

The (Un)Finished Ukrainian World War II

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ABSTRACT. The text examines one of the most difficult periods in the history of people of Ukraine – the events of the World War II.

The purpose of this survey is to show the existential nature of the largest armed conflict in the history of mankind for Ukrainians, which was determined by the real threat of depopulation, as well as the deprivation of their natural right to self-determination. Not only great and influential, but also smaller actors of international arena had their own interests in Ukrainian territories, raw materials, and industrial and human resources. However, Moscow considered Ukraine to be the sphere of its undivided domination and used all means to solve the “Ukrainian question” according to its own scenarios. The first Sovietisation unequivocally confirmed the Kremlin’s intentions to implement the Bolshevik project in the Ukrainian regions annexed in 1939–1940. Under the collision of two totalitarian systems – Soviet and Nazi – Ukrainian political independence-oriented forces managed to organise themselves for resistance and protection of the indigenous interests of the people of Ukraine. The organisation of Ukrainian nationalists, as well as representatives of other political groups created their own armed formations – such as “Poliska Sich”, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, self-defence units – which launched a struggle against the German and Soviet occupational forces and administration. This asymmetric confrontation had great political and moral-psychological significance, affirming the vitality of the “Ukrainian idea” and the continuity of the struggle for the restoration of Ukrainian statehood. The Stalinist regime needed more than 10 years to suppress the national liberation movement in Ukraine. Yet Ukrainians did not come to terms with communist tyranny and resisted it until the fall of the Soviet Union. In the current confrontation with the Russian aggression, Ukraine is finally breaking with its imperial past and establishing it as an independent, democratic state.

KEYWORDS: Ukrainian question, sovereignty, political nation, statehood, World War II, Russia, Germany, occupation, deportations, terror, genocide.

Introduction

The struggle of Ukrainians against the Nazi and Bolshevik totalitarian systems during the World War II has become the subject of many studies. Over the past three decades, a solid historiographic layer has been formed in Ukraine on various issues. These include issues like the national liberation movement, resistance to Moscow's attempts to incorporate Ukraine completely into the imperial political, socio-economic and ethno-confessional organism, to assimilate Ukrainians, and to dissolve them in the array of the "new historical community – Soviet people". Even a simple list of these works requires a whole bibliographic publication. Therefore, we will limit ourselves to mentioning only a few of them, which in our opinion, played a key role in explaining why and in what way Stalin and his closest entourage tried to solve the "Ukrainian question".

The methodological upheaval in the historiography of the World War II is related to the works of Mikhail Koval; he was the first who systematically undermined the Soviet myth of the "Great Patriotic War and Victory"¹. The destruction of the Soviet historical scheme was facilitated by works by Vladyslav Hrynevych, where a wide range of attitudes of different strata of Ukrainian society during the war, pointing to the "pain points" of the Stalinist regime and forms of civil disobedience, was presented².

A group of scholars studied the problems of the Ukrainian national liberation movement. The most important results were published in the monographs by Ivan Bilak, Volodymyr Dziobak, Anatoliy Rusnachenko, Anatoliy Kentii, Ivan Patriliak and Volodymyr Nikolskyi³. The results of the long-term work of the Working Group of Historians at the Governmental Commission for the Study of the Activities of the OUN (Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists) and the UPA (*Ukrayinska Povstanska Armiia*) created in 1997 were the "Preliminary Historical Reference" (*Попередня історична довідка*) and the "Historical Conclusion on the Activities of the OUN-UPA" (*Історичний висновок про діяльність*

¹ Mikhail V. Koval, *Ukraine: 1939–1945: Malovidomi i neprochytani storinky istorii*, Kyiv, 1995; Mikhail V. Koval, *Ukraina u Druhii svitovii i Velykii Vitchyzniani viinakh (1939–1945): Sproba suchasnoho kontseptualnoho bachennia*, Kyiv: Alternatyvy, 1994; Mikhail V. Koval, *Druha svitova viina i Ukraina (1939–1945). Istoriosofski notatky*. Kyiv: Institute of History of Ukraine, 1999; Mikhail V. Koval, *Ukraina u Druhii svitovii ta Velykii Vitchyzniani viinakh (1939–1945). Sproba suchasnoho kontseptualnoho bachennia*. Kyiv: Alternatyvy, 1999; Mikhail V. Koval, *Ukraina u Druhii svitovii ta Velykii Vitchyzniani viinakh (1939–1945)*, Kyiv, 2000.

² Vladyslav A. Hrynevych, *Suspilno-politychni nastroi naselennia Ukrainy v roky Druhoi svitovoi viiny (1939–1945)*, Kyiv, 2007; Vladyslav A. Hrynevych, *Nepryborkane riznoolossia: Druha svitova viina i suspilno-politychni nastroi v Ukraini, 1939–June 1941*, Kyiv; Dnipropetrovsk: Lira, 2012.

³ Ivan H. Bilas, *Represyвно-karalna systema Ukrainskoi Derzhavy: 1917–1953 (Suspilno-politychni ta istoryko-pravovyi analiz)*, in 2 books. Kyiv: Lybid – Army of Ukraine, 1994; Volodymyr Dzobak, *Taras Bulba-Borovets i yoho zbroini pidrozdily v ukrainskomu vyzvolnomu rusi oporu (1941–1944)*, 2002; A. Anatoly Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi. Natsionalno-vyzvolnyi rukh v Ukraini y natsionalni rukhy oporu v Bilorusii, Lytvi, Latvii, Estonii u 1940–50s*, Kyiv: Pulsary, 2002; Anatoly Kentii, *Zbroinyi chyn ukrainskykh natsionalistiv. 1920–1956. Istoryko-arkhivni narysy*, vol. 1: *Vid Ukrainskoi Visikovoi Orhanizatsii do Orhanizatsii Ukrainskykh Natsionalistiv. 1920–1942*, Kyiv, 2005; Volodymyr M. Nikolskyi, *Pidpillia OUN(B) u Donbasi*, Kyiv, 2001; Ivan K. Patryliak, *Viiskova diialnist OUN (B) u 1940–1942*, Kyiv, 2004.

ОУН–УПА), as well as the final collective monograph “The Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army”⁴. Volodymyr Baran, Vasyl Tokarskyi, Mykola Lytvyn and Kim Naumenko wrote many works on the period of the first Sovietisation of Western Ukraine⁵.

The specifics of the wartime Soviet Themis are studied by Tamara Vronska, whose works describe in detail the regulatory and legal basis of the Kremlin’s repressive course against Ukrainians over a long period. Her works provide detailed statistics on deportations and highlight the algorithm for applying principles of collective responsibility and family hostages⁶.

In a number of works of a general nature, the collectives of authors considered a complex of issues related to the Kremlin’s anti-Ukrainian policy, the first and second Sovietisation of Western Ukraine, state terror against its own people, the use of the Ukrainian factor in the international arena during the creation of the United Nations and other issues⁷. Among the series of collective works, the three-volume book *Ukraine and Russia in historical retrospect* stands out. A separate volume in it is devoted to the analysis of the Soviet project for Ukraine, in particular its implementation in the context of the World War II and its socio-political consequences⁸.

Due to the fact that the “Ukrainian question” has not been resolved in accordance with the interests of the Ukrainian political nation, there is a need to study the ways out of the World War II and the subsequent trajectories of the Ukrainian national movement, which, in the end, logically completed this process.

The “Ukrainian question” in the interwar period

There are periods in the history of each nation that determine the vectors of their civilisational choice, axiological orientations and strategies for countering destructive internal and external factors. These prevent the achievement of expected prospects and the real-

⁴ *Problema OUN i UPA: poperednia istorychna dovidka*. Kyiv: Institute of History of Ukraine, 2000; *Promizhnyi zvit Robochoi hrupy dlia pidgotovky istorynoho vysnovku pro diialnist OUN–UPA*. Kyiv: Institute of History of Ukraine, 2000; *Orhanizatsiia ukraïnskykh natsionalistiv i Ukraïnska povstanska armii. Istorychni narysy*. Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2005.

⁵ Volodymyr K. Baran, Vasyl V. Tokarskyi, *Ukraina. Zakhidni zemli. 1939–1941*. Lviv: Institute of Ukrainian Studies of I. Krypnyakevych of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2009; Mykola Lytvyn, Kim Naumenko, *Stalin i Zakhidna Ukraina 1939–1941*. Kyiv, 2010.

⁶ Tamara V. Vronska, *Pozasadovi represii chleniv simeï uchasnykiv natsionalno-vyzvolnoho rukhu v zakhidnykh oblastakh Ukrainy (1944–1952): Monograph*. Kharkiv: Ppabo, 2008; Tamara V. Vronska, *Zaruchnyky totalitarnoho rezhymu: represii proty rodydny “vorohiv narodu” v Ukraini (1917–1953)*. Kyiv: Institute of History of Ukraine, 2009; Tamara V. Vronska, *Upokorennia strakhom: simeïne zaruchnytstvo u karalnii praktytsi radianskoi vlady (1917–1953)*. Kyiv: Tempora, 2013.

