

THE POLITICS OF MEMORY IN THE POSTWAR UkrSSR (1941-1948):
FASHIONING THE MYTH OF THE “GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR”

By
Iuliia Kysla

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Supervisor Professor Alfred Rieber
Second Reader: Professor Jaroslav Hrytsak

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Abstract

This work examines Soviet politics of memory in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and focuses on the regime's undertakings toward mythologizing the Second World War. In particular, it explores origins and modification of the Soviet myth of the "Great Patriotic War" within the context of the postwar purification campaign in literature, the so-called *Zhdanovshchyna*. As the author shows, Zhdanov's crackdown of 1946-8 in Ukraine, besides being attack against western influences and nationalism, had another implicit dimension – authorities' drive for the unification of a memory of the WWII. In case studies, the author also investigates mechanisms of myth creation on the basis of two main components of the myth – liberation and all-people's myths. The first one is analyzed in details on the basis of Oles` Honchar`s writings, while the formation of the latter is traced on materials of Poltava underground group and it leader Lialia Ubyyvovk.

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Introduction

The Second World War has been a subject of thousands of books; there is a vast literature dedicated to the eastern front and Soviet experience of the war, as well. Although the history of economic policy and the combat itself has been told and retold many times, the Soviet post-war discussions on the representation of WWII have not been adequately covered. This question got its central place in the works of Catherine Merridale, whose book *Ivan's War* tells us a story of everyday experience of the war among the typical Soviet soldiers¹. The main accomplishment of *Ivan's War* is to compare the soldiers as they really acted on the battlefield during the WWII with the idealised version of the Russian soldier propagated by the Soviet state. Still, the question of war commemoration in the post-war Soviet Union was not Merridale's main focus.

Already in 1963, American scholar Matthew Gallagher was the first to analyze the Soviet representation of the war in professional history, literature and military journals². Still, his source base was very limited and consisted of only available published books and articles. No historian, till 1990-s, could even dream of getting access to the Soviet archive documents at that time. Nina Tumarkin's book *The living and the Dead: the rise and fall of cult of World War II in Russia* (Basic books, 1994) studies the cult of the Great Patriotic War in the Soviet Russia, particularly in Brezhnev's times³. Full of emotional and personal accounts, this book, however, lacks the analytical examination of the complex attitude of the Soviet regime to the war and its role in leadership mentality.

¹ Merridale's one key chapter of her first book "*Night of Stone, Death and Memory in Russia*" (Granta, 2000), where she examined the culture of suffering in Russia during the Soviet period, dealt with the same topic. Later, the author developed it in *Ivan's war* (Catherine Merridale, *Ivan's War. Life and death in the Red Army, 1939-1945* (New York: Metropolitan books, 2006).

² Matthew Gallagher, *The Soviet history of the World War II: myth, memories and realities* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1976, c1963).

³ Nina Tumarkin, *The living and the dead: the rise and fall of the cult of World War II in Russia* (New York: Basic books, 1994).

Even though there were publications about the Soviet Union during the World War II and the myth of the Great Patriotic War, historians tended to ignore the experience of war in non-Russian Soviet republics, in Ukraine republic, as well⁴. Works of Karel Berkhoff about Ukraine in WWII and Kenneth Slepyan about Soviet partisans⁵ seem to fill this lacuna at least partially. The latter, in fact, provides a very sophisticated analysis of partisan identification during and after the war, and touches the question of the official war myth. In his rich and stimulating book *Making sense of War*⁶ (Princeton, 2001), Amir Weiner focuses on the commemoration of the war in literature (veterans' discussions about the war) and the collective farm assemblies (peasants' usage of war) in post-war Ukrainian Republic. Having taken Ukrainian region of Vinnytsia as a case study, the author detailed the impact of the Second World War on the Soviet society and regime's ideology in particular.

Serhii Yekelchuk's highly innovative work *Stalin's empire of memory*⁷ for now is the only one that deals with Stalin's politics of memory in the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (UkrSSR). He examines the official discourse of the "Great Patriotic War" during and after the war but the author does not pay much attention to the post-war discussions about official interpretation of the war.

