

## INTRODUCTION

“A Hellish Noise” (2015) is the title of a videotaped testimony of a very special kind. <sup>11</sup> The 21-minute video <sup>12</sup> produced by the artist Tatiana Lecomte centres on Jean-Jacques Boijentin, who was deported from France to the Gusen Concentration Camp in Austria. In Gusen II Boijentin was sent to a slave labour factory located in a large tunnel: There, like many other prisoners, he worked under catastrophic conditions, which many inmates did not survive, assembling jet fighter aircraft for the Messerschmitt company. When eyewitnesses speak of the tunnel, the deafening noise of the machines used to produce the aeroplanes is a recurring motif. Instead of simply describing the noise in the video, which was made in 2015, Boijentin explained the sounds of the underground factory to a sound effects engineer, who then translated the description into the appropriate sounds. For example, the eyewitness Boijentin provided the following explanation: “The timber prop makes no noise when it falls on people; it simply falls and the people fall with it.” The sound effects man thought about it and experimented with ways of imitating the dull thud and abrupt silence that sounds like people falling on top of one another with a timber prop until Boijentin finally said, “Yes, that’s it!” This video is special and fascinating because it reveals the memory and communication work performed by the two: the eyewitness struggling to find a description of his perceptions and overpowering experience that is adequate and understandable for others, and the sound effects engineer struggling to understand the narrative, to empathise with it and translate it into his/her own experiential world. In their interaction, they produce a current social memory of slave labour in Gusen II for future access, reproduction and use in the medium of video. <sup>13</sup> Moreover, the subject of the video is given a social framework, referencing as it does earlier accounts of Gusen II: Specifically, it is about the sound and the noise, which plays a role in many previous narratives.

## Video Testimonies and Academic Holocaust Research

Boijentin, like many other eyewitnesses in the post-war period, frequently visited schools to speak about his experiences. It has already been said that the eyewitness has long become omnipresent (Sabrow 2012; Skriebeleit 2017). We know relatively little, however, about the reception of their testimonies. This omnipresence is due above all to the fact that the interviews have been recorded and collected as videos, which have been made accessible and disseminated and have thus enjoyed a long media life. Numerous collections of interviews with victims of National Socialism have been established in various countries in the last few decades. The motives for recording and archiving the videotaped testimonies vary but a decidedly educational objective is often involved (Taubitz 2016a: 75), namely to ensure that future generations can learn about the Holocaust and slave labour under the Nazis. But how do we explain the genesis of these many collections of videotaped testimonies with victims of National Socialism and the high level of familiarity, not only of the collections but also of the eyewitness as the mediator of history? How is this educational objective implemented in practice at the international level, and how learning processes are triggered by presenting what in cinematographic terms is often criticised as “talking heads” 14 ?

Let us begin with the first question: How and why were all these collections created? The historical and political science communities in Austria, the USA and West Germany who addressed the subject of the Holocaust never showed much interest in audio or visual testimonies. *The Destruction of the European Jews* Raul Hilberg's (1961; 1985), which is today's standard work for Holocaust research, focusses on the bureaucratic structures of the Holocaust and is thus based primarily on the documents produced by the perpetrators. Apart from that, it lasted decades before Hilberg's work was published in the German-speaking world. 15 Similarly, Saul Friedländer (2007), who probably devotes more space to the voices of the persecuted than any other historian, places his trust in diaries and memoirs but makes no use of video interviews. Timothy Snyder (2010), who consulted the *Fortunoff Video Archive of Holocaust Testimonies* (Fortunoff Archive) for “Bloodlands”, is the exception in

this respect. While the social science and humanities communities initially found it difficult to include the Holocaust as a relevant subject in their respective canons, and written memoirs were slow to find their way into the history books, Jews began to record their experiences of persecution for posterity during the Holocaust already. A case in point is the secret archive kept by Emanuel Ringelblum in the Warsaw ghetto (see Janczewska 2015). In this volume, Stephen Naron and Éva Kovács refer to initiatives, historical commissions and individuals who collected eyewitness accounts and memoirs of witnesses of the Holocaust immediately after the Second World War (see also Boder 1949; Jockusch 2012; Oppermann 2017). The Allies also created records of Nazi crimes, often with testimonies from Holocaust witnesses (see Keilbach 2016: 205–207). Similarly, the Red Army was already compiling “statements from survivors of the first phase of the Shoah” on the Crimean peninsula in 1942 (Shrayer 2014 quoted after Bothe 2015: 59). In addition, a number of literary works and autobiographies written by victims of persecution appeared in the early post-war period, although they did not at first attract a significant audience.

