

SOURCE EXPLORATION ASSIGNMENT

Most history books offer a narrative about what happened in the past. These narratives are based on *primary sources*--documents and artifacts created at the time of the events in question, or by eyewitnesses to those events--, as well as *secondary literature*--books and articles written by people (historians, memoirists, novelists) who used primary sources to craft their own narratives. In many cases historians trust other authors' work and do not consult the original primary sources themselves. The task here is to take one of these primary sources, from the [GHDI document collection](#) on the web (or other course readings or source collections), and find out as much as possible about who its author was, why that author wrote it, for what audience, how the original readers understood it, how the source was preserved, and how it has been cited and interpreted over the years since its creation.

Step 1: Proposal (meetings with professor weeks 3 & 4; due Oct. 29, 2pm--week 5) (5 points)

1. **Pick a source from the [German History in Documents and Images](#) website**, or from the notes of any other course reading, or even other relevant sources you know of.
 - a. Think about Germany between 1789 and 1914--what interests you about it?
Browse the website for sources on that topic or types of sources that interest you.
Talk to the professor if you have specific interests or need some help finding a source.
 - b. Look at the source attribution--usually at the bottom of the last source webpage.
 - c. Do some searching on the web: google the author and/or title, search [melvyl/worldcat](#) for the publication and its author, try [google scholar](#) and [google books](#).
 - d. Write a brief narrative or bullet points about where you looked and what you found.
 - e. Make an appointment with the professor and discuss what you can do with that source.
(see Step 2 for ideas about what you might do)

Step 2: Exploration (due Nov. 12--week 7; 2pm in class; 9pm on GS) (10 points)

2. **Turn in a 2-3 page text/list about the results of your research.** These might include:
 - a) Location of original document, or where the publication can be found
(Can you get a copy? If it's within the UC system, you can use interlibrary loans.)
 - b) Description of the original publication
 - c) If the original was in German: Who translated it? Are there different translations?
 - d) Biographical information about the author (and how and where you found out)
 - e) Other things written or created by that author
 - f) How, where and why the source came to be created; in what context was it published?
 - g) Who else has published that text, or cited it?
 - h) Are there varying interpretations of this text? If so, describe them & what they depend on.
 - i) Try putting unique terms into [google ngrams](#) and see whether interesting results emerge.
 - j) Can you connect this source to other sources, in the GHDI collection or in other books?

➤ I will note on your corrected draft if it qualifies for the presentation and/or web options.

Step 3: Final Version (due Nov. 24--week 9, before Thanksgiving; 2pm in class; 9pm on GS)(10 pts)

3. **After incorporating the professor's corrections & suggestions, submit a final version.**
This version will be graded on writing as well as research. (See Writing Conventions on back.)
Also resubmit the hard copy of your commented draft--paper clip the two together.

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- **Due dates.** Late submissions will be penalized one point per day, beginning 2pm on the due date.
 - **Grading.** All together this assignment counts for **25%** of your final grade (including the proposal and corrected version). It is worth taking seriously!
Excellent explorations will be eligible for a "web option" and/or in class presentation for extra credit or in lieu of the take-home final exam essay; see syllabus.

Writing Conventions (& prof's pet peeves)

1. Do not use the collective singular (with a definite article) to refer to groups; use plural instead. E.g. not "the reader will notice," but: "readers will notice." This not only indicates that not all readers are alike, but enables you to use "they" instead of having to choose between he or she. Similarly for the historian, the Nazi, the Jew, the German, etc. This helps to avoid stereotyping.
2. Place apostrophes correctly; do not use an apostrophe for pluralization (unless the word is also possessive): One Nazi, two Nazis. But possessive: That Nazi's gun; that group of Nazis' guns.
3. Capitalization of west/western, east/eastern: only when these are being used to denote the blocs during the Cold War, not when purely geographic.
4. Try to avoid the use of "America" (which can mean two continents) when you mean the United States. Unless it is very awkward, U.S. will usually work
5. The convention for spelling antisemitism has changed: no hyphen or capitalization. (This recognizes that there is no such thing as Semitism.)
6. Do not use an apostrophe in naming decades, thus correctly: "from the 1920s to the 1930s."
7. Use "who" when referring to people, "that" when referring to things or organizations.
8. The past tense of 'to lead' is spelled led: The leader Moses led his people to the promised land.
9. Use only **bold** for emphasis and *italics* for light emphasis titles, but don't use underlining except: **Underlining is reserved to signify hyperlinks.**
10. Use in-text citations (Authorlastname date, page#), and place them before the period at the end of that sentence, e.g. (Schulze 1998, 103).
Have a list of publications (references, sources) at the end of your paper, with full bibliographic information.
11. Place punctuation marks inside of "quotation marks," but reference citations outside of the quotation marks and preferably at the end of the sentence, not right after a quotation: Thus:
World War I made Germans susceptible to Nazism, according to Fritzsche (1998, 228).