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In this Special Issue, the authors explore the various ways in which the Second World War shaped children's experiences in the post-war period. They map the multifaceted interest or non-interest of states all over Europe for children in the years after the war, filter out groups of children who recall that the consequences of the Second World War significantly influenced their childhood, and investigate the childhood policies directed towards them, as well as their childhood experiences and the memories they foster about their childhood. In addition, they have included case studies from Western, Central and Eastern Europe with the aim of sparking a debate as to whether it was only a similar lifecycle that war children in early post-war Europe shared, or if they also had some life experiences in common.

Keywords: history of children; the Second World War; twentieth century; Europe

In 1946, a primary-school teacher in the Polish provincial town of Submierzyce encouraged his youngest pupils to make drawings of how they had encountered the war. Marian Trawiński gave a visual representation of his experiences as a forced labourer and entitled his artistic creation 'Children in Serfdom during the Occupation' (Figure 1). Due to a shortage of school equipment in the western provinces of Poland in the early post-war period, Marian used a sheet of paper left behind by the German occupiers. Expressing what the Nazi regime had done to him was only possible by using the consumables that the regime had left, and post-war Polish authorities could not yet offer.[1] In many European countries, teachers and social workers encouraged children in the early post-1945 period to draw in order to come to terms with their war experiences, as they shared the feeling that the Second World War had cast a heavy cloud over the lives of minors. Much attention was thus given to children on whom great hopes were pinned for bringing about Europe's recovery from the ashes of war.

This Special Issue explores the various ways in which the Second World War shaped children's experiences in the post-war period. It maps the multifaceted interest or non-interest of states all over Europe in children in the years after the war, filters out groups of children who recall that the consequences of the Second World War significantly influenced their childhoods, and investigates the childhood policies directed towards them, as well as their childhood experiences and the memories they foster about them. Case studies from Western, Central and Eastern Europe have also been included with the aim of sparking a debate as to whether it was only a similar lifecycle that war children in early post-war Europe shared, or whether they also had some life experiences in common.

Marian's drawing evokes questions and doubts in the minds of many historians. Can the drawing of a primary-school child be considered a reliable source for historical research? When looking more closely, one notices that the superior is drawn with another

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Figure 1.   Marian Trawiński's drawing about his war experience as a child forced labourer. Source: Warsaw, Archive of New Records, Ministry of Education, 'Children in Serfdom during the Occupation', signature 1858, Submierzyce.

crayon, and the drawing technique in which he is presented seems too sophisticated for a child in the early years of primary school. To what extent, then, can a drawing commissioned by a teacher and adjusted by an adult tell us what the boy wanted to articulate? Many of the authors in this Special Issue pay much-needed attention to how children's experiences were passed on. To unravel the relationship between childhood policies and children's experiences in different settings during the post-war period, authors in this Special Issue often choose research methods that allow children not merely to be the objects of the policies designed for them, or subjects under perfect control, but, at the very least, co-creators of everyday life who gave their own meaning to the policies affecting them by way of their practices.

Ever since the nineteenth century, when various nation-states started to see children as a resource for power, child welfare and national interest became steadily more intertwined in public domains such as schooling and family policies.[2] During the twentieth century, state involvement in childrearing became more systematic and comprehensive.[3] This tendency peaked after the Second World War, when various European states financed a raft of welfare measures, and the body of international children's rights' legislation grew. Both developments meant that states could interfere in family matters to a greater extent than before.[4] When, during the Cold War, childhood privileges turned into an important norm on which progress was established, competition between European countries and between the two Blocs emerged.[5]

The Second World War was a watershed in the twentieth century, not least because it affected civilians more than the 1914–18 war. Although the Second World War left little European territory and almost no group of civil society untouched, the war experiences of children in Europe remained highly segmented.[6] Nicholas Stargardt and Lynn Nicholas

plotted the wide variety of wartime experiences of unaffected, repressed, persecuted and murdered children in Europe.[7] But the end of the war in May 1945 did not mean that children's lives ceased to be uprooted.[8] Many had lost close relatives during the war and would grow up within other family set-ups than before. Poland's population, for example, decreased by 7.7 million between 1939 and 1947.[9] Others' immediate post-war childhood years were overshadowed by the search for family members or by forced population transfers. Among the 12 million persons who fled from the Red Army or migrated to Germany either in anticipation, or as an effect of, border changes at the end of the war, the majority were women and children.[10] During the Greek civil war, which continued the political cleavages from the Second World War, up to 25,000 Greek children had to leave their homes and were mainly sent to Eastern Europe.[11]

After the bloodshed of the Second World War, children became the main object for projections of hope all over Europe. On an individual level, this could be observed, for example, by the baby boom among Jewish Holocaust survivors[12], and on an institutional level by the fierce competition for displaced children.[13] There was also a widespread consensus that children whose development had been hindered by the war should be brought up and educated in order to become future responsible national citizens. Children were to be the backbone of political systems, in both democratic and Communist states. Even the former neutral countries participated in this democratisation process, with Sweden, for example, inviting German, but also Norwegian, Belgian and Czech children who were presumed to be in need, and providing them with food and care, while rigorously educating them about democracy and pacifism with the aim of 'undoing' any bad habits that had been acquired during wartime.[14]

'War children'

The selection of children who receive scholarly attention in this Special Issue results both from the dimensions of childhood as understood in the early period after the Second World War, as well as from the consequences of the war experienced by different European populations. The definition of a child has changed over time and, by the second half of the twentieth century, most European societies included not only infancy and six to 10 year olds, but also 10–14 year olds and sometimes even older teenagers.[15] The war often caused disruptions in children's education and/or forced them to take on the roles of absent parents or older siblings, prompting them to grow up more quickly. Also, malnutrition was a severe problem that had a much greater impact on children's developing bodies than on the physical health of adults. In addition, the war affected children's lives in Europe at different times. Children in Poland were experiencing this already in 1939, whereas children in the Eastern German borderlands, for example, often experienced it for the first time in 1944, when they were evacuated or fled to Germany's core. Meanwhile Swedish and Swiss children probably never felt that their daily lives were marked significantly by the war.[16]

