

Nazi Germany and the Holocaust (Spring 2020): Final Project: Sites of Nazi Persecution and Genocide

For the final project, you will create an exhibit on a site of Nazi persecution or genocide using the digital platform Omeka. Researchers at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) have identified over 44,000 camps, ghettos, and detention centers created by the Nazi regime across Europe, of which major killing centers such as Auschwitz are only the best known. Your exhibit will focus on one of these sites, analyzing its place in the Holocaust as well as the experiences of its victims.

Your exhibit should incorporate a text of approximately 3500-4000 words, alongside other media such as images, documents, maps, and timelines. Your key sources for this project will include the USHMM's *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933-1945*; videotaped survivor testimonies collected in the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive; and online collections of documents and photographs held by the USHMM, Yad Vashem (the Holocaust museum in Jerusalem), and the International Tracing Service (a German archive that has preserved millions of documents from the Nazi period). All of these resources are available online. I will also post a list of possible sites to choose from. You will have the option of publishing your exhibit at the end of the semester; it is an opportunity to create a work of public history that will reach readers beyond the classroom.

Here are some possible questions to consider as you are putting together your exhibit:

- What role did this site serve in the Holocaust? When was it created, by whom, and for what purpose? How might its function have shifted during the course of the war?
- Who was confined or persecuted at this site? How did factors of gender, age, class, nationality, and religion (or religious observance) impact the experiences of the victims?
- To what extent could communities and solidarities form in an environment of destruction? In what ways did or could those confined at the site seek to continue "normal" life?
- What is the significance of the physical construction, geography, or layout of the site?
- What happened to the site after World War II? Was it preserved or destroyed? Is there a marker or memorial today? What might this later history suggest about the political uses of memory and forgetting?

This assignment has several sub-components:

- Selection of site: **April 6 at 5 p.m.**
- One-paragraph topic description and annotated bibliography (at least 4 primary and 2 secondary sources with a short description of how each will contribute to your project): **April 13 at 5 p.m.**

- Partial draft of exhibit (including at least 1000 words of text): **April 27 at 5 p.m.**
- Project presentation (5 min.): **May 5-Wed. May 6**
- Final Omeka exhibit: **May 11 at 5 p.m.**

Suggested Sites

For the final project, you should choose a site that has an entry in one of the three volumes of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos*. These are just some suggestions to get you started, based on where I think there might be sufficient primary sources. You'll want to check to make sure you can find enough information in the various online archives (USHMM, Yad Vashem, USC Visual History Archive, etc.) and in books or articles available online.

Vol. 1: Ghettos in German-Occupied Eastern Europe

Section I: Incorporated Eastern Territories

- Lodz

Section II: Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

- Terezin (Theresienstadt)

Section III: General Government

- Czestochowa
- Kielce
- Radom
- Warsaw
- Krakow
- Nowy Sacz
- Chelm
- Lublin
- Zamosc
- Lwow

Section IV: Bialystok Region

- Bialystok

Section V: Reich Commissariat Ostland

- Riga
- Kaunas
- Rumsiskes
- Wilno
- Minsk

Section VI: Reich Commissariat Ukraine

- Kamenets-Podolskii
- Zhitomir

Vol. 2: Concentration Camps in German-Occupied Eastern Europe

I'd recommend looking at the first two pages of the contents for the major camps—we can talk about looking at subcamps, if this is of interest.

Vol. 3: Camps and Ghettos under European Regimes Aligned with Nazi Germany

- Drancy (France)
- Gurs (France)
- Budapest (Hungary)
- Szeged (Hungary)
- Odessa (Romania)
- Bratislava (Slovakia)