The present work, however, will offer a more complex overview of Soviet politics of memory in the post-war Ukraine (1941-1948) and will center on the regime's undertakings towards mythologizing World War II. Specifically, this project is devoted to the exploration

⁴ Partly, it can be explained by the misleading tendency among Western scholars to associate the USSR's population particularly with the Russians. (Alexander Dallin, *German rule in Russia 1941-1945. A study of occupation politics* (London: Macmillan Press, 1957); Alexander Werth, *Russia at war, 1941-1945* (New York: Dutton, c1964); *Soviet partisans in World War II* edited by John A. Armstrong (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964); Theo J. Schulte, *The German army and Nazi politics in occupied Russia* (New York: Berg, 1989); Marius Broekmeyer, *Stalin, the Russians, and their War 1941-1945* (Amsterdam: Mets & Shilt uitgevers, 2004, c1999); Leonid Grenkevich, *The Soviet partisan movement, 1941-1944: a critical historiographical analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 1999).

⁵ Karel C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair. Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); Kenneth Slepyan, *Stalin's guerillas. Soviet partisans in World War II* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2006).

⁶ Amir Weiner, *Making sense of war: the Second World War and the fate of the Bolshevik revolution* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001).

⁷ Serhii Yekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory: Russian-Ukrainian Relations in the Soviet Historical Imagination* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2004).

of origins and development of Soviet Ukrainian literary myth of the “Great Patriotic War” within the context of the post-war purges and the purification campaign of 1946-1948, the so-called *Zdanovshchyna*. As our materials show, the Ukrainian analogue of this ideological campaign, besides being a “crusade against the “national deviations” and an anti-Semitic campaign⁸, can be seen as a drive for the “unification” of memories of the recent war.

Zhdanovshchina, or Zdanov’s 1946-8 ideological campaign, was the regime’s reaction to wide-spread hopes for a more prosperous and liberal life after the war, as well as a return to the pre-war party line, the reassertion of ideological control over culture, and purging of the literature and the arts of western influences⁹. Although *Zdanovschyna* is usually understood as a crusade against liberalism and “the anti-Western pitch”¹⁰, in Soviet Ukraine it had one more important dimension having been also an attack again “national deviations” in history and literature. If in Moscow and Leningrad writers were criticized for “cowtowing before the West” and lack of patriotism, in Kyiv they were condemned for ‘idealization of the Ukrainian past’, ‘escape from our Soviet reality’ and ignoring class divisions. Indeed, as I suggest, the literary discussions of 1945-1947 in the UkrSSR were very much connected with the party line of how to interpret the recent war, and thus with the regime’s striving for a unified vision of the Second World War.

In a general sense, the primary focus of my thesis is to explore how Stalinist leadership and Ukrainian writers were trying to make sense of war by ‘restructuring’ memory of it within the contemporary “frames of reference”¹¹, according to the party line. In other words,

⁸ Yekelchuk, Serhii, “How the «Iron Minister» Kaganovich failed to discipline Ukrainian historians: a Stalinist ideological campaign reconsidered”, *Nationality papers*, Vol.27, No.4, 1999; Yuriy Shapoval, <http://www.ukrweekly.com/old/archive/2001/330113.shtml>.

⁹ Yekelchuk Serhii, *Stalin's Empire of Memory: Russian-Ukrainian Relations in the Soviet Historical Imagination* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2004), 63.

¹⁰ Herman Ermolaev, *Censorship in the Soviet Union, 1917-1991* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997), 104.

¹¹ According to Jan Assmann’s definition of “cultural memory”, “no memory can preserve the past”, since it can be reconstructed only from the so-called “figures of memory” in an actual and contemporary situation. (Jan Assmann, “Collective memory and Cultural identity, New German Critique”, #65, *Cultural History/Cultural studies* (Spring-Summer, 1995), 130).

I am interested in tracing how writers themselves were trying to shape their visions of the war in opposition or in accordance with the official interpretation of it. The relationship between individual and official modes of remembering the wartime experience thus is also a central issue to address here.

