

EDUCATIONAL VISITS TO THE STATE MUSEUM AT MAJDANEK

A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



**Educational Visits
to the State Museum at Majdanek
A Guide for Teachers**



PAŃSTWOWE
MUZEUM
NA MAJDANKU

**Educational Visits
to the State Museum at Majdanek
A Guide for Teachers**

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Lublin 2013

Published with the financial support of the Holocaust Educational Foundation

Cover design: Krzysztof Kokowicz

Photographs: Archives of the State Museum at Majdanek

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Publisher:

Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku
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ISBN 978-83-62816-11-8

Printed in Poland

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Introduction

An important educational mission links the school and the museum. The task of both institutions is to make young people aware of the meaning of the cultural heritage and to enable them to learn about the past and its varied implications for the present. In the case of martyrdom museums, that is the institutions that are not only historical museums but also cemeteries and monuments to the history of the Second World War, education implies an obligation and a challenge—an obligation to the victims, that their tragic fate not sink into oblivion; and a challenge in relation to contemporaries and future generations, that the memory of the crimes committed by the Nazi dictatorship contribute to shaping their historical awareness and sensitivity.

The State Museum at Majdanek (*Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku* – PMM) conducts a broad and varied range of educational work that refers on the theoretical level to the educational assumptions known as the pedagogy of remembrance. Here, the focus is on the necessity of stimulating and deepening reflection on the past in its various contexts. This is intended to help in forming historical thinking, empathy, and a sense of shared responsibility for present-day events. The main role in a process of this type is played by work on remembrance, which takes on many forms, references, and significances on the grounds of the former Nazi camps, and thus links historical and intercultural education. As a consequence, the didactic concept and educational practice at the Museum at Majdanek represent an attempt to make the past come alive and to give it contemporary relevance

in the individual and collective, social and historical, and regional and international dimensions.

The present work, *Educational Visits to the State Museum at Majdanek: A Guide for Teachers*, is one of a series of State Museum at Majdanek publications devoted to educational issues. At the same time, it is the first book addressed directly to teachers. It arose from an awareness that teachers are interested in extramural historical education at memorial sites, but it is intended above all for teachers who make use of the Museum's educational programs. It should help them to prepare and conduct lessons that take advantage of the resources at our institution in an optimal way, and beyond that to encourage them to seek their own forms of experiencing history and remembrance at an authentic historical site.

This book combines theory and practice. It opens with an article by Tomasz Kranz introducing the most important assumptions, goals, and methods of the pedagogy of remembrance. Dominika Staszczyk's text applies interdisciplinary analysis to the concept of remembrance and the impact it has on comprehending the reality of the past and learning about it. The next study, by Monika Kranz-Szurek, takes up the related issue of the impact of the interaction of local cultures and global processes on the shaping of social-cultural identity. The author of the following article, Andrzej Stępnik, considers the significance of museum education from the perspective of teaching history in school and the ensuing didactic benefits. Wiesław Wysok formulates general principles for cooperation between teachers and museum educators. The last text deals with the didactic-pedagogical work of the Museum at Majdanek. Ewa Bąbol and Wiesław Wysok present the forms of educational work at the Museum, with special attention to their practical aspects. The book concludes with a plan for an educational project, intended to make it easier to prepare a schedule of tasks connected with conducting lessons, and a selection of literature including the basic works on museum education at memorial sites and the most important studies on the work and collections of the Museum.

This publication is the result of cooperation between the State Museum at Majdanek and the Department of Historical Education and Cultural Heritage in the Institute of History at the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. It is addressed to Polish and foreign educators wishing to participate in educational projects to be held at the Majdanek memorial site. The editor and contributors express their hope that it will prove to be helpful especially to the teachers and students of schools in the Lublin area in propagating knowledge and cultivating remembrance on the subject of the Second World War during both seminars with young people from Poland and historical workshops of an international nature.

Tomasz Kranz

Tomasz Kranz

The Pedagogy of Remembrance as a Form of Museum Education

In Poland over the last two decades, three currents have emerged in historical education about the Second World War. One is the program that goes by the name of Holocaust education, intended to support the development of both teaching the history of the Shoah in schools and organizing visits to memorial sites. The general idea of this project, supported by the governments of more than 30 countries participating in the structure of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research (ITF), posits linking Holocaust education with moral education. However, despite its broad range of activities aimed at propagating knowledge about the extermination of the Jews and connecting that subject with education on human rights, it is difficult to regard “Holocaust education” as a coherent didactic concept, especially in regard to the educational work of museums at memorial sites. Basically, there are no scholarly studies presenting the theoretical and methodological assumptions of Holocaust education as a form of extramural education.¹ The majority of publications concentrate on issues surrounding covering the subject in the classroom, but fail to elucidate the concept of “Holocaust education”

¹ This conclusion can be drawn from a report on the state of education about the Holocaust in various countries, prepared by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. See *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. Main Results Report*, January 2010, <http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/Main-Results-Discover-the-Past-for-the-Future.pdf> (accessed 9 January, 2012).

itself or to attempt to conceptualize this current in the categories of didactics or the theory of education.²

The current subsumed under the definition “teaching about Auschwitz” finds itself in a similar situation. This is the central field of educational work at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim. It embraces many organized forms that aim to convey factual information about the history of Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp and extermination center. These include talks, workshops, lectures, seminars, publications containing lesson plans, e-learning, and postgraduate courses for teachers. The publications available do not, however, explain the theoretical basis and methodological assumptions underpinning the program for teaching about Auschwitz, or whether it can be applied at other memorial sites as an educational model of a universal nature.³ They do, on the other hand, suggest that teaching about Auschwitz is above all a form of specialist education, and that the historical significance and symbolism of the former camp are both its main reference point and its subject matter.

The third current is the pedagogy of memorial sites, also known as the pedagogy of remembrance. Its origins are connected with the development of German pedagogical thought on the role of museums and memorial sites in social-political education. At present, this trend is based on wide-ranging theoretical reflections and a wealth of practical experience, and partially, as well, on empirical research. This makes it possible to regard the pedagogy of remembrance as a relatively autonomous domain within the theory and practice of social pedagogy.

² From among the Polish publications, see for example P. Trojański, “Nazizm i Holocaust w edukacji historycznej młodzieży szkoły podstawowej,” *Pro Memoria*, 1998, no. 9, pp. 67–70; *Dlaczego należy uczyć o Holokauście?*, ed. J. Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, L. Hońdo, Cracow, 2005.

³ Cf. *Międzynarodowe Centrum Edukacji o Auschwitz i Holokauście*, Oświęcim, 2005, pp. 3–5; *Jak uczyć o Auschwitz i Holokauście. Materiały dydaktyczne dla nauczycieli*, ed. J. Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, K. Oleksy, P. Trojański, Oświęcim, 2007; *Auschwitz i Holokaust – dylematy i wyzwania polskiej edukacji*, ed. P. Trojański, Oświęcim, 2008; M. Zaborski, *Współczesne pomniki i miejsca pamięci w polskiej i niemieckiej kulturze politycznej*, Toruń, 2011, pp. 239–247.

What is the pedagogy of remembrance? In the German view, it is a form of social-historical education that propagates active involvement with the past with the goal of, on the one hand, upholding the remembrance of the victims of Nazi crimes and, on the other, forming the attitudes and social behavior desirable under democracy.⁴ The educational theorist Hanns-Fred Rathenow points out that the teaching process within the framework of the pedagogy of remembrance is action-oriented and combines cognitive, affective, and pragmatic elements.⁵ Polish authors take a similar view of its essence and primary goals. According to Tomasz Kranz, the pedagogy of remembrance is “a concept emphasizing the didactic and formative importance of knowledge about the crimes of Nazism acquired through the encounter with authentic documentation and landmarks at historical sites, and especially museums at the sites of former Nazi camps. An educational process based to a large degree on independent study, combining reflection on the past with reflection on one’s own disposition, views, and attitudes, plays a crucial role.”⁶

The combination of historical education with reflective education is the factor that, to a large degree, distinguishes the pedagogy of remembrance from other educational strategies that refer to the heritage of the Second World War. This does not mean, however, that every undertaking carried out according to the guidelines of education at memorial sites broadly conceived necessarily leads to the evocation of reflection on the present. The direct object of study, after all, is the past—most often the history of the camp in its various dimensions and perspectives—and

⁴ N.H. Weber, H.-F. Rathenow, “Pedagogika miejsc pamięci – próba bilansu,” *Kwartalnik Pedagogiczny*, 1996, no. 2, pp. 3–36; I. Scheurich, *NS-Gedenkstätten als Orte kritischer historisch-politischer Bildung*, in: *Verunsichernde Orte. Selbstverständnis und Weiterbildung in der Gedenkstättenpädagogik*, ed. B. Thimm, G. Kößler, S. Ulrich, Frankfurt, 2010, pp. 38–44.

⁵ H.-F. Rathenow, *Gedenkstättenpädagogik*, in: *Lexikon der politischen Bildung*, Bd. 3 (*Didaktik und Schule*), ed. D. Richter, G. Weißeno, Schwalbad, 1999, pp. 79–82.

⁶ T. Kranz, *Pedagogika miejsc pamięci*, in: *Encyklopedia pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, vol. IV, Warsaw, 2005, pp. 170–172; T. Kranz, “The Pedagogy of Remembrance,” *Pro Memoria*, 2005, no. 23, pp. 65–68.

the task of these institutions is to convey knowledge that explains that past and makes it more familiar. Nevertheless, educational work at these institutions is about not only presenting facts on the history of a given place, but also stimulating the intellectual processes that shape critical thinking and contribute to a broadening of the historical consciousness.⁷

Understanding the sense of commemoration and analyzing the meaning of memory for consciousness and identity play an important role in the pedagogy of remembrance. Memory appears here in many forms—on the one hand as individual and collective memory, and on the other as social and historical memory. In both cases its dimension may be local—and thus regional and national—as well as global, international, and universal. These multiple levels mean that the very act of reflection on memory becomes an integral part of the learning process posited by the pedagogy of remembrance. Therefore its subject matter is not only learning about tragic historical events like the Holocaust that had a dramatic impact on postwar European civilization, but also the exploration of the culture of memory, policy toward the past, and school curricula dealing with the Second World War. It is thus not only history that stands at the center of interest for the pedagogy of remembrance, but also its diverse modes of representation and interpretation, the process of historical communication broadly understood. The significance of these problems is connected with the fact that the historical subject matter propagated within a given collective and the methods

⁷ The conception of the pedagogy of remembrance is not homogeneous. The discourse in Germany is interdisciplinary in nature, but dominated by the German perspective (the problem of responsibility for the Nazi dictatorship, the effect of “negative remembrance” on the historical consciousness of Germans, and the multicultural nature of German society with its associated issues of the identity of immigrants from different ethnic groups). Little account is taken of discussions in other countries about memorial sites. Polish thinking, with its main center at the State Museum in Majdanek, on the other hand, views education at memorial sites in a general historical context and from a broader pedagogical perspective. T. Kranz, “Uwagi na temat rozwoju działalności pedagogicznej muzeów upamiętniania w Polsce i Niemczech,” *Zeszyty Majdanka*, 2003, vol. 22, pp. 401–415.

of commemorating the past cultivated by that collective are integral elements in the construction, on the one hand, of social memory, and on the other hand of the identity of the given ethnic and social group. In other words, it is not historical events but rather their scholarly, social, and cultural representations that are to an increasing measure the catalysts for the processes that shape our consciousness, identity, and perception of others.⁸

The relationship to history and the way of looking at the world are determined not only by local and regional elements, but also by processes of a global nature. In the intercultural dimension, historical education must take into account the interaction between regionalism and the transcultural, the interpenetration of the local and the global in the domain of historical communication, and culture-forming processes. In the realm of theory, the pedagogy of remembrance is akin at many points to regional and intercultural education, and as a result is a part of European education. The general goal of these currents is forming respect for the cultural heritage and the basic core values in individuals and groups in such a way that the sense of their own local and regional identities helps them to understand and accept other cultures. Learning about oneself and one's own roots, and thence about the realm of one's "local patriotism," should contribute to openness toward others, awaken interest in cultural differences, shape tolerant attitudes, and give rise to intercultural identity and pluralistic identity. Furthermore, intercultural communication emphasizes entry into the dialogue of cultures, and thus sensitivity to differences, the subjection of hackneyed interpretive schemes and myths to critical analysis, the breaking down of barriers, and the jettisoning of ethnic prejudices and stereotypes. This is also what the pedagogy of memory aims at in principle by focusing attention on historical narratives, collective

⁸ This is part of a broader phenomenon related to the conveying of tradition and memory, in which the story of the past is an important factor in cultural formation. Cf. C. Gudehus, H. Welzer, "O metodzie i teorii badań nad przekazem kulturowym," *Kultura i Społeczeństwo*, 2011, vol. LV, pp. 65–75.

memories, and policy toward the past from a national and international perspective. Putting one's own image of the past to the critical test and learning about other people's view of history is intended to facilitate the formation of an intercultural, open identity.⁹

Identity is one of the crucial factors that shape thinking about the past and its commemoration. The issue of memory has given rise to numerous publications that analyze the meaning, function, and role of memory in the construction of historical and social identity.¹⁰ It is worth summoning up an excerpt from one of them, because this quotation conveys the essence of the ideological assumptions of the pedagogy of remembrance: "social memory consists of the generations of children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and even more remote social inheritors having a feeling of some kind of continuity with the generations of their forebears—and by the same token a feeling of the continuation of their fates, a feeling of identity and responsibility for the past and the future."¹¹ An expression of this kind of approach to the heritage of the past is the propagation by the pedagogy of remembrance of the postulate "learning from history."

Important changes in educational work have been underway in Polish museum practice for several years. A manifestation of this is the founding in 2006 of the Museum Educators' Forum, one of whose goals is "the aspiration to create a professional system of instruction in the field of museum education."¹² This activity is accompanied by a deepening of scholarly reflection on pedagogical work in museums, mostly

⁹ See for example *Edukacja międzykulturowa. Poradnik dla nauczyciela*, ed. A. Klimowicz, Warsaw, 2004.

¹⁰ In the discourse on memory that has been developing apace recently, categories and concepts appear that can be significant for the theory of education at memorial sites. Expressions of new research paradigms in the field of collective memory are such concepts as cultural memory, communicative memory, storage memory, functional memory, or media of memory. On this subject see *Pamięć zbiorowa i kulturowa. Współczesna perspektywa niemiecka*, ed. M. Saryusz-Wolska, Cracow, 2009.

¹¹ M. Golka, *Pamięć społeczna i jej implanty*, Warsaw, 2009, p. 8.

¹² See www.edukacjamuzealna.pl.

by transplanting the findings of foreign authors to Polish soil,¹³ but representatives of Polish museum and academic circles are also taking part in this discourse more and more frequently.¹⁴

The conceptualization of museum education must allow for the specifics of various types of museums, yet there can be no doubt that the forms and methods of pedagogical-didactic work applied in museum practice are in part universal, and different museums can draw mutually on their experience. It is worth noting that the first publication devoted to the educational impact of museums in Poland dealt with the teaching of history in school and education at memorial sites.¹⁵

Modern museum education, regardless of the type of museum, places great emphasis on experiencing and individually creating meaning. It refers in this to the progressive educational theory of the American philosopher and educator John Dewey (1859–1952), who advocated “learning by doing,” and thus the achievement of knowledge through practical activity and experimenting.¹⁶ This idea also appears among the theorists of modern museum education, who repeat after Dewey “that the goal of education is further education, that the solving of problems means the appearance of new ones, and that the result of questions is more questions.”¹⁷ The pedagogy of remembrance also benefits from Dewey’s concepts. It attaches crucial significance to encouraging thinking in terms of problems and to fostering the desired learning skills, which in turn shape historical culture and the desired learning attitudes,

¹³ *Edukacja muzealna. Antologia tłumaczeń*, ed. M. Szeląg, J. Skutnik, Poznań, 2010.

¹⁴ Cf. J. Skutnik, *Muzea sztuki współczesnej jako przestrzenie edukacji*, Katowice, 2008, see also *Muzealnictwo*, 2011, no. 51, which is almost entirely devoted to issues in museum education.

¹⁵ P. Unger, *Muzea w nauczaniu historii*, Warsaw, 1988; T. Kranz, “Edukacja w muzeach upamiętniających ofiary nazizmu,” *Przeszłość i Pamięć*, 2000, no. 4, pp. 98–107; *Bildungsarbeit und historisches Lernen in der Gedenkstätte Majdanek*, ed. T. Kranz, Lublin, 2000.

¹⁶ W. Okoń, *Wprowadzenie do dydaktyki ogólnej*, 4th ed., Warsaw, 1998, pp. 41–43; Cz. Kupisiewicz, *Dydaktyka ogólna*, Warsaw, 2000, pp. 46–51.

¹⁷ G.E. Hein, *Edukacja muzealna*, in: *Edukacja muzealna*, p. 79.

thus contributing to furnishing the learner with concrete competences and abilities, and supporting the development of group-work skills and the acquisition of defined historical habits and competences. In this way, the pedagogy of remembrance combines social and historical values.

Opinion survey research carried out at the State Museum at Majdanek by Katarzyna Stec in 2009 showed that the most frequently indicated source of knowledge about people's fates during the Second World War and of the inter-generational transmission of memory was the combination of "school and memorial sites" (26 percent), but that only 37 percent of Polish youth were prepared by their teachers for visits to the Museum, while the analogous figure for German youth was 80 percent.¹⁸ These results indicate—and this finds significant confirmation in museum practice—that it is essential for improving the effectiveness of educational work at museums to, on the one hand, make better use of the potentialities created by cooperation between schools and the museum and, on the other, involve teachers to a greater degree and in a more conscious way in educational projects at memorial sites.

Specialists in the teaching of history also point out the necessity of reinforcing the relationships between schools and memorial sites. Andrzej Stępnik even pronounces the diagnosis that "extramural historical education (including museum education) remains more of a didactic desideratum than a reality." At the same time, he argues for the creation of more effective forms of cooperation between museums and schools on the basis of an awareness of shared goals.¹⁹

An educational visit to a museum can be used not only to systematize, reinforce, or deepen the knowledge acquired in school, but also to yield

¹⁸ K. Stec, *Współczesny zwiedzający miejsca pamięci utworzone na terenach byłych nazistowskich obozów zagłady. Raport z badań w Państwowym Muzeum na Majdanku w Lublinie*, [n.p., n.d.], pp. 12, 24.

¹⁹ A. Stępnik, *The Role of the Visit to a Memorial Museum from the Point of View of the Didactics of History*, p. 55 in this volume. See also É. Triquet, *Relacja szkoła – muzeum*, in: *Edukacja muzealna*, pp. 350–356; A. Zielecki, *Wprowadzenie do dydaktyki historii*, Cracow, 2007, pp. 257–260, 272–277.

new educational experiences. Direct contact with museum exhibits and exhibitions lends a concrete dimension to theoretical knowledge. For cooperation between museums and schools to be effective, it is essential for the institutions to collaborate on various levels, and above all in preparing programs and evaluating the educational efforts upon completion. As theorists of history teaching note, “a well prepared lesson at a museum, developed in accord with the teaching program and in cooperation with the history teacher, favors better acquisition of knowledge, teaches observation and comparison, and finally enables the concretization of the ideas that are the basis for the formation of historical concepts.”²⁰ It should be added that, at museums located at authentic historical sites, teachers and students have an opportunity to familiarize themselves not only with history but also with remembrance. However, they must bear in mind what Mariola Hoszowska writes in her consideration of the linking of these two dimensions of the past in school education: “When we ask about the role of remembrance and history in school education, we are aware that both are necessary. The problem is establishing the correct proportion. It is important that the teacher refuses to be persuaded that remembrance can be a substitute for history. That [the teacher] is aware of the differences between the one and the other and take notice of the benefits and dangers associated with them.”²¹

It is worth underlining in this context that education at memorial sites does not consist of direct teaching, but above all of learning. In practice this means that it places greater emphasis on the participants in all pedagogical undertakings being active, and on creating for them the opportunities and conditions for independent familiarization with history and the investigative work that aims at “discovering” historical truth and thus drawing conclusions that can have meaning for the

²⁰ E. Chorąży, D. Konieczka-Śliwińska, S. Roszak, *Edukacja historyczna w szkole – teoria i praktyka*, Warsaw, 2008, p. 258.

²¹ M. Hoszowska, *Pamięć, historia i edukacja szkolna*, in: *Miejsca pamięci w edukacji historycznej*, ed. S. Roszak, M. Strzelecka, A. Wieczorek (Toruńskie spotkania dydaktyczne: VI), Toruń, 2009, p. 26.

internal development of the person. In this connection, it posits the observance of two principles: self-education and agency.

