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Children as targets for war and peace memories: Narratives from defence museums or war and peace memorials in St Petersburg, Münster, Verdun, Paris, London, Copenhagen and Stockholm

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Abstract

The paper is based on findings from museum shops in national defence museums in Verdun, Paris, London, Copenhagen and Stockholm. The author deals with how peace and war memorials referring to historical contexts are used in connection with children and how national defence museum shops address children. Some comparative conclusions are drawn from concepts of the commercial, existential and political use of history and gender.

Keywords: *war and peace memorials, defence museum, children and use of history, gender*

Introduction

In many countries monuments in connection to war and peace are visible in the public sphere. It could be stones as remnants of peace treaties, war cemeteries or houses destroyed in bomb raids but rebuilt and furnished with memory inscriptions. On a local or a national level such memorials can be used in children's history lessons in schools, included in their history books or reactivated as symbolic backgrounds in activities for children. The focus of this paper is on National defence museums, interpreted as aspects of war and peace education, producing knowledge and identities. Pedagogical activity books for children aimed to learn historical facts about wars are sold in the museum shops, for example books with additional pages of stickers or colouring books. It is also possible to find narrations, either embedded historical facts in fictionalized stories or narrations built on people's memories.

This paper represents a tentative exploration of intersections between History-Children-Memorials and aims to shed light on children and museum shops in a framework of children as targets for both peace and national ambitions. On the one hand, at an international level, children are constructed and used as peace symbols, for instance in opening ceremonies at sport gatherings, symbolizing peace in a context of national competitions. At such events children performing, holding hands and singing songs are not unusual. How can war and peace memorials referring to historical contexts be used in connection to children? In what ways are children addressed in national defence museum shops?

War and peace memorials in St Petersburg and Münster

The following experiences helped spark my interest in the intersection between History-Children-Memorials dealing with war and peace:

Russia, St Petersburg 2007: I visited relatives and a woman showed me around and told me a lot about peace and war in Soviet times. In front of the armoured cruiser Aurora, famous for firing the signal for storming the Winter Palace on 25 October 1917, she said that her brother had his inaugural ceremony as a pioneer there. She envied him because her ceremony took place at the victory monument called Obelisk Pobedy, erected 1975 in honour of the defenders of Leningrad during the blockade in 1941-43, in her view a less interesting monument than Aurora. These ceremonies are to be understood as a part of a national education for children in war for peace built on historical memories in the Soviet Union.¹

Germany, Münster, 2008: When I visited the old city town hall, where a peace treaty from the Thirty Years' War in 1648 was signed, I read about children and a peace project. On one wall a colourful patchwork quilt with peace messages from children in other cities in Europe hangs and on a table a peace-book filled with text messages by children lays open. It was a Kinder Frieden (Children's Peace) project which started in 1998 in the context of the peace treaty 350 years ago. An antiwar day for children had been celebrated every year at the square in front of the cathedral of Münster. Over 1000 children from different kinds of school, young children as well as youths, had been demonstrating for peace in the world through colourful and symbolic actions.²

Empirical sources and limitations

In my paper findings from Verdun, Paris, London, Copenhagen and Stockholm will be discussed. The empirical sources represent examples of different genres. In 2008 I bought three children's books in Verdun, France, at the Douamont Ossuary, a huge and impressive national memorial cemetery from WW I. The books cover WW I chronologically. In 2009 I went to London, England, and in the underground a poster made me curious. It announced an exhibition called the War Boy. A boy of 4-5 years wearing a too big helmet and jacket, with some kind of military decoration and a homemade catapult in his hand, smiled at me. The temporary exhibition took place in the National Army Museum³ and it exposed work of the illustrator and writer Michael Foreman. Two of his own books are included, one of them deals with the writers own

¹ Andersson, Irene and Zaleskiene, Irena, Education for Peaceful Life: Case studies from Lithuania and Sweden. In *Socialinis ugdymas: Socialisation of Children and Adults: Research and Experiences*. 2011: No. 16 (27), p. 5-18.

² The text in German: Seit 1998 – 350 Jahre nach Unterzeichnung des Westfälischen Friedensvertrages – findet jährlich zum Antikriegstag das Kinder – Friedenstreffen auf dem Domplatz in Münster statt. Über 1000 Schülerinnen und Schüler aus münsteraner Grundschulen, Hauptschulen, Realschulen, Gymnasium und Sonderschulen demonstrieren für Frieden in aller Welt und für ein Friedliches Miteinander in bunten und symbolischen Aktionen. Source: Photo, owned by the researcher.