As paradigmatic examples, I have taken two case studies: the first illustrates the relationship of individual\collective memory of the war (the case of a writer Oles` Honchar¹²), while the second demonstrates mechanisms of creation the heroic vision of the war (the case of Poltava underground group *Unconquered Poltava girl* and its leader Olena Ubyyvovk)¹³. Both these cases are intersected, since in 1947 Oles` Honchar has written a novel *The Earth is buzzing* about Olena (called Lialia) Ubyyvovk, and thus played a central role in her canonization as a Ukrainian Soviet heroine.

Thus my main emphasis is on Soviet war mythologies and, particularly, on one component – the role of the Soviet (Ukrainian) underground in the fight against the Germans. Having taken the case of the Poltava case, I intend to trace the process of the “re/invention” of this story during the late 1940s-early 1950s within the broad context of the post-war “codification/unification” of the memory of World War II. Various state agents and institutions were involved in this process. Indeed, as I suggest, writers (besides historians and party officials) played an enormous role in the production of the public discourse about WWII.

¹² In 1946-1947, Oles` Honchar, already a demobilized RA officer, wrote his famous war trilogy *The Standard-Bearers* (*Praporonostsi*). The work was very well received (all parts of which in 1947-1948 received the second Stalin's Prizes), which made his quite popular and guaranteed him a place among classics of Ukrainian Soviet literature. Without doubts, his *Standard-bearers* and *The Earth is buzzing* (*Zemlia gudyt`*) are central works in post-1947 Ukrainian Soviet discourse about the war. Alongside with such canonic works as *Young Guards* by Fadeev or *The Front* by Kornychuk it can be seen as Ukrainized version of myth about the Great Patriotic War.

¹³ In Ukrainian “Ubyyvovk” means “Kill-the-wolf”. As it is believed, Ubyyvovk was a leader of this underground organization which existed in occupied Poltava from November 1941 till May 1942, so about a half a year. The group numbered 20 persons and was primarily engaged in the distribution of information (mainly of ideological character) among the city population. In May 1941 all main participants of Ubyyvovk's organization were arrested by Germans and later on executed.

In this work I follow the definition of the myth proposed by Peter Heehs, according to which “myth” is “a set of propositions, often stated in narrative form, that is accepted uncritically by a culture or speech community and that serves to found or affirm its self-conception”. More generally, it consists of any sort of propositions which “truth” does not require demonstration by “the working of logos”.¹⁴

The very object of analysis *poses numerous questions*. Therefore, the main tasks of my research are the following:

At first, I analyze the official discourse of the war, starting from the outbreak of the Soviet-German war of 1941-1945 up to the late 1940s, and trace to what extent it corresponded to the actual reality, to veterans’ personal accounts, for example.

Secondly, I study the literary discussions of the late 1940s about war representation (in press, literature, on meetings of Ukrainian Writers’ Union) and Zhdanov’s campaign trying to find out *what version* of the war had been actualized by the Soviet leadership in order to serve the regime’s legitimization and what memories were to be suppressed, either silenced or purified.¹⁵ *To what extent* was there room for individual remembrance in the public domain and what were popular responses to the official model? Thus, within the context of Zhdanov’s ideological campaign, I focus on *whom* and *for what* the party authority criticised in Soviet Ukraine during 1944-1948.

To reach the individual level, the third cycle of questions will deal with the mechanisms of mythologizing the war experience by taking the story of the Poltava underground organization and its leader Olena Uvyvovk as a paradigmatic case. I reveal *what* actually happened in Poltava in 1941-1942, and *how* this story/historical facts had

¹⁴ Peter Heehs, “Myth, History, and Theory,” *History and Theory* 33 (1), 1994: 3.

¹⁵ At once I would like to note that I do not touch the question of Holocaust and its memory in my thesis, because this topic is so broad that I would need to write another MA thesis about this. The suppression (or its ignorance) of Holocaust memories was definitely one of the central ‘muted’ topics in the Soviet discourse of the “Great Patriotic War”. Alongside with the other national experiences of the war, it tended to be absorbed by the Soviet pathos of ‘heroic struggle of the Soviet people against fascist aggressor’.

been used by the Soviet officials in their attempt to create a heroic vision of the ‘*Great Patriotic War*’.

