

Historical Politics, Legitimacy Contests, and the (Re)- Construction of Political Communities in Ukraine during the Second World War

by

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Abstract

This doctoral dissertation is a study of historical politics and legitimacy contests in Ukraine during the Second World War. By situating the operations of the Soviet state and its wartime antagonists within a broader strategic, military and political context, the study elucidates the role of historical politics in the violent processes of the building and breaking of political communities.

Through a series of case studies the dissertation untangles activities of various participants in the process of information gathering and the production of knowledge about the past for the purposes of legitimation, fashioning of collective values, nation-building, and state security. It sheds light on the relationships between various actors and organizational networks within the system of Soviet historical politics; exposes structures of complicity in the Stalinist dictatorship and simultaneously maps the outer limits of its power.

The dissertation also shows how the daily exercise of power by agents of the Soviet state—through public pronouncements, commemorations, state surveillance, and repression of bearers of alternative political identities-- had a tangible impact on behavior and everyday ideological iterations by thousands of historical subjects in the formerly occupied territories, be it former Ukrainian nationalist activists, local collaborators, Soviet partisans, members of intelligentsia or children that experienced the Axis occupation. At the same time, these people were anything but passive recipients of the official narratives. Many of them actively pursued their distinct agendas within the historically conditioned environment fraught with power inequalities that structured their choices and furnished them with tools of interpretation and languages of expression of their experiences. In the process, they often displayed ability to influence, manipulate, and occasionally even thwart the officially sanctioned narratives, prompting Soviet officials, ever preoccupied with issues of legitimacy, to continually adapt to the reality on the ground.

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Glossary of Abbreviations and Foreign Terms

Agitprop (from Agitatsiia i propaganda)—Department of the Agitation and Propaganda of the Communist Party

AK (from Armija Krajowa)—Polish Home Army

ChGK (from Chrezvychaĭnaia gosudarstvennaia komissiiia)—Extraordinary State Commission for the Documentation and Investigation of Atrocities of German Fascists and their Henchmen and for the Establishment of Damage to the Property of Citizens, Collective Farms, Civic Associations, State Enterprises and Institutions

FUR (from Front Ukraïns'koï revoliutsiï)—Front of the Ukrainian Revolution

Gestapo (from Geheime Staatspolizei)—Secret State Police

Glavlit (from Glavnoe upravlenie po delam literatury i izdatel'stv)—Main Directorate in the Affairs of Literature and Publishing Houses

GPU (from Glavnoe Politicheskoe Upravlenie)—Main Political Directorate (Soviet Security Service in Ukraine between 1922 and 1934)

Komsomol (from Kommunisticheskiĭ soïuz molodezhi)—Communist Youth League

KPZU (from Komunistychna partiia Zakhidnoï Ukraïny)—Communist Party of Western Ukraine

Kripo (from Kriminalpolizei)—German Criminal Police

NEP (from Novaia ěkonomicheskaia politika)—New Economic Policy

NKGB (from Narodnyĭ Komissariat Gosudarstvennoĭ bezopasnosti)—People's Commissariat of State Security, Soviet Security Service between February and July 1941 and between 1943 and 1953

NKVD (Narodnyĭ Kommissariat Vnutrennikh Del)—People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs

OGPU (from Ob'edinennoe Gosudarstvennoe Politicheskoe Upravlenie)—the United Main Political Directorate, Soviet Security Service in 1922-1934

OUN (from Organizatsiia Ukraïns'kykh Natsionalistiv)—Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists

ROA (from Russkaia Osvoboditel'naia Armiiia)—Russian Liberation Army

RO NKVD (from raionnyĭ otdel NKVD)—district administration of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs

SD (from Sicherheitsdienst)—German Security Service

TsK KP(b)U (from Tsentral'nyī komitet Kommunisticheskoi partii bol'shevikov Ukrainy)—
Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine

TsShPD (from Tsentral'nyī shtab partizanskogo dvizheniia)—Central Headquarters of the
Partisan Movement

UNDO (from Ukrain's'ke Natsional'no-demokratychno Ob'iednannia)—the Ukrainian National-
Democratic Association

UNKVD (from Upravlenie NKVD)—Regional Administration of the People's Commissariat of
Internal Affairs

UNRA (from Ukraīns'ka Natsional'na Revoliutsiīna armiia)—the Ukrainian National
Revolutionary Army

UNS (from Ukraīns'ka natsional'na Samooborona)—the Ukrainian People's Self-Defense

UPA (from Ukraīns'ka Povstans'ka Armiia)—the Ukrainian Insurgent Army

UPR—the Ukrainian People's Republic

UShPD (from Ukraīns'kiī Shtab Partizanskogo dvizheniia)—the Ukrainian Headquarters of the
Partisan Movement

VChK (from Vserossiiskaia Chrezvychainaia Kommissiia po bor'be s kontrrevoliutsiē i
sabotazhem)—the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for the Struggle Against Counter-
Revolution and Sabotage, Soviet Security Service between 1917 and 1922.

VKP(b) (from Vsesoiuznaia Kommunisticheskaia partiia bol'shevikov) —the All-Union
Communist Party of the Bolsheviks

Introduction

Write. Write as much as you can. Facts are remembered more or less, but feelings and all things dear and delicate that grow out of experiences simply vanish from memory [...] Let partisans write. Teach them. Encourage them. Let them keep diaries, intimate and warm, not officious reports for household use. Maybe your diary will grow into a book about the Ukrainian people in its struggle for life. The book has to show heroic characters, military talents, human passions, elation, battle exploits, spiritual greatness equal to that of our glorious forefathers, as well as lowliness, incompetence, darkness, treason and wanderings through the labyrinths of the giant cataclysm, through swamps and fires, amidst ruins and gallows, like wild beasts in the forests, at times without an oath, without knowledge of history, without properly nourished feelings of patriotism and under various influences aggravated by agitation that utilise all our stupid mistakes [...] Write. Time is running out. Appoint a special record keeper for yourself and for the old man [Kovpak]. Bring back all human passions, all movements, all tears, the pride and hatred towards the enemy, revenge and passion. Do not allow them to lapse into oblivion [...] Do not follow the example of our glorious forefathers, the Zaporozhian Cossacks, who, after their sceptres and alcohol containers disintegrated under the brunt of time, left behind hardly any historical traces, so that even history has to be written using testimonies of foreign contemporaries [...]. Follow the example of the Germans. It is true that they, bastards, have no ideals, because the ideas they are fighting for are heinous, but we, people of higher ideals, creators and authors of history, should not fail to record for posterity the beatings of our hearts and the fire of our reason.¹

This remarkable artefact from the Central State Archive-Museum of Literature and Arts of Ukraine belongs to the pen of the renowned Soviet Ukrainian film-director Oleksandr Petrovych Dovzhenko (1894-1956). Dovzhenko composed the letter in June 1943, when Sydir Kovpak's partisan brigade--in which Dovzhenko's correspondent Petro Vershyhora served as chief intelligence officer-- embarked on a dangerous raid from the Belorussian Polissia through war-torn Volhynia and on to the Carpathian mountains.²

Dovzhenko's plea to keep diaries and collect exhibits for the museum was not an isolated episode. Indeed, only recently the film-maker--whose unusually expansive and heterogeneous

¹ Central State Archive-Museum of Literature and Arts of Ukraine (TsDAMLNU), fond 690, opys 4, sprava 125, arkushi 1-2.

² Kovpak's brigade began its Carpathian raid on 12 June 1943: Valerīi Smoliī, ed., *Ukraїna: Khronika XX stolittia. Roky 1941-1943. Dovidkove vydannia* (Kyiv: Instytut istoriї Ukraїny NAN Ukraїny, 2005), 441.

communication network included many senior functionaries of the Communist party and the Soviet state--had persuaded the republican party leadership to commandeer camera men to major Soviet partisan units with instructions to film the latter's combat operations and everyday life.³ Simultaneously, Dovzhenko lobbied for the creation of the war museum, collected footage for what would become his epic documentary "Battle for Our Soviet Ukraine," and even took part in the work of the republican branch of the "Extraordinary State Commission for the Documentation and Investigation of Atrocities of German Fascists and their Henchmen" (further ChGK).⁴

Insofar as the filmmaker took for granted the connection between historical consciousness and national identity, his historical activism was not merely a reflection of his keen sense of ethical obligation to wage a battle against forgetting in the face of unprecedented destruction of human life and local cultural heritage. It was part of a systemic effort to forge the historical infrastructure of Soviet Ukrainian nation-building. As such his initiatives were unquestionably part of a much larger cultural phenomenon that encompassed not only the rich tradition of Soviet historicism, but also a plethora of commemorative ventures outside Soviet controlled territories

³Dovzhenko mentioned his initiative on the dispatch of film operators in the above-mentioned letter to P. Vershyhora. See also the decision of the underground Central Committee of the Communist Party (of the Bolsheviks) of Ukraine "On the Dispatch of Camera Operators to Partisan Units," 10 June 1943 [Central State Archive of Civic Organizations of Ukraine (TsDAHOU), f.1, op.19, spr.7, ark.157-158]; on Dovzhenko's negotiations with functionaries of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement (UShPD), see the reminiscences of the former deputy head of the UShPD Leontii Drozhzhin: "Vospominaniia ob A.P.Dovzhenko" (TsDAMLMU, f.690. op.4, spr.186, ark.18-28). On film-operators in the Kovpak brigade, see the reminiscences of the partisan F. Pshenitsin (TsDAHOU, f.63, op.1, spr.87, ark.78).

⁴ Dovzhenko's proposal to create the Republican Museum of the Patriotic War is mentioned by head of the department of propaganda and agitation of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine K. Lytvyn in his letter to N. Khrushchev on 7 June 1943 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr. 449, ark.2-3. Many contemporaries noted Dovzhenko's eagerness to hold conversations with people who participated in the fighting at the front, in the Soviet partisan movement or returned from the occupied territories. See, for example, reminiscences of the partisan commander Oleksandr Balabaï: "Chelovek, kotorogo zabyt' nel'zia," (TsDAMLMU, f.690. op.4, spr.186, ark.1-4); deputy commander of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement Leontii Drozhzhin, "Vospominaniia ob A.P.Dovzhenko," June 1958 (TsDAMLMU, f.690. op.4, spr.186, ark.18-28); writer Serhii Voskresenko, "Pid chas viïny i pislia neï (pro O.Dovzhenka)," (TsDAMLMU, f.690. op.4, spr.186, ark.38-42). The irony of Dovzhenko's collaboration with the Extraordinary State Commission consisted in the fact that the latter was spearheaded by the Soviet security service, while the film-maker himself had for more than a decade worked under secret police surveillance. The relationship between the Extraordinary State Commission and the Soviet security service is outlined in the directive by People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Vasiliï Sergiienko "On the Organisation of the Extraordinary State Commission for Documentation and Investigation of Atrocities of German-Fascist Invaders on the Territory of the Ukrainian SSR," 20 April 1943 (Central State Archives of Higher Organs of Government of Ukraine [TsDAVOVU], f. 14, op.1, spr. 2408, ark.57-61). See also Marina Sorokina, "People and Procedures: Toward a History of the Investigation of Nazi Crimes in the USSR," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 6, No.4 (Fall 2005): 797-831; Aleksandr Epifanov, *Otvettvennost' gitlerovskikh voennykh prestupnikov i ikh posobnikov v SSSR: istoriko-pravovoi aspekt* (Volgograd: MVD RF, Volgogradskii Iuridicheskii Institut, 1997), 90-92.

(most notably Emanuel Ringelblum's "Oneg Shabbat" archive in the Warsaw Jewish ghetto and the anti-Soviet "Archive-Museum of the Transitional Period" in Nazi occupied Kyiv).⁵

Given the wartime efforts of the Soviet government to mobilize the patriotic feelings of different ethnic groups within the USSR, it should come as no surprise that Dovzhenko's historico-political initiatives received support from various functionaries of the Soviet state.⁶ What is less known is that his ethno-centric historical activism and his fixation on the Ukrainian dimension of the war had long infringed on the uncertain limits of Stalinist ideological orthodoxy.⁷ In fact, in 1933 the former soldier of the Ukrainian People's Republic--who had for years worked under

⁵ Soviet historicist tradition encompassed a broad array of institutions. On the Commission for the Study of History of the October Revolution and the Communist Party (*Istpart*): Frederick Corney, *Telling October: Memory and the Making of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2004); on the Commission for the Study of the History of the Russian Youth Movement: Sean Guillory, "The Shattered Self of Komsomol Civil War Memoirs," *Slavic Review* 71, No.3 (Fall 2012): 546-548; on the Institute of Marxism-Leninism: Vladimir Mosolov, *IMEL-tsitadel' partiinoi ortodoksii. Iz istorii Instituta Marksizma-Leninizma pri TsK KPSS, 1921-1956* (Moskva: Novyi Kronograf, 2010); on Maksim Gor'kii's "History of Plants and Factories": Sergeĭ Zhuravlev, *Fenomen "Istorii fabrik i zavodov": gor'kovskoe nachinanie v kontekste epokhi 1930-kh godov* (Moskva: Institut Rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 1997); on the Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War: Aleksandr Samsonov, *Pamiat' minuvshogo. Sobytiia, liudi, istoriia* (Moskva: Nauka, 1988), 224-225; N.M. Rudenko, "Diial'nist' Komisii z Istorii Vitchyznianoï viiny AN URSSR po stvorenniu dokumental'noi bazy," *Storinky voiennoi istorii Ukrainy. Zbirnyk naukovykh statei*. Vypusk 3 (Kyiv, 1999): 29-39; on the "Extraordinary State Commission": Sorokina, "People and Procedures"; Nathalie Moine, "Fascists Have Destroyed the Fruit of my Honest Work.' The Great Patriotic War, International Law and the Property of Soviet Citizens," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 61, No.2 (2013): 172-195; on the Black Book" project of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee: Shimon Redlich, *War, Holocaust, and Stalinism: A Documented History of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in the USSR* (New York: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1995), 95-108; Anthony Beevor and Luba Vinogradova, eds., *A Writer at War: Vasily Grossman with the Red Army, 1941-1945*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 2005), 345-347; Joshua Rubinstein, Il'ia Al'tman and Yitzhak Arad, eds., *The Unknown Black Book: The Holocaust in the German-Occupied Soviet Territories*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).

On Ringelblum's project: Samuel Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History? Rediscovering a Hidden Archive from the Warsaw Ghetto* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007); on the archival preservation in the Vil'na (Vilnius) ghetto: Rakhil' Margolis, "Nachalo," in *Zydu muziejus/Evreiskii muzei/The Jewish Museum*. (Vilnius: Liutuvos valstybinis zydu muziejus, 1994), 11-16; On the "Archive-Museum of the Transitional Period" in the Nazi occupied Kyiv: Vitalii Gedz, "Dzherela do vyvchennia kul'turnoho zhyttia v okupovanomu Kyievi (1941-1943 rr.)," *Spetsial'ni istorychni dystsypliny: pytannia teorii ta metodyky: Zbirnyk naukovykh prats'*, No.15 (2007): 188-189; Oleksandr Bezruchko, "Serhii Oleksiiovych Hiliarov: dolia vchenoho i mystetstvoznavtsia na tli viiny," *Z arkhiviv VChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.1 (2011): 310-315.

⁶ On mobilization of patriotic feelings of different ethnic groups: Vladyslav Hrynevych, "Viis'kove budivnytstvo v Radians'kii Ukraïni (kinets' 30-kh—80-ti roky XX st.)," in *Istoriia ukrains'koho viis'ka 1917-1995*, ed. Iaroslav Dashkevych, 332-467 (L'viv: vydavnytstvo "Svit," 1996), 340-341; Serhy Yekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory: Russian-Ukrainian Relations in the Soviet Historical Imagination* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 24-32.

⁷ Viacheslav Popyk, "Pid sofitamy sekretnykh sluzhb (dokumenty z papky-formuliaru na O.P.Dovzhenka)," *Z arkhiviv VChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.1-2-3 (1995): 235-280; George Liber, *Alexander Dovzhenko: A Life in Soviet Film* (London: BIF Pub., 2002), 5; Oleksandr Bezruchko, *Nevidomyi Dovzhenko* (Kyiv: Feniks, 2008), 67-68; Idem, "Sprava-formuliar 'Zaporozhets': novi dokumenty pro rezhysera Oleksandra Dovzhenka," *Z arkhiviv VChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.2 (2009): 327-352.

secret surveillance by the Soviet security service--evaded the fate of many of his colleagues within Ukraine's cultural establishment only by soliciting protection from Joseph Stalin himself.⁸

At the time, the dictator, famous for his keen appreciation of the political significance of history, literature, and visual arts, not only took the filmmaker under his wing, but also commissioned films glorifying heroes of the Revolution and "socialist construction" in Ukraine.⁹ The recognition and state awards bestowed on Dovzhenko in the following years were as much due to Stalin's patronage as they were to his undeniable talent, creative output, and uncanny ability to navigate the discursive minefields of Soviet public culture in the 1930s and 1940s. That ability famously betrayed Dovzhenko in January 1944. Once again it was Stalin who played the role of the ultimate arbiter.¹⁰

Stalin's attack on the screenplay of Dovzhenko's "Ukraine in Flames"-- complete with accusations of anti-Leninism and nationalist deviation-- was not a whim of the irrational dictator.¹¹ Rather it was a product of the confluence of several factors: Stalin's persistent pattern of intervention into the cultural domain; Dovzhenko's attempts to integrate into the narrative of national identity the trauma of the 1930s and less than glorious experiences of war and occupation; extensive Soviet intelligence about the broad crisis of Soviet legitimacy in the Axis occupied territories; and last but not least, the outbreak in spring 1943 of the anti-Soviet nationalist insurgency in Volhynia and Galicia and the operations against the underground structures of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) in the Soviet controlled territories.

Specifically, Stalin and his lieutenants in Ukraine knew that following the outbreak of the Soviet-German war both Bandera and Melnyk factions of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (further OUN-B and OUN-M)¹² and some other political groupings not only

⁸ Liber, *Alexander Dovzhenko*, 136; on the fate of the Ukrainian intelligentsia during the 1930s: Serhiï Bohunov and Iuriï Shapoval, eds., *Ostannia adresa: rozstrily solovets'kykh v'iaznyv z Ukraïny u 1937-1938 rr.* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo "Sfera," 2003), 2 volumes.

⁹ Liber, *Alexander Dovzhenko*. 155-158.

¹⁰ Grigoriï Mar'iamov, *Kremlevskii tsenzor. Stalin smotrit kino* (Moskva: Konfederatsiia soiuzov kinematografistov "Kinotsentr," 1992), 52-63; Oleksandr Dovzhenko, *Shchodennyk (1941-1956)*. Eds. Mykola Zhulyns'kyï and Roman Korohods'kyï (Kyiv: "Veselka," 1995), 323.

¹¹ For the details and stylistics of Stalin's attack on Dovzhenko: Mar'iamov, *Kremlevskii tsenzor*, 52-62.

¹² In 1940 the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists --which carried out underground operations in Poland since 1929-- split in two factions. One group remained loyal to the then leader of the organization Andrii Mel'nyk. The

managed to extend their clandestine operations to the pre-1939 Soviet territories, but also temporarily took control over the formation of (collaborationist) administrations, militia/auxiliary police, editorial offices of newspapers, and various cultural institutions in many cities, towns and villages as far afield as Kyiv, Kharkiv, Donbas and Crimea.¹³

In Eastern Galicia and Western Volhynia—which before 1939 were part of Poland—such organisational activities were accompanied by significant levels of popular mobilisation and political instrumentalization of traumatic memories of Soviet rule that not infrequently were channelled by Nazis and Ukrainian nationalists alike into anti-Jewish violence and extra-judicial killings of functionaries of the Soviet state.¹⁴ Anti-Soviet historical narratives were exploited to

other group pledged loyalty to the young radical Stepan Bandera. On the history of the OUN: John Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism* (Littleton, Colorado: Ukrainian Academic Press, 1980); Roman Wysocki, *Organizacja Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów w Polsce w latach 1929-1939: geneza, struktura, program, ideologia* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2003); Anatoliĭ Kentiĭ, *Zbroinyĭ chyn ukraïns'kykh natsionalistiv, 1920-1956: istoryko-arkhivni narysy* (Kyiv: Derzhavnyi komitet arkhiviv Ukraïny, 2005); Frank Grelka, *Die ukrainische Nationalbewegung unter deutscher Besatzungsherrschaft 1918 und 1941-1942* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2005); Grzegorz Motyka, *Ukraińska partyzantka 1942-1960 : działalność Organizacji Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów i Ukraińskiej Powstańczej Armii* (Warszawa: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN : RYTM, 2006); Franziska Bruder, *“Den ukrainischen Staat erkämpfen oder sterben!”: Die Organisation Ukrainischer Nationalisten (OUN), 1929-1948* (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2007); Frank Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer 1914-1939* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2010); Oleksandr Zaïtsev, *Ukrains'kyĭ integral'nyi natsionalizm (1920-1930-ti) roky: narysy intelektual'noi istoriï* (Kyiv: Krytyka, 2013).

¹³See the transcript of Stalin's comments on the screenplay of “Ukraine in Flames”: Mar'iamov, *Kremlevskii tsenzor*, 52-56; There are many Soviet intelligence reports about the activities of various nationalist organizations in the occupied territories. See, for example, the directive of the NKVD of the USSR No.364 “On Intensification of Struggle Against Ukrainian Nationalists,” 14 August 1941 (Vladimir Iampol'skiĭ, ed., *Organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti SSSR v Velikoĭ otechestvennoi voĭne* (Moskva: “Kniga i Bizness,” 1995), t. 2, kn.1, 480-481); the report by the chief of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement T. Strokach “On Activities of Ukrainian Nationalists in the Occupied Territories of Ukraine,” no earlier than 5 December 1942 (Ivan Bilas, ed., *Represyvnokaral'na systema v Ukraïni 1917-1953: suspil'no-politychnyi ta istoryko-pravovyi analiz: u dvokh knyghakh* (Kyiv, “Lybid’”: “Viis'ko Ukraïny, 1994), t.2, 335-340).

¹⁴ Andrzej Żbikowski, “Local Anti-Jewish Pogroms in the Occupied Territories of Eastern Poland, June-July 1941,” in *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union: Studies and Sources on the Destruction of the Jews in the Nazi Occupied Territories of the USSR 1941-1945*, eds. Lucjan Dobroszycki and Jeffrey S.Gurock, 173-179 (New York and London: M.E.Sharpe, 1990); Bernd Boll, “Zloczow, July 1941: The Wehrmacht and the Beginning of the Holocaust in Galicia: From Criticism of Photographs to a Revision of the Past” in *Guilt and Denial in the 20th Century*. Eds. Omer Bartov and Mary Nolan (New York: New Press, 2002), 61-99; Dieter Pohl, “Anti-Jewish Pogroms in Western Ukraine: A Research Agenda,” in *Shared History, Divided Memory: Jews and Others in Soviet Occupied Poland, 1939-1941*, eds. Elazar Barkan, Elizabeth A. Cole, and Kai Struve, 305-314 (Leipzig: Simon Dubnow-Institut für Jüdische Geschichte und Kultur: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2007); Marco Carynnyk, “‘Jews, Poles and Other Scum: Ruda Różaniecka, Monday, 30 June 1941’” (paper presented at the Fourth Annual Danyliw Research Seminar in Contemporary Ukrainian Studies, Ottawa, October 2008); Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe, “The ‘Ukrainian National Revolution’ of 1941: Discourse and Practice of a Fascist Movement,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 12, No.1 (Winter 2011): 83-114; Omer Bartov, “Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies: Jewish-Christian Relations in Buczacz, 1939-1944,” *East European Politics and Societies* 25, No.3 (2011): 486-511; John-Paul Himka, “The Lviv Pogrom of 1941: the Germans, Ukrainian Nationalists, and the Carnival Crowd,” *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 53, N.2-4 (June-December 2011): 209-243; Jeffrey Kopstein and Jason Wittenberg, “Deadly Communities: Local Political Milieus and the Persecution of Jews in Occupied Poland,” *Comparative Political*

delegitimize the Soviet state also further to the east—within the borders of the pre-1939 Soviet Ukraine.

The consequences of this ultimately unsuccessful strategy of state-building--which OUN-B and OUN-M attempted to implement in secret even after the Nazi authorities refused to recognise the Ukrainian state and began to arrest nationalist activists--were manifold. Contemporary scholarship has focused primarily on the ideology of the OUN, the implication of various nationalist organisations in the operations of the genocidal Nazi state, and in the Ukrainian-Polish conflict in Volhynia and Galicia.¹⁵ From the perspective of Communist functionaries, however, of far greater concern was the appearance in the course of the war of a sizeable underground network connected to centres of armed insurgency in Galicia and Volhynia and encompassing in addition to itinerant members of the OUN hundreds of local activists of the defunct Ukrainian People's Republic, the clergy of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church, the Ukrainian-speaking intelligentsia, and local peasants.¹⁶

Within this larger context, Stalin's censure of Dovzhenko appears to have expressed genuine concern that the latter's ethnocentric narratives would further weaken the already problematic Soviet legitimacy claims in Ukraine and play right into the hands of Ukrainian nationalists.¹⁷ In

Studies 44, No.3 (March 2011): 259-283; Kai Struve, "Rites of Violence? The Pogroms of Summer 1941," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry. Volume 24. Jews and their Neighbours in Eastern Europe Since 1750* (2012): 257-274; Ivan Katchanovski, "Suchasna polityka pamiati na Volyni shchodo OUN-b ta natsysts'kykh massovykh vbystv," *Ukraïna Moderna*, 30 April 2013, <http://www.uamoderna.com/md/199>, last accessed 26 July 2015).

¹⁵ In addition to the works cited above, see also Marco Carynnyk and Karel Berkhoff, "The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and Its Attitude Towards Germans and Jews: Iaroslav Stets'ko's 1941 Zhyttiepyss," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 23, No.3-4 (1999): 149-184; Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569-1999* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 154-178; Karel Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine Under Nazi Rule* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 275-304; Marco Carynnyk, "Foes of Our National Rebirth; Ukrainian Nationalist Discussions about Jews, 1929-1947," *Nationalities Papers* 39, No.3 (2011): 315-352.

¹⁶ On the activities of the OUN-B in the pre-1939 Soviet territories: Volodymyr Nikol's'kyi, *Pidpillia OUN(b) u Donbasi* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukraïny NAN Ukraïny, 2001); Viktoriia Zhyliuk, *Diial'nist' OUN ta UPA na Zhytomyrshchyni u 1941-1955rr.* (Rivne: Volyns'ki oberegy, 2008); Hennadii Ivanushchenko, ed., *OUN-UPA na Sumshchyni* (Sumy: Derzhavnyi arkhiv Sums'koi oblasti/Tsentr doslidzhen' vyzvol'noho rukhu, 2009), 2 volumes; Oleksandr Dobrovol's'kyi, ed., *OUN na Donechchyni (zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv)* (Donets'k: Spadshchyna, 2013). See also the review of the said volume by Iurii Radchenko, "Nastup na skhid pounivs'ky i Holokost," *Ukraïna Moderna*, 5 January 2014, <http://uamoderna.com/blogy/yurij-radchenko/nastup-sxid-golokost>, last accessed 26 July 2015).

¹⁷ The peculiarities of the ideological challenge posed by Nazis and Ukrainian Nationalists in Eastern Ukraine were outlined in the report of the department of propaganda and agitation of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine: "On the Conditions of Agitation and Propaganda Work in the Liberated Districts of the Khar'kov and Voroshilovgrad regions" [undated, no earlier than spring 1943] (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.70, spr.209, ark.1-26).

this regard, it was anything but accidental that the controversy coincided with the start of the Red Army drive into centres of nationalist insurgency and the intensification of NKVD/NKGB operations against the nationalist underground throughout Soviet controlled territories, accompanied as they were by the Ukrainianization of the party-state apparatus and the reconstruction of the Soviet symbolic order.¹⁸

Scope of the Study

Drawing on a wide array of primary and secondary sources, including recently declassified documents from the Soviet security service archives, this doctoral dissertation is a study of historicism, historical politics and legitimacy contests from the Second World War in what today is Ukraine.

While the Second World War serves as the main frame of reference for this project, the dissertation is not a classic account of warfare, Axis occupation policies, the Holocaust, the Soviet partisan movement or the Ukrainian Nationalist insurgency. What it seeks to elucidate instead is the dynamic field of power relationships constituted by an interlocking grid of state and non-state actors engaged in information gathering, the production of knowledge, and struggles over the meaning of the past for the purpose of shaping collective values, fashioning ideal citizens, and manufacturing domestic and international legitimacy in the field of competing sovereignty claims.

¹⁸ On the logic underlying the Ukrainianization of the party-state apparatus in the aftermath of the Nazi occupation: Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War: the Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 191-236. Upon learning of unofficial instructions to keep Jews out of responsible positions in the party-state apparatus in Ukraine, M. Khel'minskaia—who had earlier been fired from Khrushchev's secretariat—approached Khrushchev directly. In the course of the difficult conversation Khrushchev reportedly told her: “I understand that you being Jewish have a subjective view of this question. But we are objective: Jews in the past have inflicted many wrongs on the Ukrainian people. The people hate them because of it. We do not need Jews in our Ukraine. And, in my view, Ukrainian Jews who survived Hitler's attempts to exterminate them, would be better off not to come back here. They would be better off in Birobidzhan. We are in Ukraine. Do you understand? In Ukraine. And we are not interested in Ukrainian people interpreting the return of Soviet power as the return of the Jews. All I can do for you is return your questionnaire to you. Fill it anew without mentioning your Jewish origin. Use your fascist documents, according to which you are a pureblood Ukrainian.” Mikhail Mitsel', *Evrei Ukrainy v 1943-1953 gg.: ocherki dokumentirovannoï istorii* (Kyiv: Dukh i litera, 2004), 27.

At the centre of the study are the Soviet state and its various subsidiaries—though rival movements and other states also come into the picture insofar as Soviet legitimating practices were inextricably bound with the activities of other actors. By situating Soviet ideological practices within a broader political and military context, the dissertation will, on the one hand, elucidate the role of historical politics in the violent processes of the building and breaking of political communities. On the other hand, it will examine the ideological contributions of specific actors, their relationships with each other, and with the broader domain of historical politics.

Before elaborating the methodological premises of this study, it is imperative to clarify the content of key terms. One of the concepts that will frequently surface in this study is “historicism.” By this term I will refer to the cultural ethos centred on the recognition of historical contingency and malleability of political collectives and of the importance of historical symbols, narratives, and shared understandings of the past as building blocks and legitimating elements of cultural and political communities imagined both synchronically and diachronically.¹⁹ In its turn, “historical politics” will refer to the policies, actions, and speech acts aimed at the promotion of shared political and social values, fashioning of ideal subjects or citizens, and the creation/destruction of (de-) legitimating symbolic orders in the field of competing sovereignty claims. Specific historico-political acts (commemorations, creation of “archives,” writing of history textbooks, teaching of history) are, on the one hand, a product of the normalization of the historicist ethos; on the other hand, they constitute and reproduce the said ethos.

If force is an originating source of power and sovereignty, historical politics is an indispensable element of legitimation--i.e., the propagation of beliefs that any particular state, government, movement, or political party warrants active support or, at least, passive compliance. Such beliefs can be grounded in the perception of the said political entity as either “just,” as preferable to available alternatives (“lesser of two evils”) or as inevitable, even when regarded as unjust. Legitimacy as the end goal of legitimation is thus always relative, contextually bounded, and

¹⁹ On the evolution of conceptions of temporality: Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Thomas Allen, *A Republic in Time: Temporality and Social Imagination* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 1-17.

subject to a greater or lesser degree of contestation.²⁰ Because domestic and external support is essential to maintaining power and to winning wars, participants of political and military conflicts typically try to bolster their legitimacy claims through accentuating their moral superiority vis-a-vis the enemy and through projecting power and invincibility.²¹ The assumption in the latter case is that people are naturally attracted to movements that effectively project strength and abandon those that appear weak.²²

In ontological terms, the global triumph of historicism and the advent of historical politics in the course of the eighteenth to twentieth centuries are intimately intertwined with discourses of nationalism and the concurrent formation of modern states dependent on various forms of historical representation for the inculcation of collective values and self-legitimation.²³ Insofar as historical politics has had the effect of normalizing historical consciousness and discourses of state and nation --regardless of their ideological content--it has tended to undermine traditional conceptions of legitimacy grounded in the sacral monarchical or religious authority of the rulers, progressively displacing the latter with historically informed discourses of popular sovereignty (the right to govern by the consent of the governed).²⁴

The institutional embodiments of historical politics are manifold. They include officially instituted holidays, commemorative rituals, monuments, the oft ambiguous and contested

²⁰ The literature on legitimacy is vast. See, for example, Gordon Clark and Michael Dear, *State Apparatus: Structures and Language of Legitimacy* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1984); Mlada Bukovansky, *Legitimacy and Power Politics: The American and French Revolutions in International Political Culture* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002); Jean-Marc Coicaud, *Legitimacy and Politics: A Contribution to the Study of Political Right and Political Responsibility* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

²¹ Milena Michalski and Michael Gow, *War, Image and Legitimacy: Viewing Contemporary Conflict* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 197-205.

²² On the role of rallies and mass events in the building of legitimacy: Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1973); Andrew Rawson, *Nuremberg Rallies* (Stroud, England: Spellmount, 2012).

²³ John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1982); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); George Mosse, *The Nationalisation of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991); Stefan Berger, *The Search for Normality: National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Germany Since 1800* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1997); Dennis Deletant and Harry Hanak, eds., *Historians as Nation-Builders: Central and South-East Europe* (London: MacMillan Press, 1988); Edgar Wolfrum, *Geschichte als Waffe: Vom Kaiserreich bis zur Wiedervereinigung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2001).

²⁴ Bukovansky, *Legitimacy and Power Politics*, 1-14. On the relationship between historicism and religion: Thomas Albert Howard, *Religion and the Rise of Historicism: W.M.L. de Wette, Jacob Burckhardt and the Theological Origins of the Nineteenth-Century Historical Consciousness* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

historical symbols, and, last but not least, various organizational networks entrusted with the assembly, preservation, study and popularization of material and documentary traces of the past judged to possess particular significance within the dominant ideological framework of particular political communities. Especially important in this regard are the institutions of the archive, the museum, and the academic disciplines of history, ethnography and archeology.²⁵

Importantly, insofar as beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (the fabric of legitimacy) are mediated by conceptualizations of past experiences, legitimacy contests always entail struggles not only over the meaning of the past, but also for control of institutions and apparatuses of historico-political signification. Such contests form the substance of historical politics and are usually pursued through some combination of ideological persuasion, rewards, coercion, and, at the extreme end, elimination of discourse producing actors.²⁶ By the same token, the absence or weakness of historico-political institutions frequently act as a structural roadblock to historical narration and hence to (re)-production of collective values and identities--national, class or otherwise. Little wonder, most revolutionary movements have taken historical politics very seriously--combining an assault on historico-political institutions and the symbolic orders associated with rival political movements with efforts to foster collective values and symbolic orders that would prop legitimacy claims of their own.²⁷ The Bolsheviks, as they emerged victorious from the war in the vast spaces of the former Russian Empire, were no exception in this regard.

²⁵ Chantal Geogel, "The Museum as Metaphor in Nineteenth Century France," in *Museum Culture: Histories, Discourses, Spectacles*, eds. Daniel J. Sherman and Irit Rogoff, 113-122 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994); Richard Wortman, *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995), 2 volumes; Timothy Luke, *Museum Politics: Power Plays at the Exhibition* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2002); Donald Malcolm Reid, *Whose Pharaohs? Archeology, Museums, and the Egyptian National Identity from Napoleon to World War I* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory: Les Lieux de Mémoire*, Volume 4: Histories and Memories (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010); Francis X. Blouin and William G. Rosenberg, *Processing the Past: Contesting Authority in History and the Archive* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

²⁶ On persuasion, coercion, and rewards as modes of pursuing conflicts: Louis Kriesberg, *The Sociology of Social Conflicts* (New Jersey: Syracuse University Press, 1973), 108-110. On museums as sites of ideological contestation and political conflicts: Luke, *Museum Politics*.

²⁷ See Lynne Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), 19-122; Orlando Figes and Boris Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution: the Language and Symbols of 1917* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999); Rolf Reichardt and Hubertus Koehle, *Visualizing the Revolution: Politics and Pictorial Arts in Late Eighteenth Century France* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008); James Simpson, *Under the Hammer: Iconoclasm in the Anglo-American Tradition* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Historical Politics in the USSR during the 1920s and 1930s

“Archives are a very important political institution”--the dean of Soviet Marxist historians Mikhail Pokrovskii declared in 1925-- “In each country they are in the hands of the ruling class, which exercises an extremely thorough control over them. As a result, no Marxist or Communist is ever allowed to administer the archives anywhere outside the USSR.”²⁸

Although Pokrovskii referred exclusively to the archival domain, his statement perfectly encapsulated the relationship between the young Soviet state and the larger domain of historical politics. Historicists par excellence, revolutionary Marxists not only believed in the existence of laws of historical development, but also exhibited considerable appreciation of culture and history as essential instruments of legitimation, political socialisation, economic development, nation-building, and, ultimately, state security. Undergirding these attitudes was the Leninist conception of the cultural revolution, premised on eradication of illiteracy, mass education, and gradual raising of cultural standards, rather than complete elimination of ideological apparatuses inherited from the *ancien regime*.²⁹

Consequently, almost from the very start the destruction of institutions and historical symbols of the monarchy, organized religion, and rival political and military movements of the Civil War era, went hand in hand with the creation of new historico-political institutions and the construction of foundational narratives of the new multi-ethnic state.³⁰ Projected onto the public

²⁸Mikhail Pokrovskii, *Politicheskoe znachenie arkhivov* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Tsentral'nogo arkhiva RSFSR, 1925), 5.

²⁹ On Lenin's conception of the Cultural Revolution: Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Introduction,” in *The Cultural Revolution in Russia, 1928-1941*. Ed. Sheila Fitzpatrick, 3-12 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 2.

³⁰ On 27 October 1917 the Council of People's Commissars officially banned publications urging resistance to the Bolshevik government. See “Dekret Soveta Narodnykh Komissarov o pechati,” 27 October 1917 (Andreï Artizov and Oleg Naumov, eds., *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsiia. Dokumenty TsK RKP(b)-VKP(b), VChK-OGPU-NKVD o kul'turnoi politike, 1917-1953gg.* (Moskva; Mezhdunarodnyi fond ‘Demokratiia,’ 1999), 11-12). On 12 April 1918 the Council of People's Commissars issued a decree “On Removal of Monuments Commemorating Tsars and their Servants and preparation of projects of Monuments of the Russian Socialist Revolution.” The first monument to Karl Marx appeared in Penza on 1 May 1918. On 30 July 1918 Sovnarkom endorsed the list of some 70 individuals who were to be commemorated in the new state. As the Soviet authorities established themselves in the peripheries of the former empire, similar decrees appeared also in the Republics: “Sovetskaia monumental'naia propaganda,” http://www.procccp.ru/view_list.php?id=2, last accessed 8 July 2015; See also Corney, *Telling October*. On campaigns against illiteracy: Peter Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass*

sphere through a wide array of media, the new narratives were anchored in the reconfigured toponymic landscape,³¹ in revolutionary holidays and festivals,³² in museums and monuments commemorating the luminaries of Marxism and the heroes of the Revolution and the Civil War,³³ in films, literary texts, and works of visual art,³⁴ in the ideologically refurbished institution of regional studies (*kraevedenie*)³⁵ and, and last but not least, in history textbooks,³⁶ scholarly publications³⁷ and archival collections specifically designed to facilitate historical study and the commemoration of key actors, organizations, and foundational moments in the history of the Communist party, the Bolshevik Revolution, and the Civil War. In time, the same would transpire in relation to industrialization, collectivization, and the “Great Patriotic War.”³⁸

Mobilization, 1917-1929 (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 70-83; On the grass roots opposition to the change of toponyms, see, for example, Valerīi Andreev, “Toponimika i ideologīia v Sovetskoī Rossii (1917-1941 gg.),” <http://toponimika.ru/index.php?id=3>, last accessed 14 July 2015.

³¹ Arseny Saparov, “The Alteration of Place Names and Construction of National Identity in Soviet Armenia,” *Cahiers du monde russe* 44, No.1 (January-March 2003): 179-198; Sergeī Nikitin, “Revoliutsiia i geografiia: stanovlenie sovetskoī toponimiki v 1918-1930 godakh,” *Otechestvennye zapiski* No.2 (2003), <http://magazines.russ.ru/oz/2003/2/nik.html>, last accessed 15 July 2015); “Toponimika sovetskoī i post-sovetskoī Moskvy: istoriia gorodskikh nazvaniī i pereimenovaniī posle 1917g. Interview s Ianom Rachinskim (chast’ 2),” *Uroki istorii*, 1 April 2014 (<http://urokiistorii.ru/history/soc/52071>, last accessed 12 July 2015); Mariia Takhtaulova, “Toponimika ta ideologīia: zminy u toponimitsi Kharkova v pershi desiatylyttia radians’koī vlady,” *Visnyk NTU “KhPI*, No.25 (2014): 128-136.

³² Karen Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades; Celebrations in the Times of Stalin* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); Sergeī Shapovalov, *Genesis sovetskikh gosudarstvennykh prazdnikov na Kubani v 1918-1930-e gg.* (Krasnodar: Kubanskiī gosudarstvennyi universitet, 2012); Malte Rolf, *Soviet Mass Festivals, 1917-1991* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 2013).

³³ On the construction of the Lenin Mausoleum: Nina Tumarkin, *Lenin Lives! The Lenin Cult in Soviet Russia* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997), 165-206; On the Lenin museum in Moscow (founded in 1924): V. Deviatov, ed., *Tsentrāl’nyi muzeī V.I.Lenina: putevoditel’*. (Moskva: “Raduga,” 1986); a collection of photographs of Soviet monuments from the 1920s and 1930s can be found on the website “Soviet monumental propaganda”: http://www.procccp.ru/view_list.php?id=2

³⁴ Evgeny Dobrenko, *Stalinist Cinema and the Production of History: Museum of Revolution* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008); Jamie Miller, *Soviet Cinema: Politics and Persuasion Under Stalin* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010).

³⁵ Aleksandr Rashkovskīi, “Istoriia razvitiia rossiiskogo kraevedeniia,” <http://www.larchive-online.com/archive/rushkovsky/kraevedenie.htm>, last accessed 20 August 2015; for an overview of developments in the field of regional studies in Right Bank Ukraine: Viktor Prokopchuk, “Osnovni factory aktyvizatsiī kraieznavchoho rukhu na Pravoberezhniī Ukraīni v 20-ti roky XX st.,” *Kraieznavstvo*, No.3-4 (2009): 6-15.

³⁶ See, David Brandenberger and Mikhail Zelenov, “Stalin’s Answer to the National Question: A Case Study on the Editing of the 1938 Short Course,” *Slavic Review* 73, No.4 (2012): 859-880.

³⁷ One such journal was “Krasnyi Arkhiv.” In the course of the 1920s there also appeared a series of publications under the auspices of *Istpart*, which commemorated particular individuals and historical events. See for example: L. Lezhaeva and G. Rusakov, *Pamiatnik bortsam proletarskoī revoliutsii pogibshim v 1917-1921gg.* (Moskva-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo, 1925).

³⁸ Figs and Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution*; Donald Raleigh, *Experiencing Russia’s Civil War: Politics, Society and Revolutionary Culture in Saratov, 1917-1922* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002), 215-222; Corney, *Telling October*.

In their pursuit of the cultural revolution, the Bolsheviks relied both on cadres of their own supporters and the creative energies of loyalist representatives of the pre-revolutionary artistic class (e.g., Maksim Gor'kiĭ and Alekseĭ Tolstoĭ), former activists of non-Bolshevik socialist parties, the national intelligentsia in the republics, the newly promoted young authors sympathetic to the Bolshevik cause, and other “fellow travellers” (*poputchiki*).³⁹

Neither was the assault on the rival symbolic orders in the course of 1920s absolute and uncompromising, the official efforts to regulate developments in the cultural domain notwithstanding. This was due not only to the pronounced deficit of qualified Communist cultural cadres and the relative heterogeneity of the party-state apparatus, but also to the potential or actual opposition to official initiatives at the grass roots level. Thus the full-fledged assault on the Russian Orthodox Church and systemic attempts at destruction or political appropriation of the associated cultural heritage began only in the mid- to late 1920s.⁴⁰ The same was true of the developments in literature, academic historiography, archeology, and *kraevedenie*, as many prominent pre-revolutionary scholars and writers either returned from emigration in the course of the 1920s or simply continued their work under Soviet rule.⁴¹

³⁹ Shortages and the perceived disloyalty of cultural cadres in the early 1920s prompted the Bolshevik government to court non-proletarian authors. See, for example, the decree of the Politburo “On the Politics of the Party in the Literary Sphere,” 18 June 1925 (Artizov and Naumov, *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsiia*, 53-57).

On the phenomenon of the Russian “smenovekhovstvo” and the return of émigrés during the 1920s: A. Kiselev, *Politicheskaia istoriia russkoĭ émigratsii: 1920-1940: dokumenty: uchebnoe posobie dlia studentov vuzov* (Moskva: Vldos, 1999). Chapter 3.

⁴⁰ The key instrument of the campaign was the so-called League of the Militant Godless. Founded by the Communist party in 1925, this organization soon came to encompass 5 million members. See Daniel Peris, *Storming the Heavens: The Soviet League of the Militant Godless* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1998). An example of political appropriation of the cultural heritage of the Russian Orthodox Church is conversion of the St. Sophia's cathedral in Kyiv—until 1929 a religious institution—into a museum (1934). In Ukraine, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church—which appeared on the historical scene during the years of the Ukrainian revolution—continued to operate legally until 1929. See “Politychni represii proty sviashchennykiv Ukraïns'koĭ Avtokefal'noĭ pravoslavnoĭ tserkvy (1919-1938). Za dokumentamy Haluzevoho derzhavnogo arkhivu Sluzhby Bezpeky Ukraïny,” Chastyna I, *Z arkhiviv VUChK-HPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.1-2 (2005); Chastyna II, *Z arkhiviv VUChK-HPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.1-2 (2006).

⁴¹ On the life of the prominent historian Mykhaïlo Hrushevs'kyĭ: Ruslan Pyrih, *Zhyttia Mykhaïla Hrushevs'koho: ostannie desiatylittia, 1924-1934* (Kyiv: Instytut Ukraïns'koĭ arkhieohrafiï, Akademiia nauk Ukraïny, 1993); Vlodymyr Prystaïko and Iurii Shapoval, *Mykhaïlo Hrushevs'kyĭ i HPU-NKVD: trahichne desiatylittia, 1924-1934* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo “Ukraïna,” 1996); Serhiĭ Plokhyy, *Unmaking the Imperial Russia: Mykhaïlo Hrushevsky and the Writing of Ukrainian History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 215-280.

See also the brief account of life and work of the founder of the Kherson Museum of Antiquities (1890) (Now Kherson Local History Museum) Viktor Goshkevich—who in 1922 was awarded the medal of the “Hero of Labour”: Natalia Karmazina, “Doslidnyk starozhytnosteĭ Pivdnia Ukraïny Viktor Ivanovych Hoshkevych (1860-1928),” *Kraieznavstvo*, No.3 (2013): 61-64;

The resultant ideological pluralism by default ensured that official historical narratives remained relatively fluid and polyvocal, if not necessarily the subject of vigorous contestation. In time, such a state of affairs would prompt the Soviet leadership to embark on a coordinated campaign to create a “usable past” as an ideological foundation for the construction of the consolidated political community.⁴²

In understanding the trajectory of Soviet historical politics during the 1920s and 1930s, it is important to keep in mind that Bolsheviks came to power not through a popular mandate, but by way of an armed coup and against the backdrop of the ongoing world war, followed by the civil war and foreign intervention. No less importantly, the experiences of 1914-1921 not only exerted a profound impact on the mentality of the Bolshevik leadership and the Soviet political system,⁴³ but also laid bare the structural weaknesses of the Bolshevik government in the multi-ethnic and predominantly peasant country.

The party had its base of support in the core industrial centers of European Russia and in what today is Eastern Ukraine--where ethnic Russians, Russian-speaking Ukrainians, and Jews constituted the majority of the population.⁴⁴ By contrast, the positions of the Bolsheviks in the countryside and in the national peripheries of the former Russian Empire were considerably weaker.⁴⁵ In fact, from 1917 to 1921 the Bolsheviks had had to contend not only with the German forces, Entente powers, and White Guards, but also with a plethora of indigenous national movements, which actively enlisted the support of local non-Russian populations. In Ukraine specifically—where ferocious multisided warfare continued for several years--the Bolsheviks managed to prevail only after securing the support of Ukrainian parties of national communist orientation and shtetl Jews radicalized by the unprecedented scale of pogrom

⁴² Brandenberger and Zelenov, “Stalin’s Answer to the National Question.”

⁴³ Efim Gimpel’son, *Stanovlenie i evoliutsiia Sovetskogo gosudarstvennogo apparata upravleniia 1917-1930* (Moskva: Institut Rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 2003).

⁴⁴ For example, the Ukrainian party organization in 1917 numbered only several thousands members. Approximately 67% of them were concentrated in the Donbas and Kryvyi Rih basin (George Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy, Urban Growth and Identity Change in the Ukrainian SSR, 1923-1934* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 31.

⁴⁵ On the Civil War in the Don region, see Peter Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution: Russia’s Continuum of Crisis, 1914-1921* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002); on the Caucasus: Jörg Baberowski, *Der Feind ist Überall: Stalinismus im Kaukasus* (München: Deutsche Verlag Anstalt, 2003); on Ukraine: Valerī Soldatenko, *Ukraïna v revoliutsiïnu dobu: istorychne esse-khroniky*. (Kharkiv: Prapor, 2008), 4 volumes; Mykola Doroshko, *Nomenklatura: kerivna verkhivka Radians’koi Ukraïny (1917-1938rr.)* (Kyiv: Nika-Tsentr, 2008), 64.

violence.⁴⁶ The situation was equally complex in the south of Russia, the Caucasus, and Central Asia.⁴⁷

The victors responded to the nationalist challenge and the above-mentioned deficit of legitimacy by, on the one hand, abolishing the unpopular policy of war communism in favor of the New Economic Policy (NEP) and, on the other hand, by making concessions to the right of self-determination (which in 1922 found institutional expression in the formation of the federal Soviet state). By 1923 the inconsistent practices around this principle of self-determination converged into the policy of indigenization (*korenizatsiia*) centered on the creation of opportunities of upward social mobility and state support for non-Russian nationalities.⁴⁸

The core premise of indigenization was the idea that the creation of a truly socialist culture--judged essential for economic modernization and the security of the young Soviet state--and ultimately the proletarian revolution around the globe were possible only through satisfying the national and cultural needs of the empire's non-Russian subjects.⁴⁹ As such, indigenization--combined as it was with systemic condemnation of "bourgeois nationalism"--was seen by the Bolshevik leadership not only as an important instrument of economic development and political

⁴⁶ On the phenomenon of National Communism: James Mace, *Communism and Dilemmas of National Liberation: National Communism in Soviet Ukraine, 1918-1933* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Distributed by Harvard University Press for Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute and the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the US, 1983); Valerii Soldatenko, *Nezlamnyi: zhyttia i smert' mykoly Skrypnyka* (Kyiv: poshukovo-vydavnyche ahentstvo: "Knyha Pam'iaty Ukraïny," 2002). On the war in Ukraine: John Reshetar, *The Ukrainian Revolution: a Study in Nationalism* (New York: Arno Press, 1972); Vladyslav Verstiuk, *Makhnovshchyna: selians'kyi-povstans'kyi rukh na Ukraïni, 1918-1921* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1991); Roman Koval', *Otaman Zelenyi: istorychnyi narys* (Kyiv and Kam'ianets'-Podil'skyi: "Medobory-2006," 2010); Valerii Smolii, ed., *Narysy istorii Ukraïns'koï revoliutsii 1917-1921: u dvokh knyghakh* (Kyiv: Naukova Dumka, 2011-2012). On the evolution of Jewish political allegiances: Oleg Budnitskii, *Rossiiskie evrei mezhdru krasnymi i belymi (1917-1920)* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2005), 438-466.

⁴⁷ Ronald Suny, *The Baku Commune, 1917-1918: Class and Nationality in the Russian Revolution* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972); Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution*; Baberowski, *Der Feind ist Überall*; Douglas Northrop, *The Veiled Empire: Gender and Power in Stalinist Central Asia* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2004).

⁴⁸ On indigenization: Mace, *Communism and Dilemmas of the National Liberation*; Yuri Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism," *Slavic Review* 53, No.2 (Summer 1994): 414-452; Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2001); Kate Brown, *A Biography of No Place: from Ethnic Borderland to Soviet Heartland* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004); Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the USSR* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2005); Elena Borisionok, *Fenomen sovetskoï ukrainizatsii. 1920-1930-e gody* (Moskva: Evropa, 2006); Valerii Vasyli'iev, *Politychne kerivnytstvo URSR i SRSR: dynamika vidnosyn tseñtr-subsentru vlady (1917-1938)* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii NAN Ukraïny, 2014).

⁴⁹ Such conception of indigenization and of the Cultural Revolution was outlined by Stalin during his meeting with Ukrainian writers on 12 February 1929 (Artizov and Naumov, *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsiia*, 102-107).

stabilization domestically, but also as a tool of foreign policy.⁵⁰ In addition to political, administrative, educational and cultural components, the policy line was supported by relevant initiatives in the historico-political domain.⁵¹

Attempts at political and economic normalization during the 1920s, however, did not affect the fundamental structures of the young Soviet state forged under extreme conditions of war within a highly complex international and domestic political context. One party rule, militarization of public life, progressive bureaucratization, administrative centralization, continuous surveillance, and persecution of political opponents were hallmarks of the Communist regime from the very start --albeit the complete elimination of political pluralism within the Communist party itself and significant curtailment of the policy of indigenization would take place only under Stalin's rule during the crisis years of 1929-1933.⁵²

Underlying this transformation of the political regime from the late 1920s was the reality of international isolation, the Soviet leadership's fears of the impending war (which grew stronger after the victory of Nazism in Germany), and the particular conception of state security predicated on the perceived necessity of military build-up, crash industrialization, and forging of the consolidated political community--both via aggressive promotion of peculiar political values and via control, isolation, or physical removal of population categories that threatened the said

⁵⁰ In addition to domestic constituencies, the target audiences of indigenization included national minorities in the neighboring states, most notably in Poland and Romania. On indigenization as an instrument of foreign policy: Mace, *Communism and Dilemmas of National Liberation*, 91-94; Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*, 274-280.

⁵¹ See David Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity, 1931-1956* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002), 93-94; Yekelchik, *Stalin's Empire of Memory*; Brandenberger and Zelenov, "Stalin's Answer to the National Question."

⁵² See, for example, the decision of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist party of Bolsheviks on arrests of professors and scholars in the affair of the "Central Committee of the Party of Constitutional Democrats," 11 September 1919 (Artizov and Naumov, *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsia*, 13-14). On the political surveillance in the USSR during the 1920s: Vladlen Izmozik, *Glaza i ushi rezhima: gosudarstvennyi politicheski kontrol' za naseleniem Sovetskoi Rossii v 1918-1928 godakh* (Sankt-Peterburg: izdatel'stvo Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta ekonomiki i finansov, 1995); Iurii Shapoval, "The Mechanisms of the Informational Activity of the GPU-NKVD: the Surveillance File of Mykhaïlo Hrushevsky," *Cahiers du monde russe* 42, No.2-4 (2001): 207-230; Volodymyr Semystiaha, "The Role and Place of Secret Collaborators in the Informational Activity of the GPU-NKVD in the 1920s and 1930s," *Cahiers du monde russe* 42, No.2-4 (2001): 231-244.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s the OGPU and its republican subsidiaries staged a series of didactic show trials against national intelligentsia. In Ukraine of particular importance was the case of the "Union of Liberation of Ukraine" (1929): See Iurii Shapoval and Vadym Zolotar'ov, *Vsevolod Balyts'kyi: osoba, chas, otochennia* (Kyiv, "Stylos," 2002), 135-138; on the Stalinist regime and the Ukrainian intelligentsia, see also: Prystaïko and Shapoval, *Mykhaïlo Hrushevs'kyi i HPU-NKVD*; Iurii Shapoval, *Mykhaïlo Hrushevs'kyi: sprava "UNTs" i ostanni roky, 1931-1934* (Kyiv: Krytyka, 1999); Vasyl' Danylenko, ed., *Ukrains'ka intelihentsiia i vlada: zvedennia sekretynogo viddilu DPU USRR 1927-1929rr.* (Kyiv: Tempora, 2012).

unity.⁵³ Not surprisingly, the groups that drew the most attention from the Soviet security apparatus in the course of the 1920s and 1930s were those that had resisted the regime in the past or could be expected to pose a security threat in the event of the war by virtue of their social origins or presupposed affiliation with potential enemy states (the so-called diaspora nationalities).⁵⁴

Within this context, the orientation of the system of Soviet historical politics was as much a reflection of the specificities of the Soviet Union's complex and evolving strategic situation, the legacies of past conflicts, and internal political and ethno-political developments during the 1920 and 1930s, as it was a product of the generic characteristics of modern statecraft and of the Marxist belief in the political malleability of human collectives.⁵⁵

⁵³ On fears of the war: Olga Velikanova, *The Myth of the Besieged Fortress: Soviet Mass Perception in the 1920s and 1930s* (Toronto: Munk Center for International Studies, 2002); on the Red Army and the militarization of the Soviet state: Mark von Hagen, *Soldiers in the Proletarian Dictatorship: the Red Army and the Soviet Socialist State, 1917-1930* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1993); David Stone, *Hammer and Rifle: Militarization of the Soviet Union, 1926-1933* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2000); On the industrialization: Robert Davies, *The Soviet Economy in Turmoil, 1929-1930* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: MacMillan, 1989); Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Stalin's Industrial Revolution: Politics and Workers, 1928-1932* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Idem, *Freedom and Terror in the Donbas: a Ukrainian-Russian Borderland, 1870s-1990s* (Cambridge, UK, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 151-160.

On the cultural component of Stalin's "revolution from above": Fitzpatrick, *Cultural Revolution*; On practices of population management in the Soviet Union during the 1920s and 1930s: Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Peter Holquist, "To Count, to Extract and to Exterminate: Population Statistics and Population Politics in Late Imperial and Soviet Russia," in *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*. Eds. Ronald Suny and Terry Martin, 111-144 (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); David Hoffman, *Stalinist Values: the Cultural Norms of the Soviet Modernity, 1917-1941* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2003); Amir Weiner, ed., *Landscaping the Human Garden: Twentieth Century Population Management in a Comparative Framework* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2003).

⁵⁴ Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Cultural Revolution as Class War," in Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Revolution*, 8-40; Vladimir Khaustov, "Iz predystorii massovykh repressii protiv poliakov. Seredina 1930kh gg." in *Repressii protiv poliakov i pol'skikh grazhdan*, ed. Aleksandr Gur'ianov, 10-16 (Moskva: Zven'ia, 1997); Terry Martin, "The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing," *The Journal of Modern History* 70, No.4 (1998): 813-861; Aleksandr Vatlin, "Nu i nechist'": *nemetskaia operatsiia NKVD v Moskve i Moskovskoi oblasti 1936-1941gg.* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2012).

⁵⁵ Christopher Gilley, for example, documented how Soviet authorities commissioned memoirs by the captured former leader of the Ukrainian People's Republic Iurko Tiutiunyk as a means of striking against Poland and the UPR activists in the emigration: Christopher Gilley, "Iurko Tiutiunyk: a Ukrainian Military Career in World War, Revolution and Civil War," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 28, No.2 (2015): 328-352. On the various dimensions of the "nature versus nurture" debate in the context of the Stalinist 1930s-1940s: Amir Weiner, "Nature, Nurture, and Memory in a Socialist Utopia; Delineating Soviet Socio-Ethnic Body in the Age of Socialism," *The American Historical Review* 104, No.4 (October 1999): 1114-1155; Hoffman, *Stalinist Values*; Igal Halfin, *Terror in my Soul: Communist Autobiographies on Trial* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003); Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on my Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2006).

The progressive subordination of the historico-political domain to the imperatives of state security became particularly pronounced from the late 1920s and early 1930s--when the relative pluralism of the NEP era succumbed to the mobilizational logic of Stalin's "revolution from above." The process was accompanied by state centralization, the emergence of Stalin's and lesser leaders' cults, the ascendance of socialist realism in literature and arts, and, last but not least, the curtailment of indigenization and the russo-centric turn in Soviet nationality policies backed by repressive measures against "national deviationists."⁵⁶

Leading the charge on the historico-political front was the Soviet dictator himself.⁵⁷ An avid reader and film-viewer, Joseph Stalin, as is known, dedicated a tremendous amount of attention to history, literature, and visual arts.⁵⁸ Over the years he not only personally reviewed and edited many films, literary texts, and history textbooks. He sought to influence the very process of the production of historical narratives --be it through the commissioning of artistic works, personal

⁵⁶ On the relationship between the central and the republican leadership in Ukraine: Vasyli'iev, *Politychne kerivnytstvo URSR i SRSR*.

First monuments to Stalin appeared already in 1929 and became commonplace by 1939: See "Sovetskaia monumental'naia propaganda": http://www.procccpru/view_list.php?id=3, last accessed 20 August 2015. On the leader cults in the USSR and in the countries of the Communist bloc after the Second World War: Balasz Apor, Jan C. Behrends, Polly Jones, and Efron A. Rees, eds., *The Leader Cults in Communist Dictatorships: Stalin and the Eastern Bloc* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004).

On socialist realism: Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as a Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Thomas Lahusen and Evgeny Dobrenko, *Socialist Realism without Shores* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1997); Evgeny Dobrenko, *The Making of the State Reader: Social and Aesthetic Contexts of the Reception of Soviet Literature* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1997); Idem, *The Making of the State Writer: Social and Aesthetic Origins of Soviet Literary Culture* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2001); Evgeny Dobrenko and Eric Naiman, eds., *The Landscapes of Stalinism: the Art and Ideology of Soviet Space* (Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 2003); Boris Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship and Beyond* (London-New York: Verso, 2011).

On the evolution of the Soviet nationality policy during 1930s: Hennadii Iefimenko, *Natsional'no-kul'turna polityka VKP(b) shchodo radians'koi Ukraïny, 1932-1938 (osvita i nauka)* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukraïny NAN Ukraïny, 2001); Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*, 211-308; Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism*, 27-62; Borisionok, *Fenomen sovetskoï ukrainizatsii*, 216-232. On history as a tool of nationality policy: Maureen Perrie, *The Cult of Ivan the Terrible in Stalin's Russia* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK; New York: Palgrave, 2000); David Brandenberger and Kevin Platt, "Introduction: Tsarist-era Heroes in Stalinist Mass Culture and Propaganda," in *Epic Revisionism: Russian History and Literature as Stalinist Propaganda*, eds. Kevin M.F. Platt and David Brandenberger, 3-16 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006).

⁵⁷ Stalin's repeated interventions into the cultural sphere stemmed from the already existing tradition. It was a common practice for the Politburo to examine literary works and pass decisions on matters of culture even during the early years of the Bolshevik rule. See, for example, the decree of the Politburo on the play of A.V. Lunacharskii "Bears' Wedding," 18 August 1924 (Artizov and Naumov, *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsiia*, 47).

⁵⁸ Mar'iamov, *Kremlevskii tsenzor*; Boris Ilizarov, *Taïnaia zhizn' Stalina: po materialam ego biblioteki i arkhiva. K istoriosofii stalinizma* (Moskva: "Veche," 2002), 57; Kirill Anderson et al, eds., *Kremlevskii kinoteatr. 1928-1953. Dokumenty* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2005); on Stalin's engagement with writers: Iuriï Murin, ed., *Pisatel' i vozhd': perezpiska M.I. Sholokhova s I.V. Stalinym, 1931-1950 gody: sbornik dokumentov iz lichnogo arkhiva I.V. Stalina* (Moskva: Raritet, 1997); Benedikt Sarnov, *Stalin i pisateli* (Moskva: Eksmo, 2008-2011), 4 volumes; George Liber, *Alexander Dovzhenko*, 155-162.

engagement with and patronage of major cultural figures inside and outside the USSR, allocation of state awards bearing his name, deliberate public pronouncements, or through canonical texts such as the “Short Course of History of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks” and the “History of the Great Patriotic War.”⁵⁹

Along with didactic show trials, such interventions, on the one hand, functioned as signals delineating parameters of the desirable or permissible public discourse, which various actors within the party-state apparatus, Soviet cultural establishment, and specialized institutions of propaganda and political control (Agitprop and Glavlit) were expected to (re)-produce and normalize.⁶⁰ Simultaneously, Stalin’s actions provided a model for practical engagement with the Soviet intelligentsia for lower ranking functionaries of the Communist party and the Soviet state both at the center and in the national republics.⁶¹

⁵⁹In the fall 1930, for example, Stalin would personally supply Maksim Gor’kiĭ with materials about “wreckers” to be used for the production of play. Sarnov, *Stalin i pisateli*, kn.1, 13. Among people Stalin received in his office were Soviet and foreign writers, journalists and film-makers. The lists of visitors can be found in Anatoliĭ Chernobaev, ed., *Na prieme u Stalina. Tetradi (zhurnaly) zapiseĭ lits, priniatykh I.V.Stalinym (1924-1953gg.) Spravochnik* (Moskva: Novyi Khronograf, 2008). Konstantin Simonov recalled telephone conversations with Stalin regarding the content of his work: Konstantin Simonov, “Glazami cheloveka moego pokoleniia,” in Konstantin Simonov, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy; Povesti raznykh let; Posledniia rabota* (Moskva: OLMA-Press, 2004), 434. On the subject of Stalin’s receptions and their role in securing allegiances of the Soviet *nomenklatura*: Vladimir Nevezhin, “Bol’shie kremlevskie priemy Stalina (1930-e—nachalo 1940-kh gg.),” *Otechestvennaia Istoriiia* No.3 (2005): 56-71.

Examples of Stalin’s speeches can be found in: Iosif Stalin, *Stat’i i rechi ob Ukraine* (Kiev: Partizdat KP(b)U, 1936); Vladimir Nevezhin, ed., *Zastol’nye rechi Stalina. Dokumenty i materialy*. (Moskva: AIRO-XX, 2003). On Stalin’s role in the production of the “Short Course of History of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks”: Brandenberger and Zelenov, “Stalin’s Answer to the National Question.” Stalin prize for literature was introduced in 1940. On the history of the prize and the mode of its allocation: Vladimir Svin’in, ed. *Stalinskie premii: dve storony odnoi medali. Sbornik dokumentov i khudozhestvenno-publitsisticheskikh materialov* (Novosibirsk: Izdatel’stvo “Svin’in i synov’ia,” 2007).

⁶⁰ On the phenomenon of Soviet show trials: Sergeĭ Krasil’nikov, Andreĭ Savin and Svetlana Ushakova, “Fenomen postrevoliutsionnykh sudebnykh politicheskikh protsessov,” in *Shakhtinskiĭ protsess 1928g. Podgotovka, provedenie, itogi*, Kniga 1, ed. Sergeĭ Krasil’nikov, 16-30 (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2011). On censorship in the Soviet Union: Arlen Blium, *Za kulisami “Ministerstva Pravdy”: taĭnaia istoriia sovetskoĭ tsenzury* (Sankt-Peterburg: ‘Akademicheskii proekt,’ 1994); Idem, *Sovetskaia tsenzura v epokhu total’nogo terrora, 1929-1953* (Sankt-Peterburg: ‘Akademicheskii proekt,’ 2000); Leonid Maksimenkov, ed., *Bol’shaia Tsenura: pisateli i zhurnalisty v Strane Sovetov 1917-1956* (Moskva: Mezhdunarodnyi fond ‘Demokratiia’: Izdatel’stvo ‘Materik’, 2005); Tat’iana Goriaeva, *Politicheskaiia tsenzura v SSSR. 1917-1991* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2009).

For the reactions of Soviet intelligentsia to the Stalin attack on Dovzhenko, see Lazar Brontman, *Dnevniki 1932-1947* (Zhurnal ‘Samizdat,’ 2004), http://militera.lib.ru/db/brontman_lk/index.html, last accessed 11 October 2011).

⁶¹ Mar’iamov, *Kremlevskii tsenzor*, 11-12; Both Lazar’ Kaganovich and Nikita Khrushchev—who headed the Ukrainian party organization in the 1920s and 1930s-- made it their habit to read and comment on literary works that appeared in the Ukrainian SSR. For example, Nikita Khrushchev who had read and approved of the publication of “Ukraine in Flames,” rapidly changed his opinion after it became clear what Stalin’s views were: Iurii Shapoval, *Liudyna i systema. Shtrykhy do portretu totalitarnoi doby v Ukraini* (Kyiv: Instytut natsional’nykh vidnosyn i politologii NANU, 1994), 220-221; on Lazar Kaganovych’s engagement with the Ukrainian historians: Serhy

Importantly, within the context of recurrent crises precipitated by the grain procurement shortfalls of 1927, crash industrialization, the catastrophic situation in agriculture in 1931-1933, mass repression of 1937-1938, and the outbreak of the Second World War, historical narratives that threatened to fracture the unity of the Soviet body politic along political or ethnic lines gradually ceased being a mere ideological challenge to the Stalinist orthodoxy. They became a matter of state security.⁶² Symbolically this transformation was marked by two signature events, both of which transpired in 1938: the appearance of the canonical “Short Course of History of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks” (approved by Stalin) and the formal incorporation of state archives by the People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD).⁶³

In Soviet Ukraine specifically, the trend towards securitization of the historico-political domain was evident already by mid-1920s at the latest, when the GPU (Main Political Directorate, precursor of the NKVD) organized a series of show trials of participants of anti-Soviet insurgency movements and activists of non-Communist parties, as well as subjected to secret surveillance many proponents of Ukrainianization within the Soviet cultural establishment. The latter included historians who had earlier heeded the call of the Bolshevik government and returned from emigration to take part in the “Soviet construction.”⁶⁴ The trend continued with the Shakhty “wrecker’s trial” (1928) and the case against the so-called “Union of Liberation of

Yekelchuk, “How the “Iron Minister” Kaganovich Failed to Discipline Ukrainian Historians: A Stalinist Ideological Campaign Reconsidered,” *Nationalities Papers* 27, No.4 (1999): 579-604.

⁶² For the developments at the Institute of History of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences during 1920-1930s, see the report by director of the Institute of History of the party at TsK KP(b)U F. Enevich, “On the Shortcomings in the Work of the Institute of History of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences,” 17 May 1944 (Oleksandr Rubl’ov and Oksana Iurkova, eds., *Instytut istoriï Ukraïny Natsional’noi Akademii nauk Ukraïny. Dokumenty i materialy 1936-1991*. Knyha 1. 1936-1947 (Kyiv: Instytut istoriï Ukraïny NAN Ukraïny, 2011), 122-135. On repression at the Institute of History in 1937-1938: the official indictment of the director of the Institute of History Artoshes Saradzhev, 7 March 1937 (Ibid., kn.1, 48-52).

⁶³ Tat’iana Khorkhordina, *Istoriia otechestva i arkhivy, 1917-1980-e gg.* (Moskva: Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Universitet, 1994), 179, 245.

⁶⁴ Krasil’nikov, Savin and Ushakova mention the following trials in Ukraine during 1920s: the trial of members of the Central Committee of the Ukrainian party of Socialist Revolutionaries (1921); the trial of the Cossack Council of the Right Bank Ukraine (1922); the trial of the Volhynia Insurgent army (1923); the trial of members of the “Kiev center of Action” (1927); Krasil’nikov, Savin and Ushakova, “Phenomen postrevoliutsionnykh sudebnykh politicheskikh protsessov,” 18-19.

In 1926, with indigenization in full swing, the GPU issued two circular letters-- “On the Ukrainian Public” (30 March) and “On Ukrainian Separatism” (4 September)-- which identified the policy of Ukrainianization as a potential threat to the integrity of the Soviet state. See Shapoval and Zolotar’ov, *Vsevolod Balyts’kyi*, 101; On the GPU-NKVD surveillance of the Ukrainian intelligentsia: Shapoval, “The Mechanisms of the Informational Activity;” Volodymyr Prystaiko and Iurii Shapoval, *Sprava ‘Spilky vyzvolennia Ukraïny.’ Nevidomi dokumenty i fakty* (Kyiv: Intel, 1995); Iurii Shapoval, ed., *Poliuvannia na ‘Val’dshnepa.’ Rozsekrecheni Mykola Khvyliovyi* (Kyiv: Tempora, 2009); Oleksandr Bezruchko, *Oleksandr Dovzhenko: rozsekrecheni dokumenty spetssluzhb* (Kyiv: Suchasnyi pys’menyk, 2009); Danylenko, *Ukraïns’ka intelihentsiia i vlada*.

Ukraine” (1930), culminating in massive campaigns of state repression directed against bearers of competing political identities in 1929-1934, in 1937-1938, and again following the annexation of the western border regions in 1939-1941.⁶⁵

The cumulative result of the concurrent cooptation, structural coercion, exclusion and outright elimination of bearers of alternative political identities was the emergence of a highly hierarchical, yet also polycentric and polyvocal cultural system, which, power inequalities notwithstanding, left space both for the dictate of the Communist party leadership and operational contributions to the governing practices and constantly fluctuating ideological master narratives by a broad range of party and state officials, representatives of the Soviet Union’s multi-ethnic intelligentsia, and the general public. In other words, rather than being a mere product of the dictate of the Soviet leadership, the ideological underpinnings of the Soviet state during 1920s and 1930s were a result of complex processes that entailed significant contributions from different societal actors in the process of their daily interactions.

In terms of content, by the start of the war the established metanarrative emphasized the following mythologized elements: the Communist party as the vanguard of class struggle and national emancipation; the October Revolution, foreign intervention, and the Civil War; socialist construction, industrialization, and collectivization; the persistent struggle with the internal opposition (Mensheviks, Trotskyists, Bukharinists, and “national deviationists”); and, last but not least, proletarian internationalism and the “friendship of the peoples.”⁶⁶

The German invasion of the USSR, complete with conquest of large swathes of Soviet territory, the practice of genocide, the purposeful destruction of local cultural heritage, extensive local collaboration with the occupiers and the emergence of indigenous forces staking alternative sovereignty and legitimacy claims wrapped in the language of anti-Soviet historical mythologies,

⁶⁵ On the trial of the “Union of Liberation of Ukraine”: ”Dokumenty pro pidhotovku i provedennia sudovoho protsesu nad chlenamy SVU,” *Z arkhiviv VUChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, 1995 (1-2): 373-396; Shapoval, Zolotar’ov, *Vsevolod Balyts’kyi*, 135-138; Shapoval, *Sprava “Spilky vyzvolennia Ukrainy.”*

On the statistics of repression: Oleg Mozokhin, “Statistika repressivnoï deiatel’nosti organov bezopasnosti SSSR,” <http://istmat.info/node/255>, last accessed 20 August 2015; in Ukraine during the same period: Volodymyr Nikol’s’kyi, *Represyivna diial’nist’ orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky SRSR v Ukraini (kinets’ 1920-kh—1950-ti rr.): istoryko-statystychni doslidzhennia* (Donets’k: Vydavnytstvo Donets’koho Natsional’noho universytetu, 2003).

⁶⁶ *Istoriia Vsesoiuznoi kommunisticheskoi partii (bol’shevikov). Kratkii kurs.* (Moskva: OGIZ-Gospolitizdat, 1938). See also Graeme Gill, *Symbols and Legitimacy in Soviet Politics* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 5.

on the one hand, delivered a powerful blow to the ideological foundations of the Soviet state. On the other hand, these dramatic experiences lent Soviet historical politics—as a means of the building and breaking of political communities—its peculiar moral urgency and mobilizational significance.

Historiography and Methodology

To be sure, the subject is not completely new. Scholars of nationalism and memory politics in particular have long explored the role of myths, symbols, commemorative rituals, and historical narratives as essential vehicles of legitimation and of building or breaking of collective identities as well as mapped the content of the said narratives.⁶⁷ On the other hand, students of Soviet government and of Soviet political culture, who have traditionally privileged high politics and analyses of relations between the center and periphery in the formulation and implementation of particular policies,⁶⁸ have increasingly turned towards the broader problematics of modern statecraft and population politics in the comparative context.⁶⁹

Thanks to this highly heterogeneous body of scholarship in multiple languages we now have a much better appreciation of the disciplinary regimes and technologies of rule, which the Bolsheviks shared to a smaller or greater degree with their Imperial predecessors and other modern states (censuses, maps and military statistics, propaganda, censorship, police surveillance, deportations and mass murder) and their functional deployment at different points

⁶⁷ Nina Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead: The Rise and Fall of the Cult of WWII in Russia* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Perrie, *The Cult of Ivan the Terrible*; Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism*; Yekelchik, *Stalin's Empire of Memory*; Plokhy, *Unmaking Imperial Russia*; Platt and Brandenberger, *Epic Revisionism*..

⁶⁸ Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Commissariat of Enlightenment: Soviet Organisation of Education and the Arts under Lunacharsky* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Robert Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary, 1879-1929* (New York: Norton, 1973); Idem, *Stalin in Power: Revolution from Above, 1928-1941* (New York: Norton, 1990); John Arch Getty, *Origins of the Great Purges: the Soviet Communist Party Reconsidered, 1933-1938* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Gabor Tamas Rittersporn, *Stalinist Simplifications and Soviet Complications: Social Tensions and Political Conflicts in the USSR, 1933-1953* (Chur: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1991); Oleg Khlevniuk, *Politbiuro: mekhanizmy politicheskoi vlasti v 1930-e gody* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 1996).

⁶⁹ Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain*; Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*; Weiner, *Making Sense of War*; Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations*; Jörg Baberowski and Anselm Döring-Manteuffel, *Ordnung durch Terror: Gewaltexzesse im nationalsozialistischen und im stalinschen Imperium* (Bonn: Dietz, 2006).

of time. We also now know a lot more about the inclusionary and exclusionary logic of Soviet foundational myth-making, about discursive practices underlying the formation of collective values and political subjectivities; about key actors and institutions of Soviet historical politics; and about the collaboration of political, technocratic and cultural elites in fashioning not only politico-social categories, but also the content of ever fluctuating ideological master-narratives, including narratives of national identity.

More specifically, Terry Martin, Francine Hirsch, David Brandenberger, Joerg Baberowski, Serhy Yekelchuk, and Valerii Vasyl'iev among others have elucidated the complexities of Soviet nationality policy and its entanglement with foreign policy objectives during the 1920s and 1930s. In the process they not only provided analyses of evolving relations between the center, republican elites and national intelligentsia, but also brought into focus the various modes of application of specific tools of population management during this period.⁷⁰ Whereas Martin and Hirsch examined the level of policy-making at the highest level, Yekelchuk and Brandenberger paid more attention to the operations of mid-level discourse producers and the *content* of ideological narratives. Other scholars examined the effects of policies and practices by various states and political movements on human collectives in specific geographical settings.⁷¹

The ideological dimension of Soviet power during the 1920s through 1940s was at the center of several studies.⁷² Stephen Kotkin's monograph in particular was instrumental in deepening understanding of power as, among other things, a product of daily actions and ideological iterations by a broad array of historical actors rather than merely a function of state coercion. His work not only exerted major impact on the later writings of Corney and Weiner—who explored the making of the legitimating meta narratives of the Soviet state in the aftermath of the Revolution and of the Second World War respectively--but also paved the way for the emergence of the entire subfield of studies of political subjectivity—whose partisans have concerned themselves primarily with documenting processes of construction of self, fashioning

⁷⁰ Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*; Hirsch, *Empire of Nations*; Yekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory*; Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism*; Baberowski, *Der Feind ist Überall*.

⁷¹ Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations*; Idem, *Sketches from a Secret War: a Polish Artist's Mission to Liberate Soviet Ukraine* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Brown, *Biography of No Place*; Tarik Cyril Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv: a Borderland City Between Stalinists, Nazis and Nationalists* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2015).

⁷² Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain*; Weiner, *Making Sense of War*; Corney, *Telling October*; Gill, *Symbols and Legitimacy*.

collective values and the political manifestations of these phenomena in the context of the Stalinist 1930s.⁷³

Valuable contributions to understanding creative aspects of power were made by literary scholars. Boris Groys investigated the aesthetic dimensions of Soviet efforts at the ideological construction of the political community.⁷⁴ Evgeniĭ Dobrenko explored the phenomenon of socialist realism and the cultural processes underlying the formation of Soviet writers and readers during 1920s and 1930s and examined the contributions of these actors to the making of Socialist Realist aesthetics and the underlying ideological message.⁷⁵ Benedikt Sarnov and Boris Ilizarov drew attention to the centrality of Stalin in the process of cultural production and elucidated the dictator's relationship with various cultural figures.⁷⁶

Specific institutions and actors of Soviet historical politics have been at the center of several specialized studies. Vladimir Mosolov investigated the history of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, which was to serve as a repository of knowledge of Marxist theory and as a training ground for Marxist educators and international epigones of World Revolution. Evgeniĭ Dobrenko presented an account of the history of the Moscow museum of Revolution. Sergeĭ Zhuravlev wrote about Maksim Gor'kii's commemorative project, "History of Plants and Factories." Finally, Elaine MacKinnon authored a biography of the prominent Soviet historian Isaak Mints who was in charge of the signature historico-political venture "History of the Civil War."⁷⁷ There also exist serious analyses of the Soviet system of political control, state surveillance, propaganda, and censorship.⁷⁸

⁷³ Halfin, *Terror in My Soul*; Hoffman, *Stalinist Values*; Helbeck, *Revolution on my Mind*; Irina Paperno, *Stories of the Soviet Experience: Memoirs, Diaries, Dreams* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2009).

