Editorial

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On 24 February 2022, Russia officially started a war against Ukraine, after a serious conflict had been simmering in eastern Ukraine since 2014 following the annexation of Crimea in violation of international law. Shortly after the war started in 2022, rumours spread that Ukrainian children – mostly from orphanages – were being brought to Russia to be entrusted to Russian families who would turn them into "real" Russians – without the remaining parents or other relatives of the children being asked for their consent.[1] These rumours have since been confirmed and the offence is being strongly condemned by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).[2] Ironically, Russia's Commissioner for Children's Rights, Maria Lvova-Belova, announced that she herself had adopted a Ukrainian boy, without a hint of doubt as to the legality of the procedure.[3] Several Russian adoption laws were modified in May 2022 to facilitate this type of adoption, which clearly violates the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.[4] The extent of the abduction and wrongful adoption of Ukrainian children at the instigation of the Russian government is currently unclear, according to the NGO Human Rights Watch. But it is believed that several thousand, if not hundreds of thousands, of Ukrainian children and adolescents were deported to Russia and adopted there last year.[5]

As is currently the case in Ukraine, children become the victims of modern wars because bombs and missiles reach far into the country and threaten, injure and kill the civilian population; because fathers go to war as soldiers and may return physically or psychologically injured, if they don't die; because mothers, grandparents, siblings and friends can also be injured or killed; because children

1 Cf. Russia's Crimes against Ukrainian Children. In: Ukrainians, 6.6.2022 (https://ukrainer.net/crimes-against-children/; 6.2.2023).

2 Cf. Amnesty International Reports Forced Adoption of Ukrainian Children in Russia. In: Le Monde, 11.11.2022 (https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2022/11/11/amnesty-international-reports-deportation-and-forced-adoption-of-ukrainian-children-in-russia_6003857_4.html; 25.5.2023); Kathryn Armstrong, Ukraine War: UN Accuses Russia of Breaking Child Protection Rules Over Refugees. In: BBC, 27.1.2023 (https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-64429377; 6.2.2023).

3 Cf. Robyn Dixon/Natalia Abbakumova, Ukrainians Struggle to Find and Reclaim Children Taken by Russia. In: The Washington Post, 4.12.2022 (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/12/24/ukraine-stolen-children-maria-lvova-belova/; 26.1.2023).

4 Cf. Motion for a Resolution on the Human Rights Violations in the Context of Forced Deportation of Ukrainian Civilians to and Forced Adoption of Ukrainian Children in Russia. In: European Parliament, 13.9.2022 (https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/B-9-2022-0388_EN.html; 6.2.2023).

5 Cf. Emma Bubola, Using Adoptions: Russia Turns Ukrainian Children Into Spoils of War. In: The New York Times, 22.10.2022 (https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/22/world/europe/ukraine-children-russia-adoptions.html; 1.2.2023).

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often have to witness gruesome violence; because their homes are often devastated or destroyed and they are forced to flee. In addition, children are often victims of war – as the fate of many Ukrainian children today once again painfully reminds us – because war can result in them being separated from their parents. For separation is often deliberately used to "assimilate" children of the other nation or as an instrument to fill one's own ranks with "child soldiers" who can be trained in cruelty and ruthlessness, separation happens through unfortunate coincidences during the flight, or in the name of the child's welfare to protect them from injury, persecution, hunger and death. Children physically injured as a result of warfare, starving children after the First World War, Jewish children before, during or after the Holocaust, London children taken to the countryside during the London Blitz, children brought to the Soviet Union to shelter them from the Spanish Civil War, or the many thousands of children forced into the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone or into one of the civil war armies in Liberia during the 1990s were all exposed to such separation experiences.

These separations have a long history, but are at the same time a distinctive feature of the wars in the 20th and early 21st centuries. But it was not only wars that uprooted children from their familiar contexts and placed them in foreign places. Separating children from their birth parents and families can almost be seen as a kind of dark tune accompanying the 20th century, whose potentially destructive power – both in terms of physical and psychological injuries – only came into view in the second half of the 20th century.[6] Even during the Second World War, it was no longer only a matter of healing physical wounds: "As anxiety and fear became feelings from which no one was seen to be immune in a new war against civilians, it was now clear that scientific knowledge of emotions was critical to the war effort.[7] At the time, when tens of thousands of children were embarked from London to the countryside, paediatrician Anna Freud observed the psychological impact of the abrupt separation of young children from their parents: "Its longing for its mother becomes intolerable and throws it into states of despair which are very similar to the despair and distress shown by babies who are hungry and whose food does not appear at the accustomed time."[8] For most children, the separation during childhood was considerably more traumatic than the actual experience of war. How the children were separated from their parents was particularly decisive for their reaction and its long-term effects.[9]

While these first observations of the child's reaction to separation were recorded during the war, the aftermath of the Second World War in particular made psychoanalytic expertise imperative. A number of psychoanalysts and doctors be-

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6 Cf. Tara Zahra, The Lost Children. Reconstructing Europe's Families After World War II, Harvard 2015.
7 Michal Shapira, The War Inside. Psychoanalysis, Total War, and the Making of the Democratic Self in Postwar Britain, Cambridge 2013, p. 46.
8 Anna Freud, War and Children, London 1943, p. 50.
9 Cf. ibid., p. 84.

