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Chapter 7

The National Socialist Prison System and the Illusive Appeal of Digital Maps

German Summary: Diese Kapitel diskutiert anhand eines landesgeschichtlichen Beispiels die Möglichkeiten und Fallstricke, die sich ergeben, wenn komplexe historischen Zusammenhänge zwischen unterschiedlichsten Orten in einer digitalen Karte als Teil einer Ausstellung der Öffentlichkeit präsentiert werden sollen.

Das Strafgefängnis Wolfenbüttel war während der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus die zentrale Haftanstalt des ehemaligen Freistaates Braunschweig. Im Land Braunschweig befanden sich jedoch zahlreiche weitere Orte des Strafvollzuges. Dies waren mehrere kleinere und größere Gefängnisse von Thedinghausen bei Bremen bis Blankenburg im Harz. Es waren aber auch Arbeitskommandos, die außerhalb der zentralen Haftanstalt in der Rüstungsindustrie oder beim Aufbau der Reichswerke Hermann Göring im Salzgitter-Gebiet eingesetzt wurden. Zusätzlich zählen beispielsweise Orte hinzu, an denen wehrmachtsgerichtliche Todesurteile vollstreckt wurden.

Neben der Geschichte des Strafvollzuges nimmt zusätzlich die Entwicklung der Zwangs- und Gefangenearbeit in der Sphäre der Justiz einen wichtigen Stellenwert ein. Zentral ist dabei die Frage nach der Sichtbarkeit der nationalsozialistischen Justizverbrechen für die Bevölkerung im damaligen Land Braunschweig. Ausgehend von diesen historischen Fragestellungen zeigt dieses Kapitel die Chancen und Herausforderungen bei der Gestaltung einer interaktiven Karte. Hierbei wird insbesondere diskutiert, in welchen Formen Kartenmaterial für eine Vermittlung passend ist, in welchem Umfang digitale Quellenzugänge sinnvoll eingesetzt werden können und welche Grenzen der digitalen Geschichtsvermittlung in diesem Format gegeben sind. Der Artikel zeigt, inwiefern ein digitaler und raumgeschichtlicher Zugang sinnig erscheint und wo die Grenzen der Vermittelbarkeit über interaktive digitale Karten liegen. Es wird deutlich, dass die Ausdehnung, Dichte und Tiefe des Netzwerkes des nationalsozialistischen Strafvollzuges mit einem landesgeschichtlichen Fokus eine derartige Komplexität erreicht, dass eine Abbildung in digitalen Karten zwangsläufig nur ausschnitthaft erfolgen kann und dadurch droht, missverständlich zu werden. Gleichzeitig bieten interaktive Karten allerdings auch didaktische Vorteile bei der Gestaltung einer Ausstellung, die mit herkömmlichen Ausstellungsmedien nicht zu erreichen sind.

1 Introduction

The system of imprisonment within the regular judiciary in National Socialist Germany is a comparatively new field of historical research. Even though the majority of the National Socialists' crimes, including the Shoa, were committed outside of the judiciary's sphere of influence, the judiciary had a key function in organizing the National Socialist regime of terror.¹ Even before their rise to power in 1933, the National Socialists had little respect for law and justice. After they installed their dictatorship, they modified laws that opposed their ideology and enacted new laws that turned their brutal and racist world view into applicable law. The judiciary became a powerful tool of their regime. A new legislation system emerged that put the request for a racially and politically put *Volksgemeinschaft* (national community) above the well-being of individuals.² Nikolaus Wachsmann has shown how the prisons and imprisonment changed within the years 1933 to 1945 and how fundamentally they were connected to the National Socialist ideology. Shortly after the National Socialists rose to power in 1933 judiciary prisons, as well as police prisons and early concentration camps, were a part of the terror and oppression against their political opponents like social democrats or communists. The use of the death penalty was enforced and newly organized in 1937, making some of the prisons centralized execution places. During World War II, prisons became part of National Socialist industrial endeavors and part of armament production. As Wachsmann has pointed out there was also fundamental cooperation between the police or Gestapo, the concentration camps, and the National Socialists' politics of annihilation.³ The history of judiciary prisons in National Socialism is remembered and musealized in several places in Germany like the memorial Zuchthaus Brandenburg-Görden, the memorial Roter Ochse in Halle and the recently remodeled memorial inside the Wolfenbüttel prison. Displaying the diverse connections of a single prison to the National Socialist network of prosecution, oppression, and violence within an exhibition by the use of an interactive digital map seems an obvious choice for future exhibitions dealing with this subject. New digital

1 Anett Dremel and Jens-Christian Wagner, "Strafvollzug im Nationalsozialismus. Ein Überblick," in *Recht. Verbrechen. Folgen. Das Strafgefängnis Wolfenbüttel im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Martina Staats and Jens-Christian Wagner (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2019), 256.