The realization of the first principle requires that three basic conditions are met, as pointed out by Jerzy Maternicki, a well known theorist of history teaching: "The investigation of historical truth by pupils is, of course, only possible when they are prepared in the appropriate way. The first condition here is awakening in them authentic historical interests, forming an active learning attitude, and developing their curiosity and a critical attitude. The second condition is familiarizing the students with the basic procedures of historical research (to the degree that this is possible in school), and also with the principles of historical thinking. This is not only a matter of developing the appropriate skills. The third condition is making the proper materials, sources, and studies available to the students."²²

The principle of respecting the agency of the learners, and thus of inculcating empowered behavior in the pupils, is understood as the right to the unhampered asking of questions and to receiving forthright answers to those questions, the initiation of and participation in educational tasks, having a role in decisions, presenting one's own opinion on a given matter, and the right to criticism.

We mentioned earlier that the pedagogy of remembrance contains elements of intercultural education. Projects in international groups make the program more attractive, but they entail new difficulties that result from differing perceptions and experiences of the past, varying states of knowledge about historical subjects, and the effects of stereotypes and myths rooted in specific national groups. That is why it is important to take these factors into account when preparing and carrying out a program, thanks to which it can become not only an occasion for an encounter with history, but also a form of international dialogue and intercultural communication.

²² J. Maternicki, *Prawda historyczna jako zadanie dydaktyczne*, in: *Wartości w edukacji historycznej*, ed. J. Rulka, Bydgoszcz, 1999, pp. 40–41.

Various educational undertakings are used in the pedagogy of remembrance. Among the most popular are visits to museums, independent work in archives or the library, project work, searching for and documenting historical vestiges, historical seminars and workshops on the subject, creative processing, and using information technology. The project method has particular educational potential. What is understood here by “project” is a program based on the planning and dividing of tasks with the goal of coming up with a definite product. As an example, the goal might be creating an exhibition or a set of documentation. The themes may be integrated into the teaching program or refer to an ongoing discussion. This kind of education is directed toward practical activity, while at the same time teaching conceptual and group work. It can also be combined with physical work on the upkeep of historical buildings and spaces. Beyond this, through the encounter with authentic original objects and documents, it offers a possibility of experiencing history that is absent from traditional school education. It is equally important that the completed program, with its tangible results, can be a source of authentic satisfaction to the participants. However, education through the project method requires great effort from both the teacher and the students. This is why it can be particularly recommended as a way of carrying out school field trips lasting several days.²³

The proposed educational effects from the pedagogy of remembrance rely on typical instructional methods used in contemporary schools: lectures, discussion, work with books, practical exercises, the use of the Internet, and group work. However, as opposed to classroom learning, the pedagogy of remembrance clearly prioritizes inquiry over simply conveying information. Beyond this, it involves experimentation and the discovery and improvement of the individual’s way of working.

²³ T. Kranz, *Edukacja historyczna w miejscach pamięci. Zarys problematyki*, Lublin, 2009, pp. 78–81. See also U. Neirich, *Erinnern heißt wachsam bleiben. Pädagogische Arbeit in und mit NS-Gedenkstätten*, Mülheim an der Ruhr, 2000, pp. 42–77.

It is worth supplementing these reflections with several practical remarks that might be helpful in preparing and carrying out activities organized on the grounds of former camps within the framework of extramural historical education:

1. The success of an educational program at memorial sites depends to a large degree on the educational potential of the institution (quality of infrastructure and instruments, quality of educational offerings, staff qualifications, etc.). Before deciding to go ahead with such a program it is worth becoming familiar with the capacity of a given museum in this regard and checking whether it meets basic pedagogical standards.

2. Projects based on the assumptions and methods of the pedagogy of remembrance require essential organizational and time frames. A two- or three-hour museum visit, the main point of which is seeing the grounds and exhibitions, need not—some views to the contrary notwithstanding—be devoid of educational merit, but the message in such a case is limited to general historical subjects. Greater educational possibilities are, of course, created by day-long visits, but the optimal solution is a seminar lasting several days which, because of the overloaded curriculum, must therefore obtain the status of an official school field trip, for example for classes with a humanities profile.

3. It is necessary during the preparatory phase to define the motivations of the participants and formulate the overall goals of the undertaking. It is of the highest importance for students to have a decisive influence on the form of the program. They should be the ones who choose the method of work and the way the results will be utilized. Participation in the project is intended to offer them satisfaction and the chance to experience something new.

4. In all phases, the program should rest on cooperation and the division of tasks. This does not rule out either an individual approach or the opportunity to concentrate on subjectively important aspects of the subject. Nevertheless, it does teach working in groups, improve communication within groups, and make it possible to conclude the

project with a tangible outcome (such as a report on the project, an exhibition, or a publication).

5. The fundamental principle of education at memorial sites is independent work by the participants, who are not merely the recipients, but also the co-creators of historical knowledge. Nevertheless, the role of teachers and educators should not be underestimated here. As observers and animators they have the role of inspiring and catalyzing the educational process. Their preparation in terms of content and their commitment, on the one hand, and a clearly defined teacher-student relationship on the other, are of great importance. A partnership arrangement in which the pupils can freely express themselves about the course and outcome of the program is recommended.

6. The encounter with a historical issue, especially in the context of Nazi crimes and the history of the German concentration camps and extermination centers, can be a stimulus to becoming aware of one's own views and prejudices and, as a result, to articulating and revising them. The exchange of opinions within the group is an integral part of the educational process, and critical reflection and the polarization of viewpoints are conditions for open education.

7. The pedagogy of remembrance is based above all on learning through discovery, and is connected to a large degree with the affective sphere. Working methods should therefore make use of the creativity of the learners, take the social aspect of education into account, and be oriented toward practical action combined with experience.

8. The issues that can be taken up within the framework of education at memorial sites embrace a wide spectrum of possibilities: from detailed subjects on the history of a given place through general problems in the history of national socialism, to problems from the field of the culture of remembrance. Projects based on an interdisciplinary teaching model are exceptionally productive for the development of historical thinking. Programs should highlight differing perspectives and levels, and represent an attempt to connect the past with the present.

9. Projects in international groups enhance the attractiveness of the program on the one hand but, on the other, entail additional difficulties. These result from, among other things, differences in the perception of the past (different interpretive models and teaching methods), the language barrier, the effect of prejudices and stereotypes, and varying states of knowledge about the partner's history and culture. It is therefore important to take such factors into account in the preparatory and realization phases of the project, thanks to which it can not only become an occasion for an encounter with history but also be a form of international dialogue and intercultural communication.

10. Educational programs at memorial sites are designated above all for school pupils. Experience to date shows, however, that they can also be a form of adult education, especially for tertiary students, teachers, and so-called multipliers of educational work. In such cases they must rest on somewhat different criteria and instructional methods than projects prepared for school students.²⁴

As we have endeavored to show in this sketch, the pedagogy of remembrance is a form of education that opens many teaching and learning opportunities for teachers and students. In general terms, it is reflection on the experiences of others that leads to reflection on oneself; it is a development of historical thinking that makes it possible to understand the present better; and it is also an attempt to shape nonconformist attitudes and behaviors based on a feeling of empathy and responsibility for the fate of others. At the same time, it is a form of museum education oriented toward the presentation of museum exhibitions and collections, and a form of extramural historical education with the goal of familiarizing students with the dramatic historical events under the rule of the Third Reich and, in a special way, with the mass extermination of Jews and other crimes committed in various kinds of Nazi camps.

²⁴ T. Kranz, *Edukacja historyczna*, pp. 88–90.

Not only the need for upholding the remembrance of those who died or were murdered during the Second World War, and in a broader context the victims of twentieth-century acts of genocide, but also the necessity of constructing critical self-awareness and a vigilant attitude toward phenomena endangering mankind and the world today, speak in favor of the development of the pedagogical concept described here in brief. In this sense, the pedagogy of remembrance is an important ingredient in humanistic education and the broader process of historical socialization. It remains an open question whether in the immediate future, in Poland, it will achieve the status of a fully autonomous branch of museum education and history teaching with a clearly defined object of research and scholarly apparatus. Whether or not this happens depends on various educational agencies, and to a decisive degree on methodologists, didactic theorists, and educators at memorial sites, but also on the teachers who, on a daily basis, shape in their pupils the values and attitudes addressed by social-historical education at memorial sites.

Dominika Staszczuk

Memory as a Cognitive Structure and Experiential Space

Interest in the category of memory has been growing systematically. Announcing the “time of memory,” Pierre Nora, the French historian and innovator behind the monumental *Lieux de mémoire* (1984–1992), characterized the situation thus: “All history . . . transformed into a discipline with scholarly ambitions has so far been constructed on the foundation of memory, but in opposition to memory, regarded as individual, psychological, fallible, *useful only* in the role of testimony. History has been the domain of the collective, memory—of the private. History was one, memory, *ex definitione*, multiple because individual in its essence. The idea of collective memory, liberating and hallowed, assumes the exact reversal of the situation.”¹

Pierre Nora hoped that orienting researchers to the cognitive potential of memory would contribute to remaking the image of history as a rationalizing science, located closer to the corpus of contemporary challenges. Another exponent was Ewa Domańska, who certified memory as a “curative medication and instrument for the redemption of groups” deprived of their voice by history.² Krzysztof Pomian took up another variant of this position. In this historian’s opinion, a sort of imperative of the moment—that is, the necessity of capturing the experiences of generations that are passing, of experiences that are

¹ R. Stobiecki, “Rola historyka we współczesnym świecie,” *Dziennik Europa*, January 12, 2005.

² *Pamięć, etyka i historia. Anglo-amerykańska teoria historiografii lat dziewięćdziesiątych (Antologia przekładów)*, ed. E. Domańska, Poznań, 2002, p. 16.

a kind of harvest of turning points and regressions in politics, economics, society, and mentality, and that are not processed by methods available to scholarship—lies at the root of the intensified exploration of issues of memory.³ An enormous number of publications in the form of articles, contributions, monographs, and collective volumes devoted to the problems of memory, commemoration, and the mechanisms of neurotization and the suppression of memories supports the thesis of the popularity of memory. This indicates a distinct reorientation by researchers in a direction not so much toward the question of “what things were really like,” as of the ways in which the past is remembered, contextually evoked, and reinterpreted. Memory as a research category, after all, makes it possible to identify cognitive structures, world-view conceptions, and ways of conceiving of and understanding the world. It functions as a stimulus to reflection on the past in its contextual aspect.

Elucidating the complexity and semantic capacity of categories of memory is no easy task. Among the researchers who have approached it in a systematic way are such figures as Maurice Halbwachs,⁴ Pierre Nora,⁵ Jan Assmann,⁶ and Paul Ricoeur.⁷ In Poland, research on memory has been initiated by the sociologists Nina Assorodobraj,⁸ Barbara Szacka,⁹

³ Cf. K. Pomian, *Historia. Nauka wobec pamięci*, Lublin, 2006, pp. 141–143; see also: E. Domańska, *Dyskusje o końcach historii*, in: *ibid.*, *Historie niekonwencjonalne. Refleksja o przeszłości w nowej humanistyce*, Poznań, 2006, pp. 35–51; R. Stobiecki, *Rola historyka*, *passim*.

⁴ M. Halbwachs, *Społeczne ramy pamięci [The Social Frameworks of Memory]*, trans. and introduction by M. Król, Warsaw, 1969.

⁵ P. Nora, “Czas pamięci,” *Res Publica Nowa*, 2001, no. 7 (154), pp. 37–43; *ibid.*, *Epoka upamiętniania*, in: J. Żakowski, *Rewanż pamięci*, Warsaw, 2002.

⁶ J. Assmann, “Pamięć zbiorowa i tożsamość kulturowa,” *Borussia*, 2003, no. 29, pp. 11–16.

⁷ P. Ricoeur, *Pamięć, historia, zapomnienie*, Cracow, 2006.

⁸ N. Assorodobraj, “Żywa historia”. Świadomość historyczna: symptomy i propozycje badawcze,” *Studia Socjologiczne*, 1963, no. 2, pp. 5–45.

⁹ B. Szacka, *Czas przeszły – pamięć – mit*, Warsaw, 2006 (on the history of research and conceptual differentiation see pp. 32–45); *ibid.*, *Pamięć zbiorowa*, in: *Wobec przeszłości: pamięć przeszłości jako element kultury współczesnej*, ed. A. Szpociński,

and Jerzy Szacki.¹⁰ In recent years, older and younger representatives of the humanities and social sciences have obtained good results in following up on their work.¹¹

The standpoint represented by Cracow psychologist Edward Nęcka, among others, is classified as “subliminal.” “Memory is not a faithful reflection of events. The designation of memory as a reconstruction, a rebuilding of what once was, what happened, what took place in the past, is closer to the truth. When reconstructing, we might not preserve or reconstruct all the elements; some of them can get away,” writes Nęcka. “What is more, it might be that memory is a construct—that is, that someone does not rebuild the past, but creates a totally new structure. Some elements of the structure are faithfully recreated, others are badly distorted, and there may also be completely new elements that were not present in the original experience.”¹²

From the point of view of cognitive psychology, memory can be defined as (1) a capacity for storing memory traces, including permanent changes caused by the momentary stimulation of the brain and read as the representation of certain impressions, experiences, or elements of the internal and external environment; or (2) a procedure for the processing of information in which the information is only a starting point and undergoes transformation through the mediation of a mechanism

Warsaw, 2005; B. Szacka, A. Sawisz, *Czas przeszły i pamięć społeczna: przemiany świadomości historycznej inteligencji polskiej, 1965–1988*, Warsaw, 1990.

¹⁰ J. Szacki, *Tradycja – przegląd problematyki*, Warsaw, 1971. For a review of the Polish research tradition in social memory, J. Filipowicz, “Pojęcie pamięci społecznej w nauce polskiej,” *Kultura i Historia. Czasopismo teoretyczno-historyczno-kulturoznawcze*, 2002, no. 2 – available online at <http://www.kulturaihistoria.umcs.lublin.pl>; Cf. A. Gabryś, “O badaniu pamięci,” *Historyka*, 2005, vol. XXXV, pp. 135–149.

¹¹ E. Domańska, *Dyskusje o końcach*, passim; R. Traba, *Przeszłość w teraźniejszości. Polskie spory o historię na początku XXI wieku*, Poznań, 2009; A. Szpociński, “Miejsca pamięci,” *Borussia*, 2003, vol. 29, pp. 17–23; R. Traba, *Pamięć zbiorowa: rozważania o „historycznych” możliwościach posługiwania się nowoczesnymi koncepcjami badania pamięci*, in: *Historia – przestrzeń dialogu*, ed. *ibid.*, Warsaw, 2006.

¹² E. Nęcka, *Psychologia i pamięć*, in: *Pamięć i działanie*, Warsaw, 2002, pp. 24–25.

that makes use of the agglomeration of memory traces. Actual memory is information “in storage.” When mentioning the findings of cognitive psychology, it is worth adding that it systematizes the phenomenon of memory and makes it possible better to understand how the past functions in our minds.¹³

Researchers who deal with the issue of collective memory are in the decided majority. Even the “individualist” Reinhart Koselleck went over to their side. They do not posit the “collectivization of memory,” but rather the skill of identifying and describing the social function of collective memory. Barbara Szacka writes that “in the process of shaping the social memory against the background of historical knowledge, a fundamental role is played by the social needs that this memory satisfies. Among them are two that stand out: the creation of group bonds and identity, and the legitimation/delegitimation of the rulers and the prevailing order.”¹⁴

She defines collective memory as “a collection of the ideas of the members of a collective about its past, about the figures who populate it and the past events that took place within it, and also the ways of commemorating it and conveying the knowledge about it that are regarded as obligatory equipment for a member of the collective.”¹⁵

This is a position close to the concept of historical consciousness,¹⁶ which until recently dominated the scholarly discourse and was quite frequently identified with the term collective memory. In essence it is hard to determine whether or not that tradition rested on faulty premises: “(1) Memory evokes the reality of the past—experience is

¹³ Cf. M. Kossut, *Fizjologia pamięci*, in: *Pamięć i działanie*, pp. 11–12; D.E. Rumelhart, *Architektura umysłu. Podejście konekcyjne*, in: *Modele umysłu*, ed. Z. Chlewiński, Warsaw, 1999, pp. 240–272.

¹⁴ B. Szacka, “O pamięci społecznej,” *Znak*, 1995, no. 480 (5), p. 70.

¹⁵ B. Szacka, *Pamięć społeczna a identyfikacja narodowa*, in: *Trudne sąsiedztwa. Z socjologii konfliktów narodowościowych*, ed. A. Jasińska-Kania, Warsaw, 2001, pp. 39–41.

¹⁶ Cf. D. Staszczyk, “Świadomość historyczna jako kategoria badawcza,” *Дрогобицький Краєзнавчий Збірник*, випуск XIII, 2009 [printed 2010], pp. 217–221.

based on recollection; (2) memory is knowledge about the past, and this means that it shapes historical consciousness. Each of these methods of interpreting memory demonstrates a different dimension of memory. Memory-recollection, reconstructing the experience of the past, makes it possible above all to study memory in its individual dimension, and knowing about this makes it possible to concentrate on the mentality of the *remembering agent*, and thus on knowing someone's world. Examining historical memory as a product of knowledge about the past gives memory-knowledge about the past a supra-individual dimension and orients the researcher toward a reconstruction of collective knowledge, and it places ideologies and world-views in place of mentality, rather than a *private* vision of the world."¹⁷

According to the linguist Wojciech Chlebda, "collective memory is the domain of the total individual memories of the members of a given community; however, it is not an ordinary product of addition: it is a synergistic quality exceeding the simple sum of the common particles of individual memory . . . The factor constituting collective memory is the sense of bonding shared by the members of a given community and the continuity between their present 'selves' and a collection of past figures, objects, facts, and events. Together, they create the 'cultural code of a given community.'"¹⁸

In a certain sense, this explains the theoretical interdependence of collective and individual memory. It makes it possible to treat the former as something figurative, used to designate analogous subject matter that becomes the common property of a greater or lesser community. This is not something all theorists agree on.

Does the phenomenon commonly referred to as collective memory exist? That is, do we remember history as a group, and not only as individuals? If so, is that shared memory something more than the sum of

¹⁷ K. Kaniowska, "Antropologia i problem pamięci," *Konteksty. Polska Sztuka Ludowa*, 2003, no. 3-4, p. 60.

¹⁸ W. Chlebda, "Tezy o niepamięci zbiorowej," *Prace Filologiczne*, 2007, vol. LIII, p. 71.

individual memories? “In my opinion, collective memory is not created out of the sum of those individual memories,” says Andrzej Chwalba. “It seems to all of us that it is our own memory, but in fact it is a memory that is suggested somewhere, for instance in school or by the media. In my opinion, collective memory does not exist, because each person is a separate individual and has a separate memory. We cannot add up or average those individual memories.”¹⁹

What about the existence of individual memory? “Not collective memory,” replies Jerzy Jedlicki, a historian of ideas, contrarily. “Memory is always only individual, which does not alter the fact that its subject matter may be common to many individuals and that there exists, in the words of . . . Halbwachs, a social framework of memory.”²⁰

The chaotic nature of memory does not, in a certain sense, cancel out the fact that memories belong to someone. Memory is not an autonomous entity because it has a depositary. The stratification of collective memory is highly differentiated. There are both great “communities of memory” as well as alternative or minority ones; there are “memories of victors and memories or non-memories of the defeated.”²¹ Research from the field of gender studies shows that memory can be gendered,²² and even have alternative sexual preferences.²³

Memory is thus a concept rich in significances, expressing one image of the world or another, or—as the lexicographer from Lublin,

¹⁹ A. Chwalba, “Czy można ufać własnej pamięci?,” *Niedziela Ogólnopolska*, 2006, no. 37, p. 24.

²⁰ J. Jedlicki, “O pamięci zbiorowej,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, July 26, 1997.

²¹ Cf. K. Pomian, *Historia. Nauka*, pp. 141–142; M. Kula, *Między przeszłością a przyszłością. O pamięci, zapomnianiu i przewidywaniu*, Poznań, 2004, p. 131.

²² M. Solarska, M. Bugajewski, *Współczesna francuska historia kobiet. Dokonania – perspektywy – krytyka* (forthcoming); M. Solarska, *Historia kobiet we Francji jako propozycja strategiczna*, in: *Gra i konieczność. Zbiór rozpraw z filozofii i historii historiografii*, ed. G.A. Dominiak, J. Ostoja-Zagórski, W. Wrzosek, Bydgoszcz, 2005, pp. 233–241.

²³ Cf. E. Domańska, *Historie niekonwencjonalne. Refleksja o przeszłości w nowej humanistyce*, Poznań, 2006; *ibid.*, *Pamięć, etyka i historia*, *passim*.

