TITLE: History, Politics and Memory: the Holocaust and Its Contemporary Consequences

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Abstract

Although about one-third of all Jews killed in the Holocaust were Soviet citizens as of 1940, we know less about the Holocaust in the USSR than in most other countries. This is because for political and ideological reasons Soviet historians either ignored the murder of Soviet Jews or submerged it in the story of fascist occupation. This project brought together scholars of the Holocaust who have worked on the USSR in order to write papers on several aspects of the subject. This was done for a workshop in March 1990. The project also uses a survey of Soviet immigrants in order to ascertain Soviet Jewish perceptions of the Holocaust and its consequences.

An important goal of the project is to ascertain whether and how the Holocaust influences Jewish attitudes and behavior in the USSR today and what impact it has had on relations between Jews and other nationalities. A consistent finding of our researchers is that, especially in the
Baltic, but also in Ukraine, local peoples terrorized and murdered Jews even before the Nazis arrived or after they invaded but before they began mass murders. This issue was suppressed in the Soviet Union until now and clearly colors Jews' views of their neighbors and their prospects in sovereign or independent states emerging from the disintegrating USSR. The holocaust has even had a direct role to play in the massive emigration of Soviet Jews.

A second contemporary consequence of the holocaust is the alienation of Soviet Jews from the regime and the rise in Jewish national consciousness, in large part because of the holocaust itself and official Soviet refusal to acknowledge it. The psychological, demographic and political consequences of the holocaust explain much of contemporary Soviet Jewish behavior and relations between Jews and other Soviet nationalities. New opportunities for both research and freer expression in the USSR are adding to our knowledge of the holocaust and may enable troublesome issues to be dealt with, thus influencing the evolution of relations between Jews and others.
The Holocaust in the USSR

Although nearly a third of all victims of the holocaust were Soviet citizens, no comprehensive study of that aspect of the holocaust exists. The term "holocaust" itself was largely unknown in the USSR until a few years ago, and it is significant that Jews now call it "genotsid," "kholokaust" or "kholokact," while the latter two terms are undoubtedly completely unknown to Soviet non-Jews. The very term had to be imported from outside. Small wonder that we know more about the holocaust in Greece or Holland, which had far smaller Jewish communities, than we do about what happened in the USSR. Moreover, the holocaust in the USSR has had important contemporary consequences which have also been either not remarked upon at all, or insufficiently analyzed. In part, this is due to the Soviet tendency to either ignore or downplay the holocaust, as well as to the inaccessibility until recently of materials in the Soviet Union.

Like so much else in the USSR, this is changing. Glasnost' has opened the pages of Soviet newspapers and journals to the subject. For the first time, the holdings of Soviet archives and libraries have been opened to some foreign specialists who are now microfilming much of the material for future analysis. At the same time, personal and collective memories of the holocaust seem to be influencing the behavior of large numbers of Soviet Jews who fear another outbreak of anti-Jewish violence and who are emigrating from their native country in
unprecedented numbers. To be sure, the deteriorating economy, the presence of family and friends abroad, and the perception that emigration could be halted at any time are other spurs to the mass movement, but the heightened consciousness of the holocaust created by recent writings and public activities seems to be playing a role as well. Moreover, the holocaust is explicitly on the agenda of the changing relations between Jews and other, especially European, non-Russian nationalities. It remains an unsettled issue not only in the USSR but for many Jews outside the USSR and the emigre communities of Baltic peoples, Ukrainians, and, to a lesser extent, Moldavians/Romanians.

This project was undertaken in order to bring together and make accessible to a wide audience the facts that together constitute the broad outlines of the holocaust in the USSR and to draw out the present day consequences of both the holocaust itself and its treatment for Soviet Jews and their relationships with other nationalities. To this end, I have been doing research on Soviet historiography and on the perception of the holocaust and its treatment by Soviet Jews, as measured by interviews with recent emigres in the Detroit area. I also convened a workshop in London, England in March, 1990, which brought together a small group of scholars from the United States, Germany, Israel and the Soviet Union. The aim of the workshop was to explore different aspects of the subject and see whether it would be possible to essay a comprehensive treatment of the subject. I have come to the conclusion that because so much new research is going on, and there is a realistic expectation that it will continue and even expand in the near future, it is too early to attempt a comprehensive treatment. At the same time, the vacuum that exists can be partially filled by some tentative treatments of aspects of the subject. The workshop
did not, in my judgment, achieve that aim, though it provided some materials toward that end, one which I believe is attainable with some modest investment of effort.

The most appropriate and feasible undertaking at the moment seems to be a volume of essays which will elucidate major aspects of the holocaust in the Soviet Union, with particular attention to its consequences for ethnic relations in the USSR today.

The Consequences of the Holocaust in the USSR

There is considerable disagreement over the number of Soviet Jewish citizens murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators—estimates range from 820,000 to 2.1 million. This is but one manifestation of the status of the subject in Soviet research and writing and the inaccessibility of Soviet records until recently. Whatever the figure, the long-term consequences of the murder of such a large number of people have been profound. They may be grouped under three interrelated rubrics: demographic, political and psychological.