2 Michael Grüttner, *Brandstifter und Biedermänner: Deutschland 1933–1939* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2015), 93–104.

3 Most notably, this field of research was opened by Nikolaus Wachsmann. See Nikolaus Wachsmann, *Hitler's Prisons: Legal Terror in Nazi Germany* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004).

tools enable museums to display not only a map with several marked places, but also to provide background information, pictures, or other source material to each and every one of those places within the network of a prison. Compared to the use of printed maps, that for a long time have been an analog tool used in museums and memorial places, a digital map suggests a more complex or more complete display of historical facts in a subliminal way.

This article will therefore examine the possibilities and disadvantages that come with the use of digital maps to display the vast variety of connections and interactions a single prison had in the years from 1933 to 1945. It will exemplarily focus on the prison of Wolfenbüttel in northern Germany close to Braunschweig as one of the centralized places where death penalties were executed from 1937 to 1945. A digital map is currently being developed by the Wolfenbüttel memorial for the new permanent exhibition.

2 Advantages of Digital Maps

Almost every memorial museum works with classic analog maps or models of the former National Socialist camp, prison, or other place of prosecution. The map—sometimes more and sometimes less accurate—is a classic medium of exhibition and explanation. While newer forms of digital reconstruction or display of demolished campsites or non-accessible places of National Socialist crimes make good use of augmented and virtual reality,⁴ the use of digital maps is a more basic approach. The use of digital maps can aim at several points. First, a map can show a place in its whole extent. Digital maps also can use computer animated graphics to show the development of a site. If a digital map is used to display a wider area like a country or a state, visitors to an exhibition can locate the site they are visiting in a broader perspective and see it in relation or connection to other places. A physically limited analog map does not possess this ability to the same extent. In addition to these aspects of possible content, a digital map in most cases provides a more interactive use of the exhibition, for example by the use of a touch-screen. Browsing a map and accessing information on several places becomes a more intuitive and affective personal experience than just looking at a classic map. A digital map can offer a deeper engagement with the exhibition for the users and provide the impression of playing an active part in the exploration of historical information. The information on display is driven by the interest of its users. In

⁴ See e.g. Jens-Christian Wagner, “Simulierte Authentizität? Chancen und Risiken von augmented und virtual reality an Gedenkstätten,” *Gedenkstättenrundbrief* 196 (2019): 3–9.

this way digital access extends the classic exhibition beyond objects and descriptions by adding an interactive way of exploring history.

In the past decades the role of visitors to exhibitions of all kinds changed fundamentally. While the visitor was in the rather passive role of being an observer of information on display, visitors today often see themselves as users and people who interact with the objects and participate in the meaning-making processes involved in the understanding of history.⁵

3 How to Define the Content of a Digital Map?

While using digital maps, some curators might be tempted by the possibility to use the nearly endless capacity of digital storage to locate and mark more and more locations on a map and provide information on all of them.⁶

But how does the use of interactive maps add to the understanding of the history of the prison system in National Socialist Germany? This will be discussed following an example from the memorial inside the Wolfenbüttel prison where a new interactive map is in development to introduce a new exhibition. The Wolfenbüttel prison was the central imprisonment facility of the judiciary in the state of Brunswick.⁷ But all over the state there were numerous other places that were part of the National Socialist prison system. There were other prisons, work deployment, and work and imprisonment camps. In addition, there were several places of collaboration with other participants in National Socialist prosecution and terror that can be taken into account, like a shooting range in the forest of Buchhorst close to the city of Braunschweig, where the Wehrmacht carried out death sentences.

These historical sites, some of which are still visible today, will be displayed on a digital map in the entrance hall of the Wolfenbüttel memorial's new exhibition building. The display shows a simplified map of central Germany with riv-

5 Chiel van den Akker and Susan Legêne, "Introduction," in *Museums in a Digital Culture: How Art and Heritage Become Meaningful*, ed. Chiel van den Akker and Susan Legêne (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2016), 7–12.

