



UKRAINIAN
INSTITUTE
OF NATIONAL
REMEMBRANCE

UKRAINE'S SECOND WORLD WAR

The Second World War was the deadliest armed conflict in human history, with battles engulfing Europe and Eastern Asia, Africa and the Near East and the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Two military-political blocs of states faced off in the war: the Axis and the Allies.

It began on September 1, 1939 with Nazi Germany (Third Reich) invading Poland. Great Britain and France opposed Germany. The USSR invaded Poland together with Germany, but after the start of the German-Soviet war (June 22, 1941), the Soviets joined the Allies. On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked the United States in the Pacific Ocean.

The majority of the world's states gradually joined the Allies, including the USA and China.

The Axis powers included Germany, Italy, Japan and their allies: Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and others.

The Third Reich capitulated on May 8, 1945, and the war ended on September 2, 1945 with Japan's surrender.

Ukraine was in the center of this global conflict and its citizens served as soldiers in every army that fought on its lands.

Numerous liberation movements arose at the same time the two coalitions were fighting the war, including the Ukrainian Liberation Movement.

The Ukrainians' fight for freedom continued for ten years after the end of the Second World War.

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Security Service of Ukraine's State Branch Archive, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine, The H. S. Psherychny Central State Film, Photograph and Phonograph Archive of Ukraine, Archive of the Center for Research of the Liberation Movement, National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War, National Museum-Memorial of Victims of Occupational Regimes "Lonsky Street Prison", the Academic Library of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, The V. V. Tamavsky Historical Museum of Chernihiv Oblast, Institute of National Memory (Poland), "Yad Vashem" (Israel), Bundesarchiv (Germany), Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Center (Canada), State Public History Library of Russia, Ukrainica Research Institute (Canada), Ukrainian American Veterans, Inc. (USA).

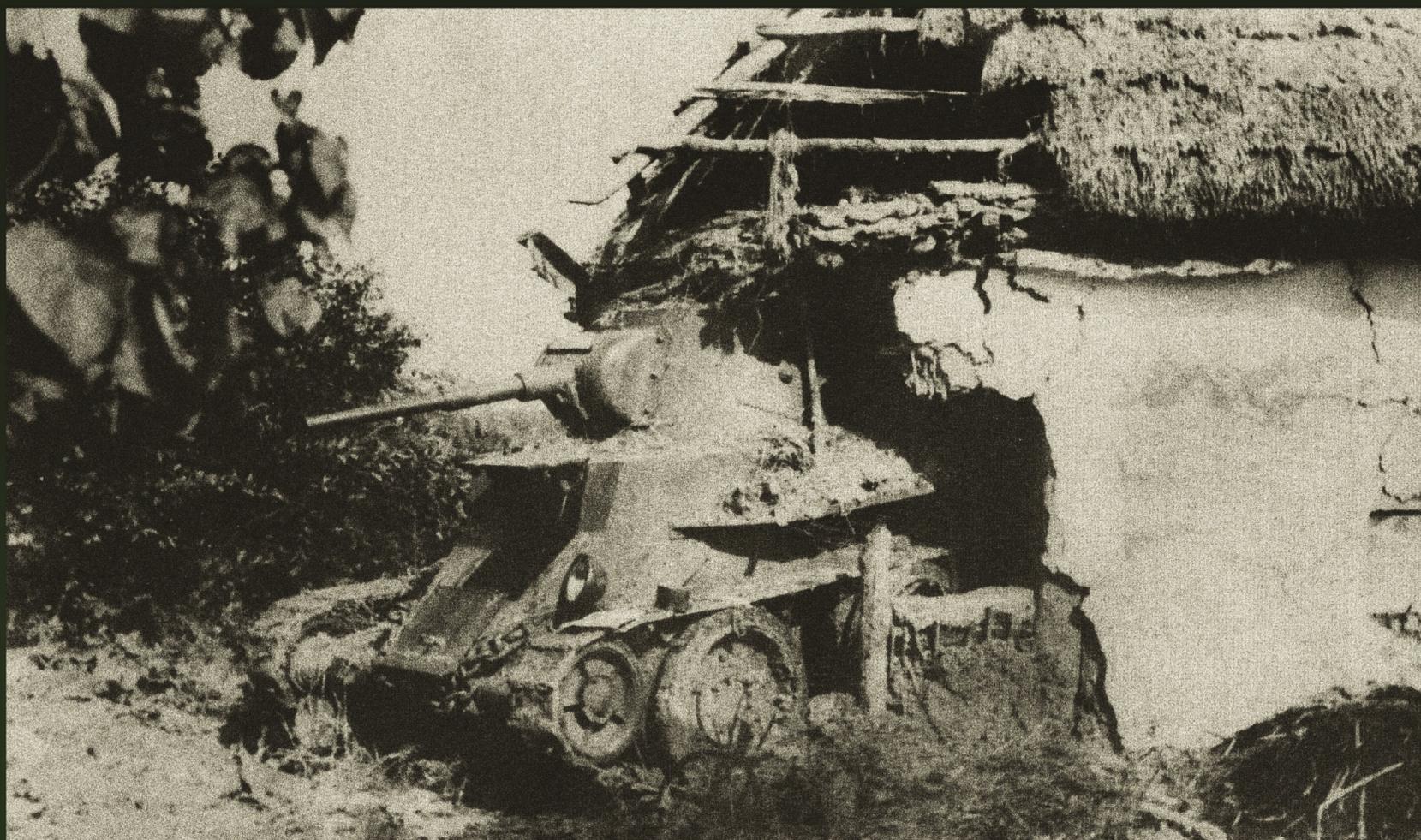
Internet resources:

The Liberation Movement's Electronic Archive (www.avr.org.ua), "Diasporiana" Electronic Archive (www.diasporiana.org.ua), "Istorychna Pravda" (www.istpravda.com.ua), "War Album" (www.waralbum.ru), Private Archive of Military-Historic Photography (www.photo-war.com), Jacques Hnizdovsky Centennial webpage (www.hnizdovsky.com), Life Magazine (www.time.com/photography/life), Narodowe Archiwum Cyfrowe (www.nac.gov.pl), Wikimedia.org (www.wikimedia.org).

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Photo: Soviet tank after a failed operation in southern Ukraine (August 1941)





INTERBELLUM

Ukraine — Europe's greatest problem



Versailles Conference's Arbitration Commission (28 June 1919)

Treaty of Versailles

The First World War (1914–1918) destroyed most of the empires that fought in the war and provided captive peoples with an opportunity to attain their own statehood. But the post-war agreements that formed the basis of the Treaty of Versailles did not eliminate any of the underlying causes of the conflict. Three groups of states emerged after the war: the “winners” (USA, United Kingdom and France), the “losers who came out winners” (Italy, Japan) and the successor states to the “losers” (Weimar Germany, Soviet Union). Only the “winners” tried to maintain the status quo. The other countries wanted to revise the war's results for their own benefit or to exact their revenge.



Map of Ukraine based on Lancelot Lawton's reports



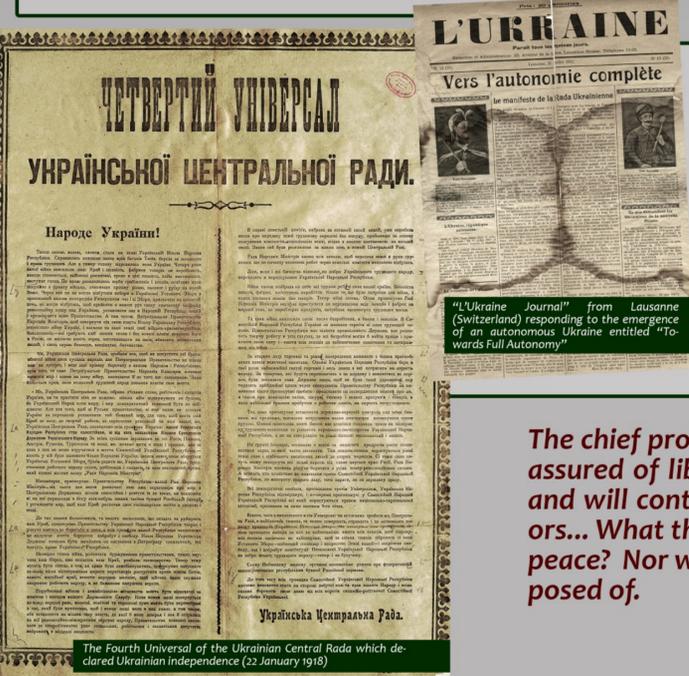
Ukrainian lands during the interwar period



Bolsheviks Welcoming the Red Terror in St. Petersburg (banner: “Death of the Bourgeoisie and Its Henchmen! Long Live the Red Terror!”)

Bolshevism

The demise of the Russian Empire during the war initially led to the democratic February Revolution followed by the communist October Revolution (1917) orchestrated by the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party. Headed by Vladimir Lenin, the Bolsheviks kept most of the former Empire's lands within the Soviet Union and announced their campaign for international revolution. The Communists' attempt to spread their influence to Europe and the world became the first pre-condition to the Second World War.



“L'Ukraine Journal” from Lausanne (Switzerland) responding to the emergence of an autonomous Ukraine entitled “Towards Full Autonomy”

Ukrainian Revolution

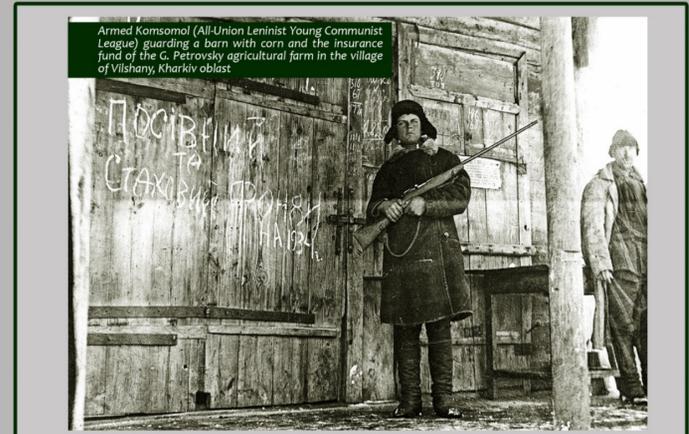
The disintegration of the Russian Empire provided the Ukrainian people with a chance to establish their own statehood. The revolutionary parliament – the Central Rada – led by Mykhailo Hrushevsky, in 1917 went from fighting for Ukraine's autonomy to the declaration of independence of the Ukrainian National Republic (January 22, 1918). In the spring of 1918, the Western Ukrainian National Republic came into being in Galicia (called Halychyna in Ukraine). Ukraine's unification occurred on January 22, 1919. But three waves of Soviet aggression and failure to secure support on the international arena resulted in the fall of independent Ukraine and the division of its lands among its neighbours (1921). In the period between the two world wars, the Ukrainians were the largest stateless nation in Europe.



Lenin Speaking to the Military in Petrograd during the October Revolution (November 1917)

The chief problem in Europe today is the Ukrainian problem... Until they are assured of liberty they will be faithless to whichever State they are bound and will continue freely to shed their own blood and that of their conquerors... What then is the use of pretending that there is peace when there is no peace? Nor will there be any until this Ukrainian question is satisfactorily disposed of.

Lancelot Lawton, “The Ukrainian Question” (Address in British Parliament, 1935)



Armed Komsomol (All-Union Leninist Young Communist League) guarding a barn with corn and the insurance fund of the G. Petrowsky agricultural farm in the village of Vilshany, Kharkiv oblast

A Nation Divided

The Soviet totalitarian regime's crimes against Ukrainians were possible because of the loss of Ukrainian statehood and occupation. The “Red Terror” was launched during the Bolshevik-Ukrainian wars of 1917 to 1921 targeting, foremost, the Ukrainian national elite. During the collectivization of 1929–1931, the most productive segment of the rural population was subjected to mass deportations and confiscation of property (“dekulakization”) and nearly 200,000 died as a result. The Holodomor of 1932–1933 was organized by the Soviet government and took the lives of more than 4 million people in Ukraine. The USSR's policies of mass terror against Ukrainians continued until 1953, while smaller scale political repressions continued to the dying days of Soviet rule in 1991.

In the Ukrainian lands that went to Poland (Volyn, Halychyna) and Romania (Bessarabia, Bukovyna), the governments also introduced policies of targeted assimilation of Ukrainians and violated their rights, but never resorted to the mass repressions similar to those used by the Soviets. Only in Czechoslovakia-controlled Transcarpathia were Ukrainians able to finally attain autonomy, only to later lose it under Hungarian rule.

Nazism

The German Empire's defeat in the First World War resulted in the loss of many of its territories and colossal payments to the victorious states. Harsh economic conditions and the division of the nation across new borders led to the steep rise of a revanchist mood in Germany. As a result of victory in the 1933 parliamentary elections the National-Socialists led by Adolf Hitler came to power – the most radical among political parties in their rejection of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. The Nazis renewed the country's industrial might and transformed Germany (Third Reich) into a formidable military state. The Nazis' campaign to exact revenge for Germany's loss in the First World War became another pre-condition to the start of the Second World War.



Hitler greeting pilots from the Condor Legion on parade in Berlin (20 April 1939)



Parade in Nuremberg during the Rally of Labour (6 September 1937)

Delegate Meeting of the III All-Ukrainian Military Congress in Kyiv. Center, left-right: S. Petliura, M. Hrushevsky, V. Vynnychenko (2 November 1917)



THE "SILVER LANDS"

Carpatho-Ukraine

1939
1945

Carpatho-Ukraine

The movement in Transcarpathia to join the Ukrainian National Republic in 1919 was unsuccessful. The victors of the First World War decided the region would become part of the Czechoslovak Republic.

The Treaty of Saint-Germain and the Czechoslovak Constitution provided for granting an autonomous status to Transcarpathia, but Prague failed to implement the provision by 1938.

In early 1938, Nazi Germany raised the issue of self-determination for the 3 million Germans who resided in the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. Expecting concessions from Prague, the Slovaks and the Ukrainians of Transcarpathia also came out with demands for autonomy.



Consequences for Czechoslovakia after the Munich Agreement and the First Vienna Award



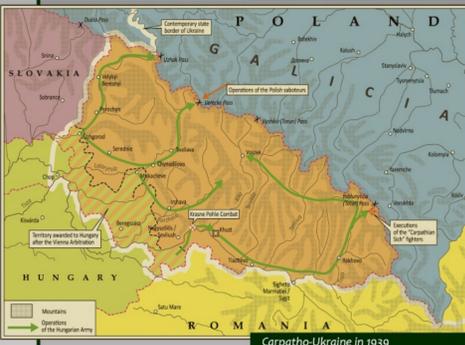
Hitler signing the Munich Agreement (30 September 1938)



Agitational Brigade of the Carpathian Sich calling people to vote for the Diet of Carpatho-Ukraine for UNO (February 1939)



Manifesto of the Carpatho-Ukrainian Government on occasion of the Vienna Award



Carpatho-Ukraine in 1939

The path to independence

The Munich Conference took place from September 29 to 30, 1938. Under pressure from Germany, Italy, Great Britain and France, Czechoslovakia transferred the Sudetenland to the Third Reich. Poland then seized Cieszyn Silesia, while Hungary staked a claim on Slovakia and Transcarpathia.

This fundamental weakening of Prague's position forced its concessions to national movements. Czechoslovakia became a federation of Czechs, Slovaks and Ukrainians (the state changed its name and became Czecho-Slovakia). On October 11, 1938, Prague recognized Transcarpathia's autonomous government of Carpatho-Ukraine that was headed by Avgustyn Voloshyn. In February 1939, the Ukrainian National Union (UNO) which supported Voloshyn won the elections to the autonomy's parliament, the Carpatho-Ukrainian Diet.

Public opinion in Europe viewed Transcarpathia's autonomy as a German initiative – as the first step to conquering Soviet Ukraine. The creation of the autonomous Carpatho-Ukraine troubled Poland, which itself had a large Ukrainian minority, bereft of rights of self-government.

Instead of playing the Ukrainian card, Hitler decided to enlist the support of Hungary and Poland and, eventually, the USSR. By decision of the First Viennese Arbitrage from November 2, 1938, Carpatho-Ukraine was forced to transfer 12% of its territory to Hungary, including its largest urban centers: Uzhhorod, Mukachevo and Berehovo. The capital of Carpatho-Ukraine was relocated from Uzhhorod to Khust.



Sich Congress in Khust (19 February 1939)

The Carpathian Sich ("sich" is the term for Cossack military base from the 16th to 18th centuries) was created in Khust to defend the land. It numbered between 10,000 and 15,000 soldiers, including members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) who arrived from Halychyna.

In March of 1939, Hitler decided to fully liquidate Czecho-Slovakia: the Czech lands were to be occupied by the Germans, Slovakia declared independent and Carpatho-Ukraine made part of Hungary.



President Avgustyn Voloshyn with Secretary Ivan Rohach near the Government House of Carpatho-Ukraine



Propaganda Poster of the Carpathian Sich

Cartoon from the British magazine "Evening Standard" on the Munich Agreement



...After thousands of years of slavery, our land has become free, independent and declares to the whole world that it was, is and will be Ukrainian! And even if our young state has not long to live, our land will always be Ukrainian, for there is no force capable of destroying the spirit and strong will of our Ukrainian people.

Excerpt from MP Mykhailo Brashchayka's speech in the Carpatho-Ukrainian Diet, March 15, 1939.



Hungarian Army in Khust

The one-day state

On March 15, 1939, Carpatho-Ukraine's parliament declared its independence. Voloshyn was elected president and the symbols of state were adopted: the blue-and-yellow flag, Ukraine's national anthem and a coat of arms combining the trident with the coat of arms of Transcarpathia

But Hungarian forces had crossed into the territory of Carpatho-Ukraine the night before. They were supported by Polish saboteur groups. Unlike Prague, the government in Khust did not surrender without a fight: the Carpathian Sich vowed to defend Transcarpathia from Hungarian intervention.

The biggest battle took place on March 16 at Krasne Pohle. The poorly-armed Ukrainian units were unable to prevent the advance of the Hungarian army, and by night-fall the capital of Carpatho-Ukraine had fallen. Voloshyn's government immigrated to Romania. Many soldiers of the Carpathian Sich were captured by the Hungarian and Polish armies only to be executed.

The Ukrainians of Transcarpathia were the first people in pre-war Europe to resist annexation by Hitler's allies and to take up arms in defence of their freedom against their aggression.



Fighters of the Carpathian Sich

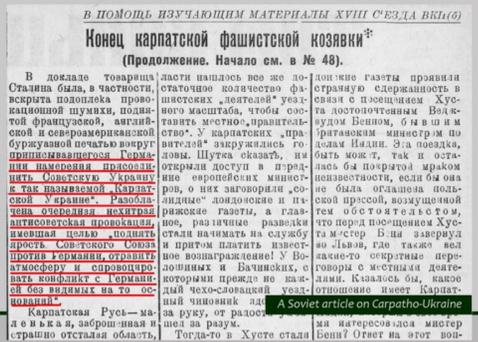


Hungarian soldiers with Polish Border Service officers after shooting Ukrainian soldiers on a mountain pass near the village of Yasinia

Preparing for the pact

A significant portion of Joseph Stalin's address to the 18th Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) in March of 1939 was devoted to the events in Carpatho-Ukraine. The General Secretary accused London and Paris of provoking German aggression against the USSR. The chief Soviet made it clear: he did not believe Hitler is planning to use Carpatho-Ukraine as a step towards expanding into the USSR. The Soviet leadership accepted the dissolution of Carpatho-Ukraine.

A few days after the disappearance of Carpatho-Ukraine, Hitler ordered preparations for war with Poland. The "Fall Weiss" ("White Plan") foresaw the occupation of only half of Poland's territory. Berlin already knew that Stalin would agree to the division of Poland.