gan to identify and treat the psychological consequences of the war (especially on children). This was done – according to Michal Shapira – in the following way: "by asserting a link between a real 'war outside' and an emotional 'war inside' individuals, analysts helped make the state increasingly responsible for the mental health and family life of citizens."[10] In this context, the British paediatrician John Bowlby pointed out in 1952 that also the institutionalisation of children and the accompanying separation from their parents could have profound consequences for them. He argued at the time: "the almost complete deprivation [...] is still not uncommon in institutions, residential nurseries, and hospitals, where the child often has no one person who cares for him in a personal way and with whom he may feel secure."[11] He saw the withdrawal of maternal care and love as the greatest risk for the children concerned: "When deprived of maternal care, the child's development is almost always retarded – physically, intellectually, and socially – and that symptoms of physical and mental illness may appear."[12] Older children, too, when abruptly and without preparation separated from their parents, have difficulties coming to terms with the separation from their parents. Bowlby tells of a six-year-old English girl who, at the end of the Second World War, had been hospitalised for the third year in a row and thus separated from her mother. Believing that she would be separated from her mother for naughtiness, she had cried out at the moment of her separation, "I will be a good girl – don't send me."[13]

Since then, our understanding of parent-child attachment has undergone a significant transformation. However, Bowlby's observation that the separation of children from their parents can have serious psychological consequences still holds. Today, it is also recognised that "psychological trauma, defined as overwhelming stress, that is, beyond an individual's", in our case a child's, "ability to cope, [...] can have long-lasting effects on mental and physical health".[14] This includes not only the risk of physical and mental illness, but also the potential epigenetic transmission of trauma to future generations, which is currently being investigated by biologists and physicians.[15]

10 Shapira, The War Inside, p. 2.

11 John Bowlby, Maternal Care and Mental Health, Genf 1952, p. 12.

12 Ibid., p. 15.

13 Ibid., pp. 27 f.

14 Ali Jawaid/Isabelle M. Mansuy, Generationsübergreifende Auswirkungen von Traumata: Implikationen für Individuen und Gesellschaft. In: Karl Heinz Britsch (ed.), Trauma und Bindung zwischen den Generationen. Vererbte Wunden und Resilienz in Therapie, Beratung und Prävention, Stuttgart 2022, pp. 140–162, here 140 [our translation]. The assumption of transgenerational transmission through epigenetic changes is, however, quite controversial, cf. Bernhard Horsthemke, A Critical Appraisal of Clinical Epigenetics. In: Clinical Epigenetics, 14 (2022) 95, pp. 1–5. For possible explanations of such an overvaluation of transgenerational inheritance of trauma by epigenetics, cf. Ute Deichmann, The Social Construction of the Social Epigenome and the Larger Biological Context. In: Epigenetics Chromatin, 13 (2020) 37, pp. 1–14.

15 Cf. Jawaid/Mansuy, Generationsübergreifende Auswirkungen, p. 140.

Against this backdrop, this special issue focuses on the interrelation between the separation of children from their parents and the exposure to physical violence and/or the perception of separation as emotional violence, an interrelationship that is characteristic of the 20th century and has not yet become a bygone past even today. Especially in light of current developments does the focus on different forms of violence as well as the shift in our understanding of violence towards children seems to gain new relevance. In contrast, at least in Germany, "[t]he comparatively hesitant discovery of child-directed violence as an object of historical research" is "closely linked to its late social perception and assessment as such".[16] Parallel to the gradual expansion of what was understood as violence towards children, the focus of societal discussions and historical research increasingly turned to this topic. While at the turn of the millennium sexual violence against children in institutions was the subject of intense public discussion, forms of psychological and emotional violence against children are now also being taken into account in historical research.[17]

During the course of the 20th and early 21st century, various forms and characteristics of the relationship between child separation and violence can be identified. In many European countries, children with acute or chronic illnesses or weaknesses were brought for weeks or months with the best of intentions to sanatoria or children's homes, which were usually located "in nature", meaning by the sea or in the mountains. In these secluded places they were supposed to regain their strength under the care of doctors and nurses who were however strangers to them. The fact that these sanatoria and children's homes were often also spaces of violence and suffering only became evident much later. Very few contemporaries listened to the children's voices, if the children raised their voices at all and reported on their experiences. But even the separation itself was a traumatic experience for many children, which could have long-term consequences. Against this background, coming to terms with the history of these "sent-away children" has gained public attention in recent years. Networks have been established, calls for eyewitnesses have been launched and children's recollections have been recorded.[18] The homes of the Hamburg Rudolf Ballin Foundation were also supposed to serve the recovery and recuperation of children. In their article in this issue, *Sarah Meyer* and *Johannes Richter* outline the first results of a research project which, under their joint leadership, investigates how

16 Stefan Grüner/Markus Raasch, Einleitung. In: eid. (eds.), Zucht und Ordnung. Gewalt gegen Kinder in historischer Perspektive, Berlin 2019, pp. 7–30, here 11 [our translation].