⁷ *Politychna istoriia Ukrainy XX stolittia. In six volumes, vol. 4: Ukraina u Druhii svitovii viini (1939–1945)*. Kyiv, 2003; *Ukraina v Druhii svitovii viini: pohliad z XXI st.*, in 2 books, Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2010, 2011; *Deportatsii. Zakhidni zemli Ukrainy (kinets 1930 – pochatok 1950): dokumenty, materialy, spohady*, vol. 1. Lviv: Institute of Ukrainian Studies of I. Krypnyakevych of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 1996.

⁸ Vladyslav A. Hrynevich [et al.], *Ukraina i Rosiia v istorychnii retrospektyvi*, vol. 2: *Radianskyi proekt dlia Ukrainy*. Kyiv, 2004.

isation of the natural right of self-determination and sovereign statehood. For the people of Ukraine, these include the times of the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–1921, World War II and the current war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The formation of the Ukrainian political nation and its struggle for its own state should be considered an internal semantic chain that links all these events. The duration of periods between them can only be perceived as a discrete nature of the specified phenomena at a first, superficial glance. In fact, they are organic components of a single process that stretched over several centuries and was marked by phases of rise and fall, undeniable successes and heavy losses. The chronological segment from the beginning of the 20th century to the beginning of the 21st century became the most intense in terms of scale, ideological support, political and diplomatic activity, and armed efforts.

Another factor that determines the content and direction of the Ukrainian people for independence is the anti-Ukrainian policy of Russia – in its autocratic, Soviet and modern state forms. The almost genetic mental conviction of the Russian rulers (and, thus, the majority of the political and cultural elites and the “ordinary people”) that Ukrainians are “little brothers” of Russia, and the mission of the Russians is to “take care” of them, has served as the basis of the expansionist policy by St. Petersburg/Moscow for many centuries. Today, this confrontation has reached its climax. It took centuries to form the Ukrainians as a political nation, and now they have to fight to keep this status as well as mere physical existence. The events that take place today also prove that all previous periods of the Ukrainian national liberation struggle had an unfinished character, but at the same time – a powerful inertia, which sooner or later had to take shape either in a positive solution to the “Ukrainian question” or in the depopulation and atomisation of Ukrainians as an ethnic group, political and social community, as well as the disappearance of Ukraine from the political map of the world.

Due to the wide range of issues related to the topic of this presentation, a historiographical review would take up too much space. In this regard, let us limit ourselves to stating that, both in Ukraine and abroad, there is a solid body of work by historians, political scientists and legal scholars, which reflects various aspects of the struggle of the Ukrainian people for their own state⁹.

After the World War I, the territories where Ukrainians lived for many centuries became part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), Poland, Romania and Czechoslovakia. If in other countries of resettlement Ukrainians had certain political and civil rights (albeit with various restrictions), then in the Soviet Union a completely different order of relations between the state and society and its individual members prevailed.

⁹ Stanislav V. Kulchitskyi, *Chervonyi vykyk: istoriia komunizmu v Ukraini vid yoho narodzhennia do zahybeli*, vol. 2, Kyiv: Tempora, 2013.

The “triumphal march of Soviet power in Ukraine” after the Bolshevik coup in Russia in October 1917 was actually a bloody massacre, which was intended to turn Ukrainian lands into a platform for “socialist transformations”. Ukrainian national forces desperately resisted these attempts for three years. On 18 January 1919, the Act of Unification of the Ukrainian and West Ukrainian People’s Republics was solemnly signed in Kyiv, which symbolised the unity of Ukrainian lands in a single state. But neither the Central Council (*Центральна Рада*), nor Hetman Pavlo Skoropadskyi, nor the Directory of the Ukrainian People’s Republic could manage to preserve Ukrainian statehood in the conditions of an extremely unfavourable international and socio-economic situation and armed confrontation with foreign troops. Having mastered Ukraine by force of arms, the Russian satraps suppressed the insurgent movement and spontaneous peasant demonstrations with an iron hand.

To attract the sympathies of Ukrainian patriots and activists and to form a positive image of the USSR abroad, the Soviet authorities in 1923 launched a policy of “indigenisation” (rus. *коренизація*), which was called “Ukrainisation”¹⁰ in the USSR. The Ukrainian intelligentsia did not recognise this insidious strategic manoeuvre; they believed in the sincerity of the authorities. They believed that this temporary concession manifested in the liberalisation of the cultural, educational and linguistic spheres is a true intention to provide Ukrainians with optimal conditions for national growth. Yet in the early 1930s, the policy of “Ukrainisation” began to wind down; instead, the regime announced a fight against “Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism”. The turning point was 1933, when the leaders of the National Communists, Mykola Khvylovy and Mykola Skrypnyk, committed suicide during this wave of “de-Ukrainisation”¹¹.

State terror turned into one of the priority areas of the internal policy of Bolshevik terror. Evidence of the instrumentalisation of the anti-human course of the “Kremlin dreamers” was its institutional and regulatory legal design. The demonised image of the “enemy of the people” became a propaganda cluster and a legal definition at the same time, and its implementation in the mass consciousness of Soviet citizens contributed to the legitimisation of the existing political system and the justification of mass terror.

The first categories of the “unwanted people” were former representatives of the upper and middle bureaucracy, entrepreneurs, bankers, landowners and soon the so-called “Kurkuls” (rus. *кулаки*) – strong and efficient farmers who were not going to give almost all the results of their work to the predatory state just for nothing. The Kremlin responded by forcibly evicting the “kurkuls” together with their families: by the beginning of March 1930,

¹⁰ See Tetiana Boriak in this issue, p. 165–166.

¹¹ Cf., *Ukrainizatsiia 1920–30-kh rokiv. peredumovy, zdobutky, uroky*, Kyiv: Institute of History of Ukraine, 2003; *Natsionalne pytannia v Ukraini XX–XXI st.: istorichni narysy*, 2006; Martin Teri, *Imperiiia natsionalnoho vyrivniuvannia: natsiialna natsionalizm u Radianskomu Soiuzi (1923–1939)*, Kyiv: Kritika, 2013.

almost 93 000 Ukrainian peasants were forcibly deported to the north-eastern regions of the USSR¹², then, another 18 000 (or more) in June 1931¹³. According to some researchers, over 277 000 peasants were deported from the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Ukrainian SSR) in two years¹⁴. After knocking out and deporting the main producer of agricultural products, which did not hide its opposition convictions, the Soviet authorities took up the middle peasant layer. Having declared a course for forced industrialisation, the Bolshevik leaders decided to finance it with the funds received from the export of agricultural products. Bread production turned into a full grain withdrawal, which caused mass starvation and death, according to various estimates, from 4 to 6 million inhabitants of the republic. The Holodomor implemented another cruel plan of Moscow: the extermination of a nationally conscious part of Ukrainians who reluctantly and too slowly, on the conviction of Stalin and his henchmen, accepted and mastered the “advantages of socialism”.

The Great Terror of 1937–1938 became the next stage of the destruction of Ukrainians, and not only those who openly or at least hinted at deviating from the “general line of the party”. The “cleansing” of all layers of society and links of the state apparatus reduced to the limit the critical mass of the national elite capable of being the bearer of the national idea and implementing it. The Ukrainian SSR within the USSR turned into one big concentration camp, whose inhabitants were paralysed by fear. This state of affairs enabled the Soviet leadership to control all spheres of social and political life and to nip any oppositionism in the bud.

The “Stalin Constitution” of 1936 was evidence of an ultimate form of the political and socio-economic system created by the Bolshevik leadership, which absolutely excluded democratic freedoms and the right of nations to self-determination (the latter slogan was particularly actively emphasised by Lenin for propaganda purposes in the pre-revolutionary and revolutionary periods). At that time, for many people it seemed that the Soviet-Bolshevik form of statehood would remain the only possible format for the social organisation of Ukrainians. At the end of the 1930s, the “Ukrainian question” again entered the epicentre of European politics. All the antagonisms that were not resolved during the World War I were turned now into new threats. Territories inhabited by Ukrainians, like Bukovyna, Volhynia, Halychyna, Zakarpattia, Lemkivshchyna, Pidlyashchya and Kholmchyna became a kind of an exchange fund for many players on the European chessboard. Few of them were going to take into account the interests and hopes of people living there, in particular, the long-term desire of Ukrainians to create their own sovereign state. Guided

¹² *Trahediia sovetskoï derevni: Kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie, 1927–1939: Documents and materials*, in 5 volumes, vol. 2: *November 1929–December 1930*, Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2000, pp. 337–338.

¹³ Stanislav V. Kulchytskyi, “Sutsilna kolektyvizatsiia ukrainskoho sela”, *Holod 1932–1933 v Ukraini: prychny i naslidky*, Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003, p. 381.

¹⁴ Nikola Buhai, *Narody Ukrainy v “Osoboï papke Stalina”*, Moscow: Nauka, 2006, p. 56.

by the decisions recorded in the Munich Agreement, Prague granted the status of autonomy to the so-called "Subcarpathian Ruthenia" (Підкарпатська Русь, Czech. *Podkarpat-ska Rus, Země Podkarpatoruska*). On 22 November 1938, the parliament of the Czechoslovak Republic officially recognised the autonomy of Carpathian Ukraine (Карпатська Україна). However, in March 1939, Hungarian troops have occupied this island of Ukrainian national statehood. Meanwhile, the influential political circles of the Second Polish Republic, which assisted Hungary in capturing Transcarpathia (Закарпаття), did not abandon the idea of finding a way out to the Black Sea. On 18 November 1938, the deputy director of the political department of the Ministry of the Interior of Poland, in a conversation with the adviser of the German embassy in Warsaw, announced the agreement of his government "to take the side of Germany in the campaign against Soviet Ukraine"¹⁵.