The long-range demographic consequences of such a massive loss of life included those shared by the Soviet population as a whole—an abnormally high number of females, depressed fertility, large numbers of unmarried women, a "missing generation" or even two. But there are also some consequences unique to the Jews. For example, because the Jewish rural population was pretty much concentrated in a few locales in Ukraine, Belorussia and Crimea, it was an easy target for the Nazi death squads who swooped down on Jewish and partly Jewish collective farms and made short shrift of their inhabitants. In 1939 there were about 100,000 Jewish collective farmers, but by the end of the 1950s there were probably no more than 40,000, none of them in specifically Jewish farms.
Moreover, the surviving rural population and those who lived in small towns moved to the larger cities at a more rapid pace than other nationalities. Jewish urban migration was motivated not only by the usual stimuli—desire for better cultural facilities and a higher standard of living— but also by fear of isolation as Jews in an environment that was generally perceived as far more hostile than it had been before the war. Just as surviving Polish Jews feared to return to their shtetlakh and huddled together for safety in the larger cities of southern and Western Poland, so, too, did Soviet Jews move to republic capitals and to Moscow and Leningrad.

A second demographic consequence of the war years was that considerable numbers of the "Zapadniki," Jews who had been Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian and Romanian citizens before 1939-40, succeeded in leaving the Soviet Union, legally and otherwise, generally moving on to Palestine (Israel), Western Europe, Australia, South Africa and North America. This lowered the proportion of Yiddish and Hebrew speaking, less assimilated Jews in the Soviet population but also strengthened the familial and other ties between Soviet Jews and co-ethnics abroad.

There were three important political consequences of the holocaust. First, the illusion held by many Soviet Jews in the decade preceding the war that they were being not only acculturated but assimilated into the larger society was shattered by the ease with which they were identified as Jews by both the Nazis and local populations. Moreover, the "proletarian internationalism" in which many had sincerely believed seemed to have melted away, as many Soviet citizens, including friends and neighbors of Jews, either remained indifferent to their fate or actively aided the killers. Many Jews seem to have come to the realization at this time— often
reluctantly and bitterly—that it was impossible to shuck off one's Jewish identity.

Second, grass roots and governmental anti-semitism, both of which were assumed by many to have disappeared or shrunk into insignificance by the 1930s, made themselves quite manifest in the 1940s. Not only in occupied territory but also in the ranks of the Soviet military Jews were chagrined to find that they were objects of derision and worse. The government's failure during the war to even once condemn explicitly Nazi murder of Jews paled in comparison to the "anti-cosmopolitan" campaign of the late 1940s, the destruction of the remnants of Jewish culture, and the "doctors plot" of 1953. Societal and governmental anti-semitism in these years cooled the considerable ardor which many Jews had for both the system and the country. The beginnings of mass Jewish alienation from both the Soviet system and Soviet society can be found in the war experience and how it was treated by officialdom and the population. Although about 200,000 Jews had been killed in combat, as prisoners of war or as partisans, it was commonly bruited about that "the Jews fought the war in Tashkent," i.e., they enjoyed a comfortable life in evacuation. This accusation seems to have hurt Soviet Jews deeply, for there is a great deal of interest on the part of the older and middle aged generations in demonstrating the heroism and combat records of Jews.

Finally, relations between Jews, on one hand, and Balts, Ukrainians and Moldavians, on the other, have been deeply influenced for nearly half a century by the events of 1940-1945. "Rukh," the Ukrainian national movement, and "Sajudis," its Lithuanian counterpart, have addressed the issue of the behavior of members of their respective nationalities toward Jews during the war. They are aware that there is a perception widespread among Jews, both inside and outside the USSR, that large numbers of Ukrainians and Lithuanians killed Jews together
with the Nazis or even on their own, and that many "punitive" groups working for the Nazis, as well as concentration camp guards, were of those nationalities. As some of the papers at our workshop made clear, spontaneous pogroms against Jews were carried out in Lithuania and elsewhere even before the Nazis took control. In turn, Baltic people, Ukrainians and others in lands occupied by the Red Army in 1939-1940 argue that many Jews greeted the Red Army enthusiastically and were all too happy to take part in ending the short lived independence which the Baltic republics had enjoyed.

Soviet myths and dogmas of "friendship of the peoples" did not permit these issues to be ventilated, and so they have festered for decades. They also condition relations between Jews and these nationalities outside the USSR. Through the 1980s one issue which agitated these communities was whether they could cooperate in the struggle for ethnic and religious rights in the Soviet Union, or whether their relations were forever poisoned by the events of the 1940s.