17 Cf. ibid.

18 Cf. the overview of reappraisal projects on the history of children's displacement (Kinderverschickungen) in Germany: https://verschickungsheime.de/traeger-von-verschickungsheimen/; 1.2.2023. The website is run by the association Aufarbeitung und Erforschung von Kinderverschickung – AEKV e.V. (Reappraisal and Research on the Displacement of Children – AEKV e.V.), which is based on the initiative of those affected.

paediatricians and pedagogues justified the separation, how the former "sent-away children" remember these forced separations and what biographical long-term consequences resulted for them.[19] Ultimately, this raises the question of what conclusions we draw today from these historical experiences with regard to our understanding of and attitude towards child separation.

However, the example of the "sent-away children" is but one of many in which children were separated from their families to improve their physical or mental health. Similar initiatives, especially transnational ones, took care of the children from Ukraine and Belarus who were affected by the nuclear disaster in Chernobyl on 26 April 1986 and who are still being accommodated in German host families so that they may recover from the after-effects of radioactive fallout. Also children who suffered from mental illness or who were mentally or physically handicapped frequently found themselves separated from their parents.[20] To many experts as well as to the respective societies, they seemed to be more appropriately accommodated in clinics and homes than with their parents. The history of child "euthanasia" during National Socialism has highlighted the risk in its most extreme form that such institutions might turn into spaces of violence and even endanger the lives of the children.[21] But continuities of separation practices can also be identified for the period after the Second World War. "The boundaries between control, therapy and violence can hardly be clearly drawn," concluded Silke Fehlemann with regard to the psychiatric treatment of children in post-war Germany; the mentally disturbed children were often subjected to further "violent processes" in these institutions.[22] In his article in this issue, *Thomas Beddies* takes a look at psychiatric care for children and adolescents in post-war Berlin and argues that although its reorganisation after the Second World War brought about individual reforms, physical and psychological violence towards institutionalised children remained commonplace.

Children and adolescents who were considered deviant by youth welfare offices or institutions also had to expect to be separated from their parents and placed in a home. Here, the intention to both educate and punish often brought about disastrous consequences for the children, as the history of the Jugend-

19 Cf. the website of the project "Erfahrungen und Hintergründe von Verschickungskindern" (https://ev-hochschule-hh.de/forschung/forschungsprojekte/aktuelle-projekte/verschickungskinder/; 1.2.2023).

20 Cf. as one example among many: Heiner Fangerau/Anke Dreier-Hornig/Volker Hess/Karsten Laudien/Maike Rotzoll (eds.), Leid und Unrecht. Kinder und Jugendliche in Behindertenhilfe und Psychiatrie der BRD und DDR 1949 bis 1990, Cologne 2021.

21 One case of child "euthanasia" that has only recently been investigated includes the activities of the autism expert Hans Asperger in the Vienna clinic „Am Spiegelgrund", cf. Edith Sheffer, Asperger's Children. The Origin of Autism in Nazi Vienna, New York 2018.

22 Silke Fehlemann/Frank Sparing, Wiederkehrende Gewalt: (Kriegs-)Kinder in den psychiatrischen Einrichtungen des Rheinlandes 1945–1954. In: Grüner/Raasch (eds.), Zucht und Ordnung, pp. 213–240, here 215 f. [our translation].

werkhöfe in the GDR demonstrates.[23] However, homes or foster families where orphaned children ended up or where children who had been taken away from their parents because they were deemed incapable of raising them or because it had been determined that the child was at risk, also all too often became sites of violence.[24] The violence experienced by children in Swedish out-of-home care since the 1920s is the focus of *Johanna Sköld*'s contribution to this special issue. Sköld traces the discussions of the Commission of Inquiry set up as part of the Swedish Redress Process (2006–2012), of which she herself was a member. At the centre of the debates was the question of whether the process of dealing with the history of child abuse that happened between the 1920s and the year 2000 should or could be based on a historically shifting definition of violence.

Against this background, this special issue is not only about violence experienced by children after separation from their parents in homes, clinics, sanatoria or foster families. In the same way, separation itself must be interrogated as a means of violence against children and parents. Insofar as "violence, especially in its child-directed manifestation" is not an anthropological given, "but to a large extent culturally conditioned and thus subject to historical change", also our understanding of violence against children is currently expanding.[25] Tens of thousands of children were taken from their parents during National Socialism in Poland, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, the Soviet Union and Norway in order to "germanise" them.[26] In Franco's Spain, children of political opponents were abducted and offered for adoption to other parents, as were the children of indigenous or opposition groups in Chile under Augusto Pinochet or during the civil war in Guatemala, which devastated the country between 1960 and 1996.[27] For the GDR, there is

23 Cf. Anke Dreier-Hornig/Karsten Laudien, Jugendhilfe und Heimerziehung im Sozialismus, Berlin 2016.

24 For an overview of current inquiry projects on child abuse and violence in institutions, cf. Katie Wright/Shurlee Swain/Johanna Sköld, The Age of Inquiry. A Global Mapping of Institutional Abuse Inquiries, 2nd edition, Melbourne 2020.

