

Holocaust in Ukraine: History and Memory in Ukrainian Society through the Prism of National Ressentiment and Civil Rights

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This research project proposes, using the example of the Ukrainian case, to consider how factors such as civil society and national resentment influence attitudes towards the Holocaust, the dynamics of discussions and the construction of memory about it. In a broad historical and geographical context, outline the specifics of the Ukrainian scenario for the perception of the Holocaust in comparison with Western and post-socialist European countries, as well as the former republics of the USSR.

Along with many studies of the memory, memorialization and perception of the Holocaust by Ukrainian society in the post-war and post-Soviet times, modern historiography does not suggest a reasonable explanatory model for just such an attitude towards the Holocaust among Ukrainians. The authors state the Ukrainian-centric nature of the new historical narrative and the non-inclusion of Jewish issues in it, the lack of a consistent policy of memory and memorialization of places of mass destruction, the unwillingness of society for an open discussion and recognition of the participation of Ukrainians in the Holocaust, but do not give an answer to why this happens and what does it tell us about Ukrainian society.

The absence or permanent suppression and deprivation of civil rights in Soviet society led to the loss of the skill of resistance and self-organization, maximum conformity as the most successful survival strategy, the absence of social ties and the functioning of society as a solidarity association that can solve some problems together.

The collapse of the Soviet Socialist Republic and the formation of Ukraine as an independent state did not lead to an immediate paradigm shift, and the new Ukrainian national project underwent serious tests before finally choosing the vector of its development. The failure to establish a nation-state during the Second World War, as well as problems with its positive transformations after gaining formal independence, gave rise to a number of complexes in the national consciousness, including a tendency to resentment, which had a destructive effect, among other things, on the formation of an inclusive historical narrative and society's willingness for a frank discussion about the Holocaust.

While conducting my dissertation research on how and in what contexts the topic of the Holocaust figured in Ukraine in the post-war and post-Soviet public thoughts, I noticed a certain correlation between the state of civil society, national complexes and traumas, and attitudes towards the Holocaust. In this project, I would like to conceptualize my previous work by turning the focus of research attention to what Ukraine and Ukrainian society are like, what problems and challenges it faced in a particular period of time, and how this was reflected in its perception of the Holocaust as part of one's history.