A Soviet article on Carpatho-Ukraine



Carpathian Sich in battle (historical reconstruction, conducted by participants of the summer 1939 events)

FRIENDSHIP SEALED BY BLOOD

The start of war



Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact

In April and March 1939, representatives of the USSR, France and Great Britain met in Moscow to discuss agreements on mutual assistance – in the event of an attack by Hitler's Germany. The Soviets demanded the Red Army occupy the Galicia and Vilnius provinces, then parts of Poland, for defensive purposes. After this demand was rejected, Moscow ceased negotiating with Paris and London.

So on August 23, 1939, the USSR signed the Non-Aggression Pact with Germany, which came to be known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. A secret protocol added to the pact delineated both states' interests in Eastern Europe. It provided for the division of Poland along the San, Vistula and Narva Rivers.

The pact allowed Hitler to launch war against Poland. In anticipation of German aggression, mobilization began in Poland at the end of August. Nearly 120,000 Ukrainians were called up to the Polish Army. These were primarily rank-and-file soldiers from western Ukraine.

Історичне засідання польського союзу.

Заяви представників національних меншин.

Декларація прем'єра Салазовського про війну. В суботу 2-го вересня відбулося велике засідання польського союзу. Перед початком наради заборознив прем'єр ген. Салаво-Салазовський, який на вступі полубував собою і за те, що союзу розуміють яку подорожню повешши українці право ти, що не через війну, тобою у травні місяці н. р. ухвалити головними в історичній справі господарства та оборони держави. «Висока Паладо! — говорив прем'єр Салазовський — Завалою в імені уряду, що стало до знаменитого Івановича Волка. Він найкращий економічною волею вести боротьбу аж до перемоги і з урядом уся Польща намагається самим духом. Ми сподіваємося, напевно, відиграємо так, як учинив Іосиф Пласудзкий. На заклик Президента підемо всі плече об плече. Візьму вітряки, як маємо навкоп Східного Ризика і виконаємо у верховну поштовому послугі всі наклади, що ведуть Польщу в Імпа Боже до перемоги».

Заяви представників українців та євреїв.

Промова посла М. Сарніцького. Стверджує на початку своєї промови, що Польща повинна віддати чверть своєї території євреям, лещет Сарніцький, говорив: «Левоні» не вказує на сьогоднішній політичний українців та польське засідання баронети 11 жовтня, на яких дучася дії культури, слуху і заходу. Історія свідчить повчас нас, що народи єврейської етносії завжди дучася після війни не безлічково. Наші обов'язки — забити про борони засідати мундугу в у потугі кожної підпорядкованості на докор Риббентропа і стати ти на спільному фронті, любасть Польщі станути з цілою готовністю на заклик держави. Вас сьогоднішній той брати зрозуміть, люба баче власною кров'ю».

Промова відавчаваче до іже в 1920-го року, іже європейської докор народів та спільної оборони, що П виконавши Пласудзкий і Петарова. Рік 1939-ий нічим не рідниться ніяк 1920-го. Воротні ці єди, тільки любасть політичний роль між собою. «Блаженно іже нам підтвердження — головна пос Сарніцький — що іже польсько-українського порозуміння міжє і що воно європейське народи польський та український в боротьбі за найбільше добро народу і єврейства».

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An article in the Ukrainian "Dziś" newspaper on Ukrainian and Jewish support for Poland against German aggression (5 September 1939)

The September Campaign

Hitler attacked Poland on September 1. The United Kingdom and France declared war on Germany in response to this aggression. Stalin held back immediate military support to the aggressor. But from the first days of war, the radio station in Minsk performed the role of a radio-locator directing the Luftwaffe's bombers. Lviv and other Western Ukrainian cities that were part of Poland were bombed in the first days of September.



Ukrainian parties that were represented in the Polish Diet called on Ukrainians to forget past misunderstandings and perform their civic duty to Poland. In addition to the hundred-thousand conscripts, several dozen officers, veterans of the Ukrainian National Army, heeded the call to defend the Polish state. They kept their Ukrainian citizenship from 1918 and served in the Polish Army under contract.

The underground OUN counted on German promises to transfer the provinces of Halychyna and Volyn to the Ukrainians. The nationalists did not know that Hitler had already agreed to give western Ukraine to Stalin. A small Ukrainian unit commanded by Roman Sushko moved through the territory of Slovakia together with the Wehrmacht. The OUN organized revolts in several locations in Poland, declaring the renewal of Ukrainian statehood. The Polish police and army brutally quashed OUN's actions.

September 1939 showed: Ukrainians' fate was once again to fight in various armies, fighting for foreign interests, often against each other.



Lviv Railway Station after German bombing

Group of Ukrainian soldiers, including veterans of the "Sushko Legion"



German bombers attacking Warsaw

"Liberation Parade"

The Soviet command created the Ukrainian and Belarusian Front on September 11, 1939. The Ukrainian Front, led by Marshal Semyon Tymoshenko, was comprised primarily of Soviet Ukrainians. Hitler urged Stalin to attack Poland immediately or risk the proclamation of the "Western Ukrainian state." On September 17, the Red Army crossed the Polish border with the declared goal "to protect life and property in Western Ukraine and Western Belarus." Neither Poland nor its Western allies had declared war on Moscow.

While Poland continued to resist the Wehrmacht, the German frontline units made it to Brest and Lviv. Warsaw defended itself. Western Ukraine and Belarus were the rearguard regions of the Polish defense. Upon news of the Soviet invasion, Poland's leadership fled to Romania. Polish border guards and army fought the Red Army in several locations, but the majority of units did not engage the enemy.



A meeting between a Polish parliamentarian and a German military official in the besieged city of Lviv



Signing of the German-Soviet Border Treaty

НОТА ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВА СССР, ВРУЧЕННАЯ ПОЛЬСКОМУ ПОСЛУ В МОСКВЕ УТРОМ 17 СЕНТЯБРЯ 1939 ГОДА.

Господин посол, Польско-германская война вызвала внутреннюю несогласность польского государства. В течение десяти дней военных операций Польша потеряла все свои промышленные районы и культурные центры. Варшава, как столица Польши, не существует больше. Польское правительство распалось и не проявляет признаков жизни. Это значит, что польское государство и его правительство фактически перестали существовать. Тем самым прекратили свое действие договоры, заключенные между СССР и Польшей. Предоставляем собой себе и оставшимся без управления. Царская администрация в убогой надежде на милость судьбы и волеизъявления, могут считать угрозу для СССР. Поэтому, будучи до конца нейтральным, Советское правительство не может больше нейтрально относиться к тем фактам. Советское правительство не может также безразлично относиться к тому, чтобы авиакорпусы украинцев и белорусов, проживающие на территории Польши, брошенные на произвол судьбы, оставались беззащитными.

Note from USSR government about the entry of the Red Army into Poland (17 September 1939)



Soviet propaganda depicting the invasion of Poland as a "liberation campaign"

The Red Army and Wehrmacht acted in concert in battles against Polish forces. The allies divided up the occupied territories according to the demarcation line they had agreed upon. Lviv, which was initially blockaded by German forces, capitulated to the Red Army. A joint German-Soviet military parade was held on September 22, as Brest was transferred to the Soviet side.

The USSR and the Third Reich signed the Agreement on Friendship and Borders on September 28. According to the agreement, the Soviet Union annexed western Ukraine and Belarus. The last units of the regular Polish Army surrendered to the Germans near Kock in eastern Poland on October 6. These were units of the Independent Operational Group Polesie.

A cartoon in the "Evening Standard" newspaper: Stalin and Hitler share "courtesies" over the corpse of Poland (20 September 1939)



RENDEZVOUS



German soldiers break a barrier on the Polish border (1 September 1939)



Stalin's congratulatory telegram published in the "Pravda" newspaper (25 December 1939)



The Red Army crossing the Soviet-Polish border (17 September 1939)



German General Guderian and Soviet Brigade Commander Krivosheina taking part in a joint parade in Brest (22 September 1939)

"THE FIRST SOVIETS"

Soviet rule in annexed territories

1939
1945



Delegates of the Soviet People's Assembly of Western Ukraine (26 October 1939)



Soviet Propaganda Poster saying: "Long Live Soviet Power in Western Ukraine!"

Occupation of western Ukraine

In order to legalize the annexation of western Ukraine, the Soviet Union announced that a People's Assembly would be held in Lviv from October 26 to 28, 1939. Overnight, 1,495 electoral districts were set up and the only candidates nominated were those approved by the newly-created local branches of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine. According to official Soviet reports, 92.8% of western Ukraine's population turned out for the Assembly "elections" on October 22 and 90.9% voted for "worker-peasant" candidates. In November, the Supreme Soviet in Kyiv voted to "accept western Ukraine as part of the Uk.SSR (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)."



Population greeting the Red Army in Lviv (October 1939)



Members of the People's Assembly of Western Ukraine at a session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR (1 November 1939)

Forced collectivization and deportation

The Soviet government's first steps evoked popular support: Ukrainization of schools and cultural life, lowering unemployment, introducing a healthcare system and land reforms.

But all political parties, save the Communists, were banned. The occupational government placed people from Soviet Ukraine and Russia in leadership positions. The plots of land the rural populace obtained as a result of land reforms were forcibly made part of collective farms.

Mass arrests and deportation of "class enemy elements" began. Between 315,000 and 325,000 people were deported into the remote regions of the USSR, the majority of whom initially were Poles and later the occupiers turned their attention to Ukrainians and Jews.



Farmers going to divide their masters' lands (1939)

В лагерях для военнопленных содержится всего (не считая солдат и унтер-офицеров состава) - 14.730 бывших офицеров, чиновников, помещиков, помещицких, заводовских, торгашей, осадников и разведчиков - по количеству свыше 97% поляки.

По ним:
Генералов, полковников и подполковников - 295
Штабс-офицеров и капитанов - 2.080
Полковников, подполковников и лейтенантов - 6.049
Офицеров и младших командиров польской пограничной охраны и жандармерии - 1.030
Разных политических, жандармов, торговцев и разведчиков - 5.138
Чиновников, помещиков, помещиц и осадников - 144

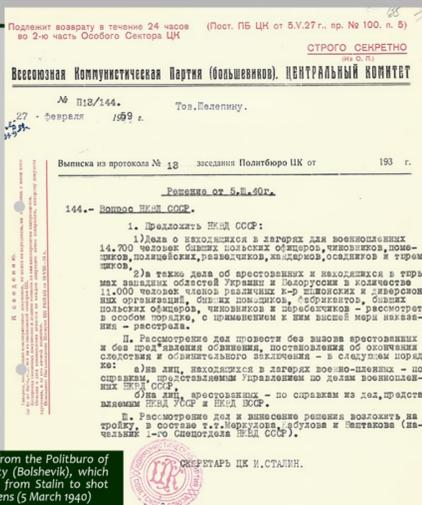
В тюрьмах западных областей Украины и Белоруссии всего содержится 18.622 арестованных (из них 10.685 поляки), в том числе:
бывших офицеров - 1.207
бывших политических разведчиков и шпионов - 5.141
Шпионов и диверсантов - 347
Дальних политический, фабричных и чиновников - 465
Членов различных партий и повстанческих организаций и разного рода элементов - 5.345
Перебежчиков - 6.127

Katyn

Polish officer POWs were held in three camps: Ostashkov and Kozelsk in Russia and Starobilsk in Ukraine, as well as in other prisons. On March 5, 1940, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) passed a resolution on their execution.

The sentence was carried out in May and April of 1940. The Kozelsk camp prisoners were shot in the Katyn Forest near Smolensk, the captives from Ostashkov were executed in Kalinin (Tver) while the POWs from Starobilsk were killed in Kharkiv.

Polish soldiers who were imprisoned in western Ukraine and western Belarus were executed in Kharkiv, Kherson and Kurapaty near Minsk. In total, 21,857 people were killed, including Ukrainians, Belarusians and Jews who served in the Polish Army.



Extract of minutes from the Politburo of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks), which provide instructions from Stalin to shoot captured Polish citizens (5 March 1940)



Broken column of the Soviet 44th Rifle Division of Mykola Shchors which consisted of 90% Ukrainians in Finland (December 1939-January 1940)



Soviet winter troops marching to the frontlines, Finland (winter 1939-1940)



Eastern Europe 1939-1941

Occupation of Bukovyna, Bessarabia and the Baltic States

The USSR forced agreements on "mutual assistance" upon the Baltic States that provided for the location of Soviet military bases on their territories.

In June 1940, the Soviet leadership demanded that Soviet armies be granted entry onto the territories of each of these countries. On June 15, 1940, the Red Army entered Lithuania. Latvia was occupied on June 16 and 17, and Estonia between June 18 and 21. Pro-Soviet governments were installed in each of these countries and they were transformed into republics of the USSR. Political repressions began in all three countries as soon as they were occupied.

On June 26, 1940, the Kremlin gave Romania an ultimatum, demanding Bessarabia and Northern Bukovyna. Bucharest agreed, and between June 28 and July 3, 1940, Soviet forces occupied these territories. Over the course of the next year, nearly 30,000 people were deported from the annexed regions to remote areas of the USSR.



Southern Front commander, Army General Georgy Zhukov at a military parade in Chisinau (4 July 1940)



Site map of the massive Polish burials in Piatykhatky near Kharkiv

Soviet-Finnish War

On November 30, the Red Army invaded Finland without a formal declaration of war after Finland refused to cede to the USSR's demands to give up the Karelian Isthmus and a number of islands.

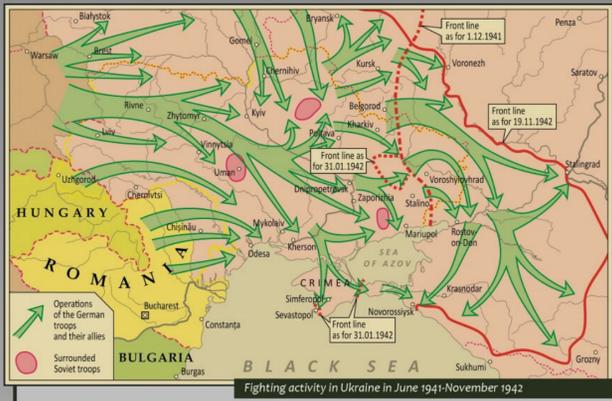
The Finnish Army numbered between 250,000 and 340,000 soldiers, while the Red Army counted between 426,000 and 761,000 soldiers. A significant number of Red Army soldiers were Ukrainian. The Finns' cohesion and innovativeness stalled the Soviet "blitzkrieg" at the border. The Red Army incurred huge losses: approximately 323,000 men to 70,000 Finns. A peace treaty was signed on March 12, 1940 in Moscow: the USSR obtained the lands they wanted, while Finland was allowed to remain independent.

Filmmaker Oleksandr Dovzhenko speaking during a Soviet election rally to the Hutsuls (highlanders) of the Carpathian Mountains (October 1939)





A HOT SUMMER "Barbarossa" and Red Army catastrophe



Blitzkrieg

On June 22, 1941, German forces crossed the Soviet border. The Red Army was numerically superior to the Wehrmacht in soldiers and equipment, but its discipline was incomparably inferior and many of its soldiers simply did not want to fight. Soviet mechanized units were destroyed in battles near the border regions of Dubno, Lutsk and Brody. The leaderless Red Army began its retreat east to the Dnieper River (called the Dnipro River in Ukrainian).



Soviet soldiers, captured in Ukraine (September 1941)



Soviet BT-7 tanks abandoned in Western Ukraine due to technical problems (June 1941)



Column of captured Red Army soldiers on the outskirts of Kremenchuk (September 1941)



Bodies of Executed Prisoners in the Lonsky Prison courtyard, Lviv (June 1941)

"First Category Evacuation"

In the first two weeks of the war, the NKVD (communist political police) executed more than 21,000 prisoners in the prisons of western Ukraine. The mass execution of prisoners in Lviv, Lutsk, Stanislaviv, Dubno and dozens of other western Ukrainian cities and towns, primarily in the so-called "political" category – the communists masked as "evacuation of the first category." The same fate awaited those imprisoned in Vinnytsia, Uman, Kyiv and many other cities with the Red Army's retreat.



Dnieper Hydroelectric Dam after being mined by special units of the NKVD (August 1941)

Neither normal language, nor writing are sufficient for anyone to describe those horrors and tortures that were endured by the numerous victims who were killed by the Bolshevik [Soviet] NKVD. It could only be experienced, it had to be seen. We still do not know the exact number and surnames of the victims who were killed.

"Ukrayinsky Shchodenni Visti" newspaper, July 5, 1941

Military catastrophe

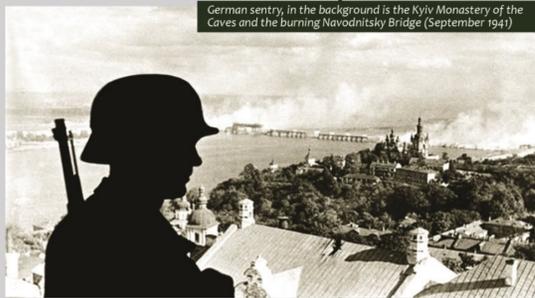
The battles in Ukraine in 1941 were a catastrophe for Soviet armed forces. Between August and October 1941, the Red Army was basically destroyed in Ukraine. The number of Soviet soldiers that were killed is not known to this day. Nearly one million Red Army soldiers found themselves surrounded in "pockets" near Uman, Kyiv and Melitopol. After battles in the Crimean peninsula, Soviet forces retreated to Sevastopol.

In August 1941, Hitler rejected the German command's proposal to concentrate forces towards Moscow. He ordered the German forces to turn around and focus their attack on the south. Kyiv ended up in their grip. The Germans soon tightened the nooses and by September 19, the Red Army had left Ukraine's capital. The defence of Kyiv lasted 72 days – longer than Poland's resistance lasted in September 1939. At the end of September, the surrounded Soviet forces were routed. According to German documents, 665,000 Red Army soldiers were taken captive.

In early 1942, Soviet command conducted several failed offensives on Ukrainian territories. Between May and July 1942, the Germans renewed their attacks. The Wehrmacht smashed Soviet forces in battles near Kerch, Kharkiv and Sevastopol. Nearly 500,000 Red Army soldiers were taken prisoner. By July 22, 1942, the Germans had occupied all of Ukraine.



Soviet soldiers captured in Left-Bank Ukraine



German sentry, in the background is the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves and the burning Navodnitsky Bridge (September 1941)

"Scorched earth"

The Red Army's retreat was conducted according to the "scorched earth" tactic. Stalin announced its necessity on July 3, 1941. Numerous governmental and party structures ordered the destruction of everything that wasn't shipped out to the eastern regions of the USSR: factory equipment, technology, agricultural produce. One of the Stalin's regime's most horrific crimes was the demolition of the Dnieper Hydroelectric Station's dam by NKVD troops in August 1941. This caused the deaths of tens of thousands of Red Army soldiers and civilians who were located nearby. Retreating NKVD units placed radio-controlled mines and other explosives in hundreds of buildings in the center of Kyiv. On September 24, powerful explosions destroyed the buildings on Khreshchatyk Street and adjacent city quarters. Thousands of Kyivans died in the rubble and fire, 324 heritage buildings were destroyed. On November 3, 1941, an explosion destroyed the 11th century Uspensky Sobor of the Kyiv Monastery of the Caves.