To present the full picture of memory politics in the post-war Ukrainian socialist republic, *the time span of the research* focuses on the period 1940s, starting with the beginning of the Soviet-German War (June 1941) and finishing with 1948, when there was a gradual change in actualization of the war in public discourse.

The thesis is structurally divided into four chapters. The first chapter provides a general overview of existing concepts and theoretical premises useful when working within the field of memory studies. The practical part of the research starts with a detailed description of the official representation of the Second World War, analyzing the emerging discourse of the “*Great Patriotic War*” on the eve, during and after the war. The second chapter deals with the literary images of the war in the USSR and Soviet Ukraine in particular; outlines the post-war purges in literary circles held by Andrey Zhdanov in 1946-1948 and the responses to this campaign among Ukrainian Soviet writers. It also introduces debates in press and at writer`s meetings on how the war should be portrayed. The forth chapter is dedicated to the mechanisms of myth creation and examines two main components of the myth – liberation myth and all-people`s myth. The first one is analyzed in details on the basis of Oles` Honchar`s writings, while the formation of the latter is traced on materials of Poltava underground group mentioned above. Lialia`s case is an interesting example of ideological manipulation which shows how selective the official representation of war was.

This work aims to contribute to the heated historiographical debates about how the Soviet system managed to maintain itself after such a devastating event. Such investigation thus will not only help us to understand the nature of Soviet rule and its ideology more deeply, but will also yield answers to the more important question of its impact and legacy.

Chapter 1. Memory as analytical category: problems of method

Phenomenon «memoria» as an object of analysis

Certainly, a mind which could not remember could not have historical knowledge. But memory as such is only the present thought of past experience as such, be that experience what it may; historical knowledge is that special case of memory where the object of present thought is past thought, the gap between present and past being bridged not only by the power of present thought to think of the past, but also by the power of past thought to reawaken itself in the present.

Collingwood "Idea of history"¹⁶

With the Latin term *memoria* historians define the notion of "memory" in all manifestations of this multifaceted phenomenon: *memoria* as an ability to retain knowledge about lived experience, about the people who died or are missing. Thus it is the ability of human consciousness (*mneme* in Greek). But there is also "memory" as a cognitive process (*anamnesis* in Greek) - the evoking of recollections of the past events in the mind (in thoughts, narratives).¹⁷ There is no consensus on what "historical memory" is about, various scholars interpret it differently: as a way of storage and transmission of the knowledge of the past, as a personal memory of the past, as a collective memory of the past if speaking about the group, as a social memory of the past when it comes to society, and finally, as a synonym for the "historical consciousness". Within the last 40-50 years the entire complex of ideas and meanings connected with the *memoria* became a subject of historians' interest, while studies of this cultural phenomenon gradually evolved into a powerful historiographical trend.

The concept of "historical memory" was introduced to the scientific community by the French scholarship in the second half of XX century. The actualisation of this concept is

¹⁶ R.G. Collingwood, *The idea of history* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 293-294.

¹⁷ Iu. E. Arnautova, «Memoria: «total'nyi sotsial'nyi fenomen» i ob'ekt issledovaniia», in *Obrazy proshlogo i kollektivnaia identichnost' v Evrope do nachala Novogo Vremeni* (Moscow, 2003), 19.

closely connected to the significant shifts and changes in the development of the world history, especially with the *French School*, and the emergence of so-called “new history” or “new cultural history”, main thesis of which was that historical reality is constructed. Still, it needs to be emphasized that Hugo von Hofmannsthal used the term “collective memory” already in 1902¹⁸, while Maurice Halbwachs in 1925 in his work *The Social frameworks of memory*, opposing Henri Bergson and Sigmunt Freud, argued that memory is a social phenomenon. In fact, as Alon Confino notes, a great art historian Aby Warburg also was among the firsts to use the concept of “collective memory”.¹⁹ However, only a few scholars beyond fields of experimental psychology and clinical psychoanalysis paid attention to the problem of memory at that time.