Today as well, Jews inside and outside the Soviet Union regard the emergent national movements among Soviet peoples with ambivalence. On one hand, they appreciate national assertion and can empathize with those who claim that their cultures and religions have been suppressed by Soviet and Russian dictatorship. On the other hand, they worry that if given their head these peoples might treat the Jewish minority even worse than it had been under a strong, centralized Soviet regime, and they point to ample historical precedent. In the past year or so, several of the non-Russian national movements have been at pains to renounce anti-semitism, confront the behavior of some members of their groups during World War Two, and give moral
and concrete support to Jewish groups trying to revive their culture and religion. Russian nationalism, on the other hand, is perceived today by many Jews as the main danger, since the more radical elements in the Russian national movement have returned to age-old anti-semitic themes, blaming Jews for the ills of Russia and sometimes issuing barely veiled threats against them. In the complex relationships between Jews, Russians and other nationalities the legacy of the holocaust plays a significant role.

The psychological legacy of the holocaust includes a lingering distrust of the populations among whom Jews live; a feeling of insult and injury at the official Soviet suppression of the holocaust, a seminal event in modern Jewish history; and a feeling of vulnerability, especially in times of social, political and economic instability. I was very much struck by a conversation I had in August 1990 with a young Lithuanian supporter of her country’s independence. Reflecting on the diminishing presence of Jews in the capital, Vilnius, where before the war they were forty per cent of the population, she remarked: "It is sad not to hear the sounds of Yiddish and Hebrew here anymore. All my Jewish friends are leaving. But I understand them. They don't trust us. They remember what we did to them in 1941, though we don't want to remember. The saddest thing is-- they are probably right."

Despite repeated assurances in Ukraine, the Baltic and Moldavia that the rights of all nationalities will be scrupulously respected, at least part of the Jewish population-- and not necessarily those who actually lived through the period of the holocaust-- remains wary of their neighbors, largely because it is common knowledge among Jews that some among an earlier generation of neighbors turned against them at a critical time, and that generation has not
confronted its own behavior in the nearly half century that has elapsed.

The Soviet suppression of the holocaust has had an effect opposite to that which was intended. Undoubtedly, one reason for glossing over it was not to arouse Jewish consciousness, which might lead to all kinds of undesirable conclusions. Instead, since almost every Jew learned about it in the family, as interviews with emigres in Detroit make clear, official silence on the matter raised the natural question, "why don't they talk about it?" Nearly half those interviewed in Detroit said that the Soviet treatment of the holocaust led them to conclude, or affirmed an earlier perception, that the regime was anti-semitic. Since most European Soviet Jews were largely ignorant of their religion, culture and history already by the 1950s, and so had only an official Jewish identity with little positive content or consequences, taking away the one profoundly Jewish experience of which they had immediate knowledge and which all of them shared was an especially damaging psychic blow.

In 1989 and again in 1990 rumors spread in the USSR that there would be pogroms against Jews. These rumors were spread throughout the country and beyond it. Though there was no concrete evidence to support them, they were so widely bruited about and given such credibility that even Soviet newspapers found it necessary to try and dispel them.¹ Without any civil rights or defense organizations, such as exist among Western Jews, with no effective political representation and having no faith in a constitutional-legal order that would protect against pogroms, Soviet Jews are more vulnerable than Jews in the West. But they are also

¹ See, for example, "Neuzhto nie slykhali?" Komsomolskaya pravda, August 22, 1989; "Chi bude pogrom?" Zoria (Dnepropetrovsk), April 18, 1989; B. Kirillov, "Razmyshlenie po povodu polzut slukhi," Kurskaya pravda, July 2, 1989.
closer to the holocaust and more apt to believe that it could happen again. What may be seen as hysteria or hypersensitivity in the West seems to many Soviet Jews to be realism. In short, the holocaust is a more immediate reality for Soviet Jews and current events are inescapably perceived in light of the events of 1941-45.

Recent Developments

Glasnost' and perestroika have allowed both greater discussion and exploration of hitherto forbidden subjects. One subject that is being given greater public attention is the holocaust. This is manifested on two levels: popular and academic. On the popular level, in the last three or four years public commemorations of the holocaust, once actively discouraged by the police, have become quite commonplace in both larger cities and small towns. In Leningrad, for example, as late as 1987 attempts to meet in the Jewish cemetery and publicly mark the day established in Israel to commemorate the holocaust were frustrated by the officials. In subsequent years the ceremonies were not interfered with and the number of participants grew rapidly. Similar meetings took place in Moscow, at Babi Yar in Kiev, Minsk and elsewhere, and many of the meetings were reported in the press.

These commemorations seem to have several purposes. They are designed primarily to honor the memory of people, many of whom were very close to those at the gatherings. They are also a public statement that history which had been repressed is being restored to its rightful place. In a larger sense these gatherings are a quasi-religious and communal experience around the one thing that all Soviet Jews shared, irrespective of age, sex, education, social status or politics, and that is their fate. To most Soviet Jews traditional prayer and ceremonial occasions
are unknown. This kind of gathering is far more meaningful to most participants than traditional holidays or fast days.

