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Confronting subject matter education with memorial pedagogy. Guides at memorial sites and Holocaust museums

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Abstract

Teaching and learning about the Holocaust and Nazi crimes is an interdisciplinary and diverse field with many different stakeholders as well as various educational concepts and programs. If this topic is looked at from the perspective of formal subject matter education, especially history and language education are of concern. In the perspective of non-formal education memorial pedagogy [Gedenkstättenpädagogik] offers a wide range of methods. In this article, the guides at concentration camp memorial sites and Holocaust museums in Europe and the US shall be examined in greater detail: This group of people carries out crucial educational work – which often is overlooked. Guides represent a crucial point between institutions and visitors, between the past and the present, and between formal and non-formal education. Based on a variety of qualitative empirical data, like interviews with guides and pedagogical staff, analysis of educational materials and field studies at the sites, a typology of guides is developed following the methodology of Grounded Theory. The research focuses on how guides contribute to passing down the history of the Holocaust and Nazi crimes to visitors by leading their tours and how their perspectives can be reflected upon formal subject matter education of history and language.

Keywords

History and literature classes, guides, Holocaust related sites, Grounded Theory

1 Formal and non-formal educational approaches – Overview of empirical studies in German and English language

In 2017 the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) published *Research in Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust. A Dialogue beyond Borders*. This publication indicates the latest topics and trends of empirical research in the growing field of international Holocaust Education. It lists and summaries empirical studies within language communities. Furthermore, the articles mention studies on research in teaching and learning, which also include visits and study trips to Holocaust related sites and museums. Regarding formal subject matter education, the authors point out that especially social sciences and educational disciplines are involved with this topic (Eckmann & Stevick, 2017, p. 20). Looking closely at educational research in German- and English-speaking countries, it turns out that there is variety of approaches which concentrate especially on history and literature. Nevertheless, the topic of Holocaust and Nazi crimes is mentioned within various other areas like geography, religious studies, art and psychology, too (Stevick, 2017, p. 162). Regarding formal and non-formal education

perspectives, this article will exemplarily concentrate on the field of history and literature as areas of formal subject matter education (Kühberger & Neureiter, 2017, p. 48).

Examining German-language research, history plays a leading role in teaching and learning about the Holocaust and Nazi crimes. This is due to the fact that Holocaust related knowledge like facts on the historical context and political consciousness have to be shared. In historical research, it is quite popular to measure students' learning outcomes. In his qualitative study, Zülsdorf-Kersting (2007) accompanied 28 German students during the course of a school year in order to gain insights into the outcomes of history education at school: One of his key findings indicates that history as a subject matter has limited abilities to change students' beliefs and understanding of historical events. Periodically, quantitative studies using questionnaires are getting similar results: In 2017 the Koerber Foundation [Körber Stiftung] conducted a representative survey among 502 German high school students aged 14 to 19 in order to ascertain the outcomes of teaching history at school. 80% of the respondents reported that the acquisition of knowledge dominated their history lessons; 70% of the respondents stated learning from history to manage challenges of the present and regarding content critically. In answering the question – “What was Auschwitz-Birkenau?” – 59% of the students could show that they are well informed (Körber, Stiftung 2017, p. 12 & 15; similarly, for Salzburg [Austria], see Kühberger & Neureiter, 2017). Besides the relevance of content, two further issues are discussed within the German-speaking community: Firstly, thoughts are given to the question of which age students should come in contact with these atrocities. On the basis of her qualitative studies among primary school students, Becher recommends to develop suitable methods for dealing with Holocaust Education as early as in primary school (Becher, 2009; Flügel, 2009). Secondly, certain social changes have an influence on teaching and learning in history classes: There is an ongoing debate in Germany if students with migration background differ in thinking about the Nazi period and Holocaust time from their classmates with German background: Georgi (2003) developed a typology of immigrant positions regarding German Nazi past. Based on similar assumptions, Köster (2013) stated a difference between German 10th graders with and without migration background when reading historical texts. For quite some time Assmann (2006) pointed out changes in the culture of commemoration: Since the eyewitnesses of the Holocaust (and the Nazi period) are passing away, memories are changing from communicative, experience-based forms to cultural, representative-constructed concretisations. In educational contexts it is discussed how talks with eyewitnesses of the Holocaust can be substituted in order to keep their testimony alive. First attempts with school classes are undertaken with videotaped testimonies of the USC Shoa Foundation at Free University of Berlin (Brüning, 2018).