Red Army soldiers captured on the Kerch Peninsula (May 1942)



Column of Soviet prisoners of war near Kharkiv (May 1942)



Soviet military vehicles, abandoned in the Odessa Port (October 1941)

LIFE "UNDER THE GERMANS"

Occupation

1939
1945



Discussions on organizing new German settlements in the East (20 March 1941)



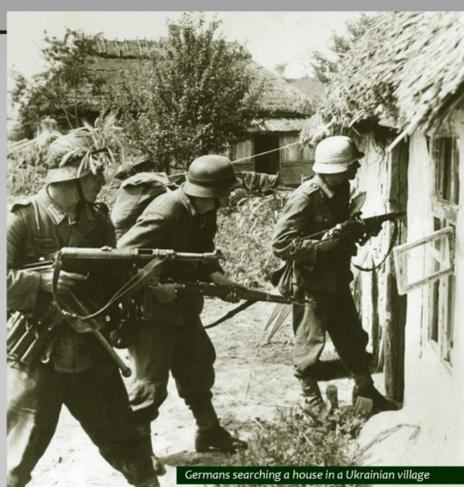
A divided Ukraine

In 1941, the Nazis and their allies dismembered Ukrainian lands into several administrative-territorial units:

- Transnistria, made part of Romania (center – Odesa, governor – Gheorghe Alexianu).
- "Galicia" District within the so-called General Government (center – Lviv, governor – Otto Wächter).
- Reichskommissariat "Ukraine" (center– Rivne, Reichskommissar – Eric Koch).
- Zone of Military Administration (Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Stalino [today Donetsk], Voroshylovhrad [today Luhansk] oblasts). The Wehrmacht was proclaimed the "supreme territorial government" in these areas.
- The Crimean peninsula was, in nominal terms, under civilian rule, as part of the Reichskommissariat, but in practise it was run by the military as the Wehrmacht's rear area in 1941–1942 and 1944.
- Carpatho-Ukraine was made part of Hungary in March 1939 and became officially known as "Sub-Carpathian territory," whose center was the city of Uzhhorod.



Corpse on Taras Shevchenko Boulevard in occupied Kyiv



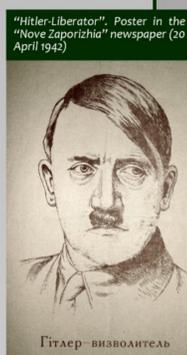
Germans searching a house in a Ukrainian village



Erich Koch - head of Reichskommissariat "Ukraine"



Otto Wächter - head of the "Galicia" District



"Hitler-Liberator", Poster in the "Nove Zaporizhia" newspaper (20 April 1942)

"Eastern Policy"

The Nazis attempted to present themselves to the Ukrainians as liberators from "Jewish bolshevism" and "Moscow's rule." In practical terms, this "eastern policy" translated into Ukraine's role as a colony that would provide food, mineral and human resources to the German war economy.

A triumvirate was established in the occupied territories – Alfred Rosenberg was responsible for the administrative hierarchy, Herman Goering for economic exploitation and Heinrich Himmler for security and the destruction of "undesirable elements."

Terror and famine

For the purpose of liquidating Jews, gypsies and communists, the Nazis created special units from the SS and Gestapo — the Einsatzgruppen.

Ukrainians were not subject to immediate extermination, although political and racial segregation and genocide affected them too. "German only" stores and restaurants appeared along with residential areas in the cities. Residents of Kyiv were prohibited from living in the Pechersk and other "elite" parts of the city.

In addition to executions, the Nazis employed the Soviet communists' proven method of famine. Hitler wanted to decrease the number of consumers of agricultural produce. So in November 1941, during a meeting in Eastern Prussia he decided to organize an artificial famine in Ukraine. As a result, the urban population fell by 53%.

The occupational government's policies in different parts of divided Ukraine had common roots and similar methods. The conditions for survival were more tolerable in the "Galicia" district. Survival was more difficult in Reichskommissariat "Ukraine" – Nazi Germany's largest colony.



Residents in occupied Kyiv reading a newspaper



Rebuilding a village church, Ukraine (1941)



German officer with a little girl in a Ukrainian village

The winter was fierce and cold. There was no bread in the cities. The bread ration in Kyiv alone – 100 grams a day of some type of mixture of millet flour with peelings – did not provide any opportunities to support life. Meat and lard, of course, the populace did not receive; only speculators were able to buy [from the] black market. "Mishochnytstvo" [from the Ukrainian word for sack, indicating people from the cities going to rural areas with sacks to bring back food] began; the intelligentsia started dying out en masse. "The liberators" pretended not to notice.

Fedir Pihido-Pravoberezhnyi, "Velyka Vitshyzyana Viyna"

Life under occupation

Ukraine's history during the Second World War was a history of occupation. The majority of Ukraine's population, more than 30 million, had "a taste of what life was like under the Germans." Structures of civil occupational government were established by the end of autumn in 1941.

At the outset of the Nazi occupation, Ukrainians' cultural and religious activities were tied to the activities of the members of OUN's mobile groups. They first arrived in Zhytomyr and Vinnytsia, where they joined various administrative and cultural institutions. But after German rule took root, the development of Ukrainian national life was crushed. The beginning of 1942 was marked by arrests and executions of members of the intelligentsia.

The media became a bastion of the "new order." This propaganda was anti-Jewish, anti-Soviet and pro-German in nature. There were other printed publications that attempted to address Ukrainian national affairs, for example the "Volyn" newspaper in Rivne.



Residents in an occupied village, mobilized to repair a bridge



Store "Only for Volksdeutsche", Kyiv (1941-1943)



Refugee family removing their belongings, fleeing the Germans



“THE PIT” Soviet POWs



Soviet prisoner, tied to a barbed wire fence, Majdanek Camp

Nearly **5 million** Soviet soldiers were taken captive.

Nazi instructions concerning POWs

The “Directives on the Treatment of Armies in Russia” (May 1941) stated: “When the need arises to overcome resistance, revolt, etc., it is necessary to immediately resort to armed force. In particular, it is necessary to immediately shoot any POWs caught fleeing, without even calling them to stop. Any delay in the use of arms can be unsafe.”

The supreme military command issued a special order to kill, among the POWs, any Soviet state and party functionaries, political commissars and Jews.



Soviet generals Pavel Ponedelin and Mykola Kyrylov in German captivity (1941). Due to their surrender into captivity, the USSR sentenced them to death in absentia. The sentence was carried out in 1950

Conditions in German POW camps

The POWs moved on foot in long columns into the camps. Soldiers, captured near Kyiv, had to walk nearly 400 kilometers. Those who were unable to make the long trip – the sick, injured or exhausted – were executed on the spot.

To transport POWs by rail, the Nazis often used open freight cars. In wintertime, thousands of frozen corpses were unloaded at their destinations. The “in transit” fatality rate reached 70%.

In the territories of occupied Ukraine, the Nazis created POW camps in 242 locations. There were three types of camps: Dulag (transit camp), Stalag (camp for rank and file soldiers and reserve officers) and Oflag (for officers). Camp buildings were wooden sties surrounded by barbed wire, there was no heat. People endured famine, lack of drinking water and disease.



Soviet soldiers walking to a POW camp

The orphaned autumn fields stretched on both sides of the road. If anything remotely edible was spotted, no force could hold us back. The guards whipped us with lashes on all sides, they beat us with rifle butts, started shooting – to no avail. Leaving the dead behind in the dug up, trampled field, the column moved on, crunching on feed beats, carrots or potatoes.

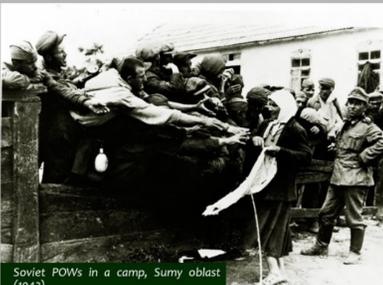
Leonid Volynsky, “Kriz’ Neech: Do Istoriyi Odninyeyi Bezi-mennyoi Mohyly”



Soviet POWs along the road to an assembly point drink from a frozen spring (1941)

They looked so terrible that frost ran across the skin. It’s fully plain that they’re not being fed. And the women bring them food, but the Germans won’t let them approach. The women throw themselves to the POWs. The prisoners, like animals, attack the food extended to them, grabbing, tearing. And the Germans beat them over the heads with the butts of their rifles. They beat the women too.

Iryna Khoroshunova, “Pershy rik viny. Kyivsky zapysky”



Soviet POWs in a camp, Sumy oblast (1943)



Soviet prisoners at a mine in Emscher-Lippe, during roll-call, Germany (1942)



Red Army column in the “Uman pit” (1941)

“The Uman Pit,” Nazi Stalag № 349

The Nazis opened a camp in the western region of Uman in 1941. According to various estimates, there were between 74,000 to 103,000 former Soviet soldiers in the Uman Stalag. The prisoners were kept without shelter. In the very first days, people were not fed at all, there was no drinking water. People drank water from puddles. The food the Nazis provided was enough for only 2,000 people. The precise number of the dead in the “Uman Pit” is unknown to this day.



Group of Red Army soldiers immediately after being captured



POW in the “Uman Pit”

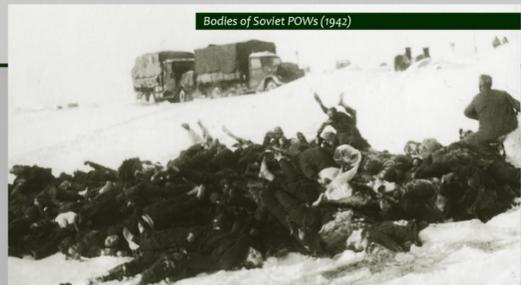


Column of Soviet POWs marching in the streets of Poltava (1943)

Tragic Finale

The fatality rate among Red Army POWs was 57.7%, while the rate among other Allied armies was less than 5%. Using a variety of methods, the Germans killed almost 500,000 Soviet captives. Another 2.6 million people perished from inhumane living conditions.

Those who were lucky to survive were subject to a new wave of persecution and repression in the Soviet Union. On August 8, 1941, Stalin issued Order № 270, which defined surrender to captivity as “malicious desertion” and treason. Of the 836,000 POWs who came back to the USSR, 233,000 were sentenced and sent to the GULAG, while more than 600,000 were forced to work in “labour battalions.”



Bodies of Soviet POWs (1942)



Women handing out bread to Soviet POWs

HOLOCAUST

Babi Yar and "the Final Solution of the Jewish Question"

1939
1945



Naked Jewish women waiting their death. Mizoch, Rivne oblast, 1942



Babi Yar

This giant grave for more than 100,000 civilians and POWs became the single most powerful symbol of the Holocaust in Ukraine. Soon after the Nazis entered Kyiv on September 27, this became the site of daily executions of Jews, POWs and civilians. The peak of the mass murders fell on September 29-30 and they continued until the end of October 1941. More than 33,000 Jews were killed in this time.

Babi Yar continued to be the location of regular executions and burials until the end of September 1943. The victims were primarily Jews, but also included Soviet POWs, partisans, Ukrainian nationalists, Roma, the mentally ill, Dniipro Flotilla sailors, prisoners of the Gestapo and anyone the Nazis regarded as a threat to their authority. In the spring of 1942, the Sirets concentration camp began operating in Kyiv and many of its prisoners also found their final resting place in Babi Yar.

After taking Odesa, Romanian forces executed 20,000 local Jews. At the end of December 1941, the Romanians killed more than 40,000 Jews outside of Bohdanivka in Odesa oblast (modern-day Mykolayiv oblast). In 1941, the occupational Romanian government created its own ghettos and labour camps on Ukrainian lands that were made part of Transnistria. Jews from Bessarabia and Bukovyna were killed there. In total, the Romanians killed nearly 300,000 Jews in this area.

The horrific policies of terror against Jews in occupied Ukraine destroyed their socio-cultural and ethno-religious community. Nearly 1.5 million Jews were killed on Ukrainian lands during the Holocaust.

Locations of the largest mass executions of Jews in Ukraine: Babi Yar (Kyiv) – more than 100,000, Bohdanivka, Odesa oblast – over 40,000, Drohobytzkyi Yar (Kharkiv) – nearly 20,000, Kamianets-Podilsky – 23,600, Dalnyk, Odesa oblast, nearly 18,000, Sosonky (near Rivne) – more than 17,000 victims.



The Holocaust, Shoa – the persecution and mass destruction of Jews by the Nazis during the Second World War. People were killed for the sole reason of their ethnicity.

The discrimination that formed the basis of Nazi racial policy quickly grew into mass murder. The plan behind "the final solution of the Jewish question" was modified after the "Blitzkrieg's" failure in the USSR. The idea of repatriating Jews to specific locations (Krakow in Poland, Madagascar or beyond the Ural Mountains) proved to be illusory. So the Nazis resorted to genocide.

The Holocaust in Ukraine

The Holocaust in the Nazi-occupied territories of the USSR was different from the destruction of Jews in other European countries. There, Jews were forced into ghettos from where they might be sent to gas chambers in places of mass destruction. In the Ukrainian lands, most Jews died from bullets in pits that were often dug by the victims themselves.

At first, the "cleansing actions" were carried out by the Einsatzgruppen on the territory of occupied Halychyna. A week-long pogrom started by the Nazis in Lviv killed 6,000 Jews. The "final solution" resulted in the destruction of the Jews of Halychyna in camps and ghettos in Ternopil, Drohobych, Boryslav, Skole, Stryi and other cities. In total, 610,000 were killed.

In the last ten days of July 1941, the Einsatzgruppen executed 1,500 Jews from Uman.

The murders in Kamianets-Podilsky set the example for future criminal actions. At the beginning of the war, 10,000 Jews lived in this city. In the first ten days of August 1941, the Hungarian government deported 18,000 Jews from Transcarpathia to German-occupied Ukraine. The Nazis forced people to march from Kolomeya to Kamianets-Podilsky and then, in four days between August 26 and 29, executed 23,000 deportees along with the locals.

In May 1944, the Jews who remained in Transcarpathia were shipped to Auschwitz, where most of them died in the gas chambers.



Curfew announcement in Brody



Odesa Jews in line for registration after German and Romanian troops arrived in town (1941)



German command announcement ordering all Jews of Kyiv to gather on September 29, 1941

The Jews are being led away without end. The people hide them, but the Germans find them and take them away. The shootings in Babi Yar can be heard to this very day.

Iryna Khoroshunova, "Pershyi Rik Viny. Kyivskyi Zapysky"

All we heard was machine gun fire at different intervals: ta-ta-ta, ta-ta... I heard it every day for two years and this [sound] remains in my ears to this day. Towards the end, a heavy, oily smoke rose over the ravine. It smoked for three weeks.

Anatoliy Kuznetsov, "Babyn Yar"



SS searching through the belongings of those shot in the Babi Yar ravine (1941)



Ivan Rohach, chief editor of the weekly "Ukrainske Slovo", shot in Babi Yar



Ukrainian poetess, editor in chief of the "Litavny" newspaper, Olena Teliha with husband Mykhailo Teliha, shot in Babi Yar

Soviet POWs burying those shot in the ravine at Babi Yar under SS supervision (1941)

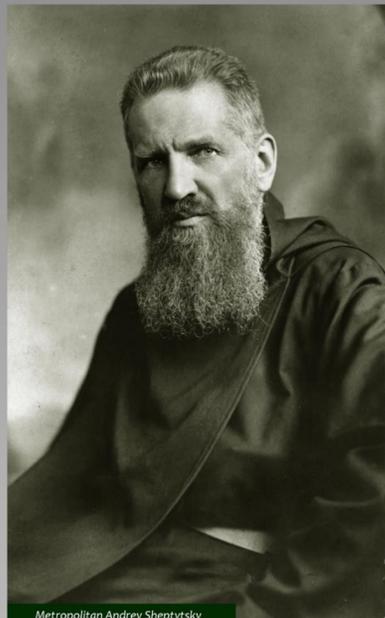


1939 1945

RIGHTEOUS AMONG NATIONS WHOEVER SAVES A SINGLE LIFE – SAVES AN ENTIRE WORLD

Honour

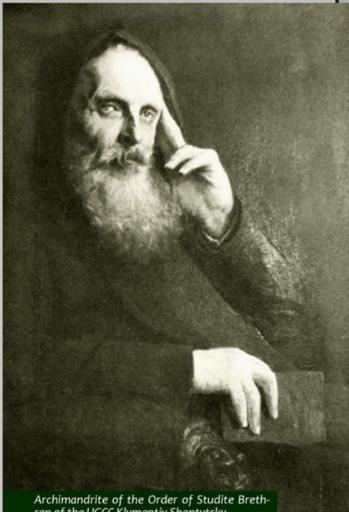
In 1963, Yad Vashem established the criteria for the honorific "Righteous among the nations," bestowed by Jews to Gentiles who saved Jews during the Holocaust. Ukraine is fourth in the world in terms of number of "the righteous" after Poland, the Netherlands and France. There are 2,515 Ukrainian names carved into the Wall of Honour in the Garden of the Righteous in Jerusalem. A person recognized as "righteous among nations" is awarded a medal, certificate and the honour of their name being written on the Wall of Honour in the Garden of the Righteous.



Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky

Andrey Sheptytsky

Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC). Rescued Rabbi David Kahane said: "When I call Andrey Sheptytsky a saint, I am not exaggerating." He led a campaign to hide Jews. Under Sheptytsky's command, some 240 priests, monks and nuns were involved in saving the lives of 200 Jewish children. Metropolitan Andrey himself provided refuge to 15 orphans in his residence, however, for political reasons, he has yet to be recognized as one of the "Righteous".



Archimandrite of the Order of Studite Brethren of the UGCC Klymentiy Sheptytsky

Klymentiy Sheptytsky

Archimandrite of the Order of Studite Brethren of the UGCC. Among the people he saved during the Holocaust were Kurt and Nathan Lewin, Adam Rotfeld, the sons of Rabbi Chameides, the Pidozhyn family, Mrs. Abraham and her daughter. On February 14, 1995, Yad Vashem recognized Fr. Klymentiy as one of the "Righteous among nations".



The Univ Studite Monastery, near Lviv. In the center of the front row is the future Polish Foreign Minister, Adam Daniel Rotfeld, left - Monk Danylo (1943)

The leaders of the Studite Order – the Greek Catholic part of the Basilian Order, for whom my father worked as an advocate before the war – proposed to save the lives of school-aged children from our family to the monastery in Univ.

The monastery's orphanage was home to many children, primarily Ukrainians and one Pole. Three boys came from Jewish families. They were admitted there by the decision of the Metropolitan of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church Andrey Sheptytsky, who called upon all his monasteries to hide Jewish children and Polish orphans. As a result, nearly 150 boys and girls were saved in female and male monasteries. The Abbot, and later the Archimandrite of the Studite Order was Klymentiy Sheptytsky, the Metropolitan's brother. He was my confessor, a person with a great heart and mind.

Adam Rotfeld, "Te, shcho pamyatayu... Uryvky zi spomyniv" [What I remember... Excerpts from Memoirs]



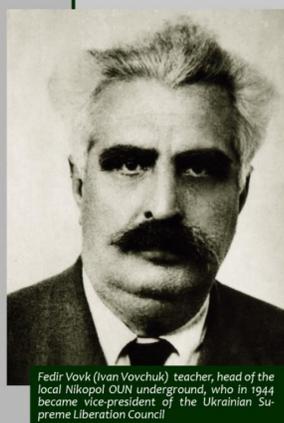
Olena Viter, Mother Josyfa

Olena Viter, Abbess Josyfa

Abbess of the Greek-Catholic Monastery that belonged to the Studite Order. Active participant of Ukrainian civic life and OUN member. The abbess hid Jewish children from the Nazis in the orphanage she ran in Lviv during the war. Among them were Lily Pohlmann, Nathan Lewin and others. Yad Vashem bestowed the honorific "Righteous among nations" to Olena Viter on February 11, 1976; she was the first among Ukrainians to receive this honour.

Nadiya Filipenko

During the occupation, Filipenko lived in Zhshkiv (then Kyiv, today Cherkasy oblast). She helped three Jewish girls survive the war: Idi Hutnyk, Fani Pyatyhorski and Sonia Skaletska. On December 25, 1995, Yad Vashem named Nadiya Filipenko as one of the "Righteous among nations".



Fedir Vovk (Ivan Vovchuk) teacher, head of the local Nikopol OUN underground, who in 1944 became vice-president of the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council

Fedir Vovk and Elizaveta Shkandel (husband and wife)

During the Nazi occupation they lived in Nikopol, Dnipropetrovsk oblast where they worked as teachers. Vovk led the local OUN underground. The couple saved fellow teacher Sarah Baxt and her older son Victor. On July 12, 1998, Yad Vashem recognized Fedir Vovk and Elizaveta Shkandel as "Righteous".



