

After the Nation? Memory Work at Mauthausen Memorial in (Trans)National Perspective

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THIS PAPER ENGAGES WITH CURRENT DEBATES IN MEMORY STUDIES REGARDING THE shifting nature of social memory production caused by ongoing processes of globalisation to discuss recent developments in educational programs at the Mauthausen Memorial. While memory scholars have challenged the conceptually restricting container of the nation-state (Welsch 194-5; Beck 23), this has also led, problematically, to a one-sided focus on transnational aspects of memory work. The 'transnational' has come to dominate the field. Even though there is a general consensus that the nation is still an important player in social memory production (De Cesari and Rigney 6; Erll 7; Phillip and Reyes 3), a major focus in current work is on transnational movements of memories and memory practices. This is particularly evident in the rich body of literature dealing with the question of how de-territorialised uses of globalised Holocaust memory play out in diverse contexts, discourses and social assemblages. All too often, I suggest, this kind of research highlights the capacity of the Holocaust to generate a sense of community beyond the national (Baer and Sznajder; Landsberg; Levy and Sznajder; Rothberg), while neglecting the parallel uses of Holocaust memory to reassert national frameworks of memory and solidarity. This gap forms the basis of my argument concerning the educative use of Holocaust memory within a highly nationalised realm. In discussing the example of Mauthausen Memorial, I consider the influence of both national and transnational stakeholders.

Mauthausen Memorial is arguably the single most important site of Austrian Holocaust commemoration. It is significant then that it has been a site through which to attempt to correct a distorted image of the national past through the development of a revised visitor engagement strategy. The new educational program addresses the complicity of Austrian nationals in the killing of around one hundred thousand people at Mauthausen concentration camp and its sub-camp Gusen. This challenges the enduring post-war myth that Austria was solely a victim of Nazi Germany and did not willingly tolerate, facilitate and participate in the mass-killings:

The common image of the SS, exposed in expressions of Austrian school children visiting the memorial today, are of people everyone feared. This expression serves as a cornerstone of the Austrian Victim Myth, construing the SS as so brutal and scary that no person in his or her right mind would oppose them. The SS is not depicted as an admired elite unit every young man dreams of joining, nor its men as being one's loveable grandfather. (Lapid and Schmutz, 'Challenges' 38)

For this pedagogical purpose, a master narrative was adopted to inform the educational activities offered at the Memorial, articulated in the following question: How was it possible that one hundred thousand people were murdered amidst a civilian society? (Lapid, Angerer and Schmutz 27). The educational strategy was revised through a cooperation between the Austrian state association *erinnern.at* and the European Union, which suggests that the need to engage with collective silences on a national scale is what drives educational work at Mauthausen Memorial. This however leaves wider pan-European issues related to Austria's past unaddressed. In this article, I therefore use Mauthausen Memorial as a case study to demonstrate how the nation continues to be a key frame in collective memory work despite the increasing involvement of transnational political bodies, such as the EU, in representations of national pasts. In particular, I trace the revision process of the educational strategy from its beginning in 2005 until its completion in 2014 through EU-reports and written material published by Austrian government institutions and the memorial.

The revision process comprised two design stages that cover a period of roughly nine years. The first design stage lasted from 2005 until 2011 and was dominated by institutions affiliated with the Austrian state, namely the Federal Ministry of the Interior, which governs Mauthausen Memorial, and the Austrian state association *erinnern.at*. The second design stage, which started in 2012 and ended in 2014 with the completion of the program, led to the refinement of the educational strategy under the patronage of the European Union Agency for

Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the European Commission program 'Europe for Citizens'. In what follows, I argue that the first design stage was the most crucial in terms of establishing the foundation of the educational framework for two reasons: it entailed the adoption of the above-mentioned master narrative and the implementation of an interactive visitor engagement strategy aimed at enhancing civic education efforts. By contrast, during the second design stage the interactive strategy was not subject to any foundational changes. However, what is crucial about this second stage is the changes in the ways that strategy was publicised. In reports and articles written by the educational team at Mauthausen Memorial, it is possible to detect a conceptual shift from the promotion of civic education to a focus on human rights education. Common to both is the pedagogical approach of interaction and autonomous learning. As I will show, this use of interaction was made possible by the fact that civic education and human rights education pursue similar educational aims and thus apply similar methods of teaching. These overlaps are made clear in this description offered by the Council of Europe:

Education for democratic citizenship and human rights education are closely inter-related and mutually supportive. They differ in focus and scope rather than in goals and practices. Education for democratic citizenship focuses primarily on democratic rights and responsibilities and active participation, in relation to the civic, political, social, economic, legal and cultural spheres of society, while human rights education is concerned with the broader spectrum of human rights and fundamental freedoms in every aspect of people's lives. (Council of Europe)

While it could be argued that these educational concepts are interchangeable, it is worth noting that institutions and representatives associated with the EU and the Austrian state make distinctive references to either one or the other concept. For the purposes of my argument, I trace this shifting rhetoric, so as to assess the extent to which educational aims pursued by different institutions influence the public representation of the educational program. I begin by examining the process of re-development focusing on the first design stage, before analysing the second design phase, and conclude with an evaluation of what the site's contemporary uses reveals about Austrian national self-representation.

Enhancing Civic Education through an Interactive Method of Teaching about the past

Prior to the recent development of the current educational program, Mauthausen's visitor tours were mostly guided by young men serving community service in lieu of military service. Under that scheme, guides received

training covering the history of the site, but lacked pedagogical expertise (Erinnern.at). To remedy the unprofessional handling of what is an integral part of the memory work performed at Mauthausen Memorial, Austrian government institutions initiated the development of a new approach, which was developed gradually over nearly a decade. Its beginnings go back to 2005, the year in which the Federal Ministry of the Interior assigned *erinnern.at* the task to design an educational strategy for Mauthausen Memorial (Erinnern.at). Existing contracts gave responsibility for redesigning the educational strategy to *erinnern.at*. This association has had the most influence in the formulation of the program's foundational principles, as indicated by the impress of its values within the educational strategy.

Erinnern.at, which was founded in 2000 by the Federal Ministry of Education and Women, works towards developing more structured approaches to Holocaust education. Memorials and memorial sites, according to *erinnern.at*, play an important educational role, as they allow visitors to study the historical particularity of one place in relation to its social environment past and present (Dreier 32). This means that educational memorial work is typically directed towards exploring the questions about what happened on site, why and how it happened, and what it has to do with today (32). Rather than teach young people established truths about the Holocaust, the strategy is to encourage an engagement with the past on a personal level. In addition to the transmission of knowledge about the history and the topography of the camp, the pedagogical concept developed includes another element, namely the self. The visitor undertaking the tour is placed at its centre (Lapid, Angerer and Ecker, ['What has this got to do with me?': On the new educational concept at Mauthausen Memorial]' 6).

An interactive methodology was framed as a response to research that had questioned whether widely used strategies of pairing the transmission of knowledge about the Holocaust with a highly emotionalised memorial visit in which the terrors of the Nazi regime were confronted are effective in preventing young people from developing an extreme-right wing attitude (Lapid, Angerer and Ecker, ['What has this got to do with me?': The educational concept at Mauthausen Memorial]' 3). The early tours at Mauthausen Memorial did in fact make use of narratives that highlighted the ferocity of the crimes committed in the camp, as the guide would meet the group of visitors at the entrance of the camp and then walk them through the site while providing a detailed account of factual knowledge about the torture experienced by the inmates (Lapid). Yariv Lapid, under whose leadership the recent re-design of the educational program at Mauthausen Memorial was conducted, points out that

the contents of the tours in the past focused on the victims, aiming to create identification with their suffering. The tendency was to provide vivid descriptions of the brutality, shocking the visitor, for example through standing in the gas chamber and describing to 14 year olds the bodily reaction to Cyclone B. (Lapid)

