373; Kathleen Paul, *Whitewashing Britain: Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), 9–10, 14–17.
37 Paul, *Whitewashing Britain,* 111–130.

people of this country."[38] How could he then effectively deport the 'brown babies', who as the children of British mothers had automatic British nationality? For birth on British soil, regardless of parentage, conferred British nationality.[39]

One father who was successful in getting his child over to the United States was Leon Lomax. His son is the only 'brown baby' I have interviewed who was adopted by his African American father. Corporal Lomax, an African American soldier, arrived back in Ohio at the end of the war; he had been stationed in England for much of his time away. The baby had been born in December 1945 and was given the same name as his father. Leon junior was put into a children's home in East Anglia by his single mother. With great difficulty, Leon senior eventually managed to have his son flown out to the United States, arriving in January 1949. The *Pittsburgh Courier* called his arrival "the story of the year!"[40] Given the 1949 shift in policy for the mixed-race GI children, I had assumed that in the early 1950s there would not have been any more British 'brown babies' adopted in the United States. However, just after my book was published in May 2019, I heard of another case of a U.S. adoption, this time in 1950. I was contacted by Aron B., the son of James B.,[41] who had been born in December 1945 in Dorset, England, to a young single woman, May, and a Black GI called Edward B. Edward's mother kept in touch with May and learnt that she was finding it hard to look after James. In 1950, James was adopted by the man he was told was his American father, Norman. Aron writes:

> "It was a difficult decision [for James's mother May] but one she understood was probably best for James. As a white mother raising a Black child she had to hide James from the public attention, but as a single mother she also couldn't provide what she wanted for him as she went to school [college] during the week in London and left James to stay with an aunt and uncle during the week. So at the age of four she put him on a plane to America telling him only that he was going to live with his father. The reality was that he was sent to live with his uncle Norman, a family secret that my father did not discover until he was in his 30s."[42]

Norman was in fact Edward's brother, but he and his wife were unable to have their own biological children and decided to take James and pretend he was

38 Quoted in Mike and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-Racial Britain* (London: HarperCollins, 1998), 75.

39 Laura Tabili, 'Outsiders in the Land of Their Birth: Exogamy, Citizenship, and Identity in War and Peace', *Journal of British Studies* 44 (Oct 2005), 4: 797. Had their British mothers married their American boyfriends, their mothers would have lost their British nationality, until the law changed with the 1948 Nationality Act. Tabili, 'Outsiders in the Land of Their Birth', 812.

40 'Courier finds First "Brown Baby",' *Pittsburgh Courier,* 12 February 1949. See Bland, *Britain's 'Brown Babies',* 168–170 for Leon's story.

41 James was a very popular name in Britain in the 1940s; I have come across five 'brown babies' called James.

42 Email from Aron B., 10 June 2019.

Norman's biological son; Edward already had his own children. Norman was in the military; at a base in Georgia, James "was taught about racism the hard way, even being beat up by the Black kids for 'pretending to be white' due to his British accent".[43] This case indicates that there may well have been other cases of adoption from Britain to the United States despite the 1949 ruling; it is possible that the ruling was less rigid than I had assumed.

V. Seeking a Sense of Belonging

The ambivalence of the British government as to whether the 'brown babies' should stay in the UK or go to the United States demonstrates how these children were not thought to belong fully to their country of birth. Not having a sense of truly belonging in Britain has dogged many of the 'brown babies' throughout their lives. Their presence has been continuously questioned, and thereby their right to be British and their right of abode. Hazel Carby, mentioned at the beginning of this article, remembers as a child being bombarded by the question: "'Where are you from?' The girl [Hazel] was surprised and disconcerted by the increasingly insistent demands to respond to what she came to think of as *The Question!* […] 'where' and 'from' did not reference geography but the fiction of race in British national heritage".[44] Monica R. cannot forget the horror of this question: "'Where are you from, you're not from *our* country, you're not one of us, you wasn't born here!' […] I remember having a row with a girl in the street when I was about thirteen, she said to me, 'you should go home, you're not one of us'."[45] Ann E., who was placed in a Somerset children's home within a week of being born, was happily adopted by a Welsh couple when aged five. Her adoptive parents never told her that she was adopted and in the immediate years after her adoption she thinks she must have forgotten about having come from elsewhere, at least at a conscious level. "They never told me a thing […] until I was thirteen and this elderly lady said to me about how I should go back where I belong, and then I said, 'And where is that supposed to be?' 'You N….rs are all the same', she said. 'And Mr. and Mrs. G. are not your mother and father'."[46] Susan T., who contacted me after the book came out, told me of the racism she experienced when she went to London as a young adult: "Where are you *really* from?" or "Fuck off to your own country!" During the Ugandan Asian exodus to Britain in

43 Email from Aron B., 12 June 2019.
44 Carby, *Imperial Intimacies,* 11–12.
45 Monica R., interviewed by Lucy Bland, 1 September 2014.
46 Ann E., born 1945, interviewed by Lucy Bland, 90 minutes, 28 November 2016, Abertillery, Wales.

1972, a woman asked her: "How do you find it here?" Susan T. replied: "find what?"[47]

Despite huge strides in attitudes concerning race, British racism, including at the state level, has not disappeared. Rights of citizenship and abode for many people of West Indian descent have recently been blatantly challenged in the terrible 'Windrush scandal' of 2018/19, in which many people who arrived in Britain from the West Indies as children and who have lived most of their lives in this country were wrongly classified as illegal immigrants and were denied basic rights to health, employment, and housing. Many were forcibly removed from Britain and returned to countries they had not lived in since childhood, and with which they had little or no ties.[48] This did not happen to the children of British women and Black GIs, who having been born in Britain illegitimately to British mothers, obtained automatic rights to British citizenship. However, although they are legally British citizens, many have not felt accepted. Part of the problem was that many of the 'brown babies', whether or not they were in a children's home or living with their mothers or grandmothers, were told little or nothing about their birth fathers, and the little they were told was often inaccurate or misleading. Not knowing about their fathers singled them out as lacking what they felt was a basic right: knowledge of their immediate origins.

When I first interviewed my participants, a few had managed to find their fathers, although many said they knew little or nothing about them, often not even a name. I encouraged them to undertake DNA testing followed by joining the free organization GI Trace (an online self-help group that traces GI relatives) and seeking the advice of DNA researcher Sally Vincent, who deciphers the findings and helps make contact with U.S. relatives. In the past few years, there has been a huge rise in DNA testing, and thus finding U.S. relatives is now proving a great deal easier. AncestryDNA (a central part of Ancestry.com which was set up in 1999) has the largest U.S. data with over five million people registered.[49] Those searching for American relatives are also crucially assisted by the very helpful management analyst at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Dr. Neils Zussblatt. Sally and Neils have so far helped about ten of my interviewees as well as several others who have contacted me since the publication of the book. The 'brown babies' are not finding their fathers alive (the fathers would by now be well into their nineties), but they are at last obtaining photographs of them and discovering, even meeting, half-siblings, uncles, aunts, and cousins. Many are being accepted into American families.

47 Susan T., born 1944, telephone interview conducted by Luca Bland, 85 minutes, January 2020.
48 See Amelia Gentleman, *The Windrush Betrayal: Exposing the Hostile Environment* (London: Guardian Faber, 2019).
49 AncestryDNA.co.uk.

Since the book went to press, Carole T., who had been looking for her father for all her adult life, has at last obtained a photograph of him. She looks extraordinarily like him. Through DNA testing, Janet J. has found her U.S. relatives and now also has a photograph of her father; she had the wrong information before. Bec, daughter of Jean, a wartime 'brown baby', has also found U.S. relatives, as has Carole M., whose half-sister has visited Britain (and who I had the pleasure to meet). There are other success stories, too, which have for many led to a greater sense of belonging and of racial pride. EL has recently found a half-sister and commented: "'the Brown Babies' story is still unfolding, even as we speak. It's so important to know where you come from. It can mean so much to so many people."

The research's dissemination is helping to create a sense of agency, community, and a shared history. At the launch of *Britain's 'Brown Babies'* in June 2019, there were over 160 people present, including many of my interviewees and their families. Two participants gave speeches about what their involvement in the book meant to them, AN declaring: "It was a tonic for me to talk to someone who really wanted to know about me and how my life had been." EL summed up the main effects of the book on his life: "Catharsis, tears, healing and empowerment." At this launch, they got to meet each other and formed a private Facebook group called *Britain's 'Brown Babies'*. Membership of this group is growing, partly due to my directing new contacts to it. It is a forum for sharing stories, photographs, and meeting each other and is seen by its participants as hugely valuable. TH for example remarked: "It is so comforting to know that we all share very similar experiences which until now we could not express. I am sure most of us felt alone in our anguish of those early days." It can thus be argued that this research has made a very distinctive, tangible contribution to the lives of the 'brown babies', giving them a sense of well-being, community (ever-growing as more find the Facebook group), empowerment and knowledge of their heritage. It has also made an important contribution to popular historical knowledge about the plight of these children.

VI. Concluding Thoughts

In conclusion, I would like to reflect on the role of the historian as both investigator and engaged participant. As a historical investigator, I wished to discover these children's backgrounds, in part because this appeared to be a history that was very largely unknown. Histories of the British experience of World War II are extensive, but they rarely feature these war babies. Furthermore, although everyone knows about the arrival of the ship the *Empire Windrush* in 1948, it is generally assumed to be the starting point for the growth of a post-war Black

British population. Yet the approximately 2,000 mixed-race GI babies were born in Britain a few years prior to the *Windrush*'s arrival.

My role as engaged participant relates more to another, more personal reason for being drawn to the study of these mixed-race babies. I would suggest that many historians (and very probably researchers in other fields) often work on subjects that resonate in some way with an aspect of their own lives. Although I am a white woman, my family is racially mixed. My father married a Guyanese woman when I was nineteen; she already had a Black daughter who became my step-sister. My nephew has mixed-race children and my partner and I have an adopted Guatemalan daughter. Thus, my interest in interracial relationships and mixed-raceness is largely because they exist in my own family, an enriching diversity that is possibly typical of many twenty-first-century families.

On the one hand, I approached the topic of my study as a historian interested in twentieth-century Britain and keen to interview as many participants as I could find, as well as to contextualize the research as thoroughly as I could. On the other hand, I was meeting and interviewing people with fascinating stories to tell, and although I was formally the 'interviewer', I was also an active and engaged participant in the interview process, encouraging elaboration and, no doubt, skewing the answers in certain directions. It is impossible (and undesirable, I would suggest) to be wholly disengaged. Interviewees need to feel that their stories are being listened to and appreciated by the interviewer, with whom they ideally form a relationship of trust and a degree of mutual exchange. It is important (but difficult) to be fully aware of how the interviewer's persona, class, race, age, and general disposition inevitably affect what the interviewee chooses to disclose and how she/he narrates the story of their lives.[50] Even in the archives, the idea that historians are somehow 'objective' is to overlook their particular biases and selective reading. In the interview situation, the absurdity of seeking 'objectivity' is even more apparent. Where the historian is interacting with living subjects, her/his active engagement is surely essential – an engagement which will have an agenda, whether it be conscious or not. Nevertheless, whatever the shortcomings of the interview process, the stories that the interviewer-cum-historian elicits from the interviewees, in this case people whose stories had generally not been heard before, are important historical records. This history is part of a wider history of the many mixed-race GI babies born to women across Europe and the Pacific region, during and after the war. For too long, their stories have not been widely known.

50 See Robert Parks and Alistair Thomson (eds.), *The Oral History Reader*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2016); Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London: Routledge, 2010); Penny Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives: Discourse and Subjectivity in Oral Histories of the Second World War* (Manchester; Manchester University Press, 1998).

Azziza B. Malanda

"I Had a Dark Skin Color, That Was a Problem": Race and Racism in the Child Welfare System in Postwar West Germany

I. Introduction

In May 2020, George Floyd, a Black man, was killed in police custody by a white officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota.[1] This deed ignited protests with thousands of people voicing their anger about systemic racism and police brutality in the United States and all over the world. In Germany, as in many other countries, the protests were intended to show solidarity with George Floyd and the American Black Lives Matter movement – but they also denounced regional racist structures within the public system and pointed at the historical continuities that had led to these. To broaden the spectrum of the historical dimensions of systemic racism in Germany, this article focuses on the experiences of Black Germans who grew up in non-parental child care settings (e.g. children's homes, foster families) in postwar West Germany. It is based on my PhD thesis, entitled "'Ich habe nie verstanden, warum sie mich ins Heim gegeben hat': Erfahrungen und Lebenswege Schwarzer Deutscher der Jahrgänge 1946 und 1949 in der Bundesrepublik" ("I Never Understood Why She Placed Me In A Children's Home": Experiences and Life Stories of Black Germans Born in the Federal Republic in 1946 and 1949).[2] The main sources for this article are narrative biographical interviews, which were conducted with Black German men and women born in postwar West Germany as illegitimate children of white German women and Black occupation soldiers of the U.S. Army. Drawing upon these individual experiences and narratives, but also upon scholarly studies, statistics, and youth

1 In this article Black – as a sociopolitical identifier – is capitalized. This is intended to highlight the empowerment process of Black people and their rejection of discriminatory and racist terms imposed by others. By contrast, white is not capitalized. While this is indeed also a sociopolitical category, it refers to a group of people who enjoy privileges within a society that is characterized by racism. The term white did not arise in the course of empowerment. Further discussions on the usage of Black and white in this volume can be found in the editorial.

2 I defended my PhD on 31 July 2020 in the History Department of the University of Hamburg. The thesis has not yet been published at the time of this writing.

welfare agency reports, I here trace experiences of racism and examine the appertaining structures, thus revealing a broad discourse about race in the postwar child welfare system while also referencing the wider context of the preceding National Socialist regime, the Weimar Republic, and the colonial era.

II. Research on Black German Children in Children's Homes

After 1945, Black German children became a topic of scholarly interest. In 1956, for instance, the German anthropologist Rudolf Sieg published a study entitled "Mischlingskinder in Westdeutschland" (Half-Caste Children in West Germany).[3] Sieg compared 100 Black German children aged one to six from 38 children's homes and orphanages of various religious denominations in West Germany to a group of white children whom he referred to as the racial norm. The anthropologist recorded sixteen body and eleven head measurements, took 186 photographs, and documented the children's complexion, lip thickness, and hair texture. In addition, he analyzed the children's medical and psychological records, as well as their social, familial, and moral milieus. Finally, he subjected the children to a series of intellectual and psychological examinations. The short conclusion of his survey stated: "Irgendwie ungünstige Auswirkungen der Bastardisierung waren an unseren Mischlingskindern nicht feststellbar" ("No particular unfavorable effects of bastardization could be identified in our half-caste children").[4]

Two years earlier, Erwin Engelbach had submitted his dissertation in psychology – entitled "Farbige Mischlingskinder in Deutschland, insbesondere in Giessen" (Colored Half-Caste Children in Germany, Especially in Giessen) – at the Weilburg Pedagogical Institute.[5] Engelbach's supervisor was Prof. Hildegard Hetzer, an Austrian psychologist, who had among other things been active in occupied Poland on behalf of the Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt (National Socialist People's Welfare) from 1942 to 1944. In Poznań, she had worked in a children's home where Polish children were psychologically examined and 'selected' in a racist process of 'Germanization'.[6] In his dissertation, Engelbach

3 Rudolf Sieg, "Mischlingskinder in Westdeutschland. Eine anthropologische Studie an farbigen Kindern," *Beiträge zur Anthropologie* 4 (1956), 9–79.

4 Ibid., 65; quotation translated by A.M.

5 Erwin Engelbach, "Farbige Mischlingskinder in Deutschland, insbesondere in Giessen," Pädagogisches Institut Weilburg, WS 1953/54, HHStAW Abt. 802 Nr. 666. Giessen is a town in the federal state of Hesse. After the Second World War, a U.S. military base was located in the town. The U.S. Army Garrison of Giessen had a population of 800 Americans.