Paweł Nowak, characterizes it—it is a “container.”²⁴ As Nowak remarks, “memory creates a collection of highly varying conceptual metaphors, the variety of which is confirmed by the impossibility of an unequivocal conceptualization of memory.”²⁵ In the context of varied research findings, memory emerges as a highly figurative category. It can, for instance, be anthropomorphised—memory is “a living being, an organism;” it turns out that we have a “living memory”²⁶ and a “dead memory” or a non-memory (in the sense of subconscious gaps in the memory—traumatic memory). Memory is also substantive—“warm/hot memory,” “cold memory,” or fleeting/passing (temporary) memory. Memory researchers also assert the existence of “nuclear memory” with a longer or shorter half-life.²⁷ Metaphorical memory takes on many forms, and it is far easier to talk about its symptoms and mechanisms than it is to talk about memory itself.

One speaks most often about the content of memory—collective levels of references, about group images and ways of commemoration, about “fleeting” and materialized structures. Memory is also a place. The places of memory are elements present in the collective memory that form the identity of the group, its stereotypes about itself. This term should be understood metaphorically. Places of memory can be situations that order our experiences, chosen episodes, historical figures, elements of continuity, signs of identity, moments of glory, and also personal and collective tragedies, traumatic experiences, and so on.

In methodological discourses there is a conviction that “memory and places play a crucial but varied role in strategies of memory by fixing

²⁴ P. Nowak, A. Siwiec, *Pamięć i jej konceptualizacje w języku i w tekstach kultury*, in: *Pamięć i miejsce. Doświadczenie przeszłości na pograniczu*, ed. D. Staszczyk, A. Szymańska, Chełm, 2007, p. 67.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 68; Cf. also D. Draaisma, *Machina metafor. Historia pamięci*, Warsaw, 2009.

²⁶ N. Assorodobraj, „Żywa historia,” p. 5.

²⁷ Ch.S. Maier, “Gorąca pamięć... zimna pamięć,” *Res Publica Nova*, 2001, no. 7, pp. 29–33.

them, multiplying them and extending their range, and, finally, filling them with new forms or eliminating them.”²⁸

Cultural memory is a special kind of collective memory.²⁹ It takes account of the phenomenon of remembering which is defined as “the conscious relation of a group to the past grounded in a coherent cultural space, conveyed through various forms of social communication: writing, pictures, saints, rituals, etc.”³⁰ Cultural memory grows into three other “domains of memory.” They are:

1. Mimetic memory – imitating the actions of others; routine acts making it easier to move in the social space.

2. The memory of things – oriented toward material landmarks that recall or symbolize the past (memorial plaques, gravestones, places of worship, etc.), indicate the identity of their users, or designate the horizon of purpose, values, and beauty.

3. Communicative memory – the consumption of the experiences of older generations that are “transmitted” to the memory of the younger generation through ritual and oral or textual accounts.

Cultural memory is a “specific transformation” of these kinds of memory. It is distinguished by its fairly abstract, symbolic, and universal nature. It cannot be created by an individual. It is created by cultural institutions, educational bodies, churches, and the media. In this situation everything old is not only remembered but also socialized (adapted to meeting present needs). In the case of cultural memory, the category of historical truth loses its utility.

Many researchers have analyzed the factors that influence the shaping of collective memory, understood as a mental state. Their studies emphasize that the collective fixing of subject matter is inseparably linked with the need for identification with concrete elements of social

²⁸ E. Rewers, *Interferencja pamięci: ku transkulturowości*, in: *Pamięć i zapomnienie w Europie przełomu wieków*, ed. Z. Drozdowicz, Poznań, 2001, p. 80.

²⁹ J. Assmann, *Pamięć kulturowa. Pismo, zapamiętywanie i tożsamość polityczna w cywilizacjach starożytnych*, Warsaw, 2008.

³⁰ Cf. R. Traba, *Przeszłość w teraźniejszości*, pp. 198–213.

reality. Both Halbwachs and Szacka have accepted the view that memory preserves from the past only those events that influence the creation of identity (group and individual).³¹ As the outstanding philosopher Leszek Kołakowski used to say, “memory creates us as individuals and memory creates us as a distinct collective.”³² Groups agglomerate around a coherent and shared interpretation of the past for the purpose of maintaining their unity.³³ This creates important bonds that construct the history of the group and integrate its identity.

As Szacka asserts, three mechanisms for the action of collective memory in the process of creating group identity can be distinguished:

1. The consciousness of a common past.
2. The sacral power of the long-ago; the conveying of values and ideals of behavior; teaching with the goal of inculcating the lesson that the good of the community is most important.
3. Figures and events from the past as symbols for attitudes and values; in the social memory they create a special language of the group, which becomes one of its distinguishing attributes.³⁴

According to sociologist Lech M. Nijakowski of Warsaw, one can speak of the following functions of collective memory in the broadest sense:

- the integrating function – proof of antiquity, of having existed forever (Szacka defines this as the identity function),
- the informational-interpretive function – “permits people to navigate in symbolic space, categorize material objects (memorials, landmarks) and activate appropriate symbolic resources in discussions with members of other groups. Although the product of such operations is

³¹ Cf. Z. Bokszański, *Tożsamości zbiorowe*, Warsaw, 2005, pp. 36–37.

³² L. Kołakowski, A. Michnik, “Pamięć kształtuje narody, dyskusja,” <http://wyborcza.pl/1,93057,5155479.html?as=2> [accessed 24 April, 2008].

³³ M. Marody, A. Giza-Poleszczuk, *Przemiany więzi społecznych*, Warsaw, 2004, pp. 137–146.

³⁴ B. Szacka, *Pamięć społeczna a identyfikacja*; see also Szacka, *Czas przeszły – pamięć – mit*, pp. 46–58.

not always factual information, it nevertheless, in spite of everything, facilitates social interactions, whether in the positive sense of facilitating dialogue with others or in the negative sense, when we use stereotypes about the enemy and avoid contact with him. It also allows for anticipating, which facilitates joint action.”³⁵

– the legitimating-adaptive function – serves to mobilize defined actions and adaptations to situations on the basis of convictions about their correctness, rightness, and conformity with tradition.³⁶

The particular images of the past constructed in the memory of a collectivity are determined by many factors. Emphasis is placed upon the powerful influence of the present and the group vision of the future. Memory therefore serves a fundamentally different task than science. “History is a science that studies the past in a critical manner, attempting to establish facts and the relations between them. History attempts to get at the truth, objectivizing its findings and subjecting them to a critical research method. The collective memory is in turn a certain function of community life, in the framework of which the community refers to its past. Memory rather freely defines what is important and what is not, creating positive and negative points of reference in the past. Memory cannot be arbitrarily decreed—it is to some measure the outcome of deliberate actions by the state, the work of historians and the creators of culture; it is a phenomenon that to a large degree eludes control by the political rulers or academic institutions . . . it accepts what is important from the point of view of our present.”³⁷

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³⁵ L.M. Nijakowski, *Polska polityka pamięci. Esej socjologiczny*, Warsaw, 2008, p. 50.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ R. Kostro, *Wstęp*, in: *Pamięć i odpowiedzialność*, ed. R. Kostro, T. Merta, Cra-cow–Wrocław, 2005, p. 8.

There can be no doubt that one of the most important turning points in the previous history of collective memory was the Second World War and the Holocaust. In the theory of history, debates on the choice of an “appropriate” discourse for consideration of the Holocaust are of no small interest at present.³⁸ Theoretical inspiration is tending toward the aestheticization of the historical experience. The Holocaust in this case is metonymic, evoked with expressive signs and deeply engaging simulations of reality. Experience remains an “unfinished, ephemeral process that does not lead to giving definitive answers to questions.”³⁹

Raising this issue prompts reflection over how institutions, including memorial museums, can join in and co-create the current culture of commemoration. After all, they have the “function of carriers of the past, components in the culture of memory, agents of historical communication, and centers of social influence,”⁴⁰ and thus have an effect on the shape of consciousness and historical sensitivity.

³⁸ See F. Ankersmit, *Pamiętając Holocaust: żałoba i melancholia*, in: *Pamięć, etyka*, pp. 163–186.

³⁹ A. Ziębińska-Witek, *Wizualizacje pamięci – upamiętnianie Zagłady w muzeach. Materiały 17. Powszechnego Zjazdu Historyków Polskich*; <http://jazon.hist.uj.edu.pl/zjazd/materialy/ziebinska.pdf>.

⁴⁰ T. Kranz, *Edukacja historyczna w miejscach pamięci. Zarys problematyki*, Lublin, 2002, p. 38.

Monika Kranz-Szurek

Between the Local and the Global: Social-Cultural Identity in the Contemporary World

Identity is a category that has fundamental significance for the functioning of various types of collectives, and for each of our lives. This ostensibly banal and obvious statement acquires deeper sense when we become aware that identity is not something given to us once and for all, and that it is not a rigid structure, but rather something being formed all the time.¹ This is why sociologists define it as a dynamic phenomenon, changing and multi-layered, and distinguish many dimensions and kinds of identity. The framework of identity embraces, on the one hand, national, regional, and local identity, and on the other hand, religious, cultural, and social identity. The construction of identity referring to groups and to individuals is performed above all in the process of communicating with others. However, the process of forming identity in today's world, full of various often contradictory stimuli that reach us from numerous sources, is subject to the influence of a multitude of factors. We must deal today—mainly because of the processes of globalization—with the intensive mutual actions and interpenetration of differing cultures on an unprecedented scale. Beyond this, the phenomena of the diminishing isolation of cultures and the increasing

¹ It is worth mentioning at this point Anthony Giddens's interesting concept stressing the reflexive and continuous nature of the individual identity, which results from the cognitive awareness of the various phases in the course of life. See A. Giddens, *Nowoczesność i tożsamość. „Ja” i społeczeństwo w epoce późnej nowoczesności* [*Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*], Warsaw, 2002, pp. 104–106.

contacts between them is not without significance for the issue of identity. After all, culture—embracing many areas of life such as language, art, customs, and legal and educational systems—is a sphere of human activity that plays an important role in the construction of identity.

In the face of the changes underway under the influence of cultural globalization, issues of identity assume special significance. Identity always arises in the socialization process through self-knowledge resulting from experiences and interactions with others. Additionally, as sociologists point out, the social identity of the individual is based on the feeling of belonging to and identifying with a given group. The dynamic and developmental nature of identity results from, among other things, the need for a sense of continuity and the desire of individuals to maintain a certain level of unity of identity through the regulation of changes and the elimination of conflicts and cognitive dissonance. Identity is thus treated here as a specific kind of “regulating mechanism that makes it possible to preserve continuity, that is, to have the feeling, in spite of changes, of being one and the same person in time and space, while also making it possible to adapt to new situations, experiences, and knowledge about the world.”² Collective identity, in turn, based on the systems of values, norms, customs, and a language and territory shared by a given group, is the “similar way of understanding, experiencing, behaving, and acting by the members of a group within the framework of the current generation as well as over the course of many generations.”³

In the process of the forming of both kinds of identity, individual and collective, their reference to a cultural center (the most important values, models, norms and so on for a given culture) is important.⁴ This

² H. Malewska-Peyre, “Ciągłość i zmiana tożsamości,” *Kultura i Społeczeństwo*, 2000, no. 1, pp. 136–137.

³ L. Dyczewski, *Kultura polska w procesie przemian*, Lublin, 1993, p. 69.

⁴ As Jerzy Nikitorowicz notes, identity links “elements of the personal system of the individual with the central values of the culture of the group the individual belongs to and with conscious participation in the timeless values of European and

connection is emphasized by the term “cultural identity of the individual and group,” understood as “the relatively permanent identification of a certain group of people and its individual members in a given cultural system created by a set of ideas, convictions, and views with concrete customs and morals, with a given axiological and normative system. This identification should reinforce the internal unity of the group and constitute its *differentia specifica*.”⁵

Cultural identity is constructed in a similar way to social identity. Due to the impact on the individual of a plethora of cultural arrangements it makes up a particular set of various contents that a given individual identifies with and seeks to realize. Depending on the types of these influences, people can create an identity that possesses either monolithic traits, when the cultural elements that penetrate it reinforce and complement each other mutually, or a “fractured identity,” when conflicting cultural traits create dissonance. The important thing in all of this is the level of cultural self-awareness, or the “capacity for distinguishing cultural rules from everyday, routine practices, which makes it possible to treat one’s own way of living as only one of many possibilities, and not as correct in an absolute sense; this is a condition for a relativistic attitude and tolerance.”⁶

The social-cultural identity of each individual is, on the one hand, a concept of oneself, growing out of one’s own knowledge about participation in many groups and the emotions and meanings connected with these affiliations, while on the other hand it represents a certain categorization of that individual by a given group. These views of identity—internal and external—appear in reality together, mutually supplementing each other.

global culture.” J. Nikitorowicz, *Encyklopedia pedagogiczna XXI wieku*, vol. VI, Warsaw, 2007, p. 754.

⁵ M.S. Szczepański, *Spoleczności lokalne i regionalne a ład kontynentalny i globalny*, in: *Kręgi integracji i rodzaje tożsamości. Polska, Europa, Świat*, ed. W. Wesołowski, J. Włodarek, Warsaw, 2005, p. 128.

⁶ P. Sztompka, *Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa*, Cracow, 2003, p. 256.

Another definition intended to flesh out the powerful interdependency existing between culture and identity is the concept of “identity culture.”⁷ This term characterizes and accents the role that national culture or separate regional and local cultures play in the process of forming cultural identity, including its manifestations as national identity and ethnic identity. This culture, like the identity built upon its foundations, is important for the survival not only of a given community, but also of its individual members. It meets their needs for belonging, respect, recognition or, finally, an axiological orientation.

Cultural identity has exceptionally significant functions in regard to both the individual and the group.⁸ The function that should be regarded as most important is that of connecting the lives of particular people with community life and introducing them to the cultural heritage of the group to which they belong. It thus connects what is individual with what is social and the social system with the culture system, supporting the participation of the individual in both systems simultaneously. Thanks to cultural identity the group survives, develops, and can adapt repeatedly to changing conditions in its environment. Within the framework of cultural identity people can understand each other because this identity facilitates interpersonal communication, mainly in regard to behavior and symbolic objects that are incomprehensible to individuals outside the group. Finally, cultural identity is a special kind of barrier against elements coming in from outside that are not compatible with the cultural center that is the point of reference for a given identity. At the same time, it selects those cultural traits that constitute the heritage of a given society by rejecting some elements and developing others.

In this context it is worth drawing special attention to what is known as “local identity,” which is exceptional because of its primacy (it is the

⁷ Kazimierz Krzysztofek introduces and describes this concept in “Globalna kultura i globalne zarządzanie,” *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, 2000, no. 1, p. 68.

⁸ Leon Dyczewski discusses the function of social-cultural memory in detail in *Kultura polska*, passim.

first to coalesce within individuals; other types of identity only arise later). In the view of Bohdan Jałowiecki, “at the beginning we are all local in the most literal sense of the word. Everyone is born somewhere, and that is where he or she first experiences a world that, along the way to adulthood, increasingly broadens. Our birthplace defines our identity and makes it possible to answer questions about where we come from and who we are. This is the way our original identity and—as Stanisław Ossowski wrote—belonging to a private homeland arise. All the later identities are secondary, and there may be many of them.”⁹ Local identity, being a sub-type of social-cultural identity, influences the functioning, survival, and transformation of both local societies and of the cultures that exist within them. It is based on local tradition and refers to a clearly defined territory and its specific social, cultural, geographic, and economic traits.¹⁰ This identity ensures that the private life of an individual is connected with the communal existence of the local society, expressed in the actions and characteristics of its residents. Furthermore, local identity constitutes, first, an important factor in interpersonal communication within the society, and second, a factor in the development of the personalities of its members.¹¹ It is also worth remembering that “without permanent roots (local patriotism, homeland/hometown, familiar territory, spatial identity, historical memory), without clear self-definition in one’s own distinctness, difficulties arise in the acquisition of an open identity.”¹²

Having made ourselves aware of the way the social-cultural identity develops and the important role it plays in the life of each person and each community, we should pay special attention to the specific

⁹ B. Jałowiecki, *Globalizacja, lokalność, tożsamość*, in: *Kręgi integracji*, p. 111.

¹⁰ M.S. Szczepański, *Spoleczności lokalne i regionalne*, p. 128.

¹¹ Dariusz Wadowski points out this function of regional cultural identity in *Wiązy społeczne w zbiorowości regionu*, in: *Spoleczno-kulturowe czynniki rozwoju regionu środkowo-wschodniej Polski i Euroregionu Bug*, ed. L. Dyczewski, Lublin, 1997, pp. 144–145.

¹² J. Nikitorowicz, *Encyklopedia pedagogiczna*, p. 754.

conditions under which it is shaped at present by global trends. We are dealing, after all, with an exceptional cultural diversity. There are group cultures created by specific social groups, local, regional, and national cultures, and finally supranational cultures, like, for instance, European culture. As Jan Skoczyński notes, “each community—local, regional, and national—is characterized by its own culture, or way of thinking, world of values, and the type of activity its members engage in. Specific cultures are characterized by permanence, capacity for development, and openness to internal and external influences.”¹³ As a result of the intensification of interaction between cultures, in the meantime, cultural diffusion is taking place. It depends on the flow of particular cultural elements from one society to another, or the borrowing of them from one culture and incorporation of them into another. Today, diffusion is an ineluctable and natural phenomenon, generally regarded as positive and treated as a factor that enriches cultures and spurs their development.¹⁴

Both cultural contact and cultural diffusion influence the existence of the category of cultural similarities. Thanks to this, despite the internal sophistication and distinctness of each culture, it is possible to observe the functioning of “cultural universals,” that is, cultural elements that are ubiquitous in nature and common to various societies. From this perspective, it is worth noting the significance of the fact that these kinds of encounters and interpenetration of cultures are not a matter of indifference to particular individuals who are simultaneously under the influence of various cultures. Cultural pluralism, with which we undoubtedly are dealing at the moment, creates specific conditions that are essential to the process of forming one’s own identity. As Nikitorowicz observes, “contemporary man, living in a multicultural society, faces the necessity of attempting to answer many questions about the difficult and complex process of forming identity, its scope, and the

¹³ J. Skoczyński, *Kultura*, in: *Słownik społeczny*, ed. B. Szlachta, Cracow, 2004, p. 616.

¹⁴ R. Linton, *Dyfuzja*, in: *Elementy teorii socjologicznych. Materiały do dziejów współczesnej socjologii zachodniej*, ed. W. Derczyński, A. Jasińska-Kania, J. Szacki, Warsaw, 1975, pp. 261–269.

unceasing definition, loss or redefinition of integration.”¹⁵ Researchers have found that the multiplicity of alternative traditions or cultural ideas resulting from globalization is in itself a threat to identity. This indicates mainly the individual’s need constantly to search for his own place or to protect his own coherence in the face of the variegated choices and options presented by the surrounding world. Some see the phenomenon of a shift from a “world of roots” to a “world of choices” in this. The tension between local culture and cultural globalization caused by this shift is felt powerfully by people who have lost a sense of rootedness in any culture.¹⁶

On the other hand, however, it must be noted that the superimposition of varied cultural influences constructs our cultural identity to a large degree. Two different impulses, after all, manifest themselves simultaneously in people: a sense of belonging that expresses itself as a strong need for belonging to some kind of community, and a sense of separateness that in turn appears in the need to be unique. Among the ways of meeting the former need is reference to some broader, overarching whole; the latter need, in turn, appears in the cultivating of one’s own specific characteristics and of local speech patterns and cultural resources. It should be emphasized that there is no contradiction between the “global” and “local” dimensions; on the contrary, they are in a dynamic balance and supplement each other. Being a participant in local culture hardly excludes participation in global culture, and vice-versa. This statement is expressed in the idea of “glocalization,” according to which global influence should be harmonized with local traditions. Glocalization is also a practical way of exploiting global means for presenting and disseminating local content, and to make

¹⁵ J. Nikitorowicz, *Encyklopedia pedagogiczna*, p. 755.

¹⁶ Gordon Mathews is one of those who expresses negative opinions of this sort in regard to the impact of globalization on issues of identity. He asserts that the individual forfeits his own particular culture by choosing something from among all the world’s cultures. *Supermarket kultury. Kultura globalna a tożsamość jednostki [Global Culture: Searching for Home in the Cultural Supermarket]*, Warsaw, 2005, pp. 7–8, p. 256.

global products match the specifics of a local environment—often by enriching them with local values.

