



THE GREAT DECOMMUNISATION

UKRAINE'S WARTIME HISTORICAL POLICY

Tadeusz A. Olszański

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CONTENTS

THESES /5

INTRODUCTION /8

- I. THE WARTIME TRANSFORMATION OF HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS /10
- II. A LENIN-FREE UKRAINE – DECOMMUNISATION IN ACTION /17
- III. THE REAL END OF THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR /26
- IV. THE PLACE OF THE UPA IN THE NATIONAL TRADITION /29
- V. THE SHADOW OF THE HOLOCAUST /35
- VI. THE (FORGOTTEN) MEMORY OF THE VOLHYNIA MASSACRE /38
- VII. ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE, ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF WAR /41

CONCLUSION /49

APPENDIX /52

The one hundredth anniversary of the Ukrainian Revolution: the official celebration plan /52

THESES

- The war with Russia which began in 2014 has triggered serious changes in the way history is thought about by the Ukrainian public, especially in opinion-forming circles. The liberal reflection critical about the nationalist tradition initiated somewhat earlier has been rejected since wartime requires heroic narratives above all. Ukraine also had to counteract the propaganda offensive from Russia which wanted to equate the Ukrainian patriotic movement with radical nationalism seen at the time of World War II, which it branded as ‘fascist’.
- The present Ukrainian leaders do not view identity policy as an important element of the functioning of the state or that it is their primary task. Therefore they entrusted this task to the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance (UINP), an institution with small organisational potential. However, its head, Volodymyr Viatrovyh, has managed to turn it into an influential centre in a very short time, aiming not so much at studying and commemorating history but rather at actively forming the historical memory of Ukraine’s citizens. His activity, tacitly supported by the government, has caused a radical change in Ukraine’s remembrance policy.
- As a result of the war, the Ukrainian public, even its Russian-speaking section, turned their backs on Russia and its traditions. The fact that the official historical narrative of the Russian Federation increasingly refers to Soviet times makes it easier for Ukrainians to also reject the Soviet tradition, which is combined with their acceptance of decommunisation.
- Ukraine has seen a radical decommunisation of the public space since the Revolution of Dignity; almost all monuments bearing Soviet content (except for war monuments) have been removed and almost all the names of cities, towns and villages and a significant part of the names of streets and institutions

referring to the Communist regime have been changed. This process is still not over but has not been resisted by the public or regional elites.

- In 2015, Ukraine discontinued its use of the concept and the term “Great Patriotic War” (implicitly: of the Soviet Union) replacing it with the term “World War II”, which in the case of Ukrainians also lasted between 1939 and 1945. This involved emphasising the huge losses sustained by Ukraine and its contribution to the victory over Germany as well as a far-reaching reinterpretation of history aimed at causing the UPA to be recognised as one of the forces which co-formed the anti-Nazi coalition.
- The actions which the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance (UINP) and centres linked to it (for example, the influential portal Istorychna Pravda) have taken since 2014 have ultimately led to the UPA being made part of the positive tradition of national history. However, any critical reflection concerning this organisation has been hampered, given the wartime propaganda needs of and due to the fact that criticism of not only the UPA but also the Ukrainian national movement as a whole has been an element of Moscow’s anti-Ukrainian propaganda. The official narrative concerning the UPA and other nationalist formations existing at the time of World War II hushes up or downplays in various ways the crimes they committed.
- The participation of Ukrainians in formations which collaborated with the Nazis and contributed to the Holocaust is no longer a taboo in Ukraine. Nevertheless, this is still a difficult topic, which is often avoided and sometimes the Holocaust itself is downplayed, thus becoming an increasing problem in Ukraine’s relations with the West.
- If the propaganda work of the UINP is continued for a sufficient period, and the institute’s influence on school education

is preserved, the decommunisation of the national tradition will achieve its intended goal. However, building a positive memory of the UPA will be successful above all in the western and central parts of the country, while acceptance of the positive image of this organisation will also grow in eastern and southern Ukraine. What will contribute to this is the fact that a significant section of the Ukrainian public demonstrates a neutral attitude towards decommunisation regardless of the degree to which they accept it.

- A five-year cycle of commemorating one hundred years of the Ukrainian struggle for independence focused on the history of the Ukrainian People's Republic (a social democratic state set up in 1917) was launched in March 2017. These celebrations will certainly popularise this section of Ukraine's history, knowledge of which is currently very poor among the Ukrainian public. This may also lead to the emergence of a new national patriotic narrative.

INTRODUCTION

A few months before the Revolution of Dignity, OSW published a *Point of View* entitled ‘The Place of the UPA in the Great Patriotic War. The dilemmas of Ukraine’s historical policy’ written by the author of this paper¹. Some of its theses were soon rendered obsolete as a result of the developments which took place in the meantime: the category of the Great Patriotic War has been eliminated from Ukrainian political and historical reflection, while the narrative of the ‘Little Russia as an equal member of the Russian Empire’ was discontinued as a result of the war. No room has been left in Ukraine for any narratives of the historical union of Ukrainians and Russians.

In this text we will not repeat the descriptions of the preliminaries of the Ukrainian historical policy and the way it was changing until 2013. Instead, we will focus on the changes that have been seen in this area due to the Revolution of Dignity, the new role of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance, and the war with Russia².

This paper discusses historical policy in the strictest sense, skipping any other elements of the Ukrainian identity policy, such as the memory of those killed during the Maidan (Heavenly Hundred) and during the war (Heavenly Guard) manifested, for example, through the erection of numerous monuments. Nor does it raise the issue of the still existing, albeit less intense than under Viktor Yanukovych’s rule, dispute over the country’s linguistic

¹ Tadeusz A. Olszański, Miejsce UPA w Wielkiej Wojnie Ojczyźnianej. Dylematy polityki historycznej Ukrainy, *OSW Point of View*, 21 June 2013, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/punkt-widzenia/2013-06-21/miejsce-upa-w-wielkiej-wojnie-ojczyznianej-dylematy-polityki>

² Regardless of the fact that Kyiv formally declares that it is engaged only in an anti-terrorist operation (ATO), there is no doubt whatsoever that a regular, if undeclared, war is being fought in eastern Ukraine, currently with a low intensity of military activity. This is also how the situation is seen by Ukrainian citizens.

policy, top-down attempts to Ukrainise the media, or disputes as to whether the Donbas is part of Ukraine in civilisational terms and other similar issues.

This text consists of three parts. The first one discusses the decommissioning of the public space that took place in 2014–2016 and its significance. The second one presents the change of attitude towards World War II, including the problem posed by the Holocaust and the attitude towards the UPA and Stepan Bandera in the Ukrainian remembrance policy. The third part discusses a new element which is the most surprising and signifies the greatest changes in the Ukrainian collective consciousness: the process of returning the Ukrainian People's Republic and the struggle for independence in 1917–1921 to the positive national tradition; this was initiated in March this year and it will be possible to evaluate the success of this project in a few years at the earliest.

I. THE WARTIME TRANSFORMATION OF HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

The Revolution of Dignity has brought only one major change in the Ukrainian remembrance policy: the Leninfall (the spontaneous destruction of monuments to Lenin in February and March 2014) the scale of which meant that the government not only did not dare counteract the toppling of the statues of Communist leaders but also had to join in this process (with a few exceptions on the local level). Before further consequences of the revolution became visible, the war came and seriously changed the way the state and society function, including as regards experiencing and forming identity (and thus also historical policy). War was no longer a story of the past or of other distant countries: it affected their own land, their compatriots and often people close to them. And the opponent in this war was Russia, a country viewed by a very large number of Ukrainians³ as still not 'fully' foreign⁴ and whose language for many of them was the main tool of participation in public life.

The war provoked a sudden escape from the 'Russianness' manifested in both state policy (official restrictions on the presence of both the Russian language and cultural products originating from the Russian Federation, above all songs, in the mass media, eliminating Russian TV channels from cable networks, blocking Russian social networking media and an Internet browser in spring 2017), the activity of intellectual and culture-forming circles (a return to the slogan 'Away from Moscow'⁵, questioning any

³ The term 'Ukrainians' (outside historical contexts) used in this text in all cases means citizens of Ukraine, regardless of their declared and/or experienced ethnic identity. In those cases where members of the Ukrainian ethnic and national community are mentioned, the term 'ethnic Ukrainians' is used.

⁴ Ukrainian citizens can still enter the territory of the Russian Federation on the basis of identity cards.

⁵ 'Het' vid Moskv'y' in Ukrainian. This slogan was coined in the 1920s by Mykola Khvylovy, a Ukrainian poet and Bolshevik cultural activist.

positive links between Ukraine and Russia and between Russians and Ukrainians existing in the past), and the actions of ordinary people who often stop using the Russian language despite their highly insufficient command of Ukrainian, and make the effort to improve their knowledge of Ukrainian. The war seems to be far from over today, so it is difficult to predict what its ultimate impact will be on public life. However, the latter of the elements described above seems to be irreversible: residents of Ukraine consciously want to speak Ukrainian to an increasing extent. This obviously does not mean that Russian-speaking circles or national minorities will disappear, but they will no longer predominate.

The ongoing transformation of the Ukrainian historical consciousness is also affected by other factors which can only be mentioned briefly in this text. The war has strengthened the feeling, which had arisen earlier, that Ukraine is isolated on the international arena and can only count on itself (this view is manifested and also strengthened by the rhetoric describing the present war as the beginning of World War III where Ukraine alone is containing the Russian aggression directed against Europe as a whole⁶). There is also a growing conviction that, given the present situation, both international and domestic, Ukraine has no chance whatsoever of joining NATO or the European Union⁷. Sometimes the opinion can be heard that the ‘Polish Round Table talks in

⁶ Cf. the statement of the Ukrainian parliamentary speaker, Andriy Parubiy, of May 2016, “Our boys who defend Ukraine’s independence in the Donbas today are not fighting for Ukraine alone, but they are defending Europe as a whole, the entire civilised world”; <http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/parubiy/5739f7e2e7ec4/> accessed on 17 May 2016. A milder version of this view was formed in February 2017 by the liberal Ukrainian journalist Vitaly Portnikov, “Warsaw should understand that it is not Washington, not NATO and not Euro-Atlantic solidarity but Ukraine that protects Poland’s security and future” quoted from: <http://kresy24.pl.warszawa-powinna-zrozumiec-nie-nato-i-waszynnton-lecz-ukraina-broni-bezpieczenstwa-i-przyszlosci-polski/>, accessed on 8 February 2017.

