PHOTOGRAPHY, MEMORY AND IDENTITY: THE ÉMIGRÉ PHOTOGRAPHER LISEL HAAS (1898-1989)

by

Amy Shulman

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the work of the German-Jewish photographer, Lisel Haas (1898 – 1989). It focuses on a selection of her portrait photographs spanning a period of almost 40 years, from before the Second World War to the early 1970s. Haas's work has not been the focus of any publication to date; this thesis situates her within the fields of photography and exile studies by focusing on the significance of memory and identity. This approach places Haas within émigré photography rather than exile photography. The latter places emphasis on political persecution; this study rather concentrates on the formation of memory and identity of an émigré.

The present work has utilised the extensive archival material of the uncatalogued Lisel Haas Collection at the Birmingham City Archives in order to construct a contextual basis for Haas's work. This thesis has been influenced primarily by the work of Annette Kuhn and Marianne Hirsch whose research has developed an understanding of the significance of the relationship between photography and memory, particularly in light of the Holocaust.

The study introduces an original approach to Haas's work; it examines the role of photography in memory at the time of the Holocaust, developing a discussion surrounding the creation of memories in family photography before exploring the role of the photograph in the construction of the photographer's identity.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study of a selection of portrait photographs by the German-Jewish émigré photographer, Lisel Haas who was born in Mönchengladbach, Germany in 1898 and died in Birmingham, Britain in 1989 (Fig. 1). This study focuses on memory and identity in relation to Haas, who was persecuted by the National Socialists and as a result emigrated to Britain in 1938. It lends itself to an increasing interest in visual culture in exile studies as well as a growing arts culture in Birmingham. The selected works, spanning some 40 years, serve as a focus for the discussion of photography and memory. This thesis aims to place Haas's work within an art historical framework in relation to exile studies while arguing that photography is significant in the formation of memory as well as female émigré identity. These issues will be explored with specific reference to the Holocaust and photography, family memory and postcolonial theoretical discourse surrounding the concept of home and identity.

Haas emigrated to Birmingham in December 1938 with her father, having had to abandon her photographic studio business in Mönchengladbach on the 15 November 1938, just five days after the pogrom night.[1] She was not granted a permit to begin work immediately in Britain, but in 1940 Haas was employed as a so-called photocall photographer by the Birmingham Repertory Theatre. Her theatre photographs are now housed primarily in the Victoria and Albert Museum Archive in London, copies of which can also be viewed as part of the Birmingham Repertory Theatre Archive, one of the collections at the Birmingham City Archives, Central Library. Although Haas's work for the theatre would make for a

[1]See Gunter Erkens, *Juden in Mönchengladbach*, Mönchengladbach, 1989, 449. Although it could not be established with certainty that Haas's business was shut down as a result of the pogrom, it can been asserted that this was most probably the case (in a conversation between the author and Dorothy Williams, Haas's niece, Dorothy stated that Haas had not said it had been taken over, but rather as a result of it being abandoned it had closed)

fascinating study, the photographer has stated that 'as much as I liked my permit for Stage and Artists [...] I was glad when [...] after the war and my naturalisation, my partner and I took up portrait photography again.'[2] This statement allows for an insight into the way Haas felt about photography, and from this it may be deduced that portrait photography held a significant place in her career.

The portrait photographs which are the focus of this thesis belong to the Lisel Haas Collection, also housed in the Birmingham City Archives. This archive is unknown and is yet to be catalogued. There is a vast collection of photographs and papers from Germany and Britain, which provide material through which some of Haas's personal history and the techniques she employed as a professional photographer have been discovered.[3] Rather than attempt to contextualise the entirety of the archive (for which a cataloguing of the archive would be a condition) or exploring the technical side of photography, this work focuses on a small number of photographs in order to construct a concise exploration of Haas and allow for a further understanding of the complexities of the social and cultural politics of pre-war Germany, Britain at war and post-war Britain. In short, this thesis aims to provide new material in the field of photography, and to a certain extent, a new approach to the work of a German-Jewish émigré photographer.

It is only in recent years that visual culture has been explored in relation to exile studies in Britain. To date, studies related to exile have mainly been concerned with literature, as noted by Jutta Vinzent.[4] The foundation of Britain's Centre for Exile Studies by Professor James McPherson Ritchie at the University of Aberdeen in 1988 (that became the Centre for German

[2]Lisel Haas, in a speech given to the Birmingham Women's Jewish Group, chaired by Mrs Fisher, date unknown
[3] There are approximately 70 boxes in the archive, including negatives and glass plates
[4]Jutta Vinzent in her introduction to *Identity and Image: Refugee Artists from Nazi Germany 1933-1945*, Munich, 2007, 9

and Austrian Exile Studies, based now at the Institute of German Studies, University of London since 1995) instigated the development of projects focused on the art and photography of German-Jewish émigrés. It was supported by the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex in 1994.[5] Little attention has been given to émigré photographers so far. In Britain, such publications include Duncan Forbes's essay, 'Politics, Photography and Exile in the Life of Edith Tudor-Hart (1908-1973)'. The work focuses on the émigré photographer, Edith Tudor-Hart, a Communist Party activist who sought to introduce a social realist method to photography in Britain. Little, too, has been published in English on female émigré photographers. For example, work by Erich Auerbach (1911 – 1977), Helmut Gernsheim (1913 – 1995) and Kurt Hutton (was Hübschmann, 1893 – 1960) has been included in exhibitions and publications where their female counterparts have been somewhat neglected. This thesis comes at a time when an awareness of the importance of art in exile is being recognised. Haas has not been included in any such project to date, but this study will provide an exclusive insight into her life as an émigré and draw attention to the significance of photography in the formation of memory and its ability to help shape identity.[6]

The present work makes use of theoretical approaches to the Holocaust, family and memory as well as aspects of postcolonial studies to inform a discussion of the significance of photography in the construction of a female émigré identity. It is important for this work that Haas is identified as a female photographer so as to contextualise her own approach to constructing an identity through the medium of photography. As a female photographer whose work has not featured in a publication on photography to date, this study will argue

[5]For example, the Centre at the University of Sussex has produced a project on photography and Jewish identity, *Visualising Modernity: Photography and Jewish Identities in Berlin and Vienna 1870-1940* as well as an extensive study on the life and work of Arnold Daghani, a survivor. See www.sussex.ac.uk/cgjs
[6]In relation to Birmingham and their photographic archives, see Birmingham City Archive website www.connectinghistories.org.uk

that Haas's work should not only belong to the history of women's photography but also to the richly diverse history of émigré art and culture. Val Williams in her seminal text *The Other Observers. Women Photographers in Britain 1900 to the Present* acknowledges that the existence and importance of women's photography had not been fully recognised. She states that 'the aims of this history are twofold: first, to resituate within a women's tradition, women whose work is widely known and secondly to rediscover the work of women photographers whose photography has fallen into obscurity.'[7] There are few works which focus on the life and work of a single female émigré photographer, but Duncan Forbes's essay, as previously mentioned, is a noteworthy study of a female Austrian émigré photographer in Britain and promotes the importance of photography in exile. Andrea Hammel has published works on literature and exile, focusing on female writers. Her book, *Everyday Life as Alternative Space in Exile Writing: The Novels of Anna Gmeyner, Selma Kahn, Hilde Spiel, Martina Wied and Hermynia Zur Mühlen* is a comparative study of five German-speaking women and aims to place their work within the field of feminist literary studies whilst drawing attention to female émigré identity. This has been useful for this study in terms of its approach to female identity.

The last ten years have seen a development in the theories of memory and photography in relation to the Holocaust. Roland Barthes's *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography* provides a basis for the approach to memory in this thesis. The impact of Barthes's text on photography and memory has been recognised, specifically his understanding of the complex nature of photography and memory, encapsulated in his theory of the *punctum* and *studium*.[8] Barthes's theory of memory was a starting point for the present work and sparked an acute understanding of the power of a photograph in the creation of memory, assisting research into

[7]Val Williams, *The Other Observers. Women Photographers in Britain 1900 to the Present*, London, 1986, 7
[8]This will be further examined in Chapter One

the literature on Holocaust studies and photography. Scholars in the field of the Holocaust have explored the uses of photography in remembering, or consequently forgetting, the atrocities of the Holocaust and have examined the impact of photographs on memory. Barbie Zelizer, whose work *Remembering to Forget. Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye* questions how we use images to record events and in remembering painful events, specifically the Holocaust.[9] This thesis has benefited greatly from such work, informing a discussion surrounding the value of Haas's pre-war photographs as documents of remembrance in order to argue that Haas may have used photography to go some way in bridging the gap between her life before her emigration, and after. The existing discourse on memory and photography is such that it extends to the significance of photographs to family memory.

The field of memory work is well established and it is for this reason that the study of a German-Jewish émigré photographer can benefit from the discourse relating to family photography and memory. Annette Kuhn has published widely on this topic, using her own experiences of family life to inform her discussions. Kuhn states that 'memory work can create new understandings of both past and present, while yet refusing a nostalgia that embalms the past in a perfect, irretrievable moment.'[10] It is this recognition of the past that places significance on the use of memory work in relation to Haas as an émigré. Rather than keep hidden the past, such memory work aims to reveal how we once were, enabling us to look beyond the picture of a constructed family moment. For this study then, 'a discussion of ethnicity and cultural identity in relation to such upheavals is central to any consideration of the meaning of "family" and the way families represent themselves to themselves and others

[9]See also Barbie Zelizer, *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*, New Jersey, 2001 and Andrea Liss *Trespassing through Shadows: Memory, Photography, and the Holocaust*, Minneapolis and London, 1998
[10]Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets. Act of Memory and Imagination*, London and New York, 2002, 10.

through their photographs.'[11] The interrelationship between memory, family and identity is consequently considered in the last chapter of this study. The construction of a cultural identity and subsequently a home is something discussed by the postcolonial theorist Stuart Hall, amongst others. The benefits of postcolonial theoretical discourse in relation to the present work became apparent whilst attempting to gain a more in depth understanding of the formation of an identity for a female émigré in Britain during and after the Second World War. As Robin Cohen explains, 'a member's adherence to a [...] community is demonstrated by an acceptance of an inescapable link with their past migration history.'[12] While postcolonialism is concerned with the process of emigration and this study does not explicitly examine Haas's emigration itself, Chapter Three is concerned with topics significant in postcolonial study, such as the question of a cultural identity and the construction of home. This particular kind of construction will be analysed in light of such postcolonial discussions surrounding the acceptance, by an émigré, of an inescapable link with their past which impacts upon their present situation.

In order to research this thesis, much work has been undertaken with the Lisel Haas Collection housed in the Birmingham City Archives. Archival work has been crucial to the formation of this thesis. The collection consists mainly of numerous boxes of photographs, negatives and glass plates but does also include some correspondence between Haas and theatre companies, photographic businesses such as Kodak, and official communication concerned with matters of rent, bills and property damages. For the purpose of this study, I have consulted twenty archival boxes (although the total number in the archive is much larger) which have been invaluable to the development of the present work. However, the

[11]Jo Spence and Patricia Holland (eds.) in the introduction to *Family Snaps. The Meanings of Domestic Photography*, London, 1991, 14
[12]Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, Oxford, 1997, ix

boxes of photographs do not have explanations of the specific photographs they contain or where they have come from; although some boxes have estimated dates on them, the individual photographs have not been dated. This leaves some questions marks surrounding Haas's work, but these primary sources have provided the only official documentation of Haas and without such sources, her work may not have been recorded. The archive collection was donated by Dorothy Williams, Haas's niece. I have met with Dorothy on a number of occasions to gain an insight into the photographer's life and hopefully grasp a deeper understanding of how her situation as an émigré may have impacted upon her work. Through this, the importance of oral sources in gender and exile studies has become apparent.[13] My interviews with Dorothy have been fundamental in the shaping of this thesis, as not only has Dorothy provided a personal knowledge of Haas and her work, but they have also allowed for a greater understanding of the context in which Haas's lived and worked; essential in providing the basis for argument in Chapter Two.

This study comprises of three chapters. The first chapter provides an account of Haas's photographs before her emigration to Britain. It examines the relationship between photography and memory, covering the ways in which photographs can perform as formative functions of memory. It makes use of material published within Holocaust studies, informing a discussion of the socio-political influences on Haas which resulted in her emigration. The chapter takes note of Roland Barthes's fundamental argument that photography cannot, in essence, be memory[14] but rather draws attention to the power of photographs in playing a part in the act of remembrance which Barthes reflects on in *Camera Lucida*. This discussion of photography and memory in relation to the Holocaust leads into Chapter Two, in which a

[13]See Susan H. Armitage and Sherna Berger Gluck, 'Reflections on Women's Oral History. An Exchange' reprinted in Robert Perks and Alistair Thompson (eds.) *The Oral History Reader*, London and New York, 2006, 73-82

[14]Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography*,(trans. Richard Howard), Reading, 2000, 91

discussion of the photograph and family becomes the focus. The second chapter examines the role of the photographer in the creation of memories for the sitter and through this proposes that family portrait photographs are significant in the construction of a family identity. It has been influenced by the work on family and memory primarily by Annette Kuhn and Marianne Hirsch to argue that, to a certain extent, Haas was able to use photography in an attempt to overcome loss, particularly after her emigration. Chapter Two raises questions about one's need to construct an identity and possess a concept of home, which are subsequently addressed in Chapter Three. The final chapter of the thesis looks at the meaning of photography to Haas, exploring the possibility that her family portrait photographs became a vehicle for her self-expression. In this sense, it examines the process of taking photographs as a means to articulate personal feelings of rejection as a result of forced emigration. This chapter looks to postcolonial studies to provide a basis for understanding the significance of home and identity to an émigré, whilst utilising the recent psychoanalytical theory of phototherapy to put forward a further argument for the power of the photograph as a way to reconstruct an arguably fragmented self.

This thesis concludes with an exploration into the reasons why Haas and her photographs belong to the field of visual culture and exile studies and more broadly to the history of photography. Whilst placing the topics explored in the main body of the thesis into the context of photography and memory in order to provide an insight into how such theoretical discourses aid discussion on a German-Jewish émigré, it furthermore proposes the possibility for further study surrounding Haas and photography. An appendix gives an insight into the archival material available at the Birmingham City Archives, Birmingham Central Library (Birmingham, UK).

CHAPTER ONE

PHOTOGRAPHY AND HOLOCAUST MEMORY

> One of the least understood dimensions of photography involves the ways in which photographs help the public construct, understand, and remember the past [...Photographs] have helped create a specific kind of memory about the Holocaust that inflects both how it is remembered and how its memory shapes popular experience of other atrocities of the modern age.[1]

Here, Barbie Zelizer in her essay 'From the Image of Record to the Image of Memory: Holocaust Photography, Then and Now', introduces the ways in which Holocaust photography helps give access to the past and shapes a particular kind of remembering. These photographs have given access to an arguably otherwise unavailable past. This chapter will examine a selection of Haas's photographs before her emigration in light of this, in order to provide an insight into the relationship between photography and memory of this time. Just as Holocaust photography shapes a certain kind of remembering, Haas's photographs will give access to the past and shed light on the social complexities of the Third Reich. Zelizer continues to outline the ways in which photographs have played a part in the formation of memories of the Holocaust:

> Photographs became effective ways of marking Holocaust atrocities by playing less to their effectivity as referential documents of a specific camp, in a specific place and

[1]Barbie Zelizer 'From the Image of Record to the Image of Memory: Holocaust Photography, Then and Now' in Bonnie Brennen and Hanno Hardt (eds.), *Picturing the Past: Media, History and Photography*, Chicago, 1999, 98

time, and more to their effectivity as symbols of the atrocities at their most generalized and universal level.[2]

This chapter aims to recognise photography as a powerful medium in the formation of memory. In addition, the theory of memory in relation to this medium will be adopted in order to understand further the role of photography in the construction of memory. Roland Barthes's *Camera Lucida, Reflections on Photography* explores this theory of memory in relation to the medium of photography. For the purpose of this chapter, Part Two of *Camera Lucida* will inform a discussion surrounding a selection of Lisel Haas's photographs taken in Germany before her emigration to Britain and the outbreak of the Second World War.[3] It will explore photography and memory, focusing on how photography has been used in the representation of historical events, specifically the Holocaust and the Second World War. It aims to call attention to the work of the German-Jewish photographer Haas, as a way of introduction, by exploring the ways in which she used photography to go some way in bridging the gap between her life in Germany and Britain.[4]

The chapter aims to address the importance of the function of photographs within a socio-historical framework, utilising psychoanalytical readings in order to begin to understand them as sites for the formation of memories and the healing of wounds. Thus, this work as a whole seeks to emphasise the significance of photographs in art history and the role that they assume in blurring the boundaries between art, history and memory. Although Haas's work does not depict the Holocaust explicitly, this particular chapter has been informed by work referring to

[2] *Ibid*, 101

[3] Parts of this chapter have been presented in a paper given at the Graduate Centre for Europe (GCfE) Annual Conference, *Europe: A Continent of Paradoxes?*, 16-18 April 2009. The paper, *Lisel Haas: Photography and Memory*, discussed the photographs of the German-Jewish émigré, Lisel Haas, in relation to memory and Holocaust Studies, with an introduction to Roland Barthes's exploration of memory and photography in *Camera Lucida, Reflections on Photography* (trans. Richard Howard 1981, Reading, 2000). The paper resulted in an article published in the online peer-reviewed *Birmingham Journal for Europe* (2010)

