

0. OSWIECIM: A POLISH TOWN - Story Preface

1. OSWIECIM: A POLISH TOWN

2. A NAZI DEATH CAMP

3. UNEXPECTED PROOF?

4. EVIDENCE OF EXTERMINATION?

5. WHEN DID THE ALLIES KNOW?



Oswiecim, a Polish town located about 31 miles (50 kilometers) west of Krakow, is situated near the confluence of the Sola and Vistula Rivers. It is also the town closest to the infamous Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Most of the Nazi death camps were located in Poland. One of the most notorious was Auschwitz, located near the Polish city of Oswiecim, about 60 kilometers from Krakow. Jewish people lived and worshiped in Oswiecim, a city on the Vistula River, before World War II.

In October of 1939, Germany annexed part of Poland. Oswiecim was part of that annexation and, according to the city's archives, the Germans removed all Jews from the town council.

By the next month, the city's ability to govern itself was completely eliminated. Instead, a German administration was set up.

By April of 1940, Henrich Himmler ordered a concentration camp to be built at Oswiecim. (It was a preferred location since it already had Polish Army facilities).

On June 14, 1940, the first camp inmates arrived: Polish political prisoners (numbers 31 to 758). Soon after, the camp was flooded with people. (A large number of rail lines led directly to it.)

The notorious Josef Mengele worked there. It was he who was personally responsible for the "selection" that ended the lives of so many men, women and children.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/OSWIECIM-A-POLISH-TOWN-Auschwitz-Place-of-Horror>

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See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/OSWIECIM-A-POLISH-TOWN-Auschwitz-Place-of-Horrors>

Media Stream



Oswiecim - Map Locator

Map image online, courtesy Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau.

PD

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Oswiecim-Map-Locator>



Oswiecim Synagogue - Before World War II

Image online, courtesy Polish Archives at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum - Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Oswiecim-Synagogue-Before-World-War-II>



Rail Lines Leading to Auschwitz

Map online, courtesy Florida Center for Instructional Technology, College of Education, University of South Florida - [Teacher's Guide to the Holocaust](#).

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Auschwitz - Selection of Women and Children

Image online, courtesy Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archives - Photo: SS, 1944.

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View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Auschwitz-Selection-of-Women-and-Children>



Birkenau - Family "Selected" for Gas Chamber

Image online, courtesy Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Archives.

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Selection Process at Auschwitz - Sophie's Choice

Clip from "Sophie's Choice," based on the book by William Styron.

Release date: December 8, 1982 (USA)

Director: Alan J. Pakula

Screenplay: Alan J. Pakula

Story by: William Styron (based on his 1979 award-winning book of the same name)

Studio: ITC Entertainment

Distributor: Universal Pictures

Starring: Meryl Streep, Kevin Kline, Peter MacNicol

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Video clip online, via kokdemir's channel at YouTube.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Selection-Process-at-Auschwitz-Sophie-s-Choice>