### Societal Constellations for the Genesis and Popularisation of Video Testimony Collections

Interviewees had to be found and interviews organised, the interviews videotaped, and the testimonies collected and processed, and for all that standardised procedures had to be developed. Andree Michaelis (2013) explains these procedures in the case of the *Visual History Archive of the Shoah Foundation* (VHA) and Noah Shenker (2015) examines them with reference to various collections in the USA. These standard procedures achieved general acceptance in the western world in the post-war period. In their respective collections, the various actors developed standards for making the interviews available and disseminating them. <sup>16</sup> That occurred in interaction with the following societal constellations and contexts: Witnesses became a phenomenon in the *juridical context* as Holocaust witnesses gave evidence in trials of Nazi criminals. For Annette Wieviorka (2006), the 1961 Eichmann trial in Israel is the

beginning of the “Advent of the Witness”. Witnesses of the Holocaust were also called to testify at other trials of National Socialist perpetrators. As they received global media coverage, after the Eichmann trial, these witnesses assumed an immediate reality for the people following the trials in the radio and television reports (Knellessen 2015; Yablonka 2015). The testimonies of witnesses in the Eichmann and the first Frankfurt Auschwitz trial are also available in the Internet today <sup>17</sup> (see also Dorothee Wein’s contribution “Voices of Survivors at Sites of Perpetrators” in this volume). At the Yad Vashem memorial site, on the other hand, such interviews with Holocaust witnesses have been recorded since 1954 and at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem since the 1960s (Taubitz 2016b: 64; Bothe 2015: 60). Merle Funkenberg (2016) has studied the volunteer support provided to witnesses since the first Frankfurt Auschwitz trial. This refers to the *psychological (and psychoanalytical) context* in which the testimonies were given. The Fortunoff Archive was specifically launched in 1979 for psychoanalytical treatment of the experiences of Holocaust witnesses. The accounts were videotaped, as was the interviewer’s act of *listening*, which Dori Laub, one of the initiators of the collection, describes as being so fundamental in trauma coping strategy. In this volume, *Stephen Naron* offers an insight into the beginnings, the objective and the specific character of this archive and into the role of the audience when witnesses of the Holocaust bear testimony. The scientific community has also studied the narratives of Holocaust witnesses and social memory. Representatives of various disciplines have analysed the traumata caused by the Holocaust, survival and the repercussions and have studied the effects these traumata can have for the act of telling or the inability to tell and for the reception of the narratives (see Caruth 1996; Felman 1992; Keilbach 2008: 153–162; Langer 1991). At the same time, criticism has been levelled by cultural scientists and philosophers at the generalising assertion that eyewitnesses are traumatised and at classifications they consider to have generalising effects with regard to whether and if so how the interviewees have access to their own experiences and what impacts they have on their narratives. <sup>18</sup> (See Kansteiner 2004; Michaelis 2013: 220–221; Tresize 2013).

Many of the collections have been created in the context of the *Oral History* movement and – in Austria and Germany – in the context of *face-to-face eyewitness talks in the classroom and extracurricular education*. To share information on the history of the Holocaust and persecution during the period of National Socialism, victims of the Nazis started visiting schools in late 1970s and early 1980s to speak of their experiences. After the establishment of the first concentration camp memorial sites, eyewitnesses worked as volunteers there, telling visitors about their imprisonment and taking them on tours of the sites (for example, see Satjukow 2012). The videotaped testimonies were a form of continuation and further development of oral history and – in Austria and Germany – of the historical research performed in history workshops, as explained in this volume by *Albert Lichtblau* (on differences between face-to-face meetings with witnesses and videotaped testimonies see also Susan Hogervorst, James Griffiths/ Louise Stafford and Birte Hewera in this volume). Some of these history workshops have generated institutions with professional exhibitions. Some testimonies were videotaped in order to preserve the interviews for future educational use, and many videotaped testimonies have been produced *in the context of history exhibitions* held at memorial sites and in museums. Lichtblau explains the importance of quality standards for videotaping testimonies and provides useful information on the practicalities of interviewing and recording the interviews. In terms of mediality, there are similarities and differences between unrecorded oral history interviews and videotaped testimonies: Both are *spoken* media, although the interviews normally have a dialogue structure. Even in the case of interviews with a pronounced narrative character, a second person – the interviewer – is always present, whether visible in the video or not. Oral history interviews and testimonies are sometimes transcribed. In that case the talks also exist in *written form*. The recipients can no longer enter into a direct dialogue with the interviewees; videos can be reproduced, edited and utilised. The – apparent – volatility and interactivity of the interview combines with the permanent, immutable and easily canonised form of the videos and the transcript. On the other hand, the permanent character of the

video becomes volatile again whenever it is cut and recontextualised, for example in the Internet or for an app or an exhibition. Videotaped testimonies conflate the characteristics of oral, written and digital mediality. Christoph Classen (2012: 305–306) has already said with regard to the television age that a strict distinction can no longer be made between communicative and cultural memory. The dissemination and familiarity of video interviews and testimonies as a medium for communicating the history of National Socialist crimes have developed in close interaction with the *television context*. Jan Taubitz, for example, says that the interviews have unconsciously borrowed from presentations in popular culture, “from which, however, they vehemently disassociate themselves” (Taubitz 2016a: 75), and he concludes,

“that comedy |9 (in a narrative-dramaturgical sense) has emerged as the dominant structure of both the eyewitness interview and popular culture” (Ibid.).