On the other hand, the emergence of memory in a historical discourse in 1960s-1970s, was very much connected to the so-called “crisis in historicism” usually associated with the postmodernist criticism. Besides, it is also attributed to the emergence of a trauma discourse, in particular, of a “return of the repressed”. Thus, according to Kerwin Lee Klein, memory boom could be seen as a “response to the great trauma of modernity, the Shoah”.²⁰ Scholars also stress that historians’ interest in the problem of memory originate in the works of history of mentalities (Philippe Aries, Lucien Febvre, Jacques Le Goff) and in emergence of a new genre of historical inquiry - the history of the politics of commemoration. According to Patrick Hatton, this topic for the first time has been addressed in the pioneering work of Maurice Agulhon *Marianne au combat* (1979) where the author offered the way in which “a commemorative image may be used to give concrete form to political

18 Kerwin Klein, “On the emergence of memory in historical discourse”, *Representations*, #69 (Winter 2000), 127.

19 Alan Confino, «Collective memory and cultural history: problems of method», *The American historical review*, Vol. 102, #5, Dec. 1995, 1388.

²⁰ Kerwin Klein, “On the emergence of memory...”, 141.

identity”.²¹ This, in fact, has marked the shift of historiography’s focus from events or ideas to the images, from the political history - to the cultural politics.

Trying to put the emergence of this term into a more global context, one needs to say a few words about why such demand for the memory emerged within the society. It is believed that social shocks (decolonization processes, the fall of Berlin Wall and collapse of the Soviet Union, economic crisis of 1974) had sharpened the society’s need to restore the “connection with the past” and provoked an extreme popularity of various ‘returning to the past’, the so-called “memory boom” of the end of XX century.²² The process which Pierre Nora calls the “acceleration of history” (after Daniel Halevi)²³ and Francois Hartog - “presentism”²⁴ in more abstract meaning is characterized by the end of societies of memory which that “had long assured the transmission and conservation of collectively remembered values” (church and school, family and state); by the end of ideologies-memory and as well the “dilation” of the very mode of historical perception which with the help of memory dissolved gradually having “substituted for a memory”.²⁵ We are confronted with understanding our inability to regain the past experiences, with the loss of past’s presence in a society which had long been ‘deepened’ into the tradition. It was the “end of peasantry” which became the final end of “communities of memory”, and therefore, the end of a living memory as such. As Pierre Nora argues, we begin to “speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left”.²⁶

In many publications on memory one can find various models based on works of already mentioned Maurice Halbwachs who already in mid 1920s considered collective

²¹ Patrick Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1993), 2.

²² Vera Milchina, “Frantsua Artog. Tipy istoricheskogo myshleniia: prezentizm i fory vospriiatia vremeni”, *Otechestvennye zapiski*, #5 (20), 2004, 53.

²³ Nora actually distinguishes two specific phenomena which had caused the blossoming of the memory era: “acceleration of history” (a break between past and presence) and “democratization of the history” (the emancipation of minorities).

²⁴ Francois Hartog, *Régimes d’historicité. Présentisme et expériences du temps* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2002).

²⁵ Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: les Lieux de Memoire”, *Representations*, No. 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory. (Spring, 1989), 7-8.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

memory to be an element which constructs the identity of social, professional or any other (for instance, ethnic) group. For Halbwachs, memory is a 'coordinate system' of the collective identification: we remember something important together with the important for us people and upon the occasion of relations with those 'others' so that memory unites us into a group that is capable of the act of recollection.²⁷ Making distinction between individual and collective memory, the author sets these two notions in opposition speaking of the 'borrowed' character of the latter, for historical memories are not my personal recollections but just a 'borrowed' knowledge about them. For every individual, this knowledge is a set of symbols and notions represented in more or less popular form through which he is connected to the group. Therefore, Halbwachs introduces notions of "interior"(personal) and "exterior" (social) memory, more precisely - "autobiographical" and "historical" memory. The former uses the latter, since our life ultimately is a part of history. However, the latter is more broad than the former; it shows past in a short and schematized form while memory about our life is a more saturated picture.