The Kremlin also had its own position on the "Ukrainian question". By combining flexible manoeuvring and liberalisation (for example, the policy of "Ukrainisation") with mass repressions and deportations on national grounds, Stalin tried to minimise the underpinnings of "Ukrainian separatism" during the 1930s. Carefully monitoring the events not only in the Ukrainian SSR, but also in the state of the Ukrainian emigration, he reacted with his own means. Commenting on the Kremlin's tactics, the American researcher Mark Frankland noted that the Soviet leaders "did not forget how Ukrainian nationalists entered into an alliance with Germany in 1917; 20 years later, the German invasion seemed the only option that could make Ukrainian separatism possible"¹⁶. The desire to eliminate the "nationalist centre" in Poland coincided with the desire to take Volyn and Galicia from it. "As for Poland", Hryhorii Kostiuk stated, "it was probably required, if not directly, then indirectly, to give up the entire Ukrainian territory (*Halychyna, Volyn, etc.*). Without this, Stalin considered it impossible to localise the danger of the Ukrainian liberation movement (*Ukrainian volcano*)"¹⁷. The Soviet leader sought to take advantage of Hitler's obsessive idea of concluding an agreement with the USSR that would allow Germany to concentrate on preparing for war. At the same time, such an agreement opened the way to the realisation of Stalin's geopolitical ambitions. On 23 August 1939, the bilateral Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the so-called Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, and a secret protocol to it were signed. According to the last document, the demarcation line between Germany and the USSR (in the event of political changes) was supposed to pass along the line of Pisa–Narev–Vistula–Sian. In addition, the German side agreed to the freedom of action of the Soviet Union in the issue of Bessarabia. The Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact provided more opportunities to suppress the Ukrainian inde-

¹⁵ *Hod krizisa: Dokumenty i materialy. 1938–1939, in 2 volumes, vol. 1: September 29, 1938–May 31, 1939, Moscow, 1990, pp. 174–177.*

¹⁶ Mark Frankland, *Krushev*, New York, 1969, p. 52.

¹⁷ Hryhorii Kostiuk, *Stalinizm v Ukraini (Henezha y naslidky)*, Kyiv, 1995, p. 385.

pendence movement than possible agreements with London and Paris (which, moreover, were playing their own game). In case of the creation of a system of collective security with Western democracies (even on the terms of the USSR), the actions of the Soviet special services would be opposed not only by the Polish, but also by the British and French governments. The agreement with Germany on the spheres of influence, on the contrary, gave Stalin *carte blanche* for any decisions and actions on the Western Ukrainian lands. His true goal was the annex of western Belarus and western Ukraine.

However, Ukrainian political circles outside the Ukrainian SSR/USSR did not stop trying to unite and to create a kind of organisation to fight against Stalin's tyranny. It should be recognised that Ukrainian politicians and the public abroad were too different both ideologically and institutionally to find a basis for consolidated actions. Yet even in these circumstances there were forces that demonstrated perseverance and resolution in the cause of the national liberation of Ukrainians. In 1920, active participants of the Ukrainian revolution (1917–1921) created the Ukrainian military organisation (*Українська Військова Організація*, UVO) headed by the former commander of the Sich rifle corps Yevhen Konovalets. It aimed to fight against the two occupiers of Ukraine–Poland and Bolshevik Russia. Ukrainian nationalism, whose theoreticians were Dmytro Dontsov, Dmytro Andrievskiy, Yuliiian Vassian, Yevhen Onatskiy, Volodymyr Martynets and Mykola Sciborskiy, became the ideological foundation of UVO. Ukrainian nationalism considered the nation as an eternal and absolute value, and the will factor as a driving force in the historical process. It put the nation above the individual, praised the heroism of the “best people”, demanded that the people act as a single unit under the leadership of one political organisation and one leader¹⁸. In one of the conversations in the middle of 1937, Konovalets, anticipating possible options for the development of events, noted: “War is inevitable in some two or three years. The German-Italian axis planned to dismantle the Soviet Union, and if Hitler does not go crazy, then Ukraine will have autonomy and its own army”¹⁹.

The ideological, political and organizational activities of UVO formed the basis for the creation of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) (1929), which united the radical forces of the Ukrainian national emigration camp. Since the OUN's political credo and uncompromising methods of struggle for the Ukrainian cathedral sovereign state precluded the possibility of legitimate participation in the social and political life of the countries that included lands inhabited by Ukrainians. Therefore, the leaders of the OUN chose illegal forms of activity, which they considered the only possible and effective under those conditions.

¹⁸ Anatolii Kentii, *Zbroinyi chyn Ukrainiyskikh Natsionalistiv...*, vol. 1, p. 66.

¹⁹ *Zhyttia i smert polkovnyka Konovaltsia. Dokumenty, materialy, spohady, shchodennyky, lysty, fotohrafii*, Lviv: Chervona Kalyna, p. 144.

At the First Congress, or the First Great Assembly of the OUN (Vienna, 28 January – 3 February 1929), several resolutions were passed that fixed its organisational structure, governing bodies, goals and tasks. The participants of the forum declared the need to deploy activities not in some specific territories, but everywhere where Ukrainians live. The ideological doctrine of the OUN became Ukrainian nationalism – a spiritual and political movement aimed at defending the indigenous interests of the people. The documents emphasised that “*only a military force based on an armed people, ready to fight for their rights stubbornly and tenaciously, can liberate Ukraine from invaders and make it possible to establish the Ukrainian state*”²⁰. In the resolutions of the Second Great Assembly of the OUN (April 1941), it was emphasised that the organisation “*considers all states, political groups and forces interested in the collapse of the USSR and the formation of an independent Ukrainian Sovereign State as allies of Ukraine*”²¹.

Without any possibility to act in Soviet Ukraine, OUN members carried out anti-Bolshevik propaganda campaigns. Nevertheless, their main efforts in the 1930s were focused on countering the anti-Ukrainian actions of the right-wing radical politicians of the Second Polish Republic, terrorist actions against statesmen who pursued a particularly harsh course towards the Ukrainian community.

Annexing the Western Ukraine as an imperial project

As a result of the criminal conspiracy of Stalin and Hitler in September 1939, the Second Polish Republic fell. The eastern territories of Poland, with Ukrainian and Belarussian majority, went to the USSR. On 26 October 1939, the People's Assembly of Western Ukraine in Lviv approved the Declaration on State Power in Western Ukraine (*Декларація про державну владу на Західній Україні*) and the Declaration on the Entry of Western Ukraine into the Ukrainian SSR (*Декларація про входження Західної України до складу УРСР*). On 1 November, the fifth session of the Supreme Council (rus. *Верховный Совет СССР*) of the USSR considered the statement of the People's Assembly and adopted the Law on the Entry of Western Ukraine into the Union of the SSR Upon Its Reunification in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (*Закон про входження Західної України до складу Союзу РСР з її возз'єднання в Українській Радянській Соціалістичній Республіці*). The authorised commission, elected by the delegates, with the relevant documents went to Moscow for the meeting of the 5th session of the Supreme Council of the USSR, where the Law on the Entry of Western Ukraine into the Union of the SSR with Its Reuniting with the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (*Закон про входження Західної України до складу*

²⁰ Quoted according to: Zynovii Knysh, *Pry dzherelakh ukrainського orhanizovanoho natsionalizmu*, Toronto: Sribna Surma, 1970, p. 162.

²¹ Jaroslav Stetsko, *30 June 1941. Proholoshennia vidnovlennia derzhavnosti Ukrainy*, Toronto, London: Liga Vyzvolennia Ukrainy, 1967, p. 61.

Союзу РСР з її возз'єднанням з Українською Радянською Соціалістичною Республікою) was adopted. Thus, the Western Ukrainian lands ended up as part of a quasi-state entity – the Ukrainian SSR, which did not satisfy the Ukrainian independence activists at all. The local population was wary of the arrival of the Bolsheviks. Almost 700 000 potential voters did not come to the polls or voted against candidates nominated “from above” with no alternative. Kostiuk presented the following vision of the first Soviet elections in the region:

The people of the western regions of Ukraine through their People's Assembly were forced to recognise Soviet power, but for this the supreme power of the Soviet Union ... was forced by a special law to recognise the right of the Ukrainian people, separated through the centuries by various empires, to unite in a single state. History will prove who is victorious then and who made concessions.²²

In fact, Stalin did not make any “concessions” to the Ukrainians, he merely implemented his own imperial plans with manic consistency, expanding borders and absorbing entire regions. The populist slogans and measures of the new government only partially concealed his true intentions, as the inhabitants of the region soon became convinced of this, Oleksandr Dovzhenko made a note about it in his diary: “Alas, if I had enough strength and time, I would write a novel about the liberation of Western Ukraine, about the reunification of our peoples... And how the people of Ukraine actually had nothing to do with it”²³.