In recent decades, 'war children' have received significant attention in Europe, although academic and public debates have differed from context to context. Often, the term 'war children' has referred only to children born out of relations between occupying fathers (first German, later also Soviet) and local women. While German soldiers caused the deaths of millions of people in Europe and around the world, they also created new life. Up to one million children are thought to have been born after sexual contact between German soldiers and local women.[17] The influential book by Kjersti Ericsson and Eva Simonsen about the post-war experiences of these children, *Children of World War II: the*

Hidden Enemy Legacy, used the term 'war children'[18], while Ingvill Mochmann, Sabine Lee and Barbara Stelzl-Marx suggested calling them 'children born of war', pointing to the fact that it was only the war that had brought the biological parents into contact.[19] In Finland, however, the term 'war children' refers to a group of children, 70,000 to 80,000 in number, who were transported to Sweden during the Second World War.[20] The most intensive use of the term 'war children' can be observed in Germany.[21] Media and non-academic literature portrayed *Kriegskinder* as being an entire generation traumatised by the Second World War, without differentiating between the experiences of different groups of children, but ascribing a shared set of experiences solely on the basis of age.[22]

This debate about a supposed generation of German 'war children' was often one about the German people as victims of the Second World War – which coincided with and was part of an overall trend to memorialise the suffering of Germans during and after the Second World War.[23] Among the numerous valuable academic publications were also some which contributed to a narrowed view on 'war children' as victims. Lu Seegers highlights that one outcome of the joint endeavours undertaken by historians and psychologists[24] while researching these children was that of 'Psychologisierung von Geschichte': the psychologisation of history.[25] Sociological research, in its turn, has explained the boom by the recent needs of members of this generation to reflect on the past, to ascribe important meaning to themselves, and to attract media attention.[26]

In this issue, we broaden the concept of 'war children' and turn it into an umbrella term for all sorts of children who experienced war and its direct consequences such as forced migration, violence, the loss of family members and others. Inspired by Monika Janfelt's claim in the *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood* that 'every country that has experienced war or armed conflict has produced war children'[27], we decided to assess critically to what degree the Second World War cast a shadow over the lives of children in Europe growing up in its aftermath. Soon, we realised that the European context of the mid-twentieth century cannot so easily be embraced by Janfelt's definition. The Second World War and its aftermath took on different shapes for different groups of children in various European countries. Although Germany was the war aggressor, up to one third of German children were more or less unaffected by its consequences.[28] In many countries that were occupied, moreover, the war did not cause a significant turning point in the life paths of their children.[29] 'War children', one could add, are not only a community of persons who experience a war, but also the addressees of messages. In neutral countries, such as Sweden or Switzerland, children somehow became aware of the issue of war through, for example, their parents' conversations or the refugees who arrived[30], or they may later have been the subject of policy measures which drew on new insights gained by child sociological research during the war in, for example, the United Kingdom.[31] It should also be remembered that the repercussions of the Second World War were not limited to Europe, and that children outside Europe were also affected, for example, American children whose fathers died as soldiers during the war.[32]

We further define the term 'war children' in this Special Issue by mapping how our concept of war children relates to existing nominators of children in Europe for the twentieth century. Very often, the history of 'war children' is written as a shared history of a certain age cohort with an anticipated common generational experience. The term 'Hitler Youth generation' (later HJ), for example, refers to a clear-cut age cohort of Germans born between 1919 and 1931, the oldest of whom could have joined the HJ in 1933, the year in which the Nazi Party came to power, and the youngest of whom would have joined the HJ in early 1945. While the war experiences of the older HJ members who were actively engaged in the war effort have received adequate scholarly attention, those of young

children have received much less.[33] Some of the papers in this issue offer insights into the post-war life worlds of the younger children who could have been included in the HJ generation.[34] Another age cohort of children functioning as a generation in historiography is that of 'baby-boomers'. The baby boom that took place around Europe in the immediate post-war years meant that, for example, one third of the French population was under 20 years old at the end of the 1960s.[35] 'Baby-boomers' have been referred to as a generation sharing the democratic spirits of the time and leading the 1968 social upheaval which led to subsequent changes in societal norms. The children of occupation, discussed in the article by Barbara Stelzl-Marx in this Special Issue, conceived between 1945 and 1955 after sexual relationships between Austrian women and Soviet men, could also be considered as part of the baby-boomers age cohort. The authors in this Special Issue rarely use the concept of a generation, and focus instead on groups of children with shared experience backgrounds, such as resettlers, forced labourers and others.

Until now, the ways in which the Second World War influenced the lives of children in the early post-war period have only been unravelled for some Western European child inhabitants and for Jewish child survivors.[36] What unites the children focused upon in the various articles of this Special Issue is the importance that national states gave to their upbringing in order to guarantee recovery all over Europe. Following high rates of war casualties and a sharp decline in births, projections of hope were crystallised in childhood programmes addressing these children.[37] Authors in this Special Issue investigate the various shapes that this state motivation took, as well as how it affected the life worlds of specific groups of children. At certain points after the war, children were symbolised as vulnerable, innocent victims, as 'an icon of what modern war does to the civil population', an image which was later used for political purposes on both sides of what would become the Iron Curtain.[38] Not all of these children had developed the capacities to understand the experiences they faced during or immediately after the Second World War.[39] Whether or not they were able to grasp the reason or sense of what they experienced, as this issue will make clear, they lived with the consequences of these experiences for much of their childhood and/or adulthood and attempted to give meaning to them.

