

A034764143



Partner-Bestellnr: 20230229273

Kartennr./PPN: 509556426

Bestelldat.: 08-11-2023 16 30

hebis.

Online-Bestellung hebis

Besteller 16 Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg Plöck 107-109 69117 Heidelberg	VFL SWB Südwestdt. Bibliotheksverbund bitte NUR an bestellende Bibliothek liefern Lokale Nr: 202308313
---	---

E-Mailadresse der bestellenden Bibliothek:

Fernleihe@ub.uni-heidelberg.de

Kunde: -

lokale Ausweisnr.: TA25000K



Lieferbibliothek

UB Marburg

<4> Universitätsbibliothek Marburg

Deutschhausstr. 9

35037 Marburg

☐ verliehen

☐ nicht am Standort

☐ beim Buchbinder

☐ vermisst

Unter Anerkennung der Benutzungsbedingungen wird bestellt:

Althammer, Beate\$Z1964- [Tp3] (Hg.), Citizenship, migration and social rights historical experiences from the 1870s, London, Routledge, 2024

ARTIKEL Johnathon Speed, Pious guardians. The Swabian Children Association and public welfare...

Artikel-Information:

Band:

Heft:

Seiten: S. 99-118

Jahr/Datum: 2024-00-00

Leihform: Kopie

Lieferart (gedr. Ausg.): PRINT

Lieferart (elektron. Ausg.): Keine Parallelausgabe gefunden

Lieferung bis: 03-01-2024

Kosteninformation: Mehrkosten bis zu 8 EUR akzeptiert

Signatur: 070 8 2023/02362

Bemerkungen: VM

Kopie im Rahmen des Leihverkehrs der deutschen Bibliotheken. Die Weitergabe dieser Kopie ist ausschließlich als Ausdruck auf Papier erlaubt. Eine Weiterleitung in elektronischer Form ist untersagt. Die Lieferbibliothek und die hebis-Verbundzentrale haften nicht für die Verletzung urheberrechtlicher Bestimmungen, die sich aus der Nichtbeachtung der Auflagen ergeben können.

Henok

4 Pious guardians

The Swabian Children Association and public welfare in the Tyrolean Alps, 1891–1915

Johnathon Speed

Introduction

Thirteen-year-old Filomena Patscheider arrived at the Ravensburg train station in March of 1908. Originally from the Tyrolean village of Graun, this was at least the second time she made the journey to Swabia.¹ On this occasion, at least, she travelled under the aegis of a priest-run association that had been facilitating similar journeys since 1891. Considering that she had failed to obtain employment at Friedrichshafen, the stop immediately preceding Ravensburg, there was some risk that she might have had to head back to the Alps empty-handed that evening. However, a farmer from Fenken, a hamlet just south of Ravensburg, ultimately agreed to hire her as a domestic for the summer. One of the association's clergymen signed a contract on her behalf, promising her to work until 28 October for 100 marks and two sets of clothing. Soon after settling in at Fenken, she made her way to the local parish office to hand over her notice card. As the priest later recounted, her term passed without incident. The only cause for concern was the fact that she never attended a day of school during her time in Swabia.

Between 1891 and 1915, the priest-run "Swabian Children Association" conveyed thousands of children just like Filomena from the Tyrolean Alps to Swabia in Württemberg, where it contracted them out to work in agriculture or as household domestics. The seasonal child migrants known as the "Swabian Children" had long been a subject of concern for regional state officials.² But it was only in 1891 that, under the auspices of a semi-public association, steps were

¹ The contributors to the 2008–2014 EU Interreg Project on the *Schwabenkinder* uncovered an earlier journey in 1905, but seem not to have discovered this subsequent journey in 1908. For the EU Interreg project's entry for her 1905 journey, see <https://www.schwabenkinder.eu/de/Datenbank/datenbank-suche/name:Patscheider>. For the files relating to Patscheider's second journey, which includes the parish priest's assessment and her original labour contract, see Staatsarchiv Sigmarin-gan (hereafter StaSig), Wü 65-26 T 1-2. Bn 348.

² The scholarship on these migrants is small but growing. Major works include Otto Uhlir, *Die Schwabenkinder aus Tirol und Vorarlberg* (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1978); Roman Spiss, *Saisonwanderer, Schwabenkinder und Landfahrer: die gute alte Zeit im Stanzertal* (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1993); Bianca Hahnen, "Hüte- oder Schwabenkinder in Friedrichshafen", *Friedrichshafener Jahrbuch für Geschichte und Kultur* 3 (2009): 58–87; Stefan Zimmermann, ed., *Die Schwabenkinder: Arbeit in der Fremde vom 17. bis 20. Jahrhundert* (Ostfildern: Süddeutsche Verlagsgesellschaft im Jan

taken to subject them to effective regulatory oversight. This association introduced standardised labour contracts, blacklisted unfit employers and coordinated with the state to apply documentary controls. When taken in conjunction with the decision to prohibit parents from any involvement, the organisation's interventions manifested a form of temporary guardianship. From their departure in March to their return in November, these children were forced to rely on the association for lodging, access to religious services, mediation in the event of disputes and the procurement of wages.

While often recognised as a significant development in the history of these migrations, the association's founding and interventions have generally been considered through the lens of private, religious charity.³ Historians have suggested that the association did not enjoy the explicit support of Tyrolean state officials and, relatedly, that its activities were only able to lessen the burdens of the journey. This chapter, in contrast, highlights the association's recurrent collaboration with regional state officials and its attentiveness to longstanding legal requirements by considering it as a mixed economy of welfare.⁴ The association's management of the journey and labour terms would not have been possible without the vigilant, sustained support of officials at various levels. Meanwhile, in taking steps to ensure compliance with legal norms crafted since the 1860s, this association helped realise decades-old regulatory objectives. In this way, the association's efforts were consistent with approaches to child welfare in Tyrol (and beyond) at the turn of the twentieth century. Like other regional organisations, this association blurred the lines between public and private and relied on clergy as traditional, trusted professionals for overseeing children.⁵

The Swabian Children Association in contemporary discourse and scholarship

The "Swabian Children" (*Schwabenkinder*) first emerged as a subject of public concern in the opening decades of the nineteenth century, when reports of thousands

Thorbecke Verlag, 2012), and Loretta Seglias, *Die Schwabenkinder aus Graubünden: Saisonale Kinderemigration nach Oberschwaben* (Chur: Kommissionsverlag Desertina, 2004).

3 This perspective has been most explicitly developed by Otto Uhlir. See Uhlir, *Die Schwabenkinder aus Tirol und Vorarlberg*.

4 The literature on mixed economies of welfare is substantial. Two works relevant to this chapter are Thomas M. Adams, "The Mixed Economy of Welfare: European Perspectives", in *Charity and Mutual Aid in Europe and North America since 1800*, ed. Bernard Harris and Paul Bridgen (New York: Routledge, 2007), 43–66; Fabio Gioni, Célia Keren and Morgane Labbé, "Productive Entanglements: The Dynamics of Public-Private Interactions in the History of Social Protection", in *Public and Private Welfare in Modern Europe: Productive Entanglements*, ed. Fabio Gioni, Célia Keren and Morgane Labbé (New York: Routledge, 2022), 1–15.

5 For an account of the development of child welfare in Tyrol, see Michaela Ralsér, *Heimkindheiten: Geschichte der Jugendfürsorge und Heimerziehung in Tirol und Vorarlberg* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2017).

of young travellers lining the roads to Swabia surfaced in published accounts.⁶ As observers described them, these were children aged 8–14 who, each March, undertook a weeks-long journey from Tyrol and Vorarlberg in Austria to southern Württemberg. The moniker “Swabian Children” referred to their destination in a handful of locales in Oberschwaben. Between the 1820s and the migration’s dissolution on the eve of the Second World War, the towns of Ravensburg and Friedrichshafen were the most common places of destination.

