Ernst Papanek, Jewish Refugee Children during WWII and the **Transatlantic Dispute about "Children's Homes"**

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Abstract

Ernst Papanek (1900–1973) was an Austrian pedagogue who, between 1938 and 1940, was responsible for children's homes in France he directed for the OSE (*Œuvre de secours aux en-fants*). In these children's homes at Montmorency, close to Paris, Papanek tried to treat the traumatized children who had lost their homes, their parents, and those who struggled with their own identities that had been called into question by ideological propaganda and personal experiences alike. Papanek decided to give their souls a new home and not only intended to keep them physically alive but also to use a new form of therapy that was supposed to treat the children as a group.

In 1940, Papanek had to escape from France, via Spain and Portugal, to the United States, and he tried to rescue the children by bringing them across the Atlantic as well. However, when he advocated for the idea to continue their treatment as a group in a children's home like the ones he had run in France, he met with resistance, as such approaches were uncommon in the United States, where social workers sought to separate the children and have them adopted into different foster families nationwide. This paper describes this transatlantic "struggle of ideas" when it comes to the role of group therapy for traumatized children and the positive impact of such children living collectively in homes.

Keywords

Ernst Papanek, OSE, Jewish Refugee Children, child transports, pedagogical transnationalism, translation of pedagogical concepts

Introduction

Ernst Papanek (1900–1973) was a Jew, an Austro-American socialist, and a progressive educator who, according to his wife, Helene, felt an obligation to make the world a better place: "He had an exaggerated sense of social justice" (Papanek, 1979, cited in Maier, 2021, p. 24). Regardless of the many lives of Jewish refugee children Papanek saved during the Second World War and his impact as an educator and educational scholar, works about his life and impact are far from numerous (Göbetzberger, 2005; Hansen-Schaberg, 2000; Hansen-Schaberg, 2009; Hansen-Schaberg, Papanek & Rühl-Nawabi, 2015; Jacob, 2021; Krohn, 2006; Maier, 2021). Gustav (later Gus) Papanek and his wife Hanna (née Kaiser) would later emphasize the important role Ernst Papanek played in the lives of the many children he worked with over the decades in different children's homes and educational institutions on both sides of the Atlantic: "It was extraordinary how eagerly Ernst Papanek combined his profession as a teacher and his vocation as a democratic socialist: For him, education and politics flowed seamlessly into one another. He saw his educational work with young people in socialist organizations as an extension of his political conviction that it is possible to transform the world through enlightenment and democracy" (Papanek & Papanek, 2015).

Papanek's pedagogical views were highly influenced by the works of the Danish psychologist Irma Kessel and the individual

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psychology (*Individualpsychologie*) of Alfred Adler, which Papanek also applied during the Second World War when he took care of Jewish refugee children in France (Kessel, 1937; Rühl-Nawabi, 2015). The young girls and boys who had escaped National Socialism and made it to France were traumatized because they "had seen their parents murdered and beaten and humiliated and had themselves been systematically terrorized and publicly loathed. In a strange country, they were strangers and afraid. In the truest sense of the word, they were orphans" (Papanek with Linn, 1975, p. 95). Hitler's National Socialist hordes and stormtroopers had "appl[ied] the psychology of terror on a scale so massive as to be un-precedented and … appl[ied] it, systematically, against children" (Ibid., p. 97). For Papanek, it was therefore naturally important to take care of the shattered souls of the children who had just arrived in France, a foreign country, where they would live in the children's homes of the OSE (*Œuvre de secours aux enfants*), separated from their parents, if the latter were still alive (Papanek, 1943a; Papanek, 1968). He placed the children in homes run by the OSE before he had to leave due to the German invasion of France in 1940. He would later try to save "his children" and place them into similar facilities in the United States; once there, however, he could not get the authorities to approve his idea for progressive children's homes, especially since it would not have been easy to translate the concept to match the experiences and standards of the US context. There, children's homes had not been used for similar purposes, but were rather linked to the housing of juvenile delinquents. There was obviously a problem with translating Papanek's own experiences and pedagogical concepts, or, what Reinhart Koselleck termed "*Erfahrungsraum*," in order to match the American expectations, the "*Erwartungshorizont*" for pedagogical work environments and existent concepts (Koselleck, 2010, pp. 349–375).