Children as objects and subjects in history

The history of childhood is increasingly valued for offering an interesting lens through which to view our knowledge of the past, as states tend to define their plans very clearly in their policies towards their future citizens.[40] This young, but established field of historical enquiry encourages us to learn us about the goals of societies through the prism of child policies and children's experiences.[41] Children have traditionally been presented as figures on the margins of war, and post-war history and research on children have mainly focused on what adults said about children in various child-policy programmes or child institutions. Historical pedagogy is a well-developed research field in Europe and studies about children's rights and youth movements using a top-down perspective are available for almost all European countries.[42]

Since the 1960s, however, children have also been regarded as important historical co-creators of everyday life.[43] The individual agency of children is far more difficult to grasp as a child is not thought to be rational, which, according to Mary Jo Maynes, is still at the heart of historians' idea of a social actor. The cognitive, linguistic and emotional boundaries of children have often been used as an argument against exploring the kind of agency that children possessed at various moments throughout history.[44] However, in her study on the denazification of the Fascist classroom in Eastern Germany, Benita Blessing

states that historians must evaluate child testimonies – in the case of her study, school essays – 'with the same critical scepticism and respect' as other sources, rather than dismissing them.[45] Other historians have learned from psychological research on child eyewitnesses in court the importance of not overlooking children's accounts, but evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. Studies that centralise child sources such as diaries, school essays, drawings and pictures composed during or after the war have convincingly shown opportunities and drawbacks of the specific capacities of children to articulate what they had seen or felt.[46] Shortcomings in children's use of language or references to time and place may not be valid reasons as to why children's descriptions of interpersonal relations and everyday life conditions cannot contribute to the reconstruction of a fuller picture of life during and after the Second World War.[47]

As children left few or no personal documents which researchers can work with today[48], historians have recently often opted for the oral-history method in order to investigate the past experiences of children. Researching experiences is difficult to start with, as we only know of experiences through their representation.[49] The way historical agents experience everyday life has become the topic of research within *Alltagsgeschichte* or *Erfahrungsgeschichte*, a sub-discipline of historiography, but, until recently, its practitioners concentrated mainly on the life worlds of adults.[50] Children not only experience situations differently than adults, they often also face other horizons of experience. Young children are less politically informed and, as a result, do not understand or share the enemy category of adults. They also tend to treat separation from their parents more seriously than adults, and the importance of strong emotions such as fear and mourning is often only comprehensible to them through their interpretation of the way adults articulate similar feelings.[51]

There are clear methodological challenges in finding out how children viewed their treatment by adults, how they articulated this experience in their own practices, and how they recall it decades later during an interview. There is a consensus within the oral-history discipline that our knowledge about the past can only be made available through narratives giving meaning to the biographical self at the moment the interview is conducted.[52] But whether we can speak of a child's voice in later-conducted interviews containing the narratives of adults is highly disputed. While Ludmilla Jordanova argued against an authentic voice[53], Diane L. Wolf claims that such a thing can be distinguished from the voice of the adult, even when that former child is interviewed decades later.[54] Adults who speak about their childhood do, for example, understand more about the situation in which they found themselves as a child. Joanna Michlic's recent analysis of the testimonies of Jewish children hidden during the Second World War provides a good example here. Despite the fact that adults in their testimonies express alienation towards the child they once were, testimonies of children written shortly after the Second World War and recent testimonies display a similar description of past practices.[55] Despite the different level of understanding as a child and as an adult, testimonies today can still offer us a gateway to past child experiences. Several articles in this thematic issue offer a deeper understanding of the way adults recall their early post-war childhood experiences today. Although these research findings do not always make it possible to come to far-reaching conclusions about societal processes, they allow for the inclusion of different voices and add to a more complex understanding of everyday life in Europe after the Second World War.

Boys and girls are objects and subjects of history in different ways. As much as childhood policies reflected other ideals of nationalisation for both sexes, so the ways such policies were experienced and articulated into speech are gender-specific.[56] Although authors in this Special Issue use age as the central category of analysis, Lu Seegers' article,

which includes narratives of German (half)orphans, points to the importance of gender in post-war childrearing.

Including East and West

After the Second World War had destroyed millions of families in Europe, the early post-war period saw a revival of family life.[57] The Nazi regime had propagated its distinct family ideology relying on the ideal of a rural and numerous family and mandatory socialisation of the desired children in the National Socialist youth organisations Hitlerjugend and Bund Deutscher Mädchen. Although this propagandistic ideal has often been interpreted as a backlash against liberalisation[58], recent research underlines the ambiguity of sexual policies in Nazi Germany and the occupied territories, calling the degree of permissiveness astonishing.[59] Nazi family policy had a flipside that lay in the discrimination of what was constructed as socially and/or racially undesired children. Once the war was over, the consequences of Nazi family policy proved disastrous all over Europe.[60] When Hitler's Empire came to an end[61], the majority of Jewish and Roma families had been wiped out or, at least, severely damaged. Central and Eastern European families were often dismembered because of, among others, child Germanisation and child forced-labour policies. War and occupation left millions of children in shattered families. Around 13 million children in Europe are believed to have lost at least one parent during 1939 and 1945. Of these, 1.1 million lived in Poland. It also affected one quarter of all minors in post-war Germany.[62]

Once political powers reshuffled, many political leaders argued that a well-developed family policy was needed in order to restore what they considered the normal rhythms of social life.[63] In the post-1945 years, women and men opted more frequently for marriage than before 1939, which is often explained by a search for security compensating for the uncertainties offered by daily life.[64] However, one can also argue that marriage law and social policies encouraged women in particular to act accordingly. The states that developed in Europe from 1945 until the 1970s were anchored in a partnership of male employment and stability of marriage, with social security organised through workers' rights being made accessible for other family members.[65] By the 1950s, Europe was made up of societies in which nuclear families were considered the cornerstones.[66]