In German language classes, testimonies of Holocaust survivors as well as fictional and media adaptations are a central component of the curricula. In 2017 Prestel undertook the attempt to point out different interpretations of reading rather factual (*The Diary of Anne Frank*) and rather fictional literature (*The boy in the striped pyjamas*). The results of her qualitative study with German high school students highlight the importance of a balance between historical knowledge and the ability to build on one's own experiences when reading these texts. Hoffmann's qualitative study (2011) pursued the question as how German and Polish students' read Mirjam Pressler's historical young-adult novel

Malka Mai. She emphasizes the potential of literature which opens interpretations beyond family and national shaped memories. Of course, there are more studies focusing on German language classes; most of them deal with the development of teaching materials and reflect theoretical implications for teaching and learning about the Holocaust and Nazi crimes (Köster, 2001; Birkmeyer, 2008; Ballis, 2012).

Some other empirical studies on the reception of literature are published in English language. They deal with Holocaust literature in English classes, mostly in the US. Spector (2005) describes a historically wrong interpretation of high school students (8th grade) who read the drama play of *Anne Frank* by Goodrich & Hacke. Hernandez (2008) is convinced that the texts read in class should be written by survivors in the age of the students. In that way, identification would be possible and young readers would become “chronological peers”. In her qualitative study, Juszwik (2011) examines classroom communication. She figures out the struggle of educators and learners to find the “proper words” to talk about the Holocaust and crimes.

Essentials of Holocaust Education (2016) gives a precise overview of teaching and learning about the Holocaust by outlining empirical studies. The editors, Totten and Feinberg, leading American scholars, state important tendencies of Holocaust Education in the US: To begin with, Holocaust Education is based on historical content, like the chronology of events, reflections of key issues and myths. Pedagogical implications have to be taken into account, too. Finally, the editors think in terms of integration of subjects and of the desire to prevent atrocities; therefore other genocides are part of their pedagogical conception. Their book is outlined by the question: What contributions do history, pedagogy and media make to Holocaust Education? Of course, Holocaust Education through the US has its place in curricula, mostly – like in Germany – in history and literature classes.

The situation in Great Britain differs from the US: the topic of Holocaust is not included in school education in all countries of the United Kingdom (Cowan & Maitles, 2017). In 2016 the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education published a mixed methods study that surveyed 8.000 secondary school students in England and interviewed almost 250 of them. One central finding was the number of common myths and misconceptions among students and their teachers (Stevick, 2017, p. 165).

To sum up the empirical research being undertaken in formal schooling contexts, it is crucial to give increased efforts to teaching historical facts to the young generation. Their knowledge differs and it depends on the conceptions and beliefs of their teachers, too. Continually, students and teachers work on gaining historical insights and political consciousness. Furthermore, Holocaust literature offers relevant potential for learning connected with students’ experiences, questioning approaches as well as potential for misinterpretations. In English-speaking countries the pedagogical concepts are bundled as Holocaust Education, trying to follow interdisciplinary approaches to the topic; in German-speaking countries Holocaust Education is not that popular in pedagogical research (Plessow, 2017, p. 316); here subject matters – especially history and language education – convey the core of content.

Holocaust Museums were built in many countries of the Western hemisphere during the last 30 years, additionally to memorial sites which were established in Europe. From an educational point of view, it is interesting to figure out within this context

how links between extracurricular venues and curricular education are shaped. In order to do so, it is helpful to take a closer look at the educational programs of Holocaust related sites. In Germany, efforts are made towards professionalizing the training of guides and pedagogical staff at memorial sites. In the US, stakeholders support training programs which are built in order to convey lessons from history. Guided tours are still the most common educational tool, even if many institutions offer more options such as seminars and workshops, personal encounters with witnesses and dealing with archival material (Österberg, 2017, p. 253).