This approach, designed to trigger affective responses by visitors, is characteristic of many educational efforts made at Holocaust memorial sites during the last half century or so. It has been termed 'Betroffenheitspädagogik' (Ziehe and Stubenrauch) referring to a pedagogy aimed at making learners emotionally affected by the issues they are studying. In its most extreme form, this teaching method promotes a kind of shock-therapy in the way the public history lesson is conveyed. It is an approach that has come under considerable criticism for its presumed ineffectiveness to facilitate a meaningful engagement with the past (Wenninger 66–67). Educational experts have pointed out the danger that visitors may feel overwhelmed by the information provided, or alternatively become desensitised over time. This criticism has been enforced by Holocaust survivors like Ruth Klüger, who points out there is a disconnection between the past as happened and the past as imagined. She stresses in particular that visits to actual sites can have a trivialising effect on perceptions about what happened there because they cannot make reference to what is missing today, namely 'the odor of fear emanating from human bodies, the concentrated aggression, the reduced minds' (Klüger 67). Her reflections on the trend in post-war Europe to turn former concentration camps into museums of imagined horrors captures the essence of ongoing debates. Klüger writes in her memoir *Still Alive: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered*:

The museum culture of the camp sites has been formed by the vagaries and neuroses of our unsorted, collective memory. It is based on a profound superstition, that is, on the belief that the ghosts can be met and kept in their place, where the living ceased to breathe. Or rather, not a profound, but a shallow superstition. A visitor who feels moved, even if it is only a kind of feeling that a haunted house conveys, will be proud of these stirrings of humanity. And so the visitor monitors his reactions, examines his emotions, admires his own sensibility, or in other words, turns sentimental. For sentimentality involves turning away from an ostensible object and towards the subjective observer, that is, towards oneself. It means looking into a mirror instead of reality. (66)

Klüger's view is that tours focusing on vivid descriptions of torture and death leave little or no room for an actual engagement with the past in the present. The new visitor engagement strategy at Mauthausen Memorial has been designed to

address this perceived problem, that is, to facilitate critical reflections upon the history of the camp and provide opportunities to tie them into the broader socio-psychological contexts attached to it. It is informed by and grounded in the concept of civic education.

In essence, the purpose of civic education is to promote the acquisition of civic values such as tolerance, and the internalisation of democratic rights and responsibilities. Focus rests on enabling young citizens to become active members of society. Civic education in Austrian school-education pursues three interrelated aims: first, teach students about democratic political institutions and their historical development; second, convey competency of judgement and independent decision-making; and third, impart the ability to participate in socio-political life (Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture). The aim pursued with the revised educational strategy at Mauthausen Memorial vaguely promotes the last two aspects with a special focus upon the promotion of participatory skills. According to the state-funded Austrian association for civic education, active participation in social and political life can be furthered through initiating reflection processes on society and politics (Austrian Society for Political Education). Therefore, civic education efforts should provide platforms of interaction for members of the public to discuss issues related to society. According to the program designers at Mauthausen Memorial, civic education can only have a transformative effect on visitors if they are able to draw a connection between themselves and the object of study. This is why the aspect of participation is taken up by the educational team, whose leaders state in one of their earliest publications that a successful civic education has to serve as a catalyst to critical self-reflection for the participant; thereby the involvement and empowerment of the visitor is viewed as an effective measure to create an environment that fosters an encounter with the self (Lapid, Angerer and Ecker, ‘[“What has this got to do with me?”: The educational concept at Mauthausen Memorial]’ 6). The underlying assumption is that providing visitors with the opportunity to be heard would empower them and eventually move them to attend to their civic duty of becoming a useful community member.