The present contribution will, therefore, after a first theoretical reflection about the "translation" of pedagogical concepts, provide a critical insight into the specific concepts Papanek had applied in France before taking a closer look at the issues he faced when he intended to transplant his childcare-related concepts in the United States. It will thereby highlight the extent to which educational as well as pedagogical concepts confronted national boundaries and made the arrival of immigrants in the US, often as refugees during the 1940s, challenging, to say the least.

Lost in Translation or: The Challenges of Pedagogical Internationalization

In the 21st century, education is very much globalized and curricula, as well as pedagogical concepts, are debated and often translated so that theoretical reflections could lead to practical adaptation. However, as McKinnon, Hammond, and Foster emphasize with regard to the "internationalisation of the curriculum," the "translation from theory into practice … seems still to be problematic" (2019, p. 138). While international knowledge and intercultural awareness are particularly promoted in modern day education (Jones & Killick 2007; Leask 2015), educators, like Papanek, whose case shall later serve as a concrete example, struggled in the past to gain attention and acceptation for their ideas, who had been imported from a different pedagogical as well as national context. In contrast to the situation in the 21st century, when "there is an emphasis on developing learners and teachers who are sensitive to diverse ways of perceiving and using language and are able to consider the potential impact of cultural differences on meaning-making processes," (Chen &

McConachy, 2021, p. 1) Papanek's situation was very much influenced by a lack of international exchange about pedagogical concepts, a nationalist and almost seclusive interpretation of education for purposes that should serve the existent social and normative order (Stratton, 2016, 1–15), and the unwillingness to debate pedagogical concepts that would emphasize otherness instead of negating it.

The international transfer of, i.e. the translation of pedagogical concepts, demands "close attention to patterns of linguistic variability, the cultural meanings that speakers tend to attribute to linguistic forms and practices, and ways that one's communicative preferences and underlying assumptions may be different to others" (Chen & McConachy, 2021, p. 2). Papanek's good intents were consequently challenged in the 1940s by existing assumptions about children's homes that were quite different from his own, but the translation of his concepts "across linguistic and cultural boundaries" (Ibid.) should become quite problematic. It is actually not easy to transplant theoretical concepts about education and/or childcare, as the latter would usually be a specific consequence of national developments, transnational events (war, migration, state formation, etc.), educational trends, and last but not least, the respective intentions related to the concepts (Engelmann, Hemetsberger, & Jacob, 2022).

In the specific context of the United States in the 1940s, the idea to collectively keep children in a shared and professionally supervised home environment was uncommon—in contrast to Europe, where in different countries children's homes had been used for decades (Atkinson, 1987). Therefore, the existing considerations were not at all congruent with Papanek's experiences and future imaginations. Consequently, he was unable to "culturally translate" his considerations and his approach. In the United States, orphanages existed since the 18th century (Carp, 2014), but the idea that children who needed protection and care, possibly due to traumatic experiences, would live together in a children's home, was relatively unknown or at least unpopular. When the Second World War had caused a massive influx of parentless children, the authorities would usually respond to the situation with a plan to find families for the unaccompanied young immigrants to reach a fast integration and in a way "Americanization."

Although "[t]he turn of the 20th century [had been] a time of profound transition, both in the status of children in American life and in the role of the federal government in child policy" (Yarrow, 2009, p.1), and regardless of the fact that "the federal government was becoming much more involved in implementing policies to promote the welfare of Americans, young and old" (Ibid.), it was the concept of the family as the ideal environment for a child's upbringing that dominated American society. However, some leftist intellectuals and activists, like Papanek in his youth in Vienna, had debated and experimented with other forms of collective education and upbringing. When he brought his knowledge about the OSE children's homes with him to the United States, Papanek could simply not translate it into English, as it were not only the words, but their national and cultural interpretation that failed to emphasize the value of the progressive approaches that had been successfully tested in France before the German invasion. The fact that a translation in this particular setting demanded more than a verbal process, but included some form of acculturation of pedagogical concepts, made the situation complex. While Papanek was surprised about the unacceptance of a progressive concept, the American partners did not understand why the

Austrian pedagogue promoted something that was considered unsuitable for American society and its high praise for the family as the elementary space for the healthy and secure upbringing of children. The progressive aspects of the children's homes were consequently lost in translation, and regardless of his successes in the past, Papanek was doomed to look for an audience that would actually understand his approach and arguments. Although his achievements in France, which will now be taken into closer consideration, were without any doubt tremendous, Papanek could not find the right way to translate his argument to attract wider support for his wish to keep the children together as a community, whose members shared similar experiences, a past, and therefore the same identity.