The interplay of these two types of memory in practice is very important for understanding the concept itself. As we already mentioned, the individual, with a part of his thoughts and ideas, belongs to a larger community. The central notion here is Halbwachs' category of "collective memory" which restrains and arranges individual's recollections through the so-called "social frameworks" (*cadres sociaux*).²⁸ The formation of this common historical knowledge occurs already in childhood and is connected above all to the correlation of child's recollections, a series of successive pictures, with the historical reality itself. In particular, Halbwachs asserts that in order to 'touch' to that historical reality, which is above these child's pictures, the child needs to get out his own "I" and to adopt the group's view. From this moment the fact, visualized with a picture, ceases to mix with

²⁷ Maurice Halbwachs, *On collective memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, c1992), 38.

²⁸ Maurice Halbwachs, *On collective memory*, 53.

child's own recollection and starts to correlate with a historical scheme. As a result, this fact, which is exterior for child's life, exactly through historical memory leaves its imprint on child's life. In these "social frameworks" individuals temporarily put themselves in the position of others; then coming back they have ready points of reference to which they attach their own recollections.²⁹ This process of social communication, when, as Marina Loskutova argues, occurs the "contiguity [soprikosnoveniie] of thoughts" and their "collectivization", can take place both through real communication (transmission of oral tradition) and in "imagined milieu" created by press and media.

Halbwachs' central thesis is a statement about "borrowed" character of memory which implies the idea that memory can sustain in the course of time only within the social context. Thus individual images of the past are short-lived and they are 'remembered' only when they are attached to the conceptual structures defined by some community. Therefore, the author's idea that *whosever recollections about the past are revised constantly* is a very important theoretical premise for us. According to Halbwachs, living memory is interplay of repetition and recollection. In the course of time individual recollections are getting unified into stereotyped images which actually constitute the form of collective memory.³⁰ In the process of every repetition, the differences in individual recollections become obliterated. Such understanding of memory directly challenges Freud's doctrine and psychoanalysis who argue that recollections are kept in full in the individual's psyche. This theory is very important, for if the past is not a constant figure and knowledge of it is being constantly revised, then historians' knowledge of the past completely depends on its commemorative 'remains' or 'traces'. Historians in such case do not 'revive' the past by reconstructing some idea in the collective memory, but "describe images in which this collective memory used to

²⁹ Moris Kholbvaks, "Kolektivnaia i istoricheskaia pamiat'", *Neprikosnennyi zapas*, #40-41 2-3(2005), 41. For electronic version see: <http://magazines.russ.ru/nz/2005/2/ha2.html>.

³⁰ Maurice Halbwachs, *On collective memory*, 45.

live once”.³¹ This approach is most popular among historians of commemoration or politics of memory.

The above mentioned French scholar Pierre Nora realized this approach in his ambitious project *Les Lieux de mémoire* (1984-1992). Practically all seven volumes of *Sites of memory* constitute a history of collective memory of France revealed through its representations. With the help of 45 most famous French historians, Nora retrospectively traces commemorative practices, gradually broadening the scope of its representations: at first images of French republic in XIX century (era of commemoration), then images of French nation from XVII and XVIII centuries, and finally (in the last volume) images of popular culture of medieval France. The brightest examples of such images are the most symbolical object of French memory: archive, tricolor, libraries, dictionaries and museums, Pantheon and Triumphal Arch, Larousse dictionary, Jean d'Arc and Cathedral Notre dame de Paris.

In Nora's interpretation, so-called “places of memory” (“sites of memory”) are “remains”, the uttermost form where exists collective consciousness in history, where “memory crystallizes and secrets itself”.³² These places are also “embodiments” of memory³³ where a “sense of historical continuity” persists. Deritualisation of our world, as Nora argues, provoked the emergence of these notions. They appear and live because there is a feeling that the spontaneous memory does not exist and we need to create archives, organize commemorations, and give funeral speeches, as since as such thing are already not natural. Therefore, “places of memory” (*lieux de mémoire*) exist “because there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, real environment of memory”.³⁴

Like in Halbwachs' works, in the center of Nora's theory is the question of interplay and opposition between two adverse notions - memory and history. Memory is alive which

³¹ Patrik Khatton, *Istoriia kak iskusstvo pamiati* (St. Petersburg: Vladimir dal', 2004), 45.

³² Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History...”, 7.

³³ Ibid., 12.

³⁴ Ibid., 7.

is preserved in social groups, while history is “always problematic and incomplete” reconstruction of what does not longer exist.³⁵ So, memory is an actual phenomenon but history is a reconstruction. Memory is an absolute, while history can only “conceive as relative”.³⁶ Therefore, what we call now memory is already history. This new transformed type of memory is *archival* which appeared as a result of “exteriorization” of knowledge (with appearance of media and printed culture) and “materialization” of memory (it is already a storehouse). As a result of liquidation of memory comes our wish to register everything, to collect documents, speeches, visible remains of what we cannot remember. In this way memory come to us from outside, we “interiorize it”, because “it is no longer a social practice”.³⁷ To complete the picture, besides “archive-memory” Nora distinguishes “duty-memory” (Ricoeur uses it also) and “distance-memory”: if the former indicates a wish of various groups (from family to nation) to find their historical roots, the latter shows the discontinuity between the past and present.³⁸

But what do “places of memory” mean in a more concrete sense? According to Nora, “places” could be simple and ambiguous, natural and artificial. In particular, the author names three main characteristic of these “places”: material, symbolical and functional. For instance, the place which is material (for example, archives storehouse) is not yet “place of memory” until our imagination will not endowed it with a symbolical aura. Even functional “places” (like textbook, last testament, veterans` association) become “places of memory” only because they are part of a ritual. Trying to answer question whether any large event or great historical work is a “place of memory”, French scholar concludes that “places of memory” are only those “founded on a revision of memory or serving as its pedagogical

³⁵ Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History...”, 8.

³⁶ Ibid., 9.

³⁷ Ibid., 16.

³⁸ Ibid.,

breviaries”³⁹ such as Etienne Pasquier’s *Recherches de la France* (1599), Michelet’s *Precis d’histoire moderne*, and surely Lavis’s twenty-seven volume *Histoire de France*.

Within his project Nora provides numerous gradation and develops a typology of “places”: starting from the simplest (like cemetery, museum, and anniversary) to the more sophisticated and intellectually constructed (“generation”, “lineage”, “district-memory”, “divisions of inherited property”). Among “material” places the author distinguishes portable or topographical, monumental or architectural ones. As functional elements, Nora speaks of places which preserve experience (veterans’ association) or those with pedagogical purpose (textbooks, dictionaries, testaments); as symbolical elements, one can speak of “dominant” and “dominated” places. One can multiply examples without end but all those sites are united by their belonging to the “unconscious organization of collective memory that is our responsibility to bring to consciousness”.⁴⁰ Thus historian’s task, following Nora’s logic, is to identify and classify those images of the past through which one can grasp the national past in accordance to available places.

Criticism and problems of memory studies: its cognitive capacities as a method

Does history of memory reveal some new layers of information earlier inaccessible? Most scholars agree that the biggest achievement of history of memory is a study of “politics of memory” or “politics of identity” which explores how constructing of the past (through inventing and appropriation) influences the power relations in the society. In other words, from this perspective we explore *who* wants to remember *whom* and *why*. Such approach without a doubt enriches our understanding of functions and meanings of collective memory. The topic of historical memory thus opens new perspectives for a historical sci-

³⁹ Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History...”, 21.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 23.

ence and provides numbers of new enquiry topics. By analyzing events and historical values as “places of memory” in two perspectives (chronological and spatial), historians can examine the structure of collective images of the past from an absolutely other perspective.

In numerous publications on memory figure notions of “social memory”, “collective recollection”, “people’s history-making” or just its absolute rejection in favor of an old concept of “myth”. The vocabulary of memory studies includes such terms as “national memory”, “public memory”, “local\people’s memory” or “counter-memory”. However, there is still no consensus on what should be called “collective” or “historical” memory, and whether there is difference between “social” and “cultural” memory.