[4] Lisel Haas's papers are held at Birmingham City Archives, Central Library, Birmingham

the Holocaust, memory and photography. It examines the problematic nature of photographs as objects in their own right as well as vehicles of memory. Oren Baruch Stier has recognised the complex nature of representations of Holocaust atrocities, in that 'what we are left with as our main access points to the Holocaust are these representations, all straining towards the truths to which they refer.'[5] He continues that it is towards these 'truths that nonetheless continually evade our grasp.'[6] It is through these photographs that one can attempt to search for answers, to come to terms with or overcome losses at the hands of the National Socialists. This chapter offers an insight in to the understanding of the complexities of the life of a German-Jew before the outbreak of the Second World War, resulting in émigré status. The photographs which will be examined, rather than depicting Holocaust atrocities or brutal actions of the National Socialists during the 1930s, offer the viewer an alternative picture of German life during this time. What will be argued is the power of these photographs in *not* showing such atrocities, as becoming vehicles of Holocaust memory. The simultaneous presence of death and life in the photograph will be explored; as Marianne Hirsch notes, 'in its relation to loss and death, photography [...] brings the past back in the form of a ghostly *revenant*, emphasizing, at the same time, its immutable and irreversible pastness and irretrievability.'[7]

The use of photographs as bearers of memory, has, in recent years, been acknowledged in a direct relationship with the atrocities of the Holocaust. The act of remembering has the possibility of being a painful experience. Photographs, in that they have the ability to perform as vehicles of memory, enable a deeper understanding of the traumatic events of the past, both

[5]Oren Baruch Stier, *Committed to Memory: Cultural Mediations of the Holocaust*, Massachusetts, 2003, 24
[6]*Ibid*, 24
[7]Marianne Hirsch, 'Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory' in *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, Volume 14, 2001, 21, http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/yale_journal_of_criticism, accessed August 2009

personal and collective. Stier proposes that 'certain images and artifacts, when utilized iconically, are transformed into bearers of memory that can transport those who engage in their symbolic presentations to a deeper understanding of the Holocaust.'[8] This kind of discussion surrounding memory recognises the power of images to evoke otherwise suppressed emotions, or ones that had never before been brought to mind. Susan Sontag, in coming across photographs of Bergen-Belsen and Dachau in a bookshop in July 1945, explains that,

> One's first encounter with the photographic inventory of ultimate horror is a kind of revelation, the prototypically modern revelation: a negative epiphany [...]. Nothing I have seen – in photographs or in real life – ever cut me as sharply, deeply, instantaneously. Indeed, it seems plausible to me to divide my life into two parts, before I saw those photographs (I was twelve) and after, though it was several years before I understood fully what they were about.[9]

This wounding which occurred when Sontag came across these photographs is something which Barthes had previous to her writing explored. However, rather than have such a vivid realisation of the power of the photograph, the theoretical discourse of Barthes's book follows a more disjointed path. In his seminal book, *Camera Lucida*, Barthes notes that 'the Photograph [is] never, in essence, a memory', that it 'actually blocks memory' and 'quickly becomes a counter-memory'.[10] Barthes has adopted a phenomenology of memory to explore the essence of photography, after discovering a photograph of his mother shortly after her death. Sontag has noted that 'in choosing to write about photography, Barthes takes the

[8]Stier, *ibid*, 25
[9]Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, London, 2008, 19
[10] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida, Reflections on Photography*, (trans. Richard Howard 1981), Reading, 2000, 91

occasion to adopt the warmest kind of realism: photographs fascinate because of what they are about. And they may awaken a desire for a further divestment of the self.'[11] After his mother's death, Barthes found himself sorting through a number of photographs of her. He wanted to 'find' the woman he had known, not just a fragment of her.[12] Barthes explains that he wanted to find the truth. He found this in what he calls *The Winter Garden Photograph*. This picture, as described by Barthes, is of his mother aged five, standing with her seven-year-old brother in a glass conservatory – or winter garden.[13] Barthes would not reproduce it, claiming the photograph only existed for him. For others, 'it would be nothing but an indifferent picture, one of the thousand manifestations of the "ordinary" [...] at most it would interest your *studium* [...] but in it, for you, no wound.'[14]

Barthes, then, argues that for those unconnected to the person in the photograph, it would merely be a visual record, at most an interesting object. But for Barthes, the image of his mother in *The Winter Garden Photograph* wounded him in a similar way to the wound caused by her death. In looking at this photograph of his mother as a child, Barthes is confronted by a girl he did/could not know. It is probable that Barthes's memories of his mother informed his recognition of this little girl as his mother. He even admits here that 'for once, photography gave me a sentiment as certain as remembrance.'[15] This admittance reveals some inconsistencies in Barthes's discussion but also one of the most important aspects of memory. Margaret Olin in her essay 'Touching Photographs: Roland Barthes's "Mistaken Identity"' addresses this with an example of one of the James van der Zee photographs Barthes discusses in *Camera Lucida*. Olin asserts that this example of Barthes's mistaken

[11] Susan Sontag (ed.), 'Introduction' in *A Roland Barthes Reader*, London, 1993 (1982), xxxv
[12] *Ibid*, 70
[13] *Ibid*, 67
[14] *Ibid*, 73
[15] *Ibid*, 70

identity (he confuses a string of pearls for a gold chain) 'illuminates an important aspect of memory: the deception at its heart, its ability to embroider and change, to be displaced, when it is "working on" one, like the details in a Freudian dream interpretation.'[16] This aspect of memory, the mistaken identity to which Olin refers, suggests that in the act of remembering, the 'truth' can be forgotten. The displacement that occurs is borne out of the individual's need to seek self-identification within the photograph.[17] The fresh-faced mother with her baby in the black-and-white photograph of a mother and her child (*Mutter und Kind* series, taken before 1939,[18] Fig. 2) embody this kind of deception to which Olin refers – the photograph performs as a kind of family reality, it does not hint to the reality beyond the camera, but rather at the construction of the photograph. As a vehicle of memory, this picture may conceal the 'truth' of reality and instead replace it with misrecognition. Haas, as a displaced person in Britain after her emigration, may have identified with such a photograph, in that it has the ability to evoke memories of happiness about the past and mask the 'truth' behind the image.[19]

This aspect of memory, in its ability to embroider and change, is one which Barthes does not appear to explicitly recognise in his writing. A photograph does, in fact, have the ability to evoke memories, both personal and collective, the former Barthes would argue, only if the spectators have a relationship in some way with the depicted. In the way that *The Winter Garden Photograph* was very much a personal photograph for Barthes and conjured up many painful emotions and memories for him, of a time before his mother's death and after, Haas's

[16] Margaret Olin, 'Touching Photographs: Roland Barthes's "Mistaken Identity"' in *Representations*, no. 80, Autumn 2002, 99-118, 107
[17] *Ibid*, 107-108
[18] On the reverse of this photograph is Haas's Mönchengladbach studio stamp and so one is able to assert that this photograph was taken before the end of 1939
[19] In her supposed attempt to overcome her losses, the subsequent chapters in this study will further explore the impact of family photographs in the formation of memory

photographs provide a record of her life in Germany before the Second World War (Fig. 3). The *Simultanbild* – or simultaneous picture – is a technique achieved through double or multiple exposures to create a single photograph. A double or multiple exposure involves either exposing multiple images on top of each other or side by side. This can give a ghostly appearance to the photograph (as seen in Fig. 3) and was also a technique made popular by Surrealist photographers.[20] Such a photograph illustrates Haas's experimentation with photography and proves her awareness of artistic trends. The photographic study is reminiscent of some Surrealist strategies, producing an eerie beauty which returns in memory as an ethereal existence. As Anselm Haverkamp has proclaimed when writing about Barthes's *Camera Lucida*, 'the adhesive power of reference fixes the past and makes it turn [...] the past turns up as death. What returns in the past of their pictures are the still-living dead.'[21] Thus, for Haas, wounded by the loss of her homeland, such photographs may have provoked memories in a similar way to that described by Barthes.

In recent years, there has been a growing debate surrounding memory and photography in relation to the Holocaust. The use of photography as documentary for, and thus evidence of, the Holocaust is problematic. Andrea Liss has established that 'the cruel paradox of the Holocaust-related photographs' is that they 'are situated precisely in the demand that they perform as history lessons [...] and provide sites for mourning.'[22] The very incomprehensibility of the Holocaust means that such photographs are not only documentary,

[20]John Hedgecoe, *The Photographer's Handbook*, London, 1981, 224
[21]Anselm Haverkamp, 'The Memory of Pictures: Roland Barthes and Augustine on Photography' in *Comparative Literature*, Vol. 45, No. 3, 1993, 262
[22] Andrea Liss, *Trespassing through Shadows, Memory, Photography and the Holocaust*, Minneapolis and London, 1998, xiii

but ‘disturb the present moment and the contemporary landscape with troubling or nostalgic memories and with forgotten, or all too vividly remembered, histories.’[23]

Lisel Haas was born in Mönchengladbach, Germany in 1898 to Jewish parents. Haas worked as a portrait photographer in Germany but also as a photojournalist, primarily for the Catholic magazine, *Weltwarte*, and as a theatre photographer for the Gladbach Town Theatre. She was listed in the Gladbach address book as ‘Portrait-Photographer Kaiserstrasse 49’.[24] In this context of Third Reich and migration, the black and white photograph of three ‘gypsy’ children outside on the step of their wagon inadvertently becomes a pertinent reminder of the many groups of people affected by the National Socialist regime (Fig. 4). The two photographs bear Haas’s writing on the back, stating in English, ‘gypsies’. Gypsies were among those targeted by the Nazis and were interned and exterminated along with the millions of Jews. The defiant nature of a minority people has been captured in the photograph of a young girl at the window (Fig. 5). The child stares down towards the camera, framed by the window and the caravan shutters. Although the word painted onto the caravan does not relate to a gypsy group or community, it may be that this wagon has been converted. The stillness in the photograph demonstrates Haas’s ability to capture a moment perfectly with the camera. These photographs can be appreciated as a form of documentary of the gypsy population in Germany, but also as a moment suspended in time, in history – a moment which cannot reveal the impending atrocities; and as Haverkamp suggests, in looking at the past through photographs, they become the still-living dead. These children are no longer children, but rather perform as a symbolic representation of a traumatic period in the past. It is probable that these gypsy photographs were part of a photojournalist commission issued to

[23] Annette Kuhn and Kirsten Emiko McAllister (eds.), *Locating Memory, Photographic Acts*, New York and Oxford, 2006, 1
[24]Gunter Erkens, *Juden in Mönchengladbach Band 2*, Mönchengladbach, 1989, 449

Haas in order to accompany a report on gypsies. This study aims to address the authority of such photographs in their ability to perform as formative functions of memory.

In 1938, Haas was issued with a decree from the Gladbach Police Authority, dated 18 October, stipulating that she must display a notice in the window of her photographic studio stating that it was a 'Jewish business' in order to avoid any further persecution.[25] Following this threat and the devastating attacks on Jewish homes and businesses during the anti-Jewish pogrom *Kristallnacht* (9-10 November 1938), which made many Jews aware of the seriousness of their situation, Haas abandoned her photographic studio business in November 1938, and she and her father left Germany arriving in Birmingham (Britain) in December 1938.[26]

In 1940, Haas was permitted to work with the Birmingham Repertory Theatre. After the Second World War, she was also able to set up her own photographic studio at her home in Moseley (Grove Avenue, Moseley, Birmingham). The atrocities of the Holocaust had torn apart Haas's life. This study suggests that her life may be viewed as having two parts: what came before and what came after the Second World War. As Sontag argues, a horrific experience has the ability to rupture and split an existence.[27] Although Haas may have wished to forget that her life had been torn apart or to recreate in Britain the life she led in Germany, it is impossible to refuse what we see when confronted by a photograph. Nancy Wood, in the introduction to *Vectors of Memory. Legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe*, uses the observations of Maurice Halbwachs, one of the first theorists to develop the concept of a collective memory, to insist 'on viewing memory [...] not as a repository of images [...]

[25]The meticulousness of these stipulations can be seen fully in *ibid*, 449
[26]Haas applied for immigration to the USA but was denied. As a result of this she immigrated to Britain, a seemingly natural choice as her brother, Hans Erich, had already immigrated to Birmingham
[27]Sontag, *ibid*, 20

but as the selective reconstruction and appropriation of aspects of the past that respond to the needs of the present.'[28]In the light of Halbwachs/Wood, I would argue that Haas reconstructed and appropriated photography from Germany to respond to her needs in the present. Haas used photography as a medium to overcome the gap between image and memory and to go some way in bridging the gap between her past and present life in Britain. Photography, for Haas, provided a means for uniting a torn Europe; indeed, a torn self. According to Stier,

> the desire for memory [...] crosses boundary lines [...] and engenders such a great deal of appropriation and disruption [...] that any sharp distinction made between then and now, there and here, authentic and inauthentic, memory, rememory and postmemory, detracts from the constructed and mediated nature of memory as a mechanism for representing the impact of the past in the present.[29]

Two photographs of the same subject matter, that of a mother with her children, are taken as examples of Haas's work executed in Germany and Britain respectively (Figs. 6 and 7). The family in the photograph taken in Germany (Fig. 6) appears more relaxed and natural in their pose before the camera, whereas the mother with her children in the photograph taken in Britain (Fig. 7) is a typical studio photograph, with the children on their best behaviour, best clothes, ready to become the frozen documentary piece on the mantelpiece for years to come. Family photography as such, is usually documentary turned memorabilia. Rather than emphasising the distance that looking through the photographic lens can also create, she believed that 'life' provided the link between her and her sitters, and gave the pictures their force and effect.[30] For Haas, photography was not frozen and did not stand still, it rather was charged by life. She may have thought of the immediacy of taking pictures, but one may also

[28] Nancy Wood, *Vectors of Memory, Legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe*, Oxford and New York, 1999, 2
[29]Stier, *ibid*, 14
[30] Lisel Haas, *ibid*, date unknown

cite Judy Weiser here who has noted that a photograph is 'a very thin piece of paper that we perceive three-dimensionally, as if alive, and as if existing right now.'[31]The implication that a photograph, or what is shown in a photograph, is living, is in contrast to Barthes's further investigation into the essence of a photograph.

Barthes's exploration of photography and memory continues with a discussion of the mortality of memory. He asserts that 'with the photograph, we enter into *flat death*.'[32] Barthes notes that the only thought he can have is 'that at the end of the first death, my own death is inscribed.'[33] The photograph as Flat Death is a concept which is acknowledged by Annette Kuhn and Kirsten Emiko McAllister.[34] They state that 'the photograph confronts us with the fleeting nature of our world and reminds us of our mortality.'[35] The moment of realising the passing of time is now the new *punctum*, according to Barthes.[36]In *Camera Lucida*, Barthes introduces the concepts of *studium* and *punctum*. The *studium* is the term used by Barthes to describe a general, cultural interest in something (in photographs). The *punctum* punctuates the *studium*. The *punctum*, according to Barthes, is an element that 'pricks' or 'wounds' by entering the realm of the personal, and is given a number of different forms by Barthes: for example, as a detail, a particular feature (in a photograph) but also as the passing of time (in a photograph), the 'that has been'. The crucial point that Barthes makes about Flat Death is the following:

> Earlier societies managed so that memory, the substitute for life, was eternal and that at least the thing which spoke Death should itself be immortal: this was the

[31] Judy Weiser, *PhotoTherapy Techniques, Exploring the Secrets of Personal Snapshots and Family Albums*, San Francisco, 1993, 4
[32] Barthes, *ibid*, 92
[33] Barthes, *ibid*, 93
[34] This reference can be found in the introduction to Kuhn and McAllister (eds.), *ibid*, 13
[35] *Ibid*, 13
[36] See also Margaret Olin's essay, 'Touching Photographs: Roland Barthes's 'Mistaken Identity'' for an interesting discussion surrounding Barthes's concept of the *studium* and *punctum*.