³ Years ago, I visited Imperial War Museum, London, but colleges have told me that activity books such as the French books are sold in this museum as well.

memories from being a boy during WW II. A third one is a fictionalized historical narrative, illustrated by Foreman but not written by him.

In 2012 I visited an exhibition on war in Afghanistan at the National defence museum, Tøjhuset, in Copenhagen, Denmark. What was most interesting in the museum shop was a book translated into Danish, written by a Swedish writer. It is about Alfons Åberg, a small boy living with his father, in Sweden a well-known fictional character. This book problematizes war, war toys, war games and what war could be in reality in a dialogue between Alfons and a father of a friend of his. The father had experienced war as a soldier in his home country. In springtime the same year I bought a ticket to Musée de l'Armée, Hôtel National des Invalides in Paris, and found a book for children with the aim of explaining the French army and what soldiers do. Sweden has a National defence museum, situated in Stockholm. Two Swedish brochures, one on information and one children's path in the ordinary exhibition, and a text in the year-book from 2011, "Collect, Make research and Tell", in which a lot of children appear at the front page, are included.⁴

It is, however, important to point out that my tentative paper is not based on systematically collected data. The empirical sources are seen through the eyes of a researcher, who was born and grew up in a nation situated in the shadow of war, in a country with a supposedly neutral recent national story yet with what is nowadays a much discussed weapons industry.

The exhibitions at the museums are both permanent and contemporary, of course, and it is obvious that the items sold in the shops are shifting and renewed, sometimes due to the policy of the museum. Some museums have school programmes, educational programmes for children and youth, which are not discussed in this paper. The examples I have included could be categorized⁵ as the following:

- Historical narrations built on facts written for children by grown-ups,
- Historical narrations written for children by grown-ups built on their own war memories,
- Historical pedagogical narration activity material built on historical facts,
- Narrations with peace in focus built on images of change, hope and friendship, not explicitly historical and national situated, but with children as peace agents.

The products in my paper are all written, illustrated and produced in national contexts by grown-ups for children and are based on children as learning subjects, targets for education.

⁴ I visited Sotamuseo, Krigsmuseet, in Helsinki, Finland, 2010, but they nearly didn't sell anything at all and nothing for children. Products of interest in the field are also "We shall never forget 9/11 - The Kids book of freedom. A Graphic Coloring Novel", a colouring book produced by Wayne Bell, USA, 2011, and "Gen, the boy from Hiroshima, a Japanese manga by Keiji Nakazawa, 1973, in Swedish 1985. Some of the material in the latter is autobiographical. In Germany there are defence and military museums as well, but I have not yet visited any of them. The largest one is in Dresden: <http://www.mhmbundeswehr.de>

⁵ The categorization is my own. I don't include historical narrative documents, such as diaries written by children living during times of war or interviews with children conducted during wartime situations.

Some reflections on theoretical concepts and methodology

One research field with connection to my paper is children's literature. "Bookbird, A journal of International Children's Literature", in the issue "On War", 2009, history is an important part of the discussions. Milena Subritova identifies a shift over time in the role of children in war times, from being heroes to be portrayed as disillusioned.⁶ A lot of writers use their own war time experiences and she stresses that it doesn't matter "... how well written, nearly any fiction is surpassed by authentic testimonies and true stories".⁷ Thoughtful are opinions expressed by the Italian illustrator Roberto Innocenti in his text "The war inside books". He thinks that normally we construct war as a period of time when everything happens, but he is of an opposite opinion. War is a period when everything stands still and no development happens, as it does in peace periods. According to this Innocenti argues that history should be rewritten.⁸

The research field of museum and cultural heritage production is of course interesting. A huge comparative project on European national museums concerning identity politics started February 2010 and ends January 2013.⁹ Analytical tools in the study are the use of the past in terms of citizenship and the connection to territory. One of the seven goals is "to conduct a comparative study of the formation of national museums in Europe and deliver a rich picture of national museums in all their social, political, and intellectual complicity" and another more complex is "to reveal the historiographic practices that underlie national museums' uses of the past and to understand how they mold collective sensibilities, notions of community, citizenship, and boundaries of difference".¹⁰ The results of this comparative project will be important to me. My data is not systematically collected and therefore not comparative, but in some sense there are some comparative results to be drawn from the study. It is a fact that comparative studies give new perspectives on the own context, in my paper - the national defence museum in Stockholm.¹¹

Another research field is historical interpretation and thinking within the field of education. Political, commercial and existential use of history will be helpful as

⁶ Subritova, Milena, "When children die in war. Death in war literature for children and youth", *Bookbird*, 2009:47, no 4.