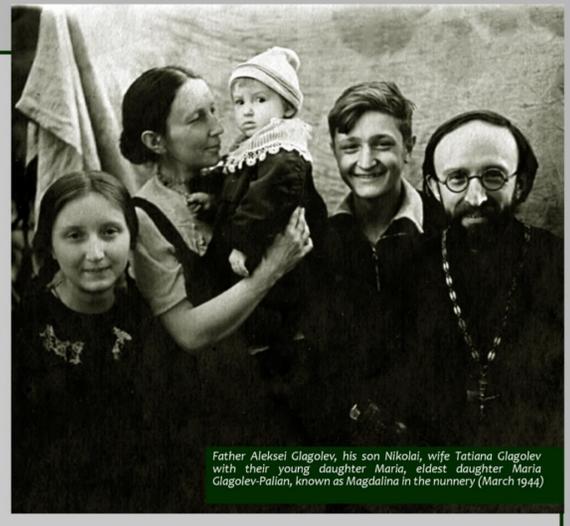
Teacher Sarah Baxt, saved by Fedir Vovk



Righteous Nadiya Filipenko (center) with those whom she rescued Sonia Skaletska and Fani Pyatyhorski

Aleksei Glagolev and his family

Parson of the Church of the Protection in Kyiv and Podol. During the Nazi occupation, Fr. Aleksei and his wife Tatiana helped Isabella Mirkinin and her daughter Iryna hide from the Nazis by providing refuge in a church building. Fr. Aleksei used old church forms to provide identities for Dmytro Pasichny, his wife and mother-in-law and provided them with a residence on church property. On September 12, 1991, Yad Vashem bestowed the honorific "Righteous among nations" on Aleksei, Tatiana and their daughter Magdalena and on October 8, 2000, the same honour was bestowed on their son, Nikolai.



Father Aleksei Glagolev, his son Nikolai, wife Tatiana Glagolev with their young daughter Maria, eldest daughter Maria Glagolev-Paljan, known as Magdalena in the nunnery (March 1944)

Wall of Honour in the Garden of the Righteous

אוקראינה UKRAINE UKRAINA

AKSENCHUK EVSTAHII & ANNA & SON BOGDAN
ALTYMNOVA ANNA
AHSHEKIEVICH ANNA & LUKIAN & DAUGHTERS LIDIA
YEVGENIA & VERA
ANTONIUK FEODOR & SON GREGORY
ANUFRIEV JOSEF
BABAEVA ALEXANDRA
BABENKO LIDIA
BAGNO GRIGORI & MOTHER ALEXANDRA
BALABAN YURI & WIFE
BALYK PEOTR & FRANSIZHKA & CHILDREN LUCIA & HELENA
BELETSKAYA ANNA
BELOUSOV DIMITRI & MARINA & DAUGHTERS ALEXANDER & ANNA
BELOVA ALEXANDRA
BEREZHITSKI JAS & OLENA
BESSMERTNAYA AKULINA
BEVZUK NADEZHDA
BLECKI EUGENIUSZ & CHILDREN JULIAN & ANNA
BLECKI LEON & MARIA & CHILDREN ROMAN & JAROSLAW
BLASHKEVICH ANTON & EUGENIA & DAUGHTER MARIA
BOBROVSKY MARIA & CHILDREN MIKHAIL & NIKOLAJ
BOCHKOVA EUGENIA & CHILDREN BORIS & MILANIA
BOGDANOVA PRASKOVIA
BODKO MARINA
BONDARENKO PRASKOVIA
BONDARENKO IVAN & MARIA & CHILDREN IVAN & ANASTASIA
BORISKINA ANASTASIA
BREITSHNAIDER ANATOLI
BUHAJ ZOSIA
BUKOVSKI IVAN & ANNA & DAUGHTERS LUBOV & NADEZHDA
BUVALIK GRIGORY
CHAKA SAU
CHALN AGRIPPINA & DAUGHTER GALINA
LAPCHINSKAYA
CHEKOVIA LUDMILA & DAUGHTER NATALIA
CHEITSOVA GALINA & SISTER VALENTINA

CHEREMUCHA ANDREI & ANASTASIA & SON VALENTIN
CHERNETSKI VIKTOR & LIDIA
CHERNOUS FEODOR & YEKATERINA & CHILDREN MARIA & ALEXANDER
CHUMAK PAVEL
DELIKAT ANNA
DERIK MAGDALENA
DKI VASILI & ANNA & SON NIKOLAI
DORDEEV LEONID & OLGA
DOBROVOLSKY ALEXANDER & EKATERINA
DOMANSKI MIKHAIL & NADEZHDA
DOMANSKI IVAN & PRASKOVIA & DAUGHTER NADEZHDA
DOWBENKO MICHALINA & JOSEF & SON JAN
DRACH ANDRON & TATIANA
DUBINSKI JOSEF & MARIA
DUTCHAK PRASKOVIA
DZYVULSKI WASYL & MARIA
EGORICHEVA ALEXANDRA & CHILDREN KLAVDIA, TATIANA & MARIA
FOMINA ANASTASIA
FURMAN PAVEL & VARVARA
GALANSKIY ULYANA & DAUGHTERS NADEZHDA & AKULINA
GALAIKO VLADIMIR & ALEXANDRA
GALETA IVAN & DAUGHTER LIDIA
GAVRILOVA ELENA
GAVRILOVA MARIA & DAUGHTER LUDMILA
GERASIMOVITSH IOISIP & DAUGHTER NINA
GHATEMCO KLINA & ALEXANDER
GOLENTIUK ANNA
GOLUB MARIA
GONTCHAR DENIS & FEODORA & CHILDREN IVAN & STEPAN
GONTCHAR MARIA
GORBULSKAYA ANASTASIA
GORTCHAKOV PAVEL & ANTONINA & CHILDREN ZINAIDA, ANATOLI & BORIS
GRABOVSKI ANDREI & MARINA
GRIGORIEVICH DANILLO & DOMNIKIA & SON VASILI
GRITZENKO POLINA
GRIZENKO TEODOSIA & DAUGHTERS VERA & NADEZHDA

GROULI IGATLI & VARVARA & CHILDREN STEFAN & DAUGHTER ANNA
GUDKOVA NINA
GUTZOL PEOTR
GUZVATI PROKOP & LIGERA
ILNICKI PEOTR & CHILDREN MICHAL, FEODOR, STEFAN, KAROL & KASIA
IVANUTA ALEKSEI & ANNA
IVASUK GRIGORI & ANNA
JAKUBOVSKAYA-FINKEL MARIA
JANUK RODION & SON MIKOLAI
JATSENKO ANATOLI
JATSUK MICHAL
JOZKIV ANNA
JURKO DUN
KACZEROWSKI IVAN & TANIA
KALENCHUK FEODOR & DAUGHTER WASYA
KALUTA KONON & ANYA, & DAUGHTERS ANNA & MARIA
KARNAUKHOVA ALEXANDRA
KARPIK ALEKSEI & RINA & SONS IOISIF & STEPAN
KATSUK KLAVDIA
KHIMTICH MOISEI & ANNA
KHMELUK NADEZHDA
KHOMENKO IVAN & PRASKOVIA & DAUGHTER YEFROSINIA
KIEFOR IVAN & WIFE & DAUGHTER OLYMPIA
KINDRAT KIRILO
KIRICHENKO ANNA
KISELEVA SOFIA & DAUGHTER VALENTINA
KIZIUN PEOTR & OLGA & SON ANATOLI
KLYMOVSKY-KACZMAR JOHANNA
KOBILNIK ANASTASIA & SON TSHESLAV
KOBYSH AFANASI & ULIANA
KOLESHCHENKO ZINAIDA
KOLPASKOVA ELENA
KONDRASHOVA LIDIA & DAUGHTERS NADEZHDA & MARIA
KONDRATYEV ALEXANDER
KONDRATYEV IVAN
KONICH FILIP & TEKLA & CHILDREN ALEXANDER & ANDREY
KONONOVA MARIA
KONTSEVICH TATYANA
KORBA NIKITA & DARIA
KORBA TEKLA
KORMYLA MICHAL
KOSTYRA-FILPENHO MARIA

KORNELIUK IVAN & ANNA & CHILDREN GEORGIY & GALINA
KOSTYUKOVICH-SCHMIDT LARISA
KOSTYUKOVICH SERGEI & MARIA & DAUGHTER GALINA
KOSTYUK-SKOLSKY YEVDOKIA
KOVALCZUK ZOFIA
KOVALENKO DANILA & ANNA & SON DIMITRI
KOVBASUK DARIA
KOZREV MARIA & ANDRIAN & DAUGHTER NADEZHDA
KRASNOLUTSKI GORDEI & AKULINA & CHILDREN VLADIMIR & EUGENIA
KRAVCHUK TATIANA
KRAVCHUK GRICH & STEFANINA
KRIVENCHENKO LIDIA
KROPOVENSKI MIKHAIL
KUCHERUK DUNIA & IOISIP
KUCHERYAVI NIKITA & CHARITINA & CHILDREN ANTONINA, GALINA & FEODOR
KUCHI MIKOLAI & OLGA
KULIK MARIYNA
KULYNYCZ STEFANIA
KUT IVAN & MARIA & CHILDREN STEFANIA & JAROSLAV
KUYAVA ANDREY & YARINA & SON NIKOLAI
LAVRENIA MARIA
LEBDEVA MARIA
LEHKA KAROLA & DAUGHTERS GALINA, KAZIA & YOSEFA
LEHMANSKAYA ZINAIDA
LESHCHUK MARIA
LEVCHUK PAULINA & SISTERS MARIA & LEONIDA
LEVITSKY EPIM & VALENTINA
LEVA & BORIS
LITVINENKO VALENTINA
LOGATZKY MEFODY & KSENIA & DAUGHTER NADEZHDA
LIPER-YAKIMOV BELA-VALENTINA
LISOVSKAYA YARINA
LITAVSKAYA ANNA & CHILDREN VERA & BORIS
LITOVCHIK TUDOSYI & OLGA
LITVINENKO VALENTINA
LOGATZKY MEFODY & KSENIA & DAUGHTER NADEZHDA
LOVNIENKO ZINAIDA
LOVNIENKO ANNA
LOPATNIUK ANDREI & ANNA
LOPATIUK ANASTASIA
LOZINSKA PELAGEA
LUCHOVITSKAYA ELENA

LUKAVSKAYA MARUSIA & SON JUZEK
LURKANCHUK OLGA
LUSCHEYEVA ANNA & DAUGHTER OLGA
LYSIUK EKATERINA
MALANKIEWICZ IVAN & MARIA
MALSKA MARIA
MARCHUK IVAN
MARCHUK VASILY & KATERINA & DAUGHTER ADAFIA
MARTINIUK FEDOR & ANTONINA
MARTYNOVSKAYA MARIA & DAUGHTER VALENTINA
MARTYSCHENKO DARIA
MARUNEVICH-SHVEI EUGENIA
MARUSCHAK VLADIMIR & USTINA & SON NIKOLAI
MASLONOV GRIGORI
MASLOV VLADIMIR & SISTER EUGENIA
MEDYNSKI OLGA & MIKOLAJ
MELNICHUK ALEKSEI
MELNICHUK MIKHAIL & JELIZAVETA
MELNY ALEXANDRA & CHILDREN VIKTOR & TAISSA
MELNYCHUK EDUARD & HALA
MIAKOVSKI SERGEJ & OLA & CHILDREN ZORA & HALINA
MICHALOVA YEVDOKIA & DAUGHTER ANNA
MIHALOVSKY VASILY
MOISEV IVAN
MOVCHAN PAVLO & TATIANA
MUT-TALANAYK MARGARITA
MUZICHENKO GALINA & MIKHAIL
MYKASNIKOVA ALEXANDRA
MYKITENKO NIKFOR & ALEXANDRA & SON PAVLO
MYKITKA STEFAN & KASIA
NAGORNY VASILY & ANNA
NAKONECHNI PIOTR & DAUGHTER TEKLA
NAVOLSKY ANTY
NAZARENKO MOISEI & LUKERIA & CHILDREN EFROSINIA
NADEZHDA & VASILY
NESTRUK KYRILL & MARTA & SON POTAP
NESTRUK GERASIM & NASTYA
NETREBENKO PAVLO & KHARITINA & DAUGHTER ANNA
NICHOPORUK OLYANA & DAUGHTER EKATERINA
NICHOPORUK PAVEL & AFANASIA
NIKICHUK ZAKHAR & WIFE
NIKICHUK ARTEM & WIFE
NIKICHUK NIKOLAJ & TATIANA

NIKICHUK ANDREJ & ZINA
NIKIFOROVA POLINA
NOSAL OLGA
NOVAK ANASTASIA & DAUGHTER GALINA
OLPINSKAYA FEODORA
OLSHANECKA OLGA
OMELIANUK STEPAN & MARIA
ONUFRIUCHUK IVAN
ONUFRIUCHUK DIMITRI
OSTAPENKO IVAN & MELANYA
OSTROVSKY ALEKSEI & SABINA
PAPSUEVA LIDIA
PATIUTA MOISEI & ANISYA & CHILDREN NATALIA, OKSANA, PRASKOVIA & OLGA
PAWLOVSKI PETRO & BROTHER IGNIAT
PETRICHENKO FEODOR & VERA
PETRIV NIKOLAI & EKATERINA & DAUGHTER OLGA
PHILIPENKO NADEZHDA
PIETRASH JOSEF
PIGNASTAYA LUDMILA
PIZANTZALI KONSTANTIN & YARVARA
POBERETSKI ANDREI & JUSTINA & SON ANDREI
POLJANSKAYA NADEZHDA & CHILDREN ZORA & HALINA
POLISHCHUK MARUSIA
POLISHCHUK ALEXANDRA
POLOVINKINA VERA & IVAN
POPELNIUK MITROPAN & NADEZHDA
POVARENKO-TSYPINSKAYA ANNA
PRHODKO ZINAIDA
PROHOROV NIKOLAI & DAUGHTER ANNA
PUKAS LUDVIGA
RADANI DEMA & CHILDREN MATILDA, MARIA & ANATOLI
RADETZKY OLGA
RAKOVICZ ALEXANDER & ELENA
RIBACHOK VARVARA & DAUGHTER OKSANA
RIBACHOK VERA
ROZMANSHIN FEODOR
ROZHOVSKAYA PRASKOVIA
RUDENOK MARIA
RYBAYAK AKULINA
RYBACZUK TIMOFEI & MARIA
SAIK ONIFER & ANNA
SAMOTUGA IVAN & CHARITINA & CHILDREN MARIA & NINA
SANEVICH ANNA & IVAN & CHILDREN TATIANA, DARIA & PETRO

SARAFUK STEPAN & PARENTS SAVOI BORIS
SACHUK LIDIA & PARENTE STEFAN & NADEZHDA
SACHUK-OBHOD TATIANA
SKVYZNYI EVEL
SOBERGA MICHAL & EFRONIA
SCHEBAK IVAN & VARVARA
SCHEBAK SUSANNA
SERRETA ANNA & CHILDREN JOZEFA & RUDOLF
SEMENIK NATALIA
SEMENIK DOMNA & DAUGHTER NADEZHDA
SEMIK MICHAL & VIKTORIA
SEREDUK ONUFRIJ & ZOSIA
SHABLI ANASTASIA & DAUGHTER KSENIA
SHATOCHA ALIMA
SHCHERBAK IVAN
SHEVCHUK EUGENIA
SHEVCHUK IOISIF & MARIA & SON ARKADY
SHEVCHUK KAROLINA & STANISLAV
SHVATSKY TARAS
SIBORCHUK VOLODYMR & ZOFIA & SON YOSEF
SIEROZUK OCHRYM
SIORSKA KATERINA & DAUGHTER IRIINA
SIVOHINA ZINAIDA & DAUGHTER TATIANA
SKLBSKY NIKOLAS
SLOBODYANIK ANDREI & JUSTINA & DAUGHTER MARIA
SLOBODYANIK ALEKSEY & MATRYONA & SON ALEXANDER
SMEZKO SAKFA & OLA
SOROCHIEVA MARIA & GENNADY
SOKOLUK MICHAL & ANNA & DAUGHTER BAZYLINA
SOKOLOV VLADIMIR
SOKOLOV YURI & MARIA
SOKUR KONRAT & JARINA
STADNIK DIMITRI & LINA
STASHUK KSENIA & IGNIAT
STASYUK PAVEL & ANASTASIA & DAUGHTER VALENTINA
STEBELSKY PEOTR & KSENIA & SON VLADIMIR
STEKY BARTOLOMEJ
STEFANOV DOMNIKA & DAUGHTERS MIROSLAWA & OKSANA
STEGANSEVA GALINA
STEK MARKO
STELNIKOVICH DIMITRI & VERA
STEPANOVA MARIA

CAPTIVES

Ukrainian "Ostarbeiters" and concentration camp prisoners

1939
1945

Forced labourers



Labour Exchange Building, Kyiv (1942)



Portrait of "Eastern Worker" in a carpentry shop in a Hanover business

From propaganda to forced deportation

The first Ukrainians were enlisted as forced labour in 1939. They came from Transcarpathia and Halychyna.

Initially, civilian workers from the occupied USSR were not intended to be used as labour because of racial considerations and state security. But the failure of the "lightning war" forced the decision of the Nazi leadership to use residents from former Soviet territories for labour.

Large scale use of hired workers from Ukraine began in 1942 and continued until 1945. The first echelons were formed from volunteers who had been duped by Nazi propaganda. In the spring of 1942, the Germans began using police and Wehrmacht soldiers to round up the local population.



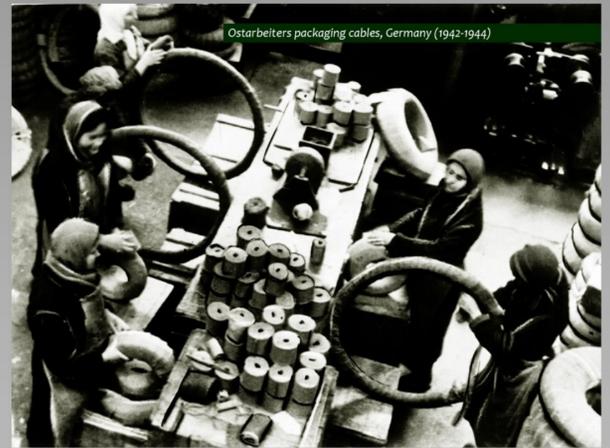
Residents of occupied Kyiv, who were sent to forced labour in Germany



"Ostarbeiter" Labour Card (1943)

Exploitation

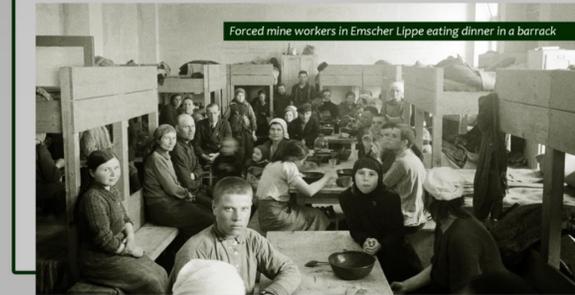
Forced labourers worked in mining and defence industries, in transport and construction, in farming and domestic labour. Those from Ukraine were forced to wear the "OST" ("East") badge on their chests signifying that they were Ostarbeiters (eastern workers). Ostarbeiters were settled in special camps under strict guard, and were isolated in their work from other workers. They were paid a wage that was half or a third of that of a German, and living costs were deducted. Penalties included both physical punishment and being shipped out to penal or concentration camps.



Ostarbeiters packaging cables, Germany (1942-1944)

Repatriation

After checking and filtration, 58% of former Ostarbeiters returned to their previous place of residence in the USSR, 19% of men were mobilized to the Red Army, another 14% to so-called "labour battalions," 6.5% "transferred to the dominion of the NKVD" (i.e. arrested), and another 2% worked in collection camps or other Soviet military units abroad.