⁷ Cf. for example, the statement made by Mykola Riabchuk in November 2016, www.raamoprusland.nl/dossiers/oekraine/311-ukraine-s-turbulent-past-between-hagiography-and-demonization, accessed on 16 November 2016.

1989 would have been impossible if not for the UPA's struggle with the NKVD in 1944–1953⁸, which is difficult to describe in terms other than a manifestation of megalomania.

The disturbance of the global order (the civil war in Syria, the emergence of Islamic State, the refugee crisis in Western Europe, and Brexit and the disputes over the future shape of the European Union associated with it) is perfectly seen from Kyiv's perspective, triggering the growing widespread response to it in the form of a search for stronger identities (national and other) and the revival of radical right- and left-wing movements. Ukraine is increasingly participating in the global circulation of ideas. Therefore, the state policy must take this into account.

What has had a great impact on the formation of Ukrainian historical policy was the fact that the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance (UINP) was granted the status of a central state administration agency⁹ and that Volodymyr Viatrovykh was put in charge of it¹⁰. Viatrovykh proved to be a brilliant organiser and quickly changed UINP, an institution which had been suffering

⁸ Oleksandr Zinchenko, 'Zamist' pislamovy' [in] *Vijya dvokh pravd. Polaky ta ukrayyntsi u kryvavomu XX stolitti*, Kharkiv 2017, p. 296. Similar opinions have also been expressed by other authors.

⁹ UINP was established by President Yushchenko in 2006 as a 'special status agency of the central executive power'. However, its heads at that time were inept and incompetent, and the institute did not play any major role then. In 2010 it was transformed into a governmental research and development centre and lost any significance (to the best of our knowledge, it was not engaged in any research activity). At present, the director of UINP is nominated by the government upon a motion by the prime minister, but his dependence on the government is only formal.

¹⁰ Volodymyr Viatrovykh was born in 1977 in Lviv. He is a historian (PhD thesis in 2004), publicist and social activist and, being the director of UINP, also a politician. He took part in the Orange Revolution in 2004 and in the Revolution of Dignity. In 2002–2008, he served as the director of the Centre for Research of Liberation Movement which he created (at present, he is the head of its academic council), in 2007–2008 he was an employee of UINP, in 2008–2010 he held the position of director of the Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine, in 2010–2011 he was on an internship at Harvard University. Viatrovykh has served as director of UINP since March 2014.

from staff and financial shortages¹¹, into the main centre of historical policy and even identity policy of Ukraine. Viatrovych and his associates skilfully use the opportunities offered by the modern media, including social networking and advertisement tools, and are engaged in large-scale propaganda and educational activity. One of UINP's major allies is the portal Istorychna Pravda, a section of Ukrayinska Pravda, one of Ukraine's most important internet socio-political portals.

The head of UINP skilfully capitalised on the fact that, even though the leading Ukrainian politicians were aware of the need for the state to adopt a historical policy, they completely failed to understand what it should be like, nor was it a priority for them. So Prime Minister Yatsenyuk entrusted this task to Viatrovych, who had earned great respect as one of Maidan activists but had neither the political experience nor the ambition to embark upon a formal political career and thus did not pose a threat to any faction or coterie. This way the head of UINP effortlessly gained the position of the main architect of Ukraine's historical policy; and this position has not been challenged by Yatsenyuk's dismissal and the increasing influence of President Poroshenko on the government¹².

Viatrovych is consistently implementing his agenda, above all its anti-Communist, state-building and anti-Russian elements, and

In his research he has focused on the activity of the UPA; his attitude to this organisation can be described as apologetic.

¹¹ UINP's budget in 2015 was 5.7 million hryvnias, and in 2016 it was increased to 8.4 million hryvnias (around US\$400,000); On 1 January 2017, UINP had 41 employees; data from the official report of UINP, <http://memory.gov.ua/page/zvit-ukrainskogo-institutu-natsionalnoi-pam-yati-z-realizatsii-derzhavnoi-politiki-u-sferi-vidn>, accessed on 16 February 2017.

¹² Reports that Poroshenko is dissatisfied with some elements of Viatrovych's policy, although unconfirmed, deserve attention. The amendments to the decommunisation laws of April 2015 discussed below were most likely introduced under pressure from the Presidential Administration. The gesture of the Ukrainian president who knelt down in Warsaw in front of the monument to the victims of the Volhynia Massacre (on 6 July 2016) was dissonant with UINP's 'political line'.

also the nationalist element as a lower priority (this is manifested above all in the context of the evaluation of OUN and the UPA). The institute he directs also continues issues of Ukrainian historical policy concerning the more distant past, such as the memory of the Holodomor (with an interesting shift of accent from the famine itself to resistance to collectivisation, including the insurgent movement in 1930–1932), the Mazepa Uprising against Russia (early 18th century) and the deportation of Crimean Tatars in 1944. Preserving the memory of the Revolution of Dignity, above all by collecting reports of its participants, has also been a very important part of UINP's activity.

The institute and its director act firmly, disregarding the opinions prevalent in the public sphere. Their ambition is to shape these opinions. They want to be 'decommunisers' not only of street names but also of people's minds. They understand that the war-time patriotic mobilisation which is viewed by a section of the public (including themselves) as a comfortable situation and not an inconvenience, offers them a unique chance. If they are able to act for a sufficient period of time, especially influencing school education, they may achieve durable success. They visibly do not care about the fact that this success may inflict serious reputational and political losses on Kyiv in international relations, especially with Poland, the European Union and Israel.

The activity of UINP has not met with serious resistance (except for several hooligan attacks on its Kyiv office and the surprisingly low number of complaints about local name changes). However, it is difficult to determine now what Ukrainians' real views are concerning historical issues; wartime does not contribute to the freedom of expressing opinions that are contrary to the official narrative, and it also influences the way sociologists formulate questions¹³. The answer 'I don't know' or 'difficult to say' very of-

¹³ Cf. the Report of the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the National Centre for Culture entitled *Ukraińcy o historii, kulturze*

ten means 'I don't want to say' or 'I'm afraid to speak my mind'. The statement that decommunisation is unnecessary (58%) to some respondents means a declaration of resistance, to others indifference, etc. Both genuine indifference and declaring to the pollster that it is contrary to one's beliefs contributes to the tendency to automatically accept the new narrative. In turn, the new narrative, as people become used to it, begins – also without reflection – to be accepted as their own.

What speaks volumes about Ukrainians' opinions on history is a comparison of answers to the question about the blame of Poles and Ukrainians in mutual relations before and after the Revolution of Dignity and the war¹⁴. Within this timeframe the number of respondents believing that both nations are to blame has dropped from 33% to 8%, and the number of those who are convinced that only the Polish side is guilty has fallen from 14% to 8% (the percentage of respondents who are of the opinion that Ukrainians are the only guilty ones has remained at the same level of 5%). What has increased (from 22% to 45%) is the number of people avoiding expressing their opinion, who chose the answer 'difficult to say' or said that none of the sides is to blame (from 26% to 34%), which the authors of the survey also interpret as a form of avoiding the answer and a desire to hide their beliefs, which in the respondent's opinion are contrary to the pollster's expectations¹⁵. The latter aspect need to be taken into consideration during an analysis of all Ukrainian public opinion polls conducted over the past few years.

According to polls, there has been an increase in the positive perception of OUN and the UPA (clearer in the case of the latter

i stosunkach polsko-ukraińskich. Raport z badania ilościowego i jakościowego, Warsaw 2017, for example, on pp. 38 (footnote 19) and 60. More references to this Report will be made in further sections of this paper.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 60.

¹⁵ It is worth adding here that the survey response rate in this case was 65.2% (*ibidem*, page 5), which means that one in three selected respondents refused to answer the question.

organisation). The degree of acceptance of the UPA has already surpassed 50%; it is treated mainly as an organisation which fought for Ukraine's independence¹⁶. The latter is above all an effect of many years of school education and therefore signifies – contrary to the conclusions of the report's authors – a further increase in the proportion of positive evaluations of the organisation with the ongoing generation change. Positive evaluations of Stepan Bandera are much rarer (36%), but also in this case there is an upward trend. The changes noted in the report prove that the new narrative of national remembrance is becoming entrenched and that the proportion of people manifesting a reconciliatory stance and willing to respect the point of view of both sides is decreasing. However, the percentage of respondents whose opinion is unknown means that such data need to be treated with great caution.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 48.

II. A LENIN-FREE UKRAINE – DECOMMUNISATION IN ACTION

While in the western districts of Ukraine (above all in Eastern Galicia) a decommunisation of the public space (the removal of statues of Communist leaders, change of the names of places, streets, etc. associated with the Communist system and the names of the patrons of institutions) was carried out in the early 1990s, hundreds of statues of Lenin, thousands of monuments and plaques commemorating the establishment and operation of the Communist system could still be seen in the rest of the country in autumn 2013, numerous places there still had Soviet names, and tens of thousands of street and institution names still referred to Communist times.

The Leninfall in winter 2014 made the completion of this process inevitable. On 9 April 2015, the Verkhovna Rada (parliament) of Ukraine adopted an act banning totalitarian symbolism recognising “the Communist totalitarian regime existing in 1917–1991 in Ukraine” and “the national-socialist (Nazi) totalitarian regime” as criminal and imposing a ban on the propagation thereof (this ban does not extend to spreading the ideologies linked to these regimes, which however is not explicitly written down)¹⁷ and the use of their symbols in public life and in the mass media¹⁸. One ex-

¹⁷ This act also imposed a ban on using the word ‘Communist’ in the names of organisations and institutions, which led to the banning of the Communist Party of Ukraine.