⁷⁴ Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism*.

⁷⁵ Dobrenko, *Making of the State Reader*; Idem, *Making of the State Writer*.

⁷⁶ Ilizarov, *Taĭnaia zhizn' Stalina*; Sarnov, *Stalin i pisateli*.

⁷⁷ Zhuravlev, *Fenomen "istorii fabrik i zavodov"*; Corney, *Telling October*; Sorokina, "People and Procedures"; Elaine MacKinnon, "Writing History for Stalin: Isaak Izrailevich Mints and the Istorii grazhdanskoĭ voiny," *Kritika: Explorations in Russia and Eurasian History* 6, No.1 (Winter 2005): 5-54; Mosolov, *IMEL-tsitadel' partiĭnoĭ ortodoksii*; Dobrenko, *Stalinist Cinema and the Production of History*.

⁷⁸ On political control and surveillance: Izmozik, *Glaza i ushi rezhima*; Peter Holquist, "Information is the Alpha and Omega of Our Work?: Bolshevik Surveillance in Its Pan-European Context," *The Journal of Modern History* 69 (September 1997): 415-450; Roman Podkur, "Informatsiĭno-analitychna robota iak odyń z napriamkiv diial'nosti spetssluzhb v 20-30 rr.," *Z arkhiviv VUChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.1-2 (1998): 342-356; Idem, *Za povidomlenniamy radians'kykh spetssluzhb* (Kyiv: Ridnyi kraj, 2000); Shapoval, "The Mechanisms of the Informational Activity"; Semystiaha, "The Role and Place of Secret Collaborators"; Svitlana Liaskovs'ka, "Oblyky 'politychno-neblahonadiĭnogo elementu' orhanamy VNK-DPU-ODPU: istorychnyĭ aspekt," *Z arkhiviv VUChK-*

The partial opening of the Soviet security service archives--notably in Ukraine-- contributed to the appearance of a series of monographs and documentary collections elucidating the complex relationship between the Communist party and the repressive apparatus of the Soviet state, on the one hand, and various opposition groups, national intelligentsia, and organized religion, on the other.⁷⁹ Deportations and mass repression as hard technologies of statecraft have long been the subject of numerous studies—in fact, so numerous that it is hardly possible to list all of them here.⁸⁰ In recent years there appeared a number of works on the Soviet security apparatus during the 1920s and 1930s and more studies are currently on the way.⁸¹ By contrast what has received relatively little attention in the literature are *functional* characteristics of the uses of history in pursuit of legitimacy in different social settings, as well as the relationship between Soviet historicism and the broader domain of historical politics, in particular, during the crucial period of the Second World War in the territories that experienced the Axis rule.

GPU-NKVD-KGB, 2010, No.1 (34): 22-52; Amir Weiner and Aigi Rahi-Tamm, “Getting to Know You: The Soviet Surveillance System, 1939-1957,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 13, No.1 (Winter 2012): 5-45.

On propaganda: Kenez, *The Birth of Propaganda State*; Karel Berkhoff, *Motherland in Danger: Soviet Propaganda during World War II* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012).

On censorship: Blium, *Sovetskaia tsenzura v èpokhu total'nogo terrora*; Gorjaeva, *Politicheskaia tsenzura v SSSR*.

⁷⁹ Prystaiko and Shapoval, *Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi i HPU-NKVD*; “Politychni represii proty sviashchennykiv,” *Z arkhiviv VUChK-HPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.1-2 (2005); No.1-2 (2006); Bezruchko, *Oleksandr Dovzhenko; Ukraïns'ka intelihtentsiia i vlada*; Valerii Vasyl'iev, Nicholas Werth and Serhii Kokin, “Dokumenty orhaniv VKP(b) ta DPU USSR pro nastroi ta modeli povedinky partiino-radians'kykh pratsivnykiv u respublitsi (1932-1933),” *Z arkhiviv VUChK-HPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.1-2 (2013): 369-400.

⁸⁰ Khlevniuk, *Politbiuro*; Aleksei Stepanov, *Rasstrel po limitu. Iz isorii politicheskikh represii v TASSR v gody “ezhovshchiny”* (Kazan': “Novoe Znanie,” 1999); Pavel Polian, *Ne po svoei vole: istoriia i geografiia prinuditel'nykh migratsii v SSSR* (Moskva: Memorial, 2001); Marc Junge and Rolf Binner, *Kak terror stal ‘bol’shim’: sekretnyi prikaz No.00447 i tekhnologiia ego ispolneniia* (Moskva: AIRO-XX, 2003); Aleksandr Vatlin, *Terror raionnogo masshtaba: ‘massovye operatsii’ NKVD v Kuntsevskom raione Moskovskoi oblasti 1937-1938gg.* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2004); Nikita Petrov and Arsenii Roginskii, “Pol'skaia operatsiia NKVD 1937-1938gg.,” <http://www.memo.ru/history/POLAcY/00485ART.htm>, last accessed 20 August 2015; Marc Junge, Gennadii Bordiugov, and Rolf Binner, eds., *Vertikal' bol'shogo terrora: istoriia operatsii po prikazu NKVD No.00447* (Moskva: Novyi Khronograf, 2008); Aleksei Teplakov, *Mashina terrora: OGPU-NKVD v Sibiri v 1929-1941gg.* (Moskva: Novyi khronograf, 2008); Vladimir Khaustov and Lennart Samuel'son, *Stalin, NKVD i represii 1936-1938gg.* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2009); Serhii Bohunov, ed., *Ukraïna v dobu “Velykoho terroru” 1936-1938 roku* (Kyiv: “Lybid’,” 2009).

⁸¹ Podkur, *Za povidomlenniamy radians'kykh spetssluzhb*; Shapoval and Zolotar'ov, *Vsevolod Balyts'kyi*; Marc Jansen and Nikita Petrov, *Stalin's Loyal Executioner: People's Commissar Nikolai Ezhov, 1895-1940* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 2002); Vadym Zolotar'ov, *Oleksandr Uspens'kyi: osoba, chas, otochennia* (Kharkiv: Folio, 2004); Nikita Petrov, *Pervyi predsedatel' KGB Ivan Serov* (Moskva: Materik, 2005); Arch Getty and Oleg Naumov, *Yezhov: the Rise of Stalin's “Iron Fist”* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); David Shearer, *Policing Stalin's Socialism: Repression and the Social Order in the Soviet Union, 1924-1953* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Paul Hagenloh, *Stalin's Police: Public Order and Mass Repression in the USSR, 1926-1941* (Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009). Also Lynne Viola is presently preparing a book length study of the perpetrators of state repression.

Approaching the subject matter in this manner necessitates not only an engagement with different historiographies, but also a re-examination of some of the assumptions about the role of official ideology, representational practices, and commemorative rituals in the USSR in wartime. This method necessarily implies a shift of attention from a limited body of normative “texts” and their creators within the political and cultural elite to a wider array of practices, institutions, and actors engaged in the everyday production of knowledge about the past in different social domains. Hence the space this study allocates to historical agents not normally thought of as participants in the production of Soviet memory discourse, notably NKVD officers, Soviet archivists, Ukrainian nationalists, Nazi collaborators, disqualified partisans, and children in the formerly occupied territories.

Ultimately, the dissertation seeks not only to elucidate the complexity of the system of historical politics in the Soviet Union of the wartime era and restore agency to the seemingly powerless actors. The aim is also to account for multi-faceted, at times complementary, at times conflicting imperatives undergirding the activities of various participants in the process of information gathering and production of knowledge about the past; to shed light on the relationships between various actors and organizational networks within the system of Soviet historical politics; to expose structures of complicity in the Stalinist dictatorship and simultaneously map the outer limits of its power. Last but not least, the dissertation will show how officially sanctioned narratives could be manipulated, reconfigured and occasionally even thwarted by less powerful actors, prompting state officials to adapt to the reality on the ground.

In adopting a systemic approach to historical politics, I will proceed from a series of assumptions: 1) different actors have the capacity to act and shape the historically conditioned environment; 2) they possess unequal power and unequal amounts of resources; 3) they are inscribed within a system, wherein they often have to act in response to prior actions or reactions by other, more or less powerful actors; 4) their choices are not only guided by their strategic and tactical objectives, but are also structurally constrained by limited resources, pre-existing discourses, and the activities of other actors.

What follows is a series of interconnected case studies, each aiming to illustrate different aspects of Soviet historicism during the Second World War. Chapter 1 lays out the general context of military and political developments in Ukraine in 1939-1945. It describes the peculiarities of the

Soviet entry into the Second World War, the dissolution of the Polish state, and the effects of Soviet state-building and legitimating practices in the annexed territories both on the populations of the region and on the wartime Soviet state itself.

Chapter 2 takes up the subject of the Nazi and Ukrainian nationalist historico-political challenge to Soviet rule in Ukraine in the aftermath of the German invasion of the USSR. Specifically, the chapter documents little known aspects of the organizational activities of the OUN-B both in Galicia and Volhynia and further to the east, within the borders of the pre-1939 Soviet Ukraine. Drawing on the materials of Soviet criminal investigative case files, the chapter elucidates the evolution of the nationalist underground networks in the Kyiv region and simultaneously untangles the peculiarities of the historico-political dimension of the state-building efforts by the OUN-B with reference to discursive struggles over the meaning of the recent past. It also shows how preoccupation with the historico-political activities of the OUN-B percolated into the thinking of Soviet officialdom, including the NKGB investigators, causing the latter to become active participants in the production of memory discourse that complemented repressive measures against Nationalist activists throughout the USSR.

Chapter 3 brings the Soviet state back into the picture even more prominently by examining in detail the surveillance and historico-political activities of the Department of State Archives of the NKVD of the USSR in Ukraine in the aftermath of the Axis occupation. It draws attention to the little known activities of Soviet archivists during the war and elucidates their contributions both to state repression and the ideological fashioning of the Soviet body politic. Rather than being mere cogs in the Soviet system, the chapter argues, Soviet archivists played a prominent role both in the process of repression and in the creation of the foundational narratives of the Soviet state.

Chapter 4 approaches the nexus of power and knowledge from a different direction. At its core is the official investigation of the anti-Jewish pogrom that took place in Kyiv in the immediate aftermath of the Babi Yar massacres. The chapter draws attention to the quotidian aspects of memories of the Holocaust in Kyiv, as well as sketches out political effects of such memories both with respect to official retributive justice and political integration of the population in the territories that experienced Nazi rule. The chapter shows that, in marked contrast to the extensive categorical repression of conventional collaborators (such as auxiliary policemen and

participants of armed anti-partisan detachments), the Soviet treatment of participants in the anti-Jewish pogrom in Kyiv combined harsh public punishment meted out to the core of active perpetrators and de facto exculpation of scores of less active participants—who were expected to be re-integrated into the Soviet body politic.

The subject of the political re-integration of the population in the territories that experienced Axis rule is also at the center of chapters 5 and 6. Specifically, chapter 5 concerns itself with the subject of the official verification of wartime activities of partisan units and underground groups. It uncovers the peculiarities of the verification process and shows how in-built institutional imperatives within the Soviet system and histories of particular communities both complicated the process of negotiation of political identities in the aftermath of the Axis occupation and created opportunities for political re-integration of putative participants of the resistance movement.

Chapter 6 engages with the history and content of the collection of children reminiscences about the Nazi occupation commissioned by the Administration of State Archives of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR in late 1943 and early 1944. Specifically, it documents the effects of official discourses on the content of children's recollections and simultaneously draws attention to the authentic experiences of the Nazi occupation that served as raw material for the construction of Soviet identity in the aftermath of the war.

Within this framework the study advances a set of larger arguments about the origins, functional characteristics, and impact of the system of Soviet historical politics on the local populations. The central argument that the study makes is that the historical politics in the USSR of the wartime era cannot be reduced to a single explanatory factor. Constituted by thousands of historico-political acts by a broad array of actors, the phenomenon of Soviet historical politics was a function of a complex mix of at times complementary, at times contradictory strategic, political, institutional, and cultural imperatives.

From the perspective of Soviet government officials, of crucial importance was the imperative of state security premised on the creation and maintenance of a cohesive body politic both via promotion of shared political values and cultural identities and via elimination of alternative identity discourses and their champions. In this sense, historical politics could hardly be confined

to the level of “text.” Daily exercise of power—for example through the practice of surveillance and repression—had a tangible impact on behavior and daily ideological iterations by thousands of historical subjects—who pursued distinct agendas within the context of the specific historically conditioned environment that structured their choices and furnished them with tools of interpretation and languages of expression of their experiences. Paradoxically, the prominence of the state in suppression or marginalization of alternative concepts of political identity also ensured the survival of the said narratives, if only in the form of investigative case files in the Soviet security service archives.

Chapter 1

World War II and the (Un)-Making of Political Communities

On 1 September 1939 Nazi Germany attacked Poland. Two days later France and Great Britain declared war on Germany. The Second World War began. Taking advantage of the vast superiority in armour and air power, the Wehrmacht rapidly inflicted a series of devastating defeats on the Polish armed forces. By the end of the second week of the war Poland's strategic situation was catastrophic. Warsaw was effectively surrounded and under siege, while the German armies kept pushing remnants of Polish armed forces towards what soon would become Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia. By 15 September the Polish military command lost operational control over the army. Two days later, with the military defeat a certainty the Polish government went into exile.

In Galicia, the progressive destabilization of the Polish state was accompanied by outbreaks of inter-ethnic violence, as embattled Polish soldiers and Polish militias attacked the unsympathetic local population and clashed with Ukrainian and Jewish self-defence units consisting of supposed Communist sympathizers.¹ Simultaneously, Polish settlers--who took residence in the region in the 1920s and 1930s--came under the attack by armed groups of the Organization of Ukrainian nationalists.² The confusion was further stimulated by the Soviet propaganda leaflets that urged Ukrainian and Jewish populations to resist Polish rule. For their part Galician Jews--who had experienced violence already in 1936--feared pogroms.³

As chaos and violence spread through Eastern Poland, few people were aware of the details of the German-Soviet agreements, which the foreign ministers of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, Joachim von Ribbentrop and Viacheslav Molotov, had signed on 23 August 1939. The Non-Aggression Pact, as we now know, was accompanied by secret protocols delineating the two states' respective spheres of influence in Eastern Europe. Germany recognized that the

¹ Gross, *Revolution from Abroad: the Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988), 19; Shimon Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany: Poles, Jews, and Ukrainians, 1919-1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 79.

² Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany*, 83.

³ On anti-Jewish pogroms in Galicia in 1936: Maksym Hon, *Iz kryvdoiu na samoti. Ukraïns'ko-ievreï'ski vzaiemyny na zakhidnoukraïns'kykh zemliakh u skladi Pol'shchi* (1935-1935) (Rivne: "Volyns'ki oberehy," 2005), 103.

Soviet sphere of interest encompassed Finland, Estonia, Latvia and the territory of Poland east of the rivers Narew, Wisla and San, as well as Bessarabia. In exchange, the Soviet government pledged to abstain from anti-German activities in the event of a German attack on Poland, to expand economic relations with Germany, and to tone down anti-fascist propaganda inside the USSR.⁴

Soviet forces crossed the Soviet-Polish frontier on 17 September. The official pretext for the invasion was the collapse of the Polish state and the protection of the Ukrainian and Belorussian population in the face of chaos and the impending German occupation. Disorganized Polish forces were unable to offer any resistance and were soon ordered by the military command not to fight. In some localities, Red Army units entered into skirmishes with Wehrmacht detachments advancing from the other side, but such incidents were rare and were promptly resolved through diplomatic channels. Simultaneously, the Soviet government stepped up its pressure on the Baltic states and Finland--recognized as part of the Soviet sphere of influence by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact-- to conclude mutual military assistance pacts.⁵

The Red Army occupied Eastern Galicia and Volhynia in a matter of days, sustaining fairly modest casualties in the process.⁶ Although local attitudes towards the Soviet government were by no means uniform, there is little doubt that the Red Army was greeted by sizeable crowds of local Ukrainians, Belorussians and Jews everywhere. Significant parts of the local population resented Polish rule and hoped for an improvement in the socio-economic situation and cultural emancipation.⁷ Others did not want to fight in the war and were unhappy with the mobilization into the Polish army.⁸ Jews specifically were also aware of the reality of Nazi persecution in the

⁴ Mikhail Mel'tiukhov, *Sovetsko-pol'skie voïny: voenno-politicheskoe protivostoianie 1918-1939 gg.* (Moskva: "Veche", 2001), 196; on the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact: Ingeborg Fleischhauer, *Der Pakt: Hitler, Stalin und die Initiative der deutschen Diplomatie 1938-1939* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1990).

⁵Elena Zubkova, *Pribaltika i Kreml' 1940-1953* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2008), 52-59.

⁶ Contemporary estimates place the number of Soviet casualties during the Polish campaign at 1,475 killed and 3,858 wounded: Georgii Krivosheev, ed., *Rossia i SSSR v voïnakh XX veka. Poteri vooruzhennykh sil. Statisticheskoe issledovanie.* (Moskva: Olma Press, 2001), chapter 4.

⁷ Vladyslav Hrynevych, paper presented at the conference of the Ukrainian-Jewish Encounter, Potsdam, June 2011. See also head of the NKVD task force in Stanislav colonel S.Savchenko to the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR on the attitudes of the population and anti-Soviet manifestations in the former Stanislav vojvodship, 12 October 1939 (Vladimir Vinogradov, ed., *Pol'skoe podpol'e na territorii Zapadnoï Ukrainy i Zapadnoï Belorussii 1939-1941.* (Warsaw-Moscow: Oficyna wydawnicza Rytm, 2001), tom 1, 187-188).

⁸ Anti-war sentiments among Ukrainians and Belorussians are mentioned in Soviet intelligence reports: see The report by L.Beriia to I.Stalin, V.Molotov and K.Voroshilov on the composition of the Border Guard Corps and attitudes of the population in connection with the start of the war, 13 September 1939: Vinogradov, *Pol'skoe podpol'e*, t.1, 140.

Generalgouvernement and welcomed any government capable of providing a modicum of security.⁹ Finally, many younger Jews and Ukrainians were active participants in the Communist Party of Western Ukraine (KPZU) and genuinely sympathized with the Soviet Union. Some of these people took part in the formation of militias and assisted Soviet officials in their efforts to build the government apparatus. In contrast, many anti-Soviet Ukrainians (especially from among the intelligentsia)--fearful of potential reprisals-- fled to the German-controlled territories.¹⁰ Poles, for their part, mostly stayed home, frightened and disoriented by the recent turn of events. Many developed intense resentment towards Jews and Ukrainians for their supposed support of the destruction of the Polish state.¹¹

Upon their arrival in the localities, Soviet officials immediately set about creating structures for the new state. Leading the charge on this front were nine mobile task forces of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD), each consisting of 40 to 70 officers and some 300 soldiers who travelled between key locations, secured government buildings and the archives of the Polish state, supervised the creation of the Soviet security apparatus, confiscated weapons and conducted registration of Polish government officials, military personnel, and former activists of anti-Soviet parties.¹² In addition to organizational steps, already during the first days of the campaign the NKVD task forces carried out arrests and internment in POW camps of hundreds of Polish civil servants, policemen, intelligence officers, military colonists (*osadniki*),¹³ as well as activists of Polish, Ukrainian, and Jewish political parties.¹⁴ Simultaneously the

⁹ Yitzhak Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 43. The information about the situation in the German occupied part of Poland often came from Jewish refugees. NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR placed the number of refugees in 6 regions of Western Ukraine at 101,337 people: Vinogradov, *Pol'skoe podpol'e*, t.1, 254.

¹⁰ By the end of 1939, some 30,000 Ukrainian refugees crossed over to the *Generalgouvernement*. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad*, 31

¹¹ Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 43.

¹² Ihor Il'iushyn and Oleksandr Pshennikov, "Diial'nist' operatyvno-chekists'kykh hrup u zakhidnykh oblastiakh Ukraïny (veresen'-zhovten' 1939)," *Z Arkhiviv VChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB No.2-4* (2000): 424-433. For the listing of population categories subject to registration and surveillance, see the excerpt from the order of the NKVD of the USSR No.001225, 11 October 1939 (Mykola Kuhutiak, ed., *Ukraïns'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh na Prykarpatti v XX stolitti. Dokumenty i materialy* (Ivano-Frankivs'k: LIK, 2009-2012), tom 2, knyha 1, 17, 32-33).

¹³ The phenomenon of military colonization related to Polish government efforts in the aftermath of the Soviet-Polish war of 1920 to strengthen its positions in the sensitive border regions by allocating plots of land to the politically reliable former legionnaires and war veterans. Military colonists possessed weapons and operated as de facto police auxiliaries: Vinogradov, *Pol'skoe podpol'e*, t.1, 70-76.

¹⁴ Il'iushyn and Pshennikov, "Diial'nist' operatyvno-chekists'kykh hrup"; See also L.P.Beriia to I.V.Stalin, V.Molotov, K.Voroshilov on measures of organs of the NKVD in Western Belorussia and Western Ukraine, 21 September 1939 (Vinogradov, *Pol'skoe podpol'e*, t.1, 150-154). Excerpt from the coded telegram by I.Serov to L.Beriia about the number of arrests in Western Ukraine, 27 September 1939 (ibid., 156-158); By 1 October 1939

authorities began probing popular attitudes and carrying out the verification of “suspicious elements” through a rapidly growing network of agents.¹⁵

Soviet policies in Eastern Galicia and Western Volhynia in 1939-1941 were subordinated to three closely intertwined overarching goals: political legitimation, social revolution, and securing control over the newly acquired territories. In an effort to dismantle the power structures of the Polish state, the Soviet authorities sought to enlist the support of local Ukrainians and Jews. The new authorities nationalized industrial enterprises, liquidated private trade, and distributed land among poor peasants. The beneficiaries were primarily local Ukrainian peasants (Jewish business owners and artisans were affected negatively by nationalization).¹⁶

In October the Soviet authorities proceeded with the legitimation of the takeover of the provinces by holding “elections” to National Assemblies. These bodies then formally petitioned the Soviet government to induct the new territories into the USSR.¹⁷ The request was formally approved in November. As a result, all residents of Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia were granted Soviet citizenship. People had a choice to opt out of Soviet citizenship and retain their prior Polish citizenship, but in such an event they would be subject to discrimination in the socio-economic sphere, as well as run the increased risk of deportation to the Soviet interior.¹⁸

An important facet of the Soviet strategy of legitimation in Galicia and Volhynia was de-polonization of the state apparatus and Ukrainianization (creation of the network of Ukrainian language schools, renaming of the Lviv University after Ivan Franko, and facilitating migration of Ukrainians to the cities). But unlike in Eastern Ukraine during the 1920s and early 1930s, most local Ukrainians remained outside power structures. Administrative posts were initially

the NKVD reportedly arrested 3,914 people in Western Ukraine alone. See the coded telegram No.44 by V.Merkulov and I. Serov to the NKVD of the USSR about the number of arrests by NKVD task forces in Western Ukraine, 3 October 1939 (Ibid., 174).

¹⁵ See the telegram No.3980 by L.Tsanava and V.Bochkov to L.Beriia about the activities of the NKVD task forces in the former Vil'na and Belostok vojvodships, 28 September 1939 Vinogradov, *Pol'skoe podpol'e*, t.1, 160-172; also the coded telegram of the administration of the NKVD in the Stanislav region to People's Commissar of Internal Affairs L.Beriia on the political attitudes in the region, 31 January 1940 (Kuhutiak, *Ukrains'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 57-58). On the phenomenon of the public opinion under the Soviet rule: Sarah Davies, *Popular Opinion in Stalin's Russia: Terror, Propaganda, and Dissent* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Vladyslav Hrynevych, *Nepryborkane riznoholossia: Druha Svitova viina i suspil'no-politychni nastroi v Ukraïni, 1939-cherven' 1941* (Kyiv and Dnipropetrovs'k: Vydavnytstvo i drukarnia “Lira,” 2012).

¹⁶ Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany*, 81.

¹⁷ Gross, *Revolution from Abroad*, 71-113.

¹⁸ Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 44.

filled by members of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine (many of them Jewish). Very soon, however, many of these people were replaced by more reliable cadres arriving from Eastern Ukraine (the so-called *vostochniki*).¹⁹ Whereas the Polish government discriminated against the minorities in the educational, socio-economic and cultural spheres, the Soviet authorities lifted such restrictions, creating in the process opportunities, however limited, of upward social mobility. The result was more extensive contacts and interactions between members of different groups in education, at the workplace, and during leisure activities.

The increased opportunities in the cultural sphere for Ukrainians, Jews, and Belorussians (in Western Belorussia), however, went hand in hand with a broad assault on religion and indigenous institutions, such as the Ukrainian educational association “Prosvita” and the Shevchenko scientific society. Eventually, the new authorities disbanded all the existing organizations operating outside the purview of the Soviet state and subjected to persecution their activists (without regard for their national affiliation).²⁰ In combination with severe state repression, such political and socio-economic transformations greatly aggravated the pre-existing tensions in the Ukrainian-Polish-Jewish triangle of inter-ethnic relations. The long-term Polish-Ukrainian conflict became institutionalized, while “Jews”--having for the first time acquired access to the positions of (however limited) authority within local communities-- came to be regarded by both Poles and anti-Soviet Ukrainians as “collaborators” of the Communist regime, collectively responsible for its deeds.²¹ To make it worse, the official liquidation of political parties and civic associations deprived local communities of the only available tools of inter-communal mediation.²²

The political repression in the annexed territories began in earnest already in September-October 1939 and accelerated in the course of 1940 and 1941, when the Soviets occupied and subsequently annexed territories of the Baltic states, Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina (June 1940)

¹⁹ Ben-Cion Pinchuk, *Shtetl Jews under Soviet Rule: Eastern Poland on the Eve of the Holocaust* (Oxford, England and Cambridge, Massachusetts: B. Blackwell, 1990); Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany*, 80

²⁰ Redlich, *Together and Apart in Brzezany*, 80; Hrynevych, Potsdam, June 2011; on the Soviet assault on Jewish organizations: Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 48-49.

²¹ The German intelligence, for example, noted that Poles accused Ukrainians of contributing to the destruction of the Polish state (Tat’iana Tsarevskaia-Diakina, ed., *Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii v gody Vtoroi mirovoi voiny: Dokumenty: v dvukh tomakh* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2012), tom 1, 87). On the evolution of the mythology of “Judeo-Bolshevism” in the Soviet Union during the 1920 and 1930s: Mathias Vetter, *Antisemiten und Bolschewiki: zum Verhältnis von Sowjetsystem und Judenfeindschaft 1917-1939* (Berlin: Metropol, 1995).

²² Jeffrey Kopstein, paper presented at the Conference of the Ukrainian-Jewish Encounter, Potsdam, June 2011.

as well as parts of Finland. The scope of repressive measures was linked primarily with the imperative of the destruction of the structures of the Polish state. Other imperatives were linked to the questionable legitimacy of the Soviet government in the annexed territories (further eroded by often unpopular policies), the precarious strategic situation, German intelligence operations, and activities of the Ukrainian and Polish nationalist underground. In the absence of legal political parties and organizations, underground organizations became the only available outlet for the accumulating grievances and political aspirations of different segments of the local population.²³

In the beginning Soviet punitive organs targeted primarily functionaries of the Polish state, army officers, military colonists (*osadniki*), and activists of Polish, Ukrainian and Jewish political parties, but gradually surveillance expanded to encompass a wider array of social groups.²⁴ By late 1939 the Soviet punitive organs had also increasingly preoccupied themselves with the activities of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). Having come into existence in 1929 through the merger of organizations of Ukrainian students and World War I veterans, by 1939 this radical nationalist organization had encompassed thousands of young activists committed to the idea of creating the Ukrainian state in the territories populated by ethnic Ukrainians--in Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Soviet Ukraine.²⁵ In 1939 following the start of the Soviet occupation of Galicia and Volhynia, many OUN activists fled to the *Generalgouvernement*, where they would play an important auxiliary role in the Nazi administration of the territories, populated primarily by Poles.²⁶ In preparation for the upcoming

²³ In 1939-1940 the NKVD uncovered more than 50 different Polish underground organizations in Western Ukraine, Western Belorussia and Lithuania. From late 1939 many of them were coordinated by the "Union of Armed Struggle" affiliated with the Polish government in exile. The list can be found in Vinogradov, *Pol'skoe podpol'e*, t.1, 328-336.

²⁴ On Soviet repression: Il'iushyn and Pshennikov, "Diial'nis't operatyvno-chekists'kykh hrup"; Ivan Patryliak, *Viis'kova diial'nist' OUN-B v 1940-1942 rokakh* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukraïny NAN Ukraïny, 2004), 147. See also the survey of political parties, military organizations and civic associations of Poland by 3rd (Counter-Intelligence) Department of the Main Directorate of State Security of the NKVD of the USSR for the year 1939: Vinogradov, *Pol'skoe podpol'e*, t.1, 36-106); report of Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs Vsevolod Merkulov to People's Commissar of Internal Affairs L.Beriia about activities of the NKVD task forces, dated 27 September 1939 (Kuhutiak, *Ukraïns'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 19-21).

²⁵ On the history of the OUN: John Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*; Alexander Motyl, *The Turn to the Right: the Ideological Origins and Development of Ukrainian Nationalism, 1919-1929* (Boulder, Colorado, New York, distributed by Columbia University Press, 1980); Iurii Kyrychuk, *Ukraïns'kyi natsional'nyi rukh 40-kh-50-kh rokiv XX stolittia: ideolohiia ta praktyka* (Lviv: Dobra sprava, 2003); Wysocki, *Organizacja ukraińskich nacjonalistów*; Kentii, *Zbroinyi chyn Ukraïns'kykh natsionalistiv*; Motyka, *Ukraïnska partyzantka*; Bruder, "Den ukrainischen Staat erkämpfen oder sterben!"; Golczewski, *Deutsche und Ukrainer*; Zaïtsev, *Ukraïns'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*.

²⁶ Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukraïnskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 129.

German war against the USSR, the anti-Soviet uprising, and the hypothetical proclamation of the Ukrainian state—the OUN had entered into a collaborative relationship with the German intelligence organs and not only continued to expand the size of its underground network, but also began to infiltrate organs of the Soviet state and official organizations, such as the Communist Youth League (Komsomol) as well as the Red Army.²⁷ Even the split of the organization into the Mel'nyk and Bandera factions in spring 1940 did not substantially change the dynamics of clandestine organizational activities.

The Soviets responded to the nationalist challenge by intensifying surveillance activities and a string of arrests that targeted primarily the Ukrainian intelligentsia and activists of various Ukrainian parties and organizations (especially intensely from December 1939).²⁸ In April-May 1940 alone Soviet punitive organs arrested more than 600 OUN activists in the Lviv, Ternopil', Rivne and Volhynia regions.²⁹ The repression would continue until the outbreak of the Soviet-German war. According to a report by People's Commissar of State Security Vsevolod Merkulov, from October 1939 until 1 April 1941, the organs of the NKVD uncovered 393 illegal organizations and groups of Ukrainian nationalists and arrested 7,625 activists. In the course of 1940 the NKVD reportedly liquidated the Lviv regional executive of the OUN three times, yet every time the network was re-built and continued its operations and preparations for the eventual armed uprising.³⁰ In January and May 1941, in a move reminiscent of the didactic show trials of the Ukrainian intelligentsia in the late 1920s and early 1930s the authorities staged three public trials of arrested activists of the OUN.³¹

An important locus of potential opposition to Soviet rule in Eastern Galicia was the Greek Catholic Church, in part due to its well-developed organizational structure, in part due to its

²⁷ Patryliak, *Viis'kova diial'nist' OUN-B*, 139; See also the report by head of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR Ivan Serov to head of the NKVD of the USSR Lavrentii Beria, 5 October 1940 (Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 189-191).

²⁸ Redlich, *Together and Apart in Bzezany*, 86.

²⁹ Patryliak, *Viis'kova diial'nist'*, 147.

³⁰ See the report of V.Merkulov to I.Stalin on the activities of Ukrainian nationalist organizations, 16 April 1941 (Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 243-251).

³¹ The first of these trials took place on 15-19 January 1941 in Lviv (The Trial of 59); the second one--on 7 May 1941 in Drohobych (The trial of 62); the third one--on 12-13 May 1941 in Drohobych (the trial of 39): Patryliak, *Viis'kova diial'nist'*, 152-153.

moral authority among the population, and in part due to its entanglement with the OUN.³² While trying to undermine this institution, Soviet authorities treaded more carefully in their relations with the clergy. In fact, initially NKVD operatives on the ground were prohibited from carrying out arrests of Roman and Greek Catholic priests without explicit authorization from the center.³³ But eventually repressive measures extended also to the clergy of different denominations and affiliated former activists of different parties, most notably the moderate Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance (UNDO). Simultaneously, the Soviet security apparatus in Western Ukraine received instructions to intensify the investigation of ties between various religious groupings in Western Ukraine and in the pre-1939 Soviet territories.³⁴

Arrests in the Soviet controlled territories were supplemented with large scale deportations to Siberia, Kazakhstan and the Soviet North. The first such deportation took place in February 1940, targeting primarily functionaries of the Polish state and military colonists. More deportations followed in April 1940, June and July 1940, and June 1941.³⁵ The groups enveloped by the final deportation included families of those deported in February 1940, “asocial elements,” Jewish refugees from the *Generalgouvernement*, and other “unreliables.”³⁶ All in all, during 1939-1941 Soviet punitive organs in Western Ukraine arrested at least 41,000 people, likely significantly more.³⁷ Roughly four hundred thousand people, mostly Poles, but also Ukrainians and Jews, were deported to the Soviet interior.³⁸ Deportations also took place in the

³² On the Greek Catholic Church and its role in the history of the Ukrainian national movement: John-Paul Himka, *The Greek Catholic Church and Ukrainian Society in Austrian Galicia* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University, Ukrainian Studies Fund, 1986).

³³ See the directive of People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR Lavrentiĭ Beria, dated 15 September 1939 in Kuhutiak, *Ukraïns’kyĭ natsional’no-vyzvol’nyĭ rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 17.

³⁴ On the Soviet dealings with the Greek Catholic Church: Serhiĭ Kokin, ed., *Mytropolyt Andreĭ Sheptyts’kyĭ u dokumentakh radians’kykh orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky (1939-1944rr.)* (Kyiv: Ukraïns’ka vydavnycha spilka, 2005); Hennadiĭ Boriak, ed., *Patriarkh Iosyf Slipyĭ u dokumentakh radians’kykh orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky, 1939-1987* (Kyiv: PP Serhiĭchuk M.I, 2012); On peculiarities of Soviet surveillance of various religious organizations, see the directive by People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Ivan Serov, dated 22 December 1939 (Kuhutiak, *Ukraïns’kyĭ natsional’no-vyzvol’nyĭ rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 49-51).

³⁵ On the deportations: Keith Sword, *Deportations and Exile: Poles in the Soviet Union, 1939-1948* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994); Iuriĭ Slyvka, ed., *Deportatsiĭ: zakhidni zemli Ukraïny kintsia 30-kh-pochatku 50-kh rr.* (Lviv: Natsional’na akademiia nauk Ukraïny, 1996);

Katherine Jolluck, *Exile and Identity: Polish Women in the Soviet Union during WWII* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002).

³⁶ Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 50.

³⁷ This is the minimum verifiable number, as there is no precise data on the number of arrests in 1939 and in the first half of 1941. The data come from Nikol’s’kyĭ, *Represyyna diial’nist’*, 421-444.

³⁸ Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations*, 159.

Baltics, Belorussia, and Bessarabia.³⁹ The consequences of the Soviet conquest were manifold: significant loss of lives, forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of people, intensification of interethnic antagonisms, and, in Ukraine, the creation of new political entities at the expense of Poland and Romania.

Operation “Barbarossa”

On 22 June 1941 Nazi Germany violated the terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and invaded the USSR. The German attack was accompanied by declarations of war on the USSR by Romania, Italy, Finland, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia and Albania. The German military campaign in the Soviet Union--albeit in part motivated by strategic considerations-- was not an ordinary war. It was a war of imperial conquest, grounded in an eclectic ideological mix of territorial expansionism (*Drang nach Osten*), German nationalism, social Darwinism, anti-Communism, scientific racism and antisemitism. Central to the Nazi version of imperialism were the utopian visions of the “Aryan race” and of “living space.” In contrast to British and French imperial traditions, the Nazi imperial visions did not provide for the “civilizing” of the indigenous populations. The vast territories of the USSR--including what today is Ukraine--were to be conquered, deurbanized, exploited, and ultimately emptied of the unwanted, “racially inferior” indigenous populations, above all Jews, whom Nazi ideologues, security establishment, and government technocrats had come to regard as the backbone of the Soviet state and of the international communist movement.⁴⁰ The freed expanses were slated for German agricultural colonization.⁴¹ Underlying these policy objectives was the utopian dream of a continental German Empire equal to or more powerful than the British Empire--wherein the “East” was to serve as “Germany’s India.”⁴²

³⁹ Documents of the Soviet security apparatus regarding deportations from the newly incorporated territories can be found in Bilas, *Represyivno-karal’na systema*, kn. 2, 129-222.

⁴⁰ Timothy Mulligan, *The Politics of Illusion and Empire; German Occupation Policy in the Soviet Union, 1942-1943* (New York: Praeger, 1988), 7; Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*; Wendy Lower, *Nazi Empire Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

⁴¹ On the German agricultural colonization: Lower, *Nazi Empire Building*, 162-179.

⁴² Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia, 1941-1945* (London: MacMillan, 1957), 7.

German short-term goals consisted of rapidly securing the territory by way of the elimination of the ideological enemies of the Third Reich and seizing the maximum possible amount of agricultural produce and raw materials. In early 1941 Nazi economic technocrats prepared plans that provided for confiscations of foodstuffs and de facto starvation of 30 million of the so-called “useless eaters,” residents of big cities and, above all, Jews.⁴³

The German military campaign against the Soviet Union (Operation “Barbarossa”), premised on the strategy of the “lightning war” (*Blitzkrieg*), got off to a quick start. The German air force (*Luftwaffe*) rapidly destroyed the bulk of Soviet military planes on the ground already during the initial hours of the invasion, making it possible to bomb Soviet cities, defensive positions and columns of retreating Red Army soldiers and civilians with virtual impunity. For their part, the offensive operations of the highly mobile tank groups resulted in the rapid encirclement and destruction of Red Army divisions concentrated along the border.⁴⁴

The situation was particularly dramatic in the central sector of the Soviet-German front in Belorussia, where in June and July 1941 the German forces successfully encircled and destroyed several Soviet armies. Already on 28 June the Wehrmacht units entered Minsk. By mid-July the German armies captured Smolensk, a mere 400 kilometres west of Moscow. In the north the German and allied forces quickly occupied the Baltics and by early September laid siege to Leningrad, a siege that would last more than two years and result in deaths of close to one million people.⁴⁵ In the process several million Soviet soldiers were taken prisoner and many Soviet armies all but ceased to exist.⁴⁶ The German offensive proceeded the slowest in Ukraine, where the Soviet command had concentrated the largest number of forces. This notwithstanding, on 19 September the Wehrmacht captured Kiev. By late 1941 Nazi Germany and its allies occupied most of Ukraine and began offensive operations in the vicinity of Moscow.

⁴³ On the “Hunger Plan”: Christian Gerlach, *Krieg, Ernährung, Völkermord: Forschungen zur deutschen Vernichtungspolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1998); Dieter Pohl, “The Murder of Ukraine’s Jews under German Military Administration and in the Reich Commissariat Ukraine” in *The Shoah in Ukraine: History, Testimony, Memorialization*. Eds. Wendy Lower and Ray Brandon, 23-76 (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008), 27.

⁴⁴ Viktor Anfilov, *Nezabyvaemyi sorok pervyi* (Moskva: Sovetskaia Rossiia, 1982).

⁴⁵ The siege of Leningrad would last from 8 September 1941 until 27 January 1944 and result in deaths of hundreds of thousands of people: Jörg Ganzenmueller, *Das belagerte Leningrad 1941-1944: die Stadt in den Strategien von Angreifern und Verteidigern* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005); Nikita Lomagin, *Leningrad v blokade* (Moskva: Eksmo-Iauza, 2005).

⁴⁶ On Soviet POWs: Christian Streit, *Keine Kameraden: die Wehrmacht und die sowjetischen Kriegsgefangenen 1941-1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1978); Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 89-113.

The Soviet retreat was accompanied by military mobilization, destruction of critical infrastructure, and the evacuation to the Soviet controlled territories of industrial equipment, functionaries of the Communist party and the Soviet state, industrial specialists, qualified workers, and prison inmates. Even though at that time, Nazi antisemitism was no secret, Jews were not among population categories specifically slated for evacuation.⁴⁷ In addition to organized evacuation, there was also spontaneous flight of many residents of the soon-to-be occupied territories, including rank-and-file Communists and Jews. Both the organized evacuation and spontaneous flight proceeded in conditions of transportation shortages.⁴⁸ The situation was further aggravated by German bombardment of both the communication hubs and transportation infrastructure. These factors along with the rapidity of the German advance frequently caused failure of evacuation, as many evacuees would find themselves caught behind the frontlines. Importantly, as Soviet forces retreated, they destroyed strategic infrastructure, which would contribute to the hardships of the population in the Axis occupied territories. For its part, the NKVD, often unable to evacuate political prisoners, carried out massacres of prison inmates in many localities.⁴⁹

The Soviet defeats during the initial phase of the Soviet-German war had a demoralizing effect both on the Red Army personnel and the civilian population, augmenting the crisis of legitimacy of the Soviet government in the national peripheries. As a result, several million Soviet soldiers became prisoners of war, voluntarily surrendered or otherwise ceased resistance. Many others avoided conscription either because of their views of the Soviet government as illegitimate or due to the perceived inevitability of the German victory.⁵⁰

As the Germans advanced through the vast area between the Baltic and the Black Seas, they encountered diverse populations, some of which had a recent history of independent statehood (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia) or featured dynamic nationalist movements with state aspirations,

⁴⁷ On Soviet media coverage of the Nazi policies towards the Jews: Karel Berkhoff, 'Total Annihilation of the Jewish Population': The Holocaust in the Soviet Media, 1941-45,' *Kritika. Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 10, no. 1 (Winter 2009): 61-105.

⁴⁸ Rebecca Manley, *To the Tashkent Station: Evacuation and Survival in the Soviet Union at War* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2009).

⁴⁹ Bilas, *Represyivno-karal'na systema*, kn.2, 222-279; Bogdan Musial, "Konterrevolutionäre Elemente sind zu Erschießen": *Die Brutalisierung des deutsch-sowjetischen Krieges im Sommer 1941* (Berlin: Propylän Verlag, 2000).

⁵⁰ Iurii Nikolaiets', "Dezertyrstvo iz lav Chervonoï Armii v Ukraïni na pochatkovykh etapakh Velykoï Vitchyznianoï viïny," *Z Arkhiviv VChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, No 1-2 (1997): 169-176.

such as the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, which sought to lean on the Third Reich to achieve their objective.

The attitudes towards the Third Reich and Soviet power, however, were not uniform. In some locations, especially in the territories recently annexed by the Soviet Union, German soldiers were welcomed as “liberators.”⁵¹ The Soviet government enjoyed much higher levels of legitimacy in Belorussia, the Russian heartland, and the predominantly Russian-speaking industrial centers in what today is southern and eastern Ukraine. In the pre-1939 Soviet territories, the government was significantly less popular in the rural areas, especially in Central Ukraine, which in 1917-1921 was the stronghold of the Ukrainian People’s Republic and anti-Soviet peasant insurgencies and subsequently experienced forced collectivization, an assault on the traditional ways of life, repression and a devastating man-made famine.⁵² The result was a comparatively high share of desertion and avoidance of conscription and refusal to evacuate. Such peculiarities of the local political landscape would exert a profound impact not only on the local experiences of the war and the Axis occupation, but also on developments in the aftermath of the Soviet re-conquest or liberation (depending on one’s perspective) in 1943-1944.

The End of Soviet Rule

The distinctive feature of the collapse of the Soviet state and regime change during the early weeks of the German invasion of the USSR was a wave of anti-Jewish violence that swept through hundreds of localities in Lithuania, Poland, Eastern Galicia, Volhynia, Northern Bukovyna and Bessarabia. Some of these incidents--which were more common in the territories

⁵¹ Lower, *Nazi Empire Building*, 37; Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 6-33. See also the report by the representative of the German Foreign Ministry at the headquarters of the 6th Army about the differences of reception of the Wehrmacht in Galicia in June-July 1941 and further to the east, 24 July 1941 (Orest Dziuban, ed., *Ukrains’ke derzhavotvorennia. Akt 30 chervnia 1941 roku. Zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv* (Lviv-Kyiv: “Piramida,” 2001), 201-202).

⁵² On the legacies of the Civil war and the traditional weakness of the Bolshevik movement in the Ukrainian speaking countryside: Doroshko, *Nomenklatura*, 64; on the complicated relationship between the Bolsheviks and the peasants in Ukraine of the Civil War period and during the 1920s: Verstiuk, *Makhnovshchyna*; Andrea Graziosi, *Bol’sheviki i krest’iane na Ukraine, 1918-1919 roky* (Moskva: AIRO-XX, 1997), 95-122; Mark Baker, “Peasants, Power, and Revolution in the Village: a Social History of Kharkiv Province, 1914-1921” (PhD dissertation, Harvard University 2001).

populated by Ukrainians-- took place shortly after the arrival of the German forces and may have been instigated by the German *Einsatzgruppen*, which frequently carried out executions in parallel to the acts of indigenous antisemitic violence.⁵³ In other places, however, violence antedated the German occupation, did not involve extensive German participation or took place after the German forces departed.⁵⁴ For their part the German military displayed ambivalence to such developments, vacillating between efforts to restore order and to dispense punishment for Communist crimes.⁵⁵

In Eastern Galicia, Western Volhynia, and Bukovina “pogroms” took place in at least 124 localities (approximately 10-13% of the total number of cities, towns, and villages). The numbers of deaths ranged from 1 to 150. In at least three cases several thousand Jews were murdered: in Lviv, Ternopil’ and Zolochiv. Preliminary estimates suggest that between 13,000 and 35,000 people lost their lives during the pogroms. In Lviv pogrom violence stopped around 5 July, only to resume between July 25 and 27 (the so-called “Petliura days”).⁵⁶

In some localities such intra-communal violence followed the discovery of victims of the NKVD terror, most notably in Lviv, Sambir, Zolochiv, Stryĭ and elsewhere, where locals forced Jews to bury the bodies of victims of the NKVD terror, clean the streets and perform other humiliating rituals.⁵⁷ But sites of Soviet massacres do not neatly correspond with places where pogroms took place. Violence broke out also in the locations where there had been no prior NKVD massacres-- and vice versa, sites of NKVD massacres did not always feature pogroms.⁵⁸

Almost everywhere pogroms unfolded in the atmosphere of the general disintegration of public order, massive looting and a carnivalesque subversion of existing social hierarchies undergirded by an explosive mix of traditional antisemitism and pernicious mythologies of “Judeo-Communism.” The latter reflected, on the one hand, the toxic impact of the repeated shifts of

⁵³ Andrzej Zbikowski, “Local anti-Jewish Pogroms in the Occupied Territories of Poland, June-July 1941.” Pohl, “Anti-Jewish Pogroms.” On 29 June 1941 Reinhard Heydrich dispatched the following instructions to the commanders of the *Einsatzgruppen*: “The self-cleansing endeavours of anti-communist or anti-Jewish circles in the territories which will soon be occupied are not to be hindered. On the contrary: they should be actively instigated, but without leaving any trace, intensified where necessary, and guided onto the right path—though without these local ‘self-defense circles’ later being able to point to any orders or political assurances given to them” (Kai Struve, “Rites of Violence? Pogroms of 1941,” 260).

⁵⁴ Kopstein, Potsdam, June 2011.

⁵⁵ Pohl, “Anti-Jewish Pogroms,” 307.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 305-313.

⁵⁷ Himka, “Lviv Pogrom,” 212.

⁵⁸ Kopstein, Potsdam, June 2011.

ethnic hierarchies and profound ethnicization of intra-communal politics (it was in 1939-1941 that some local Jews for the first time were able to rise to positions of authority provoking the resentment of local Poles and Ukrainians). On the other hand, the tendency to view Jews as ardent supporters of Communism was symptomatic of the impact of much broader transnational discourses reaching back at least to the years of the post-World War I upheaval, the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, and the rise of ultranationalist movements in countries as diverse as Germany, Poland, and Hungary.⁵⁹ In the summer of 1941 Jews were certainly not the only target of retaliatory violence (crowds also attacked non-Jewish collaborators of the Soviet regime), but they were by far the most available and the most vulnerable target group.

One of the most controversial aspects of this history is the question of the role of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in the pogrom violence in the summer of 1941 and its subsequent collaboration in the Nazi Holocaust. It is known that in the second half of the 1930s, in part as a reaction to the ascendancy of Nazi Germany and OUN's geopolitical orientation towards this revisionist power, ideologues of Ukrainian integral nationalism increasingly turned to antisemitic themes in their publications.⁶⁰ Such ideas resonated not only with the OUN rank and file, but also with significant segments of the Ukrainian population of Galicia, whose traditional anti-Judaism and economic antisemitism had informed the political thinking of the OUN leadership.⁶¹ It is also known that on the eve of the German invasion of the USSR both branches of the OUN--which had for a while maintained a collaborative relationship with the Wehrmacht and German special services in the hope of securing Nazi support for Ukrainian statehood--created several advance groups (*pokhidni hrupy*).⁶² Encompassing hundreds of activists, these were to move in the footsteps of the advancing Wehrmacht units, establish contact with the existing OUN underground,⁶³ conduct propaganda among the Ukrainian

⁵⁹ On the origins of the mythology of "Judeo-Bolshevism": Budnitskiĭ, *Rossiiskie evrei*, 93-141; see also Istvan Deak, *Essays on Hitler's Europe* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska press, 2001), 113-168.

⁶⁰ On the ideology of the OUN and its affinities with other movements of the extreme right in the interwar Europe: Zaitsev, *Ukrains'kyi integral'nyi natsionalizm*.

⁶¹ Bruder, "Den ukrainischen Staat Erkämpfen oder Sterben!", 46-47

⁶² One result of this collaboration was creation of the Ukrainian military units "Nachtigall" and "Roland."

⁶³ OUN underground networks in Galicia were headed by Ivan Klymiv (Lehenda) and, according to Klymiv himself, on the eve of the Soviet-German war encompassed about 20,000 activists in 3,300 locations (Rossolinski-Liebe, "The Ukrainian National Revolution," 92).

population and eventually take control of administrative structures and militia in the territories that would come under German rule.⁶⁴

Whereas the OUN-M (Mel'nyk faction) expected the Nazi leadership to agree to the formation of a Ukrainian state that would join the fascist "New Europe" in the aftermath of the victorious war against the Soviet Union, the OUN-B (Bandera faction)--the on average younger, numerically stronger and more radical of the two groups--preferred to confront the German authorities with a *fait accompli*. Following the start of the German-Soviet war, the underground structures of the OUN-B were to launch an armed uprising in the immediate rear of the Red Army, dismantle the remaining structures of Soviet power and together with members of the advance groups assume authority in the name of the Ukrainian state under the leadership of Stepan Bandera.⁶⁵

Importantly, the OUN-B visions of the "national revolution" provided for the physical liquidation of agents of the Soviet state and their collaborators who were described in ethno-political terms as "Poles," "Jews," and "Muscovites" friendly to Soviet rule.⁶⁶ The instructions to the latter effect appeared in May 1941 in a programmatic document titled "The Struggle and Action of the OUN during the War."⁶⁷ Following the start of the German-Soviet war the OUN-B circulated leaflets marked by virulent antisemitism and explicit calls for the extermination of Jews, Poles and other enemies.⁶⁸

On 30 June 1941 the central advance group of the OUN-B and battalion "Nachtigall" reached Lviv. On the same day the self-proclaimed chairman of the government, Iaroslav Stets'ko, declared the re-establishment of the Ukrainian statehood, while also emphasizing a preference for continued collaboration with the Third Reich.⁶⁹ As the fighting moved east in the days ahead, OUN activists held demonstrations in support of the Ukrainian state that featured local people in traditional garments extending ritualistic welcome to the advancing Wehrmacht in the "liberated" localities.⁷⁰ Simultaneously the organization set about creating a militia under their

⁶⁴ See the memoirs of a member of one of the advance groups: Mykola Chartyrys'kyi, *Vid Sianu po Krym. Spomyny uchasnyka III Pokhidnoi hrupy Pivden'* (New York: Ukrainian American Press, 1951).

⁶⁵ Such uprisings were to begin near the border and then move further east along with the movement of the Soviet-German front (Patryliak, *Viis'kova diial'nist'*, 172).

⁶⁶ Patryliak, *Viis'kova diial'nist'*, 324; Rossolinski-Liebe, "The "Ukrainian National Revolution," 84.

⁶⁷ Patryliak, *Viis'kova diial'nist'*, 111-120.

⁶⁸ Bruder, "Den ukrainischen Staat erkämpfen oder sterben!", 124-125.

⁶⁹ Rossolinski-Liebe, "The Ukrainian National Revolution," 96-98.

⁷⁰ Rossolinski-Liebe, "The Ukrainian National Revolution," 93; Chartyrys'kyi, *Vid Sianu po Krym*, 28.

own control. In late June and July such forces came into existence not only in Lviv, but also in many cities and towns in Galicia and Volhynia.⁷¹

The militia went about arresting and executing collaborators of the Soviet state and not infrequently perpetrated acts of anti-Jewish violence.⁷² The involvement of the OUN-led militias in the pogroms and their collaboration with the *Einsatzgruppen* during the initial phase of operation “Barbarossa” is well-documented, notably in the case of Lviv, Zolochiv, Buchach and elsewhere in Eastern Galicia and Volhynia.⁷³ Yet the OUN was not the only actor on the ground and one should be careful not to exaggerate the influence of the organization during this period or absolutize its role in the violence. The OUN network was spread rather thin and even if nationalist activists orchestrated the pogroms in an effort to ingratiate themselves with the German authorities, the violence could hardly have taken place without the active participation of broader segments of the local population.⁷⁴ The fact that pogroms did not take place in most localities suggests the importance of continued research and careful comparison of conditions in different communities (Chapter 4 among other things will examine the characteristics of a rare pogrom in the pre-1939 Soviet territories in late September 1941).

The Occupation Apparatus and the Problem of Local Collaboration

The military conquest and the destruction of the Soviet state was only the initial step in the process of the establishment of Axis rule in the occupied territories. The conquest was invariably followed by the creation of structures of military administration and the ruthless pacification of the area. This pattern clearly emerged already during the military campaign in Poland, when SS, police, and some Wehrmacht units perpetrated initial mass killings within the context of securing rear areas.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Patryliak, *Viis'kova diial'nist'*, 230.

⁷² Bruder, “Den ukrainischen Staat Erkämpfen oder Sterben,” 146-148.

⁷³ Himka, “The Lviv Pogrom of 1941”; Ivan Kachanovs'kyi, “OUN-B ta natsysts'ki masovi vbyvstva vlitku 1941 roku na istorychnii Volyni,” *Ukraina Moderna*, No.20 (2014): 215-244.

⁷⁴ Kopstein, Potsdam, June 2011.

⁷⁵ Dieter Pohl, *Die Herrschaft der Wehrmacht. deutsche Militärbesatzung und Einheimische Bevölkerung in der Sowjetunion 1941-1944* (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2008), 52-58; also Arad, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 42-43.

Yet there was still a qualitative difference between the developments in Poland in 1939-1941 and what would transpire further to the East within the framework of Operation “Barbarossa.” For even though the Nazi terror regime in Poland radicalized in the course of 1940-1941--as evidenced by efforts to annihilate the Polish intelligentsia, massive population transfers and restrictions of food supply to the newly created Jewish ghettos--there was not yet a systemic effort to annihilate entire populations.⁷⁶ The transition to total extermination would occur only after the invasion of the USSR.⁷⁷ The reasons for the qualitative jump in violence are not entirely clear, but appear to have derived from an interplay of the Nazi conceptualizations of the Soviet Union as the “Jewish state,” ideological frustrations resultant from the failure of the Madagascar and Lublin resettlement plans which provided for expulsions of Jews from the areas under German control, acquisition of more territories with large Jewish populations, and the euphoria that swept through the Nazi leadership against the backdrop of early victories in the summer of 1941.⁷⁸

Another important difference between the military campaign against Poland and the military campaign against the USSR consisted in the fact that the latter was carried out also by Germany’s allies. Romania, Hungary, Italy, Finland and Slovakia all participated in the invasion and subsequent occupation of Soviet territories, including the territory of today’s Ukraine. More specifically, Hungary occupied and annexed Transcarpathia. (Before March 1939 the region was part of Czechoslovakia). Romania occupied Northern Bukovina, Bessarabia and the region along the bank of the Dniester river in summer of 1941 (Transnistria). The Italian army likewise occupied and administered some localities, notably in Eastern Ukraine. The expanse of the territory and the presence of different occupation forces thus signified that the occupation was administered differently in different regions.

The authority of the German military administration--which was expected to be of short duration-- extended only to areas adjacent to the combat zone. It consisted of a network of field and local military districts (*Feld-* and *Ortskommandatur*) headed by army officers.

⁷⁶ On German policies in the occupied Poland and the evolution of the “Final Solution”: Christopher Browning, *The Path to Genocide; Essays on Launching the Final Solution* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

⁷⁷ Pohl, *Die Herrschaft der Wehrmacht*, 53

⁷⁸ Browning, *Path to Genocide*, 25; For a different interpretation of the origins of the “Final Solution,” see Richard Breitman, *The Architect of Genocide. Himmler and the Final Solution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 130.

Responsibility for securing rear areas behind the front lines lay with security divisions of the Wehrmacht.⁷⁹

As the front lines moved eastwards, the Nazi leadership transferred authority from the military to the civilian administration.⁸⁰ By late 1941 all of Right Bank and large parts of Left Bank Ukraine were transferred to the jurisdiction of the *Generalgouvernement* and *Reichskommissariat "Ukraine"* with its administrative center in Rivne.⁸¹ With the exception of the areas subject to direct annexation by Germany and its allies, from 17 July 1941 the overall (nominal) responsibility for formulation of occupation policies in the territories under the control of the civilian administration lay with the so-called Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories (*Ostministerium*) under Alfred Rosenberg.⁸²

The initial plans of the Nazi leadership provided for the creation of four administrative units in the formerly Soviet territories--the so-called *Reichskommissariats* "Ukraine," "Ostland", "Muscovy," and "Caucasus." In practice, only the first two entities came into existence (the former was headed by the Prussian *Gauleiter* Erich Koch; the latter by Heinrich Lohse). But even these never came to encompass all the projected territories. Due to the military situation, parts of today's Eastern Ukraine originally slated for incorporation into the *Reichskommissariat "Ukraine"* remained under military rule throughout the occupation.

Reichskommissariats were divided into smaller administrative units--*Generalkommissariats*--which, in turn, consisted of districts (*Gebiete*) headed by *Gebietskommissars*.⁸³ Although formally *Reichskommissars* reported to Rosenberg and *Ostministerium*, in actual practice both Koch and Lohse frequently bypassed formal lines of subordination and dealt directly with Hitler and other agencies of the Third Reich. The power of *Ostministerium* in the occupied territories was also

⁷⁹ On the role of the Wehrmacht: Jörn Hasenleiver, *Wehrmacht und Besatzungspolitik in der Sowjetunion. Die Befehlshaber der rückwärtigen Heeresgebiete 1941-1943* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2010). Security divisions No. 444, 213 and 454 in the sector of the Army Group "South"; security divisions No.207, 221, 281, 285, 286 and 403 and infantry divisions No.707 and 339 in the sector of the Army Groups "Center" and "North").

Martin Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941-1944* (Basingstoke: MacMillan in Association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 29. On the activities of the infantry division No.707 in Belorussia: Peter Lieb, "Täter aus Überzeugung? Oberst Carl von Andrian und die Judenmorde der 707. Infanteriedivision 1941/42," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 50, No. 4 (2002): 523–557.

⁸⁰ On 1 September 1941 Hitler announced creation of the *Reichskommissariats* "Ukraine" and "Ostland."

⁸¹ On the structures of the military occupation, see Dallin, *German Rule in Russia*, 95-96.

⁸² *Ostministerium* was created by Hitler's directive on 17 July 1941.

⁸³ 6 General Kommissariats were Kyiv, Volyn-Podilla, Zhytomyr, Mykolaïv, Taurien, Dnipropetrovs'k.

significantly circumscribed by other agencies of the Third Reich. Thus the crucially important security domain--both in the *Reichskommissariats* and, to a considerable degree, even in the areas under the military control--was administered by the SS. The latter functioned as a state within the state and reported directly to *Reichsführer SS* Heinrich Himmler. Different aspects of economic, agricultural, nutrition and labour policies were determined by the Five Year Plan, the Economic Staff East (*Wirtschaftstab Ost*) and the Office of Labour (*Arbeitsamt*), which frequently functioned in parallel with the corresponding agencies of the military and civilian government.

Importantly, the political leadership of the Third Reich ruled out any possibilities of local self-government, autonomy and independence for the occupied territories.⁸⁴ Consequently, indigenous personnel could not be put into leadership positions above the level of borough or village. Local mayors (*Bürgermeister*) and village elders typically reported to German agricultural leaders or military commandants, their responsibility largely limited to the organization of grain procurements, maintenance of roads, public order, and recruitment of workers. In carrying out these tasks they could rely on policemen from among the local population.⁸⁵

The specificity of formation of auxiliary administrations in the *Generalgouvernement* and *Reichskommissariat* “Ukraine” was extensive involvement in the process of the Ukrainian nationalist underground, occasionally in competition with Russian nationalist organizations—such as Labour Union of the New Generation--as was the case in Kharkiv.⁸⁶

Due to Hitler’s opposition to arming the locals, German authorities were initially suspicious of any attempts to organize indigenous armed formations. For this reason the German security service carefully monitored the organizational activities of the OUN and conducted repeated arrests and deportations to the *Generalgouvernement* of nationalist activists in the *Reichskommissariat* “Ukraine” and in the territories under military rule. Scores of OUN militants were executed.⁸⁷ This notwithstanding, from the very start of the war all organs of the Nazi state-

⁸⁴ Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia*, 22-23.

⁸⁵ Karel Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 114-140.

⁸⁶ Anatoliĭ Skorobohatov, *Kharkiv u chasy nimets’koï okupatsii (1941-1943)* (Kharkiv: “Prapor”, 2004), 136; On the activities of the White Guard Organizations during the Second World War: Iurii Tsurganov, *Neudavshiisia revansh: Belaia ěmigratsia vo Vtoroi mirovoi voine* (Moskva: Intrada, 2001), 83-98.

⁸⁷ Motyka, *Ukrainska partyzantka*, 110-112.

-including the army and police-- relied in their daily operations on a wide array of collaborators from among the local population (e.g., administrative personnel, agricultural and industrial specialists, translators, drivers). Moreover, the sheer size of the occupied territory, shortages of security personnel, and presence in the rear areas of the Wehrmacht of Soviet partisan detachments and of thousands of straggling Red Army soldiers--who eventually would form the core of the Soviet partisan movement--forced German military and police authorities increasingly to resort to arming local auxiliaries, including from among the ranks of Soviet POWs.⁸⁸

Particularly targeted for enlistment in the auxiliary police structures, mobile police battalions (*Schutzmannschaftsbattalions*), Wehrmacht or *Waffen SS* combat units were members of non-Russian nationalities.⁸⁹ One of the first indigenous armed formations was “Polissian Sich” created by Taras Bul’ba-Borovets’ in Volhynia in August 1941.⁹⁰

The recruitment of non-Russians was premised on the Nazi conception of the USSR as a fragile multi-ethnic state and on the (correct) perception of non-Russians being on average less loyal to the Soviet state than ethnic Russians.⁹¹ (It was no accident that from late 1920-early 1930s the

⁸⁸ Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 27, 41; Aleksandr Okorokov, *Antisovetskie voinskie formirovaniia v gody Vtoroi mirovoi voiny* (Moskva: Voennyi universitet, 2000), 40-41; Hasenclever, *Wehrmacht und Besatzungspolitik*, 223-228.

⁸⁹ Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 27, 41; on the military collaboration, see also Joachim Hoffmann, *Die Ostlegionen 1941-1943. Turkotataren, Kaukasier und Wolgafinne im deutschen Heer* (Freiburg: Verlag Rombach, 1986); Oleg Roman’ko, *Musul’manskie legiony Tret’ego Reikha. Musul’manskie vooruzhennye formirovaniia v germanskikh vooruzhennykh silakh (1939-1945)* (Simferopol’: Tavriia-Plus, 2000); Andrii Bolianovs’kyi, *Dyviziia “Halychyna”: istoriia* (L’viv: A.Bolianovs’kyi, 2000); Idem, *Ukraïns’ki viis’kovi formuvannia v zbroïnykh sylakh Nimechchyny: 1939-1945* (L’viv: Missioner, 2003); Vincas Bartosevicius, Joachim Tauber and Wolfram Wette, eds., *Holocaust in Litauen: Krieg, Judenmorde und Kollaboration im Jahre 1941* (Köln: Böhlau, 2003); El’za-Bair Guchinova, “Natsiia i diskurs viny: Primirenie s proshlym v politike pamiaty kalmykov,” *Ab imperio*, No.4 (2004): 263-288; Wolfgang Curilla, *Die Deutsche Ordnungspolizei und der Holocaust im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941-1944* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2006). Soviet intelligence operatives in the occupied territories carefully observed and reported on such units: See the report compiled by officials of the Central Headquarters of the Partisan Movement: “Informational Letter about the Formation of Anti-Soviet Units and Detachments by the German Military Command in the Occupied Territories,” not earlier than 15 September 1942 (TsDAHOU, f.62, op.1, spr.182, ark.25-44).

⁹⁰ In the late fall 1941 the German authorities dissolved the “Polissian Sich” and forced Bul’ba-Borovets’ to go to the forests, where he announced the formation of the “Ukrainian Insurgent Army”--not to be confused with the armed formation of the OUN-B, created in early 1943 (Motyka, *Ukrainska partyzantka*, 106-107).

⁹¹ On the instrumentalization of ethnicity in the occupied Kyiv, see the memoir by T.Fesenko, which referenced small privileges bestowed on Ukrainians: Tat’iana Fesenko, *Povest’ krivykh let* (New York: Izdanie “Novogo Russkogo Slova,” 1963), 76. The studies of political attitudes in different parts of the USSR during the Second World War are fairly sparse. See, for example, John Armstrong, ed., *Soviet Partisans in World War II* (Madison: University of Wisconsin press, 1964); On Ukraine specifically: Hrynevych, *Nepryborkane riznolossia*.

Soviet leadership increasingly relied on russo-centric patriotism as a tool of mobilization).⁹² By instrumentalizing ethnicity in this manner, the German military and political leadership sought, on the one hand, to facilitate pacification of the occupied territories; on the other hand, to influence non-Russians both in the Red Army and in the Soviet controlled territories.⁹³ In 1943, with the tide of war turning to the Soviet favour, the Nazi authorities also began to instrumentalize anti-Soviet sentiments among Russians. Thus in spring 1943 they announced the creation of the “Russian Liberation Army” (*Russkaia Osvoboditel’naia armia* or ROA), the largely virtual entity, devoid of central command structures, which, in theory, encompassed an array of indigenous police and military formations consisting of anti-Soviet émigrés, Cossacks, and former POWs of different nationalities, deployed in different parts of Europe. Formally in charge of the “Russian Liberation Army” was the former Soviet General Andrei Vlasov.⁹⁴

By 1945 the number of nominally Soviet citizens in the local police structures, mobile police battalions, national legions, Wehrmacht and SS combat and auxiliary formations may have reached close to 1 million people.⁹⁵ The motivations and circumstances under which these individuals entered into the service of the Third Reich were extremely diverse. Some, as noted, were members of various nationalist and Cossack organizations, which pursued their own political agendas (e.g., both factions of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists tried to use German military, police and Waffen-SS structures as training grounds for the future cadres of the Ukrainian army).⁹⁶ Others were motivated by strong anti-Soviet attitudes born out of personal experiences of previous decades, sought to get out of POW camps, avoid deportation for forced labour in Germany or otherwise secure one’s livelihood in the context of the German policy of deindustrialization and depopulation of the Soviet cities through the policy of deliberate starvation. Still others were forcibly mobilized (especially in 1942-1943).⁹⁷ But whatever motivations, these individuals became an important element of the coercive apparatus of the Nazi

⁹²On the russo-centric mobilization in the Soviet controlled territories: Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism*, 43-62.

⁹³ See, for example, Hoffmann, *Die Ostlegionen 1941-1943*, 51.

⁹⁴ On the “Russian Liberation Army”: Catherine Andreyev, *Vlasov and the Russian Liberation Movement: Soviet Reality and Emigre Theories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

⁹⁵ Mikhail Semiriaga, “Voennoplennnye, kollaboratsionisty i general Vlasov,” in *Drugaiia voïna 1939-1945*, ed. Iurii Afanas’ev, 313-339 (Moskva: Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi gumanitarnyi universitet, 1996), 320. Similar numbers are cited in Pavel Polian, *Zhertvy dvukh diktatur: zhizn’, trud, unizhenie i smert’ sovetskikh voennoplennykh i ostarbaïterov na chuzhbine i na rodine* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2002), 111.

⁹⁶ Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 31.

⁹⁷Gerlach, *Krieg, Ernährung, Voelkermord*; Ihor Vietrov, *Ekonomichna ekspansiiia Tretioho reïkhu v Ukraïni 1941-1944* (Kyiv: Chetverta khvyliia, 2000); Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 164-186.

state, thoroughly implicated in its criminal operations--not only through participation in the combat, anti-partisan warfare, and the accompanying destruction of civilian lives, but also via direct involvement in the Holocaust as part of the auxiliary police forces, as well as guarding POW and concentration and extermination camps both in the *Reichskommissariats* and in the *Generalgouvernement*.

The Holocaust and Other Cases of Mass Murder

That the war against the USSR would not be an ordinary war had been made clear to the German military by the Nazi leadership already in spring 1941. In the course of March, Hitler repeatedly classified the upcoming campaign as a war of extermination, in which Soviet soldiers were to be treated not as fellow soldiers, but as ideological enemies, and demanded the elimination of the “Jewish Bolshevik intelligentsia.”⁹⁸ Evoking Hitler’s guidelines, the directive of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht (dated 3 March) referred to the upcoming war with the USSR as a decisive struggle of “two opposing political systems” and granted *Reichsführer SS* Himmler ultimate authority to eliminate all elements associated with the Soviet “political system.”⁹⁹ Importantly, the broad categorization of the war in the “East” as a war of annihilation at this early point did not entail detailed elaboration on precisely who the enemies of the Third Reich were. Such a categorical fluidity and terminological vagueness--which was only somewhat alleviated with the help of subsequent orders and instructions -- left plenty of interpretive space to police and military officers on the ground. Simultaneously, the so-called commissar decree (*Komissarbefehl*) and the military jurisdiction decree (*Kriegsgerichtsbarkeitserlass*) effectively absolved Wehrmacht soldiers from criminal responsibility for the extrajudicial executions of Soviet political officers and civilians.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸Ralf Ogorreck, *Die Einsatzgruppen und die “Genesis der Endloesung”* (Berlin: Metropol, 1996), 38; Breitman, *The Architect of Genocide*, 149.

⁹⁹Breitman, *The Architect of Genocide*, 149

¹⁰⁰Pohl, *Die Herrschaft der Wehrmacht*, 71; Felix Römer, *Der Komissarbefehl: Wehrmacht und NS-Verbrechen an der Ostfront 1941/42* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2008).

The key role in the war of extermination belonged to the SS and its mobile task forces. *Einsatzgruppen*--as these units were known in German-- made their original appearance on the historical scene in 1938 in conjunction with the annexation (*Anschluss*) of Austria. Subsequently, *Reichsführer SS* and chief of German police Heinrich Himmler and chief of the security police and of SD Reinhard Heydrich deployed these formations against enemies of the Reich in Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia, and occupied Poland.¹⁰¹ There were four mobile task forces deployed behind the German army groups on the eve of the invasion of the USSR -- *Einsatzgruppen* "A," "B," "C", and "D."--each divided into smaller squads (*Einsatz- and Sonderkommandos*) and encompassing 400 to 990 members. The latter represented every branch of the security apparatus of the Third Reich (*Gestapo*, *Kripo*, security service [SD], *Waffen-SS*, and order police).¹⁰²

During the initial phase of the German-Soviet war, the primary task of the *Einsatzgruppen* consisted of setting up permanent structures of the security apparatus of the Nazi state in the occupied territories and the rapid "pacification" of the territories in the immediate vicinity of the front.

Einsatz- and Sonderkommandos operated in the immediate vicinity of the combat zone. Security provisions further from the front--in the so-called rear areas of the Army Groups-- were split between security divisions of the Wehrmacht and SS or police forces. The central component of the German police structure in the *Reichskommissariats* was the so-called Security Police (*Sicherheitspolizei*). It featured a network of stationary offices staffed primarily by former members of the *Einsatzgruppen* and was coordinated by Himmler's plenipotentiaries--Higher SS and police leaders.¹⁰³ The Security police subsumed the Security Service (SD), Criminal Police (*Kripo*) and Order Police (which in turn was divided into *Gendarmerie* in the rural areas and

¹⁰¹ Peter Klein, "Die Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD bis zum Angriff auf die Sowjetunion," in *Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion 1941/42. Die Tätigkeits- und Lageberichte des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD*, ed. Peter Klein, 9-28 (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1997), 11.

¹⁰² On the history of the *Einsatzgruppen*: Helmut Krausnick, *Die Truppe des Weltanschauungskrieges; Die Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD 1938-1942* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1981); Klein, *Einsatzgruppen*; Andrej Angrick, *Besatzungspolitik und Massenmord: die Einsatzgruppe D in der suedlichen Sowjetunion 1941-1943* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2003).

¹⁰³ On the higher SS and police leaders: Ruth Bettina Birn, *Die Höheren SS- und Polizeifuehrer. Himmlers Vertreter im Reich und in den besetzten Gebieten* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1986); Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 60.

Schutzpolizei [Schupo] in the cities).¹⁰⁴ In addition, Himmler's plenipotentiaries also disposed of three *Waffen SS* brigades and from mid-July 1941 no less than 11 order police battalions.¹⁰⁵ *Waffen-SS* regiments and order police battalions would play a particularly important role in the Holocaust in the fall of 1941--in large part due to the fact that *Einsatzgruppen* had limited manpower and were not in a position to carry out killing "actions" in large cities.¹⁰⁶

In mid-July Heinrich Himmler--in reversal of prior policy—authorised the formation of auxiliary police and mobile *Schutzmannschaftsbattalions* (*Schuma*), reporting to corresponding *Gendarmerie* and *Schupo* outposts and consisting of local volunteers and former Soviet prisoners of war. By the end of 1942 the total membership of auxiliary police and mobile *Schuma* battalions reached 300,000 people.¹⁰⁷ The distinctive feature of the auxiliary police structure in Lithuania, Latvia, and Western Ukraine was the extensive involvement in the police forces of local nationalists, who, as noted, had set about creating their own militia structures already in June 1941 and for the most part remained in police service even after the Germans subordinated and purged the militia units.¹⁰⁸ Following the stabilization of the security situation in the Baltics and Western Ukraine in the second half of 1941, some of the Lithuanian, Latvian and Ukrainian police formations were deployed to other regions, most notably Belorussia.¹⁰⁹

The logic of securing rear the areas of the Wehrmacht determined the initial targets of mass murder. In June and July 1941 victims typically included functionaries of the Soviet state, members of the Communist resistance movement, political officers in the Red Army, Jewish

¹⁰⁴ Pohl, "The Murder of Ukraine's Jews," 26; on the role of the *Waffen-SS* brigades in the Holocaust: Martin Cüppers, *Wegbereiter der Schoah. Die Waffen-SS, der Kommandostab Reichsfuehrer-SS und die Judenvernichtung 1939-1945* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005).

¹⁰⁵ In Ukraine the Higher SS and Police Leader Russia South Friedrich Jeckeln, responsible for police matters in Ukraine, commanded *Einsatzgruppe* "C," Police Regiment "South" (order police battalions 45, 303, and 314) and reserve police battalions 304, 315, and 320.

¹⁰⁶ Pohl, "The Murder of Ukraine's Jews," 40.

¹⁰⁷ Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 60.

¹⁰⁸ On the developments in Lithuania in June 1941: Joachim Tauber, "14 Tage im Juni: Zur kollektiven Erinnerung von Litauern und Juden" in Bartosevicius, Tauber, and Wette, *Holocaust in Litauen*, 40--50.

On auxiliary police structures in Lithuania: Arunas Bubnys, "Die litauischen Hilfspolizeibataillone und der Holocaust" in Bartosevicius, Tauber, and Wetter, *Holocaust in Litauen*, 117-131; Knut Stang, *Kollaboration und Massenmord: die litauische Hilfspolizei, das Rollkommando Hamann und die Ermordung der litauischen Juden* (Frankfurt am Main- New York: Peter Lang, 1996), 118-132.

¹⁰⁹ Georg Tessin and Norbert Kannapin, eds., *Waffen-SS und Ordnungspolizei im Kriegseinsatz 1939-1945* (Osnabrück: Biblio Verlag, 2000), 638-640.

On the *Schuma* battalion 201: Per Rudling, "Navuka zabivat': 201-i batal'en aukhovnai palitsii i hauptman Roman Shukhevich v Belarusi v 1942 godze," *Arche*, No.7-8 (2012): 67-87.

prisoners of war and Jewish men.¹¹⁰ But already by mid-August the massacres began to engulf also Jewish women and children.¹¹¹ Upon completion of assignments in specific localities, units of the *Einsatzgruppen* proceeded further east. In addition to the arrests and executions, they also had orders to stimulate anti-Jewish pogroms among local populations. The underlying objective was to create the impression of a popular revolt against the “Jewish rule” and in this fashion to legitimate Nazi policies.¹¹² Simultaneously, the occupation authorities fostered ethnic divisions by granting minor, but noticeable privileges to representatives of certain ethnic groups, such as ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) and to a lesser extent Balts and Ukrainians.¹¹³ Thus in the summer and fall of 1941 Ukrainians were frequently released from POW camps and received preferential access to scarce jobs, which in the context of the Nazi policy of de-urbanization and deliberate starvation of Soviet POWs could be the difference between life and death.¹¹⁴

The Holocaust in Ukraine began in the summer 1941. Just as in the Baltics, Western Belorussia and Eastern Poland, the mass murder in Eastern Galicia and Volhynia was preceded by pogroms that claimed up to 35,000 lives. In subsequent months, as the Wehrmacht rolled east, the geography of coordinated mass murder similarly expanded. Although the Nazis initiated the war, planned, organized and drove policies of genocide, the undertaking, in addition to German agencies, featured a complex array of non-German institutions and actors: Romanian army and state apparatus, Hungarian, Slovak, and Italian forces, Ukrainian legions and local police forces. The killing “actions” were typically preceded by the registration, confiscation of property, symbolic marking of Jews from the rest of the population, and ghettoization.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰In the USSR, units of the German security police relied on the so-called “Sonderfahndungsbuch UdSSR” (The Extraordinary Search List Soviet Union,” which listed senior functionaries of the USSR that were to be subject to extermination. See the collections of the reports by the *Einsatzgruppen*: Yitzhak Arad, Schmuel Krakowski, and Schmuel Spector, eds., *The Einsatzgruppen Reports: Selections from the Dispatches of the Nazi Death Squads’ Campaign Against Jews July 1941-January 1943* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1989); Klaus-Michael Mallmann, ed., *Die ‘Ereignismeldung der UdSSR’ 1941: für Konrad Kwiet*. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2011). On the activities of the *Einsatzgruppen*: On the executions of prisoners of war: Aron Schneer, *Plen: Sovetskie voennoplennnye v Germanii, 1941-1945* (Moskva: Mosty kul’tury; Gesharim, 2005), 161-169; Pavel Polian and Aron Schner, *Obrechennye pogibnut’: sud’ba sovetskikh voennoplennykh-evreev vo Vtoroi mirovoi voine: vospominaniia i dokumenty* (Moskva: Novoe izdatel’stvo, 2006).

¹¹¹On the activities of the 2nd Cavalry Brigade of the SS and the mass murder of Jews in the region of Prypiat’ marshes in early August 1941: Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 34-35.

¹¹²Heydrich’s instructions to this effect can be found in Stang, *Kollaboration und Massenmord*, 97.