> Monument. But by making the (mortal) Photograph into the general and somehow natural witness of "what has been," modern society has renounced the Monument.[37]

The pastness as captured by a photograph is a reminder of the futile nature of our existence; the power of a photograph, in contrast to Barthes's Flat Death, may lie in its ability to become a visual representation of memory. Apart from views of photography as the death of memory including those by historians such as Kuhn and McAllister, the importance of a photograph inthe revival of memory has likewise attracted attention by, for example, Marianne Hirsch's and Leo Spitzer's essay, '"There Was Never a Camp Here", Searching for Vapniarka'. This essay maps out the journey the two authors made with David Kessler to find the original site of the Vapniarka concentration camp.[38] Their journey 'sought to link postmemory to place – to transform a black-and-white image and to endow it with colour, reality, concreteness. In addition to living out mediated familial and cultural postmemories, we also hoped to create memories of our own, in the present.'[39] There was no record that the camp had ever existed, except that Hirsch and Spitzer had in their possession a photocopy of a photograph of a cardboard model of the camp made by a survivor, as well as a photocopy of an original map of the area (Figs. 8 and 9). When the group arrived in the modern-day town of Vapniarka, Ukraine, they were told by all those they approached that there had never been a camp in Vapniarka.[40] Whether these people had consciously erased this part of history from their memories, silenced their memories, or whether, as time passed, it was forgotten, is an issue that remains unanswered. But if the photocopy of the cardboard model and map had not come into the possession of the group – in other words, if there were not a visual record

[37] *Ibid*, 93
[38] This essay was published in Kuhn and McAllister (eds.), *ibid*, 135-153. David Kessler is the son of Dr Arthur Kessler, a survivor of the Vapniarka camp
[39] Hirsch and Spitzer, *ibid*, 138
[40] *Ibid*, 143

documenting that this camp had ever existed – its existence could be, and would have been, denied. The visual records here have become the only existing source of an otherwise not outspoken reality. As Hirsch and Spitzer, who presume that the memory was gone, noted, 'in visiting the region [...] we had intended to connect memory to place. But we visited places so emptied of memory that our object seemed a failure.'[41]

The poignancy of this story, and its relation to Haas's photographs, is that it demonstrates that a visual record, in this instance a photograph, becomes the witness of an otherwise forgotten reality. Photographs can be preserved in archives or museums, or passed down through generations of family members. It is through the medium of photography, and the generosity of Haas's niece, Dorothy Williams, that Haas has been identified as an important figure in the understanding of the life of an émigré photographer. Without these visual records, memories of her life and work would remain unknown, ending with Dorothy's personal memories. The preservation of Haas's photographs from both Germany and Britain allows for an exploration of her work from both periods (Fig. 10). The photograph offers a view of day to day activities of the *Ernte* – or harvest. The scene is representative of the uninterrupted ways of peasant life without the explicit implications of Nazi destruction and atrocity. The woman, boy and girl busy themselves with harvesting the crops, a back-breaking job. The photograph captures not the gruelling pace of this work, but rather a scene bathed in the cool autumnal sunlight; memories of a simple, uncomplicated time. In this way, the photograph becomes a troubled icon of the period, a photograph submerged in the embroidered and ever-changing act of remembrance. Although this photograph camouflages the political upheavals of the period, while the Vapniarka camp photograph lead to evidential proof of the camps existence, it emphasises a photograph's role in the revealing of an otherwise forgotten reality. In

[41] *Ibid*, 151

portraying such an idyllic scene, this way of life is one which was very different to Haas's own experience.

Liss has noted that 'photographs maintain a closer relation to the real, and as such, become uneasy icons.'[42]A photograph, *Vater und Sohn* of the 1930s (Fig. 11) illustrates a particular gentleness of embrace between father and son, celebrating fatherhood.[43] In light of Liss's statement, this photograph has the ability to become an uneasy icon in that it is a representation of love between family members, a peaceful union, at a time when political and racial upheavals were destroying many families. The photograph presents the viewer with an alternative reality to that captured by memories and accounts of National Socialist Germany during the 1930s. Barbie Zelizer has called attention to the fact that not enough is known about how images help record events, and about whether and in which ways images function as better vehicles of proof than words, or whether word or image takes precedent in situations of conflict between what the words tell us and the picture shows us.[44] Here Haas's photograph reveals the complexities of that time. According to Zelizer, 'the photos' broad resonance suggests that images have enigmatic boundaries which connect events in unpredictable ways.'[45] It is in this way that Graham Clarke explores the portraits of August Sander (1876 – 1964), a German photographer whose portraits documented a variety of people, from farmers to artists and musicians (Fig. 12). *The Master Tiler* (c. 1932) is comparable to that of an elderly man taking part in the harvest by Haas (Fig. 13). Clarke notes that:

[42] Liss, *ibid*, xviii
[43] The reverse of the photograph notes that it is a father with his son, despite the child not really giving its sex easily away. As to the date, the hair styles of both, and the spectacles of the father are reminiscent of the 1930s
[44] Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget, Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye*, Chicago, 1998, 2
[45] *Ibid*, 2

> *The Master Tiler* is an exemplary image of the way in which Sander's photographs establish meaning within a social context that is at once hierarchical and self-referential. The visual iconography, characteristically, signifies through what Umberto Eco has called codes of recognition and, more obviously, iconic codes [...]. All are part of a larger social mapping.[46]

The peaceful nature of these two black-and-white photographs highlights Clarke's explanation of a photograph's place within a larger social context. Haas's photograph has an elegant composition, framing the harvester against the backdrop of sky and arid soil. In such an unforgiving environment, the man grasps onto the only sign of vegetation, of life. His hands, like those of the tiler in Sander's photograph, represent the manual labour with which these two men are associated. The two photographs, in representing elderly men and exposing their tired expressions, reveal the fragility of life, its perishable condition. The starkness of this photograph offers a disturbing kind of memory, in which the viewer may be able to begin to understand the multifaceted society of 1930s Germany and become more understanding of the social conditions of the time.

The attempt to heal wounds is something which has been explored by others in relation to the testimony of refugees and survivors of the Holocaust. The incomprehensibility of the Holocaust has meant that one may argue that many refugees' and survivors' stories have not been heard. Pictures of the past, as demonstrated by Haas's photographs, reveal a complexity that is only now beginning to be understood. In what is termed 'bearing witness' survivors, refugees and child survivors have been interviewed in order to tell their story. Dori Laub explained the story of one survivor he had interviewed:

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[46]Graham Clarke, 'Public Faces, Private Lives: August Sander and the Social Typology of the Portrait Photograph' in Graham Clarke (ed.) *The Portrait in Photography*, London, 1992, 78

> Hers was a life in which the new family she created [...], had to give continuance and meaning, perhaps provide healing and restitution, to the so suddenly and brutally broken family of her childhood [...]. In her present life, she relentlessly holds on to, and searches, for what is familiar to her from her past, with only a dim awareness of what she is doing.[47]

Despite the obvious achievements of the recent work on the Holocaust and photography, which has enabled a deeper understanding of the Holocaust in relation to memory and the power of the photograph, it has been brought to attention that these images have suffered from over-exposure. Hirsch explains that,

> what we find in the contemporary scholarly and popular representation and memorialisation of the Holocaust is not the multiplication and escalation of imagery [...] but a striking repetition of the same very few images, used over and over again iconically and emblematically to signal this event.[48]

Such repetition can be recognised as a recontextualising of such images; however, Sontag is quick to point out that,

> photographs shock insofar as they show something novel [...]. Once one has seen such images, one has started down the road of seeing more – and more. Images transfix. Images anesthetize [...]. At the time of the first photographs of the Nazi camps, there was nothing banal about these images. After thirty years, a saturation point may have been reached.[49]

[47] Dori Laub, 'An Event Without A Witness: Truth, Testimony and Survival', in Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony, Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, New York, 1992, 78
[48]Hirsch, *ibid*, 7
[49]Sontag, *On Photography*, 19

It is no wonder then, that in many recent publications on the Holocaust and memory, many of the Holocaust atrocity photographs have not been reproduced in publications (for example, Sontag herself does not; neither do Hirsch and Spitzer in their account of the Vapniarka camp). Maybe this is because these images are so ingrained within the public's consciousness there is no longer a need to reproduce them, or it could be that a discussion surrounding the impact of photographs of another subject can be used as powerful vehicles of memory. Haas's photographs do not provide proof that she knew about the atrocity photographs, but rather her work before her immigration appears to attempt to create an idyllic portrayal of life. It may be that these photographs are a representation of self-denial as they appear to be apolitical on the surface. As documents, they provide evidence that 'normal' life continued in the Third Reich, and for some, life remained largely unaffected.

The need to hold on to aspects of the past and create a familiarity in new surroundings is something which Haas was able to do through the medium of photography. Photography remained a constant beyond emigration and the nature of her photographs provided a familial sense of home, albeit a surrogate one, as if Haas constructed her own sense of community and family through photography. Although trained in painting, she owned a photography studio in Mönchengladbach (Germany) and was able to set up a studio in Birmingham after the Second World War, which was situated within the home she shared with her partner.[50] The studio was financed and run successfully by Haas, as she carried out the developing and printing processes herself.[51]Apart from being an economical and conventional way of doing so, work and home became very closely interlinked. Similar to her own background and those she portrayed in Germany, her photographs from Britain are primarily of white, middle-

[50]Her German, non-Jewish partner, Grete Bermbach, lived with Haas at two residences on Grove Road, Moseley, Birmingham

[51]The archive boasts numerous correspondence between Haas and photographic companies outlining equipment needed as well as advantages of using particular types of film and paper

class families and women. These clients became her friends, and provided her with a family-type structure. Even though her father, brother and partner were also living in Birmingham, to be forced out of your true home to a place where you are considered an outsider, is always a traumatic and painful transition. In addition to the replacement of her family through the sitters of her photographs, I would also argue that the taking of photographs of family members possibly also demonstrates the attempt to establish a surrogate, mediated family for her lost, extended family.

I have been told that Haas returned only once to Germany, to collect some of her possessions which had been kept by a non-Jewish German woman during the war.[52] There, she must have witnessed the consequences of the Holocaust in her home town of Mönchengladbach. As years later, Haas's niece made a journey with her husband to Mönchengladbach in search of the family home. The house now had a new name and number, and all traces of its past had been eradicated.[53]

As Sethe in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* remarks:

> Places, places are still there. If a house burns down, it's gone, but the place – the picture of it – stays, and not just in my rememory [...]. The picture is still there and what's more, if you go there – you who never was there – if you go there and stand in the place where it was, it will happen again; it will be there for you, waiting for you.[54]

Barthes's *Camera Lucida* challenges our conception of memory. He pushes the boundaries of photography by acknowledging the paradoxical nature of photography and memory. However, in asserting that photography cannot, in essence, be memory, Barthes emphasises

[52] Interview with Dorothy Williams,05/11/2008
[53] Interview with D.W, 25/06/2009
[54] Toni Morrison, *Beloved*, New York, 1987, 36 in Hirsch and Spitzer, *ibid*, in Kuhn and McAllister (eds.), *ibid*, 145

the photograph as object. Although the photograph as object is mortal, the photograph as memory is not. The act of looking at a photograph frees us from the mortal nature of the photograph itself, and allows photography to be used as a means to attempt to heal wounds and commemorate the painful past. The inconsistencies in Barthes's text may be a result ofthe grief he felt after the death of his mother, but they also reveal the limitations of *Camera Lucida*.[55] Barthes had not considered the importance of the photograph to a person, in reviving their memories in order to tell their story or indeed to commemorate their broken past. Those who have worked on the relationship between the Holocaust, photography and memory have gone some way to reconcile survivors and refugees with their past by using the power of memory and visual record. It has been asserted in this chapter that Haas may have used photography to create some stability in an otherwise fractious environment. Memory becomes the site of attempts to reconcile with the past – a representation of the past is formed, as the reality cannot be achieved through memory. Stier concludes that 'in constructing memorial representations of the past, we always return to the origin because we *cannot* capture beginning in memory.'[56] Every attempt to overcome, to remember accurately, becomes an inadequate effort. The task is monumental, as Stier states, but one continues to try. Even if, as Hirsch writes, it is 'too late to help, utterly impotent, we nevertheless search for ways to take responsibility for what we are seeing [...] to experience [...] even as we try to redefine, if not repair, these ruptures.'[57] Through her photographs, Haas's own memory lives on for future generations to further understand the life of émigrés driven out of their home country by the National Socialists. The second chapter of this study focuses on a discussion of the relationship between memory and family photography. The chapter will use examples

[55] Such theories have been addressed to an extent by Olin in her essay on Barthes's 'mistaken identity'
[56]Stier, *ibid*, 191
[57]Hirsch, *ibid*, 26

of Haas's family portrait photographs, taken in Britain, to inform a discussion of the significance of family photographs in the formation of memory.

CHAPTER TWO

CREATING MEMORIES FOR THE SITTER: FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHY

Family photographs have, in recent years, become significant in the construction of personal histories and identities, and in the formation of memories. A re-reading of such pictures has demonstrated a 'move to revalue the undervalued and to bring into public discourse meanings which have hitherto been concealed in the most secret parts of the private sphere.'[1] Bringing these concealed meanings/memories into the open 'allows the deeper meanings of the family [...] to be reflected upon, confronted and understood at all levels.'[2] This chapter examines the ways in which family photographs provide sites for memory and their relevance in the construction of personal and family identity. Here, examples of Haas's family portraits will be examined and provide the central point of discussion surrounding family photography, the role of the woman in the family and the formation of memory in order to be able to confront the complexities of the family. As part of this dialogue, I will use Haas's family portraits to go some way in arguing that she used family portrait photography in an attempt to overcome personal losses of home and family, particularly after her emigration from Mönchengladbach to Birmingham as a result of the Nazi racial politics.

Photographs, and the albums in which they are frequently placed, play a significant role in the formation of family memories. These pictures have the ability to conjure recollections of the past; stories are remembered, shared and passed on. However, such recollections and stories may have little or nothing to do with the subject actually depicted in the photograph itself.

[1]Liz Wells, *Photography: A Critical Introduction (Third Edition)*, London and New York, 2004, 118
[2]Annette Kuhn, *Family Secrets. Acts of Memory and Imagination*, (New Edition) London and New York, 2002, 7

The photograph therefore becomes the site of discussion and debate, an object at the centre of familial revelations and drama. Annette Kuhn has noted that, 'memories evoked by a photo do not simply spring out of the image itself, but are generated in an intertext of discourses that shift between past and present, spectator and image, and between all these and cultural contexts, historical moments.'[3] This 'intertext of discourses' described by Kuhn highlights the complex structure of memory and disregards any notion that the evocation of memories is simplistic or free from the influence of time or culture. The act of remembrance is one which reveals not only personal reminiscences but the impact of the society in which these memories were formed and the important role that the passing of time plays in the changing nature of memory. When examining Haas's photographs, the importance of these subjects to Haas will be taken into account as well as her role as a professional portrait photographer in the creation of such family memories.

As a photographer of family portraits, Haas spent much of her career being involved with her clients and was responsible for creating the image of family life they desired. One may consider that a family's perceived identity is constructed through photographs taken by a professional photographer. Despite the glossy, wide-smiles on the faces of the mother, father and children captured by the camera, the family photograph allows us to recall memories from the past which may also consist of a less than perfect side to family life. Here then, behind the constructed harmony of the family, is Haas: a German-Jewish émigré forced to leave her home and find refuge in a country with which she had not had any prolonged contact with before.[4]

[3]Annette Kuhn, *ibid*, 14

[4]Haas's brother, Hans Erich, a psychoanalyst, immigrated to Birmingham with his family in 1936. He had few contacts in Britain but was advised by colleague, Ernest Jones, to settle outside London in order to establish psychoanalysis outside the capital (please see Hans Erich's obituary in *Psychiatric Bulletin*, Volume 15, 1991, 185. Hans Erich, as a fellow émigré, was Lisel's only known contact in Britain

As mentioned above the family photograph can be seen as a record of personal histories, a collection of stories and a site for the creation of memories. Haas' images are no different. The photograph from the *Harris and 2 Sons Series* of 1974 (Fig. 14) is a family portrait typical for the 1970s. The family members are dressed in smart clothes, the father of the group seemingly displaying a well-rehearsed smile. The boy mimics his father's confident pose, displaying a cheeky grin, but the tilted head towards his mother may reflect the motherly bond. The softness of the pink shirt further connects him with his mother, who is the only person in the photograph not looking into the camera. Her sideways glance, although difficult to follow, reveals something of a day-dream, which contrasts with the directness of the male gazes in the photograph. The woman is placed between her husband and son, portrayed here as the doting wife and mother. And although she seems to be taller than her husband, her gaze in the direction of her husband demonstrates a clear patriarchal hierarchy. However, although not sexualised, the opening in her white blouse draws attention to her as a more sexualised woman (if compared to Fig. 16). Such detail may be subtly exposed by the photographer and remains within the accepted view of the family which this client holds. The neutral background allows the family to become the sole focus of the photograph; an image representative of their family life and values, a keepsake for the future and a talking point on the mantle piece.

Such a photograph, commissioned by the family, may become an integral part of the formation of their memories of that particular time in their family history. Haas, the photographer, was able to shape the ways in which these future memories would be formed; with her camera, she created an idyllic scene, an idealised family, different from, what seems to be a fragmented life. As Marianne Hirsch has noted, 'the family photo both displays the cohesion of the family and is an instrument of its togetherness; it both chronicles family

rituals and constitutes a prime objective of those rituals.'[5] For an émigré then, it is clear why the family photograph can become a visual representation of belonging; it may be a means of confronting those losses and renegotiating personal conflicts in order to seek solace, for a moment, in a family fantasy.