The new strategy at the Memorial is informed by the work of Lisa Rosa, a German teacher and trainer for teachers. In line with other educational practitioners of Holocaust education (Kaiser; Scheurich), Rosa proposes an educational concept that places the learner at the centre. For Rosa, learning about the Holocaust can only contribute to the betterment of society if students are personally involved in the process of knowledge acquisition, for which they need to be addressed as active agents rather than passive listeners (Rosa 8). At the heart of this lies the effort to connect all learning activities back to the following question: ‘What has this got to do with me?’ (‘Was hat das mit mir zu tun?’). The educational team at the Mauthausen Memorial adopted this question as the central theme of its

project and geared the educational design towards facilitating participation, interaction and personal engagement (Lapid, Angerer and Ecker, ‘[“What has this got to do with me?”: On the new educational concept at Mauthausen Memorial]’ 11). Interaction is facilitated through the use of a number of components embedded into the educational strategy, a critical one being that the tour is conducted like an inquiry rather than a presentation of established historical knowledge. In this sense, the guide plays a crucial role. He or she takes the group to the different tour stations, giving participants a very brief introduction about the significance of the place visited, and then asking them to engage with historical source material provided, such as eyewitness reports, official documents, aerial views depicting the camp and its environment, and photographs (Lapid). The subsequent discussion serves as an entry point into explorations of contentious issues that are raised by the source material and is believed to offer an opportunity for visitors to challenge their pre-conceived ideas.

Enhancing Human Rights Education through an Interactive Method of Teaching about the past

In 2011 erinnern.at initiated contact with the European Union regarding its work on the educational program by inviting the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) to conduct a review of the newly implemented strategy. In 2012, the review was carried out by a group of international experts from Holland, England, Poland, Germany and Israel who operated under the auspices of the FRA. Its aim was to test the existing educational practice and come up with strategies of improvement and dissemination for the interactive method used at Mauthausen Memorial, which the FRA describes as linking Holocaust and human rights education (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, ‘FRA and Mauthausen Memorial Workshop’). A follow-up series of five workshops arose from this initiative, which took place in 2013 and 2014 allowing for a further refinement of the program through cooperation between the international team of experts, as well as members of the educational team and visitor guides working at the Memorial. This initiative was financially supported by the program ‘Europe for Citizens’, which erinnern.at had applied for in 2012 to access funds to facilitate the ongoing re-design of the educational program. In what ways has the collaborative work with the EU impacted on the educational strategy? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to examine the EU’s stance on public uses of the Holocaust past.

The EU’s overarching goal on a social and cultural level is the promotion of the process of European integration, which was born out of the need to overcome the violent Nazi past after the Second World War. European integration efforts therefore hinge upon the use of this past in ways that allow for reconciliation and

for imagining a new Europe based on uniting values such as democracy and human rights. The EU's push towards using the Holocaust past as a means to promote European integration efforts becomes clear when examining the agenda of one of the main financial supporters of the re-design of the educational strategy at Mauthausen Memorial: The 'Europe for Citizens' Program. The 'Europe for Citizens' Program, under which the Mauthausen Memorial was supported, ran from 2007 until 2013 with a total budget of EUR 215 million and was aimed at 'promoting "active European citizenship", especially the involvement of citizens and civil society organisations in the process of European integration' (European Commission EACEA, 'Citizenship Programme 2007-2013'). It funded projects in four main categories: 'Active citizens for Europe', 'Active civil society in Europe', 'Together for Europe' and 'Active European Remembrance'. The re-design of the Mauthausen Memorial fell under the latter scheme, specifically designed to cater for work dedicated to the remembrance of past violations of human rights, restrictions of personal freedoms, and disdains of democratic values as encountered during Nazism and Stalinism (European Commission EACEA, 'Action 4'). The aims, as described by the European Commission in regards to its 'Active European Remembrance' initiative, are to envision a European future based on the observance of new, democratic, human-rights-focused principles. The citizens of the European states are described as the guarantors of this vision who, through confronting Europe's dark past, shall be encouraged to actively defend its current values.