The NBC series *Holocaust* and the response in the media marked a caesura; the Holocaust became a subject of social debate in West-Germany and the USA at the end of the 1970s. It could be narrated with reference to individual characters and their experiences and with a specific plot. Recording and collecting videotaped testimonies became an institutionalised activity in the USA: The Fortunoff Archive started recording interviews in May 1979, the *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum* (USHMM) in 1988 (Taubitz 2016b: 89–110). Prior to the NBC series, the Holocaust had already been touched upon on television in a variety of formats including shows: In the 1950s the US reality documentary series *This is Your Life* included the life stories of Holocaust witnesses. In their dramaturgical structure, they had certain similarities with the later testimonies in the collections (Ibid.: 161–185). Taubitz also shows that the testimonies became the subject of comment and reflection in the television culture of the USA, for example in the sitcom *The Sarah Silverman Program* (2010) (Ibid.: 278–280). In Germany, too, the Holocaust was occasionally referenced on television in the 1950s and 1960s (see Bothe 2015: 60). Another example of a relatively early television film involving an eyewitness in Germany is

“Mendel Schainfeld’s zweite Reise nach Deutschland” (“Mendel Schainfeld’s Second Trip to Germany”), which was produced in 1972. From the 1980s onwards, witnesses of the Holocaust made increasingly frequent appearances in German talkshows (Keilbach 2008: 186–189). Last but not least, the History programme developed by the ZDF television channel with Guido Knopp as resident historian has anchored the figure of the eyewitness in the public mind (see Classen 2012; Kansteiner 2012; Keilbach 2008: 190–192). According to Keilbach the term “eyewitness”/“contemporary witness” (“ZeitzeugIn” in German) |10 has been infinitely extended through this kind of television programme, and everyone, including perpetrators, is now bearing witness to the history of National Socialism, for example in the “Holocaust” broadcast by the ZDF in 2000 (Keilbach 2008: 235–236, see also Birte Hewera in this volume). The *cinema context* has also contributed to the popularisation of presentations of the Holocaust. That is particularly clear in the case of the film *Schindler’s List* (1993), since the director Steven Spielberg established the VHA after making the film (see Taubitz 2016b: 240–258). In Claude Lanzmann’s documentary *Shoah* (1985), too, eyewitnesses were presented in moving images (although Lanzmann was highly critical of “Schindler’s List”). In *Shoah*, Lanzmann is shown speaking to victims and perpetrators of the Holocaust. But he also speaks to the Holocaust researcher Raul Hilberg, who is known as a “documents man” and reads from a memoir, the diary of Adam Czerniaków. |11 Czerniaków was chairman of the Jewish council in the Warsaw ghetto and committed suicide in 1942. |12 In the film the researcher Hilberg almost becomes an eyewitness himself: “You were Czerniaków”, says Lanzmann to his interviewee at the end. In parallel to the growing numbers of eyewitnesses presented in films and television programmes and hence in videotaped testimony collections, too, there has been increased activity in the field of film and media research, most of which is cited in this volume and earlier publications in the series *Education with Testimonies*. |13 Videotaped testimonies have thus been established in a societal framework in which representations of the Holocaust have emerged in popular culture with frequently reproduced fragments, motifs, recurring pictorial language and

plots, and with “hypertexts” (Ebbrecht 2013: 121). They have then sometimes disappeared again or remained, as Taubitz has demonstrated in the case of the comedy plot. Further “reproductions” (Ibid.) of the testimonies are available in the form of the 3D eyewitnesses /holograms created by the USC Shoah Foundation. <sup>14</sup> The question is whether there will soon be testimony motifs in video games, too. The subject “Nazi Crimes towards prisoners” is in fact touched upon in the game *Call of Duty World War II*. <sup>15</sup>