There was further political interest in the renaissance of the family all over Europe. By increasing the birth rates, the toll of lives claimed by the Second World War would be cancelled out. Authorities in various European countries had diverse strategies, ranging from strict abortion laws to financial incentives.[67] Following the war, the European birth rate climbed to above pre-war levels where it remained for at least two decades.[68] Interestingly, social scientists consider 1950–75 to be a golden age of social development for the whole European continent despite differences in levels of development, standards of living, social-security systems, demography and ideology.[69] The rapid economic growth facilitated an increase in public expenditure in the social sector and enabled the levels of child wellbeing to rise faster than in the preceding 200 years in relative terms. Most children grew up in better conditions than those in which their parents had been brought up, and less child poverty, better nutritional provisions and improved health expectations were observed. Children also profited from a better-developed and more accessible education system.[70] This progress was flanked by the establishment of children's rights – one of the direct outcomes of the Second World War.[71] Many international governmental and non-governmental organisations for children were 'propelled by the tragedy of the two world wars'.[72] The most prominent example was the

founding of different organisations within the United Nations. The UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration served as a task force to help millions of people (among them children) by providing housing and food. In 1946, the UN International Children's Emergency Fund was created.[73] Services set up for children in Europe in the mid-twentieth century, one could argue, were later capable of addressing the consequences of war for children in other war zones.

Nuclear families and the place of children herein are often only discussed within a Western European context. Such an approach is either motivated by the fact that state involvement in Eastern and Southern Europe was patchy and thin on the ground for a long time, or because socialism is believed to have produced a particular type of family.[74] By increasing state involvement after the Second World War, Communist authorities in Central and Eastern Europe aimed to emphasise that a family's primary role in society was that of reproduction. In one sense, the abundance of infant and childcare, access to education and general social-security coverage were what the state offered in exchange for renouncing political rights.[75] It would be misleading to suggest that the divide in Europe regarding family values was due to Communist authorities being able to induce children successfully with their ideology. According to Polish contemporary historians, for example, the Polish Communist authorities were not able to offer a civilisation project that would have met children's needs and that would have replaced family life in the early post-war period. As a result, building enclaves of private life, instead of whole-hearted engagement in system-approved organisations, became the focus of many Poles under Communism.[76]

Economic historians have observed that between 1945 and 1989, both market and centrally planned economies used public-expenditure and income-distribution measures in similar ways, notwithstanding their different institutional traditions, ideological goals and available resources. Socialist welfare systems in Europe featured, for example, similarly broad health pillars within the various nationally organised social-security systems, as well as equally broad family-support policies.[77] The integration of the family model prescribed by socialism in Central and Eastern Europe took on very different shapes from one country to the next, not least because the formative power of regimes happened to be limited. In addition, there was much convergence between most European states in the development and implementation of children's rights within family contexts.[78]

As it turns out, the nuclear family was just as common in East and Central European societies as in Western ones. This, however, does not mean that no divides appeared.[79] Whereas in the East, socialism brought along a faster transition to a dual-earner family model, even though the household burden largely remained with women, in the West, the male-breadwinner family model started to diverge only in the 1970s.[80] Differences can also be observed in the domain of so-called 'time-policy systems' with regard to children's schooling. Whereas in Western Europe all-day primary-school systems are more widespread, in Central and Eastern Europe, part-time primary-school systems are the norm.[81]

What this Special Issue will make clear is that regimes and/or societies thinking in terms of the nuclear family model all over Europe had difficulties in dealing with the enormous amount of children who became orphaned during the war or were born out of wedlock in war-related situations. Whereas in the First World War's aftermath, many nations in Europe were obsessed with protecting their collective claims on children and held a degree of suspicion regarding parents' practices of childrearing, the deep destruction in family life wreaked by the Second World War prompted nation-states to call upon parents 'to lead the nationalisation of their children'.[82] Children growing up in non-

nuclear families or in families with what were considered to be the 'wrong' political beliefs were regarded as problematic in the aftermath of the Second World War. This Special Issue gives insight into the various political programmes that were launched in order to save these 'outsider' children for the sake of the nation.

Some authors claim that a fairly neutral view was taken of incomplete families during the immediate post-war period, when everyday life was still dominated by material hardship and political uncertainty. They see only an emphasis on marriage as the desired gateway to the nuclear family following the introduction of family legislation that aimed to 'normalise' social life.[83] A whole range of specialists, such as family sociologists and child psychologists, became engaged in promoting a normative family model that centred around the stay-at-home mother.[84] Whereas child philanthropists used similar schemes, methods and models after both the First and Second World War, the consequences of their activities were longer-lasting after the latter. Although no systematic comparative research has been conducted, the reasons probably lay both in the international dimension of the economic framework for recovery that allowed for more public expenditure in all European states after 1945, and in changes in sociology and psychology for children who had faced specific war experiences.[85] By the late 1940s, in many European states, the activities of child philanthropists had resulted in a social conviction that certain so-called maladjusted children needed treatment or solace for their emotional disturbances.[86]

The research findings of sociologists and psychologists working with these maladjusted children at the time are increasingly being analysed for their historicised understanding within the context of Europe's recovery.[87] John Stewart has looked into British child guidance[88], and Michal Shapira has studied how Jewish psychoanalyst migrants in Great Britain gained broad influence over children affected by the war.[89] As social policy all over Europe was often imbued with a strong political interest and, as a result, was volatile in character, ideas of welfare changed over the years and resulted in changing tensions between parents, service-providers and children.[90]

Social change within and beyond the family became evident. After neutrality and later 'normalisation' towards family life had set the tone, social changes started to appear within and beyond the family from the late 1960s. While comparing how children's roles within families subsequently changed in Europe would require another publication, the article by Machteld Venken in this Special Issue offers insight into how social change also affected a group of adults who had experienced the Second World War in their childhood.

