HMC Heritage, Memory and Conflict

Heritage, Memory and Conflict Journal (HMC)
1 2021, 85–93
DOI 10.3897/hmc.1.63349

Radecznica memory game. An educational workshop

Tomasz Z. Majkowski[1], Katarzyna Suszkiewicz[2]

1 *Game Research Centre of the Faculty of Polish Studies Jagiellonian University, Grodzka 64, 30-044 Kraków, Poland*
2 *Research Center for Memory Cultures, Faculty of Polish Studies, Jagiellonian University, Grodzka 64, 30-044 Kraków, Poland*

Corresponding author: Tomasz Z. Majkowski (tomasz.majkowski@uj.edu.pl)

Published 23 November 2021

Abstract

The paper describes and discusses the educational workshop in the form of a board game jam held in Radecznica, a village in Eastern Poland. The event, organised by researchers from the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, was a follow-up of the research project on uncommemorated Jewish mass graves in the area. The aim of the workshop was to facilitate individual reflection on local Holocaust killings amongst the participating adults, as well as to bolster the memory of mass graves in Radecznica. Combining Holocaust memories with the didactic properties of rapid board game design, it was also an attempt to employ game jams as a method in Holocaust-related education. The workshop's success leaves us optimistic regarding the method and its possible applications in the future.

Key Words

board games, case study, game jam, Holocaust education, Poland, young adults

Introduction

In this paper, we consider the practice of board game design as a tool in Holocaust education, serving as an effective means for bolstering personal connections to it and explaining the systemic conditions of the genocide to teenagers. As argued by Davide Spallazzo and Illaria Mariani (2018), curated game design can facilitate the implementation of prior knowledge and provide opportunities to discuss sensitive topics from a personal perspective, while retaining a safe emotional distance from the arguments and, thus, leading to a better understanding of the said topic. According to Stefano Gualeni (2015), since designing a game demands a deeper understanding of the processes upon which the game is based and encourages the adoption and implementation of a variety of perspectives, it can result in lasting changes in attitude towards the topic.

To test the idea, a Holocaust-related game design workshop was prepared and offered to junior high school students from the village of Radecznica in Eastern Poland, a site of uncommemorated mass graves of Holocaust victims, researched by scholars from Jagiellonian University in Krakow. The workshop itself was an event concluding prolonged cooperation amongst members of the research team and the local school, an attempt to provide participating teenagers with a practical skill-set, while mobilising their knowledge of local Holocaust history to provide them with a better and more personal understanding of the genocide.

The event was a part of "Uncommemorated Genocide Sites and Their Influence on Collective Memory, Cultural Identity, Ethical Attitudes and Intercultural Relations in Contemporary Poland" research project conducted by the Research Center for Memory Cultures of Jagiellonian University in Krakow, with Roma Sendyka as the principal investigator. The project brought together scholars and practitioners of memory work in an attempt to critically re-interpret the links between sites, their (human and non-human) users and memory, 2016–2020. Interdisciplinary discussions focused on overlooked, repressed or ignored sites of violence that may benefit from new approaches to memory studies, approaches that go beyond the traditional focus on communication, symbolism, representation and communality. The key objects of analysis were clandestine and contested sites that witnessed

PENSOFT

war-time violence. As the project introduced various academic and artistic tactics, the scope and character of the workshop, while unusual, was well within the varied and interdisciplinary character of the entire endeavour. For general information on the project and a description of the sites researched in the project, see Sendyka, in this issue.

The site of the workshop

The event took place in Radecznica, a small village in the Roztocze Hills, Eastern Poland, with approximately 920 inhabitants (Polska w liczbach 2011; Zybała and Zybała 2013; see also: Smoter-Grzeszkiewicz 2018). It was chosen as the subject of a case study for the project "Uncommemorated Genocide Sites and Their Influence on Collective Memory, Cultural Identity, Ethical Attitudes and Intercultural Relations in Contemporary Poland" due to the particular wartime history of the place, as the fates of Jewish, Catholic and Orthodox people, wartime refugees and asylum seekers were intertwined there. Indeed, this village is like a microcosm of Poland's wartime experience outside of the major urban centres, with all the dominant motifs of the country-wide narratives being represented.

