Lernen aus der Geschichte

LaG - Magazine

Learning with Documents.
Historical Education
at the
Arolsen Archives

Arolsen Archives
International Center on Nazi Persecution

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Learning with Documents. Historical Education at the Arolsen Archives

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the latest edition of the LaG magazine. This issue has been prepared in partnership with the Arolsen Archives - International Center on Nazi Persecution. As well as presenting their educational offerings, it also provides an overview of the historical development of this internationally oriented institution known as the International Tracing Service (ITS) up until May 2019. This magazine is an extended and revised version of a German language edition from June 2018.

At the heart of the Arolsen Archives lies the archive built up by the ITS. It contains over 30 million documents, the majority of which are digitally accessible in the Digital Archive. More than 14 million of these documents are also available online. The documents are concerned with people who were persecuted by the National Socialists, with the Holocaust, with forced labor and with Displaced Persons.

The archive was not accessible to the public until 2007. The decision to open up the documentary holdings to the public marked the beginning of a new phase in the work of the ITS, as it was then known. Since that time, a wide range of educational materials have been developed and this edition of the magazine will provide you with information on the latest offerings.

Introduction

The International Tracing Service came into being in 1948. It was an institution in a constant state of flux. *Isabel Panek* and *Henning Borggräfe* give a historical account of its development and describe the tasks fulfilled by the Arolsen Archives today.

Tracing, i.e. the search for survivors of Nazi persecution and the provision of information to relatives of former victims, still constitutes one of the core tasks of the Arolsen Archives today. The article authored by *Anna Meier-Osiński* gives an insight into this service.

In another article, *Anna Meier-Osiński* together with *Kamila Kolakowski* presents the #StolenMemory traveling exhibition, which focuses on personal effects and the life stories of their former owners. These personal effects are belongings which were taken away from prisoners in concentration camps.

Akim Jah and *Elisabeth Schwabauer* explore the question of „who are Displaced Persons?“ and consider what potential the stories of their lives after National Socialist persecution have for learning in schools and other contexts.

Ingolf Seidel discusses the fundamental opportunities and challenges encountered when working with the biographies of the victims of Nazi persecution in an educational context. He pays special attention to the use of biographical fragments such as those preserved in the Arolsen Archives.

Akim Jah highlights the importance of historical documents for learning about his-

tory. He uses the three stages of historical inquiry – comprehension, source criticism and source interpretation – to throw light on the use of sources in an educational context. In another article, *Akim Jah* describes the archival education workshops offered by the Arolsen Archives, outlines the methods used, and the topics covered.

Christiane Weber presents the e-Guide, a tool which enables students in the class room or lecture hall to better understand the documents of the Arolsen Archives.

A new enterprise of the Arolsen Archives is the documentED project. Teachers and other educators can use the resources it offers to prepare and follow up a visit to a memorial site. *Christian Höschler* explains how this works in practice and what support the Arolsen Archives provide.

A pilot project for documentED was carried out in partnership with the Max Mannheimer Study Center in Dachau. *Steffen Jost* and *Nina Ritz* share their experiences and describe the added value provided by the project when preparing visits to memorial sites.

Marcus von der Straten focuses on working with the archival holdings of the Arolsen Archives in connection with research-based learning and describes his experiences as a teacher in the classroom.

Christa Kaletsch and *Manuel Glittenberg* describe the project titled "Zusammenleben neu gestalten" ("Redesigning the way we live together") to show how sources from the Arolsen Archives can be used to focus attention on flight and migration in the context of education for democratic citizenship.

Lilian Black concentrates on the cooperation between the Arolsen Archives and the Holocaust Survivors' Friendship Association in Great Britain. The author writes from the perspective of the daughter of a Holocaust survivor who has researched the history of her father's persecution.

Another institution which uses the archival holdings kept in Bad Arolsen for its work is the Russian Research and Educational Center for Oral History of the Voronezh Institute of High Technologies. *Olga Kulinchenko* describes her impressions and experiences as a participant in the biennial joint Winter School held by the ITS/Arolsen Archives and the Nazi Forced Labor Documentation Center in Berlin-Schöneweide.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington is an important partner of the Arolsen Archives at the international level. *Elizabeth Anthony* shows how the institutions structure their cooperation and presents publications the USHMM has produced on the basis of documents from the Arolsen Archives.

Finally, *Misko Stanisic* presents a professional development project for librarians and archivists in Serbia, which the Arolsen Archives have supported by running workshops and giving lectures.

We would like to thank the staff of the Arolsen Archives as well as all the other authors who have contributed to this issue.

The next LaG magazine will be published on 26 February 2020 and will focus on comics and graphic novels.

Your LaG Editorial Team

The Arolsen Archives. A Historical Overview

By Henning Borggräfe and Isabel Panek

"*I would like to know more about my family background and my father's fate*" or "*we are researching the fates of forced laborers in our region*": these are typical of the inquiries which reach the Arolsen Archives (known as the International Tracing Service, ITS, up until May 2019) almost every day. Located in the small town of Bad Arolsen in North Hesse, Germany, the institution was established as a tracing service for the victims of Nazi persecution over 70 years ago. It is now an information center and an archive and is home to one of the world's largest collections on the history of Nazi crimes and their aftermath. The history of the institution's origins and the way it has evolved over the years are outlined below.

Extensive Tracing Activities after Liberation from National Socialism

During their conquest of Germany and of the territories that had been occupied by Germany, the Allies came across approximately ten million so-called Displaced Persons (DPs). These included people who had been liberated from concentration camps, Holocaust survivors and survivors of the genocide of the Sinti and Roma, former forced laborers, and other people who found themselves outside of their native countries at the end of the war. Tens of thousands of them were children. The first concern of the Allies was to provide the DPs with essential care, and they were keen to return them to their native countries as quickly as possible. Most DPs were searching for information about the fate of missing friends and relatives at the time, as were millions of other people all over the world. Various agencies took up the search for victims and survivors of Nazi persecution during this early period and an extensive network of tracing bureaus was established. This network was supported by survivors who organized assistance themselves after liberation as well as by Jewish relief organizations and various national Red Cross Societies.

In the late summer of 1945, the Allies set up a Central Tracing Bureau (CTB) under the direction of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) to coordinate the search for missing victims of persecution and for other missing persons from the member states of the United Nations. This bureau, which was initially located in Frankfurt-Höchst before it moved to Arolsen in January 1946, served as a central hub for tracing activities up until 1947. It went about its work by circulating inquiries and documents between tracing bureaus in the three Western zones of occupation and a number of national tracing bureaus and by building up a Central Name Index (CNI).

Between 1948 and 1951, tracing activities were centralized in Arolsen under the direction of the International Refugee Organization (IRO), which was responsible for looking after the remaining DPs, and the zonal bureaus were closed down. As of 1 January 1948, the CTB became the International Tracing Service.

The Importance of Documents

Written testimony of persecution was essential, not only for tracing missing persons and providing information about their fate, but also for documenting atrocities, for criminal prosecutions, and for possible compensation claims. The same held true for knowledge about the National Socialist machinery of terror, the various sites of imprisonment, and the mass crimes which had been committed.

During the last months of the war, survivors' initiatives had already begun to save documents which had been created by the perpetrators. The Allied liberators took possession of the concentration camp documents which the SS had not succeeded in destroying. On the orders of the Allies, authorities, firms, and insurance companies released millions of documents on foreign forced laborers from 1946 on. In the late 1940's, ITS staff searched for traces along the routes of the death marches as well as combing through registry offices and orphanages in search of clues as to the whereabouts of foreign children who had gone missing or been abducted. And finally, the ITS collected together millions of additional documents on the registration, care and emigration of the DPs and brought them to Arolsen. These documents form the core of the ITS collection, which continued to grow over the following decades as a result of the acquisition of other collections, some of which contained original documents, while others contained copies. Today, the holdings of the Arolsen Archives comprise over 30 million documents. A Central Name Index, consisting of over 50 million index cards on the fates of over 17 million people, is one of the tools which can be used to access the documents.

The Arolsen Archives – an International Organization in Germany

The ITS was initially planned as a temporary facility – just like the IRO, which was responsible for managing it. However, it soon became clear that the process of tracing missing persons would take longer than initially thought. And in 1950 already, the organization was faced with another new task: to provide documentation of persecution for compensation claims. So when the IRO closed down in 1951, the ITS remained in operation and the Allied High Commission for Germany (HICOG) took over its management. When the latter ceased operations in 1955, responsibility for the ITS was passed on to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) after much controversial debate centering on the thorny issue of who should have control over the archive. Returning the documents to the perpetrators was unthinkable for many. This is why an International Commission was set up in 1955 to define the guidelines for the work of the ITS, a task it still fulfils to this day. The ICRC withdrew from the leadership of the ITS in 2012 and the Commission, which presently comprises eleven member states, took over the task. In May 2019, the ITS was given the new name "Arolsen Archives – International Center on Nazi Persecution" to reflect its changed role. Although the Arolsen Archives are located in Germany, they were and

still are under international supervision.

Tracing and the Provision of Information in a Constant State of Change

As the sheer dimensions of the crimes committed by the Nazis became apparent, tracing agencies soon realized that many of those missing would never be found alive and that there were often not even any documents to testify to their fate. Because of this, the ITS also carried out active field searches for missing persons in the 1940's and used various different media such as radio and newspapers to conduct so-called *mass tracing* campaigns. At the same time, a Special Registry Office was set up in Arolsen in 1948 so that family members could be provided with certification of the death of a relative. Initially, a special organization existed for the tens of thousands of underage victims of Nazi persecution. In 1951, it was integrated into the ITS as the Child Search Branch.

From the 1950's on, when compensation payments first became available, there was a marked change in the needs of the majority of the people who contacted the ITS: they were searching for evidence of persecution for their compensation claims. Up until the end of the 1960's, the ITS received hundreds of thousands of inquiries of this kind. For the staff, this primarily involved searching the documents in the archive for information which they then summarized in standardized certificates of imprisonment or residence.

The ITS experienced a second major wave of inquiries from the late 1980's onwards in the context of new debates on forced laborers and other so-called forgotten victims. After the Cold War, when the Federal Republic of Germany and German companies were persuaded to make compensation payments to victims of Nazi persecution from Central and Eastern Europe for the first time, the inbox of the ITS exploded. Hundreds of thousands of inquiries reached the ITS each year, leading to enormous backlogs and waiting periods that sometimes lasted for years – in view of the advanced age of the survivors, these were challenges for which no adequate solution could be found, although a new fast-track procedure was introduced and work began on digitizing the archival holdings.

By contrast, most of the inquiries received today come from second- and third-generation family members who want to reconstruct the fate met by their persecuted relatives. The Arolsen Archives provide them with digital copies of the archival documents as well as explanatory information.

In 2018, 15,720 inquiries concerning 24,520 victims of Nazi persecution reached the institution from all over the world. About 4.3% of inquiries still come directly from survivors or their lawyers, while 67.6% come from family members. 17.5% of the people who submitted inquiries were researchers or educators, and the number of inquiries received from this group is rising year by year. About 600 visitors conducted their own research in the reading room of the Arolsen Archives.

Open, Closed and then Open Again

The fact that researchers and educators can receive information from the Arolsen Archives and can do research in the reading room

should not be taken for granted, because the archive was closed to the public from the beginning of the 1980's up until 2007. On the one hand, the then Director justified the isolation of the institution by pointing to the growing importance of issues connected with data protection, while on the other hand also highlighting the need for the ITS to focus strictly on its humanitarian mandate as it had been defined in 1955. In the 1960's and 1970's, the previous Director had interpreted the mandate more freely, had sought to network with survivors' associations and memorial sites, and had opened up the archive to researchers. The closure of the ITS archive in the early 1980's weighed all the more heavily because real public debate about Nazi crimes and victim groups who had been marginalized in the past was only just beginning. From then on, there was repeated criticism of the isolation of the ITS at national and international level. This criticism came from academics who were denied access as well as from memorial initiatives and memorial sites associated with the Nazi past. However, the turning point did not come until political pressure built up at the international level, accompanied by media criticism of the behavior of the ITS management and of the long waiting times for inquiries to be answered. In 2007, after a lengthy period of debate, the International Commission decided to reopen the ITS archive to the interested public.

While providing information to former persecutees and their families remains a core task of the Arolsen Archives, the activities of the organization have expanded considerably since the archive was reopened to the public. Professional preservation and restoration work is underway on the original documents, which were inscribed on UNESCO's Memory of the World register in 2013. Improving access to the archive – via the internet as well as in the reading room – is at the top of the agenda. And the Arolsen Archives now implement and promote projects in the fields of research and education by running a range of activities and initiatives.

About the authors

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Tracing: Responding to Inquiries about Victims of Nazi Persecution at the Arolsen Archives

By Anna Meier-Osiński

Background

The need to reconstruct paths of persecution and clarify the fates of close relatives explains the continuing high numbers of inquiries submitted to the Arolsen Archives (known as the International Tracing Service, ITS, up until May 2019) over the past few years. This is no great surprise, of course, as alongside the 4.3% of inquiries submitted by very elderly survivors, the majority of inquiries received in 2018 (67.6%) came from second- and third-generation family members searching for "puzzle pieces" which might help them find out about the fate suffered by their parents or grandparents.

