

The Erasmus mag'

4ème mobilité: Olomouc, en République Tchèque

OLOMOUC

History of the town

Olomouc was for long time the capital of the province of Moravia. The bishopric of Olomouc was founded in 1063, and raised to the rank of an archbishopric in the year of 1777.

During the Second World War II. (1939–1945), most of the towns' German residents sided with the Nazis and the Germans run town council renamed the main square after Adolf Hitler. The Czech residents changed the name again after the town was liberated in 1945.



Olomouc contains several large squares, the chief of which is adorned with the Holy Trinity Column, designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The column is 35 m high and was built between 1716 and 1754.

The city has numerous historic religious buildings. The most prominent church is Saint Wenceslas Cathedral founded before 1107 in the compound of the Olomouc Castle.

The church is next to the Přemyslid Palace, a Romanesque building built after 1141 by the bishop Henry Zdík. Its remains one of the most precious monuments of Olomouc: such an early bishop's palace is unique in Central Europe.

In the largest square in Olomouc (Horní náměstí – Upper Square), in front of the astronomical clock, is a scale model of the entire old town in bronze.

The Erasmus mag'

Lidice

- The story about the assassination of Heydrich touched many people. And many of them paid with their lives for that. One of the biggest massacres in our history happened to the village of Lidice, located just close to Prague's Airport. The Nazis somehow became convinced that inhabitants helped the assassins, even though it wasn't true. July 10th 1942, Nazis shot 173 men, then women and children sent to concentration camps. Altogether 340 lives were lost.



The place of original village of Lidice today.

- There is almost nothing left from the village today. All the houses were destroyed, roads demolished and even the flow of the river was changed. Just to erase the village existence for good...

Lidice Children memorial



World War II memorial, Hrabyně



The main building in the Memorial contains the exhibition A Time of Destruction and Hope, which relates the events of the Second World War from a military and political point of view, while not forgetting the experiences of the civilian population, culture or the economy. It also tells the story of the participation of Czechoslovak fighters on all fronts during the Second World War and of civilians involved in the home resistance movement



The replica of the house was built according to period photographs and furnished with authentic furniture, mostly from Hrabyně; for example the glass in the doors of the sideboard was hit by shots from Soviet soldiers during fighting in the centre of the village

Ostrava-Opava Offensive (Battle scene diorama - house)



The assassination of Reinhard Heydrich



In September 1941 SS-Obergruppenführer Reinhard Heydrich was appointed Acting Reich Protector. Immediately after taking office, he introduced martial law and had lists drawn up of people intended for execution

The Czechoslovak government-in-exile decided to organise an operation to kill Heydrich. A total of four teams of parachutists were dropped over the Protectorate with the intention of carrying out the assassination. The Anthropoid team was entrusted with carrying out the assassination itself

Immediately after Reinhard Heydrich died of his wounds on 4th June, a reign of terror was unleashed on the Czech populace. According to a decree issued by Hitler, any person who had aided the assassins, or known about View of Exhibition Executed men in the garden of the Horák farm in Lidice Decree of the declaration of the state of emergency Jan Kubiš Jozef Gabčík them and failed to report them, was to be shot together with their family. The men involved in the assassination hid themselves in the Church of Sts. Cyril and Methodius on Resslova street in Prague. On the morning of 18th June, the church was surrounded by members of the SS, who had found out about the hideaway based on information provided by Karel Čurda. Three of the parachutists died in the ensuing battle and four committed suicide. As an act of revenge on the part of the German authorities, the village of Lidice was razed to the ground on 10th June 1942. Two weeks later, the settlement of Ležáky was also wiped out.

Mauthausen



The 'Stairs of Death' diorama

The Mauthausen concentration camp was established in August 1938, not far from the city of Linz in Austria. Even though it was never completed, it was nevertheless one of the most brutal concentration camps anywhere, and saw the practise of some of the worst methods of prisoner torture. Over 120,000 people died through hard labour, chiefly in the nearby quarry, or through execution, including a number of Czech scientists, teachers and artists. The so-called 'Stairs of Death', where prisoners carried heavy blocks of stone up a flight of steps leading from a quarry, can also be considered an instrument of torture. Many prisoners died while performing labour, were beaten to death with pickaxes or thrown from a nearby cliff by guards. Mauthausen here serves as a symbol of all concentration and extermination camps that operated during the Second World War.

Resistance

The most significant organisations involved in the home resistance movement after the creation of the Protectorate were Defence of the Nation, made up of former officers and soldiers of the Czechoslovak Army, the Political Centre and the 'We Remain Faithful' Petition Committee. In the spring of 1940 these organisations were merged into the Central Leadership of the Home Resistance.

Resistance during the Protectorate (The linking-bridge)



The Bombings of towns

From 1944 until the end of the war, the Allied forces carried out air raids on strategic targets on the territory of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The chief targets were airfields, industrial centres and roads. Air raids damaged a number of towns and resulted in several thousand deaths. Air raids represented a nightmare for civilians, and this psychological effect, the spreading of terror, was one of the anticipated results of the actions. The situation is illustrated in the diorama contained in the exhibition. Ostrava was bombed by the 15th Air Army on 29th August 1944. The raid lasted 20 minutes, during which 123 houses were destroyed, 1,475 damaged and over 400 lives were lost.