Empirical educational studies which concentrate particularly on tour guides are quite rare (Österberg, 2017, p. 262). In German-language studies, there is a tendency to focus on the specifics of communication which take place when guides and pedagogues from an institution meet with students and their teachers for educational purposes; such communication is characterized by the different dimensions of formal (school) and informal (memorial site) language (Haug, 2015, p. 282; also Meseth, 2008). Empirical research has found that there can in fact be tensions between the leading narrative of an exhibition and what is told by museum pedagogues in a guided tour. After studying guided tours in Ravensbrück, Dachau, Neuengamme and the House of the Wannsee Conference [Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz] in Berlin, Gudehus (2006) discovered many similarities between the stories told at the different German memorial sites regarding both content and form. This might indicate a canonization of the narrative, independent from the individual sites and their exhibitions. The efforts made in Mauthausen in order to standardize the tours deserve special mention: The educational section has developed a communication-focused program. Its evaluation shows that the guides stress two issues: they emphasize the relationship between students and teachers which has effects on the communication at the site; furthermore, they desire more support for their work from the institution's management (Halbmayer & Miklas, 2014, p. 107). There are also a few studies which take a closer look at the educational training of the guides: In her analysis of a potential nexus between human rights education and pedagogical concepts at German memorial sites, Zumpe (2012, p. 91) examines the professional training of guides and pedagogical staff members: These people are quite often lateral entrants with diverse interests, knowledge of historical content, and pedagogical skills; some of them work as pedagogical staff members at the sites and are responsible for a variety of subjects (exhibitions, tour guiding, tour guide trainings etc.); some of them work as freelancers and mainly guide tours; some of them are teachers and work in special programs at the sites; some of them work in thematic projects for a limited period of time. Most of these studies were published in German-language journals and deal with European memorial sites, likely due to the fact that Holocaust-related memorial sites are mainly located in Europe (Stevick, 2017, p. 221). English-language studies take a more teacher-centered approach in examining challenges and tensions surrounding the teaching of the Holocaust.

In summary: The work at memorial sites places significant demands on the staff, who is trained in different ways at the respective sites. The specifics of these educational trainings quite often evolved by chance and are self-taught (Werker, 2016, p. 173).

It is a demanding question what happens if at places of “dark past” persons encounter each other: High school students and their teachers, as well as individual travelers,

tourist groups, and families with younger children book tours at memorial sites and Holocaust museums. In summer times these facilities turn out as places of mass tourism; in Bavaria school classes and young adults are required to visit those places for educational purposes throughout the year (Burger & Ribarek, 2015). Visitors meet up with guides who explain the characteristics of the place and reflect history. Focusing on the guides, this raises the question: Who are the persons who take on this responsible task at the point of contact between formal and non-formal education?

2 The design of the study

2.1 Research questions

As shown before, there are many studies on teaching and learning about the Holocaust and Nazi crimes while there are only a few significant studies on tour guides at those sites related to the Holocaust and Nazi crimes. Guides are part of a diverse pedagogical staff and hold different positions in institutions: Some of them are responsible for the educational training and development of programs; some of them work as freelancers or as volunteers who come to the site once or twice a week, where they encounter a diverse and growing group of visitors, individual tourists and school classes. In my research I am particularly interested in guides, their beliefs, their motivations, and their educational aims. My questions are therefore as follows: Do guides contribute to passing down the history of the Holocaust and Nazi crimes? And if so, how do they achieve that? How can their perspectives be reflected upon formal subject matter education of history and language?

2.2 Methodology and sample

In order to answer these questions I have focused my attention on tour guides at concentration camp memorial sites and Holocaust museums in Germany, Austria and the US for some years now (since 2015). This group of people carries out crucial educational work and acts, which often is overlooked. Guides represent a crucial point of contact between the institutions and the visitors, between the past and the present, and between the space and the subject. The diverse field of tour guides is therefore a desideratum for research. It is notable that guides are rarely heard or interviewed. I chose the Grounded Theory as the key methodology of this study's design. Teaching and learning about the Holocaust and Nazi crimes is considered a largely under-theorized field where underlying assumptions of the studies remain implicit rather than being stated explicitly and compared with data (Eckmann & Stevick, 2017, p. 21). The Grounded Theory Methodology seems to be quite helpful in order to develop theoretical models (Glaser & Strauss, 2010, p. 48) and has already been used for studies in this subject area (Meliza, 2011; Zumpe, 2012; Gryglewski, 2013).

Grounded Theory implies qualitative research which focuses on the social actors and their daily practice for the purpose of developing a theory based on empirical evidence (Strauss & Corbin, 1996, p. 7–9). Its aim is not to further develop the existing “theories of great men” (Glaser & Strauss, 2010, p. 27), but to discover new theoretical concepts. Theoretical sampling is central to the Grounded Theory: Data is simultaneously collected, coded and analyzed. Subsequently, the researcher decides which data needs to be collected next and

where it can be found (Strauss & Corbin, 1996). Accordingly, data collection, analysis and theory interact in a dynamic process. The aim of this work is to develop a typology of guides at places with a “dark history”, This typology is to focus on their contribution to passing down the history of the Holocaust and Nazi crimes to visitors.