The village is known, above all, for the impressive Baroque church dedicated to Saint Anthony of Padua and its Bernadine monastery. During World War II, a strong underground movement was connected with the abbey, where local partisans often took shelter. For this reason, over the last decade, the church in the abbey has become a mausoleum for the so-called cursed soldiers of the right-wing anticommunist underground formations (the exhumed bodies found in the area by archaeological missions of the National Remembrance Institute are gradually being moved here). Therefore, the main World War II narrative in Radecznica is focused on the heroic, Polish and Catholic resistance fighters, battling both Nazis and Soviets and refusing to bow to either regime.

However, Radecznica was also the site of the mass killings of the local Jewish population. In World War II, its small Jewish community was resettled to a ghetto in Szczebrzeszyn, while a few Jews in hiding were denounced, executed and buried in unmarked graves.

One such place, called the Second Pits (Drugie Doły) by the local population, was the woodland ravine where ten local Jews had been hiding. They were denounced to the local Schupo troops by a citizen from the village of Latyczyn, located next to Radecznica. According to the witness, Stanisław Zybała (nine years old at the time, later employer of the library and local historian) – all ten Jews were shot on the spot and buried in the forest in December 1942. One of the victims was Zybała's childhood friend, a girl named Raźla. Zybała wrote about the murder in his letter to the Rabbinical Commission for Cemeteries in Poland in 2010 and personally recounted his testimony to the members of the research team.

The Rabbinical Commission for Cemeteries was established in Poland in 2002 and was originally an advisory body for the Foundation for the Preservation of the Jewish Heritage. Now it operates in the framework of the Union of Jewish Communities in Poland. The aim of the Commission is to take care of the Jewish cemeteries and keep them within their original boundaries, as well as preserving them. The Commission is also involved in detecting the killing sites and commemorating the Jewish victims.

On 2 September 2016, a commemoration ceremony took place in Radecznica, in the Second Pits. The ceremony was organised by the Rabbinical Commission for Cemeteries in Poland and Matzevah Foundation. Local authorities, school students, teachers and local leaders attended the commemoration. Amongst the events organised were a lecture for young people about the importance of remembrance, a march of memory and prayers at the site of the mass killing.

Towards the end of the project on uncommemorated sites, the research team of the Research Center for Memory Cultures decided to expand its research project into a previously unplanned area: to develop new memory practices in cooperation with local memory activists, adapted to the needs of the local community. Their aim was to sustain the memory on the Holocaust. In short, the question occupying researchers and activists alike was the issue of how to avoid a situation where the 2016 commemorations effectively led to the community being "exempted" from the "duty to remember," leading to a new wave of indifference towards the history of the Jewish inhabitants of Radecznica (Fig.1).

The decision to undertake this additional task was made for a number of reasons. Frequent research visits in Radecznica by the Jagiellonian University team led to the development of a cordial and committed relationship with local activists and educators. The research team befriended Marianna Zybała, wife of Stanisław Zybała, who continues her husband's legacy and protects the memory of the Jews in Radecznica. She became the first and most important guide in this research project. Subsequent visits allowed the team to gather unique archival material, as well as first-hand experience of the places described in Zybała's memoirs and publications.

Marianna Zybała introduced members of the research team to other local actors, such as the school principal, local teachers and activists. The trust and mutual understanding developed during the project enabled a wider scope of research than available in other places scrutinised during the project.

There was also an additional, external impulse to develop new practices as part of the project. Nowadays, after the participatory turn, memory research practices are often co-developed with possibly many stakeholders, implicated in local difficult memory. Special attention is paid to ethical aspects and to the obtaining and usage of data. In addition to well-established standards, such

Figure 1. Radecznica students listening to the lecture on narrative game design (photo by Tomasz Z. Majkowski).

as ensuring the anonymity of informants and developing guidelines for working with vulnerable respondents, there is an emphasis on the mutual relations between researchers and stakeholders. To put it simply, it is important for the researcher to not only *take* data from the local community, but also *share* their knowledge, time and commitment with them (Babbie 1975; Brzezińska and Toeplitz Zuzanna 2007; Salzman and Rice 2011; see also: National Science Centre 2016).