¹⁸ The act classifies as symbols of the Communist regime: the symbols of the USSR, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and other Soviet republics and European ‘people’s democracies’ (inverted commas as in the original) unless these are the currently applicable symbols of these countries, the national anthems of the USSR and Soviet republics, any symbols using the hammer and sickle, monuments and other depictions of activists of the Communist movement and Soviet government authorities and those commemorating events from the history of the Communist movement and the USSR (with the exception of those linked to struggle with the ‘Nazi occupiers’ and to Ukrainian science and culture) as well as names of places, administration units and other topographic objects linked to the history of the Communist movement and the USSR and their activists (with the same exceptions as in the case of monuments). The ban on the use of Nazi symbols has a much narrower scope:

ception was made for Soviet symbols at cemeteries and on monuments commemorating World War II. The ban also does not cover museum, research (including publications) and historical reenactment activities. A norm penalising the propagation of Communist and Nazi symbolism was added to the criminal code. Viatrovych (the author of the project), however, had to give up, most likely under political pressure, the idea of marking 23 August (the anniversary of signing the Ribbentrop–Molotov Pact) as the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Communist and Nazi Totalitarian Regimes¹⁹. Two years later, UINP returned to this idea in a draft national holiday reform (see below).

The content of the aforementioned act reveals an important element of Ukraine's historical policy which has already been present for some time²⁰: treating Nazism and communism (and not only so-called Stalinism) as equally totalitarian and equally criminal regimes that equally deserve international condemnation (the proposal to hold 'Nuremberg II' trials, establishing an international court for Communist crimes, has been repeated in Ukrainian political writing since the 1990s)²¹. Presumably, one of the motifs behind such a categorical approach to the issue under discussion was the deepening divide between Kyiv and Moscow.

it covers the name NSDAP, its symbols, propaganda slogans, the speeches of its leaders and the emblem and flag of the Third Reich (thus the ban does not extend to symbols of Nazi military units including SS troops and modern neo-Nazi symbols).

¹⁹ Cf. Volodymyr Viatrovych, *Chetver. Parlament. Dekomunizatsiya* (a blog post published on 8 April 2015, one day before the debate concerning the decommunisation laws), <http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/viatrovych/552578abe297e/>, accessed on 9 April 2015.

²⁰ Cf., for example, the article by Yuri Shapoval, a well-known historian representing the middle generation *Hitler, Stalin i Ukrayina: bezzhalni stratehiyi*, www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2013.05/123358/, accessed on 9 May 2017 (at the same time the article was re-published on the main page of *Istorychna Pravda*).

²¹ The same equality sign can also be found in the latest commemorations, for example, on the plaque next to the side gate to the Kyiv NKVD headquarters (it also served as temporary Gestapo headquarters) mentioning 'tens of thousands repressed by the totalitarian Nazi and Communist regimes' linked to this particular place.

1,320 monuments and busts of Lenin and 1,069 monuments and busts commemorating other Communist leaders and events linked to Communism²², and an unidentified number of plaques²³ were removed between mid 2015 and the end of 2016. The monuments that have remained intact include the monument to Shchors (a Bolshevik commander during the Independence War) in Kyiv²⁴, a monument to Fyodor Sergeev nicknamed Artem (a Bolshevik activist from Donbas) in Svyatohirsk²⁵, and also – at least until winter 2017 – a bust of Marx in the Kyiv-based Roshen confectionery factory. A Leonid Brezhnev bust has also been left intact in the heart of Kamianske (a historical name returned to the city formerly known as Dniprodzerzhynsk). For obvious reasons, decommunisation has not covered the territories that remain out of the control of the Ukrainian government. Most of the removed monuments are kept in the warehouses of municipal companies; there are plans to create an open-air museum with Communist monument sculptures.

The removal of statues of Lenin has been of great importance. As a rule, they occupied key symbolic places: on the market square, on the crossing of the main streets, in front of local government headquarters, dominating, along with monuments commemorating the Great Patriotic War, heroes in the symbolic space (monuments to Shevchenko, far less numerous, rarely occupied similarly prominent places). Thus their absence removed one of

²² For example, the colossal monument to the Cavalry Army near Brody of great artistic value has been removed. Its bronze part was stolen by local scrap collectors, and the local administration only had to remove the steel framework.

²³ These and further numerical data have been taken from Viatrovych's blog post of 27 December 2016, <http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/viatrovych/58624d866bb36/>, accessed on 27 December 2016.

²⁴ Its destruction was opposed by Viatrovych himself who insisted on removal of this artistically valuable monument from its very tall plinth in an undamaged condition. In May 2017, it was still standing covered with a blue-and-yellow veil.

²⁵ This monument, is a 20th century sculpture masterpiece and recognised as a historical monument, is 22 m high and is located next to the military frontline.

the main tools of Soviet dominance in the public space in its symbolic aspect. As a rule, only the sculptures and inscriptions were removed, while the plinths were left intact, alone may presume this is for mainly technical reasons. In some places, paintings or makeshift installations commemorating the Heavenly Hundred (as in Poltava) or Fatherland (as in Lubny) have been placed on the plinths. In western Ukraine, the plinths of the previously 'decommunised' monuments have been partly removed and partly used as the base for religious monuments. So in general, the plinths (or the places left after monuments that have been removed completely) are waiting for a new 'host', and local governments would rather not use them as the base for new monuments (many of these are still created in Ukraine regardless of the tough economic situation). Monuments commemorating the heroes from the Heavenly Hundred or those killed in Donbas have not taken the space once occupied by Lenins and Chekists.

Patriotic circles are increasingly calling for the demand removal of monuments to 'Russian-Ukrainian brotherhood' (such as the Kyiv monument commemorating the anniversary of Ukraine's unification with Russia, the so-called 'Yoke of Freedom', or a similar monument in Pereiaslav) and monuments to Russian state leaders (especially the monument to Empress Catherine II which was reconstructed over ten years ago in Odessa). UINP is willing to back up these expectations. However, it has not yet gone so far as to support them directly, most likely for tactical reasons; these monuments are not covered by the Decommunisation Act, while the remembrance policy is a prerogative of the local governments. However, surprising, unconventional moves have also been made in this area: in May 2017, the monument to Bohdan Khmelnytsky in Chernihiv has been reoriented so that it no longer points northwards, in the direction of Moscow²⁶.

²⁶ Khmelnytsky is a controversial character in Ukraine: on the one hand Ukraine under his rule liberated itself from Poland and built the foundations of its statehood, but on the other it was he who surrendered the country to Moscow, for which he has been strongly criticised, amongst others by Taras

The names of 25 communities and 987 places, including 32 cities (resolutions to this effect were passed in parliament²⁷) and of almost 52,000 streets, squares, etc. (in this case, the decisions were made by local governments or, if these did not take measures, by bodies of the territorial state administration) were changed in 2015–2016. There are no data concerning renaming companies, schools, community centres, etc. However, to the best of our knowledge, ten of thousands of them have changed their names, and this process is far from being over. Two oblasts have retained their old names: Dnipropetrovsk and Kirovohrad, because the list of the oblasts is written down in the constitution and the present Verkhovna Rada has been unable to collect the 300 votes required to amend the constitution even regarding this issue.

The change of city names has met with much stronger resistance (although only nine of the numerous court complaints reached the Supreme Court by the end of 2016²⁸), especially in the two industrial metropolises of Dnieper Ukraine: Dnipropetrovsk and Kirovohrad. In both cases a major section of the local elites and a large proportion of residents opposed the change and felt that restoring the previous names was unacceptable; these cities were previously named after the Russian empresses Catherine (Ekaterina): Ekaterinoslav and Elisabeth (Elizaveta): Elizavetgrad. In the former case the compromise solution was to sanction the colloquial name of the city, Dnipro (i.e. the Dnieper) that has been in use for decades, and in the latter case the local government had to accept another memorial name: Kropyvnytskyi (in honour of the playwright, actor and patriotic activist linked to this city who

Shevchenko. In summer 2017, suggestions were heard in Kyiv that the historical name Proskuriv should be restored to Khmelnytskyi (an oblast capital city in Podolia).

²⁷ The names of places located in Donbas and Crimea, the territories outside Kyiv's control, have also been changed. In the case of Crimea, the Crimean Tatar names have, as a rule, been brought back.

²⁸ The protests were mitigated to a great extent when it turned out that the change of the city or street name does not entail the need to change identity cards, blank forms, stamps, etc. early.

died in 1910). A somewhat grotesque conflict took place in Kom-somolsk near Kremenchuk, which had to accept the name of one of the villages on the territory of which the city was built in the 1930s: Horishni-Plavni (Upper Meadows); the name was resisted probably because its second part is similar to the Russian word 'plavki' (swimming trunks), but UINP did not yield to the protests and the complaint was rejected.

In the process of renaming locations, efforts were made to bring back their historical names (in those cases where they were available – many places, especially industrial cities, were established in Soviet times). New memorial names, traditional of not only Soviet but also earlier, Russian, toponymy, were introduced only in rare cases. Four villages received names linked to the tradition of the Ukrainian People's Republic²⁹, five others were named in honour of soldiers killed in Donbas who originated from those villages³⁰, and two located in the occupied territories were named in honour of those killed nearby³¹. No proposals of names associated with the OUN-UPA traditions have been made. Two places inhabited by the Bulgarian minority which used to be named after Bulgarian Communists were renamed after Bulgarian 19th century patriotic activists.

²⁹ Bohdanivske (formerly Zhovtneve, October) in Kharkiv Oblast, Hordiyen-kivtsi (formerly Shlyakh Nezamozhnyka, Poor Man's Road) in Kherson Oblast, Zahrodske (formerly Komunar) in Khmelnytskyi Oblast and Syniozhupannyki (formerly Petrovske, named in honour of Grigory Petrovsky, who is also the patron of Dnipropetrovsk). Only Zahrodske received the name of a person, a general of the Ukrainian People's Republic, while the other were named after military units.

³⁰ Susval (formerly Zhovtneve) in Volyn Oblast, Tokarivka (formerly Kudryavt-sivka, named after a local cacique) in Mykolaiv Oblast, Maksymivka (formerly Oktyabrske, meaning also October but in Russian) in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, Iline (formerly Panfilivka, probably in honour of one of the Red Army commanders of 1941) in Zaporizhia Oblast and Dobropasove (formerly Chervonyi Lyman) in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. In Susval, the residents, including the father of the fallen soldier, have opposed the new name, and the place will most likely be renamed again.

³¹ Uzhivka (formerly Leninske) and Stupakove (formerly Krasnyi Pakhar, Red Ploughman) – both in Donetsk Oblast.

