

Memory Work

Final report

03.02.2019 – 03.03.2019

Researcher: María Paula Nuñez Beingolea

Instructor: Igmard Zundorf

Institution: ZZF Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung

When memory interacts

Strategies to approach new generations in Ravensbrück Memorial Site in Fürstenberg, Germany and The Place of Memory and Social Inclusion in Lima, Peru.

Although there is an increasing tendency to enhance the work of memory for communities and countries that suffered violent periods of conflicts, it is crucial to perceive the active challenge that involve the relationship between new generations and the premise “Never again”. The notion not only involve an emphatic call for the victims it also extends the hand for a civic compromise with memory. The anxious requirement for collective healing have taken museums as not only informative but also, emphatic and reflexive sceneries. Therefore, the understanding and comparison between the communicative and pedagogic experience between two memory sites expose assertive encounters and common challenges in this task. Hence, Ravensbrück Memorial Place in Berlin and The Place of Memory and Social Inclusion in Lima expose permanent exhibitions that gathered different periods of history and cultural knowledge, but also open opportunities of dialogue with new generations.

In these sense, the Memory Work program permitted the development of the comparative investigation *When memory interacts. Strategies to approach new generations in Ravensbrück Memorial Site (RMS) Fürstenberg, Germany and The Place of Memory and Social Inclusion (LUM) Lima, Peru*. The process had three phases, the first one consisted in exploratory close up to the *Gedenkstätte* culture in Berlin. The second implicated the selection of the memory site and the first approach to their methodological focused in the work with new generations. The remaining phase was dedicated to the comparative analysis of both sites having in mind the historical and cultural gap between them.

As mentioned, the primary state of the project was centered in conceiving and understanding the panorama of memory culture in Berlin. Therefore, it was a necessity to visit memorials, centers of information and museums located in the capitol, to profound in the diverse processes involve in National Socialism regime in Germany and other European countries. In these sense, a closer approach to history and the perspective that institutions use to expose a comprehensive narrative gave a tangible background that helped in the process of envisaging the frames of the investigation.

The observation of memorial, centers and museums that engage the work of memory in Berlin have common aspects in terms of content, discourse and aesthetic. Information has an objective and vast quality presented in graphic formats that facilitates understanding. But above their similitudes, each of them own a different identity and focus that enrich the reflection about NS period in Europe. What’s more, every place has a singular strength adequate to the need of their

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target audience. Places as The House of the Wannsee Conference, Ana Frank's Center, and the exhibition inside Ravensbrück former concentration camp, have a way on the treatment and exposure of information that prioritize the pedagogic and communicative axis.

The exhibition inside Ravensbrück former concentration camp has a unique and distinctive approach of narrating memoir. The disposition of the information and pedagogic materials confronts the visitor and provoke a desire to engage a deeper understanding of facts. Also, integrates objects and art pieces as cultural expressions that grant a human sense to the exhibit and facilitates the construction of emphatic bridges with the past. But the prime factor for its selection was the site's visitor programs that open channels of dialogue with a focus that trust the individual capacity to formulate and self question in a personal and collective way.

While in Peru's Place of Memory the pedagogic and communicative work aims to develop a strategy that prioritize learning and dialogue as skills that permit the strengthening of culture of peace. Therefore, since 2015 activities as: thematic and art workshops, literature discussions about memory subjects and communicative resources that use media platforms, had been some of the integrated actions executed to enhance this purpose.

After the selection of both sites, a qualitative method has been used to distinguish the strategies approaching new generations. Therefore, the content revealed in the analysis was acquired by observation and interviews with specialists in the matter. The scientific tool selection priorities mediated visits across the permanent exhibits, and the remains of the RMS Concentration Camp, plus interviews with pedagogic specialist members of the staff. As well, conversations with educators that had experience the institutional pedagogic offer, or currently engaging projects with new generations taking the sites as scenarios.

The professionals who shared their educational experiences enrich the argument of these study and open newfangled discussions about societal challenges for the work of memory in each country. The group was composed by the Memorial Pedagogue and member of the educational services in RMS, Thomas Kunz and the educational specialist and collaborator in with the project *Ravensbrück*, Ingo Grolmus, the pedagogic specialist of LUM Gabriela Eguren and the educator and specialist in intercultural work with new generations in Peru, Natalia Sánchez.

Consequently, after gathering all the information the analysis was lead by two questions. The first one, ¿How to open discussions with new generations? focused in the experience of guided tours as interrogative methods and the usage of media as fundamental tool towards interpellation. The second doubt analyzed the empathic experience with the sites by two categories: cultural creation as a way of identification and practice of the empathic endurance with prologued and sustain interaction with the site. These frames of study permitted the formulation of the remaining conclusions:

1. Despite the fact that RMS and LUM, are different types of memory sites, in terms of spatial circumstances or conceptual and historical formulations, they both priorities the work with younger generations from a pedagogical and communicative point of view. However, it's relevant to point out that there isn't a pre establish order in pedagogic experience, the strategies selected for the analysis are in constant adjustment as they adapt and reconfigured to the need of the younger ones. Therefore, media communication has become a fundamental tool that frames transitive process with the potential to encapsulate memories for the present and the

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future. These cultural recreations permit memorial museums engage accessible and approachable dialogue for new generations who constantly relate and feel comfortable with these contemporary forms of comprehension and interaction.

2. Both memorial sites assume inquiring labor as a priority in their duty to promote discussion between youngers. However, the differential among cultural bases of new generations, and the political context exposed in official discourses, conditions pedagogical methodology for experimentation and innovation. Above this, LUM answer towards discourse of silence has been the use of contemporary subjects connected to the thematics vetted in the permanent exhibition. While Ravensbrück, efforts to detach from an antifascist heroic tradition, opens new perspectives towards the connection with individuals by trusting their own capacity to enhance their own search towards the traces of the past.
3. There is no guarantee that the experience of memory will change behaviors, but ideas remain in the abstract form and influence future formulations. It's strategic to take advantage of the early stage of identity foundation. The process of molding an identity it's in constant adaptation and cultural experiences could work as incentives towards this motion. The recognition of the other in a transitive process can generate a new narrative between interlocutors. Therefore, the common point of construction signifies a contributive phase towards empathy and its manifestations. Sustain interaction, understood as long term contact with the sites, will open channels of sensations grating a sense of humanity in the frames of alterity. The younger generations will create and regenerate traces of the past that will remain in the memory scenario as a sign of endurance.
4. Scenarios territorialize and acquire meaning by the presence of the visitors and their relation towards the space. Therefore, the quality of the bonding experience will take a preponderant position as the visitors deposit meaning to it. So, values that emerge from the analysis of memories may be taken not as examples, but as signs of humanity. These signs should be reconfigured, owned and used to understand the persecutions of the present.

To conclude, the analysis will be presented to the LUM team having an especial consideration of the first phase of the project. The content of this report will enrich the work of the diverse areas of coordination: Museography, Communication, The Information and Documentation Center, Pedagogy and Cultural activities. This experience had reinforced the idea that memory sites should assist and open channels that enhance bridges with new generations, process that imply adaptation to new forms of interaction and appropriation. These sites recollect the unheard stories of individuals and reinvent exhibitions as per formative spaces that invite actors, in these case new generations, to engage the shared compromise to protect the voices of resilience.