Berghof Foundation

Visual Novel for critical historical awareness



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ErinnerungsZeit

2022 - 2024

MULTIPERSPECTIVITY IN THE REMEMBRANCE OF NS INJUSTICE

With the end of the Second World War, the crimes of the Nazi state of injustice also came to an end. However, the underlying misanthropic phenomena such as discrimination, hatred, anti-Semitism, antiziganism, racism and persecution continue to this day. It is above all the voices of mar-

ginalised groups that are still barely heard in our dominant society and are systematically excluded. Moreover, their experiences and stories are still not an equal part of the official memory of Nazi injustice in Germany.

"A future-oriented culture of remembrance means forcing this interactivity (...). Only in this way does narrated history become our own and, as a result, we ourselves become rememberers. In this way, a culture of remembrance continually forges a bond that points from the past to the future."

- Digitale Spielekultur - Foundation

In three storylines, the animated visual novel focuses on fictionalised biographies of people whose experiences and perspectives as well as their resistant actions have so far received little attention in German remembrance of National Socialism; people who still experience systematic exclusion, (structural) discrimination and hatred today. The stories also show examples of how people then and now became aware of their privileges, sought allies and resisted

discrimination and persecution. The perspectives of the war generation are contrasted with those of the post-war generations and placed in relation to each other. Furthermore, the range of victims' perspectives is contrasted with the different experiences of the descendants of perpetrators, whose perspective is

still a marginalised topic in both the educational context and in official remembrance. From a peace education perspective, future-oriented remembrance requires an active examination of the ambivalent, shameful and often perceived as uncomfortable perspectives of the descendants of Nazi perpetrators and a focus on non-violent coexistence.

OUR APPROACH

The project "ErinnerungsZeit – an animated Graphic Novel" creates a digital educational space to strengthen the critical historical awareness of young people in Germany and promote their media skills. To this end, an animated visual novel is being developed as part of the project, which invites people to discover and turns remembrance into an interactive action through playful and narrative components.



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The dialogue-oriented, peace education approach of the project and the accompanying learning material enables an active, value-based examination of these ambivalences and controversies. Users are strengthened in their tolerance of ambiguity. Furthermore, the empathy of the primarily young users towards marginalised groups is stimulated and at the same time awareness of (their own) privileges is awakened. The knowledge of the continuing consequences of the Nazi era and ongoing discrimination allows users to recognise the relevance of civic engagement. By exploring various forms of resistance and presenting options for action that are sensitive to discrimination, they are encouraged to become active themselves.

DIGITAL LEARNING SPACES AND RE-MEMBERING

The "ErinnerungsZeit" project combines the medium of the graphic novel with gamified elements to create an animated visual novel. Digital media and games as well as graphic novels and (historical) comics offer alternative approaches for dealing with the past.

Digital games are a valuable tool as they can be immersive due to their interactivity and allow users to change perspectives and empathise to a certain extent. They can therefore make an important contribution to "lived", contemporary remembrance work in the present. This is characterised by constant negotiation processes between the individual and society as well as history and the present.

The simultaneity of past, present and future is a central element that graphic novels and historical comics utilise. The possibility of overcoming space and time proves to be particularly valuable in critical remembrance work for dealing with continuities of discrimination and marginalisation. This encourages both individual and biographical as well as collective dialogue, for example in the classroom.

INCLUSIVE PROCESSES FOR AN INCLUSIVE REMEMBRANCE WORK

From conception to realisation, "ErinnerungsZeit" aims to use inclusive processes to open up a space in which diverse perspectives can coexist. To this end, we in the project team critically scrutinise our own privileges and create spaces in which we talk with and not about people with affected perspectives and in which the voices of these people are heard and decisively included as active subjects.

In the course of developing and realising the visual novel "ErinnerungsZeit", the Berghof Foundation team is collaborating with graphic novelists who feel they belong to the Jewish, Black, Sinti* and Roma* and FLINTA*/LGBTQIA+ communities. The active, dialogue-oriented and sensitive exchange about the experiences of people affected by discrimination during the Nazi era and today is the basis for our joint project work. Both the end product and its development process are equally important. The cooperation partners of the Neuengamme Concentration Camp Memorial, the Association of German Sinti and Roma, Baden-Württemberg State Association and the Asamblea Desobediente support the quality assurance of the project with their professional expertise.



ACTIVITIES

April 2023: Expert discussion with experts from margin-

alised communities

May - Aug 2023: Seminar for students as a peer group with

the support of our project partners

October 2023: Kick-off workshop with the graphic novelists

and the digital agency

spring - summer Development and piloting of a multiplier

2024: guide

June - July 2024: Test phase of the visual novel and technical

dialogue

September Publication of the visual novel accompanied

2024: by a social media campaign

autumn 2024: Multiplier training courses

POSSIBILITIES OF CO-OPERATION

Are you interested and keen

- → in testing the beta version of the visual novel and the accompanying material alone or with a group in school or extracurricular educational work?
- → in taking part in one of the online multiplier training courses?
- in giving us feedback on the visual novel, the accompanying material or the online training course?
- → in contributing to a participative and multi-perspective culture of remembrance by supporting our social media campaign?

You can follow the creation process on the Berghof Foundation's social media channels and help shape the development of the visual novel "ErinneungsZeit" by making suggestions and sharing your experiences.

Follow our Instagram channel **@berghof_friedenlernen** to stay up to date and share your experiences with us.



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PARTNERS AND FUNDING