Forced mine workers in Emscher Lippe eating dinner in a barrack

Nearly 13.5 million foreigners were employed in Germany and occupied countries. Nearly 2.5 million of that number came from the territories of the USSR, the majority from Ukraine. Approximately 80,000 to 100,000 "Ostarbeiters" died.

Prisoners of Nazi concentration camps

More than 20 million people from 30 countries went through the Nazi camps. Nearly 12 million prisoners died, including 2 million children.

Prisoners

Those considered opponents of the Nazi ideology and regime, criminals and Jews ended up behind barbed wires.

Thousands of Ukrainians were concentration camp prisoners. The Nazis "marked" most of them as "Soviet," "Polish" or "Hungarian" citizens. Only a small number of Ukrainian political prisoners, members of the OUN, managed to be registered as "Ukrainians." A number of the concentration camp prisoners were not registered at all and were immediately sent to the crematoria.

The better known Ukrainian prisoners included: Omelyan Kovch – a priest who was imprisoned for saving Jews; liberation movement activists Stepan Bandera and his brothers – Vasyl and Oleksandr, Oleh Kandyba-Olzhych, Yaroslav Stetsko, Lev Rebet, Olena Vityk-Vitovych, Dariya Hnatkivska.

The Soviet NKVD political police established its own concentration camps on the sites of Nazi concentration camps in Auschwitz, Majdanek, Buchenwald and Ravensbruck.



Released children-prisoners of the Auschwitz concentration camp, showing their camp numbers tattooed on their arms



Bodies of prisoners, killed in the Auschwitz concentration camp (January-February 1945)

Concentration camps

The Nazis created 1,634 camps and their "external commands" (branches) on the territory of the Third Reich and occupied lands. The Germans used the camps for isolation, destruction and exploitation of prisoners and hostages.

Nazi Germany's first concentration camp – Dachau – was established in 1933. Sachsenhausen (1936), Buchenwald (1937), Mauthausen and the women's camp in Ravensbruck (1938) were established later.

After the outbreak of the Second World War, the Nazis created new camps based on proven methods including Auschwitz, Majdanek, Sobibor and other concentration camps on the occupied territory of Poland.

Bodies of prisoners found in the territory of a concentration camp in Darnytsia



Nazi camps in Ukraine

The Nazis operated 367 camps in the territory of Ukraine: 2 concentration camps (Janowska Camp in Lviv and Syrets in Kyiv), 78 prison and labour camps and forced labour camps for Jews, 7 prison and labour camps, 15 forced labour camps, 23 transit camps and 242 POW camps.

In Kyiv, the Syrets concentration camp was operational from the spring of 1942 to the fall of 1943. More than 25,000 people were killed in the camp.

The Nazis opened the Janowska concentration camp in Lviv in October 1941, and shut it down in November 1943. According to researchers, between 50,000 and 200,000 people were killed there during this period.



Auschwitz concentration camp prisoners, liberated by Soviet troops (January 1945)



Musician prisoners in the Janowska concentration camp performing "The Tango of Death"

Ostarbeiters board wagons heading to work in Germany



WEARING THE ENEMY'S UNIFORM

Ukrainians serving in the armies of the Third Reich and its allies

1939
1945

Ukrainians in Axis armies

Nearly 250,000 Ukrainians fought on the Third Reich's side. A small number of them were German citizens, like the son of renowned academic Oleksandr Puluj or Luftwaffe ace Robert Olejnyk. For others, it was a matter of complicated personal choices – the wish to liberate their native land or exact revenge, but most often – purely a means of survival. Additionally, up to 50,000 Ukrainians served in the armies of Germany's allies: Romania, Slovakia, Hungary and Croatia.

Vain expectations

During the interwar period, various Ukrainian political groupings expected Berlin's support in the matter of national liberation. The Third Reich was the only real enemy capable of simultaneously challenging both the USSR and Poland. The OUN and German military intelligence (Abwehr) came to an agreement on the creation of small military units. The "Bergbauernhilfe" ("Mountain-Peasant's Help" in German, called "Vyskovi viddilyi nationalistiv" [nationalist military formations] by the Ukrainians) led by Roman Sushko was organized for the war against Poland in 1939, but the "Sushko Legion" did not take part in any battles. In June 1941, the "Legion of Ukrainian Nationalists" (which consisted of the "Nachtigall" and "Roland" Battalions) crossed into the USSR with the Wehrmacht. After the Nazis refused to recognize the Proclamation Restoring Ukrainian Statehood of June 30, 1941 and began the persecution of Ukrainian nationalists, the OUN(B) went underground and began their battle against the Nazis.

Non-commissioned officer of the Ukrainian Liberation Army (UVA) - a virtual "Ukrainian army" in the Wehrmacht



Soldiers of the "Nachtigall" Battalion (1941)

"Galicia" Division

In 1943, the occupational administration of the General Government of Poland began forming the 14th Division of the Waffen-SS "Galicia" comprised of Ukrainians. Initially, volunteers joined the Division and recruitment drives were accompanied by Ukrainian patriotic manifestations. The creation of "Galicia" was presented as a continuation of the tradition of the Sich Riflemen who fought against Russia on the side of Austro-Hungary twenty-five years earlier. The leadership of OUN(B) spoke out against the Division's creation, considering it a fighting force for foreign interests. In July 1944, the Division was surrounded and routed by the Red Army in the Battle of Brody. "Galicia" was reconstituted soon after; its soldiers met the end of the war on the Austrian Front. The Germans demanded that the Division be called "Galician" but agreed to rename it "Ukrainian" only after their complete retreat from Ukraine.



Column of police officers in Kyiv during the formation of the first "Schuma" battalion (1942)



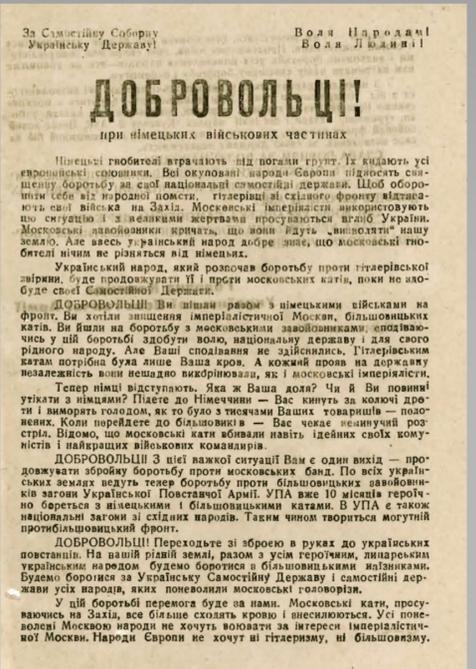
Leaflet Calling for People to Join the SS "Galicia" Division



Lieutenant Volodymyr Kozak of the SS "Galicia" Division



Head of the district police office in the village of Zahir (Poltava oblast) giving instructions to his subordinates (December 1942)



Appeal of the UPA to Ukrainians in German service, September 1943

"Schuma" and "Hiwi"

Lack of human resources for waging war and running the occupational administration led the Nazis to rely on the local populace and captives. A million Red Army soldiers ended up in German POW camps. The Germans started using them and civilians living in the occupied territories to create local police units and security guard battalions "Schuma" (short for Schutzmannschaftbattalion) to protect important installations and fight the partisans. Police units were organized according to ethnic criteria, e.g. Ukrainian, Lithuanian, and Azerbaijani. Initially, the role allotted to Ukrainians and representatives of other Soviet citizens in the German army were limited to support services, but, after a while, there emerged entire "eastern" battalions within the Wehrmacht's structure.

The Germans referred to these soldiers as volunteer assistants, commonly by the shortened form "Hiwi" from (Hilfswilligen – "willing to help"). Beginning in 1943, the Ukrainian units were officially considered part of the Ukrainian Liberation Army (Ukrainian acronym: UVA), although they were never assembled into a unified formation. The equivalent Russian formation was the Russian Liberation Army (ROA) whose nominal commander was General Andrei Vlasov.



Badge of the Ukrainian Liberation Army



Ukrainian Auxiliary Police in Stryi

Fate of Ukrainian military formations

The Ukrainian liberation movement viewed the USSR and Germany as enemies. Publications called on Ukrainian youth to not serve the Germans, and those who enlisted to take their weapons and join the UPA. Meanwhile, the OUN dispatched its own agents to the Ukrainian units within the Third Reich. During the war, the Ukrainian soldiers in German formations died in battle, were taken prisoner, deserted their posts or joined anti-Hitler forces: the UPA, the Red partisans and the French Resistance. Others retreated westwards with the Wehrmacht. In early 1945, the German leadership initiated the creation of the Ukrainian National Committee (UNC) and the Ukrainian National Army (UNA). UNC Head Pavlo Shandruk strove to gather all of the various Ukrainian formations in Germany into a unified UNA. Many Soviet citizens who wore German uniforms and surrendered to the Western allies during the war were forcibly repatriated to the USSR where retribution awaited them. Some of them managed to stay in Western Europe and joined the ranks of post-war Ukrainian emigres.

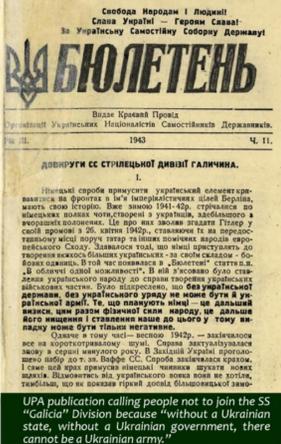
I remember they said "With German hands we'll destroy everything that is Bolshevik"

Excerpt from interrogation of Kateryna Striletska by the NKGB about Ukrainians in the Abwehr

Propaganda leaflets of the UVA, addressed to UPA members



Ukrainian Volunteer Battalion



UPA publication calling people not to join the SS "Galicia" Division because "without a Ukrainian state, without a Ukrainian government, there cannot be a Ukrainian army."



SS "Galicia" Division gunner during the Battle of Brody (July 1944)



Lieutenant-General Pavlo Shandruk, commander of the Ukrainian National Army



Recruits to the SS "Galicia" Division before leaving on their trains, Lviv (1943)

AVENGERS OR SABOTEURS?

Soviet Partisans in Ukraine

1939
1945



Leadership of the partisan units Zahar Bohatyr, Aleksander Saburov, Ivan Borodachiv



Oleksiy Fedorov, partisan commander (1942 or 1943)



Mikhail Naumov, partisan commander

Partisan Commanders

Timofey Strokach, commander of the UShPR, member of the Soviet secret police, from October 1940 Deputy People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the UkrSSR, and after the war in 1945–1946 was the Minister of Internal Affairs of the UkrSSR.

Aleksandr Saburov, partisan commander, served in the NKVD prior to the German-Soviet War, from 1943 Major General of the NKVD Armed Forces.

Mikhail Naumov, commander of the partisan cavalry grouping, served as a border guard officer prior to the German-Soviet War and after the war from 1953 to 1960, served as Head of the Armed Forces of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the UkrSSR.

Oleksiy Fedorov, commander of the partisan group in Chernihiv, at the start of the German-Soviet War was the First Secretary of the Chernihiv Oblast Committee of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine, after the war was head of various oblast committees of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine and later the Communist Party of Ukraine, was a minister in the UkrSSR government.

Sydir Kovpak, Commander of the Sumy partisan group and later Commander of the 1st Ukrainian Partisan Division of the USSR, participated in the war against the Ukrainian National Republic (1918-1919), prior to the German-Soviet War headed various Soviet structures, from 1944 member of the Supreme Court of the UkrSSR, from 1947 Deputy Head of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the UkrSSR.



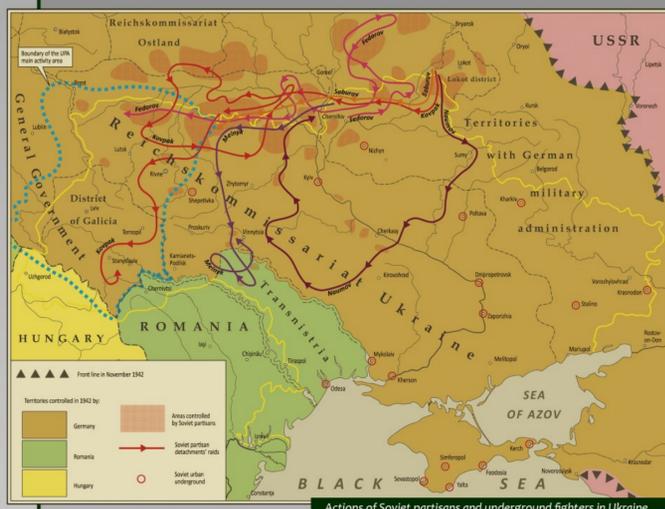
Sydir Kovpak (right), commander of Sumy partisan units and his commissar Semyon Rudniev (1942 or 1943)



The leaders of the Soviet partisan movement in Ukraine, Generals Petro Vershihora, Timofey Strokach, Sydir Kovpak

What were Soviet partisans fighting for?

Soviet special services and the Communist Party formed units of partisans to fight the enemy behind the front line. They included emissaries from Soviet command, local residents and Red Army soldiers who ended up in the occupied territories. Most of the units were under the command of the Ukrainian Staff of the Partisan Movement (known by the Ukrainian acronym "U.Sh.P.R."). The Soviet partisans fought against the occupational administration and armies, conducted raids deep into enemy-held territory, spread disorganization in the German rear and conducted diversionary activities and intelligence gathering.



Actions of Soviet partisans and underground fighters in Ukraine

War for destruction

In areas occupied by the enemy, partisan units must be formed ... to combat enemy units... to blow up bridges and roads, damage telephone and telegraph lines, set fire to forests, stores and means of transportation... In case of a forced retreat of Red Army units, not a single pound of grain should be left for the enemy... Collective farmers should drive off all their cattle and turn over their grain to the safe keeping of the state authorities for transportation to the rear... All grain and fuel which cannot be removed must be destroyed.

Excerpt from a speech by Joseph Stalin, July 3, 1941

Destroy and burn to the ground all populated places to the rear of the German armies at a distance of 40 to 60 km deep from the front and 20 to 30 kilometres to the right and left of roadways. To destroy the populated places in the described radius immediately dispatch the air force, widely employ artillery and mortar fire, supply bottles filled with flammable substances, grenades and explosives to scouts, skiers and partisan diversionary groups.

Excerpt from Order №04028 "On the destruction of populated points near the front," November 17, 1941

Soviet partisans marching



Sydir Kovpak's partisans during their Carpathian Raid in western Ukraine (1943)



Oleksiy Fedorov's Chernihiv-Volyn partisans at the beginning of their Volyn Raid (1943)

Partisan Terror

The resisting policemen, starostas [elders], burgermeisters are well "taught" prior to being executed. Fedorov's partisans were singular in their extreme brutality. I was a witness to policemen being beaten bloody, cut with knives, the hair on their heads burnt, tied by the feet, lassoed and dragged by horse through the forest, scalded with hot tea, their sexual organs mutilated.

Excerpt from a report prepared by writer Mykola Sheremet to the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine Nikita Khrushchev, May 13, 1943



Partisan battle

Pillaging, looting, banditry

The German [must have] strongly pinched Saburov, for many men from his unit are still not accounted for. Some of the injured... he threw to the enemy, buried the artillery into the ground. He has a lot of power, but little brains. ... His unit is similar to a gang. Men run away from his unit the first chance they have, like they run away from the Germans. Plunder has no limits.

Excerpt from a letter by I. Syromolotny, representative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine, to UShPR Commander T. Strokach, January 27, 1943

We have precise facts: there have been incidents of looting, rape, execution of the innocent by your units, which discredits the partisans. Use measures to stop this. Confirm receipt.

Radiogram № 3931 from T. Strokach to the Poltava Partisan Group Command, July 15, 1943

Partisans against the Ukrainian liberation movement

To Major General Vershihora... Given your division's combat experience, it will not be disbanded, but transferred to the command of the NKVD UkrSSR to combat German-Ukrainian nationalist gangs. I wish you further success in battle. Khrushchev.

Radiogram № 991 (1944) from Nikita Khrushchev to the Commander of the Partisan Division Petro Vershihora

In January 1943, redeploy Ukrainian partisan unit from the territory of the Russian SFSR and Belarusian SSR to Ukraine [to] conduct several operations to break down the police and "nationalist" formations of the enemy on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR.

Excerpt from Operational Plan prepared by the Head of the Partisan Movement's Central Headquarters, Panteimon Ponomarenko, January 15, 1943



Partisans crossing a river



Oleksiy Fedorov's Chernihiv-Volyn partisans during a political-information session

FOR AN INDEPENDENT UKRAINE

The Ukrainian liberation movement in 1940–1942

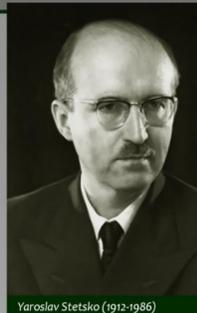
1939
1945



Andriy Melnyk (1890-1964)



Stepan Bandera (1909-1959)



Yaroslav Stetsko (1912-1986)

The Nationalists' two strategies

Founded in 1929, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) fought for the creation of an independent state. When OUN established its network of underground branches throughout western Ukraine, its primary activities took aim against the Polish regime. But when these lands were annexed by the USSR, the OUN came face to face with its main enemy – the Communist regime.

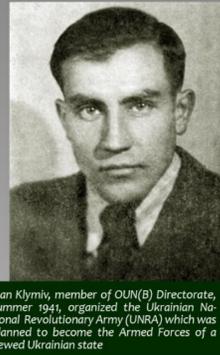
In 1940, the organization split into two parts: OUN(M) led by Andriy Melnyk and OUN(B) led by Stepan Bandera. The representatives of the younger generation, most of whom were united under OUN(B), did not reject possible cooperation with the Germans against the Soviet Union, professed a revolutionary approach. Their strategy was to organize an anti-Soviet armed uprising, the immediate creation of Ukrainian governmental state structures and the formation of a Ukrainian army. The establishment of the Ukrainian State was supposed to become a fait accompli for the Germans who were expected to accept and respect it. The OUN(M), on the other hand, remembering the experience of the First World War, viewed independence as a result of cooperation with their main ally – Germany.



Celebrating the Act of Ukrainian State Restoration (summer 1941)



Celebrating the Act of Ukrainian State Restoration (summer 1941)



Ivan Klymiv, member of OUN(B) Directorate, summer 1941, organized the Ukrainian National Revolutionary Army (UNRA) which was planned to become the Armed Forces of a new Ukrainian state



Soldiers of the UNRA (summer 1941)

Restoration of Ukrainian Statehood

Immediately after the Third Reich attacked the USSR, on June 30, 1941, the OUN(B) seized strategic objects in Lviv and issued the Proclamation Restoring Ukrainian Statehood, formed a government – Ukrainian State Government (known by the Ukrainian acronym “UDP”) and began building the Ukrainian National Revolutionary Army (UNRA). This all came as a surprise to the German occupiers. German plans did not include the existence of an independent Ukraine. The Nazis arrested the OUN(B) leader Stepan Bandera on July 5, 1941, and UDP Head Yaroslav Stetsko on July 9 and a slew of other leading members of the OUN(B). They were kept behind bars of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp to the end of 1944. In July and August 1941, the occupiers dispersed the military and local self-government structures created by the OUN and began the mass arrest of its activists on September 15. By the end of the year, some 1,500 OUN(B) members had been imprisoned by the Third Reich's security services.



Text of the “Act of June 30” with which OUN(B) declared an independent Ukrainian state

It's been established beyond doubt, that the Bandera movement is preparing an uprising in Reichskommissariat (Ukraine) with a goal of creating an independent Ukraine. All functionaries (activists) of the Bandera movement should be immediately arrested and after rigorous interrogation should be secretly executed as looters.

