ACCESSING CAMPSCAPES

INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES FOR USING EUROPEAN CONFLICTED HERITAGE

iC-ACCESS

STORYTELLING: CAMPSCAPES AS NARRATIVES

iC-ACCESS assesses the dynamics of competing postwar memories of Nazi, Communist and fascist terror at work in the European space and aims to offer tools which can potentially offer a coherent way of their storytelling that integrates different histories and divergent memories. 'Heritage as narrative' is articulated through national experiences and tropes of resistance, collaboration, occupation, and victimhood and perpetration and we consider how these affect and undermine the manner in which heritage is perceived and used in former conflict areas. We do so through transnational analyses of existing narratives relating to campscapes (represented in testimonies, literature, public media, museums, memorials and education), the processes of signification and appropriation and mainstream historical discourses and how they might overshadow complementary, or conflicted perspectives.

TESTIMONIES: CAMPSCAPES AS MEMORY

The project considers testimonies as integral of visitor experiences and a selfstanding research material on campscapes in the digital era. It thus aims to collect, analyse and rethink interview collections so that they open up paradigmatic presentations of histories or supplement sparse contextual information relating to these sites. We study the (past, present and future) role of audio and video testimonies in safeguarding, understanding and valorising campscapes. Whether these individual stories can account for a previously uncharted micro-histories or become an additional source regarding representations of victimhood, of agency or responsibility, they provide a new reason for reflection and experimentation. These types of sources often support a differentiated understanding of painful memories of conflicts of the 20th century and are presumably more flexible in conveying the mutually shared effects of these pasts. By counterposing archival collections of personal testimonies to historical simplifications of conflicted pasts, iC-ACCESS aims to convey the multiple perspectives on individual experiences circumscribed to campscapes.

UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY

NTNU
Kunnskap for en bedre verden

upf. Universitat Pompeu Fabra Barcelona

CeDiS
Freie Universität Berlin

ZÁPADOČESKÁ UNIVERZITA V PLZNI

MATERIALITY: CAMPSCAPES AS TRACES

iC-ACCESS evaluates the role that material culture plays in enhancing, limiting or suppressing knowledge concerning former Nazi and Soviet campscapes. We adopt a broad definition of material evidence: objects (e.g. personal belongings, weapons, tools, domestic items, clothing), structural remnants (e.g. buildings, barracks, fences and guard towers, extermination infrastructures), human remains and forensic trace evidence (e.g. DNA of victims in mass graves) to understand their role in the development of camp memorials and heritage sites. We are equally concerned with material remains in archives and memorial museums, as with findings of previous archaeological investigation, but we also examine the ways in which material traces and forensic evidence have been used by revisionist groups, educators, the media and the public (in particular online) to engineer alternative interpretations of Nazi and Soviet atrocities. Working closely with the associated partners and other stakeholders, activities include site visits focused on critically evaluating the presence/absence of material culture within key sites, observational experiments of visitor interactions and "public archaeology" activities. As such, iC-ACCESS demonstrates the role that materiality (which often resides unnoticed in archives or in the landscape) can play in the perception of sites.
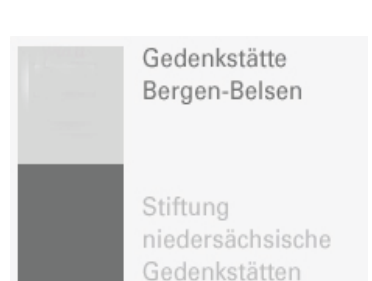
MAPPING: CAMPSCAPES AS SPACES

iC-ACCESS explores novel ways in which new technologies and methods can help identify, and provide access to buried physical traces and forensic evidence of and within campscapes. The methodology will draw upon state-of-the-art techniques derived from archaeology, forensic investigation, geography and digital humanities in order to locate, record and digitally preserve landscapes of mass violence. Recent advances in non- and minimally invasive archaeological methods, when coupled with surveying technologies from other disciplines, offer the potential to account for sensitivities surrounding conflict sites; they also facilitate a much more detailed analysis of both the areas within the boundaries of camps and surrounding landscape. We use novel applications of satellite remote sensing, airborne and terrestrial laser scanning (LiDAR), drones (UAVs), terrestrial topographic and geophysical survey, and micro- and macro-methods of archaeological excavation. iC-ACCESS provides highly detailed, three dimensional landscape models that also incorporate aerial imagery, photographs and maps, as state-of-the-art educational tools.

RE-VISUALISATION: CAMPSCAPES AS EXPERIENCE

iC-ACCESS uses and examines the potential of digital tools to offer new possibilities to connect local, national and global audiences to access conflicted heritage, without factual, time or location constraints. Virtual and augmented reality can be particularly useful at sites where no/few visible remains survive above the ground, as it can substitute traditional visitor experiences and provide an understanding of the campscape as "place". The project team will create a digital network of 4D reconstructed sites through the assimilation of the 3D visualisations and the subsequent layering of documentary evidence (e.g. material traces, oral testimonies, photographs, media, narratives and memories) connected to landscapes, monuments, memorials and museums. Through Virtual, Augmented and Mixed Reality (VAMR) and other forms of digital media we provide interactive, spatial tools that can be used online, within museums, campscapes and in classrooms. The potential of digital tools in the re-visualisation of conflict has arguably not yet been fully realised and we aim to provide new ways of representing and raising awareness.