Alina Bothe (2015) has drawn attention to the technical changes and thus the constant changes in use of the interviews: Most testimonies are indexed with keywords and sequenced and often easily accessible. That raises the question of how to work with the testimonies when interviewees are to be seen and heard who lose their composure or are not able or willing to proceed chronologically (see Maria Ecker-Angerer’s contribution to this volume). After all: When the interviews were recorded, the interviewees could not always foresee future developments in terms of their use and general dissemination. In other words: Is it appropriate to show these individuals again and again with their vulnerability and overwhelming emotions when they have no influence over the further use of the testimonies? Doubtless, the advantage of videotaped testimonies is to offer a biographical approach to victims of National Socialism. But researchers and educationalists may also be tempted to functionalise a suitable passage in an interview and focus exclusively on that passage so as to underpin a specific theory. How can inventories and online archives be organised and used to give an impression of the multiplicity and diversity of the testimonies? Most video testimony collections are transnational in character as the witnesses of the Holocaust and persecution were interviewed in various countries. In this volume, the translationalist *Sylvia Degen* offers practical tips for responding to this fact and suggests strategies for translating testimonies for inclusion in collections. Another question is how the contents of the interviews can be evaluated in quantitative terms in order to obtain results that are representative. *Éva Kovács* provides answers in her article. Also in this volume, *Susan Hogervorst* analyses how Dutch trainee teachers make use of an online archive and its functions. She also points out

that the targeted use of videotaped testimonies in the classroom is still in knee pants.

### A cursory look at the school books

A cursory look at the books currently used in Austrian high schools reveals that only one of them, namely *GO! Geschichte Oberstufe 7* (2013), makes specific reference to videotaped interviews with eyewitnesses of National Socialism in the form of photos and transcribed excerpts from the interview. We know very little about the extent and the way in which the more than one hundred thousand<sup>16</sup> collected video testimonies have found their way into school books and history classes. It is reasonable to assume, however, that the extent is limited and the cases rare. That may be due on the one hand to historians' particularly strict source-critical approach to the memory interview. The competence needed to read and assess testimonies as a source is complex, and yet it needs to be taught. On the other hand, it may be due to the lack of user-friendliness in the source itself that so little use is made of testimonies in the classroom. Analysis of video interviews takes time, even when the collection is well organised. After all, an interviewed eyewitness does not present a chronological sequence of events; the camera provides a full record – of the guiding questions put by the interviewer, which sometimes facilitate and sometimes hamper the flow of the narrative, of the interviewee's struggle to find the words or even to remember let alone explain the traumatic events, and of the way the interviewee's body language accompanies the narrative, reinforcing or contradicting certain aspects. If we take into account the resulting requirements for working with these interviews, it is hardly surprising that the authors of school books make even less use of this comprehensive source. That may change, however, as electronic teaching aids increasingly find their way into the digital classroom. In that context, videotaped interviews would be an ideal source (see Peter Gautschi in this volume). An overview of current practice with regard to educational work with video testimonies in various countries is provided by this, the fourth volume in the *Education with Testimonies* series produced by the Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future" (EVZ).

## The Genesis of this Volume

In 2016 the EVZ Foundation issued an announcement for “Funding for an international event on experience with educational uses of video interviews with victims of National Socialism”. Among other things, the Foundation made a major contribution to funding the collection *Forced Labor 1939–45. Memory and History*. In the last few years, on the basis of the testimonies, various educational applications have been created (see Dorothee Wein, Šárka Jarská and Natalia Timofeeva in this volume). In addition, the EVZ Foundation also publishes the above mentioned series of books, which provide an overview of a multiplicity of initiatives and projects that incorporate testimonies or take them as their point of departure, or which reflect on the development of the category of the “eyewitness” and generally shed light on educational work with testimonies. The objective of the invitation sent out by the EVZ Foundation in 2016 was to intensify the exchange of experience and also to produce a fourth volume in the series. The Austrian organisation *\_erinnern.at\_* was chosen to produce this volume. *\_erinnern.at\_* works on behalf of the Austrian Ministry of Education organising school visits for eyewitnesses of National Socialism who are willing to speak of their experiences and has also developed several educational DVDs and web applications based on videotaped testimonies. In 2014–15 *\_erinnern.at\_* ran the research project “Shoah in daily school life – historical learning with video interviews with survivors in a tablet based learning environment”. *Irmgard Bibermann* describes the project and presents results in her contribution to this volume. The concept developed by *\_erinnern.at\_* for “localisation of videotaped testimonies with victims of National Socialism in educational programmes” was targeted at in-depth insights in the use of such interviews in specific projects in classroom and extracurricular education. The aim was both localisation of projects using videotaped testimonies in the educational scene and identification of quality criteria for the eyewitness videos incorporated in such educational materials. Instead of a scientific conference, with invited speakers presenting formal papers, it was decided to organise the event in the form of a workshop to facilitate an exchange of experience and reflection