People have many different reasons for embarking on this kind of search and for submitting an inquiry to the Arolsen Archives. Former victims of persecution who survived were often unable to talk about their traumatic experiences or either could not or would not burden their loved ones by telling them about what had happened to them. Many did not speak out until much later, while others no longer had the opportunity or the strength to do so. Members of the second generation, who were also often affected at a conscious or sub-conscious level, were unable to ask the questions they would have needed to ask in order to process and clarify the past. Frequently, it was not until the death of their parents or other former victims of persecution that they were able to find the courage to face this (lifelong) task. Or letters and documents belonging to loved ones only came to light after their death, which often makes these documents the very first sources of information about the persecution itself or the first indication that it even took place. Deathbed revelations of adoptions which had never been spoken about or had been kept secret for years frequently prompt those concerned to search for their own identity and roots relatively late on in their lives. The passage of time often has an important role to play here, it is not unusual for a whole generation to pass before these topics can be tackled, and this is why the Arolsen Archives are currently experiencing a sharp increase in the number of inquiries from the generation of the grandchildren. For some years now, about 20,000 inquiries about specific individuals have been made to the Arolsen Archives each year from relatives alone, asking the organization to trace their family members and clarify their fates. These inquiries mainly reach the Arolsen Archives from Poland, Russia, Germany, the USA, France and Israel. In addition, the Arolsen Archives also receive inquiries about gravesites and nationalities, and since 2014, inquiries have been coming in regarding the so-called "ghetto pensions" and the one-off payments available to former Soviet prisoners of war since 2015.

Service

As a consequence of the opening up of the archives in 2007, the information relatives

receive in response to an inquiry includes digital copies of all the documents in the ITS Digital Archive which contain the name of the person who is the subject of that inquiry. In order to make it easier to understand the documents, they are made available in chronological order and are labeled appropriately, i.e. each one includes information about what type of document it is.

Responses to inquiries also include important pointers to archives and other institutions throughout the world that might be able to provide further information on the path of persecution of the specific individual concerned. People who submit inquiries also receive background information on the documentary holdings and further information to help them understand the historical sources. The Arolsen Archives also offer a detailed evaluation of the documents found. Tools which help explain the documents held in the Arolsen Archives so that they can be better understood provide important additional background information. Work on developing other tools is now underway. The online form https://arolsen-archives.org/en/search-explore/inquiries/submit-inquiry/ for submitting inquiries is available in German, English, Polish, Russian and French on the website of the Arolsen Archives. The information sent out in response to inquiries is also provided in the languages listed above.

About the author

Anna Meier-Osiński studied the Cultural History of Eastern and Eastern Central Europe, Polish Studies, and Political Science. She is Head of the Tracing Department at the Arolsen Archives.

Research Project on Effects for Relatives and the *#StolenMemory* Campaign as an Educational Project

By Anna Meier-Osiński and Kamila Kolakowski

Background

The personal effects kept in Bad Arolsen are a special collection. In the 1960s, the ITS (today's Arolsen Archives) received around 5,000 personal items, most of them belonging to former political prisoners who had been deported to concentration camps. The majority of these effects were seized by the British Army during the liberation of the Neuengamme concentration camp and were handed over to the ITS via the *Administrative Office for Internal Restitution* in Stadthagen. In addition to personal items from the Neuengamme concentration camp, the *Arolsen Archives* also hold a much smaller number of personal effects from the Dachau concentration camp and the Hamburg Gestapo, from the Amersfort police transit camp and the Compiègne deportation camp. In the years that followed, the ITS endeavored to return the effects to their rightful owners, often with the assistance of the worldwide network of *Red Cross Societies* and memorial sites. In subsequent years, only a few effects could be returned, and no active search activities were carried out by the ITS whatsoever. In 2009, the ITS carried out research on the collection of effects whose owners were unknown, with the result that it was possible to identify the owners of a large proportion of the effects, which could then be attributed correctly. In 2011, in a further attempt to support efforts to return the effects, a list of the names of the owners of the approximately 3,200 effects still held by the ITS at the time was published online.

Personal Effects in the Online Archive

In the autumn of 2015, the collection of personal effects became one of the first three sub-collections to be made visible and searchable in the online archive of the ITS (see today's online archive of the Arolsen Archives available at: https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/search/). It is now possible to search the pictures of the entire effects collection for names and, if available, dates of birth, as well as to filter the names by nationality and by place of detention. This functionality is intended to enable volunteers all over the world to help the Arolsen Archives search for the rightful owners and to attract the attention of the public to this special *temporary collection*. Publishing the collection online led to the successful return of many effects. This was made possible by the support of volunteers, most of whom were from the Netherlands at first. As a result of a Dutch TV news story about the online publication, two brothers were finally able to read a farewell letter from their father, which was "delivered" to them with a delay of more than 70 years. The story can be accessed at https://arolsen-archives.org/

en/news/sons-receive-their-fathers-farewell-letter-after-72-years/.

The Returning Effects Project

In the autumn of 2016, the ITS launched the *Returning Effects* project to help promote the search all over the world and return effects to the respective families. As part of this project, the ITS began to carry out systematic research in its own holdings and to document and evaluate the paths of persecution of the approximately 3,200 owners of the effects for the first time; information on places of residence and old addresses are particularly important here. Most of the victims of persecution were political prisoners: a large proportion of them (about 900 people) came from Poland, about 300 came from the former Soviet Union, about 680 from Germany, and there were over 50 from the Netherlands, from France, and from Spain, as well as from 30 other countries. Effects belonging to Jewish persecutees are an exception.

The information contained in the documents held in the Arolsen Archives (such as transport lists, prisoner registration cards etc.) provides important clues as to how to begin the real-life search for the survivors themselves or their relatives. Within the last three years, more than 390 effects have been returned to close relatives, including daughters, sons, and grandchildren. This was only possible through external investigations and the support of various authorities, such as register offices located all over the world, through cooperation with memorial sites, especially in Poland and including the Auschwitz and Stutthof memorials, through the assistance of the international prisoners' associations, and through the initiative of individuals in Poland, the Netherlands, Norway, France, Belgium, and Spain.

Personal encounters with relatives frequently take place in Bad Arolsen when effects are returned in person, or in the relatives' home countries, and often involve them travelling long distances from the USA, France, or Poland. These encounters emphasize just how important it is to find the next of kin, because the objects kept in the Arolsen Archives are mainly pocket watches, wristwatches, jewelry, wedding rings, personal documents like birth certificates, school reports, identity papers, correspondence, everyday items, and family photos, all of which are of inestimable value to the relatives.

„Key" to the Past

In many cases, these personal belongings function like a key that the relatives now hold in their hands, or like a trigger that helps people start to find out about their own family history. The effects and documents provide important information that can fill in the gaps in the life stories of their relatives or they function like jigsaw pieces in the reconstruction of paths of persecution which were often unknown or only partly known beforehand. Over 70 years have since passed and this period of time should not be underestimated. The same can be said of how important it still is for families to find out about the history of their relatives and,

as is frequently the case, even to find closure by clarifying their fates. In many cases, the objects concerned are familiar to the children from their childhood. Items like a pocket watch that was taken out of a father's waistcoat pocket on a Sunday and immediately rekindles childhood memories of a beloved father when it reappears 70 years after its owner's murder. Only relatives have this kind of emotional knowledge and personal memories of the victims of persecution whose last personal belongings were taken away from them before their deportation to the concentration camps.

The research and the successful returns of effects which have taken place over the past three years have shown that searching and finding families in Eastern and Central Europe is not only about returning personal belongings to the families, but is also still inextricably linked to the clarification of fates. In many of the cases which the Arolsen Archives have researched in Poland, Russia, and the Ukraine and which resulted in contact being made with the families, often with the children of victims of persecution, nothing was known about the whereabouts of the missing relative, let alone about their path of persecution, for over 70 years – until their belongings were returned to their families. Moreover, because most of the victims of persecution did not survive – the effects belonging to Polish persecutees from the Neuengamme concentration camp include items belonging to a large number of individuals who burned to death on the *Cap Arcona* – most of the families do not even know where their loved ones are buried or where a memorial is located.

Seventy years on, families are often now able to come to terms with the fates of their relatives, to visit their resting place, and light a candle for them. The documents containing information on the site of graves, for example, can be found in sub-collection 5.3.2, *Attempted Identification*. These documents were created between 1950 and 1951. However, this collection also contains many documents which had already been created in the latter half of the 1940s.

The #StolenMemory campaign

In the wake of the very successful research and return project, the ITS launched the *#StolenMemory* campaign in 2018. This ready-to-print exhibition tells the stories of the owners of the effects. The exhibition includes large-format posters displaying the names of the concentration camp prisoners and photos of the objects belonging to them. Focusing on successful searches that have culminated in the return of personal belongings, and highlighting what this means to the families, it also shows objects whose rightful owners the Arolsen Archives are still searching for, and describes the fates of the people who originally owned them. The exhibition has already been shown in Paris, Innsbruck, Kassel, Athens, Luxembourg and Venice. Exhibitions at various locations in Poland took place in 2019 (the 80th anniversary of the beginning of World War II), including two exhibitions in Oświęcim with a thematic and a geographical connection

to the Auschwitz extermination camp and to people from the region who still have not been found. The collection of personal effects lends itself particularly well to using the regional connections of persecutees from specific places. Public searches for those concerned are then launched. These searches can be part of an educational school project, for example.

Nearly 100 pupils from schools in Oświęcim attended the exhibition opening at the IJBS International Youth Meeting Center in Oświęcim/Auschwitz on 4 September, 2019. Cooperation with the International Youth Meeting Center is providing an opportunity to use #StolenMemory as an educational project: the young people involved will attend a number of seminars where they will be able to work with the biographies and the documents, research the fates of people from their own region, and look for their traces. Perhaps they will even manage to find more families. The initial results of the search efforts will be presented in March 2020.

From 9-10 September 2019, the Arolsen Archives took part in the History Forum of the DPJW (the German-Polish Youth Office) in Gdansk. Those invited to attend included memorials and educational institutions from Germany and Poland as well as teachers and others who work in the field of education and organize youth exchanges for young people in Germany and Poland. The Arolsen Archives ran a number of workshops presenting the potential of the #StolenMemory campaign for use in educational contexts. Participants were then given the opportunity to research the fate of a specific person for themselves: they searched the online archive of the Arolsen Archives for documents on Waldemar Rowiński, a 17-year-old Polish student who was deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp. He died in the bombing of the Cap Arcona passenger ship. Among other things, the Arolsen Archives still have his school reports and his student ID card. They also have documents about his imprisonment and the cause of his death. The participants then used this information as the starting point for further research and were amazed by the many connections they found and by the results that emerged in a very short time: “I learned something about the Polish school system along the way” – “Now I know what the Cap Arcona shipwreck was all about” – “I know more about the first transport to the Auschwitz concentration camp now” – these were just some of the reactions.

Outlook

In 2020, the *#StolenMemory* campaign will be one of the focal points of the German-Polish projects run by the DPJW, starting with a kick-off seminar at the International Youth Meeting Center in Oświęcim/Auschwitz at the end of January 2020. As part of the “Wege zur Erinnerung” (Paths to Remembrance) program, interested teachers and educators can apply for a grant to participate in the project, which will focus primarily on working with biographies and paths of persecution.

This article is an abridged and revised version of the following text: Ramona Bräu, Kerstin Hoffmann, Anna Meier-Osiński: The New Tasks and Challenges for Tracing. In: Henning Borggräfe/Christian Höschler/Isabel Panek (eds.): Tracing and Documenting Nazi Victims Past and Present (Arolsen Research Series # 1). Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg 2020: https://www.degruyter.com/view/product/534147 (due to be published in June 2020).

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Life after Survival. The History of Displaced Persons as a Subject for Education in Schools and Other Educational Contexts

By Akim Jah and Elisabeth Schwabauer

Liberation from National Socialism and the period which followed immediately afterwards hardly have any role to play in historical education at present. However, the situation of Holocaust survivors, liberated concentration camp inmates, and former forced laborers provides many points of reference and a wide range of issues which can be explored in history lessons and other educational contexts. These include the state (of health) of the Displaced Persons (DPs) – this is the term used to refer to those people who had been deported primarily to Germany and liberated there – as well as their subsequent movements and the activities of the Allies and international aid organizations.

The Arolsen Archives (known as the International Tracing Service, ITS, up until May 2019) are closely connected with the history of the DPs in many different ways. Not least because the Arolsen Archives have millions of documents on the subject, which can be used in a wide variety of ways in connection with historical education. This article is intended to serve as an introduction to the subject and, as such, will provide an overview of the history of the DPs.

The Situation after Liberation. Who were the Displaced Persons?