The first Sovietisation of Western Ukraine was carried out with methods of terror tested by the totalitarian regime in the 1920s and 1930s.

Incorporation of new territorial possessions was accompanied by actions aimed at political and social unification, forced collectivisation of agrarians, destruction of established forms of management and imposition of a “socialist method of production”.

On 5 December 1939, the Government of the Soviet Union issued a decree on the eviction of families of *osadniki*²⁴ to distant regions of the USSR. On 29 December, the Regulations on Special Settlements and Employment of Settlers Evicted from the western regions of the Ukrainian and Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republics (Ukrainian SSR and Belorussian SSR) (*Положение о спецпоселениях и трудовом устройстве осадников, выселяемых из западных областей УССР и БССР*), prepared by the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (*Народный комиссариат внутренних дел, НКВД*) of the USSR, was published. The document contained the following instructions: a) In accordance with the resolution of the Soviet People's Committee of the USSR, the families of squatters and forest rangers – Ukrainians who are on the lists discovered in the process of accounting for squatters by the bodies of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR – are subject to eviction on

²² Hrihorii Kostiuk, *Stalinizm v Ukraini...*, p. 437.

²³ Oleksandr Dovzhenko, *Shchodennyk 1941–1956*, Kyiv: Znannia.

²⁴ *Osadniki* are Polish colonists who received land allotments in the south-eastern voivodships (in Western Belarus and Western Ukraine) in the 1920s and 1930s.

general grounds; b) The families of squatters and forest rangers, who at the time of registration had 3–4 morgs of land and were on the voievodship lists of squatters as those who enjoyed all the advantages of the Polish state, are also subject to eviction²⁵.

On 13 February, Moscow received information about 17 206 deported families (89 062 people), and together with settlers taken out of the Belorussian SSR, the number of deportees reached 139 590 people. They were resettled on the vast territory of 21 regions of the USSR (115 special settlements), and 72% of them were women and children²⁶. The deportation of representatives of this category lasted for the next few years. As of September 1941, according to the NKVD of the USSR, there were 243 106 settlers with their families in special settlements. Among them there were many Ukrainians who were married or born into settler families²⁷.

On 2 March 1940, the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Ukraine (Bolsheviks) (CC UCP(b), having discussed the issue “On the protection of the state border in the western regions of the U[krainian]SSR and the B[ielorusian]SSR”, instructed the leadership of the Union republics to evacuate seven bodies entered into special lists of internal affairs. At the same time, directives were passed on the deportation of family members of previously repressed people and those who were or used to be in POW camps (Polish Army officers, policemen, prison guards etc.) to Kazakhstan for a 10-year period – a total of 22 000–25 000 families²⁸. In the government decree, the members of Ukrainian political and public associations (Communist Party of Western OUN, Ukrainian People Democratic Union (*Українське національно-демократичне об'єднання*, (UNDO) etc.), wealthy peasants who owned up to 5 hectares of land in the suburban area, 7 hectares in the rural area, and 10 hectares in the in the mountain area, as well as families whose heads were arrested or moved to the German occupation zone²⁹.

The second wave of deportation took place on the night of 12–13 April 1940.

Refugees from various regions of the Second Polish Republic moved to the territory of Lviv, Drohobych and Volyn regions under pressure from the Wehrmacht. Most of them – 35 283 families (79 301 individuals) – were registered with the Soviet authorities. Soon, under the control of the German resettlement commission, 30 062 families (65 899 people) were deported from the Western Ukrainian region to the West, mainly to the Reich.

²⁵ Citation according to: Tamara V. Vronska, *Zaruchnyky totalitarnoho rezhymu: represii proty rodyn “vorohiv narodu” v Ukraini (1917–1953)*, Kyiv: Institute of History of Ukraine, 2009, p. 252.

²⁶ Stanisław Ciesielski, Grzegorz Hryciuk, Aleksander Srebrakowski, *Mass Soviet Deportations During World War II*, Wrocław: Historical works, 1993, pp. 27–28.

²⁷ Tamara V. Vronska, *Upokorennia strakhom*, p. 249.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

²⁹ *Deportatsii: Zakhidni zemli Ukrainy kintsia 30–pochatku 50 rr.: Dokumenty, materialy, spohady*, in 3 volumes, vol. 1: 1939–1945, resp. ed. J. Slyvka, Lviv: Institute of Ukrainian Studies of I. Kryp'yakevych of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 1996, p. 110.

On the night of 28–29 June, when the last representatives of the German refugee commission had left Ukraine, 40 000 Polish refugees were taken to the eastern regions of the country by the forces of the NKVD units. The data on the Volyn region show the national composition of deported refugees, and out of 11 771 forcibly deported refugees, 1 017 were Ukrainians, 1 837 were Poles, and 8 924 were Jews. The deportation action, which was carried out without warning, caused panic and attempts to escape, and then the NKVD officers shot the unfortunate³⁰. Carrying out these actions without warning and in a forced manner, the internal affairs units opened fire on those who tried to escape. Some refugees committed suicide³¹.

After a brief pause, the government of the USSR managed to organise the next, the fourth wave of deportations. Expressing concern over the activation of the Ukrainian nationalist underground, on 14 May 1941, the Central Committee of the UCP(b) and the Central Committee of the USSR issued a joint resolution “On the Removal of Counter-Revolutionary Organisations in the Western Regions of the Ukrainian SSR”, which contained the following instruction:

Arrest and send to exile to settlements in remote areas of the Soviet Union for a period of 20 years with confiscation of property: a) family members of members of counter-revolutionary organisations, whose heads have moved to illegal status and are hiding from authorities; b) family members of members of the mentioned counter-revolutionary nationalist organisations, whose heads have been sentenced to the highest degree of punishment (execution).³²

By 22 May 1941, the “operation” was completed: 3 073 families (11 320 people) from Volyn, Drohobych, Lviv, Rivne, Stanislaviv, Ternopil and Chernivtsi regions headed east in box cars³³.

Trying to prevent the eviction of their relatives, individual OUN fighters resisted the Soviet security forces. Some members of the resistance came to the authorities “to confess” in order to protect their family members.

There is no consolidated assessment of the number of internally displaced persons and refugees in the period of the first Sovietisation of Western Ukraine in the scientific literature. In the three-volume *Deportations: Western lands of Ukraine in the late 1930s to the early 1950s* it is indicated that by 1 April 1941, 208 500 people were sent to special labour

³⁰ K. Kondratyuk, “Vtraty naselennia Zakhidnoi Ukrainy u 1939–1941”, in: *Ukraina–Polshcha: vazhki pytannia*, т. 5: *Documents of V international seminar of the “Ukrainsko-polski vidnosyny pid chas Druhoi svitovoi viiny”*, Lutsk, April 27–29, 1999, Warsaw: TURSA, 2001, p. 153.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

³² Quoted according to: Tamara V. Vronska, *Upokorennia strakhom: simeine zaruchnytstvo u karalnii praktytsi radianskoi vlady (1917–1953)*, p. 266.

³³ *Orhany hosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti v Velykoi Otechestvennoi voine. Sbornik dokumentov*: in 8 volumes, vol. 1: *Nakanune*, book 2: *1 January–21 June 1941*, authors/compilers: V.P. Yampolskii [et al.], Moscow: Kniga i biznes A/O, 1995, pp. 148–154.

settlements from the western regions of the Ukrainian and Belarusian SSR³⁴. Aleksandr Gurianov, who kept the accounts of each echelon of deportees, notes that from February 1940 to 1941, 309 000 to 321 000 Poles were deported to the eastern regions of the USSR³⁵.

Differentiated data on separate categories of exiles are contained in the reports of the NKVD of the USSR on the number of resettled special settlers from the western regions of the Ukrainian and Belarusian SSR: 26 120 former prisoners of war, 132 460 settlers and foresters, 46 597 convicts, 176 000 refugees and family members of the repressed, a total of 381 220³⁶ people. Yaroslav Hrytsak cites a much higher number of forcibly removed residents of the former Volyn, Ternopil and Stanislaviv Regions during 1939–1941 – almost 550 000 people, which was about 10% of the entire population of Western Ukraine³⁷.

By the way, the Bolshevik administration used similar means of subjugating the local population in Lithuania. By 17 May 1941, 15 851 people were repressed here, 10 187 of which were deported. And in general, from the moment of the Soviet occupation to the beginning of the German-Soviet war, 32 500 citizens were repressed in Lithuania³⁸.

At the same time, real and imaginary “enemies of the Soviet government” have been arrested and imprisoned. Only in the period from September to December 1939, 10 200 people were detained and transferred to judicial institutions³⁹. Most of them faced long imprisonment and death in the casemates of the NKVD.

For better ideological and political unification of the Western Ukrainian region, all political parties and public organisations (society named after Shevchenko’s “Prosvita” (“Enlightenment”), etc.) that operated in Poland have been disbanded here, and their leaders were subjected to repressions. Instead, officials, administrators and specialists from other regions of Ukraine and even the USSR arrived to take various party, Soviet and economic positions. Among them are 40 000 party workers⁴⁰.

