**Oleksandra Pekáčková Modelska**

"At the center of my dissertation project are topologies of the Holocaust in southern Ukraine, focusing on relations between individuals, groups, and places in Odesa during World War II. Odesa, a historically important commercial hub, was one of the most ethnically complex Russian Empire cities. In 1939, the city had already 600,000 inhabitants, a third of them were Jews. Following the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, Odesa was invaded by Romania, an ally of Germany. As the town surrendered, nearly 30,000 people, most of them Jews but also Roma and Soviet POWs were executed in Odesa by the Romanian army units. The “small Babyn Yar,” as the series of events is also referred to, remains one of the most tragic chapters of the region's history, one that is still neglected in scholarship. Between 1941–44, the Romanian authorities and the SS detachments brutalized Odesa inhabitants through anti-partisan actions, starvation, ghettoization, deportation, but also execution of Soviet POWs, Jews, and Roma. As opposed to the official narrative that shifts responsibility for the crimes committed against the Odesa inhabitants solely on the occupation forces, my project argues that many anti-Jewish and anti-Roma operations relied on local Ukrainian involvement. Building on new scholarship that suggests an uneven distribution of support for the policies against Jews in southern as opposed to western territories of Ukraine, this project investigates the making of genocide within the multiethnic town of Odesa. Taking into account the spatiality of events in southern Ukraine, as well as the varying attitudes of the local population towards their Jewish and Roma counterparts and the role of macro-level factors, such as religious categorization, socio-economic and political identification, my Ph.D. dissertation project sheds new light on what fosters complicity and collaboration, in Odesa as elsewhere."