¹¹³On the problem of *Volksdeutsche*: Ingeborg Fleischhauer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Deutschen in der Sowjetunion* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1983); Doris Bergen, “The Nazi Concept of ‘Volksdeutsche’ and the Exacerbation of Anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe, 1939-1945,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 29, No.4 (October 1994): 569-582.

¹¹⁴Fesenko, *Povest’ krivikh let*, 76; Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 89-113; Schneer, *Plen*, 256-257.

¹¹⁵Il’ia Al’tman, *Zherty nenavisti. Kholokost v SSSR 1941-1945* (Moskva: Kovcheg, 2002).

The first documented “action” of *total* extermination in Ukraine took place in Kam’ianets’-Podil’skyi on 28-31 August. By then the SS and police forces in Ukraine had already murdered some 40,000 Jews, mostly men.¹¹⁶ In mid-September mass killings took place in Berdychiv, Vinnytsia and Zhytomyr.¹¹⁷ Simultaneously, massacres had been taking place in Belorussia and Lithuania.¹¹⁸ On 29-30 September German police forces perpetrated the largest open air massacre of the war at Babii Iar near Kyiv, which claimed more than 30,000 victims.¹¹⁹ The killings would continue throughout the fall of 1941 in parallel with the German army’s eastward advance. In addition to the Einsatzgruppen, direct perpetrators of the mass murder in the fall 1941 also included units of the Waffen-SS, order police, and the Wehrmacht--especially in Belorussia--and occasionally auxiliary police, as was the case in the Troianiv area in the Zhytomyr region.¹²⁰

The intensification of killings in August and September 1941 was a result of both orders from the top and escalation dynamics driven by German SS and police officers in the field.¹²¹ It is also known that leaders of the Third Reich, such as Heinrich Himmler, travelled to the occupied territories in the summer and fall of 1941 and personally urged on subordinates.¹²² The other potential factor was the de facto failure of the *Blitzkrieg*, the prospect of a prolonged war and growing difficulties in supplying the Wehrmacht with food. The search for the solution, some historians argue, may have led the Nazi leadership to the decision to start murdering Jewish women and children. (Within this context, one should note that in September and October 1941 Soviet POWs, whose rations had been severely reduced, started to die en mass.)¹²³

¹¹⁶ Pohl, “The Murder of Ukraine’s Jews,” 32.

¹¹⁷ Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 42.

¹¹⁸ Wolfgang Scheffler, “Die Einsatzgruppe A,” in Klein, *Einsatzgruppen in der besetzten Sowjetunion*, 35.

¹¹⁹ Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 42.

¹²⁰ Hannes Heer and Klaus Naumann, eds., *War of Extermination: The German Military in World War II, 1941-1944* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 59, Lieb, “Täter aus Überzeugung”; Waitman Beorn, *Marching into Darkness: the Wehrmacht and the Holocaust in Belarus* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2014); Pohl, *Die Herrschaft der Wehrmacht*; Pohl, “The Murder of Ukraine’s Jews,” 39.

¹²¹ Jürgen Matthäus, “Controlled Escalation: Himmler’s Men in the Summer of 1941 and the Holocaust in the Occupied Soviet Territories,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 21, no. 2 (Fall 2007): 218–242; Wendy Lower, “Anticipatory Obedience and the Nazi Implementation of the Holocaust in the Ukraine: a Case Study of Central and Peripheral Forces in the Generalbezirk Zhytomyr, 1941-1944,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 16, No.1 (2002): 1-22.

¹²² Lower, “Anticipatory Obedience”; Pohl, “The Murder of Ukraine’s Jews,” 32.

¹²³ Gerlach, *Krieg, Ernährung, Völkermord*; Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*: 89-113.

The massacres followed a set pattern. As a rule, on the eve of the “actions” the Jewish population received orders to gather at a certain place for the purpose of the upcoming “resettlement.” The misinformation served the purpose of forestalling resistance and reducing the attempts to go into hiding. The killings, however, could hardly be kept secret from the local population.¹²⁴ They took place in the open air (in the ravines, forests, ancient fortresses), with assistance by local militias or auxiliary police, who not only carried out registration of the Jewish population, assembled, escorted, and guarded victims at the execution sites, but also mobilized local residents for preparation of mass graves and even occasionally took part in the shootings.¹²⁵ Members of the German killing squads and auxiliary policemen, as a rule, had been supplied with profuse quantities of alcohol to dampen the stress level.¹²⁶ As a rule, the victims were forced to undress and give up their valuables. All of their property and personal possessions were confiscated by the Nazi occupation authorities, while less valuable items, such as clothes and furniture, were handed over to collaborators or sold to the population.¹²⁷ In the aftermath of the killings, the German and local auxiliary police sought Jews who had gone into hiding, frequently by soliciting information from non-Jews.

Parallel to the Nazi killing actions, both Romania and Hungary in the summer of 1941 started to expel east the Jews from the territories that came under their control. Between 15 June and 12 August the Hungarian government specifically deported an estimated 18,000 to 20,000 Jews from Transcarpathia. Many of these people would become victims of the massacre in Kam’ianets’-Podil’skyi--widely regarded as the first mass killing action that targeted the entire Jewish community.

Having annexed Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia, Romania treated Transnistria as a dumping ground. The goal was ethnic cleansing of the territory of Romania proper of Jews and Roma. In

¹²⁴ On the spread of the information: Fesenko, *Povest’ krivyykh let*, 75; Individual killings took place in full sight within towns and villages. Patrick Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets. A Priest’s Journey to Uncover the Truth Behind the Murder of 1.5 Million Jews* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 65.

¹²⁵ On the mobilization of locals for preparation of mass graves, See, for example, witness testimonies Desbois, *The Holocaust by Bullets*, 66, 82; on the role of the auxiliary police and local administrations: Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*; Shmuel Spector, *The Holocaust of Volhynia Jews, 1941-1944* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), 74; Yuri Radchenko, “Accomplices of Extermination: Municipal Government and the Holocaust in Kharkiv, 1941-1942,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 27, no. 3 (2013): 443–63.

¹²⁶ Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 52.

¹²⁷ Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 45; Desbois, *Holocaust by Bullets*, 93.

these territories, the Romanian forces both perpetrated mass killings and allowed the victims to die from exposure, illnesses, and hunger in the newly created ghettos.¹²⁸

By the end of 1941 some 450,000-500,000 of Ukraine's Jews had been killed. Jewish communities effectively ceased to exist in most population centers in Left Bank Ukraine. In Right bank Ukraine and Belorussia--the territory of the former Pale of Settlement--more than a million Jews were driven into ghettos and numerous labour camps, where they would lead a miserable existence until late 1943.¹²⁹ Hundreds of skilled Jewish workers were spared also in the General Commissariats "Kiev" and "Nikolaev" at least until spring-summer 1942.¹³⁰ Along with Soviet prisoners of war, surviving Jews would henceforth be utilized as a source of skilled labour by the Wehrmacht and as forced labourers in various construction projects, such as the strategic highway No. IV in Central Ukraine.¹³¹

The contradiction between the Wehrmacht's and German industry's growing need for labour in the context of the total war and the strategic objective of the genocide was resolved through the concept of "annihilation through labour." Rather than being eliminated in one fell swoop, the surviving Jews in Ukraine and Belorussia were to be decimated gradually--through gruelling labour and deliberate restrictions of food supply. Periodically, the inmates of Jewish ghettos and labour camps were subjected to limited and total liquidations (in 1942 and 1943).¹³² In 1941, a similar, if less extreme, policy applied to Soviet prisoners of war, non-Jewish inmates of labour and concentration camps and non-working residents of cities, such as Kyiv and Kharkiv.¹³³ In late 1941 and early 1942 the Nazi authorities completed the construction of killing centers and

¹²⁸ On Romanian policies: Radu Ioanid, *The Holocaust in Romania: the Destruction of the Jews and Gypsies under the Antonescu Regime, 1940-1944* (Chicago, Illinois: Ivan R. Dee, 2000); Dennis Deletant, *Hitler's Forgotten Ally: Ion Antonescu and his Regime, Romania, 1940-44* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006); Vladimir Solonari, *Purifying the Nation: Population Exchange and Ethnic Cleansing in Nazi-Allied Romania* (Washington D.C.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010).

¹²⁹ Geoffrey Megargee, ed., *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933-1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), vol.2.

¹³⁰ Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 52-53

¹³¹ Spector, *The Holocaust of Volhynia Jews*, 111; Andrej Angrick, "Annihilation and Labor: Jews and Thoroughfare IV in Central Ukraine," in Lower and Brandon, *The Shoah in Ukraine*, 190-223.

¹³² On the second wave of mass killings: Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 78-104; Spector, *Holocaust of Volhynia Jews*, 172.

¹³³ Manfred Olenbourg, *Ideologie und Militärisches Kalkül. Die Besatzungspolitik der Wehrmacht in der Sowjetunion 1942* (Köln: Böhlau, 2004), 75-77; Gerlach, *Krieg, Ernährung, Völkermord*; Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 164-186.

initiated killing actions by gas at the death camps in Chelmno and Belzec. Many Galician Jews were deported there.¹³⁴

Insofar as this dual strategy of exploitation and incremental mass murder encouraged a belief in the possibility of survival, it was an effective instrument of division and deception about Nazi objectives, both as far as Jews and non-Jews slated for total and partial extermination and enslavement were concerned.¹³⁵ This notwithstanding, the Nazi killings in 1942-1943 were no longer a surprise to the Jewish population. As a result, some Jews escaped from the ghettos and went into hiding ahead of time. Occasionally, Nazi “actions” ran into limited armed resistance.¹³⁶

The attitudes of the local population to the mass murder were determined by a diverse set of factors--size of the communities, prior experiences of interactions with the Jews, attitudes towards the Soviet system. In general, opponents of the Soviet government both from among non-Russians and Russians tended to view Jews as adherents of the Soviet system and were thus more likely to be sympathetic towards the Nazi persecution of the Jews. (More on this subject in chapters 2 and 4).

Chances of survival were higher where the victims could rely on pre-existing support networks to provide them with food, shelter or legalization documents. Rescuers and helpers were people of different social and national background. Some were Germans and local policemen involved in the extermination process. In practice, the victims ran a dangerous gauntlet. Constantly hounded by the SD and local collaborators, they depended for their survival on the assistance and goodwill of many people. But one person was enough to bring about their demise.¹³⁷

Soviet Partisan Movement

The Communist party and NKVD started to create the structures of the resistance movement in the territories expected to come under the German military occupation already during the first

¹³⁴ Wendy Lower, paper presented at the Conference of the Ukrainian-Jewish Encounter, Potsdam, June 2011.

¹³⁵ Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 53.

¹³⁶ Spector, *Holocaust of Volhynia Jews*, 172-202.

¹³⁷ Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 77.

week of the war. On 29 June the Council of People's Commissars and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union issued a joint directive, which provided for the creation of partisan units, diversionary groups, and underground networks in the occupied territories. These were to launch attacks against enemy soldiers and their collaborators, systemically destroy critical infrastructure, and sabotage the measures of occupation authorities.¹³⁸ On 3 July the content of the directive was effectively reproduced in Stalin's famous address to the population of the country.

The early partisan units—which in the summer 1941 would come into existence in almost every administrative district—consisted primarily of Soviet loyalists, Communist and Communist Youth League (*Komsomol*) members, NKVD officers, and former members of destruction battalions (originally created for the purpose of protecting the strategic infrastructure against enemy diversions, the latter were to be converted into partisan units).¹³⁹

The central role in the organizational process belonged to the NKVD/NKGB and to a lesser extent the Red Army.¹⁴⁰ Specifically, Soviet security officers selected prospective participants of the partisan units and underground groups, personally headed many units and diversionary groups, provided instruction on questions of conspiracy, diversion, intelligence and counter-intelligence, chose locations of partisan operations, provided intelligence to the Soviet leadership about the situation in the occupied territories, and oversaw security matters within partisan units.¹⁴¹

The characteristic feature of the process at the initial stage of the war was haste, poor coordination between different organs of the Soviet state, and inadequate screening of cadres. Most of the early partisans were Soviet loyalists known to the general population. Moreover, the authorities failed to take into consideration local conditions. As a result, the organized structures of the partisan movement came into existence even in the areas where natural conditions were not favourable to the conduct of partisan warfare, such as in the steppe districts of Southern

¹³⁸ Alekseĭ Popov, *NKVD i partizanskoe dvizhenie. Fakty i dokumenty* (Moskva: Olma -Press, 2003), 16.

¹³⁹ The Soviet leadership was notoriously suspicious of the irregular fighting forces going all the way back to the years of the Civil War: Kenneth Slepyan, *Stalin's Guerrillas: Soviet Partisans in World War II* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 16; Anatoliĭ Chaĭkovs'kyĭ, *Nevidoma vĭna: partyzans'kyĭ rukh v Ukraïni 1941-1944rr., movoiu dokumentiv, ochyma istoryka* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo 'Ukraïna,' 1994), 34-35.

¹⁴⁰ Slepyan, *Stalin's Guerrillas*, 42. On the involvement of the army in the partisan movement: Viacheslav Boiarskiĭ, *Partizany i armia: istoriia uteriannykh vozmozhnostei* (Minsk: Kharvest, 2003).

¹⁴¹ Popov, *NKVD i partizanskoe dvizhenie*, 40.

Ukraine. Elsewhere Communist partisans had to operate in a politically hostile environment (in the Baltics, Western, Central Ukraine, Crimea and the Caucasus).¹⁴² Little wonder, in the general chaos that accompanied Soviet military defeats and the collapse of the Soviet political order, most of these units rapidly disintegrated. Some of their members ceased resistance activities and turned themselves in to the occupiers, others retreated to the Soviet side of the front, and only a small number continued to operate in the forest areas near Bryansk in Central Russia, in Belorussia and Northern Russia, and in a small corner of North-eastern Ukraine (Sumy and Chernihiv regions).¹⁴³

One year into the war the Soviet authorities effectively retained contact with no more than 110 out of 1,565 partisan units and diversionary groups left behind in Ukraine in the course of 1941. The situation was similar in Belorussia and Northwest Russia.¹⁴⁴ Suffering from poor supplies and constantly hounded by German security forces and local auxiliaries, the Soviet partisans led a miserable existence in inaccessible forested areas, with the primary objective being survival.

The situation started to change from early 1942. The reasons were many, but some were more important than others. For one thing, the Red Army victory at Moscow in December 1941 for the first time signalled a possibility of the German defeat. As the situation at the front stabilized, Soviet authorities proceeded with the centralization of the partisan movement.¹⁴⁵ Simultaneously, in an effort to destabilize the structures of the German government in the occupied territories, specialized units of the Red Army and NKVD intensified diversionary operations on communications and started to target Nazi functionaries and local collaborators.¹⁴⁶ German police authorities --ever preoccupied with the partisan threat--responded to the deterioration of the security situation by arrests and executions of Red Army soldiers, who in 1941 had evaded captivity, escaped or were released from the POWs camps and settled in the rural areas.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans in World War II*, 16.

¹⁴³ Armstrong, *Soviet partisans in WWII*, 26, 110; On the partisan movement in Ukraine: Chaïkovs'kyi, *Nevidoma viina*, 21-32.

¹⁴⁴ Popov, *NKVD i partizanskoe dvizhenie*, 47.

¹⁴⁵ Central Headquarters of the Partisan Movement and its republican and regional outshoots came into existence in May-June 1942.

¹⁴⁶ See, for example, the Instructions of the NKVD of the USSR No.3320 "On Measures Aimed at the Liquidation of Fascist Administrations in Temporarily Occupied Territory of Ukraine," 30 November 1941 in Iampol'skiĭ, *Organy gosudarstvennoĭ bezopasnosti*, t.2, kn.2, 371-372.

¹⁴⁷ Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 70.

Confronted with a choice of internment in POW camps and deportation to Germany, thousands of former soldiers took to the forests. There they banded together and began to requisition food supplies and conduct attacks on German officials and local collaborators. Gradually, these groups blended with the existing Soviet partisan units or came under the control of emissaries of the Soviet state, dispatched from the Soviet rear.¹⁴⁸ In the course of 1942-1943 the movement gained such strength that in parts of Belorussia, central and northwest Russia the severely undermanned German security forces had to abandon their isolated rural outposts and retreat to the cities. As a result, hundreds of thousands of local residents found themselves on territory de facto controlled by Soviet partisans. The majority lived in a twilight zone between the Germans and Soviet partisans.¹⁴⁹ In the ethnically mixed regions of today's western Ukraine and western Belorussia the picture was further complicated by the presence of Ukrainian and Polish nationalist bands.

German counter-insurgency strategy combined two approaches: the maintenance of fortified garrisons entrusted with securing communications and active anti-partisan operations in areas of strategic importance or where Germans could muster significant local support (as in the Lokot' district or in Crimea).¹⁵⁰ Yet ruthless, racialized anti-partisan warfare by Himmler's forces in 1942-1943--accompanied by the liquidation of the remaining Jewish ghettos, wanton destruction of entire villages and indiscriminate mass murder of civilians accused of supporting partisans--not only failed to stop the resistance, but also greatly increased the pool of potential recruits, as thousands of civilians flocked to the forests in a desperate attempt to survive.¹⁵¹ The radicalization of the German forced labour program and the start of deportations of workers to the Third Reich in the course of 1942-1943 was another factor that contributed to the manpower supply. Finally, from late 1942 the growth of the Soviet partisan movement was fuelled also by defectors from the auxiliary police structures and police battalions.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans in WWII*, 24.

¹⁴⁹The result was the development of the phenomenon of the partisan *krai*--the partisan controlled territories, which sought to project the appearance of the continuity of Soviet power (Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans in WWII*, 39-40).

¹⁵⁰ Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans in WWII*, 31

¹⁵¹ On the anti-partisan warfare: Slepyan, *Stalin's Guerrillas*, 65; Ben Shepherd, *War in the Wild East: the German Army and Soviet Partisans* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004); Alexander Hill, *The War Behind the Eastern Front: the Soviet Partisan Movement in North-West Russia, 1941-1944* (London-New York: F. Cass, 2005); Ben Shepherd and Juliette Pattinson, eds., *War in a Twilight World: Partisan and Anti-Partisan Warfare in Eastern Europe, 1939-1945* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010).

¹⁵² Slepyan, *Stalin's Guerrillas*, 53. On Soviet efforts to encourage defections of members of indigenous anti-partisan formations, see the report by head of the intelligence department of the Central Headquarters of the Partisan Movement major of state security Kudriavtsev: "Informational Letter about the Partisan Activities Aimed at the

By early 1943 the organizational structures of the Soviet partisan movement were consolidated via the creation of the Central Headquarters of the Partisan Movement, which encompassed a broader array of republican and regional partisan staffs. Central, Republican, and regional headquarters of the Partisan movement--operating in close coordination with the Soviet security apparatus and the Red Army-- supplied partisans with experts, weapons, and non-lethal supplies.

The positions of Soviet partisans, however, remained weak in western Belorussia and western Ukraine until at least early 1943—when the raiding partisan units of Sydir Kovpak, Alekseï Fedorov, and Aleksandr Saburov arrived in Volhynia from Northeastern Ukraine.¹⁵³ By then, however, the tide of the war had decisively turned in favour of the USSR, as the Red Army prevailed at Stalingrad, sustained the German offensive at Kursk and began offensive operations in eastern Ukraine. It was at that critical stage of the war that the Soviet leadership stepped up its effort to project Soviet power in Volhynia and Galicia, the traditional strongholds of the Ukrainian nationalist movement. The instrumental role in the effort belonged to raiding partisan detachments.

Insurgency Movements and Ethnic Conflict in the Borderlands

In mid-March 1943 the leadership of the Bandera faction of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists ordered thousands of its activists and Ukrainian policemen in Volhynia to abandon their posts and go to the forests.¹⁵⁴ Preceded by the organizational decisions in December 1942 and February 1943, the move marked the start of armed insurrection.¹⁵⁵ The immediate impetus came from the appearance in northern Volhynia of Soviet partisan detachments, which, the OUN leadership feared, could act as a pole of attraction to local Poles and Ukrainians disaffected with

Disintegration of National Formations Created by the Germans in the Occupied Territories of the USSR,” no earlier than 14 December 1942 (TsDAHOU, f.62, op.1, spr.182, ark.54-55).

¹⁵³ Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans in WWII*, 115.

¹⁵⁴ Motyka, *Ukraińska partyzantka*, 118; Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations*, 167; Ihor Il’iushyn, *Volyns’ka trahediia 1943-1944 rr.* (Kyiv: Instytut Istorii Ukraïny NAN Ukraïny, 2003), 179.

¹⁵⁵ Small armed formations of the OUN-B operated in Volhynia from late 1942 and in February 1943 conducted first attacks on German outposts in Volodymyr-Volyns’kyi: Motyka, *Ukraińska Partyzantka*, 187.

exploitative German occupation policies.¹⁵⁶ It is also possible that the decision was motivated by awareness of the German plans to arrest the OUN activists in the auxiliary police.¹⁵⁷ The desertions lasted throughout March and April and touched police precincts in many locations, including Kovel', Luts'k and Horokhiv. Some of the deserters joined the Soviet partisans.¹⁵⁸

The creation of armed formations in Volhynia, which by May 1943 became known as the "Ukrainian Insurgent Army" (*UPA*), was accompanied by efforts to subordinate smaller armed formations of the OUN-M and other political groupings (notably the Ukrainian People's Revolutionary Army [UNRA] of Taras Bul'ba-Borovets' and the Front of the Ukrainian Revolution [FUR]).¹⁵⁹ In the process, the Security Service of the OUN-B liquidated many leaders of rival organizations.¹⁶⁰ In the following months the ranks of the insurgency were also boosted by young Ukrainian men who had fled deportations to Germany, those who feared the arrival of the Red Army because they had previously collaborated with the Germans or had relatives in the UPA, former soldiers of the battalions "Nachtigall" and "Roland," of the Waffen-SS Division "Galicia" and some people of other nationalities (e.g., former members of national legions in the German service).¹⁶¹

Parallel to the developments in Volhynia, the OUN-B network in Galicia--which had for a while conducted military training of young Ukrainians--proceeded with the formation of armed detachments of the so-called Ukrainian People's Self-Defence (UNS). The first units of the UNS appeared in the Carpathian Mountains in the summer of 1943 and consisted of OUN members and volunteers from all over Galicia.¹⁶² In December 1943 the UNS was integrated into the structure of the UPA as "UPA-West."¹⁶³

The start of the nationalist insurgency in Volhynia also marked an important step in the escalation of the long-term Ukrainian-Polish conflict, aggravated, on the one hand, by the broad prior participation of Ukrainian nationalists in the structures of the oppressive Nazi rule in the

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 110-112.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 194

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 195.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 118-119; Dmytro Viedienieiev and Hennadii Bystrukhin, "*Povstans'ka rozvidka diie tochno i vidvazhno...*" *Dokumental'na spadshchyna pidrozdiliv spetsial'noho pryznachennia OUN ta UPA. 1940-1950-ti roky* (Kyiv: K.I.S., 2006), 92.

¹⁶⁰ Viedienieiev and Bystrukhin, "*Povstans'ka rozvidka*," 93.

¹⁶¹ Bruder, "*Den Staat Erkämpfen oder Sterben!*" 182-187.

¹⁶² Motyka, *Ukrainska partyzantka*, 143

¹⁶³ Viedienieiev and Bystrukhin, "*Povstans'ka rozvidka*," 94.

Generalgouvernement, and, on the other hand, by assassinations of Ukrainian community activists, members of the OUN and auxiliary policemen by underground structures of the Polish *Armija Krajowa* (especially in the Cholm region of the *Generalgouvernement*).¹⁶⁴

Other important contributing factors were efforts by the Polish underground to infiltrate auxiliary administrations in Volhynia and the anticipated showdown for the control of the region in the aftermath of the German retreat. The Polish underground specifically planned to compensate for the numerical weakness of its forces in Galicia and Volhynia by the transfer to the region of armed formations from other parts of Poland, which were supposed to secure control of the region prior to the arrival of Soviet forces.¹⁶⁵ It was within the context of this struggle that in December 1942 the leadership of the OUN-B decided to expel the Polish population from the contested territories. The decision was geared primarily at divesting the Polish government of the social base that would enable it to reassert control over the territory in the aftermath of the German retreat.¹⁶⁶

Members of other minorities were to be treated differentially. Russians judged hostile to the Ukrainian cause were to be subjected to surveillance and “liquidation” after the start of the insurrection. Jews and Armenians were to be expelled, but not murdered outright. Hungarians, Romanians, and Czechs were to be left in peace.¹⁶⁷ The situation became even more complicated in spring 1943, as raiding Soviet partisan units, which had recently arrived in Volhynia, attempted to use Polish settlements as their own bases¹⁶⁸ and the German authorities replaced some 5,000 Ukrainian police defectors with Poles from the regions of central Poland.¹⁶⁹

Although Ukrainian-Polish relations in Volhynia during the 1920s and 1930s were not as antagonistic as in Galicia due to the weaker national identity of Ukrainian peasants, the traditionally strong positions of the Communist party and efforts of the Polish government to

¹⁶⁴ Il’iushyn, *Volyns’ka trahediia*, 177-178. See also the “Report about the Number of Assassinated Ukrainians according to the Data of the Ukrainian Central Committee,” 22 January 1944 (Michael Chomiak Collection, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Acc. 85.191/59).

¹⁶⁵ Motyka, *Ukrainska partyzantka*, 300.

¹⁶⁶ In 1939 there were some 386,000 Poles in Volhynia (16.6% of the general population), but the numbers subsequently declined due to Soviet deportations and losses accrued in the war: Wincenty Romanowski, *ZWZ-AK na Wolyniu 1939-1944* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Katolickiego Uniwersytetu lubelskiego, 1993), 62-63; Il’iushyn, *Volyns’ka trahediia*, 51-52.

¹⁶⁷ Motyka, *Ukrainska partyzantka*, 113.

¹⁶⁸ Il’iushyn, *Volyns’ka trahediia*, 54-55.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 179.

isolate the regions from Ukrainian nationalist activists from Galicia, inter-ethnic antagonisms in Volhynia during the Second World War were also on the rise.¹⁷⁰ Specifically, the OUN-B successfully tapped into the socio-economic and national grievances of Ukrainian peasants and mobilized some followers among Ukrainians in the course of 1941 to 1943.

The attacks on Polish settlements began already in February 1943. Thus on the night of 8-9 February the unit of Hryhoriï Perehiïniak (Korobka) took over the Polish colony Paroslia, district Sarny, and brutally murdered dozens of local Poles. Attacks continued in the following months, especially after the formal creation of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army under the leadership of the OUN-B. The official policy of the OUN-B, however, was characterised by tactical deception and ambiguities. Thus in May 1943 the leadership of the OUN-B issued a call to the Polish population. According to the document, the organization wanted to work together with the Poles against German and Russian imperialism. The Poles were told they could remain on Ukrainian territory and were promised equal rights with Ukrainians. Their situation would be determined by their attitude towards the Ukrainian liberation struggle.¹⁷¹

In the summer, however, the attacks reached the scale of a veritable ethnic cleansing carried out in a seemingly coordinated fashion. Thus on 11-13 July alone, the UPA and mobilized local peasants allegedly carried out an assault on more than a hundred Polish villages.¹⁷² Among the thousands of Polish victims were also Jews who had gone into hiding and found shelter in the Polish colonies.¹⁷³

Polish colonists fled to larger settlements, where they formed self-defence units--with the assistance from the Polish underground and Soviet partisans. Sometimes these self-defence units carried out attacks on Ukrainian villages as a retribution for UPA killings.¹⁷⁴ The Ukrainian population also experienced attacks from the side of the Polish police in the German service--both within the framework of the German counter-insurgency and as a retribution for the UPA actions against Polish settlers. In 1944 and 1945 the intra-communal violence extended to

¹⁷⁰ On the activities of the governor Henryk Josefski during 1920-1930s, see Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War*.

¹⁷¹ Bruder, 'Den Staat erkämpfen oder sterben!', 195.

¹⁷² Il'iushyn, *Volyns'ka trahediia*, 15-16

¹⁷³ Spector, *The Holocaust of Volhynia Jews*, 251.

¹⁷⁴ Il'iushyn, *Volyns'ka trahediia*, 79

Galicia and eventually to the Cholm region, where Polish forces proved stronger.¹⁷⁵ The conflict continued in a different form even after the arrival of the Red Army, since Soviet authorities in their struggle against the UPA and Ukrainian nationalist underground relied on the Polish members of destruction battalions. The ethnic violence effectively subsided only after the population transfers carried out in the coordinated fashion by the Soviet and Polish Communist governments in 1944-1947.¹⁷⁶ The total number of the victims of the conflict on both sides is difficult to quantify precisely, but was probably in the range of 60,000 to 100,000 Poles and at least 10,000 to 15,000 Ukrainians.¹⁷⁷

From the perspective of Soviet officials, however, of far greater importance was the challenge that organized Ukrainian nationalism posed throughout the formerly occupied territories, particularly in Galicia and Volhynia where the Soviet state had to contend with a full-scale insurrection. The Soviet counter-insurgency has been the subject of several specialized studies.¹⁷⁸ What is less known are the peculiarities of the political challenge to Soviet rule and developments outside Galicia and Volhynia. These questions are the subject of the next chapter.

¹⁷⁵ Snyder, *Reconstruction of Nations*, 176, 189-192; Petro Potichnyi, *Pavlokoma, 1441-1945: istoriia sela* (Lviv-Toronto: Fundatsiia "Pavlokoma," 2001).

¹⁷⁶ Catherine Gousseff, *Échanger les peuples : le déplacement des minorités aux confins polono-soviétiques: 1944-1947* (Paris: Fayard, 2015).

¹⁷⁷ Snyder, *Reconstruction of Nations*, 170, 176; Grzegorz Motyka, *Od rzezi wołyńskiej do akcji "Wisła". Konflikt polsko-ukraiński 1943- 1947* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo literackie, 2011), 447-448.

¹⁷⁸ Jeffrey Burds, "Agentura: Soviet Informants' Networks and the Ukrainian Underground in Galicia, 1944-1948," *East European Politics and Societies* 11, No.1 (1996): 89-130; Idem, "Gender and Policing in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944-1948," *Cahiers du monde russe* 42, No.2-4 (2001): 279-320; Viedienieiev and Bystrukhin, *'Povstans'ka rozvdika'*; Alexander Statiev, *Soviet Counter-Insurgency in the Western Borderlands* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Chapter 2

The Nationalist Challenge and Legitimacy Contests

In March 1944—several weeks after Stalin’s attack on Oleksandr Dovzhenko-- operatives of the People’s Commissariat of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR (NKGB) in the Kyiv region arrested seven residents of the Bohuslav district (Kyiv region) on suspicion of belonging to the Bandera faction of the OUN. The investigation which lasted through October 1944 coincided with the beginning of the Red Army drive into centers of armed Ukrainian nationalist insurgency in Volhynia and Galicia and marked an opening of the new stage of struggle between the security apparatus of the Soviet state and the nationalist underground throughout the Soviet controlled territories.¹ As such the arrests were unquestionably part of the broader effort by the Soviet state to re-order the political landscape and re-affirm the shaky foundations of its own legitimacy in the traditionally suspect peripheries, which during the Second World had experienced Axis rule and alternative sovereignty claims.

The charges levelled against the defendants were ordinary for the time period: state treason, membership in the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, preparation of the armed insurrection and anti-Soviet agitation.² What was quite unusual was the background of the arrested activists and the geographical setting, which in the period from 1917 to 1921 was a stronghold of the Ukrainian People’s Republic and of anti-Soviet peasant insurgencies and during the 1930s experienced a devastating man-made famine and mass repression.

¹ Throughout the war Soviet punitive organs monitored nationalist milieus and repeatedly arrested people on charges of Ukrainian Nationalism and anti-Soviet agitation not only in Ukraine, but also deep in the Soviet interior—in Moscow and Komi ASSR among other places. See, for example, directive of the NKVD of the USSR No.364 “On Intensification of Struggle against Ukrainian Nationalist Organizations,” 14 August 1941 (Iampol’skiĭ, *Organy*

²See “The Indictment,” 9 October 1944 (Special State Archives of the Security Service of Ukraine (HDA SBU), f.5, spr.39389, t.3, ark.162-187). Doroshenko and others were tried by the military tribunal of the NKVD forces on 8 January 1945. As a result, Doroshenko and Durdukiivskyĭ were sentenced to execution; Rudnyts’kyĭ and Gold’shtein-- to 20 years of hard labor, Netudykhata and Nina Martynenko to 10 year in labor camps. On 8 March 1945 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet commuted the death sentence to 20 years of hard labor. All were amnestied in accordance with the decree of the Supreme Soviet on 17 September 1955.

The decree of the Plenum of the Supreme Court of the USSR No.12/8/u/s as of 7 August 1944 proposed to qualify activities of members of the OUN against the Soviet state in accordance with the articles 54-1A, 54-1B and 54-11 of the Criminal Code of the Ukrainian SSR (E.Zaĭtsev, ed., *Sbornik zakonodatel’nykh i normativnykh aktov o represiiakh i rehabilitatsii zhertv politicheskikh repressii* (Moskva: Respublika: Verkhovnyiĭ Sovet Rosiĭskoĭ Federatsii, 1993), 45; Nikol’s’kyĭ, *Represyivna diial’nist’*, 111.

Indeed, most people arrested in Bohuslav were not merely natives of the area, but also had a problematic relationship with the Soviet state going back several decades. Some were priests of the persecuted Ukrainian Autocephalous Church; others were former adherents of the Ukrainian People's Republic, dekulakized peasants or their family members.

By situating the materials of case file No.39389 within a longer temporal context, the chapter attempts to elucidate both the organizational activities of the OUN-B under Axis rule and to untangle the interrelationship between Soviet repressive politics and legitimacy contests in the territories that experienced alternative sovereignty claims both before and during the Second World War.

To be sure, the subject is not completely new. In recent years historians interested in the history of organized Ukrainian nationalism have increasingly focussed on the ideologies and wartime practices of different nationalist organizations, their collaboration with the structures of the Third Reich, and subsequent complicity in the Holocaust and other crimes against humanity, primarily in Galicia and Volhynia.³ What has so far been in shorter supply, however, are analyses of the broader strategic context, characteristics of the OUN operations east of the Zbruch river, and histories of individual communities, in which nationalist activists carried out their organizational activities from summer 1941.⁴

Of particular interest in this regard is the phenomenon of the so-called advance groups of the OUN-B and their interactions with the Nazi occupation authorities, different segments of the local population and the pre-existing institutional structures, such as the Orthodox church. In this sense, the case of the nationalist underground in Bohuslav opens possibilities for the start of exploration of entire swaths of research questions.

In addition, the four volume case file from the archives of the Security Service of Ukraine contains a wealth of information about the organizational activities of the Bandera faction of the

³Boll, "Zloczow, July 1941"; Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations*, 154-178; Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 275-304; Motyka, *Ukraińska partyzantka*; Bruder, "*Den ukrainischen Staat Erkaempfen oder Sterben*"; Pohl, "Anti-Jewish Pogroms"; Carynnyk, "'Jews, Poles and Other Scum'"; Rossolinski-Liebe, "The 'Ukrainian National Revolution'"; Himka, "The Lviv Pogrom of 1941"; Struve, "Rites of Violence?"; Kachanovs'kyi, "Suchasna polityka pam'iaty".

⁴Omer Bartov is presently preparing a history of the town of Buchach in Eastern Galicia. See also his "Wartime Lies and Other Testimonies." On the activities of the OUN-B in the pre-1939 Soviet Ukraine: Nikol's'kyi, *Pidpillia OUN-B*; Zhyliuk, *Diial'nist' OUN ta UPA*.

OUN in the Kyiv region during the Second World War, characteristics of the nationalist underground network in the Bohuslav district, nationalist historical politics, as well as the peculiarities of the relationships between activists of the OUN-B and former adherents of the Ukrainian People's Republic and of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church, who survived Stalinist repression and subsequently entered into contact with the OUN-B. By integrating the discussion of these issues into an analysis of Soviet repressive and historico-political measures, this chapter ultimately makes the case for the centrality of a Ukrainian nationalist challenge to Soviet legitimating practices in Ukraine in the aftermath of the occupation by Axis powers.

The Protagonists

The size of the underground network of the OUN-B in the Bohuslav district can not be determined with precision at this time. The official documentation indicates that as of June 1945, Soviet punitive organs arrested at least 19 individuals in Bohuslav and the surrounding areas; a further 6 were kept under secret surveillance and 12 were on the search list.⁵ Case file No.39389—which serves as a principal source of information for this chapter-- was initiated by the task force of the NKGB in the Kyiv region in March 1944 and included 7 defendants.

The central protagonist of the case was Mykola Ipatiiiovych Doroshenko (Vershuta). Doroshenko was born in 1909 in the village of Dybyntsi, Bohuslav district, Kyiv region into the family of a local priest. A graduate of an Orthodox seminary, before the war Doroshenko served as a priest and worked various jobs in Kyiv and Bila Tserkva. With the start of the German-Soviet war, he was mobilized into the Red Army, but already on 5 August was taken prisoner near Kaniv. On 18 August he was released from a POW camp in Berdychiv and joined his family in Bohuslav. While in Bohuslav Doroshenko came into contact with activists of the OUN-B. In the fall of 1941 the orthodox community in the village of Rozkopyntsi petitioned the mayor of Bohuslav about Doroshenko's resumption of his duties as a priest. After two months in Rozkopyntsi Doroshenko was transferred to his old parish in the village Chaiky. In June 1942 he was

⁵ Head of the Administration of State Security in the Kyiv region colonel of state security Bondarenko to People's Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Esipenko, 22 June 1945 (HDA SBU, f.2, op.28 (1956), spr.3, ark.179-186ob).

appointed archdeacon of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church and moved to the village Mysailivka, where he lived until the end of the German occupation. In March 1944 he was arrested by the task force of the NKGB in the Kyiv region on charges of belonging to the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.⁶ The materials of the investigation, which followed the arrest of Doroshenko furnish information not only about Doroshenko, but also about other members of the underground network of the OUN-B in the Bohuslav district and about their activities during the German occupation.

The leader of the network, Dmytro Matiiko, was born in 1908 in the village of Isaiky, Bohuslav district, and was formerly a book-keeper. In 1939 Soviet authorities commandeered Matiiko to Western Ukraine to take part in the administration of new territories. In 1941 he was mobilized into the Red Army at the rank of lieutenant, but soon deserted. While in the Rivne region, Matiiko was allegedly recruited by the OUN-B and subsequently returned to Bohuslav as a member of the northern advance group. During the German occupation he worked in the district administration as head of the financial department.⁷ Matiiko was arrested by the Soviet security service in 1955.⁸

Member of the northern advance group of the OUN-B Illia Sydorenko was born in 1906 in the Donbas. In the early 1930s he was subjected to dekulakization and in 1937-1939 was under arrest by the Kyiv office of the NKVD on charges of belonging to a nationalist organization. Following his release Sydorenko travelled to Western Ukraine, where he worked in the food industry and allegedly became a member of the OUN. Sydorenko arrived in Bohuslav as part of Matiiko's unit of the northern advance group. Subsequently he worked as head of the cadres department of the district administration and as editor of the newspaper "*Vil'na Ukraina*" until its closure by the German security service (SD). Sydorenko himself, however, was not arrested, but continued to work in Bohuslav as a district procurement officer until the German retreat.⁹

Member of the OUN-B Petro Solukha was a native of Bohuslav, the son of a priest. At the time of the events he was between 40 and 50 years of age. The protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko indicates that Solukha graduated from the Orthodox seminary in Kyiv and had at

⁶ Protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.39389, t.1, ark.18-18ob).

⁷ Ibid., t.1, ark.20ob.

⁸ This follows from the overview of the criminal investigative case file No.41013 (Ibid., t.4, ark.105-110).

⁹ Protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.39389, t.1, ark.21).

some point been subjected to dekulakization and disenfranchisement. Prior to the war he worked as a teacher in Bohuslav. Following the start of the German occupation, Solukha worked first on the district newspaper and subsequently in the department of education and religious cults.¹⁰

The *Bürgermeister* of the Bohuslav district Pavlo Lykhohodin was a native of Bohuslav. A former soldier of the army of the Ukrainian People's Republic, during the 1920s he was allegedly involved in the organization of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church in the Bohuslav district, sang in the church choir, and prepared to become a priest. Before the war he worked as a teacher in the village Chaiky. He was recruited into the OUN-B by Matiiko and Sydorenko sometime in the summer or early fall of 1941.¹¹

Head of the district grain procurement office, Petro Rudnyts'kyi, was a former officer in the armed forces of the Ukrainian People's Republic.¹² Not much is known about his activities during Soviet rule other than the reports that he had to hide his past and frequently change jobs and place of residence to avoid exposure. During the occupation, Rudnyts'kyi showed Doroshenko a photograph of himself wearing a uniform of the army of the Ukrainian People's Republic, noting that the photograph saved his life when he got arrested by the German police. Rudnyts'kyi allegedly became a member of the OUN-B in 1941 in Bila Tserkva, where he travelled together with Lykhohodin, Matiiko, and Sydorenko.¹³ Rudnyts'kyi was arrested by the NKGB in March 1944.

Another prominent member of the OUN-B in Bohuslav was head of the district supply depot, Mykola Sushkevych. In conversations with Doroshenko Sushkevych allegedly described himself as a former participant in the "Union of Liberation of Ukraine."¹⁴ During the Nazi occupation Sushkevych reportedly maintained contacts with the Tarashcha district organization of the OUN-B and unidentified nationalist activists in Bila Tserkva and Kyiv. In 1943 he was arrested by the SD and taken to Lviv as part of the larger German effort to restrict OUN operations in Central Ukraine.¹⁵

¹⁰ Ibid., t.1, ark.21ob.

¹¹ Ibid., t.1, ark.23.

¹² Protocol of interrogation of P.Rudnyts'kyi, 7 August 1944 (Ibid., t.2, ark.57).

¹³ Protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.23ob-24).

¹⁴ On the trial of the "Union of Liberation of Ukraine": Prystaiko and Shapoval, *Sprava 'Spilky Vyzvolennia Ukraïny'*.

¹⁵ Protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.39389, t.1, ark.25).

Among the subordinates of Sushkevych was Anton Granda, a member of the OUN-B who arrived in Bohuslav from Galicia in the fall 1941 and was responsible for organizational activities among young people. In this capacity Granda frequently travelled to the villages in the vicinity of Bohuslav, most notably to Medvyn.¹⁶

In the structures of the auxiliary police the OUN-B was represented by the 45-year-old Mykhaïlo Kryvets'. Like many participants of the OUN-B network in Bohuslav, Kryvets' was not a member of the organization before the war, but was drawn into its orbit after the start of the German occupation. The materials of the NKGB investigation suggest that Matiïko, Sydorenko and Lykhohodin first made him a member of the local administrative council (*starostat*) and subsequently secured his appointment as chief of the district auxiliary police. In his turn, Kryvets' reportedly made an effort to ensure that the membership of the police consisted primarily of the politically reliable former fighters of the Ukrainian People's Republic, dekulakized peasants and other people who had suffered from Soviet repression. Closely associated with Kryvets' were his deputy Pavlo Kryvosheia, head of the criminal investigations department of the district auxiliary police Vasyl' Tkalych, and head of the auxiliary police in the village Medvyn Ivan Sarapuka (a former soldier of the army of the Ukrainian People's Republic). Kryvets' allegedly played an instrumental role in the murder of local Jews and Communists. In January 1944 he fled from Bohuslav with the retreating German forces.¹⁷

In addition to the administrative structures and auxiliary police, an important locus of the organizational activities of the OUN-B in the Bohuslav district was the Ukrainian Autocephalous church. It was no accident that there were four representatives of the clergy among those arrested in Bohuslav: the above-mentioned Mykola Doroshenko and priests Dmytro Gol'dshteïn, Ihor Durdukivs'kyï, and Iosyp Netudykhata. Among the defendants there were also the church painter Pavlo Martynenko and his daughter Nina. In all likelihood, the network included a larger number of people in the Bohuslav and neighbouring districts, some of whom were probably not members of the OUN-B but rather were drawn into its operations for specific assignments.

The Advance Groups

¹⁶ Protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 31 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.89ob).

¹⁷ Protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.25).

The appearance of the underground network of the OUN-B in the Kyiv region in the summer and fall of 1941 was connected with developments in the German controlled *Generalgouvernement*, where many nationalist activists had taken refuge from Soviet repression in the course of 1939 and 1940.¹⁸ In late 1940 and early 1941, recognizing opportunities offered by the anticipated German-Soviet war for the creation of a Ukrainian state under the Nazi protectorate, both factions of the OUN started putting together special units (units of the OUN-B were called advance groups [*pokhidni hrupy*]).¹⁹ Following the start of the war, these were to head to Galicia and Volhynia, and eventually, further to the east, into the territory of pre-1939 Soviet Ukraine with orders to establish contacts with pre-existing underground cells, take control over the formation of local administrations and police, recruit new members and conduct propaganda among Ukrainians and non-Russian populations of the USSR.²⁰ In addition to their own clandestine operations and secret collaboration with German intelligence agencies, Mel'nykites, Banderites and members of other nationalist factions, on the orders of the German authorities, delegated several hundred of their members to serve as interpreters in various agencies of the Third Reich.²¹ The German military also supervised the creation of two armed formations of Ukrainian nationalists —battalions “Nachtigall” and “Roland.”²²

Particularly active was the on average younger and numerically stronger OUN-B, whose strategy of “National Revolution” in the context of the German-Soviet war included plans of an anti-Soviet uprising in the Soviet rear and an immediate proclamation of the Ukrainian state without prior consultations with the German authorities. The overarching objective of the OUN-B

¹⁸ Report by the 5th department of the border guard forces of the NKVD on the activities of the OUN in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Germany and the USSR, 2 July 1940 (Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 129).

¹⁹ Chartoryis'kyi, *Vid Sianu po Krym*; Zynovii Matla, *Pivdenna pokhidna hrupa* (München: Nasha knyhozbirnia, 1952); Lev Shankovs'kyi, *Pokhidni hrupy OUN* (München: Ukraïns'kyi samostiinyk, 1958); Mykola Klymyshyn, *V pokhodi do voli* (Detroit: Ukraïns'ka knyharnia, 1987), 2 volumes; on the OUN-M: Iakiv Shumel'da, “Pokhid OUN na Skhid,” in *Na zov Kyieva: ukraïns'kyi natsionalizm u II svitoviï viïni: zbirnyk stateï, spohadiv i dokumentiv*, ed. Kost' Mel'nyk, 75-95 (Toronto: Vydavnytstvo ‘Novyi shliakh,’ 1995).

²⁰ See the protocol of interrogation of Shymon Turchanovych (Tymofii Semchyshyn), 21 October 1944 (HDA SBU, f.13, spr.372, t.1, ark.78-79). The target groups of the propaganda were identified in the Instructions prepared by the special commission of the OUN-B in April-May 1941 (Volodymyr Serhiichuk, ed., *Ukraïns'kyi zdvyh* (Kyiv: Ukraïns'ka vydavnycha spilka, 2004-2005), t.1, 114-115).

²¹ Vasyl' Veryha, *Vtraty OUN v chasi Drugoi svitovoi viïni* (Toronto: “Novyi shliakh,” 1991), 53.

²² Myroslav Yurkevych, “Galician Ukrainians in German Military Formations and in the German Civilian Administration,” in *Ukraine During World War II: History and its Aftermath*, ed. Yuri Boshyk, 67-88 (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986); Bolianovs'kyi, *Ukraïns'ki viis'kovi formuvannia*.

consisted of confronting the Germans with the fact of an existing Ukrainian administration. In this fashion, the OUN-B planned either to facilitate recognition of the Ukrainian state or to force the Nazi leadership to reveal its real intentions regarding the political aspirations of the nationalist movement.²³

The Bandera faction created three advance groups in total. The first (northern) group under Mykola Klymyshyn was organized in Chelm and was to operate along the axis Kovel'-Luts'k-Zdolbunov-Zhytomyr-Kyiv-Poltava-Kharkiv.²⁴ The second (central) group led by Mykola Lemyk was assembled in Przemysl and was to proceed along the route Lviv-Ternopil-Proskuriv-Vinnytsya-Koziatyn-Fastiv-Kyiv-Kremenchuk-Kharkiv. The third (southern) group with Zynovii Matla at the helm started off in the Lemko land and headed towards Drohobych, Stryi, Ternopil, Proskuriv, Vinnytsia, Kirovohrad, Dnipropetrovs'k, Kryvyi Rih and Mykolaiv.²⁵ Each group had a leadership core (encompassing group commander, secretary, and staff) and peripheral organs--the so-called platoons--each consisting of four to twelve activists.

The organizational and communications officers in the staff of the leadership core were responsible for assignment of OUN cadres to specific localities and for maintaining communications with their own platoons, other advance groups, and the Central Leadership of the OUN-B. Attached to each group was also a plenipotentiary of the Central Leadership with the authority to appoint leaders of regional and district organizations of the OUN in the course of the march.

The programmatic document "Activities of the OUN in Times of War" provided for two variants of behaviour for members of the advance groups: legal activities, in the case of the German recognition of the Ukrainian state, or operations in the underground in the event of a German

²³ The objectives and tactics of the OUN-B were formulated in the programmatic document "The Struggle and Activities of OUN in Times of War" (May 1941): See Ivan Patryliak, "Viis'kovi plany OUN-B u taiemniï instruktiiï revoliutsiïnoho provodu (traven' 1941), *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, No.2 (2000): 127-137; Oleksandra Veselova, ed., *OUN v 1941 rotsi. Dokumenty. V 2-kh chastynakh*. (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukraïny NAN Ukraïny, 2006), chastyna 1, 58-176. See also the protocol of interrogation of Shymon Turchanovych (Tymofii Semchysyn), 21 October 1944 (HDA SBU, f.13, spr.372, t.1, ark.78-79) and the memorandum of the OUN-B "On Solutions of the Ukrainian Question" submitted to the Reich's Chancellery on 23 June 1941 (Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 321-330).

²⁴ Protocol of interrogation of Mefodii Pavlyshyn, 27 October 1944 (HDA SBU, f.13, spr.372, t.1, ark. 129).

²⁵ Protocol of interrogation of T.Semchysyn, 21 October 1944 (HDA SBU, f.13, spr.372, t.1, ark 81; protocol of interrogation of M.Pavlyshyn, 27 October 1944 (HDA SBU, f.13, spr. 372, t.1, ark.129); on the activities of the southern advance group: Pavlo Khobot and Roman Shliakhtych, "Stvorennia Pivdennoi pokhidnoi hrupy ta ii diial'nist' protiahom 1939-1941rr.," *Viis'kovo-naukovyï visnyk*, No.20 (2013): 156-168.

refusal to recognize the state and the beginning of repression. The OUN-M, by comparison, preferred to move with the flow of German policy, expecting that pragmatic collaboration would be rewarded with a Ukrainian state in the Nazi-led “New Europe” in the aftermath of the war.²⁶

At the start of the march in late June 1941, the first advance group of the OUN-B reportedly had 20 or 21 platoons; the second group --17-18 platoons; the 3rd group—12 to 14 (according to other sources 15 to 16 or even 29) platoons, consisting of four to twelve activists each.²⁷ In other words, the total number of participants of the advance groups at this early stage in all likelihood did not exceed 600 or 700 people--a reflection of the relative organizational weakness of the OUN-B and its inability to deploy more activists “in the east” without rendering ineffective underground structures in Galicia and the *Generalgouvernement*, whence most participants of the advance groups came.²⁸ In time, however, as the OUN-B gained ground, the size of the advance groups likely also expanded--possibly to as many as a few thousand people.²⁹ But even leaders of the groups could not precisely estimate the total number of activists under their command.³⁰

The preparations began in the *Generalgouvernement* in April 1941, when activists of peripheral structures of the OUN-B were assembled in platoons and started to study the state order and socio-economic realities of the USSR. In early May they received copies of the secret instructions “Activities of the OUN in Times of War,” prepared by the central leadership of the OUN-B.³¹ According to Tymofii Semchyshyn (“Rychka”)-- one of the leaders of the Southern advance group--the tasks consisted of: 1) capturing leadership positions within the local administrations throughout Ukraine, as well as in the Don and Krasnodar *kraï*; 2) recruitment of

²⁶ See, for example, the letters of Andrii Mel’nyk to Joachim von Ribbentrop, 24 July 1941 (TsDAHOU, f.57, op.4, spr. 338, ark.52) and Andrii Mel’nyk to *Reichsführer* SS Heinrich Himmler, 28 July 1941 (Ibid., ark.53).

²⁷ Protocol of interrogation of M. Pavlyshyn, 27 October 1944 (HDA SBU, f.13, spr.372, t.1, ark.130). For alternative numbers, see also the report of one of the leaders of the southern group Tymish Semchyshyn, 9 July 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukraïns’ke derzhavotvorennia*. 268).

²⁸ Brief descriptions of biographies of known activists of the southern advance group can be found in the protocol of interrogation of T.Semchyshyn (HDA SBU, f.13, spr. 372, t.1, ark.86-87).

²⁹ Mykola Lebed’ estimated the number of members of advance groups at the start of the march at 700: Mykola Lebed’, “Orhanizatsiia protynimets’koh oporu OUN 1941-1943rr.,” *Suchasnist’*, No.1-2 (1983): 148-156. Iaroslav Stets’ko placed the number at 5,000 (Iaroslav Stets’ko, *30 chervnia 1941: Proholoshennia vidnovlennia derzhavnosti Ukraïny* (Toronto-New York-London, 1967), 74. Such a broad discrepancy could be the result of the increase of the number of participants of the advance groups in the course of the march.

³⁰ In his memoir leader of the Northern advance group Mykola Klymyshyn claimed that he learned about the total number of members of his group only while in Luts’k and that there were 3,000 activists under his command. The number cannot be verified (Klymyshyn, *V pokhodi do voli*, t.1, 323, 374).

³¹ Protocol of interrogation of T.Semchyshyn, 21 October 1944 (HDA SBU, f.13, spr.372, t.1, ark.84); Khabot and Shliakhtych, “Pivdenna pokhidna hrupa,” 159.

new OUN members and creation of underground cells; 3) conduct of anti-Soviet nationalist propaganda.³² Another task was the documentation of crimes of the Communist regime and destruction of the local cultural heritage.³³

The march itself began in late June 1941, after the start of the German-Soviet war. The activists moved in small groups, often using bicycles and horse-drawn carts, occasionally on foot or by car. Along the route, they avoided big cities and relied on the logistical support of nationalist networks on the ground, newly created administrations and police, friendly segments of the local population, and, occasionally, sympathetic German military personnel.³⁴ Periodically, they would converge in predetermined locations to obtain orders and instructions.³⁵

As a rule, the travelling activists had addresses of “acquaintances” with whom they immediately tried to establish contact. These were usually people who had lived under Communist rule and were anti-Soviet. Some of these had reportedly cooperated with the OUN earlier, in 1939-1941.³⁶ In practice, the scarcity of OUN activists meant that they rarely staffed administrations themselves, but rather recruited local residents regardless of their prior party affiliation and subsequently secured their allegiance to the OUN-B.³⁷ The activists operated in a conspiratorial fashion and in the event of arrest by German military or security forces were instructed to present themselves as residents of Galicia whom the Soviets had deported to the east or as interpreters in the service of the Wehrmacht.³⁸

On 30 June the special task force consisting of some twenty representatives of the leadership of the OUN-B with Iaroslav Stets’ko at the helm (part of the central advance group) arrived in Lviv

³² See also protocol of interrogation of M. Pavlyshyn, 27 October 1944 (HDA SBU, f.13, spr.372, t.1, ark. 128).

³³ Matla, *Pivdenna pokhidna hrupa*, 130.

³⁴ See the report by the leadership of the Southern group, 13 July 1941 (Serhiichuk, *Ukrains’kyi zdvyh*, t.4, 42-43). Also the account by the leader of the northern advance group Mykola Klymyshyn about German commander in Sokal’ providing the organization with passes that enabled easy movement in the occupied territories for more than 200 activists (Klymyshyn, *V pokhodi do voli*, t.1, 318).

³⁵ For the northern group, such key locations were Sokal’, Luts’k, Zviahel’, and Zhytomyr (Klymyshyn, *V pokhodi do voli*, t.1, 320-334).

³⁶ Matla, *Pivdenna pokhidna hrupa*, 17-18.

³⁷ See, for example, description of the organizational process by member of the northern advance group Yaroslav Starukh (alias “Mik”), 29 June 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukrains’ke derzhavotvorennia*, 94). The organizational limitations were recognized also on the programmatic level. See the “Struggle and Activities of OUN in Times of War” (Veselova, *OUN v 1941 rotsi*, ch. 1, 62-63).

³⁸ Matla, *Pivdenna pokhidna hrupa*, 16.

and proclaimed the Ukrainian state, pledging continued collaboration with the Third Reich.³⁹ The German authorities, however, would not recognize the Stets'ko government and, after the latter refused to revoke the Act of Restoration of Ukrainian Statehood, detained a number of prominent functionaries of the OUN-B, including Stets'ko himself and the leader of the organization, Stepan Bandera.⁴⁰ The disposition of the Nazi leadership notwithstanding, the OUN-B proceeded with its plans and in the following weeks not only successfully created a network of local administrations and armed militias (the so-called "Sich"), but also became the default power in the rural areas of Galicia and, to a lesser extent, Volhynia during the brief period of the interregnum in June-July 1941.⁴¹ Following the retreat of Soviet forces from Northern Bukovyna the power in many villages wound up in the hands of activists of the OUN-M.⁴²

In the hectic atmosphere that accompanied the collapse of the Soviet state, the arrival of the German, Hungarian and Romanian forces, and, in some places, the discovery of bodies of victims of NKVD mass repression, members of the advance groups and activists of the local OUN underground were frequently at the forefront of political violence that erupted in many communities in Galicia and Volhynia. Not unlike German security forces, that sought to increase the legitimacy of Nazi rule by means of killings of local Jews (ostensibly in retribution for NKVD massacres of local Ukrainians), OUN-led militias not only attacked and disarmed the retreating Red Army soldiers, but also actively sought out functionaries of the Communist party and the Soviet state, as well as local Poles, Jews, Russians, and Ukrainians suspected of being Soviet sympathisers and secret police informers.⁴³ Moreover, there is a growing amount of

³⁹ The "Act of Restoration of the Ukrainian State," 30 June 1941 (Kuhutiak, *Ukrains'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh* t.2, kn.1, 159).

⁴⁰ Correspondence of various agencies of the Third Reich regarding the Stets'ko government can be found in Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 334, 341-343, 350-356, 361-362, 366-367.

⁴¹ See, for example, the report by the newspaper "*Ukrains'ke slovo*" on the developments in Kolomyia in early July 1941: Kuhutiak, *Ukrains'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 162, 165; on the situation in Kalush: Ibid., 168.

⁴² Ivan Fostiī, *Pivnichna Bukovyna i Khotynshchyna u Druhiī svitoviī viīni 1939-1945rr.* (Chernivtsi: Oblasne viddilennia Poshukovo-vydavnychoho ahentstva "Knyha Pam'iaty Ukraīny," 2005), 128-164.

⁴³ German rationalizations for the massacres of Jewish men in Eastern Galicia in July 1941 can be found in the report by leader of the German security police and SD, dated 16 July 1941 (Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 374-377). On the role of members of the advance groups of the OUN-B in the liquidation of NKVD functionaries, see the report of the leadership of the Southern advance group from Ternopil on 13 July 1941 (Serhiichuk, *Ukrains'kyi zdvyh*, t.4, 42-43); informational leaflet of the Southern advance group for participants of the march, 13 July 1941: Zoriana Nahorniak, ed., *Vidnovlennia Ukrains'koi derzhavy v 1941r. Novi dokumenty i materialy* (Kyiv: Ukrains'ka vydavnycha spilka, 2001), 70; also the report by the leader of the OUN-B in Kam'ianets'-Podil's'kyi, 31 July 1941 (Serhiichuk, *Ukrains'kyi zdvyh*, t.4, 66); for the contemporary report on clashes between OUN-led armed groups and retreating Red Army soldiers: Kuhutiak, *Ukrains'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 169; On arrests of Communist functionaries and Soviet activists in the village Voskresintsi near Kolomyia, see the OUN report from 6 July 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukrains'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 250); for the

evidence both of heavy involvement of OUN militiamen in anti-Jewish pogroms that swept through Galicia and Volhynia in the summer 1941 and of their subsequent participation in the Nazi Holocaust as part of the auxiliary police.⁴⁴

As pages of OUN controlled local newspapers and radio waves filled with emotionally charged accounts of Soviet atrocities (frequently blamed not only on the Soviet state, but also on Jews as a group), nationalist activists attempted to dominate the public space with displays of national and party symbols.⁴⁵ Simultaneously, they organized honorary burial of victims of the NKVD terror, historical commemorations, collective prayers, celebrations of holidays of “liberation” and “independence,” as well as quasi plebiscites in support of the Ukrainian state.⁴⁶ The primary

collection of information about activities of the NKVD: letter of the secretariat of the OUN in Stanislav to citizens regarding collection of information about activities of the NKVD, 15 July 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukrains'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 268).

Jews were described as active adherents of the communist ideology in many programmatic documents of the OUN-B. See, for example, Postanovy II Velykoho zboru Revoliutsiinoi OUN, April 1941 (Serhiichuk, *Ukrains'kyi zdvyh*, t.1, 100); also propaganda instructions of the OUN leadership (Serhiichuk, *Ukrains'kyi zdvyh*, t.1, 117); Executions of alleged informers were reported at the time by the newspaper “Zhovkivs'ki visti”: Kuhutiak, *Ukrains'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 162.

⁴⁴ OUN activists, including members of the advance groups, frequently viewed Jews as loyalists of the Communist regime and advocated their removal. See, for example, report of the advance group from the village Mlyny, dated 25 June 1941 (Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 333-334). On the executions of Jews by OUN militia in Bircha, see the OUN report in: Nahorniak, *Vidnovlennia Ukrain's'koi derzhavy v 1941r.*, 53; on the involvement of OUN-led militia in the anti-Jewish violence: Patryliak, *Viis'kova diial'nist' OUN-B*, 232.

On the pogroms in Galicia and Volhynia: Carynyk, “Jews, Poles and Other Skum”; Himka, “The Lviv Pogrom”; Kai Struve, “Rites of Violence?”

⁴⁵ According to the historian of the OUN-B Lev Shankov's'kyi, prior to the onset of German reprisals Ukrainian nationalists controlled editorial boards of 115 newspapers in the occupied territories, most notably in Galicia and Volhynia (Shankov's'kyi, *Pokhidni hrupy OUN*, 6-8).

The Lviv radio ran an hour-long program on the executions of inmates of Lviv prisons on 7 July (Dziuban, *Ukrains'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 100). The Jews were described as accomplices of the regime in numerous publications. See, for example “Sviatochna akademiia,” *Ukrains'ke Slovo*, 24 July 1941, 1. On the public display of national and party symbols, see propaganda instructions of the OUN Leadership from April-May 1941 (Serhiichuk, *Ukrains'kyi zdvyh*, t.1, 125-134); also the letter by the commander of the advance group Ia.Starukh to one Vergun, 25 June 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukrains'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 79-80).

⁴⁶ See, for example, an account about the burial procession in Nadvirna, Stanislav region in early August 1941 (Kuhutiak, *Ukrains'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 207-208); On the burial processions in Volhynia: Ulas Samchuk, *Na bilomu koni. Spomyny i vrazhennia* (Winnipeg, 1972), 177-182.

Grass roots organizations of the OUN were instructed to stage the following types of commemorative events: 1) set a memorial table in every church with names of OUN fighters who fell in battle 2) create of local pantheon of heroes to replace martyrs 3) every Ukrainian house was to have portraits of Shevchenko, Mikhnov's'kyi, Petliura, Konovalets, Bandera, the Ukrainian flag and symbols.

4) Create lists of fallen OUN activists, people deported and arrested by the Soviet authorities and by the Germans (Nahorniak, *Vidnovlennia Ukrain's'koi derzhavy*, 44-45). For the information on collective prayers, see, for example, “Oholoshennia provodu OUN u Kremyantsi pro urochysti molebni u Kremyantsi pro urochysti molebni z nagody proholoshennia Ukrain's'koi derzhavy,” 11 July 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukrains'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 172).

On rallies: Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe, “The ‘Ukrainian National Revolution,’” 108; Samchuk, *Na bilomu koni*, 148. For the description of specific events: “Spohad pro sviato proholoshennia vidnovlennia Ukrain's'koi derzhavy v Kalushi,” 13 July 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukrains'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 173-174); report about the establishment of government authorities in the villages of the Kalush district, 7 July 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukrains'ke derzhavotvorennia*,

functions of such mass events--which typically featured speeches by functionaries of the OUN, prominent members of local communities and representatives of the Greek Catholic Church in front of parading militias and, in some places, thousands of local residents dressed festively in traditional garments--was to legitimate the Stets'ko government, foster perception of its own strength among the Ukrainian population and to intimidate political opponents.⁴⁷ Combined with the assault on Polish and Soviet symbolic orders, such acts effectively delineated the parameters of the anti-Soviet historical meta-narrative that purported to give meaning to the dramatic experiences of the past and in this fashion lay ideological and historico-political foundations of the OUN-led nation- and state-building project.⁴⁸

The OUN-B met with most success in Galicia and Volhynia, where owing to the strength of the pre-existing underground and prior penetration of the structures of the Ukrainian civil society, including various youth and sports associations, the organization had exercised significant influence already before the Second World War.⁴⁹ In fact, as of 22 July 1941 the OUN-B reportedly managed to take under its control organization of city, town, and village

251-252); OUN report about the holiday of the Ukrainian statehood in Rivne on 27 July 1941 (Nahorniak, *Vidnovlennia Ukraïns'koi derzhavy*, 159-160). On collection of signatures: "On the Results of Plebiscite in some Districts of the Ternopil Region in Support of the Act of Restoration of the Ukrainian state and against fusion of Galicia with the *Generalgouvernement*," 18 August 1941 (Serhiichuk, *Ukraïns'kyi zdvyh*, t.4, 66-72. The report of the German security service (SD) from 17 July 1941 noted the activities of special propaganda groups of the OUN-B entrusted with organization of celebrations of independence in specific localities throughout the region (Dziuban, *Ukraïns'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 180).

⁴⁷ The political rationale behind mass events was outlined in the propaganda instructions of the OUN Leadership from April-May 1941 (Serhiichuk, *Ukraïns'kyi zdvyh*, t.1, 125-134). The atmosphere of such events can be gleaned from the report by anonymous observer about the celebration of the Proclamation of Independence in Stanislav on 12 July 1941. The meeting, we learn, opened with a religious service and a sermon by *presbiter* of the Greek Catholic Church Cyr Hryhorii, who "in strong words described the Bolshevik regime and patience of the people" and concluded with the assertion of the importance of building own state "under the leadership of those sent by providence." Engineer Semyanchuk read out the manifesto of the OUN-B, with the crowd saluting the Ukrainian state, leader of the OUN Stepan Bandera, Adolf Hitler, and the Hungarian army. OUN representative Rybchuk, for his part, emphasized the completion of the first stage of the OUN struggle, marked by thousands of casualties and transition to the second stage--the construction of the state. "Progoloshennia samostiïnosti Ukraïns'koi derzhavy v Stanislavovi, dnia 12 lypnia 1941r.," *Ukraïns'ke slovo* (22 July 1941): 1.

⁴⁸ See the instructions of the propaganda department of OUN-B to the militia in Lviv about the removal of the symbols of the Soviet rule, 8 July 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukraïns'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 252-253); On the renaming of streets, see the report from Rohatyn, dated 23 July 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukraïns'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 294). The writer Ulas Samchuk who was affiliated with OUN-M recalled how Banderites, having captured control over the civilian administration in Dubno (Volhynia) renamed one of the streets after leader of the Ukrainian People's Republic Symon Petliura and carried out comprehensive Ukrainianization of the public space (Samchuk, *Na bilomu koni*, 139). Occasionally, destruction of symbols of Soviet rule was carried out by local residents prior to the arrival of nationalist activists. See, for example, the report by a member of the advance group about the developments in the village Lazy in Eastern Galicia, dated 25 June 1941 (Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukraïnskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 330-331).

⁴⁹ Such conclusions follow from the 1939 reports of the Polish intelligence services: Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukraïnskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 57; Kuhutiak, *Ukraïns'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 193.

administrations and armed militias in almost every locality in the Stanislav, Ternopil', Lviv, Drohobych, Rivne, and Luts'k regions. Regional administrations in Ternopil', Stanislav, Zhytomyr, and Luts'k were de facto recognized by the occupation authorities.⁵⁰ Moreover, in the summer and fall of 1941 advance groups made significant inroads into central Ukraine (Vinnytsia, Khmel'nyts'kyi, Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Cherkasy, Kirovohrad, Poltava regions) and for the first time established an organizational presence in the Black Sea littoral, Crimea, Kharkiv, Sumy, and Donbas.⁵¹ In the process the OUN-B occasionally entered into competition with the OUN-M, the armed group of Taras Bul'ba-Borovets' (the so-called "Polissian Sich," based in Eastern Volhynia, loyal to the defunct Ukrainian People's Republic and from August 1941 allied with the Mel'nyk faction of the OUN), as well as Russian Nationalists and Don Cossacks (in Kharkiv and parts of the Donbas).⁵² In Crimea the Nazis relied primarily on the Crimean Tatars.⁵³

Although adherents of Andrii Mel'nyk could not compete with the numerically stronger and more dynamic OUN-B in Galicia and Volhynia, their activists managed temporarily to take over

⁵⁰ OUN report on the establishment of the Ukrainian state in Western region, 22 July 1941 (Nahorniak, *Vidnovlennia Ukraïns'koï derzhavy*, 120-121; Kuhutiak, *Ukraïns'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 193). In his letter to S.Bandera leader of the OUN underground in Galicia and Volhynia Ivan Klymiv claimed that OUN-B controlled (i.e. occupied or exercised control over the appointments to leadership positions at the local level) in 187 out of 200 districts in Western Ukraine (Kuhutiak, *Ukraïns'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 200). How the organization of administrations looked in practice can be gleaned from the stenogramm of the "national assembly" of the Verby district, 12 July 1941 (Nahorniak, *Vidnovlennia Ukraïns'koï derzhavy*, 67-68).

⁵¹ Chartorys'kyi, *Vid Sianu po Krym*, 141-214; Zhyliuk, *Diial'nist' OUN ta UPA*; Nikol's'kyi, *Pidpillia OUN-b*; Ievhen Horburov and Mykola Shytiuk, *Suspil'no-plitychna ta boiova diial'nist' natsionalistychnoho pidpillia pivdnia Ukraïny v roky nimets'ko-rumuns'koï okupatsii* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukraïny NANU, 2003); Anatoliï Skorobogatov, *Kharkiv*, 136, 183-185; Ivanushchenko, *OUN-UPA na Sumshchyni*; on the OUN-B in Poltava: People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR V. Riasnoi to secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine Dem'ian Korotchenko "On the Exposed Group of the 'OUN' in Poltava," 26 October 1943 (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr. 527, ark.8-12); on the Ukrainian nationalists in the auxiliary police in Kherson: protocol of interrogation of Valerian Tremmel', 9 December 1954 (AUSBUKHo, fond taiemnoho dilovodstva, op.1209, spr.70, t.1, ark.99-100); on the activities of Ukrainian nationalists in Crimea: Oleg Roman'ko, *Krym. 1941-1944gg. Okkupatsiia i kollaboratsionizm.: sbornik statei i materialov* (Simferopol': "Magistr", 2004), 92-96.

⁵² In August 1941, the regional executive of the OUN-B declared OUN-M as enemies of the Ukrainian state and nation--due to the latter's failure to recognize the Stets'ko government: Electronic Archives of the Ukrainian Liberation Movement" (further EAULM): <http://avr.org.ua/index.php/viewDoc/1385/>, last accessed 14 April 2015. The conflict was also noted by the German security police and SD. See the report about the situation in the occupied territories of the USSR and Generalgouvernement, dated 17 September 1941 (Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 436-437).

The positions of Bul'ba-Borovets' were particularly strong in the areas around Olevs'k in today's Zhytomyr region: Volodymyr Dziobak, "Taras Bul'ba-Borovets' i Polis'ka Sich," *Z arkhiviv VUChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, 1994 (1): 124-139; 1995 (1-2): 39-59.

On Russian Nationalists in Eastern Ukraine: Skorobogatov, *Kharkiv*, 178; Yuri Radchenko, "We Emptied Our Magazines into Them": The Ukrainian Auxiliary Police and the Holocaust in Generalbezirk Charkow, 1941-1943," *Yad Vashem Studies* 41, No. 1 (2013): 63-98.

⁵³ Roman'ko, *Krym*, 62-71.

administrative structures and auxiliary police in parts of Bukovyna and in a number of large cities and towns of central Ukraine, most notably in Zhytomyr and Kyiv--where they organized the so-called Ukrainian National Council.⁵⁴ Small organizations of the OUN-M appeared also in Dnipropetrovs'k, Kharkiv, Poltava, and Chernihiv regions.⁵⁵ Whereas in Galicia and Volhynia, the OUN-B attempted to subordinate Mel'nykites, expelled them from specific localities, and even killed some activists, the relationship between the two groups elsewhere was more ambivalent.⁵⁶ Sometimes Banderites and Mel'nykites denounced each other to the German police authorities, sometimes activists on the ground cooperated, sometimes the OUN-B recruited into its own ranks former adherents of Mel'nyk, as was the case in Zhytomyr.⁵⁷

The peculiarity of the organizational activities of both factions beyond the Zbruch river, in the pre-1939 Soviet Ukraine, consisted in recruitment of local cadres: intelligentsia, priests, former activists of the Ukrainian People's Republic, and younger people who had come to Soviet

⁵⁴ According to the report by the leader of the krai leadership of OUN-B in Galicia and Volhynia Ivan Klymiv (Lehenda) as of late July 1941, the OUN-M controlled administrative structures in mere 4 districts (Dziuban, *Ukrains'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 212). In Galicia, the OUN-M managed to organize the administrative structures only in the Rohatyn district. But by 22 July 1941, the Banderites pushed them out and took administration of the district under own control (Kuhutiak, *Ukrains'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 195). On the developments in Zhytomyr region: Zhyliuk, *Diial'nist' OUN ta UPA*, 33; Ivan Koval'chuk, "Prykhid pokhidnoi hrupy OUN pid provodom Andriia Mel'nyka "Pivnich" do Zhytomyra u lypni 1941r.," *Rozbudova derzhavy. Zbirnyk prats'*, No.1-2 (2011): 153-166. In some places the organizational activities of the OUN-M were carried out by members of the Bukovinian battalion on their way from Galicia to Kyiv in August-September 1941. This was the case in Podillia--in Vinnytsia, Ialtushkiv, Nova Ushytsia, Stara Ushytsia, Kopaihorod, Braiiliv, and Uman': Vasyl' Veryha, "Bukovyns'kyi kurin' 1941," in Mel'nyk, *Na zov Kyieva*, 112-114; On the OUN-M in Bukovyna: Ivan Fostiĭ, "Diial'nist' OUN na Bukovyni u 1940-1941rr.," *Z arkhiviv VUCHK-HPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.2-4 (2000): 454-471.

⁵⁵ Shankovs'kyi, *Pokhidni hrupy*, 13; also Shumel'da, "Pokhid OUN na Skhid," in Mel'nyk, *Na zov Kyieva*, 82; K. Radzevych, "Persha Kyivs'ka pokhidna grupa," in Mel'nyk, *Na zov Kyieva*, 102; The organizational activities in the Chernigiv regions were undertaken by members of the Bukovinian battalion: Veryha, "Bukovyns'kyi kurin' 1941," 115. More on the Bukovinian battalion: Fostiĭ, "Diial'nist' OUN na Bukovyni"; Vitaliĭ Nakhmanovych, "Bukovyns'kyi kurin' i masovi rozstrily ievreiv Kyieva voseny 1941r.," *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, No.3 (2007): 76-97; Per Rudling, "Terror and Local Collaboration in Occupied Belarus: The Case of Schutzmannschaft Battalion 118. Part I. Background," *Nikolae Iorga Historical Yearbook, Romanian Academy, Bucharest* 8 (2011): 195-214; Idem, "Terror and Local Collaboration in Occupied Belarus. The Case of Schutzmannschaft Battalion 118. Part II. War Criminality," *Nikolae Iorga Historical Yearbook, Romanian Academy, Bucharest* 9 (2012): 99-121.

⁵⁶ On conflicts between the OUN-B and the OUN-M in Galicia, see the report of the southern advance group (Serhiichuk, *Ukrains'kyi zdvyh*, t.4, 44). The best known case was the murder of Omelian Senyk and Mykola Stsibors'kyi in Zhytomyr in August 1941. Other instances of murder of activists of the OUN-M by Banderites are mentioned by Veryha, *Vraty OUN*, 52, 65.

⁵⁷ See the reminiscences by member of the OUN-M K.Radzevych about getting denounced by chief of the Ukrainian police in Fastiv in August 1941. The latter was member of the OUN-B: Radzevych, "Persha kyivs'ka pokhidna hrupa," 98; According to OUN-member Iu. Vargots'kyi, Mel'nykites who worked in the police warned Banderites of the plans of the German authorities to conduct arrests (Zhyliuk, *Diial'nist' OUN ta UPA*, 34); See also "The Overview Report "On Anti-Soviet Subversive Activities of the Bandera Faction of the OUN in the Zhytomyr Region," 10 January 1956 (HDA SBU, f.13, spr.372, t.29, ark.320). The attempts of the OUN-B to recruit members of the Bukovinian battalion, dominated by the OUN-M during the latter's stay in Kam'ianets'-Podil's'kyi are mentioned in Veryha, "Bukovyns'kyi kurin'," 111.

controlled western Ukraine in 1939-1941.⁵⁸ Some of these people would move further to the east as part of the advance groups and help establish organizational presence in Central and Southern Ukraine, Crimea, and Donbas. As a rule, with the exception of police, Ukrainian nationalists did not occupy the leading positions in local administrations, but operated in the shadows, with the public posts taken up by local people with corresponding qualifications.⁵⁹ This, as we shall see, was also the case in the Bohuslav district.

The German reaction to the proclamation of the Ukrainian state and activities of Ukrainian nationalists was initially muted. In fact, German army officers sometimes attended rallies, where nationalist activists gave political speeches and in some places turned to the OUN-B for assistance with setting up administrations and security provisions in the occupied territories.⁶⁰ However, already by mid-July, the occupation authorities detained Stets'ko and Bandera and demanded that the OUN-B revoke the act of 30 June 1941. Shortly thereafter military commanders on the ground received instructions to obstruct mass events that promulgated the idea of independent statehood, while the German police authorities shut down some twenty print shops utilized by the OUN-B for preparation of propaganda materials.⁶¹ Although for political and security reasons the Germans did not disband the OUN controlled administrations and militia in Galicia and Volhynia, they made a concerted effort to reduce the scope of the organizational activities and restricted the latter's authority, for example, by limiting the number of militiamen in specific localities and prohibiting militia from carrying out arrests without orders from the respective German military and police officials.⁶² Moreover, in the fall of 1941,

⁵⁸ In his memoirs activist of the OUN-M Iakiv Shumel'da claimed that the OUN-M recruited several dozens of Ukrainians from the pre-1939 Soviet Ukraine while preparing to go to the "east": Shumel'da, "Pokhid OUN na Skhid," 84-85; on seeking out former adherents of the UPR ("Petliurites") and former victims of Soviet persecution: Chartorys'kyi, *Vid Sianu po Krym*, 141.

⁵⁹ Zhyliuk, *Diial'nist' OUN ta UPA*, 43.

⁶⁰ Thus in July 1941 the *Ortskommandatur* in Horodyshche (today Zhytomyr region) issued to passes and weapons to 11 Banderites and authorized them to organize militia and elections of the community leaders in the villages of the district (Zhyliuk, *Diial'nist' OUN ta UPA*, 32); see also a report by one of the advance groups from Dobromyl' in Lviv region, dated 27 June 1941 (Nahorniak, *Vidnovlennia Ukraïns'koï derzhavy*, 48-49).

⁶¹ The directive of the commander of the 103rd security division, 11 July 1941 (Kuhutiak, *Ukraïns'kyi national'no-vyzvol'nyï rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 186-187; Leader of the Security Police and SD, report about the situation in the USSR, No.25, 17 July 1941 (Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukraïnskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 378-379).

⁶² See SD report No.12 "On the Situation in the USSR," 4 July 1941 (Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukraïnskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 358-359); also the instructions of commander of the 17th Army to the military authorities regarding units of Ukrainian self-defence in the area of military operations, 7 July 1941 (Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukraïnskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 361-362); report about the conference of counter-intelligence officers of the Army Group "South" major Weiner and senior lieutenant Lazarek with Kundt, Voell, and von Buelow regarding the events of 30 June 1941 in Lviv, 9 July 1941 (Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukraïnskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 365-366).