Haas did this, but only to a certain extent, in her profession. The blissful nature of family photographs, an indulgence in the family fantasy may well be represented in any family photography. The family photograph has become a significant feature in the formation and subsequent discussion of family myth. Recent work in the field of Family Studies has explored the mythology of the family, and addresses the complexities surrounding the construction of 'the family'. John Bernardes has called attention to the meaning of 'the family' and the popular image of 'the nuclear family', which has been described as portraying 'a young, similarly aged, white, married heterosexual couple with a small number of healthy children living in an adequate home.'[6] This portrayal of 'the family' does not reflect the diversity of society or, indeed, necessarily the realities of family life. The collection of photos belonging to the *Nicki and Francesca Pearson* series of 1963 (Fig. 15) highlights the intricacies of family life and the reality behind the lens. Haas has been able to capture the naturalness of the family, in what appears to be the family home. The diversity of what can be deemed a family is expressed here to a certain extent. Although there are two children, a mother and a father (corresponding with what has been described as 'the nuclear family') the presence of the grandmother must also be recognised. Although unknown, it has been deduced from her presence in the photograph on the top right hand side of the collection, that the older woman is the grandmother. She sits centrally, with her grandchildren either side of

[5]Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames. Photography, Narrative and Postmemory*, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, 1997, 7
[6]John Bernardes, *Family Studies. An Introduction*, London and New York, 1997, 2-3

her and their mother behind her. The grandmother sits rather informally with her arms around the boy and girl. This photograph is both fascinating and important as it highlights the chief presence of women within the family. In this photograph it is not the man, the father, who sits as the head of the family, but rather the female elder, the grandmother. The photograph of the grandmother has been taken in such a way that she is presented as a figurehead of the family, whilst the father is almost obscured by his children here. Neither the father nor the two children look into the camera for this photograph, and as a result of this the picture may take on a more truthful representation of their family life than a heavily constructed portrait. The father glances towards his son, whose eyes remain on the floor and the little girl sitting on her father's knee seems to have been distracted by something beyond the camera. Although almost obscured by his children, the father has a powerful presence which differs to the portrayed strength of the grandmother. The children photographed with their father are depicted here as the children who are provided for by their father – they are fed and clothed by him – but there is no sign in this photograph of affection as the father looks uneasy at having his picture taken. His role as the breadwinner appears to be unchallenged. The photograph of the children with their mother, on the bottom left hand side, may disclose another side to the family set-up. The boy and girl have been photographed in a more caring arrangement – the little girl has her arm around her mother and the mother holds on to her son's hand tightly. Again, this demonstrates a behaviour rather expected at the time. Interestingly, the husband and wife have not been shot together alone or with their children, but separately. Unlike the other series of family photographs in the Lisel Haas Archive, the Pearsons did not have a typical family portrait of the husband and wife with their children: this may owe to the fact that one does not remain in the archive and rather belongs to the family rather than such a photograph was never taken.

The exclusion of any negative aspect of 'the family' is a factor recognised by Bernardes and others, and this omission can be witnessed in Haas's family photographs. Bernardes asserts that some scholars had 'begun to question whether anything corresponding to the popular image of 'the family' exists at all'.[7] What is significant to the discussion of this chapter, however, is not whether this image of 'the family' exists (because surely it does not) but rather why this 'construction of unreality' is so prevalent within a family's make-up, and the reasons it is reflected, and perpetuated, in family photography.[8] Rudi Dallos has explained that 'in some circumstances families build constructions which appear to distort their reality.'[9] The distortion of family reality cannot, and does not, conceal the richness of society or the diversity of different families, but rather indulges in the image of 'the family' which is considered acceptable by society. As Bernardes has stressed that once this diversity is considered, 'it is clear that 'the nuclear family' does not exist except as a powerful image in the minds of most people.'[10] It can be argued that the power of the image of 'the family' is constructed and underpinned by having a family photograph taken, framing it and either displaying it centrally in a family home or in a family album in an attempt to preserve that very moment. The conventions of family photography reveal, to an extent, the power of the family myth – the photograph highlights the importance of defending 'the family' and shows the intent to preserve this image of the perfectly constructed family life. The family myth 'prevents the family system from damaging, perhaps destroying itself. It has therefore the quality of a 'safety valve', that is, a survival value.'[11] Family myths are expectations which can never be realised, and the photographs which, on the surface, indulge in the myth in turn

[7] *Ibid*, 2
[8] Rudi Dallos has described family myths as 'constructions of unreality' in 'Constructing Family Life: Family Belief Systems', in John Muncie et al (eds.), *Understanding the Family (Second Edition)*, London, California and New Delhi, 1999, 203-208
[9] *Ibid*, 203.
[10] Bernardes, *ibid*, 13
[11] A.J Ferreira, 'Family myths and homeostasis', *Archives of General Psychiatry*, Vol. 9, 457-63, quoted in *ibid*, 204

become the site for the deconstruction of this unreality. So then, the significance of photography to 'the family' is illustrated by Marianne Hirsch:

> Thus photography quickly became the family's primary instrument of self-knowledge and representation – the means by which family memory would be continued and perpetuated, by which the family's story would henceforth be told.[12]

Photography has the ability to reaffirm the familial myths by transforming the fluidity of family life into a series of individual snapshots – singular, engineered moments captured by the camera which may rather be assumed to in fact record actual instances of family life. These actual instances are fraught with inconsistency and fragmentation; the realities of these fragmentations of family history call attention to far too many complexities for the story told by the camera. Hirsch continues, though, that 'what may be constant, however [...] is the existence of a familial mythology, of an image to live up to, an image shaping the desire of the individual living in a social group.'[13] The two photographs labelled *Postcard Portraits – Couples and Groups* taken by Haas (Fig. 16 and Fig. 17) belong to a collection of photographs taken by Haas of family groups. This 'image to live up to' outlined by Hirsch is exposed in these two images of perfect family harmony. It is clear that Haas responded to her clients' wishes to be portrayed as a desirable, middle-class family – the epitome of 'the family'. The careful positioning of the father's arm (Fig. 16) links him to his son, who is standing behind the sofa and leaning in to his doting parents. The triangular formation of the three family members' heads takes the viewer's eye around the photograph, noting each individually and then as part of the family triangle. They are well-dressed. The passiveness of the mother is underpinned by her dark glasses; the overbearing confident nature of both the

[12]Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames. Photography, narrative and postmemory*, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, 1997, 6-7
[13]*Ibid*, 8

father and son allows the mother to become slightly overshadowed. However, this photograph differs to a typical studio portrait as it has been taken in the family home. The opportunity for this family to be photographed amongst their assets highlights the desirability of a successful white, middle-class suburban family. The close-up nature of this portrait does not distract from the large window behind the family which shows off part of the pleasant leafy grounds. The luxuriously looking fabric on the sofa, the flowers (which are recognisable as lilies) on the right hand side of the photograph and the books on the left are all imperative in the formation of this family's identity as a sophisticated unity having learnt to appreciate culture and nature alike.

It is interesting to note the difference in set-up between the two photographs of the same family. The family is more relaxed in this picture (Fig. 17), seemingly enjoying a drink and a joke. The constructed casualness of the family functions in a similar fashion to the previous photograph in that it shows off their assets whilst creating a picture of familial bliss. The distinction between the two can be seen in the representation of the mother. In this photograph she appears to dominate the frame, bending towards and looking directly into the camera. Although the father sits in the middle of the photo below the lamp, the viewer is drawn to the figure of the mother whose stress-free posture brings a settled, albeit contrived, feeling to the photograph. This may reveal, to an extent, Haas's influence as a photographer. Her ability to put her clients at ease can be witnessed in this photo, and despite the fact that this portrait adheres to the desired portrayal of a middle-class family, the woman in the second photograph has subtly taken on a more leading role within their family group both as a mother (her son seems to look towards her) and a wife (with her legs elegantly displayed in front of the lower body part of her husband).

The desired image of 'the family' is not a new phenomenon. This desire to be recorded in a particular way, to be remembered by others in a certain light, has a significant place in art history as well as the broader contexts of history, society, memory and family studies. Katherine Hoffman asserts that throughout art history, visual imagery of families has played an important role in the formation of familial stability and in notions of family identity. She begins by stating that 'the term *family values* is charged with social, political, economic and emotional connotations as discourse in political campaigns [...] editorials, and other places centers on crises in our nation that relate to our children and family life.'[14] Such concepts of identity, such as those seen in the visual recordings of families, have remained powerful throughout the twentieth century, despite the recognition of the instability of family life and the knowledge that what has come to be known as 'the family' does not really exist at all. Bernardes has gone some way to give a reason for this, by explaining that, 'the power of the image of 'the family' rests upon the way in which it has rarely been challenged and frequently been supported by disciplines as different as sociology, biology and history.'[15] So then, the acceptance of this image by society has been largely uncontested, by society as a whole, by family groups or by individuals. The threat to 'the family' is so great that all it can do is perpetuate itself in a series of memories.

The power of a photograph is undeniable in the attempt to understand the complexities of a family's past and the intricacies of its present. Kuhn reflects on her childhood ruled by a controlling mother and the heartbreaking discovery, by her mother's insistence, that her dad was not her biological father, as she had believed. These discoveries have been unearthed through examining photographs which do not hint at such family secrets, as expressed by

[14]Katherine Hoffman, *Concepts of Identity. Historical and Contemporary Images and Portraits of Self and Family*, New York, 1996, 3
[15]Bernardes, *ibid*, 9

Kuhn, but rather portray the idyllic side of family life. The photograph used by Kuhn as a starting point for her discussion shows her as a little girl, sitting in a chair and holding her pet budgerigar, Greeny (Fig. 18).[16] This picture does not reveal to the viewer what Kuhn remembers when she looks at this photograph. One may observe the setting, the look of the girl, for example, but each individual will have memories concerning different pasts and histories. Photographs then, become sites for interpretation and serves as a prompt for recollection, even if the sitter is not identical with the viewer. Kuhn continues that 'family photographs are supposed to show not so much that we were once there, as how we once were: to evoke memories which might have little or nothing to do with what is actually in the picture.'[17] Kuhn's assertion that what is revealed to us when we look at family albums or individual photographs as 'how we once were' also allows for the construction of more unpleasant memories, unearthed from the sugar-sweet presentation of the family captured in the picture. The recollection of these more unpleasant aspects of our pasts is constructed in the absence of what is shown in the photograph itself. The smiling faces may conceal a rupture which threatens to disturb the peaceful nature of the family photograph.

Haas's personal life was far from the conventional family she portrayed in her photographs. She did not marry or have any children of her own, but lived alone with her female partner. Although it is not clear whether Haas and Grete Bermbach were involved in a sexual relationship, it is apparent that they were engaged in a loving companionship which lasted their whole lives.[18]The unconventional arrangement of Haas's relationship is very interesting in view of how she portrayed family life. The creation of a harmonious family unit is most certainly a construction, one which Haas upheld and valued in her professional career. The

[16]Kuhn, *ibid*, 11
[17]*Ibid*, 13
[18] Although it cannot be assumed from this that their relationship was a sexual union, indication may allude to the existence of a suppressed lesbian relationship

supposed contradiction between Haas, the photographer, who used family photography as a way to attempt to overcome personal losses and Haas, the person, who never created a family of her own, is one which will be addressed in the third chapter.

It cannot be denied that a family portrait is a visual representation dedicated to preserving the idylls of family life, but the alleged incongruity described in the previous paragraph does not necessarily have to be a negative one. Haas's unconventional home life, I believe, had a significant impact on the ways in which she photographed families and specifically the way she challenged the role of women within 'the family' through the medium of photography. Portrait photography has played an important part in the development of women photographers already since the second half of the nineteenth century. Portraiture was especially accessible to women as it 'offered a means of self-sufficiency and fulfilment.'[19] Haas was no exception. Her studio's success reflects her determination and ability to communicate with her clients in order to produce pictures which achieved the image they (the clients) were hoping for.

Haas's experiences may have influenced some of the ways she was able to portray a number of her clients in their photographs, specifically women. The photograph of Anne Smart taken in 1972 (Fig. 19) focuses on the delicate beauty ideals of an independent young woman of the time. The unimposing studio background has allowed Haas to concentrate on Smart without having to negotiate marital and/or familial duties. She gazes beyond the camera and does not engage its presence with her eyes. Although she wears make up, Smart has a defiant look which has been illuminated by Haas. The self-sufficiency of this woman is a reflection of Haas and her professional independence. Anne Tucker has suggested that what can be seen

[19]Val Williams, *The Other Observers. Women Photographers in Britain 1900 to the Present*, London, 1994, 142

'photographically – that is, subject matter and treatment – to some extent reflects gender.'[20] Haas's treatment of her subjects, to a certain extent, could be said to reflect her sensibilities as a woman, as a woman photographer. While in the family photographs, Haas does not break away from the typical domestic subordinate role of a wife and mother at the time, the portraits of women on their own bring to the fore a sexualised, independent, young and beautiful female type associated with the woman before marriage and childbearing.

So, it could be suggested that, as a woman photographer who had a female partner, she was able to bring a certain sensibility to the portraits of women. Although Haas was a professional portrait photographer who, if she wants to attract commissions, must capture the sitter as they wish to be captured, I would like to put forward that her photographs of women and women with their children and families reveal a desire to be progressive in the depiction of women in society. Haas has been recorded as stating the following in a speech given to a Birmingham Jewish women's group:

> The unusual and the unorthodox, for which I have been fighting for years, are lately tolerated and the very fact that the well-worn path is abandoned enables new possibilities to emerge. When I first showed my photographs to my customers, I always heard them telling me the same: I do love your photographs, but, you see, the pictures are for my parents or grandparents and they are rather conservative in their taste [...]. But to-day, the language of modern photography has changed so much [...].[21]

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[20]Anne Tucker, *The Woman's Eye*, 1973, noted in Wells, *ibid*, 54
[21]An excerpt taken from a speech on photography made by Lisel Haas to a Birmingham Jewish Women's group, date unknown

Although this quotation may refer to technical issues rather than context, one could still see it in the latter sense if compared to contemporary photography. The changing role of women in society and the ways in which they have been portrayed in photographs has been examined by Val Williams in her book, *The Other Observers. Women Photographers in Britain 1900 to the Present*. Williams explores the work of a handful of female portrait photographers working in Britain from the start of the twentieth century up until the 1980s. Despite the impact of cultural and societal changes that took place during the first half of the twentieth century in photography it is clear that Haas belonged to a series of women portrait photographers who were determined to challenge the status of women in society. As Williams notes, during the late nineteenth century 'when family life was seen to be of paramount importance' some female photographers 'photographed women at its centre.' However, as women photographers entered the twentieth century 'the portrayal of elegant women' was taken 'far beyond the boundaries set by [their] Edwardian predecessors.[22] Whereas photographers working in the late nineteenth century, such as Alice Hughes, placed women at the centre of family life, women photographers during the first half of the twentieth century, such as Dorothy Wilding, were able to focus on the photography of women in their own right: 'Wilding's women are never submissive but are a new brigade of self-made, self-sufficient characters.' Williams' statement about Wilding can easily be applied to Haas; while the former displays the elegance and beauty of Elizabeth Allan (setting the photograph in a rather typical parallel with those of flowers visible in the background) in a photograph taken in 1930 (Fig. 20), Haas not only focuses on the stereotypical bodily features, but also shows the

[22]Williams, *ibid*, 145 and 152

woman smoking, a much appreciated pastime of the time in a photograph of an unknown woman (Fig. 21).[23]

In the same way that Wilding shot black and white photographs of glamorous women against stark backgrounds (Fig. 20), Haas creates strong contours in her photo (Fig. 21). Glamorous and feminine, she also appears strong and confident; and like Wilding, Haas's portraits of women highlight a change in the perceived role of women, both young and old. The picture of an older woman (Fig. 22) photographed with a pen and book highlights the status of this particular figure as an intellectual, replacing the jewellery and decadence of the young. Her spectacles do not conform to typical notions of beauty, but this woman's pose is strong and defiant; this woman looks directly at the camera, underpinning her confidence. The tranquil look in this woman's eyes shows her at ease. There is a certain kind of familiarity between the sitter and photographer; the natural pose as if this were a snapshot (not a staged portrait). Rather than being photographed purely as a wife or mother, women were photographed in their own right – well-dressed, fashionable, confident, but arguably most importantly – as independent.