on the practical outcomes to date and move the discourse forward by generating the relevant questions. After that, it was thought it would be possible, in a second step, to produce the texts needed for the envisaged publication taking due account of the discussions in the workshop. A call for participation sent out in the summer of 2016 attracted sixty proposals from Australia, Canada, Chile, Europe, Israel, South Africa and the USA. On that basis, 23 projects with 33 participants from Canada, Europa, Israel, South Africa and the USA were selected and invitations sent out for the three-day workshop in Vienna, which was organised and chaired by Moritz Wein and Werner Dreier. The event was also attended by Günter Saathoff as Co-Director of and Sonja Begalke, Team Lead for the Department for a Critical Examination of History at the EVZ Foundation. In addition Peter Gautschi (University of Applied Sciences in Lucerne, CH), Piotr Trojański (Auschwitz Birkenau State Museum, Department of Education, PL) and Éva Kovács (Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies, HU/A) agreed to participate as rapporteurs for the fields of Education, Museum/Memorial Sites and Research. Angelika Laumer (D) also attended as editor of the planned publication. The central objective of the workshop was a joint evaluation of individual projects based on eyewitness videos with regard to potential quality criteria for educational materials (good practice). Questions like the degree of congruity between the materials produced and the users' interests, ways of enriching classroom teaching and visits to museums or memorial sites as well as possible difficulties were to be discussed in order to generate conclusions for future productions. In advance of the workshop, participants were sent questions relating to the interviews, their use and the contexts for which the projects had been developed. The questions were meant to stimulate controversial debate, offer participants maximum scope for discussion and support the search for good practice. Several subjects were addressed by the participants in rotating groups on the basis of one main question designed to stimulate discussion plus a list of further questions.

The question for the "school education" groups was as follows: "Video testimonies in school education – are they useful, manipulative or over-

whelming?” One group identified several factors that play a role in the use of videotaped testimonies in the classroom. Priority was given to the “importance of teacher preparation”. The participants also discussed the minimum age at which pupils can and should learn about the Holocaust and the role that videotaped testimonies can play in the case of very young pupils. In this volume, *Ilene R. and Michael J. Berson* present the results of their research on this subject and consider ways in which video testimonies can be used to introduce young learners to the subjects of the Holocaust and social justice (for young learners, see also Michal Sadan/Madene Shachar, James Griffiths/Louise Stafford and Tony Cole/Darius Jackson in this volume). “What is a good contextual setting for video testimonies?” was the question put to the “extracurricular education” groups. One group came to the conclusion that it is country-specific and above all user-specific. The use of testimonies in classrooms with migrants was also discussed. *Carson Phillips* presented a project run by the *Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre*, in which newcomers to Canada learn about the Holocaust through testimonies used in English classes. Phillips stressed the great interest in the subject on the part of the newcomers. In his paper, he shows how easy it is to establish links between the situation of the eyewitnesses who came to Canada as immigrants after the Holocaust and today’s newcomers. There was lively debate on the question whether social media constitute a suitable context, with one participant insisting that they are not a safe place. In fact social media did not play a significant role in either the project presentations or the papers submitted. The articles and presentations also revealed a lack of agreement on the terminology. Some spoke of “Augenzeugen” (eyewitnesses), some of “Zeitzeugen” (contemporary witnesses) and others of “survivors”, while “video testimony” alternated with “eyewitness interview”, “life story interview” and “testimonial film”. In some of the projects, the interviews were treated more as historical sources, and a source-critical approach was applied. In others they tended to serve to bridge the distance between the audience in the present and the human experience in the past and to create empathy for the interviewees, who are often labelled survivors. There was also criticism on

the part of participants who felt that testimonies sometimes served as unquestioned and unquestionable symbols of authenticity. The production and use of testimonies is located between the twin poles of loyalty to the source on the one hand and functionality and pragmatism on the other. Some participants thought it more important to let the interviewees bear witness and the pupils look and listen at length and thus to teach them something about history, including the subjective experience of the history of the Holocaust, of the death of people close to oneself and/or of persecution as well as the interviewees' interpretations of their experiences. In fact the distractions in the use of videotaped testimony, the unchronological narrative – Andree Michaelis (2013: 234) speaks of the “willfulness” of the interviews – are sometimes seen as opportunities for developing reception competence and thus for educational work. <sup>17</sup> *Maria Ecker-Angerer* stresses this point in her article “What exactly makes a good interview?”. Other workshop attendees make use in their work of short videoclips to teach values which are not exclusively relevant to the Holocaust, such as social justice. Those clips were made for a specific use within the institution involved, for educational purposes or for exhibitions, for example. In general, the hour-long interviews are often used in a shortened version lasting half an hour maybe or even only a few minutes. The interviewers and their questions are often cut out but equally, material is sometimes added in the form of documents or photographs or footage from historical documentation. Also, speakers are sometimes used to add connecting words or transitions, translations provided as subtitles or voiceovers and background music added: The affinity with the documentary film is unmistakable. Some educational programmes combine introductory “video portraits” or “biographical films” with testimonies. (On the production of videoclips for their education programmes, see the articles by Cole/Jackson and Arlene Sher in this volume). Some of the group members felt that the narrative provided by the interviewees was so powerful that no entertaining editing was required. One participant wrote the comment, “Entertaining editing = underestimation of both interview and audience”. There was agreement in one group on the need for transparency with regard to