The migrations’ most notable, and for many observers outrageous, features were the “child markets”. These informal arrangements, which saw hundreds of children congregate alongside similar numbers of employers to conclude labour terms, were held on particular days in late March and early April. The children generally did not conduct the negotiations at these markets themselves. Instead, they relied on accompanying handlers who, until the Swabian Children Association’s founding in 1891, were usually parents or other relatives.⁷ It was customary for employers to offer two sets of fresh clothing, one for work and the other for leisure, alongside wages and supplemental amounts for holidays and the return journey. Beginning from the 1830s, scattered accounts noted the resemblance of these “child markets” to the slave markets of America, North Africa and the Middle East.⁸ However, these never generated a coherent discourse, appearing instead as occasional musings on a peculiar regional phenomenon. Sustained outrage over the “child markets” would ultimately only coalesce after 1900, when Austrian Social Democrats launched a moral panic over the issue as a form of child trafficking.

While a rich, if small, scholarship has flourished on the Swabian Children since the 1970s, broader public interest has only been generated with the 2002 publication of Elmar Bereuter’s novel *Die Schwabenkinder: Die Geschichte des Kaspanaze* (the Swabian Children: the story of Kaspanaze). The following year, a feature film adaptation, produced jointly by the Austrian and Bavarian public broadcasting companies, served to further enhance the Swabian Children’s public legibility.⁹ In the years since, the migrations have been the subject of a 2008–2014 EU Interreg project that drew together archivists across the region, regional museum exhibits at Wolfegg’s *Bauernhausmuseum* (Farmhouse museum), and guided hiking trails so that visitors can follow in the children’s footsteps.¹⁰

The Swabian Children Association, for its part, has long been a standard feature of public and scholarly accounts of these migrations. Both contemporary observers and

6 See, for example, Joseph Rohrer, *Über die Tiroler* (Wien: Dollische Buchhandlung, 1796), 49–50; and Johann Daniel Georg von Memminger, *Beschreibung des Oberamts Ravensburg* (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1836), 30.

7 Regina Lampert, who travelled to Swabia across multiple seasons in the 1860s, had her father with her for these negotiations. See Regina Lampert, *Die Schwabengängerin: Erinnerungen einer jungen Magd aus Vorarlberg, 1864–1874*, ed. Bernard Tschöfen (Zürich: Limmat Verlag, 2000), 51–58.

8 For two examples of this, see Carl Theodor Griesinger, “Der Jungens- und Mädchensmarkt”, in *Humoristische Bilder aus Schwaben* (Stuttgart: Verlag der Griesinger’schen Verlags- u. Antiquariatshandlung, 1844), 215–216; “Ein Kinderhandel”, *Die Gartenlaube* 4 (1866): 55–56.

9 Elmar Bereuter, *Die Schwabenkinder: die Geschichte des Kaspanaze* (München: Herbig, 2002).

10 The database and other information on the project can be found at www.schwabenkinder.eu

scholars have used the clergy's involvement as justification to view it in the context of private, religious charity. For contemporaries writing around 1900, the tendency to see the association in this fashion had much to do with the culture wars over state secularisation in education. These debates were characterised by the rivalry between the Social Democratic Party of Austria (SDAP) and the Christian Socialists, which took opposing views of the Imperial Elementary School Law of 1869.¹¹ This landmark school law had relegated the clergy's place in education to two hours of religious instruction and introduced secularly trained teachers for the remainder of the curriculum. While Christian Socialists generally sought to roll back restrictions on the clergy's place in the classroom, Social Democrats usually advocated for increased secularisation. Although these debates could be found across Cisleithanian Austria, they were particularly heated in the Catholic strongholds of Tyrol and Vorarlberg.¹²

For Social Democrats, the spectacle of a priest-run association trafficking thousands of Austrian children to "child markets" in Germany presented tantalising rhetorical ammunition in their drive for secularisation.¹³ Because they adopted a conceptual framework that coded the clergy as traditional, even backward, and state secularisation as modern, Social Democrats never felt incentivised to recognise the Swabian Children Association's ties with the Tyrolean Crownland. For Social Democrats, the Swabian Children were a "centuries old" phenomenon, through which priests were able to "export" Tyrolean children for work as domestics and shepherds in Württemberg.¹⁴ One of the most impactful SDAP critiques of this sort was given by Karl Seitz on the floor of the Austrian *Reichsrat* in 1902. Uttered in the context of a debate on the merits of Austria's compulsory schooling system, he asked,

What kind of Christianity is this, that these gentlemen show us? This association is composed almost entirely of clergy [...] [and] does not shy from

11 For two overviews of this political rivalry, see Dan Unowsky, *The Pomp and Politics of Patriotism: Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848–1916* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2005); John Boyer, *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna: Christian Socialism in Power, 1897–1918* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1995).

12 For one perspective on the role notions of traditional Catholicism had on Tyrol's development, see Laurence Cole and Hans Heiss, "Unity Versus Difference: The Politics of Region-Building and National Identities in Tyrol, 1830–1867", in *Different Paths to the Nation: Regional and National Identities in Central Europe and Italy, 1830–70*, ed. Laurence Cole (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 37–59.

13 In situating secularisation as a delimiting marker between public and private, Social Democrats invoked a series of tropes that were rather common to debates around public welfare from the latter half of the nineteenth century. For an exploration of secularisation in the context of public welfare, see Günter Frankenberg, "Shifting Boundaries: The Private, the Public, and the Welfare State", in *The Mixed Economy of Social Welfare: Public/Private Relations in England, Germany and the United States*, ed. Michael B. Katz and Christoph Sachße (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1996), 72–94. For one example of the SDAP's usage of the Swabian Children Association in the context of broader debates over secularisation, one may consider the furore over the *Verein "Freie Schule"*. See "Versammlung der 'Freien Schule'", *Vorarlberger Volksfreund* (12 October 1907), 1.

14 "Der Sklavenhandel mit den Hütelkindern", *Arbeiter Zeitung* (22 April 1906), 6.

buying up Austrian children only to barter them off in Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden, where the people there use the children as work-slaves [...].¹⁵

For Seitz, it was important to stress that clergy used the association as a platform for trafficking Austrian children abroad for their own material gain. Throughout the entire speech, in which he criticised the association's patriotism, moral hypocrisy and role as traffickers, Seitz never referenced the Tyrolean Crownland's collaboration. His calls for state intervention, in fact, relied on the notion that state bodies and officials had so far allowed the migrants and their facilitators to move without oversight.

The glut of newspaper articles, state correspondence and parliamentary debates kicked up by the Social Democratic campaign against the Swabian Children Association has also created challenges for researchers in recent decades. While some comments at the time recognised both the association's novelty and its ties with the Tyrolean state, these were effectively buried under the quantity of assessments castigating it as a modern façade draped over a traditional form. Historians researching the Swabian Children have generally confronted a record characterised by sparsity aside from a brief, intense period of excitement lasting from roughly 1900 to 1915. To a certain extent, it may be argued that the similarities between scholarly accounts of the Swabian Children and Social Democratic critiques have been encouraged by this archival shape.¹⁶

In terms of scholarship, the Swabian Children have benefitted from enhanced interest in recent decades, but investigations have generally focused on relatively narrow topics.¹⁷ The broader narrative framework established by historian Otto Uhlig in his classic *Die Schwabenkinder aus Tirol und Vorarlberg* of 1978 has, for this reason, continued to exert significant influence. In charting the migrations from their earliest emergence in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to their gradual dissolution in the 1930s, Uhlig argued that state efforts at regulation or prohibition were consistently overwhelmed by the economic asymmetries that drew these children abroad. Uhlig's account is littered with references to failed state efforts at reigning these migrations in and to recurrent official complaints about these children's resistance to state oversight.¹⁸ Uhlig's tendency to view state intervention through the lens of failure was, in part, a result of how he envisioned the threshold for successful state oversight. As he framed it, state officials attempted to secure

15 *Stenographische Protokolle über die Sitzungen des Hauses der Abgeordneten des Österreichischen Reichsrathes, XVII. Session, XIII. Band* (1902), 11262.