In this context it is also worth drawing attention to phenomena that are increasingly universal today because they are a response to the contemporary transformation—namely, the “renaissance of regionalism” and “the new local.” Hiding behind these concepts is, above all, the slogan of going back to the local, familiar, and close, yet without fleeing the global. We are dealing here with the rebirth of the local, or with the rediscovery of local values and the search for one’s own identity—predominantly in local cultural circles. Taking an active approach to one’s own identity and local culture, along with more involvement in the life of one’s immediate community, are important in this. Such an approach should be combined with greater openness to the world and contacts with the surroundings. Open regionalism tries to balance tradition and the contemporary, which is why it is so important to know how to foster and disseminate local content through the use of the products of cultural globalization, such as the latest technology. As Brunon Szyrak observes, “the essence of contemporary regionalism is endeavoring to preserve the cultural heritage and regional identity, but at the same time to enrich it with new content and values, building a dynamic past out of concern for the economic-cultural existence of the region, and through this of a strong position for the entire country.”¹⁷

It is necessary, however, to remember that the realization of these slogans is connected with the presence in every person of such essential factors as an awareness of the content and values of one’s own local culture and the appropriate cultural competence: a sufficient capacity for adaptation, selection, and reflection. Acquiring these skills is uncommonly difficult, yet nevertheless they are the starting point for learning about and correctly reading the significance of other cultures. Beyond

¹⁷ B. Szyrak, *Małe ojczyzny w globalnej wiosce*, in: *Międzygeneracyjna transmisja dziedzictwa kulturowego. Globalizm versus regionalizm*, ed. J. Nikitorowicz, J. Halicki, J. Muszyńska, Białystok, 2003, pp. 253–254.

this, the sense of the value and exceptionality of one's own culture is the foundation that makes it possible to take advantage of the riches of "global culture" adroitly. In this context the degree to which everyone needs culture on the local level is clearly visible. At the same time it can be noted that specific local cultures cannot function in isolation from the broader context of national and global cultures.¹⁸ It seems accurate to state that "someone who is simultaneously rooted in local, regional, national, and European culture will feel at home everywhere (in other regions and countries)."¹⁹

In the light of these considerations it becomes obvious that, in the contemporary world, the process of forming identity takes on special importance not only for researchers studying the subject, but also for participants in public life. From this perspective it is all the more worthwhile to appreciate all kinds of initiatives that, by combining both dimensions, local and global, contribute to the enrichment and construction of one's own identity. Such initiatives surely include various intercultural educational programs, thanks to which we can not only learn about our culture and its contents, significance, and history, but also learn to look at other cultures. Beyond this, these programs direct our attention in the direction of the so-called cultural universals, the things that are shared by and should unite all people. They also relate to the two dimensions that are exceptionally important today in the process of identity formation, the local and the global. They are often oriented at the same time toward the past with which identity is directly associated and upon which it draws. Participation in international educational projects also fosters the forming among its participants of attitudes of openness and tolerance toward what is different and was previously unknown. Thanks to this, the stereotypes they possess on the subjects of other cultures and nationalities can undergo change. Without doubt, undertakings of this

¹⁸ L. Dyczewski, "Regionalizm – narodowość – ponadnarodowość nowoczesnego społeczeństwa," *Zeszyty Naukowe KUL*, 1998, no. 3–4, pp. 182–183.

¹⁹ B. Synak, *Małe ojczyzny*, p. 253.

kind therefore influence identity. They may also help form a so-called multi-level identity, which counteracts an “either-or” approach and means “that we feel ourselves to be, for instance, Varsovians or Cracovians or Silesians, without excluding our feeling ourselves to be Poles. By the same token, our national identity need not exclude a European identity.”²⁰ It is therefore important to try to treat multiculturalism more as one of the factors in individual development, and not as a threat connected with difficulties in self-definition or a sense of alienation. Contact with different cultures helps the individual to accept an active attitude toward his own cultural identity, consisting of a capacity for self-awareness, experience, and evaluation. Jerzy Szacki says in this context that “someone who is isolated, who lives in seclusion, cannot have any identity. It is only going out into the world that enables us to be fully aware of who we are. This is described by a certain wise English proverb: “What do they know of England who only England know?”²¹

In the opinion of Tadeusz Miczka, the idea of multicultural education is the “result of the universal awareness of the question of multiculturalism in contemporary societies (cultural pluralism) and the inadmissibility of overlooking it in the pedagogical discourse. Things are this way because globalization processes are becoming the foundation of contemporary cultural identity, and it can clearly be seen from every research perspective that globalization inevitably spurs localization and the need for rootedness.”²²

The environment has great influence on the course of the process of constructing our identity—“its type depends on the elements and people we meet in our surroundings, how we understand and experience them,

²⁰ “Europejczyk wielopoziomowy. Rozmowa z Januszem Reykowskim,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2003, no. 192, p. 12.

²¹ “Traktaty nie zmieniają ducha. Rozmowa z Jerzym Szackim,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2003, no. 136, p. 14.

²² T. Miczka, *Auschwitz i Holocaust we współczesnej edukacji międzykulturowej i medialnej. Wprowadzenie do problematyki*, in: *Auschwitz i Holocaust – dylematy i wyzwania polskiej edukacji*, ed. P. Trojański, Oświęcim, 2008, p. 248.

how we accept them, and what influence they have on our consciousness and actions. Identity depends on the natural environment, the material products we use, the people we meet directly or through intermediary messages, the events we take part in and learn about in the process of socialization, symbolic objects and behaviors, and the values we encounter and accept. Thus our individual and collective identity is an effect of the action of a great many, highly diverse elements of present reality and of the recent or remote past.”²³

In consequence of this, not only contact with the present, but also the awareness of connections with the past, with things that happened long ago, are significant in the formation of identity. In consideration of identity there is no question of disregarding the mutual dependence connecting identity with the past and the memory of the past. In the case of both individuals and groups, the sense of continuity, coherence, and distinctness from others, as well as the consciousness of endurance over time are basic constitutive elements of identity. Sociologists stress that looking on identity as a process implies reference to memory, since memory influences identity to a significant degree. In Barbara Szacka’s view, memory is not only the consciousness of a common past, but also the conveyance of models of behavior and values. It is within memory that the transformation of figures and events into symbols takes place, and thus “through those symbols collective memory supplies the identifying signs that help distinguish ‘us’ from ‘them.’ This type of distinctness, in turn, is a fundamental matter for the definition of the identity of one’s own group.”²⁴ Not only is memory important to identity, but identity is also important to memory, because the sense of identity can have an impact on what we remember.²⁵

The contemporary world and global trends are resulting in an increase in the significance of issues connected with identity. Information

²³ L. Dyczewski, D. Wadowski, *Wstęp*, in: *Tożsamość polska w odmiennych kontekstach*, ed. L. Dyczewski, D. Wadowski, Lublin, 2009, p. 5.

²⁴ B. Szacka, *Czas przeszły – pamięć – mit*, Warsaw, 2006, p. 51.

²⁵ M. Golka, *Pamięć społeczna i jej implanty*, Warsaw, 2009, p. 53.

overload and the dynamics of ongoing transformations compel the adaptation of an attitude of reflection on one's own identity, oriented toward consciously shaping and nurturing it. The work of numerous cultural and educational institutions can prove to be of great assistance in this situation. Such institutions not only participate in the formation of social memory and collective identity, but also contribute to the awakening of interest in questions of one's own identity, and as a result of interest in dialogue with other national groups and memory communities. Dialogue, in turn, "is the essence, axis, sense, and goal of intercultural communication in a world torn between globalization and localization—a dialogue that should serve to indicate and characterize tensions, but also to elucidate their origins, acceptance, or rejection . . . This new phase of thinking about history requires continual negotiation, in which local and shared memory is taken into account so that the past can serve the contemporary social order, and also have a future, that is, to constitute a warning against totalitarian solutions to social processes."²⁶

Communication with others is thus an inseparable component of the process of forming identity. It should also be a permanent part of the intercultural education conducted at authentic historical sites. There cannot be any doubt that, in view of their history and the magnitude of the memory associated with them, such places represent a special place for intercultural dialogue.

²⁶ T. Miczka, *Auschwitz i Holocaust*, pp. 249–250.

Andrzej Stępnik

The Role of the Visit to a Memorial Museum from the Point of View of the Didactics of History

Memorial museums have long played an important role in the shaping and cultivating of the historical consciousness/memory of Poles.¹ Among those who already knew about this almost 200 years ago were Stanisław Kostka Potocki, who opened his private collection in Wilanów Palace to visitors, and Princess Izabela Czartoryska, who endowed the Gothic House and the Temple of Sybilla in Puławy.² Initially, the work of the amateur museum practitioners was connected to the antiquarian-collecting current in history, and the items they amassed “swam” in a sea of national aspirations, images, fears, legends, or downright fairy tales. In this way a sort of “sacralization” of national mementos took place.

A profound change in this regard occurred in the times of the Second Polish Republic (1918–1939), when deeper theoretical and methodological reflection accompanied the establishment of new museums. Quickly, museums stopped being moribund collections of curiosities. They became an alternative to the traditional (written) form of narrating history.³ They began to be viewed as institutions participating actively in conveying knowledge, ideas, and traditions of significant

¹ This broad contemporary term may be extended to include almost all museums of a humanistic nature. M. Woźniak formulates a basic definition in his *Pamięć a historia. Pamięć miejsca, miejsce pamięci*, in: *Pamięć i miejsce. Doświadczenie przeszłości na pograniczu*, ed. D. Staszczuk, A. Szymańska, Chełm, 2008, pp. 51–62.

² Cf. S. Lorenz, *Przewodnik po muzeach i zbiorach w Polsce*, Warsaw, 1971, p. 16.

³ Cf. A. Ziębińska-Witek, *Historia w muzeum. Studium ekspozycji Holokaustu*, Lublin, 2011, p. 9.

educational value.⁴ They became identifiers of specific social groups, institutions of official national education, and, after 1926, of national-state education. Confirmation of this can be found in texts by Henryk Mościcki, who regularly advocated cooperation between museums and schools in the 1920s.⁵ The issue also came up in nearly all the debates held at the General Congresses of Polish Historians (Didactic Section). The benefits of cooperation between schools and museums caught the attention of educational organizers in the reconstituted Poland, who boldly placed museums in the orbit of group educational workshops for teachers and students. Thanks to this, school environments became the main audiences for the content of museum displays and exhibitions.

The true flourishing of museum work came after the Second World War when a new organizational network of museums (including museums of martyrdom) arose with state backing. In smaller localities, Chambers of National Remembrance “stood in” for them.⁶ There were also mobile museums in buses that toured the most distant corners of the country. Ideological motives frequently lay behind the campaign to build up the museum network,⁷ but, as indicated by present findings, museums in communist Poland seldom constituted important centers of official propaganda or indoctrination. Official directives lost out to the attachment on the part of Poles (museum practitioners and visitors) to national history, tradition, or symbols of the country’s past.

⁴ E. Adamska, “Aspekty wychowawcze na lekcjach historii w muzeum,” *Wiadomości Historyczne*, 1981, no. 2, p. 108; See also J. Adamska, “Pamięć i miejsca pamięci w Polsce po II wojnie światowej,” *Przeszłość i Pamięć*, 1998, no. 1, pp. 4–11.

⁵ H. Mościcki, *Wskazówki praktyczne dla nauczycieli historii w szkołach średnich i powszechnych*, Warsaw, 1925, pp. 85–94.

⁶ Cf. J. Rell, *Problemy Ruchu Izb Pamięci Narodowej*, in: *Warsztat pracy nauczyciela historii*, ed. A. Zielecki, Rzeszów, 1988, pp. 163–182.

⁷ Cf. “Programming and organizational guidelines for cooperation between schools and museums, issued on May 25, 1984, by the ministry of education and the ministry of culture and art,” *Dziennik Urzędowy Ministerstwa Oświaty i Wychowania*, 1984, no. 8, pos. 50; E. Dymitrów, “Pamięć i zapomnienie w stosunkach polsko-niemieckich,” *Przegląd Zachodni*, 2000, no. 1, p. 7.

The last two decades have brought somewhat unanticipated developments. They are connected with numerous social-political and civilizational changes, and the altered mentality of a postmodern society. Because of the systemic transformation, the development of information technology, accelerated travel, and universal access to information and visual material, traditionally organized institutions commemorating the past fell into a crisis of attractiveness. This phenomenon also affected the martyrdom museums that had drawn particular interest (initially as symbols of combat and self-sacrificing suffering) since the end of the war. Exacerbating factors included the process of the expansion of the scope of human rights, an increase in optimistic moods, improvements to everyday living conditions, a decline in nationalistic moods, and so on. In the new situation, martyrdom museums became a troubling, strident testimony to human depravity. They began to be treated as a sort of taboo, like death, old age, and suffering in contemporary culture. The processes of international integration, the reconciliation of old enemies and of perpetrators and victims, the de-Polonization of martyrdom, the need for dialogue, and the passing away of the generation of those who had suffered, all deepened the sense of distance and the ambivalence of reflective-emotional experiences. Nor do we know all the effects of the institutionalization of memory (in the popular mind, the institutionalization of memory may be regarded as akin to such concepts as propaganda, historical prevention, or an official memory policy)⁸ or of the legal and moral restrictions on the freedom of scholarly discussion on the subject of the Holocaust.⁹

⁸ M. Janowski, *Polityka historyczna. Między edukacją a propagandą*, in: *Pamięć i polityka historyczna. Doświadczenia Polski i jej sąsiadów*, ed. S.M. Nowinowski, J. Pomorski, R. Stobiecki, Łódź, 2008, pp. 229–245; D. Staszczuk, *Czy polityka historyczna zagraża współczesnej demokracji?*, in: *Przeobrażenia w kulturze i edukacji na przełomie XX i XXI wieku*, ed. M. Karwatowska, A. Siwiec, Chełm, 2010, pp. 123–129.

⁹ T. Kranz, “Muzea w byłych obozach w Polsce jako forma instytucjonalizacji pamięci,” *Łambinowicki Rocznik Muzealny*, 2003, vol. 26, pp. 9–22.

A side effect of all this has been the slowing down of research on the history of the Second World War, the turning away from the issue by historians, and a pronounced narrowing of martyrdom subjects in contemporary scholarly publications, school history textbooks, art, and public debates. The attractiveness of martyrdom museums has even started to be restricted by educational realities. In view of the specific nature of memorials, which generally are actual or symbolic cemeteries, monuments, and places of reflection, it is impossible or inappropriate to carry out many attractive kinds of activities there.¹⁰ The legal limitations on the admission of people under the age of 13 to memorial museums also restricts the work that can be done there. So it is also with the peripheral location of such sites.¹¹ In this connection, the role of online museums in historical and civic education has grown.

Interestingly, contemporary museums can boast of growing numbers of visitors despite these tendencies. This is a result of changes in the way these institutions work and act, systematically transforming themselves into socially attuned scientific museums and re-profiling their work in line with the theory and experience of the pedagogy of remembrance.¹² They often turn themselves into educational parks.

¹⁰ M. Owsiański, "Edukacja, czyli 'co wy właściwie robicie w tym Muzeum?'" *Wiadomości Historyczne*, 2010, no. 5, p. 27.

¹¹ M. Fic, *Rola muzeów w procesie edukacji historycznej i obywatelskiej*, in: *Muzea i archiwa w edukacji historycznej*, ed. S. Roszak, M. Strzelecka (Toruńskie spotkania dydaktyczne: IV), Toruń, 2007, pp. 152–156.

¹² W. Wysok, *Międzykulturowe projekty edukacyjne realizowane w Państwowym Muzeum na Majdanku na przykładzie polsko-niemieckich warsztatów historycznych*, in: „Ludzie ludziom...” – z przeszłości uczymy się na przyszłość. *Polsko-niemiecki projekt edukacyjny zrealizowany w Państwowym Muzeum na Majdanku w dniach 20–25 maja 2007 roku*, Lublin, 2009, p. 5; W. Wysok, "Doświadczenie Auschwitz a pedagogika pamięci," *Scriptores Scholarum*, 1998, no. 1, pp. 30–38; T. Kranz, *Edukacja historyczna w miejscach pamięci. Zarys problematyki*, Lublin, 2009, pp. 63–74; M. Zaborski, *Pedagogika pamięci – uciążliwy obowiązek czy szansa edukacyjna?*, in: *Szkoły, nauczyciele, uczniowie. Dyskusja o programie, metodzie, uczeniu się w Europie*, ed. T. Gumuła, T. Dyrda, Kielce, 2008, pp. 78–91.

Increasingly willing to make use of Facebook, Twitter, or Flickr, they are creating a new model of museum culture.¹³

The way we think about education at museums is also changing.¹⁴ New preferences have begun to shift from intuitive and imaginative thinking in the direction of activity grounded in developed theories and analyses of social behavior, based on public observation at museums, among other things. As a result, contemporary museums are betting on new strategies for exhibiting and interpreting their holdings (as at the Warsaw Uprising Museum and the State Museum at Majdanek). Often, these are artistic installations. Museum visits are becoming a way of participating in culture. They are a type of social and cultural mediation. They no longer limit themselves to the factual level, broadening out into the ethical, aesthetic, and axiological spheres, “attempting to promote certain attitudes and values.”¹⁵

In the new situation, it has been necessary to create more effective forms of cooperation between museums and schools. This is a matter of giving them a new sense and meaning based on the assumption that museums and schools share common goals.

Before we formulate any expectations in this regard, let us begin with a diagnosis of the current state of affairs. Extramural historical education (including museum education) remains more of a didactic desideratum than a reality.¹⁶ Schools do not pay enough attention to the effects of parallel education, which is absolutely incomprehensible. The contemporary teaching of history is, after all, more elastic and open than it once was. Teachers are no longer constrained by a stiff curricular

¹³ Cf. K. Nowosielska, “Auschwitz młodym okiem,” *Wiadomości Historyczne*, 2001, no. 4, p. 28; Cf. also A. Huyssen, *Twilight Memories. Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*, London–New York, 1995, p. 254.

¹⁴ J. Skutnik, M. Szeląg, *Wstęp*, in: *Edukacja muzealna. Antologia tłumaczeń*, ed. M. Szeląg, J. Skutnik, Poznań, 2010, pp. 11–12.

¹⁵ T. Kranz, *Edukacja historyczna*, p. 58.

¹⁶ Cf. H. Stachyra, *Niechże historia chwali codzienność. Edukacja muzealna. Dzisiejsze bariery współpracy szkoły z muzeum*, in: *Muzea skansenowskie we współczesnej edukacji historycznej*, ed. M. Ausz et al., Lublin, 2011, pp. 61–70.

program and official ideological directives. They have the right—no, the duty—to react to current cultural trends and to take account of social expectations and moods. They should respond to the verbalized and non-verbalized needs of their pupils. The contemporary understanding of the teaching-learning process should aspire to forming well-rounded, developed personalities in the pupils and furnishing them with a set of instrumental intellectual capacities (abilities, interests, skills, habits, and competences) and an acceptance of socially-directed traits.¹⁷ The formative process should begin in childhood. Historical education should be permanent, innovative, and well rounded. The teaching and learning of history cannot be limited to lesson units. In this situation, museums become the most natural allies of schools.

Museum education can be an important element in continuing and general education.¹⁸ Museums are, after all, bearers of the past, links in social communication, and places for participation in culture.¹⁹ This creates possibilities for all-around education transcending the traditional class-lesson school system.

Contemporary museums can continue to compete with books, lectures, and electronic media because they provide an exceptional opportunity for direct contact with authentic memorials and original information sources. This makes it possible to “sign up” museum education as part of the “multisensory revolution” in education as advocated by teaching specialists (the mutual reinforcement of the educational process through words, images, sounds, smells, and touch).

Museums can be an excellent place for broader discourse about the past, present, and future. After all, visiting a museum sets in motion

¹⁷ Cz. Kupisiewicz, *Podstawy dydaktyki ogólnej*, Warsaw, 1977, pp. 10–12.

¹⁸ For more on this subject see W. Golygowska, *Rola muzeum w realizacji ścieżki „edukacja regionalna – dziedzictwo kulturowe w regionie” w szkole gimnazjalnej*, in: *Nauczanie blokowe i zintegrowane przedmiotów humanistycznych w zreformowanej szkole*, ed. T. Jaworski, B. Burda, M. Szymczak, Zielona Góra, 2002, pp. 233–238.

¹⁹ T. Kranz, “Muzea – miejsca pamięci w wymiarze społeczno-politycznym,” *Przeszłość i Pamięć*, 1989, no. 3, p. 7.

a “learning process . . . that combines knowledge about history with existential self-reflection, that is, reflection on one’s own attitudes, opinions, and behavior.”²⁰ This type of thinking is, at the same time, a “component in thinking about ourselves in the present and the foreseeable future.”²¹ It empowers pupils to be active, stimulates their personal experiences, and shapes their historical and social consciousness.²² It makes it possible to demonstrate the multiplicity of facts and problems in a synchronous and simultaneous way, showing the world in a holistic light. It shows how to perceive problems in a context of logic and interdependence. It introduces the unique “language of life” to discourse, so that it can compete with the so-called “great historiographic concepts.” This fosters the principle of communicativeness, which is crucial in education.