the editing, including the motivation and intentions. What determines the “quality of the interview?” and “Is there something like a bad interview?” were other questions asked in the workshop. The primary criterion for one group was the role of the interviewer and the need to “take care of the person being interviewed”. Whether the interviewers ask good questions, have adequate historical knowledge or simply wish to guide the interview in a certain direction was considered decisive for the quality of the final product. The relevance of establishing a list of quality criteria was put into perspective in one comment: “A bad interview can be a good interview for education.” There was a general consensus, however, on the need for the testimonies used in education to be contextualised and additional historical information provided. In their paper on evaluation of the educational programme at the *National Holocaust Centre* in the UK, *James Griffiths and Louise Stafford* are clearly of this opinion on the grounds that the testimonies appeal primarily to the recipients’ emotions. However, educators sometimes do not have enough time to include or deal with supporting modules.

The “memorial sites” discussion groups addressed the question: “Where to place testimonies? What is the purpose? What is the use?” The question in itself suggests that we know relatively little about the visitors to memorial sites: “What do we know of the responses of the visitors? Does anybody watch video testimonies at memorial sites?” One finding was that exhibitions should not be overloaded with videotaped testimonies.

### Videotaped Testimonies and Space

Videoclips and full length videotaped testimonies are a regular feature of such exhibitions, and most of these institutions have their own collections (de Jong 2011).<sup>18</sup> In this volume, information on how testimonies interact with the urban scene is provided by *Kinga Frojimovics* and *Éva Kovács* in their “tainted guided tour” of Vienna, in which the accounts of former Jewish slave labourers combine to create a tour leading from one tourist attraction to another. *Annemiek Gringold* discusses the subject of videotaped testimonies in the Jewish Cultural Quarter Amsterdam. *Madene Shachar and Michal*

*Sadan* also offer an insight into curatorial decisions and the educational work with videotaped testimonies performed at *Yad La Yeled Children's Memorial Museum, Ghetto Fighters House, Israel*. For any exhibition it is doubtless a curatorial challenge to present videotaped testimonies in competition with silent objects, written documents, photographs and the exhibition space itself. In this context, there is a need for further discussion of ideas and practical experience on the synthesis and configuration of videotaped testimonies, space and other exhibits as well as visitor responses to the testimonies. Jewish museums primarily focus on Jewish history, culture and religion in their own right, quite apart from the Holocaust. In this volume, *Anika Reichwald* discusses such considerations with reference to the *Jewish Museum Hohenems* in Austria. Educational work with testimonies by Nazi victims is also performed at a location that is a reminder of the National Socialist perpetrators, as *Dorothee Wein* shows in her paper on "Voices of Survivors at Sites of Perpetrators".

#### Further Developments in the Archives and Current Practice in Educational Work

Since the 1990s increasing numbers of interviews have been conducted and subsequently archived with representatives of various groups of victims. Both the VHA and the *Forced Labor 1939–1945* archive, for example, contain numerous testimonies by Roma and Sinti, who witnessed the genocide and slave labour under the Nazis. <sup>19</sup> An overview of the objectives and use in the Czech Republic, Germany and Russia of the web applications "Learning with Interviews" from the Forced Labor 1939–1945 collection is provided by *Dorothee Wein, Šárka Jarská and Natalia Timofeeva* in this publication. In his paper, *Teon Djingo* deals with videotaped testimonies from bystanders of the Holocaust in Macedonia. The testimonies form part of the USHMM collection. All the Jews deported from Macedonia were murdered; they were never able to bear witness themselves. In her article, *Iryna Kashtalian* shows how oral history and videotaped testimonies have been used in Belarus for an exhibition about the extermination site Maly Trostenets and how they can