The difference in portraying women as independent and reliant is strongly displayed in a series taken of *Martin and Andrea Fisher, Solihull* (Figs. 23 and 24). The photograph of Mrs Fisher on her own (Fig. 23) represents a relaxed, middle-aged woman tilting her head to the side as if to flirt shyly with the camera. This is a typical studio portrait – the background is neutral, the chair on which the client sits is unassuming and the lighting is sharp and clear. In the series of her as a mother with her two children (Fig. 24), she suddenly looks slightly stressed as if to keep the children happy and content for the constructed picture. Although they are posing for the camera, there seems to be an attempt to give the images an informal

[23]*Ibid*, 152

quality. The little boy sits on his mother's lap as she holds her little girl's hand – she is portrayed as their protector here. Although Haas's photographs of women and their families did not push the boundaries of photographic portraiture within modernist ideals, it can be argued that Haas responded to the changing roles of women in society. Haas's success reflects her skill to react accordingly to the perceived nature of society by her clients. In contrast, many portrait photographers, both male and female, have fallen out of fashion as they do not respond to the needs of their clientele. In comparison to modernist photographers, Holland has asserted that 'when high-street photographers are commissioned, it is because their work conforms. Experimentation or innovation are not welcome, and intrusive 'artistic' elements, or a naturalism that attempts to 'get behind the mask' would not keep faith with the client.'[24]Holland's statement is true to a certain extent. High-street photographers relied, and continue to rely, on paying customers whose vision of family life is negotiated. Thus, Haas not being a modernist photographer as the likes of Lucia Moholy but rather a commercial and commissioned photographer was responsible for negotiating the look of the photograph between the paying customer and her own ambitions. Being able to do this successfully is demonstrated by the length of running a portrait studio first in Germany (Kaiserstrasse 49, Mönchengladbach) and then in Britain (Grove Avenue, Birmingham).[25] This shows skill in responding to the taste of the middle-class urban customer over a period in which Haas adapted not only to possible changes of different countries but also to the changing role of women over nearly 50 years.[26] It can be determined from archival material that Haas was indeed highly regarded by her clients. In a letter written to Haas by a young client, dated 12 February 1954, Sally exclaimed, 'I wish to thank you for the photograph you gave me. You

[24]Holland, *ibid*, 4
[25]The Lisel Haas Archive holds original advertisement leaflets for both her studios in Mönchengladbach and Birmingham
[26]There are photographs in the Lisel Haas Archive which date to the mid-1980s, and therefore it is probable she worked up until her death in 1989

know I think you must be magic because the one you sent me was the one I liked best. We all epreachiate [*sic*] them more than I can tell and hope you are getting on well with your job. Love from Sally.'[27]

In viewing these photographs as a body of Haas' photographic work one may observe some of the pictures as more informal portrayals of contented family life. Haas seems to have been very much a family-oriented person, which may be seen through her treatment of her clients, but also from an account by her niece, Dorothy.[28]Her investment in her clients' well-being and in producing successful photographs has been noted in the only document recording Haas's feelings towards photography as a profession in the archive. Although this document is brief and lacks comparative material, it has been significant for this study, as it reveals Haas's feelings about portrait photography and provides an insight into the importance of photography to her. As Haas was unable to set up her own studio during the war, she immediately turned to portrait photography after 1945. Haas explains that as 'much as I liked my permit for Stage and Artists only I was glad when after the war and my naturalisation, my partner and I took up portrait photography again.'[29] The dialogue exposes Haas's dedication to her clients, especially her approach to photographing children who she attempted to capture more naturally; a photograph of three children with their two dogs (Fig. 25) shows two young boys and a little girl captivated by the presence of the two dogs, but seemingly oblivious to the camera. The dynamic created by the body of the dog gives this photograph an animated quality which would not have been captured so naturally in a typical studio portrait. The expression on each child's face is testament to Haas's ability to put her clients, particularly

[27]A letter written to Haas by Sally, 12/02/1954, MS2202 Letters 1941-, Folder I A-G, Lisel Haas Archive, Birmingham City Archives
[28]Dorothy spoke of Haas as being very much concerned with family, keeping in touch with relatives who had immigrated to South America through letter writing. This was told to the author in a meeting with Dorothy, June 2009
[29]Haas, *ibid*

children, at ease as demonstrated by the photograph of two boys happily looking into the camera (Fig. 26). The following gives an insight into Haas's process of photographing children:

> Children's expression change from one minute to the other and you never know what will happen next. I dislike stereotyped poses and like to catch children OFF-GUARD. I usually play with them until they have forgotten their self-consciousness – and I then have really nothing more to do, but to warch [*sic*]the endless series of expressions on their eager faces, wait for the right moment and shoot.[30]

The photograph mentioned earlier (Fig. 26) is an example of children having 'forgotten their self-consciousness.' The two boys are smiling for the camera, but these smiles do not appear to be well-rehearsed for the sake of a photograph. Haas spent time with her clients and at the right moment, seems to have taken this photograph to capture the spirit of the little boys playing. This kind of investment in photography not only shows the importance of photography to Haas's professional success (her ability to provide for herself relied upon the success of her studio) but also, to a certain extent, her personal life. Hoffman introduced the diversity of approaches to the relationship between the sitter and the artist (or photographer) using an example from Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. As Basil Hallward (an artist) says to his friend, Lord Henry Wotton, 'Every portrait that is painted with feeling is a portrait of the artist [...]. It is not he who is revealed by the painter; it is rather the painter who, on the colored canvas, reveals himself.'[31]

In accordance with Wilde's portrayal of Hallward, Haas's photographs of women, children and families reveal something about herself. The illusionary nature of family photography

[30]*Ibid*
[31]A quotation taken from Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, quoted in Hoffman, *ibid*, 5-6

meant that Haas, as a photographer creating this myth, did not have to preoccupy herself with the fractures of the families she photographed, but rather remained a part of the myth. In Chapter Three it is the psychoanalytical effects of family photography specifically on the émigré which are to be considered. This chapter has explored the significance of photography to families and the role of Haas as a portrait photographer. Through commissioning portrait photographs, the client is able to create a constructed reality of the family, indulging in a familial myth. In examining such photographs, this chapter has drawn attention to complex identities formed through portrait photography whilst exploring Haas's own relationship with her clients through the medium. Photography functioning as a central component in the creation of memories and identification has been discussed and will create the basis for the argument in the third chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

BEHIND THE LENS: THE PHOTOGRAPH'S ROLE IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FEMALE EMIGRE IDENTITY

The power of photography in creating a strong family identity has been explored in the previous chapter of this study. This chapter aims to call attention to Haas as an émigré and photographer in Britain in order to assert the importance of the photograph in the construction of identity.The impact of photography on Haas will be explored with reference to psychoanalytical and postcolonial theories surrounding the concept of home in order to further understand the significance of the role of photography in the attempt to overcome personal losses. It has been recognised that there are parallels between the theoretical discourse on the concept of home as set out by postcolonial theorists regarding the situations of mass emigration post-World War Two and the kind of emigration discussed here. As Jutta Vinzent has noted 'according to postcolonial studies, securing new homes is not only difficult because of the migrants bringing their own cultural baggage [...] but because of this baggage being constructed by the host country and used as a barrier.'[1] Vinzent continues that 'the change in identity can result in an identification with being a refugee who is characterised by being not at home – but longing for a home.'[2] This chapter will utilise postcolonial discourse in order to give insights into the complexities of longing for a home and the subsequent (re-)formation of identity.

[1] Jutta Vinzent, *Identity and Image. Refugee Artists from Nazi Germany in Britain (1933-1945)*, Weimar, 2006, 172
[2] *Ibid*, 172

As outlined earlier, Haas, having been forced from her home because of the events of *Kristallnacht*, immigrated with her father to Birmingham, where her brother and his family were already residing. Photography was a constant in Haas's life from before her emigration until her death in 1989. Concentrating on the period around her emigration, I would like to argue that for Haas the medium of photography provided a way to bridge this forced move and the changes that are conventionally associated with it. Particular emphasis will also be paid to Haas being a woman. The analysis is based on discourses of identity formation in postcolonial studies and psychoanalysis.

According to Katherine Hoffman, photographs offer the viewer the possibility 'to understand our own individual identities and the families we are a part of or close to.'[3] Here, Katherine Hoffman addresses the influence of visual imagery in the formation of memory and identity. Haas's experiences as an émigré and her own family life may have influenced some of the ways in which she portrayed a number of her clients in their photographs and in doing so, attempted to reconstruct the ruptures in her own life (Fig. 27). As the photographer, Haas had a key role within the making of this photograph, and it is possible that she was able to deliver such a natural portrait photograph because of a longing for her own family identity to be restored. Through the act of taking photographs and interacting with her clients on a professional and personal level, Haas may have gone some way to understand her own identity, having been affected by her clients' perception of theirs.

Self-perception has been examined at length within the field of psychoanalysis. It has played an important role in the exploration of the visual arts and, arguably, it is particularly significant to this study – not only because of its relevance to émigrés and photography, but

[3]Katherine Hoffman, *Concepts of Identity. Historical and Contemporary Images and Portraits of Self and Family*, New York, 1996, 1

also for the reason that Haas's own brother, Hans Erich Haas (1896 – 1990), practised as a psychoanalyst in Germany. In an anonymously published obituary in the *Psychiatric Bulletin*, he is remembered as the first psychoanalyst to work in Cologne and an influential figure in the development of psychoanalysis in Germany and Britain. At a time when 'psychoanalysis found little support in academic circles [...] he needed considerable courage to pursue his growing psychoanalytical interests in a climate of considerable opposition and at times derisive criticism.'[4] The hostility towards the practice of psychoanalysis in Germany by the National Socialists was great, especially when it was directed at Jewish practitioners. Even as early as 1933, it was becoming increasingly clear to Hans Erich that the regime threatened the existence of psychoanalysts in the country. He sought to leave Germany for Britain and arrived in Birmingham in 1936.[5] Hans Erich was able to set up a psychoanalytic practice in Birmingham with his work permit and was a founder member of the Section of Psychiatry of the Birmingham Medical Institute. Despite such dedication to his profession, Hans Erich did not publish any work that could be used for an application to Haas' work. There is also no other evidence on Haas being influenced by contemporary discussions on psychoanalysis. Nevertheless, this biographical detail seems to contribute to justify exploring Haas' work from a psychoanalytical perspective.

Much more significantly, however, is that psychoanalysis has informed many theories concerned with the visual arts, and the use of imagery in constructing an identity. Emigration in particular reveals the complexities of identity formations. It is through imagery that one attempts to reconcile the fractured self, as argued by Judy Weiser. The photograph has become a visual means for accessing the past and Weiser has asserted the power of

[4]Anon, 'Obituary' in *Psychiatric Bulletin*, Volume 15, 1991, 185, sourced on pb.rcpsych.org, accessed November 2009
[5]*Ibid*, 185

photography as a form of self-expression.[6] Although Weiser's work predominantly focuses on the amateur photographer, I will argue that the phototherapy techniques she employs are also applicable to professional photographers. Some complications arise here, however. Haas, as a professional portrait photographer, has been commissioned by her clients to produce photographs of them. These photographs are not random snapshots but do follow, even beyond being commissioned, certain strategies of composition. For example, Marcus Adams (1875 – 1959) was established as one of Britain's leading child photographers, and one is able to realise the presence of certain aspects of strategic portrait composition which have remained in photography throughout the twentieth century (Fig. 28). The photograph of a young girl titled *Portrait Study* of 1928 is an example of Adams's work that captures the zeitgeist of the period. The sitter has been positioned slightly off-centre with her head turned towards her left shoulder. The subject has been handled delicately by Adams who poses against a neutral backdrop. However, even a snapshot as understood by Weiser, is to some extent a selection – it has been taken as a result of a conscious process. In order to assert the importance of photography to Haas, as a means of overcoming her own personal losses, one must recognise photography as a means of self-expression, even if this self-expression cannot be fully realised in a commissioned photograph.

The use of photography as a means of coming to terms with the past has been recognised by psychologists through its use in phototherapy. The first record of photography being used in conjunction with psychology was in the 1850s by English physician Dr Hugh Diamond. Diamond discovered there was therapeutic value in showing patients in a mental hospital the photographic results.[7] However, it was not until 1975 when the first conferences on

[6]Judy Weiser, *PhotoTherapy Techniques. Exploring the Secrets of Personal Snapshots and Family Albums*, San Francisco, USA, 1993, 23
[7]Doug Stewart, 'Photo Therapy: Theory and Practice' in *Art Psychotherapy*, Vol. 6, USA, 1979, 41

phototherapy took place at the International Photography Center in New York.[8] As a pioneer of phototherapy, Judy Weiser has explored the use of photographs in therapy in order to establish close working relationships with her clients. Different from the approach taken here, however, photographs are used 'as starting points rather than end products, and who can use them to initiate questions and explore feelings can learn a great deal about themselves in the process.'[9] Photographs as a starting point in the process of overcoming losses gives explanation to their power to capture feelings and create memories in times of tragedy and adversity. Weiser uses an example of a client who had been evicted from her apartment in order for it to be demolished so new apartments could be built. In order for her anger at her eviction to be expressed the client produced a series of photographs (Fig. 29). In this example, the woman stands naked in, presumably, the corner of a room in her apartment which she was forced to leave, communicating the anger and distress she felt at being forced from this, her home. This example shows that the loss of home – whether that is an apartment, a town or a country – causes distress. Weiser explores the reasons for such anger, raising questions about guilt, abandonment and protection. Through the production of photographs, the client was able to ascertain that the 'other places I've lived in before, I left by choice. This is the first time my home rejected *me*.'[10] This acute feeling of rejection has been channelled through the photograph, which has been used as a vehicle for personal constructions of reality. To be rejected by your own home results in a longing for it which is no longer realistic, but idealistic. The idealisation of home occurs through the pain of having lost it in the first place. The memories of home become entwined with the fractures of the present resulting in a construction of the past which is no longer true to reality.

[8] *Ibid*, 41
[9] Weiser, *ibid*, 5
[10] *Ibid*, 259

The family photographs not only become sites for the formation of memories but for Haas the products of memories. Just as the woman described above by Weiser produced photographs in order to channel her anger at the memories of being forced from her home, Haas's photographs can be viewed as a construction in order to rehabilitate her own memories of her home in Germany before emigrating. Cosden and Reynolds in their essay on the uses of photography as therapy have noted that 'despite the apparent interface of photography and psychotherapy, there has been little attention given to the value of photography as a therapeutic activity in and of itself.'[11] It is here then, through Haas's use of photography, that it becomes an act of reconstruction (of the self and of home) – a healing activity in and of itself. Ruth Finnegan has noted that 'when we look at the products of memories [...] we can certainly value them as rich sources for our understanding of family and personal history [...]. But we must also remember that they are not limpid empirical data, transmitted by some mechanical process.'[12] Therefore, when looking at a photograph it must be appreciated that these constructions of family identity have been informed by an individual's memories or their own understanding of themselves. As Weiser has stated 'people's experiences of reality actually construct its meaning for them, and their eventual definition of it will be based on their deconstruction of that meaning.'[13] This becomes particularly poignant in times of distress or suffering, as Haas was forced to deconstruct the meaning of the present in order to begin to come to terms with her past. Arguably, she was able to channel those feelings through the act of taking photographs and interacting with her clients, therefore becoming more involved with her community. As outlined in the previous chapter, Haas herself has stated that she enjoyed taking photographs of children and watching them come to life in front

[11]Craig Cosden and Dwight Reynolds, 'Photography as Therapy' in *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, Vol. 9, Issue 1, USA, 1982, 19
[12]Ruth Finnegan, 'Family Myths, Memories and Interviewing' in Robert Perks and Alistair Thompson (eds.), *The Oral History Reader*, Abingdon, Great Britain and New York, USA, 2009, 180
[13]Weiser, *ibid*, 2

of the camera (Fig. 30). The naturalness of children being photographed is in contrast to the ways in which adults have their photographs taken. The child is not self-conscious or concerned with the presence of the camera, or photographer. The photograph of Nicki and Francesca Pearson is an example of Haas's success as a portrait photographer, as it is clear she was able to make her clients feel at ease and in turn they would welcome her presence.

Sarah Edge has explored the psychological impact of photography on the self, with specific reference to children. Edge has wondered 'about the role which the photograph of the child plays in fixing and marking a set of signs that stand in for the self; creating a memory, sometimes even before a memory can be held, a fixed set of signs of a self that displaces the memory of a more fluid, less static and feeling 'self'.'[14] The Lacanian influence on the impact of photography on the individual has not been ignored, as the process of self-identification will always occur from the outside. Jacques Lacan's essay on the mirror stage, 'The Mirror-phase as Formative of the Function of the I', explores the psychology behind self-recognition from birth. The Mirror-phase draws attention to the formation of the self in which he 'posited an initial identification with a mirror image that caused the child to identify with an externalized image of itself.'[15] As Lacan writes,

> we have only to understand the mirror-phase *as an identification*, in the full sense which analysis gives to the term: namely, the transformation which takes place in the subject when he assumes an image – whose predestination to this phase-effect is sufficiently indicated by the use, in analytical theory, of the old term *imago*.[16]

[14]Sarah Edge, 'Photography and the Self' in *Circa*, no. 90, 1999, 31
[15]Margaret Olin, 'Gaze' in Robert S. Nelson and Richard Shiff (eds.), *Critical Terms for Art History*, Chicago, USA, 2003 , 325
[16]Jacques Lacan, 'The Mirror-Phase as formative of the Function of the I' (1949) in *New Left Review*, 1968, 72

Margaret Olin uses Lacan's theory to inform a discussion surrounding the 'gaze', explaining that 'identification with this image is a primary misidentification and determines that the course of the ego is split, for its image of itself comes from the outside.'[17] Therefore, it has been recognised that one's first recognition of oneself is in fact a radical misrecognition. So following Lacan's hypothesis, this initial identification is at once replaced by desire 'giving rise to the desire for completeness.'[18] Such a desire can be distinguished as a search for one's own identity; the desire of the other as self. The photograph in this instance can be seen as a means to represent the self at a particular moment in time. For the two children in Haas's picture, the photograph may act as a kind of mirror and thus the children will recognise themselves as the 'other'; as they appear in the photograph. It is most likely that the brother and sister are unaware of the power of the photograph in the formation of memories and self-identification which inevitably they will happen upon later in life when they will attempt to access their past through the medium of photography. But what relevance may the photographs of children have for the identity formation of the photographer? If referring back to Sarah Edge, the photograph may work as a site for Haas's own childhood memories, but also, as a woman who has a desire for having children of her own, thus arguably becoming a substitute for reality, or, as Edge points out, a misrecognition.

The actuality is that 'each photograph always recalls that first moment of misrecognition – believing that the representation of the self is the self.'[19] This moment of misrecognition is echoed in the investment of the self in the imagined rediscovery of the past – for Haas, the misrecognition lies within the photographs of children and also the families of her clients. The 'unreality' of the reality depicted in the photograph may be necessary for the

[17]Olin, *ibid*, 325
[18]*Ibid*, 325
[19]Edge, *ibid*, 31

development of the self, in the rehabilitation of self-identity. Weiser acknowledges the essential needs for photography, in that 'the photos people take and keep serve as tangible extensions of the self and as, quite literally, personal constructs of reality in the fullest definition of the term.'[20] So even though Haas's photographs examined here are professional portraits there is still a part of her 'self' in the photographs; they also serve as an extension of her personal reconstruction of her past.