The above-mentioned FRA, which advises the EU and its member states on policies regarding the implementation of fundamental rights, aims to forge a link between human rights education and Holocaust education. This is unambiguously spelt out in the statement regarding objectives contained in the 2010 FRA report *Discover the Past for the Future: A Study on the Role of Historical Sites and Museums in Holocaust Education and Human Rights Education in the EU*. The research project's aim is 'to assist school teachers and operators of commemoration sites, original sites and historical museums in their work on human rights education' (Heller). It is presented as a contribution to current debates on how to use the dark Holocaust past as a means to create a bright future, highlighting the following:

There is no doubt that this task requires approaches that link Holocaust and human rights education, and that commemoration sites and historical museums have a significant role to play in this context. (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 'Discover the Past for the Future' 3)

As the FRA was the first EU-related institution to be involved in the process of revising the educational strategy at Mauthausen Memorial in 2012, it is not

surprising that the concept of human rights was foregrounded in reports and articles published in the second design stage. In fact, my analysis of texts discussing the revised educational strategy published between 2012 and 2014 reveals that the original rhetoric circling around civic education was abandoned in favour of a human rights approach. The final report published by erinnern.at on the series of workshops that took place between 2012 and 2014, entitled *The Challenges of Interaction: Developing Education at Memorial Sites* (hereafter referred to as *The Challenges of Interaction*), confirms this. The report highlights the EU's influence by stating that the most important tasks of educational activities at the memorial are first, to 'impart knowledge about National Socialist crimes', second, to teach about 'the history of the Mauthausen concentration camp and its satellite camps', and third, to 'convey the basic principles of human rights' (Glück, Dreier, Maschke and Wirtitsch 4). By contrast, two key texts about the pedagogy written by the educational team at the Mauthausen Memorial during the first design stage do not once mention the concept of human rights. Rather, they make reference to the interactive strategy in relation to civic education (Lapid, Angerer and Ecker, '["What has this got to do with me?": On the new educational concept at Mauthausen Memorial]'; '["What has this got to do with me?": The educational concept at Mauthausen Memorial]'). The report *Challenges of Interaction* makes the same connection with regard to human rights education:

How can learning about the Holocaust strengthen universal humanistic values? The discourse tends towards a binary structure, with issues such as Holocaust Education and Human Rights Education often being debated as mutually exclusive options. The interactive educational methods developed at the Mauthausen Memorial in the last years [...] have shown that these issues can be complementary rather than mutually exclusive. Moreover, it can bring about a much deeper introspection, both historically and in relation to issues of human rights. (Lapid and Schmutz, 'Starting Point' 18)

Similarly, Lapid prominently features the concept of human rights in his article *Combining Education at Memorial Sites and Civic Education: Experiences from the Mauthausen Memorial*, published in 2013 (Lapid). Although he refers to civic education in the title of his work, the article itself makes no mention of it specifically. Instead, reference is made to the concept of human rights in various parts throughout the text. Lapid debates the possibility of using the Holocaust as a tool for teaching about human rights and relates his plea for an interactive visitor strategy back to the FRA study, which argues for creating an environment designed to promote independent learning (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 'Human Rights Education at Memorial Sites across the European Union' 11).

The FRA study, however, goes far beyond the implementation of interactive learning strategies regarding its recommendations for promoting human rights education at Holocaust memorial sites. The FRA proposes to enhance Holocaust education through the following three features of human rights education: first, learning ‘about’ human rights, which aims to provide cognitive content about the history, institutions and legal tools of human rights; second, learning ‘for’ human rights, which involves training the student towards protecting those rights and speaking out against human rights breaches; and third, learning ‘through’ human rights, which means that the educational practices shall reflect the values of human rights and facilitate equal participation of all learners (10-11). The FRA makes suggestions about how each aspect could inform the transmission of knowledge about the Holocaust at public history institutions. Regarding the first dimension, it proposes to teach students about the violence committed against Holocaust victims as breaches of human rights and to describe how they connect to the post-war adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the establishment of a legal system to protect these rights (10). For the second dimension, the FRA proposes to analyse different perspectives of people who lived through the Second World War, such as ‘perpetrators, victims, bystanders, rescuers and resisters’ in order to help evaluate their actions from a moral point of view (11). Furthermore, it recommends discussion of what the suppression of human rights meant under the Nazi regime to highlight the importance of their existence today. Within the context of the third aspect, the FRA suggests to ‘enable students to acquire their knowledge actively and independently’ and to include their own encounters with human rights violations into the discussion (11).