Einsatzkommando Order C/5 from November 25, 1941 Document from materials of the Nuremberg Tribunal

Growing resistance

The OUN spent all of 1942 waging an underground war against the Nazi occupiers. As of March 20, reports filed by the SD (Nazi security service) about the Ukrainian nationalists were entitled “Ukrainian resistance movement.” But the occupational regime's brutality showed that methods of underground battle were not enough. In Volyn and Polissya, locals began organizing themselves into self-defence units against the occupying forces. In late 1942 and early 1943, the time had come for an armed uprising against the invaders. From October to December 1942, the Military Section of the OUN Directorate developed a plan to create an insurgent army which it launched in Volyn.



UNRA unit (summer 1941)

The insurgency... We had to launch the insurgency, and it wasn't too early as some have said, but already too late. We had to for two reasons...On the one hand, the number of otamanchyks [war lords], like Bulba-Borovets, began to grow; on the other hand the red partisans began spreading through the land... Also, before we launched the insurgency, the Germans would destroy villages en masse... This led to masses of people running into the forests seeking safety... So we had to organize these people in the forests ... There is also the moral reason. Voices asked “Where is the leadership? Why isn't it issuing orders to fight the Germans?” etc. Now we've shut these windbags' mouths and made the revolution a common cause.

Excerpt from Vasyl Makar (“Siromanets”) OUN Security Service report in the Northwestern Ukrainian lands



Taras Borovets - “Taras Bulba”, Otaman of the Polissian Sich from 1941-1942. One of the organizers of the insurgent struggle in Volyn in 1941-1943

Слухай, український народ!

Москва дає накази ОУН!

З тайних наказів і аналізів, що попадали нам в руки, видно, що кремльські жиди стоять у зв'язку з ОУН, яка нібито воює проти большевизму.

В промові ОУН сидять агенти Москви, що отримують і виконують накази вдоволеного Сталіна й його жидівських опричників. В тих тайних наказах, що скоро будуть опубліковані, ОУН означається як національно-зависла большевицька бовва частинка. Вони має завдання підбурювати український народ проти німецького правління й творити хаос в заміллі.

ОУН є зрадчим жидівського большевизму. Нам є відомі також сюди і центральні тах ворожих елементів ОУН. Ми лязво провінційні тих бид, вони на утриманні Москви.

Український народ!

Чи хочеш Ти, щоб Тобі згубили ці большевики і національно-завислові заговірники? Чи хочеш Ти бути гарматним м'ясом Твого власного ворога?

Чи хочеш Ти тим спричинити знищення Твого народу на Волині?

Жидо-большеви́зм, що бачить свій кінець, пробує ще раз відсувати свою загибель Твоєю великою поміччю і Твоєю бробою.

Чи Ти хочеш бути залачником? Чи хочеш, щоб Твої жиди, діти, Твої жидівки і старий стали жертвою озвірилого злодія?

Згадай страждання й мучи, які Твій народ мусів терпіти понад 20 літ. Згадай помордованих батьків і синів! Пригадай мільйони громадян і громадянок, вивезених в сибірські степи! Згадай згублених і помордованих священників! Згадай знищені церковні маврити і культурні цінності! Відарешуй від своїх ворогів! ОУН не може ніколи заслухати національні інтереси українського народу.

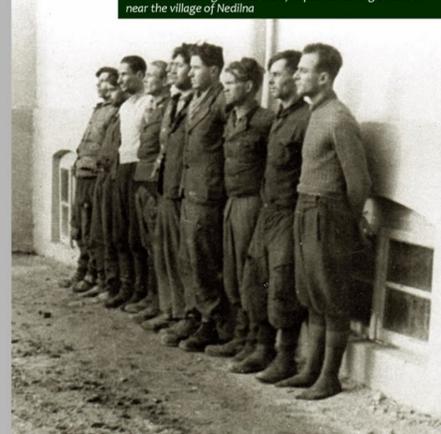
ОУН і большеви́зм – це одне, тому мусять вони бути знищені!

48/1824.

Німецьке управління.

German leaflet discrediting the OUN

Germans shooting UPA soldiers, captured during a battle near the village of Nedina



Ukrainian Insurgents

FOR UKRAINE'S INDEPENDENCE

Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA)

1939
1945

We are for the complete liberation of the Ukrainian people from the Muscovite-Bolshevik and German yokes, for the building of a Ukrainian Independent Sovereign State without masters, overlords and capitalists, without Bolshevik commissars, NKVD agents and [Communist] Party parasites. The highest responsibility for the government of the Ukrainian state will be the people's well-being.

"What is the UPA fighting for?" leaflet, August 1943

The UPA's origins

UPA units began being formed in January 1943 under the command of Volyn Military Section leader Vasyl Ivakhiv-"Som." In the winter and spring, these units largely operated independent of one another, but by May they were united into larger groups (called First, Southern, etc.) comprised of more than 500 people. The development of the insurgent army's organizational structure continued to the end of the year. In August, the groups were replaced by "Voyenni Okruhy" (military districts, known by their Ukrainian acronym "VO") whose boundaries essentially corresponded to existing oblast boundaries: VO "Turiv" (Volynska oblast.), VO "Zahrava" (northern Rivnenska oblast), VO "Bohun" (southern Rivnenska oblast, northern Ternopilska oblast), and VO "Tyutyunnyk" (Zhytomyrska oblast). The UPA's first Commander Vasyl Ivakhiv and Chief of Staff Julian Kovalsky ("Harpun") died in battle with the Germans on May 13, 1943. Their baton passed to Dmytro Klyachkivsky ("Klym Savur") and Ukrainian National Republic Army Lieutenant Colonel Leonid Stupnycky ("Honcharenko").

In July 1943, the OUN(B) Leadership began forming insurgent units in Halychyna under the name of Ukrainian National Self-Defence (known by its Ukrainian acronym UNS). Command of the UNS, which was primarily active in the Carpathian Mountains, was assumed by Oleksandr Lutsky ("Andriyenko"). In December 1943, the UPA was fundamentally reorganized. The units in Volyn became UPA-North and the UNS became UPA-West. UPA-South also merged with an operational area that included raiding units in Kamianets-Podilsky, Vinnytsia oblast and parts of the Kyiv oblast. Roman Shukhevych ("Taras Chuprynka") became UPA Commander-in-Chief and Oleksa Hasyn ("Chornota") became the Chief of Staff.



Roman Shukhevych - "Taras Chuprynka" (1907-1950), UPA Chief Commander (1943-1950)



Territorial Structure of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army



Vasyl Ivakhiv - "Som" (1908-1943), first UPA commander. Died in a battle with the Germans on May 13, 1943



Hryhoriy Perehyniak - "Korobka" (1908-1943), organized the first UPA company. Died in battle with the Germans on February 22, 1943



Insurgent leaflet (1943)



Woodcut by Nil Khasevych

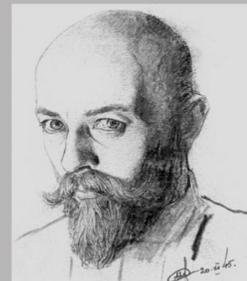


Woodcut by Nil Khasevych

Battling the Nazis

The UPA opened the anti-German front on February 7, 1943 with an attack on German headquarters in Volodymyrystia in Rivne oblast. The standoff with the Nazis lasted until the middle of 1944. In April 1943, occupational government officials reported that a national anti-German revolt is taking place in Volyn. The Nazis gave the task of crushing the insurgent movement to their most brutal punishers: Erich von dem Bach, commander of anti-partisan warfare in the east and Adolf Prützmann, SS-Obergruppenführer and Police General in Ukraine. The UPA's constant attacks on the economic infrastructure of the Reichskommissariat "Ukraine" in Volyn resulted in the German's loss of 75% arable land, 76% grain supplies and 78% of horned cattle. Through the efforts of the UPA and the OUN underground, the number of people shipped out as forced labour in 1943 was 5 times lower compared to the previous year (43,000 Ostarbeiters). The UPA's anti-Nazi campaign engulfed Halychyna in the middle of the summer in 1943. On October 10, the occupiers were forced to introduce a state of emergency in Halychyna, including the execution of prisoners as a response to insurgent attacks. From July 6 to 16, 1944, several UPA kurens (battalions) commanded by Vasyl Andrusiak ("Rizun") engaged German and Hungarian forces in the insurgents' largest battle for Mount Lopata in Lviv oblast. The enemy lost between 200 and 400 soldiers.

The losses incurred by the Nazis and their allies at the hands of the UPA are estimated to range from 12,000 to 18,000 according to different sources.



Nil Khasevych - "Boy-Zot" (1905-1952), graphic artist, illustrator for underground publications, UPA's award-winning graphic artist



Vasyl Andrusiak - "Rizun" (1915-1946), commander in the Battle of Mount Lopata

Vladimir Chermoshentsev

Fleeing famine, Vladimir Chermoshentsev and his mother moved from the Volga region in Russia to Crimea. In 1942, the Germans shipped the 15-year old boy to the concentration camp in the city of Dubno, Volyn oblast. The prisoners of that camp were freed by the UPA in early 1943. Chermoshentsev became an aid to Lieutenant Yuri Chuykovsky ("Yurko") and took part in battles against the Germans, Vlasov's troops, Soviet partisans and NKVD units. He was captured by the Soviets in 1944 and mercilessly tortured. He spent 7 years in a logging camp in Vyatsk oblast in Russia and later returned to Bakhchysarai in Crimea. When Crimea was occupied by Russia in 2014, Chermoshentsev, an ethnic Russian, said that he had received death threats. He moved to Ternopil and proudly refers to himself as a "Crimean Banderite."



Vladimir Chermoshentsev



Albert Hasenbroeck

In order to break through the informational blockade of Germany and the USSR about the liberation movement, the OUN created a radio station which operated from October 1943 to April 1945. Radio "Aphrodita" or "Vil'na Ukrayina" (Free Ukraine) as the station was called in the underground, broadcast programming in Ukrainian, Russian, English, French and German. The English and French language texts were read by Belgian Albert Hasenbroeck. He came to Rivne in Volyn oblast as a forced labourer, but fled from the Germans and joined the Ukrainian insurgents. The radio station was destroyed by the Soviets on April 7, 1945 in the village of Yamelnytsia, Lviv oblast. Hasenbroeck was captured by the Soviets and spent 8 years in the camps. He returned to Belgium in the spring of 1953.



Ten Dutch officers who in early 1944 escaped a German POW camp and joined the UPA which helped them get to Hungary



Kyrylo Osmak

Underground Parliament

In July 1944, the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council (known by its Ukrainian acronym UHVR) was created to unite various political forces that were fighting for independence. This underground parliament of Ukraine was headed by former member of the revolutionary parliament of the Ukrainian National Republic Kyrylo Osmak from Poltava oblast.



UPA soldiers in Kosiv region, 1947

BURNED ALIVE

Koryukivka Massacre

1939
1945

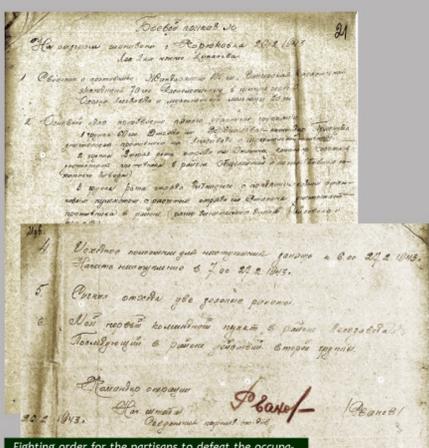


Prewar photographs of victims of the Koryukivka tragedy



Ruins of Koryukivka (1947)

Between 1941 and 1944, Nazi executioners, German Armed Forces and their allies destroyed 670 population centers, homes of 50,000 civilians in 16 oblasts of Ukraine and Crimea.



Fighting order for the partisans to defeat the occupational garrison in Koryukivka (26 February 1943)



Hanna Tykhonevskaya holds a bowl with the burnt remains of 36 victims - her family and neighbours, whom she buried after the destruction of Koryukivka. Gravesite survey (2012)

Soviet partisans in Chernihiv oblast

In February 1943, the red partisan group commanded by Oleksiy Fedorov returned to Chernihiv oblast from Bryansk oblast in Russia and set up base in the Koryukiv Forest. The partisans gathered produce from the villagers and began operations against the occupiers. In retribution, the Nazis torched the villages of Huta-Studenska, Tykhonevych and part of Perehlyuby.

On the last night of February, the partisans, acting on orders of deputy commander Mykola Popudrenko, destroyed the occupational German-Hungarian garrison in Koryukivka, freed the prisoners who were family members of Soviet partisans and local activists (97 people according to official reports, between 37 and 50 according to memoirs).

Nazi revenge

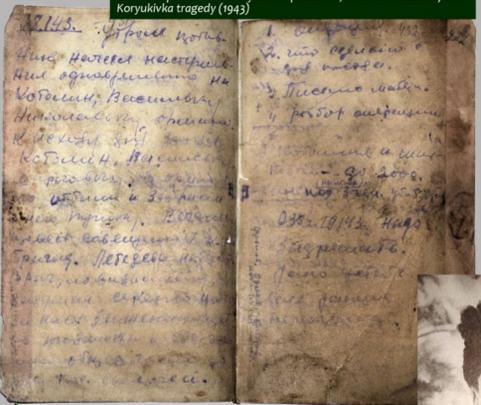
In response to the partisan operation, the staff commander of the 399th Main Field Command based in the city of Konotop, Sumy oblast, Bruno Franz Beier ordered the destruction of Koryukivka. The punitive operation's goal: "revenge and terror".

The Nazi punitive detachment arrived in Koryukivka in the morning of March 1, 1943. The town was surrounded, and all the residents were herded into large buildings in groups of 50-100 people and executed. The largest number - up to 500 - was killed in the restaurant in the town center on that day. Simultaneously, a dozen automobiles carrying executioners strafed the houses and outlying areas of Koryukivka, killing people in their homes and the streets. The town was set to flame. The operation continued the following day and a week later, on March 9, the executioners returned to burn whatever remained and kill the survivors.



Yevhen Rymar, who survived the Nazi shooting of 1 March 1943 in Koryukivka (postwar photograph)

Excerpt from the personal diary of the deputy commander of the Chernihiv partisan units Mykola Popudrenko, with no mention of the Koryukivka tragedy (1943)



Where were the partisans?

During the Nazi punitive operation, some 3,000 to 5,000 Soviet partisans of Fedorov's group were located 15 km from Koryukivka. They did not come to help and protect the residents from the 300 to 500 executioners. Soviet partisan patrols were only 3 kilometres away from the town the Nazis had sentenced to death.



Deputy commander of the Chernihiv partisan units Mykola Popudrenko



Prewar photographs of victims of the Koryukivka tragedy

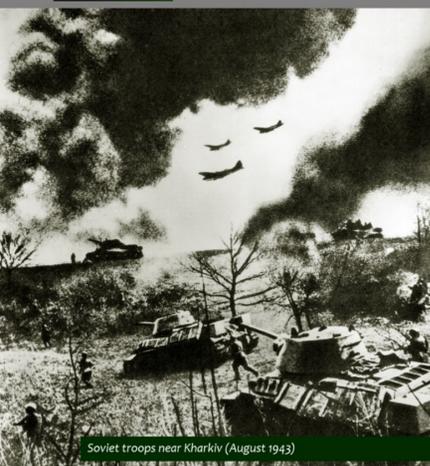
Koryukivka ruins (1947)





CHASING OUT THE NAZIS

The Red Army's Four Ukrainian Fronts



Soviet troops near Kharkiv (August 1943)

Left-Bank Ukraine

Chasing the Nazi occupiers out of Ukraine began in the winter of 1942-43.

On December 18, 1942, the Red Army took its first Ukrainian village: Pivnivka in Luhansk oblast. From January to March 1943, Soviet Armed Forces nearly made it all the way to the Dniro River, but were unable to build upon its victories as the Wehrmacht went on the counterattack and forced the enemy back east.

That summer, the Red Army renewed its offensive. Between July and September 1943, the Red Army forced Wehrmacht units out of Left Bank Ukraine beyond the Dniro River. During their retreat, the German forces, just like the Red Army two years earlier, employed the "scorched earth" tactic.



Soviet planes along the Dniro River (September 1943)



Retreating German troops destroy a railway, Donbas (September 1943)

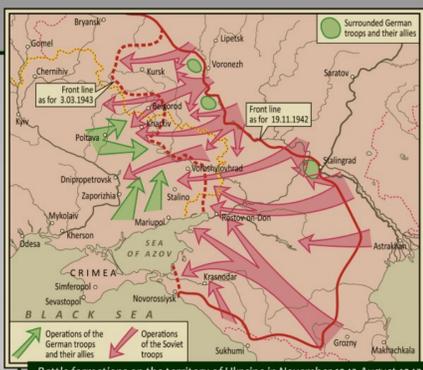
Black infantry

The offensive required human resources, so Soviet command created field military commissariats and initiated the total mobilization of Ukrainians. Most conscripts were boys who had reached military service age during the Nazi occupation, the elderly and soldiers who were captured by the Germans in 1941 and had returned home. Without adequate military training, these new recruits were used as "cannon fodder," for the communist regime considered everyone on Nazi-occupied territories to be traitors. They were often sent into battle without arms (1 rifle for 5 to 10 people) and wearing civilian clothing. That is how they earned the nicknames: "pidzhachky" (jackets), "chornozhupannyky" (black gowns), "chornobushlatnyky" (black wool coats), but mostly they were called "chornosvytnyky" (black coats) and, finally "chorna pikhota" (black infantry).

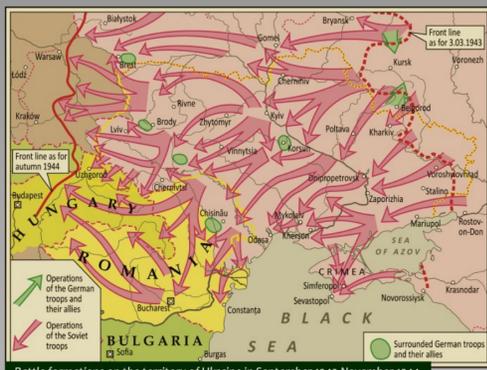
By October 10, 1943, nine thousand 16 and 17 year-old conscripts that had been mobilized in Chernihiv, Kyiv and Poltava oblasts. These young men were the first to perish.



Squad of recruits, 1st Ukrainian Front, Sumy oblast (September 1943)



Battle formations on the territory of Ukraine in November 1942-August 1943



Battle formations on the territory of Ukraine in September 1943-November 1944

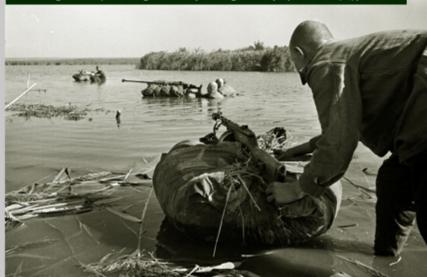
The Battle of the Dniro

One of the bloodiest battles of the Second World War took place along a 750 km front from September to December 1943. Soviet army losses counted in the hundreds of thousands of killed and wounded.

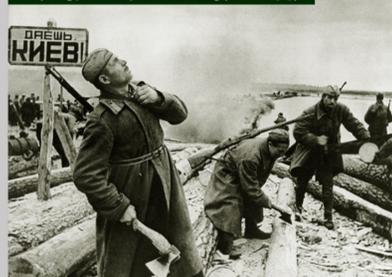
On October 20, 1943, all of the various Red Army formations that were engaged in battle on the territory of Ukraine were organized into four Ukrainian Fronts. They consisted primarily of Ukrainians who were conscripted as the Red Army moved west. Between February 1943 and October 1944, the ranks of the Red Army grew by nearly 3.7 million soldiers from Ukraine.

Stalin ordered the Red Army to take Kyiv by November 7 at all costs – the anniversary of the Bolshevik's October Revolution – and Soviet command threw all available forces into battle with utter disregard for any losses. Kyiv was liberated on November 6, 1943, at a cost of at least 380,000 soldiers' lives. This number included approximately 250,000 to 270,000 forcibly conscripted "black shirts".