OUN-controlled militia would be subjected to extensive purges, strict subordination, and incorporation into the German security apparatus as part of the auxiliary police.⁶³ To the east of the Zbruch river, the German authorities proceeded rather more decisively, as evidenced by detentions and deportations to the *Generalgouvernement* of scores of members of the advance groups from late summer 1941.⁶⁴

Even more hostile was the disposition of the Romanian authorities in Bukovina. The Romanians, according to OUN sources, took down Ukrainian flags, disbanded Ukrainian institutions, arrested local Ukrainian activists and expelled new arrivals from Galicia.⁶⁵ Even the comparatively lenient Hungarian military authorities, which initially did not stand in the way of the proclamation of independence in the Stanislav region, treated local initiatives with suspicion and eventually started to restrict OUN activism.⁶⁶

The pace of repression in the German controlled territories picked up considerably in the fall of 1941, prompting first the OUN-B and later the OUN-M to go underground.⁶⁷ In September the German police had detained Bandera, Stets'ko and some other prominent nationalists who were at the time in Berlin. Members of the OUN leadership were arrested also in Lviv. In October the German police killed the leader of the central advance group, Mykola Lemyk. In late November, in the wake of the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Bolshevik massacre of the 359 fighters of the Ukrainian People's Republic at Bazar in eastern Volhynia, the German police authorities arrested hundreds and executed dozens of OUN-M and OUN-B activists in the Zhytomyr and Kyiv regions alone.⁶⁸

⁶³ Patryliak, *Viis'kova diial'nist' OUN-B*, 235-241.

⁶⁴ Arrests of members of the Central advance group of the OUN-B in the Zhytomyr region are mentioned in the report by one of the activists on 13 August 1941 (Serhiichuk, *Ukrains'kyi zdvyh*, t.5, 32); OUN sources mention arrests of members of the advance group by the German SD in Makariv (Kyiv region) in July and in Vasyl'kiv, Fastiv and Bila Tserkva in August 1941 (HDA SBU, f.13, spr.376, t.84; <http://avr.org.ua/index.php/viewDoc/3186/>, last accessed 18 May 2015); On the arrests of Mykola Klymyshyn and some members of the northern advance group in the summer 1941, see Klymyshyn, *V pokhodi do voli*, t.1, 353-355.

⁶⁵ From OUN report from 22 July 1941 (Kuhutiak, *Ukrains'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 193).

⁶⁶ Kuhutiak, *Ukrains'kyi natsional'no-vyzvol'nyi rukh*, t.2, kn.1, 194, 213-214.

⁶⁷ Kentii, *Zbroinyi chyn ukrains'kykh natsionalistiv*, 101; Motyka, *Ukrainska partyzantka*, 110-111.

⁶⁸ On 21 November 1941 the OUN-M, for example, staged a large-scale ceremony at Bazar in Zhytomyr region, honoring participants of the Second Winter March of the UNR. Shumel'da, "Pokhid OUN na Skhid," 90. The OUN-M viewed the commemoration as a vehicle for strengthening positions of the organization in the Zhytomyr region. The organization of commemorative measures was entrusted to the leader of the regional administration Oleksandr Iatseniuk. Already on 8 November local villagers started raising a memorial mound on the site of the mass grave and on 20 November the OUN squad transported the urn with soil from the grave to Kyiv, where, after the church service, it was implanted into the wall of St. Sophia's Cathedral (Zhyliuk, *Diial'nist' OUN ta UPA*, 72).

Particularly affected were the Mel'nykites who, due to their misreading of German intentions vis-a-vis the Ukrainian national movement, had tended to operate in the open. Among the casualties were prominent activists of the OUN-M, such as the mayor of Kyiv, Volodymyr Bahazii, editor of the newspaper "*Ukrains'ke slovo*" Ivan Rohach, poetess Olena Teliha, and functionary of the Ukrainian auxiliary police in Kyiv, Roman Bida ("Gordon").⁶⁹ Significant casualties were incurred also by the more conspiratorial OUN-B, especially by its central advance group.⁷⁰ More arrests followed in the course of 1942 and 1943 in Kyiv, Dnipropetrovs'k, Kharkiv, Poltava, Kirovohrad, Mykolaiv, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Mariupol', Stalino (today Donetsk), Rivne, Vinnytsia, Simferopol' and a number of smaller towns throughout the *Reichskommissariat* "Ukraine", *Generalgouvernement*, Transnistria and in the areas under German military rule.⁷¹ The remaining activists of both factions were either forced to return to the *Generalgouvernement*, went underground or continued to operate under the secret surveillance of the German and Romanian security organs.

No less importantly, the activities of Ukrainian, Baltic, Russian, Tatar and other nationalists, wartime collaborators, church clergymen, and some other political and social groups did not escape the attention of Soviet intelligence and security organs, which, for different reasons, carefully monitored the situation in the Axis occupied territories.⁷² Once the Red Army re-established control of the territories in the course of 1943-1944, different branches of the Soviet punitive apparatus would immediately strike against the nationalist underground throughout Ukraine, while further to the West, in Volhynia and Galicia the Soviet state would also have to contend with a full-fledged insurgency.⁷³ It is within this context that one must locate both the arrests of nationalist activists in Bohuslav in March 1944 and the more comprehensive campaign

⁶⁹ Veryha, *Vtraty OUN*, 73-77; In addition to the arrests, the occupation authorities closed the newspaper "*Ukrains'ke Slovo*" and replaced it with a thoroughly controlled "*Nove Ukrains'ke Slovo*" under the editorship of Kost' Shtepa.

⁷⁰ In October 1944, in Myrhorod (Poltava region), the German security organs apprehended and subsequently executed the leadership core of the central advance group of the OUN-B, including its leader Mykola Lemyk. In the following months only a small part of the central group evaded German reprisals and managed to create underground organizations in Sumy (Veryha, *Vtraty OUN*, 63, 87-88).

⁷¹ Veryha, *Vtraty OUN*, 87-104.

⁷² See, for example, the copy of a Soviet intelligence report in the formerly classified KGB study guide: "Special Reports on the Activities of the OUN on the Territory of the Eastern Regions of Ukraine," no earlier than December 1942, HDA SBU, f.13, spr.372, t.29, ark.307-316. (<http://avr.org.ua/index.php/viewDoc/22332/>, last accessed 8 July 2015); Soviet intelligence reports about the activities of Ukrainian nationalists and the situation in the Nazi occupied territories can also be found in TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr. 523, 524, 527, 531, 534, 539, 540, 546, 554, 577, 682, 683, 688, 694, 915, 916, 918, 919.

⁷³ Dmytro Viedienieiev and Hennadii Bystrukhin, *Dvobii bez kompromisiv: protyborstvo spetspidrozdiliv OUN ta radians'kykh syl spetsoperatsii: 1945-1980-ti roky* (Kyiv: K.I.S, 2007); Statiev, *Soviet Counter-Insurgency*.

of the symbolic re-ordering of the territories that in 1941-1944 had experienced the Axis rule and OUN sovereignty claims.

The Place

The German armed forces and advance groups of the OUN-B--which arrived in the Kyiv region in mid-July 1941-- did not step into an empty space.⁷⁴ The predominantly rural, small town, and Ukrainian speaking region with its center in metropolitan Kyiv had a convoluted history of conflict and co-existence of different ethnic, social, political and religious groups. This history featured among other things stories of the early settlement of the land by ancient Slavic tribes, the medieval state of Kyivan Rus, the introduction of Orthodox Christianity and the arrival of Ashkenazi Jews during the early Middle Ages, protracted violent encounters with the nomads of the steppe, establishment of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Cossack/peasant insurrections of the 16th-18th centuries, the progressive incorporation of the land into the Russian state/Empire, and the nascence of national movements in the second half of the 19th century.

The First World War, the collapse of the existing imperial orders, the appearance of new centers of political authority, and revolutionary turmoil followed by protracted multisided warfare not only affected militarization of social structures and aggravated the pre-existing socio-economic cleavages, but also accelerated the radicalization and “nationalization” of the local polity.⁷⁵

In the resultant upheaval multi-ethnic populations of the region became a source of exploitable manpower, an object of resource extraction, and a target of violence for various governments and

⁷⁴The district center Bila Tserkva fell under the Wehrmacht control on 16 July (one week after the capture of Zhytomyr); Fastiv--on 22 July, Bohuslav--on 26 July, Tarashcha on 29 July. By mid-September, after heavy fighting, units of the German army groups “South” and “Center” encircled 5 Soviet armies east of Kyiv, paving the way for the capture of the capital of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic on 19 September.

⁷⁵For the general works on the period, see Verstiuk, *Makhnovshchyna*; Henry Abramson, *A Prayer for the Government: Ukrainians and Jews in Revolutionary Times, 1917-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution*; Raleigh, *Experiencing Russia's Civil War*; Alexander Prusin, *Nationalizing the Borderland: War, Ethnicity, and Anti-Jewish Violence in East Galicia, 1914-1920* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005); Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (New York: Pegasus, 2007); Budnitskiĭ, *Rossiĭskie evrei*.

fighting forces staking sovereignty claims over the territory.⁷⁶ Jewish communities in particular experienced pillage, confiscations of property, pogroms, and forced resettlement already during the Russian occupation of Galicia in 1914-1915 and even to a greater degree in 1918-1921, when practically all sides of the conflict(s) perpetrated acts of antisemitic violence on a smaller or larger scale.⁷⁷

The security crisis was especially acute in Right Bank Ukraine, where until the eventual victory of the Bolsheviks in 1921, none of the many belligerents were able to exercise effective control over the territory and had to contend with economic devastation, lack of experienced government apparatus, undisciplined troops, epidemics, and a radicalized population with experience of military service and ready access to weapons. The situation was further complicated by the outbreak of numerous peasant uprisings and the emergence of a number of anarchist and politically amorphous bands that would periodically ally with different movements and even switch sides.⁷⁸

In the Kyiv region specifically, the weakening of state authority, the disintegration of the Russian Imperial army, and the progressive breakdown of law and order in the course of 1917 was

⁷⁶In 1917-1922 the territory of today's Ukraine was a site of at least 12 military conflicts, some of which unfolded concurrently and involved multiple sides: (1) the first war between Bolsheviks and Ukrainian People's Republic (December 1917-February 1918); 2) military conflict in Bessarabia: Bolshevik forces against the Romanian army (January-March 1918); 3) Germany, Austro-Hungary and UPR against Soviet Ukraine/Russia (February-April 1918); 4) military conflict in the Black Sea littoral: Ukrainian rebel bands against the Entente and White Guard forces (February-April 1919); 5) peasant uprisings and the war of the Directory of the UPR against the Hetmanate of Pavlo Skoropads'ky (May-December 1918); 6) the second war between the Bolsheviks and the UPR (December 1918-October 1919); 7) the war between the White Guard Movement against the Red Army and Nestor Makhno's rebel forces (December 1917-November 1920); 8) the war between Poland and Western Ukrainian People's Republic (November 1918-July 1919); 9) the war between the White Guard movement and the army of the UPR and Makhno's rebels (December 1918-January 1920); 10) the war between the Russian Army of General Vrangel' (White Guards) and Makhno movement in Southern Ukraine and Crimea (March-November 1920); 11) the war between the armies of Poland and UPR against Bolsheviks in Ukraine (March-November 1920); 12) the war between peasant rebel bands and the Bolshevik state (1919-1922).

⁷⁷ For the detailed discussion of experiences of Galician Jews in 1914-1915, see Prusin, *Nationalizing a Borderland*, 21-55. The available estimates suggest that the armed forces of the Ukrainian People's Republic and allied rebel bands were responsible for 40% of pogroms and 53.7% of pogrom deaths; the Volunteer Army of the General Denikin allegedly committed 17.2% of pogroms and was responsible for 17% of the fatalities; The corresponding numbers for other forces were the following: rebel bands of chieftain M. Grigoriev--4.2% and 11.2%; Red Army -- 8.2% and 2.3%; Polish army--2.6% and 0.4%; other rebel bands--24.8% and 14.8% (Vetter, *Antisemiten und Bolschewiki*, 55. More on the pogroms: Abramson, *A Prayer for the Government*, 109-140. Budnitskii, *Rossiiskie evrei*, 275-352; Lidiia Miliakova and Irina Ziuzina, eds., *Kniga pogromov. Pogromy na Ukraine, v Belorussii, i evropeiskoi chasti Rossii v period Grazhdanskoï voïny 1918-1922gg. Sbornik dokumentov* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2007).

⁷⁸ Verstiuk, *Makhnovshchyna*; Viktor Danilov and Teodor Shanin, eds., *Nestor Makhno. Krest'ianskoe dvizhenie na Ukraine. 1918-1921: Dokumenty i materialy* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2006); Volodymyr Horak, "Hryhoriïvs'kyï povstans'kyï rukh (serpen' 1918—serpen' 1919): pytannia istoriohrafii," *Ukrains'kyï istorychnyi zhurnal*, No.2 (2013): 154-177.

accompanied by the spontaneous strengthening of the national identity and the revival of the Cossack and peasant rebel traditions of earlier centuries, with their characteristic charismatic warlordism, anarchistic rural anti-urbanism, territorial parochialism, and violent xenophobia that frequently translated into anti-Jewish pogroms.⁷⁹ The Free Cossacks --as this movement became known--initially appeared in the Zvenyhorodka district (today in the Cherkasy region) in spring 1917 and rapidly spread to adjacent territories. By the end of the year the enlisted Cossacks--some of them former soldiers of the Russian Imperial Army--may have numbered tens of thousands in the Kyiv region alone, although their combat effectiveness left much to be desired. In 1918-1920 participants of these highly volatile and ideologically amorphous bands became an important component of the armed forces of the short-lived Ukrainian People's Republic and--in step with the latter's military defeats and progressive disintegration--also of peasant insurgencies which posed a significant challenge to any government that attempted to rule over the land between 1918 and 1921--be it German and Austro-Hungarian occupation forces, the Hetmanate of Pavlo Skoropads'kyi, the Bolsheviks, the Ukrainian People's Republic itself or the White armies of General Anton Denikin.⁸⁰

The factors driving specific rebellions--including the anti-Bolshevik uprisings of 1919-1921 in the Kyiv region--may have varied, but the common denominator appears to have been a general rejection of the state's authority and the associated onerous duties-- compulsory army service, grain procurements, military requisitions, the imposition of alien cultural values and, frequently, ethnic factors.⁸¹ Thus in April 1919, in response to the Bolshevik policies of war communism,

⁷⁹ Felix Schnell, *Räeume des Schreckens: Gewalt und Gruppenmilitanz in der Ukraine 1905-1933* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2012); Christopher Gilley, "The Ukrainian anti-Bolshevik Risings of Spring and Summer 1919: Intellectual History in a Space of Violence," *Revolutionary Russia* 27, No.2 (2014): 109-131; one group that perpetrated pogroms in the Vinnytsia region was the unit under the command of Ananii Volynets': Roman Koval' and Kost' Zaval'niuk, *Trahediia otamana Volyntsia* (Kyiv: Diokor, 2002), 34.

⁸⁰ On the history of the Free Cossack movement: Volodymyr Lobodaiev, *Revoliutsiina stykhiia: Vil'nokozats'kyi rukh v Ukraïni 1917-1918rr.* (Kyiv: Tempora, 2010); on the Free Cossacks in the Kyiv region: Volodymyr Shcherbatiuk, "Selians'kyi povstans'kyi rukh na Kyïvshchyni 1917-1923. Suchasna istoriografiiia problemy," *Ukraïns'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, No.3 (2010): 186-204; in the Vinnytsia region: Koval' and Zaval'niuk, *Trahediia otamana Volyntsia*, 16-18. One of the prominent organizers of the movement was Iuriï (Iurko) Tiutiunyk. On Tiutiunyk and his activities during this time period: Gilley, "Iurko Tiutiunyk." See also memoirs by participants of the movement: Ivan Liutyi-Liutenko, *Vohon' z Kholodnoho Iaru. Spohady* (Detroit: Hamtramck Printing, 1986); Iuriï Horlis-Horlis'kyi, *Kholodnyi Iar: sphady osavula 1-ho kurenia polku haidamakiv Kholodnoho Iaru* (Vinnytsia: "Derzhavna kartografichna fabryka," 2011).

⁸¹ For scholarly accounts of peasant rebellions in different parts of the former Russian Empire: Graziosi, *Bol'sheviki i krest'iane*; Eric C. Landis, *Bandits and Partisans: the Antonov movement in the Russian Civil War* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008); Ivan Dubynets', "Horyt' Medvyn," in *Medvyns'ke povstannia. Spohady*, eds. Roman Koval' and Pïtro Hohulia, 18-53 (Kyiv and Kam'ianets'-Podil's'kyi: Istorychnyi klub "Kholodnyi Iar," 2014), 27.

some 900 Cossacks and peasant rebels from Medvyn and Isaïky in the Bohuslav district proclaimed the so-called Medvyn Republic, captured the town of Bohuslav and disbanded the local commune, killing and taking prisoner some 50 Red Army soldiers and 40 members of the Jewish self-defence force.⁸²

More anti-Soviet rebellions broke out in the Kyiv region in the summer of 1920 in response to the military mobilization for the ongoing campaign against Kolchak forces in Siberia, grain requisitions, and repressive measures against former adherents of the Ukrainian People's Republic. The insurgency was particularly strong in the vicinity of Medvyn, Tarashcha, Bohuslav and Lysianka and in the area adjacent to the Kholodnyĭ Iar forest, further to the south, in what today is Cherkasy region. In August 1920, several hundred peasants in the ever troublesome Medvyn arrested local Bolshevik government officials and announced the start of an anti-Soviet insurrection. The poorly armed rebels with no coordination with other communities retained control of the town for more than a month, until forced to retreat to the nearby forests by two regiments of the Red Army--where smaller bands would continue to operate under the leadership of Dmytro Tsvitkovs'kyi at least until spring 1921.⁸³ The sacking of the town and the massacre of close to eighty insurgents by the Bolshevik forces in October 1920 not only became a powerful source of local anti-Soviet lore, but was also politically instrumentalized by OUN activists already during the German occupation.⁸⁴

Importantly, the defeat of the insurgency and stabilization of the Bolshevik state from 1921 on did not completely divest the region of its character. The recognition of this fact by the Bolsheviks themselves during the 1920s was implicit, on the one hand, in broad amnesties for political opponents, the policy of Ukrainianization, and persistent efforts to integrate the population of the region politically via the system of education and opportunities of upward social mobility. On the other hand, the forging of a consolidated political community was advanced through control of the public sphere, enforcement of peculiar historico-political visions, disenfranchisement and deportations of certain population categories, as well as periodic campaigns of repression, culminating in the mass operations of 1937-1938.⁸⁵

⁸² Roman Koval', "Misto sad na richtsi Khorobrii," in Koval' and Hohulia, *Medvyns'ke povstannia*, 12.

⁸³ Shcherbatiuk, "Selians'kyi povstans'kyi rukh," 195.

⁸⁴ Ivan Dubynets', *Horyt' Medvyn*, 26-43; Volodymyr Shcherbatiuk, "Medvyns'ke antybil'shovysts'ke povstannia 1920r.," <http://www.lysyanka.narod.ru/newpubl/5PDF.pdf>, last accessed 20 May 2015).

⁸⁵ On censorship in the USSR: Blium, *Za kulisami "Ministerstva pravdy"*; Idem, *Sovetskaia tsenzura*; Gorjaeva, *Politicheskaia tsenzura*.

Along with the famine born out of excessive grain requisitions in 1931-1932, the diverse repressive measures not only resulted in the permanent removal of many opponents of Soviet power, but also precipitated a significant demographic decline of specific communities—whether through increased mortality and decreased birth rates, forced displacement or migration to the cities. More specifically, the population of the Kyiv region as a whole (including today's Cherkasy region) declined from 4,748,000 people to 3,787,000 between 1926 and 1937 (20%). By 1939 the population of the region was only 3,560,000 people.⁸⁶ The decline was even more precipitous given that in 1932 the population of the region was 5,164,000 people.⁸⁷ Not surprisingly particularly affected were small towns and predominantly Ukrainian-speaking rural areas, which bore the brunt of the famine and mass operations of 1937-1938. Thus the district center Bohuslav between 1926 and 1939 experienced the net loss of more than 3,000 people--or 28% of the total (the population declined from 12,111 to 8,735 people).⁸⁸ During the same period Tarashcha went from 10,710 to 8,783 people (a decrease of 18%),⁸⁹ while the population of the

In July 1941 the leader of the *kraï* organization of the OUN-B in Galicia and Volhynia Ivan Klymiv (Lehenda) referred to the peculiarities of the Soviet nationality and commemorative politics in Central Ukraine in the following fashion: "As far human material is concerned, Eastern Ukrainian lands today look like Galicia in 1914-1918: teachers, local administration, transport, cooperation, and nationally conscious Ukrainian element. Ukrainian was the obligatory language of instructions only in the upper grades. The study of [Taras Shevchenko's] "Kobzar" and Ukrainian literature was also obligatory. So was the history of Ukraine. In that history Petliura was an enemy of the Soviet people, because he wanted the independent Ukrainian state. Or: national-fascists that began their diversionary activities in the USSR were headed by the notorious butcher of Kyiv workers Konovalets', leader of the OUN. [National] consciousness exists, as does the yearning for the independent state." (Dziuban, *Ukraïns'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 214).

On disenfranchisement: Golfo Alexopoulos, *Stalin's Outcasts: Aliens, Citizens and the Soviet State, 1926-1936* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2003).

In Central Ukraine, mass operations, in addition to categories targeted throughout the USSR, also engulfed former "Petliurites" and "political bandits." On mass operations: Oleksandr Loshyts'kyi, "'Laboratoriia'. Novi dokumenty i svidchennia pro masovi represii 1937-38 rokiv na Vinnychyni," *Z arkhiviv VUChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.1-2 (1998): 183-227; Junge and Binner, *Kak terror stal bol'shim*; Aleksandr Vatlin, *Terror raionnogo masshtaba*; Khaustov and Samuelsson, *Stalin, NKVD i represii*; Bohunov, *Ukraïna v dobu "Velykoho terroru"*; Serhii Kokin and Marc Junge, eds., *Velykyi terror v Ukraïni: "Kurkul's'ka operatsiia" 1937-1938rr.: u 2-kh chastynakh* (Kyiv: Vydavnychi dim "Kyyevo-Mohylians'ka akademiia, 2010).

⁸⁶http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/ussr_nac_39_ra.php?reg=215, last accessed 25 May 2015

⁸⁷ Sergei Maksudov, *Geografiia poter' ot goloda 1932-1934 godov na Ukraine*,

<http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2013/0563/analit010.php>, last accessed 23 December 2015).

⁸⁸ The data for the year 1926 come from *Vsesoiuznaia perepis' naseleniia 1926 goda. Tom 12. Ukrainskaia Sotsialisticheskaia Sovetskaia Respublika* (Moskva 1929), 6; for the year 1939: "Natsional'nyi sostav naseleniia raionov, gorodov i krupnykh sel soiuznykh respublik

SSSR," http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/ussr_nac_39_ra.php?reg=221, last accessed 25 May 2015.

⁸⁹ *Vsesoiuznaia perepis'*, 6; http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/ussr_nac_39_ra.php?reg=262, last accessed 28 May 2015.

rebellious Medvyn—in 1926 a town of 9,980 people-- was reduced to a mere 7,094 residents by 1939 (29%).⁹⁰

These developments notwithstanding, even in 1941 many communities in the region still contained dozens of veterans of the army of the Ukrainian People's Republic, former participants of anti-Soviet insurgencies, dekulakized peasants, national intelligentsia, priests and their family members.⁹¹ It was these people who would serve as a pool of potential recruits both for the German occupation authorities looking for cadres to staff collaborationist structures and for OUN activists from Galicia.

The Network

At the present juncture the chronology of the organizational activities of the OUN-B in the Kyiv region is not completely clear. Organizational sources indicate that members of northern and central advance groups arrived in the Kyiv region from Zhytomyr almost simultaneously with the Wehrmacht, in mid-July 1941 at the latest.⁹² Initially, they established a temporary base in the town Vasyl'kiv, some 40 kilometers south of Kyiv, from where they launched their organizational activities in the surrounding countryside. On 17 July a member of the OUN-B with the alias "Mik" (Iaroslav Starukh) informed the central leadership about organizational activities in the Makariv district, the generally favourable disposition of the German military authorities, and preparations for the march towards Kyiv.⁹³ Three days later Starukh was in the

⁹⁰ Ivan Dubynets', "Horyt' Medvyn," 19. The census data from 1939: http://demoscope.ru/weekly/spp/ussr_nac_39_ra.php?reg=221, last accessed 25 May 2015. In 1926 the population of Medvyn was 9,980 people (Vsesoyuznaia perepis', 477).

⁹¹ See, the explanatory note (*suprovidnyĭ lyst*) to the letter of an unknown OUN-B member, 26 September 1941 (Serhiichuk, *Ukrains'kyi zdvyh*, t.5, 32-35); the defendant Iosyp Netudykhata arrested in March 1944 was a participant of the anti-Soviet uprising in the village Savarka in spring 1918: protocol of interrogation of Iosyp Netudykhata, 14 March 1944 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.39389, t.2, ark.122); On the NKVD arrests of participants of the 1920 uprising in Medvyn in 1937-1938, see Shcherbatiuk, "Medvyns'ke antybil'shovysts'ke povstannia."

⁹² The district center Makariv fell under the Wehrmacht control on 10 July (one day after units of the 1st tank group captured Zhytomyr), Bila Tserkva--on 16 July; Fastiv--on 22 July, Bohuslav--on 26 July. By mid-September, after heavy fighting, the units of the German army groups "South" and "Center" encircled 5 Soviet armies east of Kyiv, paving the way for the capture of the capital of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic on 19 September.

⁹³ Serhiichuk, *Ukrains'kyi zdvyh*, t.5, 21-22. "Mik" can be identified as Starukh based on the published report of the northern advance group from 29 June 1941, which appeared in the collection coedited by the former member of the Central Leadership of the OUN-B Vasyl' Kuk. In July 1941 Kuk was in charge of the group responsible for

neighbouring Byshiv district where members of his group were busy organizing administrative structures and where, he complained, it was difficult to create a militia due to the fact that most young men had been drafted into the Red Army.⁹⁴ In July and August 1941 outposts of the OUN-B appeared elsewhere in the Zhytomyr and Kyiv regions--in Berdychiv, Fastiv, Makariv, Byshiv, Bila Tserkva, and Tarashcha, to name a few.⁹⁵

By late 1943, according to analytical documents of the People's Commissariat of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR (NKGB), the OUN-B in the Kyiv region had developed a complicated underground network held together by one territorial (*kraï*), four regional, and at least 21 district leadership organizations, which in their turn oversaw the operations of grassroots cells in various villages. Even in 1944 some of these organizations were still unknown to Soviet security operatives, who, however, invested a tremendous amount of resources in surveillance of nationalist organizations and the general population in the formerly occupied territories.⁹⁶

The key role in the creation of structures of the OUN-B in the Bohuslav district belonged to members of the northern advance group, Dmytro Matiïko and Illia Sydorenko. The latter must have arrived in the area sometime in July or August 1941 and immediately started to recruit locals from among old acquaintances to fill posts in the administration and auxiliary police.

Although details about the initial recruitment of specific activists are scarce, it is clear that by September 1941 members of the OUN-B and their sympathisers from among the locals controlled the posts of the mayor (Pavlo Lykhohodin), chairman of the district education board

organizational activities in the Kyiv region and for the eventual proclamation of the restoration of the Ukrainian state in Kyiv: Vasyl' Kuk, "Derzhavotvorcha diial'nist' OUN. Akt vidnovlennia Ukraïns'koï derzhavy 30 chervnia 1941r," in Dziuban, *Ukraïns'ke derzhavotvorennia*, xvi-xvii

⁹⁴ Serhiïchuk, *Ukraïns'kyï zdvyh*, t.5, 27-28.

⁹⁵On the developments in Berdychiv, see the report of the central advance group, 13 August 1941 (Serhiïchuk, *Ukraïns'kyï zdvyh*, t.5, 31-32); also Klymyshyn, *V pokhodi do voli*, t.1, 347-348; on Fastiv, Bila Tserkva, and Tarashcha: Klymyshyn, *V pokhodi do voli*, t.1, 339-342, 368, 371, 373; the information about the organizational activities in Makariv comes from the OUN report dated 22 July 1941, which mentions the arrest of two members of the advance group by the German SD (HDA SBU, f.13, spr.376, t.84, ark.199, <http://avr.org.ua/index.php/viewDoc/3186/>, last accessed 18 May 2015). Leader of the northern advance group Mykola Klymyshyn many years later also mentioned the troubles with the German authorities in Makariv (Klymyshyn, *V pokhodi do voli*, t.1, 365). On the situation in Byshiv: the report by Ia.Starukh from the village Pashkivka (Byshiv district), 20 July 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukraïns'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 228-231). Reports of the OUN-B from the Kyiv region can be found also in Tsarevskaia-Diakina, *Ukraïnskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii*, t.1, 401-403.

⁹⁶ See "The Scheme of the OUN Underground on the Territory of the Kyiv Region" (HDA SBU, f.13, spr.372, t.1, <http://avr.org.ua/getPDFasFile.php/arhupa/hdasbu-13-0-372-1-029.pdf>, last accessed 6 May 2015). See also the report by head of the department of state security in the Kyiv region colonel of state security Bondarenko to deputy People's Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Esipenko, 22 June 1945 (HDA SBU, f.2, op.28 (1956), spr.3, ark.179-186ob).

(Petro Solukha), and auxiliary police in Bohuslav (Mykhaïlo Kryvets') and in Medvyn (Ivan Sarapuka).⁹⁷ Matiïko himself occupied the inconspicuous post of the chairman of the financial department of the district administration, while Sydorenko worked as head of the cadres department as well as editor of the district newspaper "*Vil'na Ukraïna*."

In order to facilitate organizational presence in the structures of the church, in May 1942 Matiïko and his associates created a church council with Illia Sydorenko at the helm. Among the tasks of this body were appointment of priests, re-opening of churches, transfer of the existing parishes from the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church (deemed loyal to the Soviet state) to the Ukrainian Autocephalous church, and oversight over the content of the sermons. This aspect of the organizational activities of the OUN-B would acquire particular importance from late 1941, when the German reprisals and closure of OUN-controlled newspapers prompted nationalist activists to go underground and transfer their propaganda activities to church parishes.⁹⁸

Finally, Matiïko, Sydorenko, Lykhohodin, Solukha, and Granda --who frequently travelled through the countryside as part of their official duties--established a number of grassroots cells of the OUN-B in the villages Medvyn, Isaïky, Savarka, Brane Pole and Iatsiuky--some of them strongholds of the UPR and peasant rebel bands in 1918-1921.⁹⁹

Vertically, the Bohuslav organization of the OUN-B, it appears, reported to the regional leadership structures either in Bila Tserkva (where some newly recruited members swore oaths of allegiance to the OUN and obtained instructions and propaganda materials) or in Myronivka (according to the statement by D.Matiïko on 16 April 1962).¹⁰⁰ In 1942-1943 additional lines of communications included direct ties with the territorial leadership in Kyiv and through the networks of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church, whose hierarchs had entered into a

⁹⁷ This can be concluded on the basis of testimony of Mykola Doroshenko. By the time he returned to Bohuslav from the German captivity in September 1941, the key administrative posts in the district were already under the control of Ukrainian Nationalists. See the protocol of confrontation between M. Doroshenko and P. Martynenko, 31 May 1944 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.39389, t.1, ark.86).

⁹⁸ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 10 March 1944 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.39389, t.1, ark.48); protocol of interrogation of I. Netudykhata, 14 March 1944 (Ibid., t.2, ark.123).

⁹⁹ Protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.21); Protocol of interrogation of P.Martynenko, 17 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.303ob); protocol of interrogation of D. Matiïko, 16 April 1962 (Ibid., t.4, ark.89).

¹⁰⁰ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.22ob); protocol of interrogation of P. Rudnyts'kyi, 7 August 1944 (Ibid., t.2, 66-70); Protocol of interrogation of D. Matiïko, 16 April 1962 (Ibid., t.4, ark.87-87ob).

collaborative relationship with the OUN-B already at the start of the German-Soviet war.¹⁰¹ Many activists also maintained horizontal ties with nationalist networks throughout the Kyiv region, notably in Korsun' (today Korsun'-Shevchenkivs'kyĭ) and Tarashcha¹⁰²

As low ranking functionaries of the German occupation apparatus, individual activists also reported to the corresponding agencies of the Third Reich. As such, their limited authority notwithstanding, they became thoroughly implicated in the latter's criminal operations. This was particularly true of those who served in the auxiliary police. In the Bohuslav district specifically, in addition to the murder of more than 100 Communists and Soviet activists, the Nazis and their local collaborators--not unlike elsewhere in the German occupied Europe-- wiped out the entire remaining Jewish population of the district.¹⁰³ Hundreds of local residents were deported for forced labour in Germany.¹⁰⁴

In practical terms, the activities of the OUN-B in the Bohuslav district, like elsewhere in central Ukraine, were predominantly organizational in nature. The overarching objective was to create an effective underground network and to secure allegiances of the maximum possible number of local Ukrainians through propaganda work in order to facilitate the creation of the Ukrainian state of the future.

Within this context, the control of various posts in the administrative structures and in the auxiliary police was indispensable for managing the composition of various bodies by way of promoting or purging people with particular ideological convictions.¹⁰⁵ *Bürgermeister* Lykhohodin, for example, used his post to place in various positions within the district

¹⁰¹ See Doroshenko's statement during the interrogation on 8 March 1944 about the alleged trips of Sydorenko and Solukha to Kyiv for instructions. He obtained this information from Solukha himself (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.39389, t.1, ark. 22ob). On the support of the Ukrainian state by the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church, see the pastoral letter by archbishop Polikarp in Luts'k, 10 July 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukrains'ke derzhavotvorenna*, 165-166).

¹⁰² Protocols of interrogations of M.Doroshenko, 8 and 10 March 1944 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.39389, t.1, ark.23-24ob, 45ob).

¹⁰³ According to the census of 1939, there were 2,425 Jews in the Bohuslav district or close to 4% of the general population. Of this number, 2,230 (92% of the Jewish population of the district) resided in the town Bohuslav; 125--in Medvyn. In the villages of the district--whose total population stood at 40,415 people--there were only 70 Jews: http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/ussr_nac_39_ra.php?reg=221, last accessed 29 May 2015. The research on the Holocaust in the Bohuslav district has yet to be conducted. Some preliminary findings suggest that most of the local Jews managed to leave the area in 1941 and that the total number of victims in the district was closer to 300 people.

¹⁰⁴ During the interrogation on 8 March 1944 Mykola Doroshenko specifically claimed that Matiĭko, Sydorenko and chief of the auxiliary police in Medvyn Sarapuka supervised the execution of 10 Communists. Altogether in the Bohuslav district the number of executed Communists and Soviet activists exceeded 100. The entire Jewish population of the district was wiped out. (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.39389, t.1, ark.20ob, 23ob).

¹⁰⁵ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.22). For the detailed account of how the purges were conducted: Protocol of interrogation of P. Rudnyts'kyĭ, 7 March 1944 (Ibid., t.2, ark.28-29).

administration veterans of the army of the Ukrainian People's Republic (notably Rudnyts'kyi and Sushkevych).¹⁰⁶ Matiiko, Kryvets' and Kryvosheia accomplished the same task in the auxiliary police.¹⁰⁷ Chairman of the district education board Petro Solukha purged teachers deemed disloyal and installed those that had experienced persecution from the Soviet state or those who were outright sympathetic to the OUN cause. He also subordinated the local theater and established control over its repertoire.¹⁰⁸ Sydorenko and the church council, in their turn, appointed priests from among old adherents of the Ukrainian People's Republic and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church--whom the Ukrainian Nationalists promoted at the expense of those who retained loyalty to the Russian Orthodox church.¹⁰⁹

Individual motivations for joining or getting involved with the OUN-B in all likelihood were diverse, but more uniform than was the case with individuals who collaborated with the Third Reich for reasons other than ideological ones.¹¹⁰ In most of the cases the common denominator appears to have been past political activities and specific experiences of Soviet rule. It has already been noted that many participants of the OUN-B network in the Bohuslav district had in the past been affiliated with the Ukrainian People's Republic and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church. Others, like the church painter Pavlo Martynenko, explicitly cited his own disgruntlement with Soviet agricultural policies and sympathy with the OUN program of privatization of agriculture.¹¹¹

The materials of case file No.39389 suggest that prior personal ties and the existence of a modicum of trust were essential for establishing initial connections. Some activists knew each other for many years; others came into the network via acquaintances that had joined earlier. This peculiarity of recruitment and network building was correctly understood by the NKGB

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., t.1, ark.23

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., t.1, ark.25; also protocol of Interrogation of P.Rudnyts'kyi, 7 March 1944 (Ibid., t.2, ark.30-32).

¹⁰⁸ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.22).

¹⁰⁹ Thus the priests who hailed from the regions of the RSFSR or were not of Ukrainian nationality were not allowed to work in the Bohuslav district: protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 10 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.48).

¹¹⁰ On collaboration: Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*; Boris Kovalev, *Natsistskaia okupatsiia i kollaboratsionizm v Rossii 1941-1944* (Moskva: "Tranzitkniga", 2004); Okorokov, *Antisovetskie voinskie formirovaniia*.

¹¹¹ Protocol of interrogation of P. Martynenko, 17 May 1944 (HDA, f.5, spr.39389, t.1, ark.299).

investigators, who repeatedly enquired during interrogations about the circles of communication of known activists and suspected members of the OUN-B.¹¹²

Very instructive in this regard is the case of Mykola Doroshenko who came into contact with the nationalist underground in October 1941 via Bürgermeister Lykhohodin, whom he had known since 1930. (At the time they both resided in the village Chaiky, where Doroshenko served as a priest and Lykhohodin worked as a teacher). One day, Doroshenko told NKGB investigators on 8 March 1944, an unknown man approached him on the street and invited him to the office of the Bürgermeister. There Doroshenko met two unknown Ukrainian nationalist activists with trident badges on their collars (Matiiko and Sydorenko). After a brief introduction, Lykhohodin suggested that Doroshenko accompany Matiiko and Sydorenko to the village of Medvyn to perform a church service in memory of the executed participants of the Medvyn uprising of 1920.¹¹³ It is not clear whether Doroshenko ever became a formal member of OUN-B.¹¹⁴ His involvement with the organization, however, grew stronger over the course of 1942 and 1943, especially after he was appointed to the post of archdeacon of the Ukrainian Autocephalous church in the Bohuslav district in June 1942.¹¹⁵

Pavlo Martynenko came into the network through Matiiko and Sydorenko.¹¹⁶ (According to Doroshenko, Martynenko knew Matiiko for many years as a fellow resident of the village Isaiky).¹¹⁷

Ihor Durdukivs'kyi came into contact with nationalist activists under different circumstances. A nephew of one of the defendants in the 1929 show trial of the “Union of Liberation of Ukraine,” Durdukivs'kyi encountered nationalist activists in Kyiv already in the fall of 1941.¹¹⁸ But it was

¹¹² See, for example, the inquiry about the communication network of Petro Rudnyts'kyi and Mykola Sushkevych that the investigator Zasluzhennyi made during the interrogation of Doroshenko on 8 March 1944 (ibid., t.1, ark.24ob, 25); also protocol of interrogation of P.Rudnyts'kyi, 7 March 1944 (Ibid., t.2, ark.32ob).

¹¹³ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.19-20).

¹¹⁴ Until 31 May 1944 Doroshenko repeatedly refused to admit to being a member of the OUN, but acknowledged involvement in the activities spearheaded by nationalist activists. See for example, the protocol of interrogation on 24 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.74). Doroshenko's statements were contradicted by P. Martynenko on 17 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.300).

¹¹⁵ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.18ob).

¹¹⁶ Protocol of interrogation of P. Martynenko, 17 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.299).

¹¹⁷ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 10 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.39).

¹¹⁸ Following his release from a POW camp in the fall 1941, Durdukivs'kyi reportedly started to look for work in Kyiv. An acquaintance told him to go to the city administration. It was there that he met people who recognized him as a nephew of Volodymyr Durdukivs'kyi (one of the key defendants in the trial of the “Union of Liberation of

not until his assumption of duties as a priest of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church in the village of Isaïky that his involvement with the organization became meaningful. Like Doroshenko, Durdukivs'kyï in all likelihood was not formally a member of the OUN-B.

Other protagonists of the case came into contact with the network either via acquaintances or by virtue of professional associations. The priest Gol'shteïn, for example, participated in the church service in Medvyn on 14 October 1941 on the order of Matiïko.¹¹⁹ The priest I. Netudykhata was recruited by Martynenko on a recommendation from archdeacon Doroshenko.¹²⁰ The daughter of Pavlo Martynenko, Nina, had met with OUN activists for the first time as a student in Western Ukraine in March 1941 and may have maintained friendship with Anton Granda when back in Bohuslav.¹²¹

In general, activists on the ground conducted recruitment and other organizational activities in a conspiratorial fashion, yet prior to the onset of German reprisals in the late 1941 and early 1942 did not particularly try to hide their political views and affiliations. Thus in addition to the overt display of Ukrainian yellow and blue flags on administrative buildings and portraits of Symon Petliura and Ievhen Konovalets' in the office of the *Bürgermeister*, some functionaries of the local administration and auxiliary police reportedly wore trident badges and, on special occasions, uniforms and decorations of the army of the Ukrainian People's Republic, making their political allegiances fairly transparent.¹²² No less importantly, within the context of a small town the information about organizational activities could hardly be kept within the confines of the small circle of OUN members.

Leaks of important organizational information typically occurred in the process of interaction between members and sympathizers of the OUN-B. Such interactions took place in different

Ukraine" and offered him a job in the city administration. At first, Durdukivs'kyï claimed, he did not accept the offer of an administrative job and chose to work as a bookkeeper at the Kyiv *Gebietskomissariat*. After a short stint there—which he described as filled with humiliating treatment of Ukrainians by German officials—Durdukivs'kyï decided to become a priest in the Bohuslav district (Autobiography of I. Durdukivs'kyï, (Ibid., t.1, ark.177ob).

¹¹⁹ Protocol of interrogation of D. Gol'shteïn, 22 June 1944 (Ibid., t.2, ark.195-196).

¹²⁰ Protocol of interrogation of P. Martynenko, 17 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.302); protocol of interrogation of I. Netudykhata, 14 May 1944 (Ibid., t.2, ark.126).

¹²¹ Protocol of interrogation of N. Martynenko, 15 March 1944 (Ibid., t.2, ark.240-241).

¹²² Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.18-22); protocol of interrogation of I. Durdukivs'kyï, 11 August 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.248).

settings: in the offices of the district administration, at communal events, such as funerals,¹²³ commemorations, and church services, as well as at private residences in the process of informal socializing.¹²⁴ During such meetings activists frequently broke the rules of conspiracy and divulged significant information about their own past, about other OUN activists, and about the nature of their involvement in the OUN-B.¹²⁵

At the same time, the relations between some nationalist activists were far from harmonious: petty rivalries, the quest for material benefits, and struggles for status within local communities were attributes of the everyday life of nationalist activists in the Bohuslav district. Indeed, conflicts and arguments, which periodically erupted between Matiiko, Sydorenko and other members of the district leadership core, allowed lower ranking members and affiliated non-members to gain a glimpse into the organizational structure, which they subsequently related to the NKGB.¹²⁶

OUN-B and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church

In late 1941 and early 1942 the German SD (security service) stepped up its pressure on the structures of the organized nationalist movement throughout Ukraine, prompting many activists to leave their posts in the auxiliary administration and to go underground. The OUN-B network in the Bohuslav district also came under attack.¹²⁷

¹²³ See, for example, the protocol of interrogation of Doroshenko on 10 March 1944 about the funeral of Doctor Levyts'kyi in Bohuslav, which featured speeches by Nationalist activists leading Doroshenko to conclude that Levyts'kyi was a member of the OUN-B (Ibid., t.1, ark.46ob).

¹²⁴ Thus Doroshenko received at his home Matiiko, Sydorenko, Lykhohodin, Solukha, and Martynenko Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 24 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.75 ob-77ob).

¹²⁵ Interrogated on 8 March 1944, Doroshenko recalled, for example, that Solukha informed him of his own membership in the OUN in 1942 (Ibid., t.1, ark.21ob); On 24 May 1944 he told investigators that also Martynenko informed him about his membership in the OUN-B (Ibid., t.1, ark.77ob). On 11 August 1944 lieutenant of state security Zasluzhenyi learned that Velyvchenko told Doroshenko about his membership in the OUN during the conversation in the summer 1942 (Ibid., t.1, ark.129).

¹²⁶ See, for example, the protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.20);

¹²⁷ In late 1941 the German authorities closed the Bohuslav newspaper "*Vil'na Ukraina*," the city theater, and schools. Shortly thereafter they arrested local representatives of OUN-B Matiiko and Sushkevych (the former was soon released while the latter was transferred to Lviv). Simultaneously, Ukrainian flags and portraits of Petliura, Tiutiunyk and Konovalets' were removed from the administrative buildings. Protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 10 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.48).

The onset of German reprisals reportedly had a demoralizing effect on some nationalist activists in Bohuslav. Still, they did not cease their political activities altogether, but took them underground and into different social spheres, most notably into the domain of organized religion. Particularly important in this regard were structures of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church, outlawed by the Soviet authorities in 1929.¹²⁸

The OUN efforts to coopt and expand the influence of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church from the very start took advantage of Nazi policy towards the organized religion in the occupied Soviet territories. In an effort to weaken the Soviet state and sever the historical ties between Ukrainians and Russians, the Nazis chose to support the religious revival in Ukraine, but also took steps to prevent the emergence of a national church. The directives from Berlin constantly drove home the idea that Russian cultural influences were to be limited, including in the religious domain. Consequently, in the territories with mixed populations, the Ukrainians were to be raised over Russians, and church services, whenever possible, were to be conducted in Ukrainian. The practical steps favouring the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church as a means of neutralizing the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church were accompanied by explicit instructions not to allow the politicization of the church. Bishops were to be treated not as representatives of the people, but as officials appointed by the *Ostministerium*.¹²⁹

It is within this larger context that one must locate the creation of the church council in Bohuslav and the illicit efforts of the OUN-B to re-open churches shut down by the Soviet state, affect transfer of Russian Orthodox parishes (subordinate to the patriarch in Moscow) to the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian Autocephalous church, and recruit individual clergymen.¹³⁰

Materials of case file No. 39389 indicate that already in the fall of 1941 and winter of 1942, the district administration opened the Trinity church in Bohuslav. Another church was opened in the village Chaŭky, while in the village Ol'khovets' the existing Russian Orthodox church was

¹²⁸ "Politychni represii proty sviashchennykiv Ukraïns'koï Avtokefal'noï pravoslavnoï tserkvy (1919-1938). Za dokumentamy Haluzevoho derzhavnogo arkhivu Sluzhby Bezpeky Ukraïny," Chastyna I, *Z arkhiviv VUChK-HPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.1-2 (2005); Chastyna II, *Z arkhiviv VUChK-HPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.1-2 (2006).

¹²⁹ Oleksandr Lysenko and Vladyslav Hrynevych, "Polityka hitlerivs'koho i stalins'koho rezhymu shchodo ukraïns'kykh natsional'nykh tserkov," in *Ukraïna i Rosiia v istorychnii retrospektyvi*. Tom 2. Radians'kyi proekt dlia Ukraïny, eds. Vladyslav Hrynevych, Vasyl' Danylenko, Stanislav Kul'chyts'kyi, and Oleksandr Lysenko, 282-306 (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2004), 282-283.

¹³⁰ Protocol of interrogations of M. Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 and 24 May 1944 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.39389, t.1, ark.21ob, 76); protocol of interrogation of P.Martynenko, 17 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.299ob).

transferred to the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church.¹³¹ The perception—shared also by the Nazi occupation authorities and NKGB investigators—was that the Russian Orthodox Church supported the USSR, while the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church was ideologically opposed to the Soviet Union.¹³² Simultaneously, OUN activists furnished priests with nationalist brochures, instructed them to conduct memorial services for prominent figures of the Ukrainian national movement (such as Taras Shevchenko), and otherwise socialized them into the nationalist discourse.¹³³ Members of the underground also gave political speeches in front of believers.¹³⁴

After the start of German reprisals, informational activities in the religious domain acquired even more importance. During his interrogation on 31 May 1944, Doroshenko divulged the content of his conversation with Anton Granda in the office of Solukha in the district administration in spring 1942. At the time Granda allegedly told Doroshenko that the OUN had come under pressure and had to operate clandestinely. Simultaneously, he requested that Doroshenko and other priests carefully conduct nationalist propaganda among believers and especially among young people, noting that the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church was best suited for such activities and that leaders of the Autocephalous Church archbishops Polikarp (Sikors'kyi) and Mstyslav (Skrypnyk) were active in the nationalist movement.¹³⁵

Matiiko and Sydorenko who frequently visited Doroshenko at his residence instructed him on the use of the network of Ukrainian Autocephalous churches, emphasizing the importance of Ukrainianization of the church, elimination of Old Slavonic (Russian Orthodox) parishes, and recruitment of new cadres for the OUN-B for the eventual insurrection.¹³⁶

¹³¹ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.19ob).

¹³² Ibid., ark. 20. In this sense, it was no accident that the arrested priests tried to distance themselves from the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church after the arrest. See Protocol of interrogation of I. Durdukivs'kyi, 19 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.182-183).

¹³³ Protocol of confrontation between I. Durdukivs'kyi and P. Martynenko, 7 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.240). On 31 May 1941 Doroshenko mentioned the event, which featured an ideological speech by the priest Varfolomiï Hamarnyk, in which the latter described the poet Taras Shevchenko as an adherent of independence. After the sermon priests were invited to the village club, where more speeches were made by Nationalist activists, followed by the performance of nationalist songs and the anthem “Ukraine Has not Died Yet” by the church choir under D. Gol'dshtein (Ibid., t.1, ark. 87ob).

¹³⁴ Protocol of interrogation of P. Martynenko, 17 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.299ob).

¹³⁵ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 31 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.89ob).

¹³⁶ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 24 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.77ob).

As a result of these activities, by July 1942 there were 17 parishes of the Ukrainian Autocephalous church in the district, headed by trusted priests.¹³⁷ Moreover, in November 1942 Doroshenko, then archdeacon of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church in the Bohuslav district, allegedly received an order to begin unification of the Russian Orthodox and Ukrainian Autocephalous Church under the aegis of the latter.¹³⁸

The nexus of the OUN-B and local clergy, however, proved unstable and by the summer 1943, when the return of Soviet power seemed imminent, many priests of the Ukrainian Autocephalous church, including protagonists of case file No.39389 had reverted to the Russian Orthodox Church, in this manner signalling their political reliability to the anticipated rulers and provoking the ire of priests who remained loyal to the nationalist cause.¹³⁹

Historical Politics and Legitimacy Contests

The infiltration of administrative structures and local institutions and the recruitment of new members did not exhaust the repertoire of the organizational activities of the OUN-B in the Bohuslav district. In an effort to project influence onto the masses, the OUN-B from the very start implemented a broad array of historico-political measures aimed at the political legitimation of the movement. Whereas Nazi propaganda exploited ethnic cleavages and laid emphasis on Germany's unique role in the history of the region (including the role of the Wehrmacht in the "liberation" of local Ukrainians from the "Judeo-Bolshevik yoke"), Ukrainian Nationalists, not unlike Soviet authorities on the other side of the front, engaged in a systemic effort to document crimes of the enemy—in this case of the Communist regime.¹⁴⁰ In Bohuslav specifically, head of the department of education Solukha mobilized teachers to compile lists of the victims of Soviet repression, executed soldiers of the army of the Ukrainian People's Republic and peasant rebels,

¹³⁷ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 31 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.88).

¹³⁸ Ibid., t.1, ark.90.

¹³⁹ Protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 20 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.72-73).

¹⁴⁰ Such assignment was given to members of advance groups prior to the start of the Soviet-German war (Matla, *Pivdenna pokhidna hrupa*, 13). See also the instructions of the propaganda department of the OUN-B regarding collection of photographic evidence of Soviet crimes, 24 July 1941 (Dziuban, *Ukrains'ke derzhavotvorennia*, 298).

victims of the famines of 1921 and of 1932-1933, as well as dekulakized and deported Ukrainians.¹⁴¹ Such activities were accompanied by the registration of all Soviet activists (some of whom would be shot) and a series of communal events, dedicated to the commemoration of the executed participants of the Medvyn uprising of 1920 and of victims of the famine of 1932-33 in the village Mysaïlivka.

Traumatic aspects of the recent past were also a recurrent feature of political speeches by members of the underground and in sermons of priests of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church. In addition, priests were instructed to hold politicized church services on specific occasions, such as commemoration of the executed rebels in Medvyn in October 1941, the opening of the gymnasium in the village Savarka in December 1941, the birthday of the poet Taras Shevchenko in March 1942, the memorial service for victims of the famine of 1932-1933 in the village Mysaïlivka, and the one year anniversary of the German “liberation” of the Bohuslav district in July 1942.¹⁴²

While the actualization of indigenous memories was local—not unlike OUN commemorations in Galicia and Volhynia-- the practices themselves reflected a broader trend towards political instrumentalization of history in the Axis controlled territories and were hardly a prerogative of Ukrainian nationalist milieus. The Nazi administration, for example, in addition to exploiting historical themes in the press, sponsored the creation of the anti-Soviet “Museum-Archive of the Transitional Period” in Kyiv, which was to furnish evidence of deep historical ties between Germany and Ukraine and foreground the role of Nazi Germany in the “liberation” of Ukrainians from “Judeo-Bolshevik rule.”¹⁴³ In 1941 German authorities publicized the subject of NKVD massacres in Galicia and Volhynia and, in 1943, organized a propaganda campaign around the exhumation of bodies of victims of the NKVD terror in Katyn and Vinnytsia.¹⁴⁴ For their part,

¹⁴¹ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.39389, ark. 22ob).

¹⁴² See the protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 24 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.74-75ob).

¹⁴³ In the spring of 1942 the Nazi administration in Kyiv ordered the creation of the so-called Museum of the Transitional Period, which aimed at de-legitimization of the Soviet state and furnishing evidence of the beneficial influence of Germans on the Ukrainian culture. See the order of the collaborationist Kyiv city administration about the creation of the Museum-Archive of the Transitional Period, 17 April 1942 (Lidiia Iaremenko et al, eds., *Istoriia Natsional'noi akademii nauk Ukraïny (1941-1945): Chastyna I. Dokumenty i materialy* (Kyiv: NAN Ukraïny, Natsional'na biblioteka im. V.I. Vernads'koho, Instytut arkhografii i dzhereloznavstva im. M.S. Hrushevs'koho, 2007), 508. See also *World War II Documents. From Bolshevism to the New Order: Museum-Archive of the Transitional Period in Kiev, 1942* (Woodbridge, CT: Primary Source Microfilm, 2003), 16 reels.

¹⁴⁴ On the Katyn' affair: Vladimir Kozlov, ed., *Katyn'; mart 1940g.-sentiabr' 2000: dokumenty* (Moskva: Ves' mir, 2001); Inessa Iazhborovskaia, Anatolii Iablokov and Valentina Parsadanova, *Katynskii sindrom v sovetsko-*

the Romanian authorities in Odessa created the so-called “Institute of anti-Communist Research and Propaganda.”¹⁴⁵ The corollary of such ideological undertakings was the purposeful and systematic destruction not only of symbols of Soviet rule (e.g., Lenin and Stalin’s monuments), but also of cultural heritage that could serve as an anchor of cultural and political identities.¹⁴⁶

Neither did the historico-political dimension of legitimacy contests in the occupied territories escape the attention of Soviet authorities. Throughout the war, the Soviet leadership received intelligence reports about historico-political activities in the occupied territories by Nazis and different nationalist groups alike.¹⁴⁷ Once the enemy had been routed, an important dimension of the re-establishment of Soviet power in the territories that had experienced Axis rule was dismantling of rival symbolic orders, as well as surveillance and arrests of people involved in their creation.¹⁴⁸

pol'skikh i rossiisko-pol'skikh otnosheniakh (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2001); On Vinnytsia: Ihor Kamenetsky, *The Tragedy of Vinnytsia: Materials of Stalin's Policy of Extermination in Ukraine during the Great Purge, 1936-1938* (Toronto, New York: Ukrainian Historical Association in Cooperation with Bahriany Foundation and Ukrainian Research and Documentation Center, 1989); Mykhaïlo Seleshko, *Vinnytsia: spomyny perekladacha komisiï doslidiv zlochyniv NKVD v 1937-1938* (New York: Novyi shliakh, 1991); Irina Paperno, “Exhuming the Bodies of Soviet Terror,” *Representations*, No.7 (2001): 89-118.

¹⁴⁵ In December 1941 the Romanian authorities in Odessa opened the so-called “Institute of Anti-Communist Research and Propaganda” that served similar objectives. See “On the Odessa Institute of the Anti-Communist Research and Propaganda,” author unknown, 9 May 1944 (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr.875, ark.19-25).

¹⁴⁶ See, for example, the description of the destruction of the Stalin busts in Kyiv in the fall 1941: Fesenko, *Povest' krivikh let*, 72; member of the Southern advance group Mykola Chartoryis'kyi mentioned destruction of Lenin and Stalin monuments in Letychiv in the summer 1941 (today Khmel'nyts'kyi region): Chartoryis'kyi, *Vid Sianu po Krym*, 141-144.

On the destruction of the Dormition Cathedral in Kyiv in the fall 1941 (See Karel Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 247-248; Ievhen Kabanets', “Ruïnatsiia Uspens'koho Soboru Kyievo-Pechers'koï Lavry 3 lystopada 1941r.” *Ukraïns'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, No.5 (2011): 82-97. According to a different version, the Cathedral was destroyed by a Soviet diversionary group. For a critical overview of different versions: Serhii Kot, “Zruïnuvannia Uspens'koho Soboru Kyievo-Pechers'koï Lavry (3 lystopada 1941): versii,” *Ukraïns'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, No.6 (2011): 122-151. On the Nazi destruction of the Russian cultural heritage in Leningrad: Steven , 55-56, *Saving Stalin's Imperial City: Historic Preservation in Leningrad, 1930-1950* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015); on the Nazi looting of museums, libraries, and archives: Natal'ia Kashevarova, *Deiatel'nost' Operativnogo shtaba reïkhsliãtera Rosenberga v okkupirovannoï Evrope v period Vtoroï mirovoï voïny* (Kiev: Natsional'naia biblioteka Ukrainy im.V.I.Vernadskogo, 2006).

¹⁴⁷ See, for example, the letter of the head of the department of propaganda and agitation of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine K. Lytvyn to first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine Nikita Khrushchev, 6 July 1943 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr.449, ark.2-3); a wartime intelligence report mentioned distribution by Nationalist activists in the Kirovohrad region of the memoir by Iurii Horlis-Horlis'kyi, which concerned itself primarily with the anti-Soviet peasant insurgency in the Kholodnyi Iar forest (HDA SBU, f.13, t.372, t.29, ark.309).

¹⁴⁸ Such activities included dismantling of German cemeteries and Ukrainian nationalist burial mounds. The liquidation of German military cemeteries was prescribed by the decree of the State Committee of Defence under the signature of Stalin from 1 April 1942 (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr.134, ark.1-2).

Within this context, it is hardly surprising that members of the NKGB task force who conducted interrogations of suspected members of the OUN-B in Bohuslav showed a persistent interest in the organizers, participants and the content of historico-political activities during the Nazi occupation. Of particular relevance in this regard were commemorations of executed participants of the peasant rebellion in Medvyn on 14 October 1941 and of the victims of the famine of 1932-1933 in the village Mysaīlivka. Such interest was not accidental. Rather it reflected a keen awareness of the questionable legitimacy of the Soviet state in the territories with problematic pasts.

The commemorative event in Medvyn surfaced in the materials of the investigation for the first time in the interrogation of Mykola Doroshenko on 8 March 1944. Lieutenant of state security Zasluzhennyī followed up on the theme during the interrogations of Doroshenko on 10 March, 24 May and 31 May 1944. Additional details could also be found in the protocols of interrogation of other witnesses, notably the priest Dmytro Gol'dshteīn who also participated in the ceremony and was interrogated about the subject on 10 March and 25 May 1944.¹⁴⁹

From Doroshenko's testimonies we learn that he arrived in Medvyn early in the morning of 14 October 1941 in the company of Matiīko and Sydorenko. On the outskirts of the village they were welcomed by chief of the local police Ivan Sarapuka, wearing for the occasion the military uniform of the Ukrainian People's Republic. Sarapuka greeted the arrivals from Bohuslav with the slogan "Glory to Ukraine!", to which they allegedly replied: "Eternal Glory!" "Death to Moscow!"¹⁵⁰ The event itself—convened by the Bohuslav district administration and attended by some 3,000 residents of Medvyn and neighbouring villages-- was reportedly staged near the grave of the executed rebels. The grave was adorned with a national blue and yellow banner and there was a speaker rostrum nearby. The meeting allegedly opened with a speech by Sydorenko, followed by the performance of the anthem "Ukraine Has Not Died Yet." Doroshenko then performed a memorial service to the accompaniment of the singing of the church choir—which, by his own admission, was preceded by ideological instructions from Sydorenko, Matiīko, and Solukha.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ HDA SBU, f.5, spr.39389, t.1, ark.179-180, 185-187.

¹⁵⁰ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.19ob).

¹⁵¹ Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 20 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.74ob).

After the service Matiiko, Sydorenko, and Riaboshapka (school teacher from Medvyn) took the floor and gave political speeches, whose content was rendered by Doroshenko in the following manner: “On the occasion of the 20th [sic] anniversary of the heroic death of fighters of the Petliurite army, we, having liberated ourselves from Bolshevik rule, can today pay them proper homage. The Bolsheviks will not return and the flag raised by the fallen heroes will be taken up by us.”¹⁵² At the end of the meeting 100 policemen from Medvyn and Isaiky, wearing blue and yellow armbands, fired the salute. The celebration then moved to the informal part, complete with a communal banquet and heavy consumption of moonshine.¹⁵³

On 24 May Zasluzhennyi aggressively questioned Doroshenko about the content of the sermon that he delivered in Medvyn—in the process forcing the suspect to admit to anti-Soviet propaganda and imposing the meaning on the event itself:

Why are you trying to mislead the investigation? Instead of revealing the full extent of your criminal deeds, you are now trying to conceal the facts of anti-Soviet nationalist activity that you yourself revealed during the interrogation on 10 March 1944. Quit covering up your criminal nationalist activities with references to theology [...] What was the content of your sermon?”

My sermon”—Doroshenko offered—“was remarkably anti-Soviet with a nationalist content. I described the executed rebels-Petliurites as “people’s fighters,” who “heroically fell in the struggle for the liberation of Ukraine from Bolsheviks and called upon Ukrainians to follow their example and unite in the struggle against the Soviet government for independent Ukraine.”¹⁵⁴

On 31 May Doroshenko—possibly as a result of torture-- accommodated his narrative even more in line with the expectations of the interrogator. He now openly described executed insurgents as “Petliurite bandits.”¹⁵⁵

Similar power plays could be observed around the subject of the commemorations of the victims of the 1932-1933 famine in the village Mysailivka in April 1942 broached during the interrogations on 24 and 31 May 1944:

Zasluzhennyi: What was the character of your sermon?

Doroshenko: It was mostly religious in character.

Zasluzhennyi: Stop it. What was the character of your speech?

Doroshenko: I am sorry. My sermon was anti-Soviet, nationalist in character.

¹⁵² Protocol of interrogation of M. Doroshenko, 8 March 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.20ob).

¹⁵³ Ibid., t.1, ark.20-21; protocol of interrogation of D. Gol’dshtein, 26 May 1944 (Ibid., t.2, ark.186).

¹⁵⁴ Protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 24 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.74ob).

¹⁵⁵ Protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 24 May 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.86ob).

Zasluzhennyi: What was the content of your anti-Soviet nationalist speech?

Doroshenko: My sermon—in addition to elements of church service—contained slanderous statements that the party and Soviet power caused deaths through famine of many people. It ran like this: “People perished in the famine of 1933 solely due to the actions of Soviet power, which deliberately organized the famine in order to destroy the Ukrainian people. Now we got rid of Soviet power and live completely free. Our “liberators” the Germans gave us an opportunity to hold religious services, which was completely impossible under the Bolsheviks. The times when the NKVD arrested and executed the best representatives of the Ukrainian people—who sacrificed their lives in the struggle for ‘liberation of Ukraine from Bolsheviks’—passed.”¹⁵⁶

And on 31 May 1944:

Zasluzhennyi: Tell [us] about your practical anti-Soviet nationalist activity. About activities of other individuals we will talk later.

Doroshenko: In April 1942 I was invited to the village Mysailivka to perform a religious service on the occasion of the “Provody” holiday [Orthodox holiday centered on commemorating the dead relatives—O.M.] I have to say that prior to this event I received no instructions from the district leadership of OUN regarding the content of the sermon. The speech was my initiative. In the sermon I claimed that the famine experienced by the entire Ukrainian people was the policy of the Soviet government and that the Ukrainian people was oppressed by the Russian people. In the process I slandered leaders of the [Communist] party and the [Soviet] government and called for the struggle for independence.¹⁵⁷

The confrontation culminated in Doroshenko’s (likely false) acknowledgement of his membership in the OUN-B, paving the way for his indictment later in the year.¹⁵⁸ Similar processes of reproduction of the meta-narrative of Soviet power could be observed in the interrogations of other defendants and witnesses in the case.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., t.1, ark.75ob.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., t.1, ark.88ob.

¹⁵⁸ Protocol of interrogation of M.Doroshenko, 4 July 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.99-100).

¹⁵⁹ In reproducing the content of Doroshenko’s speech at the cemetery in Mysailivka, the witness Makar Shevchenko noted that Doroshenko laid the blame for the famine “on one of the leaders of the Soviet power” [i.e. Stalin, whose name could not be mentioned—O.M.] (protocol of interrogation of Makar Shevchenko, 19 February 1944 (Ibid., t.1, ark.156ob).

Conslusions

By taking up the case of the OUN underground in the Bohuslav district, this chapter has attempted to elucidate the peculiarities of the Ukrainian nationalist challenge to Soviet rule in Ukraine, characteristics of the organizational work of the OUN-B, and instrumental usages of the past in the context of specific communities. It also brought to the attention of the readers peculiarities of the historico-political contests in the aftermath of the return of Soviet power, as evidenced by one specific set of NKGB interrogations. This chapter also placed developments in Bohuslav into the larger context of state-/nation building/breaking in what today is Ukraine during the Second World War and attempted to untangle both the hard and soft aspects of the struggles for power. The following chapter will examine Soviet surveillance, repression and institutional efforts to counter Ukrainian nationalism on the ideological level, using as a case study the wartime activities of the Administration of State Archives of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR.

Chapter 3

Archives, Surveillance, and the Politics of Historical Knowledge

The struggle against the Ukrainian nationalist movement was but one element of the more comprehensive effort to re-assert sovereignty on the territories that during the war came under the rule of Axis powers. Already on 18 February 1942, with the Red Army mounting its first major counter-offensive of the war, Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR Vsevolod Merkulov issued a directive identifying the tasks of the Soviet punitive organs under the new circumstances. The directive envisioned comprehensive registration (*uchet*) of thirteen different categories of Soviet citizens that had earlier compromised themselves by cooperation with the enemy. Fully in line with the prophylactic and retributive principles of Stalinist "political justice," Merkulov demanded the immediate arrest of all people belonging to nine of these thirteen categories. Among others, these included functionaries of various administrative organs and auxiliary policemen, indigenous (official) personnel of German intelligence, counter-intelligence, and police organs; members of various nationalist and "White guard" organizations; participants of armed anti-partisan units; women who married German soldiers; as well as a whole spectrum of "*posobniki*"—Soviet citizens who had aided the occupiers in various ways—for example, by collecting grain contingents from the peasants or requisitioning winter clothes for the Wehrmacht.¹

Nearly simultaneously regional branches of the Administration of State Archives of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (Upravlenie Gosudarstvennykh arkhivov NKVD SSSR—further UGA NKVD)-- received a set of operational instructions.² "Circular No.1," as this document became known among Soviet archivists at the time, required that all the documentation of the Nazi occupation authorities and of auxiliary administrations discovered in the newly "liberated" territories, as well as materials of Communist organizations and partisan units, be immediately secured and concentrated for the purpose of their subsequent criminal-

¹ HDA SBU, f.16, op.35, spr. 2, ark.104-108ob. The Merkulov directive is very reminiscent of the operational orders of the NKVD from the years of the "Great Terror." Also during the mass operations of 1937-1938, hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens were subject to repression not because of the specific "crimes" they allegedly

² Order No.057 of the NKVD of the USSR (25 February 1942) obligated operational departments of the NKVD to take part in collecting archival documents (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2355, ark.175-175ob).

investigative and scholarly usages.³ Shortly thereafter, special task forces of the NKVD (*operativnye gruppy NKVD*), following in the footsteps of the advancing Red Army units rummaged the country in search of enemy archives.⁴ Upon discovery and concentration, such documents were immediately subject to rigorous analysis by military intelligence officers, NKVD operatives, professional archivists and eventually establishment historians.

Leaving the subject of wartime investigations proper outside the scope of the chapter,⁵ I will attempt to sketch out the contours of wartime state-sponsored information gathering and knowledge production about the Nazi occupation in Ukraine. The chapter is intended as a contribution to a growing body of literature on surveillance, mass repression and the politics of history in the Soviet Union during the 1920s through 1940s.⁶ Simultaneously, the chapter broadens the discussion of the issues broached in the previous chapter--particularly from the perspective of the wartime crisis of legitimacy of the Soviet state in Ukraine, legacies of Axis

³ Circular No.1 “On Locating, Concentration and Securing of Documentary Materials of the Patriotic War of the Soviet People against the Fascist Invaders,” 16 February 1942 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2381, ark.1-2).

⁴ *Operativnye gruppy NKVD* were mobile task forces, consisting of approximately 150 to 200 NKVD officers and support personnel operating in the immediate rear of the Red Army units. Their main task was to lead re-establishment of the territorial units of the NKVD and conduct arrests of the “counter-revolutionary elements” in the “liberated” territories. As of 25 December 1942, the occupied territory was divided into 11 sectors—each to be served by a separate task force of the NKVD (Iampol’skiĭ, *Organy gosudarstvennoĭ bezopasnosti*, t.3, kn. 2, 559-563). For accounts of members of such units, see Volodymyr Lodianoi, “Zhaduiuchy pro mynule, dumaiesh pro sihodennia,” *Z Arkhiviv VChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.1 (2000): 214-218; also Nicola Sinevirsky (Mikhail Mondich), *Smersh* (New York: Henry Holt and Co, 1950), 158-159.

⁵ There is a growing body of literature on the subject, see, for example, Günther Wagenlehner, *Stalins Willkürjustiz gegen die deutschen Kriegsgefangenen* (Bonn: Verlag der Heimkehrer, 1993); Viktor Konasov, *Sudebnoe presledovanie nemetskikh voennoplennykh v SSSR. Vneshnepoliticheskiĭ aspekt problemy* (Moskva: Institut Voennoi istorii / Ministerstva oborony RF, 1998); Aleksandr E. Epifanov, *Stalingradskii plen 1942-1956 gody* (Moskva: Memorial’nyi muzeĭ nemetskikh antifashistov, 1999); Idem, *Otvettvennost’ za voennye prestupleniia, sovershennye na territorii SSSR v gody Velikoĭ Otechestvennoĭ voĭny : 1941-1956 gg. : monografiia* (Volgograd: Volgogradskaiia akademiia MVD, 2005); Andreas Hilger, ed., *Sowjetische Militärtribunale* (Köln: Böhlau, 2001), 2 volumes; Alexander Viktor Prusin, “Fascist Criminals to the Gallows: the Holocaust and Soviet War Crimes Trials, December 1945-February 1946,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 17, N.1 (Spring 2003): 1-30; Tanja Penter, “Collaboration on Trial: New Source Material on Soviet Postwar Trials Against Collaborators,” *Slavic Review* 64, N4 (Winter 2005): 782-790; for memoir accounts by Soviet officials involved in the investigations and state prosecution of war criminals and collaborators, see Iakov Aizenshtat, *Zapiski sekretaria voennogo tribunala* (London: Overseas Publications, 1991); Abdulla Valiev, *Zapiski voennogo prokurora (Velikaia Otechestvennaia voĭna 1941-1945 gg.)* (Kazan’: Izdatel’stvo “Matbugat Iorty,” 2000).

⁶ Leopold Avzeger, *Chernyi kabinet: zapiski taĭnogo tsenzora MGB* (Tel’-Aviv: “Khoken”, 1987); Khorkhordina, *Istoriia otechestva i arkhiy*; Izmozik, *Glaza i ushi rezhima*; Holquist, “Information is the Alpha and Omega of Our Work”; Serhii Bilokin’, *Masovyĭ terror iak zasib derzhavnogo upravlinnia v SRSR (1917-1941rr.)* (Kyiv: Naukove tovarystvo im. Petra Mohyly, 1999); Podkur, *Za povidomlenniamy radians’kykh spetssluzhb*; Shapoval, “The Mechanisms of the Informational Activity”; Semystiaha, “The Role and Place of Secret Collaborators”; Hanna Kapustian, “Informatsiĭni materialy VChK-GPU iak istorychne dzherelo z vyvchennia suspil’no-politychnoho zhyttia ukrains’koho sela 20-kh rr.,” *Z arkhiviv ChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.2 (2001): 465-476; Weiner and Rahi-Tamm, “Getting to Know You.”

rule, Ukrainian nationalist challenge and the resultant problems of state reconstruction, in which Soviet punitive organs played an important role.

The processes of state surveillance documented in this chapter were certainly not unique to the Soviet Union of the Stalin era. Thanks to a number of scholarly works, we now can appreciate surveillance in the Soviet Union as intrinsic to the modern state, dependent in its functioning on continued gathering and comprehensive categorization of information about its subjects.⁷

National censuses, identification systems, police databases, and the like have become over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries staple techniques of modern governance, which the Stalinist regime shared to a lesser or greater degree with its Tsarist and Leninist predecessors, other political regimes of the time period, most notably the Third Reich,⁸ as well as nation states in the 21st century.⁹

This chapter shifts focus from the perspective emphasizing the “modernity” and generic nature of Soviet surveillance to a set of questions about its specific characteristics and its role in the construction of the political community. I will do so by elucidating the activities of the UGA NKVD in 1941-1944, the place of this institution within the system of Soviet information gathering and its relationship with the broader historico-political domain during the Second World War.

Soviet archivists provided vital informational support for the punitive organs of the Soviet state in the process of identifying “war criminals,” “collaborators” and other “enemies of the people”

⁷ Holquist, “Information is the Alpha and Omega of Our Work”; Idem, “Violent Russia, Deadly Marxism: Russia in the Epoch of Violence, 1905-1921,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 4, No.3 (Summer 2003): 627–52; Hirsch, *Empire of Nations*; Juliette Cadiot, *Le laboratoire impérial: Russie-URSS, 1860-1940* (Paris: CNRS Editions, 2007); Alen Blum (Alain Blum) and Martina Mespule (Martine Mespoulet), *Biurokraticheskaia anarkhiia: Statistika i vlast' pri Staline* (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 2008); Shearer, *Policing Stalin's Socialism*.

⁸ By way of comparison, one could point out that exactly at the same time, task forces of the German SS and Staff Rosenberg made systematic use of captured enemy archives both for the purposes of repression and propaganda, of which the Soviet officials were well aware. See V. Riasnoī to N.S. Khrushchev, “On the State of Archives of the Ukrainian SSR and Measures Aimed at Creation of the Documentary base of the History of the Ukraine and of the History of the Patriotic War,” May 1944 (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2409, ark.3-15); Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, *Trophies of War and Empire. The Archival Heritage of Ukraine, World War II, and the International Politics of Restitution* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001), 198-206; Brown, *Biography of No Place*, 209; Stefan Lehr, *Ein fast vergessener “Osteinsatz”: Deutsche Archivare im Generalgouvernement und im Reichskommissariat Ukraine* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 2006); Sophie Coeure, *La mémoire spoliée. Les archives Français, butin de guerre nazi puis soviétique* (Paris: Payot, 2007), 17-58.

⁹ Kirstie Ball and Frank Webster, eds., *The Intensification of Surveillance: Crime, Terrorism and Warfare in the Information Age* (London-Sterling, Virginia: Pluto Press, 2003); Christian Parenti, *The Soft Cage: Surveillance in America. From Slavery to the War on Terror* (New York: Basic Books, 2003); Carl Watner and Wendy McElroy, *National Identification Systems. Essays in Opposition* (Jefferson, North Carolina-London: McFarland and Company, Inc., Publishers, 2004).

by collecting and surveying what equated to tons of captured archival documents. The informational reports, card catalogues, and registers (*spiski-spravochniki*) of different categories of “counter-revolutionary elements,” which professional archivists compiled for NKVD task forces and the operational departments of the regional branches of the NKVD (from 14 April 1943 NKGB) played a crucial role in defining the contours of wartime repression and in selecting specific targets thereof. Although this second aspect of the wartime activities of the UGA NKVD was not as prominent as providing informational logistics to the repressive policies of the Soviet state, it is important to note that professional archivists were also very much involved in the official politics of history.

This involvement was evident in the efforts of the UGA NKVD to publish archival documents, naturally in coordination with departments of propaganda and agitation, as well as by making these documents available to Soviet propagandists and professional historians. The internal documentation of the UGA NKVD leaves no doubt that leading members of the Soviet archival establishment were aware of the historical significance of the ongoing war with Nazi Germany. Many viewed themselves as guardians of the national archival heritage, whose historical mission consisted in the collection and preservation for future historians of all the miniscule traces of the Soviet country’s glorious wartime past.¹⁰ “Because of the order from the NKVD, instructions from the Main Archival Administration, as well as our own circular,”-- wrote head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR lieutenant of state security Shkliarov,-- “no other organ will have as many possibilities for collecting the documents. Collect and use them we must. This is our duty.”¹¹

¹⁰ The historicist ethos of the personnel of the UGA NKVD is strikingly reminiscent of the attitudes and activities of architects, museum curators, and a variety of other cultural workers in the blockaded Leningrad right around the same time, recently documented by the Canadian historian Steve Maddox. The scope of official and semi-official efforts to preserve the cultural heritage of Leningrad during the blockade is particularly striking in light of the scarcity of resources, mass starvation and rampant epidemics that enveloped the city of Lenin in winter 1941-1942: Maddox, *Saving Stalin’s Imperial City*, 44-67. The historian Jochen Hellbeck and the literary scholar Irina Paperno recently detected a similar historicist imperative behind the creation of personal accounts of the Soviet experience. See Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind*; Paperno, *Stories of the Soviet Experience*. Paperno in particular connected this impetus with the tradition inherited from the Russian intelligentsia of the 19th century. Memoir and diary writing, intended for posterity, Paperno argues, reflected the emergence of modern historical consciousness, binding personal lives to larger historical contexts (p.9). On the rise of modern forms of historicity and temporality in the 18th and 19th century Europe: Koselleck, *Futures Past*.

¹¹ TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2355, ark.24-25; also on 29 March 1941 the Council of People’s Commissars (Soviet government) obligated all publishers in the USSR to present a free copy of their publications to the UGA NKVD for the inclusion thereof within the state archival fond (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2356, ark.28).

And collect and use the documents they did. That many archivists became involved in pursuits which were part and parcel of the emergent Soviet mythologies of the “Great Patriotic War” is significant in and of itself.¹² Ultimately, however, the more important contribution of people like Mikhail Shkliarov, his deputy Panteleimon Hudzenko and their subordinates was the creation of the “Archive” of the occupation, which ever since has been utilized not only by the Stalinist propaganda establishment and Soviet historians, but also by many contemporary scholars both in Ukraine and abroad.¹³

It is in dissecting the particular nexus of repressive power and the creation of “productive” historical knowledge inherent in the activities of the UGA NKVD that I propose to seek new venues of inquiry about the Stalinist cultural system, its politics of history, as well as the networks of complicity that the system generated and on which its survival and daily functioning depended.

Archives in the Soviet System of Political Control

The use of archives for the purposes of surveillance and political repression in the USSR was not a novelty in 1942. Already the dreaded ChK (Extraordinary Committee) and its successor organization OGPU (The United Main Political Administration) showed pronounced interest in the archival heritage of various institutions of the *ancien* regime, enemy governments of the Civil War era and non-Bolshevik parties. Coupled with the employment of secret agents and

¹² In this paper I follow the definition of myth proposed by Peter Heehs: “myth” is “a set of propositions, often stated in narrative form, that is accepted uncritically by a culture or speech community and that serves to found or affirm its self-conception” (Peter Heehs, “Myth, History, and Theory,” *History and Theory* 33, No.1 (1994): 3). Specifically on Soviet mythologies of the “Great Patriotic War”: Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*; Weiner, *Making Sense of War*; Vladyslav Hrynevych, “Mit viiny, viina mitiv,” *Krytyka*, No.5 (91) (2005): 2-8.