be popularised with the help of a history competition. Noah Shenker (2015: 192–197) considers that, with today’s use of testimonies, information on genocides is being increasingly provided through the “lens of the Holocaust”. The VHA, for example, also provides interviews with survivors of other terror regimes and genocides, such as the Tutsi genocide in Rwanda. In their paper, *Andrea Szőny and Kori Street* offer an insight into the use of the USC Shoah Foundation’s online platform *Iwitness* in an educational programme and show how students relate what they see and hear to their own lives and experiences of discrimination. For her part, *Arlene Sher* presents educational work on the subject of the genocide of the Tutsi and the Holocaust using videotaped testimonies at the *Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre* (JHGC) in South Africa. As at the JHGC, museums, memorial sites and documentation centres have produced their own videos and built up their own collections. Interviews with survivors are still being conducted today, and *Tony Cole and Darius Jackson* describe how they employ a resulting video for their educational work with primary school children and children with special educational needs. In her article, *Birte Hewera* discusses the goals pursued with the biographical documentary films – or testimonial films – in the *Witnesses and Education* programme created by Yad Vashem and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Finally, *Peter Gautschi* classifies the various papers discussed by the “education” group at the workshop from the point of view of history education and analyses how historical learning can be triggered by the various education programmes.

In spite of the many differences of opinion revealed by the workshop, there was a general consensus at the end of the day that “good practice is dynamic over time” and is tied to specific contexts, goals and target groups. It was also agreed that it is important for the success of the education programmes to define their objectives in advance. Many questions remained open, such as the use of testimonies in exhibitions, how testimonies are or can be used in social media, and what measures are required for teachers to be able to use testimonies in history classes in the face of rigid curricula. The key, it was felt, will always be cooperation, an aspect with considerable potential

for improvement, for example between various professional groups like archivists, teachers in extracurricular and classroom education, and the research community.

Learners will hopefully continue to bring their curiosity to the videos and – like the sound effects man in Lecomte’s video – try to find their way, step by step, to understanding the experiences of the Holocaust, genocide and slave labour and will continue to expose themselves to the sense of helplessness that can overcome them when they see or hear the narrators in the videos. The process will perhaps become easier and more productive if they, too, share and discuss their experiences.

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- 1 For the meaning of the German word "Zeugnis" (English "testimony" or "witness") see Assmann, A. (2007). Vier Grundtypen von Zeugenschaft. In Elm, M., Kößler, G. (Eds.). *Zeugenschaft des Holocaust. Zwischen Trauma, Tradierung und Ermittlung*. Frankfurt a. M./ New York: Campus, pp. 46–49. In this English translation, the terms "interview" and "testimony" are used. In this paper, the word "testimony" refers to a special form of interview, in which an eyewitness speaks of his/her experiences during and after the Holocaust or of persecution during the period of National Socialism.
- 2 <http://tatianalecomte.com/ein-morderischer-larm>, and [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHM\\_Y5tuY-E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHM_Y5tuY-E), accessed 2 November 2017.
- 3 The video is presented as a work of art, however, and can therefore be expected to be reproduced and used much less frequently than, say, a television programme.
- 4 See Hallensleben, S. (2008). Sprache im Dokumentarfilm. Hierarchie der Töne, <http://www.taz.de/!5175465/>, accessed 3 November 2017.
- 5 See Beckmann, A.: [http://www.deutschlandfunk.de/internationale-tagung-wuerdigt-lebenswerk-raul-hilberg.1148.de.html?dram:article\\_id=399072](http://www.deutschlandfunk.de/internationale-tagung-wuerdigt-lebenswerk-raul-hilberg.1148.de.html?dram:article_id=399072), accessed 1 November 2017.
- 6 These thoughts on the creation of videotaped testimony collections relate primarily to Austria, the USA and West Germany and also touch on Israel and France. It would also be very interesting to study the production and reception of audio- and videotaped testimonies of victims of National Socialism in Socialist countries starting in the 1950s and also in other western countries such as Greece, Italy, etc. Unfortunately,

the competence and capacity are not available to do that here. In the 1980s the historian Annette Leo worked in the GDR on an interview project run by the state-owned film studio DEFA, in which survivors of the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp were interviewed on their life stories. See [http://www.nng.uni-jena.de/Annette\\_Leo.html](http://www.nng.uni-jena.de/Annette_Leo.html), accessed 1 November 2017.