⁷ Subritova, 2009:47, no 4, page 6.

⁸ Innocenti, Roberto, *Bookbird* 2007:47, no 4, page 29. Innocenti received the Hans Christian Andersson award for his remarkable and detailed illustrations in 2008. See also Meyers, Lindsay, "What do we tell children. War in the work of Italian illustrator Robert Innocenti". *Bookbird* 2007:47, no 4.

⁹ The leader of the study, the Swedish historian Peter Aronsson, said in a lecture at Malmö University 2012 that the project has looked into some defence museums as well, but they have not studied museums and children and not museum shops at all.

¹⁰ <http://www.eunamus.eu/research/research-research.html>

¹¹ On comparative history, see Berger, Stefan, Feldner, Heiko and Passmore, Kevin, *Writing history. Theory and method*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010.

analytical tools in identifying ideological message production.¹² The title of the paper is inspired by an article of Jens Qvortrup where he discusses children as targets for politics or as non-targets for politics in the sense of the right for children to cast a vote and to influence their situation.¹³ As I have argued before, in some peace books and in sport events, children can be constructed without a specific nation, but they can also in the field of peace and war be constructed as belonging to specific territories and nations.

French gasmasks and trenches in WW I

In Verdun, France, activity books surprised me at first, maybe because I hadn't seen them in Sweden connected to war and peace history. "Je colorie la Première Guerre Mondiale"¹⁴ (I colour the First World War) is designed as a traditional colouring book. On every opening there is one page with a coloured image and one page showing the image without colours. Different soldiers in uniforms appear page after page; a variety of soldiers; French foot soldiers (1914, a "poilu" 1916), German soldiers, an American "Sammy" and an English "Tommy", Sikh soldier (Great Britain) and a Senegalese infantry man (France). Chosen central elements in WW I are presented; Marne Taxi, air combat, trenches, Renault tank, assault, gas attack and military hospital followed by two images of the choice of the unknown soldier and crosses at Douaumont Ossuary. The learning is about facts and mechanically to colour "numerous small areas easy to colour". All uniforms are clean, attacks are far away, no badly wounded soldier or feelings of grief or sadness are present. Two nurses are included but no children at all.¹⁵

Learning facts are also in focus in the book "La 1re Guerre Mondiale. Tout comprendre d'un coup d'œil!"¹⁶ (The First World War. To understand everything with a "military eye"). The activity consists of additional stickers that children 10-14 years should put in right positions on the pages. There is a test with a key, for testing parents or friends. The book contains maps combined with the chronological development during WW I and explanations of difficult words. Except for central elements; alliances, the assassination in Sarajevo, positions and trenches, the unknown soldier, Verdun 1916, the war in other countries, the end 1918 and the Versailles Treaty, there are themes aimed to widen and deepen the fact-learning. Themes such as resistance movement, women's role, journalists, Lenin and USA, propaganda, censorship, graves and destroyed houses, deportation, inflation, UN and the consequences of the war. Even if it still is about facts and mechanical activity it is easy to see progression in the learning.

¹² See Jensen, Eric Bernard, *Historie – livsverden og fag*, Copenhagen: Gyldendals 2003;

Aronsson, Peter, *Historiebruk – att använda det förflutna*, Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2004.

¹³ Qvortrup, Jens, "Childhood and politics", *Educare* 2008:3 CiCe, Education Malmoe University.

¹⁴ *Je colorie la Première Guerre Mondiale, avec des images de Dominique Ehrard*, printing date unknown.

¹⁵ There are two pages with text in French and in English, the history of WWI in short, but I don't think this text is addressed to children.

¹⁶ *La 1re Guerre Mondiale. Tout comprendre d'un coup d'œil!*, Editions Play Bac, printing date unknown. *Coup d'œil* are used mostly in military contexts. To have or to use *coup d'œil* means to be able, in short time, to read the terrain and use it strategically.

http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coup_d'œil, 2012-28-05.