For obvious reasons, many more streets and squares received memorial names. We do not have collective data to this effect; it is only known that 34 out of 51,500 streets have been named after Bandera, and in some cases also after other OUN-UPA leaders³². In April 2017, Odessa city council repealed the decision of the head of the oblast state administration concerning renaming some of the streets, bringing back the names of the patrons associated with World War II, and also, for example, Valentina Tereshkova (the first woman to have flown in space, later a Soviet and Russian stateswoman). In turn, the changes of the names whose patrons really met the criteria of the Decommunisation Act were not questioned. This suggests that similar over-zealousness may be seen in other locations. Naming one of Odessa's streets after Shukhevych did not encounter any protests. In turn, the city government in Mukachevo (Zakarpattia Oblast) in the first days of July 2017 replaced Bandera and Shukhevych streets with Cardinal Huzar and Metropolitan Sheptytsky streets³³; this was an element of the local elite's struggle with the unaccepted governor. However, it cannot be ruled out that other local governments will follow their example.

As in Eastern Galicia, where a similar operation was conducted more than twenty years ago, new address plaques for many years will be placed along the old ones, making it easier for older generations to find their way around, and serving as a history lesson to the younger generations.

³² Bandera, Shukhevych, etc. streets are commonplace in the western oblasts; these names were given earlier, often in the 1990s. Streets named after these leaders began to be named in southern and, less frequently, eastern Ukraine after 2015. In 2016, a section of Kyiv's internal circular road was named after Bandera, and in 2017, its extension on the left bank of the Dnieper was named for Shukhevych (the first decision did not meet with any controversies, while the second one provoked a dispute; attempts have been made to contest it in court, so far unsuccessfully).

³³ Cardinal Lubomyr Huzar (1933–2017), the head of the Greek Catholic Church in 2001–2011, enjoyed enormous respect in Ukraine, also among non-Catholics. Metropolitan Archbishop Andrey Sheptytsky (1865–1944) was a restorer of this Church and a patron of the Ukrainian national movement in Eastern Galicia.

Another rarely noticed element of decommunisation was the fact that Poroshenko in 2015 removed Soviet elements from the names of military units, above all the names of the awards they received which were integral parts of their names³⁴ and shifting the Fatherland Defenders' Day from 23 February to 14 October, the former Red Army Day, which is also celebrated in Russia as Fatherland Defenders' Day on the day of Pokrova, i.e. Mother of God's Care, one of the most important holidays in Ukrainian Orthodoxy, known for more than ten years above all as the symbolic anniversary of the establishment of the UPA. Regardless of the controversies that almost direct reference to this formation's tradition may provoke, shifting the celebration date is an important step distancing the Ukrainian tradition from the Russian one.

Another stage of decommunisation, according to UINP, will be a calendar reform, i.e. replacing 'Communist' holidays with 'national' ones. The draft published by the Institute in February 2017 which was adjusted in April 2017 after 'public consultations' which were not precisely identified³⁵ not only shifts the holiday commemorating the end of World War II from 9 to 8 May (both days will maintain the status of national holidays) but also introduces a number of new national holidays, including the Fatherland Defenders' Day, as non-working days.

The draft limits the number of non-working holidays and introduces a cycle distributed evenly during the year of holidays linked to national symbols (February – National Emblem Day, March – National Anthem Day, June – Constitution Day, non-working holiday, September – Flag Day), and also introduces six 'mournful days',

³⁴ Thus, for example, the 24th Samara-Ulyanovsk, Berdychiv, Iron, Awards of October Revolution, three times Red Banner, Suvorov's, Bogdan Khmelnytsky Mechanised Brigade named after Prince Danylo of Halych (the last section of the name was added in 2001) became the 24th Separate Berdychiv Iron Mechanised Brigade named after Prince Danylo of Halych.

³⁵ www.memory.gov.ua/news/institut-pidgotuvav-novu-redaktsiyu-zakono-proektu-pro-svyata, accessed on 10 May 2017.

including the Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust Victims (29 September, the anniversary of the Babi Yar Massacre), the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Crimean Tatar Genocide (18 May) and the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Communist and Nazi Regimes (23 August). Contrary to initial intentions, 1 May will remain a non-working holiday (but will last only one day) and 8 May will be an 'international holiday' but will be a working day. The draft has not yet been submitted to the Verkhovna Rada, and it is not known when this may happen. However, it does set a direction for action; an emphasis on state-building elements, remembrance of the victims of totalitarianism and of the latest developments (the anniversary of the beginning of the Revolution of Dignity will be a national holiday, while the anniversary of the massacre of 20 February 2014 will be a mournful day).

III. THE REAL END OF THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

The lengthy dispute between the concepts of the Great Patriotic War (fought by the USSR and its allies against Nazi Germany in 1941–1945) and World War II (fought by the Allies against Nazi Germany and Japan in 1939–1945) was radically resolved by the Act on the Commemoration of the Victory over Nazism in World War II in 1939–1945, adopted on 9 April 2015. The notion of the ‘Great Patriotic War’ was removed from public discourse, and it was recognised that, as in Europe, the anniversary of the end of the war was on 8 and not 9 May. This day was named the Day of Remembrance and Reconciliation, and already in the same year red poppies designed in a way that resembles a bullet wound became the symbol³⁶. However, 9 May, the traditional Victory Day has maintained a non-working holiday renamed as the Day of Victory over Nazism. This was a gesture towards the ever fewer World War II veterans and also a still significant number of Ukrainians attached to this holiday. One proof of the fact that this was a temporary concession is the aforementioned draft calendar reform which envisages that 8 and not 9 May will be a national holiday and a non-working day.

This change was accompanied by a new narrative concerning World War II and the role Ukraine played in it. For Ukraine, treated as a non-sovereign but separate political entity, the war began already on 1 September 1939 (the Nazi bombardment of Lviv, the military engagement of Polish Army soldiers of Ukrainian national background), and even a little earlier (in some interpretations, the fights between the Carpathian Sich and Hungarian troops in March 1939 marked Ukrainians’ first encounter with Nazism³⁷), and lasted until 2 September 1945, i.e. the Surrender

³⁶ And also so that they could be seen as red-and-black bows, the colours of the Bandera movement and the new Ukrainian nationalism. Both meanings were certainly intended.

³⁷ The Carpathian Sich were the self-defence forces of Carpathian Ukraine, an ephemeral state established in Zakarpattia at the time of the collapse of

of Japan. In this war Ukraine lost 8–10 million people (including 1.5 million Jews³⁸); this is the third largest death toll (after China – 15 million³⁹ and Russia 14 million), ahead of Poland (6 million)⁴⁰. Its soldiers fought mainly as part of the Red Army (6 million), the Polish Army (120,000), the UPA (100,000) and the armed forces of the USA (80,000) and the British Empire (45,000)⁴¹. As part of this narrative, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) is viewed as one of the Allied forces which took part in the war against Nazism, although it is rarely referred to as a belligerent. Similarly, the scale of Ukrainian collaboration with Nazism is presented as marginal, especially when compared to the massive collaboration

Czechoslovakia that was promptly annexed (with Hitler's consent) by Hungary. OUN militants from Eastern Galicia formed a great part of it.

- ³⁸ The estimated number of Ukrainian victims of the Holocaust is as a rule lower (850,000–900,000); this difference can be a result of the fact that the higher estimates take into account Jews originating from Ukraine who were killed outside its territory. (Cf. e.g.: https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A5%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%BA%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%82_%D0%BD%D0%B0_%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B5, accessed on 5 June 2017, where both estimates are mentioned as equally valid). This number includes individuals who had Soviet, Polish and Czechoslovak (Zakarpattian) citizenship before 1939.
- ³⁹ Paying attention to China's role and losses in World War II, which are usually unnoticed in Europe, is an interesting thread in the reflection of UINP and circles linked to it.
- ⁴⁰ Here and below, quoted from UINP's brochure *Ukrayina u Druhyi svitovyi viyni*, Kyiv 2015 and the work *Viyna i mif. Nevidoma druga svitova*, UINP i Klub Simeynoho Dozvilla, Kharkiv 2016. These data roughly correspond to estimates generally adopted (which are also full of discrepancies, for example, in the case of China these estimates range between 15 and 20 million military and civilian victims), although dividing the losses of the Soviet Union into those sustained by Russia, Ukraine and other republics poses serious methodological difficulties. The number of 100,000 people who joined and left the ranks of the UPA in 1942–1952 is most likely an overestimate.
- ⁴¹ In some publications UINP admits that Ukrainians also fought on the side of the Axis states: with Germany up to 250,000, Romania 24,000, Hungary 20,000, Slovakia 2,000 and Croatia 1,500. See: Recommendations concerning the celebration of the seventieth anniversary of victory over Nazism, www.memory.gov.ua/news/rekmdendatsii-schodo-zakhodiv-z-vidznaczen-nya-u-2015-rotsi-70-i-richnitsi-peremogi-nad-natsism accessed on 29 April 2015. The number of those who fought on the side of Germany must include police and guard formations; in other cases this concerns citizens of these countries of Ukrainian ethnic background.

of Russians⁴². The conclusion to which this argumentation leads is the view that “Ukraine was included in the group of the UN founding nations in recognition of the Ukrainian contribution to the victory over Nazism”⁴³.

One of the elements of including the UPA in the joint victory narrative are attempts of reconciliation between the veterans of both formations which takes place above all in the sphere of propaganda. The president and the head of parliament invite both of these and also veterans of the so-called Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO), i.e. the present war, to state celebrations, and posters presenting ‘the victors over Nazism’ from both formations shaking hands appear on city streets shortly before the Remembrance/Victory Day⁴⁴.

By changing the official name of the conflict of 1939–1945 and presenting Ukraine as a separate independent entity taking part in these events, UINP intends to put an end to the war against Germany being treated as common (all-Soviet) and instead recognizing it as national, fought jointly by Ukrainians from various formations and countries. Breaking the bonds with Russia in this area and building the national narrative has been the main goal, while bringing the perception of World War II closer to the way this war is viewed in Western Europe was of secondary importance.

⁴² Cf., e.g. *Viyna i mif. Nevidoma druha svitova*, *op. cit.*, pages 117–121. According to the figures specified there, the estimated number of members of ‘Ukrainian’ collaborationist formations was around 250,000, while the number of ‘Russian’ ones ranged between 300,000 and 800,000.

⁴³ *Ukrayina u Druhij... op. cit.*, p. 26, similar wording can be found on p. 22. Theses of this kind have already appeared : cf., e.g. Volodymyr Lytvyn (the then head of Ukrainian parliament), ‘Yedinstvo natsii’ [in] *Holos Ukrayiny* no. 13 of 24 January 2006, claimed that “the contribution of the Ukrainian nation to the victory over Nazi Germany and its allies forced the United Nations to respect its interests. Soviet Ukraine received the moral right to unite its lands. The stigma of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact has been lifted from this event”.