According to the special report of the NKVD of Ukraine dated 3 October 1939, 144 leaders and members of UNDO, OUN and other parties, as well as 74 “Petliurivtsi, members of

³⁴ *Deportatsii: Zakhidni zemli Ukrainy...*, t. 1: 1939–1945, p. 155.

³⁵ Aleksandr E. Gurianov, “Mashtaby deportatsii naseleniia vhlub SSSR v mae–yiune 1941. Istoricheskie sborniki “Memoriala”, issue 1: *Repressii poliakov i polskikh hrazhdan*, Moscow: Zvenia, 1997, p. 116.

³⁶ *Istoriia stalinskoho Hulaha. Konets 1920–pervaia polovyna 1950 hodov. Collection of documents*, in 7 volumes, vol. 5: *Spetsposelentsy v SSSR*, resp. ed. and comp. T. V. Tsarevskaia-Diakina, Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2004, p. 63.

³⁷ Jaroslav Hrytsak, *Narysy istorii Ukrainy: formuvannia modernoi ukrainskoi natsii XIX–XX stolittia*, Kyiv: Heneza, 1996, p. 214.

³⁸ Anatolii Rusnachenko, *Narod zburenyi: Natsionalno-vyzvolnyi rukh v Ukraini y natsionalni rukhy Oporu v Bilorusii, Lytvi, Latvii, Estonii u 1940–50 rokakh*, Kyiv: Pulsary, 2002; Alexandras Gurjanovas, „Gyventojų trėmimo i SSRS gilumą mastas...”, in: *Genocidas ir resistancija*, 1997, no 2, pp. 56–65.

³⁹ Mykola R. Lytvyn, O. I. Lutskyi, Kim Naumenko, 1939. *Zakhidni zemli Ukrainy*, Lviv, 1999, p. 139.

⁴⁰ *Politychna istoriia Ukrainy XX stolittia*, t. 4, p. 95.

gangs”⁴¹ were detained by that time. By 27 November, the number of detained OUN members increased to 280, UNDO residents – up to 186⁴².

Soviet special services constantly monitored the situation and tried to neutralise all efforts of Ukrainian independents in the newly annexed territories. In mid-December, the special services conducted another operation to eliminate the nationalist underground. At the beginning of 1941, the repressions continued. On 26 March 1941, the People’s Commissar of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR Pavlo Meshyk reported to the Deputy People’s Commissar of State Security of the USSR Bogdan Kobulov that 4 657 Ukrainian nationalists were repressed in the Western Ukrainian region in 1940, and another 1 462 in January–February 1941. Besides, according to agency data, in March 1941, 13 529 people were registered, of which 426 were illegal. The document also contained instructions on the organisation of work aimed at disbanding the OUN underground from the inside, compromising Stepan Bandera and Andriy Melnyk, and deepening the split between their supporters⁴³.

In the economic area, the Soviet government followed the path of expropriation of large and medium-sized properties. Of the 2.7 million hectares of land confiscated from landowners, 1.1 million were transferred to landless and poor peasants, 1.6 million hectares to collective and Soviet farms⁴⁴. The collectivisation of agriculture, despite the resistance of the farmers, was carried out at a forced pace and mainly by forced methods, as evidenced by the following official statistics: by May 1940, only 155 collective farms had been created in the region, at the end of the year there were already 529 collective farms, and in the middle of 1941, there were almost 3 000⁴⁵. The poorest part of the peasantry received these reforms positively, but many farmers understood that the “paradise” the new government was leading them to would definitely lead to a new Holodomor.

The policy of the Bolsheviks in the religious sphere met solid opposition. Taking into account the fact that, according to some estimates, 3.5 million Greek Catholics, 2 million Roman Catholics, 1.5 million Orthodox, and 800 000 Jews lived in Western Ukrainian lands at that time, it was about the interests of the majority of the population enclaves newly joined to the Ukrainian SSR⁴⁶. In the Western Ukraine, the Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox churches enjoyed great authority and were legally bound by special agreements (concordats) with the Polish state. In addition, they owned significant property, including

⁴¹ Departmental State Archive of Ukraine (Haluzevyi derzhavnyi arkhiv Ukrainy, hereinafter: DSAU), fond 16, op. 32 (1951), file 33, sheet 95.

⁴² *Radianski orhany derzhavnoi bezpeky u 1939–chervni 1941: dokumenty HDA SB Ukrainy*, Kyiv, 2009, p. 265.

⁴³ DSAU, fond 16, op. 84, file 7, sheets 218–222.

⁴⁴ Paul Robert Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966, p. 618.

⁴⁵ *Politychna istoriia Ukrainy XX stolittia*, vol. 4, p. 97.

⁴⁶ Stepan A. Makarchuk, *Etnosotsialnoe razvitiie i natsionalnye otnosheniia na zapadnoukrainskikh zemliakh v period imperializma*, Lvov, 1983, pp. 146–148.

forest and land, which was the basis of their economic independence. However, Moscow decided to break the established situation, although they were aware that a “cavalry attack” could only harm the atheistic propaganda in the region. But in practice, everything turned out to be prosaic, as usual.

It was difficult for both Communist Party officials and Red Army men to accept the traditions of the people of Western Ukraine, which were marked by mass piety. These features formed a special mentality, unusual for the “missionaries” of communism sent by the Kremlin to sovietise the region. Soviet servicemen were surprised by the fact that during religious holidays, local peasants wore beautiful clothes and did not work, as it happened on the feast of the Birth of the Virgin Mary on 21 September 1939⁴⁷.

On 11 February 1940, the official newspaper called *Bezbozhnik* (*Безбожник*, *Godless*) published an article by O. Yaroslavskiy “On anti-religious work in the western regions of Ukraine and Belarus” (*Про антирелігійну роботу в західних областях України і Білорусії*), which in fact was supposed to become a methodical instruction for this direction of Sovietisation of the regions annexed in September 1939. A few months had passed, and a network of atheistic clubs was established in Western Ukraine. By late 1940, according to the data included in the report of the People’s Commissariat of Education of the Ukrainian SSR, there were 335 atheist clubs in six regions of Western Ukraine, attended by more than 6 000 people. The atheist component has become a mandatory element of the educational process in educational institutions of all types.⁴⁸

The Bolshevik regime immediately started pressing the clergies of all denominations. They had no desire to share with them the levers of influence on the local cosmopolitan society. In the Second Polish Republic clergymen received a number of privileges, but under the Bolsheviks, the taxation of persons of clerical rank often exceeded the level of their incomes. The calculation was to force the clerics to change their work, which, according to the Kremlin’s design, was supposed to cause the erosion of this influential social cohort.⁴⁹

Another means of eliminating religious organisations of Western Ukraine from the public space was the withdrawal from them of the function of registration of public status (weddings, deaths etc.), in accordance with the resolution of the Central Committee of the UCP(b) of 13 April 1940. Metric books were removed from parishes and transferred to state structures⁵⁰.

⁴⁷ Jurii Osh, *Z lykholittiam na priu*, Sumy: Yaroslavna, 1998, p. 19.

⁴⁸ L. V. Kravchuk, T. B. Kadobnyi, L. O. Kravchuk, “Transformatsiini protsesy na Ternopilshchyni v 1939–1941 yak faktor formuvannia u studentiv-medykiv pochuttia patriotyzmu, kompetentnosti pid chas vuvchennia istorii kraiu”, in: *Visnyk sotsialnoi hihiieny ta orhanizatsii okhorony zdorovia Ukrainy*, 2018, no. 3(77), pp. 37–38.

⁴⁹ Vasil Savchuk, *Za ukrainsku tserkvu*, Ivano-Frankivsk: Lileya, 1997, p. 101.

⁵⁰ *Central State Archive of Public Associations of Ukraine (Tsentralnyi derzhavnyi arkhiv hromadskykh obiednan Ukrainy*, hereinafter: *CSA PAU*, fond 1, file 6, case 578, sheet 202.

On the basis of the documents adopted by the People's Assembly of Western Ukraine, in particular the Decree on the Nationalisation of Land and Monastery Lands⁵¹ monastic and church landholdings, forest lands and other property, as well as premises belonging to them, were confiscated. Such actions provoked the opposition of believers, who treated monasticism with great piety.

Soviet special services became one of the most important tools of anti-religious actions in the hands of the ruling elite. The order of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR dated 23 November 1939 "On shortcomings in the agency, operational and investigative work of the NKVD Departments of the Western Regions of the Ukrainian SSR" contained an instruction on the formation of a network of special agents "from religious assets (bishops, priests, Roman Catholic priests) for the decomposition and preventive work among churchmen"⁵².

Despite the neutral position of the leadership of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church towards the new regime, the Soviet special services, on instructions from Moscow, "took into operational development" the most influential priests of this denomination. On 31 December 1939, the head of the 5th branch of the 2nd department of the State Security Department of the NKVD administration in the Lviv region, junior lieutenant of state security Cherpakov, having reviewed the materials on Andrii Sheptytskyi, Leontii Kunytskyi, Ivan Buchka, Mykyta Budka, O. Kovalskyi, V. Laba, A. Kashtaniuk and L. Diakova, "decided that the above-mentioned persons are active participants and leaders of UNDO, they conduct anti-Soviet activities, using religion as a mean of their activity". In the introductory part of the document, it was noted that an agent case under the code "Walkers" (*Ходячи*) was opened against all the listed figures⁵³. Thus, almost immediately after taking possession of the "reunified" lands, Stalin's perpetrators took all representatives of the Greek-Catholic clergies, who had a distinct civic position and enjoyed the respect of the local Ukrainian community, under their constant control.