Knowledge about the past is theoretical by nature, but in a museum it takes on a concrete dimension, merging concrete-objective thinking with theoretical-abstract thinking.²³ Thanks to the observation and analysis of historical objects, the reception of the subject matter being taught activates the perceptual and imaginative patterns shaped in the pupil during his previous development and at the lower stages of school education. It permits the pupil to understand that “history has to do with living people, and not invented tales.”²⁴ Museums are thus a kind of proving ground for the checking, concretization, and rational analysis of theoretical knowledge. The artifacts exhibited in museums represent an opportunity to enrich pupils’ theoretical knowledge, transform it into a realistic vision of history, and combine it with new elements in the form of information and facts for formulating historical concepts.

²⁰ T. Kranz, *Edukacja historyczna*, p. 10.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

²² I. Wojnar, *Muzeum czyli trwanie obecności*, Warsaw, 1991, pp. 16–17.

²³ E. Trzcińska, *Dydaktyczno-wychowawcze funkcje placówki muzealnej*, in: *Muzeum w nauczaniu historii*, ed. A. Zielecki, Rzeszów, 1989, p. 86.

²⁴ M. Honeybone, *Archiwa i muzea a nauczanie historii w Anglii*, in: *Muzea i archiwa*, p. 25.

Museums also make it possible to form a close, “friendly” bond between the artifact and the beholder, thus broadening the range of mutual communication. This has special significance when dealing with regional and local history.²⁵

Museum collections sometimes provide an opportunity to observe the participants, which facilitates the absorption of information while broadening the field of knowledge and giving it a concrete dimension.²⁶ This relieves the pupil from mechanical, often rote learning, stimulates mental operations, and makes it easier to analyze and synthesize knowledge. It also hones such cognitive skills as comparing, associating, drawing conclusions, and generalizing. It develops visual skills, one of the basic educational aims. It helps keep historical knowledge up to date; temporary exhibitions connected with current historical events are salient here. Museum education meets the natural need for independent learning. It strengthens the teaching-learning of history and social studies.

Familiarity with museum exhibits creates numerous occasions for focusing deliberate and roaming attention. Alojzy Zielecki of Rzeszów University is correct in stating that museum exhibits “create a field of attention in which there is a differentiation of the spheres of the center (clear impressions) and the periphery (indistinct, blurred). In the center of attention (the perceptual field) there is room for only a few exhibits at a time, and on the periphery, room for more. The center can change its location within the area of the exhibition. The process of attention is characterized by the range of the field of attention (measured by the number of objects perceived briefly and simultaneously), concentration (the intensity and speed of the distinct perception of exhibitions), nimbleness (the ease of shifting the concentration of attention to the

²⁵ M. Ptaśnik, *Naukowe i oświatowe zadania muzeów regionalnych i ich rola w kształceniu młodzieży*, in: *Współpraca muzeów ze szkołami*, ed. A. Kunysz, Przemysł, 1968, pp. 5–12.

²⁶ Cf. *Obserwacja uczestnicząca w badaniach historycznych*, ed. B. Wagner, T. Wiślicz, Zabrze, 2008.

exhibition in other directions is the divisibility of attention, projected in two different directions), stability (the knack of refraining from changing the direction of observation), and selectivity (ease in perceiving the content one is looking for on the basis of earlier experience, intention, or emotion). To obtain the domination of one of these characteristics in the course of viewing an exhibition, the teacher should set a definite task for the students, showing the connection between an exhibit with knowledge acquired earlier, stimulating curiosity through commentary,²⁷ and showing the multiplicity of interpretation and opportunities for cognition. Each of these elements can dominate for different exhibitions and in various periods of learning. They can be reinforced by stimulating curiosity, evoking emotion, or creating problem-solving situations.²⁸

One must be aware that what is shaped during teaching-learning in museums is “the will as an ability to realize intentions (creating projects, the idea and choice of the best answer, and making decisions about doing things). The readiness to learn in a museum, the acceptance of tasks, submitting to the rigors of order, the acceptance of a certain way of completing a task, the formulation of answers, and the readiness to present them—all of these are conditioned by the will. It is yoked with motivation, which precedes learning, aids the will, and determines the emotional sphere.”²⁹ This guarantees the permanence of knowledge through the realization of the principles of the deliberate and active participation of the pupil in the teaching-learning process. It inculcates the perception of various interpretive perspectives in history, and awakens the desire to participate in historical debates.

The achievement of such exceptional educational goals is conditioned by the atmosphere prevailing in museums. This is an exceptionally important factor. It was noted by the British pedagogue Richard Livingstone, who stated that “education is both teaching and creating

²⁷ A. Zielecki, *Muzea*, in: *Współczesna dydaktyka historii. Przewodnik encyklopedyczny dla nauczycieli i uczniów*, ed. J. Maternicki, Warsaw, 2004, p. 202.

²⁸ A. Zielecki, *Wprowadzenie do dydaktyki historii*, Cracow, 2007, p. 273.

²⁹ A. Zielecki, *Muzea*, p. 202.

an atmosphere.”³⁰ The atmosphere in a museum is a unique world of experiences. The particular nature of a memorial lends a feeling of the exceptionality and sacral nature of the objects encountered there. It is a kind of *theatrum* of history. This favors concentration and involvement by pupils in the learning process. It satisfies the pupils’ interest, which arises in new cognitive circumstances. It makes possible the individual construction of problem situations and their solution. It guarantees the accessibility and attractiveness of knowledge. The principle of conscious and active teaching/learning is fulfilled in such conditions. This aim is furthered by direct contact with museum staff, whom the pupils treat as independent experts and interesting people.

We might add that lessons at memorial museums also enrich teachers’ knowledge about their pupils. They offer a substitute for joint research work and make closer, friendly contacts possible. This facilitates the realization of the principle of conscious participation in the educational process and allows for the improved planning of educational work.

Lessons at museums are subject to the general didactic rules that prevail in the educational process. Each museum lesson must thus be compatible with the school’s curriculum, and should be meticulously prepared in terms of content, methodology, and organization.

The most important thing is defining the goals that we wish to achieve during such a lesson. We will see that these goals can be achieved more deeply and easily at a museum. We can achieve much more there than at school. Work at a museum yields competences of a universal nature. This contributes to the all-around development of young people in a system of parallel instruction.³¹

Memorial museums offer conditions for meeting educational aims that the pupils can carry over into their real lives. After all, they have an “explanatory, moral, and warning function.”³² The conveyance of

³⁰ Quoted by I. Wojnar, *Muzeum czyli trwanie*, p. 17.

³¹ B. Kubis, *Muzealne oferty edukacyjne jako element rozwoju zainteresowań historycznych młodzieży*, in: *Muzea i archiwa*, p. 51.

³² T. Kranz, *Muzea – miejsca pamięci*, p. 9.

information through museum exhibits creates conditions for arousing empathy and patriotic, civic, and humanistic feelings. It influences the formation of positive attitudes toward the multicultural nature of our history (the multiplicity of memory). This provides an opportunity to meet the goals of European education. The artifacts gathered in museums are, after all, authentic testimony to the lives of people from various nations, cultures, milieus, generations, and occupational or other groups. They illustrate the past of Poles, Germans, Russians, Jews, French and Dutch people, and others. In this context it is easier to instill values like responsibility, courage, tolerance, solidarity and cultural heritage with sense.³³ Museum education can also favor the development of democracy by accenting the things that bring people together. It is an excellent setting for cross-section themes.

The institutional cooperation of museums with schools is a separate issue. Such cooperation should not result merely from a teacher's or museum practitioner's interest in this educational form. It should have a permanent organizational foundation.³⁴ It should be part of a planned strategy based on a systematic, active, and responsible partnership between people involved in the educational process (pupils, teachers, and museum professionals).

It is advisable to begin with broad consultation, since only an accurate mutual understanding of the needs and expectations of cooperation between schools and museums can ensure positive results.³⁵ Museum practitioners should serve as advisers, but leave teachers extensive autonomy in forming the concepts for museum lessons. This is an inherent part of teachers' competence and of the school's broad, coherent

³³ Ibid., p. 6; cf. also A. Ziębińska-Witek, *Między tekstem a spektaklem, czyli historia w muzeach*, in: *Historyk wobec źródeł. Historiografia klasyczna i nowe propozycje metodologiczne*, ed. J. Kolbuszewska, R. Stobiecki, Łódź, 2012, pp. 207–215.

³⁴ Cf. Z. Rajewski, *Muzeum – szkoła – ochrona dóbr kultury*, in: *Współpraca muzeów*, pp. 65–74.

³⁵ M. Russocki, A. Zielecki, *Muzeum a nauczyciel historii*, in: *Muzeum w nauczaniu*, p. 48.

instructional program. Museum professionals can—and should—propose lessons based on educational methods and forms that have been tried and tested in the museum. These include seeing selected exhibitions with a guide, meetings with eyewitnesses to history, study days, historical workshops, museum courses, work camps, laboratories, international projects and educational-historical seminars, internships, and volunteer work.³⁶ They are like a breath of fresh air for school education. It is also worth remembering that teachers expect professionally prepared publications, advice, visual material, and guides to the museum.

The particular nature of museum lessons makes the special organization of classes imperative.³⁷ Young people should not treat visits to a museum as simply an outing.³⁸ They must be aware that they have concrete tasks to meet.³⁹ A museum lesson must have a strictly defined subject and range of knowledge according to the principle of *non multa sed multum*. It should be remembered that too many exhibits, their uniqueness, or a large exhibition space can interfere with remembering (by piling up multiple layers of information and impressions). Prolonging the time spent at an exhibition can sometimes lead to tiredness and boredom, which might result from the fact that the historical items presented in museum collections do not fit into the context of the pupils' natural environment. Some items were only used on special occasions in the past. Others may have an ambiguous meaning for visitors, which may lead to false conclusions about and images of the past. Such a situation can also crop up when exhibits are not located in the appropriate group of items—something that happens rarely today.

We might agree with Érik Triquet that there is a threefold differentiation of museum visits: (1) initiating interest in the museum; (2) systematizing knowledge; and (3) keeping up to date with research

³⁶ Cf. *The State Museum at Majdanek. Educational Activities*, Lublin, 2010.

³⁷ For more on this subject see P. Unger, *Muzea w nauczaniu historii*, Warsaw, 1988.

³⁸ J. Maternicki, *Szkolne kółka historyczne*, Warsaw, 1966, p. 65.

³⁹ Cf. T. Gałaszewski, *Dziecko w muzeum. Funkcje muzeum w wychowaniu estetycznym*, Warsaw, 1967.

findings.⁴⁰ Magdalena Kosior-Szychiewicz, Agnieszka Tkaczyk, Andrzej and Ewa Osoba, Iwona Kozak, Aneta Szadziewska, and Emilia Kosowska-Stępniaak make the important observation that a museum lesson should include an introductory phase, a preparatory phase, the realization of the project, and evaluation and remarks by the practitioner.⁴¹ This is an especially apt proposition because it covers all the steps in such a lesson, step by step. Tomasz Kranz proposes the broadest formulation, postulating five phases that should be taken into account in museum education: the introductory phase, preparation, realization, summing up, and documentation and presentation.⁴² It also presents a detailed plan for an educational project at a memorial.⁴³

There is no space in a short article for detailed teaching suggestions on the form of projects, lesson plans, outlines, lesson protocols, and so on. These are easy to find in the instructional-methodological literature or on the web. Our goal has rather been to show the unusual nature of the poetics of museums as places that represent history—the memorials in historical (but not only historical) education. They have a special identity. They are authentic and enlightening. They maintain the “appropriateness” of the relation between object, context, and exposition. They are potentially the best ally for crisis-stricken Polish schools. Both schools and museums have a great mission to fulfill—shaping the culture of memory.

⁴⁰ É. Triquet, *Relacja szkoła – muzeum*, in: *Edukacja muzealna*, pp. 337–360.

⁴¹ M. Kosior-Szychiewicz et al., „Ludzie ludziom...” – z przeszłości uczymy się na przyszłość. *Polsko-niemieckie seminarium historyczne*, in: „Ludzie ludziom”, pp. 8–28.

⁴² T. Kranz, *Edukacja historyczna*, p. 75.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 76–90.

Wiesław Wysok

The Principles of Cooperation Between Museum Pedagogical Staff at Memorial Sites and Teachers in Carrying out Educational Projects – Practical Remarks

The living memories of wartime—the generation of witnesses and survivors—are passing unavoidably into history. The generational change, which brings to an end an epoch in the understanding of the memory of the Second World War, poses a new challenge for both museum-memorials and schools in conveying knowledge about the past within the framework of extramural historical education. Both schools and institutions have important missions in this area. For this reason, it seems imperative to reflect upon the range, form, and content of cooperation between teachers and educational staff at memorials within the framework of various activities held outside school.

Education at museums on the sites of former Nazi camps creates an unconventional and attractive space for a confrontation with the past and has great cognitive value. Many factors influence the educational success of study visits to memorials. Among the most important are careful planning of the program and defining the aims and methods as well as the means of achieving them. A further condition *sine qua non* for the successful preparation of a study visit is making contact with and meeting the museum pedagogical staffer conducting the project to discuss the program framework and structure. Personal contact also reinforces trust and enhances cooperation when creating the concept for the educational visit. The optimal solution is prior familiarization by the teacher with the memorial he plans to visit with his students. This can take place during a preliminary visit to the museum or through participation in a methodological-instructional seminar at the museum

on the subject of educational projects. The goal of the meeting is for the teacher to become well oriented as to the didactic base and the variety of educational opportunities at a given memorial.

An important educational premise and requirement connected with a visit by young people to a memorial museum (and something that teachers seem to forget sometimes) is the voluntary principle. Pupils should make a conscious decision to travel to a museum commemorating the victims of Nazism. This principle applies to all aspects of the stay, beginning with a conscious decision by the pupils to take part in a museum project, through the choice of the subject they will deal with during the lesson, to the way they will follow up on the visit. The school should encourage young people to take the initiative in issues dealing with the Second World War by developing an internal readiness to work with history, understood as a cognitive and emotional process.

It is worth emphasizing that there is no single correct and ideal way for young people to learn and internalize history at memorial museums. The modes of communication and expression preferred by the pupils and their individual requirements and needs should be taken into account when choosing the form and method of work, which should be matched to both their intellectual and emotional capacities. This is why the teacher must make sure that the planned visit to the memorial is appropriate for a given age group, and respects their educational needs and their knowledge.

Visiting the site of a former concentration camp supplies the visitors with many cognitive and experiential opportunities differing from a typical school lesson. Contact with an authentic site and using original objects in educational work can awaken a special desire to learn, influence the learning process, and stimulate the pupils' interests and motivation. It must nevertheless be said that working on the history of a camp creates an emotionally fraught situation for both pupils and teacher. This applies mostly to the pupils, who are frequently vulnerable to experiencing strong emotions during a visit to a memorial. Experiencing these emotions, however, can be justified in educational

terms and seems downright necessary for a productive encounter with the historical site and its past. The affective aspect of learning about the past makes it easier to construct a bridge to temporally remote historical events and inspire a sense of empathy with the victims and survivors. Emotional factors can therefore be used to initiate the instructional process. Thanks to this, an educational visit can become important to the personal development of the visitor. The teacher must be aware of this and take account of this component of the project in the process of preparing the group to visit the memorial site. Beyond this, the teacher should think before the visit about various practical things to do to help the pupils work out their emotions.

When the lesson at the museum begins, there is an important change in the understanding of the role of the teacher, regardless of how the pupils view him in the school context (teacher of a specific subject, homeroom teacher, etc.). In the didactic program at the museum he becomes a counselor in matters of substance for both the whole group and each participant individually, but also a partner assisting in the intellectual and emotional efforts of the participants. In the new role thus understood, the task of the teacher is to accompany the pupils in a group learning process, and to help them overcome difficulties, fears, and tensions. This requires constant reflection on the ongoing learning process, the group dynamics, and the structure and course of the lesson. The teacher must also consider the moment at which the memorial museum visit will appear in his working plans and how to integrate the visit with his work with the class. Connecting with the subjects discussed during lessons in school, if the school curriculum makes this possible, seems to be a factor conducive to achieving educational goals at the historical site.

Obviously, there are important differences between the role of the museum educational staffer and the teacher. This applies mostly to responsibility for achieving the requirements in terms of content connected with the project, as well as skills and opportunity for influencing the participants during a visit to the memorial museum. This also

translates into chances to shape the instructional process and build a trust-based relation with the young people. The educational staffer's attitude—his charisma, authentic commitment, and persuasiveness—has great influence on the intensity of participation in lessons, individual study of a historical theme, deeper group reflection, and the forming by participants of their own perspective on the past. He is perceived as a person whose competence and personal influence can ensure that the participants orient themselves in dealing with difficult historical material. The goal of his teaching work is to stimulate pupils to independent work and to inspire a creative approach to new historical content. The educational staffer therefore creates an organizational and content-based framework for the independent study instincts of the participants in the educational sessions, making it possible for them to realize the basic goals. His position in the instructional process evolves toward the function of moderator. He must possess essential knowledge and skills connected with constructing a museum narration, encouraging pupils to undertake a critical encounter with history and to ask their own questions, while moderating the dialogue between past and present. He is also responsible for creating an appropriate working atmosphere during the lesson, which should give the pupils a sense of satisfaction and make them feel that they are doing something exceptional.

The museum pedagogical staffer is also responsible for giving the teacher the right methodological tips and instructional material with the goal of properly preparing the lessons that introduce and sum up the visit to the memorial site.

A task shared by the teacher and pedagogical staffer is making the pupils aware that their role in the teaching process changes in a museum commemorating the victims of Nazism. In practice, it often happens that pupils taking part in extramural lessons are unaccustomed to an active manner of working or do not possess the skills required for learning in such an educational setting. The teacher and the pedagogical staffer must thus take responsibility for preparing the pupil for assuming a new role and help him to find his place in the learning process. As

opposed to classroom lessons, pupils taking part in museum projects can help determine the subject, course, and organization of the work. This also applies to the presentation of the final results—participants in the project must present their own ideas, justify them, and explain their choices and standpoints. Understood in this way, the agency of the learners is among the most important postulates of the pedagogy of remembrance. It permits pupils not only to learn new skills, but also to join in the current of the local life of their school and hometown. It is also essential to support the development of the social competence of individuals by both schools and memorials.

Establishing the precise division and scope of tasks between the pedagogical staffer and the teacher before starting the project conditions the successful conduct of the visit in its various stages, in terms of both organization and subject matter. The entire undertaking, furthermore, requires the active participation of all those involved—the teacher, the pedagogical staffer, and the pupils. In principle, each educational program carried out in a commemorative museum should contain several phases that are integral parts of it.¹ Among the most important of them, regardless of the form and methods chosen, are the following:

1. Preparation

The preparatory phase must take into account organizational, subject-matter, and methodological aspects. Before making the decision about the choice of the main subject of a study visit to a commemorative museum, the teacher should hold a discussion with the pupils about their motivation, personal interests, and doubts. A very good solution is to assign brief written responses that are presented in a classroom

¹ A practical description of the different phases of a project can be found in the publication „*Ludzie ludziom... – z przeszłości uczymy się na przyszłość. Polsko-niemiecki projekt edukacyjny zrealizowany w Państwowym Muzeum na Majdanku w dniach 20–25 maja 2007 roku*”, Lublin, 2009.

forum. This is important for creating a group atmosphere supportive of the educational visit, and also for better understanding the pupils' decisions. Beyond this, the type of responses will constitute valuable comparative material in the summing-up phase of the project.

Success in extramural education is supported by finding and formulating a clear goal for the project and creating a stable motivational platform. This is based on the cooperation of teacher and pupils, with the assistance of the museum educator. The components of this are authentic interest in an encounter with the past, a desire to take part in group work, and an attractive working model and form of producing the final outcome of the entire undertaking (exhibition, online report, film, etc.). The overall goal of the introductory preparation for a visit to a memorial site is an attempt at finding a variety of routes for approaching the historical subject. The teacher's task is to encourage potential participants in a visit to a commemorative memorial to seek out traces of the past, for instance in their own families, in order to strengthen their motivation and contribute to the formation of personal attitudes to history. Another way of achieving this goal can be the discovery of fragments of the past (such as a visit to a historical cemetery) or existing forms of commemoration (monuments or memorial plaques) in their hometown. This prompts pupils to pose individual questions and begin the process of working on remembrance. In the sphere of content, the teacher should convey introductory information to the young people on the historical site they plan to visit or, initiating the process of making the pupils more active, prepare such information (which should correspond to their intellectual and emotional abilities and needs) together with them. It is recommended that the method and content are selected after consultation with the museum pedagogical staffer. Pupils must be aware of where they are going and know the significance of the memorial site to their region and country, and sometimes also to the culture of remembrance in an international dimension.