¹³ Since the grand opening of the Soviet archives in the early 1990s numerous historical studies have appeared in Ukraine and abroad dealing with various aspects of wartime history—such as the Holocaust, OUN and UPA, Soviet partisan movement, and everyday life in the occupied territories, to name a few. Many of these studies drew heavily on the materials previously assembled and protected from extinction by functionaries of the Soviet state. See, for example, Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941-1944: Organisation und Durchführung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens*. (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996); Vietrov, *Ekonomichna ekspansiiia Tretioho Reïkhu*; Il’iushyn, *Volyns’ka trahediia*; Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*; Skorobohatov, *Kharkiv*; Patryliak, *Viis’kova diial’nist’ OUN*; Bruder, “*Den ukrainischen Staat erkämpfen oder sterben!*”

informers and familiar forms of surveillance that the Bolshevik regime shared with other modern states (census, passportization, and perustration of correspondence),¹⁴ monitoring of the contents of archival documents became an indispensable vehicle for identifying potential sources of opposition from the early years of the Bolshevik rule.¹⁵

Throughout the 1920s, however, the Soviet archival establishment, despite the obligation to respond to numerous inquiries from the OGPU, retained a significant degree of autonomy from the punitive organs. It was only in the wake of Stalin's consolidation of power and the accompanying centralization and bureaucratization of the party and state apparatus from 1929 on, that the archives were gradually integrated with the structures of the coercive apparatus. Formally, this process reached completion in April 1938, when the NKVD de jure assumed total control of all archival holdings. By then, providing informational support to the NKVD in the mass operations of the "Great Terror" had effectively become the main task of the Soviet archival organs.¹⁶

The freshly appointed head of the Main Archival Administration, captain of state security Iosif Nikitinskiĭ, articulated the new conception of the role of the archives during a conference with heads of the regional administrations of state archives in April 1939.¹⁷ According to Nikitinskiĭ, the role of archival organs now consisted in "placing in the service of the Socialist state all the archival materials on enemies of the people,-- from provocateurs, secret agents and Gendarmes to Trotskyites and Rightists." In charge of coordinating this work was the so-called "sector of classified collections" (*otdel sekretnykh fondov*), created as a sub-unit of the Main Archival

¹⁴ See, for example, Holquist, "Information is the Alpha and Omega of Our Work"; James Scott, *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship, and the State* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

¹⁵ Particularly suspicious in the eyes of the OGPU officials were the so-called "former people" (i.e. functionaries of the Tsarist state, nobility, clergy, Gendarmes, policemen, servicemen of the "white" armies, etc.), "bourgeois nationalists," as well as members of various socialist parties. See Viktor Chentsov, *Politychni represii v Radians'kii Ukraïni v 20-ti roky* (Kyiv: Instytut Istorii Ukraïny NAN Ukraïny, 2000), 101; Shapoval and Zolotar'ov, *Vsevolod Balyts'kyi*, 83-85.

¹⁶ Khorkhordina, *Istoriia otechestva i arkhivy*, 179, 245; also Hermann Schreyer, *Die Zentralen Archive Russlands und der Sowjetunion von 1917 bis zur Gegenwart* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 2003), 103-104.

¹⁷ Iosif Illarionovich Nikitinskiĭ (1905-1974), before being appointed head of the Main Archival Administration led the commission for control of archival organs that was created on the initiative of Lavrentiĭ Beriia. One of the consequences of the work of this commission was the purge of more than 100 archival workers (Schreyer, *Die Zentralen Archive*, 125); The brief biography of Nikitinskiĭ can be found on the official website of the Russian Archival Agency: www.rusarchives.ru/heads/nikitinskiy.html, last accessed on 5 September 2009.

Administration on the initiative of Nikitinskiĭ. Sectors of classified collections at the time also appeared in each and every state archive.¹⁸

A few months later the ethos and practices of state surveillance were transposed to the territories incorporated into the USSR in the wake of the Red Army's invasion of Poland in September 1939. In a preview of developments in the aftermath of the Nazi occupation, special task forces of the NKVD, which included professional archivists among their members, used the captured archives of the Polish state to target representatives of the government administration, the Polish nobility, members of "bourgeois" parties, and "nationalist elements."¹⁹ In the meantime, personnel of the UGA NKVD in the "old" Soviet territories continued analysis of the documents of the state archives and compilation of the lists of different categories of the "enemies of the people."²⁰ This work never ceased, even when the war started and the troops of the Axis powers overran large tracts of Soviet territory. Thus archivists from Ukraine continued their work in the Soviet interior--in Zlatoust, Balashov, Aktiubinsk, Ural'sk, Ul'ianovsk and Alga-- where the archival documents deemed most important by the NKVD had been relocated in the course of 1941-1942.²¹ For example, just in the first six months of 1942, while in evacuation in Zlatoust, personnel of the Central State Historical Archive processed 28,000 newspapers from the years 1917 to 1929 and entered into the card catalogue data on 23,442 individuals. In combination with data derived from other materials concentrated in the sector of classified collections, the number

¹⁸ Khorkhordina, *Istoriia otechestva i arkhivy*, 179.

¹⁹ On the activities of task forces of the NKVD in Eastern Galicia in 1939, see Il'iushyn and Pshennikov, "Diial'nist' operativno-chekists'kykh hrup"; Nikita Petrov, *Pervyi predsedatel' KGB Ivan Serov*, 23; see also the order by Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR captain of state security Gorlinskiĭ (7 February 1940), obligating chiefs of the UNKVD in the newly incorporated territories to prevent destruction of documents from the Polish archives and intensify their "chekist" usage (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.1918, ark.1).

²⁰ According to Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Ratushnyiĭ, several days after the beginning of the Soviet-German war archival units sent to the operational departments of the NKVD a "large number" of catalogues of "counter-revolutionary elements," which the NKVD used to carry out arrests. See Ratushnyiĭ to Secretary of the TsK KP(b)U D. Korotchenko, October 1942 [no precise date] (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2332, ark.10-17); also People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Savchenko, "On the Work of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR from June 1941 to October 1942," 27 October 1942 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2332, ark.23-30). On mass arrests in the summer of 1941, see People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Sergiienko to First Secretary of the TsK KP(b)U N.S. Khrushchev, 30 June 1941 (Tamara Vrons'ka, ed., *Kyiv u dni natsysts'koï navaly. Za dokumentamy radians'kykh spetssluzhb* (Kyiv-L'viv: Misioner, 2003), 136-137); also the report by chief of the Zhytomyr UNKGB, 27 June 1941 (Iampol'skiĭ, *Organy gosudarstvennoĭ bezopasnosti*, t.2, kn.1: 93-95).

²¹ The selection of documents slated for evacuation was governed by the order of the NKVD of the USSR No. 0401 "Ob okhrane gosudarstvennykh arkhivov v voennoe vremia," 30 August 1941 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2355, ark.73). According to the official data, from 19 regions of the Ukrainian SSR, the NKVD evacuated 60 train cars of archival documents, encompassing 6500 fonds or 1.5 million case files. See Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Ratushnyiĭ to Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine D. Korotchenko, October 1942 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2332, ark.12).

of “counter-revolutionary elements” registered during the six-month period just by this archival unit reached 39,697 people.²² Given that a large number of individuals from the target groups (“white guards,” “gendarmes,” “kulaks,” “Trotskyites,” “Petliurites”) had already been liquidated in the mass operations of 1937-1938, the scope and ambitiousness of the continued official efforts to achieve the legibility of the Soviet society become very obvious.²³

Task Forces of the NKVD

Teams of archivists started to appear in the “liberated” cities and towns of the Donbas and the Kharkiv region even before the issuance of “Circular No.1.” A small but indispensable part of the NKVD task forces, the archivists were among the first to enter and search for abandoned documents on the premises of the SD, Gendarmerie, and organs of civilian administration, both German and local auxiliary. Already on 12 February 1942 deputy head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR eHudzenko reported from Voroshilovhrad (today Luhans’k) about the efforts of the group under his command to restart the work of the archives in the Voroshilovhrad region, as well as to put together teams of archivists to be dispatched in short order to the Stalino (today Donets’k), Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovs’k, Poltava and Sumy regions, where they were to conduct the concentration and processing of the collected documents of the German occupation authorities and auxiliary administrations.²⁴ The German counter-offensive at Kharkiv in May 1942 temporarily thwarted these plans, but as the frontlines started to move westwards for the second time in the aftermath of the Battle of Stalingrad, the pattern of incorporating archivists into the task forces of the NKVD evident in late 1941 and early 1942 would repeat itself time and again. The only tangible difference this time was that as the Red Army approached the Soviet Union’s

²² HDA SBU, f.16, op.1, spr.3, ark.243-252.

²³ See, for example, Head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR Shkliarov, “Plans of Work of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR, Central and Regional Archives of the NKVD-UNKVD during the Year 1942” (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, d.2340, ark.1-6).

²⁴ Deputy Head of UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR Hudzenko to Head of the UGA NKVD of the USSR Nikitinskiĭ, 12 February, 1942 (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2355, ark.17); For a celebratory account of Hudzenko’s wartime activities, see Viktor Danylenko and Sviatoslav Iusov, “Arkivist, arkheograf, istoryk: Panteleimon Hudzenko: diial’nist’ u 1941-1945rr. u konteksti roboty arkhivnykh orhaniv URSR,” *Arkhivy Ukraïny*, Nos.5-6 (2008): 128-151.

western frontiers, the archivists were also urged to dedicate particular attention to locating documents of various nationalist organizations, specifically those of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.²⁵ In 1944 and 1945, this work would continue also beyond the Soviet borders—in Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Germany.²⁶

Throughout the war the central and republican offices of the UGA NKVD closely monitored the activities of the teams in the field and supplied them with detailed instructions on how to organize the search for documents and utilize the assistance of the local population.²⁷ In their turn, Hudzenko and his subordinates regularly dispatched to the UGA NKVD reports about their work, particularly in the “operational-chekist” domain. These reports form a very important body of sources on the everyday work of Soviet archivists in the rear areas of the Red Army and their relationship with the punitive organs.

Particularly revealing in this regard is the document composed on 7 March 1943 by head of the sector of classified collections of the state archives of the Stalino region, Ermakov. Attached to the Administration of the NKVD (*UNKVD*) in the Stalino region earlier in the year, Ermakov’s team supervised the re-establishment of state archives and collection of documents of the occupation authorities in the entire region. They delivered arguably their biggest coup in late February 1943. While searching the building of the German office of labour (*Arbeitsamt*) in Slav’ians’k, the archivists discovered a partially preserved card catalogue containing records for 70,000 (!) residents of the city. According to Ermakov, this find made possible identification of all of the city’s policemen, Gendarmes, attorneys, interpreters, volunteers for service in the German army and other “counter-revolutionary elements.” The trip to the editorial office of the

²⁵ “Instructions ‘On the Organization of Work of the Organs of the UGA NKVD-UNKVD of the Ukrainian SSR in the Liberated Districts,’” 26 April 1943 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr. 2420, ark.1-3). It is noteworthy that activists of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists had orders to destroy the documentation of the German occupation authorities prior to the arrival of the Soviet forces (e.g. Order No.4, 11 November 1943, scanned document, courtesy of Andrii Usach).

²⁶ Richard J.Kneeley and Edward Kasinec, “The Slovanska Knihovna in Prague and its RZIA Collection,” *Slavic Review* 51, No.1 (Spring 1992): 122-130; Grimsted, *Trophies of war and Empire*, 278-388; Idem, “Twice Plundered or ‘Twice Saved’? Identifying Russia’s ‘Trophy’ Archives and the Loot of the Reichsicherheitshauptamt,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 15, no.2 (2001): 191-244.

²⁷ For example, in November 1943, following the conference in Moscow with heads of archival departments, the UGA NKVD suggested that in order to retrieve surviving archival documents, task forces conduct excavations of the burned and destroyed buildings of the state archives (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2526, ark.11). In another instruction, the UGA NKVD urged its personnel to resort to the assistance of the general population (by way of appeals to turn in archival materials) only after the bulk of the materials had already been collected. They were also not supposed to mention the NKVD in such appeals. Rather the population was to be led to believe the documents were being collected by archival organs strictly for future historical research. See “Instructions,” 26 April 1943 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr. 2420, ark.1-3).

newspaper “*Donskaia gazeta*” turned out to be equally “fruitful.” Analysis of the newspapers confiscated there produced the names of a large number of authors of “anti-Soviet” publications.²⁸

The head of the department of classified collections of the Central State Archive of the October Revolution, Boris Shain, led the working group of the UGA NKVD responsible for processing captured documents that had been concentrated in Starobel’sk in April-May 1943. His tasks were thus somewhat different from those of his colleague Ermakov. The four-man team was to systematize the collected documents, to select materials for the publications on the Nazi occupation regime, and, most importantly, to prepare catalogues of “counter-revolutionary elements” to be delivered to the operational departments of the NKVD. The tasks were strictly regimented, with each member of the group responsible for specific “political colourings” (“*politokraska*”) earlier proposed by the UGA NKVD in consultation with the command cadres of the Soviet punitive organs.²⁹ Shain himself was to prepare the lists of the personnel of the Starobel’sk city police and interpreters working at the German offices. His subordinates created registers of people who voluntarily left for work in Germany and, separately, those who were deported, as well as employees of district and city administrations, the office of land affairs (*zemupravlenie*), as well as Soviet POWs who worked in the occupied territory.³⁰

²⁸ Ermakov to head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR Hudzenko, 7.3.1943 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr. 2444, ark.1-3). Analysis of newspapers produced compromising data on all sorts of people, not just authors of “anti-Soviet” publications. See, for example, the text of the registration card on Ievdokiia (Dusia) Kobzar, created by the staff of the UGA NKVD: “Born in the village Nikol’skoe, Belgorod district. 17 years old [in 1942]. [She] helped wounded German soldiers and sheltered them from the Red Army. [She] informed a unit of the German army about the location of the wounded. [She] worked as a nurse at a German hospital. [She] corresponded with the relatives of the German soldier that she “saved.” They invited her to Germany. [Source] newspaper ‘Nova Ukraina,’ No.170, 2.8.1942, p.3.” (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2494, ark.28).

²⁹ Some proposed lists of “political colourings” are available. For example, on 4 March 1944, Panteleimon Hudzenko, who had already been promoted to the post of head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR, sent to the regional branches of state archives one such list containing 26 different “colourings.” Beside the expected categories of employees of German punitive organs, “provocateurs” and denouncers, indigenous personnel of German civil administrations, town mayors and village elders, interpreters, volunteers of the German army, members of the Ukrainian “nationalist” organizations “Prosvita,” members of OUN and UPA, “*Volksdeutsche*” etc, there were also not so usual categories, such as people who voluntarily left for work in Germany, Communists and *Komsomol* members who remained on the occupied territory, POWS (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2564, ark.4-4ob). Obviously, functionaries of punitive organs regarded people belonging to the latter categories as potential targets of repression, albeit individuals within these groups, unlike others, were not arrested on the basis of their “political colourings” alone.

³⁰ TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2524, ark.15. See also Shain’s reports from Kalach (Voronezh region), dated 30 March 1943 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2526, ark.3-5) and 2 April 1943 (Ibid, ark.6-8). In some places emissaries of the UGA NKVD did not dispose of their own cadres. Therefore they would rely on assistance of the NKVD operatives. See the report by head of the department of state archives in the Ternopil’ region Goriachkin, 6 February 1944 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr. 2573, ark.4-4ob).

No less importantly, Shain prepared for the NKVD an information sheet about the relatives of individuals who had been repressed by Soviet punitive organs before the war.³¹ The existence of such informational reports is highly significant. It suggests quite unambiguously that Soviet archivists were more than just a blind tool in the hands of the punitive organs. To use Vladlen Izmozik's apt phrase, they were indeed its "eyes and ears." By taking initiative in the creation of the new categories of suspects and informing the security apparatus of the potential (heretofore unknown) target groups, they likely contributed to the elaboration of "political colourings" and thus influenced the direction of wartime repression-- even if the decision whether actually to repress members of these groups was a priori not theirs.³² In this context, one wonders, for example, if such informational sheets from the UGA NKVD were not the original reason why Soviet punitive organs subjected to filtration all members of certain professional groups (for example, janitors and building custodians).³³

Visions and Realities

The ambition of official efforts in the domain of information gathering cannot be doubted. One should not, however, exaggerate the ability of the UGA NKVD to realize its visions of societal legibility and historical preservationism. In addition to the proverbial inefficiency of the Soviet

³¹ TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2524, ark.15.

³² An order by head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR Hudzenko (May 1944) identified preparation of such informational sheets for the purpose of "orienting" punitive organs as one of the main tasks of the archival organs (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2564, ark.2). *Orientirovki* also issued from within the apparatus of the NKVD/NKGB/Smersh. See, for example: Aleksandr Bezverkhnii and Vasilii Khristoforov, eds., *Smersh: Istoricheskie ocherki i arkhivnye dokumenty* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Glavarkhiva Moskvy: OAO "Moskovskie uchebniki i kartolitografiia", 2003), 150-151; Nikol's'kyi, *Represyvnna diial'nist'*, 62. The informational brochures prepared by the UGA NKVD were also used for "chekist lectures"—i.e. in training future NKVD/NKGB operatives. For example, in November 1942 head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR Shkliarov informed chief of the III Department of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR captain of state security Medvedev about preparation of 4 informational bulletins on various Ukrainian "nationalist" organizations, --intended for "internal use" (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2357, ark.8-9).

³³ Tamara Vrons'ka, "Femida voiennoi doby i tsyvil'ne naseleattia," *Storinky voiennoi istorii Ukraïny. Zbirnyk naukovykh statei*. Vypusk 3 (1999): 111-112; Valentyna Shaïkan, *Kolaboratsionizm na terytorii Reikhskomisariatu "Ukraïna" i viis'kovoï zony v roky Drugoi Svitovoï viïny* (Kryvyi Rih: Mineral, 2006), 379.

bureaucracy and intra-institutional conflicts familiar to students of the Soviet government, the enlightenment ethos of scientism and rationality, embraced by the leadership of the UGA NKVD consistently clashed with the established cultural patterns and economic realities of the wartime era.³⁴

Throughout 1942 and 1943, Panteleimon Hudzenko regularly informed his superiors about the difficulties that his teams had encountered in the search for German documents. Besides the objective conditions and situational factors hampering their work, such as bad weather, impassable roads, inadequate means of transportation, lack of the Red Army progress in many sectors of the front, and destruction of archives by retreating German forces, the deputy head of Ukraine's archival establishment also mentioned obstruction to the work of the UGA NKVD from within the Soviet apparatus. We learn, for example, that NKVD investigators or officers of military counter-intelligence³⁵ frequently confiscated the most important documents.³⁶ But rather than forwarding these documents after their usage to the UGA NKVD, not infrequently officers simply disposed of them.³⁷ Such lack of appreciation for the historical significance of the archival materials became a source of tension between NKVD operatives on the ground and professional archivists. Hudzenko, in particular, repeatedly submitted requests to the operational departments of the regional branches of the administrations of state security and to the military

³⁴ The dissonance between the utopian visions and the reality can be said to be the paradigmatic feature of the Soviet project in general. See Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain*; Nicolas Werth, *L'île aux cannibales: 1933, une déportation-abandon en Sibérie* (Paris: Perrin, 2006); Lynne Viola, *The Unknown Gulag: the Lost World of Stalin's Special Settlements* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

³⁵ Special departments (*osobyie otdely*) of the NKVD (from April 1943 *Smersh*) performed counter-intelligence and investigative functions within the military. See "Decree of the Political bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks 'On the Work of Special Departments of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,'" 11 January 1939 (Vladimir Khaustov, Vladimir Naumov, and N. Plotnikova, eds., *Lubianka, Stalin i NKVD-NKGB-GUKR "SMERSH" 1939-mart 1946* (Moskva: "Mezhdunarodnyi fond 'Demokratiya'", 2006), 16-18). On the history of the special departments: Oleh Bozhko, "Osoblyvi viddily v systemi orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky (1918-1946)," *Z arkhiviv VUCHK-GPU-NKVD-KGB* No.2 (2001): 281-315; Bezverkhnii and Khristoforov, *Smersh*.

³⁶ Operational departments of the NKVD (from April 1943 NKGB) encompassed intelligence (I Department), counter-intelligence (II Department), secret-political (III Department), terror and diversions in the occupied territories (IV department); the administration of special departments (V Department). See Nikita Petrov and Vladimir Kokurin, eds., *Lubianka : organy VChK-OGPU-NKVD-NKGB-MGB-MVD-KGB, 1917-1991: spravochnik* (Moskva: Mezhdunarodnyi fond "Demokratiia," 2003), 272-277.

³⁷ On the confiscation and partial destruction of documents by by the officials of state security, see, for example, the report by a representative of the rival institution--deputy head of the administration of People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs in the Dnipropetrovsk region major of state security Leletkin, "On the Activities of Archival Organs on the Territory of the Dnepropetrovsk Region," 15 November 1943 (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2468, ark.14-21).

intelligence to transfer documents of the occupation authorities to the UGA NKVD after their usage.³⁸

Eventually, pressure also came to be applied from within the apparatus of the Commissariat of Internal Affairs. Thus on 4 August 1942 there appeared an order issued jointly by deputy head of the NKVD of the USSR, Kruglov and head of the UGA NKVD, Nikitinskiĭ. The order described the collection and preservation of materials of the wartime era, particularly those about Nazi atrocities, as a “matter of state importance” and stressed the inadequacy of Ukraine’s intelligence agencies’ earlier efforts in this domain. To correct the situation, People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR, S.Savchenko, was advised immediately to organize the gathering and concentration in the state archives of all documents from the occupation authorities, materials about partisans, as well as all printed matter that appeared in the region during the war.³⁹ These measures notwithstanding, tensions seem to have persisted, because on 25 April 1943 the issue was taken up at the highest level once again. This time the transfer of documents from military counter-intelligence to the UGA NKVD was demanded by People’s Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR V. Sergienko.⁴⁰

There were problems within the apparatus of the UGA NKVD itself. It appears that in some places, for reasons unknown, archival workers simply neglected their assignments. Thus in Kherson, captured by the Red Army on 13 March 1944, the gathering of documents of the occupation period did not commence until 22 May, when the state archive published in the local press the appeal to the population to deliver available archival materials. By then a significant portion of documents reportedly had already been “spontaneously destroyed.”⁴¹

The intra-institutional correspondence of the UGA NKVD contains a large number of complaints about the “irresponsible actions” of some archivists that resulted in the destruction of “valuable documents.” For example, according to Leonid Kondakov, head of the working group of the UGA NKVD in the evacuation in Shadrinsk (Urals region), one of his subordinates, Akimova, disposed of important files from the state archives of the Kaluga region—these reportedly were

³⁸ TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2355, ark.21-21ob. See, for example, Hudzenko to chief of the V Department (administration of special departments) of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR, captain of state security Ryzhov, 11 April 1942 (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2355, ark.37).

³⁹ TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2381, ark.87-88.

⁴⁰ Ibid., spr.2433, ark.3.

⁴¹ Ibid., spr.2658, ark.1-9.

discovered in the stove along with waste paper.⁴² Writing to his deputy Hudzenko from Zlatoust (Chelyabinsk region) in May 1942, head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR Shkliarov expressed concern about “bad things” (“*nekhorošhye dela*”) taking place in the Balashov group. Shkliarov suspected that members of this unit, on the pretext of recycling “unimportant” documents, also recycled “needed” files. The clean paper obtained in exchange allegedly was used for unauthorized barter with other institutions.⁴³

Problems also existed in the domain of the “operational-checkist” usage of the archives. For example, the head of the working group in Ural’sk, Bassak, was accused of neglecting his assignments. Allegedly, he submitted to the UGA NKVD the first register of potential “spies” (citizens of foreign states living in the USSR) a whole month and a half after receiving the initial order-- after three reminders.⁴⁴ Bassak was not alone. It appears that as late as February 1944 many archival units, while registering tens of thousands of “counter-revolutionary elements,” severely lagged behind in creating catalogues (*spiski-spravochniki*) for the operational departments of the NKVD/NKGB. Thus the Stalino unit reportedly prepared such catalogues for only 23.5% of those registered; the Poltava unit boasted of 22.3%, and the Ukrainian affiliate of the Central Archive of the October Revolution, 11.5%. Other archival units apparently had yet to generate a single catalogue. From the perspective of the UGA NKVD, such a state of affairs was totally unacceptable.⁴⁵

But it was the wantonly utilitarian, and, perhaps, in a few cases, politically motivated destruction of the documents by advancing units of the Red Army that provides the ultimate illustration of the clash between the visions of societal legibility espoused by functionaries of the Soviet state and the haphazard patterns of daily behaviour by the state’s subjects. Rather than securing enemy archives, soldiers, it appears, routinely used their contents as fuel or “cigarette paper.”⁴⁶ The damage was on such a scale, that eventually People’s Commissar of Defence Marshall Vasilevskii, on prompts from the NKVD,⁴⁷ issued an order, which specifically addressed the

⁴² Ibid., spr.2400, ark.20.

⁴³ Ibid., spr.2355, ark.35-36.

⁴⁴ Ibid., spr.2400, ark.14-15.

⁴⁵ Ibid., spr.2564, ark.2.

⁴⁶ On the purposeful destruction of archival documents, see an account by a former officer of Smersh Mikhail Mondich. Mondich claimed to have personally destroyed in spring 1945 some cards from the center for registration of Russian émigrés in Prague, including his own card and those of his acquaintances. See Sinevirsky (Mondich), *Smersh*, 186-187.

⁴⁷ See People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR V.Riasnoī to Commanders of the Voronezh,

problem that, in his view, jeopardized military intelligence, “operational-chekist” work by the punitive organs, as well as preservationist efforts by the staff of the UGA NKVD:

In the course of liberation by units of the Red Army of cities, towns and villages, the command cadres at times do not organize the immediate gathering and protection of documentary materials left behind by the enemy. There are numerous cases, wherein important materials revealing the operational plans of the German military command, their treacherous objectives and actions towards the civilian population and [Soviet] POWs, their criminal erasure of the cities, get destroyed by our own troops. [...] Particularly important are the documents of Gestapo, Kommandaturen, SS, police, Gendarmerie, propaganda units, district and village administrations, editorial offices of newspapers etc. These documents are extremely valuable for learning the history of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people against the German-fascist invaders. But there are instances of individual Red Army soldiers using them as a wrapping and smoking paper, or as a fuel.

I order:

- 1) To categorically prohibit the personnel of the Red Army units to destroy any archival documents[...]
- 2) to forbid the Red Army units to take quarters in the buildings of the state archives.
- 3) The commanders of garrisons should immediately organize gathering [...] and protection of collected documents.
- 4) documents carrying operational value are to be handed to the military staffs[...] [All other documents] are to be handed to the state archives via the NKVD.
- 5) The contents of this order are to be made known to all officers.⁴⁸

Yet, for all the challenges, contradictions, and ultimate utopianism of official visions, one also should not lose track of what functionaries of the Soviet state *were* able to accomplish under the difficult circumstances. Just over two years after the appearance of “Circular No.1” and Hudzenko’s teams’ first forays into the “liberated” territories, the then People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Vasiliĭ Riasnoĭ, in a report to the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine N. Khrushchev, spoke about 100,000 files of the occupation authorities, 25,000 letters by “*Ostarbeiter*,” and more than 10,000 German newspapers collected by Soviet archivists in a mere sixteen months between January 1943 and May 1944.⁴⁹ Another report by V.Riasnoĭ, from 21 August 1944, directed to his superiors in Moscow, makes obvious the scope of the “operational-chekist” usage of this documentation. We learn, for example, that in the first six months of 1944 alone, the personnel

Southwestern, Southern and Steppe Fronts, 13 August 1943 (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2413, ark.1-1ob.)

⁴⁸ Vasilevskii’s order appeared on 12 December 1943 (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2408, ark.69-70). Earlier in the year, on 8 September 1943, a similar order was issued by the Command of the Voronezh front (Ibid., spr.2413, ark.6-6ob).

⁴⁹ Ibid., spr.2409, ark.7.

of the UGA NKVD in the “liberated” regions of Ukraine registered 108,478 “counter-revolutionary elements,” while 48,723 individuals had found their way into the registers that were subsequently sent to the NKVD and NKGB for the purposes of their “operational use.”⁵⁰ It is therefore clear that official efforts to intensify the preparation of catalogues in 1944 bore fruit.

Comprehensive statistics about the total number of “enemies” registered by archival organs in all years in all regions of the USSR may not exist. It is clear, however, that those numbers would significantly add to the 108,478 total reported by V.Riasnoī. For example, just in the “liberated” territories of Ukraine between 1 February and 1 November 1943, personnel of the UGA NKVD reportedly identified 20,531 “counter-revolutionary elements.”⁵¹ Nor did the activities stop in August 1944, as many more archival documents would subsequently fall into the hands of the punitive organs in the course of the Red Army’s offensives. To place the above-mentioned numbers in perspective, roughly 320,000 people were arrested on charges of “collaboration” in the entire USSR in all years.⁵² The corresponding number of arrests for Ukraine between 1943 and 1957 was reportedly 93,600.⁵³ Even assuming that many of those registered by the archivists escaped prosecution, and that many of those arrested fell into the hands of the punitive organs by way of denunciations from ordinary citizens, the data supplied by Soviet partisans and underground fighters, secret informers and agents of the punitive organs, or materials of previous investigations, the significance of the UGA NKVD in the process of repression is still quite apparent.

Operational Usages of the Archives

So how did the punitive organs make use of the information supplied by the UGA NKVD? The evidence is fragmentary, yet some conclusions can be drawn. It appears that a particularly important role in the daily functioning of the machinery of repression in the USSR was

⁵⁰ Ibid., spr.2564, ark.9-10.

⁵¹ Ibid., spr.2424, ark.46-57.

⁵² See Oleg Mozokhin, “Statistika repressivnoī deyatel’nosti organov bezopasnosti SSSR na period s 1921 po 1953g.,” www.fsb.ru/new/mozokhin.html, last accessed on 20 May, 2008; also Penter, “Collaboration on Trial”; Martin Dean, “Where Did All Collaborators Go?” *Slavic Review* 64, No.4 (Winter 2005): 791-798.

⁵³ Nikol’s’kyī, *Represyvnna diial’nist’*, 206-224.

performed by the so-called First Special Department of the NKVD/MVD of the USSR and its regional offshoots. The enigmatic First Special Department, as it was known in the official parlance of the day, was responsible for maintaining the centralized intra-institutional (i.e., common to military counter-intelligence, militia and organs of state security) database (*kartoteka*) of “anti-Soviet elements.” This database, whose creation went back to the early years of Bolshevik rule,⁵⁴ was constantly updated from a variety of sources--e.g., data from secret agents and informers, statements by partisans, materials gathered in the course of previous investigations by different organs,⁵⁵ and even the deciphering inscriptions on the walls of the Nazi run prisons.⁵⁶ It was to the First Special department that personnel of the UGA NKVD dispatched card catalogues, which they created while processing captured documents. And it was to the special departments that operatives of various punitive organs referred to in the process of obligatory (passport) re-registration of the population (*perepropiska*) in the “liberated” regions,⁵⁷ “filtration” of individuals detained by street patrols and in the course of “mass operations” by troops of the NKVD for the protection of rear areas,⁵⁸ as well as during the post-war “repatriations” of Soviet citizens from abroad, particularly Germany.⁵⁹ In addition to the

⁵⁴ Roman Podkur, “Stvorennia merezhi sekretnoho informuvannia VUChK-GPU na pochatku 20-kh rr. XX st.,” *Istoriia Ukrainy: malovidomi imena, podii, fakty (zbirnyk statei)*, Vypusk 14 (2001): 251-268.

⁵⁵ On 4 March 1942, head of an NKVD task force, operating in the vicinity of Kharkiv, captain of state security Leonov issued an order obligating the members of the operative group as well as personnel of the UNKVD to obtain in the process of interrogation detailed information about “traitors.” After the completion of investigation, excerpts from the protocols of interrogations were to be handed to the corresponding operative departments. Simultaneously personal information on individual suspects was to be sent to the I Special department of the NKVD of the USSR for the purpose of entering the information into the centralized database. The operative departments were to create dossiers (*uchetnye dela*) on the individuals surfacing in the materials of investigation, to which all the relevant information could subsequently be added (HDA SBU, f.16, op.35, spr. 2, ark.102-103).

⁵⁶ Epifanov, *Otvettvennost' za voennye prestupleniia*, 74-77; also the report by People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Savchenko, Mach 31, 1943 (HDA SBU, f. 13, spr. 438, ark.2).

⁵⁷ According to Tamara Vrons'ka, in the course of passport re-registration of the population in Ukraine in 1943, the authorities managed to identify 66.500 individuals who during the occupation stood in the German service, as well as 12.800 people, whose closest relatives retreated with the enemy (Vrons'ka, “Femida voiennoi doby,” 112-113). On the history of the Soviet passport system, see Tamara Vrons'ka and Stanislav Kul'chyts'kyi, “Radians'ka pasportna systema,” *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, No.3 (1999): 33-43; no.4 (1999): 3-15; Gijs Kessler, “The Passport System and State Control Over Population Flows in the Soviet Union, 1932-1940,” *Cahiers du monde russe* 42, Nos. 2-3-4 (April-December 2001): 477-504; Nicolas Werth, “The Russian Card: the Propiska,” in Watner and McElroy, *National Identification Systems*, 116-119.

⁵⁸ Detention and subsequent “filtration” of numerous Soviet citizens is mentioned in the operative informational reports (*svodki*) of various units of the NKVD troops for the protection of rear areas. See, for example, the report of the commander of the 18th brigade, dated 2 September 1944 (Peter Potichnyj Collection on Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency, reel 5, frames 42-43).

⁵⁹ The extent of the wartime usage of the database is illustrated by the report of head of the 1st Special Department of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR lieutenant of state security Smirnov to Ukraine's People's Commissar of Internal Affairs S. Savchenko (17 September 1942). According to Smirnov, in the period from 15 August to 15 September, the staff of the special department ran the check on 50,289 individuals and added to the database additional 29,960 cards (HDA SBU, f. 16, op.1, spr.3, ark.254-256). Among the people subject to obligatory “filtration” were all

databases of the special departments, as already mentioned, all the operative departments of the NKVD/NKGB received from the UGA NKVD special catalogues. These could be consulted on the spot.⁶⁰

All of the above leads me to conclude that historian Tanja Penter may be glossing over the complexity of informational work by the punitive organs in suggesting so unequivocally that the bulk of wartime prosecution cases originated under the influence of reports of secret police agents or denunciations from the general population.⁶¹ There is, of course, plenty of evidence about Soviet citizens who willingly supplied information about the identity and location of “collaborators.” There is also no doubt that Soviet punitive organs attached the utmost importance to the recruitment of agents and secret informers and that—particularly in later stages of the war—they used the agents’ networks efficiently against the alleged war criminals in German POW camps, collaborators, and participants of nationalist insurgencies in the Soviet Union’s western borderlands.⁶²

At the same time, one should note that deployment of agents against specific individuals (*agenturnaia razrabotka*) often began only after the individual in question had already in some way “attracted” the attention of punitive organs. Moreover, particularly in the initial months after re-establishment of Soviet power, at least in some parts of Ukraine the use of secret agents by Soviet punitive organs must have been rather limited. Thus captain of state security Golubev, deputy head of the NKVD task force operating in the vicinity of Kharkiv, in a report to People’s Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Sergienko (9 April 1942) pointed out this peculiarity quite unambiguously:

The importance of work with agents has yet to be recognized. The number of agent case files (*agenturnye dela*) runs in single digits (both with us and the regional administration of the NKVD). Secret-political department [of the regional

former Soviet prisoners of war and *Ostarbeiter*, see Polian, *Zhertvy dvukh diktatur*, 24; on the postwar repatriations, Iuriĭ Arzamaskin, *Repatriatsiia sovetskikh i inostrannykh grazhdan v 1944-1953gg.: voenno-politicheskii aspekt* (Moskva: Voennyĭ universitet, 1999).

⁶⁰ See, for example, “Catalogue of Officers and Rank and File Members of the Gestapo, SS, Schutzpolizei, Order Police, Ukrainian Auxiliary Police, *Gendermerie*, Field and Local Commands, as well as Punitive Detachments and Police Battalions, which Operated in Ukraine during the German-Fascist Occupation (1941-1944),” Kiev 1946 (HDA SBU, f.13, spr. 323, t.1, t.2).

⁶¹ See Tanja Penter, “Die locale Gesellschaft im Donbass unter deutscher Okkupation 1941-1943,” in *Kooperation und Verbrechen: Formen der “Kollaboration: im oestlichen Europa 1939-1945*, eds. Christoph Dieckmann, Babette Quinkert, and Tatjana Tönsmeier, 183-223 (Göttingen: Walstein Verlag, 2003), 189.

⁶² See, for example, Sinevirsky, *Smersh*, 108; Burds, “Agentura”; Epifanov, *Stalingradskii plen*, 120-122; Viedienieiev and Bystrukhin, *Dvobii bez kompromisiv*.

administration of the NKVD] made no effort to dispatch agents behind the frontline into Khar'kov. And to date no one has conducted the recruitment of appropriate agent cadres. I am doing everything in my power to improve work with agents.⁶³

The “abysmal” state of “work with agents” in the secret political department of the administration of the NKVD in the Kharkiv region was also the subject of a special report by head of the NKVD task force captain of state security Voloshin (24 March 1942). During his stay in Kupians'k Voloshin was particularly dismayed by the failure of officers of the secret-political department to meet regularly with agents. Thus, we learn, between 1 and 15 March 1942 out of forty one scheduled meetings only five actually took place. Officers of one of the units in the same department, Voloshin railed, “did not even know what agents they had in their network and consequently scheduled no meetings whatsoever.” As a result, throughout this period agents of the secret political department of the regional administration of the NKVD supplied a meagre two reports. To make matters worse, according to Voloshin, the personnel of the regional administration of the NKVD put those reports into a drawer and did nothing about them.⁶⁴

It is therefore not surprising that under the circumstances, a lot of arrests were being carried out on the basis of “official data”—i.e., card catalogues in the special sectors, registers supplied by the staff of the UGA NKVD and materials of investigations already under way. Whether the situation in Kharkiv and Kupians'k in spring 1942 was typical of the work of the task forces and territorial units of the NKVD at the time is difficult to determine. In some districts of the Voroshilovhrad region, it appears that data from agents and secret informers indeed accounted for the majority of arrests. In others the situation resembled that in Kharkiv and Kupians'k.⁶⁵ What is clear, however, is that the weaknesses of work with agents were not a major hindrance to

⁶³ HDA SBU, f.16, op.35, spr. 2, ark.35-37.

⁶⁴ Ibid., ark.119-124.

⁶⁵ Kremenskiĭ RO NKVD between March and May 1942 arrested 23 individuals—17 on the basis of data from agents and informers; Novo-Atrakhanskiĭ RO NKVD—9 and 2 respectively; Pokrovskiĭ RO NKVD—2 (1), Troitskiĭ RO NKVD—10 (3); Novo-Duvanskiĭ RO NKVD—9 (3); The data derives from the report to the People's Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Sergienko by head of the control inspection of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR captain of state security Matveev, 6 June 1942 (DA SBU, f. 16, op.1, spr.3, ark.140-151). Starobel'skiĭ RO NKVD between January and June 1942 arrested 59 people—4 on the basis of data from agents and informers; Belokurakinskiĭ RO NKVD—44 (24); Voroshilovskiĭ RO NKVD—68 (44); Aleksandrovskiĭ RO NKVD—8 (4); Evsugskiĭ RO NKVD—18 (10); Novo-Pskovskiĭ RO NKVD—20 (12); Belo-Lutskiĭ RO NKVD—10 (7). The data come from the report by chief of the Control and Inspection Group of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR captain of state security Matveev to People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Sergienko, 30 June 1942 (HDA SBU, f. 16, op.1, spr.3, ark.160-175).

the conduct of arrests, because agents and informers were never the sole, or, indeed, the main source of information.

UGA NKVD in the System of Soviet Historical Politics

The wartime activities of the UGA NKVD in the realm of historical politics can be adequately appreciated only within the larger context of Soviet state information gathering and knowledge production about the experiences of the population in the territories formerly occupied by Nazi Germany and its allies. In addition to NKVD/NKGB investigations, other types of informational work during the Second World War included party and NKVD/NKGB led verifications of partisan units and underground groups, the creation of the so-called “Extraordinary State Commission for the Investigation of the Atrocities of German Fascists and their Henchmen” (further ChGK—*Chrezvychnaia gosudarstvennaia komissia*) and the “Commission for the Study of the History of the Great Patriotic War.” The tasks of the latter in particular resembled those of the UGA NKVD.

Created in December 1941, the All-Union “Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War” from the very start was subordinated to the Department of Propaganda and Agitation of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks (the so-called *Agitprop*). In fact, it was formally headed by chief of the *Agitprop*, Georgii Aleksandrov. Members of the “Commission” were to create a “docu-

mentary base” and subsequently to write “true” histories of the War.⁶⁶ Unlike the personnel of the UGA NKVD, who collected documents in the vicinity of the front, officials of the Commission operated in the Soviet interior. In addition to collecting documents, they also recorded testimonies by participants of events (e.g., Red Army generals, heroes of the Soviet Union, partisan commanders, party functionaries, and, eventually people who lived under Nazi

⁶⁶ The “Commission” was heir to the tradition of the *Istpart*--the institution that once collected documentation on the history of the October Revolution and the Communist Party. On the *Istpart*: Corney, *Telling October*; Ruslan Pyrih, “Arkhivy Komunistychnoi partii Ukrainy: formuvannia, struktura, funktsionuvannia (1918-1991)” in *Narysy istorii arkhivnoi spravy v Ukraini*, eds. Iryna Matiash and Kateryna Klymova, 427-442 (Kyiv: Vydavnychyi dim “KM Akademiia,” 2002), 427-431.

rule).⁶⁷ Thus the characteristically modernist imperative of rendering societal structures legible and free of “enemy elements” from the very start was combined in all of these ventures with a historicist impetus to produce and selectively put into the public space “knowledge” about experiences of chosen groups of Soviet citizens for the purposes of political education. The objective of fostering the politically conscious Soviet person was to be achieved by means of familiarizing the public with the examples of the country’s tragic yet glorious wartime past. Ultimately, both repressive and productive impulses converged around the overarching goal of winning the war and legitimating Communist party rule and Stalin’s leadership in the process.

There was more to all of these tightly interwoven ventures than the partially overlapping tasks and the shared ethos of information gathering and its deployment for the purposes of repression and propaganda. Equally significant were personnel links. For example, the already mentioned Panteleimon Hudzenko and the Ukrainian historian Fedir Shevchenko (in 1943 head of the scholarly publications section of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR) would become members of the Ukrainian branch of the “Commission for the Study of History of the Patriotic War” after the latter began its work in 1944.⁶⁸ The head of the partisan sector of the “Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War,” the historian Ivan Slin’ko, in 1945-46 was in charge of the working group that played an important role in the party-led verification of activities of various partisan units and underground groups. Fragmentary evidence also indicates that, just like archivists, professional historians from the “Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War” cooperated with the NKVD/NKGB. Although it is not clear if forwarding to the organs of state security materials carrying “operational value” was a part of their job description, there is no doubt that some members of the Commission did exactly that.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Samsonov, *Pamiat’ minuvshogo*, 224-225; Bernd Bonwetsch, “Ich habe an einem völlig anderen Krieg teilgenommen”: Die Erinnerung an den “Grossen Vaterländischen Krieg” in der Sowjetunion” in *Krieg und Erinnerung. Fallstudien zum 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, eds. Helmut Berding, Klaus Heller, and Winfried Speitkap, 145-168 (Göttingen: Vandenhöck und Ruprecht, 2000), 145; Rudenko, “Diial’nist’ Komisii z Istorii Vitchyznianoï viiny.”

⁶⁸ On the scholarly career of Fedir Shevchenko (1914-1995) in the postwar era, see Olena Apanovych, *Fedir Pavlovysh Shevchenko: Istoryk, arkhivist, istoriohraf, dzhereloznavets’, arkheograf, orhanizator nauky, liudyna. Spohady ta istoriohrafichnyi analiz* (Kyiv: Instytut Istorii Ukraïny NAN Ukraïny, 2000).

⁶⁹ See Ivan Slin’ko, “Report on the Trip to the City of Sumy and the Sumy Region for the Purpose of Inspecting the Work of the Regional Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War and the Collection of the Materials on the Patriotic War,” 6 March 1946 (TsDAVOVU, f.4620, op.4, spr. 14, ark. 9-10).

Personnel links also existed between the staff of the UGA NKVD and the “Extraordinary State Commission for the Documentation and Investigation of Atrocities of German Fascists and Their Henchmen” (ChGK).⁷⁰ The available documents make it clear that units of the UGA NKVD, along with the operational departments of the NKVD, were involved in documenting Nazi atrocities from very early in the war and did not cease this work even after the ChGK came into existence in November 1942.⁷¹ In fact, one of the most important tasks of the UGA NKVD throughout the war was to “assist” the ChGK in collecting evidence of Nazi crimes.⁷² In all likelihood, the perceived distrust of the information stemming from the NKVD, both within the USSR and abroad, was one of the main reasons why the “Extraordinary State Commission” was created in the first place.⁷³

According to the Russian historian Marina Sorokina, another possible objective behind the creation of this body consisted of representing some Soviet crimes as atrocities of the Nazis. The best known case of falsification of historical record is, of course, the ChGK report about the massacre of Polish officers in the Katyn forest in spring 1940.⁷⁴ The Katyn Affair, however, was not an exception. To date we possess information of at least several more instances of historical falsification by the ChGK: the well documented cases of Vinnytsia and Bykivnia and the relatively unknown massacre of the population of several villages in the Cherek district (Kabardino-Balkaria) carried out in November 1942 by the joint NKVD and Red Army task force under the command of captain Nakin. Subsequently, in summer 1943, on orders from the

⁷⁰ One of the links was the Deputy Head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR Pavliuk.

⁷¹ See, for example, the order by Deputy People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Ratushnyi 27 May 1942 (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2355, ark.201); also the nearly analogous order by deputy head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR Hudzenko, 27 May 1942 (Ibid., spr.2381, ark.34-34ob); also the order by deputy People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Ratushnyi to chiefs of the operational departments of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR, 4 September 1942 (Ibid., spr.2381, ark.78). One example of publications by the UGA NKVD is *Smert’ detoubiitsam. Sbornik dokumentov* (Moskva: Izdatel’stvo TsK VLKSM “Molodaia Gvardiia,” 1942).

⁷² “Instructions ‘On the Organization of Work of Organs of the UGA NKVD-UNKVD of the Ukrainian SSR in the Liberated Districts,” 26 April 1943 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr. 2420, ark.1-3).

⁷³ This vision of the Commission’s tasks was articulated in the first known proposal for its creation, submitted in August 1941 to secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks Shcherbakov by an official in the department of propaganda and agitation Khavinson (Epifanov, *Otvetstvennost’ gitlerovskikh voennykh prestupnikov*, 81-82).

⁷⁴ On this subject: Sorokina, “People and Procedures.” For the role of the “Extraordinary State Commission” in the Katyn Affair, see Kozlov, *Katyn’*, 488-506.

leadership of the Kabardino-Balkar ASSR the local branch of the “Extraordinary State Commission” produced “evidence” blaming the massacre on Germans and local “bandits.”⁷⁵

It is not out of the question that more evidence of developments of this sort will appear in the future, although by no means should it be implied that falsifications by the ChGK were ubiquitous. What was ubiquitous was the covert usage and subsequent publication by the ChGK of the materials on war crimes supplied by NKVD/NKGB officers and the UGA NKVD. Personnel of the UGA NKVD themselves published on atrocities of the Nazis and their “henchmen,” although roughly from mid-1942 the attribution “UGA NKVD” disappeared from the titular pages of such publications.⁷⁶ By informing the public of Nazi crimes, naturally with approval from the department of propaganda and agitation, in a way that emphasized the genocidal extermination of the “Soviet people” (rather than specific population groups, such as Jews or Sinti and Roma),⁷⁷ the UGA NKVD-ChGK tandem performed an important legitimating function for the Stalinist regime.⁷⁸ For if the Nazis were enemies of the “Soviet people” and by extension of all humanity, it was only logical to conclude that the Soviet state, as the enemy of the Third Reich, was the saviour of humanity. Reflecting this conception of the role of the UGA NKVD in the wartime politics of history is the letter that head of the UGA NKVD Shkliarov sent from Zlatoust in May 1942 to his deputy Hudzenko. (Hudzenko at the time was busy organizing

⁷⁵ See K. G. Azamatov, ed., *Cherekskaia tragediia* (Nal’chik: Izdatel’stvo “El’brus,” 1994); On the Vinnytsia case: Paperno, “Exhuming the Bodies of Soviet Terror”; on Bykivnia: Nanci Adler, *Victims of Soviet Terror: The Story of the Memorial Movement* (Westport, Connecticut-London: Praeger, 1993), 88; on the ChGK falsification of the history of destruction of the central part of the city of Kyiv, now known to have been the work of the NKVD, see Grimsted, *Trophies of War and Empire*, 184-188.

⁷⁶ TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, d.2364, ark.9. This situation caused disappointment among the personnel of the UGA NKVD, who felt their work was not being properly recognized. Head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR Shkliarov, for example, after the Department of Propaganda and Agitation decreed removal any mentions of the NKVD from the titular page of several publications, insisted that at least individual authorship be indicated (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2364, ark.1-3).

⁷⁷ The classic example is the disappearance from open publications of mentions of the Jews as victims of the Nazi genocide, despite the awareness by Soviet officials that the Jews as a group were subjected to total extermination. See Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 49-51; Lev Bezymenskii, “Informatsiia po-sovetski,” *Znamia* 1998, No.5, <http://magazines.russ.ru/znamia/1998/5/bezym.html>), last accessed on 14 September 2009; Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 191-236; Karel Berkhoff, “Total Annihilation of the Jewish Population. One should mention, however, that throughout the war, and especially before the publication of Stalin’s article in “Pravda” on 15 January 1942, that referred to Jewish victims as “Soviet citizens,” the Soviet press did publish reports about the Nazi antisemitism and about the massacres of the Jews. Karel Berkhoff convincingly demonstrates that such reports would periodically appear in the Soviet publications even during the later stages of the war (Berkhoff, “Total Annihilation,” 76-78).

⁷⁸ See for example, Panteleimon Hudzenko, ed., *Zvirstva i zlochyny nimets 'ko-fashysts 'kykh zaharbnikiv na Kharkivshchyni* (Kyiv: Ukrderzhvydav, 1944).

According to Danylenko and Iusov, in 1944 alone the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR published about 50 articles on the subject (Danylenko and Iusov, “Archivist, arkhograf, istoryk,” 139).

the collection of German archival materials in the recently “liberated” regions of Eastern Ukraine.)

In two weeks,--Shkliarov wrote,--[our cadres] will finish the brochure titled “Socialist Humanism and Fascist Atrocities.”[...] This brochure will serve as a powerful condemnation of the savage brutalities of fascist vandals and, simultaneously will tell about the great liberating mission of the Red Army and peoples of the USSR.⁷⁹

Although always subsidiary to “operational-chekist” tasks, historico-political pursuits were an important aspect of the wartime activities of professional archivists. Personnel of the UGA NKVD partook in the historical discourse in the USSR in a variety of ways--by publishing documentary collections, individual documents and articles in central, regional and district newspapers; by reading texts of documents on the radio; by delivering lectures, as well as by organizing documentary exhibitions on a wide range of topics.⁸⁰

Naturally, such activities cannot be considered outside the power grid within which archivists operated, since the hierarchical nature of Stalinist politics placed severe restrictions on the agency of individual actors. Joseph Stalin and his inner circle, of course, did not run and control everything, but there is no doubt that they and their ideas exerted a profound impact on the entire political domain, including the politics of history in the USSR and Ukraine. For this reason, the historian Serhy Yekelchuk, perhaps, grants the creative intelligentsia in the Stalinist Ukraine a greater degree of autonomy from the ideological “dictate” of the center than they enjoyed in reality.⁸¹ The center indeed may not have “dictated” the exact contents of the ideological message to the Ukrainian writers, historians, and artists, but that does not mean that they were unaware of the boundaries of the permissible discourse. The personnel of the UGA NKVD were not exception in this regard. Head of the UGA NKVD of the USSR Nikitinskiĭ, for example, explicitly linked the thematics of his subordinates’ prospective publications for the year 1942 to

⁷⁹ Shkliarov to Hudzenko, 2 May 1942 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spt.2364, ark.1-3).

⁸⁰ Ibid., spr. 2420, ark.32.

⁸¹ Serhy Yekelchuk, “Diktat and Dialogue in Stalinist Culture: Staging Patriotic Historical Opera in Soviet Ukraine (1936-1954),” *Slavic Review* 59, no. 3 (Fall 2000): 597-624.

Stalin's famous speech on 7 November 1941, effectively signalling the desired content of the ideological message.⁸²

Where functionaries of the UGA NKVD did enjoy significant autonomy is in the archival domain proper, which they jealously guarded from intrusions by outsiders, particularly in regards to the right to determine the usage of the documents of the German occupation authorities. Illustrating this aspect of departmentalism (*vedomstvennost'*) is a curious collision that occurred in Kup'ians'k (Kharkiv region) in May 1942. On 13 May *Pravda* published an article under the title "Collecting Documents of the Great Patriotic War." Among other things, the article mentioned the exhibition of original German documents in the museum in Kup'ians'k. The article attracted the attention and aroused the ire of the head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR Shkliarov. Invoking orders of the NKVD and instructions of the UGA NKVD of the USSR about the primacy of his own institution in the domain of document preservation and usage, Shkliarov instructed his subordinates immediately to confiscate all the documents from the museum (because of their potential damage to the interests of the Soviet state) and inform the department of propaganda and agitation of the necessity to obtain permission from the UGA NKVD for exhibiting documents of the German occupiers in the future.⁸³

Subsequent developments lend the story a somewhat ironic twist. According to Shkliarov's deputy Hudzenko, when his men arrived in Kup'ians'k, it turned out there were no documents to confiscate. In fact, there was no museum there either. There only existed the plan of the exhibition prepared by one member of the regional department of propaganda and agitation. The article in *Pravda*, Hudzenko wrote, described what, in the opinion of the author, "should have been exhibited, and not what actually was."⁸⁴ The moral of this story is that even agents of historical myth-making in the USSR sometimes could not distinguish between what was real and what was a socialist realist simulacrum.

Like the texts on Nazi atrocities, UGA NKVD's other historiographical pursuits were subjected to the overarching goal of legitimating the Stalinist regime (and Stalin personally) and delegitimizing its political rivals (such as Ukrainian nationalists). Just what kind of notions and

⁸² Head of the UGA NKVD of the USSR major of state security Nikitinskiĭ, "Circular 'On the Tasks of the Scholarly Publications of the Departments of State Archives of the NKVD-UNKVD and State Archives,'" 9 February 1942 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2330, ark.1-3).

⁸³ Shkliarov to Hudzenko, 21 May 1942 (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2355, ark.44-45).

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, ark.67.

political values the audiences should have internalized can be easily deduced from the topics of the historical brochures that Soviet archival organs were supposed to produce during the year 1942 as part of an on-going state propaganda effort.⁸⁵ Examples included “Lenin and Stalin as Leaders and Organizers of Victories of the Red Army,” “The Struggle of Russian and other Slavic Peoples against the German Invaders,” “Atrocities of German Invaders in the Past and during the Current War,” “Partisan War of the Russian People against the Foreign Invaders,” “Ukrainian Nationalists in the Service of German Fascists,” to name a few.⁸⁶ Behind each of these titles there lurks a particular Stalinist ideologem—e.g., “Stalin as Heir to the Leninist tradition,” “friendship of the peoples,” “Ukrainian nationalists as enemies of the Ukrainian people,” and so on.

The brochure “Ukrainian Bourgeois Nationalists as Agents of German Fascism” is rather paradigmatic of the UGA NKVD method of dealing with the past. It all began on 23 February 1942, when Shkliarov ordered his deputy Hudzenko to collect information about the activities of the “Ukrainian nationalists” in the occupied territories (meaning at this time the activists of the Ukrainian Central Rada, the Hetmanate, and the Directory of the Ukrainian People’s Republic, rather than the OUN, as discussed in the previous chapter). “Some of these agents of German fascism,” Shkliarov wrote, “had exhibited their loyalty to German imperialism as early as 1918 and then continued their traitorous work as German spies.” Additionally, Shkliarov provided Hudzenko with a list of Ukrainian politicians of the revolutionary era, including the premier of the Ukrainian People’s Republic Holubovych, on whom he wanted compromising information.⁸⁷ Similar requests for materials documenting the “traitorous” activities of “Ukrainian nationalists” followed in April and May 1942—with a rejoinder that several “important” brochures were now in jeopardy because of the lack of materials.⁸⁸

As part of the effort to accumulate the information on “nationalists,” Hudzenko, in his turn, submitted a query to Deputy People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Ratushnyi. Having informed Ratushnyi of the preparation of the brochure “Ukrainian Nationalists as Agents of German Fascism,” Hudzenko expressed the wish to know if any of the

⁸⁵ On the wartime propaganda in the USSR, see, for example, Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism*; Yekelchik, *Stalin’s Empire of Memory*.

⁸⁶ Nikitinskiĭ, “Circular,” (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2330, ark.1-3).

⁸⁷ Ibid., spr.2363, ark.8-8ob.

⁸⁸ Ibid., spr.2355, ark.30, 47.

“Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists” were active in the occupied territories at the contemporary juncture. (He attached the list of 31 political figures received from Shkliarov.)⁸⁹

I have not found in the archives Ratushnyi’s reply to Hudzenko, but several weeks later, in May 1942, Hudzenko informed Shkliarov about the results of the search and about the decision not to publish a brochure on “Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists,” written earlier in the war by one Rudnev of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR. According to Hudzenko, the decision to abstain from publication was dictated by the appearance of new data about the attitude of “nationalists” towards the war and Nazi occupiers:

There is no doubt that they (bourgeois nationalists) displayed their traitorous essence not only during the first German occupation, but also in the course of preparation of the present occupation [...] At the same time, interestingly enough no “Ukrainian statesmen” known to us are presently in the occupied territory of Ukraine. In Kiev from the first days of occupation there emerged Ogloblin, in Khar’kov—some Kramarenko, in Stalino—one engineer, same in Dnepropetrovsk. But there is nobody from the old cohort of fascist lackeys [...] This, of course, does not mean that the former Petliurites are not provocateurs, traitors, and fascist servants in the occupied territories, but all of these are small fry. The big fish, however, are invisible [...] I have examined the materials in our IV Department--materials, newspapers, etc. But nowhere did I find mention of people ubiquitously present in the brochure by comrade Rudnev and that you have inquired about. Speaking on the radio in Kiev and Lviv are also completely unknown “professors,” “docents,” or “founders of something,” like Arkadii Liubchenko in Kharkiv. He is the “founder of Ukrainian literature,” etc. Now a few words about the list of “statesmen” that you sent me: Golubovich and Liubinskii were in the USSR all the time, and, naturally, they can not engage in any [subversive] activities there. Tkachenko died. Shelukhin is so old, that there is little chance he can be used politically. Khristiuk has been arrested by our organs. Sidorenko, Lutsenko are both dead. Other individuals were mostly abroad spying. One little detail about Vinnichenko. He’s married to a Jew. Hitler “struggles against the world Jewry.” Perhaps, this is why they did not come to terms [...] As you see, to date we have very few materials about the old cohort of “statesmen.”⁹⁰

The objective here is not the discussion of the complicated relationship with the Nazi regime on the part of various strands of the Ukrainian national (nationalist) movement and the Ukrainian intelligentsia. Some of these issues were raised in the previous chapters. Rather the point is about the role of the UGA NKVD in politico-historical myth-making. Hudzenko’s description of Rudnev’s “defective” brochure evokes two different approaches to the politics of history within

⁸⁹Hudzenko to Ratushnyi, 16 April 1942 (Ibid., spr.2363, ark.5-6).

⁹⁰Ibid., spr.2363, ark.7-7ob.

the UGA NKVD. First, some archivists (Rudnev) were not above inventing stories, which, is not a surprise to students of Soviet history. Perhaps a little more surprising is the behavior of Hudzenko who blocked the publication of Rudnev's work due to its factographical "mistakes." The deputy head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR did not doubt for a second that "nationalists" were enemies and that, in fact, they were German agents, but he wanted this narrative to be backed up by archival documents for credibility. To this end, throughout the war various organs of Soviet power, including the UGA NKVD, spent a significant amount of time and effort, searching for archival documents that would expose the cooperation of their political opponents with the Nazis and thus discredit them once and for all. That such documents by definition were chosen selectively did not seem to bother people like Hudzenko and Shkliarov.

Conclusions

The German historian Stefan Plaggenborg recently suggested that we begin to think about Soviet society during the Stalin era as a society of accomplices (*Mitmachgesellschaft*).⁹¹ In my view, however, restoring agency to the historical subjects in this fashion, provocative as it is, requires specification and historical concretization. Otherwise, one runs the risk of obfuscating the persistently recurring problem of moral choices for the historical actors and replacing the problematic dichotomy of "perpetrators" and "victims" with a framework representing almost everyone as a "collaborator" of the system. While it is true that the Stalinist state in its functioning indeed relied on cooperation, willing or coerced, of wide strata of Soviet society, one must not overlook the fact that contributions by different agents were a priori asymmetrical. In this sense the experiences of the personnel of the UGA NKVD are very instructive. Their numerical insignificance notwithstanding, their role both in the domain of state directed repression and in the realm of the politics of history in the USSR during the Second World War was disproportionate to their numbers.⁹² The nexus of state repression and the making of

⁹¹ Stefan Plaggenborg, *Experiment Moderne: der sowjetische Weg* (Frankfurt-New York: Campus Verlag, 2006), 155.

⁹² According to the report by People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Riasnoï (May 1944), the personnel of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR at the time of the report included only 138 people (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2409, ark.3-15).

historical discourses will be explored further in the following chapter, which examines the official investigation and memories of anti-Jewish violence in Kyiv during the Nazi occupation.

Chapter 4

Stalinist Justice as a Site of Memory

On 23 January 1944 some five hundred residents of Kyiv assembled near the corner of Mezhyhirs'ka and Verkhni Val streets in the historical district of Podil witnessed the hanging of three local accomplices of Nazi crimes. The macabre event was deliberately staged on the territory of the same park thoroughfare where in fall 1941 the men now hanging from the gallows led a small crowd of Kyivans that cruelly abused, robbed, and finally buried alive several Jewish residents of Podil, mostly older women who had failed to report to the designated assembly point in the run-up to the notorious Babi Yar massacres.¹

In contrast to numerous, rather well documented instances of local anti-Jewish violence in parts of today's Eastern Poland, Lithuania, Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia, during the initial phase of operation "Barbarossa," evidence about similar developments within the Soviet Union's pre-1939 borders is quite sparse.² In fact, the prosecution case file No.46837 at the Specialized State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine might be the first thoroughly documented case of this kind that is now available to researchers.³

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*Note:

Throughout the essay I have abstained from using real names of defendants, witnesses and investigators and opted for pseudonyms instead. The decision has been dictated by ethical considerations accruing from the nature of the crime and the possibility of false statements made during the NKGB interrogations.

¹ Chief of the NKGB in the Kyiv region lieutenant colonel of state security Bondarenko to People's Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR S. Savchenko, 24 January 1944 (HDA SBU, f.2, op.108, spr.8, ark.164-165). The undated version of the same report was also reproduced in Vrons'ka, *Kyiv u dni natsysts'koï navaly*, 444-445.

² On the pogroms in the Western border regions, see, for example, Ernst Klee, Willi Dressen, and Völker Riess, eds., *"The Good Old Days": the Holocaust as Seen by Its Perpetrators and Bystanders* (New York: Free Press, 1991), 23-27; Andrzej Zbikowski, "Local Anti-Jewish Pogroms"; Jan T. Gross, *Neighbours: the Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Marco Carynnyk, "Zolochiv movchyt'," *Krytyka* 10 (2005), http://www.holocaust.kiev.ua/news/upload_file/file/Carinnik_Zolochiv_movchit.pdf. Kai Struve, "Ritual und Gewalt—Pogrome des Sommers 1941," in *Synchrone Welte: Zeitenräume jüdischer Geschichte*, ed. Dan Diner, 225-250 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2005). Kopstein and Wittenberg, "Deadly Communities"; Himka, "The Lviv Pogrom."

³ The prosecution case file is at HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 46837. Between 1943 and 1953 Soviet military tribunals and other special courts subjected some 320,000 individuals to judicial repression on charges of collaboration. Some 90,000 of these cases originated on the territory of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Oleg Mozokhin, "Statistika repressivnoï dielat'nosti organov bezopasnosti SSSR na period s 1921 po 1953 g.," <http://istmat.info/node/255>, last accessed 24 April 2013; Volodymyr Nikol's'kyi, *Represyivna diial'nist' orhaniv derzhavnoï bezpeky SRSR v Ukraïni (kinets' 1920-kh-1950-ti roky). Istoryko-statystychni doslidzhennia. Monohrafiia* (Donets'k: Vydavnytstvo Donets'koho natsional'noho universytetu, 2003), 206-224.

In choosing to write about this particular case file, which I discovered in the course of dissertation research in fall 2010 while following up on unspecified archival references in publications by other scholars, I have not been driven by an assumption that these materials concern experiences that were “typical.”

There are indeed reasons to believe that violence of this type was quite unusual in the pre-1939 Soviet territories. Certainly Soviet security officials themselves regarded the case as out of the ordinary. This is evident from the existence of at least two special reports about the arrests of suspects, the progress of the investigation and the public execution of the three defendants by the chief of the Administration of the NKGB in the Kyiv region lieutenant colonel of state security, M. Bondarenko, to People’s Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, S. Savchenko, dated 7 and 24 January 1944.⁴ The occurrences in the park also made their way into the text of an earlier special report to Nikita Khrushchev from People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Vasiliĭ Riasnoĭ, which explicitly mentioned the arrest of one of the primary defendants.⁵ Equally suggestive of the high profile of the case is the size of the investigating team, which included at least seven NKGB officers. Finally, unlike the mostly secret trials of collaborators, the proceedings against the pogromists concluded with a public execution.⁶ While

⁴ HDA SBU, f.2, op.108, spr.8, ark.158-160, 164-165.

Chief of the Administration of the NKGB in the Kyiv region Mykhailo Stratonovych Bondarenko was born in 1901 in Putyvl’ (today in the Sumy region). Ukrainian. In the Soviet security apparatus from 1922. Member of the Communist party from 1932. Throughout the 1930s he occupied various junior and medium leadership positions within the republican and central apparatus of state security. On the eve of the war with Nazi Germany Bondarenko served as chief of the Administration of the NKVD in the Odessa region. Prior to his assignment to the post of chief of the Administration of the NKGB in the Kyiv region in November 1943, he served as chief of the NKVD task force in Southern Russia and Eastern Ukraine and then as chief of the Administration of the NKVD in the Stalino (today Donetsk) region. He died in 1977 (Nikita Petrov, ed., *Kto rukovodil organami gosbezopasnosti, 1941-1954. Spravochnik* (Moskva: Zven’ia: Memorial, 2010), 211.

People’s Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Serhiĭ Romanovych Savchenko was born in 1904 in Skadovs’k (now Kherson region). Ukrainian. In the Soviet security apparatus from 1922. Member of the Communist party from 1930. During the 1920-1930s he occupied various posts within the security apparatus of the Ukrainian SSR, including the post of chief of Administration of the NKVD in the Stanislav region (1939). At the start of the war Savchenko served as deputy People’s Commissar of State Security and Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR. From May 1943 until August 1949 he was People’s Commissar (later Minister) of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR. He died in 1966 (Nikita Petrov, ed., *Kto rukovodil NKVD, 1934-1941*, <http://memo.ru/history/nkvd/kto/biogr/gb433.htm>, last accessed 16 February 2013).

⁵ Report of People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR V. Riasnoĭ to First Secretary of the Communist party of Ukraine N. Khrushchev, “On the Detention of a Group of Traitors-Marauders B-ov and others,” 3 December 1943 (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr.524, ark.196-198).

⁶ According to the official statistics, in 1943 Soviet authorities publicly hanged 70 people. In 1944 the number rose to 83 (Oleg Mozokhin, *Statisticheskie svedeniia*. The actual number of public executions was likely much higher, as Soviet partisans and Red Army soldiers frequently carried out unreported extra-judicial executions of German prisoners of war and indigenous collaborators. For the analysis of various aspects of the Soviet politics of

it appears unlikely that the initiative to stage a public execution belonged to the members of the military field court of the 8th Guards' Tank Corps, who tried the case and passed the death sentence, it is hard to say whether the decision originated within the security apparatus itself or whether it was a result of a more complex process of negotiation with the party organs.

This chapter is an attempt to deepen the discussion of themes elaborated in the previous chapters. Utilizing the materials of the investigative case files, it engages two types of distinct, yet closely intertwined historical contexts—that of the events themselves and that of the investigative case files and the narratives imbedded in them.

The chapter argues that the violent event, which lasted through the afternoon of 30 September or 1 October, consisted of a series of discreet episodes and involved a small group of active perpetrators and dozens of transient observers. Some of the latter would occasionally join in the violence or otherwise assist the activist core as they passed by or took a break from their daily chores, thus casting into sharp focus the fluidity of boundaries between “perpetrators” and “bystanders” in Kyiv during the Nazi occupation.

Simultaneously, the materials of the investigation point to the vicissitudes of official efforts at retribution within the context of the partly anonymous urban milieus and illustrate the ambiguities of the official Soviet conceptions of complicity. While the protocols of interrogations of the defendants and witnesses leave little doubt that participating in the pogrom in one way or the other were dozens of Kyivans, only the three most active perpetrators were brought to trial. Thus the case against the pogromists furnishes an important corollary to the very severe categorical repressive measures directed against the more conventional categories of collaborators, such as policemen and indigenous servicemen of the German punitive organs.⁷

Finally, the chapter makes an argument about the importance in the general structure of the investigation of what I call milieus of memory—social settings of the urban neighbourhoods where episodes of the recent dark past were discussed both during Nazi rule and following the re-establishment of Soviet power. These milieus, the chapter argues, proved absolutely

retribution: Epifanov, *Otvetstvennost' gitlerovskikh voennykh prestupnikov*; Idem, *Stalingradskii plen*; Konasov, *Sudebnoe presledovanie nemetskikh voennoplennykh*; Prusin, “Fascist Criminals to the Gallows”; Penter, “Local Collaboration on Trial”; Ilya Bourtman, “Blood for Blood, Death for Death”: The Soviet Military Tribunal in Krasnodar, 1943,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 22, No.2 (2008): 246-265.

⁷ Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 129-190.

indispensable for this case. Moreover, rather than being an unproblematic informational resource for NKGB investigators, the narrative accounts of witnesses and perpetrators when combined with the peculiarities of the official information gathering exerted a profound influence on the choice of suspects, as well as the general direction and outcomes of the investigation.

Antecedents

Advance units of the Red Army entered Kyiv on 6 November 1943, bringing to a close a series of offensive operations that cost the Soviet side an estimated 30,590 casualties.⁸ Nearly completely depopulated through the experiences of the previous years, the capital of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic lay in ruins, the casualty of aerial and artillery bombardment, street fighting, and two waves of scorched earth tactics, employed by retreating Soviet forces in September 1941 and by their adversaries two years later.⁹

As thousands of displaced civilians gradually trickled into the city, military boards scrambled to draft all eligible men into the Red Army while the returning functionaries of the Communist party and the NKVD/NKGB worked tirelessly to re-establish the government apparatus, carry out the registration of the remaining population, organize reconstruction of the city, and secure rear areas of the Red Army by means of removing select categories of wartime collaborators. It was in this context that in December 1943 Soviet security forces arrested a group of men suspected of a series of crimes, including a brutal murder of several Jewish Kyivans in the park near the intersection of Mezhyhirs'ka, Nyzhniĭ Val and Verkhniĭ Val streets during the initial weeks of the German occupation.

⁸ Krivosheev, *Rossiiia i SSSR v voĭnakh XX veka*, 291.

⁹ The experiences of the Soviet military mobilization and evacuation, Nazi genocidal policies, deportations within the framework of the forced labour program, and the eventual expulsion of civilians from the combat zone by the Wehrmacht reduced the population of Kyiv to a mere 30,000 at the time of the Red Army arrival. By 11 November 1943 the population increased to an estimated 80,000. See the report by People's Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR S.Savchenko to People's Commissar of State Security of the USSR V.Merkulov, 12 November 1943 (Vrons'ka, *Kyĭv u dni natsysts'koĭ navaly*, 395-396). In December 1943 the population of Kyiv stood at about 180,000 in comparison with 930,000 in 1940: Mitsel', *Evrei Ukrainy*, 23. For images of the destroyed city: Dmytro Malakov, ed., *Kyĭv: 1941-1943. Fotoal'bom* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo "Kyĭ," 2000), 102-142. See also the appendix in *Kyĭv u dni natsysts'koĭ navaly*. On the Nazi occupation and the Holocaust in Kiev: Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*; Vitaliĭ Nakhmanovich and Tat'iana Evstaŭ'eva, eds., *Babiĭ Iar: chelovek, vlast', istoriia: dokumenty i materialy v 5 knigakh* (Kiev: Vneshtorgizdat Ukrainy, 2004); Il'ia Levitas, ed., *Pamiat' Bab'ego Iara: vospominaniia, dokumenty* (Kiev: Evreiskii Sovet Ukrainy, 2001).

The case against Egor Ushakov, Nikifor Iusov, and Venedikt Bulanov, originated and evolved in a rather haphazard fashion indicative of the mode of operations of the Stalinist security apparatus in the heady days following the re-establishment of Soviet power in Kyiv. From the already mentioned report on the progress of the investigation by chief of the NKGB in the Kyiv region it follows that members of the task force initiated the case in December 1943 under the influence of data obtained through informers' networks.¹⁰ At first sight, the assertion by senior NKGB officer is at odds with an easily verifiable fact that cadres of the crime detection department of the rival NKVD detained one of the soon to be principal defendants (Venedikt Bulanov) already on 20 November 1943-- nearly a full month before members of the NKGB task force began interrogations of the first witnesses in connection with the events of September 1941. In fact, as early as 3 December 1943 People's Commissar of Internal Affairs, Vasiliĭ Riasnoĭ, informed the Republic's party leader Khrushchev about the arrest of a group of "traitors-marauders," in which among other crimes he explicitly connected Bulanov to murders and burials of a group of Jews in the park near the Mezhyhirs'ka-Verkhniĭ Val-Nyzhniĭ Val intersection.¹¹

The contradiction, however, may be more apparent than real and can potentially be explained by inadequate communication between different branches of the Soviet punitive apparatus, which at the time must have still been in the process of reconstitution. Even a cursory examination of the materials of the case file reveals that Venedikt Bulanov was not central to the NKGB investigation. Security service officials interrogated him for the first time only on 28 December 1943—five days after they detained Iusov and seven days after they had started interrogating Ushakov.¹²

The fact that the initial inquiry involved only inhabitants of 11 Mezhyhirs'ka street and centred on crimes allegedly committed by Egor Ushakov (resident of the same apartment building) leads one to conclude that the data received by the NKGB through secret informants' networks concerned Ushakov rather than Iusov or Bulanov. With this information in hand, NKGB operatives, it seems, took the most obvious and likely the most cost efficient route available to

¹⁰ HDA SBU, f.2, op.108, spr.8, ark.158-160.

¹¹ People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR V. Riasnoĭ to Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine N. S. Khrushchev, "On the Detention of Traitors-Marauders (B-v and others)," 3 December 1943 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr. 524, ark.196-198).

¹² Materials of the militia investigation were incorporated into the case only on 26 December 1943, the date when junior lieutenant of state security Balandin copied the protocol of interrogation of Aleksandr Iaroshevich, originally questioned by the militia on 21 November 1943 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 46837, ark.131-132).

them in the largely anonymous urban environment. They started secretly interrogating Ushakov's immediate neighbours.¹³

Milieux de Mémoire

Historians working on questions of memory of the Second World War in the Soviet Union are well familiar with the processes of marginalization of the Holocaust in the Soviet public discourse that set in already during the war and reached its logical conclusion in the post-war years with the suppression of the publication of the "Black Book" of the Jewish Antifascist Committee and the start of the campaign against "cosmopolitanism."¹⁴

The gradual elimination of explicit references to the Holocaust from the public space, did not, however, mean that the experiences of Soviet Jews were not widely discussed in other settings. In her article Tanja Penter made a useful observation about a generally unacknowledged aspect of war crimes trials in the USSR. The historian proposed to view the closed sittings of military tribunals as a surrogate public sphere, in which experiences of the war and occupation, the Holocaust and collaboration, partisan warfare and Nationalist insurgencies could be and were articulated much more openly than in the ideologically inflected public culture of late Stalinism.¹⁵

¹³ The investigating team consisted of at least 7 officers. On 18 December lieutenant of state security Pavlov interrogated Anastasiia Bozhenko and Nadezhda Vitvitskaia, both native Kyivans of working class background. On 20 December Pavlov's colleague junior lieutenant of state security Panov questioned Feodosiia Ivashchenko and Evdokiia Riabova, as well as the 10-year-old Alekseĭ Emel'ianenko (in the presence of the boy's mother). In the days following Ushakov's arrest the team of investigators would also interrogate his son Nikolaĭ and the 19-year-old Vladimir Latynin, another resident of 11 Mezhyhirs'ka. The interrogations of A.Emel'ianenko and V. Latynin were a direct consequence of the testimony by F. Ivashchenko who had identified them as witnesses of the burial of Jews in the park (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.46837, ark.23-42).

¹⁴ Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*; Redlich, *War, Holocaust, and Stalinism*; Bezymenskii, "Informatsiia po-sovetski"; Weiner, *Making Sense of War*; Gennadii Kostyrchenko, *Tainaia politika Stalina: vlast' i antisemitizm* (Moskva: "Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia," 2001); Il'ia Al'tman, "Memorializatsiia Holokosta v Rossii: istoriia, sovremennost', perspektivy" in *Pamiat' o voĭne 60 let spustia: Rossiia, Germaniia, Evropa*, ed. Mikhail Gabowitsch, 509-530 (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2005), 515-517; D. Nadzhafov and Z. Belousova, eds., *Stalin i Kosmopolitizm. Dokumenty Agitpropa TsK KPSS 1945-1953* (Moskva: Mezhdunarodnyĭ fond "Demokratii": 2005); Rubinstein and Al'tman, *The Unknown Black Book*; Berkhoff, "Total Annihilation of the Jewish Population."

¹⁵ See Penter, "Local Collaborators on Trial."

The materials of case file No. 46837 suggest that Penter's argument can and should be pushed even further. Personal reminiscences about the war and the Holocaust, I would argue, were relayed not only in closed official settings, such as the NKGB interrogations, questioning by officials of the Extraordinary State Commission or in military tribunals. Rather than being suppressed, memories of past violence, it appears, formed an integral part of the local social fabric both during the Nazi occupation and in its aftermath. In contrast to crimes of the Stalinist regime that naturally were discussed much more freely during the Nazi occupation, memories of the Holocaust, it would seem, were repeatedly surfaced in different everyday situations both under the Nazi rule and in its aftermath. Such communicative settings included but were not limited to family conversations, the neighbourly culture of gossip, denunciatory practices, and drunken binges in the context of traditional male sociability.

During the occupation these *milieus de mémoire*, to use Pierre Nora's famous phrase, had served as an important cultural backdrop to the terror regime of the Nazis, boosting the capacity of the German police authorities to conduct effective surveillance and identification of Jews and Communist functionaries. By the same token, stories and rumours, which freely circulated within urban neighbourhoods during the occupation and in its immediate aftermath, significantly facilitated subsequent retribution by the Soviet punitive organs. At no point was this more obvious than during the NKGB interrogations of residents of 11 Mezhyhirs'ka Street between 18 and 21 December 1943. In light of the fact that nearly all witnesses in case No. 46837 were able to relay to investigators all sorts of damning rumours about Egor Ushakov, it seems logical to conclude that NKGB informers, referenced by lieutenant colonel Bondarenko, picked up the information that prompted the original query from conversations they overheard in the residential area.¹⁶

Given the central role this particular neighbourhood played in the development of the case against the pogromists, it is indeed remarkable how few residents of 11 Mezhyhirs'ka actually witnessed or professed to witness Ushakov's crimes personally. What many communicated to investigators instead was hearsay and reported speech by the defendant (i.e., renditions of what

¹⁶ The subject of the recruitment and deployment of agents/informers is discussed in the following works: Podkur, "Informatsiino-analitychna robota"; Idem, *Za povidomlenniamy radians'kykh spetssluzhb*; Shapoval, "The Mechanisms of the Informational Activity"; Semystiaha, "The Role and Place of Secret Collaborators"; Lomagin, *Leningrad v blokade*, 89-107.

might be called “collective memory”).¹⁷ Such nuances may not have been of practical significance to NKGB operatives intent on catching war criminals. They do, however, reveal a lot about the sociology of memory of past violence and even more about its political usages in the post-occupation period.