Various actions were considered, as well as the participation of different groups of Radecznica stakeholders, including library users, students of the local junior high school, members of the "Stąd jesteśmy" (We're from Here) association devoted to local culture preservation. The openness and support of the local middle-school principal allowed us to carry out the project in cooperation with the teachers and students. The research team of the "Uncommemorated Genocide Sites…" project invited them to co-develop a game-based educational workshop together with the Game Research Centre of the Faculty of Polish Studies at Jagiellonian University, led by Tomasz Z. Majkowski. Outdoor games, digital and board games were all considered. As a result, the outdoor games – well-suited and often-used for awareness-raising gaming – was rejected as too time- and resource demanding. Digital games, on the other hand, required all participants to have access to computers, which could not be guaranteed. For those reasons, the board game format was selected as the most promising medium for the workshop.

The exercise was supposed to emphasise the significance of the local commemoration of the places where Jewish inhabitants had hidden. According to Stanisław Zybała, there were three major hideouts: 1) forest near the brickyard, where from October till March 1943, about 70 people were shot, 2) the already mentioned Second Pits and 3) a brickyard called "Bojtek". Zybała also mentioned ten places where Jews in Radecznica were murdered (Zybała and Zybała 2013). The game-based workshop was therefore built around the theme of hiding (either oneself or someone else), with regard to wartime events other than the Holocaust in Radecznica.

Methodological considerations

Games – whether board games or digital games – are an important educational technique used effectively to shaping abilities and forming attitudes (Gee 2007; Bogost 2010; Connolly et al. 2012; Flanagan and Nissenbaum 2014). They are often employed in disseminating knowledge in an enjoyable way, especially in historical education (Kapell and Elliott 2013; Chapman 2019; Lünen et al. 2020) – indeed, digital games developed for historical education games appeared already in the 1970s, with history-themed educational board games dating back to the 19th century. Despite widespread game-based historical education, it is far less common to use the medium in education related to memory of the Holocaust, as it is often considered inappropriate to combine the Holocaust with play.

In 2000, the game and theatre scholar Gonzalo Frasca answered "No." to the question whether "Is it barbaric to design video games after Auschwitz?", claiming that such games would be possible if the deaths are treated

as a singular and pivotal event, not just an obstacle to overcome (Frasca 2000). Despite his seminal paper, Holocaust-related digital games only appear incidentally. It is more popular to use toys in Holocaust-themed art, to cause shock by confronting children's themes and motifs with the topic of the Shoah. The most famous examples of this kind are Zbigniew Libera's *LEGO* and exhibition piece with a concentration camp made out of LEGO bricks and Brenda Romero's *Train* – a playable board game tasking players with efficiently packing passengers in trains only to reveal they are heading to death camps mid-game (Fig. 2).

In digital games, it is more common to use allegories or fantasy tropes while dealing with the Holocaust. For example, death camps are set against alternative history of a Third Reich victory in the *Wolfenstein* series. The Polish digital game, *My Memory of Us,* uses a euphemism for the Holocaust: it is carried out by evil robots against people wearing red clothing. Finally, in many commercial games set in the realities of World War II, the Holocaust is either presented as a background event or completely omitted (On the matter of Shoah motifs in games, see: Chapman and Linderoth 2015; Michalik 2015; Kansteiner 2017; Seriff 2018; Pötzsch and Šisler 2019; Pfister 2020).

Digital games designed for educational purposes often mimic this strategy, referencing the Holocaust as a side-trope or background event, necessary to portrait World War II, but unrelated to the main plot. The most direct approach to the matter is offered by the award-winning game *Attendat 1942*, developed by a team of researchers from Charles University in Prague. Though the main plot-line is based around the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, at the margins of the main story is thorough information about the fate of Czech Romani and the Jews of Central Europe, going as far as meeting an Auschwitz survivor during a game play. It is worth noting that the game was banned in Germany and removed from popular game distribution platforms (such as Google and Apple online stores) for displaying Nazi-related imaginary. Even though those bans were recently lifted, the struggle to make educational games available on popular platforms clearly shows another obstacle for game-based Holocaust education: it is often confused as Nazi propaganda and actively censored.

