

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

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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.

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