The book “Au temps de la Grand Guerre”¹⁷ (During the Great War), is in a way different. Even if the narrative is constructed around fact learning, feelings and empathy are explicit in the young boy’s story. Antoine is since 4 years evacuated to his grandparents in Saint-Martin. The year is 1918. Antoinette’s mother works in Paris in a weapon factory. His father is a soldier. The reader meets Antoine in different situations; gasmask training at school, his mother visiting and telling about her work, a death message in the home of a neighbour, his father visiting and telling about the life in the trenches, a meeting with an American pilot who needs help with his plane, and the mayor informing about the peace in school. The illustrations follow the story well and are helpful in an identification process. A lot of extra facts on the situation 1918 are presented; women in war, new weapons, Verdun, airplanes and pilots, days to remember the dead, the peace treaty, who lost and who won after the war and so on. A passage of empathy: just before the Antoine hears about the death message he plays with his tin soldiers. He becomes sad, and after his father’s visit and he learns about the life in the trenches he will not play with them anymore. The war comes to close, and Antoine makes an active choice. This is a passage where children’s situation in war is explicit and feelings could be discussed with children.

In Paris, France: - What is it like to be soldier today?, the writers ask in their book “L’armée”¹⁸ (The Army). On the front page one girl is holding a warship in her hand and she looks as if she is thinking something and one boy and a soldier are saluting each other. The book is about French soldiers and their tasks to protect French interests, both in France but also in other countries. There are not only men in the army, in France many women are working in the army, the book points out. But the images in the book show few girls and it is a man who holds his arm around a boy’s shoulder when he shows him different branches of the fighting services. Sometimes history is involved; great French military leaders in history, heroes with decorations and their presence in the army, boys at 10 years old starting their education to be knights during the Middle ages is connected to the issue of children soldiers today, and historical days to remember.

English childhood life in WW II

In London, England: “War Boy. A wartime childhood”, by Michael Foreman¹⁹, represents writers and illustrators using their own memories. Beautiful and expressive aquarelles support the story but they are also stories themselves. The book is about a boy’s childhood during WW II in Britain’s closest town to Germany where a large naval base is positioned. Due to this the small town is in the frontline and soldiers are a part of everyday life. In the beginning a firebomb is coming into the boy’s bedroom and the family runs to a shelter in their garden, but as to be seen in the book there are other types of shelters, as well. Gasmasks, evacuations, hiding military tents as haystacks, a Hill green shelter where older and poorer people come by nights, how children play around

¹⁷ Ponthus, René och Hoffman, Ginette, *Au temps de la Grand Guerre. Des enfants dans l’Histoire*. Casterman 1998.

¹⁸ Delrieu, Alexia et de Menthon, Sophie, *L’armée*. Le monde d’aujourd’hui expliqué aux enfants, Gallimard Jeunesse 2011.

¹⁹ Foreman, Michael, *War Boy. A wartime childhood*. London: Pavilion Children’s Books, 2006.

the shelter and shoot at raiders with toy weapons, children's schooldays and farm days are some of the themes. The boy learned some military discipline because his mother ran a shop where soldiers had tea. On holidays she even threw parties in her living-room for soldiers. When the Yanks came, jitterbugs and chewing-gums are other memories. At the end of the war, peace and Guy Fawkes Day was celebrated with Hitler at the top of the fire.

It is hard to tell if "Billy the kid", by Michael Morpurgo and illustrated by Michael Foreman²⁰, is a book built on memories, maybe fictionalized memories. It is about an old soldier living in the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, a home for elderly soldiers, and his life before and after WW II. Before the war he was a promising football player in Chelsea. His nickname was Billy-the-Kid. His oldest brother Joe died in the war. In spite of the football carrier Billy enlisted instead of Joe. He got caught and was sent to prison in Italy, from which he escaped. Back home again he felt he had to go back to war. He had terribly experiences when meeting people in concentration camps. His leg got badly hurt and he came home as an invalid. His family had died in a bomb raid, and he had nothing to live for. Billy began drinking, and walked around in the country. After several years he happened to live in a cellar in a house bought by a young couple with their son, Sam. Billy stayed with the family and trained Sam in football. Because of problems with his drinking he moved to Royal Hospital. There he met an old friend from the prison in Italy, who remembered him as Billy the Kid, and Sam became a good football player in Chelsea.

An example in the category peace narratives of change, friendship and hope, not situated in time and place, is "A child's garden, A story of hope", by Michael Foreman.²¹ The story is characterized by opposites; grey, dull – flowers, colours, high fences – freedom, stony, dry landscape – flowering, growing landscape and despair – hope. A boy discovers a grapevine plant in a ruined landscape. He waters it and it grows all over a fence – a kind of border. Children come and play as friends in the shadow of the grapevine where butterflies and birds now live. One day soldiers tear down the grapevine and the boy's heart breaks. He and his family survive in the ruins in the winter but in spring a new plant is growing at the other side of the fence. A girl waters the plant and the soldiers let the plant be because it is on their side of the fence. The plant spreads to the boy's side and soon it covers the fence. The grapevine is strong again and birds and butterflies return. "One day the fence will disappear forever and we will be able to walk again into the hills", the text says. In the end there is a long symbolic caravan of children walk with flowers in their hands.