6 For example the project "Views of Ghent" has identified and described over 3,500 locations in the City of Ghent alone. See Lars de Jaegher, Maria de Waele, and Véronique van Goethem, "The Use of Digital Media in a New Urban History Exhibition: STAM – Ghent City Museum," *18th International Conference on Virtual Systems and Multimedia, Milan, 2012*, 557–560, accessed 3 August, 2021, doi: 10.1109/VSMM.2012.6365976.

7 To prevent possible misunderstanding in this article the capital city will be referred to as "Braunschweig," while the state will be addressed as "Brunswick."

ers and mountains to provide some geographical orientation for the user. The only visible border is that of the state of Brunswick, as it was set to provide the spatial border for places to be included in the map. The map is designed specifically for this geographical and political area. Places are marked and accessible via a simple touch on the screen. A context box displays a short text containing more information about the chosen location and pictures or other historical sources—in cases where they are available. The installation is built on a content management system that allows changes to the context or the addition of new places over time as historical research might provide new views or information.

The following three examples will point out both the advantages and the disadvantages of the medium but will focus mainly on the pitfalls that accompany the presentation of complex historical situations and dependencies on a digital map within an exhibition. First, the example of the numerous prisons in the state of Brunswick is considered, followed by the work deployment of prisoners from Wolfenbüttel. Finally, focus turns to the special case of the Institute of Anatomy in Göttingen, which falls outside the proposed grid of places within the judiciary system.

During National Socialism, judiciary places of detention were operated under a variety of different names. However, a clear distinction can be made between remand prisons, court prisons, which also mainly housed prisoners on remand, and prisons for the accommodation of convicted prisoners. The term *Kreisgefängnis* (district prison), which is common in the state of Brunswick, denotes the regional jurisdiction, as does the name *Landesstrafanstalt* (state prison) referring to the Wolfenbüttel prison. The size of the prisons varied considerably. In addition to the two large prisons in Wolfenbüttel and Braunschweig, that were designed for an estimated number of roughly 1,000 and 300 prisoners, there were four district prisons, which had twenty-four to forty places of detention and also functioned as court prisons, as well as numerous court prisons, whose capacity was between two and seventeen prisoners. A total of twenty-three regular prisons can be identified in the state of Brunswick. In addition to the central state penal institution in Wolfenbüttel, the district- and remand prison in Braunschweig was the second largest prison. Furthermore, there were district prisons in Bad Gandersheim, Blankenburg, Goslar, Helmstedt, and Holzminden. In addition, there were smaller court prisons in Bad-Harzburg, Calvörde, Eschershausen, Greene, Hasselfelde, Königslutter, Lutter am Barrenberge, Salder, Schöningen, Schöppenstedt, Seesen, Stadtoldendorf, Thedinghausen, Vechelde, Vorsfelde, and Walkenried.

Imprisonment in the judicial prisons is distinguished from imprisonment in other places of detention, which during National Socialism were all part of the terror and persecution system. Inmates of a judicial prison usually were convict-

ed by a court and sentenced to a certain period of imprisonment. The imprisonment itself was regulated by law. But the judiciary system collaborated closely with other bodies of persecution. For example, after being mistreated in the Gestapo prison in Braunschweig's Leopoldstraße, victims were taken to the police prison Wendenstraße. From there they were transferred to the district and remand prison and thus to the sphere of judiciary. From there, some prisoners were transported further, for example to the Alt-Moabit prison in Berlin before a trial at the *Volksgerichtshof* (people's court). Those sentenced to death were further transported from Berlin, among other places, to the prison in Brandenburg-Görden, where another of the central execution sites was located. Other prisoners were handed back to the Gestapo after their release from prison. They were further maltreated or taken to a concentration camp.⁸ All in all no judiciary prison could be considered a more secure place of imprisonment for the victims of National Socialism. Even if mistreatment inside judiciary prisons might have been less common, some prisoners were handed over to other places and to severe physical abuse.

In addition, it is important to avoid the impression that convicted persons would have been imprisoned exclusively in prisons close to the places of their arrest. This becomes apparent, for example, when one looks at the origins of the Wolfenbüttel inmates in 1938, who came from the districts of the courts of Celle, Magdeburg, Hamm, Darmstadt, Hanover, Berlin, Leipzig, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt am Main, Munich, and Naumburg.⁹ The question that arises when designing a digital map is: Which of the numerous prisons within the given frame of the state of Brunswick should be depicted? Is the number of places of detention decisive as far as which to include and which to exclude from the map or are the special crimes committed by the National Socialists in some prisons given special consideration? At the same time, the focus on judiciary prisons is deceiving: Gestapo prisons or their prison camps are not taken into account, even though many prisoners of justice were handed over to the Gestapo and vice