The gatherings are occasions for expressing multiple solidarities. The participants express solidarity with each other as a beleaguered people now and then. The gatherings also manifest solidarity across generations, despite the political and cultural gaps which otherwise exist. Solidarity is also expressed across boundaries since Soviet participants are aware that the holocaust is an experience with which Jews in Israel and the West also identify.

New conditions have given rise to a sudden burgeoning of a Jewish press. It is estimated that there are now about forty Jewish newspapers and periodicals in the Baltic, Ukraine and Russia. A sampling of this press reveals that nearly every issue has at least one article on the holocaust. Clearly, this subject is of great interest to readers in many cities and there is not one Jewish publication which ignores it.

Even the most "establishment" of the publications, the monthly Sovetish haimland, publishing since 1961 and which has always carried materials relating to the holocaust for its small Yiddish reading audience, has increased the amount of factual material published about the holocaust. It has published descriptions of memorial meetings in several cities, as well as letters from readers asking that more information be made available and that the Black Book documenting the holocaust in the USSR, prepared for publication by Ilya Ehrenburg and Vassily

Grossman in 1946, be published finally in a Soviet edition. Three issues (May-July 1990) carried the first extensive chronicle of what happened to Jews in the USSR in 1941-1945, including their role in combat. A total of 77 double-columned pages was devoted to the articles, introduced as "but one of the first steps on the road to deeper and broader work in this field." An article by the late Shaul Borovoy on the annihilation of Odessa's Jews was published in July 1990. It was said to be the first work published in the USSR on the holocaust which was based completely on Soviet archival materials.

This kind of publication bridges the popular and the academic or scholarly. Similarly, the interviewing of holocaust survivors is of interest both to general and to scholarly publics. In Odessa a group of professional historians and cultural activists is videotaping accounts by survivors of some of the camps of Transnistria. Amateur historians are making parallel efforts in other cities. In Moscow and Leningrad the Jewish cultural associations have sub-sections whose task it is to research the holocaust. In light of all the other tasks before a community which has had no communal life and organizations since at least 1948, it is highly significant that researching and understanding the holocaust should be given such prominence.

The holocaust has also been salient in the political arena. As the non-Russian republics

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3 See "Di potsht," Sovetish haimland, No.5 (May) 1989, p. 139.

4 Nikolai Motovilov, "Yidn in FSSR un di milkhome fun 1941-45," Sovetish haimland, Nos. 5, 6, 7, 1990. This work is said to be based on a through survey of five Soviet newspapers, not including the Yiddish daily of the war years, six documentary collections, and other sources.

moved to independence, they have been very careful to specify that all nationalities should enjoy equal rights and cultural opportunities within them. Mykhailo Horyn, chairman of the secretariat of the Ukrainian Rukh movement, rejects "All proponents of integral nationalism, all those who believe in the idea of 'Ukraine for Ukrainians" and asserts that "We are forming ethnic communities which represent a spectrum of independent communities within an independent and democratic Ukraine. It is only such a Ukraine that we foresee, and only such a Ukraine that we want to build." 6

In the Baltic, however, some see the national movements as curtailing the rights and freedom of expression of the Slavic populations. Be that as it may, the Baltic movements have explicitly supported Jewish cultural expression. And yet, the shadow of the holocaust hangs over Baltic-Jewish relations, as expressed in the Yiddish newspaper now published in Vilnius. "The greatest problem which all Jews in the diaspora face cannot go unmentioned. The declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the Lithuanian Republic 'On the Genocide Against the Jews During the Hitlerite Occupation' was received with satisfaction and it should be a buffer against antisemitic manifestations. But...it pains us to see the callousness of officials who prevent the commemoration of the memory of the victims of genocide. They avoid designating the sites of mass murder as places where Jews were sent to their eternal rest." 7

The author went on to say quite pointedly that "In our republic people avoid speaking openly and writing about events in Lithuania in the years 1941-1944; people try to cut out this period of history as if there hadn't been mass slaughter of Jews, no ghettos, no self-sacrifice by

6 Interview with Marta Kolomayets, The Ukrainian Weekly, September 2, 1990.

7 Shmuel Hirsh, "Barg arop?" Yerushalayim d'Lite No. 6, June 1990, p. 1.
noble people who saved Jews, as if there had not been a total extermination of a nation. So how, asks a Jew, is our period different from Stalin's or Brezhnev's?...These thoughts and feelings have dominated the mass emigration."\(^8\) Thus, a direct connection is made between the holocaust of half a century ago and the mass emigration of Jews today. Clearly, the holocaust remains a political issue affecting relations between Jews and other nationalities.

**Developments in Research**

There are no professionally trained historians of the holocaust in the Soviet Union. However, there are professional historians whose training has been in other fields who are now taking an interest in the holocaust. These are mostly Jews and seem to number less than a dozen. More numerous are amateurs who are collecting testimony from survivors or doing library and archival work. About a dozen people were brought from the USSR to Jerusalem's Yad Vashem Institute in 1990 for a two week training seminar in holocaust research. They returned to the USSR where they are presumably continuing their work.