During the liberation of Europe, as they advanced through Germany and the territories occupied by Germany, the Allies found about 10 million people from nearly every country in Europe who had been displaced and uprooted. About 7.7 million of them were found in Germany alone. They included large numbers of children and young people. The DPs comprised many different groups. Many of them had previously been deported from various European countries to perform forced labor in Germany, where they were obliged to work – often in inhumane conditions – in factories, small companies, and municipal enterprises as well as on farms, in private households, and in church communities.

The liberated foreign concentration camp inmates constituted a second group. Many of them had been imprisoned for years in concentration camps where they were subjected to life-threatening conditions. The prisoners who were liberated in the concentration camps were joined by those liberated in the numerous sub-camps and "Außenkommandos" and by those who had survived the so-called death marches.

The liberated concentration camp prisoners also included a large number of Jews who, as survivors of the Holocaust, constituted a distinct group. They had been deported from the Reich or from occupied and allied countries and had been brought to ghettos or the Auschwitz concentration and extermination camp. From there, they had been moved on again to perform forced labor or had been sent on so-called evacuation transports to camps further to the west. In most cases, they were the only surviving members

of their families.

In addition to these groups, all of whom were victims of National Socialist politics, the DPs also included people who had fled from the various Soviet republics and other countries for political reasons and who found themselves on the territory of the former German Reich after the end of the war. The Jewish "infiltrees" who started arriving in Germany in 1946, and who will be dealt with in greater detail below, were also registered as DPs by the Allies, as were the German Jews who had survived the Holocaust and saw no future for themselves in Germany.

The Support Provided by the Allies, the Repatriation and Emigration of Displaced Persons

The former forced laborers, the liberated concentration camp prisoners from the various European countries and the survivors of the Holocaust were in urgent need of support when they were liberated, especially as far as medical care and supplies of food and clothing were concerned. This assistance was provided by the Allies and by Allied aid organizations – initially by the *United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* (UNRRA) and later by the *International Refugee Organization* (IRO). The support provided by the Allies included registering the DPs and tracing their relatives. From 1948 onwards, tracing activities were concentrated at the then ITS in Arolsen. Hospitals were built to treat the sick, and children's centers were set up to look after and care for unaccompanied children and adolescents. The Allies also organized repatriation. However, this was not always easy to implement when it came down to individual cases. Many of the DPs could not or would not return to the countries they had come from. In addition to the antisemitism rife in their native countries, which was touched upon previously and made it impossible for Jews to live safely and be treated as equal members of society, there were also political reasons for this. Many DPs saw no future for themselves in East Central Europe, dominated as it was by Stalin, or they feared that they would suffer political disadvantages on their return. For forced laborers, liberated concentration camp prisoners, and prisoners of war from the former Soviet Union, repatriation also had serious consequences because they were under general suspicion of having been collaborators. They were often detained and interrogated in so-called filtration camps for months on end on their return. Some of them were taken to Soviet forced labor camps. Nonetheless, the Soviet Union had not recognized the status of the DPs and insisted on their being returned to their countries of origin as quickly as possible. During the months that followed the liberation, the western Allies, on the other hand, came to the conclusion that no one could be forced to return to their country of origin if they raised valid objections. The Western Allies subsequently helped DPs who did not want to return to their native countries to emigrate to other countries. The IRO, which assumed responsibility for looking after the DPs in mid-1947, was charged with provi-

ding DPs who wished to emigrate with assistance in finding a host country. DPs could apply for assistance with emigration under a resettlement program. A number of countries were eventually willing to accept DPs. These were mainly traditional countries of immigration, such as the USA, Canada and Australia, and other countries that needed workers. Although the immigration regulations of the destination countries were a little more liberal than they had been before the war, there were still restrictions. It was especially difficult for sick people to find a host country willing to take them. Many of the Jewish DPs wanted to emigrate to Palestine. However, this was not easily managed until the state of Israel was founded in 1948. Sometimes a number of years passed before people were actually able to emigrate. The Allied aid organizations in West Germany, Austria and Italy set up so-called DP camps to provide temporary accommodation. These camps were a transit area for people who saw their future in other countries, far away from Europe.

The Situation of Jewish Displaced Persons

Originally, the camps were structured according to the countries of origin of the respective DPs. However, Jewish survivors in these camps were faced with antisemitism all over again. Once an investigative commission set up by US President Truman had revealed the sometimes catastrophic conditions in the camps and had highlighted the special situation of Jewish DPs in particular, special camps were set up especially for Jews.

Supported by various bodies, including Jewish welfare organizations, Jewish DPs were able to make preparations for their emigration there by taking language lessons and attending vocational training courses. The DPs played an active role in organizing camp life. There was a camp administration and a camp police force, children were looked after in kindergartens and were given lessons in the schools. The DPs set up their own newspapers, cinemas, theaters, and synagogues. To commemorate the victims of Nazi persecution, they erected the first monuments and organized memorial ceremonies.

Starting in the summer of 1946, the camps for Jewish DPs also attracted thousands of Jewish refugees from Central Eastern Europe who could not stay in their former places of residence, such as Poland, because of the antisemitism they faced there. They had survived the Holocaust and had initially returned to their places of origin, but now they entered occupied Germany, most went to the US zone, in order to emigrate from there. Some of them were Polish Jews who had fled to the Soviet Union in 1939 following the German invasion of Poland or who had found themselves there after the Soviet occupation of eastern Poland. Thousands of these people had been sent to Siberia by the Soviet administration and had later come to the Central Asian Soviet republics by various circuitous routes. From there, they returned to Europe after the liberation. The Allies called these refugees "infiltrees."

Many DP camps were closed as more and

more people emigrated, especially after the founding of the State of Israel in 1948. The last camp in Föhrenwald, south of Munich, was closed in 1957. Responsibility for the DPs had been transferred to the Federal Republic of Germany in 1951 already, when the IRO had ceased its activities. Those Displaced Persons who were unable or unwilling to emigrate for a variety of reasons remained in Germany and were granted "homeless foreigner" status.

Documents on Displaced Persons in the Arolsen Archives

The documents on the DPs preserved in Bad Arolsen comprise documents on individual people from nearly all the countries of Europe and include applications to the IRO for support, case files of unaccompanied children, registration cards, and papers which portray the situation in the many DP camps.

Other collections contain information about repatriation to countries of origin, emigration to other countries, and about the activities of the ITS and the later Arolsen Archives, which continues to support survivors and the relatives of people who were murdered in tracing family members and documenting their detention in a camp. The documents can be searched in the so-called ITS Digital Archive on site in Bad Arolsen. A vast selection of the documents are also accessible in the Online Archive.

Further information and carefully prepared educational materials can be found in the educational offerings provided by the Arolsen Archives, which are available free of charge and can be accessed at https://arolsen-archives.org/en/learn-participate/learning-with-documents/.

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Learning with Biographies. Objectives, Opportunities and Limitations of Educational Work with Life Stories and Biographical Fragments about Former Victims of Nazi Persecution

By Ingolf Seidel

Learning with biographies is essentially about using life stories to approach the events of a specific historical epoch from a subjective perspective. In the context of National Socialism, it is usually understood to mean learning based on individual histories of persecution suffered by survivors of the German policy of extermination. The focus is on the testimony of survivors of National Socialism - "contemporary witnesses" is the vague term often used to describe them today. Biographical learning in connection with perpetrators, bystanders, or people who have been incriminated by others etc. plays at best a marginal role in this canon.

Contemporary Witnesses and Historical Learning

As the concept of contemporary witnesses is closely connected with questions of historical learning using biographies, I would like to begin by quoting Primo Levi's well known and unsettling words on the subject of witnesses:

»We, the survivors, are not the true witnesses. (...) We survivors are not only an exiguous but also an anomalous minority: we are those who by their prevarications or abilities or good luck did not touch the bottom.« If these lines written by Primo Levi are taken literally, there are no surviving contemporary witnesses of the German policy of extermination. The people who were killed in the gas chambers of Auschwitz, in Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka, in the camps of "operation Reinhardt", are no longer with us. Often, all that is left of them is an anonymous mass grave, and so there is usually not even a place where the bereaved can mourn today. The perpetrators of these crimes made every effort to ensure that no witnesses to these murders survived.

At the same time, our everyday knowledge and the desire to communicate that lies at the heart of our work as educators go against Primo Levi's words. We are aware of the existence of countless reports made by survivors and preserved in archives. The archive of the Shoah Foundation alone, which was founded by Steven Spielberg and is part of the University of Southern California (USC), contains over 50,000 interviews. We are familiar with Yehuda Lerner's account of the Sobibor uprising and of his escape from the camp, which he speaks about in Claude Lanzmann's documentary titled "Sobibor, October 14, 1943, 4 p.m." Yes, even surviving inmates of the so-called Sonderkommando in Auschwitz have given testimony in written and visual form, including Jakow Silberberg, the protagonist of Karl Fruchtmann's 1987 film „Ein einfacher Mensch" (a simple man).

Written accounts can also bear witness. The nature of ego-documents such as letters, diaries and memoirs is, of course, different.

Persecutees record their sufferings, their resistance, or their survival strategies in these ego-documents, which embody the victims' perspective. However, in the witness statements recorded by the media or transcribed during the Nazi trials, there is already some blurring of the clarity which stems from the notion that these statements are testimonies given from a strictly first-person perspective. Even the camera perspectives used during the Eichmann trial constitute an element of staging by third parties.

Documents in archives, here the documents in the Arolsen Archives in particular, represent different perspectives. These might be the perspectives of perpetrators, if the documents concerned are files which come from concentration camps, for example. Or they may represent the bureaucratic perspective of people from aid organizations who worked with survivors. These documents are contemporary testimonies too, albeit from the point of view of the perpetrators or other parties.

Marginalized Victim Groups

Learning with biographies or with biographical elements provides the opportunity to demonstrate the heterogeneous nature of the victims of persecution; this applies in particular, but not exclusively, to Jewish persecutees who did not become "THE JEWS" until their homogenization through National Socialist ideology. When dealing with Nazi history, it is also necessary to devote attention to the biographies of other groups of persecutees in order to counteract the hierarchization of these groups that is seen in practice and that results in their marginalization.

It is a sad fact that the National Socialist genocide of Sinti and Roma people, which has its own specifics, is remembered as an afterthought at best. Similarly, the almost uninterrupted continuation of antiziganism after 1945, which is evident in the life stories of the Sinti and Roma minority as well as in archival documents, is hardly mentioned, in contrast to secondary antisemitism. In recent years, the forced laborers who were exploited so murderously have come to receive a little more attention. And some seminars cover the biographies of homosexuals in concentrations camps. More attention is also now being paid to the murders perpetrated by the Nazis on the sick as well as on the T4 campaign.

But who is providing pedagogical support and who is reminding us of the second largest group of victims? This group consists of about 3.3 million Soviet prisoners of war. Where has the debate about so-called antisocial elements or alleged career criminals found its way into educational contexts? Even Social Democrats and Communists, who were the first victims of the Nazi state, receive only marginal attention today. The usually unintentional hierarchization of the victims that is seen repeatedly in practice, is primarily, but not only, carried out by the dominant society. All these groups are not simply "forgotten victims" – they were and still are marginalized in the discourse of re-

membrance. It is certainly true that archives contain hardly complete biographies – and still fewer ego-documents – about so-called anti-social elements or people who were forced to wear the green triangle that identified career criminals. However, biographical traces of a wide range of different groups of persecutees can be found in the holdings of the Arolsen Archives – and not only there.

The Perspectives of the Victims of Persecution and Integrated History

Discussions with contemporary witnesses and recorded interviews with survivors are used in educational contexts with the intention of making it possible to experience history from a subjective perspective and of making history more accessible. At the same time, according to Matthias Heyl, subject-orientation also means »*enabling young people to analyze a historical situation as well as their own references to it in order to be able to search for ways and means of finding their own individual perspective on the historical situation which presents itself to them and to do so in the context of their own interests.*« This requires them to distance themselves from both victims and perpetrators in a way that is not always possible during a discussion with a contemporary witness involving intense emotions. Documents from archival collections can help to create this distance as they are indirect reports about a person.

It is due to the great historian Saul Friedländer that history is increasingly being recounted in the form of "*integrated history*", which takes the perspective of the victims into account and gives it a central place. Among other things, (videographed) interviews with survivors of German extermination policy are available for this purpose. This approach, which Friedländer conceived for the persecuted Jews, should not be limited to them alone. Ultimately, examining and communicating the perspective of the victims is just as important as examining and communicating the perspective of the perpetrators or the history of events and structures. In this context, we also need to tell the life stories of the persecutees before and, in the case of survivors, after their persecution, as well as focus on their reactions to the persecution and on decisions in order to ensure that these people are not reduced to the status of victims. For me, however, it remains unclear whether the absolutization of this perspective in educational contexts, while correct, may in fact prevent a confrontation with the concept of guilt in all its various forms - and ultimately constitute an affirmation of post-National-Socialist society, which, at the expense of repressing its own responsibility and "*secondary guilt*" (Giordano), believes itself to be able to free itself from guilt by identifying with the victims and sacralizing them.

This leads me to question the purpose of using biographies in an educational context. What do we aim to achieve by working with contemporary testimonies or by analyzing biographies? Is it all about instigating a sense of personal involvement and about emotionalization? Or is it a question of simply reconstructing biographies, especially with a view to evaluating historical documents?