6 Gerhard Benetka, "Hildegard Hetzer," in *Wissenschaftlerinnen in und aus Österreich. Leben–Werk–Wirken,* edited by Brigitta Keintzel and Ilse Korotin (Vienna–Cologne–Weimar: Böhlau 2002).

discussed Black German children in the contexts of biological 'racial mixing', social status, and perception by society. In the last chapter, he made general predictions about a possible future for these children both in Germany and overseas, adding eighteen short biographies of Black German children growing up in a denominational children's home in the West German city of Giessen.[7]

In the context of racial ideology, which segregated and organized humans into a hierarchy, so-called 'Mischlinge' ('half-caste children') symbolized an unwanted group and a social and racial disturbance.[8] From a racist point of view, they did not fit into the fixed racialized order dividing between 'black' and 'white' people. Regardless of their German citizenship, the majority of Black Germans were marked as racially different and not as 'real' Germans due to their physical characteristics and their descent from a Black parent. The racial classification was also expressed in the term 'Mischlingskind', which was consistently used in everyday, official, as well as scholarly language.[9]

Both Engelbach and Sieg distanced themselves from the murderous racial policies of the National Socialists. However, the literature they cited, the language they used, and the involvement of their respective supervisors in the National Socialist regime are evidence of the theoretical and structural continuities of racist and social Darwinist thinking in academia at the time.

Within scholarly research over the past decades, the position of Black Germans of the postwar generation in general – and those who grew up in care in particular – has shifted from being objects to subjects. This change of perspective is important, as it has revealed the subjective interpretations of experiences as well as the social and institutional conditions Black Germans grew up in after 1945. The experiences of former Black German children in care were made visible in the book "Farbe bekennen: Afrodeutsche Frauen auf den Spuren ihrer Geschichte" (Showing Our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out) by Katharina Oguntoye, May Ayim, and Dagmar Schulz and in the autobiography by Ika Hügel Marshall, "Daheim unterwegs: Ein deutsches Leben" (Invisible Woman: Growing

7 His data relied on the personal notes of a nun at this children's home.

8 In German, the term 'Mischling' arose in the seventeenth century during the initial era of European expansion to categorize individuals of multiracial heritage. Originally, it referred (and still refers) to animals and crossbreeds. Under the National Socialist regime, the term was also used to refer to the progeny of so-called 'mixed' unions between Jews and non-Jewish Germans. After 1945, the term remained a racialized category of social analysis and social policy. It was mainly used to describe the children of white German women and men of color. In Germany today, the term 'Mischling' is sometimes still used in unofficial contexts, as the collected narrations of Black Germans of the postwar generation have shown.

9 Fatima El-Tayeb, "Dangerous Liaisons: Race, Nation, and German Identity," in *Not so Plain as Black and White: Afro-German Culture and History, 1890–2000*, edited by Patricia Mazón et al. (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2005), 38.

Up Black in Germany).[10] The German historian Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria analyzed the structures of the West German public welfare system with a focus on Black German children. For the first time, her publication "Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung: Afrodeutsche 'Besatzungskinder' im Nachkriegsdeutschland" (Between Welfare and Ostracism: Afro-German 'Occupation Children' in Postwar Germany) reconstructs the history of the Albert-Schweitzer-Kinderheim (Albert Schweitzer Children's Home for Half-Caste Children, ASK).[11] The ASK was founded by the white German pastor's wife Irene Dilloo in North Rhine-Westphalia and served from 1952 to 1959 for the almost exclusive accommodation of Black German children. In her work, Lemke Muniz de Faria also traced the history of the U.S. adoption plan for Black German children in care. Her survey is part of a broader interdisciplinary and international research focus on so-called 'Besatzungskinder' (occupation children) after 1945.[12] Research on the history of Black Germans of the postwar generation who grew up in care is still in its early stages. My research fills this gap by defining former Black German children in care as a category of analysis in their own right and focusing on their individual experiences.

10 Katharina Oguntoye et al., *Farbe bekennen: Afro-deutsche Frauen auf den Spuren ihrer Geschichte*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Orlanda Frauenverlag, 2006); Ika Hügel-Marshall, *Daheim unterwegs: Ein deutsches Leben* (Berlin: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2001).

11 Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz De Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung: Afrodeutsche 'Besatzungskinder' im Nachkriegsdeutschland* (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2002), 120–156.

12 Heide Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler: Black Occupation Children in Postwar Germany and America* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005); Silke Satjukow and Rainer Gries, 'Bankerte!' Besatzungskinder in Deutschland nach 1945 (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag 2015); Ute Baur-Timmerbrink et al. (eds.), *Wir Besatzungskinder: Töchter und Söhne alliierter Soldaten erzählen* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2015); Elke Kleinau and Ingvill Mochmann (eds.), *Kinder des Zweiten Weltkrieges: Stigmatisierung, Ausgrenzung, Bewältigungsstrategien* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2016); Sabine Lee, *Children Born of War in the Twentieth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017); Lucy Bland, *Britain's 'Brown Babies': The Stories of Children Born to Black GIs and White Women* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019); Marion Kraft (ed.), *Kinder der Befreiung: Transatlantische Erfahrungen und Perspektiven Schwarzer Deutscher der Nachkriegsgeneration* (Münster: Unrast Verlag, 2015); Ingrid Bauer, "'Leiblicher Vater: Amerikaner (Neger)': Besatzungskinder österreichisch-afroamerikanischer Herkunft," in *Früchte der Zeit. Afrika, Diaspora, Literatur und Migration,* edited by Helmuth Niederle et al. (Vienna: WUV 2001), 49–67.

III. Black Children of German Descent in Institutional Care during Colonialism, the Weimar Republic, and the National Socialist Regime

Black children of German descent growing up in care were not a new phenomenon of the postwar period. As the German historian Frank Becker has shown, the practice of segregation reaches back to Germany's colonial period in the early 1900s.[13] Between 1902 and 1907, Catholic and Protestant missions in Namibia – then the colony of German South-West Africa – established racially segregated homes for children of German settlers or soldiers and native Black women.[14] Under German rule, German South-West Africa became a settler's colony. The colonial government destroyed traditional social, political, and familial structures in order to establish a local community based on racial segregation. Contemporary discourses on race also served to legitimize the education of so-called 'Mischlingskinder' in the colony. Their mere existence – born out of wedlock, growing up fatherless, with African descent – fueled fears within the German settler community of what they considered to be an upcoming degeneration of their own 'white race', of the German nation and their superior social status. In this context, the German colonial power relied on preventive actions such as a 'racially' segregated institutional education. Their educational program combined Christian missionizing with a social Darwinist and racist image of mankind. The primary goal was "Erziehung zur Arbeit" (being educated to work) to include the 'Mischlingskinder' in the economic system of the colony as submissive workers.[15]

13 Frank Becker, "Die 'Bastardheime' der Mission: Zum Status der Mischlinge in der kolonialen Gesellschaft Deutsch-Südwestafrikas," in *Rassenmischehen–Mischlinge–Rassentrennung. Zur Politik der Rasse im deutschen Kolonialreich*, edited by Frank Becker (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2004), 184–219.

14 The German men had come to former German South-West Africa as settlers or – in the wake of the war and genocide against the Herero and Nama – as soldiers. Legal marriages happened very rarely, since the men had either left the country or married a white German woman. In addition, the German colonial administration banned marriages between Black and white people – so-called 'Mischehen' (mixed marriages) – by law. See Jürgen Zimmerer, "Krieg, KZ und Völkermord in Südwestafrika: Der erste deutsche Genozid," in *Völkermord in Deutsch-Südwestafrika: Der Kolonialkrieg (1904–1908) in Namibia und seine Folgen*, edited by Jürgen Zimmerer and Joachim Zeller (Berlin: CH. Links, 2016), 45–63.

15 Zimmerer, "Der koloniale Musterstaat? Rassentrennung, Arbeitszwang und totale Kontrolle in Deutsch-Südwestafrika," in *Völkermord in Deutsch-Südwestafrika*, edited by Zimmerer and Zeller, 26–41. In the early 1900s, "Erziehung zur Arbeit" was a common method to 'rescue' so-called 'endangered' and 'dangerous' minors. While boys were mainly employed in agriculture, girls were given household chores. The heavy physical work was accompanied by strict rules, religious upbringing, and little free time. These strict measures were intended to accustom the boys and girls to prevailing social manners and customs and to educate them to be capable subjects. Carola Kuhlmann, "*So erzieht man keinen Menschen!*" *Lebens- und*

Under the provisions of the Versailles Treaty following the end of World War I, Germany lost its colonies to the victorious powers. However, the official end of German colonial power did not mean the disappearance of colonial structures. Among other circumstances, migrants from Germany stayed in the former colonial territories while immigrants from former colonial countries continued living in German cities. One of the latter was Theophilius Wonja Michael. He was the father of Theodor Wonja Michael, who was born in Berlin in 1925 as the fourth and youngest child of his Black Cameroonian father and his white German mother.[16] When he was four, Theodor Michael, along with his siblings, was placed in a children's home and grew up with foster parents. In his autobiography, he stated that their referral to institutional care was highly motivated by racism and classism. His birth mother had already passed away and his father had divorced his second wife, so the children were growing up with their single father. To earn a living for himself and his four children, Theophilius worked as an extra in the movies and as a performer in so-called 'Völkerschauen' (human menageries), racist performances meant to satisfy colonial fantasies. The father took his children to his jobs, where they also had to participate. From a contemporary point of view, they as a Black family did not conform to a white German norm because of their biological features, ethnic origin, social status, and the constellation of the family. Under Nazi rule, Theodor Michael also entered into the public child welfare system. On the basis of the "Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses" (Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring) passed under the Nazi regime, an unknown number of Black German children in the public welfare system were forcibly sterilized.[17] Theodor Michael did not become a victim of this violent act and survived the Holocaust. Theodor Michael's autobiography is an important part of Black German history. It is one of the few narrations by a Black German Holocaust survivor. Furthermore, it deals with Germany's marginalized colonial history and refers to current migration movements.[18]

Berufserinnerungen aus der Heimerziehung der 50er und 60er Jahre (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag, 2008).

16 Theodor Michael, *Black German: An Afro-German Life in the Twentieth Century (*Munich: dtv, 2015).

17 On the forced sterilizations of Black German children, see Reiner Pommerin, *Sterilisierung der Rheinlandbastarde: Das Schicksal einer farbigen deutschen Minderheit 1918–1937* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1979).

18 More texts on the experiences of Black Germans during the Third Reich include: Serge Bilé, *Das schwarze Blut meiner Brüder: Vergessene Opfer des Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin: Claassen, 2006); Fatima El-Tayeb, *Schwarze Deutsche: Der Diskurs um 'Rasse' und nationale Identität 1890–1933* (Frankfurt/New York: Campus, 2001); Hans J. Massaquoi, *"Neger, Neger Schornsteinfeger!" Meine Kindheit in Deutschland (*Munich: Knaur, 1999); Marie Nejar, *"Mach nicht so traurige Augen, weil du ein Negerlein bist." Meine Jugend im Dritten Reich* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2007).

IV. Black German Children in Care after World War II

In the aftermath of the Nazi regime, the term 'Rasse' (race) became a taboo in both official and academic usage in Germany. Over the course of the 1950s, the term was replaced by 'Anderssein' (otherness) or 'Fremdsein' (foreignness). However, avoiding a specific term does not mean that the thinking behind it or the system with which it intersects has disappeared. During the postwar period and later in the Federal Republic of Germany, Black German children continued to be characterized on the basis of their complexion, hair structure, behavior, mental and physical conditions, and so on. These characteristics were contrasted with a constructed white norm. As the following statistic shows, different types of complexion became markers for a contrived otherness.

According to a survey commissioned by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and published by the Federal Statistical Office in 1956, about 68,000 children of German women and Allied soldiers were born between 1945 and 1955 in what was then the federal territory and West Berlin. Approximately 4,800 of these were labeled children of "farbiger Abstammung" (colored descent).[19] Without reference to the father's nationality, this statistical category uncoupled racial from national difference. By using biological criteria such as skin color, only Black children were recorded separately. As the historian Heide Fehrenbach stated, the category "farbiger Abstammung" "deraced Soviet paternity and rendered Jewishness invisible", implicitly coding the so-called 'Besatzungskinder' (occupation children) of formerly racialized Soviet and Jewish soldiers as 'white'.[20] "What remained were distinctions of nationality on the one hand and blackness on the other."[21]

The survey from 1956 also provided information about the different forms of accommodation on a federal level. However, the survey must be interpreted with caution: The data collection is incomplete; only the period from 1945 to 1955 is represented; only illegitimate Black German children fathered by Allied soldiers under official guardianship were recorded (and thus not the children of Black German civilians); and no further surveys were carried out on the federal level.[22]

19 Statistische Berichte, "Die unehelichen Kinder von Besatzungsangehörigen im Bundesgebiet und Berlin (West)," edited by Statistisches Bundesamt Wiesbaden, 10 October 1956, 3.

20 Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, 80.

21 Ibid.

22 Conventional wisdom holds that Black Germans were deliberately not recorded as a category in postwar official records, not least of all due to the fact that the National Socialist regime had used such official records of minorities as a tool for persecution. However, during the research phase of my PhD, I repeatedly came across sources that disclosed a segregated recording of Black children. For example, at the archive of the *Evangelischer Verein für Adoption und Pflegekinderhilfe e. V.* in Düsseldorf, adoption records were marked with a red 'M' for "Mischlingskind" (half-caste child). It can be argued that a survey of Black German

According to the study, 38 percent of the approximately 4,800 Black German children grew up in children's homes or with adoptive families. By comparison, of the remaining 63,000 white children, only around twenty percent were placed in public welfare facilities.[23] Despite certain shortcomings and the fact that the majority of Black and white 'occupation children' grew up with their maternal families, the figures reveal that in the first decade after 1945, Black German children were placed in care more frequently than white children.

V. Reasons for Placement in Care – Discrimination of White German Single Mothers

Since it cannot be exactly determined how many Black German children grew up in care after 1945, what can be said about the reasons for placing a Black child into care? In his survey from 1956, Rudolf Sieg gave a list of reasons leading to the placement of the children he had recorded in institutional care: "Death of the mother (2 %); illness or full-time employment of the mother (25 %); marriage or new partner of the mother (9 %); neglect of the child (14 %); denying custody due to anti-social behavior (43 %)."[24]

Sieg's data is problematic in various ways. First, he did not state the sources of his information. Moreover, he attributed the reasons of the referral mainly to the mothers, which makes it difficult to fathom other dimensions. For instance, the power and impact of the authorities or the family and the social circumstances were largely excluded. As the main reason for child neglect, Sieg stated the children's mixed-race heritage. By associating racism with the mothers as individuals, he ignored racism as a social and systemic problem. In his survey, working single mothers and those who were said to have shown 'antisocial' behavior were labeled the most 'problematic' groups and formed the largest percentage of those who gave up their Black children. By categorizing the mothers as 'criminal prostitutes' on the one hand and 'unmarried female laborers' on the other, Rudolf Sieg reproduced stereotypes of illegitimate motherhood which reached back to the 1900s, when single mothers were stigmatized as the 'anti-image' of ideal German mother- and womanhood. The conservative family policy of the 1950s idealized the small patriarchal family as a normative space, which needed to be protected because it contributed to the restabilization

children in care rendered them nearly invisible in the West German public welfare system. With their 'disappearance' in public perception, their realities, experiences, and life paths were also made invisible.

23 Statistische Berichte, "Die unehelichen Kinder von Besatzungsangehörigen," 8.

24 Sieg, "Mischlingskinder in Westdeutschland," 24; quotations translated by A.M.

of social and national structures in West Germany. Women who deviated from this norm were accordingly defamed as 'socially dangerous' and thus turned into outcasts within society. Moreover, women who had an unmarried relationship with a Black man were also confronted with racist prejudices. This was also the case during the occupation period after 1945. Relationships between German women and American GIs were ostracized and/or punished by both the U.S. military authorities and large parts of the West German population. Following racist patterns, connections between Black and white were viewed by parts of the German population as treason, a loss of honor, and a violation of moral conventions. From the perspective of West German society, Black soldiers were not only perceived as 'victors' and 'occupiers', but also defined on the basis of biological characteristics and racist given names. As a result of such attributions, these men often had neither a name, a nationality, nor a biography. The women who entered into relationships with them were collectively suspected of prostitution, publicly defamed, and socially declassified.[25]

Racist structures within German society and the U.S. Army, arbitrary official requirements, and segregated U.S. marriage laws made it difficult for white German women and Black U.S. soldiers to be in a relationship, get married, or raise children together, whether in the United States or Germany. The men were often withdrawn from Germany as soon as a possible paternity became known, leaving the mothers and their children personally, socially, and economically isolated. The placement of Black children in care has to be interpreted and analyzed in this social frame.