Papanek and the Children's Homes in France

Papanek left Austria during the February Uprising in 1934 (Weinzierl, 1994; Bauer, 2019; Weingand, 2020) and became an active member of the Social Democratic Party in exile (Schwarz, 2008). In 1938, his wife and children followed, and the family was reunited in Paris. Lene had already organized tickets to leave Europe for New York City, but Papanek was approached by the OSE, whose representatives intended to hire the Austrian educator to take care of children of political refugees, whose number had increased since the National Socialists had taken power in Germany. Since Papanek shared some of the experiences of the children, it was probably easier for him to connect, as the situation the young girls and boys found themselves in, was not needed to be "translated" for the pedagogue. He was supposed to oversee the OSE's children's homes in France as the organization's leading director, and the fact that Papanek would have a "free hand"—in contrast to his later US experiences—with regard to the running of the facilities and would at the same time be able to save some money for the start of his family's new life in the United States eventually made him accept the offer (Papanek with Linn, 1975, pp. 33–37). He later explained his decision in some detail: "To be perfectly frank, I took on the job originally for a limited time and for the most practical of all reasons: to put aside a little money. I was myself a political refugee ... It was not as a political man that the OSE wanted me, of course, but as a teacher" (Ibid., p. 33).

After visiting the children's home in Montmorency, near Paris, he decided to take the job and stay in France for another six months. In his words, although "I had been basing my argument to Lene solely on the opportunity it would give us to save up some money, I also had the queasy feeling that this was not a very good time for a man who had done so much talking about standing up to Hitler to be running off to America" (Ibid., p. 42). Papanek's progressive approaches would eventually lead to some conflicts, especially with regard to the running of facilities for Orthodox Jewish children, but the whole situation changed dramatically after the Night of Broken Glass in November 1938. Maier emphasizes in this regard that "[t]he children's home project in Montmorency took on a whole new meaning overnight. Instead of just helping children who were already in the country, the OSE and Ernst Papanek decided to bring children at risk to France" (2021, p. 96). One could argue, that Papanek's work was "politically translated" as well, since violent antisemitism in Germany had created an increased necessity for children to be brought out. Many more Jewish refugee children would soon arrive in France, and the OSE was not the only organization to organize transports for them. The Central Child Reception Office (*Bureau Central d'Accueil aux Enfants*), the Rothschild Foundation (*Fondation*

de Rothschild), and the Israelite Committee for Children from Germany and Central Europe (*Comité Israélite pour les enfants venant d'Allemagne et d'Europe Centrale*) also tried to get Jewish children to safety, and the first transports arrived in Paris in February and March 1939 after the French government had issued 200 visas for them (Maier, 2020). Unlike those who were brought on children's transports (*Kindertransporte*) to Britain (Göpfert, 1999; Benz, 2003; Fast, 2010), the ones who arrived in France were supposed to remain together as a group and would therefore be housed in the OSE's children's homes.

Papanek could house some of the children at the four homes in Montmorency: the Villa Helvetia, the Villa La Chesnaie, Les Tourelles, and La Petite Colonie. Financially, the OSE and its task of building new homes relatively quickly was supported by the Baroness Pierre de Gunzbourg, "the French wife of a Russian-born aristocrat" (Papanek with Linn, 1975, p. 44), who provided 40,000 Francs. Regardless of the Baroness' claim that she would not be willing to spend any more of her money on children's homes, Papanek realized that she was a real philanthropist and would continue to support him and the OSE:

> It was really very funny. The Baroness was an imposing woman, with hatchet-like features that she refused to make the slightest attempt to pretty over, and a warm, beautiful heart that she was always trying to hide. ... Three weeks later, she gave us another forty thousand francs to buy a castle on the outskirts of Montmorency. Before the year was over, she had bought castles for us all over France at a cost of more than a million francs and was serving very actively as the chairman of our Board (Ibid., p. 45).

In addition to the rich philanthropist, the exile community in Montmorency helped to build the children's homes as they felt obligated to provide the soon to be arriving children with some safety: "They were working for the love of the children and they were happy for the chance to be working, and that meant they were working with enthusiasm. ... [A] doctor became a mason, and a pretty darn good one. Lawyers became carpenters, professors became painters, former ministers of state became roofers, writers became laborers" (Ibid., p. 47).

