

Violence against Civilian Victims on the Eastern Front of World War II

Initiative: Trilaterale Partnerschaften – Kooperationsvorhaben zwischen Wissenschaftler(inne)n aus der Ukraine, Russland und Deutschland

Bewilligung: 05.12.2019

Laufzeit: 3 Jahre

Projekt-Website: https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/md/zegk/sog/forschung/civilian_victims_2020.pdf

The main focus of the project is on crimes against civilians in the occupied and liberated territories of the Soviet Union, especially in Russia and Ukraine, during the Second World War. The researchers involved will analyze violence by various actors, such as Nazi occupation forces, local collaborators, different nationalist groups, Soviet partisans, the Red Army and other agents of the Soviet state apparatus from multiple perspectives. They will focus on victims of violence as well as perpetrators and bystanders, while recognizing the fluidity of these categories. Wartime violence will be studied in its immediate local contexts while simultaneously placing it within the larger historical framework of the Nazi war of annihilation in the East and repressive policies of wartime Stalinism. The project emphasizes six major areas: 1) the study of experiences of civilians under specific German occupation regimes and study of violence as particular method of rule; 2) study of the Holocaust in conjunction with other major forms of violence; 3) a focus on different local contexts of violence; 4) study of violence in Soviet home front areas, with particular emphasis on how the home front reacted to the deep German incursion into Soviet territory; 5) study of violence as part of liberation by the Red Army, re-Sovietization and the politics and experiences of retribution; 6) study of experiences of violence and perceptions of individual victims on the basis of self-testimonies.

Projektbeteiligte

Prof. Dr. Tanja Penter

Universität Heidelberg
Osteuropäische Geschichte
Zentrum für Europäische Geschichts-
und Kulturwissenschaften
Historisches Seminar
Heidelberg

Dr. Olena Lysenko

National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
Institute of History of Ukraine
Kiev
Ukraine

Prof. Dr. Oleg Budnitskii

Higher School of Economics
School of History
International Center for the History and Sociology
of World War II and Its Consequences
Moscow
Russland

Prof. Dr. Oleg Khlevniuk

State University - Higher School of
Economics
School of History
International Center for the History and Sociology
of World War II and its Consequences
Moscow
Russland

Artem Latyshev

Higher School of Economics
International Center for the History and Sociology
of World War II and Its Consequences
School of History
Moscow
Russland

Dr. Liudmila Novikova

State University - Higher School of
Economics
International Center for the History and Sociology
of World War II and Its Consequences
School of History
Moscow
Russland

Dr. Roman Podkur

National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
Institute of History of Ukraine
Kiev
Ukraine

Dr. Valeryi Vasyliev

National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine
Institute of History of Ukraine
Kiev
Ukraine

Wolfgang Schneider

Universität Heidelberg

Zentrum für Europäische Geschichts- und Kulturwiss

Osteuropäische Geschichte

Historisches Seminar

Heidelberg

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