16 A good example is the scholarly treatment of educator Josef Muther's contribution to the *Zeitschrift für Kinderschutz und Jugendfürsorge* in 1912. Most scholars have cited this work without referencing it to the broader panic over the Swabian Children. Josef Muther, "Die Wanderung der Schwabenkinder in Tirol und Vorarlberg", *Zeitschrift für Kinderschutz und Jugendfürsorge* 4 (1912): 1–2.

17 Consider, for example, this study of Swabian Children to Ailingen: Michaela Couzinet-Weber, "Schwabenkinder im 'Obstgarten am Bodensee': Eine Sonderform der Saisonarbeit dokumentiert am Beispiel Ailingens", *Friedrichshafener Jahrbuch für Geschichte und Kultur* 4 (2012): 134–153.

18 See, for example, Uhlig, *Die Schwabenkinder aus Tirol und Vorarlberg*, 119–121, 199–203.

control over these migrations over the course of the nineteenth century but failed because they were unable to alter the migrations' basic form. For him, this was defined by the essential details of origin and destination and labour as shepherds or domestics. While Uhlig's focus on these features is helpful for recognising the phenomenon's persistence over centuries, it does not provide an effective barometer for identifying shifts in travel route, method, duration, term negotiations or labour practices. And changes in such aspects could drastically transform what it meant to migrate.¹⁹ There was real significance in whether migrants were able to travel with family or if they were forced to move under the guidance of parish priests, whether they travelled by rail or foot, or whether the journey lasted days and not weeks.

As regards the association's relations with state officials, Otto Uhlig also emphasised the vigilant, dedicated steps taken by the association's clergymen even as he regarded state support and funding as perfunctory. In his account of the organisation's founding, for example, he argued that the Imperial government's decision to approve the association's appeal for legal establishment was evidence of "tolerance" rather than "positive approval".²⁰ Likewise, he portrayed the association's appeals for state funding as notable and the provincial Landtag's decision to approve them as cursory. He never mentioned the heated debates surrounding the association's appeals for funding in 1909 and 1914, each of which garnered approval only after supporters rallied passionate defences.²¹

The Swabian Children Association's ties with the Tyrolean Crownland have escaped notice because of the nature of political discourse over these migrations in its own time and the trajectory of scholarship since the 1970s. At the turn of the twentieth century, Social Democrats tended to emphasise the clergy's involvement and to underemphasise the association's ties with the Tyrolean state because this aligned with their political objectives. Meanwhile, in scholarly accounts, the narrative of state impotence against the overwhelming influence of economic factors has obscured the role state officials played in the association's operations. The idea that Tyrolean state bodies were involved in a successful effort at altering these migrations would have suggested that the Swabian Children themselves were not impervious to state oversight, but might have been actually shaped by it at important junctures.

Public begging before the Swabian Children Association

Reports of Swabian Children begging and wandering litter the press landscape of the Eastern Alps in the 1860s and 1870s. As one *Feldkircher Zeitung* contributor

19 For one observation on the import of shifts in route and method, see James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

20 Uhlig, *Die Schwabenkinder aus Tirol und Vorarlberg*, 197.

21 For that from 1909, in which representative Franz Habicher rallied to the association's defence, see *Stenographische Berichte des Landtages der gefürsteten Grafschaft Tirol. X. Landtagsperiode* (1909), 321; for that from 1914, in which Michael Mayr took up this cause, see *Stenographische Berichte [...] Tirol aus der XI. Landtagsperiode* (1914), 494.

noted in 1873, "swarms of Swabian Children pour over the land, begging from house to house [and] community to community for travel funds despite a ban on public begging".²² Critics' qualms were not with the pursuit of seasonal labour abroad. Many actually viewed the child migrations to Swabia as an acceptable solution to conditions of profound poverty. One *Bote für Tirol* journalist offered a rather common assessment of this position in 1856, noting that the Swabian Children returned "with a fresh, healthy appearance, were fitted with new clothes, and brought to their mother and father [...] 4, 6, 8, up to 12 gulden of hard currency".²³ Not a few placed special emphases on these children's work in agriculture rather than industry. As one mused, "For how much better off are those children who are dutifully instructed to work in God's open nature [...], than are those unfortunates (*Bedauernswerthen*) who work [...] in a factory for wretched wages [...]"?²⁴

The real issue of concern for observers in these earlier decades was the mischief in which the children were reputed to engage while on the road. Reports of migrants "fall[ing] upon" the communities they passed like "wandering locusts" highlighted the anxieties of residents lining the route to Swabia.²⁵ Almost all such reports emphasised how these incidents were not only repugnant, but also illegal. Contemporaries repeatedly pointed out that police authorities were less vigilant in applying bans on begging to these children than they were to other wanderers. For example, in observing that the Swabian Children begged "for their entire *Zehrung* (travel funds) [...] at houses and on the streets", one writer bemoaned that bans on begging were not enforced "just as they are for other people".²⁶

In 1867, the office of the Imperial government at Innsbruck (*Statthaltereie*) addressed these concerns by issuing an edict that both positioned begging as an issue of administrative, legal concern and established clear requirements for these child migrants. The edict's interest in begging was implied in its opening sentence, which informed readers that it was drafted in accordance with a previous announcement of 28 November 1865. As it happened, this other statute was part of a broader legal campaign, with roots going back to at least the 1850s, meant to suppress begging and vagrancy. Expressing exasperation at local authorities' apparent lack of zeal at enforcing bans on begging, this 1865 statute reminded officials that they were empowered to censure noncompliance with internal deportation via the *Schub*, corporal punishment and fines.²⁷ By referencing this broader

22 "Innerbregenzerwald, Febr. Die Schwabenkinder", *Feldkircher Zeitung* (1 March 1873), 3.

23 "Vom Bodensee, 9. Dez.", *Der Bote für Tirol* (17 December 1856), 3.

24 "Aus dem Illthale", *Der Bote für Tirol* (9 March 1878), 9.

25 As reprinted in *Die Debatte*, see "Die Schwabenkinder", *Die Debatte* (23 March 1867), 2.

26 "Vom Unterland", *Vorarlberger Landes-Zeitung* (16 January 1868), 1–2.