On 11 January 1941, L. Beria, the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of the USSR approved a plan of agency-operational measures regarding the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, aimed at its discredit, breakdown and, ultimately, liquidation. The document contained instructions on the methods of splitting the hierarchy and the clergies by inciting contradictions between supporters of the Latinisation of the Church and adherents of preserving its Byzantine rite, compromising the bishops with falsified materials about their "household schedule" and violating canonical prescriptions, abusing the

⁵¹ CSA PAU, fond 1, op. 6, file 516, sheets 171–172.

⁵² Ivan H. Bilas, *Represyвно-karalna systema v Ukraini 1917–1953: Suspilno-politychnyi ta istoryko-pravovyi analiz*, book 1, p. 126.

⁵³ Quoted according to: *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptytskyi u dokumentakh radianskykh orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky (1939–1944)*, translated from Russian, Kyiv, 2005, p. 43.

Church's material wealth, etc. It was supposed to form a group of clergies who would start a movement for separation from the Vatican and joining the Russian Orthodox Church⁵⁴.

It did not seem possible to eliminate such an influential denomination with a one-time campaign. The metropolitan himself wrote about it in the summer of 1941 as follows:

It is quite obvious that under the Bolsheviks we all felt doomed to death; they did not hide their desire to destroy and suffocate Christianity, to erase its smallest traces. They did it slowly, so as not to stir up too much resistance among the entire population. They also feared public opinion in Europe, which they thought was better informed of what was going on here than it really was. In general, they did not feel at home here: perhaps this was one of the reasons why they treated us more carefully than we expected.⁵⁵

The Orthodox Church did not feel protected either. As a result of the Bolshevik atheistic offensive, 90 parishes were closed in 1940 in the Volyn Diocese alone⁵⁶, the number of monks in the Pochaiv Lavra decreased from 300 to 80⁵⁷, and in the Obytskyi Saint Nicholas Monastery, from 64 to 20⁵⁸.

Repressions against clerics of various confessions and denominations continued until the beginning of the German-Soviet war. According to researchers' calculations, before Germany's attack on the USSR, 53 Orthodox priests were arrested on the territory of Poland occupied by the *Reichsicherheitshauptamt* (RSHA) as a result of the "liberation campaign": 10 of them were lucky enough to be released, 37 went missing, 6 died or were shot⁵⁹.

Local officials performed actions to dissolve religious communities and close existing churches, which was also negatively perceived by local population.

The religious policy of the Bolsheviks in Western Ukraine, alongside other actions, formed a negative attitude towards the Stalinist regime in the majority of the Ukrainian and Polish population of the region, and with the beginning of the German war against the USSR, it largely determined the attitude of the local society towards the German occupation administration.

The final chord of the first Sovietisation was the mass murder of inmates of prisons located in the cities of Western Ukraine. Of all the prisoners who were supposed to be evac-

⁵⁴ V. I. Serhiichuk, *Pravda pro "zoloty" veresen*, 1939, p. 42.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁵⁶ M. Kucherepa, V. Visyn, *Volyn: 1939–1941*, Lutsk, 2005, p. 99.

⁵⁷ Daniela Kalkandjieva, *The Russian Orthodox Church, 1917–1948: From Decline to Resurrection*, New York: Routledge, 2015, p. 72.

⁵⁸ Volodymyr Borshcheych, *Volynske dukhovenstvo u XX stolitti: identychnist, status, evoliutsiia*, Lutsk: RVV Volyn. nats. un-tu im. Lesi Ukrainky, 2010, p. 95.

⁵⁹ Friedrich Heyer, *Kirchengeschichte der Ukraine im 20 Jahrhundert: von der Epochenwende des Ersten Weltkrieges bis zu den Anfängen in einem unabhängigen ukrainischen Staat*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003, p. 236.

uated to the eastern regions of the country, NKVD employees in the first days of the war brutally murdered and shot about 22 000 people⁶⁰.

Ukrainian national liberation struggle during World War II

On the eve of Germany's attack on the USSR, Ukrainian patriots intended to declare their power in those Ukrainian territories from which the Red Army would retreat. However, despite all efforts to form an underground armed force capable of organised opposition to Stalin's power structures, the independents did not have time. Thus, the OUN(B) (Ukrainian nationalists led by Stepan Bandera) in the second half of 1941 could count on 12 000 members and 7 000 "younglings"⁶¹. To compare, the Lithuanian Activist Front (LAF) at that time numbered 36 000 people⁶². The Soviet services were quite effective in opposing the attempts to form an underground network, and this prevented the implementation of the plans carried out by the members of the liberation movement.

Hoping that Berlin would tolerate Ukrainian aspirations, a significant part of Ukrainians associated the arrival of the Germans with an improvement in the socio-economic situation and greater freedoms. Such expectations were to some extent based on the experience of the German presence in Ukraine in 1918 (or, for Galicia, being a part of Austrian-Hungarian Empire). However, the new realities turned out to be incomparable with the events of the Ukrainian revolution. A certain part of the Ukrainian political community with an independent orientation towards emigration assessed the situation more soberly. Back in October 1939, the newspaper *Ukrainske Slovo* (Українське слово, *Ukrainian Word*, Paris) contained an article stating:

From now on, Germany poses a very great danger to the Ukrainian question. It is surprising that the great states do not realise this, but, on the contrary, fear that the Germans intend to create an independent Ukrainian state. [...] Now our task is to make sure that everyone understands that the creation of an independent Ukrainian state is absolutely necessary since nothing facilitates German dominance in Eastern Europe, on the one hand, and the spread of Russian-Bolshevik influence on the West, on the other hand, as the absence of a Ukrainian state. The creation of an independent Ukrainian state is consistent with the general goals of Western states and means a refusal to recognise the hegemony of the Germans and Russians in Europe.⁶³

While searching for allies in the Ukrainian cause on the international arena, the theorists of the OUN and their supporters from among scientists, lawyers, economists,

⁶⁰ *Shche odyn etap henotsydu. Yak ubyvally viazniv u tiurmakh 1941, in: Istorychna pravda*, 2012 September 6; Kai Struve, "Masovi vbyvstva viazniv livskykh tiurem: shcho vidomo pro mistsia ta killkist zhertv?", in: *Ukraina moderna*, 2021, no. 31 and others.

⁶¹ Anatolii Kentii, *Zbroinyi chyn ukrainskykh natsionalistiv...*, p. 190.

⁶² Harrison Solsbery, *900 dnei*, Moscow: Rusich, 1994, pp. 164–165.

⁶³ Quoted according to: Volodymyr Kosyk, *Ukraina i Nimechchyna u Druhii svitovii viini*, Paris, New York, Lviv, 1993, pp. 487–488.

agrarians and those who had experience in state administration (in particular, during the Ukrainian revolution in 1917–1921) worked on the development of documents that were to form the basis concepts of state construction. At the beginning of 1940, the State Planning Commission was established, which was a part of the *Command of the Ukrainian Nationalists* (*Провід українських націоналістів*, PUN). It was headed by OUN members P. Herasymenko and L. Biletskyi, and O. Olzhych was appointed to be responsible for this case from the OUN. The KDP included 15 commissions, including economic, use of natural resources, finance, agriculture, industry and trade, cooperative movement, school and others. The goal of the State Planning Commission was succinctly outlined by a member of the PUN, Andrievskiy: it was supposed to “work out all kinds of problems in areas of economic, social and cultural life ... from the perspective of the needs of all of Ukraine”⁶⁴.

After the split of the OUN in two parties (Bandera and Melnyk parties), the Bandera party formed its own State Commission of the OUN headed by Volodymyr Horbovyi (April 1941), which worked on similar issues.

Immediately after the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, “offshoot groups” of the Bandera and Melnyk OUN moved to the territory of the Ukrainian SSR. They were considered a kind of “political army”, called to form local self-government bodies, the Ukrainian militia, to create national public associations and cultural and educational institutions. Bandera’s OUN sent almost 5 000 members of “raid groups” competing with the Melnyk groups, to the central, southern and eastern regions of Ukraine. In one of the analytical documents of the Bandera OUN, it was stated that in the summer of 1941

the OUN in the eyes of the citizens of Eastern Ukrainian Lands and even in the imagination of the ordinary OUN members acted as a Ukrainian-independent force that had found or was looking for an alliance with the Germans in struggle with Bolshevism. A very small number of the citizens of the Soviet Union knew about the real independent revolutionary doctrine of the OUN and its inevitable clash with Hitler’s Germany.⁶⁵

At first, the Nazis themselves were not clearly aware of the goal of the Ukrainian nationalists, and when it became clear, they started terror against OUN. In the middle of September 1941, they arrested supporters of Bandera, and later of Melnyk⁶⁶.