When the Jewish refugee children eventually arrived, it became clear to Papanek and the other educators who were supposed to take care of them for an as yet unknown time span how traumatized these young girls and boys were. Papanek would later remember the moment of this first encounter as follows:

> I explained that they were now going to have a little snack to eat and then go outside with their counselors and play until lunch was ready. A moment of silence. A somber-eyed, redheaded girl, about nine years old, raised her hand tentatively, and when I encouraged her to speak up she asked, in a sweet, tremulous little voice, "Are Jewish children also al-lowed to go into the park?" We were annihilated. It was all we could do not to rush out and throw our arms around her. What made it even more annihilating was that every other eye was turned up toward me waiting just as anxiously for the answer. When we did go outside, they just stood around waiting to be told what to do. They didn't ask any questions. They didn't even wander around aimlessly. They just followed whatever instructions or suggestions came their way. And so, at least, we knew what our first task was

> going to be. We were going to have to show them how to play. We were going to have to teach them how to be children (Ibid., p. 48).

The children suffered "from many traumata, including an inferiority complex, as they had begun to doubt their own value as human beings. So the fact that they were treated like everybody else and they were allowed to act like children without any restriction based on their or their parents' identities came as a surprise to them" (Jacob, 2021, p. 35). However, and regardless of the fact that they were all, in a way, Jewish refugees, the children shared different identities. There were 1) Orthodox Jewish children, who were kept as a group together at an OSE home in Eaubonne and with whom daily life seemed to be more difficult due to the existence of different religious rules (Papanek, 2015); 2) the "Cubans," i.e. middle-class children, whose parents had previously tried to escape by ship to Cuba (Reinfelder, 2002; Schöck-Quinteros, Loeber & Rau, 2019); and 3) the "Robinsoner," who were political refugees' children who had already been in France before 1938 but who arrived at the homes after the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 when the OSE decided to accept children who had no Jewish background at all as well. Regardless of their different identities, the children eventually grew together as a community and were, to a certain degree, drawn into that communion by Papanek, who served as a central figure within the OSE children's homes, which helped 283 children find a new home in Montmorency.

Papanek was fond of the idea of keeping the children together, as he assumed that this would help them to face their multiple traumata better and probably heal through a collective form of therapy. The director consequently argued on behalf of an anti-authoritarian approach, and "[t]he use of the first name, as the most outrageous symbol of our permissive policies, was one of the things that kept the Orthodox Community in a permanent state of discontent" (Papanek with Linn, 1975, p. 87). It was important in 1939 to choose one's words when addressing these girls and boys, who had lost their homes and families, wisely, and Papanek emphasized in this regard that

> [W]ords do carry their own symbolism, and as a practical politician I would be the last man in the world to underestimate the importance of symbols. With the Social Democrats, the exchange of first names was exactly that, a conscious symbol of the children's full status as comrades. And so it was with us. We were a community of children and adults, sharing a common danger and engaged in a common experiment. ... I have always felt that the community can support the individual to a far greater extent than has ever been suggested. If we were to be a true community, if community living was to be given a fair chance, authority had to be based on something far more meaningful than Mister or Sir or, heaven help us, Herr Direktor (Ibid., p. 88).

Papanek could relate to the experiences these children had gone through in the past few months or years, when they had been ostracized by society, quite well. It was therefore not only important to ensure their physical well-being in the children's homes but, as the Austrian pedagogue emphasized:

> Our first educational goal was to assure the children, explicitly and implicitly, that nothing that had happened to them had been their fault. The second was to convince them that the persecution they had suffered was not their inevitable fate

> as Jews. The third was to create an educational system that would return them to the world with a sense of pride, accomplishment and social consciousness (Ibid., pp. 115–116).