Presenting the Special Issue

The majority of contributions in this Special Issue started from the assumption that a certain group of children had some kind of problematic upbringing during the early post-war period. As a result, this publication maps different groups of children affected by the war, and starts a dialogue between different national (Dutch, Belgian, German, Polish, Ukrainian, North American, Australian, Austrian, French, Russian and Italian) and disciplinary (historical, sociological and ethnomusicological) research traditions on childhood policies regarding war children, as well as the war children's own experiences. While relying mostly on national case studies or on comparisons between two countries, the international political context is clearly integrated. Such an approach seems justified by the fact that, despite proclaimed progress in the area of international engagement for child rehabilitation, post-war European states mainly relied on themselves to take responsibility over their children.[91]

The Special Issue consists of five thematic blocks, four of which offer comparisons between phenomena taking place in Western and Central/Eastern Europe. The fifth block, on post-war remembrance of forced labour experiences of children, self-evidently only addresses Central and Eastern Europe. The first thematic block looks at family and offers insights into the difficulties encountered during the implementation of post-war family policy against the background of war experience. Ismee Tames examines the determined attempts to restore the malfunctioning families of Dutch collaborationists and delivers an impressive example of the intense political interest that various religious and secular organisations took in bringing up Dutch children after the Second World War. The important role that psychologists and social workers were granted in childcare once more demonstrates the close interplay between ruling elites and experts in the twentieth century. An overly clear division between the 'good' and the 'bad' families was prevented by the Cold War: Dutch political elites feared that the devalued families may 'radicalise' and take side with Communism. Tames' research on whole families of collaborators might motivate research spillovers for other countries where normally individuals were focused on research dealing with political renegades after 1945.[92] Stefania Bernini offers a comparative study on the images of war children and mothers in two countries that found themselves on different sides of the Iron Curtain: Italy and Poland. The author's political cross-thematic approach introduces us to new insights on family policies as a way of creating meaning out of war losses. Interestingly, long-lasting national traditions based on strong Catholicism prevailed and the new political systems could not intrude in the family to the extent that authorities wished. As a consequence, the author argues there was an overall 'familisation' of the post-war discourse.[93]

The second thematic block continues the family focus, but now from the perspective of children growing up without a father. Lu Seegers' article highlights German children who had lost their father in the war effort and examines the different consequences generated for boys and girls in Western and in Eastern post-war Germany. The study reveals that Western German authorities expressed genuine interest in these children, while their Eastern neighbours mainly ignored the problem. Seegers shows how strongly policies, socio-religious backgrounds and prevailing gendered role models influenced the narratives of interviewees.[94] Barbara Stelzl-Marx investigates the history of a group of children whose fathers were mostly absent after procreation: the offspring of Austrian women and Soviet men. During the occupation of Austria between 1945 and 1955, more than 20,000 children were born, some following voluntary sexual relations between local women and occupation soldiers, others as a result of rape. The children fathered by Red Army soldiers in particular experienced a long history of stigmatisation due to Austrian society's negative experiences with the 'Russians', and the images created which were soon further reinforced by the Cold War context. The closed borders made contact between occupation children and their Soviet fathers almost impossible (this was not the case for Austrian occupation children who had a French, British or American father). In recent years, however, many have started looking for their absent fathers in the hope of answering questions which they consider crucial to their own identity.[95]

The third thematic block looks at displacement as a consequence of war. Due to extensive border shifts after the war, many societies on both sides of the Iron Curtain consisted of a significant amount of newcomers who needed to reinvent themselves, or at least adapt. In the process of societal integration, the younger generations played a vital role. By interacting in class and in clubs with comrades from different backgrounds, and, thanks to this, also connecting their 'foreign' parents with the new life, they bonded with their new environment. Western and Eastern Germany had to integrate millions of

refugees and expellees, and Poland's borders shifted significantly to the West. As these societies were among those most affected by population displacement, this Special Issue offers a telling comparative contribution on uprooted children living on early post-war Poland's Eastern and Western borders, as well as a comparison of children staying in and children moving away from the Czechoslovakian-German borderlands.

While the experiences of the distant communities in the post-war Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-German borderlands differed tremendously, contemporary narratives of being a refugee/deportee/forced migrant, losing one's home/homeland and watching the deportation of the previous inhabitants of one's new place of residence bear many similarities. Anna Wylegała's article therefore provides impressive evidence of the similarities of post-war experiences of a particular group of children. In addition, Wylegała shows how and why children's memories differ from those of their parents, and, in doing so, helps to strengthen research on the subjectivity of children in childhood studies.[96] Ulrike Präger explores the experiences and memories of children subjected to forced migration or the loss of home through their singing practices. Drawing on ethnographic interviews with two groups of Germans from the Bohemian lands – those who left for Germany and those who stayed in Czechoslovakia – she offers insights into the importance of political frameworks for individual and collective processes of memory and identity-building. Using a political cross-thematic approach, she contributes to a more nuanced view on child refugees' and expellees' experiences from the rarely explored angle of ethnomusicology.[97]

The fourth and fifth thematic blocks examine the different ways in which Nazi policies towards undesired children in Europe affected these children after the Second World War. Jewish children who survived the Holocaust form the subject of the fourth thematic block, in which Katy Hazan introduces us to post-war Jewish childhood life in France and Belgium from a *top-down* perspective, and Marta Ansilewska highlights Jewish child war survivors in Poland from a *bottom-up* perspective. Although German extermination policies targeted the entire European Jewry, attitudes for Gentiles already differed during the war, and continued to do so afterwards. Hazan demonstrates how the French and Belgian states, but also – and even predominantly – Jewish organisations expressed huge interest in Jewish survivor children during the early post-war period. Their activities concentrated on searching for family members and providing assistance in physical and psychological healing.[98] Hazan's findings for Belgium, based on a review of literature and other sources available in French, are complementary with recent studies published in Dutch, such as on the recovery of Jewish life in post-war Antwerp and the experiences of Jewish hidden children.[99] Using the oral-history technique instead, Marta Ansilewska reveals hitherto unknown aspects of the post-war life worlds of so-called Polish 'Holocaust children'. Her interviewees had to convert to Catholicism in order to be able to survive outside of ghettos on the Aryan side and also in later years stayed with this faith, either out of ignorance, customisation, true faith or strategic interest due to what they often perceived as a hostile environment.[100]