⁸ Der Oberlandesgerichtspräsident an den Braunschweigischen Minister des Inneren, 29.09.1939, NLA WO 12 Neu 13 Nr. 15256 Polizeiliches Haftlokal in Braunschweig. The examples follow the imprisonment history of Wilhelm Keune. See Markus Gröchtmeier, *Fahnenwechsel: Nationalsozialismus und britische Besatzung in der Stadt Wolfenbüttel 1933–1948* (Hamel: CW Niemeyer Buchverlage, 2018), 136–48. On the Wolfenbüttel prison's collaboration with the Gestapo see Jannik Sachweh, "Von Wesermünde nach Wolfenbüttel. Orte der Justizverbrechen im nationalsozialistischen Strafvollzug," *Jahrbuch der Männer vom Morgenstern* 97 (2019): 15–16.

⁹ Wilfried Knauer, "... nicht hinter Mauern! Die Stadt und das Strafgefängnis Wolfenbüttel 1933–1945," in *Wolfenbüttel unter dem Hakenkreuz. Fünf Vorträge*, ed. Stadt Wolfenbüttel (Wolfenbüttel: Stadt Wolfenbüttel, 2000), 84.

versa. Of course, focusing on the prisons is already a narrowing of the perspective. The different courts could just as well be taken into consideration when it comes to giving an overview of the connections of a selected prison in the system of National Socialist persecution. For the final decisions on what sites to include on the digital map, it is important to strike a balance between a comprehensiveness (that can never be fully achieved) and the receptive capacity of the visitors.

During the entire period of National Socialism, there were more than seventy work detachments at the Wolfenbüttel prison, which were deployed inside and outside the prison. Prisoners in the prison itself usually worked from Monday to Saturday within the institution but were hardly paid. In addition to assignments in various commercial enterprises, prisoners were deployed spontaneously and briefly for transport or agricultural work. It is no longer possible today to give a complete list of these short-term assignments. In the course of preparations for war, the work deployment was expanded from 1938 onwards and almost all prisoners were employed. In the following years of the war, prisoners were also called upon to do work important to the war effort and were increasingly deployed outside the prison. If the places of work were near the prison, the prisoners were taken from the prison to work and back again in the evening. At more distant places, the prison set up several permanent external commands. The prisoners were mainly used for forced labor in the war economy. As a result, the number of sick prisoners and deaths rose significantly. During World War II, the penal system was to contribute to a German victory. The prisoners' manpower was increasingly exploited, while the food supply and medical care of the prisoners deteriorated increasingly. In Wolfenbüttel, as early as 1940, about 50 – 60 % of the prisoners were used exclusively for important war-related work at external commands.¹⁰ This use of prisoners in permanent commands outside the prisons in the state of Brunswick has barely been researched to date.

Particularly during the last two years of the war, the judiciary prisoners could no longer be overlooked as workers in Brunswick's economy. In addition to foreign civilian and forced laborer's, Gestapo prisoners, the inmates of the concentration camps, prisoners of war, and Wehrmacht prisoners, the judiciary prisoners were often employed in the same company. The problem with displaying these details on a digital map is not so much marking the numerous different locations; rather, it is a challenge to distinguish between short-term and long-term deployments and to clearly differentiate between the deployment of judicia-

¹⁰ Jahresbericht über die Durchführung des Strafvollzuges und die Verwaltung des Strafgefängnisses Wolfenbüttel im Rechnungsjahr 1940, NLA WO 42 A Neu Fb. 3 Zg. 37/1983 Nr. 53 Einrichtung und Verwaltung der Vollzugsanstalten.

ry prisoners and the deployment of concentration camp inmates, for example. If this distinction is not made clearly, a digital map is in danger of suggestively equating the different forms of forced labor or of placing other forms of forced labor into the background.¹¹ This becomes clear in the example of the work deployment camps in the last months of the war. From the summer of 1944, the work deployment of prisoners outside the prison in Wolfenbüttel took on new dimensions. In nearby factories, armaments production was intensified once more and in large-scale projects, parts of the armaments production were to be moved underground and thus protected from air raids. The last months of National Socialist rule were also marked by murder, mass deaths, and the mass deportation of prisoners from prisons and camps. The front advancing ever further into the territory of the Reich led to “evacuations” of prisons to prevent the prisoners from falling into the hands of the Allies. The way in which the prisoners were treated varied greatly from place to place. However, clear differences can be seen when comparing the evacuations of the concentration camps.¹² Especially within the framework of the *Jägerprogramm* (production of fighter airplanes), prisoners from Wolfenbüttel were called upon to work on underground relocations of the armament industry alongside prisoners of war and concentration camp inmates. Thus, three new permanent field commands were created in the final phase of the war: one in Walbeck for the company Büssing NAG Flugmotorenwerke from Braunschweig-Querum, and two in Blankenburg for the Oda-Werke and the Klosterwerke. For the two underground relocations in Blankenburg, the prison worked directly with the construction management of Organisation Todt,¹³ which coordinated the work. In accordance with the legal regulations, Organisation Todt could not place judiciary prisoners in the same work camps as the concentration camp prisoners it also used for the underground relocations.¹⁴ This causes a problem for a digital map focusing on judi-