Does the much-hailed concept of authenticity play the most important role? Or is it all about conveying the history of events from a subjective perspective? Whatever the concrete objective in schools and other educational contexts may be, when we work with biographies, as with any other source, and this cannot be emphasized often enough, historical integration within the history of National Socialism is essential. The narrative competence called for in schools can only develop when the historical context is not hidden by the powerful nature of discussions with contemporary witnesses and egodocuments.

When learning with biographies, as when working with biographical archival documents, it is therefore neither adequate nor sufficient to consider individual biographies in isolation or to deal exclusively with individual stories of persecution. When working in an educational context, we must, and I understand this is in a normative sense, reveal the underlying ideologies (primarily antisemitism and racism), the social and political processes (such as the radicalization of Nazi politics during the war and the sometimes competing interests of Nazi institutions), and the cultural context. And the concrete circumstances and historical events must also be taken into account, by examining the history of the concentration camps, for example.

Consequently, imparting knowledge about the history of events and about the structural history of National Socialism is essential for a real understanding of biographies and individual stories of suffering. Traditional textbooks still have an important role to play here, although a number of problematic aspects are seen over and over again, such as the way Jews are hardly ever depicted as active agents.

The abovementioned processes can also be inferred from biographical fragments from collections of files held in archives. Some of these documents were created or used by perpetrators. This means that when working with archival documents, the first step should be to reveal the provenance of the source in order to understand whose perspective is involved. It follows that the data the documents contain must be subjected to a critical appraisal. Many types of documents (e.g. registry office cards from concentration camps) are not self-explanatory. Unlike discussions with contemporary witnesses or interviews which have been recorded on video, archival material has to be discovered and collated. This in itself calls for a more intensive examination of the materials involved. A biography is not available to participants as a finished product, they have to explore it, or even research it, for themselves. This research-centered approach provides special opportunities for differentiation when learning with biographies.

An additional difficulty that may – and probably will – arise is the fact that it is often only possible to reconstruct fragments of a biography on the basis of archival documents. However, these biographical elements are not unsuitable for use in the context of historical learning. What is more important in

such cases is to explore, discuss and present the reasons for and the background to the gaps. Gaps in a person's biography can also serve to symbolize fractures in their life story or biographical fragment, which were in fact caused by their persecution or even their murder. One objective might be to investigate which aspects of a person's life do not feature in the files created by perpetrators, i.e. to explore how the files negated a person's reality and robbed them of their humanity even while they were still alive. In fact, the biographical fragments which can be gleaned from the documents in the Arolsen Archives concretize Moishe Postone's analysis, which holds that the National Socialist perpetrators and those who collaborated with them turned the Jews they persecuted into shadows, numbers, and ciphers.

About the author

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Working with Historical Documents from the Arolsen Archives in an Educational Context

By Akim Jah

The Arolsen Archives (known as the International Tracing Service, ITS, up until May 2019) hold millions of documents related to persecution under National Socialism, the Holocaust and Displaced Persons. They include official documents and forms, index cards from administrative bodies but also registration documents, lists of names, and documents connected with applications of various kinds.

Many of the documents are about individual people, they relate to specific persons, in particular to former victims of National Socialist persecution. The documents are paradigmatically suitable for use in historical education in the context of archival pedagogy. They provide an ideal approach to the subject of persecution during National Socialism and the Holocaust, or to the history of the immediate post-war period and the situation of Displaced Persons.

The concept of working with historical documents in an educational context is rooted in the assumption that these documents provide an opportunity to learn about the period in question and about the contexts within which the source documents were created. But what does this kind of learning look like in practice? Which steps need to be taken to ensure that historical documents are subjected to qualified examination and which learning goals are connected with this approach? Which potentials does it ultimately offer for historical education? The present article explores these questions and outlines a step-by-step procedure for using historical documents in educational contexts. Working with historical sources is understood as a methodological-didactic approach which enables young people to learn to assess and interpret sources independently.

Archival Documents as Source Materials for Historical Education

Unlike factual texts *about history*, archival documents cannot be seen in isolation, i.e., they are – perforce – not self-explanatory. What we see and read when we look at documents superficially is not necessarily congruent with their historical significance. Because they were produced in a specific context and for a specific purpose, they reflect the views of the person who created them and contain only information that was relevant to the specific function that the document had at the time. Seen from today's perspective or from the point of view of someone who is not an expert, the information contained in such documents is often neither easy to understand nor clear. What is more, historical documents usually reflect the standpoint of their author, which can reveal itself in the way the contents are formulated, for example, or in terminology that may be discriminatory, trivializing, or euphemistic in nature. This applies similarly to index cards and forms such as questionnaires. These too were created for a specific purpose and reflect a specific standpoint.

And the people who filled out such forms were tied to the structure and the rules laid down for appropriate entries, i.e. they were restricted in the answers they could give. Moreover, they found themselves in a specific (coercive) situation and were also pursuing their own interests. It should also be noted that some forms were filled out by third parties, not by the respondents themselves. Supplementary elements (added later) in the form of stamps or comments also need to be taken into consideration.

Consequently, historical documents have to be deciphered, read critically, interpreted, and put into context before they can be understood. Reading a historical document is quite different from reading a factual text as the examination of a historical document may well not lead to all the facts being established beyond doubt, nor must such an examination leave no questions unanswered and no contradictions unresolved. It may, however, give rise to new questions in turn, which can make it necessary for students to consult other sources and even carry out further (archival) research of their own.

The steps to be taken when examining documents in an educational context are similar to the methods of historical research and comprise *comprehension, source criticism* and *source interpretation*. Ideally, these steps should be followed when using a document in an educational context, if necessary in an abbreviated form, and appropriate guidance should be given by the teacher or educator.

Comprehension, Source Criticism and Source Interpretation

Comprehension refers to the process of understanding what kind of document we have before us, i.e. Finding out when, for whom, and for what purposes it was created, and what its key message is. Some of this information (the name of the document, for example) can be deduced from the document itself, while other information has to be deciphered, decoded or interpreted first. Many documents, especially forms or index cards which have already been filled out, contain entries that are legible, but which are almost impossible to understand without specific explanatory information, or which can only be understood to a limited degree without it. In order to put a document into its specific historical context and understand the meaning of the terms, abbreviations and references it contains, it may be necessary to have recourse to information which already exists. When working with documents from the Arolsen Archives, there are two ways of dealing with this: 1. The workshop outlines and educational materials provided by the Arolsen Archives contain historical information and contextualizations which put the documents in context and make them "readable." 2. The online e-Guide to the Arolsen Archives uses a graphical user interface to describe common types of document and explain entries that are found frequently in forms and administrative files in particular.

Once the comprehension phase has been completed, the next step is to investigate the content by performing *source criticism*. This

is the process of evaluating the document in respect of its credibility, its plausibility and its accuracy. This can take the form of immanent criticism, e.g. By recognizing that the young age noted on a prisoner registration card from a concentration camp cannot be reconciled with the profession given on the same card. This may also involve comparing different sources, e.g. Analyzing and explaining contradictory information contained in different documents. In the spirit of the concept of research-based learning, this can involve gathering together various pieces of information about a person from different documents and subjecting them to a critical comparison. Questions as to the interests and the perspective of the author are also a component part of source criticism.

Finally, *source interpretation* consists of putting the information that has been gathered into the historical context and evaluating it in the context of a specific question. Source interpretation requires a certain amount of historical knowledge. In a classroom situation, this means that students can use knowledge acquired during previous lessons or can explore the context while they work with the sources. So at this point, the emphasis is no longer just on the information that was gathered during the comprehension phase, but has now shifted to more general historical knowledge. This is especially true when working with biographical documents: the focus here is not on individual biographical details or the reconstruction of a biography, but on structural issues such as persecution under National Socialism, detention in concentration camps, or the situation and perspectives of displaced persons after liberation.

The underlying aim of subjecting historical documents to critical examination is therefore not limited to the mere acquisition of information, but goes beyond that to further students' analytical and interpretational skills, which, for example, is an element in the core curricula of German schools.

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Workshops and Training Courses Based on Archival Documents and Aimed at Educators in Schools and Other Contexts – an Educational Program Provided by the Arolsen Archives

By Akim Jah

The Arolsen Archives (known as the International Tracing Service, ITS, up until May 2019) offer a range of workshops that are based on their extensive documentary holdings and are aimed at educators whose work involves teaching about core issues of Nazi persecution and its aftermath. The target group mainly consists of teachers, especially history teachers at upper secondary level, people involved in out-of-school education, and educators who work for memorial sites and archives.

A workshop usually consists of three phases: an introduction to the topic in question, work in small groups using selected documents as examples, and a final evaluation phase. During the course of the workshop, participants get to know the documentary holdings of the Arolsen Archives that relate to the topic in question, learn about the educational approach of learning with documents, and reflect on how they can use the potential of archival documents in their own work. At the end of the workshop, the participants receive a wide range of teaching aids which they can use in their own educational work. These materials include copies of historical documents and worksheets that contain short introductory texts and questions for students to work on.

The workshops cater to different time requirements and include one-day study programs as well as training courses that run for a number of hours. On request, a specific (regional) focus can be taken into account when selecting the documents for a workshop.

Workshop Schedule

The introduction given at the start of every workshop takes the form of a presentation which provides an overview of the background of the Arolsen Archives, the documentary holdings kept there, and the historical context of the topic in question. For example, the workshop on the subject of Nazi forced labor describes the function of forced labor under National Socialism and the living and working conditions of forced laborers. The historical documents relevant to this topic preserved in the Arolsen Archives are then shown. The workshop on Displaced Persons (DPs) describes the situation of the survivors of the Holocaust and of former forced laborers after liberation and uses documents to show what kind of support was provided by Allied relief organizations.

The participants then work in small groups and use color copies of historical documents to learn about a specific aspect of the topic in question. Alternatively, they analyze suitable biographical documents, applying the methods described for "learning with biographies". During the workshop on forced labor used as an example above, the indivi-

dual working groups cover the different aspects of forced labor in different places and for different companies, the surveillance, punishment and treatment of forced laborers as defined according to racial criteria, and the special situation of pregnant forced laborers. During the workshop on DPs, the groups use administrative documents to focus on the state (of health) of those liberated, the registration and the self-descriptions of DPs, their repatriation, and "life in transit." Alternatively, the paths taken by former persecutees after liberation can be traced using two different biographies. The critical analysis of the documents follows the principles of research-based learning and involves comparing the details given on the various documents and "gathering" relevant information from the documents. Documents from the post-war period are used in all the workshops, including those which focus on the Nazi era. The main reason behind this is the desire to make it clear that life went on for survivors after the liberation and that the injustice they suffered had far-reaching consequences. Helpful ideas for history teachers are included for all working groups. This makes it possible to use the material in schools.

The number of documents given to the working groups differs depending on the amount of time available. One-day study programs include two phases of group work: participants deal with general aspects during the first phase before going into greater depth during the second phase. During the evaluation session which follows the group work, participants present their results to the whole group and then discuss the topic as a whole. The workshops conclude with a discussion on how participants can use archival documents in the own work.

Workshop Topics

General workshop on the Arolsen Archives

A topical overview of the documents preserved in the Arolsen Archives. The focus is on getting to know the potential of the collections for educational work on the following topics: the Holocaust, forced labor, death marches, Displaced Persons, unaccompanied children, and the paths taken by survivors after 1945

Holocaust

The scale of the Holocaust is illustrated using deportations from France and the German Reich as well as mass killings of Jews in Serbia and Eastern Europe by way of example

Persecution of Sinti and Roma

Introduction to and overview of the persecution of Sinti and Roma under National Socialism. Attention is also paid to the subject of antiziganism, which survivors were confronted with after 1945

Concentration camp inmates

A critical analysis of the history of the persecution of concentration camp prisoners, using Dachau as an example. The focus is on the various different groups of prisoners and the conditions in the camp, but also on the lives of former prisoners after liberation

Nazi forced labor

Introduction to and overview of „civilian“ forced labor under National Socialism. The focus is on the use of forced labor in different places and by different companies, the surveillance, punishment and treatment of forced laborers as defined according to racial criteria, and the situation of pregnant forced laborers

Displaced Persons (DPs)

Introduction to and overview of the history of DPs, with a focus on Holocaust survivors and former forced laborers and including the activities of the Allied relief organizations UNRRA and IRO, repatriation, and emigration

Unaccompanied children

Introduction to and overview of the situation of unaccompanied children and young people who survived the Holocaust or were deported as forced laborers. The focus is on the paths of persecution of minors, their future prospects, the care provided by the Allies, and the activities of the Child Search Branch

If you are interested in any of these workshops, please send an email to education@arolsen-archives.org. The workshops can be held in English and German, and some are available in Russian. We look forward to providing you with information about the conditions and the way to proceed. We are happy to visit you for this purpose.

