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TamÖÂ¡s Krausz. *The Soviet and Hungarian Holocausts: A Comparative Essay.* DeKornfeld and Helen D. Hiltabidle. Center for Hungarian Studies and Publications, Hungarian Authors Series. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006. ix + 136 pages. $30.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-88033-569-0.

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A Comparison, but an Unbalanced One

The Holocaust in Hungary is not well known internationally and few books on the subject are available in western languages. The situation is comparatively better concerning the understanding of the extermination of Jews in Russia during the Nazi occupation. So, an essay comparing both countries should be a worthwhile and promising effort, especially if the author is a professor of Russian studies at Budapest University. But readers expecting the comparison announced in the title will be disappointed, as Krausz rarely mentions the Holocaust in Hungary, doing no more than counting the casualties and briefly describing the political aftermath during the communist era. As this book is mainly an analysis of the Holocaust in Soviet politics, the description of the book as a "comparative essay" is misleading. While the work definitely is an essay, calling it a comparative one seems a bit of a stretch. After introducing nationalism as the root of antisemitism in Europe, Krausz writes on Jews in the Soviet Union. Subsequently he examines expropriation, deportation and extermination between 1938 and 1941 and characterizes the genocide in Hungary and the Soviet Union. The last chapters show the Soviet political use of the Holocaust during the cold war and its consequences such as anti-Zionism and emigration; furthermore, Hungarian and other East European variations of the political afterlife of the Holocaust are examined.

In his essay Krausz offers some inspiring insights and aspects especially for the Soviet Union. He focuses on the prehistory of antisemitism in Russia and the results of the genocide in Soviet politics, covering a time period spanning from the nineteenth century to the 1980s, while the actual murders are dealt with mainly as numbers and statistics. Cold war history especially is presented in detail, comprising some thirty pages of a rather small book. These topics reveal Krausz as a capable and well-read researcher who formulates clear and practical verdicts based on comprehensive knowledge of Soviet history. As the work does not rely on archival sources but mostly on Eastern European literature, there are no new facts to be learned, but several of the author's interpretations and conclusions are fresh and convincing and some comparatively unknown details are presented.

It is a pity that Krausz obviously did not make use of large segments of new Holocaust research, quoting only one German title and none of the great studies by Raoul Hilberg, Christopher Browning or Peter Longerich, for example. If he had, his judgments might have been more precise and correct when dealing with non-Russian history. It seems that errors occur whenever he writes about German history. The group of historians stressing Hitler's role instead of structural influences on National Socialism are not "internationalists" but "intentionalists" (p. 36). That the churches in Germany did not protest against the genocide does not mean they supported the National Socialists due to a shared antisemitic conviction (p. 6); Krausz does not distinguish between religious and racial antisemitism and states that a "particular importance of the racial factor was manifest only in the Soviet

territories" (p. 51f), leaving aside Poland, for instance.

Certainly it is not true that "there was no mutual or ideological difference between the SS and the Wehrmacht, only a functional one," and one wonders, why it should not be important whether or not a German soldier was convinced of the truth of National Socialism (p. 48). All these points have been duly examined or are at least still being discussed in historiography and obviously they are of great relevance for understanding National Socialism. But as Krausz's book is not intended to achieve this goal, the author shows no interest whatsoever in explaining or even taking into consideration accurate description in detail. Thus, it is no surprise that he greatly overestimates the weight of Daniel Goldhagen's work in Holocaust research. The field is by no means determined by Goldhagen's influence, which eventually led to ignoring the "multidimensional diversity of the true motivations" (p. 111). This is definitely not the case.

So, who should read this book and whom does it concern? Undoubtedly it is not written for the Holocaust researcher focusing on Eastern Europe, for it will neither inform nor satisfy him. As little of the quoted literature is in western languages, the book is not suited for further studies and its inaccuracy on areas outside of Soviet history makes the volume of little use for undergraduate teaching. Due to its clearly stated verdicts, Krausz's essay might enlighten readers with little in-depth knowledge who want to inform themselves about the Holocaust in Soviet politics. They can find credible answers to their questions, while the errors concerning German history may be negligible. Clear and short verdicts, not lengthy historical debates and differentiated argumentation, makes the work a fair read for people who lack time for more research. However, this group may be somewhat smaller than the topic–and the volume–deserve. In the end, a more precise handling of facts and interpretations not related to Russian history would have made it easier to recommend the book as a work on a neglected subject, even if Krausz does not really compare the Soviet and Hungarian Holocausts.

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