⁴⁴ The specimen of the poster is available on the website of UINP: <http://www.memory.gov.ua/page/ukrainska-druga-svitova>, accessed on 20 May 2017.

IV. THE PLACE OF THE UPA IN THE NATIONAL TRADITION

A photograph presenting President Petro Poroshenko wearing a military jacket and the inscription ‘cynical bandera’ in the place where the user’s name is usually presented appeared on Poroshenko’s official Facebook profile in spring 2017⁴⁵. The posting of this photograph can be viewed as proof of a kind of carelessness of the people in charge of the Ukrainian president’s image. However, the inscription proves that the term ‘Bandera/bandera’ is being decreasingly linked to the historical leader of OUN, and is becoming a definition of a certain patriotic option.

The Revolution of Dignity in which young people from nationalist organisations (the party Svoboda⁴⁶ and the marginal groups which became integrated already on the Maidan into the Right Sector⁴⁷) played a major, albeit not decisive, role, and then the war, in the first phase of which volunteer formations consisting to some extent of members of these organisations, played an immense role, contributed to increasing the popularity of Ukrainian nationalism, referring to the tradition of OUN and the UPA’s military struggle. This was on the one hand a result of the need for a distinct tradition of armed struggle against Russia, and on the other of the clear image of these organisations, their rhetoric and symbols which attract attention. This attractiveness has

⁴⁵ This photograph was used as an illustration for Mykhailo Dublyansky’s article *Derzhava, yaka stala Batkivshchynoyu* (with no perceptible link to its content), www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2017/04/14/7141248 accessed on 18 April 2017. Here ‘Bandera’ means a Banderovets, hence the small letter. This phrase can be found, albeit rarely, also in other sources.

⁴⁶ A nationalist political party which drew upon the OUN Bandera tradition and agenda, represented in parliament in 2010–2015.

⁴⁷ The Right Sector is the place occupied by radical football fans at Dynamo Kyiv Stadium. This name was used in the Maidan to create a joint organisational platform for groups of football fans and members of marginal ultra-radical nationalist and neo-Nazi groups. Some time later it was used as a base for a political party which has, however, remained a marginal grouping.

been bolstered by the image of the UPA as a military organisation which heroically struggled against the occupier promoted since the 1990s in school education (this image of the UPA has been present in Ukrainian school textbooks and publications addressed to teachers already since circa 1993–1994).

What has also contributed to the entrenchment of the positive image of the UPA and Banderovtsy (with a better or worse understanding of what that term means) is Russian propaganda, branding the entire Maidan community as ‘Banderofascist’ (in fact, radical nationalists formed a clear minority there) and reviving the old Soviet stereotype which places an equals sign between fascism on the one side and Ukraine’s struggle for independence against Russia on the other. This kind of propaganda provoked an understandable response: if the enemy speaks so bad about Banderovtsy, it is clear they are bad for the enemy, *ergo* they are good for us. This also provoked another response: they call us Banderovtsy to defame and degrade us – let’s be them with pride, let’s raise this name to the banners⁴⁸.

Bandera and Banderovtsy

Stepan Bandera became the main ‘hero’ of the Soviet anti-Ukrainian propaganda, even a negative symbol of the ‘Western’ Ukrainianness (cf. the contemptuous branding of the Ukrainian language as ‘Bandera tongue’, frequently seen until the 1980s) probably because of his name, being – using contemporary terminology – a meme per se, linguistically ‘foreign’ (the origin of the surname Bandera is unclear) and at the same time associated with the words ‘band, bandit’ (the term

⁴⁸ A group of young Jewish people from the Maidan responded to the anti-Semitic statements in the Russian media that “zhydobanderovtsy” (Jewish Banderovtsy) predominate on the Maidan by accepting this name and creating a symbol of Jewish Ukrainian patriotism: the menorah with the Tryzub inside. Later, members of the Jewish Maidan Sotnya were wearing red-and-black skullcaps.

‘bandera’ has been used in the meaning ‘Banderovets’ since at least the 1950s). The role played by Bandera at the time of World War II (he was in German captivity in 1941–1944) did not predestine him to become a symbol of either the UPA’s struggle or the crimes committed by this organisation; other people played the main role in both these areas. This Soviet propaganda stereotype has been taken over by independent Ukraine, reversing the signs.

Bandera himself, even though it is mainly he to whom monuments are erected (most of them were built before 2014), remains somewhat out of the way in this narrative. Official (and public, where present) remembrance is focused on Banderovtsy who are identified with the UPA, the ‘steadfast army’ and its commanders, especially Roman Shukhevych⁴⁹. It is they who are treated as heroes, it is their struggle that is meant to inspire the present soldiers, it is they who are the subject of hero-worship. Bandera only – if it can be put this way – embodies them.

The outbreak of the war froze and later extinguished the previously emerging critical reflection on the Ukrainian nationalist movement during World War II, raising the issue of the crimes it committed against Poles and also Jews and Ukrainians (the latter were the least frequent). There is now no return to this discussion. As has been stated by Mykola Riabchuk, an active participant of the dispute over the UPA before 2014: “Our intelligentsia and society will have to come to terms with the past in a fair manner, to recognise its unpleasant or disgraceful cards. But we cannot do this

⁴⁹ Proof of Shukhevych’s growing role in the Ukrainian narrative of national remembrance includes, for example, his 110th birthday in Lviv this year, which was celebrated with pomp even though this date coincided with the anniversary of the Lviv Pogrom of 1941 in which some of the soldiers of the collaborationist Nachtigall battalion led by Shukhevych were engaged. Ukrainian Jewish organisations unsuccessfully appealed for the celebrations to be cancelled.

according to the Russian paradigm or any other imposed on us from the outside”⁵⁰. In other words, a nation engaged in war cannot, as intellectual from unthreatened countries would like, “to look at the past as a foreign country”, it has to “make a choice regarding whom it supports at present”⁵¹. When the public climate in Ukraine becomes conducive to liberal and anti-nationalist reflection again, it will already be resumed by new people and in a new way.

In 2015, after the Great Patriotic War category was officially rejected, UPA tradition could be made part of the positive narrative of national remembrance in a new manner⁵². This tradition was alive above all in Eastern Galicia and Volhynia. However, after a quarter-century of the functioning of Ukraine’s uniform school education system, it can no longer be said that it was unknown outside this area. This is proven by the emergence of popular teaching materials devoted to Bandera and the UPA targeted in an obvious way at residents of central and eastern Ukraine⁵³.

The Act on the Legal Status and Honouring the Memory of the Fighters for Ukraine’s Independence in the 20th Century (part

⁵⁰ Mykola Riabchuk, *Svitlo vid temriavy. Andreas Umland, pamyat’ pro UPA i yevro-intehratsiya Ukrayiny*, www.istpravda.com.ua/columns/2017/01/14/149456 accessed on 16 January 2016. This text is a variant of the article for the portal Raam op Rusland quoted above.

⁵¹ Yuliya Yurchuk, *Proshloye pod pritselom amnezii: pamiat’ ob OUN i UPA v Volynskom regione na primere pamyatnika Klimu Savuru*, [in] www1.ku-eichstaett.de/ZIMOS/forum/inhaltruss26.html, p. 92, accessed on 22 May 2017. The author refers to D. Lowenthal’s work, *The Past is a Foreign Country*, Cambridge 1985.

⁵² It had always been present in the negative tradition due to Soviet propaganda, so it was easy to simply reverse the signs. Similarly, the return to the tradition of the Ukrainian People’s Republic has been difficult above all because it had vanished from official propaganda and thus from public consciousness after World War II.

⁵³ One example is the brochure by Vita Levytska, *Stepan Bandera i ya: opovidannia*, Kyiv 2016, published as part of the series ‘History of Ukraine. 12 credits’, aimed at facilitating primary school pupils to earn a maximum grade in history. This text is of a hagiographic nature: Bandera is presented as a relentless national resistance activist in the inter-war period, and also a brave boy scout who overcame limitations linked to his poor health.

of the decommunisation package discussed above) granted this status (amongst others) to all Ukrainian military organisations active during World War II which did not collaborate directly with Nazi Germany⁵⁴. Those which did, such as the Ukrainian Legion (of 1939), the Nachtigall and Roland battalions (of 1941), the Ukrainian Self-Defence Legion (of 1943–1944) and the SS Halychyna (Galizien) division, as well as numerous police and guard formations were not mentioned in the act, and thus their members were not recognised as fighters for independence. No one took care of the fact that the same people were often members of both (for example, a significant section of those who were UPA members in 1943–1944 had received military training in the ranks of Nazi pacification formations, known as *Schutzmannschaft*). It is also worth adding that the act did not grant veteran status to anyone, most likely because most of the organisations specified in it were not of a military character.

UPA, its leaders and ordinary members have ultimately joined the ranks of Ukraine's national heroes, even though it is suggested that those who committed crimes should be condemned or excluded from this group. This aspect of the operation of Ukrainian nationalist formations (both those who fought for independence and collaborationist formations) is, however, when possible left unmentioned or blurred; the issue of Ukrainians' participation in the Holocaust and the Nazi pacifications of Belarusian, Polish and Ukrainian villages is passed over in silence, while the Volhynia Massacre is presented as either a 'conflict with Poles' or

⁵⁴ This is their full list: Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists, People's Liberation Revolutionary Organisation (a little-known organisation established by UPA leaders in Volhynia in summer 1944), the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army of Ataman Taras Borovets (also known as Poliska Sich and the Ukrainian Liberation Army), the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council (a political agency established by the leaders of OUN-UPA at the beginning of 1945) and the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (a coalition of anti-Soviet organisations of various nations established under the aegis of OUN-UPA).

‘the Second Polish-Ukrainian War’⁵⁵, and the crimes committed at that time are treated as an element of ‘jacquerie’, the uncontrolled peasant movement⁵⁶ or as ‘symmetrical’ to the Polish crimes committed against the Ukrainian civilian population. Sometimes the developments of those times are presented as a conflict between two groups of citizens of the Republic of Poland which does not concern modern Ukraine, etc., more often the question is asked who began the spiral of the crimes and why it was the Poles.