For three years I have been collecting and analyzing data, especially at institutions which currently strive for professionalization, such as the concentration camp memorial sites in Dachau and Mauthausen. These institutions systematically train their tour guides and develop educational concepts: In Dachau, a knowledge-driven approach is pursued, which is reflected in an emphasis on historical correctness. The concept of Mauthausen is different from this approach; there, much attention is devoted to the interaction between guides and visitors. To sharpen my view I visited the *Anne Frank Zentrum* in Berlin, where adolescents are trained to be peer guides. The goal is an improved access to young people, with regard to language and the topic. These adolescents are taught to serve as role models and inspirers who project their experiences into social life. The sample was completed with studies at the *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum* in Washington, where the typology of guides is extended even further, as unpaid volunteers are trained there. These men and women are often retirees, usually with an academic background and work experience from other museums on the National Mall. At the *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, they have the possibility to engage in a meaningful and appreciated activity. From this circle, yet another group with similar motivations emerges: the so-called “survivor guides”. Some of them were “discovered” in the museum and trained to guide tours, often with VIP status.

At all those places I conducted interviews with guides and pedagogical staff, analyzed training scripts and observed educational offers.¹ The interviews were transcribed using GAT2 (basic transcription) and the data were analyzed with the software MAXQDA.

2.3 Types and typology

Focusing on typologies, I followed the principles for creating an empirical grounded type construction, which is part of theory modeling according to the Grounded Theory (Kluge, 2000): “If the type is defined as a combination of attributes, one first needs properties and/or dimensions, which form the basis for the typology.” (Kluge, 2000) There are different kinds of types and typologies and I aim at a prototypical approach. This means that I try to showcase particularly telling examples for the different kinds of types (Breuer, Muckel & Dieris, 2017, p. 311).

Kluge (2000) describes four stages in the empirical construction of typologies which are closely intertwined with each other. In the first stage, relevant dimensions are filtered

¹ Dachau: interviews with guides (n=8), interviews with pedagogical members (n=3). Mauthausen: interviews with guides (n=5); interviews with pedagogical members (n=3). Berlin: interviews with guides (n=2); interviews with pedagogical members (n=2). Washington: interviews with guides (n=4); interviews with pedagogical members (n=5). At all sites pedagogical members do tour guiding, too. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to do field studies at all four places: I accompanied tour guides and visited special programs; guidelines for the educational training were analyzed as well.

from the data through comparison and coding according to the Grounded Theory. In the second stage of the process, the cases are grouped by regularities, and in the third stage, relationships between the regularities are established. This means that first conceptions of types are developed and verified through the data. At stage 4, the final stage, the characteristics of the types can be defined, which leads to a typology (Kluge, 2000). For this typology of guides, six dimensions could be derived from the data. Six different types could so far be identified in detail at all of the examined concentration camp memorial sites and Holocaust museums.

connection	Guides feel a personal relationship to the place and the meaningful situation of tour guiding.
economy	Guides are appreciated for their work by the institutions (money, gratitude, respect).
adaption	Guides adjust their tours to the needs of their groups (time, atrocity, special needs).
perception	Guides are led by guidelines which enable them to make choices (objects, feelings, facts).
narratives	Narratives are the storylines of the tour (global, historical, institutional) combined with specific forms of communication (dialogical, monological).

Figure 1 – Comparable dimensions for constructing a typology of guides

2.4 Results

2.4.1 Guide of tension

“Wie wird die Gedenkstätte verwaltet, das ist was, was mich seit Jahren irgendwie auch beschäftigt, weil das oft irgendwie im Laufe der Zeit sehr prekäre Situationen waren, wo es irgendwie eigentlich kaum möglich war sozusagen auch irgendwie die eigene Arbeit oder sich selbst irgendwie weiterzuentwickeln oder halt quasi auch die Vermittlungsarbeit. Das ist, was mich stört.” (Interview_w_f_2016)

[“The way the memorial site is managed is something which has concerned me for years, as there were many very precarious situations over time where it was hardly possible to develop my work or myself or the educational work. That is what bothers me.”]

This kind of guide experiences tensions on different levels of their work: They are closely connected to the institutions on a personal level, but see a lot of deficits in the way the management shows appreciation and support for their work. They have a strong inner compass but quite often they cannot follow it because of their visitors’ interests. They perceive contradictions between their beliefs and the requirements of organized tours.