The workshop which we organised in Radecznica was based on the idea of using games as a tool for shaping attitudes. The traditional approach to game-based education assumes that learning takes place in the course of playing, with the student acquiring desired abilities and absorbing knowledge while playing the game. In the same way, the game presents its ideological message, forcing the player to engage with the desired activities in order to succeed (Gee 2007; Bogost 2010).

In Radecznica, we took a slightly different approach, based on a model described by game scholars and designers Davide Spallazzo and Illaria Mariani (2018), as well as the game scholar, designer and philosopher Stefano Gualeni (2015). The approach assumes students themselves design the game, with the purpose of critically examining its central themes. To complete such a task, students need to reflect on the phenomenon the game is based upon, trying to identify its systematic properties which can then be used as the basis for the rules. Therefore, the goal is not to transfer knowledge, but to provoke independent reflection and the development of a personal relationship with the subject under analysis. This relationship then leads to the internalisation of the relevant content. Such a method was used by the aforementioned scholars to raise awareness of a variety of subjects, from

Figure 2. *Train* board game by Brenda Romero (source: designer's website, http://brenda.games/train).

dietary health hazards to sexually transmitted diseases and the systemic persecution of minorities.

The main didactic aim of the Radecznica workshop was to stimulate the participating students to reflect on the systemic aspects of the Holocaust, as opposed to the individual stories of death and survival. Their main task was to combine local Holocaust history, commonly perceived as a series of isolated events featuring individual actors, with their own understanding of recurring conditions that made the said events possible in the first place. In this way, we hoped to encourage discussion on the unprecedented scale and scope of the legacy of the Holocaust, as well as its ubiquitous nature. However, we also wanted to draw attention to more general contexts of refuge, hiding and threat to life. At the same time, our intention was neither to avoid trivialising our subject matter, overwhelm participants with the gravity of the issues nor bore them – something school classes often do. Finally, we had to steer away from enabling a particular kind of cynicism that can result from reducing historical tragedy to a pure rule set that has to be operational. We did not want the students to focus on finding a clever way to depict the Holocaust with witty and enjoyable mechanics or to design any winning conditions for such a game.

That was why we drew our inspiration from the artistic project *Train* by Brenda Romero that has the form of a board game and the location-based game designed by Ilarii Mariani's and Davide Spallazzo's students (presented by the authors during the seminar *Researching the Transgressive Aspects of Gaming and Play* at the University of Bologna, 22 May 2017). In both of these games, players perform a series of actions that are fairly typical for entertainment games, such as managing railroads in a board game or tagging unaware by-standers in a location-based game. Only at the end are participants informed that the theme and mechanics were inspired by the story of the Holocaust. In the first of our two examples, this revelation happens mid-game, when players are informed that they were optimising the arrangement of places in train carriages heading to death camps. In the second case, after the game was concluded, it was revealed that the rules to identify and tag unaware bystanders was based on a set of instructions for the Italian Fascist Party allowing for the identification of citizens of Jewish origin on the basis of their physical features. By withholding this crucial information until the end, both games reveal the problem of the bureaucratic-normative aspects of the Holocaust, provoking consideration of the banality of evil.

Based on the examples described and the methodological assumptions stemming from them, the workshop creators prepared the following exercise: the students were to design a board game with a neutral theme, featuring rules for escape or hiding and then re-theme it, so the designed rules would be applied to the Holocaust narrative, in particular the killings in the Second Pits and the activity of Stanisław Zybała. In this way, we hoped to open up a space for reflection on systemic aspects of the Holocaust vis-à-vis local history (Fig. 3).