Haas's photographs of middle class families depict, on the most part, traditional constructions of a mother and/or a father with their children. Haas's own personal life did not follow this traditional pattern. However, this is not to assume that Haas longed for a family in the same ways she had photographed them, but rather that because of her experiences, the subjects she photographed arguably/may well have become a vehicle for her imaginative rediscovery of her past before her emigration (Fig. 31). The colour photograph of a brother and sister embracing reveals their innocence through the portrayal of the two of them intertwined together. The innocence of the children, in forgetting that they are being photographed, is exemplified by the gaze of the little girl. She looks beyond the camera to somewhere where the viewer of the photograph cannot see. She does not engage or return Haas's gaze either, but rather looks out into the beyond. There are no personal photographs of Haas with her own family in the archive, so these family photographs may offer a constructed reality which, nevertheless, can function as a site of an imagined home, a surrogate of belonging, even if unreal, especially in times of suffering and pain.

This strength of character is continued in the depiction of women at work. The black and white picture of a woman in her nurse's uniform is a different kind of portrait (Fig. 32). Although clearly a portrait photograph (the background is screened and the lighting artificial),

[20]Weiser, *ibid*, 229

the subject wanted to be portrayed as a woman working. If one applied Lacan's theory to an adult's recognition of oneself, such portraits of individual women may have the ability to represent different facets of Haas's imagined reconstruction of her own identity and her willingness to belong but also her desire for something more.

Griselda Pollock has asserted the importance of the gaze beyond the boundaries of the screen/camera/canvas. In questioning Lacan's mirror-phase, Pollock argues that ''beyond the screen' is not nothing, but the imagined locus of a social as well as psychic desire for more, for renegotiated social orders, for other managements of sexuality and subjectivity.'[21]Here, the screen refers to Lacan's mirror, and Pollock contests Lacan's assertion that the development of self-identification belongs only to this mirror-phase. So rather than being defined by the externalised image of the self, one has the ability to see beyond this and attempt to recover a more rounded, multifaceted identity. Pollock addresses some flaws in Lacan's theory of the mirror stage: 'the problem with [his] argument [...] was that he appeared to assume some proto-subject already there to recognise the identity between the image and the body looking at it.'[22] Although it has been argued that Haas's photographs became a mirror for her own self-recognition, or re-recognition, through the representation of children, family groups and independent women, some of them showing them working, it has also been asserted that Haas's personal life did not follow such a prototypical pattern.

The desire for completeness has been expressed in postcolonial approaches to diaspora, and here it applies to Haas as an émigré and as a woman. Using Haas's family photographs this part of the chapter will explore the meanings of 'home' and how photography has been used

[21]Griselda Pollock, 'The Gaze and the Look: Women with Binoculars – A Question of Difference' in Richard Kendall and Griselda Pollock (eds.), *Dealing with Degas: Representations of Women and the Politics of Vision* , New York, 1991, 118
[22]*Ibid*, 116

as a means to overcome the loss of a home. As a result of National Socialism, Haas had to leave her home country, becoming, in political terms, an 'enemy alien' in Britain. Photography, as I would argue, formed, on another level (i.e. as a medium), a unifying site; it enabled Haas to interact with her surrounding community, and gave her the possibility to belong. Haas was able to establish herself professionally so successfully that she did not return to Germany after the war, or emigrate elsewhere.[23]

The complexities of 'home' have been addressed by postcolonial theorists in order to further understand diaspora cultures and answer questions relating to 'cultural identity'. To highlight the significance of memory to such an approach, Simon Featherstone has brought attention to the use of memory which 'tends to be associated with individualised recollection that serves to constitute personal identity within a society [...]. But [...] memory can also provide a provocative critique of historical practice, and a flexible means of exploring postcolonial pasts.'[24]

The question of identity is interrelated with that of the longing for home.Stuart Hall has explored these issues and has questioned the very idea of a 'cultural identity' as it implies a coherent and stable structure. Hall asserts that we should think of 'identity as a "production" which is never complete [...] always constituted within, not outside, representation. This view problematises the very authority and authenticity to which the term "cultural identity" lays claim.'[25]

Hall argues in this particular essay, 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora', that there are at least two different ways of thinking about 'cultural identity'. The first position defines this kind of

[23]This however, may have, in part, been because Haas was denied the right to immigrate to the United States
[24]Simon Featherstone, *Postcolonial Cultures*, Edinburgh, 2005, 171
[25]Stuart Hall, 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora' in Nicholas Mirzoeff (ed.), *Diaspora and Visual Culture. Representing Africans and Jews*, London, Great Britain, USA and Canada, 2000, 22

identity in terms of 'one, shared culture, a sort of collective "one true self", hiding in the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed "selves".'[26] In essence, this position provides cultural identities with a stable and continuous meaning, reflecting the shared cultural and historical experiences of the people belonging to it. Hall relates this directly to the 'Caribbeanness' of the black experience, but here this position informs thinking surrounding the Jewish experience. Such an imagined coherence, as described by Hall, is imposed on experiences of dispersal and fragmentation.[27] In contrast to this first position, Hall recognises as the second view of cultural identity that there are also 'critical points of deep and significant *difference* which constitute "what we really are"; or rather – since history has intervened – "what we have become."'[28] In this second sense, although cultural identity is historical it undergoes constant transformation. It has been asserted from this second view of cultural identity that it is important to recognise these constant changes, as well as the past. The act of taking a photograph, of interacting with her clients, enabled Haas to construct – or re-construct – her identity. On the one hand, Haas shares her past with other émigrés – in terms of a collective memory of pre-war Germany and the reception of the Holocaust - but on the other, makes her own experiences which intervene, thus questioning the fact of being able to speak of Haas's identity in terms of nationality or any other cultural identification.

John McLeod explains that home primarily becomes a mental construct in that 'it exists in a fractured, discontinuous relationship with the present.'[29] In this way, Haas's photographs of family offer a construction of happiness when in reality she was experiencing loss and her way of life had been fractured by the actions of the National Socialists. This fractured state as mentioned by McLeod refers to the relationship between home and the present. The Fraser-

[26]*Ibid*, 22
[27]*Ibid*, 23
[28]*Ibid*, 23
[29]John McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism*, Manchester, Great Britain and New York, USA, 2000, 211

Thorburn wedding of 1966 (Fig. 33) was well-documented in Birmingham, with an article being published along with examples of Haas's photographs in *The Birmingham Sketch*, 1966. The picture is unconventional in its depiction of the bride, Fiona Thorburn, with her sister preparing for the ceremony. It is unusual in its portrayal of the family as it is informal in comparison to typical wedding photographs. The bride and her sister have been captured behind the scenes in a chaotic moment before the ceremony. The natural smiles and echoed body language of the two sisters creates harmony in the composition of the photograph and this image provides a site for the constructed reality of familial bliss. Despite its construction, this photograph is convincing in its depiction of happiness as a result of marriage and a coming together of families. Belonging to a family, whether that be through marriage or otherwise, can be seen to be significant in the development of happiness and completeness of an individual. This series of three photographs depicting parents with their infants again addresses the effects of family on the happiness of an individual (Fig. 34). Interestingly, it is the father who takes control of the parenting in this series of images, whilst the mother looks on dotingly in two of the photographs and the father is alone in the third picture (on the right-hand-side of the image shown). None of these photographs expose any fragmentation or breakdown of the family group, rather reinforcing the idea that family provides an individual with happiness, comfort and security.

Photographing a father alone with his children seems to strengthen the idea of the 'family' as outlined in the previous chapter. Ida Kar (1908 - 1974) was born in Tambov, near Moscow and came to London in 1945 with her second husband, the artist and critic, Victor Musgrave. As a female photographer working in Britain at the same time as Haas, the subjects of her photographs provide an interesting comparison to Haas's work as a portrait photographer; as female émigrés, Kar and Haas focus on taking photographs of people and their families – a

subject associated with identity and home (Figs. 34 and 35). *Lizzie Spender; Sir Stephen Harold Spender* (Fig. 35) is a black and white photograph of a father with his daughter. Another person holds the baby, Lizzie, but they are not disclosed to the viewer. Rather Kar focuses on the male presence and the unusual angle gives this photograph an interesting viewpoint. Like Haas's portraits of fathers with their children, Kar's portrait captures an almost private moment between father and daughter; seemingly without any interruption by the camera. In this sense, Kar's other portrait of Spender with his children, *Sir Stephen Harold Spender with his two children Lizzie and Matthew* (Fig. 36), portrays a moment of quiet family reflection and may reveal a sense of pride which is also present in Haas's photographs of fathers and their children. These photographs present the viewer with an almost advertisement-like portrayal of the family unit, selling the idea of family to the viewer who may before have been cynical about the power of family identity. For Haas, shooting scenes such as this for her clients, it can only be assumed that it evoked within her a painful remembrance of the past and instilled a willingness in her to attempt to reconstruct her arguably fragmented life. For Kar also, it is as if the photograph provides a site for the construction of a strong family identity in which the father is very much present.

As Hall notes, such photographs 'offer a way of imposing an imaginary coherence on the experience of dispersal and fragmentation.'[30] Photography – the process of taking photographs – allowed Haas to construct idyllic scenes of family life. Such 'dreams of home' as described by Holland, a longing for the time before the war and the atrocities of the Holocaust, were most likely present in Haas's thoughts during the 1940s and after. As a displaced person, her own dreams of home may well have come up against the reality of the conflicts and fragmentation that she experienced. This kind of disintegration is something

[30]Hall, *ibid*, 23

which cannot be witnessed in any of the family photographs Haas took. The photograph of a father with his son (1974) depicts the scene of a seemingly good relationship (Fig. 37). The photograph's inscription states that the subjects are father and son. Both males gaze out of the photograph, engaging directly with the camera and the viewer. Such a photograph dispels any feelings of awkwardness or reproach towards family life, instead reaffirming the power of photographs in constructing an imagined reality of a family relationship. The warmth conveyed in Haas's portraits cannot be denied and it seems only natural that through photography Haas was able to make visual her desired reality of once again belonging. However, Avtar Brah insists that 'home is a mythic place of desire in the [...] imagination. In this sense it is a place of no-return even if it possible to visit the geographical territory that is seen as the place of origin.'[31]

Although Brah's concept of home as a mythic place of desire, and therefore a place to which you cannot return, reinstates the idea of an imagined reality, it refuses the notion that home (in the past) cannot be utilised in order to somehow rehabilitate oneself in the present. Hall calls attention to the writings of Frantz Fanon who declares that this rediscovery is the object of a 'passionate research [...] directed by the secret hope of discovering beyond the misery of today, beyond self-contempt, resignation and abjuration, some very beautiful and splendid era whose existence rehabilitates us both in regard to ourselves and in regard to others.'[32]Fanon describes the attempt to overcome the unhappiness of the present in the hope of rediscovering one's own identity and a sense of belonging in the present. McLeod asserts that 'the migrant seems in a better position than others to realise that all systems of knowledge, all views of the world, are never totalising, whole or pure, but incomplete, muddled and hybrid.'[33] So Haas's

[31]Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora*, cited in McLeod, *ibid*, 209
[32]Frantz Fanon, 'On National Culture' in Mirzoeff, *ibid*, 22
[33]McLeod, *ibid*, 215

position as an émigré in fact allowed her to view the world differently from her clients, so that rather than necessarily believing in the family myth she was able to understand the intricacies of family identity and may have realised that, in its very conception, the family can never be complete in reality, but constructed in a photograph.

There is emphasis therefore on portraying a familial relationships resulting in an imagined image of real life. The mother of the Preece family being photographed with her three children (Fig. 38) creates a totalising image of family life and gives a sense of that unattainable idea of home. The mother is positioned as guardian of her children, portrayed as a woman in control of her own existence and her family's identity. This photograph is paramount in her understanding of her own identity within the family set-up; it is a vehicle for her belief in the myth or at least her ability to recreate the myth in regard to others. Whilst Haas's position as an émigré may allow her to see beyond this image of perfection it does not necessarily mean that she would want to remain completely separate from this construction. Her position may be enlightened but it is possible it was fraught with inconsistencies and self-conscious reflections through which she may attempt to reconcile with her past. In these terms, the photograph may be a means to heal wounds and attempt to come to terms with the unforgiving events of the past.

Edith Tudor-Hart (1908 – 1973), an Austrian émigré, was a documentary photographer who immigrated to Britain because of political persecution. A large body of her work focuses on the working classes of London and examples show her investment in children as a metaphor for the future (*Basque Children, Stoneham Camp, England*, 1938, Fig. 39).[34] The photograph of the Basque children is a defiant act against the politics of war. Although taken around 25

[34]Duncan Forbes, 'Politics, Photography and Exile in the Life of Edith Tudor-Hart' in Shulamith Behr and Marian Malet (eds.) *Arts in Exile in Britain 1933-1945. Politics and Cultural Identity*, The Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, Vol. 6, Amsterdam and New York, 2006, 77

years before Haas photographed the Pearson children, this photograph, like Haas's, represents the significant impact of the imagery of children on the understanding of the self and the power of a photograph as a whole. Duncan Forbes highlights the possibility of the image of the child as a symbolic representation of the photographer who may have been reminded of their own childhood. The children in Tudor-Hart's photograph 'point back three decades to a sixteen-year-old girl in a blurred snapshot, emerging rapidly into adulthood determined to prevail against a brutal world.'[35] The late 1930s brought unrest and fear even to those as young as the children in the photograph. This is in direct contrast to the children in Haas's photograph, whose innocent portrayal demonstrates an ease before the camera and an image with which the viewer is more comfortable. As a (probably commissioned) portrait photograph there are a number of reasons why it differs from Tudor-Hart's documentary picture to the extent that their comparison is limited. However, what can be argued is that, in this respect, a photograph of a child or children can form a powerful site for the memories of 'home' and an imagined undisrupted life for a displaced photographer.

The fluid nature of the construction of the self is something which has been addressed by Postcolonial theorists, who define the hybrid nature of the state of the diaspora, or migrant individual. As Hall, mentioned earlier, claims,

> identity is not a fixed essence at all, lying unchanged outside history and culture. It is not some universal and transcendental spirit inside us on which history has made no fundamental mark. It is not once-and-for-all. It is not a fixed origin to which we can make some final and absolute return. Of course, it is not a mere phantasm either. It is

[35] *Ibid*, 77

> *something* – not a mere trick of the imagination. It has its histories – and histories have their real, material and symbolic effects.[36]

According to Hall, it seems as if Haas's own personal history had its own 'real, material and symbolic' effect on her perception of self; her self-identification once she arrived in Britain. The effects of her past on her present cannot be denied, but play a significant part in the imagined desire for belonging. At a time when it seemed crucial to overcome the losses experienced in the past – that of home and family – photography provided a vehicle for the reconstruction of the self. Visual imagery can symbolise and magnify the struggle faced by uprooted people anywhere. During the years of National Socialism 'the making of diaries, autobiographies, and [...] portraits manifests just how intently Jews cultivated an individuality the Nazis meant to cut down.'[37] Haas's work as a photographer, along with the resilience of her brother who continued to practice as a psychoanalyst in Britain, is testimony to the struggles of the Jewish émigrés. Regardless of the upheaval caused by emigrating, the efforts to obtain a work permit and eventually being able to set-up her own photographic studio in Birmingham, Haas's determination to continue to photograph, to earn her living as a portrait photographer, is testament to the unavoidable process of the imagined rediscovery of the self through the memory of the past. As Ernst Weiss, a German-Jewish writer, asks: 'What else is there left to us [...] in exile but to nourish our memories [...]?'[38]

[36]Hall, *ibid*, 24
[37]Mary Felstiner, 'Charlotte Salomon's Inward-turning Testimony' in Geoffrey H. Hartman (ed.), *Holocaust Remembrance. The Shapes of Memory*, Oxford, Great Britain, 1995, 111
[38]Ernst Weiss cited in Felstiner, *ibid*, 111

CONCLUSION

> Within the medium of photography [...] we simultaneously experience the [...] relation between life and death, between testimony and its impossibility, between the self and another, and among the past, the present, and the future.[1]

The three chapters of this study reveal several ways in which photography is central to personal memory and identity. The chapters are drawn together by their collective interest in the formation of memory and the construction of an identity through the medium of photography. Chapter One argues that Haas's German photographs offer an insight into photography and memory of that time (before the Second World War), in its exploration of an alternative view of Nazi Germany. It explores the implications of a forced emigration on the construction of memories of home and identity, and asks whether Haas's inferred longing for home played an important part in the nature of the subjects Haas photographed once in Britain (i.e. typical middle class British families). These photographs become the main focus for Chapter Two, concerned with family photography and how a constructed, stable identity of family life can be captured in a portrait photograph. It has been acknowledged that Haas, as the photographer, played an important part in the creation of memories for her sitters (in that she created and shot the photograph); but also it has been established that the role of photography was key in Haas's search for her own identity as a female émigré (Chapter Three).