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The e-Guide to the Arolsen Archives: a Versatile Online Tool that Can also Be Used in Historical Education

By Christiane Weber

In order to understand documents from the Arolsen Archives (known as the International Tracing Service, ITS, up until May 2019) in the sense indicated by the term source analysis, pupils and teachers who work with archival documents in educational contexts need a broad knowledge both of the historical context in which the documents were created and of the details they contain.

This knowledge has been brought together in the e-Guide of the Arolsen Archives. The e-Guide (the "e" stands for electronic) is available on the internet free of charge and provides detailed information on the documents most commonly found in the Arolsen Archives. The emphasis is not so much on individual index cards that represent the personal fate of a concentration camp inmate, forced laborer, or Displaced Person, but rather on the type of document itself. Documents that are related to individuals, such as questionnaires and index cards, take center stage. They include prisoner registration cards from the concentration camps, registration cards of Displaced Persons, and registration documents for forced laborers, for example.

In addition to the historical context of their use (who used the document, why, how, when, and what for? Where was it issued and by whom?), abbreviations and other details that appear on the documents are explained in simple language. There is one sample card per document and a zoom function is provided. Individual sections of the sample document (so-called overlays) are highlighted to indicate that explanations are available.

The explanations make the documents and the information they contain readable, explain their historical function and the context in which they were created, and clarify content that would otherwise be impossible to understand. Even abbreviations which may seem unimportant at first can reveal a great deal about the fates of the people for whom the cards were created – but they have to be decoded first, because the documents do not speak for themselves. For example, even experts are often uncertain what it means when the name of a camp appears in a specific position on a card: does this signify that the person concerned was imprisoned there previously or does it indicate that they were deported there from somewhere else? Nor is it immediately clear to anyone who looks at a personal effects card that these cards list personal property that was confiscated from concentration camp prisoners, for example. And without contextual knowledge, it is almost impossible to understand what the details and abbreviations on a labor assignment card mean, to mention a third example.

As well as explanations, the e-Guide also contains a wealth of further information, including quotations from accounts given by survivors and, above all, a large number

of documents that shed light on the specific historical context. The e-Guide also presents the different variations of specific types of documents.

There are three ways of accessing the descriptions of the documents: as well as providing a conventional list of the names of the cards and a full-text search, the e-Guide also features a visual point of access. Small images of all the cards covered by the e-Guide are displayed when the web page is opened. This means that users who are looking for information of a general nature can click on cards that arouse their interest. A filter function guides users to the correct description, even if they do not know exactly what kind of document they have in front of them.

The interactive design of the e-Guide caters for different levels of prior knowledge because it enables users to decide for themselves how much information they need. The target audiences of the e-Guide are very diverse and include family members and survivors from Germany and abroad who receive documents from the Arolsen Archives in response to their inquiries, students and academics who work with the documents, as well as users of the online archive. However, the e-Guide is particularly suitable for use in history lessons in schools or in out-of-school education. Teachers can consult the e-Guide in advance to familiarize themselves with the context of the historical documents they plan to use during their lessons. But students, too, can also use the e-Guide to find out about the documents themselves in the context of research-based learning.

The e-Guide was developed with the support of various memorial sites, researchers from all over the world, and longstanding employees of the Arolsen Archives. It can be accessed in English and German at https://eguide.arolsen-archives.org, and it is growing all the time. The first documents to be included in the e-Guide were about 30 of the most common concentration camp documents and descriptions of the most frequently found documents on Displaced Persons. Information on the documents about forced laborers is planned to go online in 2021.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for us, please e-mail us at eguide@arolsen-archives.org or call us on +49 5691 629 324. We look forward to hearing from you.

About the author

Christiane Weber, a historian, is a Research Associate in the Research and Education Department of the Arolsen Archives. She is responsible for designing and implementing the e-Guide, which aims to describe the most common documents which exist on concentration camp inmates, DPs and forced laborers.

Supporting Trips to Memorial Sites on the Basis of Documents from the Arolsen Archives: the documentED Project

By Christian Höschler

The Arolsen Archives (known as the International Tracing Service, or ITS, up until May 2019) contain over 30 million documents with information on the fate of more than 17 million victims of Nazi persecution. The holdings include records from the National Socialist concentration camps, documents on forced labor during the Second World War, and material from the period after liberation which includes documents produced by the Allies during the occupation and the correspondence that the ITS exchanged with survivors and their relatives over a period of some decades. This unique collection holds great potential for historical-political educational work. It is against this background that the Arolsen Archives are engaging in new educational activities which focus on teaching about the history of Nazi persecution.

One example is a new project titled *documentED* – a portmanteau word combining documents and education – which uses documents from the Arolsen Archives as the basis for preparing trips to concentration camp memorial sites and for relevant follow-up activities.

This article describes the concept behind the project, which is still in the early stages. Trials of the *documentED* project started in the summer of 2018; a number of memorial sites in the German-speaking world have been participating in this test phase. On the basis of the experience gained so far, the project will be included as a permanent element in the future educational offerings of the Arolsen Archives.

Basic Concept

A school class is planning a trip to a concentration camp memorial site. What can the teacher do in advance to prepare the students for the visit? This is where the *documentED* project comes in. The Arolsen Archives offer so-called toolkits on their website, containing documents from different concentration camps that are today kept in the Arolsen Archives. These toolkits can be downloaded by teachers and are ready-to-use. When selecting the documents to be used in the project – typically, documents related to individual people are chosen, such as prisoner registration cards or questionnaires – the needs of teachers and students are taken into account. How much time is available for preparing the trip to the memorial site? Is the visit planned as a (half) day trip or will it be part of a project week? How much prior knowledge of the subject of Nazi persecution do the students have? What learning goals have been defined? Should students be given the opportunity to work on other documents after visiting the memorial as a follow-up to the trip to the historical site? These are just some of several important questions. For that reason, the *documentED* toolkit has been designed as a flexible resource and can be used in different ways, in accordance with the time and

resources available.

The Arolsen Archives can also compile an individual, "customized" *documentED* toolkit for a particular group, should this be required. This will usually involve using the ITS Digital Archive to research documents with a link to prisoners who originally came from the same town or region as the young people in the group. If, for example, a school class from Jena wants to visit the Buchenwald concentration camp memorial site, the Arolsen Archives can search their holdings for documents on prisoners from Jena who were detained in the Buchenwald concentration camp.

Relating Learning to Students' Everyday Lives

In the case of the individualized toolkit, when the Arolsen Archives find suitable documents, it should be possible to establish a connection with two localities that are familiar to the students – a connection with the memorial site the students are visiting and a connection with the place where the students live. These links can be used to help students relate what they learn to the circumstances of their own lives. For instance, if a prisoner registration card from the Buchenwald concentration camp gives a prisoner's former address, this address may well be familiar to the students. The realization that a former victim of persecution came from the same place as the group which is now visiting the historical site where that person was imprisoned ideally arouses genuine interest on the part of the students: Who was this person who came from the same town as me? What was their background and what was their profession? Why were they arrested by the National Socialists and imprisoned in a concentration camp? Did they survive the persecution? If so, what was their life like after liberation? Students can use the information that can be gleaned from the documents in the archive to examine the concrete fate of a specific individual. This can serve as the starting point for considering the structural history of Nazi persecution. This way of introducing the subject is both methodically and didactically more suitable than reading long factual texts in which Nazi persecution is described in all its horrible detail, but may largely remain abstract, for example.

Contextualization

Most of the documents in the Arolsen Archives that relate to the National Socialist concentration camps are perpetrator documents. They were used in a specific historical context, in this case in the context of concentration camp administration. Because documents of this type reflect the inhuman ideology of the National Socialists and are highly problematic in terms of their information content – the way prisoners' physical characteristics were recorded and the categories that were used to classify prisoners are just two examples of this – they can never be used in isolation in the context of educational activities. Instead, when used in the classroom, the documents need to be carefully deconstructed and must be viewed in relation to the context in which they were created. It is essential that students gain an understanding of who created the documents for what purpose and that they

be made aware that the content of the documents must be viewed with a critical eye.

This is why the *documentED* project does not stop at providing raw source materials. It also encourages the use of the e-Guide, which can be accessed on the website of the Arolsen Archives and helps to explain the documents and put them into context. The e-Guide is a digital tool that describes the form and function of the most common types of documents found in the Arolsen Archives, including the most frequently found concentration camp documents. Central questions (Who created the document and what was the background to its creation? What needs to be taken into account when working with this document?) are answered in detail with an emphasis on the use of simple language.

This means that even pupils with little prior knowledge can work with the documents because the contextual knowledge they need is made available to them, in fact they can piece it together for themselves. On the one hand, this is intended to prevent students from drawing the wrong conclusions from source documents created by perpetrators. On the other hand, this method is especially suitable for research-based learning, which gives students the opportunity to develop the skills they need to deal with sources critically.

Information for Teachers

In addition to the documents and the e-Guide, information for teachers constitutes the third component of the *documentED* toolkits. Accompanying texts aimed at teachers discuss fundamental aspects that the Arolsen Archives deem to be important when using the documents in an educational context.

Working with person-related documents on Nazi persecution and its consequences brings students into contact with the fate of individuals. However, the picture that results necessarily remains incomplete; it is impossible to reconstruct an entire path of persecution or a full biography. While it can be argued that the potential inherent in research-based learning constitutes a distinct advantage, missing information and gaps in the content – which can result from the existence of contradictory details in the documents – can present students with problems and can have a negative effect both on motivation and on learning outcomes.
This means that teachers have to be prepared for certain reactions from their students. They can remind students of the fragmentary nature of the documents – a fact which is of key importance for the critical analysis of historical sources – while encouraging them to conduct further research at the same time. Local archives are often the best place to go in order to find out more about the former persecutees or about the general history of Nazi persecution in a specific place. Alternatively, students can examine documents from the post-war period (documents from the Allied Displaced Persons camps, for example) in order to place knowledge acquired in connection with a visit to a memorial site into a broader context. *documentED* provi-

des differentiated yet concise explanations of these and other points which are important when working with documents from the Arolsen Archives.

In summary, *documentED* toolkits are much more than just tailor-made collections of materials complete with valuable contextual information; they serve as an easy-to-use aid for any teacher who wants to use source materials about the history of Nazi persecution effectively in connection with a trip to a memorial site.

About the author

Dr. Christian Höschler studied History, English, and Educational Sciences in Munich. He is Deputy Head of the Research and Education Department at the Arolsen Archives.

The Use of Person-Related Documents from the Arolsen Archives in the Work of the Max Mannheimer Study Center Dachau

By Steffen Jost and Nina Ritz

The number of German schools that visit concentration camp memorial sites or documentation centers as part of their work on the subject of National Socialism is still rising. Depending on the type of school, the visit is normally scheduled in year 9 (Gymnasium and Realschule), sometimes even in year 8 (Hauptschule and Mittelschule). But visitors also include vocational schools (Berufsschulen), out-of-school youth groups, and international groups. While most of these groups take part in a short educational program, such as a guided tour, during their visit, a growing number of groups are interested in using the opportunity to return to specific topics they have already covered during school lessons or as part of a project. At the Max Mannheimer Study Center in Dachau, we have found that it is primarily groups or group leaders who book a study seminar that lasts several days who are interested in homing in on a specific topic to make their trip to the memorial site a more meaningful experience. These groups are not only interested in concrete historical knowledge, they also want to develop various skills. In June 2016, the Max Mannheimer Study Center joined forces with the International Tracing Service Bad Arolsen (ITS, now known as the Arolsen Archives) and launched a pilot project named *Document Go* in an effort to meet these needs more effectively. Groups who wanted to visit the Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial and take part in a study program were given documents that were specially selected for them from the holdings of the Arolsen Archives to help them prepare for their visit. These files (or file excerpts), which are full of fragments of biographical information about former prisoners, made it possible to establish a connection between the place a particular group came from and the Dachau concentration camp.

Although working with historical documents above and beyond the short excerpts provided in school textbooks is a common feature of many history lessons today, many students are still fascinated when they are given the opportunity to apply the principles of research-based learning and work with a large quantity of historical documents or even whole files. The regional-historical approach, which involves working with a selection of documents on former Dachau prisoners who have some kind of geographical link to the group's place of origin, is an excellent means of highlighting the relevance of examining the historical topic. The *Document Go* project was therefore aimed at generating greater interest during the preparation phase before the actual trip to the memorial site.

When person-related documents are used to help prepare a group for a visit to a memorial site, they should ideally be used in advance – under the supervision of teachers during history lessons, for example. Howe-

ver, groups that take part in a three-day study program at the Max Mannheimer Study Center can use the documents at the beginning of the seminar under the supervision of the educational specialists who work there. In practice, two different approaches proved popular. With the first approach, the whole group (max. 15 participants), divided into smaller groups, all worked on documents about one and the same prisoner. With the second approach, the small groups worked on documents about different prisoners.

In the first case, all the participants received the same set of documents and worked with them on their own. They were given the task of finding out as much as they could about the person and noting the information down. The groups all came together at the end and each one presented their results during a plenary session. The complexity and the scope of the historical documents as well as problems with their legibility meant that each group tended to find out different information, rather than duplicating the information found by other groups. The educator could document the results visually either during or after the plenary session.