- 7 Testimonies of the witnesses recorded during the Eichmann trial are available on YouTube. Testimonies from the Auschwitz trial are to be found here: <http://www.auschwitz-prozess.de>, accessed 2 November 2017.
- 8 Wulf Kansteiner (2004) undertakes a critical review of the term “cultural trauma” and the assumption that traumata are automatically transmitted to the following generations. In his opinion, excessively flexible and also inflationary use is made of the term “cultural trauma”.
- 9 Here Taubitz is referring, not to the humorous or mocking element of a comedy but to its narrative structure. Since the “Holocaust” series was broadcast, Holocaust testimonies have typically been structured with a pre-war period followed by the period of persecution and war and then the post-war period, often with a conciliatory ending.
- 10 We have retained the word “eyewitness” (“ZeitzeugIn”) for this introduction, however, because the term “‘survivor’ recalls the border between life and death, a grey zone which – like death itself – is far removed from the everyday experiences of most people today.” In the context of educational work especially, the term “survivor” can involve expectations of fear and horror, “but it also has something attractive about it, particularly when the horrors of the past can be viewed from the relative safety of the classroom”, see Dreier, W. (2016) Testimonies of Holocaust Survivors in School Education – Experiences, Challenges, Open Questions from an Austrian Perspective. In Apostolopoulos, N, Barricelli, M., Koch, G. (Eds.). *Preserving Survivors’ Memories. Digital Testimony Collections about Nazi Persecution: History, Education and Media*. Berlin: EVZ, p. 92. The authors in this collection vary in their views of the subject. We use the phrase “witness of the Holocaust” or “witness of persecution” to denote people who were at risk of being murdered and were persecuted during the period of National Socialism; we do not use the term to refer to perpetrators.
- 11 The historian Christopher Browning used the term “documents man” with reference to Hilberg at the conference on “Raul Hilberg and the Holocaust Historiography. A conference to mark the 10th anniversary of his death”, which was organised by the Potsdam Center for Contemporary History and held in Berlin on 18–20 October 2017. In a presentation entitled “‘I have never begun by asking the big questions’: Raul Hilberg and Testimonial Reenactment in Shoah”, Noah Shenker discussed *Shoah* in detail on 19 October 2017.
- 12 Here are a few examples of publications on the cinematic treatment of National Socialism and especially the Holocaust, including the figure of the eyewitness and interview settings: Baumgärtner, K. S. (2012): Some Filmic Heroines and “Others” in the GDR Documentary Women in Ravensbrück (1968). In Dorchain, C. S., Wonnemberg, F. N. (Eds.). *Contemporary Jewish Reality in Germany and Its Reflection in Film*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter. pp. 51–70. Bowinkelmann, P. (2008). *Schattenwelt. Die Vernichtung der Juden, dargestellt im französischen Dokumentarfilm*. Hannover: Offizin; Ebbrecht-Hartmann, T. (2016). Witnessing Emotion: Encountering Holocaust Survivors’ Testimonies in Documentary Films. In Apostolopoulos, N., Barricelli, M., Koch, G. (Eds.).

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- 13 With regard to education with videotaped testimonies, see also the previous publications in the series "Education with Testimonies", <http://www.stiftung-evz.de/handlungsfelder/auseinandersetzung-mit-der-geschichte/bildungsarbeit-mit-zeugnissen.html>, accessed 2 November 2017.
- 14 McMullan, T. (2016). The virtual Holocaust survivor. How history gained new dimensions, see <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/jun/18/holocaust-survivor-hologram-pinchas-gutter-new-dimensions-history>, accessed 3 November 2017.
- 15 See Rosenberg, A.: 'Call of Duty: WWII' apparently does more than merely acknowledge the Holocaust [http://mashable.com/2017/09/18/call-of-duty-wwii-story-trailer/#\\_mMF.dR8Piqu](http://mashable.com/2017/09/18/call-of-duty-wwii-story-trailer/#_mMF.dR8Piqu), accessed 3 November 2017 and Wilhelm, Z: Call of Duty: WW2" erschienen: Nazi-Zombiehorden ohne Holocaust <https://www.derstandard.de/story/2000067097786/call-of-duty-ww2-erschiene-nazi-zombiehorden-ohne-holocaust>, accessed 13 November 2017. On the German version of the game Wolfenstein 2 The New Colossus, see Schiffer, C. Wie das Spiel Wolfenstein 2 die Geschichte entsorgt, see <https://www.br.de/radio/bayern2/sendungen/zuendfunk/netz-kultur/wolfenstein-the-new-colossus-nazis-skandal100.html>, accessed 13 November 2017.
- 16 That is an estimate by Tony Kushner for both audio- and videotaped interviews (Kushner quoted after Bothe 2015: 58). Jan Taubitz puts the number of recorded testimonies in the USA alone at 80,000 (2016b: 15).
- 17 See also Elm, M. (2008). *Zeugenschaft im Film. Eine erinnerungskulturelle Analyse filmischer Erzählungen des Holocaust.* Berlin: Metropolis pp. 213–218.
- 18 The publication de Jong, S. (2018). *The Witness as Object. Video Testimony in Memorial Museums.* New York: Berghahn promises an in-depth treatment of this subject. At copy date for this volume, it had not yet been published.
- 19 See for example: Svatonová, J. (2015). Use of Interviews with Witnesses to the Porajmos, at the Museum of Roma Culture In Knellessen, D., Possekel, R. (Eds.) *From Testimony to Story. Video Interviews about Nazi Crimes. Perspectives and Experiences in Four Countries.* Berlin: EVZ, pp. 111–115.