

# GUIDELINES

FORGOTTEN VICTIMS - THE HOLOCAUST OF THE SOVIET JEWRY



DRAWING OF A MOTHER CARRYING  
HER DAUGHTER, 1942, UKRAINE.  
GHETTO FIGHTERS HOUSE ARCHIVES

# RATIONAL

IN JUNE 1941, "OPERATION BARBAROSSA" BEGAN - THE GROUND ATTACK OF THE GERMAN ARMY ON THE SOVIET UNION. THIS OPERATION ALSO MARKED THE BEGINNING OF THE FINAL SOLUTION - THE MASS MURDER OF THE JEWS IN THESE AREAS, WHO MADE UP MORE THAN A THIRD OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST. HALF A MILLION MORE JEWS FOUGHT AS PART OF THE RED ARMY AND AS PARTISANS.

DESPITE THIS, THE STORY OF THE SOVIET JEWRY DURING THE HOLOCAUST AND THE WAR IS NOT WELL KNOWN. WE WISH TO ADDRESS THIS ABSENCE AND EXAMINE THEIR FATE BOTH IN THE LOCAL AND BROADER CONTEXT OF THE JEWISH HOLOCAUST AND TO COMMEMORATE THOSE COMMUNITIES THAT WERE DESTROYED BETWEEN 1941-1944.

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## GOALS

- TO LEARN ABOUT THE STORY OF THE SOVIET JEWRY DURING THE HOLOCAUST, THROUGH TESTIMONIES FROM THE FILMS CREATED BY THE DIRECTOR BORIS MAFTZIR.
- TO EXPERIENCE A JOINT INQUIRY ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE SOVIET JEWRY DURING THE HOLOCAUST.
- TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE TO REMEMBER THE LESS KNOWN STORY OF THE SOVIET JEWRY, AS PART OF THE HISTORICAL HERITAGE OF THE DESCENDANTS LIVING ALL AROUND THE WORLD.



# GUIDELINE

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## BACKGROUND

During the Holocaust, the German army invaded the territories of the Soviet Union in June 1941. This operation also marked the beginning of the final solution – the mass murder of the Jews in those areas, who make up more than a third of the victims of the Holocaust. Half a million more Jews fought as part of the Red Army and as partisans.

Despite this, the story of the Soviet Jewry at the time of the Holocaust and the war is not well known. During this activity, we will try to shed light on the fate of the Soviet Jews, through personal testimonies, most of which are taken from a series of films created by the director Boris Maftzir. Through those testimonies, we seek to expand the historical story and context, and to commemorate those communities that were destroyed between 1941-1944.

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FACILITATOR

First let's watch a video clip of a dynamic map, presenting key stages of the path leading to the mass murder of the Jews in the eastern territories and the Soviet Union, starting with "Operation Barbarossa": The German invasion into the Soviet Union territories, the Einsatzgruppen units, and finally, the layout of the mass shooting sites. Watch the dynamic map video on the next page.



**Optional question for discussion after the video: Did the video broaden your historical knowledge? How so?**

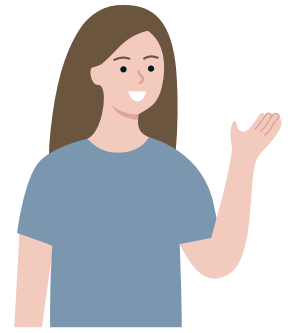


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# The fate of the the Soviet Jewry during the Holocaust

During the invasion of the German army into the territories of the Soviet Union and the East, the systematic persecution of the Jews began in all the areas that they occupied. The persecution was carried out in decrees, in some cases the establishment of ghettos, and finally, mass murder at shooting sites.

During the activity, we will view testimonies of those who survived and those who witnessed the murders. These testimonies are part of a series of films, created by the director Boris Maftzir, in which he sought to trace the unknown past of the Soviet Jewry Holocaust.



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## PART ONE

- Click on the 'testimonial videos' button on the website and watch two testimonies of your choice. It is recommended to watch one longer testimony (10 minutes) and a short testimony (3-5 minutes).
- Choose one section from the testimonies that spoke to you/caught your attention, moved you. Present the section to the class/group and explain your choice.

## PART TWO

- Click on the '**Interactive Map**' button, which includes stories of the victims and sites of murder.
- Choose one character you connected with and present it to the class/group and explain your choice.



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## PART THREE

Click on the '**Aftermath Button**' and watch the video. Then scan the QR code and answer the survey.



- In your opinion, what are the reasons that it is important to learn about the story of Soviet Jewry during the Holocaust and World War II?
- How do you think awareness of this issue can be raised?

## SUMMARY

The final solution of the Jewish people began in the summer of 1941, with the invasion of the German army into the territories of the Soviet Union. Approximately two million Jews (some researchers indicate more than two and a half million victims) were murdered at mass murder sites by Einsatzgruppen units and local collaborators. As a result of the Cold War and the historical focus on the Ghettos and Camps in Poland, the Holocaust of the Soviet Jews (alongside their heroism within the partisan units and the Red Army), is less known.

In this activity, we wanted to raise awareness of their story, as part of its historical significance and to broaden the context of the Holocaust.



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