Crossing the Dniro along the Bukryn Bridgehead (September 1943)



Preparing for the Dniro River crossing (October 1943)



Crossing the Dniro (1943)

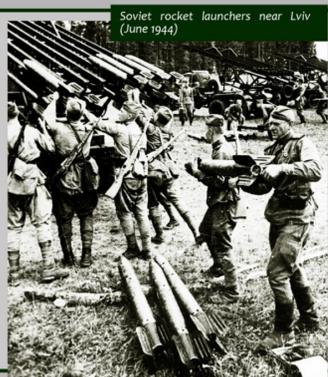
Many civilians who've been mobilized in Ukraine have died in battle. They call them, I believe, "black shirts". They go to war wearing clothes from home, without any preparation, like those serving in penal battalions. People look at them like convicts.

Oleksandr Dovzhenko, "Diary", December 28, 1943

The "black infantry" is on the roads of the Poltava oblast en route to the front. That is what they called conscripted villagers who had not yet received their army clothes. But the spirit of this infantry was beyond praise. They go on the attack like lions. They die, if necessary, but in their agony take one more step forward.

Yuri Yanovsky, "Shlyakh viyny" propaganda piece, November 1943

Local residents burying a Red Army soldier who died during the Battle for the Dnieper (1943)



Soviet rocket launchers near Lviv (June 1944)

Right Bank Ukraine

The Red Army began the year of 1943 with a series of nine sequential offensive operations in Right Bank Ukraine and in Crimea. The Wehrmacht incurred heavy losses and retreated from all positions along the front. Particularly hellish were the battles around Korsun, Kovel, Ternopil, Kamianets-Podilsky and Sevastopol. By May 1944, the German Armed Forces were fully dislodged from Right Bank Ukraine and Crimea.

The next series of powerful blows against Wehrmacht positions were struck by the Red Army in the summer and fall of 1944. A tragic page of these events were the battles fought in the so-called "Brody Pocket" where Ukrainians from the "Galicia" Division and the 1st Ukrainian Front fought against one another. The Germans were unable to stop the Soviet advance and by November had left Ukraine's borders.

After the Nazi occupiers were chased out of Ukraine, the Soviet totalitarian regime was re-established. Because of its important contribution and colossal sacrifices, Ukraine became one of the founding countries of the United Nations, but there was no room in the new world order for Ukraine as an independent state.

Fighting in Zaporizhia (October 1943)



Soviet troops crossing the Liutzh bridgehead (October 1943)



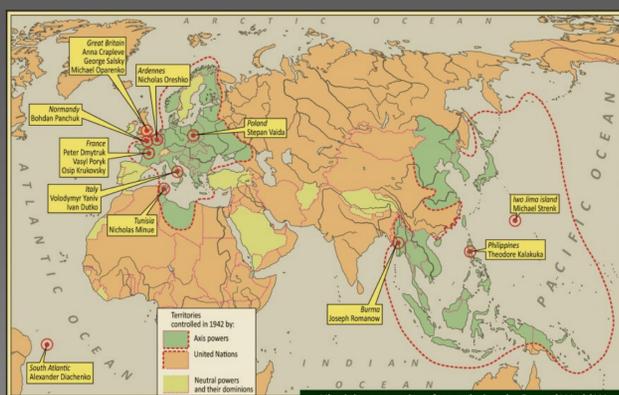
THE OTHER FRONTS

Ukrainians in the ranks of other armies

1939
1945



Landing of Allied troops in Normandy (Summer 1944)



Ukrainians on various fronts during the Second World War

ДО ВІДОМА УКРАЇНЦЯМ, ЩО СТАВАЛИ ДО ПОВОРОВИХ КОМІСІЙ

Коли хтось з українців, які знав-
гавалися у французьку армію, од-
ержать повідомлення до польської а-
рмії, має поступати так:
1) повідомлення не підписувати, а
вкласти в чисту коверту,
2) Написати на білому папері, цей
текст по-французьки, що поділяємо
комунізм, підписатися і вкласти те-
же в ту саму коверту,
3) Запечатати коверту та написати
адресу, яку поділяємо комунізм і ви-
дінити поштової значок за 1 франка
і кинути до поштової скриньки.
Тек поділяється до справи, за-
вдячується до французької армії.
Цю інформацію належить подати
до відомо всіх українців.
Управа Союзу

Лист, який треба перенести й під-
ним підписатися.
Монзьяк,
J'ai l'honneur de vous renvoyer
ci-joint ma convocation, étant déjà
occupé dans l'armée française (Lé-
gion Étrangère), pour la durée de
la guerre.
Sincerely,
Писати на коверті таку адресу:
Monsieur le Chef
du Bureau de Recrutement Polonais,
5, Rue de la Chaussée-d'Antin, 5,
Paris (8^e).



Government advertisement targeting the Ukrainian community in Canada in "New Pathway" asking "You slept well last night, didn't you? Meanwhile Yurko was fighting in Dieppe!" (1942)

An article in the "Ukrainian Word" newspaper in France urging Ukrainians to join the French Army (7 April 1940)

On the Allies' side

The majority of Ukrainians fought in the war on the side of the Allies. In addition to the Polish and Soviet armies, they served under American, British, French and flags of other countries in the coalition. In the fall of 1939, the émigré president of the Ukrainian National Republic Andriy Livytsky, located in German-occupied Warsaw, transferred his credentials to Vyacheslav Prokopych in Paris. The heirs of the Ukrainian National Republic officially stated that in this war they stand on the side of France, Great Britain and Poland.

Ukrainians fought in Polish and Czechoslovak armies even after these countries had been occupied by the Third Reich. As part of the Second Polish Corps they gained renown in the battles for Monte Cassino in Italy. For example, Volodymyr Yaniv was awarded the Virtuti Militari. Polish air force pilots of Ukrainian origin George Salsky and Michael Oparenko flew in the British Royal Air Force after being evacuated from Poland. Many Ukrainians from the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine fought in Czechoslovak units on the side of the USSR. Hero of the Soviet Union Stepan Vaida died during battles of the First Czechoslovak Army Corps in Poland.



A group of Ukrainian-French Legionnaires with a portrait of Taras Shevchenko (1940)

For France's freedom

Some 6,000 Ukrainians defended France against Nazi aggression in the ranks of the Foreign Legion. After Prime Minister Henri Pétain's capitulation in June 1940, the resistance movement began to spread. Ukrainians from everywhere fought on the side of the French partisans. They included representatives of the pre-war emigration, for example unit commander Osip Krukovsky. They also included Soviet POWs and deserters from army units in German service. Red Army soldier Vasyl Poryk formed his own partisan unit. Canadian pilot Peter Dmytruk became a partisan after his plane was downed in the skies over the occupied country. Both Poryk and Dmytruk died heroically for France's freedom. Entire units of Ukrainian policemen who were deployed by the Germans to fight the partisans defected to the side of resistance forces. In 1944, two partisan battalions were formed from their number. They were named after Ukrainian national poet Taras Shevchenko and Ukrainian Cossack leader Ivan Bohun.



Vasyl Poryk - Red Army soldier and French partisan



Portrait of Peter Dmytruk on his tomb in Les Martres-de-Veyre, France



American Allies in Northern Africa (1943)



Fighting during the German offensive in the Ardennes

Memorial put up by Ukrainians in the Foreign Legion (1940)



Modern memorial in the municipality of Peynier in honour of Ukrainians in the Foreign Legion

American Diaspora

Ukrainian communities in the Diaspora strove to prove their loyalty to their countries of residence. The largest number of Ukrainians abroad fought in the armed forces of the USA: nearly 80,000. They fought against both Germany and Japan. Alex Diachenko, Nicholas Minue, Theodore Kalakuka and many other American army servicemen have received state honours.

More than 35,000 Ukrainians fought in the Canadian armed forces under British Supreme Command. Canadian-Ukrainians even had their own chaplains: Orthodox Semen Savchuk and Greek-Catholic Mykhailo Horoshok. Bohdan Panchuk, a participant of the Normandy invasion, organized the Union of Ukrainian Canadian Soldiers in the United Kingdom during the war.

After the victory over Nazism, the Ukrainian soldiers did not get an opportunity to even visit their historical homeland.



Gordon Bohdan Panchuk - founder of Ukrainian Canadian Servicemen's Association



Michael Oparenko in his Royal Air Force uniform



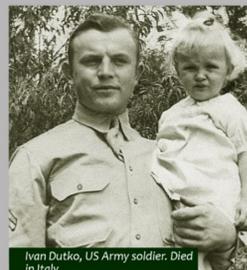
Officer of the Canadian Women's Army Corps Anna Craplewe



Theodore Kalakuka - the first Ukrainian to graduate West Point, USA. Died in the Philippines



US Navy sailor Alexander Diachenko. A high speed military transport ship was named after him



Ivan Dutko, US Army soldier. Died in Italy



Joseph Romanow, Canadian pilot. Subsequently, the first Ukrainian-Canadian General in the Canadian Armed Forces

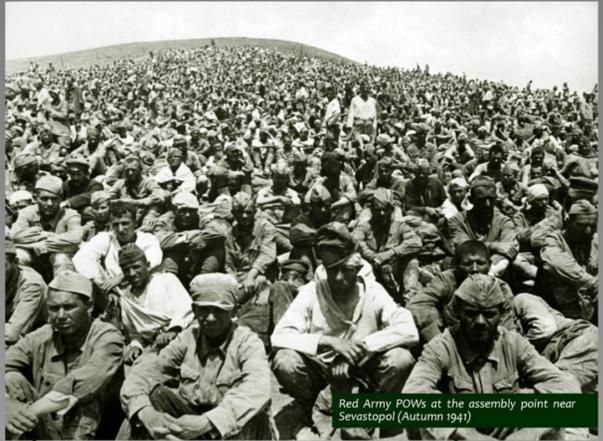
U.S. President Harry Truman awarding Master-Sergeant Nicholas Oresko the Medal of Honour (30 October 1945)



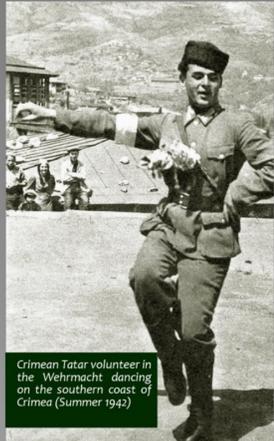
SÜRGÜN

Punished people

1939
1945



Red Army POWs at the assembly point near Sevastopol (Autumn 1941)



Crimean Tatar volunteer in the Wehrmacht dancing on the southern coast of Crimea (Summer 1942)



R. Eminov. Between past and present

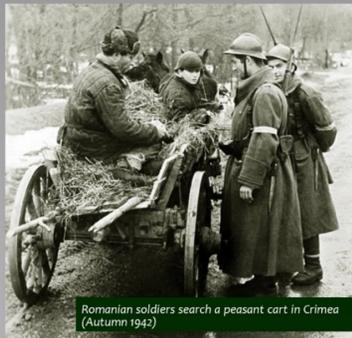
Deserters? Collaborators?

The Nazis were chased out of the Crimea by May 12, 1944, and a week later the Soviet government began the deportation of the Crimean Tatars, accusing them of mass desertion at the beginning of the war and mass collaboration during occupation.

Similar accusations were later leveled against other peoples of Crimea.

Soviet propaganda created and supported the myth of "20,000 deserters" from among the Crimean Tatar Red Army soldiers. In reality, the total number of Crimean conscripts during the entire war was less than 25,000, and in 1946, 9,000 Crimean Tatars were demobilized from the Red Army. When the 51st Army was routed in Crimea in 1941, conscripts of all nationalities, not only the Crimean Tatars, fled its ranks. Five Crimeans were recognized as Heroes of the Soviet Union for their deeds in battle and pilot Amet-khan Sultan was twice awarded this medal.

Soviet propaganda stressed the Crimean Tatar's "complete cooperation with the enemy." It claimed that "nearly all adults" collaborated with the Nazis. But tallies show that the maximum number of Crimean collaborators did not exceed 15,000 to 16,000 persons or 6.5% to 7% of the population. Indeed, every nationality that came under German occupation cooperated with the Germans in one form or another.



Romanian soldiers search a peasant cart in Crimea (Autumn 1942)



Red Army soldiers seem to be captured on the street of Kerch (Summer 1942)

The motorized columns did not go right up to the settlements, but stayed at the road junctions while detachments of special troops encircled villages. Their orders were to allow the inhabitants an hour and a half to get ready, but political officers cut this down, sometimes to as little as forty minutes, to get it over with more quickly and be on time at the assembly point – and so that richer pickings would be lying around for the detachment of the task force to be left behind in the village. Hardened villages like Ozenbash, near Lake Biyuk, had to be burned to the ground. The motorized columns took the Tatars to the stations, and there they went on waiting in their trains for days on end, wailing, and singing mournful songs of farewell.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, "GULAG Archipelago"

Sürgün (Deportation)

Despite these false accusations, the first wave of deportation of Crimean Tatars began on May 18 to 20, 1944. In two days, more than 190,000 persons were sent to special settlements and another 6,000 to the GULAG network of Soviet concentration camps.

The second wave of deportations came on June 27. More than 3,000 Crimean Tatars and more than 40,000 Bulgarians, Armenians, Greeks, Turks and Roma were exiled. The Crimean Tatars, including soldiers and officers who left the Red Army after the war, were also exiled, despite their combat service.

Crimea's traditional cultural diversity completely disappeared as a result of the deportations. In order to destroy even the memory of the Crimean Tatars, nearly 1,000 Crimean Tatar place names were renamed. In 1946, Crimea was re-organized from an autonomous republic into a regular oblast.



Crimean Tatar refugees leaving the war zone in the mountainous Crimea (Summer 1942)



German soldiers on rest leave in a Crimean Tatar farmstead (Summer 1942)

Soviet "justice"

The Crimean Tatars and other deported peoples were allowed to leave the special settlements from 1954 to 1956. In 1967, the charge of mass collaboration was dropped and in 1989 their deportation was recognized as a crime, but the deportees were still not allowed to return to their homeland. Their return only began after Ukraine became independent.

In a new place

The majority of the deportees were settled in Central Asia. In the first half-year, more than 30% of Crimean Tatars died due to the brutal resettlement and absence of normal living conditions in their new places of residence.

People did not have the right to freely leave the special settlements and the heads of families had to report to the militia once a month. Escape attempts were punished with lifelong exile and 20 years of forced labour.



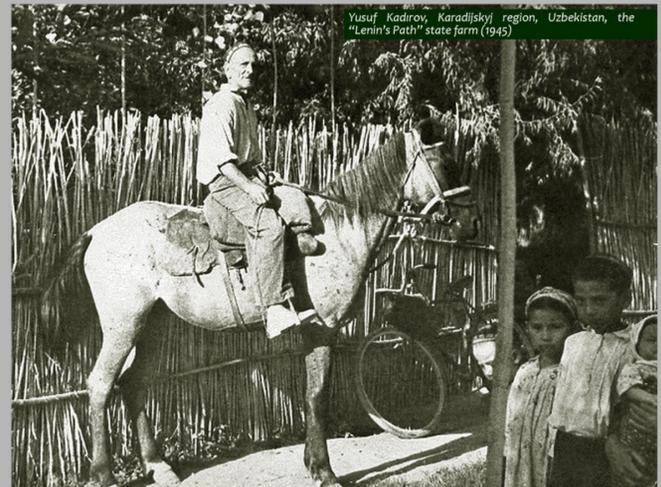
Pilot Amet Han Sultan, a Crimean Tatar, twice awarded Hero of the Soviet Union (1945)



In Central Asia picking cotton, left: Mustafa Ablázov (photographer), Ablákim İbraimov (from the village of Koz), Ferit Abdullayev, Memet Emçiyev (from the village of Taraktash)



Gülsum Katali (Seferova) and her children in a logging camp, Urals (1949)



Yusuf Kadırov, Karadışkıy region, Uzbekistan, the "Lenin's Path" state farm (1945)



R. Eminov. Train of Death

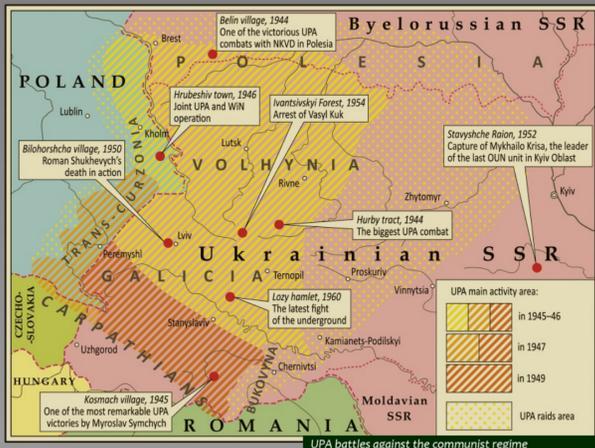
THE UNDEFEATED

The war after the war

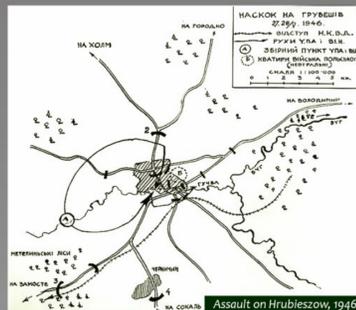
1939
1945



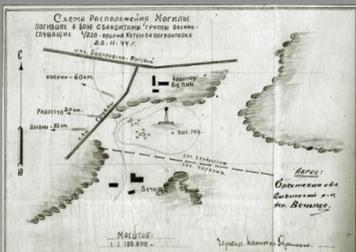
UPA unit commander reading underground literature (1940's)



UPA battles against the communist regime



Assault on Hrubieszow, 1946



Location of mass grave of 28 soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 222nd Regiment of the NKVD Border Guards, killed in battle with the UPA brigade "Pomst Bazar" near the village of Bein, Belarus (22 November 1944)

UPA's war against the NKVD

After the Nazis were expelled, the Soviet government became the Ukrainian liberation movement's primary enemy.

From April 21 to 27, 1944, some 3,000-4,000 UPA soldiers, from the UPA-North and UPA-South military districts, were surrounded by NKVD forces numbering between 15,000 and 30,000 soldiers, according to various reports, outside the village of Hurby on the border of the Rivne and Ternopil oblasts. At a cost of 400 dead, the insurgents were able to break out and avoid complete destruction. This battle between the UPA and the NKVD's Internal Army was the largest in the history of their conflict. It showed the Soviet regime that it is not fighting some chaotic "gangs" but was up against an organized and motivated military force.

In 1944 and 1945, the UPA conducted nearly 6,600 anti-Soviet actions. The totalitarian regime responded with nearly 40,000 punitive operations. According to Soviet documents, the losses numbered 7,000-8,000 insurgents and nearly 5,000 on the Soviet side.

Vasyl Kuk (1913-2007), Supreme UPA commander (1950-1954)

Mykhailo Svystun - "Yasen" (1912-1944), one of the UPA commanders in the Hurbiv Battle



Troops of Modest Ripetskiy - "Horyslav" (seated third right) in Czechoslovakia during their raid into western Germany (September 1947)



UPA's foreign raids

"The Great Raid"

After Communist Poland had deported the Ukrainians out of Trans-Curzonina in 1947, the UPA's struggle in these lands lost its purpose. Some of the companies crossed the border into the UkrSSR, while the "Burlaky," "Brodych" and "Hromenko" companies took a course to Western Europe with the goal of telling the free world about the Ukrainians' war for liberation. "Hromenko's" Company traversed 1,500 kilometers and fought battles, but arrived whole in German Bavaria. The remaining companies dispersed into smaller groups and incurred losses in skirmishes with the Czechoslovak army. The Ukrainian insurgents' appearance in Western Europe provided irrefutable proof that the struggle for independence was continuing in Ukrainian lands.