The museum pedagogical staffer should be invited to participate in the introductory phase of the project in order to present the educational

possibilities and discuss the working methods, what the museum expects from the pupils, and the teaching process itself. His responsibilities also include explaining to the pupils how to understand the contemporary role of the museum and memorial. Together with the museum pedagogical staffer, the teacher should also establish which communicative structures will be used in summing up the various points of the program and the entire project (open discussion, written statements, etc.).

The pupils' discovery of the personal significance of history and its connection to their family or hometown, along with their curiosity and emotional confrontation with the past, are factors that strengthen the motivation to visit the memorial site. Both the museum pedagogue and the teacher have the task of helping pupils to explore and become aware of their own needs, fears, and uncertainties, as well as what they expect of the planned project, in the introductory phase.

2. Realization

This is the crucial stage in the entire educational undertaking, which is why carrying it out requires great intellectual, content-related, and emotional effort from the pedagogical staffer and the teacher. Cooperation between these partners is intended to provide the pupils with the best possible learning conditions through inquisitive, creative work.

The museum pedagogue takes responsibility for creating an appropriate setting, furnishing instructional material, and organizing the lessons. The choice of material and historical sources is intended to enable the participants to analyze history from many perspectives (the perspective of the survivors, the perpetrators, Poles, Jews, or other groups of victims). The pedagogical staffer also acquaints the pupils with the history of the camp and the extant original artifacts. These original camp objects help the pupils better feel the atmosphere of the place, thus supporting the learning process. The role of the specialist counselor

from the museum is to make the participants aware that, when working on a given subject, they must make the effort to seek out and discover their own truths about history. While doing this, he must appeal to the principle of the many-sided nature of history and the multiplicity of interpretations. The pedagogical staffer therefore does not relieve the pupils of their cognitive efforts and does not attempt to influence the outcome of their work, but rather creates a space for study and reflection. He is, however, responsible for the agreement of the prepared historical subject matter with the latest scholarly research findings.

In the process of work on the project, which involves not only dealing with history but also working through impressions and emotions, the teacher should help the pupils on an ongoing basis, drawing on his own experience to explain problems that come up and assist in overcoming them. Because, as a rule, he knows his own students, he is better equipped than the pedagogical staffer to diagnose their needs, preferences, and possible difficulties with historical material. Participants in the lessons ought to become aware of their own feelings and emotions, and share them with the project counselor and their fellow participants. Through the effort of inquiring, the pupils not only take in the history of a given camp, but must also work out their own position and understanding of history, as well as learning how to express the experience they have acquired in forms that correspond to their sensitivity and skills (posters, texts, multimedia presentations, art work, photography, etc.). The teacher should not impose his point of view, but rather give the pupils a chance to find the means of expression that are best for them.

The central question that the museum pedagogical staffer and teacher should leave with the participants (while simultaneously encouraging them to answer it) can be formulated in the following way: What do the things I have learned today about historical events have to do with me? This question represents a point of contact with contemporary social realities and can be an inspiration to reflecting on the individual and collective sense of remembrance. The attempt at an answer (negative or

positive) is a step toward formulating a personal relationship (or lack of one) to history, and toward situating the pupil in the public discourse on remembrance.

3. Summarizing

The summing-up stage, with all the counselors in the project taking part, is aimed at making it possible for pupils to look from a distance at their experience and the knowledge they have acquired. As a follow-up to projects that have an end-product, the pupils and the counseling team evaluate the results of the work and prepare to present them in a chosen place (school, online, youth club, etc.). The teacher must remember that the form, that is the active method of presenting the product of the work and the opportunity for pupils to enter into a dialogue with the audience, are more important than the place of presentation. Only in public debate does a participant in the project have a chance to present and define his views, motivation, and decisions. Aside from discussing the “material” results of the work, the pupils should also think about their impressions and experiences, articulate them, and justify their viewpoints. This is a condition for progressing from a critical disputation with the past to the process of shaping and refining a contemporary historical awareness and constructing points of reference to the present. This makes it easier for them to carry over the knowledge and experiences they have acquired into today’s world. The supportive role of the teacher in this process consists of taking into account the pupils’ opinions and remarks on the issue. Because the goal of education is the formation of conscious and responsible citizens, the teacher should guarantee the young people taking part in the project a chance to discuss and tell about their interest in specific themes. The important thing in all of this is for the pupils to be able to formulate their judgments freely, and discuss dilemmas, differences of opinion, and controversies in a critical and open way. The teacher-pupil relationship should be one of partnership.

The teacher can also initiate discussion of the contemporary forms of xenophobia, prejudice, persecution, or intolerance in such a way that the historical points of reference take on a current context and become a starting point for discussion of these phenomena and of the individual's responsibility to counteract them. It is also essential for the teacher and museum pedagogue to prepare an evaluation questionnaire, which makes a systematic assessment of the lessons from the pupils' point of view possible. An opportunity for the participants to voice critical remarks and opinions lies in the interest of those who conduct the lesson by allowing them to introduce corrections and improvements in their future educational undertakings.

The results of the work by the museum pedagogue and teacher can usually be appreciated over a longer time frame. This results mostly from the fact that historical education at memorial sites largely affects awareness processes, and changes in this domain require not only time but also effort from the third party, that is, the pupils. The museum pedagogue and the teacher must additionally accept the fact that the results of an encounter with history at an authentic site—regardless of the posited instructional and educational goals—remain open and hard to foresee. What is more, it is the participants in the project who determine which elements of their experience they internalize and treat as having normative and practical meaning in their lives. Those benefits of participation in the program that can be measured directly, on the other hand, most frequently have to do with the knowledge they have absorbed and their personal experiences and impressions.

However, in order to reinforce the potential long-term effects of the program, the teacher should encourage the pupils to join other activities connected with the theme of history and the present day (such as research into the history of their hometown, working as a guide, volunteering, or serving an internship at a memorial, or becoming involved in social projects and aid to those who need it). In this area, too, the final decision belongs to the pupil, although a well-argued suggestion from the teacher can play a large role here.

The scope, contents, and intensity of preparing, carrying out, and evaluating the project depend on the chosen form of the stay at the museum-memorial and should be negotiated. Nevertheless, the overarching goal of the cooperation between the teacher and the museum pedagogue should be the formation of an attitude of active memory in the younger generation. Thanks to active and creative participation in museum projects, the participants have an opportunity to gain influence over the co-creation of a new kind of memory—cultural memory—and by the same token to bring about varied forms of commemorating the victims of the Second World War. A well prepared and well conducted educational visit to a memorial site can contribute to that. Successful cooperation between school and museum is a necessary condition.

Wiesław Wysok, Ewa Bąbol

Study Visits in the Educational Practices of the State Museum at Majdanek – Forms, Aims, and Working Methods

1. Visiting the permanent historical exhibition and grounds of the former camp at Majdanek

Trips to the State Museum at Majdanek by the decided majority of pupils consist of visits lasting several hours. This form of encounter with the past will surely continue to be the most frequently practiced form of visiting museum-memorials. Visits to the Museum can nevertheless take different forms. To meet the expectations of pupils and the standards of contemporary historical education, the Museum at Majdanek has developed alternative models for study visits. Their common denominator is the principle of an active role for the pupils, accenting the necessity of independent learning and involvement in studying history. From the point of view of educational and instructional effectiveness, the stay at the memorial museum should go beyond the standard guided tour, which usually includes seeing the historical exhibition, some of the camp buildings, and a documentary film. The proposals presented below are aimed at making a creative approach to history on the part of the young people possible and prompting them to reflect on the significance of the memory of the past, and the commemoration of the victims of the Nazi dictatorship, on the historic and contemporary levels.

1.1. A visit broadened to include cognitive-emotional aspects

A short visit (about three hours) to the memorial can yield instructional benefits if it is not limited only to providing general knowledge about the camp, but also includes elements that influence the cognitive and affective spheres. The measurable educational effects of the visit depend to a large extent on the working methods used, the form of historical narrative, the professionalism of the pedagogical staffer, and the preparation and degree of motivation of the participants in the visit.

The museum's message should reach the pupils on the cognitive, emotional, and reflective levels during the time they spend on the grounds of the former Nazi camp. In the first instance, this is a matter of sketching out the overall historic context, and the absorption and understanding by the young people of historical events in the context of their causes and effects. The emotional level is intended to make it possible for the participants in the visit to "experience" history in a different way from in the classroom, to generate personal identification with what they have learned, and to empathize with the victims and survivors. The very fact of being in the authentic historical space and the unique aura of encountering the vestiges of the past—the buildings, original items, and artifacts—aid in this. Starting with this cognitive-emotional message of the museum, the pedagogical staffer can inspire the pupils to think about the history they have "seen," and by the same token to combine the cognitive process with deeper reflection, which includes formulating conclusions and questions that are important from the perspective of young people, such as: What is history? How is it represented? What do I have in common with this as an individual and citizen?

The pedagogical staffer should apply the appropriate methodological criteria to the museum's message. Among the most important of these are visual presentation (as part of the historical narration), evoking situations (identification with victims and survivors), negative identification with the perpetrators (debating the motives of their criminal deeds), and carrying over the historical experience and information

into a contemporary context (reflection on the meaning of the past and remembrance to the younger generation).

The working method consists of making the pupils active during the time they spend going through the permanent historical exhibition and grounds of the former camp, and fostering a dialogue with these spaces. In this way the pedagogical staffer attempts to create a platform for the young people to ask their own questions. During an educational visit lasting several hours, it is possible to introduce elements of educational discussion by appealing to the pupils' general knowledge and their capacity for independent thinking, and questioning stereotypical ideas. This is intended to counteract the passive perception of history and encouraging the young people to discuss the things they have learned.

A precondition for success is appropriately motivating pupils to visit the museum-memorial, and to learn about the doubts, fears, and expectations they connect with the visit itself. Furthermore, during the preparations for the visit, the young people should learn about the overall history of the camp at Majdanek, define their own fields of interest, and think about the issues they would like to explore more thoroughly during their visit to the Museum. Acquainting them with instructional material (accounts by prisoners, documentary films, etc.), or with the Museum at Majdanek website (www.majdanek.eu), is helpful in this regard. It is also important for the teacher and the pupils to establish together how they wish to honor the memory of the victims of the camp (lighting candles, reciting a poem, etc.). These factors give rise to a sense of co-responsibility among the pupils for the visit to the memorial, create a good atmosphere, and foster the integration of the class.

1.2. Discovering the historical site. The visit combined with individual discovery of original objects and vestiges of the camp

This model of a study visit lasting approximately three hours consists of screening a documentary film about Lublin Concentration Camp, touring the permanent historical exhibition with a pedagogical staffer,

and the independent discovery by the pupils of places and events connected with concrete, extant, original camp objects (buildings, squares, artifacts) on the grounds of the memorial. In the first phase of the visit, the museum pedagogue acquaints the young people with the history of Majdanek. Next, the participants in the lessons are divided into several groups and receive instructional material. This includes a map of the camp and concise information about particular places and preserved camp buildings. The main part of the material is made up of accounts by survivors, describing events and buildings from their perspective. The pupils, as they “wander” around the memorial, have the task of seeking out the places and buildings described in this material and comparing their present state with the accounts by survivors. They share their impressions and conclusions with their peers at the Museum at the end of the visit, or in school during the summing up of the project.

The essence of looking for the vestiges of the past is not only acquiring more information, but also confronting history and its representations as recorded in the material remains and artifacts. In addition, the young people have an opportunity for an individual and creative experience of history that may bear the fruit of questions about the significance of remembrance in their lives, and inspire them to think about contemporary forms of commemoration. Aside from the cognitive space of the Museum (exhibitions, the official historical narrative), the pupils are also spending time in an emotional space (creative thinking, individual experience, and images of memory from their family home) in which they can ask questions and form their own attitude to history.

1.3. From the ramp to the camp: Vestiges of the victims and survivors

The next model for an educational visit has the goal of broadening the perspectives—spatial, cognitive, and affective—from which young people learn about the history of Lublin Concentration Camp. This model posits the inclusion in the program of visiting the area outside the

Museum, that is, the grounds of the railway siding where trains full of deportees arrived at Majdanek and the route they followed to the camp. The primary theme is experiencing the route and discovering meanings and memory traces in the altered topography of the historical site. While doing so, pupils can re-create the fate of the people imprisoned in Majdanek at many stages of their life in the camp. The structure of the program designated for secondary-school pupils, which takes six hours, is composed of several thematic units.

The study visit begins with a meeting of the pupils, teacher, and pedagogical staffer on Wrońska Street, where the railroad siding (on the grounds of the so-called *Flugplatz*, about 2 km from the camp) is located. This is an encounter with a historical site that has undergone fundamental reshaping. The pupils obtain lesson material with excerpts from accounts in which former Majdanek prisoners describe the conditions on the transport, their arrival in Lublin, and their situation during the march to the camp. Participants in the lesson read memoir excerpts intended to acquaint them, from the perspective of survivors, with both the events themselves and the atmosphere. The next point in the program is familiarization with the present state of commemoration along the route along which thousands of men, women, and children deported to Lublin were herded into the Majdanek camp—the plaque at the railroad overpass. This serves to evoke reflection and discussion about the adequacy of such commemoration and a search for one's own ideas. Developing new proposals for commemoration, matching the sensitivity and imagination of contemporary youth, can be one of the tasks for the participants in the educational visit.

Along the way to the Museum, the pupils join in active program work. Their task, in small groups, is to conduct brief interviews with people who live near Droga Męczenników Majdanka (Road of the Martyrs of Majdanek) and the former camp. Before the beginning of the project, in consultation with the people conducting the project—the pedagogical staffer and the counselor from their school—the pupils formulate questions about the knowledge and memory of events connected with

the functioning of Lublin Concentration Camp. The goal of taking this survey is obtaining information about whether and to what degree Majdanek and its history are present today in the consciousness of Lublin residents who live near the former camp.

The next stage in the project takes place inside the Museum at Majdanek, where the young people learn the history of Lublin Concentration Camp on the basis of the documentary film and the historical exhibition. This phase of the visit concludes with an independent search by the pupils for specific places among the preserved original camp objects (selected barracks and other remains) and re-creating events connected with them. This is supported with material prepared by the pedagogical staffer. The summing up of the entire project consists above all of a content-based assessment of how it went, and also of the presentation by the pupils of their ideas for new forms of commemorating the victims of Majdanek.

The methodology is oriented toward creative learning, active perception of history, and supporting the work of remembrance. Pupils are confronted with historical events and the ways they are commemorated. This gives them an occasion for individually shaping the course of the visit, becoming responsible and active agents in the learning process. The evocation in the young people of a feeling of having influence on the co-creation of a new culture of remembrance serves this end.

1.4. In the role of guide

Another form of a visit lasting several hours and designated for pupils in secondary schools is a visit with the active participation of young people. In this case, the pedagogical staffer is not only a source of information about the camp, but also functions as project moderator. About four hours must be set aside for such a lesson. It has the following goals:

- learning about the history of the concentration camp at Majdanek and the fate of the people imprisoned there, as well as Nazi policy in occupied Poland.

– developing skills in independent work with source material and the selective choice of information.

– forming the skill of expressing things in a coherent, synthesizing way.

The passage through the historical exhibition is preceded by work with source material, mostly accounts by former prisoners and studies intended for the general reader. They deal with selected issues connected with the functioning of Majdanek, as a basis for forming an overall image of the history of the camp. The themes that the young people work on are the reception of prisoner transports, living and working conditions in the camp, and forms of resistance. Special attention is paid to the youngest prisoners—Jewish, Belarusian, and Polish children. Participants also learn about the biographies of several members of the camp garrison. An important role is played here by examining the motives for their actions and the question of responsibility for taking part in atrocities. After familiarizing themselves with the material, the young people prepare a several-minute-long talk and set out with the pedagogical staffer into the space of the museum where, at a place of their choosing, they recapitulate and comment on the information they previously gathered.

The pupils taking part in the lesson appreciate the opportunity to work independently with source material and play the role of guide. It is also worth emphasizing that reading the accounts before embarking on the task of acting as guide breaks down the emotional barriers to contact with the camp space and enables pupils to make more conscious choices about visiting. Participants in active visiting from Secondary School No. 1 in Lublin summed up their impressions:

In my opinion, the workshops at Majdanek were a very good idea because they broadened the knowledge I had acquired in school and enabled me to learn more about the history of the camp on the basis of accounts by prisoners. I liked the workshop form, that is, each group prepares information on a given subject and later takes on the role of guide. That was my favorite part. The documents from which we collected information were very interesting.

Pupil, age 17

Working with the source material and taking on the role of guides is a very good idea, which helped us better understand the history of a place that is so important to us and allowed us to share our own observations in the classroom forum. Everyone was involved and mobilized, which is why I regard these workshops as fruitful.

Pupil, age 18

The workshops that took place at Majdanek were very educational and interesting. They enabled me to learn more about the history of that place and understand it. I especially liked the group work on source texts and the opportunity to be a guide for the rest of the class.

Pupil, age 18

It is worth emphasizing that none of these models of several-hour-long study visits can be organized and carried out in a spontaneous manner. They require longer preparation in terms of content and organization, consultation with the Museum pedagogical staffer, and a final evaluation and presentation of the results of the project.

2. A study day

Among the themes taken up during educational projects on the history of Lublin Concentration Camp are issues connected with the attitudes of the perpetrators, the people who played a passive and active role in the use of terror against concentration camp prisoners. The instructional concept of lessons devoted to the members of the camp SS garrison embodies one of the premises of the pedagogy of remembrance, which states that the pupils, aside from building empathy and positive identification with the victims, should also have an opportunity to grapple with negative biographies. This type of negative identification, which is psychologically harder to accept, nevertheless makes it possible to broaden both the historical and the educational perspective. The basic goals of lessons about the perpetrators are:

– familiarization with profiles of selected members of the SS garrison at Majdanek.

- familiarization with theories that elucidate the motives behind people taking part in criminal activities.
- making the young people aware of the mechanisms that condition behavior characterized by aggression and violence.
- inculcating assertiveness, non-conformism, and responsibility for one's choices.
- critical reflection on one's own behavior and attitudes toward other people.

The lessons last about three hours and are characterized by deeper reflection on the concentration camps. They are intended for pupils from secondary schools who have previously visited the Museum at Majdanek and dispose of general knowledge about the history of Lublin Concentration Camp. In a longer variant (about five hours), the lesson can be held with groups that have not previously visited the Museum, and is combined with touring the permanent historical exhibition and the grounds of the camp. In view of the difficult issues in the lesson, however, the visit to the Museum should be preceded with the proper preparation, and a survey of the interests, motivations, and intellectual capacities of the potential participants in the project.

Question: Were the Nazis, in planning and carrying out their crimes, normal? What are the psychosocial mechanisms that turn ordinary people into murderers? This was the central theme of the workshops on "Perpetrators: Ordinary people or enthusiastic operatives of the Holocaust?". In February 2011, pupils from Secondary School No. 9 in Lublin took part in these workshops. The participants were divided into groups and given two thematic modules to work with. One group delved into the biographies of members of the SS garrison in Lublin Concentration Camp (two members of the staff in the commandant's office, the camp physician, and two female overseers from the women's camp). The pupils concentrated above all on their lives before the war and the motives that led them to join the SS or sign up to serve in the concentration camp. They paid particular attention to the behavior of these people in the camp at Majdanek. During the lesson, they

attempted to establish the main reasons for the cruel behavior of the members of the SS garrison toward the prisoners.

The other group of pupils analyzed the theoretical psychological-historical concepts that explain the behavior of the perpetrators. One of them, the dispositional hypothesis, starts from the assumption that human behavior can be explained by character traits. There is a so-called authoritarian character that is susceptible to the influence of charismatic leaders and is marked by a tendency to simplified thinking about the world. Such people manifest great potential for brutality and aggression, especially in regard to people who are different in cultural or ethnic terms. Another interpretation, the situational hypothesis, is based in turn on the premise that there is a strong relationship between a person's attitudes and behavior, and the conditions and circumstances under which that person acts. Proponents of this theory stress that situational factors, social functions, and currently prevailing norms play a greater role than individual character traits. Other researchers, pointing to ideological factors (racism, anti-Semitism), contend that greater pressure on the behavior of the perpetrators results from such causes as group pressure, a desire to fit in, a readiness to obey authority, brutalization brought about by war, and treating the victims as objects.

At the conclusion of the lesson there was a discussion summing up the results of the work in groups. The pupils concluded that, without ideological indoctrination and prolonged racist and anti-Semitic propaganda that reinforced the conviction of German racial superiority, genocide against Jews, Poles, and other people would not have been possible. On the other hand, the behavior of the perpetrators was undoubtedly influenced by such factors as submitting to orders, group pressure, the desire for career advancement, and character traits (ruthlessness, brutality, emotional instability, and the authoritarian mentality).