Guides of tension are characterized by their ambivalent view on how the history of the Holocaust and Nazi crimes is passed on. They feel strongly about changes in education and research regarding this matter. They do not feel sufficiently involved in the resulting changes on site and usually need to react to that. The guide of tension is

precisely aware of changes in the visitor structure: For one thing, this results in rising expectations towards the guide. For another, this requires the duration of the tour to be very flexible, as adjustments need to be made in this regard. Accordingly, the guide subordinates to the visitors' time requirements and simultaneously bears the memorial site's demands in mind. Maneuvering between these two poles, the guide has to customize the tour for the group, which means that it is dominated by personal interests and time management. The guide's own convictions become secondary. In most cases, the guide of tension does not feel appreciated by the institution, neither morally nor financially; they are driven by personal motives that led them to get involved in these places. This kind of guide is particularly interested in the question of how much the civil society knew of the inhumane events at the time. Unsurprisingly, tension guides ask the visitors questions, as they intend to critically examine and discuss history. Guides of tension do not adapt a clear position in these situations, as they are torn between their own views and those of the memorial site. This guide often promotes a critical narrative that may be directed against both the memorial site and the (historical) civil society and their behavior.

2.4.2 Point of Interest Guide (POI-Guide)

“Die Leute wollen diese Bequemlichkeit, Sicherheit, wie auch immer, dass da jemand was erzählt, der ein bisschen was versteht davon, oder mit ihnen spricht darüber.” (Interview_w_g_2016)

[“People want that comfort, or safety, or whatever, of someone who is familiar with the subject telling them about it or having a conversation with them about it.”]

This type of guide is a part of a global navigation system touring places of dark tourism. They safely lead visitors to (hidden) memorial sites as well as to museum exhibitions; within these places they easily find the key sights for their groups. They are driven by a global perspective which includes creating a physically and mentally manageable tour for the visitors. This also means that they help the visitors to find their way out of the site and the topic.

Point of interest guides perform important tasks at memorial sites and museums: Not only do they take care of the actual tour, they also help people find their way to the institution. Often they offer an “all-round carefree package”, which leads from the hotel or another meeting point to the memorial site. For many visitors, these guides represent the main link between them and the institution, which assigns the guides a responsible role and a clearly defined function. The guides are well aware of this responsibility; consequently, they select suitable routes and relevant objects for the visitors. POI-guides protect their group, which in turn feels committed to them, as the exhibition or the site appears confusing and impenetrable.

Point of interest guides are conscious of the site's value, which can be unlocked for tourists in order to present historical facts and gain personal insights; the site allows the guides to earn money and to develop personally and professionally. The site's historic legacy and its current significance are important coordinates for POI-guides. They shape their narrative, which consists of stories told on site about the past and the present. This type of guide claims that they want to fulfill a moral duty, yet all too often they get “caught up” in the possibilities of accessing the site: Due to the plethora

of routes and the variety of visitors it is important to skillfully and purposefully find paths to key objects.

2.4.3 Guide of History

“Sie [Ehrenamtliche im Buchladen] weist mich auf Stanislav Zámečnickýs *Das war Dachau* hin; dieser sei die Grundlage für den Katalog und jeder Guide müsse diesen zur Grundlage seiner Führung machen. Sie vergleicht für die Inhaltsverzeichnisse. ‚Sehen Sie!‘ Zudem meint sie, dass Zámečnický ein ehemaliger Häftling war, der Geschichte studiert hat. Sie sei keine Historikerin und könne nur erzählen.” (Protokoll_19.03.2015)

[“She [volunteer at the book shop] shows me Stanislav Zámečnický’s *That was Dachau*; according to her, the book forms the basis for the catalogue which every guide needs to use as the basis of their tour. She compares the tables of contents. ‘See?’ She also notes that Zámečnický was a former prisoner and studied history. She points out that she herself is no historian, all she can do is tell stories.”]

This type of guide focuses on historical facts and a source-critical presentation. They provide verifiable facts which bring them close to the perpetrators’ perspectives. Due to their profound expertise regarding the historical facts of the time period between 1933 and 1945, these guides are well accepted authorities at their respective institutions.