11 On the differentiation between forms of forced labour see Marc Buggeln, “Unfreie Arbeit im Nationalsozialismus. Begrifflichkeiten und Vergleichsaspekte zu den Arbeitsbedingungen im Deutschen Reich und in den besetzten Gebieten,” in *Arbeit im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Marc Buggeln and Michael Wildt (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2014), 231–52.

12 Christoph Bitterberg and Silvia de Pasquale, “Mord, Massensterben und ‘Rückführungen’. Die letzten Kriegsmomente im nationalsozialistischen Strafvollzug,” in *Kriegsendverbrechen zwischen Untergangschao und Vernichtungsprogramm*, ed. Detlef Garbe and Günther Morsch (Berlin: Metropol-Verlag, 2015), 81–96.

13 In the late phase of the Third Reich, Organisation Todt (OT) administered the construction of concentration camps and the supply of forced labor to the war industry.

14 Nachweisung der ständigen Außenarbeitsstellen bei den Vollzugsanstalten Bezirk Braunschweig, 08.01.1945, NLA WO 42 A Neu Fb. 3 Zg. 37/1983 Nr. 22 Belegungs- und Beschäftigungsübersichten der Vollzugsanstalten; betr. Belegungsübersichten. And: OT-Einsatzgruppe IV “Kyffhäus-

ciary prisons' inmates. There were more prisoners in this system of forced labor but not all would be represented on the map.

The historical investigation of the external commands of the Wolfenbüttel prison in the last months of World War II is made more difficult by the fact that parts of the files of the prison and the responsible Brunswick Prosecutor General's Office were destroyed. In addition, both in contemporary records as well as in post-war documents, the assignments of different camps to the respective organizations to which they were subject are not clear and often simply incorrect. For example, in a post-war trial in Belgium against prison officials, not only was witness testimony on the justice camps evaluated but reports from survivors of the Buchenwald concentration camp's external commands were also taken into account. The fact that Blankenburg, like many places, had a large number of different camps was hardly recognized.¹⁵ It is obviously a great challenge to transfer this distinction, which has not yet been conclusively clarified in historical research, into a digital map without concealing important information or aspects of forced labor in these places.

The third example will deal with the case of a place that was closely connected to the Wolfenbüttel prison but was administrated by a university. There was a connection between an increased number of executions under National Socialism and anatomical research at German universities. In February 1939, the distribution of the bodies of executed persons was organized by permanently assigning the execution sites to different anatomical institutes. Those killed in the Wolfenbüttel prison were now firmly assigned and regularly offered to the Anatomical Institute in Göttingen.¹⁶ For at least 217 of the 783 bodies recorded in Göttingen for the period 1933–1945, the Wolfenbüttel prison was the place of origin. Thus, the prison was the largest place of origin of the bodies handed over to the Anatomical Institute. Due to the increased application of the death penalty during National Socialism, all anatomical institutes found themselves in a situation that allowed them almost unlimited access to the desired “material.”¹⁷ In some instances, only

er” S-Bauleitung Osterode/ Hz. An das Strafgefängnis Wolfenbüttel, 22.02.1945, NLA WO 42 A Neu Fb. 3 Zg. 37/1983 Nr. 14 Ersatzgefangene für Gefangenenlager und Auffüllung von Strafanstalten.

15 Commissariat de police, ville de Liège, 13.11.1946, State Archives of Belgium, Cour Militaire de Bruxelles, Prosecutor v. Lupfer et al., case 182/B/1950, 05.12.1950, Nr. 58.

16 Der Reichsminister für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung (i.A. Mentzel) an das Universität-Kuratorium Göttingen, 18.02.1939, UniAGött Kur. 0987 Anatomie Leichen 1939–1958.