While preparing the workshop, the researchers were also concerned about ethical issues. How could we run the project so that the subject of the killings in Second Pits was not disrespected or made light of and, on the other hand, so that the participants will not be traumatised? The form of the workshops was consulted with both the school principal and the history teacher – who knew the students best. Before the workshop, there was an informational letter sent to the prospective participants and their parents informing them about the central subject of the project and written parental consent was required for participation. During the entire course of the

Figure 3. Students working with a professional game designer on early prototype (photo by Tomasz Z. Majkowski).

workshop sessions, Katarzyna Suszkiewicz was present, an educator from the AntySchematy2 Foundation (established in 2008 to support education endeavours opposing discrimination, racism and xenophobia) with experience in running workshops with young people, as well as the school principal and the history teacher. Project participants were given the opportunity to leave the workshop at any moment without giving any reason.

Contrary to the stated fears of the organisers, the students carried out their tasks with great commitment and respect for the subject matter, in all seriousness seeking means of expression for the Holocaust narrative with the aid of the game rules.

Board game design workshop

Fourteen students participated in the two-day workshop, together with seven organisers: five lecturers and mentors representing the Game Research Center and one professional Holocaust educator from the Research Center for Memory Cultures, introducing the central subject and supervising the ethical aspects of the workshop. Finally, there was one professional board game designer present. He was also experienced in organising "game jam" workshops: game design events, during which participants have to rapidly create their own games from scratch (Kultima 2015). In addition to the team mentioned above, the school principal and a history teacher observed the exercise.

As participating students had no prior experience of game design, certain preventative measures were taken to avoid any creative hitches. Prior to the workshop, five simple board game rule-sets were prepared by the professional game designer. We also secured professional components for making board games: empty boards, decks of blank cards ready to be described and illustrated, wooden and cardboard tokens etc. Said materials were divided into sets facilitating the development of certain rule types and mentors were instructed to steer student designer groups towards pre-created rule-sets if they were unable to create rules of their own. It should be stressed that those additional measures turned out to be utterly unnecessary, as all of the student teams were up to the task and were able to create simple, yet playable games of their own without any significant interference from their mentors.

The workshop was a two-day event, with the first day devoted to the basic game design, resulting with creation of functional prototype games. During the second day, students re-themed games that they had designed during the first day to tell a local Holocaust story.

The sessions began with a talk devoted to narrative and rhetorical aspects of board game rules and some training in the basics of game design. The students were then divided into four working groups, each with their own mentor from the Game Research Centre and a randomly assigned theme for the game to be designed, from well-established themes, common in commercially available board games (science fiction, fantasy, farming and horror). There was an additional task to develop the rules for escaping, hiding or searching.

The rest of the first day's exercises was devoted to work with mentors, whose task was to give the students feedback on their ideas and introduce solutions in case any team got stuck. They approached their teams every 40 minutes or when called upon to minimise their influence over the design team dynamics and ways of working. As a result, four fully playable game prototypes which students could play from beginning to end were developed. All four groups got involved and, at the end of the day, were happy with the results. The only controversy stemmed from the fantasy theme, as occult-related aesthetics turned out to be controversial for the student group due to religious reasons. As a result, the game was re-themed as "fighting evil". This was the only controversy to arise during the entire workshop: it is telling that a fictitious theme turned out to be more problematic for students than working with local Holocaust history, testament to the efficiency of the Holocaust education that students had already received under the auspices of the "Uncommemorated Genocide Sites…" research project (Fig. 4).

On the second day, the students were told the theme of their games was about to change and were given training on how to use the game rules developed as a tool to describe the Holocaust. To illustrate, one of the projects developed during the first day was used; on the second day, in any case, three people resigned (because of prior engagements) and the number of groups was reduced to three. After that, the groups discussed possible ways of applying their projects to the subject of the Holocaust and developed re-themed prototypes with their mentors.

In the end, three projects were presented.

The first, initially themed as escaping from a haunted house (horror genre), used the mechanism of a gradually shrinking board and resource management. The original goal was to help a person escape a collapsing house that was haunted by evil spirits. Both the mechanics and the theme turned out to be easily convertible to tell a Holocaust-related narrative. In the second version, the game focused on attempts to save a hiding Jewish person from death, with players collaborating to provide the persecuted individual with the necessary resources. The most important part of the re-theming discussion was devoted to the gradually shrinking board: it turned from a literal space (a collapsing house) into a metaphorical one, representing the "space for survival" as systematically shrinking.