The fifth block considers how child forced labourers tried to give meaning to their war experiences during the post-war period. As Nazi war policy prescribed this practice only for Central and Eastern European children, this thematic block presents one contribution on Poland and one on the region of the former Soviet Union, at the same time acknowledging that the phenomenon was much more widespread.[101] Whereas in the former Soviet Union, Nazi child policy was to a great extent reduced to child forced labour, in Central Europe, children were grouped into desirables and non-desirables, and sent accordingly for Germanisation or forced labour. This thematic block therefore needs

to be read in tandem with the latest research insights on the Germanisation of Central European children during the war and its legacy.[102] Machteld Venken evaluates ego documents that Polish child forced labourers created during Communist times. A comparative analysis of this unique collection with recent testimonies points out that the early ego documents offered a more nuanced depiction of Germans and displayed richer information on the working conditions and daily routine during employment than contemporary ego documents. A comparative reading of the archival testimonies with their published equivalents reveals that the streamlining of a publicly acceptable version of the past under Communism cut both ways, i.e. sometimes upgrading, but at times also downplaying the propaganda content of autobiographical wordings. The collection both increases our understanding of child forced-labour experiences during the Second World War and offers insights into the negotiated appropriation of Communist ideology at the individual level.[103] Gelinda Grinchenko examines the discourses about child forced labourers in the USSR and in post-1989 Ukraine. Before 1989, the legacy of child forced labour was highly instrumentalised for political reasons and changed over time to suit different political needs in the Cold War situation. After the collapse of Communism, however, the situation in Russia and Ukraine started to diverge significantly.[104] Whereas the topic received less public attention in Russia, it formed an impetus in Ukraine for diverse legal and academic activities, including the proliferation of the oral-history method.[105]

In mapping child policies and experiences throughout Europe after 1945, we would like to provide scholars with insights that might enrich their research on children in various national and transnational contexts. Ismee Tames' contribution may inspire scholars to look at other children with parents who collaborated during the war. Stefania Bernini's account opens the door for family policies and practices to be researched in other European countries.[106] We would be interested to see to what extent the research findings on absent fathers in Germany and Austria correspond to situations in other European countries, such as Greece after the Civil War, and other time periods, such as the post-war period in former Yugoslavia.[107]

This Special Issue offers the first European perspectives on the situation of war children after the Second World War. While we have dealt with the consequences for children in the early post-war period who were unwanted during the war, we have not, for example, spoken about youth delinquency after 1945, which was a major concern at the time and has been well-researched in various individual European countries.[108] Further, the question of residential care in children's homes – an issue that has received attention in recent media debates and has lead to new academic initiatives – is only touched upon in some contributions.[109] There are also other groups of war children which remain understudied: 'war children' who were adopted by foster parents in Europe or overseas, either due to the death of their parents or for other reasons. The story of post-war adoption has yet to be researched in detail.[110] Intergenerational contacts might form another line of research enquiry. How did the war children discussed in this thematic issue react to the generation of 'baby-boomers'? Jean-François Sirinelli pointed out that baby boomers were perceived as a new sociological phenomenon not only within their societies, but that they also shared the self-awareness that they were bringing about societal change.[111] What, for example, did war children think about the revolts in 1968?[112] Another question concerns continuities and discontinuities with 'war-child' policies and experiences after the First World War.[113] Further comparative research on people who played an important role in the upbringing of children is recommended. For example, were schoolteachers willing, or able, to engage the specific groups of children we focus on in this issue? Making use of

other sets of sources enables us to research such diversity in school contexts.[114] Silke Satjukow has performed an analysis of the leaflets that explained to German teachers how to educate black children born as a result of the occupation.[115] In our opinion, Ostkunde, a subject taught in the 1950s in Western German schools about territories lost in the East after the Second World War, could receive more scholarly attention. Pupils wrote numerous school essays that have yet to be fully researched and which may resolve questions about the integration of refugee children.[116]

With the twentieth century not necessarily having been 'the great battle between democracy and fascism, or communism versus fascism', but, and here we agree with Tony Judt, having been characterised by the rise of state involvement in all European countries[117], researching a group nation-states considered to have been of pivotal importance[118] paves the way to a richer understanding of European history. In this first overview of children growing up in Europe in the shadow of the Second World War, we have posed challenging questions on similarities and differences, elements of convergence and divergence in childhood programmes, as well as on childhood experiences and former children's memories, in an effort to open up a discussion on these topics rather than to immediately offer clear-cut answers. What this Special Issue does, however, make clear is that the Second World War cast its shadow over children in more significant, but also in more complex, ways than was previously thought.

Notes

1. Archive of New Records, Warsaw, Ministry of Education, signature 1858, Submierzyce.
2. Michel and Varsa, "Children and the National Interest;" Jablonka, "Social Welfare," 394.
3. Schumann, "Introduction," 2.
4. Carlbäck, Gradskova, and Kravchenko, "Introduction," 6–7.
5. Fass, "Introduction," 13; Blum, "Socialist Families?," 236.
6. Zinnecker, "Zur Einführung," 14.
7. Stargardt, *Witnesses of War*; Nicholas, *Cruel World*.
8. Winter, "The European Family," 168.
9. Pine, *Nazi Family*.
10. For the expellees from "Poland" see Jankowiak, "Bilans wyjazdów," 146. For numbers of different population transfers during and after the war see: Ther, *Die dunkle Seite*. For some numbers of transferred children during the war see Janfelt, "War in the Twentieth Century," 878.
11. See Danforth and van Boeschoten, *Children of the Greek*, 46–7, for numbers.

