

TRANSNATIONAL MEETS LOCAL

Making Holocaust Research Projects and Infrastructures
Sustainable by Using Digital Archives, Electronic Repositories, and
Internet Platforms on Local and Regional Levels

Date: 19/20 November 2018

The workshop “Transnational Meets Local” is being organised within the framework of the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI) project, supported by the European Commission. Inaugurated in 2010, EHRI, the first project of its kind, aims to support the Holocaust research community by building a digital infrastructure and providing online access to information about dispersed sources relating to the Holocaust through its online portal (<https://portal.ehri-project.eu>). The project also facilitates personal networks aiming to initiate collaborative approaches in the study of the Holocaust and to develop resources and tools that will play a vital role in Holocaust research, commemoration, and education. EHRI thereby seeks to overcome one of the hallmark challenges of Holocaust research, namely the wide dispersal of the archival source materials across Europe and beyond, and the concomitant fragmentation of Holocaust historiography.

The two-day workshop invites stakeholders who maintain digital platforms, repositories, and databases, or have developed internet-based curricula, exhibitions, and presentations on specific research projects and/or case-studies in Holocaust Studies. Focussing on current questions of digital archival collections in Central Europe, the aim of the workshop will be to discuss and develop policies and procedures on organisational and legal levels concerning the transnationalisation of Holocaust research networks and archives. The workshop is directed at a wider public, bringing local approaches and regional aspects of current usages of Holocaust-related sources to the fore. The linkage of these local approaches to other projects from Central Europe will enable the creation of a network of and for these initiatives, transcending the ethnic, linguistic, and/or national borders which until now have represented an obstacle in opening spaces for innovative approaches.

The first part of the workshop will focus not only on methodological, epistemological, and ethical questions emerging from the transition from the analogue to the digital, but also on the challenges of harmonisation in areas related to digital research technologies and standards, including the complex processes of dissemination. The first day will centre on the question of how the resources and infrastructure of EHRI projects can be made sustainable and expanded with the help of local projects and scholars, as well as through shared digital platforms.

The second part of the workshop will concentrate on current educational programmes, curriculum developments, and local interventions which produce or re/use historical sources. To this end, we will invite Austrian and Central European stakeholders, archivists, educators, curators, and facilitators to discuss the sustainability of their projects, as well as the possibilities of future expansion into the field of contemporary history and Holocaust Studies. At the end of the workshop, we will invite the former and current protagonists of the Mauthausen testimony archive as an Austrian 'flagship' initiative to discuss their policies and procedures, for example the legal restrictions arising from privacy legislation.

Practical information:

The deadline for applications is September 1, 2018. The selection process aims at making up a balanced group of participants equally made of researchers, archivists and stakeholders. We invite applications for the international EHRI-Seminar. An application package consists of:

- A curriculum vitae (maximum 2 pages)
- A letter of motivation with reasons for attending this workshop (maximum 1 page)

Please send the application package to cfp@vwi.ac.at by September 1, 2018.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

19 November 2018

9:00 TRANSNATIONALISATION OF HOLOCAUST SOURCES

Keynote Addresses

Speakers:

Stephen Naron (Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies)

Michal Frankl (EHRI/VWI)

Wolfgang Schellenbacher (EHRI/DÖW) <https://blog.ehri-project.eu/>

10:30 COFFEE BREAK

11:00-12:30 TRANSNATIONALISATION – CASE STUDIES

The workshop will not reduce the question of translatability to a mere linguistic problem (i.e. that smaller languages have more difficulties in getting to be heard), but understands this as a metaphor of ‘translating’ concepts, cultures, languages, legal frameworks, and educational strategies. This panel will address the manageable interfaces or gateways to be produced between infrastructures such as EHRI and local or regional initiatives, and will discuss best practices of connecting local archives with global networks and of relocalising or ‘translating’ – with all its meanings – transnational/multilingual collections for and to local, ‘home-grown’ environments. It will finally shed light on the legal aspects relating to the following processes:

- institutionalisation of project-based networks and archives,
- dealing with inequalities and/or gaps (centre/periphery, language, etc.),
- political aspects.

12:30-14:00 LUNCH

14:00 BEYOND THE ARCHIVES: TAKING COLLECTIONS INTO THE PUBLIC SPACE

Panel (Short presentations and discussion)

The aim of this panel is to discuss the current policies of ‘classical’ archives in the age of new digital technologies and the strong and natural need of public interventions to use historical sources. It will address the questions of how EHRI can facilitate the co-operation between the two groups of agents; how it can help discover and reactivate hidden or forgotten sources and

vice versa: how archives can learn about public interventions and preserve their collected sources.

15:30-16:00 COFFEE BREAK

16:00-17:30 PROJECT TO ARCHIVE: THE HISTORY OF THE MAUTHAUSEN INTERVIEW COLLECTION

Roundtable Discussion

Moderator: Albert Lichtblau

Using Austria as a case study, this roundtable will consist of the protagonists of the Austrian flagship project Mauthausen Survivors Documentation Project and representatives of the Archive of the Mauthausen Memorial. This discussion will aim to understand how the institutions and scholars in question have dealt with the discrepancy between the project-based, large-scale, digital testimony production and the later preservation of this huge collection.

18:00 BOOK PRESENTATION

“Interactions. Internationale Erkundungen guter Praxis in der Bildungsarbeit mit Video-Zeugnissen von Opfern des Nationalsozialismus” (mit Moritz Wein/erinnern.at)

20 November 2018

10:00-12:00 COLLECTING BY LEARNING – LEARNING BY COLLECTING

World Café

Hundreds of interviews and local historical sources were collected by school classes and local initiatives in the framework of various educational and commemoration activities. This panel will focus on how these educational programmes could use EHRI in curriculum development and vice versa how EHRI could implement the newly collected historical sources and knowledge in its network. The panel will focus on the following question:

- What are the traps and pitfalls of using and producing historical sources in education?
- What happens to the content produced in these small initiatives?
- How can the content be kept alive?
- How can the collected knowledge be implemented in public history?
- How can educational programmes be linked to the EHRI infrastructure?

Examples: Yellow Star Houses, Ungarisch-Jüdische Zwangsarbeit in Wien, Letter to the Stars, etc.

12:00 LUNCH

13:30 LOCAL MEETS TRANSNATIONAL

World Café

As a result of the European Holocaust Remembrance Day and the decades-long mainstreaming of Holocaust education, local commemoration initiatives are flourishing in Europe. The aim of this panel is to understand how these initiatives can be integrated into larger networks or infrastructures, such as EHRI. It will focus on the following questions:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of visibility and unlimited access?
- How can the 'the beauty of the local' be kept alive?
- Who 'owns' the projects and initiatives once they are completed?
- How can local initiatives be made sustainable and visible?

16:30 FINAL DISCUSSION