Danish soldier daddies in war abroad

In Copenhagen, Denmark, the permanent departments were closed due to reconstruction. Instead it was possible to visit an exhibition on Danish soldiers in Afghanistan. The rich and colourful shop sold items in red and white connecting to the nation such as Danish

²⁰ Morpurgo, Michael and Foreman, Michael, *Billy the kid*. London: Pavillion Children's Books, 2005.

²¹ Foreman, Michael. *A child's garden. A story of hope*. London: Walker Books, 2009.

flags and drums, books of the Danish history and Danish kings and queens and tin soldiers, historical clothes and weapons for children and even small war toys; the latter in a size not provocative at all.

Among this “Alfons og Hamids soldaterfar”²² (Alfons and Hamids soldierdaddy), by a Swedish writer but translated into Danish. Alfons is a boy of 6 years. His friend, Hamid, has a father who has been at war in his homeland. Together Alfons, Hamid and his father build a goal for football. Alfons wants Hamids father to tell them about the war, but he is not eager to do so. Instead the boys play war, shoot at each other with laser guns, play war games on the computer, study toy catalogues and so on. One day the father has changed his mind and tells them about one of his important experiences in war. He begins saying that it is impossible to tell about war because it is a mess and very sad, and sometimes you do not know who the enemy is. His story is existential and is about the first time he experienced a bomb plane. He did not know what to do, but he lay down on the ground. He saw an ant in front him, who lay down a burden, stood still and waited. There was some kind of contact between them, he thought. After the attack the ant took up the burden and start moving again, and so did Hamid’s father. After the storytelling Alfons and Hamid discover, when looking out of the window, that their goal has been ruined. “We have to build it up again”, the father says, “because we are the same as the ant”.

Swedish weapons and All Children’s Right

In Stockholm, Sweden, one of the messages to children in the museum shop is a nation being out of war since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The book “Sweden’s last Great War” confirms this. That international agreements are important to the nation is obvious because of two other colourful books, “Everybody has rights - United nation and Humans rights”, and “All Children’s right – the Children’s convention”. Nevertheless the shop sells war toys, rather big Lego-models for the children to build.

That children have a prominent role is presented already in the brochure “Armémuseum”²³ aimed to inform and to entice people to visit the museum. The front page consists of two photos, in one three soldiers in Charles’ XII army are fighting in a battle. The other photo is more interesting, four children in uniforms too big for them and at least two of them are girls. A girl in the center with long blond hair is wearing a red jacket and a brown-grey uniform cap which do not fit at all. She smiles and looks as if she says: “Is it ok, this way?” A boy is walking out of the photo, wearing a blue uniform. He is showing feelings of expectations.

The year-book 2011 confirms that children are important to the museum. On the front page at least seven smiling girls are standing and listening to a man in a uniform telling them something. One article deals with museum pedagogy “Möten mellan människor –

²² Gunilla Bergström, *Alfons och soldatpappan*, Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren, 2006, the Danish title: *Alfons og Hamids soldaterfar*.

²³ *Armémuseum*, Stockholm. I samarbete med Svenskt kulturarv (informationsfolder).

pedagogik på Armémuseum”²⁴ (Encounters between people – pedagogy at the Defence museum). The text informs about their policy. In older time, during nineteenth century, the Armémuseum should foster soldiers for the future. Mostly men visited the museum until 2000, but a modern exhibition on the connection between war in history, peoples living conditions and the Swedish state changed that and now one third are women. What about war toys? Although questions of moral and ethics are important in an Armémuseum, the text claims, war toys in the museum shop are a difficult question. In the first years of 2000 the museum did not sell war toys at all, but now the policy has changed due to the fact that the shop is responsible for its own costs. If children play with war games with war toys they learn to negotiate and accept to both win and to loose, the text argues.