The educational strategy at the Mauthausen Memorial reflects limited parts of this agenda. For instance, it provides different perspectives on the Nazi past at Mauthausen through bringing in historical sources that highlight actions undertaken by perpetrators, victims and bystanders. However, as the educational team stresses in the final report, *The Challenges of Interaction*, guides are expected to strictly avoid presenting a fixed view on how the past should be interpreted in order to allow for enhanced interaction (Lapid and Schmutz, ‘Implementation’ 52). A strategy aimed at withholding guidance in terms of the ways in which the actions of contemporaries should be judged does not, I suggest, establish a clear connection to the ethical appeal associated with the concept of human rights, which ultimately entails the condemnation of the kinds of abuses that occurred under the Nazi regime. In accordance with Lapid’s interpretation, I suggest that it is the third aspect of learning ‘through’ human rights that is supported with the use of an interactive strategy. However, since students are not being introduced to the concept of human rights specifically,

interaction aids the human rights mission as uncertainly in the second design phase, as it promotes civic education in the first.

Analysing National Memory Work in a Transnational Context

The above discussion has shown that education at the Mauthausen Memorial does not cater for content-related lessons on democracy or human rights. Nevertheless, the way it is framed in reports and articles throughout the first and second design stages suggests that the enhancement of active citizenship and the protection of human rights would naturally emerge as a by-product of involving visitors in the process of knowledge acquisition on site. Without detracting from the importance of interaction for successful learning, the assumption that its use in Holocaust education necessarily contributes to the strengthening of a culture of democracy and the recognition of human rights should be taken with caution. The key to answering this question, however, lies in visitor studies, which is outside the scope of the present study, which has focused rather on the conceptual framing of the visitor engagement strategy. As far as this aspect is concerned, I argue that interaction could only be used to promote civic and human rights education because both these pedagogic approaches overlap in their respective aims to promote a society based on values of equality and active citizenship partly through employing active and independent learning practices. Coupled with the lack of learning modules that linked Mauthausen's Nazi past directly to democracy in the first design stage, this overlap in aims and practices made it possible to simply make the claim about education for human rights in the second design stage. This, I argue, is how interaction came to be used to legitimise two quite different educational agendas at distinct stages in the design process. In other words, the interactive methodology became a template to further different institutional agendas in Holocaust education.

What contributed to this use of an interactive strategy is the increased role that the EU has assumed in memory work in Austria. Its impact is evident in a growing recognition of the EU as a supranational political body of which Austria perceives itself to be a part. One way to demonstrate this is by examining the changes the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs recently made to the government's *Civics Education in Schools: Decree on the Integral Educational Principle* of 1978 (Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, 'Civics Education in Schools: Decree on the Integral Educational Principle' [1978]; Austrian Federal Ministry for Education and Women's Affairs, 'Citizenship Education as a Cross-curricular Educational Principle: General Ordinance 2015'). As the Ministry of Education supports *erinnern.at*, which led the revision of the educational strategy at Mauthausen Memorial, the decree is highly relevant for the case discussed above. In 1978, when Austria adopted the *Decree on the Integral Educational Principle*, the aim was to contribute to the

