

Curriculum Vitae

## **Maja Kruse**

Interdisciplinary PhD at the University of Maine since 2019.

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## **EDUCATION AND RELEVANT WORK**

**Research interests:** WW2; the Holocaust; Jewish ghettos; the German occupation of Denmark 1940-1945; the deportation of the Danish Jews to Theresienstadt 1943-1945; Lebensborn; GIS; German linguistics.

**2019-: Research assistant and PhD student at the University of Maine.** Research assistant on the Holocaust Ghettos Project in collaboration with the Holocaust Geographies Collaborative. We digitize and study the Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos (USHMM, vol. 2) that contains 1,142 ghettos. I have developed a gazetteer of the ghettos and am responsible for preparing the GIS files for visualizing our data in GIS.

### **2019-: Indexer for the USC Shoah Foundation.**

I am responsible for indexing the Shoah interviews of the Danish interviewees. There are around 123 testimonies of people with relation to Denmark of which 67 are in Danish.

**2018-2019: Master's thesis.** "The German SS-initiated association "Lebensborn e.V." in Denmark 1940-1945":

Heinrich Himmler founded the association Lebensborn in 1935 with the purpose of an increase in "genetically worthy" humans. It spread across Nazi Germany and several occupied countries. The organization was established in Denmark 1944-45, but very little is known about its activities. I visited Danish and German archives in Copenhagen, Berlin, and Munich to find answers about what happened in Denmark.

**2016-2019: Master's Degree.** Master of Arts in German Studies at the University of Southern Denmark (as my major) and Geography and Geoinformatics at the University of Copenhagen (as my minor).

**2018: Course on the Danish Jews in Theresienstadt: history, topography and memory.** At the University of Southern Denmark, the History Department. During this course, we mapped the memories of the Jewish Danish survivors in QGIS. We identified concrete places mentioned by the survivors in their testimonies and located these in the ghetto during an 11 day fieldwork in Theresienstadt. I transcribed parts of 18 interviews from the USC Shoah Foundation and made linguistic analyses of them resulting in a paper on the places they feared with focus on the differences and/or similarities between written and oral formulations. The group project resulted in a website: [www.danishjews-intheresienstadt.org](http://www.danishjews-intheresienstadt.org), a TV interview in Danish television (regional news channel), and hopefully a book with our results and research.

**2015-2016: Bachelor's thesis.** "Two brothers in resistance and German captivity during WW2". The bachelor project is about my grandfather and his brother in the resistance movement during the German occupation of Denmark in 1940-1945. They were put under arrest in September 1943 and sent to German prisons. I searched the archives, literature and newspapers, interviewed descendants and found a lot of new information.

**2013-2016: Bachelor's Degree.** Bachelor of Arts in German Studies at the University of Southern Denmark (as my major) and Geography and Geoinformatics at the University of Copenhagen (as my minor).

## **ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

2019: "Significant places of the Danish Jews in Theresienstadt 1943-45: how do they describe them?" Presentation at "Werkstattgespräche" (workshop talks), a research community where researchers in German-related topics present their latest scientific work. In German. University of Southern Denmark.

2018: "To describe the indescribable: how the Danish Jews in Theresienstadt described the places they feared with a focus on differences between oral and written testimonies". Presentation at "Engerom Linguistic Circle" at the University of Copenhagen, department of English, Germanic and Romance Studies (Engerom), public event.

2018: "Feared places of the Danish Jews in Theresienstadt 1943-1945". Presentation at the Danish "Network for the study of Nazism and the Holocaust", public event, University of Southern Denmark.

2016: "Two brothers in the Danish resistance movement and German captivity during the Second World War". Presentation at the Danish "Network for the study of Nazism and the Holocaust", public event, University of Southern Denmark.

## **LANGUAGES AND TECHNICAL SKILLS**

Danish is my native language. I speak and write English and German quite fluently. I am familiar with Norwegian and Swedish as these languages resemble Danish a lot.

I have worked in GIS for a number of years, mapping various aspects of the Holocaust such as escape routes, the distribution of camps and ghettos, and animations of the timing of the openings and closings of ghettos. I have done a few visualizations in Tableau, and I can do basic programming in python. I have good technical skills in Microsoft excel as I have used this program in both geography and German studies when dealing with large data sets, e.g. when dealing with large amounts of testimonies.