VI. Reasons for Placement in Care – Perspectives of the Interviewees

After 1945, the referral of minors to children's homes was initiated a) by the parents, b) by the legal representation of municipal youth offices, c) by decision of the Guardianship Court, or d) by order of the Juvenile Courts on the basis of the "Reichsjugendwohlfahrtsgesetz" (Reich Youth Welfare Act, in force between 1922/24 and 1961) and the "Jugendwohlfahrtsgesetz" (Youth Welfare Act, in force

25 On 'forbidden' relationships between white German women and Black U.S. occupation soldiers, see: Elizabeth Heineman, "The Hours of the Woman: Memories of Germany's 'Crisis Years' and West German National Identity," in *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949–1968*, edited by Hanna Schissler (Princeton–Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001, 21–56; Maria Höhn and Martin Klimke, *A Breath of Freedom: The Civil Rights Struggle, African American GIs, and Germany* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Annette Brauerhoch, *"Fräuleins" und GIs: Geschichte und Filmgeschichte* (Frankfurt a. M.: Klostermann, 2006).

between 1961 and 1990).[26] No empirical study has been undertaken to date on Black German children in care after 1945 based on their individual case records. It is therefore currently not possible to paint a broad picture on the possible reasons why youth offices or courts would order referrals to residential care.

The men and women I have interviewed were between zero and four years of age when they entered the West German public welfare system. On average, they spent fifteen years in care and were approximately sixteen years old when they left. When asked why they had to enter institutional care, the respondents usually gave not just one, but a combination of different reasons, which all show how race and racism intersected with the categories of class and gender. The interviewees learned the relevant information from their mothers and close relatives as well as from their welfare files. They also speculated and drew their own conclusions. All of their statements on this topic show that the search for these reasons has preoccupied the men and women to the present day and that most of them still do not understand the supposed reasons or cannot comprehend their mothers' decisions.

Renate Müller-Klaasen (name changed by the author) was born in 1946 in the federal state of Hesse in West Germany. She is the daughter of a white German mother and a Black American father. At the end of World War II, her father was stationed in occupied Germany as a member of the U.S. military forces. Her parents' relationship lasted about two years. However, before Renate Müller-Klaasen was born, her father had to return to the United States. She never met him or even saw a picture of him. When Müller-Klaasen was still an infant, her mother moved with her from Hesse to North Rhine-Westphalia, a neighboring West German state, where the mother was originally from. Around 1948, the mother got married to a white German man. At the age of four, Renate Müller-Klaasen was placed in a Catholic orphanage. For the following fifteen years, she grew up in different forms of residential care in West Germany, including at least five years at the ASK for mixed-race children.

> "In the beginning he [the stepfather] was very nice to me, but then he started beating me and drinking alcohol. And he beat my mother too, and whenever I wanted to help her, I got beaten again. Then the neighbors reported us to the youth welfare agency and they took me out of the family and I was brought to a children's home."[27]

Regarding the reasons for her placement in care Renate Müller-Klaasen explained in the same interview, too:

26 Zwischenbericht von "Runder Tisch Heimerziehung in den 50er und 60er Jahren" (Berlin 2010), 16 and 28. <https://www.fonds-heimerziehung.de/dokumente/berichte-und-publikationen-runder-tisch-heimerziehung.html> (6 November 2020).

27 Renate Müller-Klaasen, born 1946, interviewed by Azziza B. Malanda, 84 minutes, 5 July 2011, interview in the possession of the author.

> "My mother was really unstable. She was helpless and she was weak. Maybe because of the marriage to this man who always beat her. But I just never understood and I often asked her why she had given me into care. Well, I had a dark skin color, that was a problem and therefore she was not respected."[28]

Reinhard Baumgärtner (name changed by the author) was born in Baden-Württemberg in 1946. He lived with his mother until he was two years old and then stayed with foster parents. At the age of six, Baumgärtner was sent to a Catholic children's home in his place of birth, where he lived for eight years as one of five children of color. In 1961, Baumgärtner graduated from school and returned to live with his mother, with whom he had stayed in touch throughout the intervening years and who was now married with a daughter. In his interview from 2013, Baumgärtner explained the reasons for his placement in care as follows: "At the age of two, I stayed with foster parents because my mother had to work. Being a ward of the state, the youth welfare agency sent me to foster parents."[29] At another point in the interview, he added:

> "I have a cousin, his father was probably Puerto Rican and therefore his skin color turned out a little lighter than mine. And since he was the first [born], he stayed with our grandparents. So when I was born, there was no room left for me."[30]

In his answers, he combined the living situation and status of his single, working mother, the administrative actions of the youth welfare agency, and his own position within his mother's family as possible reasons for his transfer to foster parents and later to a children's home. Like other interviewees, he also identified colorism as one reason for his disadvantaged position in comparison to his cousin.

Another interviewee was Ute Weissenberger (name changed by the author), born in Bavaria in 1946. At first, she lived with her mother, but was later neglected and was hence brought into the household of the mother's landlords. At the age of three, she was referred to a Catholic children's home. In 1957, she was relocated to a remedial home, also in Bavaria. In 1961, she went to live with a friend of her mother's. Because of a dispute between the two women, Weissenberger had to move out and was transferred to an approved girl's school by the youth welfare agency. At the age of seventeen, she finally left the welfare system. Weissenberger described the reasons for her placement in care as follows:

28 Ibid.

29 Reinhard Baumgärtner, born 1946, interviewed by Azziza B. Malanda, 120 minutes, 2 May 2013, interview in the possession of the author.

30 Ibid.

> "When I was born, my mother did not want me […] because I had the wrong skin color. I was the reason, the visible reason, for her divorce. And she took it out on me. She left me alone in the apartment, locked me up, she wanted to starve me."[31]

Horst Budde (name changed by the author) was born in North Rhine-Westphalia in 1946. While still an infant, his mother placed him in a missionary hospital close to his birthplace. At the age of four, he was sent to a Catholic children's home. He graduated from school in 1960. For his job training, he moved to a residential facility for male apprentices. Following the advice of his guardian, Budde contacted his mother when he was about seventeen years old. She lived not far away, worked as a tailor, and had a 23-year-old daughter.

> "I have talked to my older half-sister and she said that the pastor told my mother she had to expect her son to turn into a criminal. Therefore I understand that she was concerned […]. My mother was a self-employed tailor and of course she was worried about her clients, who probably would not have liked it if a dark-skinned child were amongst them."[32]

Due to the guardianship regulations, single mothers and their illegitimate children were under constant supervision by the youth welfare agency. Within this system of social control, neighbors, teachers, and parishioners also scrutinized their behavior, living situations, and external appearances. Classism and racism could also lead mothers to feel detached from their children after birth, leading them to give their children up to institutions, foster families, or for adoption. The mothers' racist attitudes and the anger of having been abandoned by the children's fathers could also lead to Black German children being placed in institutional care. Furthermore, mothers gave up their children because they were single parents, employed yet unable to provide comprehensive care for their children. In addition, some of the children were born from extramarital relationships. If this was the case, the children either had to be kept secret from the partner or the partner himself insisted on giving up the child. In addition, a Black child could meet the rejection of the mother's (potential) new partner. Serious illness or death of the mothers were also reasons for out-of-home care. Finally, Black German children were sometimes born of rape, in which case they were given away by their mothers.

31 Ute Weissenberger, born 1946, interviewed by Azziza B. Malanda, 113 minutes, 25 February 2014, interview in the possession of the author.

32 Horst Budde, born 1946, interviewed by Azziza B. Malanda, 120 minutes, 17 April 2013, interview in the possession of the author.

VII. Growing Up in Children's Homes

If the mothers' experiences are difficult to reconstruct (but worth further research nonetheless), depicting the Black children's lives in care is possible, thanks to a variety of sources. Archival materials and biographical interviews help us identify that Black German children and adolescents were placed in the following types of residential care:[33] infant's homes, denominational children's homes, public homes of the state or local authorities, children's and youth villages, approved schools, foster families, remedial homes, "Junggesellen-Heime" (facilities during job training), mother and child facilities, the privately run Albert-Schweitzer-Kinderheim (ASK), the segregated children's home for 'Mischlingskinder', and a monastery facility.

Except for the ASK, Black German children and adolescents were accommodated in facilities commonly used by welfare authorities. These particular places were then officially called "gemischte Heime" (mixed institutions) for Black and white children. The following factors influenced the type of accommodation: age, gender, religious belief, upbringing difficulties, so-called child errors, current life situation, and physical and psychological constitution. However, in the case of Black German children, the category of race also came into account, with youth welfare agencies recommending special forms of care for mixed-race children, where they would receive a special training or would be amongst 'their kind'. As part of a survey of the Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge (German Association for Public and Private Care), the youth welfare agency in Bonn reported on the number and living situations of illegitimate children of Allied soldiers in August 1951: Altogether 93 'occupation children' were born in Bonn between 1945 and 1951.[34] Five of these were 'colored', two of whom lived in residential care:

> "[…] one child is placed in the children's village in Wahlwies, Lake Constance district. This institution has set itself the task of promoting colored children and placing them in suitable positions – possibly overseas – after school. Preference should be given to the accommodation of mixed-race children in the children's village mentioned, because such children are later exposed to mocking when they start professional careers but also during their formative years."[35]

33 Beside biographical interviews, I have used the following sources: publications from the social sciences, anthropology, and psychology, as well as archival sources from federal, regional, and denominational social welfare archives and adoption organization archives.

34 From 1949 to 1990, the City of Bonn was the capital of West Germany. Germany's present constitution, the Basic Law, was declared in this city in 1949. From 1990 to 1999, Bonn served as the seat of government – but no longer capital – of reunited Germany.

35 Letter from the youth welfare agency in Bonn to the Social Minister of North Rhine-Westphalia, 9 August 1951, LAV NRW R, NW41.

In an official statement from October 1955, the youth welfare agency in Velbert – a small town near Düsseldorf in North Rhine-Westphalia – advised referring the only Black boy in the community to a segregated institution. The boy, born in Bavaria in 1947, lived in a foster family:

> "The child is extremely untalented. We cannot recommend him going to a regular school. He is not able to count to five in the second grade. His reading, arithmetic, and spelling skills are insufficient. The child does not fit in within the school class community. However, he is open-minded to religion. In moral terms, he is not particularly noticeable. […] As already mentioned, the child is the only colored mixed-race child in Velbert. In our opinion, with his unfortunate disposition, he will later always attract attention and thereby provoke ridicule, which will certainly have an unfavorable effect on his development. It would be useful if the child were to be placed in a facility for half-caste children, where he would not be noticeable and where people could better respond to his mentality."[36]

The supposedly benevolent measure of the youth welfare agency was not adopted because a "facility for mixed-race children" would have offered the boy better opportunities, but because he would there be among "his own kind". Thus, the main reasons for his placement there were not pedagogical, but racist. The source does not reveal whether the boy was actually placed in a segregated institution. It is clear, however, that the youth welfare agents did know that in February 1955, the first eight Black German children had moved into the ASK in the city of Wuppertal, just about twenty kilometers away.

As already mentioned, the interviewed men and women remained in the child welfare system for an average of fifteen years – some of them until they had almost reached the legal age of 21. Placing children in care was not a temporary solution – for example, until their mothers' domestic conditions or life situations had improved – but was designed for a long period.

Most of the men and women stated that they had to change the type of placement several times. For example, Renate Müller-Klaasen said: "I moved so often, it was honestly like being on tour. I could have had a backpack, too."[37]

Changes took place when foster families could no longer take care of their foster children, an institution was closed, or the children became too old for an institution, but also when educational difficulties arose or supposed mental or physical illnesses were diagnosed. The interviewee Holger Feldmann (name changed by the author) described a very drastic case of a forced change of institution. At the age of twelve, he was moved from a Catholic children's and youth's home to a correctional facility for male juveniles. This was preceded by a

36 Letter from the youth welfare agency in Velbert to the Rhineland Regional Council, 31 October 1955, ALVR 43215/38676.

37 Renate Müller-Klaasen, interviewed by Azziza B. Malanda, 5 July 2011.

dispute between Feldmann and a nun whom he pushed down the stairs. After this, Feldmann was told he would leave the facility to go on vacation, but he was simply brought to another institution:

> "Then I was brought into my group and we had a larger dormitory with 20 to 25 beds in the room. Then I turned to [another boy] and said, I'm only here for recreational vacation. Then he said, well, I'm here for recreation, too. But I've been here for many years. We are all here for recreational vacation. That's when I understood what they had done to me. They lured me out of the home with this lie […]."[38]

The experience of having been deceived caused a physical and mental breakdown. For several days after his arrival, he was neither able to attend the daily routines nor to go to school.

In most children's homes, the number of Black children (and children of color) was very small. In this respect, the German social scientist Hans Pfaffenberger pointed out in 1953 that more important than their mere number was the fact that the children and teenagers in care experienced multiple forms of stigmatization and discrimination.[39] They had been born out of wedlock, their fathers were the former enemy, and as a mixed-race population, they jeopardized the imagination and construction of a white German nation and challenged historical definitions of ethnic Germanness. Ute Weissenberger recalled that in every institution, she was "the only chocolate-colored child; not easy."[40]

Renate Müller-Klaasen explained that the staff at a Catholic children's home treated her differently because she was the only Black child:

> "They beat me! They also put a stick on my back. I had to sit for hours with the stick on my back or my finger on my mouth for hours. […] And I was the only one who always had to eat her vomit. For four days."[41]

Holger Feldmann stated:

> "The time in the children's home was of course very bad, […] the many blows that I received from the nuns, who tore my hair or hit my head on the floor or against the wall. […] Because I was the only Mischling in the facility, just because I have a black father, he was the devil. So I am a child of a devil and I have to be treated accordingly and the devil in me cast out, too."[42]

By contrast, Horst Budde, like others, pointed out that he enjoyed certain privileges:

38 Holger Feldmann, born 1946, interviewed by Azziza B. Malanda, 210 minutes, 9 April 2013, interview in the possession of the author.

39 Hans Pfaffenberger, "Farbige Kinder im Heim – ein Prüfstein," *Unsere Jugend* 5 (1953) 12: 533–536.

40 Ute Weissenberger, interviewed by Azziza B. Malanda, 25 February 2014.

41 Renate Müller-Klaasen, interviewed by Azziza B. Malanda, 5 July 2011.

42 Holger Feldmann, interviewed by Azziza B. Malanda, 9 April 2013.

> "I was able to sing well and I had a good memory, which meant I could also learn well. And in plays I was always the star of the children's home. I really enjoyed this status. In general, I don't have any bad memories of my time in the children's home."[43]

However, his privileged status changed after he was referred to a different institution upon finishing school:

> "The situation in this institution was irritating because of the massive conflicts between the youngsters. I was fourteen years old at the time, the eldest were 21, 22. […] It was a very bad time of my life. It was also the first time that I felt something like a distance because I had a different skin color, because I was someone else."[44]

All interviewees independently stated that when they met other Black children or children of color, they experienced a certain connection. As Holger Feldmann recalled:

> "In the second institution, we were seven mixed-race children. I was the oldest. I felt happy about the fact that there were other children like me. Seven out of 200 is not much, but still I was happy. I also had a special connection to them, because when I got to know that someone called them names I went there and said, 'you do not call me names. So I want you to stop it'. Then my voice got louder, too. But thank God, these situations did not happen very often."[45]

Renate Müller-Klaasen experienced her transfer from the Catholic children's home to the ASK as an act of liberation. The isolation she had experienced as the only Black child until then disappeared the moment she met all the other Black German children of the ASK.

However, these positive examples should not obscure the fact that experiences of racism also occurred outside of these institutions – for instance in school, at work, or in romantic relationships.