The second group developed a highly polished prototype about escaping from a galactic prison (science-fiction genre), with all players controlling two pawns and moving through the board, with random events represented by cards. It was re-themed as a game about escaping from a threatened zone and the need to remain in constant movement, emphasising, with the help of the rules developed, the danger involved in a group of fugitives and the value of help granted by people who are not themselves in danger. In the design process, students discussed both internal and external limitations of hiding places, stress-

Figure 4. Students preparing a farming-themed game about cartoon pigs under mentor's supervision (photo by Roma Sendyka).

ing that the rule limiting the numbers of pawns that could occupy the same space needed to be realistic, as all hiding places in the area had only been able to accommodate a limited number of hiding Jews, due to physical space limitations. They made an attempt to tie the game board to the local topography, but discarded this idea after reaching the saddening conclusion they did not know enough households in the Radecznica area who had provided help and shelter for Jewish people to name all the safe spaces on the board after them.

The third project, initially a humorous game about pigs growing and selling crops, while searching for treasure (life on a farm genre), developed two re-themed versions. In this way, they had to deal with the double-theme of the original game (resource management and treasure-hunting), as the combination turned out to be unfit for a Holocaust narrative. Moreover, building a Holocaust-themed game about gathering the resources necessary to find something hidden had the potential to be deeply disturbing for a game about hunting for hidden Jews. To avoid this pitfall, students decided to re-connect the two main game mechanics and develop separate ideas.

In the first one, players were tasked with gathering resources to survive in conditions of the constant threat of denunciation. The main discussion students had was about the types of resources necessary for survival, in order to replace the three types of crops from the original game. After some debate, the group decided to name the three types of resources "food", "medicine" and "hope", considering those crucial to survive under extreme persecution.

In the second version, based on resource management rules, the participants were contemporary Polish people who slowly get to know a hidden truth about the local Holocaust murders. In this last case, the references to the killings in the Second Pits and the figure of Stanisław Zybała were the most direct, as the game was based on the student's own journey in getting to know local Holocaust history during the research project. It was also the least developed concept, due to time constraints (the group was preparing two prototypes, after all).

The final presentations were taken very seriously and the participants not only thought intensively about the Holocaust, but also reacted emotionally as well. The group discussion was not only about how to relate the rules of the games designed to the set subject matter, but also about the language appropriate for speaking about games in this context. For example, all the groups highlighted the matter of victory and defeat, replacing the first term with "survival". The participants were very able to connect their projects with the local context and avoid completely pop-cultural clichés about the Holocaust, such as images of ghettos or camps ingrained in our minds from cinema and television (as well as commercial games). Instead, all the groups by their own volition took up topics closely tied to the local, non-institutionalised history of the Holocaust. An example here would be the referencing by the participants of the specific names of hidden Radecznica citizens.

Conclusion

The immediate result of the workshop was undeniable and allowed all of the assumed goals to be fulfilled. All of the student groups mobilised and implemented their knowledge of local Holocaust history, not only shared by the entire group due to common education, but also stemming from individual family tradition and knowledge. They also discussed the systemic aspects of the genocide, helping them to separate what was incidental from the general conditions in order for the latter to be represented by the rules. In this way, they created their own critical framework to evaluate and debate both vernacular and official histories and reach a common conclusion which they were ready to share with the rest of the workshop participants. In this way, a more personal and emotional

link was established between students participating and the tragic memory of the Holocaust, hopefully resulting in a greater need to preserve local Holocaust history and commemorate murder sites in the future (Fig. 5).

To measure if there had been any lasting effects, participants were asked to fill out an anonymous evaluative questionnaire two weeks after the workshops. Most of the participants commented that the workshop enabled them to acquire new skills to better understand the mechanisms operating in the world. Those answering confirmed that they now know where the Second Pits were – which may also be explained by their participation in the memorial ceremonies of 2016. Similarly, the majority stated that they knew what happened in this place. On the other hand, in responding to the question about their plans to visit the commemorated place of hiding and death of Radecznica's Jews in the future, their answers were rather positive, but not univocally.