Papanek was also quite progressive with regard to the schooling of the children, and no grades were applied by the teaching staff. In contrast to ordinary schools, the children would receive quarterly reports about their progress, which emphasized the latter (or lack thereof) according to the following positive and negative categories (Papanek, 1940, pp. 20–21):

> 1) does his very best
>
> 2) is attentive and hardworking
>
> 3) takes pains over his work
>
> 4) grasps things easily
>
> 5) is interested in the subject
>
> 6) expresses himself very well
>
> 7) concentrates on his work
>
> 8) shows perseverance
>
> 9) prepares his work well
>
> 10) shows comprehension, application and perseverance
>
> 11) shows initiative
>
> 12) shows imagination
>
> 13) could make greater efforts
>
> 14) is lazy and inattentive
>
> 15) does not take great pains
>
> 16) shows no understanding of the subject
>
> 17) is devoid of interest
>
> 18) has no ability to express himself
>
> 19) is superficial in his work
>
> 20) is without perseverance
>
> 21) does not prepare his work
>
> 22) shows a lack of knowledge caused by absence
>
> 23) is not very bright
>
> 24) shows a lack of imagination

Instead of numerical grades, such comments "were aimed at encouraging the child to keep working rather than at merely passing judgement on work that had already been done" (Papanek with Linn, 1975, p. 131).

Nevertheless, Papanek not only had the background of the children in mind but also considered what would be necessary for them to learn for the future, and he was keen to train them in some kind of professional manufacturing or artisanry as well to secure them an income for the years to come. He argued that

> In an educational system which is truly geared to keeping instructions as close to life as possible, one also had to be mindful of the backgrounds of the children, the special circumstances under which they had come to us and the living conditions that probably a-waited them. These were not children who had been sent to a boarding school by indulgent parents. They were children who would have to go out into the world to earn a living, possibly in a strange country, probably without any family tradition to guide them and

> certainly without any parental connections to smooth the way (Ibid., p. 129).

With respect to the political education of the children, who had never experienced the privilege of a democratic society, Papanek introduced a student co-administration for the children's homes to ensure the children had some influence on the rules during trials that were held to decide on disciplinary cases. The students received responsibility for the administrative process and could learn about the latter, and Papanek hoped that they would enjoy such a democratic environment, especially since most of the children were victims of a totalitarian regime.

Papanek's experiences with children in wartime would eventually also influence his pedagogical considerations during his years in the United States (Papanek, 1942a; Papanek 1942b). However, he faced several issues with the US authorities, especially in relation to his progressive views about how traumatized children should be treated, which he failed to translate to gain the understanding of and support by the US authorities and organizations in charge. Some of these issues were related to his stubborn colleagues on the US side, others to a mistranslation of the concept of "children's homes," and these should now be taken into closer consideration.

The Conceptual Dispute in the United States

A visitor from the United States who once observed how an OSE home's children had celebrated—they celebrated all birthdays, holidays, and any reason they could find, especially since Papanek wanted to spread happiness as widely as possible among the children—described the community as a "Strauss operetta," a view the Austrian pedagogue disliked:

> We were not a Strauss operetta. Neither were we one big theater party. We were a community of very special children with very special problems. They had come to us, strangers and afraid, and we had to make them happy again. Not merely by creating a well-ordered home. Not with parties or songs. When I speak of making them happy, I am not talking in terms of amusing them. Our task was to create an atmosphere in which they could develop and bloom again (Papanek with Linn, 1975, pp. 86–87).

When Paris fell in June 1940, the OSE children's homes were moved to southern France, and an old castle in Montintin near Limoges was supposed to become the new home for Papanek's children. With them in safety for the moment, the Austrian Social Democrat and exile decided to leave, as his presence would probably have endangered the future of the children's home. He left Asta Imbert, a "French, Catholic, and apolitical" woman (Maier, 2021, p. 159), in charge, and although some of the children might have felt betrayed, Papanek had no choice as the Vichy Regime under Petain was likely to cooperate with the German invaders.

The Papanek family, together with Oscar and Marianne Pollak, two other Austrian socialists, were the first to be brought from France to Portugal via the Spanish Underground's route. On 3 September 1940, the Papaneks boarded the Nea Hellas in Lisbon and arrived in New York City on 12 September. In the United States, the family moved from place to place in the beginning, living at 151 West 94th Street, 155 West 84th Street, and 410 W 110th Street (Maier, 2021, p. 171), since they were short of money. Despite these peregrinations,

Papanek immediately tried to secure rescue measures for the children in France, whom he intended to bring across the Atlantic as well. Papanek, who now worked as a dishwasher, hoped that the Jewish Labor Committee or the American branch of the OSE (AMROSE) would support his endeavor, but there was "a maze of organizations" (Papanek with Linn, 1975, p. 218) that prevented fast action in this regard:

> When life and death rides on every choice you must make, you remember only those whom you did not save. And that is the bitter irony of it: Those who did the most feel the most guilt. Those who did the least feel the least shame. It always happens when life and death are at the toss that there are those from whom no help is expected and you find help, and there are those who exist for no other purpose than to help, and they do nothing. It must be recorded that while thousands of children survived the Holocaust be-cause the Underground was able to find shelter for them in monasteries, farmhouses and children's institutions throughout Europe ... there were those in the United States from whom help had been confidently expected who did nothing. And in some cases, worse than nothing (Ibid., pp. 31–32).