Participants in the project concluded that brutal characteristics came out in specific situations. They summed up the lesson as follows:

In today's lesson I learned that character traits do not have a direct influence on what a person becomes, because he is not evil by nature. No one is born aggressive. It is the environment and conditions that influence the development of certain characteristics that lie deep in the human psyche, but emerge only under the right conditions.

Pupil, age 17

I am glad that I could take part in these lessons, because I deepened my knowledge on the subject of camp life, that I could learn about people who were normal at first, like us, even of a similar age, but one single factor, or something else, caused them to become the tormentors of others. During these lessons I understood that you have to be cautious in making life decisions, and also that one person can be a perpetrator towards another.

Pupil, age 18

I understood that there are no limits that a man will not transgress, and no things that he will not do. Cruelty and evil are not natural phenomena. This is a deliberate, intended, conscious desire on the part of a person to inflict pain on another person.

Pupil, age 18

I noticed myself that the main reason for the behavior of the perpetrators is a desire for career advancement and group pressure, which lead to the loss of human values.

Pupil, age 17

Some of the pupils also pointed out that it was proper to delve into the motives of the perpetrators:

I believe it is worth pondering what influenced these people who contributed to the death of prisoners. I do not understand their behavior and I think that nothing can justify this. However, looking at and analyzing the fate, situation, and behavior of the prisoner victims, I think there is a need to ponder the motives of the perpetrators' actions.

Pupil, age 18

According to me, taking up the subject of the perpetrators is needed. Analyzing their motives, characters, and the reasons for acting that way makes it

possible to come to the appropriate conclusions for the future. Thanks to this it is possible to bring up young people in such a way that they act properly in a given situation.

Pupil, age 18

Lessons like this are very necessary because learning about these events is usually based on the victims, and the motivations of the perpetrators are never considered.

Pupil, age 17

During the summing-up, there were also some skeptical voices:

I do not think that any deeper analysis of the factors that can influence such behavior makes any sense, because too much depends on the situation and we are unable to predict how we will behave in a given situation.

Pupil, age 18

3. Museum lessons

3.1. Museum lessons using video recordings with witnesses to history

“I talk to everyone who wants to listen to me”

The change of generations—the departing of the direct witnesses to events—means that a question has arisen in educational work: How to convey the perspective of the persecuted and victims of Nazi dictatorship to today’s and future generations? One possibility is to use audio and video recordings, which have special value among the remaining memoirs and records: they document the living memory of wartime. They are, of course, no substitute for personal meetings with witnesses to that epoch, but they represent important source and didactic material in educational work with young people. They impart the individual experience of the victims and also present the time of persecution, suffering, and struggling against the reality of the camp from a personal perspective.

The Museum at Majdanek, on the basis of interviews preserved on audio and video media, has developed a pedagogical-media concept in this regard. Its essence is presenting the witness to that epoch in the role of the author of the historical message. Taking advantage of concrete accounts, biographical narration acquires the character of “archived memory” for the participants in museum lessons to deal with.

Achieving the following aims during the lesson is planned:

- acquiring knowledge about the concentration camp at Majdanek.
- learning about the personal experiences of witnesses to history in a broader historical context.
- supporting the development of historical thinking and empathy.
- inculcating the skill of selecting information, classifying historical facts, and locating events in time and space.
- assisting in the development of the skill of utilizing information from various sources (film, video recordings, excerpts from memoirs, studies intended for the general reader).

On the methodological level, the lesson is oriented toward practical and creative work by the participants. The lessons last about five hours, and are intended for students from intermediate and secondary schools.

In October 2010, young people from Secondary School No. 6 in Lublin took part in a museum lesson titled “I talk to everyone who wants to listen to me,” based on a biographical narration by a former Polish political prisoner of Majdanek, Wanda Ossowska. The visit to the Museum at Majdanek was preceded by a preparatory meeting during which the participants defined their motivations and expectations of the planned project.

The program of the visit to the Museum at Majdanek began with the viewing of a documentary film about the history of Lublin Concentration Camp, which made it possible to situate the fate of Wanda Ossowska within the broader context of German occupation policy in the Lublin area. During the museum lesson based on the video recording, pupils learned about selected issues from the history of the former concentration camp in Lublin, including the intake of transports of

Jews to the camp and selection for the gas chambers, prisoner escapes, mutual aid among prisoners, the functioning of the hospital in the women's field, and the work of a physician incarcerated at Majdanek, Dr. Stefania Perzanowska.

The main part of the lesson consisted of work with the source, in the form of the video recording. The pupils started working when they obtained a task that they carried out while viewing the reminiscences and after the screening concluded.

The tasks to be completed while watching the account were as follows:

- in a few points, note the events that the subject talked about.
- note your reflections and feelings while watching the excerpts from the account.

After the showing, the pupils shared the initial, spontaneous observations that accompanied them while watching the film.

The tasks to be completed after watching the account were as follows:

- tell which part of the excerpt made a particular impression on you, and why.
- formulate two or more questions that you would like to ask the subject of the video if you were conducting the interview with the subject of the video.
- write a short text in which you commemorate this prisoner of Majdanek. Do not write a factual summary of her account or a classical biographical sketch, but rather attempt to explain what things about the subject and her fate made a particular impression on you. The proposed forms are an article for the school newspaper or website, a letter to a close friend or to Wanda Ossowska herself, a poem, etc.

On the basis of what they had learned, the participants in the lesson wrote short answers to the questions, formulated conclusions and assessments, and shared them with other pupils during the discussion. Writing brief mini-essays, as proven in practice, can stimulate the pupils' creativity and their skill at self-expression while encouraging them to take up further historical themes. It must be remembered at the same time that some pupils may not want or be able to lay bare their

deeper feelings and experiences in the presence of such an emotional and difficult subject as the history of the concentration camp and the fate of its victims. That is why it is worth taking the time to find another form of expression for these pupils (drawing, painting, photography).

The final stage in the workshops was visiting the museum exhibition and the grounds of the former camp with special attention to places and issues that featured in the video the pupils had watched. After the lesson there was an evaluation of the project, and the young people had a chance to speak out on the subject of their impressions, observations, and reflections on the significance of what they had learned.

Here are statements by some of the participants in the museum lessons:

Sadness and regret. No one can really feel what Wanda Ossowska felt. I have not lived through the things she did. Only a person with a very strong character could survive that hell. After viewing the film many people are wondering about the real sense of life and its value.

Pupil, age 16

In today's times we are looking around the world for heroes and authorities for ourselves. Often it's a singer, actor, politician, or athlete. We overlook the fact that there are many heroes among us, that we pass them in the street, and we are unaware of how much they have achieved. An example of such a hero is Wanda Ossowska—a prisoner of the concentration camp at Majdanek—the woman thanks to whom the hospital was set up, who saved a Jewish woman's newborn child, to whom it was always possible to turn, and she would try to help.

Pupil, age 16

During my visit to the Museum I learned about a wonderful woman, Wanda Ossowska, who was a prisoner in the camp at Majdanek. She is a figure toward whom I felt great respect and admiration. Her attitude made a great impression on me and I would like to tell you about what made the greatest impression on me. Wanda Ossowska does not talk about what she felt and experienced; she concentrates mostly on the people who were around her. She tells about how, together with Dr. Stefania Perzanowska, she aided sick prisoners. She presents the story of a mother who, out of love for her children, voluntarily went to her death together with them. Despite all the terrible events she lived through, she

can talk about this with great calm. Under the pressure of death, she could help people disinterestedly. She is a figure who deserves notice and respect. I believe that everyone should know who Wanda Ossowska was.

Pupil, age 16

I am writing a letter to you because I want to tell you about a certain woman by the name of Wanda Ossowska. She was a prisoner in the concentration camp at Majdanek. She had the position of nurse and she brought help to the sick and needy. Her account aroused many feelings in me that I would like to share with you. Wanda was a person with a strong character, bringing help, and she did not think about her own death, which gave her the strength to survive. According to me, Wanda Ossowska is an interesting person who can answer many of the questions that come up on the subject of Majdanek, I think that you would be interested in the museum lesson at which I learned about this hero.

Pupil, age 16

Eyes

Empty, the light of life gone out

Arms

Skinny as long, white, dead candlesticks

Legs

Like fragile sticks trying to hold up a tree

Ribs

Resembling broken prison bars

Faces

Frozen in horror

They were still alive

Pupil, age 16

Aside from the lesson featuring the recording of Wanda Ossowska, the educational offerings of the State Museum at Majdanek include other lessons that make use of video: “Different fates—similar dreams” and “The world behind the barbed wire.” Lesson scenarios are available at www.majdanek.eu.

3.2. Museum lessons on the basis of original camp objects

“We were only numbers”

This lesson is based mainly on work with historical sources and posits the active participation of the young people in educational sessions. Its strong point is the overall presentation of the functioning of the concentration camp at Majdanek. It makes it possible for young people unfamiliar with camp subjects to learn in thorough detail about the principles according to which the camp functioned and the characteristic phenomena there. The starting material for these lessons consists of original items from the camp understood as bearers of memory, and the historical contents related to them. To this day, the Museum at Majdanek preserves almost 300,000 various original items and sees to their conservation. They are eloquent witnesses to suffering and the experiences of starvation, sickness, and violence, but also of the struggle to retain dignity.

Aims of the lesson:

- learning about the mechanisms by which the concentration camp functioned and Nazi policy in occupied Poland, using the camp at Majdanek as an example.
- inculcating the skills connected with the evaluation and critical analysis of source materials.
- developing an independent approach to studying historical issues.
- developing the skill of expressing oneself in public and formulating one’s ideas clearly.

Because the objects themselves can stir the emotions, it is exceptionally important to place them in context. This is why the pedagogical staffer begins the lesson with a multimedia presentation featuring a historical commentary. It includes, among other things, photographs of things brought to the camp and discovered after liberation—documents, items of everyday use like combs, razors, or books, and items for religious use. The pupils learn that many of the deportees were unaware of the fate that awaited them—that when they arrived in Lublin, they

would find themselves in a concentration camp. Other original items illustrate the prisoner community, the hierarchy among prisoners, and also the forms of resistance, including illegally created artistic objects and attempts at establishing contact with the outside world.

This basic information is intended to introduce the pupils to the subject of the camp and facilitate their work in the small groups to which they are assigned following the video presentation. On the basis of source material, four groups inquire into the stages of the intake of prisoner transports and learn about the prisoner community from the point of view of origin, age, reasons for incarceration in the camp, and the functions they performed there. They also learn about living conditions and examples of camp art and other means of psychological resistance. Participants in the lesson have at their disposal excerpts from memoirs and non-specialist studies, as well as sets of photographs of historical objects. Following the workshop component, they are next accompanied by the pedagogical staffer onto the grounds of the historical exhibition, where the young people present the issues they examined earlier. The lesson leader supplements the information they convey.

The use of authentic objects can counteract any feelings the young people might have that the historical events are remote in time, or abstract. A concrete object can become the starting point for constructing a narrative. A commentary is often necessary, however, in the form, for instance, of testimony from former prisoners, because the significance that visitors attribute to a given object may differ from its original significance in the camp. Working independently, which shows the young people that they can obtain information on their own and broaden their own historical consciousness, is especially important. Furthermore, active participation by acting as guides enhances the pupils' fluency in public speaking.

4. Work camp – practical work on the grounds of the memorial site

Physical work on the grounds of the former camp attracts great interest among young people and serves above all to preserve the historical space and material vestiges. Educational projects oriented toward work by pupils on the upkeep of original camp objects has a long tradition and is based on many years of experience at the Museum at Majdanek. It yields mutual practical benefits. On the one hand, the Museum receives concrete aid in taking care of the grounds of the former camp; for their part, the pupils have the feeling of contributing in a tangible way to rescuing the authentic camp space.

The work camps, intended for secondary-school students, may be international in character and have been organized in this form during the summer months for many years in cooperation with the One World Association of Poznań. These two-week-long meetings between young people from Poland and Germany are not limited only to work on the grounds of the camp, but are also enriched by historical workshops and joint tours of Lublin and the region. Organizing shorter work camps is also possible, but they must last a minimum of two days.

The basic goals of the work camp include:

- upkeep of the grounds and original remains of the camp.
- raising awareness of the need for the conservation of authentic objects.
- learning about the history of the concentration camp and the system that governed its functioning, through the prism of original objects, among other things.
- analyzing the meaning of the memorial site in the public awareness over the years.

The example of 2011 lessons with pupils from Secondary School No. 1 in Lublin illustrates the form that educational work can take during a two-day workshop. The first day was dedicated to learning about the history of Lublin Concentration Camp. An attractive working method must be chosen in order to encourage the pupils to grapple intellectually

and emotionally with the past. A good solution is a tour with the active participation of the young people. This consists of integrating the participants into the role of guides to the historical exhibition. Before setting out onto the grounds of the Museum, the young people work in small groups on themes to be covered while touring the historical exhibition—intake into the camp, living conditions, labor, resistance, the fate of children, and profiles of the perpetrators. Individual work with source material gets the young people more involved in guiding, and while doing so they can share their observations with their peers. The creative and active role of their friends as guides comes as a positive surprise to the participants and, at the same time, has an impact on increasing their motivation to learn about the past.

Physical work was organized on the second day. The young people usually work at cleaning dirt and grass from the remains of the barracks foundations. These are places that school groups touring the grounds of the exhibition do not visit. This makes it possible to talk about the lesser known material traces of the past. While the young people are cleaning the vestiges in Field I, as in the case of the lesson with the pupils from Secondary School No. 1 in Lublin, it is possible to talk in depth about the history of this part of the camp and the buildings that stood here when it was in operation, including the camp hospital. Aside from this, the pupils can see other objects located in the vicinity of this field—the old crematorium building or the remains of the camp laundry. Simply spending time with the extant material of the camp can increase the pupils' interest and motivation for delving into history. Historical commentary, however, is necessary for them to be able to fully apprehend the significance of the remains of the camp. Reading memoirs by former prisoners furnishes the pupils with essential information for imagining past events. It also prevents these events from being so distant in time and difficult to grasp with the intellect. Only in connection with historical knowledge does the practical work take on deeper sense. Furthermore, the time spent on the grounds of the prisoner fields on the second day makes it possible

to talk with the pedagogical counselor about subjects that did not come up previously.

Pupils taking part in lessons of this type emphasize that the visible effects of their exertions are important to them. This makes their work satisfying. The effort they put into the project is like making an individual donation to the site. It teaches them responsibility for the historical heritage, which the generation of youths entering adulthood should care for. The young people also take note of the state of preservation of the camp space, learning about the history of the Museum and the reasons that have conditioned the present-day appearance of the place. They also ask themselves questions about the problems connected with its preservation.

Both parts of the workshop are thus especially important, because work itself without the historical consciousness loses its didactic dimension. Discussions with pupils show that reading memoirs or performing maintenance work at an authentic historical site enhances their sensitivity in relation to that place, and the stay there sticks in their minds all the better.

Being part of the workshops gave me a chance not only to learn more about the history of that place, but also to engage independently with it, a real encounter. The first day, working on the sources, I not only learned dry facts but also could be a witness to the suffering of many people. It gave me the opportunity for a more personal approach to history. The second day was a time for reflection and pondering the experience and enormous amount of information conveyed on the first day. Those two days were complementary and undoubtedly very exhausting, and they will surely remain in my memory for a long time.

Pupil, age 18

Thanks to the workshop at Majdanek I deepened my knowledge of the history of that place in an interesting way. The lessons were conducted so that everyone took an active part in presenting and learning about the history of the camp. Thanks to that we learned more and were more involved in doing so. The work on the grounds gave variety to the workshops, because with our own hands we were able to protect that place from being forgotten.

Pupil, age 18

5. Historical workshops

Historical workshops are a lengthier educational form. They require a minimum of two days. The longer time set aside for learning about the history of the camp makes a problem-oriented approach to historical phenomena and events, as well as an independent investigation of their causes, possible.

The goals of the historical workshops are, above all, the following:

- learning about the history of the camp at Majdanek against the background of events in the Second World War through independent work with historical sources.

- mastering the ability to work effectively in a group.

- depending on the guidelines for the workshop, learning practical skills such as preparing an exhibition or creating a website.

The historical workshops can be divided into those oriented toward a process and those that have the goal of preparing some kind of end product. The educational sessions that concentrate on process underline the value of the effort that the pupils put into learning about the mechanisms connected with the functioning of the camp. The goal is to create a space for the independent development of the learner so that he can draw conclusions for the future. In the case of the second kind of workshop, the intended effect is the creation of some kind of end product, such as a poster, brochure, website, or exhibition. At the same time, this end product represents documentation of the whole undertaking. In fact, it is difficult to separate the two spheres—process and product—since the end product is a record that validates the course of a process and contains within itself the most important conclusions drawn from the activity.

The Polish school system does not favor the organizing of longer historical workshops at memorial sites. Experience shows, however, that they can be conducted in several stages by assigning two to three hours per week to them. Such workshops, oriented toward an end product, were carried out in cooperation with the history teachers at School Complex No. 4 in Lublin and Secondary School No. 2 in Włodawa.

The lessons for the pupils from school no. 4 consisted of their participation in several working sessions in the library and archives of the Museum, during which they familiarized themselves with memoirs by former prisoners and historical studies of the camp at Majdanek. The goal of this work was for the pupils to prepare a conspectus for guiding pupils from their own school around the historical exhibition. Among the pupils who later served as guides for their peers, this form of learning history met with great enthusiasm and involvement. It was surprising, but at the same time a very eloquent fact, that these same pupils applied to take part in the project each year until they graduated from intermediate school.

The pupils from Włodawa took part in workshops titled “Majdanek prisoners in the memory of the younger generation,” and also had a specific task to meet. Their starting material was *grypsy*, the Polish slang word for secret messages smuggled out of the camp. The group worked with messages that prisoners sent to their families. They next compared the news conveyed in the secret messages with postwar memoirs written by those same former prisoners, or videotaped interviews with them. Three visits to the Museum, each lasting several hours, inspired the pupils to a creative approach to the material they read; later, they responded in several different ways, including writing poems.

Through independent work with archival material, studies, and especially through reading accounts by former prisoners, the young people were able to find individual routes to the past and learn about the experiences of people imprisoned in the camp. Thinking about all these things contributed to their personal development and changes to their accustomed views and attitudes.

After my stay at the Museum at Majdanek, I can say with all my heart that I am a wiser person. From these workshops I learned a great deal about life in the camp and I could see original grypsy. The audio and video material was an incredibly interesting change from overly long biographies of heroes. I think that everyone who took part in this project will be more sensitive to and aware of what a great tragedy occurred at Majdanek. Conclusions should be drawn from it so that no one will ever again have to learn new histories of camps.

Pupil, age 17

Each encounter with the history of Majdanek has been different for me, because during each one of them I learned about the stories of different people. Each of these stories was part of a single tragedy, which our ancestors had to deal with. The opportunity of taking part in this project not only broadened my knowledge on the subject of living conditions in the camp, but also allowed me to take something like a journey into the past. That journey showed me how war and the camp experience can change a person. The dramatic situation facing the prisoners in Majdanek is something that must be appreciated, that must be remembered. This drama does not seek fame and does not call out to us with an echo; it only depends on our memory whether it will be remembered. It will stay in my memory for certain.

Pupil, age 17

Analyzing the grypsy and memoirs gave us a new outlook on the situation that prevailed in Majdanek. It is worth examining the lives of particular prisoners to see what happened in their lives and how they survived it. We do not deal with such things in school, which is why I'm very happy that I could take part in the project and come to know these people better thanks to the grypsy and recordings. This was an incredible experience for us. We have opened up to history, but so few people are interested in it. Now I know and I am fully aware of what happened here. It was a great tragedy. This is important, because people like us now know the mistakes made long ago and will try not to permit history to turn around in a circle.

Pupil, age 17

6. Historical-literary lessons: work with a camp diary

“Yet a part of my heart remained there, at Majdanek”

A special kind of source material, used as the basis for one-day educational programs for intermediate- and secondary-school students, is the diary kept by 16-year-old Jadwiga Ankiewicz while she was at Majdanek. It deserves to be treated as a document of its time and a relic of the camp, preserved to this day in its original form. The circumstances under which these entries were noted down are unusual enough, but the contents are even more astounding. The author is a very acute observer of camp life and does not concentrate only on her own experiences and

thoughts, but also tells about the most important events taking place in the women's field. The diary therefore has enormous informative value. The things recorded there can become the foundation for a better understanding of everyday life in the camp.