An exciting new development was the decision by the authorities to grant access to Soviet archives to researchers from both the United States Holocaust Memorial Commission and Yad Vashem, the main holocaust research center in Israel. Teams of researchers from both institutions have been working together in the USSR and have concentrated on microfilming materials in archives in several cities, including Moscow, Leningrad, Odessa, Riga, Minsk and others. Since information is lacking especially on the pre-1939 Soviet territories, this is the area in which the researchers are concentrating. The films are being taken to Israel and the United

\(^8\) Ibid.
States.

Another potentially rich source is the complete archive of Ilya Ehrenburg which was brought to Israel and is now at Yad Vashem. That archive, containing testimonies collected in the mid- and late 1940s, is now being catalogued and examined by Israeli specialists. Information about the Holocaust is also being disseminated more widely among Russian-language readers outside the USSR. In 1990, the head of Yad Vashem, Yitzhak Arad, himself a former Soviet partisan, published a paperback book in Russian titled *Kholokast*, a collection of essays on aspects of the Holocaust in the USSR.

**Workshop Report**

In order to try and bring together some of the research on the Holocaust in the USSR, I convened a workshop in London with the aid of the NCSEER grant and cooperation from the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies of University College London. The latter provided a meeting room and very reasonable housing and eating facilities so that the workshop could be held within budget. The workshop was held immediately following a conference at University College London on Jews in the USSR, so that the costs of some participants were shared and some UCL conferees were invited to participate in the workshop as commentators and observers. The latter included Professor John Armstrong (Wisconsin), who has done research on Ukraine in World War Two; Dr. David Bankier (Hebrew University) who specializes in Nazi propaganda and the Holocaust; Professor Roman Szporluk (University of Michigan) who has done research on ethnic relations in Ukraine, Belorussia and Russia; two UCL students with interests in the
holocaust, and two or three others.

Workshop participants were: Dr. Yitzhak Arad, Yad Vashem; Dr. Dov Levin, Yad Vashem; Dr. Shmuel Spektor, Yad Vashem; Mr. Michael MacQueen, Office of Special Investigations, U.S. Department of Justice; Dr. Hans-Heinrich Wilhelm, Germany; Professor Zvi Gitelman, University of Michigan; Mr. Daniel Romanovsky, Yad Vashem; and Professor G.A Kumanev, Institute of the History of the USSR, Soviet Academy of Sciences, Moscow. It was logistically very difficult to secure the participation of Professor Kumanev, but since this was the first time that a Soviet scholar had participated in a conference on the holocaust, we felt that our efforts were worthwhile. Professor Kumanev has written on the role of Soviet railroads during the war but has now begun to turn his attention to the holocaust.

Professor Mordechai Altshuler and Dr. Yosef Litvak of the Hebrew University were invited to present papers but could not do so because of illness. Professor Altshuler has promised a completed paper by January 1991, but Dr. Litvak, who has made valiant efforts to write his paper, is, unfortunately, terminally ill and we cannot expect his paper.

In compliance with the NCSEER contract, which calls for a "conference report," what follows are Executive Summaries of the workshop papers. I have added a few remarks drawn from the workshop discussion as well as my own evaluation of each paper in regard to suitability for publication in its present form.
Yitzhak Arad, "The Holocaust in the USSR: An Overview"

We know of Soviet archival holdings with a great deal of material on the holocaust but only now are being made available to foreign and even Soviet historians. The greatest dearth of information pertains to what happened within the pre-1939 Soviet borders. There has been very little published on the lives of the 70 million Soviet citizens under occupation, and even less on the Jews. [Professor Armstrong noted that in 1956-58 he had read 70 Soviet dissertations on the occupation, and in none were Jews ever mentioned at all]. It is difficult to estimate the number of Nazi victims. Probably 10-12 per cent of the over two million Jews in the annexed territories succeeded in escaping the invaders, while another 2-3 per cent had been deported to the Soviet interior in 1939-41. About 1.75 million Jews remained under German occupation, and about half succeeded in fleeing. Another 20-30,000 survived as partisans or in hiding, but 200,000 Jews died in the armed forces and another 80,000 Jewish prisoners of war were killed.

The paper discusses the German administration of the occupied territories and delineates three periods in the process of mass murder. The situation varied from one region to another and the paper traces the consequences of these differences for the Jews. As for the local population, "The degree of collaboration in the Baltic states was much greater than that in Belorussia or even in the Ukraine. In the Baltic states most of the Jews were killed by local police and other volunteer units...." Moreover, "The German army [as opposed to special killing squads] was directly involved in the murder of Jews in the occupied Soviet Union to a greater extent than in any other country...."