VIII. Conclusion: Talking about Racism

The examples above (both good and traumatic memories) show that Black children were othered and singled out by white children and the authorities in charge of them. The Black children, in turn, sensed relief and felt empowered when they found other Black children around them. It therefore comes as no surprise that a central and connecting topic of the biographical interviews are the interviewees' experiences with different forms of racism. The women and men questioned reported on the direct and long-term consequences of their experi-

43 Horst Budde, interviewed by Azziza B. Malanda, 17 April 2013.
44 Ibid.
45 Holger Feldmann, interviewed by Azziza B. Malanda, 9 April 2013.

ences of racism and its influence on personality, body, and interpersonal relationships.

Although all the interviewees referred to race as an additional category for the referral to institutional care, none of them explicitly used the term racism. A reason for this could be the fact that in postwar Germany and in the Federal Republic, there was no public debate about racism. After the end of the Third Reich, the term *Rasse* became a taboo in official and academic use. However, as already mentioned, avoiding a specific term does not mean that the mindset and system behind it disappears – the lack of use (and precision) made it more difficult to identify and define the issue, and therefore to (re)act accordingly and dismantle both.

In research on the history of growing up in care in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as in the public debate on the "Runder Tisch Heimerziehung in den 50er und 60er Jahren" (Roundtable on Institutional Care in the 1950s and 1960s), racism and experiences of racism in German children's homes were not an issue that – at least in public perception – was named or negotiated.[46] The realities of life of the women and men surveyed show, however, that they had to learn from early childhood onward to be categorized and evaluated based on their complexion. In addition, they were often the only Black children in the institutions or belonged to a numerical minority compared to children coded as white. The women and men were thus forced to develop survival strategies from an early stage in their lives in order to survive in the facilities, in society, and within their own families. Accordingly, the methodology used in this research – particularly the biographical approach – as well as the conclusions drawn provide an incentive for researchers from different disciplines (history, politics, social, educational, and literary studies, as well as medicine and psychology) to think further and deepen the history of Black children in care. Investigating such unknown stories and perspectives might shed a new light on the social (and administrative) history of Germany and help understand the roots of the actual discussions on systemic racism, but also classism and sexism.

46 In 2009, the "Runder Tisch Heimerziehung in den 50er und 60er Jahren" was established by decision of the German Bundestag and the Petitions Committee. In December 2010, an extra-parliamentary panel presented the results of two years of roundtable negotiations on how to compensate tens of thousands of former children and youths for the systematic wrongdoings they had to endure at the hands of educators in West Germany's children's homes in the 1950s and 1960s. The panel recommended that victims who suffered torture, maltreatment, and humiliation receive compensation from a 120-million-Euro fund financed by the German federal government, the federal states, and the churches. In addition, consultation centers were also established. See <https://www.fonds-heimerziehung.de/geschichte-der-fonds/runder-tisch-heimerziehung.html> (4 October 2020).

Ingrid Bauer

Post-World War II Interracial Relationships, Mothers of Black Occupation Children, and Prejudices in White Societies: Austria in Comparative Perspective

I. Introduction

Relations between local women and members of the Allied occupation forces were a significant phenomenon in Austrian postwar society after 1945. Due to the deployment of a large number of foreign soldiers in Austria, manifold contacts with the civilian population were unavoidable. This was particularly true for the U.S. occupation zone. As the historian Sabine Lee demonstrated with regard to two very different scenarios – the U.S. presence as a friendly ally in the United Kingdom during World War II and as an occupation force in Germany after the end of the war – this was a typical outcome of the forces living "in close proximity to the local civilian population".[1] This was moreover the result of the daily routine of occupation: After all, the U.S. military was partially garrisoned in private residences, relied on services provided by the local population, and became a significant employer in all the localities in which it was stationed.[2]

It is nevertheless astounding how quickly and vigorously fraternization spread across former enemy lines. The prohibition initially proclaimed by the U.S. military on private, amicable relations between American soldiers and the local population was in Austria and Germany disobeyed from the outset, by both sides, as it served an array of needs and interests. Not even the rejection of any form of rapprochement among some parts of the population was able to stem this tide. The major motives on the part of the GIs included a desire for distraction, female companionship, and intimate relations. On the part of local women, there was a need to catch up on joie de vivre, openness, and diversity following the deprivation, loss, and overwork that had characterized the war as well as the years of self-isolation in the National Socialist "Volksgemeinschaft". According to the

1 Sabine Lee, "A Forgotten Legacy of the Second World War: GI Children in Post-War Britain and Germany," *Contemporary European History*, 20, 2011, 2: 157–181, 158.

2 Ingrid Bauer, *Welcome Ami Go Home. Die amerikanische Besatzung in Salzburg 1945–1955. Erinnerungslandschaften aus einem Oral History-Projekt* (Salzburg–Munich: Pustet, 1998), 57–63.

recollections of female contemporaries, a fair number felt attracted to the U.S. soldiers' healthy good looks, their nonchalance, coolness, and the undamaged quality of the victors.[3] New facets of masculinity were also being positively noted: The Americans were said to be "more gallant, not so – today one would say – macho".[4] Concerning Black[5] American servicemen, who made up about five to six percent of the U.S. troops stationed in Austria, their particularly warm-hearted, caring, and child-friendly nature was emphasized. For the Black GIs themselves, the liberating experience of often being treated better by the White people in Europe than they were in the largely segregated United States was something of "a breath of freedom," as Maria Höhn and Martin Klimke summarized in their book of this title.[6]

Despite the romantic aspects emphasized in personal recollections, the realities of life in a country in which the provision of energy, food, and goods had collapsed should not be ignored. The needs and demands of everyday life after the war as well as the lack of local men on account of war losses and captivity also made the GIs attractive – they were moreover visibly well-resourced.[7] Their material power inculcated a hope for protection and security. Thus, a considerable number of emerging relationships reflected an active feminine survival strategy in the context of the shortages that characterized the first years after the end of the war. What outraged many Austrian men – especially soldiers returning home from the war – was considered an art of survival by quite a few women. It is widely held that the war and the necessity of providing for the basic needs of daily life changed the world of women's experiences and led toward greater independence. This also engendered the emergence of occupation-era relationships as an expression of greater social as well as sexual self-determination,

3 Ingrid Bauer and Barbara Huber, "Sexual Encounters across (Former) Enemy Lines," in *Sexuality in Austria,* edited by Günter Bischof et al. (New Brunswick–London: Transaction Publishers, 2007), 65–101 (Contemporary Austrian Studies, vol. 15), 71–79.; Ingrid Bauer, "'The GI Bride': On the (De)Construction of an Austrian Postwar Stereotype," in *When the War Was Over. Women, War and Peace in Europe, 1940–1956*, edited by Claire Duchen and Irene Bandhauer-Schöffmann (London–New York: Leicester University Press, 2000), 222–232, 223; Monika Pelz, "Heiratsmigrantinnen 1945–1955," in *Auswanderungen aus Österreich. Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zur Gegenwart,* edited by Traude Horvath and Gerda Neyer. (Vienna–Cologne–Weimar: Böhlau, 1996), 387–409, 401.

4 Quoted in Bauer/Huber, "Sexual Encounters," 75.

5 This article capitalizes the terms Black and White, except in direct quotes. For more information, please refer to the editorial.

6 Maria Höhn and Martin Klimke, *A Breath of Freedom. The Civil Rights Struggle, African Americans, and Germany* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Lucy Bland, *Britain's 'Brown Babies'. The Stories of Children Born to Black GIs and White Women in the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 22.

7 Bauer/Huber, "Sexual Encounters," 71; Pelz, "Heiratsmigrantinnen," 401; Lee, "A Forgotten Legacy," 160.

particularly on behalf of younger women, who now made up their own minds in the selection of partners, even going so far as associating with American GIs.[8]

The variety of intimate encounters that developed in everyday life in occupied Austria, which occurred amongst all social classes (and moreover reflected similar developments in Germany and the United Kingdom), was extensive: These ranged from flirtations through short-term acquaintanceships and relationships lasting for the duration of the soldier's deployment up to several thousand marriages,[9] the latter mostly involving White servicemen. In the case of Black GIs, the necessary marriage license was only granted in rare cases by the military authorities. Finally, many of these intimate encounters led to children being conceived. Current research in Austria estimates that 350 to 400 of the roughly 5,000 children born to U.S. occupation soldiers in Austria were born to Black GIs.[10]

Guiding Questions

Embedded in the well-researched general phenomenon of intimate occupation-era contacts following World War II,[11] this article highlights interracial relationships between Black U.S. occupation personnel and Austrian women. In a postwar society that defined itself as White, such intimate Black/White encounters were confronted with a great degree of incomprehension and even rejection, often sparking a public outrage that was grounded in racist thinking. The women involved were regarded as particularly reprehensible and as having gravely betrayed social values. Beyond such discriminatory ascriptions, however, very little is known about the inner workings of these interracial encounters. This

8 Ingrid Bauer, "'Austria's Prestige Dragged into the Dirt'? The 'GI-Brides' and Postwar Austrian Society (1945–1955)," in *Women in Austria*, edited by Günter Bischof et al. (New Brunswick–London: Transaction Publishers, 1998), 41–55 (Contemporary Austrian Studies, vol. 6), 50; Bauer, "'The GI Bride'," 229; Lee, "Forgotten Legacy," 160.

9 No complete official statistics of these marriages exist. Pelz estimated that among all the Allied occupation forces, the figure was between 4,000 and 5,000, considerably more than half of these presumably occurred in the U.S. zone; Pelz, "Heiratsmigrantinnen," 408.

10 Niko Wahl, Philipp Rohrbach, and Tal Adler, *SchwarzÖsterreich. Die Kinder afroamerikanischer Besatzungssoldaten* (Vienna: Löcker, 2016), 46.

11 On Austria, see among other publications the findings of my own research: Bauer/Huber, "Sexual Encounters," Bauer, "'The GI Bride'," Bauer, "Austria's Prestige" sowie Pelz, "Heiratsmigrantinnen"; Eva Maltschnig, "Österreichische 'War Brides' und ihre Kinder in den USA," in *Besatzungskinder. Die Nachkommen alliierter Soldaten in Österreich und Deutschland*, edited by Barbara Stelzl-Marx and Silke Satjukow (Vienna–Colone–Weimar: Böhlau, 2015), 218–237. On West Germany, see, for example, Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins. The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill, NC: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2002).

is not only true of Austria. Most recently, the historian Lucy Bland came to similar conclusions with regards to the United Kingdom.[12] In the context of West German postwar society, Maria Höhn applied the categories of race and gender with great effect in her study on "GIs and Fräuleins," which honed our perspective on the multiple facets of anti-Black racism during this period.[13] Finally, German publications – especially those of Heide Fehrenbach – as well as the most recent contributions from Austria on the subject of "Mischlingskinder" (mixed-race children) born from interracial relationships during the occupation era also partially incorporated the perspectives of the mothers and fathers.[14]

This article builds on these previous studies with the aim to provide nuanced insights into Black/White relationships in the context of the postwar occupation era, the individual experiences thereof, and the social as well as institutional treatment of these relationships. The focus lies especially on the women involved: What motivated them, despite the widespread racist prejudices toward non-White people in their society, to enter into interracial relationships? How did racist prejudices – both in Austrian society as well as among the U.S. occupation authorities – intersect with other factors in determining their personal circumstances and their social status, including after the end of the occupation? What did it mean to have a child without the prospect of being fully integrated? And what can we learn from the subsequent social reactions and discourses about the mental state of Austrian postwar society, the process of national reconstruction, and the divisions drawn between the self and the other?

This article addresses these questions through a combination of contextual information and specific case studies. The latter were reconstructed from narrative biographical interviews as well as other first-person sources like letters

12 Bland, *Britain's 'Brown Babies'*, 28.

13 Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins.*

14 Heide Fehrenbach, *Race After Hitler: Black Occupation Children In Postwar Germany And America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Heide Fehrenbach, "Of German Mothers and 'Negermischlingskinder'. Race, Sex, and the Postwar Nation," in *The Miracle Years. A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949–1968,* edited by Hanna Schissler (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 164–186; Yara-Colette Lemke Muniz de Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung. Afrodeutsche "Besatzungskinder" im Nachkriegsdeutschland* (Berlin: Metropol, 2002); Azziza B. Malanda, "Weiß werden – Weiß sein – Weiß bleiben. Zur Konstruktion von Weißsein am Beispiel der Mütter Schwarzer deutscher Kinder in der frühen Bundesrepublik," *Ariadne. Forum für Frauen- und Geschlechtergeschichte* 70, 2016: 10–17; Marion Kraft (ed., trans.), *Children of the Liberation. Transatlantic Experiences and Perspectives of Black Germans of the Post-War Generation* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2020); on Austria see Regina Fritz et al., "'Guter Dauerpflegeplatz gesucht.' Kinder afroamerikanischer GIs und österreichischer Frauen in der Besatzungszeit," in *Besatzungskinder,* edited by Stelzl-Marx and Satjukow, 207–217; see also my pioneering essay: Ingrid Bauer, "'Leiblicher Vater: Amerikaner (Neger)'. Besatzungskinder österreichisch-afroamerikanischer Herkunft," in *Früchte der Zeit. Afrika, Diaspora, Literatur und Migration*, edited by Helmut A. Niederle et al. (Vienna: Universitätsverlag, 2001), 49–67.

collected in the framework of the research and exhibition project "Lost in Administration" (LIA),[15] and – in one of the cases – also on the basis of a file compiled by the youth welfare agency. The article moreover investigates sociological and psychological studies of the postwar period and analyses media reports of the time as well as oral history sources from my previous research on the occupation era in Austria. This approach allows for contemporary and retrospective perspectives to be combined. In order to better fathom the Austrian case, comparisons with respective scenarios in Germany and the United Kingdom will also be included at salient points.

II. Love and Sexuality in the Context of the Postwar and Occupation Period – Ambivalences, Irritations, and National Honor

In the aftermath of World War II, relationships between local women and military personnel of the occupation forces became a central and highly emotional point of discussion within Austrian society, above all in the first postwar years. In many circles, these relationships were regarded in an ambivalent or even hostile manner, particularly being criticized as erotic fraternizations with the former enemy and therefore as an affront to local men and as an act of national disloyalty.[16] These relationships were also frequently equated with prostitution, which indeed reached exceptional dimensions in the U.S. occupation zone, with female "camp followers," as they were labeled at the time, from across Austria pouring into the neighborhoods of the U.S. military quarters.[17] Yet this association was applied to virtually all the women who got involved with occupation soldiers, who were collectively accused of acting out of financial motivation and of leading loose lives. Moreover, derogatory labels such as "GI brides," girls and women "of a certain sort," "dollar floozies," and "gold diggers" were applied regardless of the actual nature of the women's contacts. The public discourse – in numerous newspaper articles, statements by politicians, position papers issued

15 This project on Austrian children fathered by Black GIs was based at the University of Salzburg from 2013 to 2017. Project team heads: Philipp Rohrbach and Niko Wahl; website: <www.lostinadministration.at>. The collected sources include 28 narrative biographical interviews, some of which involved the mothers and adoptive parents.

16 Bauer, "Austria's Prestige," 46–49.

17 Pelz, "Heiratsmigrantinnen," 404.

by conservative Catholic circles, police reports, welfare agency files, and other sources – was just as biased.[18]

Three revealing dynamics can be deduced from the criticisms of GI brides, namely: 1) the central role that "sexual relations and gender representation played in the process of national reconstruction and moral rehabilitation",[19] 2) the extent to which "relationships with members of the Allied occupation forces as 'foreign sovereigns' were in a particular way burdened with national meaning",[20] and 3) the fact that Black/White intimate relations were subjected to vehement social exclusion on account of a racist limitation – grounded not only in National Socialist ideology – of love and sexuality.

The so-called GI brides thus generally represented, and for various reasons, sand in the gears of the postwar reconstruction and normalization toward which Austria was striving. Their relationships stood at odds with societal efforts to reestablish a conservative family order and to return the lives of women, which had been transformed by the war and its challenges, to a traditional gender order. Moreover, the Austrian patriotism enforced by the political elites in the 1950s, which began to increasingly and proactively delineate itself from the occupation powers, even led to fraternization behaviors on the part of women being characterized as a betrayal of Austria's honor. Some newspapers aggressively recommended threatening these women with strict social ostracism and a loss of reputation.

