

Bringing German History to Tourists

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Abstract : Sites of Jewish Life in Berlin 1933-1945. Between Persecution and Self-assertion" was realized in a project funded by the European Regional Development Fund. A smartphone app, and a associated web site enable tourists and other participants of this educational offer to learn in a serious way more about the life of Jews in the German capital during the Nazi era. Texts, photos, video and audio recordings communicate the historical content. Interactive maps (both current and historical) make it possible to use predefined or self combined routes. One of the manifold challenges was to create a broad ranged guide, in which all detailed information are well linked with each other. This enables heterogeneous groups of potential users to find a wide range of specific information, corresponding with their particular wishes and interests. The multitude of potential ways to navigate through the diversified information causes (hopefully) the users to utilize app and web site for a second or third time and with a continued interest. Therefore 90 locations, a lot of them situated in Berlin's city centre, have been chosen. For all of them text-, picture and/or audio/video material gives extensive information. Suggested combinations of several of these "site stories" are leading to the offer of detailed excursion routes. Events and biographies are also presented. A few of the implemented biographies are especially enriched with source material concerning the aspect of (forced) migration of these persons during the Nazi time. All this was done in a close and fruitful interdisciplinary cooperation of computer scientists and historians. The suggested conference paper aims to show the challenges shaping complex source material for practical use by different user-groups in a proper technical and didactic way. Based on the historical research in archives, museums, libraries and digital resources the quantitative dimension of the project can be sized as follows: The paper focuses on the following historiographical and technical aspects: - Shaping the text material didactically for the use in new media, especially a Smartphone-App running on differing platforms; - Geo-referencing of the sites on historical and current map material; - Overlay of old and new maps to present and find the sites; - Using Augmented Reality technologies to re-visualize destroyed buildings; - Visualization of black-/white-picture-material; - Presentation of historical footage and the resulting problems to need too much storage space; - Financial and juridical aspects in gaining copyrights to present archival material.

Keywords : smartphone app, history, tourists, German

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