Asked directly on 18 December 1943 if she knew anything about Ushakov’s crimes during the occupation, Anastasiia Bozhenko readily referred to the alleged betrayal in the fall 1941 of the Jewish military doctor named Mikhail Ermak. Ermak, also a resident of 11 Mezhyhirs’ka Street, was a wounded prisoner of war, whom the German military had put into one of Kyiv’s hospitals. In Bozhenko’s narrative, after Ushakov had learned of Ermak’s whereabouts, he denounced the Jewish man to the German police. Shortly thereafter Ermak was given a lethal injection.¹⁸ The most curious part of this story is that Bozhenko met Ushakov only in 1942 and heard about Ermak *post factum* from another neighbour. Bozhenko’s secondhand account had close parallel in the testimonies of other witnesses, notably Evdokiia Riabova and Feodosiia Ivashchenko, suggesting that the episode was widely discussed in the neighbourhood.

For her part, in addition to the story about Ushakov’s role in Ermak’s demise,¹⁹ Ivashchenko revealed that her husband [in the Red Army at the time of the interrogation-O.M.] witnessed how Ushakov [she did not mention anybody else] assaulted two older Jewish women and a 17 year old girl, pushed them into the air defence trench in the park and then buried them alive. As a result of conversations with her husband, Ivashchenko not only was able to furnish the NKGB with data implicating Ushakov but also could show the location of the grave(s). She also directed the NKGB to Alekseĭ Emel’ianenko and Vladimir Latynin, both of whom witnessed the events in the park.

¹⁷ Many years ago the renowned French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs argued that human memories - and by extension any form of knowledge - are always “collective.” In contrast to its later usages, the original Halbwachsian concept of “collective memory” did not suggest the existence of some monolithic body of memories common to all the members of any given group. Nor did Halbwachs claim -- contrary to what some critics wrote about his work -- that social collectives such as the “nation,” rather than individuals do the actual remembering. What Halbwachs wanted to get across through this concept was essentially that personal conceptualizations of lived experience and subsequent recall are always mediated by the social milieu to which any given individual belongs (Maurice Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory* (New York: Harper and Row, 1980)).

¹⁸ HDA SBU, f.5, spr.46837, ark.23.

¹⁹ According to Ivashchenko, the wounded Ermak wrote a letter to residents of the apartment building, in which he asked them for some food. The witness claimed that the neighbours (she described them with a characteristic term “all ours” (“vse nashi”)) collected whatever food they could and took it to the hospital. Allegedly, Ermak’s whereabouts became known to Ushakov who worked at the same hospital as a carpenter. Shortly thereafter, in front of Ivashchenko and several other women he reportedly threatened to betray Ermak—the “Jew.” (Ibid., ark.30).

It might seem paradoxical in the context, but one of the main reasons why so many residents of 11 Mezhyhirs'ka Street were able to implicate Ushakov in various crimes and wrongdoings was his own bragging. Ivashchenko recalled how during the occupation Ushakov, who was not shy about openly expressing his anti-Soviet views, also used to boast in front of other neighbours that he personally buried alive three Jewish women, that he “organically hated all Jews” and that he would “happily exterminate their entire nation.” He also reportedly threatened to turn in the “Jew” Ermak to the German police: “They” [Jews] -- Ushakov exclaimed -- “drank the blood of my daughter. Now let others drink theirs.” (Ushakov’s daughter Aleksandra was arrested by the NKVD in 1939 on charges of speculation and illegal trading in alcohol.)²⁰ Several days after Ermak’s death, Ushakov allegedly informed neighbours that the Jewish man was given a lethal injection.²¹

Evdokiia Riabova, interrogated on 20 December 1943, confirmed Ivashchenko’s account about Ushakov’s participation in the burial of the Jewish women and his absolute lack of remorse for his acts:

E.R.: [...] In late September-early October 1941-- I don’t remember the exact date -- I sat on the bench together with Vitvitskaia and several other neighbours when Ushakov came in, took the spade and walked out. Then we heard a woman scream on the street. Some 20 minutes later Ushakov returned and proudly proclaimed that he had just buried a young Jewish woman. From conversations with neighbours I knew that she was a 17-year-old girl. He buried her alive.

Lt. Jr. Paiu: Who told you Ushakov buried her alive?

E.R.: I don’t remember who specifically told me that he buried her alive. *All neighbours talked about it* [emphasis mine—O.M.]²²

Riabova’s friend Nadezhda also did not report witnessing murders in the park. She did, however, note that a certain Kseniia Kharchenko told her that Ushakov had buried alive a Jewish woman. Vitvitskaia did not explicitly corroborate Riabova’s account. Nor did she inform the NKGB that her brother Vladimir Latynin also witnessed the events in the park. Her account, however, contained a story about the verbal confrontation in August 1943 involving Ushakov and a former neighbour Ivan Kulish, a Ukrainian Communist, who before the war worked as a driver of an NKVD prison car. Ushakov allegedly threatened Kulish that he would denounce him to the “Gestapo,” because the latter had previously arrested his daughter. The story about

²⁰ Protocol of interrogation of E.Ushakov, 21 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.13ob).

²¹ Ibid., ark.30.

²² Ibid., ark.34-35.

Ushakov's conflict with Kulish and the latter's arrest shortly thereafter also surfaces in statements by many other witnesses.²³

Constrained as they are by the official protocol and the witnesses' apprehensive awareness of the dominant discourse and the politics of retribution, the depositions by residents of 11 Mezhyhirs'ka Street nonetheless signal several important issues that deserve serious exploration in the future. First, in Ushakov's case anti-Sovietism and adherence to the murderous mythology of "Judeo-Bolshevism," cultivated by Nazi propaganda and doubtlessly shared by many other Kyivans at the time, were combined with personal experiences of victimization during Soviet rule.

Ushakov's participation in the murder of innocent Jewish women whom he did not know had a corollary in the reported denunciations of the old Communist Vorobiev (mentioned in the testimony of A.Emel'ianenko, but not pursued by the investigators) and the NKVD man Kulish (mentioned by several residents of 11 Mezhyhirs'ka Street). Kulish in particular was not only clearly implicated in state repression, but apparently was involved in the arrest of Ushakov's daughter Aleksandra.

Materials of the investigation do not contain evidence that can elucidate Ushakov's personal relationship with Mikhail Ermak during 1930s. It is not clear if Ermak played any role in the plight of Ushakov's daughter or indeed if he had any relationship with the Soviet political order. It is certainly not inconceivable that as a member of the relatively privileged social stratum (doctor) Ermak was a Soviet loyalist or at least appeared as such to Ushakov due to the performative nature of public statements during the Stalin era. Since during the 1920s and especially 1930s many people in the USSR were wary of openly expressing their thoughts and feelings, ritualistic expressions of loyalty to Stalin and the Soviet cause, became common, making it difficult for ordinary citizens to determine political allegiances of people around them.²⁴

²³ Ibid., ark.25. Kulish, who survived the arrest reportedly told A.Bozhenko that it was Ushakov who betrayed him (Ibid., ark.24). Aleksei Emel'ianenko who also witnessed the confrontation between Ushakov and Kulish claimed that Ushakov threatened Kulish with the words: "You will go the way of Vorobiev" (Ibid., ark.38) [Vorob'ev was a Civil War veteran who had resided in the same building and was arrested by the German police in 1941—O.M].

²⁴ On the practices of "speaking Bolshevik": Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain*, 198-237; on political rituals in Stalinist Ukraine: Serhy Yekelchuk, "The Civic Duty to Hate: Stalinist Citizenship as Political Practice and Civic Emotion (Kiev, 1943-53)," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 7, No. 3 (2006): 529-556.

The loyalty rituals of the Stalin era naturally minimized outward manifestations of dissent irrespective of the subjects' ethnic background. In the Jewish case, however, there was a major complicating factor in the form of the high visibility of Jews in positions of power and the pre-existing discourse about "Judeo-Communism," which for the time being was driven underground.²⁵ Refracted through the prism of this discourse, Stalinist rituals likely caused many contemporaries - especially among the ethnically conscious opponents of the Soviet political order - to view the imaginary collective of "Jews" as unquestionable supporters of the ruling regime bearing responsibility for its deeds. The actualization of this understudied element of the Soviet political culture in the public sphere and in the context of neighbourly sociability must have had the effect of endowing the pernicious mythology that tied all Jews into a web of collective responsibility for Stalinist crimes with a tangible personal dimension.²⁶

The outbreak of the war not only did not discredit these discursive constructs, but likely re-enforced them, as the reality of Soviet defeats, German propaganda and the emerging awareness of the Nazi exterminatory policy had left the ever larger number of even politically uninvolved Jews in the soon to be occupied territories with little practical alternative to hasty evacuation to the Soviet interior or rallying to the Soviet cause in the weeks preceding the arrival of the German armed forces. On the other hand, many non-Jews, including some former Communist party members and people implicated in the operations of the Soviet state, under the influence of Soviet defeats were rapidly moving in the opposite direction, seeking ways to accommodate themselves to the impending reality of the allegedly friendly German rule.²⁷ For the many Jews

²⁵ On the determinants of the political preferences of the Russian Jews and the evolution of the discourse of "Judeo-Bolshevism" during the Civil War, see Budnitskiĭ, *Rossiĭskie evrei*.

²⁶ The overwhelming majority of Soviet Jews were, of course, not directly involved in the Holodomor violence or in the mass repression of 1937-1938, even if individuals of Jewish nationality dominated the leadership cadres of the NKVD in Ukraine throughout the larger part of the 1930s. On the latter topic: Iuriĭ Shapoval and Vadym Zolotar'ov, "Ievrei v kerivnytstvi orhaniv DPU-NKVS USRR-URSR u 1920-1930rr.," *Z arkhiviv VUCHK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, No.1 (2010): 53- 93.

It is, however, not unlikely that in Soviet Ukraine the predominantly urban "Jews" (and for that matter "Russians"), especially younger residents of big cities, were indeed a lot more likely to entertain a positive or at least ambiguous attitude towards the Soviet government than say "Ukrainians," who as the majority of the republic's rural population were hit particularly hard by the devastating de-kulakization, the man-made famine of 1932-1933, and to a lesser extent also the "kulak operation" of 1937-1938. This, of course, is not to deny that some Jews and many Russians also died during the man-made famine and many more during the Great Terror. Neither were ethnic Ukrainians absent from the ranks of Soviet loyalists or indeed active perpetrators of Stalinist crimes (as numerous rural activists and in our case the NKVD driver Ivan Kulish would attest to).

²⁷ See, for example, the following excerpt from the NKGB interrogation of Valeriĭ Mykytovych Koralov, member of the VKP(b) from 1926, dated November 8-9, 1943: "[...] I admit that I composed this autobiography after the

trapped inside the occupied territories such transformations of the local body politic boded anything but good.²⁸

Tangled Webs

Egor Ushakov was arrested on 21 December 1943 on charges of betraying to the German security service (SD) Ermak and Kulish, participating in the anti-Jewish violence in the park, and committing robberies of apartments during the German retreat in November 1943.²⁹ Subsequent

Germans arrived in Kharkiv with the intention to obtain work at the institute. Realizing that as a former Communist I would not be able to get work, I decided to present myself to the occupation authorities as an anti-party man [...]

--Reproduce what you wrote in your application to his Excellency Herr *Bürgermeister* of Kharkov?

--My letter dated 17 November 1941 and addressed to the Ober*Bürgermeister* of Kharkov had a profoundly anti-Soviet content. I am not able to reproduce the exact contents now, but I recall that in addressing "His Excellency Herr *OberBürgermeister* of Kharkov, I wrote that as an anti-Soviet person I had been persecuted by the Soviet authorities.

--Did you write "Soviet authorities"?

-- No, I always wrote "Judeo-Communist authorities." The Germans and their lackeys were fond of that phrase, that's why I wrote it [...]" (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr.683, ark.111-112).

In this context one could also mention a relatively high ratio of former Communists and Komsomol members within the ranks of auxiliary police in the German occupied Ukraine. (Ivan Dereïko, "Mistsevi viis'kovi formuvannia zbroïnykh syl Nimechchyny na terytorii Reikhskomisariatu Ukrainy (1941-1944)," (kandydats'ka dysertatsiia, Natsional'nyi universytet Kyievo-Mohylians'ka Akademiia, 2006), 97-100.

The subject of the Nazi propaganda on the Eastern front is discussed in Ortwin Buchbender, *Das toendende Erz: deutsche Propaganda gegen die Rote Armee im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1978).

²⁸ The survivor of the Holocaust and the former partisan of the Saburov brigade Iosif Margulis referenced the discursive shift by recalling conversations that he heard in September 1941 after his company of mobilized underage recruits got trapped behind the front-lines near Kyiv: "[...] The message [of the German propaganda] was simple: 'Russian soldiers surrender! Do not obey Jewish commissars! They provoked the war with Germany, which is bringing freedom to peoples of Russia liberated from the yoke of Judeo-Bolsheviks!'" The letters were huge, as if on a poster. You would get the message, even if you did not intend to read those leaflets.

We spent the night in a village, at our friend's uncle Pylyp. The man saw the nephew: "Who's there knocking on the door? Looks like Taras from Vydvor? The son of Mar'iana? Come on in!" - "I am not alone, but with other guys. We are walking from Kyiv...I am an underage draftee." "Come on, why would you need that Kyiv? The German is coming. He's bringing freedom to Ukraine. Why are you running away. Let the Jews run, as Hitler plans to slaughter them all! And we will work in our field!" I was listening to the "honest speech" and felt as if I had been struck across the face. Thus I started to learn about the science of war and read the textbook of life and death." (Iosif Il'ich Margulis (b.1924) : <http://www.iremember.ru/partizani/margulis-iosif-ilich.html>, last accessed 8 October 2011).

²⁹ HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 46837, ark.9. The allegation that Ushakov robbed empty apartments in October 1943 is in the testimony of Feodosia Ivashchenko. "His family used to be very poor, - Il'iashenko concluded, - now they have almost everything. Ushakov's wife told me she has a large store of food [...]" (Ibid., ark.31). According to Nadezhda Vitvitskaia, the latter activities of Ushakov led to the German soldiers' discovery of the secret hideout of Kyivans evading forced evacuation and the subsequent execution of 17 people (prot. of inter. of Nadezhda Vitvitskaia, 18 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.25).

Executions of civilians who evaded the forced evacuation from the combat zone in November 1943 were commonplace in Kyiv. See the report by the deputy chief of the intelligence department of the NKGB of the

developments suggest unambiguously that the investigators completely ignored the latter charge and only peripherally focused on the alleged betrayal of Ermak and Kulish. That the NKGB officers were interested primarily in the murder of the Jews became particularly evident after the witness Vladimir Latynin and the broken Ushakov (who likely had been subjected to torture and a tremendous amount of psychological pressure on 21 and 22 December 1943) identified Nikifor Iusov as another active perpetrator. Iusov was taken into custody on 23 December.³⁰ The former militiaman and fire-fighter Venedikt Bulanov, who had languished in the NKVD prison since late November, had been transferred to the NKGB jurisdiction around 26 December 1943.

Interrogations of witnesses that followed the arrest of Iusov and the transfer of Bulanov were subordinated to the same overriding principle of information gathering as with Ushakov's "circle" a few days earlier. In all instances witnesses tended to reside not just in the same neighbourhood as suspects, but for the most part also in the same apartment buildings—33 Nyzhniĭ Val Street in the case of Iusov's "circle" and 30 Mezhyhirs'ka Street in the case of Bulanov's.³¹ The latter detail is quite important. The anti-Jewish violence in Podil in fall 1941, though not always anonymous, was not "intimate" either. As a result, many actors were ignorant of the identity of Jewish victims. Not infrequently, they also could only name a small number of active perpetrators and observers. This epistemological peculiarity, though not completely surprising in the urban context, almost certainly exerted a significant influence on the direction of the investigation.

Interrogations in general were geared towards the documentation not merely of crimes committed, but of crimes committed by specific individuals. This arrangement, as was particularly clear during the interrogations of Egor Ushakov's neighbours, had an effect of both accentuating the role of the alleged perpetrator in question and de-emphasizing violent contributions by others. The necessary reliance of the NKGB operatives on particular residential milieus made it quite difficult for the investigating team to identify perpetrators and witnesses who were not familiar to people from any given neighbourhood. There was therefore nothing

Ukrainian SSR captain of s/s Kushch (9 November 1943) about the discovery of 23 corpses on the Mykhailivs'kyi Lane identified as men shot during the Wehrmacht retreat: Vrons'ka, *Kyiv u dni natsysts'koï navaly*, 394.

³⁰The arrest warrant was issued by the leader of the investigative team senior lieutenant of state security Korneev, who conducted most interrogations of Iusov (HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 46837, ark.50).

³¹ Protocol of interrogation of Evgeniia Beliaeva, 23 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.78-89); Anna GavriloVA, 23 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.90); Evgeniia Karpova, 23 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.91-92), Vladimir Latynin, 23 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.93) Ol'ga Lebedeva, 24 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.94-95), Evdokiia Rudakova, 27 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.101-103).

surprising about the fact that Venedikt Bulanov who clearly was one of the more active participants of the burial action in the park was not identified by any interrogated residents of 11 Mezhyhirs'ka or 33 Nyzhniī Val Street in the course of the ongoing investigation. Due to the fact that he resided several blocks away, they must have viewed him as another anonymous member of the crowd. The reason Bulanov was brought into the case at all had less to do with the NKGB inquiry per se than with the fact that his participation in the events had been exposed in a separate investigation by the crime detection department of Kyiv's militia several weeks earlier.

In comparison, Iusov who lived close to 11 Mezhyhirs'ka St. was recognized by at least two people (Ushakov and Latynin). In other words, there was a great deal of serendipity and contingency built into the case from the very start. It certainly was not a given that the authorities would have been able to arrest Iusov and Ushakov, had the informers tipped them off about Bulanov instead of Ushakov. In such a hypothetical scenario, the investigators would have questioned the neighbours of Bulanov (residents of 30 Mezhyhirs'ka Street). Which people they would go after next would be determined not by the perpetrators' respective role in the pogrom, but essentially by the ability or willingness by witnesses to provide concrete names.

Most witnesses, of course, would have little option but to testify when asked about the activities of specific perpetrators already known to the security service officials--in our case Ushakov, Iusov and Bulanov. They likely did have more choice in identifying other accomplices, when the NKGB officers made a general enquiry about the latter. And here is where things get very interesting and complicated. As far as the readiness to implicate neighbours in the persecution of the Jews is concerned, the difference between what looks like conflict-ridden neighbourhoods at 33 Nyzhniī Val Street and 30 Mezhyhirs'ka Street on the one hand, and 11 Mezhyhirs'ka Street, on the other, could not be more striking. One cannot easily dismiss the possibility that most residents of 11 Mezhyhirs'ka St. had not participated in the violence. If that was indeed the case, then their implicit effort to represent Ushakov as a "black sheep" may have reflected the actual state of social relations in the neighbourhood. It is, however, not the only possibility.

There is no doubt that the collapse of Soviet power, the arrival of the Wehrmacht, and the unfolding extermination of Jews precipitated the remarkable shift of political discourse in Kyiv. Nazi policies not only placed the remaining Jews and Soviet functionaries outside the law, but also created an environment that rewarded acts of betrayal and violent behaviour towards

members of the now ostracised and persecuted minorities. Under the new circumstances locals could denounce, rob, and, as the materials of case No.46837 show, even kill Jews with impunity and not have to contend with the prospects of punishment. Not a small number of Kyivans took advantage of the situation to loot Jewish property, to avenge past grievances, and give vent to their prejudices and violent proclivities in an effort to endear themselves to the occupiers. Egor Ushakov specifically, it appears, also tried to use the opportunity to increase his previously marginal standing within the neighbourhood. His shameless bragging about burying Jewish women leaves little doubt in this regard.

What is not completely clear is how different neighbours reacted to his “heroics” during the occupation as opposed to the later period. How many approved of his views and actions at the time? Did anyone attempt to reproach him? (As we shall see, some residents of 30 Mezhyhirs’ka St. did openly reproach the other defendant Bulanov.) What should one make of Ivashchenko’s assertion that all the neighbours collected food for Ermak and seemingly did not denounce him? Assuming she was telling the truth, did this imply that the majority of Ermak’s and Ushakov’s neighbours were not antisemitic? Or did they collect food because for whatever reason they viewed Ermak as a special case and the same attitude would not necessarily apply to other victims of the Holocaust?

What was the deeper meaning of neighbourliness at the time and how did different residential milieus function before the war, during the Nazi occupation and in its aftermath?³²

Ivashchenko’s characterization of neighbours as “ours” strongly hints at a sense of community that was not necessarily conceived in ethnic or even political terms (same women, for example, spoke about conversations with wives of both Ushakov and the NKVD man Kulish). Did the fact that Ushakov was a social pariah in the political context of 1943 (his family was subject to persecution during 1930s; he himself clearly engaged in various anti-social behaviours, such as heavy drinking and theft of his neighbours’ property during the German retreat in October 1943) affect the direction of the official investigation? It is extremely unlikely that the inhabitants of 11

³² See, for example, the prosecution case file of the Kyivan Hryhoriï Mykhaïliuk (HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 25530). During the occupation Mykhaïliuk served in the auxiliary police and for a time hid in his apartment a Jewish neighbour Selia Pikman (Kuzina). On 30 July 1951 Pikman (Kuzina) testified in front of the military tribunal during the trial of Mykhaïliuk: “[...] All neighbours covered for me. Mykhaïliuk and his wife gave me shelter. I would occasionally stay in their apartment, sometime overnight, but most of the time I stayed in the village where I went to exchange things for food. One day the building administrator came in a cart to take me to the assembly point. But all the neighbours, including Mykhaïliuk, came to my rescue and did not allow her to take me away (HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 25530, ark.243).

Mezhyhirs'ka St. accused Ushakov falsely. But is it possible that they de-emphasized the complicity in the Holocaust of some of the other neighbours whom they viewed as more respectable (as “ours,” to use Ivashchenko’s term)?

There are indeed reasons to suspect that a number of witnesses deliberately withheld some information from the NKGB, though the reasons for these actions are not clear. One wonders, for example, why Nadezhda Vitvitskaia did not mention during the interrogation that her brother Vladimir Latynin personally observed beatings and burials from nearby. (Latynin was interrogated on 23 December 1943.) Given that Latynin lived in the same apartment building as his sister and that the events were widely discussed in the neighbourhood, it is extremely unlikely that he did not tell her anything about what he saw in the park that fateful afternoon.

Similarly, Evdokiia Riabova’s evasive reply about the sources of the information for the claim that Ushakov buried the Jewish girl alive (“all the neighbours talked about it”) could be a deliberate attempt to withhold information from the investigators. As noted, Riabova regularly interacted with Vitvitskaia, whose brother Latynin was in the park and provided a detailed testimony to the NKGB (possibly unbeknownst to other neighbours). Moreover, when asked about people who could confirm his testimony about the pogrom, Latynin mentioned the neighbours Novosel'skiĭ and Andreĭ Riabov. It is not likely that Andreĭ was Evdokiia Riabova’s husband. However, he could well have been her brother or possibly brother-in-law and can be identified as the husband of the witness Feodosiia Ivashchenko.³³

Assuming we are not dealing here with a mere technical failure by the NKGB officers properly to record the depositions, the question must be asked why the women did not reveal to the investigators that their relatives had been on site and obviously served as the neighbourhood’s principal sources of information about the pogrom? Were they trying to protect family members from an exposure to interrogations? Is it possible that Latynin, Riabov, Novosel'skiĭ, and maybe some other residents of 11 Mezhyhirs'ka Street were more than “witnesses” of the pogrom? Unfortunately, at this point such questions cannot be adequately answered.

³³ According to the list of wartime casualties compiled by the Podil district’s military board, resident of 11 Perets (now Mezhyhirs'ka) street Andrei Ivanovich R. (b.1919) was drafted into the Red Army on 23 November 1943 and went missing in action in January 1944. The same document identifies R.’s wife as Feodosiia Nikolaevna R.—i.e. Feodosiia Nikolaevna Ivashchenko in the materials of the case (source: the database of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation (OBD-Memorial): www.obd-memorial.ru, searched on 11 October 2011).

In comparison, it is possible to establish that at both 33 Nyzhniī Val and 30 Mezhyhirs'ka Street in addition to Iusov and Bulanov there resided multiple people who were implicated either in betrayals and looting of Jewish property or in antisemitic violence in the park. Though the individuals in question naturally attempted to obfuscate their personal involvement, statements by some of their neighbours and also by defendants exposed wider webs of complicity, suggesting that some “witnesses” were not completely forthcoming.

Whether the differences of behaviour during the interrogations derived from the different dynamics of inter-ethnic relations within their respective neighbourhoods during the occupation or merely to the different levels of solidarity among non-Jews in the face of the NKGB inquiry is difficult to say. Certainly the residents of 33 Nyzhniī Val Street had comparatively little leeway during the interrogations for the simple reason that the pogrom and burials had taken place right in front of their building. It was simply impossible for them to claim that they did not witness the events. By the same logic, the status of witness naturally would make it extremely difficult to abstain from naming perpetrators. Moreover, by the time officers of the NKGB task force arrested Nikifor Iusov and had the bodies of victims exhumed on 23 December, the general contours of the crime were well established thanks to the depositions by Ushakov, Latynin, Emel'ianenko and Aleksandr Iaroshevich. (The latter was interrogated by Kyiv's crime detection department in connection with the arrest of Bulanov as early as 21 November 1943.) As a result, investigators confronted Iusov, Bulanov and their neighbours with very pointed questions about the events in the park.³⁴

But beyond the importance of these situational factors, the inter-personal conflicts and political divisions within these particular neighbourhoods are impossible to overlook. There was nothing accidental about the fact that the most detailed deposition about the violence and the burials in the park came from the 43 year old Communist party member Evgeniia Beliaeva, resident of 33 Nyzhniī Val. Beliaeva not only supplied the investigators with all sorts of details about Iusov's anti-Soviet attitudes before the war and his role in the murder of Jews, but also named a whole set of other neighbours who took part in the violence or otherwise assisted the active

³⁴ While interrogations of Iusov's “circle” centred on events in the park, Bulanov's neighbours mostly talked about what happened to several Jewish inhabitants of 30 and 32 Mezhyhirs'ka Street before Venedikt Bulanov literally dragged some of them to their deaths in the park (Given that the building was some 250 meters away from the site of murder with several adjacent houses blocking the view of the park, it is possible that those of Bulanov's neighbours who stayed home that day could not witness the burials. Many may also have known what was going on, but chose to avoid the gruesome spectacle).

perpetrators. Incidentally, Beliaeva was also one of the very few witnesses who could identify one of the victims by name (which could be an indication that Communists or Soviet loyalists were more likely to interact with Jews before the war).³⁵

Similarly at 30 Mezhyhirs'ka Street, it was above all people who were sympathetic to the Jews that provided the most detailed and frank testimonies about what happened to their neighbours before Venedikt Bulanov and others dragged them out of their homes and to their death in the park. In this case, however, the nature of the personal conflict between Bulanov and the witnesses Kravchenko, Semenchuk and Petrovskii did not seem to have any political underpinnings. They were simply opposed to the Nazi policies towards the Jews and openly castigated the "bandit" Bulanov for his actions. In his turn, Bulanov responded with threats also to bury them, the "defenders of the yids."³⁶

The Crime

Due to the general features of Stalinist political justice, the peculiarities of the official information gathering, and the very nature of memory-based testimony, reconstructing the course of the pogrom itself is fraught with significant difficulties. The unintentionally inaccurate statements by some witnesses and the deliberately misleading depositions by defendants and some other witnesses aside, the task is complicated by the fact that the pogrom consisted of several discrete episodes and continued for several hours. Moreover, none of the participants, including defendants in the case, witnessed the whole event.

In some places (for example at 30 Mezhyhirs'ka Street) violence against the Jews preceded the beatings and the burial action at Nyzhniī Val. Some perpetrators and observers arrived in the park while the attacks were already in progress. Others drifted in and out of the crowd as they took care of their daily chores. Moreover, the anonymity of the majority of the Jewish victims and the limitations of memory-based testimonials with their characteristically loose chronologies

³⁵ HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 46837, ark. 78-89.

³⁶ Protocols of interrogation of Tit Kravchenko, 28 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.139-141); Nataliia Semenchuk, 28 December 1943 (Ibid., ark. 144-145); Maksim Petrovskii, 1 January 1944 (Ibid., ark. 146).

make it difficult to establish precisely when and how each of the victims died. Neither it is always clear when witnesses were speaking about different victims and when they were merely providing diverging perspectives on the predicament of the same people.

What we know for sure from the materials of exhumation is that the two common graves (former bomb shelters--one in front of 33 Nyzhniī Val street and one at the corner of Verkhniī Val and Mezhyhirs'ka Street) contained seven corpses in total.³⁷

In contrast to the number of victims and the geography of the events, which are easy to establish thanks to the multiple references to the location of the graves and the materials of exhumation, the chronology of the events is a lot blurrier, as different witnesses linked the pogrom to different dates. Alekseī Emel'ianenko dated it vaguely as five or six days after the arrival of the Germans, i.e., on 24 or 25 of September 1941.³⁸ Evdokiia Riabova placed it sometime in late September or early October.³⁹ Vladimir Latynin recalled that the pogrom occurred on 27 or 28 September.⁴⁰ According to Nikifor Iusov, he and others buried the Jews in the park on 30 September 1941.⁴¹ The same date was referenced by two other witnesses, Evgeniia Beliaeva and Anna Gavrilova.⁴² Aleksandra Savicheva's testimony leads one to conclude that the pogrom took place on 1 October.⁴³ Egor Ushakov initially placed the pogrom on 12 October 1941, but eventually moved the date to late September.⁴⁴

Confusion also reigned among NKGB officers. Thus on 7 January 1944 the chief of the NKGB in the Kyiv region lieutenant colonel of state security Bondarenko informed his superiors that the Jews were buried in October 1941.⁴⁵ As far as officers leading the investigation are concerned, it appears, they accepted 30 September 1941 as the date of the crime at the latest by 25 December 1943--most likely because the date perfectly correlated with statements by several witnesses that

³⁷ Acts of the exhumation are at HDA SBU, f.5, spr.46837, ark. 158-171. The exhumation did not corroborate the rumours relayed by some witnesses that more bodies could have been buried in the area. According to Aleksandra Savicheva, Bulanov claimed during the occupation that he had buried in the park on Nyzhniī Val 12-14 Jews (protocol of interrogation of A.Savicheva, 27 December 1943 (Ibid., ark. 137-137ob).

³⁸ Ibid., ark.36.

³⁹ Ibid., ark.101-103.

⁴⁰ Ibid., ark.40.

⁴¹ Ibid., ark.63.

⁴² Ibid., ark.80, 89.

⁴³ Savicheva stated that the policeman who took away Jewish women from 30 Mezhyhirs'ka Street (subsequently victims of the pogrom in the park) arrived on 1 October (Ibid., ark.137-137ob).

⁴⁴ Ibid., ark.13.

⁴⁵ HDA SBU, f.2, op.108, spr.8, ark. 158.

violence in the park broke out the day after the majority of local Jews departed for the assembly point in the run-up to the Babī Iar massacres.⁴⁶

It is possible, however, that they were mistaken and that the pogrom really took place on 1 October 1941 (the date provided by Savicheva) as that was the day when commander of the Ukrainian police in Kyiv “Orlyk”—who appears to have been a member of the Meln’nyk faction of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists—under the threat of death obligated all building administrators and janitors to turn in all Jews, former members of the Communist party, and cadres of the NKVD.⁴⁷

Several janitors played a rather important role in the events in the park, indicating that there could have been an indirect link between the police order and the outbreak of violence. Given the lack of conclusive evidence, it seems most reasonable to assume that the pogrom took place either on 30 September or on 1 October 1941.

More research is definitely needed concerning the role of the German military. Generally speaking, there is no doubt that German soldiers were present on site, cheering on malfeasants and taking photographs.⁴⁸ The confusion about their exact role in the killings arises from a combination of factors. On the one hand, in an effort to deflect the responsibility for the deaths of some of the victims, both Ushakov and Iusov claimed that some of the Jews were killed by unidentified Germans.⁴⁹ Nikifor Iusov in particular crafted a very elaborate narrative about German soldiers’ shooting the three elderly Jews buried in the hole in front of 33 Nyzhnīi Val Street. While Iusov’s story is extremely unconvincing in light of depositions by witnesses Beliaeva, Latynin and Gavrilova, it appears likely that at least one of the women was indeed shot by a German officer the day *after* the pogrom and was subsequently buried by Venedikt Bulanov

⁴⁶ Junior lieutenant of state security Vasil’ev was referencing 30 September 1941 as the date of the crime already during the initial interrogation of N. Iusov on 25 December 1941 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 46837, ark.63).

⁴⁷ The order read: “Building administrators have 24 hours to inform the district commissariats and the Headquarters of the Ukrainian Police in Kyiv (located on the 2nd floor at 15 Korolenko St.) about all the Jews, cadres of the NKVD, and members of the VKP(b) that reside in their buildings. Sheltering these people will be punished with death. Building administrators and janitors have the right independently to deliver Jews to the Jewish camp located on the territory of the POW camp on Kerosynna street.” (Vrons’ka, *Kyiv u dni natsysts’koï navaly*, 208). “Orlyk”’s real name was Anatolii Konkel’. See Nakhmanovych, “Bukovyns’kyi kurin’.” That “Orlyk” was a member of the OUN-M follows from the materials of the investigative case file No.69330 at the HDA SBU.

⁴⁸ Protocol of interrogation of Evgeniia Beliaeva, 23 December 1943 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 46837, ark.84; protocol of interrogation of Vladimir Latynin, 23 December 1943 (Ibid., ark. 40ob).

⁴⁹ Protocol of interrogation of Nikifor Iusov, 31 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.69-71); protocol of interrogation of Egor Ushakov, 22 December 1943 (Ibid., ark. 76-77).

on top of other victims in the place identified by Iusov (that's why there were seven rather than six bodies in total). It is possible Iusov witnessed the latter murder. It is also possible that the Germans shot one woman during the pogrom, but the latter case is more doubtful.⁵⁰

At the same time the materials of the investigation, including the protocols of interrogations of principal defendants, give no indication whatsoever that the Germans acted as direct instigators of anti-Jewish violence in the park and in the residential neighbourhoods.⁵¹ The claim by Nikolai Ushakov that the Germans forced his father to bury Jews contradicts depositions by most other witnesses, including Egor Ushakov himself and Alekseĭ Emel'ianenko whom one of the NKGB officers questioned on the subject explicitly.⁵² Equally unconvincing is the statement by the witness Tat'iana Lysenko that a German soldier attempted to force her to participate in the burial of the live Jews.⁵³

Narrating the Murder

Kyivan Jews began to walk to the assembly point at the corner of the Mel'nykov and Dehtiarivs'ka Streets on 29 September 1941, the day after the appearance of the infamous order by the German city commissar.⁵⁴ Those who on 29 September remained in their homes were mostly elderly people who either attempted to go into hiding or simply were unable to walk three

⁵⁰ The claim was made by the defendant Ushakov on 21 December 1943 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 46837, ark.13). Nataliia Semenchuk claimed that Rakhil' Smoĭlovskaia (resident of 30 Mezhyhirs'ka St.) was shot by the Germans (though she herself did not witness it (Ibid., ark. 141). In light of statements by other witnesses, it is possible that Semenchuk who did not witness burials in the park unintentionally collapsed the story of Smoĭlovskaia's death with that of another old Jewish woman from 32 Mezhyhirs'ka St., who was taken to the park by Bulanov and allegedly shot by a German officer the day after the pogrom.

⁵¹ Some NKGB operatives seem to have succumbed to this notion in the beginning. Thus senior lieutenant of s/s Korneev wrote in Iusov's arrest warrant on 23 December 1943: "According to the statement by the arrested Egor D. Ushakov, Iusov took part in the brutal extermination of Soviet citizens organized by the Germans." (HDA SBU, f.5, spr.46837, ark.50).

⁵² Protocol of interrogation of Nikolai Ushakov, 22 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.39-39ob); protocol of interrogation of Egor Ushakov, 21 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.13); protocol of interrogation of Alekseĭ Emel'ianenko, 21 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.36-38).

⁵³ Lysenko's neighbour Tyt Kravchenko claimed that she once told him that it was her friend Bulanov rather than the Germans who tried to force her to shovel the soil, though Kravchenko did not know if she did (Ibid., ark. 139-141). The witness Semenchuk, on the other hand, linked Lysenko to looting of Jewish property (Ibid., ark. 144-145).

⁵⁴ The order issued on 28 September 1941 obligated all of Kyiv's Jews to report in the morning of 29 September to the corner of the Melnykov and Dehtiarivs'ka Street near the cemetery. They were supposed to bring with them documents, money, valuables, as well as warm clothes. Those who did not comply with orders were threatened with death. The order was reproduced in Vrons'ka, *Kyiv u dni natsysts'koï navyly*, 207.

kilometres to the designated point of assembly. It was these people that in the days following mass shootings in Babiï Yar became the target of round-ups by the auxiliary police and ultimately of attacks by scores of local non-Jews.⁵⁵

In late September 1941,--I don't remember the exact date,--a police cart stopped in front of my apartment building No.30 Nyzhniï Val Street? [sic]⁵⁶ The cart already carried 10 Jews. Accompanied by a group of women, which included my wife, a policeman headed to the apartment of the 70 year old Jewish woman Smoïlovskaia⁵⁷ [sic] on the 5th floor. I voluntarily joined them. When inside the apartment, the policeman slashed Smoïlovskaia with a whip and started throwing her clothes and other belongings to the women [who showed him the Jewish apartment—O.M]. He also demanded her [Smoïlovskaia] to give him the money, which she did [...] I put the old woman on my shoulders and took her down to the cart. The policeman then took her away. Next day on the request of the janitor Marusia Gavrylenko [...] I took to the garden on the Nyzhniï Val a Jewish woman from 32 Nyzhniï Val Street [sic].⁵⁸ In my presence a German shot her and I buried her in the trench. I then returned to the janitor and drank a glass of vodka [...] I also robbed Jewish apartments. From the apartments No.5 and 7 at 30 Mezhyhirs'ka St. I took the clock, clothes, pillows and a blanket.⁵⁹

A Civil War veteran and a former Soviet militiaman, Venedikt Bulanov made this deposition during his first interrogation on 28 December 1943. During the second interrogation on 29 December he complemented his earlier statements by noting that after he had taken down Smoïlovskaia, he returned to her apartment where together with Savicheva, Stronchuk, his wife and some other neighbours they divided up her property.⁶⁰ There is no reason to doubt the veracity of Bulanov's statement about his and some neighbours' participation in the betrayal of Smoïlovskaia and subsequent division of spoils. Though Savicheva and Stronchuk, who were both interrogated as witnesses, did not admit to their own less than savoury role in the fate of the Jewish woman, neither attempted to explain how they wound up in Smoïlovskaia's apartment together with the policeman, Bulanov and the "10-12 of mostly unknown people" [looters of

⁵⁵ Protocol of interrogation of V. Latynin, 23 September 1943 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 46837, ark.40); Evdokiia Rudakova, 27 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.101-102); A. Iaroshevich, 21 November 1943 (Ibid., ark.131-132).

⁵⁶ Bulanov lived at 30 Mezhyhirs'ka Street.

⁵⁷ The official documents refer to the Jewish woman as "Samoïlovskaia" (for example, the arrest warrant for Bulanov, issued by lieutenant Skripka of the crime detection department of Kyiv's militia on 22 November 1943 (HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 46837, ark.113); also the above-mentioned report by People's Commissar of Internal Affairs V.Riasnoï (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr. 524, ark.196-198).

⁵⁸ 32 Mezhyhirs'ka street—O.M.

⁵⁹ HDA SBU, f.5, spr. 46837, ark. 124-125.

⁶⁰ Ibid., ark.128.

Jewish property--O.M.].⁶¹ What Bulanov did not mention, however, is that aside from Smořlovskaia there was another Jewish woman from 30 Mezhyhirs'ka Street who was taken from her apartment the same day.⁶²

Testimonies by Bulanov's other neighbours (e.g., by Tyt Kravchenko and Natal'ia Semenchuk) fully corroborate his statement that the day after the pogrom he literally dragged to the park the elderly Jewish woman from 32 Mezhyhirs'ka Street, where the latter was shot by a German officer. Bulanov was said to have robbed the victim beforehand. No less important, they make it clear that Bulanov was among the participants of the burial actions on Nyzhniř Val on 30 September/1 October 1941.⁶³ Just like Egor Ushakov, Bulanov boasted in front of his neighbours about burying the Jews and apparently also threatened those neighbours who expressed sympathy for the victims.⁶⁴

The testimony by the 77-year-old Kravchenko is particularly noteworthy in that it not only illustrates ever so vividly the multifarious forms of complicity in the Holocaust be it driven by prejudice, greed or opportunism, but also highlights the profoundly unsettling problem of moral choices, which people like Kravcheko and Semenchuk had to make against the backdrop of both the draconian rule of the occupiers and, no less importantly, harassment by the likes of Bulanov. In such a context, it was all too often difficult for sympathetic non-Jews even openly to criticize Nazi policies and the activities of local malfeasants, much less actively assist the victims. The dilemma is well illustrated by this statement by the witness Tyt Kravchenko:

⁶¹ Kharitina Stronchuk, for example, described how the policeman accompanied by 10-12 "mostly unknown people," including V.Bulanov and his wife, entered the apartment of Rakhil' Smořlovskaia's [Smolovskaya in Stronchuk's rendering—O.M.]. According to Stronchuk, the policeman demanded gold from the Jewish woman and ordered Aleksandra Savicheva to carry the disabled Smořlovskaia downstairs. After Savicheva refused, Bulanov took the woman down. Interestingly, when asked who could corroborate her testimony Stronchuk mentioned only Savicheva (protocol of interrogation of Kharitina Stronchuk, 23 December 1943 (Ibid., ark.133-134). Savicheva's account is essentially identical to Stronchuk's, the only difference being that she also mentioned the rumours that the Jews that were on the cart were buried in the park on Nyzhniř Val and that Bulanov allegedly boasted of having buried 12-14 Jews (protocol of interrogation of Aleksandra Savicheva, 27 December 1943 (Ibid., ark. 137-137ob)).

⁶² From the deposition by the 15 year old Aleksandr Iaroshevich it follows that besides Smořlovskaia that day the policeman put onto the cart another elderly Jewish woman who had resided at 30 Mezhyhirs'ka St. Iaroshevich did not say anything about "10 Jews on the cart," which Bulanov would mention on 28 December 1943. He did note, however, that the policemen dropped the women in the park on Nyzhniř Val and that they would get buried alive in the trench (Ibid., ark.132).

⁶³ Tat'iana Lysenko claimed to have personally witnessed Bulanov's participation in the burial of live Jews in the park on Nyzhniř Val (Ibid., ark. 138).

⁶⁴ Natal'ia Semenchuk: "After Bulanov returned from the park, he washed his hands, and started harassing me and Tat'iana Kravchenko: "Why are you feeling sorry for Judas? If you continue crying, you will soon find yourself in the same place as Judas." (Protocol of interrogation of N.Semenchuk, 28 December 1943, ark. 144); Bulanov allegedly threatened also Maksim Petrovskiř, janitor at 32 Mezhyhirs'ka St., accusing him and his family of hiding Jews (Ibid., ark. 146).

In late September 1943, a cart stopped in front of our building. Some tied up people were already there. The cart was driven by the unknown young man of average height, bare-headed, with a whip in hand, and V.I. Bulanov. The unknown man entered our apartment and started asking if there were Jews here. My wife Nataliya Il'inichna answered that there are only two of us in the apartment [...] After Bulanov and the unknown young man entered the building, I saw through the window how one man on the cart managed to extricate himself from the ropes. He jumped off the cart and stood there indecisively. "Why are you standing? I yelled, "Run!" The man dashed to the street. Children running after the cart started screaming that the man ran away. The unknown subject ran outside, but seeing the fugitive get away, shrugged and did not begin the pursuit. There were living people on the cart. I could hear their groans. Then I saw how the unknown man drove to the cart one of our Jewish neighbours, striking her with a whip. As they approached the cart, the man grabbed the old woman and threw her on top [...] Then I saw Bulanov. He was carrying on his shoulders a disabled old woman [...] Her name was Smoïlovskaiia. Her husband had been taken away three days earlier. As Bulanov carried the old woman, his wife Anna was pulling off the latter's boots. When I observed this scene, I said to Bulanov: "What are you doing? Bandit!" In response he threateningly swore at me: "That's none of your business, defender of the yids! Tomorrow I will drag you to the same place as them." Bulanov put the old woman on the cart, which headed towards Nyzhniī Val. I do not know what happened to those people. But after Bulanov returned, he said while washing his hands: "Once I bury 100 Jews, I will earn myself a new coat." He also boasted in front of me: "I am burying the cursed Jews, and they yell and swear at me" [...] The resident of our building Tat'iana Lysenko related in front of other neighbours that she saw how Bulanov buried the still living people in the park on Nyzhniī Val. *It was on the same day that he took away Smoïlovskaiia* [emphasis mine—O.M.]⁶⁵

While specific evidence is sparse, it is highly probable that widespread betrayals, harassment and looting of Jewish property at the time were also taking place in Podil's other neighbourhoods. In the Mezhyhirs'ka-Nyzhniī Val-Verkhniī Val area in particular violent searches for the remaining Jews are known to have begun already in the morning. By the time the young policeman arrived at 30 Mezhyhirs'ka Street the excesses had already escalated into murderous attacks that would eventually culminate in the burial of six people in the park.⁶⁶

The materials of the case leave little doubt that at least a few dozens of Podil residents in one way or another were implicated in the anti-Jewish violence that day or at least were part of the crowd that had gathered to observe the burials, and, as usual, to grab some of the victims'

⁶⁵ Ibid., ark. 139-140.

⁶⁶ Beliaeva times events vaguely: "in the afternoon." According to both Iusov and Latynin, the burials in the park began at around 4-5p.m. During the interrogation on 29 December 1943, Bulanov claimed that the policeman arrived at 30 Mezhyhirs'ka at around 4p.m (Ibid., ark.126).

belongings. Ushakov estimated the crowd contained some 40 people.⁶⁷ Yet it is also clear that the violence became deadly under the influence of a small core of active perpetrators consisting of Ushakov, Iusov, “Grigoriĭ”, the “janitor Alekseĭ” and some others with the majority of those present on site acting either as willing sidekicks, intent on taking possession of whatever items victims had on them, or merely curious voyeurs, who like Latynin and Gavrilova stopped to find out what was going on as they went about their daily business. For some the spectacle proved profoundly unsettling, even traumatic, and they would leave long before the end of the execution.⁶⁸ One should also not lose track of numerous others who, like Riabova and Vitvitskaia, clearly understood that something terrible was going on in the park, but probably made a choice to stay back and avoid the disturbing view.⁶⁹

Interrogated on 25 December 1943 the defendant Iusov described in great detail the development of the pogrom at the corner of Mezhyhirs’ka and Nyzhniĭ Val in the afternoon of 30 September (or 1 October) 1941. Specifically Iusov’s testimony shows how the abuse of a lone elderly Jewish woman by a group of children who had been hitting her with rocks set the stage for the horrendous crime that followed once Iusov, Ushakov, and “Grigoriĭ” [eventually identified by the NKGB as Grigoriĭ Kashevskii, resident of 35 Nyzhniĭ Val street] started ruthlessly pummelling the victim with punches and kicks.

On 30 September 1941 at around 4-5p.m. I was walking along Mezhyhirs’ka Street towards 33 Nyzhniĭ Val St. when I noticed a crowd of people heading towards Nyzhniĭ Val [...] In front of 37 Nyzhniĭ Val St. there sat a citizen of Jewish nationality. Children that surrounded her (ten in total, I do not know their names) hit her with rocks, dispersed her belongings and otherwise abused her. On seeing this Grigorii (I do not know his surname), Ushakov, and myself approached the woman and started to beat her. I kept punching the old woman in the face until she fell to the ground. Grigorii, Ushakov and I lifted her and hit her head several times against the lamp post. Together with Ushakov and Grigorii we kicked the woman in the face and in the chest. As we beat her, we yelled “Yids sucked our blood for 23 years. Now it is our turn.” The crowd that gathered there cheered us on with jokes and shouts.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Ibid., ark.13.

⁶⁸ e.g. the boy Alekseĭ Emel’ianenko mentioned that he did not see everything because he ran away terrified; also Anna Gavrilova mentioned that she rapidly walked from the “horrible” place (protocol of interrogation of Anna Gavrilova, 23 December, 1943 (Ibid., ark.90).

⁶⁹ E.g. Riabova reported that together with Vitvitskaia they heard screams on the street, then Ushakov appeared and told them that he buried Jews.

⁷⁰ Ibid., ark. 63-64.

The outbreak of violence was also observed by former Communist party member Evgeniia Beliaeva, who would become an important source of information for the NKGB in the course of the investigation. According to Beliaeva, that afternoon, she went out to fetch some water. As she approached the corner of Nyzhniī Val and Mezhyhirs'ka, she heard a scream. She noticed the crowd of people and the Jewish woman named Katz (resident of 35 Iaroslavs'ka street), who was being beaten and chased along Nyzhniī Val. Having noticed the commotion, Iusov, who was carrying the bucket with water, allegedly handed it over to his ten-year-old son and ran towards Katz. Screaming obscenities, he took away the food that she held, and started pounding her. After she fell, Iusov jumped onto her chest to the accompanying cheers (“*uliuliukanie*”) from the crowd, all the while yelling: “They [‘yids’ and Communists--*sic*] used to ride us, now we ride them!”⁷¹ If that was not enough, Iusov, the unknown janitor from 19 Mezhygirs'ka, “Grigoriī,” and several others would pick the bleeding half-conscious woman and start to hit her head on the lamp post as well as lift her high in the air and then let her drop to the ground.⁷²

Both Iusov and Beliaeva clearly talked about the same victim as evident among other things from overlapping references to the act of hitting the woman's head on the lamppost. Thus it seems reasonable to conclude that Katz was the first victim of the pogrom in the park. What happened next, however, is less clear. According to Beliaeva, the men stopped tormenting Katz because their attention shifted to an old Jewish man, old woman and a young girl whom somebody had brought “from the lower numbers of Nyzhniī Val.”⁷³ It is on this point that Beliaeva's testimony sharply contradicts that of Iusov who in the beginning would not tell the investigators about the second group of victims. At the same time, Beliaeva's depositions also do not cohere with the account of the boy Aleksei Emelianenko who spoke of three old women and said nothing of the old man and the girl. How can one explain such contradictions given that the official exhumation of 2 graves produced a total of seven bodies?

Beliaeva's extremely graphic and detailed account of torture, to which Iusov reportedly subjected the old man and the old woman leaves little doubt of her account's veracity even though no other witnesses mentioned some of the same details (e.g. about how Iusov tormented the old man by hitting him with a spade across bare feet; about how Iusov ordered his son and other neighbours' children to bring sand, which he stuffed into the victims' mouths, or about

⁷¹ Ibid., ark. 82.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., ark.82-84.

how adult perpetrators instructed children to throw heavy rocks at the Jews inside the grave in order to kill them before the burial).⁷⁴ Beliaeva's narrative appears trustworthy also because it is to a significant degree corroborated by Vladimir Latynin who also recalled the burial of the old man, the old woman and the girl. (Latynin arrived on scene together with Novosel'skiĭ and Andreĭ Riabov, when the men had already partly filled the grave.)⁷⁵

In my view, the above-mentioned discrepancies and the resultant confusion are due not only to Iusov's initial efforts to mislead the investigators, but also to the fact that the protagonists witnessed discrete episodic sequences and almost never the entire event. Beliaeva specifically appears to have reported on what can be classified as episodes 1 and 3 of the gruesome event, but did not mention what happened in between—most likely because for some reason she was not there at the time.

In reconstructing what may be termed episode 2 of particular importance is Iusov's statement that he and other perpetrators temporarily abandoned Katz after a certain Andreĭ Shkola brought two old Jewish women from Mezhyhirs'ka Street. Given the general context, corresponding chronologies and depositions by Bulanov, Iaroshevich, Kravchenko and Lysenko, it seems reasonable to conclude that the women were Rakhil' Smoĭlovskaia and her neighbour, whom Bulanov and "Shkola" (most likely the "unknown young man" in Kravchenko's testimony) had picked up at 30 Mezhyhirs'ka Street shortly before. According to Iusov, "Shkola" with the assistance of some German soldiers pushed the women into the air defence trench near the intersection of Verkhniĭ Val and Mezhyhirs'ka. It must have been at that point that "Grigorii" and Ushakov ran home to collect the spades in order to bury the two old Jewish women (the episode, which carved itself into the collective memory of residents of 11 Mezhyhirs'ka St.). Subsequently the perpetrators threw Katz into the same ditch.⁷⁶

Iusov's testimony on this particular count appears more or less reliable. On the one hand, it does not contradict Ushakov's graphic descriptions of violence that accompanied the burial, the latter's attempts to minimise his own role notwithstanding. On the other hand, the episode described by Iusov perfectly correlates with the rumours about the violence in the park conveyed

⁷⁴ Protocol of interrogation of Anna Gavrilova, 23 Dec. 1943 (Ibid., ark.90).

⁷⁵ Ibid., ark.40-41.

⁷⁶ Ibid., ark.64. According to Beliaeva, at some point Katz regained consciousness and attempted to get away from the place but was stopped in her track by the janitor Ol'ga Lebedeva, one of the witnesses in the case (Ibid., ark.84).

by iIvashchenko, as well as the statement by Aleksei Emel'ianenko, who witnessed the burial of three elderly Jewish women.⁷⁷

The boy Emel'ianenko did not stay to witness the whole event, as he ran away in fear earlier. Vladimir Latynin, for his part, arrived late, as it seems, but stayed to the end.⁷⁸ Latynin did not see the burial of the three older women at the corner of Verkhni Val and Mezhyhirs'ka, referred to by Emel'ianenko and described by Iusov. He only witnessed the burial of the old man, old woman and the girl in front of 33 Nyzhni Val St.⁷⁹ All of this leads one to conclude that by the time of Latynin's arrival the three elderly women (Katz, Smoïlovskaia and an unknown resident of 30 Mezhyhirs'ka St.) had already been buried. Given that the violence in the park continued for a few hours (approximately from 4 to 7 p.m.) and that several witnesses mentioned performing chores throughout the day (such as doing the laundry), the logical conclusion is that Beliaeva only witnessed the beatings of Katz and the burial of the second group of victims, but was not there when the perpetrators buried Katz and the two women from Mezhyhirs'ka.

Iusov, in contrast, was there almost from the very start and his failure to inform the investigators about the second burial and his participation in the murder of the old man, the old woman, and the girl was part of a deliberate strategy to mislead the investigators that went all the way back to the initial interrogation on 25 December 1943. Once subjected to lengthy periods of nighttime questioning (and likely physical pressure) and confronted with the evidence, which the NKGB obtained from Ushakov, Latynin, Beliaeva, and Gavrilova, Iusov admitted to his role in the second set of murders. At that point the case was solved for all intents and purposes.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Ibid., ark.34. Emel'ianenko also mentioned the woman that got shot by the German officer, though it is not quite clear from Emel'ianenko's deposition that the latter murder took place the following day (the woman from 32 Mezhyhirs'ka St.).

⁷⁸ This is evident from Latynin's claim that the crowd was eventually dispersed by the Germans (Ibid., ark. 41ob).

⁷⁹ Ibid., ark. 40-41ob.

⁸⁰ Chief of the NKGB in the Kyiv region lieutenant colonel of state security Bondarenko signed the indictment and sent the case to the military field court of the 8th Guards' Tank Corps on 16 January 1944. The indictment can be found in the case file (Ibid., ark. 193-195).

Conclusions

One of the arguments of this chapter is that both the suppression of the memory of Soviet violence and the marginalization of the Holocaust in the thoroughly controlled public culture of the USSR were not coterminous with everyday mnemonic practices in the formerly occupied territories. Early defeats of the Red Army and the establishment of Nazi rule in Kyiv in September 1941—when activists of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists for the time being captured a number of posts in the city administration, the auxiliary police and the editorial office of the newspaper “*Ukrains’ke slovo*”—not only delivered a powerful blow to the legitimating claims and the political order associated with the Soviet state, but also radically reconfigured the local public sphere. The result was both the opening of an outlet for the expression of personal grievances against Communist rule and simultaneous legitimation of antisemitism and ethnic chauvinism within certain segments of the Ukrainian and Russian populations.

In this situation, rather than turning into a figure of absence, the Holocaust and specifically the murder of a group of Jewish Kyivans in Podil in 1941 became a subject of numerous, at times intensely hostile conversations within the context of neighbourly sociability—both during the Nazi occupation and in its aftermath—with perpetrators themselves being active participants of such discussions. Recorded by NKGB officers, the narrative accounts by residents of Podil neighbourhoods contain a great deal of information not only about the background, the sequence, and the participatory dynamics of the murderous anti-Jewish violence, but also about social and political relations in Kyiv under Nazi rule, which await further research. Ironically, due to the nature of Soviet and post-Soviet commemorative politics, today our principal, if not only point of entry to historical contexts, which once functioned as a living reservoir of memory about life in the occupied Kyiv and enabled the official investigation of the pogrom, is the documentation generated by the Soviet security apparatus. Memory milieus to all intents and purposes became a mere site of memory in the form of the archival case file.

In explaining the lack of emphasis on the Nazi extermination of Jews in Soviet public space of the wartime era, the renowned publicist Ilya Ehrenburg once referred to the Soviet leadership’s preoccupation with the notion of “Judeo-Bolshevism” cultivated by the Nazi propaganda as a means to foster national divisions in the USSR and destabilize the Red Army and the Stalinist

regime.⁸¹ Given the brutality of the Nazi occupation, the official emphasis on the victimization of the generic “Soviet people” and the overall number of victims had some basis in reality and doubtlessly served the pragmatic function of wartime mobilization.

Yet the reasons why the marginalization of the Holocaust in the Soviet public space proved so enduring had less to do with wartime contingency or even with the creeping official antisemitism that became evident already by 1942 than with long-term structural factors, notably the inherent ideological subversiveness of narratives about the extermination of the Jews. The distinctive experiences of Soviet Jews in the occupied territories both belied the foundational doctrine of “friendship of the peoples” and, perhaps, more disconcertingly from the perspective of the party leadership, evoked the spectre of extensive indigenous collaboration in all of its multifarious forms. Questions about the underlying causes of the collaboration, in their turn, could easily bring to the fore the violent experiences of collectivisation, the man-made famine, the terror of 1937-1938 and mass repression that accompanied the annexation of Western border regions in 1939-1941, thus casting into doubt the legitimacy of the Stalinist regime itself.

Nikifor Iusov, Egor Ushakov and Venedikt Bulanov climbed the gallows on 23 January 1944, a time when public executions of Nazi war criminals and local collaborators had been established as an essential feature of the Stalinist symbolic order throughout the formerly occupied territories. Officially institutionalized as a preferred form of punishment for the Nazi war criminals and their local henchmen through a decree of the Supreme Soviet from 19 April 1943, public hangings became particularly common in the wake of the first didactic trial of Nazi war criminals in Krasnodar in July 1943.⁸² The wartime institutionalization of execution as a

⁸¹ Il'ia Èrenburg, *Liudi, gody, zhizn'* (Moskva: “Sovetskii pisatel',” 1990), t.2, kn.5, 351.

⁸² See The Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR “On Measures of Punishment for German-Fascist Evil-Doers, Guilty of Murder and Torture of the Soviet Civilian Population and POWs, for Spies and Traitors from Among Soviet Citizens, and their Collaborators,” 19 April 1943. The text of the document was reproduced in full in Irina Bezborodova, *General'no vermakhta v plenu* (Moskva: Rossiiskii gumanitarnyi universitet, 1998), 203-204; An abridged version of the decree can also be found in Zaïtsev, *Sbornik zakonodatel'nykh i normativnykh aktov*, 66; Vrons'ka, *Kyïv u dni natsysts'koï navyly*, 385-386.

For the analysis of various aspects of the Soviet politics of retribution, see Wagenlehner, *Stalins Willkurjustiz*; Epifanov, *Otvetsvennost' gitlerovskikh voennykh prestupnikov*; Prusin, “Fascists Criminals to the Gallows”; Penter, “Collaboration on Trial”; Bourman, “Blood for Blood, Death for Death.”

According to the official data, in 1943 the authorities publicly hanged the total 70 people. In 1944 the number rose to 83 (Mozokhin, “Statisticheskie svedeniia”). The actual number of public executions was likely a lot higher, as Soviet partisans and Red Army soldiers frequently carried out unreported extra-judicial executions of German prisoners of war and indigenous collaborators, notably soldiers of the so-called “Russian Liberation Army.” See, for example, the reminiscences by the decorated veteran of the Red Army Ion Lazarevich Degen, in which he explicitly

spectacle, while similar to the terror practices of the Nazis, marked a radical departure from the highly secret killing operations of the NKVD before the Second World War.⁸³ At the core of this shift lay the issue of legitimacy, which acquired tremendous urgency after the Axis armed forces had overrun large tracts of Soviet territory. This peculiarity would subsequently impede proper recognition of the Holocaust.

Symptoms of the crisis of legitimacy of the Soviet government included desertions and voluntary surrender by numerous Red Army soldiers; reluctance of many Communist party members to evacuate and the virtual collapse of the Soviet partisan movement during the initial months of the invasion; extensive collaboration with the enemy throughout the occupied territories and the budding nationalist insurgency in the western border regions.⁸⁴

Communist officials responded to this perceived crisis through ubiquitous propaganda, extensive repression, and the intensification of pre-war regimes of domestic surveillance. No less important, the reconstruction of the shaken foundations of the Soviet political order drew on a plethora of elaborate power rituals encompassing obligatory mass rallies in “liberated”

references strangling “Vlasovites” by the noose attached to the vertically moving barrel of the tank gun (<http://www.iremember.ru/tankisti/degen-ion-lazarevich/stranitsa-16.html>, accessed 3 October 2011).

⁸³ On public executions during the Nazi occupation of Kyiv, see the undated testimony given to the Commission for the Study of History of the Great Patriotic War by the artist Nikolai Andrianovich Prakhov (TsDAVOVU, f. 4620, op.3, d.243a, ark.10); on public executions in Kherson during the occupation: the excerpt from the protocol of interrogation of the former chief of the auxiliary police in Kherson Valerian Tremmel, 18 August 1955 (AUSBUKhO, fond taiemnoho dilovodstva, op. 1209, spr.70, t.1, ark.102). The operational order No.00447 which inaugurated the mass operations of 1937-1938 prescribed complete secrecy as regards announcements of troika verdicts. In accordance with the directive of the NKVD of the USSR No.424, people sentenced to death by troikas and dvoikas were not informed about the verdict in order to forestall potential resistance. They learned about the pending execution only on site. See Alekseĭ Teplakov, *Protседura: Iсполneniia smertnykh prigovorov v 1920-1930kh godakh* (Moskva: Vozvrashchenie, 2007), 9.

Even though on 24 May 1944 the decree of the Supreme Soviet explicitly prohibited military tribunals from sentencing defendants to death by hanging, under pressure from the punitive organs public hangings of war criminals nonetheless continued until the death penalty was temporarily abolished in May 1947 (Epifanov, *Otvettvennost' gitlerovskikh voennykh prestupnikov*, 31). Before 24 May 1944 military tribunals did not have the right to try people suspected of committing war crimes. Previously such cases fell under the exclusive jurisdiction of military field courts (*voenno-polevye sudy*). See “The Decree of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on granting Military Tribunals the Right to Try Crimes Falling under the Purview of Article 1 of the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR from 19 April 1943,” 24 May 1944

(http://bdsa.ru/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=823&Itemid=30, accessed 26 September 2011). The death penalty was abolished by the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet on 26 May 1947, but was re-introduced already in January 1950: Iurii Shemshuchenko, ed., *Zherty repressii* (Kiev: Iurinform, 1993), 28.

⁸⁴ Oleksandr Lysenko and Vladyslav Hrynevych, “Vyprobuvannia: perevirka viinoiu,” in *Ukraina i Rosiia v istorychnii retrospektyvi*. Tom 2. *Radians'kyi proekt dlia Ukrainy*, eds. Vladyslav Hrynevych, Vasyl' Danylenko, Stanislav Kul'chyts'kyi and Oleksandr Lysenko, 144-396 (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2004), 185-195.

localities,⁸⁵ re-burials and commemoration of victims of Nazi atrocities, demonstrative erasure from the physical landscape of German military cemeteries and memorials,⁸⁶ staged marches of the vanquished and humiliated German prisoners of war,⁸⁷ widely publicized didactic trials of Nazi war criminals, and, last but not least, public executions of enemies of the regime-- be they German military, nationalist guerrillas, or local perpetrators of the Holocaust.

Within communities brutalized and fragmented by the prior experiences of Soviet, Nazi, and, in the western border regions, nationalist violence, the macabre spectacles appealed to a widespread desire for justice and revenge.⁸⁸ Such symbolic acts also sent an immensely powerful message

⁸⁵ According to head of the department of the propaganda and agitation of the CC CP(b)U Lytvyn, by 1 January 1944 in the towns and villages of the Chernihiv region alone there took place 1242 meetings in which the estimated 350.000 people took part (TsDAHOU, f.1, o.70, spr.209, ark.45).

Complete with invariable scripted speeches by Communist functionaries, Red Army commanders and Soviet partisans, such rallies always featured spontaneous and doubtlessly sincere expressions of gratitude to Stalin and the Red Army for liberation from the Nazi yoke by many representatives of the public.

For an illustration of the phenomenon, see transcripts of speeches at the city meeting in Kiev on 27 November 1943 by the Ukrainian party boss Nikita Khrushchev, Marshall Zhukov and General Vatutin (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.70, spr.95, ark.79-81); also the undated "Materials for Speakers at the Meeting of Revenge" (in Kremets', Ternopil region), composed by Deputy Chief of the Political Department of the 13th Army lieutenant colonel Suchkov (TsDAHOU, f. 57, op.4, spr. 25, ark.448-451); the official report on the meeting in Sarny, Volhynia on 14 January 1944 (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.70, spr.101, ark.14-21). For a perspective by a participant, see the diary by the painter Anton Komashka, entry from 25 September 1943(TsDAMLIMU, f.290, op.1, spr.141, ark.7).

⁸⁶ On 1 April 1942 Stalin signed the decree of the State Committee of Defence No. 1517. The decree obligated regional and local executive committees to organize special brigades entrusted with collecting unburied corpses and ordering the existing burials of Soviet soldiers. Such brigades were also to "liquidate" German military cemeteries located within population centres and re-bury the fallen enemy soldiers in remote locations outside towns and villages, and away from major highways and Soviet military cemeteries (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr.134, ark.1-2). On this subject, see also Oleksandr Potyl'chak, *Radians'ki rezhymni ustanovy dlia viis'kovopolonenykh ta internovanykh v URSR (1939-1954): organizatsiia, dyslokatsiia, struktura* (doctoral dissertation, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Institute of History, Kyiv, 2005, especially chapter 6: "Pokhovannia inozemnykh viis'kovopolonenykh ta internovanykh Drugoi Svitovoï viiny v Ukraïni."

In Kyiv, the German occupation authorities organized the military cemetery on the Askoldova Mohyla. The cemetery and the monument got destroyed in November 1943 following the return of the Red Army to Kyiv: Malakov, *Kyiv, 1941-1943*, 159). About the German military cemetery in Kharkiv, see the report by People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Vasiliï Riasnoiï (10 October 1943) (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr.536, ark.1).

⁸⁷ On 17 July 1944 some 42000 German POWs, including more than a thousand officers and 19 generals were marched through the streets of Moscow. Later in the day People's Commissar of Internal Affairs Lavrentii Beriia reported to Stalin about what later became known as the "parade of the vanquished." Beriia's report has been published in the journal *Rodina*, No.4, 2005 (http://www.istrodina.com/rodina_articul.php3?id=1529&n=83, accessed on 16 September 2011). An analogous march was staged in Kiev on 17 August 1944. The materials relating to the march in Kiev, including Khrushchev's report to Stalin can be found at TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr.940.

⁸⁸ Il'ia Ėrenburg described how in 1943 in the Chernihiv region he saw a woman pulling in rage on the beard of the hanged collaborator (Ėrenburg, *Liudi, gody, zhizn'*, t.2, kn.5: 315); See also the testimony of the retired security service official Nakhman Dushanskiï describing the public execution he organized in the village Liubavichi in Belorussia. According to Dushanskiï, during the execution of one of the three local collaborators, the rope broke under the weight of the condemned men. Though in such situations it was customary to commute the death sentence to 25 year imprisonment, according to Dushanskiï, the local people refused to play by the rules. Before the representative of the military tribunal read out the existing regulations, the crowd had already put the man back into

about the inevitability of retribution to actual and potential collaborators in the territories not yet under Soviet control. More importantly, however, public executions of a small number of the most notorious local killers, accompanied with cheers and ritual applause from the crowds of spectators,⁸⁹ effectively reproduced the official public discourse, which marginalized collaboration as an expression of social pathology by a handful of inveterate enemies—the so-called traitors of the Soviet people.⁹⁰ This legitimating meta-narrative of state power, which on 23 January 1944 was symbolically re-enacted through the lifeless bodies of Ushakov, Iusov, and Bulanov, generally had little space for the distinctive experiences of Soviet Jews. For dozens of local men, women, and children who in September 1941 joined in the anti-Jewish violence in Podil, it had no place whatsoever.

The following chapters will deepen the discussion of the processes of creation of the new political community using as a point of departure the official verification of the wartime activities of Soviet partisan units and underground groups and the history of the collection of children's reminiscences about the Nazi occupation assembled by the Administration of State Archives of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR.

the noose (Nakhman Dushanskiĭ: www.iremember.ru/drugie-voyska/dushanskiy-nakhman-noakhovich/stranitsa-4.html, accessed 11 October 2011).

⁸⁹ Statements about “positive reactions” to the execution of war criminals surface again and again in classified documents by both the NKGB and party organs. See the Interim Prosecutor General of the UkrSSR Roman Rudenko to chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the UkrSSR Leonid Korniets about the execution of a local collaborator in Mariupol on 8 October 1943, which allegedly was met “with applause” (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr.689, ark.45); On the public execution of collaborators in Mena, Voroshilovgrad region, see Secretary of the Mena district committee of the Communist Party Plotnikov to secretary of the TsK KP(b)U Demyan Korotchenko, 19 October 1943 (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr.688, ark.56); Jubilant reactions to the execution of defendants in the Kharkiv trial were also evoked in the official report that Nikita Khrushchev sent to Joseph Stalin: “On the Khar'kov Trial of the German Invaders and Traitors of the Motherland,” 20 December 1943 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr. 463, ark.15-20); also the above mentioned report by lieutenant colonel of state security Bondarenko, 24 January 1944 (HDA SBU, f.2, op.108, spr.8, ark.164-165).

⁹⁰ Jeffrey Jones, “Every Family Has Its Freak”: Perceptions of Collaboration in Occupied Soviet Russia, 1943-1948,” *Slavic Review* 64, No. 4 (Winter, 2005): 747-770.

Chapter 5

Partisans, “False Partisans,” and the Negotiation of Political Identities

On 10 October 1945 Alekseĭ Alekseevich Fedorov,¹ the glorified Soviet partisan commander and at the time first secretary of the regional committee of the Communist party in Kherson, Ukraine, reported about the results of the official verification of wartime activities of several partisan units and underground groups that allegedly operated on the territory of the Kherson region during the Axis occupation. Having presented the information about a number of officially recognised units and groups, whose members for the most part perished between 1941 and 1943, Fedorov dedicated a separate section of the report to six formations that he designated as “false partisan.” These groups, the first secretary of the Kherson *obkom* (regional committee of the Communist party) alleged, emerged during the final week of the occupation and consisted of people, who by presenting false accounts of their wartime activities attempted to cover up their “crimes” against the “Soviet motherland” or justify their passivity in the struggle against the enemy.²

Fedorov singled out in particular the so-called “Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyĭ” partisan unit that allegedly operated in the Ivanivka and Akymivka districts between September 1941 and November 1943.³ Led by old Communists Trokhym Klymenko and Dmytro Illiashenko, the officially designated “false partisan” unit and the affiliated underground cell carried on its roster 136 members, including many local Communists, some Red Army deserters, auxiliary policemen, a village elder, and even a few people identified by Fedorov as agents of German punitive organs.⁴

The story of the “Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyĭ” unit was by no means unique. The available archival documents make clear that at the time the Communist party and Soviet punitive organs conducted similar investigations in relation to a plethora of would be “resistance” groups and

¹ See his memoir: Alekseĭ Fedorov, *The Underground Committee Carries On* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Pub. House, 1952).

² Alekseĭ Fedorov, “The Summary Report on the Political Work of the Underground Organizations,” 10 October 1945, (State Archives of the Kherson Region (DAKhO), f. p-3562, op.2, spr.49, ark.1-20).
³ Alekseĭ Fedorov, “The Summary Report on the Political Work of the Underground Organizations,” 10 October 1945 (State Archives of the Kherson Region (DAKhO), f. p-3562, op.2, spr.49, ark.1-20).

³ As a result of the administrative reform of 1944, Ivanivka district was incorporated into the newly created Kherson region. Akymivka district remained part of the Zaporizhzhia region.

⁴ DAKhO, f.p-3562, spr.49, ark.17-18.

individuals suspected of “collaboration” throughout the formerly occupied territories of the Soviet Union.⁵ Between 1944 and 1946 party organs in Ukraine alone refused to recognize as legitimate claims by hundreds of such entities. By August 1946 in the city of Kyiv the number of officially styled “false underground groups” (*lzhepodpol’nye gruppy*) totalled eleven. The Kiev region boasted of nineteen such groups and eighteen unrecognized partisan units (*lzhepartizanskie otriady*), while a further sixteen underground organizations and two partisan units were still under official scrutiny.⁶ The corresponding numbers for other regions at around the same time were: Odessa region—at least twenty unrecognized underground groups and partisan units;⁷ Kherson region—at least eight;⁸ Mykolaïv region—at least twelve;⁹ Voroshylovhrad region—at least eleven;¹⁰ Vinnytsia region—at least two.¹¹ This is obviously just the tip of the iceberg, as the picture was likely very similar in the remaining eighteen regions of the Ukrainian SSR.¹²

What precipitated the unprecedented growth of numbers of partisans and the proliferation of partisan units in the final months of the German occupation and thereafter was awareness by Soviet citizens of the arch-exacting criteria of loyalty propagated by the Stalinist regime. Realization that their behaviour during the occupation, sometimes by virtue of necessity, diverged from official definitions of patriotism was the single most important reason why many people feared the return of Soviet power. Therefore in the face of the seemingly inevitable German defeat, those Soviet citizens who decided not to evacuate with the Germans (or were unable to do so) perceived joining the ranks of resistance, real or imagined, as the only viable

⁵It is important to note that habitual usage by historians notwithstanding, representatives of Soviet power never employed the term “collaboration” to describe the phenomenon of cooperation with the Axis powers in the occupied territories of the USSR. The term “collaboration” in the post-Soviet space began to be used systematically only during the 1990s—largely under the influence of “Western” scholarship. The Soviet terms customarily reserved for individuals cooperating with the wartime enemies of the Soviet state were “traitors” and “henchmen” (“*predateli*,” “*izmenniki Rodiny*” and “*posobniki vraga*”).

⁶ The calculations are based on the materials of the following file: TsDAHOU, f.1, op.22, spr.378.

⁷ TsDAHOU, f.1, op.22, spr.450, ark.77-84.

⁸ DAKhO, f.p-3562, op.2, spr.50.

⁹ TsDAHOU, f.1, op.22, spr.422.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, spr.188.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, op.23, spr.161, ark.25-26.

¹² It is also important to note that some armed groups were never officially designated as “false partisan,” which did not prevent Soviet secret police from arresting their members. See, for example, the report of secretary of the Kalanchak *raïkom* (district committee of the Communist party) Kudinov to the Kherson *obkom*, dated 20 July 1945. According to Kudinov in the port Khorly, two days prior to the arrival of the Red Army, there appeared an armed group consisting of village elder and some policemen. These individuals “did not assist the Red Army and did not struggle against the German invaders.” After the arrival of the Red Army, the group was disarmed, its members arrested and convicted (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.50, ark.37).

route into the “community of the Soviet people.”¹³ Particularly well represented within this group were former Communists, prisoners of war, Red Army deserters, and auxiliary policemen.¹⁴

Nobody understood the motives and concerns of such people better than did functionaries of the Communist party and of the Soviet secret police. What Soviet officials in their effort to implement a definitive political categorization of the population in the formerly occupied territories had trouble understanding is that under the conditions of brutal Nazi rule many individuals engaged, for a variety of reasons, in a whole spectrum of activities along the axis of collaboration-resistance.¹⁵ Deliberate lies by individuals under official investigations thus not infrequently meshed with stories about very real activities that encroached on the boundaries of Nazi legality and could thus be legitimately construed as acts of resistance, even if these were not necessarily perceived as politically motivated acts at the time of the events.¹⁶ In combination with the particularities of official information gathering and handling and the specific constellations of power relations within individual communities, this feature of wartime

¹³ A member of the Communist underground in Kherson wrote after the war: “[...] In September [1943] comrade Sergeev told me that at the Komintern shipyards there appeared some “Underground Committee.” I suggested that comrade Sergeev become its member and inform me about its activities. From Sergeev I learned that the “Committee” was headed by Sinel’nikov, Lukyanov and Sorokin. The latter we did not trust, in part because during one of the first meetings of the “Committee” he stated that it was time to start doing something, “because ours will arrive and will grab us by the rear end”[...]”[emphasis mine—O.M.] (“tak kak pridut nashi I voz’mut nas za odno mesto.”) (DAKhO, f.p-3562, op.2, spr.53, ark.93). A.G. Bezverkhniĭ and V.S. Khristoforov cited a story from the prosecution file of a group of former servicemen of Sonderkommando SS 10A that was involved in acts of mass murder in Krasnodar. These attempted to pass as members of the Soviet underground organization (Bezverkhniĭ and Khristoforov, *Smersh*, 315).

¹⁴ The order No.270 of the Headquarters of the Supreme Command of the Red Army (16 August 1941) obligated the Red Army soldiers and officers to fight to the bitter end and effectively criminalized not only desertion, but also captivity. The text of the order can be found in Iampol’skiĭ, *Organy gosudarstvennoĭ bezopasnosti*, t.2, kn. 1, 482-486.

¹⁵ Soviet dissident Anatolii Efimovich Bakanichev (b. 1920), arrested in 1948 on charges of “treason” and sentenced to 15 years of labor camps related in his unpublished memoir stories about frequent exchange of personnel between Soviet partisan units and anti-partisan detachments raised by the German occupation authorities. Bakanichev heard these stories from participants of events themselves. See Anatoliĭ Bakanichev, *Vospominaniia*. 1974. Unpublished manuscript (Narodnyi Arkhiv (NA), f.21, op.1, d.2, l.76).

Tentative efforts to conceptualize this problem can be found in Penter, “Collaboration on Trial.” See also Oleksandr Melnyk, “Zhnyva istoriografii: monografiya Karela Berkhofa i problemy interpretatsii dzhherel z istorii okupovanoi natsystamy Ukrainy,” *Ukraina Moderna* 13, No.2 (2008): 266-289. Soviet ordering of the political space in the formerly occupied territories is conceptualized in Weiner, *Making Sense of War*; also Baberowski and Döring-Manteuffel, *Ordnung durch Terror*.

¹⁶ See, for example, the testimony of a certain Sazonov, a book-keeper at the train depo in Raden’ske (Kherson region). Sazonov construed as “resistance” acts that were not intentionally political,—e.g. supplying documents to a runaway POW and illegally securing a food ration for a co-worker. The latter had been deprived of the food ration for 10 days by a German commandant (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.50, ark.24).

experience created conditions in which one's status within the Soviet political community could be negotiated and re-negotiated in the aftermath of the occupation.

Why did certain individuals find themselves among “collaborators” and “false partisans,” while others were accorded the desired status, sometimes following a prolonged process of “negotiation” with the powers that be?¹⁷ What actions-- or lack thereof—were construed as “resistance” or “collaboration” by different representatives of the Soviet state (functionaries of the Partisan Staffs, Communist party officials, NKGB investigators, and others)? How did putative partisans go about obtaining official recognition and what discursive strategies did they adopt in their dealings with the authorities? How important for the outcome of such investigations were specific state functionaries and residents of local communities, whose depositions, often reflecting intra-communal conflicts of the prewar era, were used to determine the wartime behaviour or to verify testimonies of putative “resisters” and “collaborators”? Where did the visions of different actors converge? On what points did they clash? What was the dynamic of their interaction over time, given that functionaries of the Soviet state possessed power to normalise their own narratives of wartime experience by means of criminalising or rewarding certain types of behaviour in the occupied territories? Finally, what can the engagement with official efforts at information gathering and the multi-vectoral struggles over the meaning of wartime experience reveal about the Soviet state, its relationship with the local communities, and postwar reconstruction of political communities in the territories that experienced Axis rule? These are some of the questions that are explored in this chapter.