> "We need to ensure that every girl knows that she will be excluded from all decent society in the village and the city if she gets involved with an Ami [derogatory slang for Americans], if she is ever seen with one of them. Every girl must be inculcated from a young age with the thought that an Austrian girl should not cast herself away, that when she protects her own honor and dignity, she is simultaneously protecting the honor and dignity of her homeland!"[21]

Notably, contemporary discourses painted a very specific picture when scenically portraying undesirable fraternization: that of the "negroes" and their local "chocolate girls" – one of the terms applied to women who had contacts with Black American soldiers. In both private and public discussions, they became the most explicit indicator for a claimed decline in morals, traditions, and honor. Similar conclusions have been drawn with regard to Germany and the United

18 Bauer, "Austria's Prestige," 42; Pelz, "Heiratsmigrantinnen," 406; on the parallels in Germany, see Maria Höhn, "Heimat in Turmoil. African-American GIs in 1950s West Germany," in *The Miracle Years,* edited by Schissler, 145–163, here: 147–149.

19 Fehrenbach, "Of German Mothers," 164.

20 Bauer/Huber, "Sexual Encounters," 69; Erika Thurner, *Nationale Identität & Geschlecht in Österreich nach 1945*, 2nd ed. (Innsbruck–Vienna–Bozen: Studien Verlag, 2019), 79–87.

21 *Neue Tageszeitung* (Innsbruck), 7 May 1952, 3–4.

Kingdom,[22] where U.S. troops, as already mentioned, were stationed as friendly allies. This latter case in particular demonstrates that the largely negative attitudes toward intimate interracial encounters derived more from culturally conditioned racial hierarchies and anti-Black prejudices than the circumstance prevailing in Austria and Germany, which nevertheless also played a role, that these relationships constituted intimate contacts with the former enemy and present occupier.

In this context, it is striking that on the one hand the 'Blacks' were regarded among large parts of the Austrian population as the most popular members of the U.S. troops. "Somehow they were the more cordial people," is how the comparison to White GIs was often drawn retrospectively in oral history interviews.[23] The extent to which the U.S. Army was characterized by segregation and racial discrimination was also noted with reservation. This not infrequently led – as the interviews showed – to a particular feeling of solidarity with the Black servicemen since, from the perspective of the locals, these soldiers' discrimination mirrored their own experience of being occupied and thus being equally treated as second-class citizens.[24]

However, on the other hand, it must be emphasized, as has also been pointed out in the respective research relating to the United Kingdom and Germany,[25] that in their rejection of intimate relations between Austrian women and Black GIs, the attitudes of most White Austrians aligned with the segregationist attitudes of their White occupiers. This is evinced in the following extract from an oral history interview with a male contemporary: "Once, I was chatting to a guard, a white guy. I said: 'Well, you do properly go after your negroes.' 'Well', he answered, 'so what? Say you have a daughter and she goes around with a negro. So what do you do?' 'Well', I said: 'My God, I wouldn't like it much.'"[26]

The positive attitudes toward Black GIs described above thus had a clear limit throughout most the period in question: namely interracial mixing with regard to love and sexuality.

It is remarkable that despite this racist taboo against non-White people, a number of women, even if not a great number, nevertheless entered into relationships with Black American servicemen.[27]

22 Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins, 152–159;* Susanne zur Nieden, "'Geschichten vom Fräulein'," *Feministische Studien* 1995, 2: 19–27, 22–23; Bland, *Britain's 'Brown babies'*, 25–28.

23 See Bauer, *Welcome Ami Go Home,* 167–172.

24 Ibid., 71–72 and 168; on Germany, see Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins*, 91.

25 Lee, "Forgotten Legacy," 162; Malanda, "Konstruktion von Weißsein," 13.

26 Cited in Bauer, *Welcome Ami Go Home*, 170–171.

27 Bauer, "'Leiblicher Vater: Amerikaner (Neger)'," 53.

III. Love Despite Racist Taboos

Women in Black/White relationships were confronted with being categorized beyond the boundaries of respectable femininity by their contemporaries. This included, as the sources reveal, a refusal on the part of postwar society "to imagine that interracial relationships grew out of genuine mutual love and desire".[28] A German socio-psychological study on the situation of so-called "Mischlingskinder" published in 1960 at least attempted to include the perspectives of the women involved. As the authors summarized, "the opinion that most of the mothers were women with rather loose lifestyles" has to be "decisively opposed," and they emphasized:

> "A genuine mutual attraction was often the most important reason for the connection. Some women had previously experienced bitter disappointments or felt misunderstood by their husbands. They reported that their colored partner was the first to truly recognize them as a human being. We frequently encountered the conviction that the colored soldier possessed a greater emotional warmth and intensity and that they were not just seeking to take advantage of the women but were ready to wholeheartedly commit to the relationship."[29]

On the basis of the three following examples drawn from narrative biographical interviews, various aspects of the inner workings of such relationships will be illuminated. These cases reveal very different developments and future prospects as well as different strategies that the individuals in question adopted toward the problems and challenges they faced. The first condenses the experiences of a woman who is reflecting back from her own perspective and in her own words; in the other two cases, the memories of the children are the main source: what they had been told by their mothers, what they assumed their mothers had experienced, and what additional written documents allow us to reconstruct.

"Nobody has ever treated me like that"[30]

The end of the occupation in Austria in 1955 did not necessarily mean the end of contact between Austrian women and U.S. servicemen, despite the redeployment of the latter to new locales like Italy and Germany. In fact, Hiltraud S., a nurse living in Salzburg, only had her first encounter in the early 1960s, a time when, as

28 Fehrenbach, "Of German Mothers," 168.

29 Klaus Eyferth et al., *Die Situation der Mischlingskinder und die Aufgaben ihrer Eingliederung* (Munich: Juventa 1960), 28.

30 The following information and quotes are drawn from the interview with Hiltraud S., born 1939, conducted by Ingrid Bauer and Philipp Rohrbach, 30 November 2018, Vienna, 03:27:19, LIA Collection.

we will see, discrimination against interracial mixing remained significant on both sides of the ocean.

It was a mutual place of work, a U.S. military medical center in neighboring Bavaria, that enabled a love affair that would change her life. She was offered a position at this institution through the mediation of an Austrian doctor employed there. Her experiences there were completely new to her, including the "totally relaxed atmosphere" and the general recognition of her skills. "I had never experienced this in that manner ever before. In hospitals and among nurses it is usually very tough, but there it was actually rather easygoing." She generally found that the Americans had a completely laissez faire attitude, an "easiness" that she had not hitherto known. "We had been raised so strictly," she remarked in the interview by reference to her own familial experience, which had moreover been shaped by biographical ruptures on account of the war. Through the Americans, she had by contrast become familiar with "an entirely different world," a world that included Melvin C., a pharmacology student from Seattle who worked in the pharmacy at the U.S. military medical center. He had volunteered to be stationed in Germany in order to cover his tuition fees when he returned to the United States. "And I was totally impressed that someone would join the army and then save his salary so that he could study."

Hiltraud S. described Melvin as polite and courteous. It was very easy to communicate with him as he also spoke German, having taken some courses. They grew closer through intensive conversations. She claimed to have already asked herself back then "why we actually got closer to each other," and her answer was that "he had had a similar childhood to me." In the interview she moreover recalled "when the sparks actually flew" between them: "We had a date and it happened to be my birthday. Then it was raining and he had this big umbrella and he had stuck a red tulip into the spokes and was waiting for me like this. And he wished me a happy birthday. And then he took the tulip …, well, in my life I never …, nobody has ever treated me like that."

Hiltraud S. spoke of a "carefree time" involving intensive conversations, the possibility of traveling, and, if they went out together locally, they could visit the nearby Armed Forces Recreation Center. She was astonished by both the luxury and the ease she encountered there. However, when she discovered that she was pregnant, another, hitherto ignored reality suddenly loomed larger than life: "I can't take you with me because they will shoot you. It's not possible," is how Melvin summarized the in his view insurmountable obstacles to a shared future in the United States. In reality, Washington was one of the few U.S. states without laws banning interracial marriage at the time, yet perhaps Melvin discounted this possibility so decisively on account of the history of massive segregation in

Seattle.[31] She did not ask, but rather "laughed out loud, clueless," as Hiltraud S. recalled in the interview. "Racism, until then, had simply not been an issue for me."

Now she sensed, however, that Melvin could also encounter difficulties at the U.S. medical center if her pregnancy became public knowledge – after all, they had kept their relationship discreet, as too intimate contacts were frowned upon by the military authorities. She therefore quit working there and switched to an Austrian hospital in a small town right on the other side of the border. One gesture by Melvin, who regularly visited her there, made a special impression on her: He brought her a package with baby clothes and a little pair of knit shoes on top. "That was simply lovely," is how she compared this approach to the otherwise mostly rather difficult gender relations "at that time, how men behaved …". They often spoke about the child and discussed possible names together. They got engaged and developed a plan for the future together based on a shared life in Germany or Austria. Melvin C. wanted – as he also stated in his later paternity declaration – to finish his pharmacology studies in the United States and then return to Europe. "There were so many pharmacies that shut down because there were no pharmacists available. So there would have been opportunities," is how Hiltraud S. described their hopes at the time.

When the child was born in 1964, Melvin was already a few days into his maritime journey back to the United States. According to their planning, he should still have been present at birth. However, he was recalled early – a standard strategy of the U.S. military authorities when it became known that a woman was expecting a child from a GI. "This procedure was intended to protect both the soldiers in question and the U.S. government from any potential material obligations."[32] However, as Hiltraud S. recalled in retrospect, she had herself from the outset absolved Melvin of responsibility, "as I told him: 'I have a job and I can do that for two years and that is not such a big problem for me.'" She tried "to act strong but I must say that I didn't know what it meant to have a child. And I simply didn't think about racism."

She said that the color of her partner's skin was absolutely not an issue for her. "I was sometimes simply amazed how others reacted to it when I was together with him, for example when I went for a walk with him. One time, we went down to the railway station together and he brought me to the train and a man actually spat right in front of my feet." Yet she claimed not to have let such experiences get to her. "It only really affected me when I became pregnant and then when the baby was born." She was left to her own devices with her son, raised him by

31 See *The Seattle Civil Rights & Labor History Project*, based at the University of Washington, <https://depts.washington.edu/civilr/segregated.htm> (18 February 2020).

32 Malanda, "Konstruktion von Weißsein," 13.

herself, and not only during the two years they had agreed to before Melvin's planned return to Europe, during which they maintained their relationship with phone calls and letters. During this time, as she stated, it must have become clear to him that this was not what he wanted. "I think he put it like this on the phone: 'I don't want to live in Austria and I don't want to live in Germany.'"

"America was seventh heaven by contrast"[33]

The oral history interviews that I conducted in the course of my research on the Allied occupation of Austria revealed that the 'totally other', the unfamiliarity of men of color in a completely White country, combined with a certain exoticism of the strange, functioned as something of a projection surface, an object of fascination, and thus a counterbalance to everyday life in the postwar period.[34] This is also documented in the following example from the LIA Collection.

The mother of Verena K. met the girl's African American father in Vienna in 1946. The daughter recalls that her mother, a 25-year-old office worker at the time and divorced from a failed wartime marriage, was motivated by a combination of erotic attraction, an interest in the extraordinary and peculiar, as well as pragmatic considerations. "Yes, so my father was part of the occupation. Yes, and he […] was walking down the street with his friend, my mother was behind them with a girlfriend, and they apparently had a sexy walk. [Laughs.]" Her mother knew enough English "to be able to flirt with them. And […] my mother is a great letter writer. She always wrote letters when she liked somebody or found them interesting. Yes, and they wrote to each other when he had to return to America."

In 1947, Verena K.'s mother followed the servicemen Thomas Charles F. to the United States, probably in the context of the 1946 Alien Fiancées and Fiancés Act. This enabled foreign partners of members of the U.S. armed forces who had served in World War II to immigrate to the United States, provided that they got married there within the space of three months. Otherwise they would be deported.[35] The necessary financial guarantee of 500 dollars was deposited provided by the girl's father's mother, in other words her African American grandmother. Verena K. was born in 1948 in a small industrial town in Michigan. Her father earned a living there as a worker in an iron factory, but was outside his work active as a musician and therefore was often out and about in bars and

33 The following information and quotes are drawn from the interview with Verena K., born 1948, conducted by Philipp Rohrbach, 12 August 2015, Vienna, 02:01:48, LIA Collection.

34 Bauer, "'Leiblicher Vater: Amerikaner (Neger)'," 53–54; on British women's "peculiar fascination with Black Americans," see Bland, *Britain's 'Brown babies'*, 21–22.

35 <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/79th-congress/session-2/c79s2ch520.pdf> (24 February 2020); see also Lemke Muniz de Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung*, 22.

nightclubs. As the daughter recalled, her parents' marriage only survived this for a few years. Yet her mother was by no means unhappy in the United States: "She was also partly fleeing from Vienna … the postwar period …, she said that they had been sleeping on the table because there were so many bugs and so on. And [there was] also no food. America was seventh heaven by contrast." On account of the "sumptuous, great food," her mother "immediately, I believe, put on ten or fifteen kilos [Laughs.], yes".

The return of a Black GI who was soon followed by his White bride-to-be does not seem to have provoked any negative reactions in this case. The mixed-race child and her mother were integrated into their respective communities on both sides of the ocean. The child's African American grandmother took care of her while her mother worked as an ironer in a launderette and when Verena contracted tuberculosis during a lengthy stay with her mother in Vienna provided her with the antibiotic streptomycin, which at the time was still difficult to obtain in Europe: "So she kind of saved my life." Meanwhile, their family of origin and broader environment in the social democratic milieu in Vienna reflected the findings of a contemporary study, namely that the parents and neighbors in the workers' districts accepted the child "without any great fuss".[36]

"He absolutely wanted to marry her, but she didn't want to"[37]

In her interview, Puppi L. spoke of the difficulty of categorizing the history of her parents' relationship, recalling that her mother did not like to speak about it and that it had actually been a taboo issue. "Well, she told me fragments […]. That it was simply a phase in her life, which is how I came to be and that was simply how it was. She actually didn't want to get into it in any more detail." The few written documents[38] that her mother gave her permission to look at over the years allow for the following story to be reconstructed: While her father – a private first class born in Dallas, Texas – was stationed in Austria, her parents maintained on an ongoing relationship lasting several years. Their daughter was born in 1950. Andrews D., 25 years old at the time, officially confirmed his paternity, with the paternity certificate including the remark that the "child's father will cover the entire alimony for the child". According to Puppi L., her mother lived in Salzburg-Siezenheim at the time, in a house near the U.S. barracks, and it was "common for my father to be there. If he was not currently on duty in the

36 Eyfert et al., *Mischlingskinder*, 28.

37 The following information and quotes are drawn from the interview with Puppi L., born 1950, conducted by Philipp Rohrbach and Niko Wahl, 14 February 2015, Salzburg, 1:40:29, LIA Collection.

38 These documents are kept in the interviewee's private collection.

barracks, he was with us." Her memories of this time are vague. In any case, her father must have been redeployed very suddenly. The documents do not allow for the precise date to be determined in retrospect and the American military authorities on principle did not inform women and mothers of the GIs' new location.[39] It only becomes evident from a letter sent later by the father that he had been deployed to serve in the Korean War. This letter was written in remarkably good German – here cited in English translation – from Oakland, California in December 1954:

> "Dear Adele. Above all forgive me that I did not write to you sooner, but I was in Korea and could not even write home. But now I am back and trying to come to Austria and then I will submit the papers so that we can marry. I only hope that you and the child are healthy. Our child must be pretty big now, I just wish I could see you both. I always thought of you, it was terrible for me that I could not write. […] Please write to me right away whether you got my letter. I hope that you haven't forgotten me and that you still love me, I love you and my thoughts are always with you and our daughter. Now my dear I must conclude but I hope to hear from you soon and please send me pictures of yourself and our child. Warm greetings and kisses from your Andrews. Give Puppi a kiss from me."

These efforts to resume contact and to secure, through an application for permission to marry, the relationship that had lasted several years before it was interrupted by his service in Korea, were not successful. According to Puppi L., her mother never answered this letter. "He absolutely wanted to marry her, but she didn't want to. That's what she told me anyway. […] She didn't want to go to America, because that's how it was at the time, white and black […] did not belong together."