Illusions concerning the possibilities of Ukrainian state-building in the conditions of the Nazi “new order” existed for some time even among the leadership of the OUN(B).

Another historical and semantic parallel could be suggested. Immediately after the retreat of the Red Army under the pressure of the Wehrmacht and its allies, both in Ukraine and Lithuania, the national forces made an attempt to restore statehood and independence. On 23 June LAF announced the restoration of the Republic of Lithuania and the crea-

⁶⁴ Dmytro Andrievskiy, “Pid znakom Saksenhavzenu”, in: *Nepohasnyi ohon viry*, Paris, 1977, p. 254.

⁶⁵ Volodymyr Serhiychuk, *OUN–UPA v roky viiny. Novi dokumenty*, Kyiv, 1996, p. 303.

⁶⁶ Anatolii Kentii, *Zbroinyi chyn ukrainskykh natsionalistiv...*, vol. 1, pp. 238–249.

tion of the Provisional Government headed by Kazys Škirpa. And on 30 June 1941, Ukrainian nationalists announced the revival of the Ukrainian state by a special Act. However, like the Soviet authorities, the Nazi occupiers did not allow even the slightest political autonomy of local national forces. Any manifestation of activity in this direction was brutally persecuted. The Germans did not let Škirpa into Lithuania⁶⁷. The initiators of the proclamation of the Act on 30 June in Lviv also faced severe sanctions. On 5 July 1941, the Germans arrested Bandera, Volodymyr Yaniv, and later Horbovyi and Yaroslav Stetsko in Krakow. After the interrogations in Berlin, they were transferred under special supervision. After the arrests and mass executions of Ukrainian nationalists in the second half of 1941 and at the beginning of 1942, both the Bandera and Melnyk factions of the OUN, most of the surviving members of the organisation went underground and started forming armed units to fight against the German and Soviet occupiers.

Nevertheless, the first formation of the independent orientation that appeared in the territory occupied by the Nazis was the "Poliska Sich" led by Taras Bulba-Borovets, associated with the government of the Ukrainian People's Republic in exile. The *otaman* (chieftain) considered the fight against the Bolsheviks to be his main task. Since the Germans ordered to disband this formation, Bulba-Borovets with a group of fighters and commanders went to the forest, where later a new formation called the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (*Українська повстанська армія*, UPA) arose, which already professed anti-German slogans⁶⁸. Over time, the Bulba's formations were forcibly joined to the Bandera's UPA, which was created at the end of 1942 to the beginning of 1943 and adopted this name from the Bulba's army. Its first commander was Dmytro Kliachkivskiy (*alias* Klym Savur). The concept of the UPA command was that the Bolsheviks would return to Ukraine weakened and a minimum of 300 000 Ukrainian army would be needed to fight them. However, under the conditions of the German occupation of Ukraine, the UPA adhered to the strategy of a two-front struggle, approved by the Trird Extraordinary Great Assembly of the OUN in August 1943. It envisaged a struggle against the imperialism of Moscow and Berlin. At the same time, the Stalinist regime was considered the main enemy of the idea of a sovereign Ukraine:

We meet the occupation of Ukrainian lands by the Bolsheviks with an active resistance in all means that may lead to the collapse of the state apparatus of Moscow imperialism and contribute to the growth of the organised forces of the Ukrainian people in their struggle for an independent Ukrainian state".⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Arunas Bubnys, "Litovskoe natsionalnoe antifashistskoe soprotivlenie. 1941–1945", in: *Vestnik arkhivista*, 1995, no. 3 (27), pp. 55–60.

⁶⁸ See: Bulba-Borovets, *Armiia bez derzhavy*, Lviv, 1983; Volodymyr Dzobak, *Taras Bulba-Borovets i yoho viiskovi pidrozdily v ukrainskomu rusi oporu (1941–1944 rr.)*, Kyiv, 2002.

⁶⁹ Anatolii Kentii, "Dvofrontova borotba UPA (1943–persha polovyna 1944)", *Orhanizatsiia ukrainskykh natsionalistiv i Ukrainka povstanska armii. Istorychni narysy*, pp. 160–222.

UPA units carried out sabotage actions, attacks on German garrisons, prisons and warehouses, during which they sought to obtain weapons, ammunition, medicines and food. Only in May–June 1943, the first group of the UPA under the command of Dubovyi (*alias*) had 18 combat encounters (eight battles against the Germans, the rest against Polish and Soviet forces)⁷⁰. In the autumn of 1943, the UPA units fought 47 battles with the Germans, and the self-defence bush units fought 125 skirmishes, during which the rebels lost 414 killed and wounded, and the Germans lost up to 1 500⁷¹.

In November 1943, the UPA had about 20 000 soldiers, and together with the formations of the Bulba and Melnyk forces, the armed units of the Ukrainian National Resistance Movement estimated 35 000–40 000 men⁷².

The Wehrmacht's loss of the strategic initiative and the beginning of the Red Army's offensive on the territory of Ukraine determined the shift of emphasis in activities to the anti-Soviet direction. The OUN document "On the internal situation" (*До внутрішнього положення*, end of 1943) emphasises:

The harmfulness of the actions of the Red Partisan consists in the following: 1) it provokes the Germans to speak against the Ukrainian people; 2) it destroys the conscious Ukrainian element; 3) it is a single factor that leads communist work in Ukrainian lands and because of this it leads to disorientation among part of the population (pro-Moscow orientation); 4) By his actions, he tries to paralyse the liberation movement of the Ukrainian people; 5) it is the vanguard of Soviet imperialism and thus the enemy of the liberation struggle of the enslaved peoples [...] ⁷³

As the front line approached, the "red" partisans intensified their actions, which forced the UPA command to take intensive countermeasures. During October and November 1943, the insurgents conducted 54 skirmishes against the Soviet partisans and 47 against the Germans⁷⁴. The UPA units attacked the units of the Red Army, a party-Soviet asset, and opposed the mobilisation measures of the Bolsheviks in Right-bank and Western Ukraine. But in 1944, they faced another force – the Internal Troops of the NKVD, which were better equipped and trained than the Soviet partisans. Therefore, the losses of the rebels began to increase. According to the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR (March 1944) during 65 operations, 1 129 members of the UPA and members of the Ukrainian Communist Party were killed, and from 7 March to 7 April, as a result of 109 Chekist operations, 2 600 insurgents and underground fighters were killed, and 3 256 were captured prisoners, while the losses of the NKVD were 112 killed and 90 wounded⁷⁵.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

⁷¹ L. Shankovskiy, *Istoriia ukrainskoho viiska*, second complemented edition, Winnipeg, 1953, p. 46.

⁷² Anatolii Kentii, *Ukrainska povstanska armiiia u 1942–1943*, Kyiv: Institute of History of Ukraine, 1999, p. 181.

⁷³ Quoted according to: Anatolii Kentii, 'Dvofrontova' borotba UPA...', p. 200.

⁷⁴ L. Shankovskiy, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

⁷⁵ Anatolii Kentii, *Ukrainska povstanska armiiia v 1944–1945*, Kyiv: In-t istorii Ukrainy, 1999, pp. 111–113.

When the front line crossed the borders of Ukraine, the last and most dramatic period of confrontation between the Ukrainian national liberation movement and the Stalinist regime began.

As of 25 January 1945, according to the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR, 496 combat units of the OUN and UPA (25 353 people) operated on the territory of the republic⁷⁶. On 15 March (the day when it was supposed to put an end to nationalist formations), according to information from the Lviv Regional Party Committee, there were 49 "gangs" (1 200 fighters) left in the region, 7 (704) in the Volyn region, 55 (1,160) in Rivne region, 69 (1,384) in Drohobych region, 11 (2,150) in Stanislaviv region, 79 (1,908) in Ternopil region: in total, more than 200 units⁷⁷. Then Moscow decided to use a new tactic to neutralise the national liberation movement – blockades. At the plenum of the Central Committee of the UCP(b), the results of the two-month "Chekist military operations" were reported: 11 000 UPA soldiers and members of the OUN were killed, 26,000 were captured, and 22 000 surrendered⁷⁸. Many OUN leaders and UPA commanders were killed in clashes with the NKVD troops, in particular, the leader of the OUN at the South Western Ukrainian lands Kliachkivskiyi (*alias* Klym Savur), the deputy commander and chief of staff of the "Zavikhvost" "Ostrizkiy-Holubenko" group, commanders of brigades "Pylyavtsi" (*alias* Lysyi, "Bald"), "Kholm-ska", "Burya", "Vengeance for Kruty" (*alias* Verkhovynets and Kryga-Nazar), "Memory of the Bazar" (*alias* Yarok), the first deputy commander and chief of staff of UPA Karpovych, deputy commander of UPA-West *alias* Kremin, leader of the Southern regional branch of OUN *alias* Borys. The commander of the North-West Group of the UPA, Yurii Stelmaschuk, a member of the Central Committee of the Bandera's OUN(B) Duzhiy, Ye. Myroslav, head of the printing house and economic representative of the OUN, a member of the Central Committee of the OUN(B) I. Pererivskiyi-Danyshchuk (*alias* Harmatyuk) were captured⁷⁹.