The Origins of the Soviet Partisan Movement

The history of the “Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyi” partisan unit and the affiliated Communist underground cell, which came into existence on the orders of the Zaporizhzhia regional committee of the Communist party in August 1941 and originally consisted of thirty and nine members respectively, is inextricably bound with efforts of the Stalinist leadership to organise

¹⁷Some Soviet citizens officially became recognized as “partisans” only in the 1960s. See, for example, Chaikovs’kyi, *Nevidoma viina*, 247-249; Hrynevych, “Mit viiny ta viina mitiv.”

resistance in the rear of the advancing Wehrmacht. In Ukraine alone in the first months of the war different bodies organized and left on the territories soon to be occupied or dispatched behind enemy lines 883 partisan units and some 1,700 diversionary groups--about 35,000 people in total.¹⁸ The overwhelming majority of these early partisans came from the ranks of Civil War veterans, participants of destruction battalions, personnel of the NKVD and NKGB, as well as Communists and *Komsomol* members not utilized for underground work.¹⁹

It was in this context that in August 1941 the officials of the Zaporizhzhia *obkom* ordered the organization of a partisan unit and its affiliated Communist underground cell in the Ivanivka and Akimovka districts. The partisan unit consisted of thirty Communist party members and rural activists and was commanded by the Civil War veteran and former chief of the district militia Trokhym Klymenko. The clandestine network led by the former official of the Ivanivka military board Dmytro Illiashenko encompassed nine participants.²⁰

The fate of many of the early partisan detachments was unenviable. Constantly hounded by German security forces and their local auxiliaries, most of these poorly trained and ill-equipped groups suffered from lack of supplies and internal turmoil in the wake of the Red Army defeats. Demoralization hit particularly hard partisans in central, southern and eastern Ukraine, where the geographical terrain was poorly suited for the conduct of guerrilla warfare and there was a larger segment of hostile population than, for example, in Belorussia. Such demoralization contributed immensely to the efficiency of German counter-insurgency operations. As a result, by late 1941 most partisan units in Ukraine had ceased to exist, destroyed in battle or simply succumbed to the processes of internal disintegration.²¹ A similar fate befell the Communist

¹⁸ Chaikovs'kyi, *Nevidoma viina*, 34-35.

¹⁹ See Special report of L.Beriia to I.Stalin "On the Activities of the Organs of the NKVD of the USSR in the Rear of the Enemy," 13 March 1942 (Khaustov, Naumov and Plotnikova, *Lubianka*, 330-334). Destruction battalions (*istrebitel'nye batal'ony*)-- were armed units organized during the summer 1941 for the purpose of fighting German parachutists and carrying guard duty at strategically important sites in the rear of the Red Army.

²⁰ See the resolution of the Bureau of the Kherson *obkom*, 6 September 1945 (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr. 50, ark.70-72). The resolution of the Bureau of the Kherson *obkom* drew heavily on the report of the so-called Antonova Commission (5 September 1945). In August-September 1945 the Antonova Commission conducted the verification of the activities of the unit. The report of the Commission is at TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.4-11)

²¹ As of 1 May 1942 party organs were aware of only 200 partisan units still active in Ukraine (Chaikovs'kyi, *Nevidoma viina*, 34-35); See also the report of the 444 German security division about the destruction of Soviet partisans in the Dnieper *plavni* dated 5 November 1941 (TsDAVOVU, f. KMF-8, op.2, spr. 154, ark. 44-53). The document was also published by Mykhaïlo Koval', "Rik 1941-i: partyzany Ukrainy," *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, No.3 (1996): 55-61. On the destruction of Girskiï's partisan unit by units of the Einsatzgruppe D, see Tätigkeits- und Lagebericht Nr.6 in Klein, *Die Einsatzgruppen*, 231, 242 (footnote No.10). For a Soviet partisan's

underground.²² It was thus not until the second year of the war that the Soviet partisan movement became a significant military and political factor in Belorussia, northeastern Ukraine, and the western regions of Russia. Among the factors contributing to the revival of Soviet insurgency one should particularly mention the collapse of Hitler's Blitzkrieg strategy; Nazi policy towards Soviet POWs; violent deportations of young people for work in Germany; and continued German counter-insurgency operations that left hundreds of Belorussian, Russian, and Ukrainian villages in ashes, forcing their surviving residents to join the ranks of partisans.²³ Last but not least, one should not discount the significance of continued endeavours by Soviet authorities to fuel resistance behind the enemy lines by sending in specialized diversionary groups. (These operated under the auspices of military intelligence and the NKVD). In addition to gathering intelligence, disrupting communication lines, and conducting assassinations of German officials, indigenous administrative and police personnel, and activists of nationalist organizations, these often formed the nuclei of emerging partisan units.²⁴

The organizing effort by the NKVD, and from summer 1942 by the Headquarters of the Partisan Movement,²⁵ however, proved of little or no consequence in the steppe regions of Eastern and Southern Ukraine.²⁶ To use a term from the vocabulary of Nazi officials, this part of the country remained effectively "pacified" throughout the occupation period. As a result, these regions

perspective on the disintegration of Soviet partisan units in the Chernihiv region, see the testimony of Georgii Artazeev (TsDAHOU, f.166, op.2, spr. 48, ark.1-63).

²² Skorobohatov, *Kharkiv*, 223-239.

²³ Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans in WWII*; Matthew Cooper, *The Phantom War: the German Struggle Against Soviet Partisans, 1941-1944*. (London: Macdonald and Janes, 1979); Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 275-282; Pohl, *Die Herrschaft der Wehrmacht*, 285-304.

²⁴ See, for example, Instructions of the NKVD of the USSR No.3320/SV "On Measures Aimed at Liquidation of the Fascist Administration in the Temporarily Occupied Territory of the Ukrainian SSR," 30 November 1941 (Iampol'skiĭ, *Organy gosudarstvennoĭ bezopasnosti v Velikoĭ otechestvennoĭ voĭne*, t.2, kn. 2: 371-372). See also "The List of Persons Executed by the Partisan Units of the Rovno Region," (TsDAHOU, f.62, op.1, spr. 271, ark.29-38). On the role of the NKVD in the history of the Soviet partisan movement: Alekseĭ Popov, *15 vstrech s generalom KGB Bel'chenko* (Moskva: Olma-Press, 2002), 173-190.

²⁵ Central Headquarters of the Partisan Movement (*Tsentral'nyi shtab partizanskogo dvizheniia*) was created on 30 May 1942 by the decision of the State Defense Committee (*Gosudarstvennyi Komitet Oborony*) for the purpose of conducting leadership and coordination of the partisan movement in the occupied territory. Subordinated to the Central Partisan Staff were several territorial bodies — Western, Kalinin, Briansk, Leningrad and Karelian Partisan Staffs. On 20 June 1942 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine created the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement (*Ukrainskiĭ shtab partizanskogo dvizheniia*). Subsequently, between September 1942 and July 1943 8 more territorial Partisan Staffs came into life (See Boiarskiĭ, *Partizany i armii*, 182-183).

²⁶ Throughout 1942 the NKVD and military intelligence occasionally parachuted diversionary groups into the occupied parts of Ukraine. These, however, were often destroyed within days, sometimes hours after their landing. About a group of Soviet parachutists destroyed by auxiliary police in 1942 at the village Podokalynivka in the Gola Prystan' district of the Kherson region, See "The Overview of Archival Materials on the Intelligence-Diversionary Group," 1 June 1995 (DAKhO, f.p-3562, op.2, spr.1, ark.37).

were also a lot less affected by the whirlwind of destruction brought along by German counter-insurgency operations which defined daily life in Belorussia, northern Ukraine, and the western regions of Russia until the very last days of Nazi rule.²⁷ This notwithstanding, when the Red Army units returned to the area in 1943 and 1944, here too they were often greeted by groups of armed men (and some women) who presented themselves as “partisans” and subsequently took part in military operations alongside regular army units. And when the dust settled, “partisans” not mobilized into the Red Army, not infrequently ended up occupying positions of authority in the newly “liberated” towns and villages.

The Soviet State and the Problem of “False Partisans

The term “false partisans” (*lzhepartizany*) entered the vocabulary of Communist officialdom while large parts of the Soviet Union were still under the rule of Nazi Germany and its allies. Already on 6 April 1942, shortly after Soviet troops temporarily recaptured the district town Lozova in the Kharkiv region, People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR, Vasiliĭ Sergienko, informed the first secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine Khrushchev about the arrest of ten self-proclaimed “partisans.” Following a probe into their activities by the organs of the NKVD, all Lozova partisans, including the group leader Efim Fufrianskiĭ, were charged with “treason” and alleged links to German intelligence.²⁸ Fears about German agents disguised as “partisans” penetrating the organs of Soviet power and military staffs were even more evident in a report submitted by the interim People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR, Sergeĭ Savchenko, to Khrushchev on 22 June 1942.²⁹

By February 1943, when in the wake of victory at Stalingrad the Red Army began its drive into the Donbas and eastern Ukraine, the concerns over the phenomenon that the term “false partisans” purported to describe became all-pervasive. Speaking during a conference with

²⁷ In Lel’chitsy district of Belorussia, for example, completely destroyed were 62 out of 63 villages. See Vladimir Adamushko, ed., *Osvobozhdennaia Belarus’: Dokumenty i materialy. Kniga Pervaia. Sentiabr’ 1943—dekabr’ 1944* (Minsk: NARB, 2004), 50. See also Bernhard Chiari, *Alltag hinter der Front: Besatzung, Kollaboration und Widerstand in Weissrussland 1941-1944* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1998).

²⁸ HDA SBU, f.16, op.1, spr.4, ark.35-37.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, ark.63-67.

district officials in Milove (Voroshilovhrad region) on 1 February 1943, Leonid Korniiets', head of the government of the Ukrainian SSR, identified the registration and verification of partisans as one of the most pressing tasks of the local administration—no less important than the reconstruction of the party and state apparatus, registration of the remaining population, and elimination of “counterrevolutionary elements.”³⁰ Upon registration, Korniiets' instructed local officials, all partisans were to be handed over to the chief of the local branch of the NKVD, “who knows what information about them interests us.” “Such people” [partisans], Korniiets' concluded, “are to be identified, and we wish to be informed about them.”³¹

Two things thus become apparent from the protocol of the conference in Milove. First, after the re-establishment of the organs of Soviet power, interrogation of partisans and micro-management of the process of verification was the responsibility of the NKVD. It must be noted that partisans who had arrived on the scene before the appearance of the NKVD and party officials were registered and subject to preliminary verification by representatives of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement (further UShPD) moving together with army units. Second, lower level party and government officials were not supposed to know what the NKVD was doing with partisans and what the republican leadership wanted to know about them—“the NKVD chief knows what information interests us.”

Several weeks after the conference in Milove something important happened in the town Troits'ke, about 200km east of Kharkiv, raising the level of official alarm about “false partisans” and concerns about the infiltration of Soviet organs by German agents to an even higher level. The string of dramatic events was set in motion on 2 March 1943, when deputy chief of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement Lieutenant Colonel Metel'ev informed Leonid Korniiets' about a so-called “partisan regiment” (*partizanskiĭ polk*) and its commander “colonel Nivskii.”³² Having familiarized himself with the documentation of the “regiment,” emissaries of the UShPD established that the latter consisted of more than 600 partisans and allegedly destroyed in cooperation with the Red Army more than 1,700 German soldiers and officers (the claim was never verified). Yet, already at this stage Metel'ev sounded the alarm about the “political portrait” of the unit and its leadership. Among the negative aspects in the history of the unit, the deputy chief of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement noted in

³⁰ TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 23, spr. 538, ark.30ob-34.

³¹ Ibid., ark.34.

³² See “Special report ‘On the Troitskoe Partisan Unit,’” 2 March 1943 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr. 524, ark.3-4ob).

particular Nivskii's "pursuit of glory" and "his determination to create a regiment to be able to justify the rank of colonel that he had given himself." As a result, according to the document, the "regiment" became a refuge for people who resided in the occupied territories, worked for the enemy, served in the police, and for suspected spies and other "elements" that in the face of Red Army victories joined Nivskii in order to "rehabilitate themselves as partisans."³³

But it was the command cadres of the "regiment," starting with "colonel Nivskii" himself, which raised the largest number of questions. According to Metel'ev, the real name of "colonel Nivskii" was Nikolaï Ivanovich Vill. Born in 1907, of Estonian background and a teacher by profession, he was a Red Army soldier, who in 1942 was taken prisoner and placed into a German POW camp. In August 1942 Vill allegedly escaped and joined a partisan unit in the Poltava region. Very soon, however, he left for the Voroshilovhrad region, arguably on orders to organize partisan groups there. Having arrived in the village Nikol'ske, Metel'ev claimed, Vill soon married a sister of the village policeman Kotov. What made Vill particularly suspicious in the eyes of the representative of the USHPD was the friendship that he established with policemen Kotov, Mishchenko and Volkov, whom he would eventually supply with certificates of membership in the unit. This move apparently precipitated Vill's conflict with captain Iatsenko, his chief of staff. Trying to conceal "the real face of the unit" and his connections with "traitors," Metel'ev wrote, on 30 January 1943 Vill ordered the execution of twenty-five people, including captain Iatsenko, having accused them of treason and refusal to follow his combat orders. The execution, Metel'ev emphasized, took place *after* Soviet power was re-established in the Troits'ke district and could have been avoided easily, had Vill's record indeed been spotless.³⁴

One of Vill's close collaborators was a certain Georgii Gular'ian. A former Red Army officer, during the occupation Gular'ian served as commander of an anti-partisan detachment of "Ukrainian Cossacks." Eventually, he persuaded some thirty Cossacks to join Nivskii's "regiment."³⁵ Many other commanders of partisan groups and individual partisans of Nivskii's "regiment" at some point were under arrest by the German punitive organs, but were either released or escaped and continued their underground work. This group of suspected "German

³³ Ibid., ark.3ob.

³⁴ Ibid., ark.4.

³⁵ Ibid.

agents,” according to the deputy chief of the UShPD, encompassed all members of the Troits’ke underground committee, including its secretary Tkachenko.³⁶

Taking into consideration compromising materials about the commanding cadres of the “regiment” and of the Troits’ke underground committee, deputy chief of the UShPD concluded, “the operative group of the UShPD considers it appropriate to hand over all the materials to the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR for more thorough investigation, particularly on the subject of alleged connections [of the unit members] with the Gestapo.”³⁷

Just how much significance the authorities attached to Vill-Nivskiĭ and the “partisan regiment” is evident from the fact that the investigation of the activities from the very start was supervised by Vasiliĭ Sergienko, at the time chief of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR.³⁸ Moreover, in the following weeks Sergienko regularly informed Khrushchev, Korniiets’ and other members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine about the progress of the investigation. In his reports Sergienko effectively reiterated all the allegations earlier raised by lieutenant colonel Metel’ev, but with an important nuance—Vill-Nivskiĭ, Gular’ian, Tkachenko and other “partisans” were now represented as unquestionably part of an espionage network run by German intelligence.³⁹ Particularly revealing in this regard was Sergienko’s report to Khrushchev dated 1 April 1943. Having informed the leader of the republican party organization about the arrest of twenty-three “partisans” and “members of the underground group” in the Troits’ke district, Sergienko drew a narrative that characterized arrested “partisans” as creatures and obedient tools in the hands of the German security service. In creating a “false partisan unit,” NKVD chief concluded authoritatively, the German SD strove to “paralyse” the genuine resistance movement and to infiltrate the staffs of the Red Army and organs of Soviet power in the “liberated” territories with their own agents.⁴⁰

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Biographical data about Vasiliĭ Sergienko can be found in Petrov and Skorkin, *Kto rukovodil NKVD, 1934-1941*, 378-379.

³⁹ See, for example, People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR V. Sergienko to Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine L. Korniiets’, “On the Exposed and Liquidated German Intelligence Network and the False Partisan Unit that it Created, 19 March, 1943 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr. 524, ark.5-10).

⁴⁰ TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr. 524, ark.11-20. At the time of their arrest several “partisans” occupied positions of authority in the district party and state organs. Thus Tkachenko was first secretary of the Troits’ke *raĭkom*; Vasil’ev—second secretary of the *raĭkom*; Tavolzhanskiĭ—chairman of the district executive committee (*raĭispolkom*); Salienko—head of the district school-board; Grib—editor of the district newspaper; Kalashnik—deputy chairman of the *raĭispolkom*; Aleksandrov—head of the mobilization unit of the district military board; Neka—head doctor of

In light of the available evidence, the question about how realistic NKVD charges of espionage were in this case must be left unanswered. There is no doubt, however, that encounters with the “partisan regiment” of “colonel Nivskii” had a major impact on the evolution of the concept of “false partisans” and on official approaches to verification of partisan units in the recently “liberated” territories. Thus drawing a lesson from the case, Sergienko informed Khrushchev about NKVD efforts to identify analogous “false partisan units and groups” and conduct their subsequent “filtration” and disarmament. In the process, individuals suspected of being German spies were arrested, while others were handed over to the military boards for induction into the Red Army.⁴¹

Even though no other units or groups in Ukraine seem to have commanded the kind of attention accorded to Vil-Nivskii and members of his “regiment,” doubts about the “political portrait” of various underground groups and partisan detachments were raised repeatedly throughout the remainder of the war and thereafter. Alarmed by continued discoveries and arrests of “false partisans,” testimonies of trusted partisan commanders with NKVD affiliation,⁴² analysis of perustrated correspondence and of German archival documents, data obtained from NKVD and NKGB informers, and numerous “signals from below,” Communist party and security service officials initiated investigations into the activities of ever larger numbers of partisan units and underground organizations.⁴³ Such investigations became particularly numerous in 1944 and 1945 when most Soviet territory was no longer under the occupation of Axis powers and many

the district hospital.

⁴¹ Ibid., ark.20. Eventually on 26 May 1943, 21 members of the unit were brought before the military tribunal. Following a 6-day trial, most of the defendants, including Vill and Tkachenko, received death sentences. The copy of the verdict of the tribunal was forwarded by Sergienko to Khrushchev on 8 June, 1943 (Ibid., spr. 683, ark.78-92).

⁴² See, for example, the transcript of the interview with Ippolit Danilovich Medynskii, 5 March 1944. In 1943, Medynskii, as an envoy of the UShPD, was parachuted behind enemy lines with a task to organize “wild partisans” in the Vinnytsia region. In the interview to the staff of the Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War Medynskii raised doubts about the loyalties of some partisans of the unit under command of Iurii Kondratiuk. According to Medynskii, a number of Kondratiuk’s partisans may have entertained links with Ukrainian Nationalists, while some participated in mass murder of Ukraine’s Jews. (TsDAHOU, f.166, op.3, spr.76, ark.49-52).

⁴³ See for example Deputy Chief of the Counter-Intelligence Department of the 1st Ukrainian Front Major General Belianov to Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine N. Khrushchev, “On the Arrest of Leaders and Individual Participants of the False partisan Unit under the Command of the former corporal of the Waffen SS Division “Totenkopf”, Fridrich Gotschalk,” 1 February 1944 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr.932, ark.15-17); People’s Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR S.Savchenko to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR N. Khrushchev, “On the Results of the Verification of the Complaint by the former commander of the Makeevka Partisan Unit A.S.Aleksentsev,” 7 June 1944 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr.918, ark.18-19); Epifanov, *Otvettvennost’ za voennye prestupleniia*, 74.

partisan commanders and surviving members of underground groups had submitted official reports about their wartime activities.

The process of verification of these activities cannot be analysed in isolation from official efforts to secure the terrain by way of removing “traitors” and other “counter-revolutionary elements” and to relieve the party and state organs of those deemed untrustworthy. The latter aspect has been relatively well documented. Amir Weiner, in particular, showed, how party organs, grappling with the task of rebuilding of the party-state apparatus in the formerly occupied territories, sought to establish what happened to the pre-war Communists-- and if alive, how they behaved during the occupation. This information was then used as a basis for decisions on reinstating individual Communists within the ranks of the party. Unless they could produce evidence of active resistance, Communists who had remained in the occupied territory were as a rule not reinstated in the party (i.e., they were effectively expelled).⁴⁴

Eventually, many of the Communists were also removed from the positions they occupied, although as several historians have convincingly demonstrated, the challenges of economic reconstruction significantly reduced the scope of the post-occupation purge.⁴⁵ Confronted with a deficit of qualified cadres in the industrial and agricultural sectors of the economy, the party leadership in Ukraine and throughout the formerly occupied territories of the USSR had little choice but to continue to employ “compromised” Communists and wartime “collaborators.” The rationale was articulated very clearly by Nikita Khrushchev himself during a conference with officials of the departments of cadres of the regional committees of the Communist party of Ukraine in June 1944:

We need to rely more on people who remained on the territory occupied by the Germans. All of Ukraine was occupied. As a matter of fact, we do not have another choice. And one should not propagate the idea about the inferiority of such people. This idea is wrong and harmful. One has to approach the question in a business-like manner. We have to support all the qualified, hardworking specialists. We should not

⁴⁴ Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, Chapter 1. Overall number of members of the KP(b)U who remained on the occupied territories exceeded 143,000, of whom 116,000 survived the occupation. As of 10 January 1950 more than 77,000 had been expelled from the ranks of the party, while close to 25,000 cases for a variety of reasons remained unexamined (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.46, spr. 5337, ark.35).

⁴⁵ Tetiana Pershina, *Hospodars'ka nomenklatura v Ukraïni, 1943-1945* (Kyiv: Instytut istoriï Ukraïny NAN Ukraïny, 1997), 15. See also the study by Martin Blackwell, Martin Blackwell, “Regime City of the First Category: The Experience of the Return of Soviet Power to Kyiv, 1943-1946” (PhD dissertation, Indiana University, 2005).

treat such people as if they bear some stigma. We should not do that. It will cause nothing but harm.⁴⁶

Because of the official expectations that “true Communists” had to resist and because many Communists in 1941 were under orders to remain in the enemy rear and to organize resistance, the process of screening party ranks was often inseparable from investigations of the activities of various partisan units and underground groups. The two campaigns, however, were distinct from each other, because verification also encompassed partisan units and underground cells, which, in the official parlance of the day, evolved “spontaneously” (*stikhīno*), that is were not organized by Communist party or security service officials.

In reconstructing the process of verification, it is important to keep in mind that by mid 1942, the organs of Soviet power maintained contact with only a fraction of partisan units and underground cells created in 1941. What happened to the thousands of partisan units and underground groups left behind with special tasks in 1941 and early 1942 was for the most part unknown. In charge of coordinating investigations of the fate of these individuals and groups were the organizational-instructional department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine and its territorial offshoots.⁴⁷ These organs submitted queries about the fate of specific Communists to the respective branches of the NKVD-NKGB, and, if the individuals in question had perished during the occupation, about the circumstances of their death.

Because of the limitations on access to the documentation of the Soviet security service, what exactly happened inside NKGB offices is not completely clear at this point. One can speculate that besides interrogating surviving partisans and members of underground groups, the personnel of the operative departments also browsed their operative registers and catalogues of different categories of “collaborators” (*spiski-spravochniki*) to see if any names would surface there. We also know that NKGB officers scrutinized captured German documents and protocols

⁴⁶ Quoted in Tetiana Pershyna, “Funktsionuvannia administratyvnykh organiv na seli (1943-1945),” *Storinky Voinnoi istoriï Ukraïny. Zbirnyk naukovykh stateï. Vypusk 3* (Kyiv 1999:) 89-91. Also Jeffrey Jones, “Every Family Has its Freak”: Perceptions of Collaboration in Occupied Soviet Russia, 1943-1948,” *Slavic Review* 64, No. 4. (Winter, 2005): 747-770.

⁴⁷ *Organizatsionno-instruktorskiï otdel.*

of interrogations of German POWs and “collaborators” arrested and possibly executed earlier.⁴⁸ Some of the better informed “collaborators,” still in custody, were no doubt subjected to a repeat round of interrogations with more specific questions in mind.⁴⁹ Finally, security service officials managed to establish the fate of some members of the Communist underground as well as their own agents by deciphering inscriptions on the walls of Nazi run prisons.⁵⁰ The results of the search would be communicated to the chief of the relevant branch of the NKGB, and the latter would notify the party organ that made the original inquiry.⁵¹ If investigators had reasons to suspect fallen partisans were betrayed, the NKGB arrested the suspects and began prosecution. In their turn, fallen partisans and underground fighters were recognized as such and their families received financial and food assistance from the state.⁵²

Verification of the wartime activities of “surviving” partisan units and underground groups began shortly after the arrival of the Red Army units. Usually, the process of verification was set in motion by partisans and underground fighters seeking official recognition. By submitting reports about their activities either to emissaries of the Headquarters of the Partisan Movement at the front or to the party organs, they inevitably activated the bureaucracy of verification. Inevitability in this case, however, is not a synonym for a speedy and thorough investigation. Party archives contain many complaints from “partisans” and “underground fighters” about the procrastination of officials responsible for conducting verification and making decisions on reinstatement in the party. Likewise, party organs at the regional level and higher often had to

⁴⁸ See People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR V. Sergienko to secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine N. Khrushchev “On the Underground Organization ‘Young Guard’ and its Destruction,” 31 March 1943 in *“Molodaia Gvardiia”: khudozhestvennyi obraz i istoricheskaia real’nost’: sbornik dokumentov i materialov*. Eds. Irina Ioffe and Nina Petrova (Moskva: Veche, 2003), 18-19. Sergienko’s narrative about the “Young Guard” was based on the testimony of the investigator of the Krasnodon police M. Kuleshov, arrested and interrogated by Soviet security service a few weeks earlier.

⁴⁹ For example, the circumstances of death of Emel’ian Girskii and other commanders of the partisan unit from Kherson were established on the basis of testimonies of the arrested K. Dziuba, A. Kolomoïchenko, and S. Nemytykh. See A. Fedorov, “Report on the Political Work of Underground Organizations,” 10 October 1945 (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.49, ark.5-6).

⁵⁰ Names scribbled on prison walls were specifically sought for in the registries of Department IV of the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR. See Chief of the Registration and Information Sector of the 4th Department of the NKGB of the USSR captain of state security Ignat’iev, “Informational Letter: On the Verification through Registers of the 4th Department of the NKGB of the USSR of Persons, Listed on the Walls and Objects of the Prison of the SD and Gestapo in Kiev,” 28 January 1944 (HDA SBU, f. 13, spr. 438, ark. 60-60ob).

⁵¹ See, for example, chief of the UNKGB in the Kherson region M. Krashenninikov to Secretary of the Kherson regional committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine A. Fedorov, “Informational Letter ‘On the Results of the Investigation of the Circumstances of Destruction of the Partisan unit in the Nyzhni Sirohozy district,’” 6 August 1945 (DAKhO, f. p3562, op.2, spr.18, ark. 26-27).

⁵² See excerpt from the protocol No.55 of the session of the Kherson *obkom*, 17 September 1945, “On the Partisan Unit Organized in the Nyzhni Sirohozy District in August 1941” (Ibid., spr.18, ark.30).

issue multiple reminders to the subordinate party and NKGB officials to expedite the process of verification of registered units, lest they completely neglect this important task.⁵³

If no one submitted a report about the activities of a specific unit or group—for example, if the latter was destroyed—it could go unregistered. Consequently, unless the unit or group had been previously organized by the party organs or by the security service, no investigation took place automatically, and relatives of the fallen had a difficult time obtaining recognition and assistance from the state.⁵⁴

At least in a few cases, however, the party organs did initiate investigations without having earlier obtained reports from “resisters.” Thus in October 1945 first secretary of the Kherson *obkom* Alekseĭ Fedorov received a communication from Colonel Dmitriev of the second department (counter-intelligence) of the Administration of the NKGB in the Kherson region with an attached letter addressed to a Red Army soldier Petr Vasil’evich Efremov, which military censors had earlier forwarded to the NKGB.⁵⁵ In her letter, the author Ol’ga Ivashchenko “reminded” Efremov of the underground organization “Tsvetok” (*Flower*) to which they both had allegedly belonged. The letter contained a list of group members and a fairly detailed description of the group’s plans and activities—e.g., the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate the elder of the village, procurement of weapons, the failed attempt to blow up the railway line, propaganda, and provision of food for the people evading deportation for forced labor in Germany. “You joined this ‘Flower,’” the letter continued, “voluntarily and because we trusted you.” In the end Ivashchenko advised Efremov to reply to her and other people very cautiously. Ivashchenko’s deliberate misidentification of herself on the envelope as “P. Turchenko” is a testimony to just how apprehensive and cautious she herself was.⁵⁶

⁵³Ibid., spr. 54, ark.211; See, for example, the injunction by first secretary of the Kherson *obkom* to expedite the process of verification in the Skadovs’k district, 19 July 1945 (Ibid., spr. 50, ark.36).

⁵⁴Not infrequently it took repeated petitions of family members of the fallen seeking material assistance from the state for the authorities to begin official investigations. One such letter addressed to N.S. Khrushchev by parents of a group of teenagers executed in Kherson in 1942 for involvement in underground activities is at DAKhO, f. p3562, op.2, spr.29, ark.4-4ob).

Also see the 1967 letter of Evdokiia Sergeeva to writer Smirnov soliciting assistance to recognize the group of which her executed son was a member (Ibid., spr.6, ark.101-102).

⁵⁵Organs of censorship, both civilian and military, entrusted with daily perustration of correspondence routinely forwarded suspicious letters to the NKGB. See, for example, a special report prepared on the basis of analysis of perustrated correspondence that People’s Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR S. Savchenko forwarded to Khrushchev’s deputy Dem’ian Korotchenko (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr.918, ark.9-15); also Avzegez, *Chernyĭ kabinet*.

⁵⁶DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.54, ark.102-103.

On receiving the letter, Fedorov forwarded it to the head of the organizational-instructional department of the Kherson regional committee of the Communist party with an order to conduct a verification.⁵⁷ The lack of any subsequent documentation about “Tsvetok,” however, suggests that no investigation actually took place in this case.⁵⁸ Burdened with a multitude of other assignments, district officials most likely did not bother with a group that did not submit an actual report about their activities (and thus formally did not claim a place in the community of resisters).

Bureaucracies

Throughout the war information on the underground and partisan activities that flowed from different branches of the NKGB and district committees of the Communist party was concentrated in the party archives of the regional committees. Representatives of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement sent their reports directly to the central headquarters. Organizational-instructional departments of the regional committees would henceforth act as primary controllers of information about resistance activities in any given region.⁵⁹ In the centre the materials on the Communist underground were concentrated in the party archive under the control of the organizational-instructional department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. Materials on partisan units landed mostly in the archive of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement, before being transferred to the “Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War” in 1947.⁶⁰

Within this system a peculiar place was occupied by the Soviet security service. Because data on partisans and members of the underground were classified as “secret” and “top secret,” access to them was governed by what Jonathan Bone has described as the “right-to-know” controls of

⁵⁷ Ibid. ark.102.

⁵⁸ The only time “Tsvetok” resurfaced in the official documentation was in April 1962. At that time the commission of the Kherson city Committee that looked for “unknown resisters” examined the letter by “P. Turchenko” and, having found it “suspicious,” recommended yet again to forward it to the KGB for verification (Ibid., ark.237-240).

⁵⁹ Ibid., spr.49, ark.29.

⁶⁰ TsDAHOU, f.166, op.2, spr.624, ark.7-14.

information.⁶¹ Consequently, even though the party organs frequently entrusted the NKVD/NKGB/MGB with investigating activities of different partisan units and groups, the security service, it appears, did not possess its own centralized database.⁶² Therefore when organs of the NKGB/MGB required information about certain partisan units, underground groups, or specific “resisters,” they had to request it from the organizational-instructional department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine, its regional offshoots, the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement, and, after the dissolution of the latter, from the “Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War.”

The following is a very characteristic example. On 6 January 1944 People’s Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, Sergeĭ Savchenko, inquired with the organizational-instructional department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine about a certain Mariia Pidchenko, a former party official, who during the occupation of the town Liubotyn in the Kharkiv region had been subject to arrest by the German SD. According to Savchenko, in explaining the reasons for her stay on occupied territory, Pidchenko evoked her membership in the underground organization “Iskra” (“Spark”) headed by a certain Tsymbaliuk. Savchenko requested confirmation about whether such an underground organization was indeed left behind in Liubotyn and whether Pidchenko was among its members.⁶³

A few months later, on 10 June deputy head of the organizational-instructional department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine Viktor Alidin contacted the organizational-instructional department of the Kharkiv regional committee of the Communist party with a request about the organization “Iskra.” Alidin wanted to know if the above-

⁶¹ Jonathan Bone, “Soviet Controls on the Circulation of Information in the 1920s and 1930s,” *Cahiers du monde russe* 40, Nos. 1-2 (January-June, 1999): 65-90.

Secrecy about their wartime activities at this time also governed the lives of many former members of Communist underground organizations, at times becoming a source of personal dramas. Thus a former member of the Communist underground group in Kiev Fedir Lysiuk in a letter to secretary of the TsK KP(b)U Dem’ian Korotchenko related about public humiliations that he had to endure from various Soviet officials and his inability to defend himself because of the ban on divulging to the general public information about the nature of his wartime activities (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.22, spr.20, ark.61-64).

⁶² Subordination of secret police to the party organs in the matter of initiating verification explains why some partisans went unrecognized as such even when the NKGB were aware of the Nazi executions for participation in resistance activities. For example, in Kakhovka (Kherson region) as early as 1945 the secret police possessed information that a group of residents of Kakhovka executed in 1943 belonged to an underground organization (AUSBUKhO, fond taiemnogo dilovodstva, op.1209, spr. 70, t.3, ark.101). The group, however, was officially recognized only in 1962 (DAKhO, f.p-3562, op.2, spr.1, ark.20).

⁶³ TsDAHOU, f.1, op.22, spr.86, ark.86.

mentioned organization existed and, if so, whether it had been recognized by the regional committee. Was it left behind by the party organs or did it emerge “spontaneously”? What was the verdict on its activities? Finally, the regional officials were to inform the organizational-instructional department of the Central Committee about whether Pidchenko belonged to the membership of “Iskra.”⁶⁴ It is of interest to note that the organizational-instructional department did not inform the regional officials that this information was needed by the security service. In its turn, the NKGB inquiry had contained no mention of exactly why this data about Pidchenko was required. We do know, however, that the Soviet punitive organs usually submitted such requests when they needed information in the process of collecting evidence against auxiliary policemen, village elders, and other individuals charged with “collaboration” Soviet style. In other words, what lower level party officials were not supposed to know is that Mariya Pidchenko had been arrested—possibly on suspicion of association with the German punitive organs, as hinted by Savchenko’s mention of her prior arrest by the German SD.⁶⁵ And her only chance to receive exemption from prosecution was to produce convincing evidence of having been a member of an underground organization.⁶⁶ We do not know for certain what happened to Mariia Pidchenko in the end. It is clear, however, that under the chaotic conditions of wartime record keeping and the mind-boggling processes of verification proving the fact of one’s membership in underground organizations or having assisted Soviet partisans could be quite problematic. Consequently, as the Russian historian Elena Seniavskaia noted, not a few Soviet heroes landed in the dock or on the gallows.⁶⁷

The process of verification of partisan units and underground groups became centralized only in early 1945, just as the Soviet propaganda establishment set about creating a mythology of resistance. Not surprisingly, at the centre of the new endeavour stood the department of propaganda and agitation (*Agitprop*) and its creature the “Commission for the Study of the

⁶⁴ Ibid., ark. 83.

⁶⁵ Arrest by the German punitive organs during the occupation often raised suspicions of association with German intelligence and was thus sufficient grounds for arrest by Soviet secret police. See the order issued on 7 June 1942 by major Safonov of the Kharkiv UNKVD to heads of operational groups of the UNKVD and chiefs of RO NKVD (HDA SBU, f.16, op.35, spr. 2, ark.245-245ob.)

⁶⁶ The decision of the Supreme Court of the USSR to this effect appeared on 25 November 1943. See The Decree of the Plenum of the Supreme Court of the USSR #22/M/16/U/ss “On the Qualification of Actions of Soviet Citizens Aimed at Providing Assistance to the Enemy in the Districts Temporarily Occupied by German Invaders,” 25 November 1943 in Zaïtsev, *Sbornik zakonodatel'nykh i normativnykh aktov*, 43-45. Because of this ruling of the Supreme Court, arrested policemen were often asked during the interrogations if they were members of resistance.

⁶⁷ Elena Seniavskaia, *1941-1945: Frontovoe pokolenie. Istoriko-psikhologicheskoe issledovanie*. (Moskva: Institut Rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 1995), 131.

History of the Great Patriotic War.” Throughout 1945 the department of propaganda and agitation of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine issued a series of requests to the regional committees to search for heretofore unregistered groups and individual partisans and to conduct investigation of their activities.⁶⁸

Parallel to these efforts, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine created a special working group of the Department of Propaganda and Agitation. The group was headed by a former partisan and then head of the military-partisan section of the “Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War,” Ivan Slin’ko.⁶⁹ Slin’ko himself described the tasks of the group as verification on the ground (*proverit’ na mestakh*) of the credibility of each and every report composed by partisans and establishment of the membership of every partisan unit. That was necessary in order “to sift off all the opportunists” (*vsekh primazavshikhsia*), “to confirm their battle activities,” and “to create an appropriate order in the documentary records elucidating this crucial episode in the history of the struggle of the Soviet people against the German-Fascist Invaders.”⁷⁰

By the time the working group was dissolved in 1946, its members had assembled and reviewed almost 600 reports and accompanying materials dispersed in a variety of archives: the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement, different regional and district committees of the Communist party, and regional branches of the NKGB. As a result, some 450 reports were endorsed and landed in the archives of the “Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War,”--where they were supposed to serve as a vitally important source base for future historians of the partisan movement. Thirty-six reports were transferred in 1945 to the Rostov and Voronezh regional committees of the Communist party, where they belonged territorially, while some 80 reports were forwarded to the individual regional committees for a repeat

⁶⁸ See in particular “Decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine No.104,” 17 April 1945 (DAKhO, f. p.3562, op.2, spr.49, ark. 24-25). Subsequently *obkoms* would request *raikoms* to conduct a search for the heretofore-unregistered partisan units and underground groups in their respective districts.

⁶⁹ Eventually, Slin’ko established himself as one of the foremost Soviet historians of the partisan movement. See his *Pidpillia i partyzans’kyi rukh na Ukraïni na zavershal’nomu etapi vyzvolennia, 1944* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1970).

⁷⁰ Ivan Slin’ko, “Informational Letter ‘On the Condition of Documents and Materials on the History of the Partisan Movement in Ukraine during the Great Patriotic War,’” no precise date (TsDAHOU, f.166, op.2, spr.624, ark.7-14).

verification.⁷¹ Among the eighty odd groups slated for another round of verification was also the “Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyi” partisan unit from the village Ahaĩmany in the Kherson region.

The Structure of the Verification Process

The typical structure of the verification process can be illustrated by the following example. Sometime in June-July 1944 the organizational-instructional department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine received a report about the activities of an underground group at the train depot in Radens’ke (Kherson region): the report was addressed to Khrushchev. On 15 July 1944 the report and other materials of the organization were forwarded to the Kherson regional committee with a request to conduct verification. The report landed in the organizational-instructional department, whose chief immediately instructed officials of the regional committee and of the NKGB to begin a probe into the activities of the group. Results of the verification were to be reported to the head of the organizational-instructional department of the regional committee, who would then inform the organizational-instructional department of the Central Committee about the outcome of the investigation.⁷² Occasionally officials of the organizational instructional department would contact its district offshoots directly, bypassing the regional level completely.⁷³ Most of the time, however, party organs at the regional level simply requested the respective units of the NKVD or NKGB to conduct interrogations of “partisans” and the residents of communities in which they operated.

There is, however, an important complicating factor. Although organs of the Communist party, specifically the organizational-instructional department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine and its subordinate bodies, coordinated the investigations and eventually came to control the information generated in the process, micro-management of verification, while the war continued, was characterized by diversity and pronounced

⁷¹ Ivan Slin’ko, “Report to Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine comrade Litvin,” 5 June 1948 (Ibid., ark.15-18).

⁷² DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.50, ark.13.

⁷³ See, for example, head of the organizational instructional department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine Sarapul’tsev to secretary of the Chaplynka *raĩkom* Svetlov, no precise date (Ibid., ark.21).

decentralization. Particularly in 1943 and 1944, in addition to party officials and security service officers, evidence was also assembled and analysed by the personnel of political departments of the Red Army, military counter-intelligence, and, most importantly, emissaries of the Headquarters of the Partisan Movement.

There is no doubt that these different bodies worked towards the common goal of identifying and weeding out “false partisans.” There is also evidence that they exchanged information and cooperated with each other (as in the case of the “Nivskii regiment”). This notwithstanding, the activities of officials of each of these organs were also governed by distinct bureaucratic imperatives and by the logic of institutional interests. Thus representatives of the Headquarters of the Partisan Movement, arriving together with the Red Army and ahead of the operative groups of the NKVD and NKGB, in their eagerness to integrate larger number of partisan units under their operational command, tended to be rather less critical of “partisan” narratives. Their logic was very straightforward. The Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement represented the institution that from its inception in June 1942 was charged with coordinating and organizing resistance in the enemy rear. As a result, the number of partisan units under the operational control of the Headquarters of the Partisan Movement was construed as an indicator of the level of that organ’s effectiveness. The higher the number of units under their control, the more effective Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement appeared as an institution within the Soviet system. Individual officers frequently bought into this logic. Consequently, they granted official recognition to a large number of partisan units and underground organizations before the organs of Soviet power could even be re-established. In time, many such entities would be subject to a repeat verification and were then disqualified by the NKGB and party organs.

The “sloppiness” of the representatives of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement was not lost on contemporaries. Ivan Slin’ko, an official of the Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War, entrusted with reviewing the available documentation of various partisan units noted as much. In his 1948 report to the head of the Department of Propaganda and Agitation he complained that the staff of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement often granted legitimacy to units composed of policemen, village elders, Ukrainian nationalists and other “traitors,” as well as units organized several days before the arrival of the Red Army. It must be noted, however, that Slin’ko attributed this “sloppiness”

primarily to objective conditions. Because “partisans” were usually drafted into the Red Army and moved ahead with the front, officers of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement often had no opportunity to conduct a more thorough questioning of “partisans” and verification of testimonies thus obtained.⁷⁴ Stern criticisms of the verification methods of the political departments of the Red Army and of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement were voiced also by security service officials.⁷⁵

But if involvement of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement in the process of verification early on tended to drive the numbers of recognized groups and individual “resisters” upwards, the NKGB investigations, not surprisingly, were geared towards exposing “traitors,” “German agents,” and “false partisans.” Evidence corroborating this conclusion is plentiful.⁷⁶ The direction of the NKGB inquiries was also not a secret to the objects of official investigations. “Partisans” often complained about harassment and intimidation by security service officials. In its turn, discovery of “counter-revolutionary elements” among members of any given unit, not infrequently led to the disqualification of an entire group as “false partisans.”

Such, for instance, was the outcome of official probes into the activities of the “Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyi” unit (Kherson region). A similar fate befell the so-called “Zheleznyak” partisan unit, also in Kherson. Just like the “Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyi” unit, the latter was initially subject to verification by representatives of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement. But unlike in the case of the “Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyi” unit, the verdict of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement did not bode well for members of the “Zhelezniak” unit, who already at this stage were accused of “passivity” and “reluctance to lead an active struggle.”⁷⁷ Subsequently, the activities of the “Zhelezniak” unit were scrutinized almost

⁷⁴ I. Slin’ko to Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine K. Lytvyn, 5 June 1948 (TsDAHOU, f.166, op.2, spr.624, ark.15-18).

⁷⁵ Thus People’s Commissar Sergienko, in an already mentioned report dated 6 April 1942 expressed his displeasure with a certain Colonel Sergeev. The latter had conducted preliminary verification of the activities of the unit under the leadership of Efim Fufrianskiĭ (HDA SBU, f.16, op.1, spr.4, ark.35-37).

⁷⁶ The former head of the KGB Vladimir Semichastnyi put it best when talking about the organization “Young Guard” from Krasnodon: “Preservation of good memory about the “Young Guard” should be recognized as accomplishment of Nikita Sergeevich [Khrushchev]. Had he not intervened with Stalin directly, this organization, as many others, would have got bogged down in the MGB and remained unknown. “Who betrayed whom? Who was a traitor?”—that’s what MGB was all about. This could go for years!” (Vladimir Semichastnyi, *Bespokoĭnoe serdtse* (Moskva: ‘Vagrius’, 2002), 51).

⁷⁷ See the informational letter by Chief of the Task Force of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement at the Military Council of the 2nd Guard and 51st Armies major Chernianskiĭ “On the Activities of the Partisan Unit Named after Zhelezniak,” 23 December 1943 (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr. 54, ark.226-227).

exclusively by security service officials. It is not clear whether heavy involvement by the NKGB/MGB in the latter case was purely accidental or whether it was precipitated by a significant number of prior arrests among the “Zhelezniak” unit members. Perhaps, arrests were a consequence rather than a cause of the security service being in the driver’s seat from the very start of the investigation. At any event, the “Zhelezniak” unit likewise was categorised as “false partisan,” despite the existence of evidence about resistance activities by at least some members of the unit.⁷⁸

Communist party officials possessed institutional agendas of their own. In this regard very indicative is the outcome of the investigation of the group at the Radens’ke train depot. I.Motovilin and M.Sirotin submitted an official report about the activities of their group to Khrushchev in summer 1944, about eight months after Soviet power was re-established in the Tsiurupinsk district (Kherson region). For that reason, participants of this organization had never been recognized as “partisans” by the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement and only dealt with party and NKGB officials. The fate of the group was officially spelled out on 30 July 1945, when the board of the Tsiurupyns’k district committee of the Communist party decreed that “no underground group existed at the train depot in Radens’ke” and that “the report submitted to N.S. Khrushchev was a fabrication concocted by Motovilin and Sirotin.”⁷⁹

What made the decision of the Tsiurupyns’k district committee particularly puzzling is that party officials conducting the verification did not question the actual existence of the clandestine organization. Nor did they doubt at the end of the day that its members engaged in sabotage and even organized a series of diversions (train crashes). What they found wanting about the organization of I. Motovilin and M.Sirotin was its *stikhiīnost’*—that is “lack of centralized party leadership that would direct its activities, give concrete assignments, and inform [group members] about the situation at the front.”⁸⁰ In other words, to the party functionaries

⁷⁸ See the report of head of the investigative unit of the UMGB in the Kherson region lieutenant Verbov to head of the organizational-instructional department of the Kherson *obkom* Sarapul’tsev, 23 September 1946 (Ibid., ark.214); also Excerpt from the Protocol No.105 of the Session of the Bureau of the Kherson City Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine, 25 March 1947 “On the So-Called “Partisan Unit” Named After Zhelezniak” (Ibid., ark.223).

⁷⁹ Ibid., spr. 50, ark.44.

⁸⁰ See Instructor of the Organizational Instructional Department of the Kherson regional committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine Savchenko, “Informational Letter on the Organization and Activities of the Partisan Group at the Train Station Radensk, Tsiuriupinsk District of the Kherson Region during the Temporary German Occupation Based on the Report of Motovilin and Sirotin,” no precise date (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.50, ark.127-128).

conducting verification in Tsiurupyn's one was not a real "resister" if he/she was not acting on official orders. In this manner the legitimating ideologem about the centrality of the Communist party in organizing resistance to the Nazi rule, a staple feature of Soviet mythologies of the "Great Patriotic War," became a crucially important factor in the process of verification itself and the reason why some underground groups did not obtain official recognition.⁸¹

In post-war years, party organs and the Soviet propaganda establishment would find ways to get around the problems of *stikhiīnost'* and legitimacy by falsifying archival records and representing as Communist-led groups that functioned seemingly free of any party control. That impetus became particularly evident in 1962, when the Department of Propaganda and Agitation of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine launched a campaign to identify "unknown resisters."⁸² The functioning of the mechanism of co-opting of non-Communist resistance is well illustrated by developments in the Kherson region. There officials of the Kherson city committee of the Communist party would manage to produce "evidence" about members of the Communist organization "Centre" directing groups of Kherson youths led by Illia Kulyk and the Zaporoshchuk brothers.⁸³ Simultaneously, archival materials would be removed from the file of the organization "Svetyi Put'" (officially recognized as non-existent) and incorporated into the documentation of the organization "Center."⁸⁴ At the same time, some partisans of the "Zhelezniak" unit, that in 1946-47 were explicitly categorized as "false

⁸¹ See, for example, Emel'ian Iaroslavskii, *Partiia Lenina-Stalina—organizator bor'by za pobedu nad nemetsko-fashistskimi zakhvatchikami* (Moskva: Ogiz, Gospolitizdat, 1942). In 1946 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine instructed the "Commission for the Study of the History of the Great Patriotic War" to prepare a collection of documents entitled "Partiia Lenina-Stalina—organizator i vdokhnovitel' partizanskogo dvizheniia na Ukraine" (TsDAHOU, f.166, op.2, spr.624, ark.1-5).

Also note the controversy that erupted at about the same time around Aleksandr Fadeev's Stalin prize winning novel "Young Guard." Stalin's ire was raised by Fadeev's representation of the "Young Guard" as an organization of Krasnodon youths that emerged "spontaneously" and acted independently of the party control. See Clark, *The Soviet Novel*, 160-162; Erenburg, *Liudi, gody, zhizn'*, t.3, 124-125. The available archival documents seem to confirm Fadeev's original conception. See V.Sergienko to N. Khrushchev, 31 March 1943 (Ioffe and Petrova, *Molodaia Gvardiia*, 18-19). On Soviet mythologies of the Second World War more generally, see Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*; Weiner, *Making Sense of War*; Hrynevych, "Mit viiny ta viina mitiv."

⁸² Historians have long conceptualized this campaign as an outgrowth of a long-standing personal rivalry between "Ukrainian" Nikita Khrushchev and wartime secretary of the Communist Party of Belorussia Panteleimon Ponomarenko, who also happened to be head of the Central Partisan Staff. According to this conception, the quest for "unknown resisters" in Ukraine in the 1960s aimed at artificially boosting the numbers of Ukraine's partisans and underground fighters to leapfrog Ponomarenko's Belorussia with its officially recognized 374,000 partisans. Chaikovs'kyi, *Nevidoma viina*, 247-249; Hrynevych, "Mit viiny, viina mitiv."

⁸³ "Excerpt from the Protocol No. 28/79-3 of the Session of the Bureau of the Kherson City Committee of the Communist Party from 17 April 1962" (DAKHO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr. 54, ark.235-236).

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

partisans,” in 1962 would be recognized...as members of the organization “Centre” (!)⁸⁵ By the same token fallen members of underground groups that in 1944-1945 remained unrecognized because of their suspected links with the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, in the 1960s would begin to be treated as unquestionably “Soviet patriots.”⁸⁶ But that would happen later.

The parallel involvement in the process of verification by several different bodies had an important consequence. It furnished presumed partisans with opportunities to contest the unfavourable outcomes and solicit assistance of alternative institutions. Thus the results of the NKGB-driven investigation could be appealed with the party organs. And refusal to recognize the unit by district or regional party officials could be contested with the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of the Bolsheviks or personally with Khrushchev, Voroshilov or even Stalin himself. In the process some purported “partisans” demonstrated tremendous savvy in navigating the maze of Soviet bureaucracy and manipulating the official propaganda discourse of resistance for their purposes. Thus on 14 February 1944 Aleksandr Aleksentsev, commander of the unit from Makiivka, Stalino (Donetsk) region, in a letter to N.S. Khrushchev complained about a certain “comrade Terekhov” of the local branch of the NKGB:

⁸⁵ DAKhO, f.p-3562, op.2, spr.29, ark.57-60.

⁸⁶ I have in mind organizations in towns Gornostaivka and Velyka Oleksandrivka (Kherson region)—both officially recognized in the 1960s. See Protocol No.58 of the Session of the Bureau of the Kherson Village and Industrial Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine from 4 April 1964 “On the Confirmation of Reports on the Activities of Partisan Units and Underground Organizations and Groups on the Territory of the Kherson Region During the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945, Discovered from 1961 to 196” (Ibid., spr.1, ark.161).

For earlier documentation, See the informational letter about the “Union of Liberation of Ukraine from German Invaders,” composed by secretary of the Gornostaivka *raikom* Gryshchenko, dated 30 July, 1945. The group was destroyed by the German punitive organs in April 1943. The Communist official identified some members of this group as belonging to the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (DAKhO, f.p-3562, op.2, spr.50, ark.42-43). One should note, however, that officials of the German SD seem to have regarded the Gornostaivka group as consisting of “Komsomol members” and of “Soviet activists.” This is the view expressed by Tamara Ignatenko (Meyer) during her interrogation by the NKGB in 1944. In 1943 Ignatenko (Meyer) worked as an interpreter for Mathias Karmann, chief of the German SD in Tsiurupyns’k, who supervised execution of group members. The excerpt from the protocol of interrogation of T.Ignatenko (Meyer) is at AUSBUKHO, fond tayemnogo dilovodstva, op. 1209, spr.70, t.2, ark. 299-302. Documentation collected to support the case of executed youths from Velyka Oleksandrivka as “Soviet patriots” is at DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.6, ark.95-109). Suspicions about their affiliation with the OUN derive from the testimony of Alekseï Lukich Erëmenko (Oleksii Ieremenko), who in 1967 wrote to the party organs the following: “[...] After the war investigative organs dealt with these young patriots, but I am not aware about the results of the investigation. I know that the executed Zapara, Soromlia, Nazarenko, Sergeev, Detsyk, Ostapenko, Bebel and the POW who stayed at Viktor Zapara were not members of the group of Nationalists that were tried by the revolutionary tribunal and received sentences of various length (Zasiad’ko, Snegich, Kostikov and others).[...] I am convinced that young people executed by the Germans were not Nationalists, that they had no idea of it [Nationalism], but were real patriots of the Motherland” (Ibid., ark.99-100).

Dear Nikita Sergeevich! I learned that chief of the Makeevka city branch of the NKGB comrade Terekhov is interrogating commanders of groups and partisans of the Makeevka unit for a purpose other than establishing the combat exploits of the unit. He is treating them [partisans] as if they were criminals—he questions them rudely, hurls offenses, intimidates. Such a form of questioning suggests that comrade Terekhov has taken an a priori negative view of the activities of the unit, and is currently trying to discredit it in the eyes of the population of Makeevka and to accuse partisans of being liars and criminals [...] Such ways of interrogating and intolerant attitude towards participants of partisan struggle caused them to experience confusion, humiliation and undeserved insults. All of this is happening at the time when all newspapers of the Soviet Union--*Pravda*, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, *Trud*, *Stalinskoe Znamia*, *Sovetskaia Ukraina*, and some others-- have been relating exploits of the unit. Finally, I have official documents: certificates about surrendering weapons to organs of the NKVD, about surrendering a radio station to major Perov, representative of USHPD on the Southern front; testimony by the commander of the 301st rifle division about the assistance furnished by the unit during the battle for Makeevka etc.[...] 14 members of the unit died patriots' death in battle with the enemy[...] As a young future Communist, hardened in battles for Sevastopol' and convinced of my own rectitude, I ask you, Nikita Sergeevich, to take the necessary measures and put an end to the five months' long indignities and recognize the exploits of our Ukrainian patriots, reared by the great party of Lenin-Stalin.⁸⁷

Others attempted to solicit the assistance of the officers of the Headquarters of the Partisan Movement who had earlier recognized their units, using positive prior decisions as leverage in their struggle with local party and NKGB officials.⁸⁸ Such appeals were often effective insofar as they caused the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement and the higher party organs to intervene and commission a second or even third round of verification. Such interventions, however, did not necessarily have much influence on the results of repeat verifications. Ultimately, the struggle over the meaning of wartime “resistance” was between would-be “partisans” and local party and security service officials entrusted with verification. It was a priori an unequal struggle, which the purported partisans could win only with the support

⁸⁷ TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr. 918, ark.21.

⁸⁸ In December of 1943, Ivan Dunaev, former commander of the partisan unit in Khartsyzsk, Stalino region, sent a letter to major Perov of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement. In the letter Dunaev complained about the procrastination of local party organs in investigating the activities of the unit and their failure to provide assistance to families of fallen partisans. “I wanted to ask,--Dunaev exclaimed rhetorically,--if head of the district executive committee Zaikin and 3d secretary of the raikom Somarokov do not recognize any partisans, what are the people executed by the Gestapo in Ilovaïsk? What are the people executed in Khartzysk at the river? What are they?” (TsDAHOU, f.62, op.1, spr. 536, ark.196-198).

Dunaev's call was heeded. Several weeks later major Drozhzhin of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement contacted the Stalino *obkom* with a request to inform the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement about the steps taken to address issues raised by Dunaev in his letter to major Perov (Ibid., ark.199).

of local communities. In this regard, the story of the “Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyi” partisan unit and the underground cell in the village (today in the Kherson region) is very instructive.

The Role of Local Communities

The fate of the “Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyi” partisan unit and Dmytro Illiashenko’s underground cell in many ways mirrored the fortunes of the majority of Soviet partisan units in Ukraine during the early stages of the occupation. The materials assembled during the two rounds of verification led by the Kherson regional committee, including testimonies by many members of Klymenko’s unit, leave little doubt that by the time the Wehrmacht and its Romanian allies occupied the Ivanivka district in September 1941 Klymenko’s unit had de facto ceased to exist.⁸⁹ Some partisans retreated with the Red Army, others laid down weapons, returned home and registered with the occupation authorities as former Communists. Remarkably, some eventually joined the police or occupied various positions in the rural administration and at the machine tractor stations (i.e., became Nazi collaborators in the official Soviet categories).⁹⁰

With the exception of the former NKVD officer Ivan Bidenko and several Communists who had distinguished themselves through active participation in collectivisation and dekulakization, the majority of local Communists and original participants of the partisan unit survived the occupation.⁹¹ Unlike many of his comrades, the commander of the unit, Trokhym Klymenko,

⁸⁹ During the second round of the verification in December 1945-January 1946 the Commission of the *obkom* questioned 48 residents of the Ivanivka district in addition to several dozens interrogated in August-September 1945. See secretary of the Kherson regional committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine to head of the organizational-instructional department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine Zlenko, 8 February 1946 (DAKhO, f.-p.3562, op.2, spr. 50, ark.123-125).

⁹⁰ See “Decision of the Bureau of the Kherson obkom on the Report of Klymenko,” 6 September 1945 (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr. 50, ark.70-72); The Commission of the Kherson *obkom*, which in August-September 1945 conducted the verification of the wartime activities of the partisan unit and the underground group in Ahaïmany and other villages of the Ivanivka district compiled the list of “collaborators” (*posobniki*) among the supposed partisans. The list included 33 names, including several elders of agricultural communities, most notably the former Communist party member Nikita Litvinenko and chief of the Ivanivka district police (former Komsomol member) Petr Zarubaev. The list is at DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr. 50, ark.148-149. See also the report of the *obkom* Commission, 5 September 1945 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark. 4-11).

⁹¹ Ivanivka district sustained the unusually small human losses, even in comparison with other districts of the Kherson region. According to the NKGB data, during the occupation of the Ivanivka district the SS and the German Gendermerie executed 14 people in total. The victims of shootings including 5 Jewish residents of Ivanivka (identified as Abram Failer, the doctor Levikhina and her 3 children); 3 unidentified Soviet POWs, the NKVD

did not register with the German authorities, but went underground and throughout the occupation secretly resided in different villages on the territory of the Ivanivka and Akimovka districts.⁹² For his part, Dmytro Illiashenko, who was supposed to lead the underground network discovered immediately upon the arrival of the Germans and Romanians that the owners of “conspiratorial” houses (*konspirativnye kvartiry*) with whom agreements existed before the occupation were unwilling to provide him accommodation while local Communists showed no interest in underground work.⁹³ Illiashenko thought of no better alternative but to register with the occupation authorities, pledging along with other Communists to abstain from participating in resistance activities.⁹⁴ In February 1942, however, with the threat of arrest looming, Illiashenko and another Communist, Andrii Kovba, would have to seek shelter from friendly acquaintances (some of whom had maintained good relations with the German agricultural leader and local “collaborators”).⁹⁵ Eventually, underground existence led both Klymenko and Illiashenko to a secret hideout inside an abandoned well on the outskirts of the village Ahaĩmany.⁹⁶ The discovery of the hide-out by the police resulted in a brief skirmish, the

officer Ivan Bidenko (former member of Klymenko’s partisan unit); 3 Communist party members, whom the NKGB report described as “active participants of collectivization and dekulakization” --Zinovii Tymchenko, Trofim Vol’makov, Vasiliĩ Afanas’ev; the Communist party member and partisan during the Civil War Iakov Novak; the Communist party member and the Red Army officer Ivan Bondar’-Kudriakov. See chief of the NKGB in the Ivanivka district senior lieutenant of state security Nezymov to chief of the NKGB in the Kherson region captain of state security Krashennnikov, no precise date (DAKhO, f. r-1479, op.1, spr. 2, ark. 58).

⁹² Klymenko did not register with the authorities most likely because as the chief of the district militia in 1930-1932 he faced an almost certain execution.

⁹³ Dmytro Illiashenko, “The Explanatory Note about the Work of the Underground Organization in the Ivanovka district,” 28 July 1944 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr. 618, ark.7-19).

⁹⁴ From the protocol of the interrogation of Andrei Garmash, 15 August 1945: “Approximately in November 1941, the *Gendermerie* gathered all the Communists and Komsomol members at the club in Ivanovka. Present at the meeting were Communists [...]. The interpreter announced that from today we, the Communists, are no longer members of the party. We were warned not to come together in groups and not to engage in agitation and subversive work against the German authorities. After that we were told to go home and work where they tell us.[...]” (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.132-133); Gavriil Mamontov stated on 28 December 1945 that at the above mentioned meeting of the Communists in Ivanovka, the German commandant demanded that Communists Il’iashenko, Ivan Isaev, the former chief of the militia Taranenka, and the former directors of the MTS Kozachenko and Ermak register with the occupation authorities, lest they get shot if apprehended. 2 days later Mamontov saw Isaev and Il’iashenko openly working in the village (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.50, ark.97-98).

⁹⁵ See transcript of interrogation of Klavdiia Hryhorenko, 8 August 1945 (Ibid., ark.49-49ob). Nadiia Voloshko described Klymenko’s host Ivan Hryhorenko, administrator of the kolkhoz storage facilities, as “having friendly relations” with the village elder Prykhod’ko, the German Landwirt and local policemen, “with whom he drank and whom he supplied with chickens and eggs which he had taken away from the collective farmers. Voloshko also claimed that Hryhorenko’s daughter had an affair with the German agricultural leader (the protocol of interrogation of N.Voloshko, 7 August 1945 (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, d. 50, ll.45-46; also TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.101-103).

⁹⁶ In fall 1942, the shelter was discovered by the police. Following a brief skirmish also mentioned by several residents of the village, the fugitives ran towards the local pond, where they stayed for several days before the danger passed and they relocated to houses of acquaintances. See the protocol of interrogation of N. Voloshko, 7

escape of Klymenko and Illiashenko, and the subsequent arrest of all local Communists, who, however, would soon be released.⁹⁷

The materials assembled by the Kherson regional committee in the course of two rounds of verification reveal virtually no evidence of organised resistance in Ahaïmany and the surrounding areas until several days prior to the Red Army arrival. While many local residents not affiliated with the partisan unit spoke of the lack of resistance activities in the area during the occupation, some went as far as to fault Klymenko and his men for the failure to forestall the destruction of the mill, hospital, administrative buildings, and people's houses in Ahaïmany by a handful of retreating German soldiers in late October 1943.⁹⁸ Neither did self-declared partisans intervene when a small number of German guards executed a group of Soviet POWs on the outskirts of the village.⁹⁹ At the same time, there is no doubt that during the occupation several would-be "partisans" went underground while others engaged in activities that violated the norms of Nazi legality and could subsequently be instrumentalized politically as manifestations of resistance. Such acts ranged from pilfering the property of agricultural communities to unauthorised listening of Soviet radio broadcasts and spreading information about the situation at the front by word of mouth (represented in the process of verification as "propaganda and agitation")¹⁰⁰ to the (likely unintentional) destruction of agricultural machinery (which in a curious reversal of the Stalinist discourse on wrecking some would-be partisans retrospectively represented as acts of political opposition to the Nazi rule).¹⁰¹

August 1945 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.101-103); also the protocol of interrogation of Oleksandr Strukov, 7 August 1945 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.99-100)

⁹⁷ Arrests of local Communists as hostages was mentioned by Andrei Garmash on 15 August 1945 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.132-133)

⁹⁸ The following statement by Kateryna Chesnokova appears rather typical: "--What did partisans do in your village during the German occupation?

--They did nothing. In fact, there were no partisans in the village. I did not see a single Soviet newspaper or leaflet during the entire occupation. When the Red Army units were entering the village, partisans were at home. This notwithstanding, the Germans were able to set on fire the windmill. Partisans Ivan Syvogryvov and Petro Syvogryvov lay some 50 meters from the windmill, but they did nothing. The mill burned down completely. Now the Sivogrivovs are screaming everywhere that they were partisans." (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, d.50, l.63).

(TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.127-127ob.)

⁹⁹ See transcript of interrogation of Hanna Nepyipyvo, 9 August 1945 (Ibid., ark.108-109); also transcript of interrogation of Nestor Sydorenko, 9 August 1945 (Ibid., ark.106-106ob).

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, the transcript of interrogation of Hryhorii Iakovenko, 7 August 1945 (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.50, ark.47-48; TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.95-9); also Karp Isaev, 10 August 1945 (DAKhO, f.-p3562, op.2, spr.50, ark.58; TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.118-118ob).

¹⁰¹ See the transcript of the interrogation of Ivan Dovbnia, 10 August 1945 (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.115-116)

With the Red Army approaching the area in the summer and fall 1943, there were no doubt conversations among former members of the partisan unit about the necessity to make their presence known.¹⁰² These talks were followed by secret negotiations with the chief of the district police, Petr Zarubaev, and the creation of clandestine caches of weapons.¹⁰³ Finally, there was the coming out of the unit members on the eve of the Red Army arrival in late October 1943 that entailed the execution of a local policeman and the distribution of grain to the peasants (which the Commission of the Kherson obkom construed as an effort to bribe villagers so that they would confirm the narrative propagated by Klymenko and other would-be partisans).¹⁰⁴ Subsequently, Klymenko and his men took part in the Red Army offensive operations at the village Sofiivka, in which one member of the unit died.¹⁰⁵ Shortly upon the reestablishment of Soviet power the unit was disbanded. Many of its members were drafted into the Red Army or were employed by the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement for assignments in Crimea, while some, including Klymenko and Illiashenko, assumed leadership positions in the district apparatus of the Soviet state.¹⁰⁶

Participation in combat legitimated the unit in the eyes of some villagers, and, more importantly, in the eyes of the representative of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement who officially recognised the unit and supplied Klymenko and his men with official documentation, paving the way for Klymenko's reinstatement in the party by the Ivanivka district committee in spring 1945. Yet having obtained the official recognition by the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement, Klymenko and Illiashenko nonetheless failed to have this decision validated by the Kherson regional committee of the Communist Party (likely due to the personal position

¹⁰² Secret meetings involving former partisans of the Klymenko unit were mentioned by Oleksandr Zakharchenko during the interrogation on 10 August 1945 (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.50, ark.55-56; TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.112-114.)

¹⁰³ The recruitment of Zarubaev was carried out on the request of Klymenko by Pylip Akimov, who had known Zarubaev very well before war. According to Akimov, after he had recruited Zarubaev in May 1943, he arranged the latter's meeting with Klymenko. Subsequently Zarubaev and several other policemen would supply the unit with weapons (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr. 50, ark.66-67; also TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.128-131). Another would be partisan Karp Isaev mentioned that in September 1943 4 men from Klymenko's group brought to Ahaïmany 13 rifles from Kolchanovka. The rifles were hidden at the homestead of the member of Klymenko's group Ivan Dovbnia (DAKhO, f.-p3562, op.2, d.50, l.58). (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, d.619, ll.118-118ob.)

¹⁰⁴ The execution of the policeman Sosna by Klymenko on 27-28 October 1943 is mentioned by Ivan Isaev (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr. 50, ark. 59-60) (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.110-111) and Ivan Dovbnia (TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.115-116).

¹⁰⁵ Protocol of interrogation of Hryhoriï Iakovenko, 7 August 1945 (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.50, ark.47-48; TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.95-99).

¹⁰⁶ Klymenko became chairman of the executive committee in the Ivanivka district. Illiashenko assumed the post of the head of the district military board.

of Alekseï Fedorov, who, whether he relied on evidence or not, from the start assumed a very critical position towards Klymenko personally and the members of his unit).¹⁰⁷ Following the investigation of the activities of the unit, on 6 September 1945 the bureau of the regional committee proclaimed the “Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyi” unit to be a “false partisan” unit and revoked the earlier decision by the Ivanivka *raïkom* to reinstate Klymenko and Illiashenko in the party.¹⁰⁸

So why did the Kherson regional committee refuse to rubber-stamp the earlier decisions of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement and the Ivanivka district committee? The chapter suggests that the disqualification of the ‘Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyi’ partisan unit in September 1945 had to do both with Klymenko’s personal feud with the first secretary of the Kherson regional committee Alekseï Fedorov, which developed in the summer 1945, and with passivity of the unit during the occupation evoked by many local residents. It appears the commission of the Kherson regional committee (the Antonova Commission), which arrived in Ahaïmany in early August 1945 to conduct the verification of the wartime activities of the would-be partisan unit and the underground group, indeed had an agenda to disqualify the unit. In their appeals to Kliment Voroshilov and the Commission of Party Control in the aftermath of the decision by the regional committee, Klymenko, Illiashenko and other would-be partisans referenced threats and bullying directed at them by Antonova herself and by other representatives of the regional committee and the NKGB.¹⁰⁹

Appeals to the higher-ups precipitated a new round of verification in December 1945 and January 1946, which, however, only reconfirmed the earlier decision. What sealed the fate of the unit, it appears, was the failure of its command cadres to mobilise the support of the local community. This failure may have been connected with Klymenko’s service as head of the district militia in 1930-1932 and his involvement in the repressive policies of the Soviet state in

¹⁰⁷ See “The Decision of the obkom of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine,” 6 September 1945 (DAKHO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.50, ark.73); also Klymenko’s letter to the Commission of the Party Control at the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine about Fedorov’s attitude towards him personally and to the members of his unit, 25 September 1945 (Ibid., ark.79-80).

¹⁰⁸ The Resolution of the Bureau of the Kherson Regional Committee of the KP(b)U on the Report by Klymenko, 6 September 1945 (Ibid., ark.70-72). The resolution can also be found at TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.1-3.

¹⁰⁹ Klymenko challenged the decision of the bureau of the Kherson obkom in a letter to the Commission of the Party Control on 25 September 1945, dismissing the decision as an act of revenge by Fedorov (DAKHO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.50, ark.79-80). The letter to Voroshilov by Illiashenko and several other partisans is at DAKHO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr. 50, ark.141-144.

the countryside during 1930s (which he himself referenced during his interrogation by the officials of the Antonova Commission on 2 August 1945).¹¹⁰ Moreover, following the restoration of Soviet power in the Ivanivka district in November 1943, Klymenko, Illiashenko and several other rural Communists were appointed to different positions of power and in this capacity came into renewed conflict with some members of the local community, who denounced them to the higher authorities as “false partisans” and protectors of local collaborators (i.e., village elders and policemen who were on the roster of the partisan unit).¹¹¹ Ultimately, in the course of the verification a segment of the rural population forged a tacit alliance with the party and NKGB officials from Kherson to disempower and humiliate the unpopular rural officials whose rocky relationship with some villagers evidently went all the way back to the late 1920s and early 1930s.¹¹²

Conclusions

While analysing the processes of reconstruction of the Soviet political community in light of the official verification of resistance activities during the Axis occupation, it is always important to keep in mind local specificities and the existence of spaces for negotiating one’s political identity that the Soviet bureaucratic practices generated. Histories of the “Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyi” partisan unit and similar groups suggest quite unequivocally that former Communists and alleged “partisans” were anything but helpless victims of the purge. They actively fought for the recognition of their status as members of the “resistance community,” navigating, sometimes very skilfully, the maze of Soviet bureaucracy, mobilising mechanisms of appeal, and building alliances within local communities in an effort to produce information that would affect favourable outcomes of official investigations. Sometimes they were successful;

¹¹⁰ TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.22, spr.619, ark.69-75.

¹¹¹ On 3 July 1944 the former Communist party member Ivan Blyzniuk denounced “false partisans” in a letter to Stalin (DAKhO, f. p-46, op.1, spr. 26, ark.150-150ob).

¹¹² Parallels can be drawn with Sheila Fitzpatrick’s analysis of rural trials of 1937-1938: Sheila Fitzpatrick, “How the Mice Buried the Cat: Scenes from the Great Purges of 1937 in the Russian Provinces,” *The Russian Review* 52, No.3 (July 1993): 299-320.

often they failed. But what matters here is that even during the Stalinist 1940s there existed a space for negotiation of one's political identity, a space which increased after the death of Stalin.

But whereas many residents of the formerly occupied territories, including former Communists and participants of the resistance movement, had to negotiate their political status, there was one large social group, whose membership in the Soviet political community was never in question: children. Rather what was at stake in the latter case was the ideological terms of political (re)-integration.

The following chapter examines the subject of political integration of Soviet children in the aftermath of the Axis occupation, using as a frame of reference the history and content of the collection of children reminiscences from Kherson (Ukraine), commissioned by the Administration of State Archives of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR in the first half of 1944.

Chapter 6

World War II as an Identity Project

Historians of Eastern Europe are familiar with the collection of children's memories of Soviet rule in Eastern Poland edited by Irena Grudzinska-Gross.¹ Fewer people, however, know about the existence of similar collections of children's essays in the Soviet Union.

The reminiscences, which appeared in the course of 1942 through 1946, were commissioned through school boards both by the Administration of State Archives of the NKVD (UGA NKVD) and the "Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War" and were part of the broader effort to create a documentary record of the Axis occupation.² Eventually, tens of thousands of compositions under the general title, "What I Experienced under the German Occupation," landed in the sectors of classified collections of a number of regional and central archives, one of them being the State Archives of the Kherson region.³ Given the peculiar functions of the sectors of classified collections within the system of Soviet state security, it is not unreasonable to conclude that children's essays might have also been used for political surveillance of the population in the formerly occupied territories.

The children's compositions, however, were more than a documentary record of the Axis occupation or raw materials for political surveillance. Insofar as teenage writers did not freely relate their wartime experiences, but had to respond to a series of structuring questions within the context of Soviet secondary education, the essays were also a reflection of a deliberate state-sponsored effort at construction of political identities and legitimation of the Soviet political order in the territories that experienced Axis rule. The questions around which the new meta-narrative of Soviet power –which children were expected both to appropriate and reproduce in writing –were unmistakably geared towards eliciting negative reactions towards German and

¹ Irena Grudzinska-Gross, *War Through Children's Eyes: the Soviet Occupation of Poland and the Deportations, 1939-1941* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1981).

² There exist several orders prescribing creation of collections of children's essays. See head of the UGA NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR P. Hudzenko to heads of regional archives, 10 November 1943 (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2416, ark.3); Hudzenko issued a similar set of instructions referencing prior orders also on 10 April 1944 (TsDAVOVU, f.14, op.1, spr.2564, ark.6). See also plans of work of the Voroshilovhrad branch of the Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War for the year 1946 (TsDAVOVU, f. 4620, op.4, spr.14, ark. 100-101).

³ DAKhO, fond r-3497, op. 1, spr. 1-37. I thank the archivist Zoria Solomonivna Orlova for drawing my attention to this collection in fall 2003.

positive reactions towards Soviet rule. (Legitimacy is always relative.) Specific examples of questions included: “What did you experience under German rule?” “What did you do and how did you organize your life?” “What changes did the Germans introduce into everyday life?” “How did your neighbours react to German rule?” “How did you help the Red Army and the partisans?” “How did you wait for and greet the Red Army?” and so on.⁴ By engaging in a close reading of several hundred such essays from the city of Kherson and the surrounding countryside, this chapter attempts both to untangle the parameters of the official identity project and to map the content of the essays themselves.⁵

One objective of such an exercise is to learn what aspects of Nazi rule the Khersonian children found central to their wartime experience. Given that remembering is always collective and meditated by prior knowledge, careful engagement with children’s memoirs—constrained as these were by the official questionnaire-- may produce a better understanding not only of the ways in which the experiences of the Nazi occupation impacted the Soviet political project, but also elucidate the complexities of cultural milieus, in which children’s memories of the Second World War crystallized.⁶ Importantly, while narratives found in children’s compositions do not reflect the variety and complexity of wartime experience in this part of the country, when used appropriately, they can offer interesting insights into the manner in which Soviet schoolchildren remembered the war and the Nazi occupation. On the other hand, the analysis of children’s reminiscences and of the historical contexts in which they came into existence complicates some of the understanding of the processes of the reconstruction of the Soviet political community.

⁴ DAKhO, f.r-3497, op.1, spr.29, ark.2; spr.33, ark.29ob.

⁵ According to the 1944 report by head of the Kherson branch of the Administration of State Archives of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR, the authorities collected 683 essays in the course of that year (TsDAVOVU, f. 14, op.1, spr.2658, ark.29-32).

⁶ The literature on the sociology of memory is vast. Some of the works I consulted include the following: Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*; Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York-London: Oxford University Press, 1975); Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire,” *Representations* 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (Spring, 1989): 7-24. For a useful overview of the existing works on memory, see Kerwin Lee Klein, “On the Emergence of Memory in the Historical Discourse,” *Representations* 69 (Winter 2000): 127-150; Alon Confino, “Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method,” *The American Historical Review* 102, No.5 (December 1997): 1386-1403; Susan Crane, “Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory,” *The American Historical Review* 102, No.5 (December 1997): 1372-1385; Irina Paperno, “Personal Accounts of the Soviet Experience,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 3, No.4, (Fall 2002): 577-610.

The Background

Before proceeding with the analysis of the content of the compositions themselves a brief survey of the local experiences of the occupation is in order. Prior to the war, the territory, which in 1944 was incorporated into the newly created Kherson region (oblast), was administratively divided between the Mykolaïv and Zaporizhzhia regions.⁷ The city of Kherson itself was a district centre in the Mykolaïv region and, as per the 1939 census had the population of almost 97,000 people-- engaged in various industries, state offices, the system of education, and agricultur.⁸ The combined population of the remaining nineteen rural districts stood at close to 650,000 people, most residents of small towns and villages. Thus the bigger towns such as Kakhovka, Heniches'k, and Tsiurupyns'k each had between 10,000 and 16,000 residents. The population of smaller district centres ranged from 3,000 to 10,000.⁹ Everywhere, with the exception of the town Kalinindorf (centre of the Jewish national district) —where Jews were the largest group-- Ukrainians and Russians formed the majority, with Jews and ethnic Germans being the notable minorities. The size of the Jewish population ranged from 16,000 in the city of Kherson to a mere 11 people in the coastal Sivash district, with most districts having from a few dozens to less than a thousand Jewish residents.¹⁰

Due to the strength of the Soviet army group in Ukraine, the German and allied Romanian forces arrived in the region fairly late--in August-October 1941. As elsewhere in Ukraine, the Soviet retreat was preceded by extensive military mobilization, destruction of the strategic infrastructure, arrests and deportations of “unreliable elements” within the framework of securing rear areas, organized evacuation and spontaneous flight of Communist party functionaries, skilled workers and their family members, as well as many Jews who by then had

⁷ The Kherson oblast' was created on 30 March 1944 through the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and encompassed 13 districts that were previously part of the Mykolaïv region and 6 districts of the Zaporizhzhia region.

⁸ http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/ussr_nac_39_ra.php?reg=306, last accessed 19 December 2015. The economic profile of the region before the war was outlined in the summary report of the Extraordinary State Commission

⁹ http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/ussr_nac_39_ra.php?reg=308, last accessed 19 December 2015.

¹⁰ As per the 1939 census the Bilozerka district had 274 Jews; Beryslav—496; Velyka Oleksandrivka—322; Hola Prystan'—362; Hornostaïvka—56; Kalinindorf—7,717; Kakhovka—1162; Novo-Vorontsovka—69; Skadovs'k—799; Kherson village district—77; Kalanchak—75; Tsiurupyns'k—525; Chaplynka—67; Velyka Lepetykha—50; Heniches'k—1747; Ivanivka—33; Nyzhni Sirohozy—39; Novotroits'ke—77; Syvash—11. The numbers come from the data of the 1939 census on the website of the Institute of Demography of the National Research University “Higher School of Economics”: www.demoscope.ru, last accessed 19 December 2015.

been well aware of the reality of the German persecution.¹¹ While no reliable estimates are available, it is clear that the military mobilization and the evacuation substantially reduced the population and changed the demographic profile of the region. Thousands of younger men were drafted into the army, while the region also lost a substantial percentage of Soviet loyalists, Jews and ethnic Germans through the evacuation to the Soviet interior. The region also received a few thousands refugees—many of them Jews-- from Odessa, Bessarabia, and other regions, whose eastward progress was cut short by the rapid advance of the Wehrmacht.¹²

The not too numerous Red Army units and Soviet government institutions started to pull out of Kherson on 16 August, three days before the arrival of the Wehrmacht. The chaotic withdrawal of representatives of Soviet power was accompanied by the breakdown of order and widespread looting.¹³ The regime change in Kherson and elsewhere in the region, however, did not usually feature the spontaneous welcoming of German soldiers, nationalist mobilization, or anti-Jewish pogroms that characterised the political landscape in Galicia and to a lesser extent Volhynia and Central Ukraine a few weeks.¹⁴ Some activists of the OUN-B did arrive in the Kherson region as part of the southern advance group in August-September 1941.¹⁵ In some places, including Kherson and Velyka Oleksandrivka, they even infiltrated the administrations and auxiliary police, but their influence on local politics was, in general, negligible.¹⁶ Whatever the local attitudes towards Soviet power before the war—and these may have been quite negative in the rural areas--the default position of most people at the time, it appears, was withdrawal into the

¹¹ For the discussion of the impact of knowledge of the Nazi atrocities: Mordechai Altshuler, “Escape and Evacuation of Soviet Jews at the Time of the Nazi Invasion,” in Dobroszycki and Gurock, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 77-104.