White/Black: Dichotomy and Hierarchy

The examples presented here demonstrate that interracial couples were confronted with many hurdles: the circumstances of the time and the exceptional situation presented by the occupation and its power asymmetry; racial discrimination; the regulations of the U.S. military and separations due to the sudden redeployment of the GIs; and the drawn out process of applying for permission to marry, which was seldom successful. "Decisions about marriages lay with the American local (white) commanding officers, who generally disapproved of mixed-race relationships."[40] The overwhelming majority of White

39 See Lemke Muniz de Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung*, 30.

40 Ingvill C. Mochmann and Sabine Lee, "The Human Rights of Children Born of War. Case Analyses of Past and Present Conflicts," *Historical Social Research* 35 (2010), 3, 268–298, 278;

Americans were opposed to interracial marriages, with only five percent in favor in the late 1950s.[41]

In Austria, too, intimate Black/White relationships evoked associations and connotations of a perversion of the social and civilizational order. Yet this rejection was directed with greater fervor against the women than against the Black soldiers or later against the children who emerged from these relationships. Merely being seen with a Black GI involved the risk of ostracism.[42]

A vivid example is the narrative strategy adopted in the following report of an Austrian newspaper from the Catholic milieu, which targeted U.S. soldiers and their "Girls," as the article referred to them using the English term, at a sausage stand: The report spoke amongst other things of a "towering negro" with "a Lady" on his arm. The "Black's face" bore a look of pride as "here, in this occupied country, which knows fewer racial prejudices than his own, [he could] do what is forbidden in his homeland! He walks openly with a White woman through the streets." The report moreover stated: "Does he perhaps recognize deep inside that the character and the soul of this kind of White woman is blacker than his skin?"[43] With this rhetorical question, the report simultaneously conveyed the indirect message that racial segregation – like a law of nature – could not be lifted anywhere. The Black soldiers, as the audience was being informed, did not really have a choice that transcended the boundaries of race. Ultimately, it was not a W*hite* woman that they received but, in her character, a *deep Black* one.

IV. Under General Suspicion of Prostitution

Among the dominant moral assumptions and narratives about women who associated with Black GIs was the general suspicion of engaging in professional prostitution, potentially also clandestine prostitution. There were also warnings that young girls could get "caught up in the maelstrom of casual prostitution because of their contacts with occupation soldiers".[44] All of this was discussed in the media as a "burning postwar problem,"[45] which genuinely did exist but is difficult to quantify. This is because it got mixed up in public perception with

see also: Pelz, "Heiratsmigrantinnen," 191; Lemke Muniz de Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung*, 21–25.

41 Steven Pinker, *Gewalt. Eine neue Geschichte der Menschheit* (Frankfurt a. Main: S. Fischer, 2011), 579–581.

42 See Bauer, "'Leiblicher Vater: Amerikaner (Neger)'," 56–57; Eyferth, *Mischlingskinder*, 74, Bland, *Britain's 'Brown Babies'*, 28, Fehrenbach, "Of German Mothers," 168.

43 *Salzburger Volkszeitung*, 27 March 1952, 5; Bauer, "'Leiblicher Vater: Amerikaner (Neger)'," 56–57.

44 Bauer and Huber, "Sexual Encounters," 83.

45 *Das kleine Blatt*, 17 January 1948, 3; *Weltpresse*, 6 August 1947, 4.

moral irritation about the carefreeness with which girls and young women entered into erotic relationships with members of the occupation forces, thereby traversing traditional and culturally rooted notions of womanhood.[46] Newspaper reports about regular police raids in the environs of U.S. bases and leisure centers appeared under headlines such as "Women Going Astray,"[47] "Easy Girls,"[48] and so forth. Such reports called for their "isolation in an appropriate institution and their simultaneous habituation to work," while warning that clandestine prostitution "is above all a result of the demoralization of youth through fascism and war" and could therefore "not be combatted effectively through strict surveillance alone, but only through education and upbringing."[49]

The authorities and the police, on the other hand, construed the issue of clandestine prostitution very broadly. Merely being present in a venue or dance club that was frequented by U.S. soldiers could be sufficient reason for an arrest during a raid. Nuanced voices, such as the social democratic newspaper *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, called for psychological care in actual cases of clandestine prostitution: A policeman "is not a suitable guardian in this instance. He is also not qualified to determine the boundary between free love and prostitution".[50] A remarkable case in this respect involved a young woman who openly defended her lifestyle and lodged an appeal with several different authorities against her arrest on account of alleged clandestine prostitution. The highest of these authorities, the Supreme Administrative Court, finally ruled in her favor with the following verdict: While the complainant had "admitted to accepting money from an American soldier, the father of her two children, up until 1952, as well as to having a relationship with a second American soldier after the first soldier departed for Korea and to having also received money from him," this was in and of itself not evidence of clandestine prostitution.[51]

Nevertheless, to be seen in the company of Black GIs almost invariably invoked such suspicions, as court files and child welfare agency documents reveal. The latter became involved in the case of underage women who had fallen foul of the societal image of womanhood and were subjected to forced welfare measures on account of their diagnosed "neglect". The same was true of mothers of children born out of wedlock, as in such cases the child welfare agency assumed custodial care. This entailed inquiries and inspection visits by female welfare officers, who for the most part were prejudiced and therefore not very supportive. The keyword "negro," which was particularly emphasized in the files of these

46 Thurner, *Nationale Identität*, 72.
47 *Das kleine Blatt*, 13 August 1949, 1–2.
48 *Demokratisches Volksblatt*, 5 July 1952.
49 *Das kleine Blatt*, 17 January 1948, 1–3.
50 *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, 8 August 1947, 2.
51 *Der Abend*, 14 August 1954, 3.

women when it came to describing their lifestyles, became an internal code used by the child welfare agency in relation to questionable sexual morality: The child's mother had had dealings with American soldiers, "including with negro soldiers," is how the surveys put it, or: she had a "negro friend" or "makes a living from Ami acquaintances (negro)". The files similarly documented stigmatizing assessments by neighbors: "The mother is said to live off negro visits" or "the child's mother is called a negro girl".[52]

V. The Mothers of Black Occupation Children

The extent to which women in interracial relationships and their children were regarded as a "separate problem group"[53] is evinced by the mere fact that they became the object of statistical surveys and scholarly studies. This is especially true in Germany and in the case of the children. They were regarded in West German postwar society, as Malanda and others demonstrated, as a "touchstone" for the fact "that the racist heritage of National Socialism could be overcome and that a humane treatment of minorities was possible".[54] When the first of these children began attending school, an intense liberal discourse emerged – unlike in Austria – on the question of their integration, which also extended to the scholarly sphere.

A study initiated by the International Union for Child Welfare, Geneva, was conducted in 1951/52 in cooperation with child welfare agencies in several countries[55] including Austria, with the following data provided among the findings:

Some of the mothers were very young and the majority, namely 82 percent, were single. The age group 16 to 21 made up 48 percent (5 percent more than was determined in Germany). In some cases (about 2 percent in both Austria and Germany), the mothers were even under 16. The age group 21 to 30 made up 36.5 percent of the cases in Austria, with 13.5 percent being over 30. The duration of the relationships as determined in the study is also notable: In about a third of the Austrian cases, the relationship lasted for a year or longer after the birth of the child, while in an additional 6 percent of cases concrete steps had been taken to obtaining marriage documents, although this had only been successful in one

52 See Archiv der Stadt Salzburg: Akten Jugendamt/Fürsorge (Gruppe F4 bis F12).

53 Lemke Muniz de Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung*, 46.

54 Malanda, "Konstruktion von Weißsein," 10, 11; Fehrenbach, "Of German Mothers," 170.

55 Luise Frankenstein, *Soldatenkinder. Die unehelichen Kinder ausländischer Soldaten mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Mischlinge* (Munich–Düsseldorf: Steinebach 1954), 22; for a critical assessment of this and other contemporary studies, see Lemke Muniz de Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung*, 48–72.

single case by the time the study was conducted. These more or less durable relationships, which made up about 40 percent of the cases, stood in contrast to those fleeting encounters that occurred once, twice, or three times, but accounted for a relatively high proportion of children born to Austrian mothers, namely 35 percent (by comparison to 20 percent in Germany). In about 25 percent of the cases (33 percent in Germany) the relationship was said to have lasted "several months". According to this survey, children were born as a result of rape in about 3 percent of cases in Germany and 1 percent in Austria.[56]

Beyond these numbers – as the interviews conducted for the project LIA reveal in more detail – lay a range of different life stories and relationships. What they all have in common is the manifold kinds of pressure to which the mothers of Black occupation children were subjected.[57] They were met with intense discrimination, racist hostility, and social ostracism, and confronted later in life by limited possibilities to get married and establish a family as well as by professional and financial problems.[58]

Yet Eyferth et al. noted in their contemporary study (as briefly mentioned above) class-based differences in the reactions of the population: In middle-class neighborhoods, it was

> "rather more common for colored children and their mothers to encounter contempt and rejection from their neighbors than in working class suburbs or even in hutments. The few cases in which we detected a more or less consolidated rejection of contact with the mother and in which the child was isolated were in more affluent neighborhoods or in better ordered rural communities."[59]

The pressure on the mothers increased in the event – as would eventually happen in just about all cases – that they were left alone without the fathers of their children and – what was also true in the majority of cases – that they could not count on alimony. As the U.S. military authorities made unequivocally clear in a 1946 decree, there was no legal basis for such claims. According to these stipulations, which were disseminated as a warning by Austrian newspapers and women's magazines, members of the U.S. occupation forces could also not be forced to recognize paternity.[60] Women were left, with a few exceptions, to bear the consequences of pregnancy alone. The responsible local authorities, who regarded the children above all as an undesirable expense for the public welfare

56 Frankenstein, *Soldatenkinder*, 25–26.
57 Wahl/Rohrbach/Adler, *SchwarzÖsterreich*, 46–47; Malanda, "Konstruktion von Weißsein," 11.
58 Fritz et al., "Dauerpflegplatz gesucht," 62; Malanda, "Konstruktion von Weißsein," 11 and 14.
59 Eyfarth et al., *Mischlingskinder*, 29.
60 See "Schwangere Fräuleins werden gewarnt," *Demokratisches Volksblatt*, 25 May 1946. For more information, see Philipp Rohrbach's contribution in this volume of Zeitgeschichte.

system, only rarely behaved in a supportive manner and were in fact mostly regarded as a supervisory authority.

The very young mothers in particular were often unable to cope. If their birth families refused to offer them any form of financial or other support, they were predestined to slide down the social scale. So, for example, a social worker who was assigned to a family in a hutment noted after one of her visits to their precarious quarters: "A subtenant sleeps in the kitchen with her infant, who got her child from an American soldier (negro) whose whereabouts is unknown."[61]

The conditions to which the affected women were exposed often influenced their behavior toward their children. The files of the child welfare agencies include cases in which children had already been left behind in the hospital after birth in the hope of evading the shame of a – as it was called at the time – "Negermischling" ("negro mongrel") and the social problems that went along with it. Malanda regarded such decisions by mothers to separate themselves from their children as a symbolic act, namely to reclaim their positions as White women within a White majority society.[62]

If in such cases a relative of the mother, often the grandmother, did not intervene, the child often ended up in a welfare institution, with foster mothers, or with adoptive parents. However, they were regarded as difficult to place. Foster and adoptive mothers were also affected by discrimination, as the letters from one of these mothers to the responsible social worker in the adoption department reveals. In a letter from 1957, for example, she wrote: "If our nearest and dearest would leave us alone with their partly well-intended and partly hateful intrusiveness, we would have harmony. I have now developed a thick skin and a sharp tongue, that will do at a pinch! Terrible, the things that some people want to know." She ended her letter with the words: "There, now I have poured my heart out."[63]

Helga F., who grew up as an adoptive child in a traveling Sinti family, in which she was completely integrated and very soon learned to speak the Sinti language fluently, remembers a particular scene especially vividly of "how my mother had to let herself be reviled". They were on the move with a horse and carriage when the gendarmerie turned up: "ID check. Suddenly, one of the gendarmes said, in exactly these words: 'Oh look, the gypsy women are also sleeping with the negroes now.' My mother could have said: 'I adopted the [child].' But instead she said: 'So what, this is my child.'"[64]

61 Stadtarchiv Salzburg: Akten Jugendamt/Fürsorge F4, Ordner 70, R.H.: Bericht 1953; Bauer, "'Leiblicher Vater: Amerikaner (Neger)'", 58–60.

62 Malanda, "Konstruktion von Weißsein," 16.

63 Magistrat der Stadt Wien: Adoptionsabteilung, LIA Collection.

64 These quotes are drawn from the interview with Helga F., born 1946, conducted by Philipp Rohrbach and Niko Wahl, 18 December 2014, Vienna, 1:42:50, LIA Collection.

According to the study by the International Union for Child Welfare, Geneva, cited at the beginning of this section, 14 percent of Austrian occupation children with a Black GI as a father lived with adoptive parents in the early 1950s, 3 percent lived in homes, and 15 percent with maternal relatives. This means that the overwhelming majority, namely 68 percent, lived with their biological mothers.[65] The research conducted during the project LIA suggests a similar trend, even if only at a proportion of fifty percent.

However, the reality, as the following example reconstructed from a welfare file[66] demonstrates, consisted of a series of numerous changing waystations between mothers, foster homes, and welfare institutions, and thus a long way to a stabilization of both the mothers' and the children's lives.

"The child's mother has repeatedly been summoned to the child welfare agency"

C. L., a carer from a rural background, gave birth to her son in October 1955, a few days before the last occupation soldiers left Austria. His African American father, a sergeant in the U.S. Army from North Carolina, had already been redeployed to Italy by this point. The welfare file begins with an entry from December 1955: "The child's mother will appear at the agency in January, when the child's father comes to Salzburg on leave, to recognize his paternity." This evidently never happened. Instead, C. L. followed the father to Italy together with the infant. In 1959, she returned to Salzburg with her now three-year-old child. As access to the parallel U.S. society of the occupation period, with its resources and thus a certain kind of security, was no longer available, an unstable phase of life set in. Without a local network and left to her own devices, without a secure place of work and a regular income, the fragility and ruptures of the 'occupation bride' lifestyle now came into full effect. The little boy was taken from his mother by the child welfare agency and placed in foster homes, which proved to be unsuitable. "The child's mother visits him regularly and he is clearly attached to her," as an entry in the file from May 1959 states. However, the mother was not able to pay the stipulated monthly support payment, resulting in summonses to the child welfare agency, criminal charges, and admonitions of exaction. "Considering that paternity could not be determined (negro father), Miss L. […] is primarily responsible for support," is how the agency put it in dry terminology. Subsequently, the file records department store thefts committed by the mother and resulting jail terms, while at the same time it was repeatedly noted: "The child's

65 Frankenstein, *Soldatenkinder*, 34.

66 All the following information drawn from: Stadtarchiv Salzburg, Archiv nach 1945, J.L., Box 3707.

mother maintains contact [to her son]". A brief entry from 1962, "the child's mother paid on time," indicates that her living conditions had become more stable. C. L. had been able to gain a foothold as a temporary seamstress in various businesses. In 1963, she met her later husband, a school janitor, whom she married in 1967. The agency then noted: "Lives in orderly conditions". However, the boy, who had continued to live in various foster homes, had in 1963 been placed in a welfare institution on account of problems at school. Only in 1970 was the mother allowed to take in her son. He was 15 years old by this point.