27 This 1865 statute was especially concerned with those known as *Dörcher*, as itinerant wanderers in the region were pejoratively called. For this law, see "75. Verordnung des K.K. Statthaltereie-Präsidiums vom 28. November 1865, (Nr. 2508 – pr.) in Betreff des Dörcher- und Vagabundenwesens", *Landesgesetzblatt Tirol und Vorarlberg* (1865): 64–65. For a scholarly overview of pertinent issues underlying nineteenth-century campaigns against wandering, see Leo Lucassen, "A Blind Spot: Migratory and Travelling Groups in Western European Historiography", *International Review of Social History* 38, no. 2 (August 1993): 209–235.

campaign, the 1867 edict on the Swabian Children rather subtly gestured to the punishments that might await Swabian Children caught begging while en route.²⁸

The 1867 edict on the Swabian Children also contained specific stipulations that rendered the dispensation of visas to these child migrants contingent on the provision of proofs of poverty and dutiful school attendance.²⁹ These two documentary requirements communicated sufficient need and moral character. Positive assessments of the Swabian Children had long relied on implicit contrasts with the negative examples of itinerant vagrancy and factory work. It is in this context that recurrent rumours of migrants "mistaken" as Swabian Children, who had either been abducted abroad or sought to use the schooling dispensations to engage in mischief, should be understood.³⁰

The 1867 edict was not the first statute to set legal requirements for the Swabian Children. Its stipulations actually combined requirements from previous statutes dating back to the 1830s. The main difference between the 1867 edict and its precursors was that it was publicised, with numerous outlets reporting on it and at least two opting to reprint the law verbatim.³¹ While some reporters argued that the edict's stipulations were deficient in certain respects, others focused on inadequate enforcement. The significance of the public response to the 1867 edict was that it signalled the moment at which both officials and regional publics began to understand the Swabian Children as a subject fit for state oversight. This shift in understanding is legible in public accounts of the Swabian Children. While those published before 1867 tend to focus on the reasons for these children's decision to head abroad, such as poverty, those after demonstrate significant interest in questions of legal compliance and state enforcement.

The edict of 1867 and the discourse it generated established clear regulatory expectations. Ongoing reports of begging even after the statute's passage only reinforced the sense that state officials understood this aspect of the Swabian Children as a legal problem. The same might be said of the establishment of clear requirements for the acquisition of visas and schooling dispensations. Already by 1870, one journalist reported that some parents were providing "false age information" in order to "fraudulently obtain" travel documents for their children.³² Another noted the tendency to travel using expired visas from previous seasons rather than going through the application process anew.³³ In all, the interest in noncompliance by lay observers, when combined with recurrent statutes reiterating requirements, demonstrated that the

28 Censures against begging by the Swabian Children were sometimes rendered explicit by subsequent statutes, such as the Vorarlberger Summer School Ordinance of 1884. See "Sommer-schulordnung für Vorarlberg", *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* (16 April 1884), 5.

29 For the 1867 edict on the *Schwabenkinder*, see "Eine sehr heilsame Verordnung", *Katholische Blätter aus Tirol* 4 (10 February 1868), 16.

30 For one contemporary tale of this sort, see "Der wiedergefundene Sohn", *Innsbrucker Nachrichten* (1 January 1876), 3.

31 For one of these, see "Von der Linken III (Die Schwabenkinder)", *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* (28 February 1868), 3.

32 "Oberland, 6. April. Gleiches Recht für Alle?", *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* (8 April 1870), 3.

33 "Innerbregenzerwald, Ende Febr. Die Schwabenkinder", *Feldkircher Zeitung* (1 March 1873), 3.

Swabian Children were understood in the context of state oversight and regulation. It would take another two decades, however, before officials would arrive at a tenable strategy for realising the objectives laid down since the 1860s.³⁴

The *Schwabenkinderverein*: founding, intervention, documentary controls

In October of 1891, Tyrolean *Landtag* representative Josef Anton Geiger petitioned the Lieutenant Governor of Tyrol to authorise the founding of a "Swabian Children Association" in that Crownland. As association chairman, he enlisted 67-year-old Venerand Schöpf, a parish priest and himself a former Swabian Child.³⁵ Schöpf would be the first of three priests to serve in this capacity. In 1899, Alois Gaim was selected as the final chairman – a post he would hold until the association's dissolution in 1915. In addition to Geiger, the organisation's inaugural rolls included three city representatives, two mayors and the District Governor of Landeck.³⁶ The association also relied on recurrent subsidies from Tyrol's public coffers. After an initial gift of 300 crowns, it submitted routine requests for additional allotments of between 400 and 800 crowns on a semi-annual basis.³⁷ The organisation also secured facilitative agreements with various state bodies. It successfully petitioned the Austrian Railway Administration to reserve separate train cars for migrants – with tickets granted at reduced rates.³⁸ Meanwhile, beginning from 1895, it exploited its ties with the District Governor of Landeck to file a request for the passage of legislation that would have required all Tyrolean Swabian Children to travel under its guidance.³⁹ By 1910 at the latest, these efforts bore fruit in

34 The broader context of debates over schooling in the Alps suggests a cause for this chronological gap. Catholic conservatives criticised the 1869 *Reichsvolksschulgesetz*'s compulsory schooling requirements as an undue burden for poor families. In 1883, they succeeded at passing a revision to the law, which allowed sub-provincial authorities to release children from instruction for "grave reasons". In Tyrol, this revision generated discussion about the legality of the Swabian Children, which was partially addressed by the passage of a provincial school law in 1891.

35 For this letter from Geiger to the *Statthalterei*, see letter of 24 August 1892. "Hohe K. K. Statthalterei!", Nachlass Otto Uhlig, Vorarlberger Landesarchiv (hereafter VLA), Bregenz.

36 Uhlig, *Die Schwabenkinder aus Tirol und Vorarlberg*, 198.

37 Because the stenographical reports of the Tyrolean *Landtag* contain references to these requests in some years but not in others, it is difficult to say whether funding was requested every year or every other year. A report of the initial subsidy can be found in "Tiroler Landtag, Innsbruck, 29. März (IX. Sitzung)", *Bregenzer Tagblatt* (31 March 1892), 6. Subsidies of 400 crowns were requested in 1898 for 1898 to 1901, see *Stenographische Berichte [...] Tirol aus der VIII. Landtagsperiode* (1898), 96. In 1902 and 1903, the association was awarded subsidies of 800 crowns, see *Stenographische Berichte [...] Tirol aus der IX. Landtagsperiode* (1903), 391.

38 For a reference to this agreement, see Venerand Schöpf's press brief to *Der Burggräfler* from 1894, "V. Sch. Pettneu, 29. April. Schwabenkinderangelegenheit", *Der Burggräfler* (5 May 1894), 5; for a reference to this practice in later years, and in particular to the number of cars (7) that the rail authority might allot, see "Der 'Sklavenhandel' mit den Hütkindern", *Tiroler Anzeiger* (7 November 1908), 1.

39 This strategy was agreed upon at the association's 1895 annual meeting. See "Landeck, 15. Januar. Generalversammlung des Hütkindervereines", *Brixener Chronik* (22 January 1895), 6–7.

a district order that rendered the approval of school dispensations contingent on a promise to travel under the association's care.⁴⁰ All of this drives home that while, in the public eye, the organisation's priests garnered the most attention as functionaries, provincial state officials played a substantial role in coordinating legal efforts and arranging funding.