The key question for the educational project was: "Should we, in your opinion, remember about the "Second Pits"? "What ideas do you have to achieve that?" Three people replied "yes, we should" without further comment, two answered in a more personal way: "in my opinion we should remember it" and "Yes, I think it is worth remembering about places like that." One person referred to the question in a more generalising way: "Of course, we should remember about every historical place. We should talk about this at school." Others gave examples of how to remember: "I believe we should share information with a larger number of people, so the memory will not die; [...] by visiting and teaching about it; for example, in prayer, to visit the place; yes, visit the place." One respondent took up the issue of frequency of mnemonic practices: "we should go and look in regularly."

Both the mentors and participants of the workshop emphasised the strong points: teamwork, the opportunity for creativity, the process of the creation of games itself and the freedom to discuss them at will. Participants also emphasised the open-minded approach of the project leaders, their readiness to help and the atmosphere of the workshop ("we had wonderful mentors, who helped us better understand the mechanisms of the world, there was a good atmosphere which helped our work; I most liked the nice atmosphere, the wonderful mentors and the interesting talks about games").

We should not forget that the initial conditions for this experiment were unusually favourable: the young people already knew the place which was the unifying point for the entire project and the school's representatives were supportive. Nevertheless, it also seems that the form of creative activity chosen – allowing for a large degree of freedom and creativity – led to a situation where the memory of the participants about local events was genuinely enlivened. Without a doubt, the form of experiment and the invitation for the young people to be creative and to place their games in a historical context, can be seen to be the most innovative aspect of this educational project. In contrast to many other educational projects, young people were not treated as the passive addressees of a previously-prepared message. On the contrary, participants had the task of creating these contents and not simply reacting to them. In our opinion, the young people from Radecznica managed with these challenges very well. Whether or not the impact of this memory game will be an enduring one, only time will tell.

Figure 5. Students presenting re-themed game during the workshop conclusion (photo by Karina Jarzyńska).

Acknowledgements

The articles presented in this issue were prepared within the scope of the project: "Uncommemorated Genocide Sites and Their Impact on Collective Memory, Cultural Identity, Ethical Attitudes and Intercultural Relations in Contemporary Poland" (Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the National Programme for the Development of Humanities, 2016–2020, registration no 2aH 15 0121 83), developed in the Research Center for Memory Cultures, Faculty of Polish Studies, Jagiellonian University. Principal investigator: Roma Sendyka, team members: Katarzyna Grzybowska, Aleksandra Janus, Karina Jarzyńska, Maria Kobielska, Jacek Małczyński, Jakub Muchowski, Łukasz Posłuszny, Kinga Siewior, Mikołaj Smykowski, Katarzyna Suszkiewicz and Aleksandra Szczepan. The workshop was designed and conducted by Tomasz Majkowski, Małgorzata Majkowska, Marta Błaszkowska, Maciej Nawrocki and Bartosz Schweiger (Game Research Centre members), Wojciech Rzadek (Board Game Designer) and Katarzyna Suszkiewicz (Holocaust Educator). It was supervised by Roma Sendyka and Karina Jarzyńska from The Research Center for Memory Cultures. We offer our sincere thanks to the principal of the Radecznia Middle School, Hanna Nowak and the history teacher, Janusz Krukowski, for their cooperation, hospitality and support in carrying out the project.

transl. by Patrick Trompiz

References

Babbie E (1975) The Practice of Social Research. Wadsworth, Belmont, 584 pp.

Bogost I (2010) Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames. MIT press, Cambridge, 464 pp.

Brzezińska A, Toeplitz Z (2007) Problemy etyczne w badaniach i interwencji psychologicznej wobec dzieci i młodzieży. Academica, Warszawa, 340 pp.