25 Grüner/Rasch (eds.), Einleitung, p. 12 [our translation].

26 Cf., among others, Isabel Heinemann, Fundament der Volksgemeinschaft? Familientrennungen und -gründungen in der nationalsozialistischen In- und Exklusionspolitik. In: Johannes Hürter/Wiebke Lisner/Cornelia Rauh/Lu Seegers (eds.), Familientrennungen im nationalsozialistischen Krieg, Göttingen 2022, pp. 57–81. On the National Socialist "Lebensborn" cf. inter alia: Thomas Bryant, Himmlers Kinder. Zur Geschichte der SS-Organisation "Lebensborn e.V." 1935–1945, Wiesbaden 2011. On the Germanisation of children from the Soviet Union cf. Yuliya von Saal, Mehr als Opfer – More than Victims. In: Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas, 68 (2020) 3/4, pp. 403–431; cf. also the Kreisau Initiative's educational project "Uprooted: (Hi)Stories of Stolen Children during World War II": https://www.krzyzowa.org.pl/de/projekte/projekte-der-historisch-politischen-bildung/uprooted-de/3377-nowy-projekt-edukacyjny-uprooted-hi-stories-of-stolen-children-during-world-war-ii-historie-dzieci-zrabowanych-przez-okupacyjne-wladze-niemieckie-podczas-ii-wojny-swiatowej-2; 3.2.2023.

27 On Spain's "Stolen Children" during Francoism cf. the exhibition "Duerma en ti" presented at the National Museum of Anthropology in Madrid in 2022 (https://www.gc.cuny.edu/news/professor-documents-spains-stolen-babies-travesty-exhibit;

also the claim, which has not yet been sufficiently investigated, that children were taken away from their parents for political reasons and given up for adoption.[28] But even in democracies, the understanding of the urgent safeguarding of the best interest of the child is highly malleable, which can result in children taken away from their parents if the parental child-rearing practices are deemed to be irresponsible or harmful to the child by the respective state authorities. There are thus two forms of violence here that we address: firstly, children's vulnerability after their separation from their parents, which often enabled the exercise of violence in the first place, and secondly, the actual experience of separation as a form of violence that could affect the lives of the children and their parents in the long run.

The institutionalisation of indigenous children or children of mixed ancestry in boarding schools (so-called "residential schools"), as practised in Canada, the USA, Australia and New Zealand since the end of the 19th century, also belongs in this context.[29] In some cases until the 1990s, these children were taken away from their families to be educated as "real" Americans, Canadians, Australians or New Zealanders in mostly church-run boarding schools. It was not until the 1990s that the experiences of former indigenous boarding school children came to public attention and triggered a broad debate about these "stolen generations".[30] As a result, the demand to come to terms with these brutal colonial

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3.2.2023); on Chile's stolen children cf. Ernesto Lodono, "Time We Can't Get Back": Stolen at Birth, Chilean Adoptees Uncover Their Past. In: The New York Times, 17.12.2022 (https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/17/world/americas/chile-adoption-pinochet.html; 3.2.2023); on the issue of Germanised Polish children, cf. Iris Helbing, Polens verlorene Kinder. Die Suche und Repatriierung verschleppter polnischer Kinder nach 1945, Dissertationsschrift Europa-Universität Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder) 2015.

28 On politically motivated adoptions in the GDR, which could also be justified by accusations of "asociality", cf. Thomas Lindenberger/Agnès Arp/Ronald Gebauer/Marie-Luise Warnecke, Dimensionen und wissenschaftliche Nachprüfbarkeit politischer Motivation in DDR-Adoptionsverfahren, 1966–1990. Vorstudie im Auftrag des Bundesministeriums für Wirtschaft und Energie, Potsdam 2018 (https://zzf-potsdam.de/sites/default/files/forschung/Abteilung1/zzf-bericht-ddr-adoptionsverfahren_26_02_2018.pdf; 1.2.2023). A research project on the history of politically motivated adoptions in the GDR, led by Anke Dreier-Hornig and Karsten Laudien and funded by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Home Affairs, has been running since July 2022 (https://www.eh-berlin.de/meldungen/detail/an-institut-der-ehb-leitet-ddr-zwangsadoptionsstudie; 1.2.2023).

29 Cf. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Canada's Residential Schools: The History, Part 1: Origins to 1939. The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume I, Montreal 2015; Katie Wright/Shurlee Swain/Kathleen McPhillips, The Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. In: Child Abuse & Neglect, 74 (2017), pp. 1–9; Shurlee Swain/Johanna Sköld (eds.), Apologies and the Legacy of Abuse of Children in 'Care'. International Perspectives, London 2015. A commission of enquiry into the abuse and deprivation of Maori children will deliver its report in March 2024: https://www.abuseincare.org.nz/; 1.2.2023.