maintenance of democracy through promoting active citizenship amongst pupils across all types of schools and age groups. In this first version of the decree, the goal was not merely to teach students an awareness of Austria as a nation founded on democracy, but to impart a pan-European way of thinking as well as a cosmopolitan attitude characterised by an understanding of existential problems of humanity (Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, 'Civics Education in Schools' 2). As this demonstrates, reference is made to Europe not in terms of its role as a political institution, but rather in the sense of an imagined community that only loosely connects to the bounded-ness of the Austrian nation, which is at the heart of civic education efforts. In June 2015 an updated version of the decree entitled *Citizenship Education as a Cross-curricular Educational Principle: General Ordinance* was released to respond to changes in schools, society and politics since the adoption of the first version (Austrian Federal Ministry for Education and Women's Affairs, 'Citizenship Education' 2). In this document reference to the Austrian state shifts to Europe; citizenship education 'highlight[s] the role of Austria in Europe and globally, and communicate[s] an understanding of existential and global relationships and problems of humanity' (3). Furthermore, the EU is referred to as an influential supranational political body. Consequently, the *General Ordinance* describes civic education as a cross-curricular educational principle 'based on international recommendations and guidelines emphasizing the significance of citizenship education and young people's right to it' (2). Mentioned in this regard are the 'Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education' and the 'UN Convention on the Rights of the Child', as well as the European Parliament and the 'Council on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning' (2).

Even though the 2015 *General Ordinance* might not have directly informed the revision process of the educational strategy at the Mauthausen Memorial, it can be argued that its adoption merely marks an endpoint of a process that already affected the Memorial. In the 2010 report on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of *erinnern.at*, the incumbent Minister of Education, Claudia Schmied, highlighted the following:

The significance of National Socialism and the Holocaust goes well beyond the national context. Of great importance, for example, is the educational dialogue in the framework of the Task Force International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF). Since Austria joined in 2001, *erinnern.at* has played an active role within the Austrian delegation. (Schmied 7)

The ITF, which since then changed its name to 'International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance' (IHRA), is an intergovernmental body, which is

supported by thirty-one, mostly European, member countries and works towards the global expansion of Holocaust education and the refinement of its pedagogical practices. *Erinnern.at*'s membership in the IHRA indicates its openness towards international collaborations on issues related to Holocaust education. This openness is even further highlighted in the preface of *erinnern.at*'s 2014 annual report, which clearly situates its educational work within a European framework. In support of a broader argument about growing radicalisation trends in Europe and the world, reference is made to the 7 January 2015 terrorist attack upon the offices of French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* and the 14-15 February 2015 terrorist shootings in Copenhagen (Maschke and Wirtitsch 4). The preface further states that the kind of Holocaust education provided by *erinnern.at*, aimed at changing radical attitudes, should be seen as a contribution towards securing peace in an increasingly unstable Europe. These aspects of educational work demonstrate the willingness on the part of *erinnern.at* and correspondingly the Ministry of Education to connect with a broader European community. This stance is consistent with the decision to involve the EU in the revision of Mauthausen's educational strategy by sourcing EU funds. Part of the process of securing funding for collective memory projects from political institutions is to highlight the relevance of the past in the present. The alignment of the respective memory project with values in education represented by potential future funding bodies is part of this process, which continues to inform memory work once financial support has been granted. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that, due to the provision of funds by EU bodies, which propose to include the concept of human rights in teachings about the Holocaust, the educational team at Mauthausen Memorial placed the new pedagogic strategy in context with human rights during the second design stage. However, the willingness to take on EU-guidelines in Holocaust education is limited, as the process of 'rebranding' the visitor strategy in the name of human rights shows. While the involvement of the EU led to a refinement and new description of the interactive strategy in place, the 'master' narrative was not adjusted in any way to reflect broader European implications in relation to Mauthausen's past. Educational work at the Mauthausen Memorial for the most part remains a national memory project, which can be illustrated via analysis of the learning content.