Chapman A (2019) Playing the historical fantastic: Zombies, mecha-nazis and making meaning about the past through metaphor. In: Hammond P, Pötzsch H (Eds) War Games: Memory, Militarism and the Subject of Play. Bloomsbury Publishing, New York, 91–110. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781501351181.ch-006

Chapman A, Linderoth J (2015) Exploring the limits of play: A case study of representations of Nazism in games. In: Mortensen TE, Linderoth J, Brown ALM (Eds) The Dark Side of Game Play. Controversial Issues in Playful Environments, Routledge, 137–153. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315738680-9

Connolly TM, Boyle EA, MacArthur E, Hainey T, Boyle JM (2012) A systematic literature review of empirical evidence on computer games and serious games. Computers & education 59(2): 661–686. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2012.03.004

Flanagan M, Nissenbaum H (2014) Values at play in digital games. MIT Press, Cambridge, 224 pp. https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/9016.001.0001

Frasca G (2000) Ephemeral games: Is it barbaric to design videogames after Auschwitz? In: Eskelinen M, Koskimaa R (Eds) CyberText Yearbook 2. University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, 172–180.

Gee JP (2007) Good video games+ good learning: Collected essays on video games, learning, and literacy. Peter Lang, Pieterlen and Bern, 167 pp. https://doi.org/10.3726/978-1-4539-1162-4

Gualeni S (2015) Self-transformation through game design. Philosopy of Computer Games, Berlin. https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d33a/bc8280f65a9a799dc3d72b844409bedf3a7d.pdf

Kansteiner W (2017) The Holocaust in the 21st century: Digital anxiety, transnational cosmopolitanism, and never again genocide without memory. In: Hoskins A (Ed.) Digital Memory Studies. Media Pasts in Transition. Routledge, New York, 122–152. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315637235-5

Kapell M, Elliott A (2013) Playing with the Past: Digital Games and the Simulation of History. Bloomsbury Publishing, London, 402 pp.

Kultima A (2015) Defining Game Jam. Foundation of Digital Games Proceedings. https://tinyurl.com/y5wyaq6w

Lünen A, Lewis KJ, Litherland B, Cullum PH (2019) Historia Ludens: The Playing Historian (Routledge Approaches to History). Routledge, New York, 318 pp.

Michalik T (2015) Pop-pamięć. Edukacja o Holocauście a gry komputerowe – od puzzli po serious games. Acta Humana 5: 127–138. https://doi.org/10.17951/ah.2014.5.127

National Science Centre (2016) Recommendations of the Rada Narodowego Centrum Nauki (National Science Centre Council) regarding research involving people. https://www.ncn.gov.pl/sites/default/files/pliki/2016_zalecenia_Rady_NCN_dot_etyki_badan.pdf

Pfister E (2020) 'Man Spielt Nicht Mit Hakenkreuzen!' Imaginations of the Holocaust and Crimes Against Humanity During World War II in Digital Games. In: Lünen A, Lewis KJ, Litherland B, Cullum PH (Eds) Historia Ludens: The Playing Historian (Routledge Approaches to History). Routledge, New York, 267–284. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429345616-17

Polska w liczbach (2011) Wieś Radecznica. http://www.polskaw-liczbach.pl/wies_Radecznica

Pötzsch H, Šisler V (2019) Playing Cultural Memory: Framing History in Call of Duty: Black Ops and Czechoslovakia 38–89: Assassination. Games and Culture 14(1): 3–25. https://doi.org/10.1177/1555412016638603

Salzman PC, Rice PC (2011) Thinking Anthropologically: A Practical Guide for Students. Prentice Hall, Boston, 160 pp.

Seriff S (2018) Holocaust war games: Playing with genocide. In: Magalhães L, Goldstein J (Eds) Toys and Communication. Springer, Heidelberg, 153–170. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-59136-4_10

Smoter-Grzeszkiewicz R (2018) Słownik historii gminy Radecznica (1868–1990). Urząd Gminy Radecznica, Radecznica, 86 pp.

Spallazzo D, Mariani I (2018) Location-based mobile games: Design perspectives. Springer, Heidelberg, 108 pp. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75256-3

Zybała M, Zybała SR (2013) Tak cię widzę, Radecznico. Urząd Gminy Radecznica, Radecznica, 67 pp.