Wikipedia as Primary Source: A Case Study on Jasenovac

**Why treat Wikipedia as a primary source?**
As an online, open-source, and community-built public space, Wikipedia provides us access to an unmediated digital memory landscape that grants insight on public memory, national identity, and community engagement with history.

**How do we do this?**

1. **The Wiki Article:** Examine an article’s narrative and compare it to a subject’s historiography or compare Wikipedia articles in different languages.

2. **“View History”:** This feature shows what user made revisions & when. Track how the page has changed. What elements of the narrative changed or remained consistent?

3. **“Talk” Page:** Here Wikipedia users interact with one another, discuss, and debate the article’s content. Consider what issues are of contestation and how users engage with one another.

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**Jasenovac on Croatian & Serbian Wikipedia**

Jasenovac was a concentration and death camp operated by the Croatian proto-fascist Ustaše in the Independent State of Croatia between 1941-45. There, 83,000+ Serbs, Jews, Roma, anti-fascists & communists were executed. The legacy of Jasenovac is still a major point of contention between Serbs and Croats today.

**Comparing Serbian and Croatian Wikipedia**

- Croatian version aims to dispel the Jasenovac “myth” and rehabilitate Croatian national identity, while the Serbian version emphasizes the size and brutality of the camp with the Ustaše labeled as perpetrators.
- Croatian version’s history shows that from 2005-2018 Jasenovac was referred to as a death camp rather than a work camp as the site now states. In the Serbian case, the narrative has been relatively consistent with the inclusion of the term genocide in 2012.
- Both talk pages reveal that Jasenovac debates are tied to Holocaust denial. The camp’s relation to the Holocaust however is vague, yet deeply tied to ethnic conflict from the 1990s.
- Users categorize their own and others national identity based on understandings of Jasenovac. Supporting a meek interpretation of Jasenovac and small victim number = Croat & emphasizing camp’s brutality and an inflated victim number = Serb.