30 One of the first accounts of growing up in such a residential school was published in 1992: Isabelle Knockwood, Out of the Depths. The Experience of Mi'kmaw Children at the Indian Residential School at Shubenacadie, Novia Scotia, Lockeport 1992.

assimilation practices gained massive public resonance. Since then, thousands of deaths and abuses from these schools have come to light.[31] In Canada, it was finally decided to create a day of remembrance, the "National Day for Truth and Reconciliation", which now commemorates the suffering and death of indigenous children in Canadian residential schools every year on the 30 of September.[32] This historical case makes it particularly clear how forms of collective, in this case racially motivated, child abduction made the exercise of violence (including death) on the now unprotected (because parentless) children possible in the first place.

Natalia Aleksiun's article in this issue draws attention to a completely different form of separation in a racist context. She traces the paths of Jewish children and young people in Poland who had been hidden by non-Jewish Polish families or individuals during the National Socialist occupation. After the end of the war, they were faced with the decision to stay or to leave – a painful decision often accompanied by ambivalent feelings, because over the period of occupation relationships had been established or even marriages completed, and sometimes children had been born. The initial separation from the biological parents caused by violence often led to a second separation here, a separation from the non-Jewish "temporary families" or also, if they stayed, from the Jewish community. The article thus demonstrates how childhood separations can lead to non-biological but nevertheless, important social ties, the possible dissolution of which can have severe emotional consequences for the persons concerned.

In the history of the 20th century, temporary segregation was also an issue in a completely different context, namely when parents wanted to provide their children with exceptional learning opportunities and sent them to boarding schools such as the British Eton for this purpose. According to Daniel Gester and Felicity Jensz, "these schools extracted, and at times excluded, pupils from their original social background in order to train, mould, and shape them so that they could fit into their perceived position in broader society".[33] That this form of segregation can also be understood as violent is made clear by the term "boarding school syndrome", coined by psychoanalyst Joy Schaverien in 2015.[34] Schaverien argues

31 On a mass grave of 215 Indigenous children found in British Columbia in 2021, cf. Ian Austen, 'Horrible History': Mass Grave of Indigenous Children Reported in Canada. In: The New York Times, 28.5.2021 (https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/28/world/canada/kamloops-mass-grave-residential-schools.html; 3.2.2023).

32 Cf. Honouring Indigenous Children, Families on National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. In: CBC News, 29.9.2022 (https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/photos/national-day-for-truth-and-reconciliation-scroller-1.6600335; 3.2.2023).

33 Daniel Gerster/Felicity Jensz, Global Perspectives on Boarding Schools in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. In: eid. (eds.), Global Perspectives on Boarding Schools in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Cham 2022, pp. 1–36, here 3.

34 For an overview cf. Alex Renton, Boarding School Syndrome Review – Education and the Pain of Separation. In: The Guardian, 8.6.2015 (https://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/jun/08/boarding-school-syndrome-joy-schaverien-review; 3.2.2023); Nick Duffell, The Making of Them. The British Attitude to Children and the Boarding School System, London 2000.

that “sending children away from home to boarding schools, whilst considered to be a privilege, is also psychologically damaging,” and she sets out how “early boarding ruptured their [the children’s] primary attachments.”[35] But the discussion about boarding schools is by no means exclusively about psychological trauma caused by (early) separation from parents. As several reappraisal projects in recent years have revealed, sexual abuse and physical violence also occurred again and again in these places – in supposedly elite institutions. Particularly prominent examples from Germany are the Odenwaldschule, long admired for its reform pedagogical concepts, and the Berlin-based Canisius-Kolleg run by Jesuits.[36]

In a completely different vein, hundreds of thousands of children who were brutally separated from their parents at the US-Mexico border in recent years as a consequence of US immigration policy have been left unprotected.[37] Many of these children have not been reunited with their families to this day. As manifold examples in history demonstrate intercountry migration always poses a threat to the integrity of families.[38] The US Conference of Catholic Bishops accordingly called on the administrations of Donald Trump and Barack Obama “to end the policies of detention”, as the bishops considered it morally imperative “to keep families together, or when separated, to reunify the members as soon as possible”.[39] For the children, being separated from their families or migrating unaccompanied from the start is a major challenge. Stephanie N. Arel summarises the possible consequences as follows: “with the lack of supportive loved ones who mitigate the negative effects of traumatogenic experiences endured before, during, and after migration, minors suffer impairment to healthy development, which perpetuates problems with intimacy, attenuates the feeling of security in relationships, and disrupts their general sense of well-being in the world.”[40]

In response to the recent massive migration of unaccompanied minors, the European Commission published the handbook “Family reunification for refu-

35 Cf. Joy Schaverien, Boarding School Syndrome. The Psychological Trauma of the ‘Privileged‘ Child, London 2015, pp. 1 f.

36 Cf. Heiner Keupp/Peter Mosser/Bettina Busch/Gerhard Hackenschmied/Florian Straus, Die Odenwaldschule als Leuchtturm der Reformpädagogik und als Ort sexualisierter Gewalt. Eine sozialpsychologische Perspektive, Wiesbaden 2019; Ursula Raue, Bericht über Fälle sexuellen Missbrauchs an Schulen und anderen Einrichtungen des Jesuitenordens, Berlin 2010.

37 Cf. Erica Bryant, Children Are Still Being Separated from Their Families at the Border (https://www.vera.org/news/children-are-still-being-separated-from-their-families-at-the-border: 3.2.2023).