The attitude of local populations toward the killings was mostly one of indifference. That objectively assisted the Germans since in order to survive Jews would have needed the food,
shelter and false papers that the population would have had to provide. The number of active collaborators was smaller than of the indifferent but larger than that of active rescuers of Jews. The paper suggests reasons for this and also points out that the Soviet government and Party never called for assistance to Jews, perhaps because all civilians in occupied areas, including Jews were seen "almost as traitors."

**Evaluation:** This is a sound, comprehensive paper that needs to be fleshed out and can be usefully supplemented with selective translation from Arad's recent Russian-language book on the holocaust in the USSR. In revised form it can be a good introductory chapter to a book. There are some obvious implications here for the contemporary period and I hope to induce Arad to draw them out. Arad is a former Soviet partisan, head of Yad Vashem, author of a fine study of the Vilna ghetto, and recently has worked in Soviet archives. For these reasons it is important to have him as an author.

Georgii Kumanev, "The Hitlerite Genocide of the Jewish Population on the Occupied Territory of the USSR"

The subject has hardly been touched upon in the Soviet Union for several reasons. The occupied territories had multiethnic populations and the Fascist genocide was directed against many peoples. Secondly, until very recently, any author focussing on Jews "could easily have been accused of some kind of nationalism or Zionism." However, the time has come to fill in the blank spots in Soviet historiography.

Basing himself on published documents and some archival materials, Kumanev attempts
an overview of the subject. He describes Nazi policies and their implementation; the ghettos in Ukraine, especially Lvov, the mass murder at Babi Yar (Kiev), and similar actions in the Baltic. The fate of Jewish POWs has been unjustly neglected, and he touches on the subject.

The Soviets have never tried to establish the number of Jews murdered. There are many untapped resources in the USSR that could yield considerable information. The "Pamyat" (Memory) project aims to list the names of all Soviet citizens who died in the war. This work will probably fill over 400 volumes.

Evaluation: This essay is somewhat superficial, going over what is familiar ground for Western readers, but acknowledging the shortcomings of Soviet scholarship and trying to explain them. Some of them are inadvertently brought out in the paper which is written, still, in the style of the "period of stagnation." Kumanev seems to imply that the most important task is to fix the exact number and names of the victims. Nothing is said about collaboration and its consequences, about attitudes of Soviet citizens, or about evacuation policy. These omissions speak for themselves. In my judgment the paper should stand as is because it accurately reflects the problematics of Soviet attitudes and scholarship, while also acknowledging them.

The paper was written in Russian and I have supervised and edited a translation.

Shmuel Spector. "The Holocaust of Ukrainian Jews"

The Nazis, and Hitler especially, identified Jews with Bolshevism and therefore the Wehrmacht was reminded that one aim of the war was to eliminate the "Jewish-Bolshevist
intelligentsia," then expanded to include all Jewish state employees, which, in Soviet conditions, meant just about all Jews. The mass murder of Soviet Jews "was the first stage in the 'Final Solution.'"

Einsatzgruppen C and D numbered only 1,400 men but operated throughout Ukraine, a vast territory over which the Jews were scattered. This is why "many local Ukrainian auxiliary police units" and German rear guard units were used in the mass murder of Jews. Another "problem" was that the German army relied on local skilled labor and Jews were very prominent in this field.

There were Ukrainian pogroms against Jews, the biggest in Lvov where thousands were murdered. These were encouraged by the Germans who also reported receiving "basketfuls" of denunciations of Jews by local inhabitants in Kiev and elsewhere. In West Ukraine ghettos were established and Jews stayed alive longer (until 1942/43) than in the east. All told, about 1.5 million Jews were killed in the enlarged Ukraine (including Bessarabia, Bukovina, East Galicia). About a million Ukrainian Jews were saved by flight or evacuation.

Evaluation: The paper is clear and well constructed but it is only an outline of a very complex subject. More needs to be written about regional differences, Ukrainian-German relations and their implications for Jews, and, of course, Ukrainian-Jewish relations. Recently, several books on Ukrainian-Jewish relations have been published and these need to be considered. Whether or not Dr. Spector will be willing to undertake substantial expansion of his paper remains to be seen.
Dov Levin. The Holocaust in the Baltic States

The rapidity of German occupation determined Jews' chances for survival in the Baltic states. In Lithuania, occupied within three to four days, only six per cent of the Jewish population survived, whereas 60 per cent survived in Estonia where the occupation took over two months. What made the situation in the Baltic particularly tragic was that "A large number of Jews...particularly those residing in small towns, were murdered by former neighbors, classmates, customers and the like. Moreover, many of these incidents occurred before the German army entered...." The great majority of Baltic Jews were killed within the first six months of the occupation. Jews were shipped to Baltic ghettos and concentration camps from other countries.

Three obstacles to Jewish partisan activity were that so many had been killed so early in the occupation; the hostility of the local population; partisan units were Communist-dominated and controlled from Moscow, and this put off many Jews.

At the end of the war, the Jewish population of the Baltics was only five per cent of what it had been, and many of the survivors had migrated from other areas of the USSR.