Since Guides of History are aware of the significance and difficulty of the topic for the German nation, they mostly use written records as the basis of their work. In consequence, they primarily refer to sources by perpetrators rather than reports by survivors. In many cases, their presentation is marked by an inherent negativity and does not open up other horizons; the visitors’ perspectives are rarely involved in the communication process either. Guides of history employ a mainly monological and cognition-oriented didactical concept. They explain the basis of their approach as follows: Only when people possess a certain degree of knowledge about historical facts (events, terminology, source criticism), they are qualified to talk accurately about the Holocaust and Nazi crimes and to adequately assess the historical situation. However, these guides are aware that this kind of assessment is hardly possible, since such an enormous quantity of relevant facts and data exists, some of it in archives and still unexplored. Recounting historical events of the Nazi era gives them a certain confidence in order to not lose track. At the same time, they risk turning the historic site into a mere “accessory for scholarly treatises” by neglecting the sensory qualities of the historical site. Guides of history see themselves standing out from the other guides due to their knowledge. From their perspective, they make an important contribution to the educational work, which stands in stark contrast to the level of salary they receive, a circumstance which is often lamented. In the context of the memorial the guide of history claims the prerogative of interpretation. Other guides and staff members regularly refer to and comment on this claim.

2.4.4 Guide of Present

“Und da sind aktuelle, zum Beispiel zu Themen dabei, wie Umgang mit der AfD in der historisch-politischen Bildungsarbeit. Des, da ham wir uns dann darüber unterhalten, der Beutelsbacher Konsens auf der einen Seite, der Begriff der wehrhaften Demokratie auf der anderen Seite.” (Interview_w_v_2017)

[“And there are current issues, such as the question of dealing with the AfD [a right-wing political party] in the historical-political educational work. We had a discussion on that, the Beutelsbach Consensus on the one hand, and the idea of a well-fortified democracy on the other.”]

This type of guide is rooted in the present. They are aware of the importance of history, too. But for their tour guiding, reflections on political and social conditions of the present play a greater role; in their narratives, they focus on authoritarian systems and their chances to gain power and take over. Accordingly, they take human rights and their value for today’s democracy into consideration.

Guides of present always bear in mind the society at large: Their narrative is characterized by an emphasis on the importance of democracy for the present. This also becomes apparent in the educational offers they develop, as they establish explicit links to current social challenges, such as dealing with refugees and anti-Semitic resentments. Their tours adapt to such changing circumstances. These guides do not limit themselves to the respective historical site either, but rather include other places of terror and suffering – “places of dark tourism” – in their considerations. Consequently, they seek dialogue with the visitors; they are eager to get to know their views and attitudes in order to adapt their educational offer accordingly.

Guides of present admit that the site has a negative aura. They allow visitors to freely express their feelings, and they are no stranger to tears and shock. However, their emotions should be counterbalanced with cognitive knowledge in order to make the immediate situation bearable. Guides of present are convinced that a preoccupation with the resistance of prisoners during the Nazi era will inspire visitors to show resistance in today’s societies.

Their ideals can sometimes be in a certain contradiction with the experiences they make at the institutions; they lament a lack of freedom concerning the pedagogical guidelines and a lack of transparency with regard to decision making. Guides of present perceive these experiences with a higher intensity, as they are driven by moral values rather than financial ones. They live in financially secure circumstance and are therefore independent.

2.4.5 Survival and Safety Guide

“Wenn es um den eigenen Nachbarn, Familie ging, das ist dann doch ein schmerzliches Thema, aber ich glaube, dass die moralische Dimension und dieses Antwort auf die Frage, wie konnte es passieren, darauf habe ich selbst auch keine befriedigende Antwort gefunden.” (Interview_m_j_2015)

[“When it comes to your own neighbour or family, it is a painful topic, but I believe that the moral dimension and the answer to the question of how it could have ever happened – I could not come up with a satisfactory answer myself.”]

In order to commemorate the pain and suffering of innocent civilians during the Nazi era, these guides pay special attention to the conditions of survival and safety in times of persecution. Quite often they dedicate their tours to survivors and walk the path of that prisoner’s suffering, where life and death are deeply interwoven. These guides want to make the visitors aware of the fragility of safety.

The presentation of places and objects that played a significant role for the prisoners is characteristic for the tours of survival and safety guides. They regularly point out transgression which turned humans into subjects without rights. The prisoners are the pivotal element of the narrative, which is supposed to have an “effect” on the visitors. But what is the desired “effect”? Survival and safety guides aim to “build a bridge”: For one thing, they are aware of the site’s negativity and its influence on the viewers; nonetheless, visitors should visit places of dark tourism several times. For another thing, they intend to gain something positive for the present from the negativity of the site, meaning the preoccupation with dangers to the democracy in the past and the present.