The first "great blockade" has not brought the desired results, so the second one immediately began, which lasted until June 1945. At the same time, the use of special groups of the NKVD–NKGB, which included former participants of the liberation movement, was practised. In the middle of 1945, there were 156 special groups (1 783 people). Posing as members of the UPA, they destroyed and captured the insurgents. Having developed the means of exposing special groups, the leaders of the independence movement and the SB OUN (OUN Security Service) forced the bodies of the NKVD–NKGB to abandon the creation of new special groups⁸⁰.

Many UPA soldiers have left its ranks believing the Soviet authorities, which promised amnesty. Thus, after the publication of the appeal of the Praesidium of the Verkhovna Rada and the Ukrainian SSR National Committee and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine "To the Workers, Peasants and Intelligentsia of the Western Regions of Ukraine", hundreds of rebels and members of the underground expressed their desire to lay down their arms. Stalin and Khrushchev authorised public executions of the

participants of the liberation movement in Yavoriv, Drohobych, Boryslav, Stryi, Olesko, Horokhov and other cities, which were supposed to intimidate and paralyse its social base.

On 5 and 15 of November 1945, the leaders of the Ukrainian SSR published appeals, which contained promises of amnesty for those who would voluntarily stop resistance. At the same time, reinforced military contingents arrived in the region. With the measures taken, it was possible to inflict heavy human, material and moral losses on the Ukrainian underground-insurgent forces. The results of the “fight against banditry” were summarised in an information document of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR (16 January 1946): from February 1944 to 1 January 1946, 39 778 Chekist military operations were carried out, 103 313 have been killed, and 110 785 “bandits” have been detained. 8 370 OUN soldiers and 15 959 “active rebels” have been arrested, 50 058 people have surrendered⁸¹. A systematic combination of propaganda measures, military and special operations caused irreparable losses to the liberation movement. Incomparable material and human potential; isolation of the OUN and UPA from external sources of support (in particular, political); the fatigue of the population from the long war, the terror of state structures and the pressure of the OUN and the UPA; the despondency of many participants of the anti-Soviet resistance determined the superiority of the Stalinist regime and a significant reduction in the scale of the resistance.

In this difficult period, theorists and leaders of the OUN, the UPA command have managed to update the doctrinal structures and organisational and political forms of the independence movement on a democratic basis. However, under those conditions, it was not possible to form a supra-party all-Ukrainian institution.

Evaluating the phenomenon of the Ukrainian national liberation movement, one should focus on several conclusions and generalisations.

Conclusions

Summarising what has been said, it should be emphasised that the confrontation between the nationally conscious, non-denationalised and demoralised part of the Ukrainian people and Moscow imperialism during the World War II covered ideological, political, ethno-confessional and armed spheres. Denying Ukrainians the natural right to free choice of political and public forms of organisation of social life and their own sovereign state, Moscow sought to completely absorb Ukraine, to seize its natural and human resources. Having destroyed national statehood in the early 1920s, the Bolshevik totalitarian regime pursued a policy of genocide against Ukrainians. Reverences in the form of an inconsistent and short-lived policy of “Ukrainisation”, the creation of a quasi-state administrative-territorial entity – the Ukrainian SSR – as part of the Union of the SSR, securing the status of a member of the United Nations for the Ukrainian SSR should be interpreted

⁸¹ *Derzhavnist*, 1992, part 7, p. 48.

as sham attempts to camouflage the actual state of affairs: total centralism, the Kremlin's arbitrariness, brutal imposition of vulgar-communist forms of political, economic and social life, denationalisation, Russification and assimilation of Ukrainians.

De facto, the World War II for the Ukrainian people has not ended with a victory over Nazism, because Ukraine fell under the complete dictate of another totalitarian system – the Bolshevik one. And even after becoming a *de jure* sovereign state, Ukraine remained in tight orbit of Moscow. Russia's modern war against Ukraine is evidence of the incompleteness of the war for independence. Its current stage should become decisive and finally free the Ukrainian people from the Russian imperial yoke.

Oleksandr Lysenko

(Ne)baigtas Antrasis pasaulinis karas Ukrainoje

SANTRAUKA

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas vienas sudėtingiausių ukrainiečių tautos istorijos laikotarpių – Antrojo pasaulinio karo įvykiai. Šis tyrimas siekia parodyti didžiausio žmonijos istorijoje ginkluoto susirėmimo, pasižymėjusio realia depopuliacijos grėsme ir atėmusio iš ukrainiečių prigimtą apsisprendimo teisę, egzistencinį poveikį ukrainiečiams. Ne tik didieji, bet ir mažesni tarptautinių santykių arenos žaidėjai buvo asmeniškai suinteresuoti užvaldyti Ukrainos teritorijas, žaliavų, pramonės ir žmogiškuosius išteklius. Tačiau Maskva laikė Ukrainą savo neriboto viešpatavimo sritimi ir naudojo visas priemones, kad „Ukrainos klausimas“ būtų išspręstas pagal jos scenarijų. Molotovo–Ribentropo paktas tapo tik laikina sovietų diplomatijos sėkme, juk Hitleris turėjo savų planų dėl ukrainiečių žemių. Pirmoji sovietizacija nedviprasmiškai pademonstravo Kremliaus ketinimus 1939–1940 metais prijungtuose Ukrainos regionuose įgyvendinti bolševikų projektą. Susidūrus dviem totalitarinėms sistemoms – sovietinei ir nacistinei – Ukrainos savarankiškos politinės jėgos sugebėjo susitelkti, kad pasipriešintų ir apgintų esminius Ukrainos tautos interesus. Ukrainos nacionalistų organizacija, kitų politinių grupių atstovai sudarė ginkluotus dalinius – Polesės sečę, Ukrainos sukilėlių armiją, grupinius savigynos būrius, kurie pradėjo kovą su vokiečių ir sovietų okupacine kariuomene ir administracija. Ši nesimetriška konfrontacija turėjo didelę politinę, moralinę ir psichologinę reikšmę, nes patvirtino „Ukrainos idėjos“ gyvybingumą ir kovos už Ukrainos valstybingumo atkūrimą nenutrūkstamumą. Stalino režimui prireikė virš 10 metų Ukrainos nacionaliniam išsivadavimo judėjimui nuslopinti. Tačiau ukrainiečiai nesusitaikė su komunistine tironija ir priešinosi jai iki SSRS žlugimo. Dabar, priešinant agresorei Rusijai, Ukraina galutinai nutraukia ryšius su imperine praeitimi ir įsitvirtina kaip nepriklausoma, demokratinė valstybė. Metodologiniai tyrimo metodai remiasi teoriniais koncepciniais pagrindinių tyrėjų darbais, tarpdisciplininiais analitiniais ir interpretaciniais įrankiais ir šiuolaikiniu tezauru.

REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: Ukrainos klausimas, nepriklausomybė, politinė nacija, valstybingumas, Antrasis pasaulinis karas, Rusija, Vokietija, okupacija, deportacijos, teroras, genocidas.

Олександр Лисенко

(Не)завершена українська Друга світова війна

РЕЗЮМЕ

У тексті розглядається один з найскладніших періодів у історії українського народу – події Другої світової війни.

Мета цієї розвідки полягає в тому, щоб показати екзистенційний характер найбільшого збройного зіткнення в історії людства для українців, який визначався реальною загрозою депопуляції, а також позбавленням їх природного права на самовизначення. Не тільки великі, а й менші актори міжнародних відносин мали власну зацікавленість в українських територіях, сировинних, промислових та людських ресурсах. Однак Москва вважала Україну сферою її безроздільного панування і використовувала всі засоби для розв'язання «українського питання» за власними сценаріями. «Пакт Молотова – Ріббентропа» став лише тимчасовим успіхом радянської дипломатії, адже Гітлер мав свої плани на українські землі. Перша радянська недвозначно засвідчила наміри Кремля реалізувати у приєднаних 1939–1940 рр. українських регіонах більшовицький проект. В умовах зіткнення двох тоталітарних систем – радянської і нацистської – українські політичні сили самостійницького спрямування зуміли організуватися для спротиву і захисту корінних інтересів народу України. Організація українських націоналістів, представники інших політичних груп створили збройні формування – «Поліську Січ», Українську повстанську армію, кущові самооборонні відділи – які розгорнули боротьбу проти німецьких і радянських окупаційних військ і адміністрації. Це асиметричне протистояння мало велике політичне і морально-психологічне значення, стверджуючи вітальність «української ідеї» і неперервність боротьби за відновлення української державності. Сталінському режиму потрібно було понад 10 років, аби придушити національно-визвольний рух в Україні. Та українці не змирилися з комуністичною тиранією і чинили їй опір до падіння СРСР. Нині, у протистоянні з російським агресором, відбувається остаточний розрив України з імперським минулим й утвердження її як незалежної, демократичної держави.

Методологічні підходи дослідження базуються на теоретико-концептуальних напрацюваннях провідних дослідників, міждисциплінарному аналітичному й інтерпретаційному інструментарії та сучасному тезаурусі.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: «Українське питання», суверенітет, політична нація, державність, Друга світова війна, Росія, Німеччина, окупація, депортації, терор, геноцид.