

Francine Hirsch, *Soviet Judgement at Nuremberg: A New History of the International Military Tribunal After World War II*, Oxford University Press, 2020 – 560 p.

The book *Soviet Judgement at Nuremberg: A New History of the International Military Tribunal After World War II* has 4 parts, concerning one of the most important juridical events of the 20th century: the establishment of the International Military Tribunal (IMT). For the first time in history, an international court acknowledged the notions of crimes against humanity, genocide, and war crimes.

Francine Hirsch is an objective historian who knows that the Nuremberg Trials represent a special history when addressing the war history.

It is also known that the Soviets were interested in presenting the Nazi crimes in their real image for disclosing their own crimes, for example, the Katyn massacre, made by the Soviets against the Polish Army war prisoners (both officers and soldiers), which Soviets blamed the Nazis for (the ammunition for Soviet rifles were compatibles with German one after the help the USSR gave to the Weimar Republic and the German Reich during the inter-war period). The Western Allies had the occasion to see that many Soviet prosecutors were chosen, by Stalin, amongst the most submissive prosecutors from the arranged trials that took place during the Great Purges ordered by him in the early thirties.

The Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact from August 23rd 1939 was a heavy heritage of the war for the Soviets. Stalin had already sent a lot of prisoners of war (even 150,000 Romanian officers and soldiers who had surrendered on August 23rd 1944, on the Eastern Front) in Siberia Gulag camps and, during the war, most of the prisoners had died because of terrible prison conditions in the Soviet camps. More than a third of the war prisoners did not return to their countries and families.

Many times, Soviet prisoners (especially from NKVD or partisans) were killed without trial by SS and German prisoners (especially SS, Gestapo agents), immediately after they were made prisoners.

On the other hand, British, American and French prosecutors had tried to convince the German prisoners (former statesmen, high-ranked officers, scientists, even former SS, Gestapo, RHSA, Abwehr officials) to offer military secrets, intelligence, the results of their discoveries, in exchange for reducing or cancelling the penalties.

Francine Hirsch considers that the “birth certificate” of the Cold War was signed at the meeting rooms within the Justice Palace from Nuremberg. Both the Soviet and the Western Allies would have German intelligence and people on their side, in case of a future military confrontation.

Nobody could deny the role of Soviet Union in defeating the Nazis, or that the International Military Tribunal (IMT) made possible the institutionalization of the Human Right Movement, but, overall, there can be noticed that, during the sessions, there occurred a lot of confrontations between the Soviet and the Western Allies.

Francine Hirsch has a major contribution through the book *Soviet Judgement at Nuremberg: A New History of the International Military Tribunal After World War II*, for the better understanding of the events that took place almost eight decades ago.

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