In order to achieve this goal, this type of guide mostly asks questions which in turn raise questions from the visitors; the visitors will leave the site with open questions rather than satisfying answers, which will make another visit necessary. This creates a “chain of hermeneutical commemoration”: Past injustices are interlinked with current commitment as well as guides and visitors with victims and survivors. The task of bearing testimony to injustice is passed on from the prisoners to the survivors and finally to the visitors, so that the protection of humanity becomes a task that connects everyone.

2.4.6 Guide of Mission

“You can look at this history from different entry points and you can see yourself in that exhibition and in the story. I saw myself in there and it spoke to me so I’ve been here ever since for twenty two years.” (Interview_m_j_2016)

These guides fulfill a mission which is important for their lives and should be shared with visitors. During a visit or a personal encounter these guides were struck by the significance and the value of passing down Holocaust history. Therefore they dedicate their manpower to proclaim the message of the importance of humanity and human dignity.

The message “Never again!” is central to the narrative of these guides. The guide of mission had this realization when they were unexpectedly “struck” by an epiphany that was the initial spark for their commitment. They try to pass on this deep internal experience so it can reach more and more people. The issue of reimbursement is secondary to them as their mission is of far greater importance. The size of the task is demanding on the people involved, and it is impossible to put a monetary value on this. A tour of the site and the exhibition does not require any special efforts, as they speak for themselves and have a powerful impact. The message “Never again!” finds a medium and unfolds its effect. Examples include objects like the shoes of murdered prisoners, which are capable of evoking strong emotions. The sensation of cold also promotes an intense experience. True to the principle of a holistic approach, guides of mission put their trust not only in sensory perceptions, but also the power of the word. They emphasize the “positive effects” of the tradition of history like preachers: They proclaim the beneficial power of historical events for their own life and for a better future. Guides of mission wish to convert their visitors to create a better world – their thoughts, feelings and actions revolve around that. This is necessary not least because crimes against people and genocides are being committed to this day.

3 Interpretation and Discussion

Before interpreting the results it must be emphasized that the constructed types are prototypical ones and guides may take their “type-role” according to individual situations. With regard to the research questions some answers could be found.

Firstly, the typology shows a central pattern: Tour guides have their own agendas during their tours, which may differ from the pedagogical goals of the institutions. In Dachau, Mauthausen, Berlin and Washington, guides are called *Referenten* [speakers], *Vermittler* [mediators], *Begleiter* [companions] and interpreters of exhibitions. Regarding their concepts, guides are clearly distinguishable by whether they set the narrative of their tour in the past, the present or the future. As shown in figure 2, there is a tendency to anchor tour guiding in the present. This temporal setting is accompanied by either rather positively or rather negatively oriented lessons which can be learnt from this part of “dark history”. The guides deal mainly with negatively connoted knowledge but also try to balance it out: On the one hand, an “isolation” of the guide of history is apparent; on the other hand, a lack of future oriented concepts for teaching and learning about the Holocaust and Nazi crimes is notable. Most of the guides’ narratives focus on the present and on a balanced presentation of deterrent power of evil. On a practical level, this typology can be useful in the educational training offered by sites in order to enable the trainees to locate themselves and to challenge their beliefs and motivations regarding the temporal setting and revealing the shaping of lessons they teach.

