

The Pogroms of 1918-1921 and the Onset of the Holocaust

The Pogroms of 1918-1921 were a series of violent attacks against Jewish communities in Eastern Europe, particularly in Ukraine and Poland. These events marked a dark period in history and are seen by many as a precursor to the Holocaust. Understanding the causes and consequences of these pogroms is essential for comprehending the factors that led to the systematic extermination of millions of Jews during World War II.

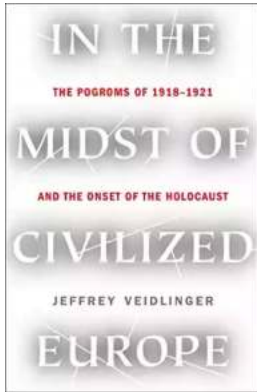
The Historical Backdrop

To truly appreciate the significance of the pogroms of 1918-1921, it is necessary to delve into the historical backdrop against which these events took place. The end of World War I saw immense political and social upheaval in Eastern Europe. Economic instability, nationalist tensions, and the collapse of various empires created an atmosphere of uncertainty and unrest that fueled interethnic conflicts and targeted attacks against minority groups.

The Outbreak of Pogroms

The pogroms of 1918-1921 were not isolated incidents; they were widespread and systematic. Jewish communities became easy targets for resentful nationalists seeking to vent their frustration and blame them for the post-war hardships. The chaos and breakdown of law and order in many regions created an environment conducive to the spread of anti-Semitic propaganda, further fueling the violence.

In the Midst of Civilized Europe: The Pogroms of 1918–1921 and the Onset of the Holocaust



by Jeffrey Veidlinger(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 38284 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 465 pages



Methods and Motives

Pogroms were often unleashed upon Jewish communities by organized mobs or military units. They involved harassment, looting, rape, and murder. The motivations behind the pogroms were multifaceted, ranging from political and economic grievances to deep-rooted anti-Semitic sentiments. Some nationalist groups believed that by targeting the Jews, they could divert attention from their own failings or grievances.

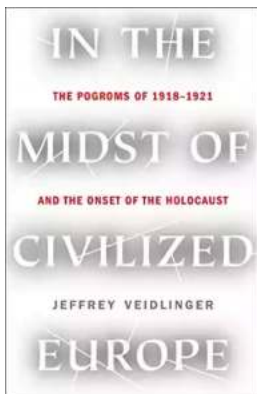
Impact and Legacy

The pogroms had a profound impact on the Jewish community and left a lasting mark on history. As thousands of Jews were killed or forcibly displaced, many sought refuge in other countries, fostering the emigration of Jewish populations to nations such as the United States, Canada, and Palestine. The trauma of the pogroms also played a role in shaping Jewish identity and highlighting the urgent need for a Jewish homeland.

The Connection to the Holocaust

The pogroms of 1918-1921 are widely regarded as a precursor to the Holocaust. While they may not have had the scale or systematic nature of the later genocide, the pogroms provided a blueprint for the oppression and dehumanization of Jews. The atrocities committed during this period served as a chilling foreshadowing of the horrors that were to come.

The pogroms of 1918-1921 were a dark chapter in history, representing the violent persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe. These events, along with the prevailing social and political climate, set the stage for the Holocaust. By examining and understanding the causes and consequences of these pogroms, we can strive to prevent such acts of hate and violence from repeating in the future.



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FINALIST FOR THE NATIONAL JEWISH BOOK AWARD * SHORTLISTED FOR THE LIONEL GELBER PRIZE

“The mass killings of Jews from 1918 to 1921 are a bridge between local pogroms and the extermination of the Holocaust. No history of that Jewish catastrophe comes close to the virtuosity of research, clarity of prose, and power of analysis of this extraordinary book. As the horror of events yields to empathetic understanding, the reader is grateful to Veidlinger for reminding us what history can do.”

—Timothy Snyder, author of *Bloodlands*

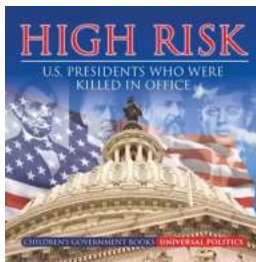
Between 1918 and 1921, over a hundred thousand Jews were murdered in Ukraine by peasants, townsmen, and soldiers who blamed the Jews for the turmoil of the Russian Revolution. In hundreds of separate incidents, ordinary people robbed their Jewish neighbors with impunity, burned down their houses, ripped apart their Torah scrolls, sexually assaulted them, and killed them. Largely forgotten today, these pogroms—ethnic riots—dominated headlines and international affairs in their time. Aid workers warned that six million Jews were in danger of complete extermination. Twenty years later, these dire predictions would come true.

Drawing upon long-neglected archival materials, including thousands of newly discovered witness testimonies, trial records, and official orders, acclaimed historian Jeffrey Veidlinger shows for the first time how this wave of genocidal violence created the conditions for the Holocaust. Through stories of survivors, perpetrators, aid workers, and governmental officials, he explains how so many different groups of people came to the same : that killing Jews was an acceptable response to their various problems. In riveting prose, *In the Midst of Civilized Europe* repositions the pogroms as a defining moment of the twentieth century.



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