Papanek must have been disappointed by the situation, which is why his statements in a report sent to social worker Elsa Castendyck, the former US delegate to the Advisory Committee on Social Questions of the League of Nations and who had also visited the OSE homes in France before, are hardly surprising:

> As you know, I had resisted since 1940 the desire which was shared by you ... to tell the whole history of what we sometimes thought was criminal misunderstanding and neglect when organizations and people tried to prevent by hook or crook to have the children from France come over to the U.S.A. I still believe that we should not attack some organizations, wrong as they were for their terrible and fateful mistakes, because they still have to request money from the public to do another kind of work which they do well and which is still necessary (Papanek, n.d.).

Since AMROSE was not the only organization in the United States that tried to rescue Jewish children from Europe and later coordinated their arrival (Sonnert & Holton, 2006, pp. 31–46), there was initially a kind of competition for visas, especially since the United States Committee for the Care of European Children (USCOM), which coordinated these attempts, "had managed to obtain visas for English children, but they had little success, in the end, in cutting the red tape for Jewish children from the continent. ... They would not, and could not, bring themselves to believe that the children were in mortal danger, because once they did it became incumbent up-on them to move heaven on earth to rescue them" (Papanek with Linn, 1975, p. 217).

It eventually took until March 1941 before the first visas were issued, but at least the children from the French OSE homes were on the move, although, in the end, not all could be saved from the German policy to annihilate the Jews (Papanek, 2015, pp. 267–269), something that would haunt Papanek for the rest of his life. At the moment the first of "his children" arrived on US shores, however, the Austrian pedagogue was facing serious problems concerning his idea to set up new children's homes in the US. Children's homes like the ones Papanek had run

in France were uncommon in the US context, where such facilities were only known in relation to their use for juvenile criminals. The family, and in replacement of the former the foster family, was long considered the best environment for children to grow up (Hacsi, 1995), and it was argued that the children arriving from Europe had to be separated and spread within foster families across the country. Instead of facing their trauma and being reminded about it by others, it was argued that the distance to their former life and the people who represented it, would be best for the healing and the future of the young girls and boys (Curran, 2008, pp. 426–427). Papanek consequently faced the problem of translating and selling a progressive pedagogical concept to an audience that was unfamiliar with it, and obviously also resistant to change the existent traditional focus on the foster family. Lotte Marcuse, a social worker and German-Jewish Children's Aid representative who was responsible for the OSE children, intended to separate the children and send them to host families across the United States. She also prohibited Papanek from getting in touch with the children because she intended to make them break with their past to overcome possible traumata. Papanek's ideas for children's homes were not accepted by the educational and pedagogical establishment of the United States, and at a conference where he presented the concept of his OSE homes, he was harshly criticized for his progressive form of educational care (Papanek with Lin, 1975, pp. 217–221). The antagonism to the idea to keep the OSE children together as a group was also related to the fear that such a decision would stimulate antisemitic resentment in public perceptions of the work to save Jewish refugee children from Europe.

The conflict eventually ended in favor of Marcuse, who was in sole charge after Papanek's contract with AMROSE had been terminated in March 1941, and she decided the children's fates alone. Papanek was deeply sad and depressed: "What Mrs. Marcuse had in mind was a complete resettlement plan based on the incredible theory that the children must make a complete break with their past—as if she really believed it were possible to wipe the slate clean and begin all over again" (Ibid., p. 241). In addition, Marcuse did not allow Papanek to meet the children once they had arrived in the US, something that really bothered the latter: "It was terrible for him. She prohibited him from seeing the children. She had the power, and he had nothing" (Maier, 2021, p. 192).

Papanek had not been able to translate and "sell" his concept of the children's home as a progressive form of trauma therapy for girls and boys who had suffered from terror and war in Europe to the right influential person or organization, which is why, in the end, he just had to accept that at least some of the children had been saved, although they would not be allowed to continue to live as a community as they had in France since 1938. The case of Papanek and the OSE children therefore also emphasizes that mistranslations or misunderstandings of pedagogical concepts, here in a transatlantic context, might have had severe consequences for the lives and well-being of Jewish refugee children during and after the Second World War.