17 Sabine Hildebrandt, *The Anatomy of Murder: Ethical Transgressions and Anatomical Science during the Third Reich* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2016). And: UniAGött Kur. 0986 Anatomie Leichen bis 1938; UniAGött Kur. 0987 Anatomie Leichen 1939–1958.

parts of the bodies were transferred from Wolfenbüttel to Göttingen. The funeral company Frieden, which in some cases represented the Göttingen medical staff in Wolfenbüttel when taking over the bodies, received order lists with the desired body parts. For example, in some cases only the severed heads of the bodies were to be brought to Göttingen by train.¹⁸ The prison in Wolfenbüttel also differed from the other places of origin of the bodies in that samples were taken on site and physicians worked with the bodies in a special room set up for this purpose right next to the guillotine in Wolfenbüttel.¹⁹ The bodies of the executed persons were used in university teaching for dissection courses and for the production of permanent show specimens.²⁰ Thus, the Institute of Anatomy in Göttingen was an institution directly and immediately connected with the prison in Wolfenbüttel. The bodies of the victims of the National Socialists executed there became “research material.” A cartographic representation should hardly hide such a close connection between two places in the system of National Socialist persecution. Nevertheless, the Institute of Anatomy was not an institution of the judiciary and was located outside the state of Brunswick. If this connection is taken into account and displayed on the map, it is difficult to explain why other connections, such as those to the Gestapo, might be omitted from a map.

It becomes clear that the selection of the places to be depicted is quite difficult. It is a process of weighing up direct connections between the prison in Wolfenbüttel and other places and the relevance of the respective connections. Not even a digital map, which could theoretically depict every conceivable connection, can flood exhibition visitors with such a wealth of information and at the same time hope that the visitors will actively engage with the information.

4 Conclusion

Digital maps can be used to show the development and expansion of a singular place towards a more connected structure. They cannot show the whole complexity of the National Socialists’ system of oppression, violence, and terror and its development over the whole period of the National Socialist regime from 1933 to 1945 in a way that is easily accessible for exhibition visitors. In re-

18 Anatomisches Institut Göttingen an Beerdigungsinstitut “Frieden,” 31.10.1942, ZAUGA – B 1, Kuratorium Leichen.

19 Anatomisches Institut Göttingen an den Vorstand des Strafgefängnisses Wolfenbüttel, 27.07.1943, ZAUGA – B 1, Kuratorium Leichen.

20 Erich Blechschmidt an den Kurator der Universität Göttingen, 17.06.1942, UniAGött Kur. 2602 Bausachen Anatomie.

ality, the prison system was only one of many ways the National Socialists terrorized and persecuted their political opponents and those who were not seen as part of the so-called *Volksgemeinschaft*. The legal prison system was intertwined with other sorts of places of imprisonment like concentration camps or police prisons, and depended on bigger structures like local, regional, and national courts and the ministry of justice in Berlin. Focusing on the legal prison system and displaying it on a digital map therefore will always necessarily leave some blind spots for exhibition visitors, even if the map aims to display all elements of the prison system within a given region. Nevertheless, digital maps are a meaningful tool to show the density of the prison system within the German state and in the occupied territories. But eventually a map cannot replace a visit to the historical sites. As in all cases, maps have to be used very carefully and the information on display should help those who view it to gain insight into the more complex structures while maintaining awareness of its limited contents and its constructed character.

Compared to other ways of including digital media into an exhibition, like virtual- or augmented-reality applications, a map still is a more basic tool. But all in all, the digital presentation of information on a map can be seen as highly significant or even necessary to future exhibitions that deal with a certain space in a certain period. By showing its extension and development the digital map addresses the audience's expectations for participation and interaction that have emerged in recent years and will most likely emerge even further and can even be considered a "product of digital identity."²¹

By exploring this example of a rather neglected part of the history of National Socialist crimes, it became clear that the use of digital tools increases the feasibility to make more information on a network accessible within an exhibition. On the other hand, this way of "doing history digitally" also carries some potential dangers. It must be based on a thorough historical investigation of the individual sites and needs to be carefully applied so as to not overwhelm the audience with the vast number of places and immense possibilities for including information on those sites as well as all the connections maintained by a prison in National Socialist Germany.

²¹ Tula Giannini and Jonathan P. Bowen, "Museums and Digitalism," in *Museums and Digital Culture: New Perspectives and Research*, ed. Tula Giannini and Jonathan P. Bowen (Cham: Springer Nature, 2019), 30.

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