When the groups were given documents about different people, they documented the results themselves during the group work phase. Experience showed that this approach took much longer and that it was both easier and more satisfying for the participants if they already had previous experience of working with sources. The results were then presented or shown to the whole group in various different ways (e.g. using a timeline). During the discussion phase, participants were then able to focus on a comparison of the different ways in which the documents came to be preserved, the various life paths and paths of persecution, and the underlying reasons for them.

With both approaches, key questions were written on a flip chart as an aid: Who is mentioned in the documents? Which places did the person spend time in? When, where, and why were they imprisoned? What did the person do before and after their imprisonment? What can we deduce about the person's personality? The origin of the sources was also discussed in the plenary sessions. Discussions about the origins of concentration camp documents, DP documents, and compensation documents gave rise to new questions which were dealt with during the course of the study program. All in all, working on documents that give an insight into individual paths of persecution was not conducive to finding conclusive answers. On the contrary, we found that analyzing documents at the beginning of our programs – before the visit to the Dachau memorial site – led participants to formulate many questions of their own.

Using Arolsen Archives documents to prepare visits to memorial sites as practiced within the *Document Go* project and as further developed and continued by the Arolsen Archives with the *documentED* project has proved to be extremely valuable for the historical-political educational work of the Max Mannheimer Study Center. Although working with the documents requi-

res all those involved to devote significantly more time in advance, this is justified by the educational experience which leaves a much more lasting impression on the participants.

About the authors:

Steffen Jost, a historian, worked as an educator at the Max Mannheimer Study Center, Dachau, up until September 2018. In October 2018, he became Head of the Education Department of the Concentration Camp Memorial Site Dachau.

Nina Ritz, M.A. Jewish Studies and Philosophy, was Head of the Max Mannheimer Study Center, Dachau, up until September 2019. In July 2019, she became Head of International Education Centers of the Volksbund German War Graves Committee, Berlin.

The Arolsen Archives – a Very Special Learning Environment

By Marcus von der Straten

The following text is a report on the successful long-term cooperation that exists between the Wilhelm-Filchner-Schule in Wolfhagen and the Arolsen Archives in neighboring Bad Arolsen.

Alongside the use of descriptive texts, the critical analysis of written sources has a firm place in the disciplinary canon of methods used in the field of history teaching and has long been an accepted element of standard textbooks. However, a difficulty with the source editions of many textbooks is the fact that they differ optically, i.e. (typo)graphically, from real documents and that the didactic approach applied sometimes changes the material beyond recognition. But this does at least have the advantage of making it possible to contextualize and interpret historical sources and incorporate descriptive texts within the rigid timeframe and methodological constraints of normal lessons. In addition to these text-based materials, modern learning should involve as many other different types of sources as possible (images, objects, and audio-visual sources), film documentaries, history films, digital media, etc., as well as out-of-school learning environments.

Visits to archives, for example, provide didactical and methodological learning opportunities that, however, are not usually (or cannot usually be) exploited within the normal school routine for organizational reasons. But it is this very departure from routine that contributes to the positive effect that excursions of this kind have on students' motivation. Another aspect worthy of positive mention is the fact that a visit to the Arolsen Archives, for example, enables students to experience history directly by giving them the opportunity to work with documents that have neither been specially prepared for use in the classroom nor previously deciphered. In the context of research-based learning, this encourages students to formulate their very own questions about history!

The Arolsen Archives and School - in Practice

The Wilhelm-Filchner-Schule and the Arolsen Archives (formerly the International Tracing Service, ITS) have been cooperating in various ways since 2010. After attending initial training courses, teachers were able to use the archive for research purposes, receive digitized archival materials for use during the preparation of visits to memorial sites, and use publications from the Arolsen Archive for teaching purposes. In addition to these forms of project-specific cooperation, students are also allowed to use the archive and its library on their own when working on presentations or special assignments, for example. Day trips to the archive organized on a regular basis by the History Workshop, an optional course for year 10/11, are a central element of the cooperation. The following procedure is usually followed: welcome and discussion of expectations, presentation on the history and the mandate

of the Arolsen Archives, introduction to the archival database, individual research in the ITS Digital Archive with support from staff, complementary use of the library, short presentation of results, feedback, further work and final presentations in school. The young people usually learn how to use the digital archive very quickly at a technical level as it is a medium which is familiar to them from their everyday lives. However, in view of the complexity of the archival holdings, students require professional support from the helpful staff of the Arolsen Archives and from the teacher supervising the group when it comes to conducting their own research. While the questions students ask at first tend to be related to the application itself (directory structure, file paths, etc.) and to be of a general nature (technical terms, foreign words), most of the questions they ask later on are concerned with specific aspects of the subject of their research. Given appropriate support, most students are able to conduct their own research on a specific topic successfully and to evaluate documents accordingly. The material that students find during their research is provided free of charge at the end of the day so that they can continue to use it at school afterwards. The team at the Arolsen Archives will carry out further research on request.

The Potential of Research-Based Learning at the Arolsen Archives for History Teaching

In order for a research visit to Bad Arolsen to be successful, it is essential to contact the staff at an early stage and to prepare the students by introducing the subject matter in advance. Lessons should cover key themes appropriate to the specific focus of the visit (e.g. Nazi ideology and its supporters, propaganda and terror as instruments of power, organization and structure of the concentration camp system, groups of victims and prisoners, everyday life in the camps, forced labor). In addition, the teacher who accompanies the group must be willing to provide active and knowledgeable support.

The Arolsen Archives are Europe's largest archive on National Socialist crimes and their aftermath. As a tracing and information center, they are a particularly good resource when it comes to searching for specific names and places within the territory of the former German Reich or within the territories which were occupied by Germany. A large quantity of general documents and person-related documents from the "Imprisonment", "Forced Labor", "Displaced Persons" and "Tracing Service" sections of the archive are available to the learning groups and can be used by them for the purposes of reconstructing individual fates or exploring the contents of official documents. The archive comprises collections of Nazi documents as well as collections which come from the Allies, from the Arolsen Archives themselves, and from their predecessor organizations. Most of the holdings have already been digitized.

The research carried out by the students is not always entirely successful or productive for a number of reasons: sometimes the data or documents available on individual per-

sons, specific places, or topics is only rudimentary, and sometimes problems arise in connection with documents in foreign languages or with documents that are damaged or difficult to read. Despite these difficulties, the young people are usually very satisfied with their achievements and with the support they receive. Because the students have such a high level of identification with their own work, it is often necessary to stop the research session before the students are ready because of the limited time available. Research-based learning is particularly good at fostering intrinsic motivation and has an activating cognitive effect. Experiences of authenticity and empathy when viewing original documents and considering the lives of specific historical persons enhance learning: discovering a name on a deportation list or looking at ego documents authored by a concentration camp survivor has a very different effect than reading an abstract description of the same theme.

This approach leads to a deeper understanding and to a concretization both of subject matter that is familiar to the students from previous lessons and of subject matter that is unfamiliar. Building on the desire to learn more about the Nazi dictatorship, the Holocaust, and the immediate post-war period that many students express, their prior knowledge can be consolidated and expanded in this way – and with a definite regional focus too.

The students also practice and strengthen their ability to deal with written sources, a key competence. In view of the changing culture of writing, reading and reception (keyword: fake news), extracting meaning and reading critically have become all the more important in recent times. In addition to subject-specific competences such as source criticism, contextualization and interpretation, studying official documents, for example, can also serve to sensibilize students to the revealing, euphemistic language used by the National Socialists or help them recognise the inhumanity of administrative processes. In this respect, the Arolsen Archives offer challenging and varied opportunities for active, discovery-centered historical learning by encouraging students to formulate questions of their own, apply analytical skills, develop problem-solving strategies and hone their historical and contemporary awareness (powers of perception, analysis, judgement and orientation). At the end of this process of independent, cooperative, co-determined and reflective learning, some kind of joint - and, if necessary, assessable - product should result (narrative competence). This might be a commemorative speech, commemorative plaque, exhibition display case, video, website, history newspaper, textbook chapter, presentation, poster, etc.

A Plea for Using Archival Materials (from the Arolsen Archives) in Schools

Generally speaking, greater use of existing archives, memorial sites, museums, libraries etc. by schools should be encouraged, as these environments provide opportunities for experiential and discovery learning using

concrete historical examples.

Working with the Arolsen Archives and using the documents from the ITS Digital Archive have proved very successful in practice, both from a general educational perspective and from the specific perspective of history teaching. Going beyond everyday, run-of-the-mill lessons based on textbooks and worksheets provides teachers with the opportunity to arouse genuine curiosity in students and to awaken their detective instincts. Confronting students with source materials that have not been specially prepared for teaching purposes can help them develop competences that are both subject-specific and universal, both content-based and process-based. In the context of this institutional learning opportunity, students actually take ownership of a "school" topic and make it their own, they apply historical methods themselves, and participate voluntarily with greater intensity.

About the author

Marcus von der Straten was born in 1968 and lives in Ahnatal, close to Kassel, Germany. He studied Ancient History, Medieval History and Modern History, Economic and Social History, Political Science, German Language and Literature, and Education at the Georg-August University in Göttingen. He has been teaching History, German, Geography, Politics, Economics, and Performing Arts at the Wilhelm-Filchner-Schule in Wolfhagen since 2005. He is a senior teacher and became Head of History in 2006.

"Who is 'We'?" On the Critical Analysis of Social Heterogeneity and the Notion of Homogeneity in the Past and Present

By Christa Kaletsch and Manuel Glittenberg

There are currently over 65 million refugees worldwide – more than ever before. A detailed examination of the history of the Displaced Persons (DPs) can shed new light on the current debate on flight and human rights and provide new insights into the preservation of human dignity and the right to self-determination. This was the context behind a joint workshop that was developed on the initiative of the Demokratiezentrum im Beratungsnetzwerk Hessen (Democracy Center in the Advisory Network of Hesse) by the Arolsen Archives and the Zusammenleben neu gestalten (Redesigning the way we live together) project of the DeGeDe (German Society of Education for Democratic Citizenship).

"Where can someone be expelled to, if she was born in Arolsen" was one participant's astonished response. An examination of the documents on the history of DPs provided by the Arolsen Archives makes it clear that the injustices done in the name of National Socialism continued for a long time after the creation of the Federal Republic of Germany. Like many victims of the Nazi regime who were deported from Germany, Erna Demestre, who was persecuted as a "gypsy" by the Nazi regime, was deprived of all her human and civil rights. The Federal Republic of Germany ignored the consequences of this injustice, which included the loss of her citizenship.

The selection of documents taken from the Arolsen Archives provide insights into life stories that illustrate central aspects of the history of DPs. What is important here is that the documents are evidence of the perceptible mechanisms of exclusion, compensation and recognition. They do not tell a finely honed story. They only provide evidence that this story took place. The historical evidence can serve as a sounding board for questions. Not so much in its function as a historical narrative, but rather with the aim of reflecting upon discourses, rituals and everyday practices. A picture can then emerge of the DPs' freedom of action in relation to their human rights. Both continuities and discontinuities become apparent.

"I was amazed to find out how much would actually have been possible if the lead taken by the US administration had been followed," is a sentiment often expressed by participants at the end of the all-day workshop. The differences between the administrative practices of the military government and the Federal German administration, into whose jurisdiction the "aftercare" of the DPs passed in April 1951, are one of the key insights gained during the "Who is ‘we’?" workshop. The focus on the universality of human rights has a central role to play here. This is why the participants are asked to get actively involved in considering human rights at the beginning of the workshop. The starting point is the "question of

happiness" raised by World Vision in their 2010 children's study. On the basis of this question, participants work individually to identify five aspects "which a child needs in order to live happily." Subsequent discussions in small groups broaden the perspective. The various aspects identified, which usually concern the central issues of the right to protection, participation, and freedom and which highlight the importance of social, economic, and cultural human rights, can be dealt with in a plenary session.

A short unit follows introducing the main aspects of the development of human rights after 1945 and laying down the framework for working with the "biographical sketches" later on. The discourse on dignity and the significance of formulating concrete, universal, and inalienable human rights are brought together for the first time as participants reflect on the experience of the multiple violations of human dignity. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes every human being as an individual and as a legal subject. After a short presentation focusing on specific, individual human rights, a discussion of a DP registration card strengthens the awareness that people who were disenfranchised and persecuted by the Nazi regime need to have their status as subjects restored to them.

Participants then divide up into small groups. Three different perspectives involving various different aspects of the history of the DPs are highlighted during this phase of the workshop, and there is a focus on the role of various factors which can empower as well as limit the self-determination of those concerned.

Not only does the example of Erna Demestre highlight aspects of homogenization and rights deprivation, her story also points to aspects of being forgotten and of being made invisible. An inquiry submitted to the ITS from the Caritas relief organization in Frankfurt in 1969 provides documentary evidence of how the withdrawal of citizenship continued on well into the history of the Federal Republic of Germany. Official political recognition of the Nazi genocide of the Sinti and Roma did not follow until 13 years later – as a result of the struggle of the Sinti and Roma civil rights movement which began in the late 1970s. A hunger strike which started on Good Friday in 1980 at the Dachau Memorial has a special role to play here.