Evaluation: This is quite sketchy. Dov Levin has written extensively on this subject, mostly in Hebrew. It might be possible to go through his writings and select more comprehensive and appropriate sections, though one will not find there attempts to examine the contemporary consequences of the holocaust. That may need another author.
Michael MacQueen. Nazi Policy Toward the Jews in the Reichskommissariat Ostland, June-December 1941: From White Terror to Holocaust in Lithuania

The thesis of this paper is summed up as follows: "The Holocaust in Lithuania was as much the product of pressures from below (i.e., low level SS and SD commanders, commanders of collaborationist units, local vigilante squads, persons of responsibility in the Nazi and indigenous civil administrations) as it was of the decrees issuing from the Nazi hierarchy; further, it was the development of these forces in, and in conjunction with, the specific ethno-political context of Lithuania that made possible the full development of the Holocaust."

In the first three months of the Nazi occupation there was more of a "white terror" (anti-Semitic riots) than a planned and systematic extermination campaign. Only when the Germans recognized "the destructiveness of their Baltic collaborators" did they shift to systematic extermination since they saw that local attitudes and behavior made this feasible.

Contrary to popular perceptions, Jews did not benefit from the Soviet occupation of 1940. Nevertheless, they were held responsible for it and 5,000 Jews were killed, mostly in Kaunas, before the Nazis even came in. Close analysis of the Einsatzgruppen leads to the conclusion that "the German 'achievement' has to [be] considered largely as a 'triumph' of managing the Lithuanian auxiliary forces...without whom this deadly work would not have been remotely possible." It may be that the experience of seeing so many Jews killed so brutally and quickly by local elements contributed to the decision adopted at Wannsee in 1942 to launch the "final solution."

Evaluation: This is a very important, even shocking, paper. It is well documented, with a clear
and striking thesis, and well presented. If the thesis is correct, it explains much of contemporary Jewish-Baltic relations and the current mass emigration placed in the context of prospective Lithuanian independence.

Hans-Heinrich Wilhelm, "Inventing" Holocaust for Latvia - New Research Problems

The paper reviews a good deal of the German literature, especially on the occupation in Latvia, and points out untapped sources of information, such as soldiers’ letters.

In the early stages Jews were killed sporadically and under pseudo-legal pretexts. There was an escalation to mass murder, but there was no "grand design" implemented as originally planned.

Contrary to some recent arguments, the holocaust was not designed out of a desire to achieve economic rationality or eliminate poverty. In Latvia, the local population wanted Jewish wealth and Jewish women for sexual relations. Latvian churches remained mostly indifferent to the Jews. There may have been a Nazi fifth column planted in Latvia before the war which may have spurred Latvian actions against Jews, many of which were considered excessive by the Germans.

Evaluation: This essay is disorganized and strays often from the main theme. The author commands a good deal of literature but does not handle it well. A colleague of Wilhelm’s has offered to help him rewrite and so it remains to be seen whether it can be salvaged for
Daniel Romanovsky, "Soviet Jews Under the Nazi Occupation (based on data on North-Eastern Byelorussia and Northern Russia)"

On the basis of 120 oral interviews conducted by the author in East Belorussia in 1984-1987, half of them with non-Jewish witnesses, the author explores the reasons more Jews did not flee. There was a lack of transportation, they were unfamiliar with the countryside, Soviet law prohibited leaving one's workplace, there were strong moral and social pressures to stay and help produce for the front. Local officials were also afraid to urge evacuation lest they be charged with "lack of faith in the Red Army." Subjective factors impeding evacuation included ignorance of the true state of military affairs, images of the German as fair and cultured and an attachment to modest possessions which people had acquired only at the end of the 1930s when the standard of living had risen somewhat.

Romanovsky describes German anti-Jewish propaganda and local administration and analyzes the reluctance of the local population to help Jews. People were afraid to help; they viewed Jews as alien; they assumed every regime had its enemies (theirs had identified Whites, Trotskyites, Kulaks and Nepmen) and the Jews played that role for the Germans; they were used to seeing people shot. As a woman who saw especially cruel executions of Jews in Sebezh put it, "How were the Jews shot? Well, what's there to tell. They were shot and that's all."

The paper describes in vivid detail the ghettos, murders of entire town populations, and how Jewish goods were taken over by others. To this day there remains a strong--and fantastic--
impression among the local population regarding huge quantities of gold taken from the Jews.

"The Jewish gold even now disturbs the minds of some inhabitants of Eastern Belorussia."

**Evaluation:** This is an example of the amateur history being done now in the USSR and provides a good complement to the "official" writing of Kumanov. The paper is firmly anchored in the Soviet realities of the 1930s and 1940s and recreates the atmosphere of the period, touching also on the lasting imprint the holocaust made on Jews and non-Jews who lived through it. This is an unusual and needed perspective. Some heavy editing should make this into a fine contribution.