While this thesis has been influenced by existing scholarship within the fields of Holocaust studies, family memory and photography and postcolonialism, much of the conclusive

[1] Eduoardo Cadava and Paula Cortés-Rocca, 'Notes on Love and Photography', *October*, no. 116, 2006, 5

evidence has been drawn from the photographs themselves and other archival material from the Lisel Haas Collection. Information provided by Haas's niece, Dorothy Williams, has been fundamental in the shaping of this thesis, although such heavy reliance on archival material and oral sources has its limitations. Because the archive remains uncatalogued, many specifics surrounding the subjects of the photographs are missing, most significantly the names and dates of the subjects of the photographs. Although this led to difficulties in being able to contact those in the photographs (and therefore resulted in a lack of comparative material relating to memories of Haas), the wealth of the archive allowed for substantial contextual research to be formed around the photographer. Furthermore, as any work based on archives, the present conclusions drawn from it are based on a selection of resources undertaken by the author, which is, to a certain extent, always subjective. And last but not least, the archive is based on a pre-selection; particularly in term of photographs, there might have been a number of reasons why one photograph ended up in the archive and the other not, reasons that have been neglected in the present work. While every effort has been made to approach the topic objectively, the thesis principally does treat the archive in its entity and is therefore, however, able to draw attention to the work of a forgotten émigré photographer, contributing to the field of exile studies: it has addressed and explored the impact of the construction of a female émigré identity on the formation of memories of the sitters of family portrait photographs. Also, rather than focusing on the period 1933-1945 (which many existing publications on émigré artists do), this thesis examines work undertaken post-World War II and instead offers an insight into the ways in which an émigré photographer has attempted to settle after the war and how this has impacted on their photographs. In doing so, the research undertaken has resulted in the present work which offers a comparative study

between a single female photographer and essential aspects of photography in relation to her émigré status.

This thesis, having explored the portrait photographs of the uncatalogued archive of Lisel Haas for the first time, contributes to two major fields: to photographers in Birmingham and thus to a national history of photography, and secondly to Exile Studies in Britain, a field which usually focuses on London over other cities in Britain.[2] It has been argued that the impact of Birmingham-based photographers on the development of the medium is yet to be fully documented,[3] but Peter James, Head of Photographs at the Birmingham Central Library, has curated exhibitions and contributed to a number of catalogues which focus on the work of photographers based in Birmingham.[4] Now the present work contributes to the prospective awareness of photography in Birmingham. The Birmingham Central Library houses one of the National Collections of Photography, as well as extensive archival holdings on photographers and photographic societies based in and around Birmingham, for example the émigré photographer Ernest Dyche. As well as information regarding other immigrants in Birmingham, the photographic collections reveal a rich heritage of photographers who have aided the development of the medium in Britain. Haas has been explored partly in relation to women photographers, and Birmingham's history of photography includes professional female photographers such as Marion Silverston.

Whilst the Birmingham City Archives hold extensive photographic collections, little work has been done to place these photographers within art history. Although Peter James (mentioned

[2]For example, the Raphael Samuel History Centre, a collaborative project between the University of East London, Birkbeck and Bishopsgate Institute, promotes research in psychoanalytical approaches to London history and memory

[3]'Foreword' in Peter James, Tessa Sidey and John Taylor (eds.), *Sunlight and Shadow: The Photographs of Emma Barton 1872-1938*, Birmingham, 1995, 5

[4]For example, *Knight of the Camera. The Photographs of Sir Benjamin Stone*, exhibition catalogue, 2008 and Peter James and Richard Sadler, *Homes Fit For Heroes. Photographs by Bill Brandt 1939-1943*, Stockport, 2004

previously) is a pioneer of Birmingham photography, this thesis develops a contextual basis for Haas within exile studies and as this work has repeatedly shown, Birmingham photographers can be linked nationally and thus this study has aimed to broaden the picture of the development of photography in Britain.

It has only been in recent years that exile studies has become concerned with the visual arts. However, there is little research on the relationship between photography and exile studies, particularly in relation to memory. In February 2010 the Centre for the Study of Cultural Memory (CCM) was launched as part of the Institute of Germanic and Romance Studies (IGRS). This interdisciplinary and cross-cultural Centre promotes the significance of memory, but much of the focus remains on mainland Europe and the USA. For example, the CCM draws attention to such work carried out by Laura Levitt on family photography and American Jewish identity.[5] The preoccupation with memory and identity outside of Britain, especially with Jewish identity and memory, is something which has not yet been addressed at any length in relation to photography in this country. This work bridges the gap between exile studies and photography, placing Haas within the context of art history whilst addressing the wider concerns of memory and identity in relation to exile. This study relates to Duncan Forbes's work on Edith Tudor-Hart, the other female émigré photographer to receive an article in Britain, in that it brings attention to the work of a single female photographer whose work has not before been the focus of an academic work. The significance of photography to exile studies should be recognised as such works provide valuable documentation of life before and after emigration.

[5]Laura Levitt (ed.), *Changing focus: family photography and American Jewish identity*, a special edition of *The Scholar and Feminist Online*, 1:3, 2003, accessed viawww.igrs.sas.ac.uk, 2010

The connection between photography, memory and the Holocaust has previously been recognised, but this study has addressed the relevance of memory in the Holocaust through photographs showing an alternative view of Nazi Germany. While scholars such as Andrea Liss and Barbie Zelizer have focused on the impact of atrocity photographs on memory, this work presents a different approach to Holocaust memory. Oren Baruch Stier asks, 'How, in the end, will memory encompass and contain the representation of the Holocaust?'[6] In truth, there is no end to how the Holocaust is represented through or in memory. Rather, memory has the ability to challenge silences and myths of the past. The present work provides an insight into photography and memory at the time when the National Socialists were in power. As a result its approach allows for a more in depth exploration of Holocaust memory, not in terms of emigration, but rather of the time.

This study of Haas has aimed to fill a gap within past and current research concerned with photography and exile studies through its examination of portrait photographs and memory; and in its approach, attempts to provide further insight into the work of a (female) émigré photographer in Britain during and after the Second World War, thus establishing a broader picture of photography in Britain.

[6]Oren Baruch Stier, *Committed to Memory: Cultural Mediations of the Holocaust*, Massachusetts, 2003, 191

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Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

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Fig. 5

Fig. 6

Fig. 7

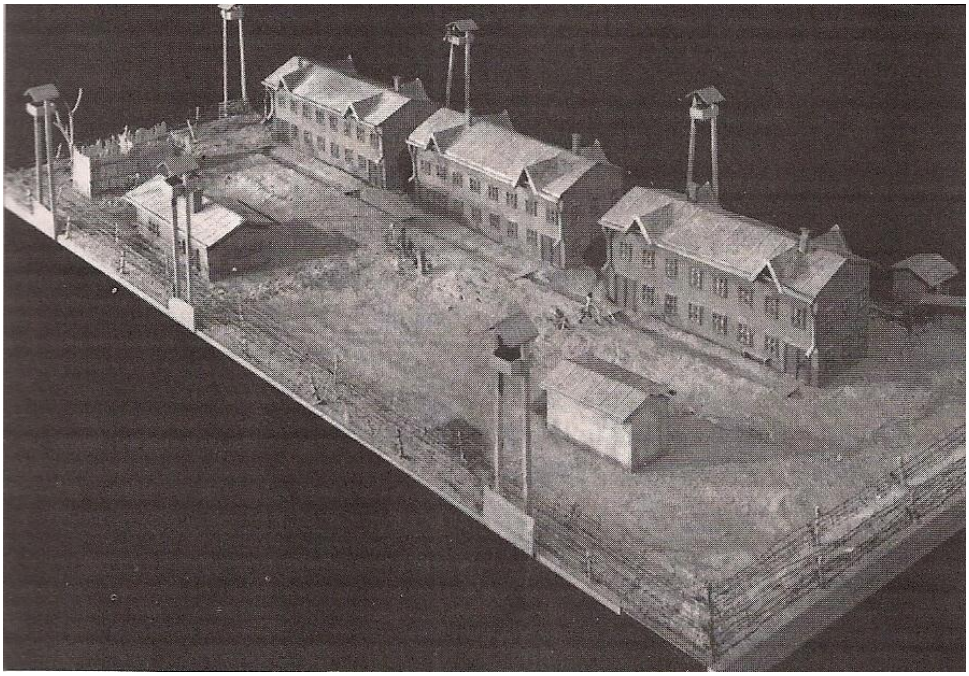


Fig. 8


SLOVAKIA
U.S.S.R.
Vinnitsa
Dniester R.
Vapniarka
Mogilev-Podol'ski
Sighetul Marmatiei
Cernăuți
Dorohoi
Tisza R.
Satu-Mare
Budapest
NORTHERN-TRANSYLVANIA (annexed by Hungary, 1940)
TRANSNISTRIA (annexed by Romania, 1941)
Prut R.
Dniester R.
Oradea
Dej
Bistrita
Iași
Chișinău
HUNGARY
Cluj
Tirgu-Mureș
(annexed by the Soviet Union, 1940)
Odessa
Timișoara
ROMANIA
N
Banat
CROATIA
Belgrade
Bucharest
Black Sea
Romania 1941–1942
1933 boundary
1941 boundary
1942 boundary
SERBIA
Danube
(annexed by Bulgaria, 1940)
BULGARIA
0 20 40 60 80 100 Miles
1942 regional boundaries