At the end of the workshop, consideration is given to struggles connected with visibility and recognition and to other examples of self-empowering strategies implemented by those concerned similar to that mentioned above. They constitute a break with the mechanisms of "othering", i.e. the practice of defining people as being alien on the basis of a dichotomous construct consisting of "us" and "them" and a consequent withdrawal of affiliation which is a violation of the right to non-discrimination. The way these mechanisms work and their topicality are debated previously: shortly after the NSU murder of Halit Yozgat on 6 April 2006 in Kassel, 4,000 people gathered together and demonstrated in front of Kassel's city hall calling for there to be "no 10th victim". They drew attention

to the racist background of his murder and to the links with the other murders carried out by the NSU. Many participants are astonished by how little this and other events of self-empowerment enter into the public consciousness.

Ibrahim Arslan, a survivor of the racist arson attacks in Mölln in 1992, is one of the people involved in the NSU Tribunal. He underlines the importance of engaging with the perspective of those affected – a perspective which is often rendered invisible – as well as with their expertise and with their struggles: "Society must acknowledge the aggrieved parties and identify with them in order to put a stop to these kinds of crimes."

About the authors

Manuel Glittenberg studied Sociology (M.A.). He is an antisemitism and anti-racism consultant and trainer and a member of staff of the project „Zusammenleben neu gestalten. Angebote für das plurale Gemeinwesen“ (Redesigning the way we live together. Offerings for a plural society) which is run by the German Society of Education for Democratic Citizenship.

Christa Kaletsch is a journalist specializing in history, and an author, program developer and consultant in the fields of constructive conflict resolution, participation, and education in democracy and human rights. She is head of the project „Zusammenleben neu gestalten“ (Redesigning the way we live together).

The Arolsen Archives and the Holocaust Survivors' Friendship Association – Learning from History in Partnership and Friendship

By Lilian Black

In August 2008, after a number of unsuccessful attempts in previous years to secure access to information at the International Tracing Service (ITS, today: Arolsen Archives), Eugene Black and his eldest daughter Lilian arranged to visit the archives in Bad Arolsen. Eugene was born Jeno Schwarcz on 9th February 1928 into a Jewish family in Munkacs, formerly Hungary. He was the youngest of five children and had three sisters, Blanka, Jolan, and Paula, and an older brother, Alexander. His mother was called Leni and his father Bela. They lived prosperous and happy lives. Eugene's father was not very religious, but his mother was, and they kept a kosher house and had the Friday Sabbath meal, often with members of the wider family. Eugene was a bright student, but his greatest love was football. He played in the school team, and his mother frequently told him off for coming home with dirty boots! On 19th March 1944, everything changed as the Germans occupied Hungary and their already well-rehearsed plans for the Final Solution were implemented. The ghetto was formed, and families from outside Munkacs were forced in from the surrounding areas. On 14th May, Eugene was coming home from school when he saw his family being pushed into the back of a lorry. He approached them and was himself made to get in. They were taken to the brick factory and immediately loaded into cattle wagons. Thus began his journey into hell. After three days they arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau where Eugene was selected for slave labour, and he never saw his family again.

Eugene was then sent on to Buchenwald, Mittelbau-Dora, Harzungen, and Ellrich. In March 1945, he was sent by train to Bergen-Belsen. He was liberated there on 15th April 1945 by the British forces. He was 17 years of age, weighed less than 50 kilos, was an orphan, and in the country of his enemies. He had experienced and witnessed the worst in humanity. After liberation, once he had recovered some of his health, he became attached to the British Forces as an interpreter, and in 1948, he met my mother, who was with the British Army. They fell in love, and he came to Britain in 1949, where he married, had four children, two grandchildren, and a successful career with Marks and Spencer.

Growing up, we were never allowed to speak about the camps. We knew father had been in the concentration camps and his family had been gassed, but there was a long silence about something which was too horrible for words. We were not allowed to watch TV programmes about the camps, anything German was 'verboten', and we were to be protected at all costs. There were no photographs, no impression of how they had looked or lived, and no possibility of father ever revisiting the former camps or returning to his hometown. It was all just too painful and too difficult. I remember as a

child wondering why there were no members of father's family at our family parties and how sad this was.

Then, in 2005, we decided to attend the 60th liberation commemoration event at Bergen-Belsen and also to visit Mittelbau-Dora and Buchenwald. By this time, father had retired and had started to speak about his experiences in schools and to community groups. He and I both became members of the Holocaust Survivors' Friendship Association (HSFA) in Leeds, and this is how our journey of discovery began. We were welcomed in Germany by some truly wonderful Germans, people like Sabine Stein, Jens-Christian Wagner, Bernd Horstman, Diana Gring, and Thomas Rahe, who were giving their lives to working in the Memorial sites day in day out, facing the past and the actions of their forefathers, taking responsibility even though they had not themselves perpetrated the crimes. I remember the occasion on the evening after the liberation event, when we entered a restaurant in Celle to have dinner after an emotional day. We must have looked like a survivor family, dressed as we were in dark formal clothes, and then something amazing happened. Everyone stood up and bowed towards us in contrition and respect. We just nodded and tried to smile in acknowledgement.

This journey gave father the opportunity to see a new Germany, not one which was destroyed and bombed, but one which had been rebuilt, a Germany where he was made welcome and where it was acknowledged that he was a victim of the Holocaust. This was a truly cathartic experience for us all, but especially for father. He had faced his demons and so had I. From this point on, we never looked back and returned frequently to the annual commemoration events at Bergen-Belsen, Mittelbau-Dora, and Buchenwald, keeping up our friendships with the memorial staff, who always welcomed us so wonderfully.

In 2006, father decided he wanted to return to Birkenau to pay his respects to his family who had perished there. This was the most difficult of journeys. For the first time, father could walk around the camp and see the bureaucracy, scale, and organisation of death as it had been. However, there was no smell of burning this time, he said. He recounted step-by-step his arrival and separation at the ramp and his subsequent entry into the camp, including his sheer terror and total confusion as to what was happening. He described to us how he was stripped and had all his hair removed from every part of his body and how he was issued with 'striped pyjamas' and underwear. He told us about how later on that night, when he saw the chimneys blazing and there was a terrible smell of burning, his friend's father, Mr Kornreich, who had survived selection, told him that this was the bodies of their families burning. This was the first time he told us this. It was a very sad visit, but it was born with great fortitude by father.

In 2008, I again wrote to the ITS in Bad Arolsen and said we would like to come and see what records there were for father. I was immediately contacted by Gabriele Wilke of

the ITS, who said she would look into the matter and be ready to meet us on the agreed date in August 2008. We arrived there by car and were greeted by Gabriele and an interpreter, although we both spoke and read German. We were taken to a room, and there we saw several files which had been extracted from the archive and contained all of my father's prisoner records. It was quite astonishing to see his Auschwitz card, one from Buchenwald, and one from Mittelbau-Dora, the transport lists, movement from block to block in Mittelbau-Dora, his sick records when he was 'excused from tunnelling', a liberation list from Bergen-Belsen, and a photograph from his International Refugee documentation post liberation. The bureaucracy of death was just astonishing to us.

Then Gabriele asked us if we were ready to hear about the fate of his two sisters Paula and Jolan. At this point we were quite without words and in some shock. She then produced the prisoner cards for father's two sisters who had been selected for slave labour like him. They were sent with 1000 Hungarian Jewish women to the Gelsenlager in Gelsenkirchen to perform slave labour in the oil refinery and clear up after the bombing raids.

Also contained in the records was a death certificate. They had both been killed in an RAF bombing raid in September 1944. For 64 years, my father and the whole family had believed that his entire family had been gassed in Birkenau. The shock was enormous. The ITS then telephoned Stefan Goch, the historian at Gelsenkirchen, and we arranged to go there the next day. We took our leave of the ITS staff, and drove to Gelsenkirchen, where we were shown the railway line they came in on from Auschwitz, the oil refinery which still exists, and the cemetery where there is a memorial stone for the 151 Hungarian Jewish women killed in that fateful bombing raid. Sadly, there is no memorial and indeed no memory of the incident at the present-day oil refinery judging by the company's website. Their broken bodies lie there still. After the war ended, correspondence shows that the company denied any involvement in the use of slave labour as 'they came under the Nazis.' This continues to be unresolved and is, for me, an unfinished story.

In 2010, I was elected as Chair of the Holocaust Survivors' Friendship Association, and the membership of survivors determined that we should collect our survivor´s testimonies, continue to speak in schools and to wider community groups, and undertake Holocaust education. In addition, there were many precious letters, photographs, and some artefacts, quite ordinary but of great emotional value, which had been brought out through the Kindertransporte or had been recovered post war. I was asked by many of the members whether there could be any records of their families' fate, similar to those my father had found.

Thus began a long relationship with the International Tracing Service, now the Arolsen Archives. We found that by combining documentary evidence of persecution with a survivor's story, we could take an evidence-

based approach to our educational work. When we started receiving information from Bad Arolsen, so much was revealed to our survivor members. One person received the date and time of her stepfather's death in Sachsenhausen and the date of her biological father's death from the Auschwitz Death Book, another discovered that her mother had been previously married and had had a child who had died and was now buried in Belgium. People received their own records of persecution, which they had never seen before, and this often filled in time gaps of not knowing for sure how long they had been in a particular camp. To date, we have received hundreds of copies of documents relating to our members through the Arolsen Archives.

Our friendship with the Arolsen Archives is based on human contact with people who care about our legacy and about how we need to use this to alert the world to what may happen when people are persecuted for whatever reason. This is the dearest wish of our survivor community, to make sure no one ever suffers as they did simply because they were Jews.

It is to this end that we decided in 2016 to create a permanent Holocaust Exhibition and Learning Centre at the University of Huddersfield. There is no similar resource in the North of England, yet Holocaust education is part of our national curriculum. We came to Germany to discuss this with our German partners, including the International Tracing Service, and sought advice about our interpretative approach and plans. We then raised the funds through the Heritage Lottery Funds, a number of philanthropic trusts, family trusts, and individual donations. The Centre opened in September 2018. Our Holocaust Exhibition and Learning centre will create an immersive experience combining visual testimony with narrative, artefacts, and our evidence base provided by the ITS Digital Archive.

In 2017, I was part of a UK delegation to Bosnia. This is a more recent genocide perpetrated against the Muslim community, much smaller in actual numbers but with many parallels to the Holocaust in terms of the processes used. In Bosnia, however, there is no acceptance of responsibility. Male survivors and the Mothers of Srebrenica told us how they had returned to their villages to live amongst the perpetrators, who walked freely. There were no records, and some mass graves remain hidden. They have no place to go to grieve and nowhere to get information. There is a high level of denial from 'authorities'. This is in stark contrast to our experience in Germany. Perhaps we need the passage of time to help heal wounds, or maybe the scars are there forever. I know that we as a family and as an association never forget our relatives and mourn their loss everyday. But we believe that by working together, we can secure our legacy and enable future generations to learn what happens when stereotyping and persecution become the norm.

In September 2017, Eugene Black died peacefully in his home, his most precious place. He is missed by so many people. A

man of great humour and humanity, he would wish us all to go on and never give up. He always said, “Life is for living.” His legacy forms part of the Holocaust Exhibition and Learning Centre.

We are grateful to our many friends in Germany who helped us on our journey and especially to the Arolsen Archives for their professionalism and humanity. We value our partnership going forward.

For more information about the Holocaust Exhibition and Learning Centre please refer to: www.holocaustlearning.org.uk.

About the author

Lilian Black is daughter of Holocaust Survivor Eugene Black and Chair of the Holocaust Survivors’ Friendship Association, Leeds, England.

Use of Archival Materials from the Arolsen Archives in my Work as a Specialist at the Academic Center for Oral History of the Voronezh Institute of High Technologies

By Olga Kulinchenko

In February 2017, as an employee of the Academic Center for Oral History of the Voronezh Institute of High Technologies, I participated in the International Winter School for Educators in Berlin, which was dedicated to the history of Nazi Forced Labor and how it is remembered in post-war Europe. The Winter School was organized by the Nazi Forced Labor Documentation Center Berlin-Schöneweide and the International Tracing Service (ITS, today: Arolsen Archives) in Bad Arolsen. The program included lectures, excursions, workshops, and individual and group work with documents provided by the organizations mentioned above. Within the framework of the seminar, participants were encouraged to request information from the ITS Digital Archive on topics of interest. I requested documents relating to respondents whose interviews are included on the online educational platform "Learning with interviews. Forced Labor 1939-1945". This resource was created by the Academic Center for Oral History of the Voronezh Institute of High Technologies in cooperation with the Center for Digital Systems of the Free University Berlin. Due to the kind involvement of Arolsen Archives employees Akim Jah and Elisabeth Schwabauer, documents concerning the Polish political prisoner Anna Palarczyk, the French forced laborer Victor Laville, and the Soviet prisoner of war Mikhail Bochkarev were retrieved from the archive and forwarded to me. Later, in agreement with the representatives of the Archive, the documents were published on the educational platform. These materials became an essential part of our document collection. They made it possible to present the problem of forced labor more fully and to personalize it with biographical films placed on the platform.