Any teaching method relates directly to the content it communicates on the ground. In the case discussed here, a disparity exists between the public image portrayed about the content transmitted and the nature of the actual learning activities conducted in situ. In fact, it appears that the strong focus on civic and human rights education in the public promotion of the educational program deflects attention from it as a national memory project. In regard to the content of the memorial's educational program, it focuses heavily on transmitting knowledge about the history of the site in relation to the master narrative: 'How

was it possible that one hundred thousand people were murdered amidst a civilian society?’ (Lapid, Angerer and Schmutz 27). As the educational team stresses in *The Challenges of Interaction*, ‘[p]opular notions in Austrian society place the atrocities behind the walls, exterritorial to the eye as well as the mind. Reality was different, and the camp was built in the midst of civilian society and intended to be part of it, with the houses of the town Mauthausen a few hundred meters away’ (Lapid and Schmutz, ‘Challenges’ 38). As this makes clear, the educational program’s aim is to confront visitors, especially Austrian citizens, with this reality by highlighting that “without society’s interest and active support the concentration camps would not [have] exist[ed]” (Lapid). To help visitors explore the core question, the tour takes them first to the sections of the camp that are located outside its walls. These tour stations are designed to confront participants with the role of local residents, the guards and the SS before taking them inside the camp to study victims’ accounts and experiences. The previous design of the tour, as mentioned above, focused on recalling the sufferings of the victims. The new design has shifted to narrating bystander and perpetrator perspectives aimed at addressing the issue of Austria’s complicity in mass murder and oppression.

The prominent position given to perpetrators and bystanders is based on the underlying assumption that anyone, under certain circumstances, could assume that role. It thereby follows a recent trend in memorial work to include perpetrators’ perspectives (Wenninger). This focus on what museum scholar Paul Williams calls a ‘tolerance-based pedagogy’ aims at raising awareness about this danger through teachings about aggressor perspectives (Williams 102). For instance, in the course of the tour, visitors are taken to the former residence of Eleonore Gusenbauer, whose house overlooks the quarry where during the war inmates were abused on a daily basis. Visitors are then presented with a letter of complaint written by Gusenbauer and addressed to the local police stating the following:

Inmates of the Mauthausen concentration camp are constantly being shot at the Vienna Ditch work site. Those who are badly struck still live for some time and lie next to the dead for hours and in some cases for half a day. My property is situated on an elevation close to the Vienna Ditch and therefore one often becomes the unwilling witness of such misdeeds. I am sickly in any case and such sights make such demands on my nerves, that I will not be able to bear it much longer. I request that it be arranged that such inhuman deeds will cease or else be conducted out of sight. (Horwitz 35).

This source provides evidence of locals’ tolerance of violence against prisoners and therefore offers an opportunity to challenge misconceptions about their role

(Lapid). Such an approach, which is used at each of the tour stations, may promote critical reflections on questions of Austrian guilt and complicity. However, it does not encourage visitors to reflect upon the broader European dimension related to Mauthausen's past. In contrast to, for instance, the museum exhibition at the Mauthausen Memorial, which highlights the place of Mauthausen in a widespread system of Nazi concentration camps that stretched over Europe, the educational tour does not connect the killing of one hundred thousand inmates in Mauthausen to the millions of others, who were murdered across Europe. This is because, despite the public framing of the interactive strategy as a European memory project, education at the Mauthausen Memorial follows a deeply national agenda: to break the myth of Austrian victimhood.

Conclusion

In this discussion I have sought to demonstrate that despite the influence of the EU on public history projects carried out by its member states, national frameworks of collective memory still play a key role in contemporary educative projects designed to deal with the past. This does not mean that collective memory is produced in a national vacuum. In fact, quite the opposite is true, as my analysis of the EU's influence on national memory work through the formulation of policies and the provision of funding shows. However, currently preoccupying memory studies scholarship are approaches and studies that seek to transcend or circumvent the nation as the key site of memory making. This sometimes results in studies that fail to account for the national within the transnational. Through this particular case study, my aim has been to indicate some of the limitations involved in relying on the conceptual framework of the transnational as a natural point of departure in studying the complex processes of social memory production. At the very least, it risks over-determining the impact of transnational influences; or, equally, underestimating the political and social power that nation-states still hold.

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