The essence of the thesis of the ‘Second War’ places the UPA on the same platform as the Polish Home Army (as regards both the status of the organisations and the methods of their operation and their consequences)⁵⁷, and thus putting the state structures created by OUN-UPA in 1943 and the Polish Underground State on a par (for the time being this is merely implied but will soon probably be expressed openly). At the same time, the UPA is presented to an increasing extent as an anti-Nazi force and an objective ally of the Western powers. For the time being, this is taking place mainly in publications and media statements.

⁵⁵ This thesis was formulated for the first time by Viatrovych in his work *Druha polsko-ukrayinska viyna 1942–1947*, Kyiv 2011. It has become generally accepted also among authors whose views are far from nationalist.

⁵⁶ The pogroms of the Jewish population in 1917–1920 are presented by UINP in a similar manner – and much more in compliance with the facts – as ‘jacquerie’ in an attempt to limit (if not exclude) the responsibility of the UNP’s leaders for them. Cf. *Desyat’ mifiv pro ukrayinsku revolutsiyu*, <http://www/memory.gov.ua/desjat-mifiv-pro-ukrajinsku-revolutsiyu> accessed on 16 March 2017.

⁵⁷ Viatrovych even writes about “the Polish underground and its paramilitary structures (especially the Home Army)” and “the Ukrainian underground and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army” as parties to the conflict. (Volodymyr Viatrovych, ‘Polsko-ukrayinski vidnosyny v 1940-x. Propozytsiya istorychnoi dyskusii’ [in] *Vina dvokh pravd, op. cit.*, p. 266).

V. THE SHADOW OF THE HOLOCAUST

The Soviet narrative of World War II remembrance avoided differentiating its victims along national or religious lines. This was not, as is usually thought, a result of the desire to conceal Jewish (or Polish and others) victims but was rather an element of building a supra-ethnic and non-religious Soviet nation. This is the reason why inscriptions honouring ‘Soviet people’ or citizens of the Soviet Union were placed on monuments commemorating the victims of the then events (including the Holocaust and the Volhynia Massacre).

When after 1991 Ukraine became confronted with Poland’s expectations that citizens of the Republic of Poland who had been killed in its territory should be honoured separately, the slogan ‘victims should not be divided’ was coined and was used, for example, to block the construction of a Polish cemetery in Bykivnia. This conviction was strengthened by the fact that the Communist terror had relatively rarely employed the ethnic criterion and that ethnic Ukrainians, Russians, Jews, Poles and the less numerous representatives of many other nations are buried in the mass graves of the victims of the Great Purge⁵⁸. This is exactly the same as with the mass graves of those killed during World War II. Over the past few years, this way of thinking has fitted in with the tendency of strengthening the civic nature of the Ukrainian national community where it does not matter who is an ethnic Ukrainian, Russian, Jew or Pole, if all of them fight and die in defence of their common fatherland.

It seems that Kyiv does not notice or does not understand the significance of the memory of the Holocaust, including the demand to commemorate Jews precisely as Jews in the political discourse

⁵⁸ Representatives of numerous ethnic groups, including very numerous Poles being Soviet citizens, rest next to each other (with the exception of the separate section where Polish officers killed in 1940 are buried) in the Bykivnia Graves.

that is currently predominant in Europe and the USA. This has an impact on how their attitude towards Ukraine is shaped (in turn, Russia understands this perfectly). Ukraine and its most senior authorities were completely unprepared for confronting this discourse. President Poroshenko's apology for the participation of "some Ukrainians" in the Holocaust during his visit to Israel in December 2015 did not change much in this area – they passed almost unnoticed in Ukraine. It seems that even the presidential administration was not interested in promoting this event on the domestic arena because it did not fit in with the predominant and increasingly stronger perception of Ukrainians as a nation of victims and heroes.

The speech the president of Israel, Reuven Rivlin, gave at the Verkhovna Rada in September 2016 was groundbreaking. He stated directly that many Ukrainians collaborated with the Nazis during the Holocaust in Ukraine, pointing, in particular, to members of OUN. This met with resistance in Ukraine, which disheartened Ukrainians instead of motivating them to start a serious discussion on the scale of Ukrainian participation in the Holocaust⁵⁹ and the legacy of Ukrainian anti-Semitism and its present shape. It seems unlikely that such a discussion could be started in a situation when even in the opinion of moderate Ukrainian historians and publicists, the voices of European critics are in unison with Moscow's anti-Ukrainian propaganda, even if this similarity is accidental⁶⁰.

Two more elements obstruct Ukrainian reflection on the Holocaust. The first one is the desire and endeavour to perceive their own nation only in terms of victimhood and not allowing the thought that 'we' could have committed crimes. This problem,

⁵⁹ It is indisputable that Ukrainians, who were both Polish and Soviet citizens before the war, took part in this crime, but their participation has still not been researched in a sufficiently detailed manner.

⁶⁰ Cf. Riabchuk's opinion quoted above (footnote 50).

which has also been present in Polish disputes, does not require much comment. Another one is the endeavour initiated by President Viktor Yushchenko to present the Holodomor⁶¹ not only as genocide against the Ukrainian nation but as a crime, comparable to the Holocaust. This rhetoric was discontinued during Yanukovich's presidency, but it returned with renewed vigour after 2014. In May 2017, Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman (by the way, a Jew who publicly declares his identity) on his official visit to Israel appealed once again to the Knesset to recognise the Holodomor as genocide. This demand is difficult for Israel to accept.

⁶¹ A famine which affected the Ukrainian part of the Soviet Union in 1932–33, at least partly stimulated by the Soviet government (in Kyiv's opinion, it was intended and planned by the central government). Most likely, the death toll was around 3.5 million people. The term Holodomor does not cover famines of the same period which affected territories of the Soviet Union other than the lands inhabited by ethnic Ukrainians.

VI. THE (FORGOTTEN) MEMORY OF THE VOLHYNIA MASSACRE

The Polish-Ukrainian remembrance conflict over the operation of the UPA and, more precisely, the recognition of the mass murders of the Polish population in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia as an act of genocide, has been severely escalated in effect of the processes taking place in both countries. There is no doubt that for UINP and the circles supporting it the memory of the Volhynia Massacre is inconvenient and they would rather freeze any discussions concerning this issue. However, they have to tackle this issue, given the growing interest it is provoking in Poland (also among researchers and politicians). However (unlike, for example, with decommunisation) their actions in this area are no more than responsive; they do not try to take any action until Warsaw takes steps. The methods of downplaying or denying the UPA's crimes have been briefly outlined in section III.

Kyiv (and this opinion is prevalent among the Ukrainian political class) does not agree to recognising the Volhynia Massacre as an act of genocide, employing a variety of arguments⁶², mainly those focused on the assumption that a party engaged in a struggle for national liberation cannot commit such a crime (or, perhaps, any crime), even if it takes action with regard to 'an invader' civilian population, and also that the term 'genocide' can only be used, if a competent international court has ruled that this status should be granted to a given event. The fact that this term was used in the resolutions of the Polish parliament met with particular criticism in 2016⁶³. The latter seems to be an essential point of the allega-

⁶² An overview of this argumentation can be found in: Andriy Kozitskiy, 'Volyn: nevdala sproba 'ostatochnoho rozvyazannia' naukovoï problemy' [in] *Viyina dvokh pravd*, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-151.

⁶³ On the other hand, this does not prevent Ukraine from claiming that the Holodomor was an act of genocide committed against the Ukrainian nation and convincing the parliaments of more and more countries to officially recognise this fact.

tions that the Polish side is ‘politicising’ an issue that should be left to historians alone⁶⁴.

A new tendency in interpreting the events of 1943–1944 has been noticed over the past two years: questioning the reliability of Soviet sources concerning UPA crimes (especially records of interrogation of UPA members). Without going into the details of these strictly academic polemics, it is difficult not to notice another ‘manoeuvre’ in this tendency which appeals to the Ukrainian public even more strongly since it fits in with the broader trend of the de-Sovietisation of Ukrainian historical memory.

UINP has suggested a formula of reconciliation based on a strict symmetry of both actions and evaluations; Poland and Ukraine should jointly honour the victims of the conflict, jointly condemn those who committed crimes and create a common platform for dialogue between historians, publish a joint presidential Declaration of Remembrance and Reconciliation, jointly set a day of remembrance of the victims of the conflict and together erect a monument to the victims with the inscription ‘Mutual hatred was buried here’⁶⁵.

The list presented above contains one more element that deserves separate attention: in Zinchenko’s opinion it is necessary “to mutually admit that ‘all victims of the conflict are ours, not Ukrainian or Polish, but human’”⁶⁶. These words are a clear reference not

⁶⁴ The latter demand also has another point: Viatrovych and his associates would like to remove Ukrainian politicians from remembrance policy and turn it into their own monopoly.

⁶⁵ Zinchenko, *op. cit.*, pp. 297–298. According to this author, one of Viatrovych’s closest aides, this is a summary of the concept presented by UINP in 2014 to the government of Ukraine.

⁶⁶ Zinchenko, *op. cit.*, p. 297. The source of the internal quotation is not specified. Cf. also another Zinchenko’s statement: “becoming aware of the fact that all victims are ours can be a formula of reconciliation. Not Polish, not Ukrainian – human; we must jointly condemn this and bury mutual hatred”, <http://hromadskeradio.org/programs/rankova-hvylya/wyznannya-podiy-na-volyni-genocydom-pogirshyt-vidnosyny-ukrayiny-i-polshchi-istoryk> accessed on 17 June 2017.

only to Christian humanism but also to the aforementioned Soviet concept of 'not dividing the victims'. The author deliberately disregards here the fact that the present dispute over the events that took place in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia in 1943–1945 concerns the attitude towards the perpetrators (especially the UPA as an organisation) and not the victims.

VII. ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE, ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF WAR

Independent Ukraine has not decided as yet to formally draw upon the tradition of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) that was proclaimed in 1917 and was ultimately destroyed by Bolshevik Russia three years later. The fact that Mykola Plaviuk, the last president of the UNR in exile, handed over the Republic's insignia to the president of Ukraine in 1992 was disregarded by the Ukrainian state, and the constitution mentions only in general terms "centuries of tradition of the operation of the Ukrainian state." The Ukrainian Independent [and] United State proclaimed by Bandera's OUN⁶⁷ (which did not become a political reality) is mentioned much more frequently than the UNR in popular historical rhetoric.