Mordechai Altshuler, "The Impact of the Holocaust on Jewish National Consciousness in the USSR"

Data from three unpublished research projects among Soviet emigres indicate that the holocaust played a more decisive role in raising Jewish consciousness and identity than did the establishment of the State of Israel, the Six Day War of 1967 or the Yom Kippur war (1973). This is true also for those who were born after 1945. Knowledge of the holocaust was acquired mainly within the family and it was personalized. Immediately after the war some Soviet literature and music dealt with the holocaust but the theme was abandoned by 1950, to the consternation of many Jews. Recent novels and other works dealing with the holocaust are read eagerly by Soviet Jews and well known among them.

**Evaluation:** Thus far, I have only an outline of the essay. Its thesis fits very well with the
findings from my study in Detroit. I anticipate a well documented and valuable contribution to our understanding of the contemporary and behavioral relevance of the holocaust.

Zvi Gitelman, "History, Memory and Politics: The Holocaust in the Soviet Union"

The holocaust has been ignored or downplayed in Soviet writings, except in Yiddish, and this paper examines why this is so. However, contrary to assertions by some Western analysts, there is considerable variation in Soviet treatments of the holocaust. The variations seem idiosyncratic, indicating that there was no rigid "Party line" on the matter. Soviet Yiddish writing emphasizes aid to Jews by fellow Soviet citizens and the leading roles played by Communists in anti-Nazi resistance. Collaboration by Soviet people, Jewish military heroism and anti-semitism among Soviet people are themes assiduously avoided by Soviet authors.

The way the holocaust has been treated has aroused Jewish resentment and has raised ethnic consciousness. The holocaust remains a major item on the agenda of relations between Jews and other peoples of the USSR. It influences Jewish attitudes to both Soviet society and the system.

Comment: This paper was published in 1990. Since its publication I have uncovered some more information on Soviet historiography before glasnost'. New materials have been published in the last two years and need to be taken account of in a revised treatment.
The Detroit Study

In an attempt to understand Soviet Jewish perceptions of the holocaust and their influence on Jewish attitudes and behavior in the USSR, I have collected about 270 interviews with 1989-90 arrivals in the Detroit area. They come from all parts of the European USSR, and include both sexes, people of different ages, educational levels and occupations. About 240 interviews have been coded, the rest are being coded, and the interviews will be resumed with a new wave of arrivals. Eventually, I hope to have at least 350 interviews.

A preliminary analysis shows a very high proportion of the respondents having served in the Soviet military during the war or having close relatives who did so. Seventy-one lost close relatives in combat and 137 had close relatives who were murdered as civilians. The great majority learned about the holocaust as children, either through personal experience or in the family, and very few learned about it from Soviet media or schoolbooks, though 27 per cent read books about it, the most frequently mentioned being Anatoly Kuznetsov’s Babi Yar, Evgenyi Evtushenko’s poem by the same name, and Anatoly Ryubakov’s novel Heavy Sand. Over two-thirds could cite a Soviet book dealing with the holocaust and the great majority cited Kuznetsov, Evtushenko or Rybakov. Only ten per cent thought Soviet non-Jews had sympathized with Jewish plight and two-thirds thought the population was either indifferent or divided in its attitudes toward Jews. Fully three-quarters of the respondents asserted that consciousness of the holocaust influenced their ideas about the place of Jews in the USSR. The perceived indifference of the Soviet government to the holocaust led a high proportion to the conclusion, as they typically put it, "that there is no place for Jews in the USSR" or that "the regime is anti-semitic."
When asked which Soviet nationalities, if any, collaborated with the Nazis, fully 84 per cent mention Ukrainians first (nearly 47 per cent of the respondents were born in Ukraine), with Russians second.

Interestingly, less than a third could venture even a guess as to the number of Jews killed in the USSR, and among those who did offer an answer the numbers vary wildly. The overall figure of six million Jewish holocaust victims is much more familiar.

When the data are complete, it will be possible to analyze them by sex, age, region of origin and other variables. This may yield another chapter, possibly complementing Altshuler’s.

**Agenda for the Future**

The objectives of the original research plan have been largely accomplished but, not surprisingly, they have generated further goals. Several objectives remain:

1) Workshop papers need to be revised and in most cases supplemented as well as heavily edited for language and style.

2) Since my ultimate objective is the production of a book which will touch on all major aspects of the Soviet holocaust, I would like to go beyond the workshop papers and find suitable articles for inclusion. These are most likely to be translations from Russian, Yiddish and Hebrew, since, as far as I have been able to determine, the English language literature is very thin.

3) I would like to finish my own documentary research and revise my article, bringing it up to date. There are ten volumes of Evrei i Evreiskii Narod (collections of articles from the Soviet press) and two years of Sovietish haimland and other journals that need to be examined.
4) The Detroit area study should be completed through further data collection and analysis.

If I am able to accomplish these tasks, the projected volume should be ready for publication some time in 1992 or 1993.