From its founding statutes, the association indicated its intent to act as the Swabian Children's surrogate caretakers. The specific types of oversight, material support and care it offered corresponded to aspects that critics had long castigated as evidence of parental neglect.⁴¹ These statutes correspondingly promised to arrange "reliable accompaniment and guidance on the journey" and to guarantee "good accommodations at the places of employment".⁴² Rather subtly, the reference to "reliable accompaniment and guidance" gestured to the tendency towards begging and vagrancy while en route. Recurrent rumours of such behaviour stretching back to the 1860s had long blamed parents or other accompanying relatives rather than the children themselves. By 1891, the notion that parents were teaching children to beg and wander in lieu of heading to Swabia had become a standard trope in critiques of these migrations.⁴³

The notion that the association assumed a form of temporary guardianship was also borne out in the way it administered the aspects of journey, labour negotiations and labour terms. Per the journey, it established procedures by which to collect children at particular locations in order to convey them by rail and ferry as a single conglomeration. From departure in Landeck to arrival in Friedrichshafen, this lasted less than 48 hours. In his recounting of it, Otto Wenzl, who travelled in 1909 under the association's guidance at the relatively advanced age of 15, revealed the sorts of procedures the association established for collection and travel:

The first collection point for the district of Imst was the railway station. When everyone was there and accounted for by Priest Greil, [he] then travelled with us to Landeck. There, another travel guide waited for us [...]. We Swabian Children set our backpacks down all together at the train station and marched with the travel guide to the guesthouse [*Zur Sonne*]. There, at its entrance, Priest Schatz asked each child's name before we went to our evening meal.⁴⁴

The stark difference between this and the account of a journey some four decades earlier, by ten-year-old Regina Lampert, suggests just how much the Swabian Children Association had transformed the experiences of these migrants. For Lampert,

40 Uhlig, *Die Schwabenkinder aus Tirol und Vorarlberg*, 203.

41 For an original draft of these statutes, see "Verein zum Wohle der sogenannten 'Schwabenkinder' u. jugendlicher Arbeiter überhaupt" (8 February 1891), 3 pages, Nachlass Otto Uhlig, VLA.

42 Ibid.

43 Ludwig von Hormann, "Alpenstaffage, 6. Die Schwabenkinder", *Wiener Zeitung* (30 November 1874), 6.

44 Otto Wenzl was one of the individuals Uhlig interviewed for his study. This passage is quoted from Uhlig, *Die Schwabenkinder aus Tirol und Vorarlberg*, 204.

the journey to Swabia involved exploration and discovery, as heretofore unseen vistas, villages and people came into view. It was not simply a trip but a *trek* populated by characters known and unknown. For her, a boy from the neighbouring village, serving as an early travel guide, signified a vital connection to home. Alternately, a curious passenger aboard the ferry from Bregenz emphasised just how far she had come.⁴⁵ In contrast, for Wenzl, the trip was understood according to a bilateral interaction between the migrants and the association's clergymen -- note that only the clergymen had names. While it is certainly possible that Wenzl knew the travel guide at the Landeck railway station, the absence of identifying information reinforced the irrelevance of those who were neither migrants nor clergy. Lastly, the utilitarian description of movement from one place to another suggested how the accelerated speed of the journey impacted the entire experience. There was simply less time and opportunity to interact with people along the way.

The association's organisational model was explicitly designed to sequester children from their surroundings and thereby to eliminate possibilities for begging. In offering rail tickets at a reduced rate, it sought to undercut claims that the expense of the trip, when combined with the poverty of the children and their families, necessitated begging.⁴⁶ Likewise, by conducting the journey over a much shorter time than was customary -- most children took at least a week to reach Swabia prior to the association's interventions -- it reduced the need for additional days and funds for accommodations and food. Meanwhile, by securing separate rail cars and ferries, it limited the possibility for engagement with strangers in the communities lining the route.⁴⁷

The organisation was also intent on addressing longstanding concerns over the difficulties of the journey. Tyrolean specialist and educator Ludwig von Hörmann's portrayal of these difficulties from 1877 was typical:

It is a touching sight when such a small caravan comes down the street into a village. Grouped up around their guide -- usually an elderly man or woman -- like sheep around a shepherd, they wander along the street in shabby clothes [with] a walking stick in hand and a tiny sack on their backs.⁴⁸

Since it often coincided with the region's last and first snows, the association's elimination of travel by foot ameliorated concerns over the hardships of the journey.⁴⁹ Alternately, the network of inns on which the association relied, like the *Zur*

45 Lampert, *Die Schwabengängerin*, 51–58.

46 "V. Sch. Pettneu, 29. April (Schwabenkinderangelegenheit)", *Der Burggräfler* (5 May 1894), 5.

47 One example of a separate rail reservation may be found in "Die Schwabenkinder", *Innsbrucker Nachrichten* (31 March 1911), 5–6; an example of the separate ship, or *Sonderschiff*, can be found referenced in "Oberinntal", *Tiroler Volksbote* (28 March 1909), 5.

48 Ludwig von Hörmann, *Tiroler Volkstypen: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sitten und Kleinindustrie in den Alpen* (Wien: Gerold, 1877), 100–101.

49 A few references to these snows, and a related expression of gratitude for the association's intervention, may be found in "Nauders, Oberinntal. 23. März", *Tiroler Volksblatt* (31 March 1907), 7; "Tirols Sklavenhandel", *Tiroler Volksblatt* (25 November 1911), 2.

Sonne in Landeck and the *Zum Rad* in Friedrichshafen, addressed the perception of the Swabian Children as itinerant street-children who occasionally slept under the stars.

The association's interventions were no less transformative for the labour negotiations at the so-called "child markets". The first and most visible change it introduced concerned the places of destination. While Ravensburg had long been the site of the largest and most well-known of these markets, numerous other, smaller markets were often organised on an ad-hoc basis in villages throughout Upper Swabia. This meant that, for most children and their guides, the process of finding employment had been informal and piecemeal. Most migrants simply took the first acceptable offer they found along the way.⁵⁰

The association changed this by funnelling all of its charges into the two cities of Friedrichshafen and Ravensburg. This was a decision that, due to the sheer numbers the association brought to one location at a specific time, had the effect of attracting a corresponding mass of employers. The resulting spectacle led to numerous reports of children being greeted by 500 or more adults at the port. As one *Friedrichshafener Seeblatt* contributor put it in 1895:

The Tiroler and Montafoner *Hüttekinder* came in today before noon in unexpectedly large numbers [...]. There must have been around 250 children, [both] boys and girls. Yet a much larger number of employers from the entire region waited as well, namely from Baden [...]. Unfortunately, many of the employers were not "seen to" ("versehen"), since there were more [of them] than there were of the children.⁵¹

In this rowdy atmosphere, association priests conducted labour negotiations for hundreds of children in mere hours. These time constraints applied not least because the caravan was set to convey those children still without employers on to Ravensburg that same evening.

Finally, in order to maintain oversight even during the employment terms, the association introduced labour contracts, notice cards and blacklists. Taken in concert, these had the effect of projecting this semi-public oversight, via the association, across the Austro-German border. Printed in the thousands over the course of the association's existence, the contracts forced employers to negotiate on the association's terms.⁵² The last line of these contracts drove this point home: "The latter [the employer] must turn to the administration of the association [...] in all issues relating to the conditions of employment". The contract's stipulations

50 A reference to this tendency may be found in "Oberinntal. 26. März. Vom Verein der Hüttekinder". *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* (1 April 1893), 1.

51 From the Friedrichshafen *Seeblatt* (16 March 1895), quoted from Bianca Hahnen, "Hüte- oder Schwabenkinder in Friedrichshafen", *Friedrichshafener Jahrbuch für Geschichte und Kultur* 3 (2009), 73.

52 For several of these contracts, which were produced as part of a state survey by Württemberger officials in 1908, see StaSig, Wü – 65-26 T 1-2: Bn 348.

furthermore compelled the employer to maintain certain standards of care during the labour terms.

The employer is obligated to handle these young workers as would a good house father, to encourage the same to [good] order and good manners, to supervise their religious-moral (*religiös-sittliches*) conduct, and especially also to convey the same on Sundays and certain Fridays to Holy Mass [...].

These requirements are notable for their emphasis on religious education and their silence on the issue of schooling. This was, however, consistent with the association's official stances. Because the children were excused from schooling in Austria for the purposes of work in Germany, it would constitute an undue burden to expect them to attend school over the summers.