38 Cf. Kate Jastram/Kathleen Newland, Family Unity and Refugee Protection. In: Erika Feller/Volker Türk/Frances Nicholson (eds.), Refugee Protection in International Law. UNHCR’s Global Consultations on International Protection, Cambridge 2003, pp. 555–603.

39 Hille Haker/Molly Greening, Introduction. In: eaed. (eds.), Unaccompanied Migrant Children. Social, Legal, and Ethical Perspectives, Lanham 2021, pp. ix–xv, here xi.

40 Stephanie N. Arel, Trauma, Detachment, and Non-Belonging: The Plight of Migrant and Refugee Children. In: Hille Haker/Molly Greening (eds.), Unaccompanied Migrant Children. Social, Legal, and Ethical Perspectives. Lanham 2021, pp. 43–62, here 44.

gee and migrant children – Standards and promising practice" in 2020 to facilitate the reunification of families with children in the context of international migration.[41] International recommendations for action such as these point to the immense dimension of the problem of separation of children and parents in the course of global migration processes.

This overview of these most diverse forms of separation to which children were subjected in the 20th and early 21st centuries gives rise to a number of questions that the special issue addresses. First of all, it should be explored which historical moments and causes were responsible for which forms of separation in order to write a diachronic history of these separations. It is also necessary to ask which motives were decisive for the various forms of separation and displacement of children. As the previous overview already suggests, special attention must be paid to the history of science in psychology, pedagogy and medicine. For the 20th century saw not only a general scientification of the social (Lutz Raphael), but also a psychologisation of the social, especially regarding the history of children.[42] However, Meyer and Richter show in their contribution on the "sent-away children" of the Hamburg Rudolf Ballin Foundation that this is by no means a linear history of the increasing assertion of psychological thinking. Until the late 20th century, paediatricians and pedagogues alike justified displacement with reference to the healing effect of nature and distance from parents – whether through the effect of nature on the child's body or in social terms through the enforced distance from parents, whose educational and health competence was in doubt. The children's "homesickness" was perceived as a problem, but at the same time it was claimed that this problem could be dealt with by modifications such as increasing the distance of the "sent-away children" with their age. The psychological arguments increasingly conceiving of the separation from parents as a fundamental problem, were initially considered secondary by paediatricians and pedagogues. However, the psychological arguments of parents were taken up and could therefore not be completely ignored, even if there were tendencies to psychologise the criticism of some parents as "overprotection". Here, as in Beddies' contribution on the psychiatric care of children and adolescents in the immediate post-war period, it becomes clear that further research is needed to discern how medical, educational and psychological arguments influenced the shift in the practice and legitimising of the separation and which actors provided the decisive impetus in each case.

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41 Cf. Council of Europe (ed.), Family Reunification for Refugee and Migrant Children –Standards and Promising Practices, Strasbourg 2020 (https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/library-document/family-reunification-refugee-and-migrant-children-standards-and-promising_en; 3.2.2023).

42 Cf. Lutz Raphael, Die Verwissenschaftlichung des Sozialen als methodische und konzeptionelle Herausforderung für eine Sozialgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts. In: Geschichte und Gesellschaft, 22 (1996) 2, pp. 165–193.

For some years, though, there have been efforts to explore the experiences children had during their voluntary or forced separations in the 20th century.[43] Children's experiences are also the focus of both the contribution by Meyer and Richter and Aleksiun's exploration of the ambivalent feelings of belonging that determined the decisions of Polish-Jewish youth who were able to escape the Holocaust with the support of non-Jewish adults. Aleksiun draws here on a unique body of sources: a collection of letters sent by Polish-Jewish adolescents or young adults, as well as their non-Jewish helpers, to the Central Committee of Jews in Poland and its local branches, requesting support or compensation. Aleksiun is thus able to draw on documents that were written shortly after the event, an event, though, that could cast these experiences in a different light due to the end of the war and the possibility of emigration. In addition, these letters may also have been influenced by the intentions of the letter writers towards the Jewish committees. No less challenging is the interpretation of the oral history interviews that Meyer and Richter conducted with former "sent-away children". Here, not only the great temporal distance to the events and the creative work of remembrance must be considered, but also the question of the extent to which these separation experiences have affected the later life course of the former children up to the present day and how these possible effects (as well as the psychological knowledge of them) have shaped the work of remembrance. This points to a fundamental methodological challenge of childhood history, which is confronted with the difficulty of how childhood experiences can be historiographically recorded despite the widespread absence of testimonies written during childhood. In addition to the paths taken by Aleksiun as well as Meyer and Richter, more and more childhood histories draw on material legacies such as pictures and drawings or understand the search for the child's voice in a more comprehensive way, so that sounds, songs and gestures co-located in other documents can also be included.[44]

However, anyone attempting to fathom the relationship between childhood, separation and violence in the 20th century not only faces the difficulty of reconstructing the children's experience in a methodologically and theoretically appropriate way, but also of determining what is meant by violence in the first place. This question has been at the centre of broad debates in sociology, political science and history since the 1970s.[45] Narrower definitions of violence, such as that

43 Cf. for example, Laura Hobson Faure, Exploring Political Rupture through Jewish Children's Diaries: The Kindertransport Children in France, 1938–42. In: The Journal of Modern European History, 19 (2021) 3, pp. 258–273.

