

Modeling the Occupation of Krakow and the Krakow Ghetto: Digital and Analog Approaches Towards an Integrated History

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As the well-known digital humanist Willard McCarty has recently argued, the simulation of an historical event is not necessarily as problematic as is often assumed if the simulation is itself part of the iterative approach essential to digital methods. This paper takes on the implications of McCarty's argument by investigating its implications for the "integrated approach" of perpetrator and victim history now so central to Holocaust Studies. It asserts two distinct points of view.

On one hand, the paper will examine perpetrator sources, including how the history of the occupation of Krakow intersected with labor and ghettoization policy within the regional Distrikt Krakow as well as in the larger ghetto "system" as a whole (connecting our project to the Holocaust Ghettos Project). Such a macro approach, however, will be contrasted with a micro study that foregrounds the Nazi administration's presence throughout the spaces of occupied Krakow as well as the Jewish experience of the ghetto itself. For the former, we will draw on the potential of GIS for raising political patterns in need of further investigation; for the latter, we will use digital mapping and other modes of visualization to reveal important distinctions and overlaps to an integrated history. Through these various angles of analysis, we will argue that spatial approaches that incorporate historical sources, iterative digital methods, and an attention to the ambiguity of evidence help model an approach to Holocaust Studies that extends existing paradigms in decidedly new ways.