12. Grossmann, *Jews, Germans, and Allies*.
13. Zahra, *The Lost Children*.
14. Janfelt, "War in the Twentieth Century," 878.
15. Fass, "Introduction," 8. Laura L. Lovett stresses that "age [is] a universal, yet fluid category": Lovett, "Age: A Useful Category," 89–90.
16. Zinnecker, "Zur Einführung in Teil I," 14.
17. For an even higher number, between one to two million, see Drolshagen, *Wehrmachtskinder*, 9.
18. See especially the chapter "Children During and After the Spanish Civil War;" Richards, "Ideology and the Psychology," 115–37.
19. For an introduction about different "children born of war," see Mochmann, Lee, and Stelzl-Marx, "The Children of the Occupation."
20. Junila, "Wars on the Home Front," 191–232 and Laurent, "War and the Emerging Social State," 315–54. We thank Tiina Kinnunen for these references.
21. For somewhat similar developments in the Netherlands, see Ismee Tames in this issue.
22. See, among the most widely read books: Bode, *Die vergessene Generation – Die Kriegskinder brechen ihr Schweigen*.
23. For an English-language analysis, see Niven, *Germans as Victims*.
24. This resulted in various joint publications in the publishing house Juventa, which specialised in psychology and pedagogy. Ewers et al., *Erinnerungen an Kriegskindheiten*; Fooken and Zinnecker, *Trauma und Resilienz*; Radebold, Bohleber, and Zinnecker, *Transgenerationale Weitergabe*; Ruchniewicz and Zinnecker, *Zwischen Zwangsarbeit*.
25. Seegers, *Vati blieb im Krieg*, 16. See also Seegers, *Vati*, for a detailed discussion of these books.
26. Heinlein, *Die Erfindung der Erinnerung*.
27. Janfelt, "War in the Twentieth Century," 880. For a more limited definition only referring to "children born of war" see Roberts, "History of Childhood. Europe," 425.
28. Numbers after Zinnecker, "Zur Einführung," 14.
29. While for example in Catholic parts of Belgium, everyday life in school remained mainly untouched, in Eastern Europe teachers and curricula were changed, and the right to education was dramatically limited: Van Ruyskensvelde, "Education and Occupation;" Harten, *De-Kulturation und Germanisierung*.
30. For literature on Switzerland see Lienert, "*Wir wollen helfen, da wo Not ist;*" Schmidlin, *Eine andere Schweiz*, and Zeder, *Ein Zuhause für Jüdische Flüchtlingskinder*.
31. On Swedish child policies after the Second World War see Sandin, "Children and the Swedish," *Reinventing Childhood*.
32. See, on the children of the US military, Tuttle, *Daddy's Gone to War*.
33. Schumann, "Childhood and Youth in Nazi Germany," 468.
34. See in English: Plato, "The Hitler Youth Generation;" Wierling, "The Hitler Youth Generation in the GDR."
35. Sirinelli, *Les Baby-Boomers*, 9.
36. See for a short overview on the meanwhile differentiated field Zalar, "Holocaust," 431–4. See the different publications by Andrea Reiter about child perspectives on the Holocaust, e.g. Reiter, "The Holocaust." See also the different publications on Poland, heavily affected by the Holocaust, inter alia Michlic, "The Children Accuse." For the study of the Kindertransport see Sterling, "Rescue and Trauma;" Fast, *Children's Exodus*.
37. Barbagli and Kertzer, "Introduction."
38. See Stambolis and Pfau, "Kriegskinderbilder;" Handro, "Zwischen Identitätsstiftung und historischem Verstehen." See regarding the Vietnam War, Peacock, "Broadcasting Benevolence."
39. Reulecke, "Zur Einführung in Teil III," 206.
40. Fass, "Introduction," 9; Saxton, "Introduction," 103.
41. See Fass, *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood*, vol. 1, xii.
42. For Western Europe, see, for example, Depaepe, "It's a Long Way;" Schumann, "Asserting Their 'Natural Right;'" for Poland see Kosiński, *O nowa mentalność*. For Youth movements see: Alaerts, *Door eigen werk sterk*; in a comparative perspective Kurme, *Halbstarke*. On organised youth in the Communist countries see e.g. Saunders, *Honecker's Children*;