The museum receive around 300 school classes every year, but to attract families with small children from 6 years of age a specific children’s path has been produced. I quote the welcoming words in the folder “I soldatens fotspår” (In the footprint of a soldier): “Welcome to the children’s path in the Armymuseum. Here children and grownups together can follow in the footprints of a soldier and experience life in campaigns and everyday life. You can try uniforms and search for a war-trophy. Watch out for the little small soldier with a flag to find you way around. Good Luck!”.²⁵ The small soldier is a boy. Children’s path consists of 9 stations from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century. It contains mercenary soldiers, everyday life in campaigns, a chamber belonging to a rich nobility man with expensive cloths and weapons, canon industrial production, the family and wife, Carolingian horsemen, an ordinary soldier’s chest for keeping his uniform and at the demand to open a small box with a war-trophy inside. At each station a question is put to the children: Is it money, adventure or the cloths that would be of most interest if you would be soldier voluntarily? What do you think the flags and drums were used for? Can you guess what the beautiful weapons were used for if not for battles? How many furnaces can you see in the canon foundry? Which soldiers name would you like to have? Which weapons are the Carolingian soldiers carrying? How do you think it felt like wearing a uniform? The questions are addressed directly to children and put the individual child in a masculine position, in a soldier’s position. Interesting enough there are no questions to everyday life in the campaign. Although there are text in the brochure about women and children, for instance the soldier’s wife and the small cottage in which they lived, nothing is asked about how children would have experienced life in times of war.

Results and discussion

As shown above in examples from St Petersburg and Münster war and peace memorials referring to historical contexts can be symbolically reactivated and used politically and existentially in connection to children. In the first example the revolution and the siege during WW II create an historical framework for children in the pioneer movement to identify politically with the nation. In the second a city town hall and a peace treaty, 350

²⁴ Pettersson, Gundela, “Möten mellan människor – pedagogik på Armémuseum”, i Tetteris, Karin (red), *Samla, Forska, Berätta*. Stockholm: Armémuseum, Årsbok 2011.

²⁵ *I soldatens fotspår*. För familjer med barn från ca 6 år, Armémuseum, printing date unknown.

years old, create an historical framework for school children's peace activism to spread an existential message to the world.

In what ways are children addressed in national defence museum shops? National identities are constructed even in the museum shops when it comes to war and peace in history. Stories about war, peace and nations are told in different ways. Collections, exhibitions and history writing are part of processes where personal and national experiences and wounds in history are told, left out or remembered and sometimes even questioned. Some nations have been deeply affected and involved in war fought in terrains of their own and some have not. Some nations have been "winners" and others have "lost" war. Revolutions and war abroad are other sceneries to be remembered in some way or the other. In my paper focus is on some examples for addressing children in museum shops at national defence museums.

When it comes to war and history children are addressed as belonging to a nation. My findings have shown that to know historical facts about for example WW I and WW II are central, both for small children and youth in young ages. Facts and some fact-related reflections are also in focus in the children's path in Stockholm. The historical facts are nationally situated and can be reproduced as icons in mechanically pedagogical activities for instance in colouring books, in books with additional stickers and tests, or as questions included in a path through an exhibition. Ambitions to give deeper understanding of themes are visible. Historical constructed narratives for example *Au temps de la Grand Guerre* and *Billy the Kid*, where the child can identify with a personalized story, still constructed for learning central facts about the wars, may stir identification and empathy processes. Although authentic narratives told with the writers own memories in focus should surpass fiction the book *War boy. A wartime childhood* reproduces fact icons of war history as well. However, in this case the writer brings new facts and new aspects of childhood everyday life into the story and takes history writing further. Children are addressed as children, playing and working, not just as subjects for learning.

In narratives with peace in focus, built on images of change, hope and friendship, children are addressed symbolically as peace agents often working on their own without grown-ups. That is the case in *A child's garden, A story of hope*. History is existentially used as hope for the future and children are seen as representations for future generations. A grown-up has however a central position in the story *Alfons and Hamid's soldier father*. War memory is used existentially when the fathers experience contrasts the boy's war toys and war games and helps the boys in rebuilding the destroyed goal.

In my findings, books and brochures, children mostly are addressed as boys, except in the Swedish army museum where focus during the last years have been to address women, families and children as well. But girls are anyhow not really included in war history, in the book *L'armé* and in the information brochure for the Armymuseum in Stockholm girls do not really fit in or are present but disappear after a while. Anyhow, the icon "a child dressed in a too big uniform", as an anomaly, is a common used image.

Some products in museum shops address children commercially, such as provocative big war toys. This is the case in Stockholm where the human rights education is strong as

well. Except for the argument that the museum shops are to be responsible of their own costs the national construction here addressed children is two ways: human rights should be respected but weapons are ok as well.

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