The only areas of flexibility in these contracts concerned issues of wages and the city at which employers could surrender their charges back into the association's care. For example, the contract for 15-year-old Hermann Stampfer of Nauders, signed in 1897, awarded him 75 marks for the duration of his term and two sets of clothing. Alternately, the contract for Filomena Patscheider of Graun, signed in 1908, granted her 100 marks, two sets of clothing and two marks as a bonus for *Blutfreitag*.⁵³ It bears mentioning that no information on the children's parents or legal guardians was provided in these contracts. The only details are their towns of origin and their names. In this way, the contracts treat them as dependent subjects of the association and so indicate that all issues about their treatment would be conveyed to the organisation's intermediaries rather than parents or legal guardians.

The notice cards (*Meldungskarten*), which children were required to present to priests in their places of employment, served a similar purpose.⁵⁴ It was through this tool, introduced as early as 1895, that the association enrolled local priests on the other side of the Austro-German border as auxiliary functionaries. In addition to providing a method by which to contact the association in cases of dispute or mistreatment, the priests were also expected to check up on the children and report back any issues. The cards themselves were explicit about the association's expectations:

The Association for the Care of the *Hüttekinder* in Tyrol transfers the child (name) ..., into your protection, and requests that you supervise the same in religious-moral respects (*religiös sittlicher Beziehung*), [... and that you] enforce the labour-contracts and issue a certificate of moral conduct upon termination.⁵⁵

⁵³ "Blood Friday" is a Catholic holiday, usually held on the first Friday after Ascension Day, common to parts of Austria and southern Germany. It usually involves a procession on horseback that draws crowds of congregants each year.

⁵⁴ While Uhlig's *Nachlass* does not contain an example of this document, it is referenced in, as but one example, Siegmund Kraus, *Kinderarbeit und Gesetzlicher Kinderschutz in Österreich* (Wien: Franz Deuticke, 1904), 169.

⁵⁵ Uhlig, *Die Schwabenkinder aus Tirol und Vorarlberg*, 208.

The latter was to be written on the backs of the cards. These notice cards served to maintain the association's oversight even during the labour terms while simultaneously providing mechanisms for dispute resolution. The cards also helped to supplement the routine visitations, which then-chairman Alois Gaim conducted for each of the association's charges during the summer months.

Finally, the blacklists, or "black books" (*Schwarze Bücher*) as they were called, represented the primary form of censure in cases of contract violation on the part of employers. In previous decades, scattered sources suggest, children used an informal method for isolating and avoiding undesirable employers. According to one 1895 *Die Gartenlaube* article, which comports with the personal recollections of Otto Wenzl, employers who mistreated children one season were discussed and described by children while en route. At the market, children would sometimes employ a piece of chalk to mark undesirable employers.⁵⁶ Association chairman Alois Gaim rendered these sorts of informal methods obsolete with his introduction of the "black book", in which he recorded the names of unfit employers and the dates of their infractions. He declined, importantly, to record the nature of their transgressions. These lists served an additional function of deflecting criticism. In one 1913 letter, Gaim assured that claims of children being mistreated were "increasingly rare" on account of "the actions of the association and the introduction of the black books [...]".⁵⁷ While, in this letter, Gaim suggested that those recorded might be subjected to court proceedings, the "black books" were often used to apply a softer form of censure. The association would simply refuse to undersign contracts for those with blacklisted names.

Effects for neighbouring Vorarlberg

The association was extraordinarily successful at persuading legally participating Tyrolean Swabian Children, or those who went through the proper channels of applying for a schooling dispensation with the explicit purpose of going to Swabia to travel under its care. In its early years, members did express exasperation over the numbers of children who travelled without its benefit – individuals who were derided as "*Wilde*".⁵⁸ However, by 1910 at the latest, the provincial school board had begun to tie the approval of school dispensations to the applicant's promise to use the association.⁵⁹ For example, in one surviving school dispensation report from 1913, 13-year-old Theresia Fischer from the village of Laatsch found her application approved "only under the condition that she undertakes the journey to *Schwabenland* with the *Hütekinderverein* (the Swabian Children Association)".⁶⁰ For its

56 Arthur Achleitner, "Tiroler 'Schwabenkinder'", *Die Gartenlaube* 17 (1895), 281–283.

57 Alois Gaim himself often boasted of the "black book's" success at dissuading unfit employers. For this, see his letter of 10 November 1913, "Euer Hochgeboren!", *Nachlass Otto Uhlig*, VLA.

58 "Nachträgliches zum Auszuge der Schwabenkinder", *Brixener Chronik* (26 March 1895), 6.

59 These *Schuldispens* applications were usually drafted by teachers or other local school authorities, but parents often wrote appeals in the case of rejection.

60 Landesschulrat 1098 – 18a (Fasc. 13), *Tiroler Landesarchiv*, Innsbruck.

part, the association also, as a matter of course, verified that each of the children seeking to use its resources had followed proper procedures and possessed the necessary documents.⁶¹ This meant, specifically, that children had furnished proofs of poverty and dutiful school attendance to acquire a schooling dispensation, which they then used to acquire an itinerary-specific travel visa for work in Swabia.⁶²

After the first two seasons, which saw the association guide 134 and 70 children respectively, the numbers seldom dipped below 150 in any one year.⁶³ While, on aggregate, this accounted for less than one per cent of school-aged Tyroleans, because of the policies regarding the application process it effectively encapsulated all legally participating Swabian Children from that Crownland.⁶⁴ Year after year, the numbers of children travelling under the association's care decreased slightly between 1895 and 1912. Chairman Alois Gaim argued that its spike in 1913, adding 40 children in comparison with the previous year, was a result of the "Balkan disruptions" (Balkan wars) that spurred a decline in the textiles industry in the Alps.⁶⁵

However, because it remained throughout exclusive to the Crownland of Tyrol, the association never officially claimed guardianship over any children from neighbouring Vorarlberg. This is notable not least because just as many, if not more, registered Swabian Children continually hailed from that other Crownland. As per an Austrian child-labour survey of 1902, for example, some 335 Vorarlberger children were given school dispensations as *Schwabenkinder*, a number that contrasts with the "200-300" led by the Swabian Children Association the same year.⁶⁶ Correspondingly, migrants from Vorarlberg tended to behave much as had their Tyrolean counterparts prior to the association's intervention. According to one 1914 meeting of the Ministry of Agriculture, since there was "no common association" for Vorarlberg similar to that operating in Tyrol, "bans have been ineffective in the face of the urgent need".⁶⁷ Meanwhile, as surviving reports from a survey organised by the Württemberg district of Wangen in 1908 reveal, in contrast to

61 Josef Muther, "Die Wanderung der Schwabenkinder in Tirol und Vorarlberg", *Zeitschrift für Kinderschutz und Jugendfürsorge* 4 (1912), 1-2.

62 School dispensations themselves reveal some flexibility in these requirements. Sometimes, for example, there was no explicit reference to poverty, whereas in other cases, there was no reference to past school attendance. This dynamic is legible in the collection of *Schuldispens* applications that survive at Bezirkshauptmannschaft Bregenz, Sch. 529, III, u.a. *Schwabenkinder*, VLA.

63 A list of these numbers may be found in a 1914 letter from the Austrian Ministry of Agriculture: Präsidium des K. K. Ackerbau-Ministeriums, 11 March 1914, Nachlass Otto Uhlig, VLA.

64 According to one 1908 report, there were some 143,411 school-aged children in the Crownland of Tyrol. See K. K. Arbeitsstatistisches Amt im Handelsministerium, *Erhebung über die Kinderarbeit in Österreich im Jahre 1908, II. Teil. Textliche Darstellung. 1. Heft* (Wien: K. u. K. Hof- und Universitäts-Buchhändler, 1911), XIV.