Jadwiga Ankiewicz kept her diary for four months, from January 16 to May 17, 1943, up to the moment when she was released from the camp. She belonged to a group of prisoners arrested at random during a sweep of the streets of Warsaw on January 16, 1943. This group could count on being released from the camp, and the motif of waiting to return to freedom runs through the pages of the diary. The girl's age plays an important part—like the majority of the young people participating in these sessions, she was a teenager, which makes it easier for them to find a way to identify with her experiences.

The way she describes her experiences is also important. The text of the diary is not an accumulation of descriptions of evil and wrongdoing, but rather an insightful register of events. Because Jadwiga lived in hope of being released from the camp, readers of the diary join her in looking forward to this, and the text is not devoid of faith in a sudden improvement in her fate. Beyond this, it is written in a simple language and not overloaded with foreign-sounding camp terminology, especially where Jadwiga describes her first days at Majdanek. An unusually interesting element consists of the lyrics to songs sung in the camp on occasions including the release of a group of women prisoners.

All these characteristics led to the decision to use the diary in educational work with youth. It is a basic source for learning about camp reality. During these historical-literary lessons, there is great emphasis on getting the pupils involved through the independent acquisition of knowledge. The goals achieved along the way include:

- learning about the history of the camp at Majdanek—especially the prisoners rounded up on the street—and everyday life in the camp.
- inculcating the skills of working with source texts and the selective use of information.
- stimulating reflection on historical content.

Lessons take the following form: They start with the screening of a documentary film on the concentration camp at Majdanek, after which the pupils view a multimedia presentation. They learn about the fate of people rounded up at random on the street and see photographs of Jadwiga Ankiewicz and the diary she wrote. After this introduction comes the time for work in groups of several people each. During it, the pupils read diary entries, concentrating on six chosen issues: the conditions of camp life, slave labor, various categories of prisoners, the extermination of the Jews as seen through the eyes of a 16-year-old girl, the prisoners' mechanisms of psychological resistance, and profiles of members of the SS garrison. The individual groups present the selected information in the course of acting as guides to the grounds of the former camp. The guide supplements the information by giving a fuller image of the camp, places, and events that were not known to the young prisoner.

Lessons conducted in 2011 with members of the Editors' Club from Intermediate School No. 11 in Lublin are an example of a project realized on the basis of Jadwiga Ankiewicz's diaries. Before visiting the Museum, the pupils met at school with a member of the Education Department staff. As part of the preparations for the visit to the Museum at Majdanek, they familiarized themselves with various historical sources—photographs, memoirs, *grypsy*, and records from the camp chancellery. A week later, they visited the Museum at Majdanek and took part in a museum lesson. The task of the pupils after the conclusion of the visit to the memorial site was to sum up selected information about the camp and publish it on the school website. They added their own thoughts about the diary and the lessons to the historical contents.

I think that this brief trip really gave us a lot. I think that previously none of us was fully aware of how horrible the war was. From that day on the freedom of our homeland will have the same value for us as it had with Jadwiga Ankiewicz.

Pupil, age 15

The lesson at Majdanek will remain in our memory for a long time. It made us more sensitive to history and made us aware that everyone is a person, regardless of their nationality, religion, or the political views they have.

Pupil, age 15

The lesson at Majdanek was highly instructive. We had a chance to find out how ghastly life in the concentration camps was. We found out how much one person can hate another only because they have different origins or have other ideas about life. We won't forget this lesson for a long time.

Pupil, age 16

Similarly, the teacher, who was also the counselor to the Editors' Club, stressed the chance of meeting many different learning and educational goals.

In the first place—an encounter with the history of the Second World War, and also, and perhaps especially, with the history of our own city. The story was told from many angles and with variety: a lecture, a presentation, a film, workshops, analysis, touring the Museum—and above all, experience.

Second—literature. Jadwiga Ankiewicz's diary is rich in informational content. It is interesting from a literary point of view and—this is especially important to the pupils—it is true. The pupils' brief articles for the school newspaper are a literary form of coming to terms with what they have learned.

Third—the personal example of the diary's author, Jadwiga Ankiewicz. The young heroine—almost the same age as the pupils at the lesson—teaches us how to live in radically difficult conditions, how to hold out, how not to fall prey to doubts, not to stop being a human being, and also how to make an objective judgment of those who might be to blame for our fate.

7. Creative processing—**affective photography**

One of the options for learning about history at the Museum at Majdanek makes use of various kinds of art work, and affective photography is one of these. The educational concept of emotional photography involves the encounter with an authentic historical site as concealed in

various artifacts, vestiges, and the reminiscences of survivors. The use of this medium in the process of commemoration sets active and independent learning in motion, but above all it makes possible a creative interpretation of past events and a dialogue with them. This approach is based mainly on the imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, and creativity of the participants.

The visualization of the past, using photography as a medium, was taken up in April 2010 by pupils from the John Paul II School Complex No. 5 in Lublin within the framework of the project "The living memory of the Shoah: Majdanek in the reminiscences of former prisoners." Projects oriented to affective photography last two days and are directed to secondary-school pupils.

On the first day of the lessons, the pupils had a chance to familiarize themselves with the history of the former German concentration camp at Majdanek with the help of various didactic means including the historical exhibition, a documentary film, and archival resources. The taking of photographs was preceded by a study of the history of the camp as seen through the eyes of former prisoners and documented in pictures from the period when Lublin Concentration Camp was in operation. An important and inspiring source of information about the camp in this regard consisted of accounts by Polish, Jewish, Russian, and Belarusian survivors who talk about the experiences and fates of individual people. The living memory of the camp, as recorded in these memoirs, helped the participants in the workshops to get in better touch with their own emotionality, which is a factor in visits to memorial sites.

The second day was taken up with photography workshops. The pupils attempted the difficult task of encountering history and its vestiges with the help of artistic means of expression. The content-based lessons were based on the concept of transposition, or creative processing. This gave the participants in the project the opportunity for an individualized view of the past and the discovery of their own way of learning about it. Thus the space and extant original remains were an important point of reference for grappling with the tragic history of

the camp at Majdanek. The results of the individual creative processes of the participants in the project were photographic works depicting the current perception of Majdanek, inspired above all by the reminiscences of survivors.

The project concluded with the mounting of a photography exhibition. The photographs were shown to the public on June 10, 2010, during a ceremony at School Complex No. 5 devoted to the Righteous among the Nations—people who rescued Jews during the German occupation. The photographs shown there depict places commemorating victims of Majdanek from the perspective of the younger generation, unencumbered by the biographical and emotional trauma of the war. At the same time, one can see in them the sensitivity of the young people and a new view of the memorial sites whose past is deeply rooted in the present-day city of Lublin.

The lessons were jointly evaluated and summed up by the pupils, their teachers, and pedagogical staffers from the Museum at Majdanek. The pupils shared their impressions during the evaluation.

I feel that this kind of workshop is very interesting and inspiring. Through the fact that we could walk on our own around the Majdanek grounds, we had a chance to grapple with that difficult subject and our own feelings. We could also, in a certain way, express ourselves by taking pictures and showing what Majdanek looks like through our eyes.

Pupil, age 16

Being here was a genuinely interesting history lesson. I could deepen my knowledge about life, work, and also the death of the people who were in this terrible place; their emotions, faith, and hope in a better tomorrow. The events at Majdanek touched the entire Jewish people. Seeing so many people visiting this place, I became aware that this Museum is important on a worldwide scale. The workshops helped me understand the problem of the Holocaust.

Pupil, age 17

Taking part in the workshops, I was at Majdanek for the third time. Each time, however, something different caught my attention. This time I tried to give myself over to the suffering of the people who died here by photographing

the place. When we were taking pictures, we paid more attention to details that we had not noticed before.

Pupil, age 17

Having read accounts by prisoners of the Majdanek camp, an unending reading list, you can't return to your daily routine and responsibilities without taking a moment to think and ponder things. After what they wrote, and visiting the place where these people were tormented, the imagination automatically starts working. Before my eyes I have the scenes of these peoples' farewells to the rest of their families, and the dread and horror in the eyes of the children. I also know that the pictures I took, as I see it, will remind me of those people who perished in such brutal circumstances.

Pupil, age 17

For me, active participation in the workshops was a very interesting and valuable experience. For me, Majdanek is no longer a piece of ground where wooden barracks stand, crematorium furnaces, and gas chambers, but rather the site of the death and sufferings of many innocent people of various ethnic backgrounds. A place of tragedy and crimes committed by people. A place of warning for future generations.

Pupil, age 16

8. Intercultural projects

Intercultural education in a museum-memorial should be understood as a cognitive-reflective process with the purpose of shaping the understanding of diverse historical narratives and preparation for interaction in the form of dialogue with different paradigms and symbols of the remembrance of the Second World War. It constitutes one of the possible approaches to communicating and encounter at the memorial site with varying perspectives and national memories in a European context. The intercultural learning process at the Museum at Majdanek consists of meetings of youths, students, and educators from different countries. Preparation requires a great amount of work on organization and the subject matter, and considerable time. It is necessary to find a foreign partner for the project and develop a concept for the program.

The principal goals in carrying out such projects include the following:
– the practice of intercultural dialogue as a foundation for building understanding among different nationalities.

– becoming familiar with various perspectives on historical experience.

– taking cognizance of varying historical narratives and ways of interpreting the past.

– increasing sensitivity to contemporary manifestations of racism, xenophobia, and prejudices.

– constructing a culture of remembrance in a European dimension.

This form of education has numerous cognitive and educational values:

– it makes it possible to learn about not only the historical events themselves, but also various narrations and historical perspectives.

– it permits unconventional approaches in international groups to the history of Nazism.

– it breaks down intellectual and cultural stereotypes about participants of different ethnic or national backgrounds.

– it conveys humanistic values and inculcates attitudes of empathy and solidarity.

In methodological terms, the lessons, in the form of historical workshops, are based on learning about the past through discovery. The essence of the project is active learning by the participants in mixed working groups, using source material on the history of Lublin Concentration Camp and the German occupation in the Lublin area. The project lasts from three to five days. The entire undertaking is made up of the following stages:

1. The preliminary stage

This stage includes the forming of a team of several teachers who will conduct lessons in different subjects (ideally, two or three teachers), finding a partner for the project (in the case of Polish-German projects, partners can be sought on the website of Polish-German Youth Cooperation, which serves as an intermediary in setting up partnerships

between schools; registration may be required), selecting a group of participants on a voluntary basis, and discovering their expectations and motivations for joining the project.

2. The preparatory stage

This includes exchanging addresses (email, Facebook) for the purpose of establishing contact with pupils from the partner school, meeting members of the staff of the Museum at Majdanek, agreeing the dates for the project, discussing the introductory concept and the means of realizing it, preparing the young people in terms of subject matter (for instance through meetings with the Museum's project coordinators and visiting the temporary exhibitions connected with the subject of the project), the division of the participants into working groups, and the assignment of previously agreed themes to specific pupils.

3. Stages in the realization of the project

This phase should involve visiting the historical exhibition, independent study by the pupils on selected subjects from the history of the camp at Majdanek (such as the fate of children, various groups of internees, living conditions and resistance, the attitudes and motives of the perpetrators, and the trials of the Majdanek SS garrison), the presentation of their findings at a school forum, at the Museum, or at some other place, and honoring the memory of the victims of Majdanek in a previously agreed symbolic way (such as placing flowers, lighting candles, and reciting poems).

4. The final stage

The summing up of the project includes the filling out of evaluation questionnaires describing the experiences of the participants as well as a critical assessment of the carrying out of the project itself so that conclusions can be drawn about possible changes to future programs, the writing of a report by the organizers, and the compiling of documentation of the entire program for submission to the bodies that supported it.

A Polish-German project titled "Commemorating the prisoners of Majdanek" with the participation of pupils from Intermediate School

No. 24 in Lublin and the Büchner Grammar School in Darmstadt was held in June 2011 within the framework of multicultural teaching.

The Polish and German pupils acquainted themselves with the history of the concentration camp at Majdanek, took part in up-to-date historical education using innovative project working methods, and working in small workshop groups on selected issues from the history of Lublin Concentration Camp (underage camp prisoners, the perpetrators, survivor biographies). Engaging in the independent study of documents and reading postwar accounts at the place where events occurred, they gained a better and more emotional insight into the history of the camp; a personal meeting with an eyewitness to history, former Majdanek prisoner Zdzisław Badio, left a permanent mark on their memory. At the end of the project, each pupil took an individual farewell from the memorial by laying a floral tribute at a place of his or her own choosing—outside the Mausoleum containing remains of the victims of Majdanek, at a barracks, or at the barbed wire.

Intercultural education is characterized by a desire for dialogue, which is why an important goal of the project was making contact and breaking down barriers and stereotypes in mutual perceptions. The first integration meeting contributed to this as the young people learned about shared interests and similar tastes in music and films. Despite the existence of different historical and moral perspectives, the workshops that followed confirmed a similarity: on both sides, learning about history evoked the same feelings. Everyday contact fostered discussion and the breaking down of barriers. Speaking German, English, and Polish, the guests learned some basic words and expressions in the language of their hosts.

The Polish youth gained a better knowledge of an important part of the history of the city; for the German pupils, the workshops were an occasion to come to terms with a difficult chapter in their own history. The meeting represented a clear step forward in educating individuals to be aware of their roots and history, and also to be open to the world. The aim of the summing-up meeting was to evaluate the project on the levels

of organization and content, and to learn about observations by the participants. The pupils shared their reflections during the evaluation:

Through working in groups, I became aware what a terrible tragedy took place 70 years ago. Thanks to contacts and conversations with our German peers, we found out that, even though we speak different languages, we are the same.

Pupil, age 15

Participation in the project made me more aware of the events of the Second World War, and I began to grow interested in history and tell other people about what I had learned. I met people from other countries and doing this historical project with them was a fantastic experience. I could make contact and talk to them.

Pupil, age 15

The project allowed me to overcome certain stereotypes about the German people. Thanks to this I could see Germans not through the prism of the Second World War, but rather as my peers. This younger generation cannot be blamed for what happened more than 70 years ago. It is worth remembering about the Holocaust to prevent such a situation recurring.

Pupil, age 16

For me, the workshops with the Germans were an interesting experience. During them, I could meet people who familiarized me a little bit with their country and their culture. I am glad that the guests had at least a taste of Poland, and I hope that it was an important experience for them. Now I would like to visit the Darmstadt region. We will surely stay in contact.

Pupil, age 15

According to me, the atmosphere was very friendly. We succeeded in integrating with the group of German students. They were open, funny, and nice. The workshop program was interesting, well prepared and carried out. Despite the fact that I have lived in Lublin my whole life, it was only thanks to this program that I had the occasion to visit Majdanek. I also met many interesting people, and sometimes it was hard to get things across or find a common topic, but in the end we managed to understand each other.

Pupil, age 16

Outline of an Educational Project at a Memorial Site

Preliminary Phase

- defining the motivation of the pupils
- choice of form and establishing the scope of the program (standard visit, one-day seminar, historical education project, or integrated teaching)
- deciding on the nature of the undertaking (internal school project or international youth exchange)
- discussing the overall outline of the program in class-lesson
- museum reconnaissance in terms of organizational-educational possibilities and program offerings

Preparation

- formulating the subject and goal of the project
- preparing an action plan
- gathering historical information on the site to be visited
- familiarization with the museum infrastructure and resources (initial survey)
- consultation with museum staff on the form of the program and preparation of material (provision of teaching material, selection of publications, archival material, preparation of working space, etc.)
- choice and discussion of working methods, division of tasks among individual students or teams of students
- planning the form of commemoration
- in the case of international youth programs, ongoing cooperation with the partner and aid in preparing for the foreign group's stay in Poland

Realization

- visit to the museum (touring the permanent exhibition and possibly additional exhibitions)
- viewing of films and other documentary material connected with the subject of the project
- work in the library, archives, on the grounds, etc.
- meetings and discussions (with eyewitnesses to history, museum staff, lecturers)
- commemoration

Follow-up

- exchange of impressions during class discussion
- joint reflections on the significance of the insights and experience acquired
- evaluation of the project in terms of subject matter and teaching
- discussion of possible ways of using the material collected
- summing up and presentation of the most important conclusions and results outside of class (in other classes, as part of a general school assembly, at meetings with representatives of relevant institutions and organizations, etc.)

Documentation and Presentation

- going deeper into the project and reinforcing acquired knowledge
- preparing previously selected forms of presentation (newspaper article, exhibition, account of the project, etc.)
- presentation in a public forum

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Photo 1. Aerial photograph of the German concentration camp at Majdanek in 1944. In the foreground is the central section with the wooden barracks for quartering prisoners. Majdanek, officially named Konzentrationslager Lublin, functioned from October 1941 to July 1944.



Photo 2. A panorama of the State Museum at Majdanek, the oldest martyrdom museum in Europe, where there are many objects symbolizing crucial aspects of the functioning of the Nazi concentration camps and the Holocaust: prisoner barracks, guard towers, gas chambers, execution ditches, and crematoria.



Photo 3. One of the informational panels with a map of the Museum, making it easier to navigate the extensive (222 acres) historical space of Majdanek. In the background is the Monument-Gate, the first part of the large-scale commemorative complex built in 1969 to pay homage to the victims of the camp.



Photo 4. Part of the outdoor historical trail “Konzentrationslager Lublin 1941-1944,” which explains the extant buildings and the grounds of the camp. A commentary in Polish, English, and Hebrew conveys basic facts about the material remains of the camp. Detailed information on this subject can be found in *Majdanek. A Guide to the Historical Buildings*.



Photo 5. Accounts by prisoners, describing crucial camp experiences and the most tragic events in the history of Majdanek, supplement the historical trail. These eyewitness testimonies are connected with the places where they are exhibited. The narrative created in this way documents such issues as living conditions in the camp, slave labor by prisoners, extermination in the gas chambers, and the mass murder of Jews on November 3, 1943.

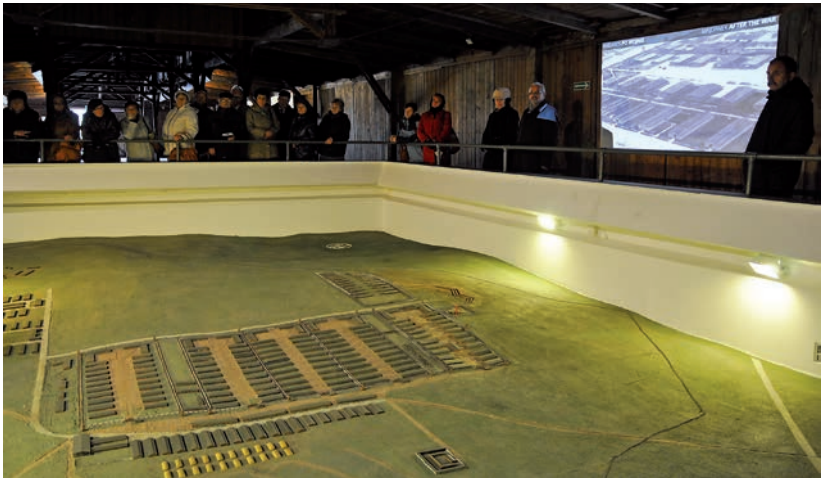


Photo 6. Detail of a museum exhibition in the former economic barracks. In the foreground is a three-dimensional model of the camp and a screen on which archival photographs of various parts of the buildings at Majdanek are projected.



Photo 7. Remains of sanitary equipment from the prisoner barracks in the oldest part of the camp, known as Field I. Almost 100 ruins of this type are extant at Majdanek. Participants in international work camps organized by the Museum often help with their upkeep.



Photo 8. There are about 18,000 administrative records from KL Lublin, 2,000 *grypsy* (secret messages), 1,100 accounts by former prisoners, and 550 video recordings here. The “Index of Majdanek Prisoners” based on the extant fragmentary camp records contains data on more than 56,000 persons.



Photo 9. The Branch of the State Museum at Majdanek on the grounds of the former German extermination center at Bełżec. Detail of the permanent historical exhibition about the history of the camp, shown against the background of the mass extermination of Jews within the framework of *Aktion Reinhardt*.



Photo 10. The Sobibór Branch of the State Museum at Majdanek. A memorial plaque at the site of the former Nazi extermination center is located near the railroad platform. Trains full of Jews deported to their deaths from Poland, Slovakia, the Netherlands, and several other European countries arrived here.

The State Museum at Majdanek conducts a broad and varied range of educational work that refers on the theoretical level to the educational assumptions known as the pedagogy of remembrance. Here, the focus is on the necessity of stimulating and deepening reflection on the past in its various contexts. This is intended to help in forming historical thinking, empathy, and a sense of shared responsibility for present-day events. The main role in a process of this type is played by work on remembrance, which takes on many forms, references, and significances on the grounds of the former Nazi camps, and thus links historical and intercultural education. As a consequence, the didactic concept and educational practice of the Museum at Majdanek represents an attempt to make the past come alive and to give it contemporary relevance in the individual and collective, social and historical, and regional and international dimensions.