44 Cf. Kristine Moruzi/Nell Musgrove/Carla Pascoe Leahy (eds.), Children's Voices from the Past. New Historical and Interdisciplinary Perspectives, Cham 2019; Friederike Kind-Kovács, Budapest's Children: Humanitarian Relief in the Aftermath of the Great War. Bloomington 2022; cf. also the dissertation project by Susanne Quitmann at LMU Munich, The Voices of British Child Migrants.

45 For an overview of the history of violence as well as the scientific history of violence, cf. Philip Dwyer, Violence. A Very Short Introduction, Oxford 2022.

of the criminologist Pieter Spierenburg, subsume only intentional acts directed against the physical body of an individual or a group of individuals under the concept of violence.[46] The current WHO definition, on the other hand, also includes the threat of physical violence and understands an act as violence even if the person suffers no physical but only psychological harm.[47] Definitions of violence that no longer use the intentionality of the transgression as a criterion, such as Johan Galtung's concept of structural violence, or that do not directly involve a physical act, such as Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence, go even further.[48] In recent times, even the mere act of speaking is sometimes understood as violence, as expressed, for example, in the term "hate speech".[49] In contrast, this special issue's definition of violence is based on a concept developed by the philosopher Dietrich Schotte, according to which to *"deliberate serious injury to living beings against their will"*[50] is the essential characteristic of every act of violence. This also includes acts that injure psychologically. In view of recent findings in the fields of trauma research and epigenetics, an exclusive restriction to physically suffered injuries seems to us to make little sense, since injuries to the body all too often entail injuries to the psyche, while psychological injuries almost always have an impact on the body as well.[51] In contrast, we conceive of structures and institutions as enabling conditions for violence, but not as violence itself.[52]

Even if we use a specific definition of violence, it strikes us as imperative to ask about the shifting historically and culturally valid understandings of violence. Svenja Goltermann recently called for "historicising the understanding of violence and examining the shifting categories, concepts and ideas in the semantic field of violence" in order to be able to analyse "which cultural, political and social developments drove the change in the understanding of violence [and] how this change, in turn transformed society and produced new experiences of violence".[53] This is precisely the task addressed in the contributions by Meyer and Richter, who look at the contestation and legitimation of separation in the

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46 Cf. Pieter Spierenburg, Violence: Reflections About a Word. In: Sophie Body-Gendrot/ Pieter Spierenburg (eds.), Violence in Europe. Historical and Contemporary Perspectives, New York 2008, pp. 13–25.

47 Cf. Etienne G. Krug/James A. Mercy/Linda L. Dahlberg/Anthony B. Zwi, The World Report on Violence and Health. In: Lancet, 360 (2002) 9339, pp. 1083–1088.

48 Cf. Johan Galtung, Violence, Peace, and Peace Research. In: Journal of Peace Research, 6 (1969) 3, pp. 167–191; Pierre Bourdieu, Le sens pratique, Paris 1980, p. 230.

49 Svenja Goltermann, Gewaltwahrnehmung. Für eine andere Geschichte der Gewalt im 20. Jahrhundert. In: Mittelweg 36, (2020) 2, pp. 23–46, here 38 f.

50 Dietrich Schotte, Was ist Gewalt? Philosophische Untersuchung zu einem umstrittenen Begriff, Frankfurt a. M. 2020, p. 235 [italics in original; our translation].

51 On the relationship between trauma and epigenetics, cf. Hunter Howie/Chuda M. Rijal/Kerry J. Ressler, A Review of Epigenetic Contributions to Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. In: Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience, 21 (2019) 4, pp. 417–428.

52 Cf. Thomas Lindenberger/Alf Lüdtke (eds.), Physische Gewalt. Studien zur Geschichte der Neuzeit, Frankfurt a. M. 1995.

53 Goltermann, Gewaltwahrnehmung, p. 29 [our translation].

context of children being sent away, and by Sköld, who traces the debates surrounding an appropriate understanding of violence in the context of the Swedish Redress Process. Sköld in particular focuses on a central problem that arises from a consistent historicisation of violence: Is it possible to choose a historically sensible and thus shifting concept of violence as a starting point when it is about coming to terms with (and ultimately also compensating) actions within children's homes that would not have been clearly identified as violence at the time, but were nevertheless already experienced as violations by the children themselves and are named as violence by them today? In addition, there are the discussions of the Swedish investigation committee, documented in detail by Sköld, about the question on which source basis a historically reflected understanding of violence could be gained, which could serve as a starting point for a long-term investigation of approximately one hundred years, as it was aimed at within the framework of the Swedish Redress Process. Here it becomes quite clear that an epistemology of our contemporary understanding of violence is a great challenge for any history of violence that does not limit itself to epistemology and at the same time strives for a longer perspective.