UINP has suggested adding a preamble to the governmental draft Act on the Participants of the Struggle for Ukraine's Independence of 9 April⁶⁸ 2015 which states, amongst other things, the following, "considering the fact that the Central Council of Ukraine on 9 (20) November 1917, under its Third Universal, proclaimed the Ukrainian People's Republic, and on 9 (22) January 1918, under the Fourth Universal, the Ukrainian People's Republic was announced as a self-reliant, independent, free and sovereign state of the Ukrainian Nation (...) emphasising the fact that on 8 (21) December 1917 Soviet Russia launched military aggression against the Ukrainian People's Republic which led to the occupation and later annexation of Ukrainian territory (...), considering the existence of the government and other state bodies of the Ukrainian People's Republic in exile after the occupation and annexation of

⁶⁷ Few people, even in Ukraine, pay attention to the fact that this act was in the form of restitution and not proclamation of independence. Therefore, even though the new name was introduced, it also drew upon the tradition of the UNR.

⁶⁸ The text is available on: http://search.ligazakon.ua/l_doc2.nsf/link1/JH1Y-100A.html, accessed on 2 June 2017.

Ukrainian territory in 1920–1992 and the fact that on 22 August 1992, the President of the Ukrainian People’s Republic in exile, Mykola Plaviuk, submitted an official letter from the UNR State Centre to the President of Ukraine stating that the Ukrainian State proclaimed on 24 August and approved by the people of Ukraine on 1 December 1991 is the continuator of the state-national traditions and the legal successor of the Ukrainian People’s Republic (...). This Act determines the legal status of the participants of the struggle for Ukraine’s independence in the 20th century”.

It is written further in article 3.2 of the draft that, “The state recognises the struggle for Ukraine’s independence in the 20th century as legal⁶⁹ because its goals, forms and methods did not contradict the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international acts of law.” It finally states in article 7.2 that “individuals guilty of violating this act shall face liability envisaged by the law,” which was merely a declaration devoid of any legal meaning⁷⁰.

Presenting the matter this way was a symbolic breakthrough that rooted modern Ukraine in history and made its right to independence (in fragments which have been skipped here) based not on the generally understood right of nations to self-determination (as is provided in the constitution) but on specific acts of international law. The argumentation for the struggle for Ukraine’s independence to be recognised as legal (complying with a law of nations) was selected well, and the norms were correctly established on its grounds from the formal viewpoint.

For reasons that are not quite known, probably under pressure from the Ukrainian president’s inner circle, a day before the vote,

⁶⁹ The word ‘pravomirnost’ used in the Ukrainian text is a strict equivalent of ‘legality’ as a legal term.

⁷⁰ Imposing real liability would require determining the kind of liability (criminal, administrative, civilian) and precise acts recognised as ‘violations of the act.’

the draft was replaced with a new one, a hastily written modification of the previous one. It was announced that it was no longer a governmental but a parliamentary draft⁷¹. The new preamble, significantly shorter, was stripped of any political meaning. The provision concerning the legality of the struggle for independence was put as follows (article 2.2): “The legal ground for granting legal status to those who fought for Ukraine’s independence in the 20th century are international acts and national legislation of Ukraine pursuant to which the state recognises as legal the forms and methods of struggle for the independence of Ukraine in the 20th century” (and thus that the struggle for independence was legal because the modern Ukrainian state deems it so). Finally, the penal provision (article 6) was significantly expanded and received the following wording: “6.1: Citizens of Ukraine, foreigners and stateless persons who demonstrate a contemptuous attitude in public towards the individuals referred to in article 1 of this act, impede the exercise of the rights of those who fought for Ukraine’s independence in the 20th century and shall be held liable in compliance with Ukrainian legislation currently in force. 6.2 Public denial of the legality of struggle for the independence of Ukraine in the 20th century shall be deemed as deriding the memory of those who fought for Ukraine’s independence in the 20th century and degrading the dignity of the Ukrainian Nation, and is illegal”⁷².

The initial coherent draft has been completely wasted. Reading the adopted text of the act, it is impossible to understand what the legality of the struggle for Ukraine’s independence results from or even what it is. The wording of the penal regulation has been elaborated in a grossly imprecise manner and means that it can be

⁷¹ Formally, it was put forward by Yuri Shukhevych, a member of Oleh Lyashko’s Radical Party faction, a son of the UPA commander, Roman Shukhevych. However, it is obvious that Shukhevych was not the author of this document.

⁷² All quotations originate from the official text of the act as in <http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/314-19/print1301001262798510>, accessed on 19 May 2015.

understood as an introduction to restricting the freedom of academic publications, which has provoked serious criticism⁷³. The overriding goal of the act – to formally link Ukraine’s ‘new’ independence with the ‘old’ one – has been missed completely. In this case Viatrovykh sustained a painful defeat.

However, UINP has not given up on restoring the 20th century state tradition in Ukraine. The one hundredth anniversary of these events served as an occasion for this. In March 2017, the Ukrainian government approved the Action Plan prepared by UINP in connection with the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the Ukrainian National Revolution of 1919–1921⁷⁴. The celebration plan is focused on the state-building process and military actions; there is no place for it for the insurgent movement led by Nestor Makhno⁷⁵ or actions taken by other ‘atamans’⁷⁶, or for the overthrow of the Republic by Hetman Skoropadskyy and its restitution as a result of people’s uprising. There is no place in it for the Polish-Ukrainian alliance of 1920. A list of the anniversaries taken into account in the plan and a list of the most important events skipped in it are provided in the Appendix.

⁷³ It was only in January 2017 that a draft appeared proposing introducing to the Criminal Code of Ukraine the crimes of publicly negating the legality of the struggle for Ukraine’s independence in the 20th century and of publicly negating the Holodomor. However, not even attempts to put this on the agenda have been made as yet.

⁷⁴ www.memory.gov.ua/news/uryad-zatverdiv-plan-zakhodiv-z-vidznachennya-100-richchya-podii-ukrainskoi-revoljutsii-1917-19, accessed on 6 March 2017.

⁷⁵ Nestor Makhno created a powerful army in southern Ukraine in 1918–1920 which did not report to any state agency. He would temporarily cooperate with the forces of UNR and Bolsheviks, to be finally defeated by the latter.

⁷⁶ Local leaders of guerrilla troops, some of which had several thousand or even more than ten thousand soldiers, who backed UNR in the struggle against the hetman towards the end of 1918 but who later turned against it. Localness (focusing on defending the immediate neighbourhood) and an unwillingness to join the ranks of a regular army were among the characteristics of the ataman movement.

The fact that the term ‘Ukrainian revolution’ has come into official use is of key significance in itself. From circa 1991, only a group of historians used it, including Orest Subtelny⁷⁷, who is very influential in Ukraine, and it also appeared in some textbooks. However, the predominant trend was to treat these events – in compliance with the Soviet and Russian historiography – as part of the all-Russian revolution and civil war, and thus a derivative of the processes which were centred on Moscow and Petrograd⁷⁸. At present, the Ukrainian struggle for independence is becoming an autonomous event/process, the developments in Russia are treated as external, and the operations of Russian troops, be they Bolshevik or White Guard forces, in Ukraine are viewed as foreign invasions.

The celebrations include numerous planned academic conferences and publications and will most likely provoke numerous discussions and disputes⁷⁹ that will be meaningful not only for historical consciousness but also for the modern reflection on state and nation. The Ukrainian People’s Republic was a Socialist (but not Bolshevik) entity, and it was only the Bolshevik invasion that forced it to take a pro-independence stance; a well-governed and efficient Ukrainian state was created (although for only a few months and under German occupation) by Pavlo Skoropadskyyi,

⁷⁷ Cf. Orest Subtelny, *Ukrayina. Istoriya*, Kyiv 1991, p. 310. For more details on the role played by this work in the shaping of the historical narrative of independent Ukraine see: Tadeusz A. Olszański, *Miejsce UPA w Wielkiej Wojnie Ojczyźnianej...*, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁷⁸ The grounds for treating the then developments as a revolution and not merely a struggle for national liberation, as well as for the distinctness of the Ukrainian and Russian revolutionary processes can be found in: Jarosław Hrycak, *Historia Ukrainy 1772–1999. Narodziny nowoczesnego narodu*, Lublin 2000, pp. 115–118.

⁷⁹ It seems that the UINP’s publication is a foretaste for these: *Ten myths of the Ukrainian Revolution*, www.memory.gov.ua/news/desyat-mifiv-pro-ukrainsku-revoljutsiu, accessed on 16 March 2017; as are the articles published in *Holos Ukrainy*, the official newspaper of Ukrainian parliament, on 28 January 2017, pp. 4–5. Cf. also the article by Yulia Oliynyk, *Ostatocno prokynuty-sia*, in: <http://tyzhden.ua/Society/164034>, accessed on 5 January 2017.

a conservative aristocrat and, independently of him, by Ukrainian National Democrats from Eastern Galicia. The hero of the anti-Bolshevik offensive of 1918 and probably the most skilful of the Ukrainian commanders of the epoch, Petro Bolbochan, was executed in 1919 on Symon Petliura's order for excessive political and military self-reliance. There are many controversial episodes like this. Judging from the materials published so far, UINP is trying to unite these traditions and blur the conflicts and controversies. How successful will it be?

The commemorations of the one hundred years of the struggle for independence are also meaningful in current politics; Ukraine is again at war with Russia. One may wonder whether, if not for the war, the accents would have been distributed similarly or not in the celebration programme. Hushing up the memory of Makhno and other atamans and accentuating the operations of the regular army obviously served the current political goals; political and military lawlessness is still a threat to the state. It is not a coincidence that, when criticising the lawless blockades of railway connections with Donbas, President Poroshenko branded them as 'ataman-like' in a clearly negative meaning. A similarly contemporary context can be found in the words of Parliamentary Speaker Andriy Parubiy on his opening speech on the occasion of the official celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the revolution: "In March 1917, along with Ukrainian parliamentarism, the Ukrainian army was reviving. The army which was and is a foundation of the Ukrainian state. (...) The Ukrainian soldier was the only ally to have never betrayed his own nation, to have never betrayed Ukraine⁸⁰.