Fig. 9

Fig. 10

Fig. 11

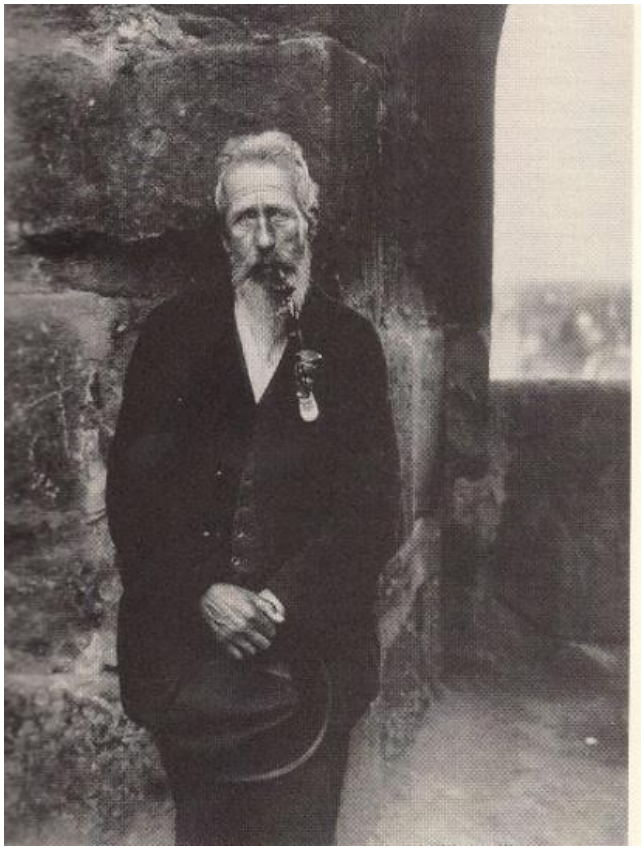


Fig. 12

Fig. 13

Fig. 14

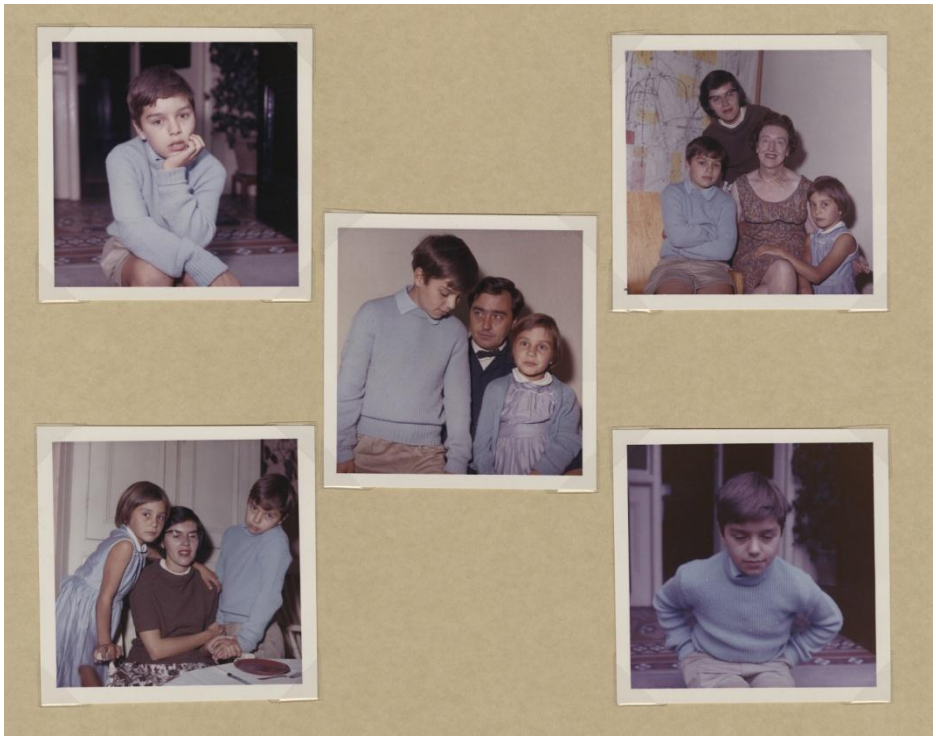


Fig. 15

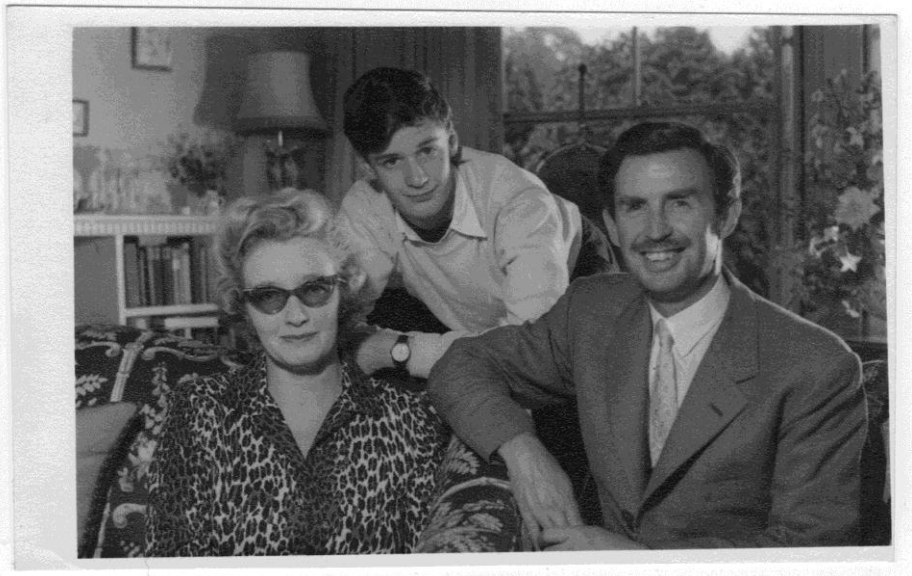


Fig. 16

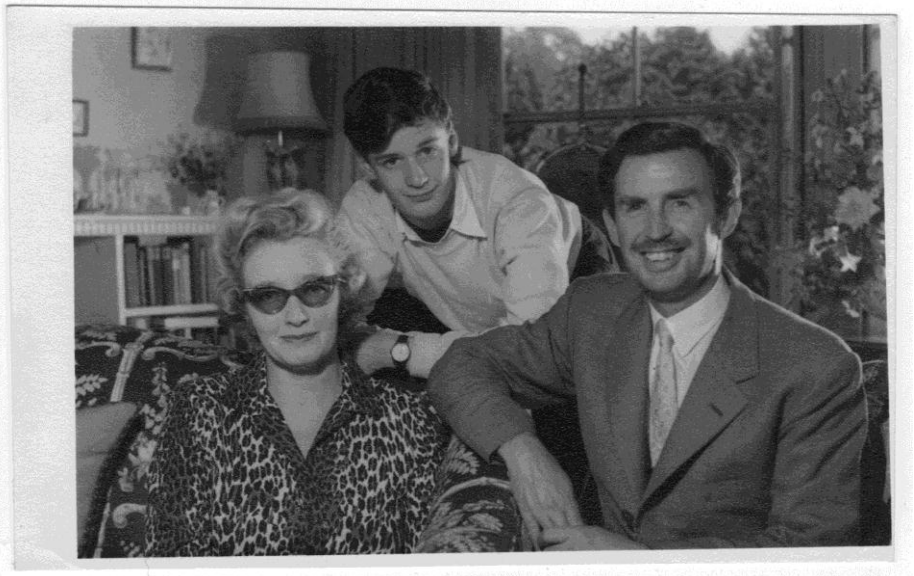


Fig. 17

Fig. 18

Fig. 19

Fig. 20

Fig. 21

Fig. 22

Fig. 23


[SEE HAAG COLLECTION]
MARTIN + ANDREA FISHER
SOLIHULL 1972
SEE ALSO COLOUR NEGATIVES 1962-73

Fig. 24

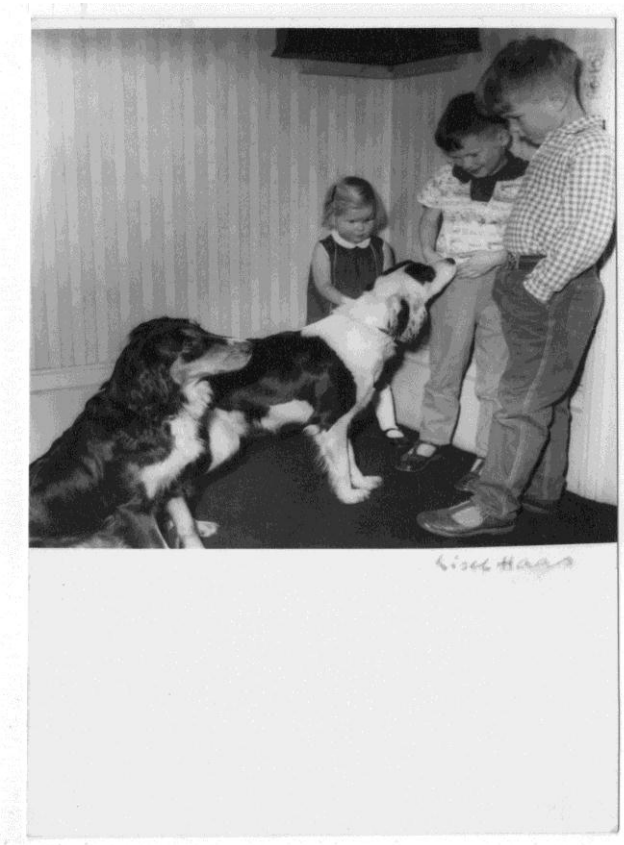


Fig. 25

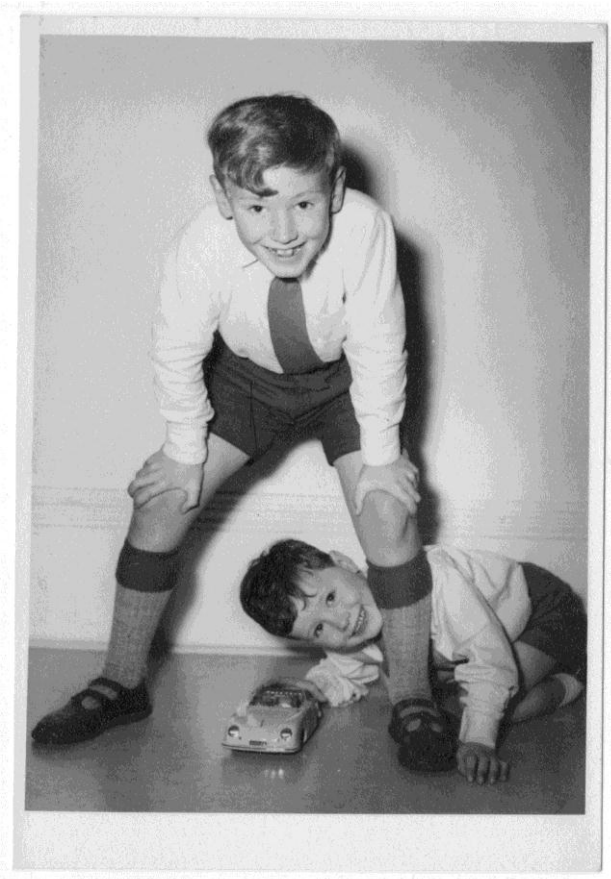


Fig. 26

Fig. 27

Fig. 28

Fig. 29

Fig. 30

Fig. 31

Fig. 32

Fig. 33

Fig. 34

Fig. 35

Fig. 36

Fig. 37

Fig. 38

Fig. 39

APPENDIX 1

Lisel Haas Collection (Birmingham City Archives, Central Library, Birmingham)

List of Archival Material

The list below comprises the unpublished and photographic material consulted for this thesis. The folders contain correspondence including that between Haas and clients, businesses, and government. The boxes comprise of photographs and negatives of Haas's work from Germany and Britain. A selection of colour photographs from the 1960s and 1970s have been dated, but most remain undated and uncatalogued. The list below is that which was consulted for this particular study; however there are a greater number of boxes in the archive which have not been included in the present work. The material in the Lisel Haas Collection has been donated by Haas's niece, Dorothy Williams.

Although the photographs and correspondence have been collated, much more could be done in terms of cataloguing the material. The archival material is vast and research into dating the photographs and identifying the sitters, for example, would provide a means to begin the cataloguing process, in order to make the photographs, and Haas's story, more accessible.

Folders:

Folder I – A-G Letters 1941-

Folder II – H-N

Folder III – O-R

Folder IV – S-T Letters 1941-

Folder V – U-Z

Boxes:

MS2202 Box 1 – Colour Prints 1962-1973

MS2202 Box 2 – Colour Prints 1962-1973

MS2202 Box 3 – Colour Prints 1962-1973

MS2202 Box 4 – Colour Prints 1962-1973

MS2202 Box 11 – Prints

MS2202 Box 14 – Prints

MS2202 Box 15 – Prints

MS2202 Box 45 – Prints

MS2202 Box 47 – Prints

MS2202 Box 48 – Prints

MS2202 Box 49 – Prints, Fraser - Thorburn Wedding 1966

MS2202 Box 50 – Prints, Fraser - Thorburn Wedding 1966

MS2202 Box 54

MS2202 Additional Brown Box

MS2202 Additional Box 2 of 2 (2007)

MS2022 Box 54 – Prints

MS2022 Box 55 – Prints

MS2022 Box 56 – Prints

MS2022 Box 57 – Prints

APPENDIX 2

The following extract is an edited version of a speech given by Lisel Haas to a Birmingham Jewish women's group. The date of this speech is unknown, but it has proved invaluable through its brief but telling account of Haas's relationship with photography.

> Owing to this ever since PH-y has become a universal hobby and as there are only a few female Ph-rs about, I am constantly asked by various clubs to talk on this subject.
>
> I usually try to wriggle out of these invitations, lecturing is not my favourite pastime and I know I am a bad speaker with an accent in the bargain.
>
> But when your chairman, Mrs Fisher, kindly asked me to talk to you, I was very pleased.
>
> And do you know why?
>
> Because this is the first time since I am in England, that I ever been asked by any jewish group, and I am very happy to have this opportunity of meeting you.
>
> ...
>
> When I arrived in this country as a professional Ph-r shortly before the war, I could not get a permit to work straightaway.
>
> But still, I was lucky. The late george Owen [...] happened to see some of my pictures, and he invented a job for me which was, although photographical, above suspicion [...].
>
> Soon afterwards I became – and still am – ph-r for the Arts Council of Great Britain [...].
>
> I then started to work for the B'ham Repertory Theatre, where I have taken every show for the last 20 years [...].

The greatest DIFFICULTY in sgae Ph-y lies in the effect of the play on the artist. After a very dynamic or powerful or moving performance, the actors are completely worn out [...]. If, however, as it is bound to happen sometimes, the play is easy going or not so good, the actors are like lambs. The RESULT is that we often get the best pictures of the least important plays and vice versa.

...

As much as I liked my permit for Stage and Artists only, I was glad when after the war and my naturalisation I could take up portrait ph-~~again~~ as well [...].

Exactly as there is a relationship between the actor and his audience, there is a LINK between me and my sitter. WE DEPEND ON EACH OTHER, and this relationship ferments the pictures, it gives them their vitality and their effect.

...

The ph-r is a kind of sorcerer, who sees through the mask we all wear and he can, at will hide everything the sitter wishes to conceal.

...

The keynote of success with children's ph-s is to emphasize NATURALNESS

Children's expressions change from one minute to the other and you never know what will happen next.

I dislike stereotyped poses and like to catch children off guard

I usually play with them, until they have forgotten their selfconsciousness, and then I have really nothing more to do, but to watch the endless series of expressions on their eager faces, wait for the right moment and shoot.

...

Some of you may be disappointed that I do not talk about the technis of ph-y or give any professional secrets away.

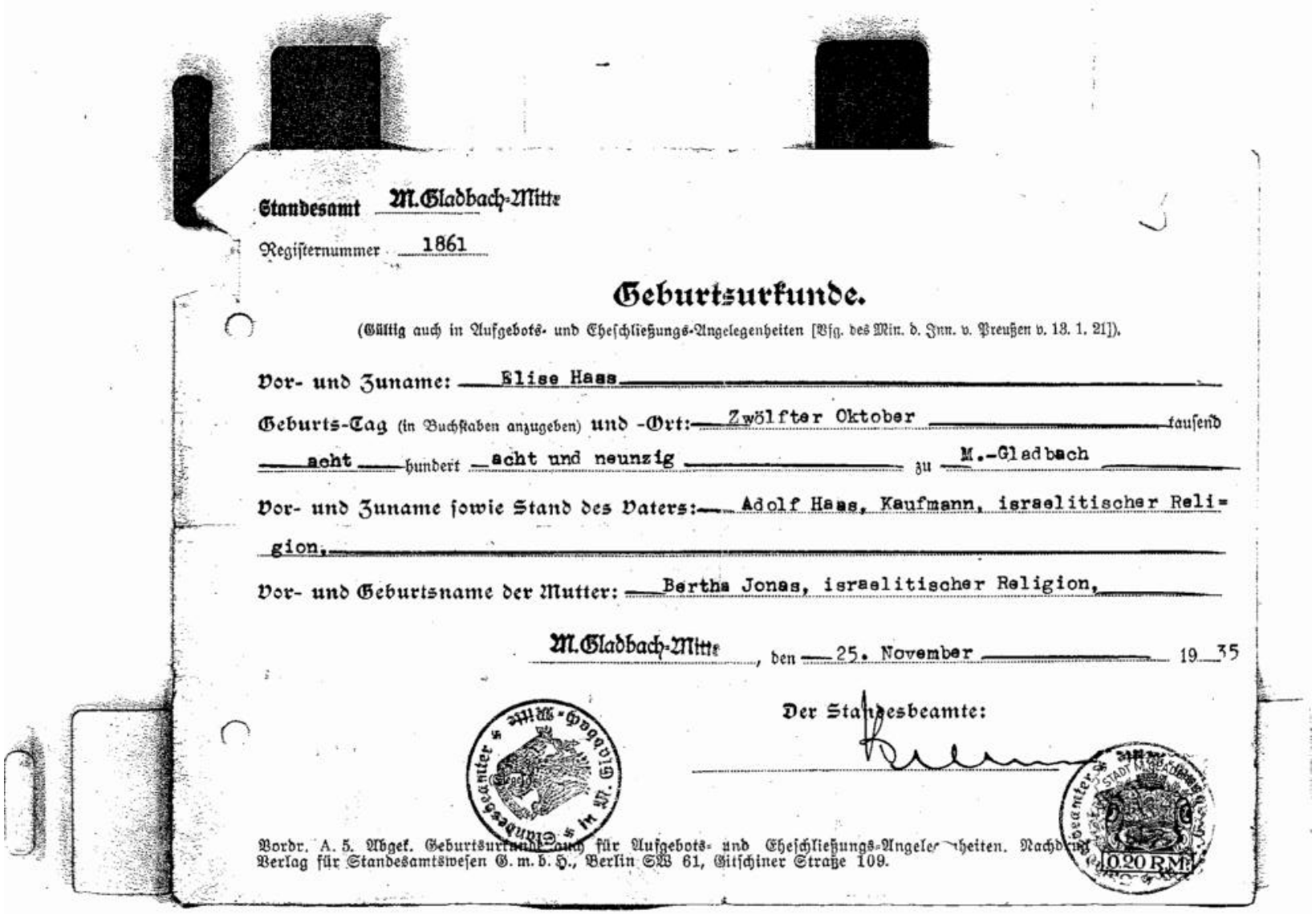
You can learn, if you wish so, evrything about ph-y from technical books and the rest by your own observation.

And quite honestly – a good ph-r should not have any secrets

The whole secret lies in yourself, in your individual approach, in the mind behind the camera.

...

To end this I can only say that for the ph-r, as for any person with seeing eyes, the world is an neverending venture, full of surprises, great and small, from the newest scientific wonder to the shadow of a blossom on the wall.



Standesamt M.Gladbach-Mitte

Registernummer 1861

Geburtsurkunde.

(Gültig auch in Aufgebots- und Eheschließungs-Angelegenheiten [Bfg. des Min. d. Inn. v. Preußen v. 13. 1. 21]).

Vor- und Zuname: Elise Haas

Geburts-Tag (in Buchstaben anzugeben) und -Ort: Zwölfter Oktober tausend

acht hundert acht und neunzig zu M.-Gladbach

Vor- und Zuname sowie Stand des Vaters: Adolf Haas, Kaufmann, israelitischer Religion,

Vor- und Geburtsname der Mutter: Bertha Jonas, israelitischer Religion,

M.Gladbach-Mitte, den 25. November 19 35

Der Standesbeamte:

Bürgermeister M.Gladbach-Mitte

Stadt M.Gladbach

0,20 RM

Vordr. A. 5. Abgek. Geburtsurkunde auch für Aufgebots- und Eheschließungs-Angelegenheiten. Nachdruck verboten.
Verlag für Standesamtswesen G. m. b. H., Berlin SW 61, Gitschiner Straße 109.

APPENDIX 4

Meldeblatt

zur Meldung bei der Deutschen Botschaft — Gesandtschaft,
beim Deutschen Generalkonsulat — Konsulat — Vizekonsulat
in Birmingham

1	**Familienname** (bei Frauen auch Geburtsname)		HAAS
2	**Vornamen** (Rufname unterstreichen)		ELISE
3	**Geburts — tag — monat — jahr**		12. 10. 98
4	**Geburtsort, Kreis, Staat**		M. Gladbach, kr. M. Gladbach, Preussen
5	**Erwerb der deutschen Staatsangehörigkeit*) durch Geburt — Legitimation — Eheschließung — Einbürgerung am** ..... **Besitz einer ausländischen Staatsangehörigkeit neben der deutschen Staatsangehörigkeit? Frühere ausländische Staatsangehörigkeit vor Erwerb der deutschen Staatsangehörigkeit**		Geburt / /
6	a **Religiöses Bekenntnis**	b **Abstammung**)**	a Jüdisch — b Jüdisch
7	**Familienstand** ledig; verheiratet, verwitwet, geschieden: seit ..... Bei Frauen Familienname und Vorname des Ehemannes	**Gesamtzahl der Kinder** (Söhne, Töchter)***	ledig
8	**Beruf:** (wenn nicht selbständig, angestellt bei wem?)		früher Fotografin, selbst. — jetzt ohne
9	**Vater** Vorname, Familienname	**Mutter** Vorname, Geburtsname	Adolf Haas — Bertha geb Jonas
	Geburtsdatum » ort	Geburtsdatum » ort	21. 6. 1866 Kraebnick, Rhld — 2. 12. 67 Borken i/W
	Religiöses Bekenntnis	Religiöses Bekenntnis	Juve — Jüdisch
	wenn verstorben: † (Kreuz) und Sterbejahr	wenn verstorben: † (Kreuz) und Sterbejahr	verstorben 1918
10	Schulbildung		höhere
11	Kenntnis lebender Fremdsprachen		englisch, französisch
12	Nachweise, Zeugnisse über besondere Fertigkeiten (z. B. Führerschein)		/
	Wehrdienstverhältnisse		/
	Renten- und Ruhegehaltsempfänger (auszahlende Stelle)		/

*) Deutsche Staatsangehörige des Landes Österreich haben in Spalte b des »Meldeblatts« zur ersten Frage nicht Wiedervereinigung Österreichs mit dem Deutschen Reich, sondern Erwerbsgrund **österreichischen** Bürgerrechts, zur letzten Frage die frühere ausländische Staatsangehörigkeit vor Erwerb der **österreichischen** anzugeben.

**) Nur Angabe, ob Jude oder jüdischer Mischling.

***) Eigene Kinder unter 15 Jahren sind in das Meldeblatt des meldepflichtigen Elternteils aufzunehmen, wenn sie gleichzeitig mit diesem gemeldet werden (siehe Ziffer 19). Im übrigen ist für jede zu meldende Person, also insbesondere auch für die Ehefrau und die über 15 Jahre alten Kinder, ein besonderes Meldeblatt einzureichen.

13	a Im Konsulatsbezirk seit: / b Zugezogen von:	a 25.12.38	b M.gladbach
	c Gegenwärtige Anschrift (Ort, Straße, Hausnummer, Gebäudeteil) (ggf. Untermieter: bei .....)	c 77 Hagley Road, Edgbaston bei Dr Haas (Bruder)	
14	Letzte polizeilich gemeldete Wohnung im Reich (Datum der Ausreise)	23.12.38 M.Gladbach Ludendorffstr 37	
15	Mitgliedschaft bei der NSDAP, ihren Gliederungen und angeschlossenen Verbänden	/	
16	Zugehörigkeit zu örtlichen deutschen Vereinen und Organisationen	/	
17	Besitz eines Heimatscheins? Wenn ja – wann, wo und von welcher Behörde ausgestellt? Gültig bis?		
18	Besitz eines Reisepasses? Wenn ja – wann, wo, von welcher Behörde, mit welcher Nummer ausgestellt? Gültig bis?	Ausgestellt vom Preuss. Regierungspräsidenten in Düsseldorf, gültig bis 5.2.1940 No 144/39 II, A II 53-3, Ha 6/39	
19	Kinder unter 15 Jahren: a) Vornamen, b) Geburtsdatum, c) Geburtsort, d) religiöses Bekenntnis	a / b / c / d	
		1.	
		2.	
		3.	
		4.	
		5.	
20	Voraussichtliche Dauer des Aufenthalts im Ausland	/	
21	Besondere Bemerkungen:		

(Ort) Birmingham, den 20 Juli 1939

Erich Haas

(Eigenhändige Unterschrift)

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