But even regarding shorter periods of time, such as Beddies focusing on the immediate post-war history of psychiatric care for children and adolescents in Berlin, it is problematic to work exclusively with a historicised concept of violence. This is because the interpretation of violence against children was controversial at the time and referred to a change in medical, pedagogical and psychological legitimations, which was often only slowly put into practice in the face of a lack of resources and great resistance from some of the parties involved. Working out this change in the context of contemporary health policy conditions is important and instructive in its own right. But is what have been done to the bodies of mentally ill or "deviant" children at that time to be characterised as violence from a strictly epistemological perspective? Or does this require recourse to a concept of violence that transcends the contemporaneous discussion?

Beddies, as well as Meyer/Richter, Sköld and Aleksiun, show that it was often only the separation of children from their parents that made violent attacks on the child's body possible. However, in most cases, it has not been intended to use violence against the children from the start, on the contrary, the initial movement was motivated by the attempt to protect children's bodies from death, war, violence or illness, to cure them, to improve their physical or mental condition or to (re-)integrate them into society through institutionalised education, to enable them to recover from life in the big city or another health-endangering environment. On the one hand, this refers to a form of violence that is only marginally mentioned in this special issue: violence that children experience before separation, in some cases also inflicted on them by their own parents or family members. Thus, it is not uncommon to find evidence of parental violence towards their children, parental neglect or other endangerments of the child's well-being that led to the removal of the child or to temporary custody. On the other hand,

this points to the centrality of the concept of the best interest of the child in the history of separations in the 20th and early 21st centuries – a concept that, in its shifting definitions, always refers back to a certain ideal of childhood. This ideal emerged in the Global North from the 19th century onwards under the influence of pedagogues, developmental psychologists, paediatricians and social reformers. Childhood was increasingly understood as a protected counter-world to the world of adults.[54] War and sexuality, but increasingly also violence of all kinds, as well as child labour, were considered incompatible with the ideal image of childhood that was aspired to. The American historian Paula Fass comments on this historical retelling of childhood from the perspective of child protection: "War and sexuality are domains from which modern Westerners have withdrawn the ideal of childhood in horror, but neither children in the past nor contemporary childhood experiences are without important connections to these arenas.[55] The reality of past and present childhoods, however, often fell far short of this ideal. This applies both to the Global North and the Global South. The countless wars of the 20th and early 21st centuries "most dramatically highlighted the difficulty of preserving the territory of childhood", as British childhood historian Hugh Cunningham put it a few years ago.[56] This "falling short" of the ideal of childhood was, on the one hand, a powerful impetus for many national and international initiatives aimed at protecting children – and frequently led to the temporary or permanent separation of children from their birthparents, often, in turn, opened up possibilities for inflicting violence.

On the other hand, this ideal, shaped by Western values and Western-dominated sciences, often also obscured the significance of childhoods that did not correspond to this ideal, as is evident, for example, in the discussion on child labour. As the sociologist Viviana Zelizer has shown, in some contexts child labour is indeed a factor that contributes to the education and further development of children, while other forms of child labour are not even perceived as such because they are performed unpaid within the family, such as all the care work taken on by children and young people. It is not so much the ideal, but rather the view of the concrete social context that should decide whether "exploitation or valuable experience" is present.[57] But such an ideal of childhood also proves to be problematic in other respects. For – as historian Laura Tisdall argues – "the dominant model of childhood in the Global North [...] often silences, belittles and oppresses children".[58] Whether this at least partly explains why separations

54 Hugh Cunningham, Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500, 2nd edition, London 2014, p. 172.

55 Paula Fass, Is There a Story in the History of Childhood? In: ead. (ed.), The Routledge History of Childhood in the Western World, New York 2015, pp. 1–14, here 5.

56 Cunningham, Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500, p. 186.

57 Viviana Zelizer, The Priceless Child Revisited. In: Jens Qvortrup (ed.), Studies in Modern Childhood. Society, Agency, Culture, London 2005, pp. 184–200, here 195.

58 Laura Tisdall, State of the Field: The Modern History of Childhood. In: The Journal of the Historical Association, 107 (2022) 378, pp. 949–964, here 950.

oriented towards this ideal and carried out in the best interest of the child often led to violence is an open question. Looking at other models of childhood, whether they developed independently of the Western model in the Global South or in close exchange, may reveal such hitherto mostly unnoticed consequences of an ideal that in many ways still dominates childhood history. This is also relevant for a history of childhood, separation and violence that – like in this special issue – focuses on countries of the Global North such as Sweden, Germany and Poland. A view "from the outside" reveals implicit presuppositions of this history and questions common categorisations of childhood history such as that of chronological age.[59]

This special issue is intended as a first approach to this topic, a topic that has gained increasing attention in recent years in historical research as well as in the public sphere and is of alarming topicality again, especially today. Nevertheless, a comprehensive perspective that is not limited to a specific context (e. g. children and war), but takes the various manifestations of separation as a form of violence against children in its different facets into account, is largely lacking. This special issue hints at the possible gain in knowledge of such a perspective, although it can only present fragments of such a story. The special issue is thus intended as a starting point for a global history of childhood, separation and violence in the 20th and 21st centuries.

59 Ibid.