During the same ceremonial session of Ukrainian parliament on 17 March 2017, Viatrovych, who was invited to take the floor, not only returned to restoring the 'state-building legacy' of the UNR to Ukraine but also stated, "Our century-long war for freedom is

⁸⁰ www.rada.gov.ua/print/141729.html, accessed on 21 March 2017.

not over yet”⁸¹. Ten days later, Parubiy began his speech on the occasion of the anniversary of the Battle of Kruty as follows: “The war with Ukraine’s perennial enemy, Russia, has been underway already for one hundred years almost without interruption”⁸². In statements that followed, various authors backed this thesis, for example, by extending the notion of hybrid war so that it could also cover the Holodomor.

This project is planned to continue for almost five years⁸³. If it is carried through, it may bring serious changes in Ukrainians’ historical and civic consciousness. The emphasis on the UNR tradition free of ethnic nationalism will contribute to building a new, civic and democratic Ukrainian nationalism, and also a new archetype of struggle for one’s own state, offering an alternative to the currently predominant UPA tradition and providing a chance to choose one of the variants of the unambiguously patriotic tradition. This will allow the tradition of the national state to be expanded to those circles to whom the UPA tradition is and will remain difficult and even impossible to accept.

A return to the various threads of previous controversies will also broaden the field of political discourse which is extremely limited at present; it will offer a chance for Ukrainian conservative groupings to become stronger (drawing upon the tradition of Hetman Skoropadskyi) and a revival of the Ukrainian social left (drawing upon the pro-independence traditions of Socialist parties). If it becomes possible to establish a formal link between modern Ukraine and the Ukrainian People’s Republic and its continuity

⁸¹ The text of this speech can be found on the author’s blog <http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/viatrovych/58cbde2177a8d/>, accessed on 2 March 2017.

⁸² *Holos Ukrayiny*, 28 January 2017, p. 1.

⁸³ One of its elements will be the rehabilitation of the participants of the fights for liberation in 1917–1921, i.e. repealing the sentences imposed on them by Soviet courts; this is a purely symbolic act after one hundred years. Attorney General Yuri Lutsenko in January 2017 promised that an act regulating these issues would be passed.

is cherished by the supreme state authorities and diplomacy⁸⁴, Ukraine will reinforce its position on the 'symbolic' map of the world gaining the standing of a state that has a tradition longer than the merely post-Soviet.

⁸⁴ Ukraine's independence in 1918–1919 was officially recognised by 24 countries, and unofficially by five more.

CONCLUSION

Ukraine's remembrance policy and also its historical memory (not only in connection with this policy) is undergoing a great transformation. The war has revalorised numerous thought patterns, numerous hierarchies. Increasingly more is being heard from pro-Western but non-liberal circles who share the concepts of the nation, state and history rooted in the first half of the 20th century but which have been given up in the West. More is also being heard from the new generation formed in an independent Ukraine, to whom World War II is already history but for whom the ongoing war with Russia is a profound, formative experience (also to those who take no direct part in it).

Ukraine is not a 'lonely island'; the changes taking place across the modern world also affect it. In turn, identity policy is currently undergoing great changes linked to its new socialisation (or democratisation) resulting from new information sharing technologies. The increasingly strong role played by social media segmenting the discourse (that help exchange opinions not only within a circle of those with a similar mindset), Twitter which forces its users to formulate their thoughts in a very brief form and thus radically, without going into any nuances or explanations, the Internet memes combining the serious message with the satirical, less and less time left to respond (discussions even under serious articles published on blogs rarely last longer than ten or so hours) all impede a serious exchange of thought. On the other hand, the new opportunities mean that many more people are participating in public discussions than as recently as twenty years ago, and thus views which used to remain within the private space are now articulated in public.

The advantage of the Internet media over the 'classical' media has also brought about 'post-truth', a lie which is easily spread and difficult to spot. In the initial phase of the Donbas war, it was employed on a great scale above all – though not exclusively – against

Ukraine and its external allies. Manipulating public discourse is now easier, and it is increasingly difficult – for ordinary audiences it is practically impossible – to unmask this manipulation, and especially to distinguish what is a spontaneously formed, earnest (though erroneous) opinion and what is a well-thought-out lie aimed at derailing the discussion. This is being used by various centres of influence interested in pushing public discussions in the directions desirable to them.

This has a special meaning for historical policy because its threads are usually commonly familiar and understandable to societies (unlike economic, financial and legal issues) and also because almost all society members care about identity disputes.

The changes that have taken place across the globe over the past twenty years have led to a growing demand for a sense of security. One of its sources is a strong collective identity and, above all, national (more frequently understood in ethnic than political terms) and religious identity. As a result, conflicts over remembrance tend to be reborn rather than extinguished in highly developed countries (examples of this include the fact that the Spanish political left has resumed its demand that the body of General Franco be removed from the Valle de los Caídos or attempts to remove monuments to Confederacy leaders in the southern states of the USA), and nothing suggests that this trend will be reversed. This phenomenon has also affected Ukraine, where its effect is reinforced on the one hand by the previous weakness of modern liberalism and on the other by the ongoing war and the clear deterioration of the living standards of most Ukrainians.

The operation of UINP meets the needs of the new situation and at the same time the new situation is being used to remodel Ukrainians' historical consciousness. Since it has the status of a state agency, its potential to influence is much higher than that of other centres tasked with similar goals which have only social media at their disposal. The institute operates with great self-confidence,

disregarding public opinion or possible international consequences. Its administration clearly does not care about the possibility of a deterioration of relations with Poland or Israel, nor do they care much more about the possible deterioration of relations with the European Union, especially given the currently predominant view that Ukraine has no chance of joining the EU. The only thing that matters to them is Ukraine and that Russia is a deadly enemy and the 'antithesis' of Ukraine. On the other hand, leading Ukrainian politicians focused on current affairs seem not to see the external costs of such a historical policy or disregard these costs. The operation of the institute fits in with the general national patriotic mobilisation actively co-created by the central government. Thus UINP has been given a free hand and can implement its extensive plan of modifying Ukraine's collective memory.

TADEUSZ A. OLSZAŃSKI

APPENDIX

The one hundredth anniversary of the Ukrainian Revolution: the official celebration plan

The plan for celebrating one hundred years of the war for independence developed by the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance and approved by the Ukrainian government⁸⁵ envisages the commemoration of the anniversaries of the following events⁸⁶.

- [1] The one hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of the Ukrainian Revolution and the establishment of the Central Council of Ukraine, March 2017.
- [2] The one hundredth anniversary of the forming of the First Ukrainian Regiment named after Bohdan Khmelnytsky, May 2017.

This regiment, and after it a few others, was formed as part of re-forming of Russian army units. No large-scale celebrations of this anniversary were seen.

- [3] The one hundredth anniversary of the establishment of Secretariat General of the Central Council of Ukraine, the first Ukrainian government, June 2017.
- [4] The one hundredth anniversary of the proclamation of the Ukrainian People's Republic, November 2017.

It may be expected that this will be the beginning of the proper cycle of celebrations on the state level.

- [5] The one hundredth anniversary of the proclamation of independence of the Ukrainian People's Republic, January 2018.

This sequence of anniversaries illustrates the way the Ukrainian patriotic left has evolved from the demand for

⁸⁵ www.memory.gov.ua/news/uryad-zatverdiv-plan-zakhodiv-z-vidznachennya-100-richchya-podii-ukrainskoi-revoljutsii-1917-19, accessed on 6 March 2017.

⁸⁶ The left column contains the exact wording as included in the plan (skipping the entities in charge of holding the celebrations); the right column includes the necessary comments and also mentions important events which have been skipped in the plan.

broad autonomy as part of the Russian Republic through a federated state (after the Bolshevik Revolution) to full independence (after the Red Guard launched the attack on Kyiv).

- [6] The one hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Kruty, January 2018.

The Battle of Kruty on 29 January slowed down the Bolshevik march towards Kyiv, facilitating Ukraine's peace negotiations with the central powers.

- [7] The one hundredth anniversary of approving the Tryzub as the national emblem of the Ukrainian People's Republic, February 2018.

- [8] The one hundredth anniversary of liberating Crimea from the Bolsheviks, April 2018.

Ukrainian troops, by gaining control of central and then eastern and southern Ukraine, were operating as part of the much stronger German troops occupying the territories surrendered to them by Russia under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

Skipped: The overthrow of the UNR by Hetman Skoropadskyi in April 1918 (supported by German troops), the proclamation of the Ukrainian State (it survived until December 1918).

- [9] The one hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Ukrainian Navy, April 2018.

- [10] The one hundredth anniversary of the 'November Upsurge', the Ukrainian uprising in Lviv as a consequence of which the Western Ukrainian People's Republic was proclaimed, November 2018.

- [11] The one hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, November 2018

This was one of the last moves of Hetman Skoropadskyi.

Skipped: The overthrow of the Hetman's state and reinstatement of the UNR after a short civil war.

- [12] The one hundredth anniversary of the announcement of the Act of Unification of the Ukrainian People's Republic and the Western Ukrainian People's Republic, January 2019.

Skipped: The fall of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic (July 1918), clashes with Denikin (White Russian) troops

(May-November 1918), Petliura taking the dictatorship in the UNR (November 1918).

- [13] The one hundredth anniversary of the First Winter March of the UNR Army, December 2019.

The Winter March was an attempt of saving part of the forces of the defeated army by sending it on a raid in the rear of Denikin and the Bolshevik armies. It continued until May 1920 and ended by uniting with the assaulting Polish-Ukrainian troops.

Skipped: The Polish-Ukrainian agreement of April 1920, the Polish-Ukrainian offensive followed by a retreat, the participation of UNR troops in a defence operation in August 1920 (the defence of Zamość), the UNR continues to fight after the Polish-Soviet truce.

- [14] The one hundredth anniversary of the Second Winter March of the UNR Army and the one hundredth anniversary of the executions of UNR Army soldiers near Bazar village, Zhytomyr Oblast, November 2021.

The Second Winter March (or Ice March), which ended in complete failure, was an attempt made by a group of UNR soldiers detained in Poland. It was aimed at using the wave of peasant uprisings to reconstruct the Ukrainian state. Its participants were the first to use the name 'Ukrainian Insurgent Army'.

It is characteristic that the anniversaries of these uprisings that continued until 1922, the symbol of which is the so-called Kholodnyi Yar Republic (present-day Cherkasy Oblast) have not been included in the official state narrative. These anniversaries will also certainly be commemorated, but as part of a separate agenda.