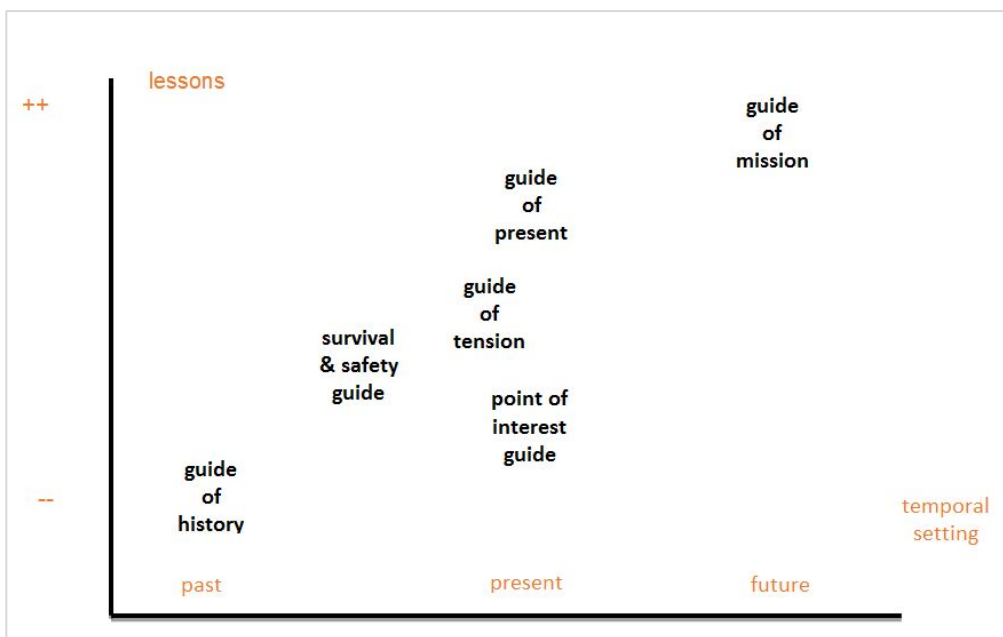


Figure 2 – Positional map for tour guides (following Clarke, 2012)

Being aware of this guides’ typology can also help teachers to find their own positions. In Dachau, Mauthausen, Berlin and Washington it is quite common that students within their school classes are regular visitors. Their teachers may listen to the guides’ narratives and reflect them against the background of their own experiences as well as their lessons taught at school.

Secondly, with a view to the training, some parallels can be drawn between guides and teachers: Memorial employees can visit different training programs at the sites and museums, which are partly offered by self-taught pedagogues. In particular, guides of tension are aware of the disproportion between pedagogical guidelines of the institutions, the needs of the visitors and their own personal interests. Many of them feel torn between the reality of tour guiding and the personal professional requirements.

In similar ways, teachers feel insufficiently prepared to deal with the topic, are often self-taught and experience anxiety about how to handle it. They feel a tension between emotion and reason and between memory and history. Sometimes they are not sure which purpose teaching that part of “dark history” is supposed to serve (Stevick, 2017, p. 221; also Langer, Cisneros & Kühner, 2008). These findings are supported by a recent study of lectures on Holocaust Studies at German universities. In 45 out of 79 universities, one or none unit on the history of Holocaust is offered within four semesters. Student teachers in particular struggle in how to gain historical knowledge during their studies (Nägel & Kahle, 2018, pp. 32-33). This might be an explanation for the myths and misunderstandings in teaching and learning about the Holocaust and Nazi-crimes which have been uncovered by empirical studies.

Finally, an analogy can be derived in comparing formal and non-formal education: One key finding of this study is the equivalence of extracurricular learning shaped by guides with subject matter education shaped by teachers: Considering history and literature, three guides of the typology mentioned above try to achieve similar objectives by using similar methods of teaching.

memorial pedagogy / guide	characteristics / teaching	subject matter / objectives
guide of history historical knowledge	chronological order monologue based on facts	history class historical knowledge
guide of survival & safety survivor testimonies	commemoration questions bearing testimony	literature class reading testimonial literature
guide of present defend democracy	human rights dialogue balance of emotions and facts	history (and political) class political consciousness

Figure 3 – Analogy of memorial pedagogy and subject matter education

From the perspective of memorial pedagogy as well as subject matter education this equivalence might be surprising. Guides and pedagogical employees are representing the extracurricular venues of education often in contrast to curricular education: The sites are supposed to have an “authentic” atmosphere which enables a variety of learning experiences; the communication between students and educators are intended to be free from hierarchy and therefore extremely meaningful (Haug, 2015, p. 60). Of course, the specificity of Holocaust related sites should not be questioned in general. It is worth emphasizing, however, that many memorial sites evoke sometimes the impression of “emptiness” or of reconstruction; many museums are exhibiting representations and installations to evoke special feelings and in order for visitors to

gain historical insights (Klein 2012). This fact might turn out to be a challenge for teachers: At an “authentic” site they seek for support to deepen historical and emotional learning of their students (Agentur der Europäischen Union für Grundrechte, 2011, pp. 62-63).

In terms of tour guiding, teaching overlaps with subject matter education of history and literature. It would be interesting to observe other subject matters of e.g. religious studies or geography responding to the typology of guides which was developed within this study, e.g. “guide of mission” and “point of interest”-guide. Further studies have to be undertaken to reflect this relationship.

Since the Holocaust and NS-crimes become part of history they present a challenge for connecting (young) people with the past. When reframing teaching and learning about Holocaust and NS-crimes in the 21st century, the results of this study sound promising: At a public space different stakeholders work on “shaping memories” at the intersection of formal and non-formal education. Learning about the concepts of each other might be an important step of a social relevant and meaningful educational approach in order to teach about the Holocaust as a history and warning (Snyder 2015).

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