VI. Conclusion: Having a Child and Being a Child without Prospects of Ever Being Fully Integrated

"I owe her a lot," Johann S. says about his mother, who supported a family of several individuals through her work as a cutter in a glass factory. "She always fought for me and did not give me up. […] She was very proud. She had to put up with insults: negro whore, she was spat at … She told everyone what she thought, told them that she stands by her child."[67]

The majority of the biological mothers not only stood by their children and provided for them by themselves. These women also had to fight for and on behalf of their children, for example having to resist the pressure exerted by the child welfare agencies to give their children up for adoption.[68] Clear measures to distance oneself from such unwelcome interventions were addressed in a series of interviews conducted for the project LIA:

"She [the mother] told me that when I was very little, somebody came from the child welfare agency and then she said she didn't need anyone, she would provide for me. […] She did not make it easy. She was a very resolute woman", is how Puppi L. remembers her single mother, who was without familial support and working nights as a cleaning lady in order to be with her daughter during the day. She also worked as a seamstress on the side. She wanted nothing to do with the child welfare agency. Her mother also always supported her when problems arose "on account of the color of my skin being a little different," for example during walks through the city: "'Ah look, it's a negro girl.'" She would become "insanely angry" when people said something like this. "She was like a hen, ensuring that nothing happened to me. That was always the most important thing for her. […]

67 Interview with Johann S., born 1946, conducted by Philipp Rohrbach, 3 January 2018, Stötten, 2:04:31, LIA Collection.

68 For more information, see Philipp Rohrbach's contribution in this volume of Zeitgeschichte.

And above all, my mother was a …, as I said, she had both feet planted firmly on the ground. She couldn't be brought down by anything. She was tough."[69]

The interviews indicate that a very particular kind of 'community of fate' emerged between the mothers and their children, which also entailed a whole range of ambivalences: Not only those children who grew up in care homes or with foster parents and who later sought contact described their relationships to their biological mothers as difficult.[70] Those who grew up with their mothers also reported problems: for example when their mothers did not want to speak about where they came from and erected a "wall of silence".[71] Or when they placed their children in a kind of glass case to protect them from outside hostility.

To have a child and to be a child that "visually differed from the homogenous White surroundings" and therefore experienced "a constant feeling of 'otherness', of being different" was a challenge for both sides.[72] Terms such as "negro child," "negro mongrel," or "mongrel," with which the aberration from the White majority society was branded, transformed the children into the "racial other".[73] This was reflected not least of all in the terminology of the authorities, as the following entry in a file from the adoption department of the City of Vienna from the year 1952 demonstrates with regard to a six-year-old girl: "The child is developing into a pronounced 'Mischlingskind', with dark, crinkled, wooly hair, yellowish skin, and an active spirit."[74] This focus on skin color, hair texture, or the thickness of the children's lips "insisted on defining the children as the product of their father's (rather than white mother's) racial ancestry".[75]

As Hiltraud S., a nurse and single mother, summarized her situation: "The only ones that Bernhard and I could ever count on were each other".[76] Like many others, she was also left without any familial support. "The way they behaved when Bernhard was born …" Her cousin told her that such a child "shouldn't come into this world" and her brother let her know: "'You can come over anytime, but you'll simply have to leave the child somewhere else. Put it in a home or a boarding school or something.' […] My sister-in-law said something similar: 'Who has such a child!' And the child was standing right there!"

The experiences of everyday racism to which her son was subjected were to continue later in life. When he would tell her about the discrimination he suffered

69 Interview with Puppi L., born 1950, conducted by Philipp Rohrbach and Niko Wahl, Salzburg, 14 February 2015, 1:40:29, LIA Collection.
70 Fritz et al., "Dauerpflegeplatz gesucht", 215.
71 Ibid., 216.
72 Mochmann/Lee, "The Human Rights of Children", 279.
73 Malanda, "Konstruktion von Weißsein," 11.
74 Magistrat der Stadt Wien: Adoptionsabteilung, LIA Collection.
75 Fehrenbach, "Of German Mothers," 177.
76 Interview with Hiltraud S.

in school she would try "if possible not to cry in front of him, because some of it affected me deeply". The mother's summation that "There's just the two of us. We are left to fend for ourselves" was shared by [Bernhard] Kevin S. in his recollections from his perspective as a son, who also recalled her encouraging stance: "There are limits, we don't need to worry, nothing will happen, and we won't let ourselves be intimidated."[77] It was not easy for his mother:

> "She wished she could always protect me and stand up for me and would have liked to always be there, especially with regard to these racist incidents, but that didn't help me. Well, it helped in the sense that there was someone who understood me, but it didn't help in the sense of 'how can I find my identity'. For example, what do I respond to someone who says you are inferior, you are stupid? Of course this also gnawed at her, since of course she knew to a certain degree that she could only partially help me."

Only when attitudes in Austria as elsewhere regarding a society characterized increasingly by mobility, globalism, and cultural diversity began to change from the 1980s onwards did Kevin S. begin to reconsider "the absence of 'black' role models"[78] and the possibility of arriving at an autonomous, secure identity – as an "Austrian of Color," as he called himself. This process of self-empowerment was also supported by civil society engagements with contemporary racism. The research and interview project LIA and the related exhibition "Schwarz-Österreich" (Black Austria) were perceived as important incentives in recent times by Kevin S., a computer specialist who later became active as a social worker for refugees. The media coverage, the public discussions, the networking meetings organized in the framework of the project, and the recognition that "I am not the only one" opened up new perspectives and the opportunity to reflect, including with regard to his mother: "So there are several areas where we are now a little more relaxed, where this great tension that always accompanied this entire issue have begun to subside."

The biographical research conducted on former occupation children and their mothers in recent years as well as the public awareness it has engendered has also cultivated important possibilities for the affected individuals to develop new self-positionings and for their life stories to be integrated into public consciousness.[79]

77 Interview with [Bernhard] Kevin S., born 1964, conducted by Ingrid Bauer and Philipp Rohrbach, Vienna, 14 January 2019, 02:24:40, LIA Collection; he deliberately changed his first name from Bernhard to Kevin.

78 Philipp Rohrbach and Niko Wahl, "Bandbreiten der Erinnerung. Lebensgeschichten im Forschungs- und Ausstellungsprojekt Lost in Administration/SchwarzÖsterreich," in *Außerordentliches. Festschrift für Albert Lichtblau*, edited by Regina-Thumser-Wöhs et al. (Vienna–Cologne–Weimar: Böhlau 2019), 211–225, 214.

79 Ingrid Bauer, "'Ich bin stolz, ein Besatzungskind zu sein.' Zeitgeschichtliche Forschungen als Impulse für Empowerment? Befunde mit Blick auf die einstige US-Zone in Österreich," in *Besatzungskinder,* edited by Stelzl-Marx and Satjukow, 183–206.

Abstracts

Black GI Children in Post-World War II Europe

Kelly Condit-Shrestha
American Fathers, German Mothers, and "Brown Babies": The Intersection of Race, Empire, and Kinship in U.S. Transnational Adoption

In the context of the Cold War, the intimate experiences of post-World War II U.S./German family-making (and family-breaking) held great transnational significance. This article examines the transnational social positioning of German/U.S. "brown babies," white occupation children, American fathers, and West German mothers, in order to explore the racialized transatlantic discourses that informed postwar West German and U.S. family-making decisions, policies, and practices regarding U.S. transnational adoption. In particular, this article highlights the intersection of U.S. and West German nation-building agendas – and the subsequent politics of support and resistance that emerged – as embodied in brown baby kinship formations on both sides of the Atlantic. Ultimately, this article is a study of the politics of familial intimacy and illuminates how postwar U.S./German adoption decisions provided crucial entry points to both reinforce and challenge transnational discourses of white supremacy, recuperate African American and West German sovereignty, engage empire, and reimagine futures, in both postwar U.S. and West German societies.
Keywords: transnational U.S. adoption, German "brown babies", critical race studies, transatlantic studies

Philipp Rohrbach
"This Has Finally Freed the Welfare Agency from a Considerable Burden": The Adoption of Black Austrian Occupation Children in the United States

This article focuses on the adoption of Black Austrian occupation children in the United States and, as such, it is embedded in the broader context of Austrian children who were given up for adoption abroad. These adoptions were instigated by the child welfare agencies in Vienna, Upper Austria, and Salzburg, those provinces that made up the U.S. zone during the occupation period in Austria (1945–1955). It explores the broader (welfare) political debates that took place during this period on the federal level in which the question concerning these children's adoption abroad was embedded and demonstrates that the children who were given up for adoption by the welfare agencies, especially in the first postwar years, mostly belonged to destitute women with no one to support them. The welfare agencies thereby aimed to relieve themselves of the cost of supporting these women and their children. Over the course of the 1950s, different developments began to take shape. While the Viennese welfare agencies in particular began rejecting adoptions abroad, the authorities in Salzburg clung to this policy even after the end of the occupation period, a policy that was both racist and directed against members of the lower classes.
Keywords: children born of war, occupation children, Austrian "brown babies", transnational U.S. adoption, racism

Lucy Bland
The War Babies of Black GIs and White British Women: Experiencing Racism and Exclusion and Searching for a Sense of Belonging

This article begins by summarizing the main findings of the research undertaken by the author on the lives of children born to Black GIs and white British women during World War II. It then focuses in particular on two themes, namely the racism and exclusion experienced by these children, and the question of belonging. The latter is charted through examining both the authorities' attitudes to whether the children should stay in Britain, i. e. whether they belonged, and the search for and sometimes acquisition of a sense of belonging by the 'brown babies' themselves, including through locating American relatives. The article attempts to demonstrate how this research has made a tangible contribution to the lives of these GI children, giving them a sense of well-being, community, empowerment, and knowledge of their heritage. The article ends by considering the relationship between the historian as investigator and as engaged participant.
Keywords: mixed-race, GIs, racism, belonging

Azziza B. Malanda
"I Had a Dark Skin Color, That Was a Problem […]": Race and Racism in the Child Welfare System in Postwar West Germany

Despite growing research on children born during the occupation period in Germany after World War II, little is known about the life experiences of the Black Germans amongst them who grew up in care. According to a survey by the Federal Statistical Office of West Germany from 1956, Black German children were placed in care after 1945 more often than white children. The category 'race' was frequently an additional reason for referral to institutional care. Drawing upon qualitative interviews, scholarly studies, statistics, and youth welfare reports, this article focuses on experiences of racism and discourses on race in postwar West Germany and highlights the historical continuities that led to these. Investigating the marginalized history of Black Germans in care in postwar West Germany is in turn a further step toward understanding the roots of today's discussions on systemic racism in Germany.
Keywords: Black Germans, children's homes, child welfare system, racism, postwar West Germany

Ingrid Bauer
Post-World War II Interracial Relationships, Mothers of Black Occupation Children, and Prejudices in White Societies: Austria in Comparative Perspective

This article highlights interracial relationships between Black U.S. occupation personnel and Austrian women. Their intimate contacts were often confronted with vehement rejection on account of a racist limitation of love and sexuality. Beyond discriminatory ascriptions, this article aims to provide nuanced insights into such Black/White relationships in the context of the postwar occupation era, the individual experiences thereof, and the social as well as institutional treatment of these encounters. The focus lies especially on the women involved, who – regarded as having gravely betrayed social values – were confronted with being categorized beyond the boundaries of respectable femininity: What motivated their 'love despite racist taboos'? How did racist prejudices determine their personal circumstances and their social status, including after the end of the occupation? What did it mean to have a mixed-race child without the prospect of being fully integrated? And what can we learn from the subsequent social reactions and discourses about Austrian postwar society, the process of national reconstruction, and the divisions drawn between the self and the other?
Keywords: interracial relationships, women, black occupation children, children born of war, postwar Austria (1945–1955), gender history

Reviews

Johannes Sachslehner, Hitlers Mann im Vatikan. Bischof Alois Hudal – Ein dunkles Kapitel in der Geschichte der Kirche, Wien 2019, 288 Seiten.

Nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg verhalfen katholische Geistliche deutschen Kriegsverbrechern zur Flucht. Wie gut war Papst Pius XII. darüber informiert? War er etwa damit einverstanden? Nach der Freigabe der Archivalien des Pacelli-Papstes wird möglicherweise Brisantes darüber zutage kommen – und der Name Alois Hudal wieder aktuell werden. Denn der aus Graz stammende Rektor des deutschen Priesterkollegiums „Anima" in Rom machte dieses zur Drehscheibe der sogenannten Rattenlinie. Er stattete Nazi-Massenmörder mit falschen Papieren aus, organisierte ihre Weiterreise nach Südamerika oder in den Nahen Osten und bezahlte etlichen auch die Überfahrt.

Der Titel der jüngsten Hudal-Biographie von Johannes Sachslehner, „Hitlers Mann im Vatikan", ist allerdings verfehlt: Die „Anima" war nicht im Vatikan und Hudal zwar mit seinen Beziehungen zur deutschen Besatzungsmacht für den Vatikan fallweise ein brauchbarer Kontaktmann, machte aber sehr zum Missfallen der Päpste Pius XI. und Pius XII. meistens, was er wollte.

Sachslehner stützt sich auf eigene Archivforschungen, auf die vorhandene Literatur über Hudal und auf eine Vielzahl verstreuter Beiträge in Printmedien. Die Meriten des Buches sind vor allem in der Darstellung des frühen Hudal zu finden. Dieser ist geradezu ein Schulbeispiel für den prägenden Einfluss des mit Antisemitismus getränkten katholischen Milieus im Österreich des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts. Ein großer Teil der Katholiken verabschiedete sich von Grauen erfüllt vom Antisemitismus, als sie sahen, wohin er geführt hatte – mir ist als Beispiel dafür ein Satz von Friedrich Funder in Erinnerung, den ich Kurt Skalnik verdanke: „Gott wird mich hoffentlich nicht so hart bestrafen, alles noch einmal lesen zu müssen, was ich geschrieben habe." Er hatte als Chef der katholisch-antisemitischen „Reichspost" Schlimmes geschrieben, 1945 jedoch „Die Furche" gegründet, um konsequent gegen Antisemitismus, Rassenhass und Inhumanität aufzutreten. Man kann die heute in den christlichen Kirchen verbreitete Hilfsbereitschaft gegenüber Flüchtlingen nicht zuletzt als Ergebnis solcher Lernprozesse sehen.

Sachslehner beschreibt, wie Hudal den diametral entgegengesetzten Weg ging. Bei ihm kam allerdings, auch dies ein Schulbeispiel, zum Antisemitismus der Nationalismus hinzu, und zwar in seiner extremsten Form: Er war ein glühender Nationalsozialist im Bischofstalar und blieb es, als er wusste, welche Untaten die Nationalsozialisten begangen hatten. Sein ehemaliger Sekretär Joseph Prader: „Er hat die Juden gehasst." Offenbar fehlte ihm etwas, wovon wir zu Unrecht meinen, es gehöre zum Menschen wie die Sprache oder der Geruchssinn, nämlich die Fähigkeit zur Empathie. Ein großer Teil der „kleinen Nazis" dürfte von genau

dieser Art gewesen sein: empfindungslos und eben daher gleichgültig gegenüber menschlichem Leid.

Ein hochintelligenter und sprachgewaltiger Aufsteiger mit brennendem Ehrgeiz, versuchte Hudal sich 1936 mit seinem berüchtigten Buch „Die Grundlagen des Nationalsozialismus" Hitler anzubiedern und ihm im Alleingang die Kirche als Partner anzubieten, verurteilte aber die NS-Rassenlehre. Die Privataudienz, in welcher er Pius XI. für sein Projekt gewinnen wollte, ging gründlich daneben. Der Papst hatte Hitler längst durchschaut und meinte, von Geist könne man bei dieser Bewegung nicht sprechen, worauf Hudal nichts anderes übrigblieb, als aus dem geplanten Titel „Die geistigen Grundlagen des Nationalsozialismus" den Geist zu streichen. Damit war die Rolle als Vermittler zwischen Kirche und Hitler, die er sich erträumt hatte, geplatzt und die Hoffnung auf den Kardinalshut auch. Goebbels ließ das Buch in Deutschland verbieten.

Fortan saß er zwischen den Stühlen, doch recht bequem, denn während des Krieges konnten ihn sowohl der Vatikan als auch die Deutschen für informelle Kontakte gut brauchen. Nach der deutschen Besetzung Roms versteckte er im ersten Stock und im Keller der „Anima" entflohene alliierte Kriegsgefangene, seine deutschen Freunde gingen im Erdgeschoss ein und aus. Noch 1943 träumte er davon, gemeinsam mit den Nationalsozialisten mit dem Bolschewismus „aufzuräumen". Den Brief, mit dem er auf Wunsch des Papstes im Oktober 1943 gegen die Deportation von tausend Juden bei den Deutschen zu intervenieren versuchte, hält Sachslehner für wirkungslos. Zu einem offenen Protest des Papstes kam es bekanntlich nicht.