Mykhailo Duda - "Hromenko", UPA company commander (1912-1950)

The war continues

In order to imitate legitimacy, the Soviet government decided to hold "elections" to the USSR's Supreme Soviet in Western Ukraine while it was still engulfed in an insurgent war. In order to accomplish this, the regime stationed a garrison in every Western Ukrainian community between January and April 1946, (230,000 soldiers in total), to prevent people from aiding the insurgents. This operation became known as the "Great Blockade" and resulted in the death of nearly 5,000 UPA soldiers.

Significant human losses (40-60%) led to a change in tactics. In those areas where the liberation movement was most depleted, insurgent units were disbanded and methods of conspiratorial-underground struggle were adopted. Small groups of insurgents would attack government structures and sabotage communication lines. In this way the underground prevented the regime from becoming established on the local level.

The Soviets recognized that military methods were ineffective, so they instead made intelligence operations a priority. Groups of NKVD agents and captive insurgents disguised as UPA members hunted underground commanders and leaders, terrorized and plundered civilian targets in order to discredit the insurgent movement.

The underground's social base also came under attack: by 1953, more than 200,000 people were deported, primarily family members and sympathizers of the OUN and UPA.

In late 1949, the liberation movement went completely underground. In September, UPA Commander-in-Chief Roman Shukhevych announced the demobilization of the last regular army units.

From then on, an armed underground operated in Ukraine. The network focused on counteracting collectivization, anti-Soviet agitation, assassination of representatives of the administration, communist activists and military officials, sabotage and other diversionary operations. After Shukhevych was killed in 1950, the liberation movement was headed by the experienced conspirator Colonel Vasyl Kuk, who was only captured four years later.

The last known armed skirmish between the underground and Soviet forces took place on April 14, 1960 in the Ternopil oblast.

According to Soviet archival documents, between 1944 and 1953, UPA and underground OUN forces were engaged in 14,500 battles that took the lives of 30,000 Soviet soldiers and cost the lives of 150,000 insurgents.

ДОВІДКА НКВС УРСР про боротьбу з українськими націоналістами.
28 травня 1946 року.
СОВЕРШЕННО СЕКРЕТНО

СПРАВКА
О результатах борьбы с фашистскими на территории западных областей УССР на период с февраля 1944 года по 25 мая 1946 года.

	1944	1945	1946	Всего
Проведено операций и засад	6495	33278	4798	83771
Убито фашистов и прочее	57405	45907	7523	110835
Захвачено боеприпасов и прочее	98641	126158	25777	250576
Явлено с повинной фашистов	29204	79488	6157	114859
Итого	185250	252153	38927	476360

Наши потери при операциях:

Убитыми и пропавшими	1675	1072	236	2983
Убито фашистами	3287	3421	401	7309
Наши потери убитыми и пропавшими	5869	7395	864	14128
Изъято единиц оружия	28346	40791	13389	82526

Министр внутренних дел Украинской ССР Т. СТРОКАЧ
28 мая 1946 года
Верно: зам. нар. УВС МВД УССР Л. ПАСТЕЛНИК

Копия: Машинкою: ЦДМКУ: Ф. 7. — Оп. 23. — Стр. 2967. — Арх. 25.

Report from the UKSSR NKVD about the fight against Ukrainian nationalists



Insurgents in front of a bunker

Intelligence-military group ("Special group") of the Soviet Ministry of State Security (MGB), Carpathian Mountains (1951)



MGB officers of the Solotvyn police division in Ivano-Frankivsk oblast, after searching for OUN leading member Mykola Tverdokhlib - "Hroma"



Military Remembrance Day near the village of Yabluniv (31 August 1944)

1939
1945

A WORLD DIVIDED IN TWO

The end of World War II



The "Big Three" in Yalta (February 1945)

Yalta Conference

On the eve of the Third Reich's demise, the "Big Three" leaders, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Joseph Stalin and Winston Churchill met in Yalta from February 4 to 11, 1945 for a conference. As a result of the agreements reached here and later in Potsdam, Europe was divided into two parts: the democratic, liberal West and the communist, totalitarian East.



Postwar Europe (1945-1949)



Soviet and American soldiers celebrating their victory over the Nazis (April 1945)

Meeting on the Elbe

From the fall of 1944 to the spring of 1945, the Red Army conducted a series of strategic offensive operations that ended with the routing of German armies in Eastern and Central Europe. Simultaneously, Allied forces landed in Normandy and launched an attack against the Germans in Western Europe. On April 25, 1945, the armies of the 1st Ukrainian Front met up with units of the 1st US Army near the town of Torgau on the Elbe River in Germany.



Soviet tanks near the Reichstag in May 1945



Delegation of the U.S.S.R. at the inaugural meeting of the UN



Meeting of soldiers of the 1st Ukrainian Front and the 1st American Army on the Elbe River (April 1945)



Oleksiy Berest

Battle of Berlin and Germany's surrender

The armies of the 1st Ukrainian Front took part in the battles that were supposed to end the war in Europe. Despite huge losses, on May 2, 1945, Soviet forces stormed and took Berlin. Fighting was particularly intense in battles for the city center and the Reichstag, from which Soviet soldiers hung dozens of flags as a symbol of victory, including the flag that would later become designated as the Flag of Victory. This flag was installed on the Reichstag by a group commanded by Ukrainian Oleksiy Berest.

On May 7, 1945, the protocol for the unconditional surrender of German Armed Forces was signed in Reims, France, and on May 8, 1945 the signing ceremony of the Act of Unconditional Surrender was signed in the Berlin district of Karlshorst. World War Two ended in Europe.

Battles in the Far East

On April 5, 1945, the Soviet government denounced the non-aggression pact it had signed with Japan on April 13, 1941. Then on August 8 and 9, 1945, three Soviet Fronts, including the Trans-Baikal Front (in which Ukrainians were nearly half of the armed personnel – soldiers from the former 2nd Ukrainian Front) attacked Japanese forces in Manchuria. Another 40,000 soldiers that had been mobilized between February and August of that year in Ukraine were also dispatched there. On August 17, 1945, Soviet forces broke through enemy defences and three days later the Japanese began to lay down their arms.



Soviet soldiers with flags from the Kwantung Army (August 1945)

Flag over Iwo Jima

Fierce battles between American and Japanese forces in the Pacific Ocean theatre were fought in early 1945. Their epicentre were the islands of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. On February 23, 1945, six marines raised the American flag on Mount Suribachi on the island of Iwo Jima. The most senior soldier among them in terms of rank was United States Marine Corps Sergeant Michael Strank – a Ukrainian from the Pryshiv (Presov) region.



United States Marine Corps Sergeant Michael Strank

The Atomic Era

American airplanes dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945 respectively. Over 100,000 people were killed, 400,000 were injured. Large areas became zones of radioactive pollution. That put an end to Japanese military appetites. Among the hundred world-renowned academics who participated in the creation of the Atomic Bomb was an American with Ukrainian roots, George Kistiakowsky, director of the Explosives Research Library in Los Alamos.



George Kistiakowsky



Hiroshima after the atomic bomb fell (August 1945)

Japan's surrender

On September 2, 1945, after six years of hellish battles, the Second World War officially came to an end when the Japanese Instrument of Surrender was signed aboard the USS "Missouri" in Tokyo Bay. On behalf of the USSR, it was signed by Lieutenant General Kuzma Derevyanko, a Ukrainian from near Uman who represented the Soviet Supreme Commander in the Far East. Thus, another Ukrainian had a hand in ending the terrible war.



Lieutenant-General Kuzma Derevyanko



Signing of the Japanese Instrument of Surrender (2 September 1945)

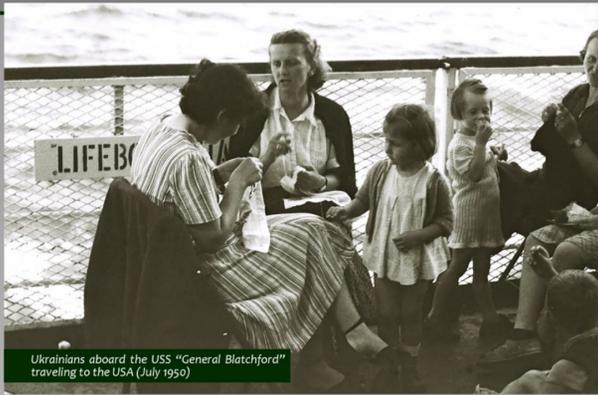


Raising the American flag on Iwo Jima (23 February 1945)



IN A FOREIGN LAND

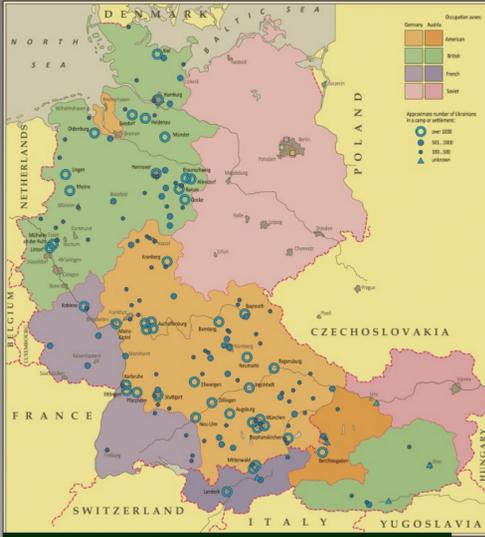
Refugees and Displaced Persons in Western Europe



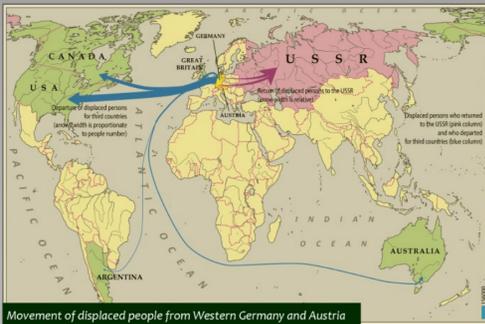
Ukrainians aboard the USS "General Blatchford" traveling to the USA (July 1950)

Those who refused to return

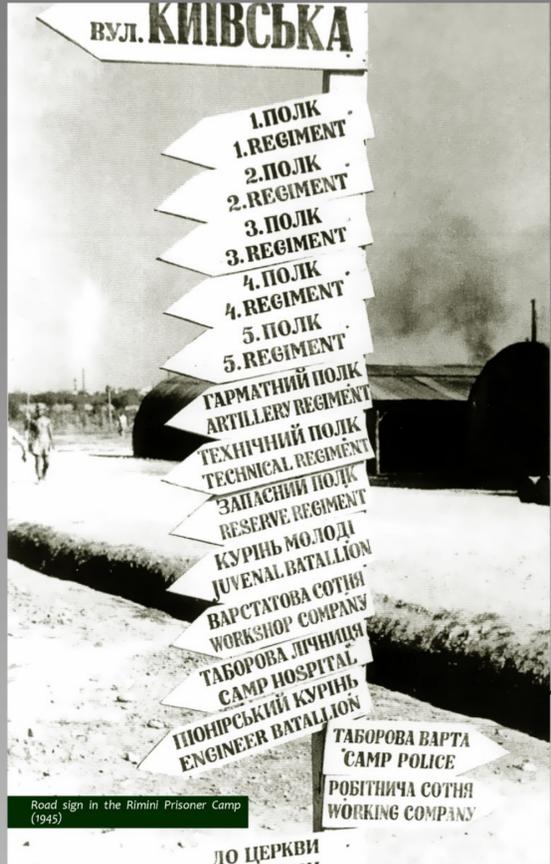
At war's end, nearly 20 million foreigners ended up in Germany and Austria. More than 2 million were Ukrainians – "ostarbeiters" (forced laborers) or refugees fleeing the advancing Red Army. Many found themselves in the Soviet zone of occupation and most were soon repatriated to the Soviet Union, where exile, imprisonment and even execution awaited many of them. Many thousands refused to be repatriated and tried to stay in the West using all available means. Their status was complicated by the fact that during the Yalta Conference, the Allies gave in to Stalin's demand to hand over all Soviet citizens located on the territories they controlled. This demand was met in the first months after the end of the war. The forced removal of Soviet citizens was typically applied to those who wore a German uniform during the war.



Ukrainians in DP Camps in Western Germany and Austria (by Ihor Stebelsky)



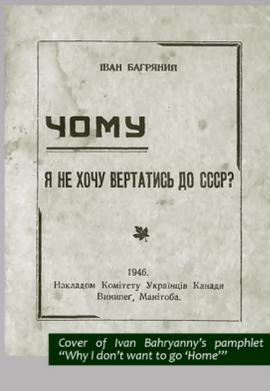
Movement of displaced people from Western Germany and Austria



Road sign in the Rimini Prisoner Camp (1945)



Cover of the Ukrainian edition of George Orwell's "Animal Farm" addressed to "displaced persons" that was translated and published by Ukrainians in Germany in 1947



Cover of Ivan Bahryanny's pamphlet "Why I don't want to go 'Home'"



Ulas Samchuk, prominent Ukrainian writer, immigrant. Author of the daily "Planet DP" (pre-war photo)



Viktor Petrov-Domonotovych. Prominent Ukrainian writer and scientist, immigrant. In 1949 disappeared under mysterious circumstances in Munich. Later, he resurfaced in the USSR, which suggests he may have been a Soviet spy.

I will return to my native land with millions of my brothers and sisters, who are here in Europe and there in concentration camps in Siberia, when the totalitarian bloody Bolshevik system is wiped out like that of Hitler. When the NKVD follows the Gestapo, when the red fascism disappears as German fascism has disappeared.

Ivan Bahryanny, "Why I don't want to go 'Home'"

A new life

In 1947, Western countries begin opening their borders to residents of the DP camps. While the International Refugee Organization was the primary international organizational committee to deal with displaced persons and refugees, the Ukrainian Diaspora's efforts to help with resettlement were coordinated through the Central Ukrainian Relief Bureau.

Thanks to the efforts of the USA, Canada and Great Britain, the resettlement of Ukrainians occurred quickly, and thousands left occupied Germany to begin a new life abroad. In these countries they formed a new base of the Ukrainian Diaspora, bringing with them their own organizations, culture, political orientations and knowledge. Nevertheless, even living in their own homes, many Ukrainians had to regularly register with the local police force as displaced persons, refugees and foreign nationals.

With no opportunity to return to their native Ukrainian land, they started re-creating elements of their homeland far away from it. The activities of the émigré organizations played a decisive role in promoting the Ukrainian cause in the world during the Cold War, and then in 1991 in ensuring international recognition of Ukraine's independence.



Wedding in a DP camp



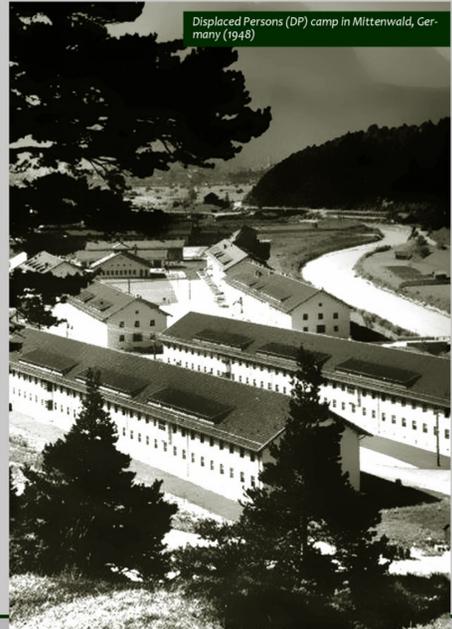
Plait group in Mittenwald (1948)



Ukrainian theatrical troupe in a DP camp



Students and teachers of a DP



Displaced Persons (DP) camp in Mittenwald, Germany (1946)



Ukrainian immigrant-artist Jacques Hnizdovsky (1915-1985) beside his painting "Displaced Persons" (1948)

THE PRICE OF WAR

Ukraine's contribution and losses

1939
1945



Paraskevia Havrysh



Ivan Havrysh



Anatoly Havrysh



Fedir Havrysh



Anastasiy Havrysh



Pavlo Havrysh

Paraskevia Havrysh's five sons and one war

Paraskevia Havrysh, a woman with old Cossack roots, a widow, mother of five sons for whom she waited to see back from the war after six long years. The eldest three, Ivan, Pavlo and Fedir, were mobilized in 1939.

The first to go was Ivan – he disappeared in the autumn of 1941, during the defence of Sevastopol.

In 1943, her two youngest sons were mobilized into the "black infantry". Anatoly died almost immediately. Anastasiy made it to Poland but perished near Ostrolessk. In the autumn of 1943, Pavlo took part in one of the war's biggest battles – the Battle for the Dnipro. He went through hell and earned the Hero's Star. Fedir survived too, although he nearly froze to death in Finland in 1940, and later "liberated" Lithuania. He finally made it to Berlin where he wrote two words on the walls of the Reichstag: "We won!"

Ukrainians in the armies of the Second World War (approx.)



Allies

about **6 351 000**



more than **6 000 000** in Soviet Army

more than **100 000** in UPA

120 000 in Polish Army

80 000 in USA Army

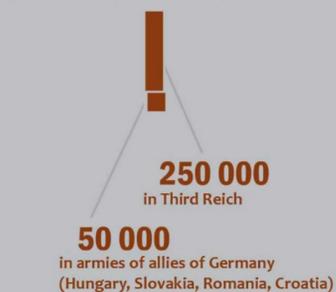
more than **45 000** in British and Canadian Armies

more than **6 000** in French Army



Axis states

about **300 000**



250 000 in Third Reich

50 000 in armies of allies of Germany (Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, Croatia)

Major events

March 15, 1939 – Declaration of Independence by Carpatho-Ukraine

March 16, 1939 – Occupation of Carpatho-Ukraine by Hungarian Armed Forces

August 23, 1939 – Signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact that allowed Hitler and Stalin to divide Europe and start the Second World War

September 1, 1939 – German invasion of Poland, first bombings of Lviv; the beginning of the Second World War for Ukrainians

September 17, 1939 – The Soviet Union, in agreement with Berlin, occupies and later annexes western Ukraine

June 28, 1940 – Soviet occupation and annexation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovyna

June 22, 1941 – The Third Reich attacks the USSR, transforming Ukraine into the largest battlefield between two totalitarian regimes in the world

June 30, 1941 – Declaration Restoring Ukrainian Statehood in Lviv

September 19, 1941 – Germans take Kyiv

September 29, 1941 – Mass executions of Jews by Nazis begin in Babi Yar

July 22, 1942 – The Nazis occupy all of Ukraine

October 14, 1942 – Symbolic date for the creation of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) – the only armed force that fought for Ukrainian independence during the Second World War

December 18, 1942 – The campaign to chase Nazi occupiers out of Ukraine begins

August 24, 1943 – The "Battle for the Dnipro" begins

May 18, 1944 – Deportation of Crimean Tatars from Crimea

July 11, 1944 – Creation of the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council (UHVR) – the highest political body of the wartime Ukrainian underground

November 23, 1944 – The completion of the campaign to chase Nazi occupiers out of Ukraine

April 25, 1945 – The Conference of United Nations convenes in San Francisco and adopts the Charter of the Organization of the United Nations

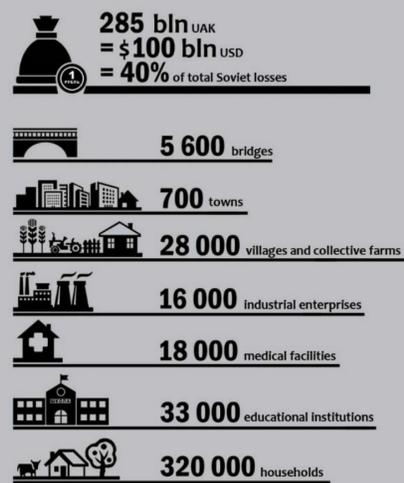
May 8, 1945 – Germany's capitulation, end of the Second World War in Europe

September 2, 1945 – Japan's surrender, end of the Second World War in Asia

"Top 5" countries in terms of population loss (% of total population)



Ukraine's losses



People mourn their family members executed by the Nazis in Bagerov Yar, Kerch (January 1942)