        Wierzbicki, "Młodzież w PRL." For an East–West comparison, see Venken, "Nationalization Campaigns," *Nationalities Papers*.
43. Ewers et al., *Erinnerungen an Kriegskindheiten*, 11–12; Handro, "Vom Objekt zum Subjekt."
44. Peter N. Stearns calls this problem the "granddaddy issue" in childhood history. See Stearns, "Challenges in the History of Childhood," 35.
45. Blessing, *The Antifascist Classroom*, 12.
46. Stargardt, "Drawing the Holocaust in 1945." For an approach to children's play, see: Maubach, "Der Krieg im Spiel."
47. Michlic, *Jewish Children in Nazi-Occupied Poland*, 16.
48. On the shattered sources see Maynes, "Age as a Category," 117–18.
49. Leociak, *Doświadczenia granicze*, 10.
50. For a very brief introduction: Jaeger, "Erfahrung." For the concept of *Alltagsgeschichte*, see the Lüdtke, *Alltagsgeschichte*.
51. Reulecke, "Kriegskindheit als Gegenstand von Geschichtspolitik und Erinnerungskultur," 206.
52. Venken, *Straddling the Iron Curtain?*, 30.
53. Roberts, "History of Childhood. Europe," 425.
54. Wolf, *Beyond Anne Frank*, 342.
55. Michlic, "'The War Began For Me After the War.'"
56. Carlbäck, Gradskova, and Kravchenko, "Introduction," 11. For the symbolic meaning of girls see Maynes, "Age as a Category," 116.
57. Winter, "The European Family," 172.
58. Pine, *Nazi Family*, 179.
59. Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*. For occupied Poland, see Röger, "The Sexual Policies."
60. Pine, *Nazi Family*, 4, 186.
61. Mazower, *Hitler's Empire*.
62. Seegers, *Vati blieb im Krieg*, 10, 13, 88.
63. Winter, "The European Family," 169.
64. Idem, 172.
65. Saraceno, "Social and Family Policy," 256.
66. Barbagli and Kertzer, "Introduction," *Family Life*.
67. For Poland, see Klich-Kluczewska, "Making Up for the Losses." For a more general account on welfare systems and children see Cravens, "Social Welfare," 767.
68. Winter, "The European Family," 152.
69. Cornia and Danziger, "Common Themes," 22.
70. Fass, "Introduction," 12.
71. See e.g. United Nations. "The UN Convention on the Rights of Child."
72. Taylor, "International Organizations," 491–2.
73. See Black, *Children First*.
74. Blum, "Socialist Families?," 198; Fass, "Introduction," 11.
75. Heinen, "From Equality to Difference?," 98.
76. See the contributions of Kosiński and Żaryn, "During the 'Dyskusja'," 330, 332.
77. Fajth and Zimakova, "Family Policies," 122.
78. Cornia and Danziger, "Common Themes," 8.
79. Blum, "Socialist Families?," 234; Klich-Kluczewska, "Przez dziurkę od klucza," 96–97.
80. Gerhard, "Family Law and Gender Equality," 88.
81. Hagemann, Jarausch, and Allemann-Ghionda, "Children, Families, and State,"
82. Zahra, *National Indifference*, 10, 203.
83. Saraceno, "Social and Family Policy," 257, 260. For a more differentiated picture, see Seegers, *Vati blieb im Krieg*.
84. Gerhard, "Family Law and Gender Equality," 78.
85. Winter, "The European Family," *Family Life*, 152.
86. Wheatcroft, "Cured by Kindness?", 146.
87. Roberts, "History of Childhood," 425.
88. Stewart, *Child Guidance in Britain*.
89. Shapira, *The War Inside*.
90. Borsay and Dale "Introduction," 3, 11.
91. Zahra, *Lost Children*.
92. Tames, "Children of Dutch Nazi collaborators."

93. Bernini, "Mothers and children in post-war Europe."
94. Seegers, "Dead dads'."
95. Stelzl-Marx, "Soviet children of occupation in Austria."
96. Wylegała, "Child migrants and deportees from Poland and Ukraine after the Second World War."
97. Präger, "'Musicking' children from the Bohemian lands."
98. Hazan, "Les orphelins de la Shoah en France et en Belgique."
99. Vandendaelen, *Laten we hun lied verder zingen*; Vandormael, *Verborgen oorlogsjaren*.
100. Ansilewska, "Accepting Jewish roots for a pair of shoes."
101. See Plato, Leh, and Thonfeld, "Hitler's Slaves."
102. For the latest and most comprehensive study, see: Hopfer, *Geraubte Identität*. Before: see Hrabar, *Hitlerowski Rabunek Dzieci Polskich*.
103. Venken, "Child forced labour."
104. Grinchenko, "And now imagine her or him as a slave, a pitiful slave with no rights."
105. Apart from the contribution by Gelinada Grinchenko, the topic of Soviet children is not discussed in this issue. One of the reasons is that their war experiences and memories have been given detailed attention in the recent publication of Rozhkova, *Vtoraia mirovaia voĭna v detskich 'ramkach pamiati'*. Another lies in the fact that the main transitions in childrearing were already installed after the establishment of Communism in 1917. Juliane Fürst's study on Stalin's last generation offers insights into the transnational character of Soviet youth culture shortly after the Second World War with, for example, fashion-conscious subcultures being products of their time and surroundings in Europe at large. See Fürst, *Stalin's Last Generation*, 246.
106. For a similar plea: Carlbäck, Gradskova, and Kravchenko, "Introduction," 1. In Romania, there is an on-going project about family policy and the history of childhood. See http://copilariaromaneasca.ro/en/ (accessed 15 December 2014).
107. See Danforth and van Boeschoten, *Children of the Greek*.
108. Although youth movements have been part of European history since at least the turn of the twentieth century, they started to be portrayed more frequently as acting against social norms after 1945. For an overview about youth culture in German history, see Klotter, *Romantik und Gewalt*; for a comparative perspective with the United States see Briesen and Weinhauer, *Jugend, Delinquenz und gesellschaftlicher Wandel*; for Great Britain see Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain*.
109. For an example, see the on-going Swiss research project "Placing Children in Care" (http://web.fhnw.ch/plattformen/placing-children-in-care/, accessed 16 December 2014).
110. See Lemke and Muniz Faria, *Zwischen Fürsorge und Ausgrenzung* and Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*. There is yet to be a comprehensive study about foster parents after 1945.
111. Sirinelli, *Les baby-boomers*, 108.
112. Seegers, *Vati blieb im Krieg*, 288–99, 48–7.
113. See, for example, the recent conference "War and Childhood in the Age of the World Wars: Local and Global Perspectives" at GHI Washington: 0_Intro_10.01.2015_peer_-review.doc http://www.ghi-dc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1400&Itemid=1214, accessed 10 January 2015.
114. Depaepe et al., "'Ethnohistory' of Primary School in Flanders."
115. Satjukow, "Besatzungskinder;" Satjukow and Gries, *Kinderschicksale im Nachkriegsdeutschland*.
116. See about *Ostkunde*, Weichers, *Der deutsche Osten*.
117. Judt and Snyder, *Thinking the Twentieth Century*, 386.
118. See Schumann, "Introduction," *Raising Citizens*, 1.

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