



The Phantom Holocaust: Soviet Cinema and Jewish Catastrophe (Jewish Cultures of the World)

Olga Gershenson

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Even people familiar with cinema believe there is no such thing as a Soviet Holocaust film. *The Phantom Holocaust* tells a different story. The Soviets were actually among the first to portray these events on screens. In 1938, several films exposed Nazi anti-Semitism, and a 1945 movie depicted the mass execution of Jews in Babi Yar. Other significant pictures followed in the 1960s. But the more directly filmmakers engaged with the Holocaust, the more likely their work was to be banned by state censors. Some films were never made while others came out in such limited release that the Holocaust remained a phantom on Soviet screens.

Focusing on work by both celebrated and unknown Soviet directors and screenwriters, Olga Gershenson has written the first book about all Soviet narrative films dealing with the Holocaust from 1938 to 1991. In addition to studying the completed films, Gershenson analyzes the projects that were banned at various stages of production.

The book draws on archival research and in-depth interviews to tell the sometimes tragic and sometimes triumphant stories of filmmakers who found authentic ways to represent the Holocaust in the face of official silencing. By uncovering little known works, Gershenson makes a significant contribution to the international Holocaust filmography.

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