65 See letter of 10 November 1913, "Euer Hochgeboren!", Nachlass Otto Uhlig, VLA.

66 For the first number from Vorarlberg, see *Innsbrucker Nachrichten* (22 March 1904), 5; for the rough count from Tyrol, see "Innthal und Seitenthaler", *Tiroler Volksbote* (4 March 1902), 10.

67 Präsidium des K. K. Ackerbau-Ministeriums, 11 March 1914, Nachlass Otto Uhlig, VLA.

the association's written contracts, most children from Vorarlberg continued to conclude labour terms orally.⁶⁸

Reflective as they are of the differing material experiences of the Tyrolean and Vorarlberger migrants in the era of the Swabian Children Association, these facts did little to diminish the association's impact as a central figure in public discourse from its founding onwards. While some, like Vorarlberger *Reichsrat* representative Martin Thurnher, reminded contemporaries that "no such association yet exists [in Vorarlberg]", most began to speak of it as interchangeable with the migration of Austrian children to Swabia more broadly.⁶⁹ As a result, many began to regard practices introduced under the association's aegis, such as the chartering of separate ferries and train cars, as transhistorical features of this migration system rather than recent innovations.⁷⁰

The First World War and the Swabian Children Association's dissolution

In March of 1915, long-time association chairman Alois Gaim sent a missive to the labour office (*Arbeitsamt*) of Ravensburg, informing them that the *Statthalterei* for the two Alpine Austrian Crownlands would henceforth cease issuing travel visas for the Swabian Children. The point of the letter was to let the Ravensburg office know that forty "Association Children" (*Vereinskinder*) had been registered to migrate that season, but that the association would no longer be able to convey them abroad. While "the population was indignant" at the *Statthalterei*'s decision, Gaim argued, "the association's leadership cannot be blamed for this, since it was entirely prepared to organise the migrations".⁷¹ Considering that it was never resurrected after the borders reopened in 1917, this letter ended up being one of the organisation's last official acts. In all, it had overseen the migrations for 25 years, shepherding multiple generations of children from Tyrol to Swabia.

The Great War provided the disruption necessary for a transformation in the treatment of Vorarlberger Swabian Children even as it sounded the death knell for the migrations from Tyrol. In noting this divergence, contemporaries expressed befuddlement because, as far as they were able to tell, the economic conditions remained much the same in both Crownlands. In 1928, Vorarlberg's Provincial School Inspector expressed that, "There (in Tyrol) it was possible to break with an old tradition despite the fact that those children were economically no better off

68 See, for example, the results from the survey in the city of Wangen itself, StaSig – Wü 65-42 I 4

69 *Stenographische Protokolle über die Sitzungen des Hauses der Abgeordneten des Österreichischen Reichsrathes. XVII. Session, XLII. Band* (1902), 11403.

70 The train itself was, of course, a somewhat recent introduction to the region. The Arlbergbahn, which linked Innsbruck with Bludenz, only opened in 1884. However, as one association member noted in 1893, parents were apt to travel by foot even where train travel was available to "save the one gulden". See "Oberinntal. 26. März. Vom Verein der Hüt Kinder", *Vorarlberger Volksblatt* (1 April 1893), 1.

71 Letter of 23 March 1915, "Löbliches Arbeitsamt Ravensburg", Nachlass Otto Uhlig, VLA.

than our own *Schwabenkinder*".⁷² In looking back on developments from just after the war, contemporaries were left to wonder if legal censures had been sufficient on their own, or if some other aspect had played a role.

While evidence is scarce, the most likely explanation for the practice's end in Tyrol resides in the dissolution of the Swabian Children Association itself. By 1915, the Tyrolean state had long treated the association's utilisation as compulsory for prospective migrants. This had granted Chairman Alois Gaim authority over a vast array of details. While some "*Wilde*" may have continued to travel of their own accord, the general impression was that, by the turn of the twentieth century, most children from the Crownland travelled under the association's care. Its dissolution in 1915 therefore did more than rob potential migrants of a travel method – it produced a hole in the legal structure and signalled the collapse of migratory pathways. This meant that when the borders eventually reopened, Tyrolean parents, teachers and administrators would have been forced to pioneer a new legal consensus regarding schooling releases, the acquisition of visas, public funding for rail travel and labour contracts. Parents would also have had to consider issues including the payment of fees for visas, the purchase of railway tickets (or the proper routes to take if going by foot), wage negotiations and even the identification of willing employers. In sum, decades of experience had rendered Tyrolean parents dependent on the Swabian Children Association to handle the array of practical details necessary for seeking work in Swabia. The war may not have permanently stopped the migrations for those from Vorarlberg, correspondingly, because parents were never forced to surrender these capacities to an organisation like the Swabian Children Association.

Even so, the Swabian Children Association's legacy as a model for Vorarlbergers looking back after the war remained considerable. From 1919 to 1926, a small coterie of priests looked to the association's example in their efforts to extend provincial oversight. During these years, a priestly triumvirate compelled these children to join their "child trains", introduced written labour contracts and inscribed unfit employers in their very own "black books".⁷³ While these priests never attempted to found an official association, they were treated as the state's intermediaries by the provincial school board of Vorarlberg. As but one example of this dynamic, when German state officials reached out to Austrian authorities to ask that these children register as migrant workers, the school board of Vorarlberg contacted the priest in charge of the child trains at the time.⁷⁴ This organisational approach was, in all, maintained until 1937, when the last of the

⁷² Letter of 3 March 1928, "An das Bezirksarbeitsamt in Ravensburg", Nachlass Otto Uhlig, VLA.

⁷³ These were Georg Reichart, Wilhelm Walch and Ernst Sittenthaler. In his speech to the *Wirtschaftsverband Vorarlberg-Schwaben* in 1922, Wilhelm Walch explicitly invoked the Swabian Children Association as a model for his efforts in Vorarlberg after the war. "Die Hüttekinderfrage", *Vorarlberger Tageblatt* (19 July 1923), 1–2. Meanwhile, a draft version of Walch's labour contract, with the simple title "Dienstvertrag", can be found in Nachlass Otto Uhlig, VLA.

⁷⁴ See letter of 21 January 1927, Nachlass Otto Uhlig, VLA.

official "child trains" departed for Swabia under the guidance of parish priest Ernst Sittenthaler.⁷⁵

Conclusion

Scholars of the Swabian Children have suggested that the association only effectuated superficial alterations around travel route and method. This chapter, however, argues that the association's interventions reflected shifts in relationships with various state bodies, local police and enforcement agencies, and private individuals and organisations. Just as importantly, these innovations transformed the conception of the journey itself. Children travelling with the association had a quite different experience than those moving with their parents, older siblings or relatives, and these differences manifested a change in what it meant to be a *Schwabenkind*. For those travelling prior to the association's founding or on their own from Vorarlberg, the journey signified a trek characterised by hardship and difficulty. Prior to the association's existence, children moving by foot often stopped at St. Anton am Arlberg, where they tore off splinters from a statue of St. Christopher as a talisman for protection on the road.⁷⁶ On the brighter side, the moment of final separation from family was often delayed or even avoided entirely. Parents could, should they so desire, visit their children during the summers and even work alongside them if the employer needed an extra hand.⁷⁷

For those under the association's care, in contrast, the journey was a utilitarian affair that passed in two short days. Children had few opportunities to interact with the communities through which they passed or to meet fellow travellers who were not themselves Swabian Children. In place of the possibility for occasional parental visits, children were forced to say their final farewells in March. Taken as a whole, this had the effect of constructing a curated space for *Vereinskinder*, the entry into which was up to the association's discretion. While parents and other family members were excluded, employers were permitted to interact with the children provided they fit certain criteria and followed particular guidelines.⁷⁸

Conceived in this way, the association's interventions can be understood within the broader context of transformations in child-welfare administration

75 The list of official *Kinderzüge* includes a final entry for 1937. Uhlig also found other correspondence suggesting that the last of the trains left in 1937. Nachlass Otto Uhlig, VI.A.