Of the 1,600 children who lived in OSE facilities in France, 253 were brought to the United States, and the last of them arrived in July 1942. On 26 August 1942, Montintin was raided by the authorities, and in September, Papanek received a heart-breaking report of the events:

> Last week we lived through a kind of St. Bartholomew's Massacre. At five o'clock

> in the morning we had guests with trucks at the door. They took a lot of people away with them. Then it was said that boys under eighteen would be released again, but in the meantime they were already sent further. Allegedly to Poland, but we don't really know anything definite. Among those taken was Ernst Koppel, Benno Singer, Klans Martin. Guenther and Horst, who were with their parents on vacation, were also taken. And girls from the other houses. In the days that followed there was a hunt for those who had escaped, but the forests are large. There were tragicomic scenes as well. For instance, Friedman whom you know so well, slipped out of their hands twice. The second time he went to the toilet under guard, but he managed to escape from there too. Yesterday the little ones from our house was taken, allegedly to be taken to their parents in the concentration camps. They took even two year olds from their nurseries, and let them sleep at the railway station. What they intended to do with them we don't know.... (Anonymous, 1942).

This news left Papanek a broken man, haunted by the fact that he had been unable to save all "his children" from death: "There are those who survived and found their lives, exactly as we had wished for them. There were those who survived into a vague, disquieting sense of guilt that they should have lived while so many died. There were those who did not survive and should have survived, and there is a bitterness about that which the years will never swallow" (Papanek with Linn, 1975, p. 31). It was questions about the things that probably could have done but were not, especially due to the struggles with the US authorities, that depressed Papanek in the years to come:

> I had discovered that you can question and question, poke and probe, and never get back anything beyond a kind of vague disclaimer calculated to minimize the accident of their survival, to close the gap between themselves and the dead. For behind every innocent question they hear the voice of the Inquisitor snap:
>
> Why are you alive, and the others dead?
>
> What did you do?
>
> Whom did you know?
>
> And behind all that: Whom did you
>
> betray? (Ibid., p. 271)

Papanek continued to think about his experiences with the OSE children in France and decided to change American views about educational and pedagogical concepts in the future as a consequence. He enrolled at Columbia University to become a social worker himself, writing his Master's thesis "On Refugee Children: A Preliminary Study" (Papanek, 1943b), and not only would he continue his work with children, he also founded the American Youth for World Youth (AYWY). Eventually, one year after the end of the Second World War, Papanek was considered an expert on children's homes and was asked to tour Europe to inspect such facilities there for the United Nations (Maier, 2021, p. 210). After years as director of the Brooklyn Training School and Home for Young Girls (1948/49) and later the Wiltwyck School for Boys (1949/58), Papanek finished his PhD thesis on the Austrian school reform in 1960 (Papanek, 1962) and taught at New York's

Queens College as a lecturer and then as Professor of Pedagogy until 1971.

Conclusion

This case study of Ernst Papanek's work as director of the OSE children's homes in France between 1938 and 1940, as well as his attempts to open similar facilities in the United States in the early 1940s, show the sort of problems progressive pedagogues and educators could have faced as a consequence of cultural differences with regard to pedagogical concepts, but it was also the current situation of the Second World War, i.e. the prosecution of "political enemies" and Jewish families by the Nazi regime, that caused problems due to the differences with regard to existent pedagogical and educational standards in Europe and the United States, i.e. their countries of origin on the one hand and their "new homes" on the other. Papanek was a progressive Austro-American pedagogue who tried not only to save children physically from the nightmares of persecution and death but also to give them a place to belong and to save their souls from trauma and pain. At the same time, it must have been painful for him to see that his progressive ideas and demand to keep the children together were not welcomed in the American context of the early 1940s.

The "mistranslation" of Papanek's concept of children's homes, or rather, the inability to accept a new form and interpretation of this term, eventually determined the fate of more than 250 OSE children, who were instead supposed to grow up individually as Americans in a world where their past did not seem to be of importance anymore. Regardless of this assumption, it was Papanek who left a deep impression on the children, and the memories they made in his children's homes in France remained some of the happiest of their lives.

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