We are currently in the second stage of the project – the implementation of the platform in the school curriculum – and are now holding educational seminars for Russian teachers. Whenever we present the platform, we emphasize the presence of materials provided by the Arolsen Archives as well as by other museums and memorials.

The Academic Center for Oral History also conducts educational activities in the form of a school history club called “We and Our Past.” Between 2015 and 2017, I supervised the work of the club in a school in Voronezh. Created during that time, the online platform "Learning with interviews. Forced Labor 1939-1945" provided the basis for our work with school students. Classes devoted to studying materials from this educational resource were given to students from ninth to eleventh grade. The course aimed to help students develop the skills they need in order to work with a biographical interview as a historical source and to make them acquainted with a topic that is not addressed by the history and social studies curriculum

but whose significance nonetheless makes it worthy of attention. According to a poll conducted at the end of the academic year, students mentioned that the classes that involved working with archival sources and personal documents were the most engaging and the most useful in helping them to acquire research skills.

This work allowed the use of a wide range of methods and techniques for teaching history. In the 2018-2019 academic year, I used the documents relevant to forced labor provided by the Arolsen Archives in the framework of the Winter School as a base for curriculum development and as a source for preparing tasks for individual and group work for students who attended the history school club. I plan to continue this work in the 2019-2020 academic year.

It is worth pointing out that project work which involves teachers and students working together is a widely used educational method in Russian schools and one that can be applied to various types of sources. Not only does analyzing the information contained in the short biographical films on the online educational platform in conjunction with the archival materials mentioned above enable students to solve educational tasks, it also contributes to their personal development. On the one hand, it provides students with the opportunity to see how the process of using forced laborers and their extermination was institutionalized, and on the other hand, it invites them to consider the tragedy of individuals included in seemingly endless lists.

It is important to note that the organizers of the Winter School created an atmosphere that was conducive to the free exchange of opinions, ideas, and experiences between representatives from various fields, such as education, science, art, and culture. The lectures, excursions, and practical exercises have opened up new opportunities and made it possible to develop new methods for teaching the topic of Nazi forced labor using materials provided by the Nazi Forced Labor Documentation Centre and the Arolsen Archives.

The experience I gained during the creation of the online platform "Learning with interviews. Forced Labor 1939-1945" and my work as curator of the school history club contributed to the enhancement of my professional skills. Participation in the Winter School empowered me to expand my pedagogical toolkit significantly. I can now use new ideas to enrich the use of materials from the Arolsen Archives about places of forced detention, forced labor, and the postwar period.

About the author

Olga Kulinchenko is a specialist at the Academic Center for Oral History of the Voronezh Institute of High Technologies.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Collections of the Arolsen Archives

By Elizabeth Anthony

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (the Museum, or USHMM) is a living memorial to the Holocaust and strives to inspire citizens and leaders worldwide to confront hatred, prevent genocide, and promote human dignity. Since opening its doors in 1993, the USHMM has hosted more than 43 million visitors. The Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies serves as the Museum's scholarly division and works to support the growth of Holocaust studies at universities in the United States, to foster relationships between international organizations and individuals, and to ensure the ongoing training of future generations of scholars. Over the past 10 years and among its many activities, the Mandel Center has promoted the use of the collections of the Arolsen Archives (formerly the International Tracing Service, or ITS) as a largely untapped source of immense scholarly potential through academic programming related to the ITS Digital Archive.

The Allied powers established the ITS in Arolsen (today: Bad Arolsen), Germany, after World War II as a resource to help reunite families separated during the war and to trace missing relatives. Millions of pages of captured Nazi documentation were repurposed for tracing needs, and the ITS archive then grew as new records, both originals and copies, were deposited within its collections. For decades, the ITS worked on behalf of survivors and victims' families to clarify the fates of individuals under Nazi oppression, as well as to provide survivors and victims' families with documentation necessary for indemnification claims. The archive finally opened and became available to scholars and other researchers in November 2007, both onsite in Bad Arolsen and around the world at seven digital copyholder locations. The ITS was renamed "Arolsen Archives - International Center on Nazi Persecution" in May 2019.

The USHMM – one of the copyholders of the ITS Digital Archive – utilizes the archive in a number of ways. The staff of the Holocaust Survivors and Victims Resource Center assists survivors and their relatives to learn more about their paths of persecution under the Nazis, as well as the fates of their loved ones. Museum staff in the Collections division uses Arolsen Archives holdings to document the histories of acquired artifacts and paper collections. And the Mandel Center's academic programming activities related to the ITS Digital Archive include the convening of research seminars, workshops, and conferences. Fellows-in-residence have access to the digital archive and staff expertise for utilizing its resources, and staff researchers use the Arolsen Archives to compile information to document the more than 42,000 Nazi sites of incarceration, forced and slave labor, and mass murder for the Mandel Center's Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos. Periodically the Mandel Center

publishes source volumes in the series "Documenting Life and Destruction: Holocaust Sources in Context," most recently *Nazi Persecution and Postwar Repercussions*: *The International Tracing Service Archive and Holocaust Research* (2016) by Dr. Suzanne Brown-Fleming (Director, International Academic Programs).

The Mandel Center also works closely with the Arolsen Archives and digital copyholders around the world on partner projects to enable better access to the archive, to explore the archive's potential for Digital Humanities projects, and to promote its use through cohosted seminars, workshops, and conferences. In addition, a new educational initiative of the Mandel Center, the Arolsen Archives, and the London-based Wiener Library for the Study of the Holocaust and Genocide (another of the seven copyholders of the ITS Digital Archive) seeks to provide resources for undergraduate classes studying the Holocaust in the form of a primary source supplement series based on documentation from the Arolsen Archives. Each supplement includes an introductory essay on the dedicated topic and presents an assortment of original documents from the Arolsen Archives related to that theme. Descriptions, translations (as necessary), and questions for pedagogical work are included, as well as a list of suggested reading and historical photographs from the collections of the USHMM and The Wiener Library. The first two supplements – *Women under Nazi Persecution* and *The Camp System* – are available for free download on each of the partners' websites. At least two additional supplements are planned and will cover topics including the Nazi persecution of Roma and Sinti, and Displaced Persons.

About the author

Elizabeth Anthony, Ph.D., is the Director of Visiting Scholar Programs at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies. From 2013-2019, Anthony served as the Mandel Center's International Tracing Service and Partnerships Program Manager and was responsible for the promotion of the scholarly use of the ITS Digital Archive, ITS-related academic programming and outreach, and partner programs with other institutions. She received her Ph.D. in history at Clark University in 2016.

International Library Platform for Education About the Holocaust

By Misko Stanisic

I believe that there is an unexplored and unutilized potential in libraries for teaching and learning about the Holocaust, particularly in the new environment created by the digital transformation of the culture of remembrance. Consequently, we must open up the existing teacher-training infrastructure to other groups that can act as multipliers, such as librarians and archivists, in order to prepare them for a new active role in education about the Holocaust that utilizes their specific expertise, organizational structures, and facilities, as well as the Holocaust-related material to which they have access.

The "International Library Platform for Education About the Holocaust" project aims to present and promote a new strategy for engaging libraries, library infrastructure, and archives in education about the Holocaust. Terraforming, our NGO from Novi Sad in Serbia, developed the idea and presented it to international partners and experts.

During the first phase of the project, the goal was to inspire and motivate important international stakeholders, institutions, and experts. The next step was to initiate a collaborative platform of international resources for Holocaust education centered on librarians, libraries, library networks, and library resources. One of the main pillars of this idea is constructed around methodologies, approaches, and experiences of archival pedagogy and their transformation and adaptation to the library environment.

In this context, the international platform represents a set of shared methodologies and goals as well as a sustainable, long-term process of coalition building between relevant stakeholders and experts with the aim of fostering a greater involvement of libraries, library networks, and librarians in teaching and learning about the Holocaust. The concept we propose aims to promote teaching and learning about the Holocaust in the information age by identifying and utilizing new opportunities and potentials for education about the Holocaust in the evolving infrastructure of digital humanities and by creating educational strategies in the landscape of the digital reinvention of museums, libraries, and archives. At the same time, this approach will contribute to shaping the future of the digital culture of remembrance.

Between December 2017 and December 2018, we arranged a series of various activities in order to present and discuss the idea with stakeholders from different countries. The stakeholders included a wide range of practitioners, theoreticians, professionals, and experts in relevant fields: from librarians to teachers, from historians to archivists, from experts in the field of education about the Holocaust to survivors, from policy makers in the fields of culture and education to international centers for teacher training, from Jewish communities to Holocaust memorial centers and museums.

The Arolsen Archives were one of the main partners in this process. They were involved in several seminars for librarians and archivists held in Belgrade and Novi Sad during 2018 within the framework of the project. Their contribution consisted of introducing basic concepts of archival pedagogy and implementing workshops based on case studies using the archival documents available in their holdings. Dr Akim Jah from the Arolsen Archives Research and Education Department explained that historical documents do not always paint the whole picture or provide a clear picture - most of the time additional research is needed. However, for Dr Akim Jah, this is a challenge rather than a disadvantage for learning as learning happens when we make a productive effort in order to understand and piece the story together for ourselves.

In November 2019, the publication "International Library Platform for Education About the Holocaust" was released. The aim of the publication is not to offer all the answers. Our goal is to present and propose the idea that after successfully working in the field of education about the Holocaust together with libraries and library networks in Serbia for several years, we strongly believe this approach should be taken to international level. Of course, many questions and challenges still need to be addressed. The publication resulted from project participants, experts, and relevant stakeholders exchanging ideas and entering into discussions with one another during various project activities and events. The most important of these was the final expert seminar titled “Librarians and archivists and the new international resources for teaching and learning about the Holocaust” that took place on 13th December 2018 at the National Library of Serbia in Belgrade. At the seminar in Belgrade, we discussed 4 aspects of our proposition: 1. Unexplored and unexploited potentials of libraries and librarians in teaching and learning about the Holocaust; 2. How to engage libraries and librarians in this field; 3. New perspectives and opportunities this proposition could contribute at an international level; and finally, 4. How to put this idea into practice.

Beside the Arolsen Archives, the following international partners participated in and contributed to the project in various ways, making this a truly joint effort: the Europeana Foundation, the Anne Frank House, the Holocaust Memorial Centre of the Jews from Macedonia, the National Library of Serbia, Yad Vashem, errinern.at, Vienna University Library, the Humanity in Action Foundation, the Historical Archive of the City of Novi Sad, and the University Library of Belgrade. The project was funded by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance IHRA, the Anne Frank House, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia.

The "International Library Platform for Education about the Holocaust" project was awarded the annual Yehuda Bauer Grant by the International Holocaust Remembran-

ce Alliance IHRA. IHRA awards this honor annually to an outstanding project proposal submitted through IHRA's grant program.

Terraforming is an independent non-governmental and non-profit organization from Novi Sad in Serbia committed to promoting and improving teaching and learning about the Holocaust and to combating antisemitism, antigypsyism, and other forms of xenophobia. More information on: www.terraforming.org

The publication titled "International Library Platform for Education about the Holocaust" is available at https://terraforming.org/publication-international-library-platform/

About the author

Misko Stanisic is co-founder and director of Terraforming NGO from Novi Sad/Serbia. He studied Law at the University of Sarajevo and pedagogy in Stockholm. He is a member of the Serbian Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), and member of the IHRA Working Group for Education.

Services Offered by the Arolsen Archives

The Arolsen Archives provide a wide range of different ways to access information and digital copies from the archives and to learn more about the documents they hold. They also offer opportunities for professional development, including workshops and seminars on various topics.

The Arolsen Archives regularly hold research seminars which present their collections and the digital archive to various target groups and in different places. They also run academic conferences and seminars, including the winter school for educators titled “Nazi Forced Labor – History and Aftermath”, which they organize every two years in partnership with the Nazi Forced Labor Documentation Center in Berlin-Schöneweide. They also run workshops for multipliers and teachers. For up-to-date information and invitations to upcoming events, visit the website of the Arolsen Archives at: https://arolsen-archives.org/en/news-events/.

The website also includes information on how survivors, relatives of former persecutees, academics, educators, students, and other interested parties can submit an inquiry; the online inquiry form can be accessed directly here: https://arolsen-archives.org/en/search-explore/inquiries/submit-inquiry/.

A growing number of documents held by the Arolsen Archives are gradually being made available online. Free access to the online archive is available to all interested parties at: https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/search/.

To see an overview of the educational materials provided by the Arolsen Archives and access them for download, go to: https://arolsen-archives.org/en/learn-participate/learning-with-documents/.

The e-Guide, the online tool which provides explanatory information on the documents in the archive, can be found at: https://arolsen-archives.org/en/search-explore/additional-ressources/e-guide/.

Do you have any questions about our educational offerings or would you like receive regular updates on our latest events? If so, please write to us at: education@arolsen-archives.org.

The next Lag magazine will be published on 26 February 2020 and will focus on comics and graphic novels.

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