76 For one account of this practice, see Sabine Mücke and Dorothee Breucker, "Schwabenkinder Vorarlberger, Tiroler und Graubündner Kinder als Arbeitskräfte in Oberschwaben", *Ravensburger Stadtgeschichte*, vol. 27 (Ravensburg: Volksbank Ravensburg, 1998).

77 This is precisely what Regina Lampert's father did for her first season in Swabia. See Lampert, *Die Schwabengängerin*, 61–62.

78 This calls to mind the "enclosure" thesis, which, as articulated by historians of childhood, posits that children were increasingly segregated into child-specific spaces during the course of the nineteenth century in much of Europe and North America. For a classic formulation of this argument see Stephen Lassonde, "Learning and Larning: Schooling, Juvenile Employment, and the Early Life Course in Late Nineteenth-Century New Haven", *Journal of Social History* 29, no. 4 (Summer 1996), 839–870.

throughout Europe and North America in the latter half of the nineteenth century. This association was emergent from a moment in which many were coming to regard children not simply as members of their particular communities or households, but as (future) citizens.⁷⁹ As a result, elites and officials began to consider child welfare as an issue of public need rather than private charity and so sought to enrol professionals with skills appropriate to overseeing children. The recourse to priests made sense in Tyrol on account of its strong association with Catholic traditionalism. This decision also implicitly gestured at, and ultimately aroused the ire of, Social Democrats intent on secularising education by expelling the clergy from the classroom altogether. This context helps explain at once how the Swabian Children Association was consistent with approaches to child welfare in Tyrol, and why its entanglements with state bodies have been underemphasised.

References

- Adams, Thomas M. "The Mixed Economy of Welfare: European Perspectives". In *Charity and Mutual Aid in Europe and North America since 1800*, edited by Bernard Harris and Paul Bridgen. New York: Routledge, 2007, 43–66.
- Bereuter, Elmar. *Die Schwabenkinder: die Geschichte des Kasparzwe*. München: Herbig, 2002.
- Boyer, John. *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna. Christian Socialism in Power, 1897–1918*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1995.
- Clifford, James. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Cole, Laurence, and Hans Heiss. "Unity Versus Difference: The Politics of Region-Building and National Identities in Tyrol, 1830–1867". In *Different Paths to the Nation: Regional and National Identities in Central Europe and Italy, 1830–70*, edited by Laurence Cole. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, 37–59.
- Couziniet-Weber, Michaela. "Schwabenkinder im 'Obstgarten am Bodensee': Eine Sonderform der Saisonarbeit dokumentiert am Beispiel Ailingens". *Friedrichshafener Jahrbuch für Geschichte und Kultur* 4 (2012): 134–153.
- Dickinson, Edward Ross. *The Politics of German Child Welfare from the Empire to the Federal Republic*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996.
- Frankenberg, Günter. "Shifting Boundaries: The Private, the Public, and the Welfare State". In *The Mixed Economy of Social Welfare: Public/Private Relations in England, Germany and the United States*, edited by Michael B. Katz and Christoph Sachße. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1996, 72–94.
- Giomi, Fabio, Célia Keren and Morgane Labbé. "Productive Entanglements: The Dynamics of Public-Private Interactions in the History of Social Protection". In *Public and Private Welfare in Modern Europe: Productive Entanglements*, edited by Fabio Giomi, Célia Keren and Morgane Labbé. New York: Routledge, 2022, 1–15.

⁷⁹ Edward Ross Dickinson has argued that the late nineteenth century was a transitional moment between the traditions of private charity in the early nineteenth century and the increasingly state-sponsored forms of child welfare that predominated by the 1920s. Edward Ross Dickinson, *The Politics of German Child Welfare from the Empire to the Federal Republic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).

- Griesinger, Carl Theodor. "Der Jungens- und Mädchensmarkt". In *Humoristische Bilder aus Schwaben*. Stuttgart: Verlag der Griesinger'schen Verlags- u. Antiquariatshandlung, 1844, 215–216.
- Hahnen, Bianca. "Hüte- oder Schwabenkinder in Friedrichshafen". *Friedrichshafener Jahrbuch für Geschichte und Kultur* 3 (2009): 58–87.
- Hörmann, Ludwig von. *Tiroler Volkstypen: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sitten und Kleinindustrie in den Alpen*. Wien: Gerold, 1877.
- K.K. Arbeitsstatistisches Amt im Handelsministerium. *Erhebung über die Kinderarbeit in Österreich im Jahre 1908, II. Teil. Textliche Darstellung. 1. Heft*. Wien: K.u.K. Hof- und Universitäts-Buchhändler, 1911.
- Kraus, Siegmund. *Kinderarbeit und gesetzlicher Kinderschutz in Österreich*. Wien: Franz Deuticke, 1904.
- Lampert, Regina. *Die Schwabengängerin: Erinnerungen einer jungen Magd aus Vorarlberg 1864–1874*, edited by Bernard Tschöfen. Zürich: Limmat Verlag, 2000.
- Lassonde, Stephen. "Learning and Earning: Schooling, Juvenile Employment, and the Early Life Course in Late Nineteenth-Century New Haven". *Journal of Social History* 29, no. 4 (Summer 1996): 839–870.
- Lucassen, Leo. "A Blind Spot: Migratory and Travelling Groups in Western European Historiography". *International Review of Social History* 38, no. 2 (August 1993): 209–235.
- Memminger, Johann Daniel Georg von. *Beschreibung des Oberamts Ravensburg*. Stuttgart: Cotta, 1836.
- Mücke, Sabine, and Dorothee Breucker. "Schwabenkinder: Vorarlberger, Tiroler und Graubündner Kinder als Arbeitskräfte in Oberschwaben". *Ravensburger Stadtgeschichte*, vol. 27. Ravensburg: Volkshank Ravensburg, 1998.
- Muther, Josef. "Die Wanderung der Schwabenkinder in Tirol und Vorarlberg". *Zeitschrift für Kinderschutz und Jugendfürsorge* 4 (1912): 1–2.
- Ralser, Michaela. *Heimkindheiten: Geschichte der Jugendfürsorge und Heimerziehung in Tirol und Vorarlberg*. Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2017.
- Rohrer, Joseph. *Über die Tiroler*. Wien: Dollische Buchhandlung, 1796.
- Seglias, Loretta. *Die Schwabenkinder aus Graubünden: Saisonale Kinderemigration nach Oberschwaben*. Chur: Kommissionsverlag Desertina, 2004.
- Spiss, Roman. *Saisonwanderer, Schwabenkinder und Landfahrer: die gute alte Zeit im Stanzertal*. Innsbruck: Wagner, 1993.
- Uhlig, Otto. *Die Schwabenkinder aus Tirol und Vorarlberg*. Innsbruck: Wagner, 1978; 3rd edition 1998.
- Unowsky, Dan. *The Pomp and Politics of Patriotism: Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848–1916*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2005.
- Zimmermann, Stefan, ed. *Die Schwabenkinder: Arbeit in der Fremde vom 17. bis 20. Jahrhundert*. Ostfildern: Süddeutsche Verlagsgesellschaft im Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2012.