Unter den Nazis, denen Hudal nach dem Krieg zur Flucht verhalf, waren der für den Einsatz der „Gaswagen" durch die Einsatzgruppen mitverantwortliche Walther Rauff, der Kommandant der Vernichtungslager Sobibór und Treblinka Franz Stangl, der in Sobibór an mindestens 165.000 Morden beteiligte Gustav Franz Wagner und der „Schlächter von Riga" Eduard Roschmann. An der Flucht von Dr. Emil Gelny, der in Gugging und Mauer-Öhling hunderte Geisteskranke ermordet hatte, viele eigenhändig, hat er wahrscheinlich mitgewirkt. Er war nämlich keineswegs der einzige Kirchenmann, der Kriegsverbrechern bei ihrer Flucht half. Otto Gustav Wächter, der am 25. Juli 1934 in Wien den Befehl zum Angriff auf das Bundeskanzleramt gab und später Gouverneur von Galizien und Befürworter der „harten Linie" in Sachen „Endlösung" wurde, starb, getröstet von Bischof Hudal, in einem römischen Ordensspital. Damit war der Bogen überspannt.

Da er alle höflichen Bitten, abzutreten, ignorierte, wurde Hudal 1951 gezwungen, zu gehen. Sein Selbstmitleid war so überdimensional wie sein Ego. Nicht einmal der Besuch der österreichischen Bundesregierung 1961 konnte ihn trösten. Auf einem Foto im Buch sieht man ihn zwischen Bundeskanzler Gorbach und Außenminister Kreisky, beide im Frack mit Bruststern und Schärpe. Eine

seiner letzten Freuden dürfte der Besuch von Rolf Hochhuth gewesen sein, dem er Tipps für das Stück „Der Stellvertreter" gab. Er starb 1963. Das Buch, in dem er mit allen abrechnete, die ihn nie verstanden hatten, erschien 1976: „Römische Tagebücher – Lebensbeichte eines alten Bischofs". Eine einzige Peinlichkeit, voll von NS-Terminologie. Bis zuletzt durch und durch von sich selbst überzeugt, hatte er immer recht gehabt und richtig gehandelt.

Sachslehners Buch lässt eine narzisstische Persönlichkeitsstörung vermuten. Dass Hudal Hitler veranlassen will, den „Mythus des Zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts" von Alfred Rosenberg zu verbieten, um mit der Kirche auf einen Nenner zu kommen, dass er nach dem Krieg seine Denkschrift über die Neuordnung des Donauraumes an Churchill, Roosevelt und Stalin schickt, passt ins Bild der auch bei hoher Intelligenz für ihre eigenen Grenzen und Möglichkeiten blinden Persönlichkeit.

Die Rolle Hudals, „wenn es galt, die Deutschen vor weiteren Juden-Deportationen aus Rom diskret zu warnen oder durch Hudals gute Beziehungen zur Polizei Schutzbriefe für kirchliche Gebäude zu erwirken, in denen in Rom Hunderte von Juden versteckt waren", wird unter anderen von Hansjakob Stehle, auf den sich Sachslehner an mehreren Stellen stützt, in einer Besprechung von Hudals posthumem Werk erwähnt,[1] kommt aber bei Sachslehner nicht vor. Die Frage, ob Hudal etwa tendenziell richtiglag und nur zu wenig diskret vorging, steht als hässliche Gestalt im Raum.

Leider hat das Buch kein Namensregister.

Hellmut Butterweck

Michael Riekenberg, Gewalt. Eine Ontologie, Campus-Verlag, Frankfurt am Main/New York 2019, 164 Seiten.

Mit seinem Buch „Gewalt. Eine Ontologie" unternimmt der Lateinamerikahistoriker Michael Riekenberg den Versuch, die Erforschung von Gewalt neu zu denken und einen Beitrag zur nach wie vor aktuellen Debatte zum Thema zu leisten. Die darin formulierte Forderung, nicht mehr Gewalt selbst schwerpunktmäßig in das Zentrum wissenschaftlicher Aufmerksamkeit zu rücken, wie es Vertreter*innen der Neuen Gewaltsoziologie vorschlagen, folgt dem derzeitigen Forschungstenor. So plädierten auch Wissenschaftler*innen wie u. a. Wolfgang Knöbl oder Teresa

1 Hansjakob Stehle, Des „braunen Bischofs" Abschied. Ein peinliches Dokument: Hudals Lebensbericht, Die Zeit, 24. 12. 1976, Nr. 53, 16.

Koloma Beck jüngst für eine stärkere Kontextualisierung und für die Abkehr von einer situationsbezogenen, dicht beschreibenden Analyse von Gewalt.[1]

Der arrivierte Gewaltforscher Riekenberg hat sich mit diesem Buch – anders als in seinen vorangegangenen Fallstudien z. B. zu staatsferner Gewalt in Lateinamerika – für die Form des Essays entschieden. Diese solle ihm erlauben, so der Autor im Vorwort, „mitunter nur […][s]einen Eindrücken Ausdruck zu geben, nicht gesicherten Ergebnissen der Forschung ohne deswegen freilich die wissenschaftliche Methodik aufzugeben". (S. 7). Er will also seine Leser*innen dazu einladen, seinen Überlegungen zu folgen und eigene Ideen mitzunehmen. Er schöpft für seine Argumentation aus den Feldern der Ethnologie, der Geschichtswissenschaft, der Soziologie, zieht Philosophen wie Ludwig Wittgenstein oder Walter Benjamin zu Rate und wagt einen Exkurs in die Psychologie von Jacques Lacan.

Mit einer persönlichen Verortung – hier ganz Ethnologe – leitet Riekenberg seinen Essay ein und positioniert sich dann gegenüber den Errungenschaften der Neuen Gewaltsoziologie. Ihn überzeugt einerseits das Begriffsverständnis der ‚Innovateure' der Gewaltforschung: Gewalt sei demnach rein physisch und damit „geschichtslos" (S. 32). Das, was Johan Galtung als strukturelle Gewalt oder Pierre Bourdieu als symbolische Gewalt definiert, sind für Riekenberg Machtkonstellationen, die er somit in seinen Gedankengängen zur Gewalt weitgehend vernachlässigt. Anderseits zieht er eine eindeutige Grenze zur neuen Gewaltsoziologie, indem er unter Rückgriff auf das – wie er selbst gesteht – sperrige Konzept der „Ontologie" von Philippe Descola,[2] zum Perspektivwechsel auffordert. Eine fruchtbare Gewaltforschung, so sein Plädoyer, solle Gewalt als „Strukturtatsache" (S. 14) verstehen und folglich Erklärungsmodelle dafür liefern, wie sich Menschen „in die Gewalt stellen". (S. 14).

Zur besseren Einordnung von Gewalt in ihren Kontext orientiert er sich an zwei Systemen: Nach seinem Dafürhalten lässt sich Gewalt sowohl in das Kontinuum von Natur und Kultur sowie in das von Physikalität und Interiorität einordnen. Gewalt sei also der Welt ihrer Akteur*innen wesenhaft. Um das jeweilige Verhältnis besser beschreiben zu können, greift der Autor auf drei Ontologien Descolas zurück: Animismus, Naturalismus und Analogismus. Der Animismus beschreibt, so Riekenberg, die Kosmologien von Gemeinschaften, denen die Vorstellung zu eigen ist, dass alle Wesen in ihrer Physikalität divergent sind, aber in vergleichbarer Weise Interiorität besitzen, d. h. alles sei gleicher-

1 Siehe: https://www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-6802#note1 oder auch: https://www.hamburger-edition.de/zeitschrift-mittelweg-36/alle-zeitschriften-archiv/artikel-detail/d/2479/Im_Brennglas_der_Situation._Neue_Ans%C3%A4tze_in_der_Gewaltsoziologie/3/.

2 Philippe Descola, Jenseits von Natur und Kultur. Epilog von Michael Kauppert, Frankfurt am Main 2011.

maßen belebt und beseelt, somit seien alle Wesen einander gleichgestellt. Gewalt ist in solchen Gesellschaften notwendig. Sie ist Teil der Gesellschaftsordnung und deshalb in bestimmten Situationen für die Mitglieder solcher Gesellschaften eine normale Handlungsoption. Die physischen Effekte, die durch Gewaltanwendung entstehen, haben eine nachgeordnete Bedeutung gegenüber den sozialen. Gewalt ist eines von vielen Mitteln, um sich in die Gesellschaft und ihre Logik einzuordnen. Demgegenüber verweise der Naturalismus auf – wie er es nennt – eine Vorstellungswelt, die Natur als beherrschbar begreift. Gewalt stellt in solchen Gesellschaften stets eine Transgression dar, die Konsequenzen, die aus ihr erwachsen, haben also keinen unmittelbaren Sinn. Anders als im Animismus ist Gewalt deshalb hier Kommunikation. Beiden dieser idealtypischen Gesellschaftsformen sei jedoch die Ontologie des Analogismus gemein, die den Modus des Findens von Ähnlichkeiten beschreibt, um Ordnung zu erschaffen.

Zur Illustration dieses Konzepts der Ontologien zieht er als Vergleichsgegenstände idealisierte Vorstellungen von sogenannten amazonischen Gemeinschaften und der sogenannten zivilisierten Technikgesellschaft heran, wobei er im Verlauf seiner Ausführungen eindeutige Bezüge zu Deutschland beziehungsweise Mitteleuropa des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts herstellt. Am Beispiel dieser beiden Gesellschaftsformen wendet er sich den gängigen Themen der Gewaltforschung zu: Gewalt und Emotionen, Akteure, Gemeinschaften, Raum, Staat, Legitimation, Hierarchien und Eskalation. In seinen Darstellungen verschiedener Figurationen von Gewalt und ihrer Analyse verweigert er sich der gängigen Terminologie und führt seine eigenen Begriffe ein, wie die folgenden drei Beispiele aus dem Essay verdeutlichen: Das, was bei Felix Schnell oder Jörg Baberowski Gewaltraum heißt, nennt er Umgebungen. Er will damit nicht der Konstruktion sozialer Räume unter den Vorzeichen von Gewalt nachspüren, sondern die Beschaffenheit von Räumen jenseits ihrer Konstruiertheit in die Analyse einbeziehen. Er argumentiert, dass sie Einfluss auf das sich Positionieren des Individuums oder der handelnden Gruppe zur Gewalt nehmen. So kommt er zum Ergebnis, dass die Stadt andere Gewaltformen zulässt als das ‚Dickicht' des Amazonas. Als Beispiel verweist er auf Expeditionen von Forscher*innen aus der technisierten Zivilisation in Amazonasgebiete, die während ihres Aufenthalts eine Veränderung ihrer eigenen Bereitschaft zur Gewalt feststellten. (S. 67). Der Autor deutet diesen Wandel der eigenen Wertmaßstäbe und die Hinwendung zu einer animistischen Positionierungsstrategie als Ergebnis einer als bedrohlich wahrgenommenen Umgebung. Ein weiteres Beispiel, das er im Mittelteil des Essays analysiert, ist die Gewalt von Bürgerkriegen, der häufig das Vorurteil anhängt, grundsätzlich brutaler zu sein als Gewalt außerhalb solcher Konflikte. Hier fragt sich Riekenberg, ob nicht vielmehr die Narrationen über diese Gewalt ihr die besondere Brutalität einschreiben und ob Gewalt überhaupt qualitativ gewertet werden kann. Dem gewaltvollen Verhältnis zwischen Staat und Indivi-

duum nähert er sich an, indem er darüber nachdenkt, ob Staaten als „Räuber" von Identitäten Macht entfalten und so mittels Analogismus ihre Herrschaft sichern. (S. 77–89). Der Mittelteil des Essays umfasst eine Vielzahl an historischen und zeitgenössischen Beispielen, die er stets mithilfe der Ontologien einordnet. Hier wird seine eingangs formulierte Forderung nach einem Perspektivenwechsel greifbar und deutlich, dass besonders der Vergleich von gänzlich unterschiedlichen Gesellschaftsformationen hilfreich sei, Gewalt besser zu verstehen und Aspekte zu sehen, die hinter detailgenauen Analysen von Gewalt als Ereignis zurücktreten. Zum Abschluss wendet sich Riekenberg der Frage zu, inwieweit Gewalt eine anthropologische Grundkonstante ist und befragt hierfür Jacques Lacan und seine Überlegungen zum Spiegelstadium frühkindlicher Entwicklung. Die Konfrontation mit dem „Anderen", so der Autor, lege die Grundlage für Gewalt, da diese eine mögliche Form des Umgangs mit der eigenen Unvollkommenheit darstelle. Riekenberg beendet seine Ausführungen mit einer Anekdote über Soldaten, die im Kampf gegen den Leuchtenden Pfad im peruanischen Hochland in den 1980er- und 1990er-Jahren abgeschnittene Finger oder Ohren ihrer Opfer als Kriegstrophäen sammelten. Damit will er die Kernthese seines Buches illustrieren: Auch im Naturalismus der technisierten Zivilisation finden sich Spuren des Animismus.

Der Autor hat sich mit diesem 164 Seiten starken Essay der großen Aufgabe gestellt, unterschiedliche Fachdisziplinen in einen Dialog zu bringen sowie neue Impulse in der Debatte zur Gewaltforschung zu setzen. Ob das Format des Essays hierfür das geeignete Mittel darstellt, ist diskussionswürdig. Der Grat zwischen sinnvollen Verkürzungen zur Stärkung der Argumentation und süffisanter Rhetorik gegenüber Unwissenschaftlichkeit und Polemik ist schmal und dem Autor ist dieser Balanceakt nicht immer gelungen. Dies ist besonders schade, denn in seinen Ausführungen finden sich viele interessante und anregende Gedanken, die im Mäandern seiner Gedankengänge und der bisweilen etwas unpräzisen Sprache untergehen, es aber verdient hätten, weitergedacht zu werden.

Alles in allem legt Riekenberg ein sehr anspruchsvolles Werk vor, das sich an ein versiertes Fachpublikum wendet, zum Weiterdenken anregt und einen interdisziplinären Blick auf Gewalt wirft. Seinem Ziel, Denkanstöße zu liefern, ist er umfänglich gerecht geworden.

Stefanie Wiehl / Katharina Seibert

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Abgabe: elektronisch in Microsoft Word DOC oder DOCX.

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Rechtschreibung: Grundsätzlich gilt die Verwendung der neuen Rechtschreibung mit Ausnahme von Zitaten.

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Kapitelüberschriften und – falls gewünscht – Unterkapiteltitel deutlich hervorheben mittels Nummerierung. Kapitel mit römischen Ziffern [I. Literatur], Unterkapitel mit arabischen Ziffern [1.1 Dissertationen] nummerieren, maximal bis in die dritte Ebene untergliedern [1.1.1 Philologische Dissertationen]. Keine Interpunktion am Ende der Gliederungstitel.

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Zahlen von null bis zwölf ausschreiben, ab 13 in Ziffern. Tausender mit Interpunktion: 1.000. Wenn runde Zahlen wie zwanzig, hundert oder dreitausend nicht in unmittelbarer Nähe zu anderen Zahlenangaben in einer Textpassage aufscheinen, können diese ausgeschrieben werden.

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Die nachfolgenden Hinweise beziehen sich auf das Erstzitat von Publikationen.
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Monografien: Vorname und Nachname, Titel, Ort und Jahr, Seitenangabe [ohne „S.“].

Beispiel Erstzitat: Johanna Gehmacher, Jugend ohne Zukunft. Hitler-Jugend und Bund Deutscher Mädel in Österreich vor 1938, Wien 1994, 311.

Beispiel Kurzzitat: Gehmacher, Jugend, 311.
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[bei Beiträgen grundsätzlich immer die Gesamtseitenangabe zuerst, dann die spezifisch zitierten Seiten].

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[prinzipiell zuerst das Dokument mit möglichst genauer Bezeichnung, dann das Archiv, mit Unterarchiven, -verzeichnissen und Beständen; bei weiterer Nennung der Archive bzw. Unterarchive können die Abkürzungen verwendet werden].

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Die englischsprachigen Zitierregeln sind online verfügbar unter: https://www.verein-zeitgeschichte.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/p_verein_zeitgeschichte/zg_Zitierregeln_engl_2018.pdf

Es können nur jene eingesandten Aufsätze Berücksichtigung finden, die sich an die Zitierregeln halten!