

Visiting the camps memorials

„I want to show my group the concentration camp“, most of the time this is the first sentence if a teacher calls at the concentration camp memorial Dachau. Sometimes he is told that he is 61 years to late for that visit, the camp was liberated at the 29th of April 1945. All he and his group can visit is the site of the former camp which has been changed to a memorial in 1965.

It is not only a subtle play on words to differentiate between the camp and the memorial, this is also reflecting what place we can visit today, how the visitors' expectations and the actual place may differ and what kind of re-construction is to be undergone to understand the significance of the place.

The seminar tries to work on the question what does it mean to come to the memorial, how can we prepare our students for that difference and how can we work on the culture of memory. Remembering the era of the National Socialism, remembering the Holocaust will be disconnected to the accounts of the survivors, the eyewitnesses of the persecution. For this the visitors and interested public will be more and more delegated to the memorial sites on the authentic sites. Memorial sites are key places of engagement with and reflection on history, are places of cultural experiences, they are a part of the political culture of the country and a place of international significance. The historical site in Dachau is part of the nation' heritage, it is in Pierre Nora's words a "lieux de memoire", it's significance surpasses local and national remembrance. The workshop tries to discuss these questions of significance of the site and the meaning of a visit on those different levels and will try to give some hints for educational approaches to the place.

Pictures:

2005 Mai Gehweg1.jpg (= view of the new entrance)

2005 Mai Jourhaus1.jpg (= view of the Jourhause, the former gatehouse of the camp)

CV Peter Koch

- Born 31st of October 1970 in Munich, married, one daughter
- Graduated from High school 1990
- 1992 – 1998 Studies of German literature, history, politics, and sociology, Ludwig Maximilians Universität München
- 1998 – 2000 scientific employee at the Ludwig Maximilians Universität München
- 2000 – 2002 legal clerkship
- 2001 – 2003 scientific employee at the concentration camp memorial Dachau, development of the Educational department; also teaching on a Gymnasium
- Since 2004 head of the Educational Department at the memorial
- Member of national and international working groups, university lecturer for didactics of history, publications and lectures