¹² Iosif Shaikin and Mikhail Ziabko, “Natsistskiĭ genotsid v evreiskikh zemledel’cheskikh koloniiakh iuga Ukrainy,” in *Katastrofa i soprotivlenie ukrainskogo evreĭstva (1941-1944)*, ed. Ster Ielisavetskiĭ, 154-171 (Kiev: Institut politicheskikh i etnonatsional’nykh issledovaniĭ, 1999); The Jewish refugees in the Kalinindorf district are mentioned by the former chairman of the Kalinindorf village council Sara Belen’kaia, 25 July 1968 (AUSBUKhO, fond taiemnoho dilovodstva, op. 1209, spr.70, t.2, ark.174-175).

¹³ Boris Vadon, *Okupatsiia Khersona. 1941-1944* (unpublished manuscript. Kherson Regional Library), http://krai.lib.kherson.ua/ru-vadon_rykopis.htm, last accessed 21 December 2015.

¹⁴ In the course of my research I encountered only one instance of spontaneous anti-Jewish violence in the larger region prior to the arrival of the German forces. It occurred in the Bereznegovata district of the Mykolaiv region, where a group of men allegedly tied the rabbi to the tail of the horse and dragged him through the streets (and Ziabko, “Natsistskiĭ genotsid,” 159).

¹⁵ See Chartoryis’kyĭ, *Vid Sianu po Krym*, 196.

¹⁶ The OUN-B had its representatives in the auxiliary police in Kherson. See the protocol of interrogation of deputy chief of the auxiliary police in Kherson Valerian Tremmel’, 9 December 1954 (AUSBUKhO, fond taiemnoho dilovodstva, op. 1209, spr.70, t.1, ark.99-100); Ukrainian nationalists in Velyka Oleksandrivka are also mentioned in the report by chief of the UNKGB in the Velyka Oleksandrivka district to chief of the UNKGB in the Kherson region colonel of state security Krashennnikov, no earlier than 14 July 1944 (DAKhO, f.r-1479, op.1, spr.2, ark.62-65).

private sphere and an apprehensive wait-and-see attitude towards the new rulers. The exception was a small number of participants of the organized Communist resistance movement and a larger group of local residents—primarily from among the former opponents of Soviet power—who opted to join the structures of the collaborationist local administration and auxiliary police, when these came into existence in the course of late summer and early fall of 1941.

The German invasion of the USSR had prompted the Soviet leadership to embark on the creation of numerous destruction battalions, partisan units and underground organizations, consisting primarily of NKVD officers, Communist functionaries, Communist party and Communist Youth league (*Komsomol*) members, and other Soviet loyalists. In the course of July and August, a number of such armed formations appeared also in the Kherson region. The history of the “Bohdan Khmel’nyts’kyi” partisan unit under the command of Trokhym Klymenko was discussed in the previous chapter. Other units, which operated in the forests in the vicinity of Kherson and in the wooded areas along the Dnieper river (the so-called *plavni*), fared much worse than Klymenko and his comrades. In October 1941 German security forces, equipped with intelligence from defectors and local residents, sealed off areas of partisans’ concentration and systematically proceeded to destroy all of the units in battle, killing and capturing most of the partisans.¹⁷ By then the German police authorities had already carried out the registration of the entire population and identified all former Communist party members. Some were immediately executed; most were released under the threat of death in the event of resistance.¹⁸ Such harsh measures were effective, inasmuch as there was no significant organized resistance in the region throughout the occupation, the existence of a few underground groups and periodic incursions by operatives of the Soviet military intelligence notwithstanding.¹⁹

¹⁷ See Deputy People’s Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR Esipenko to Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine Korotchenko, “Special Report on the Arrested Member of the VKP(b) Nemytykh,” 31 August 1945 (TSDAHOU, f.1, op.22, spr.74, ark.58-60). See also the report of the 444 German security division about the destruction of Soviet partisans in the Dnieper *plavni*, dated 5 November 1941 (TsDAVOVU, f. KMF-8, op.2, spr. 154, ark. 44-53). The document appeared in Koval, “Rik 1941-1”’; on the destruction by units of the *Einsatzgruppe* D of the partisan unit headed by Emel’ian Girska in the Kherson region: Tätigkeits- und Lagebericht Nr.6, in Klein, *Die Einsatzgruppen*, 231, 242 (footnote No.10).

¹⁸ Vadon, *Okupatsiia Khersona*, 3; On the persecution of Communists and Soviet activists in the countryside, see, for example, chief of the UNKGB in the Ivanovka district senior lieutenant of state security Nezymov to chief of the UNKGB in the Kherson region colonel of state security Krasheninnikov, no precise date (DAKhO, f.r-1479, op.1, spr.2, ark.58-59); chief of the UNKGB in the V.Oleksandrivka district to chief of the UNKGB in the Kherson region colonel of state security Krasheninnikov, no precise date [no earlier than 14 July 1944] (*Ibid.*, ark.62-65); chief of the UNKGB in the Nyzhni Sirohozy district captain Chernyshov to chief of the UNKGB in the Kherson region colonel of state security Krasheninnikov, no precise date (*Ibid.*, ark.60-61).

¹⁹ One such group of 15 paratroopers was captured by the German security forces and local police near Askaniya-Nova. See chief of the UNKGB in the Novo-Troits’ke district captain of state security Marusov, no precise date

When analysing the content of children's compositions, it is also important to keep in mind that the local experiences of Nazi rule were diverse, being influenced by whole set of factors, including but not limited to one's ethnic background, relationship to the occupation apparatus, age, gender and whether one resided in the city or in the rural areas.

The top position within the local ethnic hierarchy constructed by the Nazis belonged to ethnic Germans. The few ethnic Germans not deported from the region to the Soviet interior in August 1941 were given an opportunity to register as *Volksdeutsche* and as such were entitled to certain privileges when it came to work and food rationing.²⁰ The same was true of local collaborators, some of whom could also appropriate Jewish property.²¹

Ukrainians and Russians not regarded as an immediate security risk were to serve as a source of exploitable manpower, but were not guaranteed employment. Consequently, if they resided in the city, they often suffered from restrictions of food supplies to the non-working population within the framework of the German policy of deindustrialization and deurbanization of the occupied territories.²² It was also city residents who during the occupation bore the brunt of arrests, incarceration, physical punishment, internment in forced labour camps, and executions for even relatively minor transgressions of Nazi legality.²³ Within this context, of separate

(Ibid., ark.72-73). In June 1942 another group was destroyed near the village Podokalynivka, Tsiurupyn'sk district. See the "Review of the Archival Materials About the Intelligence-Diversionary Group," compiled by officer of the USBU in the Kherson region A. N. Driutskii, 1 June 1995 (Ibid., f.p-3562, op.2, spr.1, ark.37).

Materials on the underground organizations "Center" and "Patriot of the Motherland" which operated in the city of Kherson can be found at DAKhO, f.p-3562, op.2, spr.2, 28, 30, 31, 54

²⁰ See, for example, materials of criminal prosecution files of people indicted for having enrolled in the *Volksdeutsche* list in the Kherson region: Zinaida Frode (DAKhO, f. r-4033, op.1, spr. 422); Nikolai El' (Ibid., op.3, spr. 970); Nikolaï Brecht-Nikolenko (DAKhO, f. r-4033, op.4, spr. 97); Semen Vinskevich (Ibid., op.7, spr. 138); Serafima Prudkovskaia (Ibid., op.7, spr. 250); Andrei Levin (Ibid., op.7, spr.484); Mania Melamed (Ibid., op.7, spr. 543); Klavdiia Frizen and Ekaterina Golubova (Ibid., op.7, spr.834); Akulina Fal'man (Ibid., op.8, spr.406).

On ethnic Germans in Ukraine before and during the Second World War: Meir Buchsweiler, *Volksdeutsche in der Ukraine am Vorabend und Beginn des Zweiten Weltkrieges. Ein Fall Doppelter Loyalität* (Stuttgart: Bleicher Verlag, 1984).

²¹ On material incentives behind collaboration: Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 67. On the motives of specific policemen and appropriation of Jewish property in Kherson, see, for example, the criminal prosecution case file of Nikolaï Zapara (DAKhO, f. r-4033, op.7, spr.332).

²² On the Nazi policies: Vietrov, *Ekonomichna ekspaniia*; Gerlach, *Krieg, Ernährung, Völkermord*; Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 164-186.

²³ On the Nazi prisons and labour camps in Ukraine: Maryna Dubyk, ed., *Dovidnyk pro tabory, tiurmy ta getto na okupovaniï terytorii Ukraïny (1941-1944)* (Kyiv: Derzhavnyi komitet arkhiviv Ukraïny, Ukraïns'kyi natsional'nyi fond "Vzaiemorozuminnia i prymyrennia," 2000); Tamara Vrons'ka and Oleksandr Lysenko, "Tiurmy v natsysts'kii karal'no-represyvnii systemi na okupovaniï terytorii Ukraïny," *Ukraïns'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, No.1 (2013): 92-105.

significance are issues relating to the situation of women and their relationships with occupiers and male collaborators, which, however, cannot be adequately analysed here.²⁴

In comparison, the situation of rural residents was more favourable than that of city dwellers, inasmuch as they did not usually suffer from lack of food supplies and occasionally even took advantage of the black market trade in foodstuffs. Moreover, their dealings with the sparsely placed representatives of the Nazi occupation apparatus in the countryside (the so-called agricultural leaders) were often mediated by local collaborators and for a long time were limited to fulfilling grain procurement targets and labour assignments close to home.²⁵ But as the war dragged on, rural residents throughout Reichskommissariat “Ukraine” also frequently became the target of violent round-ups for forced labour in Germany.²⁶ The Kherson region was hardly an exception in this regard.²⁷

By far the harshest measures within the context of the Nazi occupation were reserved for Jews, Roma and Soviet POWs, whose extermination unfolded in parallel and in the case of Jewish prisoners of war was inseparable from each other.²⁸ Already during the initial days of the occupation of Kherson, the Jewish residents of the city were subjected to obligatory registration and symbolically marked off from the rest of the population. Some 400 Jewish men and a few women were shot immediately upon the registration—allegedly in retaliation for the destruction of the city infrastructure by the retreating Soviet forces a few days earlier.²⁹ The rest were forced to relocate to the improvised ghetto on the outskirts of the city.³⁰

²⁴ Some data have been presented by Anatoliĭ Skorobohatov in his study of the everyday life in Kharkiv under Nazi rule: Skorobohatov, *Kharkiv*, 311.

²⁵ On 24 July 1942 Mykolaïv *Generalkomissar* Oppermann, for example, informed *Gebietskommissars* about efforts of the indigeneous administrative personnel and heads of collective farms to inflate the numbers of local residents in order to retain the greater amount of foodstuffs for local needs and demanded that the allocation of food to the local population did not exceed the determined numbers (TsDAVOVU, f. KMF-8, op.2, spr. 297, ark.50).

²⁶ On the situation of peasants in the *Reichskommissariat Ukraine*: Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 114-140.

²⁷ The Extraordinary State Commission placed the number of forced labourers deported from the Kherson region to Germany at 37,498 people: “The Report about the Results of Calculation of the Damage and Investigation of Atrocities of German Fascist Occupiers in the Kherson region. The List of Culprits Responsible for the Despoliation of Property of Citizens, Collective Farms and Organizations of the Kherson region,” (DAKhO, f.r-1479, op.1, spr.7, ark.23). See also chief of the UNKGB in the Gornostaivka district lieutenant of state security Gusev to chief of the UNKGB in the Kherson region colonel of state security Krashennikov, “On Facts of the Deportation of Soviet Citizens into the German Slavery,” no precise date [no earlier than 24 August 1944] (Ibid., spr.2, ark.42).

²⁸ On the fate of Jewish POWs: Polian and Shneer, *Obrechennye pogibnut’*.

²⁹ “Tätigkeits- und Lagebericht Nr. 6 der Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD in der UdSSR (Berichtszeit von 1.10-31.10.1941)” in Klein, *Die Einsatzgruppen*, 232.

³⁰ Vadon, *Okupatsiia Khersona*, 8-9. The ghetto was located at the cross-section of the Frunze and Rabochaya streets (Antonina Karpova, “Kherson v roky okupatsii,” *Pole*, 24 March 2000).

Importantly, by the time southern Ukraine came under German and Romanian control in late August-October 1941, the extermination of entire Jewish communities had already been in progress. As a result, except for the city of Kherson, no Jewish ghettos were created anywhere else in the region. By mid-to-late September 1941 units of the Einsatzgruppe D and order police—which had earlier perpetrated mass killings in the Odessa and Mykolaïv region—murdered all the Jews in Kalinindorf, Beryslav, and a few other towns and villages on the right bank of the Dnieper river.³¹

On 24 and 25 September Einsatzkommando 11A (part of the Einsatzgruppe D) and its local auxiliaries proceeded to shoot some 7,000 to 8,000 Jews in Kherson. The killings in the ravine near the village Zelenivka, preceded by concentration of the victims in the city prison, continued for two days and effectively marked the end of the Jewish community of Kherson.³² Henceforth only some 150 women and children from mixed marriages were allowed to live—it appears, due to the persistent lobbying of local police authorities by Ukrainian and Russian family members.³³

On 25 September some 740 Jews and 60 Communists were murdered in the vicinity of Kakhovka by members of the 4th company of the police battalion No.9.³⁴ In the following weeks more killings of Jews, Roma, and Communists took place also in the left bank districts, which

³¹ Documents of the Extraordinary State Commission about the mass killings in Kalinindorf on 16 September 1941 can be found at DAKhO, f.r-1479, op.1, spr.54. Witness testimonies and protocols of interrogations of local accomplices of Nazi crimes can be found at AUSBUKhO, fond taiemnoho dilovodstva, op. 1209, spr.70, t.2, ark.151-153. In the Beryslav district massacres of Jews took place on 10 and 22 September 1941: “Survey Prepared for Head of the Investigative Team of the UKGB in the Kherson Region Major Dmitrichenko,” 23 May 1966 (Ibid., ark.1-10). Some 400 Jews of Beryslav were murdered on 22 September 1941. See chief of the UNKGB in the Beryslav district senior lieutenant of state security Shineev to chief of the UNKGB in the Kherson region colonel of state security Krasheninnikov, “On Crimes of German-Fascist Invaders in the Beryslav district,” no precise date [no earlier than 1 September 1944] (DAKhO, f. r-1479, op.1, spr.2, ark.52-57). On murder of 23 Jews in the Novo-Vorontsovka district: chief of the UNKGB in the Novo-Vorontsovka district captain of state security [signature unintelligible] to chief of the UNKGB in the Kherson region colonel of state security Krasheninnikov, no precise date (Ibid., ark.77-77ob).

³² On the Einsatzgruppe D: Angrick, *Besatzungspolitik und Massenmord*. On the mass killings of Jews in Kherson, see the report and testimonies assembled by the “Extraordinary State Commission for the Documentation and Investigation of Atrocities of German Fascists and their Henchmen” (DAKhO, f.r-1479, op.1, spr.118, ark.1-13); also the protocol of interrogation of deputy chief of the auxiliary police in Kherson Valerian Tremmel’, 6 November 1954 (AUSBUKhO, fond taiemnoho dilovodstva, op. 1209, spr.70, t.1, ark.98); protocol of interrogation of Nadezhda Korogod, 10 June 1944 (Ibid., ark.83); protocol of interrogation of Boris Klerman, 19 June 1944 (DAKhO, f. r-4033, op.5, spr.358, ark. 15-18).

³³ *Gebietskommissar* Rodde to *Generalkommissar* Opperman, 9 February 1943 (DAKhO, f. r-1824, op.1, spr. 95, ark.2). On the role of family members, see the post-war testimony by Valentin Kiriunnikov (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.22, spr.608, ark.52).

³⁴ DAKhO, f. r-1479, op.1, spr.64, ark.2; Witness testimonies about the murder of Kakhovka Jews are also available at AUSBUKhO, fond taiemnoho dilovodstva, spr.70, t.1, ark.229-256, 273-281. The perpetrators were identified through the following source: Jeffrey Burds, *The Holocaust in Rovno: The Massacre at Sosenki Forest, November 1941* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 21.

were occupied only in October (Skadovs'k, Novotroïts'ke and others).³⁵ Where the victims were few—as was the case in the author's home town of Verkhniï Rohachyk-- they were arrested by the local police and escorted to larger towns with prison facilities (Tsiurupyns'k, Velyka, Lepetykha, Kam'ianka) where they awaited the eventual execution.³⁶ In the aftermath of the massacres, the German policemen and local auxiliaries also looked for the Jews who had gone into hiding and, it appears, occasionally killed them on the spot.³⁷

Kherson was also a site of three POW camps—Dulag 120, Stalag 364 and Stalag 370 located in different parts of the city.³⁸ More camps were located in the rural areas, notably in the Kalanchak district.³⁹ As of today the best documented are experiences of prisoners of war in Kherson camps.

The available testimonies suggest that the first columns of POWs started to arrive in the city already during the first days of the occupation. They were invariably met by crowds of locals, who would come looking for their relatives and also bring food. With the exception of political officers, Jews, and, occasionally, Soviet sailors captured in Crimea, who were promptly executed, most of the POWs died from hunger, exposure to the elements and backbreaking labour in the fall of 1941 and winter 1942.⁴⁰

There are no precise estimates of the total number of deaths in the Kherson POW camps. Official Soviet estimates suggest that as many as 40,000 POWs may have perished in the city between August 1941 and November 1943—when the camp inmates were evacuated to Germany.⁴¹

Importantly, just like executions of the participants of the Communist resistance and the extermination of the Jews and Roma, the suffering of POWs was not a secret to the local population. Quite the contrary, it was an intensely public spectacle, exerting a profound

³⁵ “Survey Prepared for Head of the Investigative Team of the UKGB in the Kherson Region Major Dmitrichenko,” 9 June 1966 (AUSBUKHO, fond taiemnoho dilovodstva, op. 1209, spr.70, t.2, ark.1-10).

³⁶ The author's great grandfather was reportedly arrested and taken to the town Kamianka (today in the Zaporizhzhia region). He was never heard of again by the relatives.

³⁷ See, for example, the protocol of interrogation of Klavdiia Shcherbyna, 24 July 1968 (Ibid., ark.151-153).

³⁸ See the review of the criminal investigative case file No.169 of the military counter-intelligence “Smersh” of the 4th Ukrainian front, 22 June 1971 (Ibid., ark.273-275).

³⁹ See chief of the UNKGB in the Kalanchak district lieutenant of state security Kalinovich to chief of the UNKGB in the Kherson region colonel of state security Krashennikov, 4 October 1944 (DAKHO, f. r-1479, op.1, spr.2, ark.66-68).

⁴⁰ Testimonies about the situation in POW camps can be found at DAKHO, f. r-1479, op.1, spr.118, ark.15-25; f.r-1479, op.1, spr.123; spr.162.

⁴¹ This is the official estimate by the “Extraordinary State Commission” (Ibid., ark.28).

psychological impact on the local population and influencing attitudes towards Nazi rule, especially inasmuch as locals themselves increasingly suffered from daily arbitrariness, exploitation, expropriation of property, inadequate food supply (in the city), violence accompanying deportations for forced labour in Germany, and, eventually, the expulsion of civilian population from combat areas in November 1943. More importantly, all of these experiences not only bred resentment, but also generated a tremendous amount of insecurity among local residents, which in the absence of viable political alternatives invariably translated into more positive attitudes towards Soviet power.⁴² All of this was particularly true of children who could hardly conceive of any political reality outside Soviet and Nazi rule.

Narratives

When evaluating the contents of children's essays on the war, it is important to bear in mind the writers' background. Born between 1927 and 1931, the children from this sample were for the most part urban residents who had received the bulk of their formal education in Soviet schools already before the war.⁴³ This fact may, in part, explain, the intensity of Soviet patriotism apparent in the majority of the essays.⁴⁴ Since in the context of the Nazi occupation, ethnic identity most of the time had a direct bearing on the nature of the historical subjects' wartime experiences, it is fairly safe to assume that the essays in the sample were unrepresentative of the whole population of the region. After all, completely excluded from the 1944 memory project were not only the Jewish and Roma victims of the genocide and ethnic Germans evacuated by the Wehrmacht or deported by the Soviet authorities to special settlements in Central Asia, but

⁴² Soviet propaganda projected to the occupied territories did not fail to mention that the Red Army and the Soviet state were the only forces capable of delivering the population from Nazi rule. See instructions issued by first secretary of the Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Ukraine Nikita Khrushchev to commanders of Soviet partisan units in Ukraine, 11 June 1943 (TsDAHOU, f.65, op.1, spr.15, ark.1).

⁴³ Some formal schooling was under the German occupation. It appears, however, that few if any schools operated regularly and most were closed down throughout 1943, as the occupation authorities attempted to utilize students' labor.

⁴⁴ Generational differences in the attitude towards Soviet power and the role of Soviet schooling were noted by Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 2004), 205-231.

also Russian and Ukrainian youths taken to the Third Reich for forced labour in the course of 1942 and 1943.⁴⁵

The construction of children's reminiscences also cannot be understood outside the larger political context and intensive indoctrination taking place inside and outside Soviet class-rooms at the time of writing.⁴⁶ Yet careful examination of the essays reveals the existence of narrative patterns that are not easily explained by reference to the processes of political indoctrination and textual manipulation in the context of Soviet classrooms.

One element of collective memory that kept re-surfacing in some form in nearly every essay is the sense of one's own victimization, usually submerged in the larger narrative of Soviet suffering, patriotism, and anti-fascism sprinkled with intense antipathy towards the Germans as a group. Importantly, this narrative closely correlated with the internal correspondence of Soviet officials, the topics of publications by the Administration of State Archives of the NKVD and the Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War and the propaganda materials directed at Red Army soldiers—all of which typically emphasized the Nazi victimization of the vulnerable population groups, such as women, children, and prisoners of war—ostensibly with a view to legitimating Soviet rule, intensifying hatred of the enemy, and raising the combat morale of the soldiers.⁴⁷

One should not, however, make assumptions about the nature of the relationship between children's reminiscences and the official discourse. As of today, we still know relatively little about the origins of what some historians have called the official myth of the "Great Patriotic War"—which during the Second World War supplanted the October Revolution as a foundational master-narrative of the Soviet state and henceforth performed the function of fostering a consolidated political community.⁴⁸ What is clear is that the official master narrative was more than an artificial creation of Soviet propaganda, having received along the way critical contributions from a large number of state officials, artistic intelligentsia, and ordinary Soviet

⁴⁵ Most of these would return to Ukraine only after the war in the process of post-war repatriation. On the latter subject: Arzamaskin, *Repatriatsiia sovetskikh i inostrannykh grazhdan*.

⁴⁶ For some specimens of Soviet wartime propaganda, see Weiner, "Nature, Nurture, and Memory."

⁴⁷ See, for example, *Zverstva nemtsev nad plennymi krasnoarmeitsami* (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1942); *Zverstva, grabezhi i nasiliia nemetsko-fashistskikh zakhvatchikov* (Moskva: OGIZ Gospolitizdat, 1942); *Zverstva nemetsko-fashistskikh zakhvatchikov. Dokumenty* (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1942-1945); *Smert' detoubiitsam. Sbornik dokumentov*. Moskva: Izdatel'stvo TsK VLKSM "Molodaia Gvardiia," 1942.

⁴⁸ Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*; Hrynevych, "Mit viiny ta viina mitiv."

citizens, notably from among Red Army veterans.⁴⁹ Moreover, Soviet officials consistently gathered information about these experiences, which were then incorporated into the emergent meta-narrative of Soviet power. Within this context, collections of children's reminiscences, letters of *Ostarbeiter*, and testimonies assembled by the Commission for the Study of History of the Patriotic War, serve as a reminder of the existence of entire clusters of historico-political practices, which in the wake of the Axis occupation played an important role in the ideological (re)-construction of the Soviet political community.

Among the specific instructions, which clearly expose the links between the grass roots experiences and historico-political activities of the Soviet state one can mention a letter by Nikita Khrushchev to secretaries of the regional committees of the Communist Party of of Ukraine (12 February 1944):

Organize collection of materials about deportations of the Ukrainian population to Germany. Gather notable facts of Germans' abuse of our people; facts and authentic documents about the recruitment and forced deportations of the population of the cities and villages; authentic orders, instructions, and secret correspondence of the German officials on these issues; the number of the deported from regional centres, towns, and villages; the authentic letters home from Germany; photographs; the most vivid witness testimonies, as well as medical certificates about the injuries sustained at work in Germany. Pay particular attention to the collection of materials about the enslavement of children and teenagers. If possible provide information about their age and the total number of those deported. All the materials are to be delivered to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine no later than 1 March 1944.⁵⁰

In the following weeks, officials of regional and district committees indeed carried out such research and forwarded corresponding reports to the Central Committee, which, presumably, would use these materials for political purposes.⁵¹ So what were the wartime experiences and the stories that children related in the context of the official memory project?

⁴⁹ Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, especially chapter 1.

⁵⁰ TsDAHOU, f. 1, op.23, spr.1062, ark.11.

⁵¹ See, for example, secretary of the Chernihiv *obkom* Kuznetsov to first secretary of the TsK KP(b)U Khrushchev, no date (Ibid., ark.18-23); secretary of the Skadovs'k district committee of the KP(b)U Terekhov to secretary of the Mykolaïv regional committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine Filippov, no earlier than 16 February 1944 (DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr.19, ark.6).

If people indeed tend to remember traumatic events vividly, then no other episode of the German occupation was more traumatic to the majority of Khersonian children than was the expulsion of the civilian population from the city in November and December 1943.⁵² Nearly all the children evoked the event and many dedicated a major part of their essays to the description of their experiences at this time.

In Kherson, the events that spawned the writings were set in motion on 31 October 1943, when the German military announced the obligatory evacuation from the city of all male residents aged 14 to 65.⁵³ The overwhelming majority of local men, however, failed to report to the assembly points. Some people decided to await the arrival of the Red Army in the dug-outs that they had prepared a few months earlier.⁵⁴ Others sought shelter in the countryside or went into the woods along the Dnieper embankment (*plavni*) with the intention of later crossing over to the Soviet side of the front.

The latter was the course of action pursued by the father and an elder brother of the young Khersonian, Hanna Kryva. In what appears to be a direct rendering of the story that she heard from her family members, the girl related developments in the woods in November 1943:

People from the city went to the islands, into the *plavni*. The Germans learned about this and started combing the *plavni*. When the beasts caught anybody they took them to the city for an interrogation. My father and brother were hiding in the reeds, when the Germans started blindly to shoot at the *plavni*. They machine-gunned the reeds and hit my brother in the forearm. The Germans moved on, while my father and brother jumped into the boat and quietly returned home. Staying in the *plavni* was no longer safe.⁵⁵

Strikingly similar is the recollection of Nila Kryvosheia, whose father also fled into the *plavni* in November 1943. But whereas Hanna Kryva explained the decision of her relatives to return home by reference to the danger stemming from the German punitive operations, Nila Kryvosheia suggested that her father was forced to leave the *plavni*, because he had run out of

⁵² See, for example, Daniel Schacter, *Seven Sins of Memory: How the Mind Forgets and Remembers* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001), 80; Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 7-9; Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, 326.

⁵³ Vadon, *Okupatsiia Khersona*, 19. Zinaida Derkach (DAKhO, f. r-3497, op.1, spr.25, ark.6-7). The primary objectives behind the forced evacuation of men included securing rear areas of the Wehrmacht and depriving the Soviet side of potential soldiers.

⁵⁴ Lidiia Mel'nykova (DAKhO, f. r-3497, op.1, spr.27, ark.12); Shkurat (Ibid., ark.15); Elizavetta Kliuchareva (Ibid., ark. 22); Anatoliĭ Shvets' (Ibid., ark. 50-51).

⁵⁵ Hanna Kryva (DAKhO, f. r-3497, op.1, spr.32, ark.1-2).

food after a 10-day stay on the island. We also learn that upon his return to the city, Nila's father fell into the hands of Wehrmacht soldiers and was sent to a transit camp. From there he escaped to an unspecified village on the outskirts of Kherson. Given the chaotic nature of developments at the time, perhaps, the most unexpected aspect of the Kryvosheias' story is that the women of the family learned through the grapevine where their men were; and once the German officials announced the general evacuation from the city, they headed directly to the village to join them.⁵⁶ Such displays of family loyalties and social solidarity seem to have been particularly commonplace at the time.⁵⁷

The military orders providing for the removal from the combat area of all civilians regardless of age or sex, it appears, made their appearance on December 8, 1943.⁵⁸ Initially, the orders concerned only the population living in the streets adjacent to the river-line. Within a week, however, their application extended to the rest of the city. Evgeniia Brodetskaya remembered her experiences of December 1943:

As the Red Army approached Kherson, residents of the lower streets were relocated into the upper section of the city. We took in a woman with three children. The frustrated Germans sent men and women to the camps. My mother worked at the hospital. On 10 December the Gendarmes suddenly swooped into the hospital and rounded up all the personnel. Afraid to lose my mother I left with her in convoy. They put all the medical staff and myself into some dilapidated hospital without warm clothes or even food. Only the next day did my grandmother bring us clothes and several days' supply of food. On the same day they took us to the train station. The station was under constant gunfire, I was crying. They sent us to Mykolaïv. In Mykolaïv [local] people received us well. They gave us a room, although there were 8 people living in there.⁵⁹

Because of the lack of transportation, however, most of the people who had failed to flee earlier were sent west on prolonged foot marches. The young Khersonian Leonid Bal'oshenko was among thousands of women and children expelled from the city in December 1943:

⁵⁶ Upon the arrival of the Red Army, Nila Kryvosheia's father was drafted. He was killed in action on 25 June 1944 (Ibid., spr.27, ark.38-39).

⁵⁷ See also the composition of Valentyna Shkurat. Her father was marched to Mykolaïv. The rest of the family somehow knew exactly where he was and they too joined him several weeks later (Ibid., ark.14-15).

⁵⁸ Vadon, *Okupatsiia Khersona*, 19.

⁵⁹ Evgeniia Brodetskaia (DAKhO, f. r-3497, op.1, spr.25, ark.8-9).

They sent us towards Muzykivka [village in the vicinity of Kherson] We slept in an unheated church building. Four days later, our wagon got stuck in the mud two kilometres from the village of Bukhal'tsevo [village in today's Mykolaïv region]. We had to carry all the personal belongings and two little children, whose mother evacuated with the [Red Army] hospital in 1941 [...] Shortly thereafter we ran away and hid in a village. Villagers received us very warmly. We stayed there until the arrival of the Red Army.⁶⁰

These experiences were widespread.⁶¹ Yet, not all city-dwellers were uprooted by the German evacuation policy. Having taken refuge in secret hide-outs within the city, some Khersonians anxiously awaited the arrival of the Red Army, whose advance had bogged down on the left bank of the Dnieper, a mere ten kilometers from Kherson. Sometimes, German soldiers discovered these hideouts, in which case their inhabitants were either shot or, more commonly, sent to special points of assembly administered by the German military, frequently after receiving a severe beating. From there the German military authorities would march them further west.⁶²

The family of Elizavetta Kliuchareva had been hiding in a cellar for more than a month. After their food ran out, they attempted to get out of the city:

As we reached the slaughterhouse, the Germans noticed us and began to shoot. We stopped. Two German soldiers ran towards us and started beating my father. We all were crying. They then took us to the transit camp.⁶³

Following several weeks spent on the road among the evacuees, the Kliucharevs ran away and hid in one of the villages in today's Mykolaïv region, where they stayed until the Red Army units took control of the area. They returned to Kherson several weeks later to learn that the uncle—who stayed behind in the cellar—was discovered and executed by the German soldiers.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Leonid Bal'oshenko (Ibid., spr.27, ark.60).

⁶¹ Koval' (DAKhO, f.r-3497, op.1, spr.34, ark.11); Halyna Krykunova (DAKhO, f. r-3497, op.1, spr.25, ark.10); A.Holubova (Ibid., ark,15); P.Stashenko (Ibid., ark. 28).

⁶² In summer 1944 the "Commission for the Investigation of Crimes of German Fascists and their Henchmen" established that in the period of forced evacuation eight Kherson civilians were executed in the Military *Vorstadt* District of Kherson (Ibid., f.r-1479, op.1, spr.118, ark.27).

⁶³ Elizavetta Kliuchareva (Ibid., f.r-3497, op.1, spr.27, ark.20-22).

⁶⁴ Ibid., ark.22.

Forced Labour in the Memory of Children

Popular narratives of victimization linked to pronounced anti-Germanism and Soviet patriotism were not new in Kherson late in 1943. Nor were the patterns of evading regulations of the Nazi occupation authorities that manifested themselves so clearly in the course of the forced evacuation of the population. As many essays make clear, the beliefs and practices described above were already in place as early as summer 1942 when the Nazi labour program entered its radical phase.

Launched in spring 1942 at the height of the manpower shortage in the Third Reich, the recruitment of *Ostarbeiter* (eastern workers) was initially conducted on a voluntary basis.⁶⁵ For a number of reasons, of which lack of employment and food shortages in the city throughout the winter 1941-1942 were probably the most important, some young Khersonians did enrol as volunteers.⁶⁶ It is worth mentioning, however, that Kherson's children never mentioned this fact in their accounts of wartime experience. One reason for this omission is obvious. Some volunteers could well have been elder siblings of these writers. Given the broader context of the on-going war and the vigorous pursuit of presumed collaborators by the Soviet state, it is obvious why the essays would not contain any mention of such embarrassing and potentially perilous facts.

Another reason for this omission relates more closely to the experiences of the children themselves. As the limited reserve of volunteers was exhausted by the summer of 1942, the German occupation authorities increasingly resorted to forced recruitment. While eventually some 15,000 young Khersonians found themselves on the way to Germany, many others were forcibly mobilized for a variety of labour assignments within the region.⁶⁷

The trauma of the recruitment drives, fear of deportation to Germany, and exploitation at the workplace left profound imprints in the collective memory of the German occupation. Valentina Gladkaia described her experiences in the following manner:

⁶⁵Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 253-274.

⁶⁶ On the conditions in the Ukrainian cities during the occupation see, Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*; 141-186.

⁶⁷ The figure is an official estimate of the Extraordinary State Commission (DAKhO, f.r1479, op.1, spr.118, ark.28).

I worked at road construction. We worked all day and were not allowed to take breaks. A German overseer made us work all the time, beating us with a whip when we wanted to take a break. That reminded me of the picture I saw in book about how exploiters tortured the Chinese. Every day we grew more hateful of the Germans. One day I received a summons from the labour office. When I entered, I saw a German. One heard sobs and groans coming from the corridor. Some people fainted. The German examined my file, eyed me from head to toe and said: "Go to the [medical] Commission" I began protesting, saying I was only 14. He did not want to hear about it: "Nothing will happen to you. You will work in Germany. There you will not leave your workplace without permission."⁶⁸

Larissa Chaplina's brother, born in 1927, was taken to Germany, "where the beasts forced him to perform convict labour and subjected him to starvation." "When I turned fourteen," Larissa wrote, "I had to hide to avoid deportation to Germany."⁶⁹ When Zinaida Derkach turned the same age in 1942, we learn, she did not report to the local labour office. In July 1943, however, the German occupation authorities issued an order about the obligatory re-registration of people born in 1928. According to Zinaida, she attempted to avoid mobilization for forced labour in Germany by finding employment in an agricultural community just outside the city.⁷⁰ Liudmyla Diastrianova attempted to avoid labour obligations by pretending to be younger than she really was. It appears, however, that the tactical ploy did not work. The girl was convinced she became a victim of denunciation on the part of some neighbours.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Valentina Gladkaia (Ibid., f.r-3497, op.1, spr.34, ark.82-83). Together with 30 other youngsters Valentina was put onto the train and sent to Mykolaïv. It appears, however, that in Mykolaïv she indeed was exempted because of her young age

⁶⁹ Ibid., spr.25, ark.4.

⁷⁰ Ibid., ark.6-7, 11-12.

⁷¹ Ibid., spr.1, ark.1; The fear of denunciation by fellow Khersonians also comes up quite clearly in the story of Olena Burychenko who also shirked registration with the Labour office: "When the Germans entered Kherson, I lived unregistered because of the rumours that all children older than 10 years of age would be sent to Germany. Then my parents secretly took me to Tsiurupyns'k [a town on the left bank of the Dnieper opposite Kherson], where my grandmother lived. There I also remained unregistered. I did not venture outside, because the neighbours could denounce me to the authorities. They also wrote in the newspaper that parents failing to have their children registered would be shot. My parents secretly moved me back and forth between Kherson and Tsiurupyns'k, because all the neighbours knew I lived unregistered and could turn me in." (Ibid., spr.27, ark.18-19). Such fears of denunciations might seem paranoid, but given the epidemics of denunciation in the 1930s and then during the Nazi extermination of Jews and Communist functionaries, they were not completely preposterous. On the practice of denunciation in the Soviet history, See Sheila Fitzpatrick "Signals from Below: Soviet Letters of Denunciation from 1930s," *Journal of Modern History* 68, No. 4, Practices of Denunciation in Modern European History, 1789-1989, Dec., 1996): 816-866; The phenomenon of denunciation in the Nazi occupied territories is discussed in Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 59-88.

It appears that as time went on, the functionaries of the German labour office in Kherson improved their skills in rendering legible the obscure state of the local labour force. The obligatory registration of the workforce, including all children born in 1928, made it much harder for the Khersonians to avoid labour obligation by merely failing to report. Local resistance, however, quickly took on different forms. Bribing medical personnel to get exemptions was the most favoured technique for people who could afford it.⁷² Those, who, like siblings Mykola and Zinaïda Vorontsovs from the village Novo-Raisk, were not in a position to secure medical exemptions, frequently resorted to self-mutilation. After their efforts to misrepresent their year of birth fell flat, the Vorontsovs reportedly began taking some unspecified medication. (Their father was a veterinary doctor.) The drugs, we learn, weakened their bodies, but ultimately saved the two children from deportation.⁷³ The parents of Nila Kryvosheia used family connections to place Nila's elder sister on sick leave. The girl remained ineligible for the draft for four months. Then, according to Nila, her parents applied caustic soda to her sister's legs to secure the exemption: "People used to say, it was better to die young than to go to Germany for a certain death," wrote Nila in the conclusion to her essay.⁷⁴

The view that the youngsters taken to Germany were doomed to death resurfaces in a number of essays. While such notions might have derived in part from later biases, there are also some indications that similar views were voiced as early as spring 1943, although it is much more difficult to establish their genealogy. One possible explanation is the arrival from fall 1942 of notifications about the death of some *Ostarbeiter* and the rumours they generated.⁷⁵

But the fears also fed off the *Ostarbeiter*'s letters that came from Germany. One such letter written by a Khersonian, Pasha Reva, to her uncle in August 1943, revealed very well the girl's emotional state after recently experiencing Allied bombings:

My dear, how scared I was. How I miss home. How I wish I could see you just for a moment and tell you everything. I would then not be afraid to die. It is very unlikely

⁷² Certainly not everybody could. A. Bakanovskaia wrote: "My brother was to go to Germany. He had unhealthy kidneys. My mother turned to a doctor for help, but the doctor demanded 10,000 rubles. My mother did not have that much money. Wherever she went, nobody was willing to help her. My brother had to go. When they issued an order to register kids born in 1928-1932, my mother would not take me to the Labour Office." (DAKhO, f. r-3497, op.1, spr. 32, ark.11).

⁷³ Ibid., spr.26, ark.94.

⁷⁴ Ibid., spr.27, ark.38-39.

⁷⁵ The earliest notification about an *Ostarbeiter*'s death I managed to find was dated October 6, 1942 (Ibid., f.r-1824, op.1, spr.109, ark.9).

we'll survive. Oh, how I hate to perish in the foreign land, but will have to. So long. Do not forget me. Write me a letter. Bring some joy to my life.⁷⁶

The already mentioned Valentina Gladkaia related the contents of the letters that she received from her elder sister, who was taken to Germany in May 1943:

When I read her letters [to the neighbours], men cried along with women. She works at the plant. German foremen are mean. They beat [eastern workers] especially when they hear bad news from the front. Day norms are very high. It is impossible to fulfil one in two days, and whenever a person comes outside, [German] children hurl stones and yell "Bolshevik."⁷⁷

While there certainly were quite a few letters that described conditions of work and life in Germany in more positive terms, they seem to have had a limited impact on popular attitudes towards the Nazi labour program.⁷⁸ As far as the children's essays are concerned I found only one mention of positive experiences of *Ostarbeiter*.⁷⁹ In my estimate, this tendency has to be explained in terms of what Daniel Schacter calls the "consistency bias."⁸⁰ Having come to regard Nazi rule as the ultimate exercise in oppression geared towards the eventual extermination of the majority of the indigenous population, many children writers found little reason in the fall of 1944 to include in their essays images that might have stood at odds with this general picture. Certainly, the language in which young Khersonians expressed their feelings had everything to do with the official Soviet propaganda of the time. Yet, it would be overly simplistic to explain teenagers' professed identification with the Red Army and the Soviet state by reference to the official propaganda alone. To do so would be to ignore the complex processes of politicization and identity formation undergone by the local body politic in the final year of the German occupation.

⁷⁶Ibid., f.r-2244, op.1, spr.5, ark.15.

⁷⁷ Ibid., f.r-3497, op.1, spr. 34, ark.84.

⁷⁸ A. Gagarina: "They feed us well. The nature is very beautiful here. In the forests there are pigs, goats and foxes. Every Sunday the girls and I go to the neighbouring village. There is a restaurant. We drink beer and lemonade. We miss you very much. Say hi to people I know" (Ibid., f.r-2244, op.1, spr.5, ark.56).

⁷⁹ Zaichenko, "We had neighbors. Their daughter worked in Germany. Once she sent home a letter. Her mother came outside and said to the Germans: "Meine Maria gut, gut schreibe. Lives in Berlin." (Ibid., f.r-3497, op.1, spr.37, ark.9).

⁸⁰ Schacter, *Seven Sins of Memory*, 138-139.

Making of the Soviet Body Politics

In his book on everyday life in *Reichskommissariat "Ukraine,"* the historian Karel Berkhoff argued that despite the growing dissatisfaction with Nazi rule in the years 1942 to 1943 the population in the occupied territories by and large did not look forward to the return of Soviet power because of the memory and fears of political repression. In Berkhoff's interpretation, during the war the bulk of the populace in Dnieper Ukraine remained essentially immune to "ideologies" (which the author appears to understand in a traditionally narrow sense as Communism), expressing their social and political identities in profoundly local terms. The only reason Communist regime came to be perceived by some as preferable to Nazi rule, Berkhoff argues, was because it was not identified as foreign.⁸¹

While one can certainly appreciate the value of the author's argument about the tenacity of local identities, Berkhoff's argument misses a crucial point: the identification with members of one's local community could be submerged in the identification with larger entities, such as, the Ukrainian nation or the political community of the Soviet people. As some recent research shows, this was indeed the case in parts of Soviet Ukraine even before the Second World War.⁸² Certainly in the Kherson region, the resentment of Nazi rule frequently translated into positive situational identification with the Soviet state, if only because the latter was perceived as the only alternative to the Nazis.

The first traces of politicization were in evidence in Kherson as early as January 1942, when in the wake of the Red Army's successful offensive in the Crimea a number of pro-Soviet underground groups apparently came to life. In the following months members of such groups engaged, among other things, in clandestine relief efforts at POW camps, distribution of propaganda leaflets, and dissemination of subversive rumours about the rapid return of the Red Army.⁸³

⁸¹ Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 223-225.

⁸² On peasants becoming Soviet, see Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 298-363; on the possibility of reconciling the Ukrainian national identity with the Soviet one, see Serhy Yekelchuk, "Stalinist Patriotism as Imperial Discourse: Reconciling the Ukrainian and Russian Heroic Pasts, 1939-1945," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 3, No. 1 (Winter 2002): 51-80.

⁸³ *Holos Dnipro*, 11 January 1942; DAKhO, f.p-3562, op.2, spr.26, ark.146.

To be sure, the overwhelming majority of the population did not flock to the underground groups. Indeed, almost to the very last day of the occupation, most Khersonians combined selective subversion of German policies with some sort of cooperation with the German authorities.⁸⁴ One has to be careful, however, not to assume, as did some Soviet officials after the war, that such opportunism necessarily denoted political neutrality or support of “ideologies.” After all, such behaviour was characteristic of many members of the Soviet underground in Kherson, who unlike Soviet partisans in Northern Ukraine and Belorussia, had to work to make their meagre living. In the Nazi occupied Kherson employment could be found only at German sponsored institutions or industrial and agricultural enterprises working for the German war effort. Such behavioural ambiguity notwithstanding, there is evidence that as the war went on, popular interpretations of Nazi rule drew closer to the narratives articulated by the politically committed members of the Soviet underground. Instrumental in this process were the radicalization of the occupation policies, expectations of the inevitable German defeat, and, perhaps, most important, the propaganda efforts by the Soviet state and local underground groups. Let us take a quick look, for example, at the proclamation of the organization “Centre,” circulated in Kherson in May 1943:

All of you have read the address of the German authorities to Ukrainian youth, born in the years 1922-1925. Soon after the mobilization, our youngsters will be sent to work in the concentration camps and in German brothels. Fascists by any means available to them want to destroy our young people brought up in the spirit of Communism and loyalty to the Soviet state, who can become the reliable reserve of the Red Army. You all know from the letters of friends, brothers, and sisters, from the stories of the disabled who returned from Germany what conditions of life and labour are like for our people in Germany. Hundreds of thousands of young people have died from hunger, epidemics, and backbreaking labour. Our answer should be: not a single volunteer for work in Germany! Do not let them take you there by force! Avoid mobilization! Organize partisan groups! Policemen, sabotage policies of the German occupation authorities, make it easier to hide for people avoiding the mobilization and those who run away from the camps and assembly points!⁸⁵

As the text of the propaganda leaflet above makes clear, blurring distinctions between what we might call political and popular interpretation of the wartime events was facilitated by the fact

⁸⁴ A German historian, Bernhard Chiari, recently made a point that in the conditions of the Nazi occupation, some form of cooperation with the authorities became an almost inescapable prerequisite for survival. See Chiari, *Alltag hinter der Front*.

⁸⁵ DAKhO, f. p-3562, op.2, spr. 25, ark.38.

that, just like ordinary city dwellers, members of the Soviet underground movement were participants in the collective memory of the occupation, interpreting the reality of German rule based on the pool of experiences and ideological constructs available to the population as a whole (“all of you have read the address of German authorities to the Ukrainian youth...,” “you all know from the letters of friends, brothers, and sisters; from the stories of the disabled who returned from Germany what conditions of life and labour are like for our people in Germany,” “hundreds of thousands of young people have died from hunger, epidemics, back-breaking labour”). What thus initially distinguished this explicitly political narrative from popular conceptualizations of the wartime experience was not so much its factual content, but the instrumental linkage established between popular discourses of victimization and anti-Germanism, on one hand, and Soviet political identity on the other.

But as Soviet military fortunes steadily improved throughout 1943, Nazi policies became more radical, and the apolitical subversion of the occupation policies grew more frequent, more and more people began to perceive the Red Army as the only force capable of bringing deliverance from the thoroughly resented Nazi rule. In this manner, boundaries between political and popular narratives of the wartime experience became blurred even before the Red Army returned to Kherson. Among other things this development meant that not only could ordinary citizens, including our young writers, insert their own experiences into the Soviet meta-narrative of the Second World War, but also embrace the latter as a part of their own identity.

No definitive judgment can, of course, ever be made on political attitudes in a society where free expression is not an option.⁸⁶ The only way to reduce the possibility of getting trapped in accoutrements of the dominant discourse, whether Nazi or Soviet, consists in contextualization and exploration of the nexus of the available textual evidence with information on people’s behaviour.⁸⁷ Clearly the efforts of thousands of Khersonians to avoid the German led evacuation and unite with the Red Army units late in 1943, expressed more than a sense of local identity. Surely, these people were not oblivious to the fact that the arrival of the Red Army

⁸⁶ Some recent literature on the subject of political attitudes in the Soviet Union in the 1930s includes the following: Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain*; Davies, *Popular Opinion in Stalin’s Russia*; Jochen Hellbeck, “Fashioning the Stalinist Soul: the Diary of Stepan Podlubnyi, 1931-1939,” *Jahrbücher der Geschichte Osteuropas* 44, No.4 (1996): 233-273; Lynne Viola, ed., *Contending with Stalinism: Soviet Power and Popular Resistance in the 1930s* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2002).

⁸⁷ James Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 191; Lynne Viola, “Popular Resistance in the Stalinist 1930s: Soliloquy of a Devil’s Advocate,” in Viola, *Contending with Stalinism*, 23-29.

would inaugurate the return of the Soviet government. Of course, for many, perhaps, the majority, the choice was simply pragmatic. Indeed, as the hectic scrambling by some former prisoners of war and former policemen to organize “partisan detachments” in November-December 1943 indicates, some individuals entertained serious misgivings about the return of Soviet power.⁸⁸

Yet, what matters is not whether everybody shared unquestionable loyalty to the Soviet system, although probably a certain percentage of people did, but that in the conditions of the seemingly inevitable German defeat, strategic political choices had to be made. And once the die was cast, frequently months before the German retreat, people had to act more or less in accordance with their newly selected political identity.⁸⁹ Thus, by the time of the Red Army’s arrival, the political community of the Soviet people in Kherson was a reality. In the final analysis, however, it was up to the Soviet authorities to determine who was a good Soviet citizen during the Nazi occupation. Not everyone passed the test.⁹⁰

Children’s portrayal of their relationship to the Soviet state is quite standard. Most celebrated the Red Army and drew nostalgic comparisons between life in the USSR before the war and the reality of exploitation and continual humiliation under the Nazis.⁹¹ Nina Gudilina, from school number 3 in Kherson, not unlike several of her classmates, wrote in 1944:

Under German rule institutions of culture were closed, theaters, cinema, and schools. If the schools were open, they were available primarily for the peculiar people--Germans [*Volksdeutsche*]. It was difficult to live. One had to work. I had to do heavy manual labour from early morning until night. The labour did not correspond to the nutrition, which was inadequate. At night I often went without sleep, for the

⁸⁸ In Kherson, one of such units was organized late in fall 1943 by the former Red Army officer Iakov Sinel’nikov. The band several dozens strong took shelter in the Dnieper plavni after the evacuation of the male population of Kherson was announced in November 1943. According to the postwar investigation by the Soviet authorities, most of the members were runaway POWs who for some time had been secretly living in Kherson. Some, however, were “active collaborators,” who, as we learn from the secret police report, participated in the executions of Kherson Jews. Materials of investigation are at DAKhO, f.p-3562, op.2, spr.54, ark.163-227.

⁸⁹ The classical examples are “collaborators” who in 1943 secretly assisted members of the Soviet underground in an obvious effort to ingratiate themselves with the Soviet state. See, for instance, the testimony of the Kherson entrepreneur Iakov Tkhorovskii (Ibid., spr.26, ark.32-45.); materials of the MGB investigation regarding the connections between the underground organization “Centre” and the POW doctor Yakov Breisler-Alimov, who in 1942-43 worked on the German Labour Office Medical Board (Ibid., spr.31, ark.198-206).

⁹⁰ See Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, especially Ch.2.

⁹¹ The tendency to interpret the period immediately preceding the calamities and personal trauma in nostalgic terms seems to be fairly common. See, for example, Paul Fussell’s analysis of British soldiers’ memories of the pre-WWI period in his *The Great War and Modern Memory*, 80-81.

Gendarmes swooped down frequently and took young people for convict labour in Germany, from where there was no return.⁹²

The importance of networks of collective memory in forging a sense of the political community of the Soviet people comes up conspicuously in the composition of Lidiia Mel'nykova. Speaking about Kherson in fall 1943, Lidiia wrote:

Soon there began to arrive people evacuated by Germans from elsewhere. They talked about German crimes, Germans torturing Soviet people. We eagerly read leaflets that the Soviet planes were dropping. But the Germans watched so that nobody read them. They shot those people, who were found to be keeping leaflets. We longed to find out about the Red Army, but the Germans would not tell the truth. They only wrote that they pushed the Red Army further east, and then yet further. Then partisans [?] brought us word that the Soviet troops were already in Tsiurupyns'k. We were so happy and everybody spoke about the near liberation from these butchers.⁹³

Nazi Crimes in Children's Stories

The development or strengthening of Soviet identity and the concomitant crystallization of the sense of political community, dramatically affected children's representations of the Nazi extermination policies, causing youngsters to gloss over the collaboration of segments of the local population in the destruction of the local Jews and Communist functionaries. (Perhaps, this was a function of the questionnaire.) However, the concrete experiences and perception of themselves as victims of National Socialism offers an explanation as to why children, not unlike the officials of the Soviet state, failed to acknowledge the distinctiveness of the wartime experience of the Soviet Jews.⁹⁴ From the perspective of children writers who mentioned the

⁹² DAKhO, f.r-3497, op.1, spr.25, ark.2-3.

⁹³ Ibid., spr.27, ark.11.

⁹⁴ This phenomenon is frequently explained by evoking local anti-Semitism, whatever is understood by this term. Nina Tumarkin, for example, wrote, "How thoroughly must anti-Semitic sentiments have penetrated a culture that needed to prevent the entire Soviet population from knowing about the Jewish people's definitive ordeal (Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead*, 49). Similar view is expressed by Amir Weiner, "When Memory Counts: War, Genocide, and Postwar Soviet Jewry," in *Landscaping the Human Garden: Twentieth Century Population Management in a Comparative Framework*. Ed. Amir Weiner, 167-188 (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2003); Zvi

Holocaust, what happened to the Jews was terrible, but it was only one episode of the Nazi brutalization of the local population, a perception that becomes more understandable if we place it into the context of mass death in the POW camps and the experiences of the local population during the forced evacuation from combat areas.⁹⁵

While the majority of the essays mention Nazi atrocities against the Jews, Roma, Communists, and Soviet POWs as a component of the general narrative of Nazi criminality, only twelve children report having personal encounters with the plight of Soviet prisoners of war and a further ten report in some detail about the murder of the Jews. This feature of the children's memories is probably to be expected. In contrast to the policy of forced evacuation and the Nazi labour program described above, the killings of Jews, Roma, Communists, and POWs, was rather peripheral to the wartime experience of the majority of the young Khersonians, despite the fact that awareness of the perpetrated atrocities provided such an important basis for the construction of their own identities.⁹⁶ Also, the ability of the children to relate more closely to the experiences of other victims of Nazi extermination policies was almost certainly circumscribed by the effort of the parents and other adults to prevent children from personally witnessing the violence.

The analysis of the representations of the Nazi war crimes reveals curious tendencies. In light of the children's own experiences, it comes as little surprise that the majority of the writers tend to emphasize the brutality of the Germans. In fact, in my sample I was not able to find one "good German." Very typical in this respect is Nadezhda Koval's essay. Reconstructing her first encounter with the Wehrmacht troops in August 1941, Nadezhda wrote:

At 4p.m on August 19, 1941. We heard the roar of the German cars and barking shouts of the Germans. In our neighbourhood there stood the artillery unit. They placed the guns and began to shoot at the retreating Red Army soldiers. I remember

Gitelman, "Soviet Reactions to the Holocaust, 1941-1991," in Dobroszycki and Gurock, *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, 3-28.

⁹⁵ According to the estimates of the "Regional Commission for the Investigation of Crimes of German Fascists and their Henchmen," Between August 1941 and November 1943 in the city of Kherson alone close to 40,000 Soviet prisoners of war died (DAKhO, f.r-1479, op.1, spr.118, ark. 26-28).

⁹⁶ For Inna Karakoz, however, the Holocaust was a central experience of the Second World War: "My father was a Karaite. Karaites, like Jews were subject to execution. In many cities Karaites were shot. In Kherson the Germans apparently ran out of time. In October 1941 we heard a rumour that discussions were taking place in the Gestapo about the Karaite question. For two and a half years my two sisters, brother and I awaited anxiously the return of our father from work. I heard father say to my mother that he did not want to die such an abject death" (Ibid., f.r-3497, op.1, spr.34, ark.64).

being struck that they were wearing rings with the skulls. On their hats they had the picture of death.⁹⁷

It is unlikely that the girl could see SS-insignia on the Wehrmacht soldiers' headwear. The sign, however, provided a powerful symbol for constructing the image of the German soldier as a bearer of death, which the girl connected with the executions of several hundred Jews and Communist functionaries that took place in the city in the following days.⁹⁸

No less graphic is the representation of Wehrmacht personnel in the account of Lidiia Bazhenova:

Several days had passed since the Germans occupied the city. Silence reigned in our neighbourhood, while many other places were billeted by German soldiers. The quiet did not last. One day two German front-soldiers entered our yard. All the neighbours were home, because people shaken by the terrible events [i.e., Red Army retreat and the arrival of the Wehrmacht] did not know what to do. The Germans started looking for the Jews among us. Having found two people, a man and a woman [the girl does not explain how the Germans were able to do it], they started yelling, thump their feet and reached for the weapons. We did not understand what was going on. The Jews were terrified. The Germans shortly turned around and left. We started asking our Jewish neighbours what the Germans wanted from them. They told us that the Germans would return in two hours. If the Jews did not give them two watches, they both would be shot. The Jews did not have a watch, but one woman ran to her relative and brought one. When the Jews started asking for another watch, it turned out that only our family had one. My mother had to give her gold watch, because the lives of the people were more precious than watches. We waited for the Germans, but they never showed up. Everybody remained alive and well, but only for a very short time. In a few days they pasted announcements on the lampposts that all Jews had to move to the ghetto. After that we saw our Jewish neighbours several times during work. They were loading huge stones onto the carts. Those who could not lift heavy stones, the Germans beat with a whip and kicked. We never saw them again.⁹⁹

Striking about these and similar accounts is not so much emphasis on the Nazi brutalization of Jews and other civilians, but rather the tendency to overlook the fact that Germans were not the only people engaged in persecution of the civilian population. In fact, as recent research shows, the human destruction could hardly have reached the proportions it did without direct and

⁹⁷ Ibid., ark.8.

⁹⁸ Ibid., ark.9.

⁹⁹ Lidiia Bazhenova (Ibid., spr.34, ark.45-46).

indirect assistance on the part of a segment of the local population.¹⁰⁰ Yet, of all the examined essays only one addresses (and condemns in harsh terms) the involvement in and profiting from the Holocaust on the part of some fellow Khersonians.¹⁰¹

Children's portrayal of the plight of POWs generally conforms to the same pattern of overlooking collaboration with the Nazis on the part of some former POWs, yet there is one significant difference in the manner children portray their relationship to the experience of captive soldiers.¹⁰² In contrast to the representation of the Holocaust, wherein the issue of local assistance to the Jews is mentioned only in two of the available essays,¹⁰³ children describing the plight of the POWs habitually mention efforts of the civilian population to help starving prisoners with food. Some children even report personally delivering supplies to the camps.¹⁰⁴ This data is an obvious indication that a much larger number of Khersonians involved themselves in POWs affairs than in the Jewish case. The question is why? The antisemitic attitudes among the general public may have certainly played some role, but by no means do they serve as the only explanation.¹⁰⁵ More important for the local failure to extend more comprehensive assistance to the Jews were the pace of the extermination (most of the Kherson Jews were dead within a month of the German arrival), social fragmentation, and fear of denunciation that prevented a large number of Khersonians who may have sympathized with the Jewish plight to get more actively involved. In contrast, the extermination of POWs was spread over a long period of time, and because the German authorities never made it into a consistent

¹⁰⁰ For some recent literature on collaboration, see Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*; Idem, "The German *Gendermerie*, the Ukrainian *Schutzmannschaft* and the "Second Wave" of Jewish Killings in Occupied Ukraine: German Policing at the Local Level in the Zhitomir Region, 1941-1944," *German History*, 14, No.2 (1996): 168-192; Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair*, 59-88.

¹⁰¹ Nadezhda Koval' (DAKhO, f.r-3497, op.1, spr.34, ark.10).

¹⁰² For some literature on the Nazi policies towards Soviet prisoners of war, see Streit, *Keine Kameraden*; Alfred Streim, *Die Behandlung sowjetischer Kriegsgefangenen im Fall "Barbarossa": eine dokumentation unter Berücksichtigung der Unterlagen der deutschen Strafverfolgungsbehörden und der Materialien der Zentralen Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen zur Aufklärung von NS-Verbrechen* (Heidelberg-Karlsruhe: Möller-Juristischer Verlag, 1981); Karel Berkhoff, "The 'Russian' Prisoners of War in Nazi Ruled Ukraine as Victims of Genocidal Massacre," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 15, No.1 (Spring 2001): 1-32.

¹⁰³ In my sample only Inna Karakoz, whose father incidentally was a Karaite, reported that her family was hiding a Jewish woman. According to Inna, they were very afraid their father would be killed too, because they heard stories of Karaites' being executed as Jews (DAKhO, f.r-3497, op.1, spr.37, ark.64). Lidiia Mel'nykova reported about some Khersonians baptizing and adopting Jewish children, whose parents had been executed (Ibid., spr.27, ark.11-12). While it is hard to establish exactly how many children were saved through conversion, the fact mentioned by Lidiya Melnykova is corroborated by several other witnesses (Ibid., f.r-1479, op.1, spr.123, ark.18).

¹⁰⁴ Sh. Kazariants (DAKhO, f. r-3497, op.1, spr. 1, ark.30); O. Ovcharuk (Ibid., ark. 107); A runaway POW was also hiding in the house of Liudmila Kovaleva's parents before he was discovered by the German *Gendermes*. Once again no explanation is provided how the Germans could have possibly known about the runaway, unless some assistance came from the local population (Ibid., spr.37, ark.18).

¹⁰⁵ See, for example, Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 277.

policy to punish locals providing help to the POWs, more people were prone to extend assistance.

Conclusions

School essays from Ukraine's Kherson region offer rich possibilities for capturing not only the ways in which Soviet children experienced the reality of the Nazi occupation, but also how they used the memories of these experiences to construct a sense of themselves, of the political community of the Soviet people, and of the Germans. The majority of the children from the sample interpreted the German occupation as the ultimate exercise in victimization. Central to the essays are the descriptions of the traumatic experiences of the Nazi forced labour program and the displacement of the civilian population from the combat areas in late 1943. The Khersonian children located their personal stories within the larger narrative of the Nazi victimization of the Soviet people, more specifically Jews, Communists and Soviet prisoners of war, despite the fact that relatively few youngsters could report direct encounters with Nazi extermination policies.

At the same time, rampant anti-Germanism and patriotic consolidation after the re-establishment of Soviet rule caused the majority of the children writers to overlook the contributions local residents made to the extermination policies of the Nazis. In this regard, it would be most interesting to explore the relationship between the children's (and adults') reconstruction of the wartime events and the gradual establishment of the official myth of the Second World, with its emphasis on the universal suffering of the Soviet people, denial of claims to particularistic victimhood on the part of the Soviet Jews, and exclusion of collaboration from the official narratives of the war. After all, the origins of the Myth of the Second World War might have as much to do with popular memories of the war, as they did with the visions of Soviet political and cultural elites.

Conclusion

As an ideological component of the broader domain of population management historical politics has since the eighteenth century functioned as a primary vehicle of legitimation and of the building and breaking of political communities in spaces of contested sovereignty. The associated ideological practices reflect both generic characteristics of modern statecraft and respond to specific strategic concerns, legacies of past conflicts, and internal political and ethno-political developments. Yet the social institutions through which historico-political acts are channelled—commemorations, archives, museum, academic historiography and the like—are devoid of inherent ideological message and can be shaped in accordance with the needs of specific governments and political movements.

While the Bolsheviks inherited most of the apparatuses of historico-political signification from the ancient regime, their activities in the domain of historical politics during 1920s and 1930s were a direct response to their deficit of legitimacy in the aftermath of the Civil War, especially on the peripheries of the former Russian Empire, the reality of the capitalist encirclement, and the fall-out from their own economic policies such as crash industrialization and collectivization. In practice, this process featured a complex mix of initiatives—including partial accommodation of political and cultural concerns of problematic groups (e.g., through the policy of indiginization), the concurrent cooptation of segments of the Russian and non-Russian intelligentsia, control of the public sphere, and hard technologies of rule (deportations, imprisonment, mass killings of political opponents). Importantly, during the 1920s the system remained relatively open and pluralistic (at least within the confines of the Communist party itself). The crisis years of 1929-1934, however, tilted the regime towards a more thorough embrace of repression, which also affected developments in the historico-political domain.

Today we know that Stalin, prominent functionaries of the party/state, and high profile representatives of the Soviet intelligentsia played a disproportionately important role in framing the contours of ideological master narratives. Moreover, by the late 1930s, the regime succeeded in establishing effective control over the public sphere and drew into the process of ideological production broad strata of Soviet society. Such hegemony, on the one hand, made perilous an

expression of dissenting views, including those about the events in the past. On the other hand, it raised uncertainty among ordinary subjects about each other's political views.

The ideological hegemony enforced by the punitive apparatus of the state, however, did not eliminate possibilities of alternative meanings of contemporary and historical events, even if such knowledge for the time being was driven underground. This was particularly true of the situation in the territories annexed by the USSR only in 1939-1940, where the legitimacy of the Soviet government was questionable and where underground organizations of Ukrainian, Polish, Lithuanian and other nationalist movements continued to operate until the start of the Second World War.

The Nazi invasion of the USSR and the destruction of the structures of the Soviet state in the vast spaces between the Baltic and Black Seas--complete with extermination of entire population groups and destruction of the symbols of Soviet rule and local cultural heritage--delivered a powerful blow to the legitimacy of the Soviet state.

The potent factors underlying fragmentation of the political community in the territories to which the Communist regime staked its sovereignty claims, included ethnic hierarchies imposed by the Nazis, exterminations of Jews, Roma, and Soviet prisoners of war, mass killings of Communists and participants of resistance movements, and other crimes against humanity. Moreover, the Nazis recruited hundreds of thousands of local collaborators, many of whom became active accomplices in the Holocaust and other crimes of the Third Reich. This was particularly true of the developments in the national peripheries of the former Russian empire and the USSR—both due to the questionable legitimacy of the Communist regime in those territories and purposeful policy of the Nazi leadership, which sought to weaken the Soviet state by instrumentalizing ethnic cleavages.

No less importantly, the war temporarily opened a window of opportunity for various nationalist groups—such as the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in Ukraine--which sought to avail themselves of the opportunity to build mono-ethnic states under the Nazi protection. Even the refusal of the Nazi leadership to recognize the legitimacy of such aspirations did not eliminate the ideological problem for the Soviet government, as many local residents, especially in what today is western Ukraine, the Baltics, Crimea and the occupied parts of the Caucasus heeded the call of nationalist activists and embraced alternative ideological constructions of reality.

Moreover, people who were expected actively to resist the Nazis and their allies frequently did not behave in ways deemed appropriate by the Soviet leadership. Thus as the Wehrmacht rolled east in the course of 1941, hundreds of thousands of men mobilized into the Red Army either surrendered to the enemy or simply laid down their weapons and returned home. Many avoided military mobilization and evacuation to the Soviet interior. The realities of Soviet defeats also affected the morale of those who were unquestionably loyal to the Soviet state before the war. As a result, many Soviet partisan units and underground groups effectively ceased to exist, while many Communists registered with the occupation authorities and pledged to abstain from resistance activities. In Ukraine specifically, the veritable collapse of the Soviet resistance movement in the course of 1941 was not merely a consequence of Soviet military defeats, active operations of the German security forces, and a terrain poorly suited for the conduct of guerrilla warfare, but also a function of the political attitudes of the population, structured as these were by the often traumatic experiences of the previous decades.

It is within this context of a legitimacy crisis, that one must situate a broad array of power rituals and historico-political practices, aimed at the reconstruction of the shaken ideological foundation of Soviet rule and the re-building of a political community fragmented by the prior experiences of Soviet, Nazi, and in some places also nationalist violence. Examples of such practices included but were not limited to obligatory mass rallies in “liberated” localities;¹ destruction of Wehrmacht cemeteries and Ukrainian nationalist burial mounds;² multifarious forms of

¹According to head of the department of the propaganda and agitation of the CC CP(b)U Lytvyn, by 1 January 1944 in the towns and villages of the Chernihiv region alone there took place 1242 meetings in which the estimated 350.000 people took part (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.70, spr.209, ark.45).

Complete with invariable scripted speeches by Communist functionaries, Red Army commanders and Soviet partisans, such rallies always featured spontaneous and doubtlessly sincere expressions of gratitude to Stalin and the Red Army for liberation from the Nazi yoke by many representatives of the public.

For an illustration of the phenomenon, see transcripts of speeches at the city meeting in Kiev on 27 November 1943 by the Ukrainian party boss Nikita Khrushchev, Marshall Zhukov and General Vatutin (Ibid., spr.95, ark.79-81); also the undated “Materials for Speakers at the Meeting of Revenge” (in Kremenets’, Ternopil region), composed by Deputy Chief of the Political Department of the 13th Army lieutenant colonel Suchkov (Ibid., f. 57, op.4, spr. 25, ark.448-451); the official report on the meeting in Sarny, Volhynia on 14 January 1944 (Ibid., f.1, op.70, spr.101, ark.14-21). For a perspective by a participant, see the diary by the painter Anton Komashka, entry from 25 September 1943n(TsDAMLUMU, f.290, op.1, spr.141, ark.7).

² On 1 April 1942 Stalin signed the decree of the State Committee of Defence No. 1517. The decree obligated regional and local executive committees to organize special brigades entrusted with collecting unburied corpses and ordering the existing burials of Soviet soldiers. Such brigades were also to “liquidate” German military cemeteries located within population centres and re-bury the fallen enemy soldiers in remote locations outside towns and villages, and away from major highways and Soviet military cemeteries (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr.134, ark.1-2). On this subject, see also Oleksandr Potyl’chak, *Radians’ki rezhymni ustanovy dlia viis’kovopolononykh ta internovanykh v URSR (1939-1954): organizatsiia, dyslokatsiia, struktura* (doctoral dissertation, National Academy

archival/heritage preservationism,³ honorary reburial of victims of Nazi crimes, staged marches of defeated and humiliated German prisoners of war;⁴ war crimes investigations and didactic trials/public executions of Nazi war criminals and local collaborators;⁵ political surveillance and mass repression of bearers of competing political identities; suppression of the “Black Book” project of the Jewish anti-Fascist Committee⁶ and the post-war ideological crackdown at the Institute of History of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences,⁷ to name a few.

By situating such historico-political practices within a broader context of wartime legitimacy contests, the dissertation, on the one hand, has attempted to deepen understanding of the experiences of the war, Axis occupation and post-war reconstruction of the Soviet political order in Ukraine. On the other hand, the study has sought to problematize the very notion of historical politics as an instrument of building and breaking of political communities by bringing into focus the narrative contributions of different actors and struggles over the meaning of the past in different social domains.

The first case study examined the peculiarities of the Ukrainian nationalist challenge to Soviet rule in the Kyiv region in 1941-1943. Specifically, the chapter examined the organizational activities of the Bandera faction of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in the

of Sciences of Ukraine, Institute of History, Kyiv, 2005), especially chapter 6: “Pokhovannia inozemnykh viis’kovopolonenykh ta internovanykh Drugoi Svitovoï viiny v Ukraïni.”

In Kyiv, the German occupation authorities organized the military cemetery on the Askoldova Mohyla. The cemetery and the monument got destroyed in November 1943 following the return of the Red Army to Kyiv: Malakov, *Kyiv*, 159. About the German military cemetery in Kharkiv, see the report by People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Vasiliï Riasnoï, 10 October 1943 (TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr.536, ark.1).

³ Maddox, *Saving Stalin’s Imperial City*.

⁴On 17 July 1944 some 42000 German POWs, including more than a thousand officers and 19 generals were marched through the streets of Moscow. Later in the day People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs Lavrentii Beriia reported to Stalin about what later became known as the “parade of the vanquished.” Beriia’s report has been published in the journal *Rodina*, No.4, 2005 (http://www.istrodina.com/rodina_articul.php3?id=1529&n=83, accessed on 16 September 2011). An analogous march was staged in Kiev on 17 August 1944. The materials relating to the march in Kiev, including Khrushchev’s report to Stalin can be found at TsDAHOU, f.1, op.23, spr.940.

For the footage of the march of German POWs through Moscow, see: *Prokonvoirovanie voennoplennykh nemtsev cherez Moskvu* (Spetsial’nyi vypusk Tsentral’noï Ordena Krasnogo Znameni Studii dokumental’nykh fil’mov, 1944).

⁵ Prusin, “Fascist Criminals to the Gallows!”; Bourtnan, “Blood for Blood, Death for Death”; Penter, “Local Collaborators on Trial.”

⁶ Turmarkin, *The Living and the Dead*; Redlich, *War, Holocaust, and Stalinism*, 95-108; Bezymenskii, “Informatsiia po-sovetski”; Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 191-236; Kostyrchenko, *Taïnaia politika Stalina*; Il’ia Al’tman, “Memorializatsiia Holokosta”; Nadzhafov and Belousova, *Stalin i Kosmopolitizm*; Rubenstein and Al’tman, *The Unknown Black Book*; Berkhoff, “Total Annihilation of the Jewish Population.”

⁷ See, for example, the resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Bolsheviks of Ukraine “On Political Errors and Unsatisfactory Work of the Institute of History of Ukraine of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR,” 29 August 1947 (Smoliï, *Instytut Istorii*, t.1, 559-564).

Generalgouvernement in the spring and summer 1941 and the latter's effort to extend their state-building project to Galicia, Volhynia and the pre-1939 Soviet territories following the start of the German-Soviet war. To this end, the organization put together three special task forces (the so-called advance groups), consisting of several thousand activists, which were to move in the footsteps with the orders to take control over the formation of local administrations and auxiliary police.

The Ukrainian nationalists were particularly successful in Galicia and Volhynia where they managed to take over administrative structures in the majority of districts, the Nazi refusal to recognize the Ukrainian state notwithstanding. They also made significant inroads into Central Ukraine and for the first time established an organizational presence as far afield as the Donbas and Crimea. In the rural areas of the Kyiv region—which in 1918-1921 were a stronghold of the Ukrainian People's Republic and subsequently of anti-Soviet peasant insurgencies—the OUN-B could draw on a large pool of potential recruits from among old adherents of the Ukrainian People's Republic, peasant rebels, priests of the Ukrainian Autocephalous church, dekulakized peasants and their family members.

Within this context, the chapter elucidated not only the organizational activities of the OUN-B, but also examined historical commemorations, which Ukrainian nationalists attempted to leverage in order to secure allegiances of the maximum possible number of local residents (commemorations of peasant insurgents executed by the Soviet forces in 1920, the famine of 1932-1933 and so on). The chapter also drew attention to the political salience of discursive struggles over the meaning of the past at the grass roots level, which manifested itself ever so clearly in the interrogations of arrested nationalist activists by Soviet security service officials.

The latter theme was developed from a different angle in chapter 3, which focused on the wartime activities of the Administration of the State Archives of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR (UGA NKVD). Within the context of the deep legitimacy crisis of the Soviet state in the Axis occupied territories, the UGA NKVD played a disproportionately important role both in the domain of state surveillance and in the field of historical politics. The involvement of the UGA NKVD in political surveillance was primarily in the form of surveying contents of captured enemy archives, which archivists themselves had secured in the recently "liberated" localities. The result of such activities was the creation of card catalogues, registers of "counter-

revolutionary elements,” and informational reports, which Soviet punitive organs utilized for targeted repression of Nazi war criminals, Ukrainian nationalists, and a broad array of Soviet citizens engaged in collaboration with the Axis powers. No less importantly, Soviet archivists were active participants in the production of historical narratives, which were projected onto the soldiers of the Red Army and civilian populations in the formerly occupied territories with a view to legitimating the Soviet state and de-legitimizing its opponents (including Ukrainian nationalists).

Chapter 4 approached the subject of the reconstruction of the Soviet political community by examining the official investigation of the anti-Jewish pogrom in Kyiv, which culminated in the murder of seven Jewish Kyivans by a crowd of local residents. The chapter places developments into the larger context of past conflicts in the region, ideological transformations of the Soviet body politic in the aftermath of the Nazi invasion, and the latter’s impact on the state of inter-ethnic relations in Kyiv in September 1941. Simultaneously, the case study elucidates the peculiarities of the official Soviet investigation and the role of local memory milieus in the process of identifying perpetrators of the violence. Rather than being a figure of absence, the experiences of local Jews, the chapter argues, were widely discussed in local social settings both during the Nazi occupation and in its aftermath and subsequently greatly facilitated the official investigation.

As to the Soviet dispensation of punishment in this case, its mode differed markedly from the severe categorical repression of more conventional categories of collaborators, such as local policemen and indigenous servicemen of the Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS. Although it is clear that participating in the pogrom violence were dozens of Kyivans, the Soviet authorities arrested, put on trial, and executed only the three most active perpetrators. Within the context of the crisis of legitimacy of the Soviet state, this decision was not accidental, but reflected an effort to affect the political re-integration of the largest possible number of local residents. The same logic undergirded the gradual marginalization of the Holocaust and the issue of collaboration in the Soviet public sphere.

Another social group that posed a peculiar ideological challenge to the Soviet state were local participants of the resistance movement. Chapter 5 documented both the origins of the organized partisan movement in Ukraine, its veritable collapse in the course of 1941 and 1942, and the

eventual (re-) appearance of many partisan units and underground groups consisting of former Communist party members, Red Army soldiers, and defectors from German sponsored police formations. Given the scarcity of official intelligence about the situation in occupied territories, scarcity of loyal and competent administrative personnel, and the operations of the special services of the Third Reich aimed at the destabilization of the Soviet state, such groups, the chapter argues, posed considerable security challenges for the Soviet state. Official verification of the wartime activities of such groups in the course of 1943 to 1945 was meant to separate genuine participants of the resistance movement from the so-called “false partisans.”

The verification process, however, was fraught with significant difficulties, which reflected not only the chaotic conditions of wartime record keeping, but also different institutional imperatives undergirding the operations of bureaucracies entrusted with the investigations. Thus the personnel of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement, geared towards increasing the number of partisan units under their own operational control, tended to be less critical of the narratives by the putative resisters. Security service officials, however, tended to disqualify many units due to the presence in their ranks of compromised individuals. For their part, Communist party officials were particularly sceptical of groups that operated independently of the party control.

Alleged participants of the resistance movement were not passive victims of the purge. Many of them actively fought for their status within the Soviet political community, mobilizing available mechanisms of appeal in the case of unsuccessful applications, navigating the maize of Soviet bureaucracies and inter-institutional conflicts, and building alliances with Soviet officials and local residents. Sometimes they succeeded. At other times they failed. But while they unquestionably possessed agency, the final decision always rested with the officials of the Soviet state.

Whereas chapters 2 to 5 discussed the experiences of groups and individuals that posed a special challenge to Soviet rule in Ukraine, the final chapter of the dissertation focuses on the social group, whose place in the political community of the Soviet people was never in question, children. Using as a primary source children’s reminiscences about the Nazi occupation--gathered by school boards on the instructions of the Administration of State Archives of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR in the course of 1944--the chapter both analyses the imperatives

underlying the official memory project and engages in a close reading of children's narratives themselves.

In commissioning the essays, the chapter argued, Soviet officials pursued a series of interconnected objectives. On the one hand, the school assignment served as a vehicle of political integration as children were effectively obligated to write themselves into the emerging meta-narrative of the Soviet state via a series of structuring questions. On the other hand, the authorities used children's reminiscence and other materials about the developments in the occupied territories for political purposes, including propaganda and surveillance. In this sense, the memory project was part and parcel of a much broader official effort that encompassed also the developments discussed in the previous chapters—most notably the activities of the Administration of State Archives of the NKVD, the Commission for the Study of the History of the Patriotic War, the Extraordinary State Commission, and a plethora of smaller state-sponsored initiatives.

The genealogy and political usages of these essays, however, should not obscure the fact that they reflected the genuine experiences of a significant segment of local children. For this reason, children's narratives, informed by the traumatic experiences of Nazi rule, have to be taken seriously both on their own terms and in order better to appreciate diverse ideological contributions to the emerging meta-narrative of Soviet power.

Ultimately, it is through recognizing agency of different inter-dependent actors that the dissertation has attempted to conceptualise historical politics as a field of political contestation geared towards building or breaking of the political communities. In this sense, historical politics as a sum total of acts of historico-political signification both complemented the coercive practices of state- and nation-building and, to a considerable degree, was constituted by the latter.

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