

# THE ERASMUS MAG

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## A visit to Olomouc

A journey to the Czech Republic and into WW2 history.

As part of the school's Erasmus+ project on WW2 "Our history and cultural legacy" we visited our partners in the city of Olomouc between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

Although we had been looking forward to our trip, we knew that some parts would probably be a little difficult.

Our teachers had shown us a film about what German soldiers did in this country in WW2 in the village of Lidice as well as a

documentary on Reinhard Heydrich and the SS. Here the links to those videos, if you are interested in watching them:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HGHLT8cSRMc>

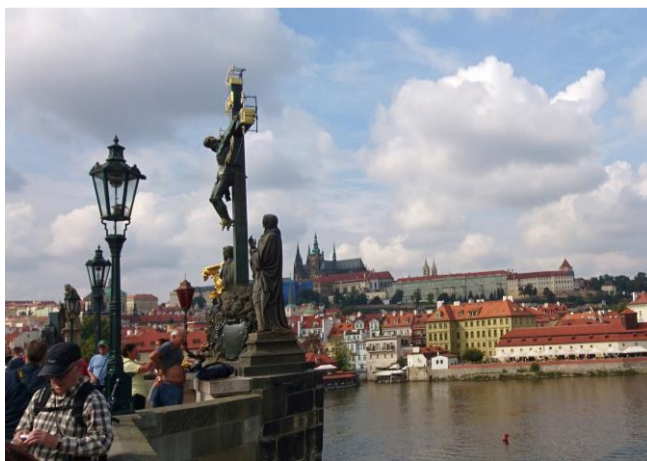
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IV7vTEiis1c>

## Day 1 Arrival in Prague

*Original text by E. Heinick*

On Sunday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, our small group - consisting of eight students, together with our teachers, Ms. Lewe and Mr. Linke - met at the airport in Düsseldorf. At 1:50 p.m. our plane took off for Prague, Czech Republic, where we arrived at 3:15 p.m. A shuttle bus then took us downtown.

We were then allowed to look around downtown Prague for about two hours. We then took the train to Olomouc for two and a half hours.



In the evening we finally arrived at the train station in Olomouc and were picked up by our host families.

## Day 2 Getting to know Olomouc



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## Day 2 Getting to know Olomouc

On Monday morning our exchange partners took us to their music school. There they showed us a program that consisted of beautiful music and a wide variety of dances. Then we went to the school of our exchange partners.

Everyone took part and there was a nice atmosphere between all countries

The woman who did the tour with us gave each of us a bag with a notepad, a ballpoint pen and a brochure about the city. The most famous sight at the town hall is the astronomical clock, which we could not see that day, because it had to be repaired at that time.

After a tour of the building, we had lunch in the school cafeteria. Next, we drove to downtown Olomouc, where we visited the town hall.

Then we visited a lot of sights, such as the Trinity Column, the Naval Column or the Arion Fountain and we drove through the city in a dotto train. We saw a lot of the city.

One of our stops was particularly special. We went to St. Wenceslas Cathedral. We took the train from the city center to a more rural area. Our host parents had already prepared a picnic for us on a meadow. After eating together, we played a few community games. Everyone took part and there was a nice atmosphere between all countries. We stayed there until evening and spent time in the adjacent playground. The train took us back to the city center, where our host families were already waiting for us.



## Day 3 Remembering Lidice

Probably the most depressing part of our stay. The sad story of the village that was randomly chosen and destroyed to retaliate the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich.



R. Heydrich

First, we visited the Lidice Museum, in which objects that were spared by the fire, such as the old Lidice city gate, are kept. Where the town of Lidice once stood a long time ago, there are only a few basic outlines of houses and the church. In addition to a large bronze statue of all the children who perished at that time, many people have put down toys and a large rose garden is also on the premises.

A new Lidice has been established next to the memorial. There we visited an art gallery full of photos and pictures from Lidice. After Lidice we drove to Prague and visited the St. Cyrillus and the Method Church. They were a hiding place for refugees during World War II.



## A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

On orders from A. Hitler and H. Himmler the village of Lidice was completely destroyed in June 1942.

All 173 men from the village who were over 15 years of age were executed on 10 June 1942. A further 11 men from the village but who were not present at the time, were later arrested and executed.

The 184 women and 88 children were deported to concentration camps; a few children were handed over to SS families because they looked Arian. The rest were killed at Chelmno extermination camp.

## Day 4 Hrabyňě



The war memoral at Hrabyňě

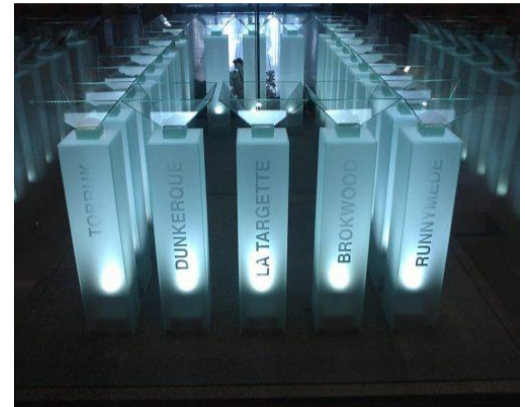
### On Wednesday we visited the Hrabyňě monument.

Another rather sad occasion. Where the memorial now stands, great battles for Czech territory took place during the Second World War.

*Hrabyňě World War Two Museum* tells the story of one *battle* on the Eastern Front as the Wehrmacht was defeated by the Red Army.

Our guide told us many interesting facts about this important battle of WW2. It showed us again how terrible war can be.

The rest of the day we were allowed to spend some time in Prague.



## Day 5: A day of languages and fun

After two days of dealing with events from WW2 we had the opportunity to practise and develop our English and have some fun at the same time.



On Thursday we went to school with our exchange partners. There many different workshops were prepared for us in the classrooms. Activities such as folding origami butterflies were great fun for everyone and strengthened the sense of community. After a meal in the school cafeteria, we set out on foot into a forest. A tent was set up on a large meadow in the forest, with many tables and benches. It was a warm day, so we left our jackets and backpacks by the tables. And then we played a game where we were divided into many groups. In each group there was at least one youth from each country. Each group was assigned a supervisor. We had to master various tasks together in the group. Small group games where we could of course only communicate in English.

We all really enjoyed the games. After the games we got our food. In addition to salad and bread, you could choose between grilled cheese, chicken and pork. There was also Kofola. Cola from the Czech Republic, which tastes different than the one in Germany.

After dinner we were allowed to use the air trampoline.



We split into two teams and played with the ball someone had brought with us. As soon as it got dark we made a campfire over which we grilled sausages and marshmallows. There were also tons of chips. Loud music boomed from a jukebox and everyone danced. We took a lot of group photos and celebrated our last evening in the Czech Republic. Many exchanged their numbers to keep in touch. This evening made a decisive contribution to our making many new friends.

## Day 6: Farewell

In the morning we packed our bags. Our host families took us to the train station, where we had to say goodbye to each other. We were all sad to leave the Czech Republic, as well happy to have finally arrived in Cologne.