Thus despite huge quantity of literature on the topic, in memory studies there still exist many unanswered questions and undefined notions. Historians warn us about “terminological profusion” (Kansteiner)⁴¹ and “semantic overload” (Klein).⁴² John Gillis, in particular, claims that memory “memory seems to be losing precise meaning in proportion to its growing rhetorical power”.⁴³ Even Pierre Nora, the most active promoter of this concept, notes that the most difficulty of the last volume of *Sites of memory*, devoted to the people’s culture, lies in the additional constructing which the notion of “sites of memory” implies. He writes about contradictions between method and project which is similar to the problem encountered by the national history when the latter tries to explain “nation” through nation“.⁴⁴

What can a study about Jean d’Arc give us? If we would ask ourselves whether it sheds light on the real Jean d’Arc, we will get a negative answer, since it is rather the his-

⁴¹ Wulf Kansteiner, “Finding meaning in memory: a methodological critique of collective memory studies”, *History and Theory* 41 (May 2002), 181.

⁴² Kerwin Klein, “On the emergence of memory in historical discourse”, *Representations*, #69 (Winter 2000), 144.

⁴³ John Gillis, “Memory and identity: a history of a relationship”, in *Commemorations: the politics of national identity* (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1994), 3.

⁴⁴ P’ier Nora, “Problematika mest pamiat’i”, in *Frantsia – pamiat’* (St.Peterburg: Izd.vo St.Peterb. I-ta, 1999), 44.

tory of symbolical meaning of d`Arc, the history of numerous ways of her usage.⁴⁵ Patrick Hutton discusses similar questions in his book *History as an art of memory* where he shows that present historians` interest to memory is connected first of all with the postmodernist emphasis on images and forms of their representation. According to him, the problem of such approach is that it tries to “reduce memory about the past to the history of its images”. With such approach, the rhetorical practice itself becomes a new layer of reality which wedges itself between historians and events, personalities and ideas of the past.⁴⁶

Sometimes one can encounter even more radical criticism. Some scholars argue that memory as a field of study has a “label more than a content” and that it does not offer any true additional explanatory power.⁴⁷ Perhaps, Gedi Noa and Yigal Elam represent the most radical position in these discussions – they argue that the concept of “historical memory” as an explanatory tool is delusive. Criticizing Halbwachs` theory of “social frameworks, the authors claim that memories are never truthful reflections of the past but ready stereotypes.⁴⁸ Halbwachs` exorbitant attention to the society, according to them, subordinates both history and memory. As a result, history as a science does not make sense and turns to means of “ideology and moralist needs of the society”. Therefore, “collective memory”, as Noa and Elam argue, is nothing else than a “misleading name for the old familiar “myth” which can be identified with “collective” or “social” stereotypes.⁴⁹

Very often scholars draw parallels between history of memory and history of mentalities claiming that they both become useful and get their explanatory force only depending on questions raised and methods used. For instance, American historian Confino, having analyzed three contemporary works, distinguishes the whole scope of problems concerning

⁴⁵ Petr Uvarov, *Istoriia, istoriki i istoricheskaia pamiat` vo frantsii*, *Otechestvennye zapiski*, 2004, № 5.

⁴⁶ Patrik Khatton, *Istioriia kak iskusstvo pamiati* (St. Petersburg: Vladimir dal`, 2004), 73.

⁴⁷ Confino A. “Collective memory and Cultural history: problems of method”, *The American Historical review*, Vol. 102, № 5 (Dec. 1997), 1388.

⁴⁸ Gedi Noa and Yigal Elam, “Collective memory – what is it?”, *History and memory*, 8 (1), 43.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 47.

history as an analytical category. Criticizing this approach for above mentioned tendency to study memory only through its representations, the author speaks about tendency to “reduce memory, which is fundamentally a concept of culture, to the political”⁵⁰, as well as ignorance of its social part and question of reception. In Confino`s point of view, such “history from above” can not be considered a study of collective memory. Excessive emphasis on the analysis of representations also contains a risk to get a unipolar picture, which ignores questions of transmission, distribution and mediums of representation. As a solution the author proposes to study the history of memory in its diversity combining perception, representations and confrontation.⁵¹

Apparently Wolff Kasteiner and Irina Savelieva give the most productive criticism of the history of memory. Both researchers agree that one surely needs to distinguish between “individual” and “collective” memory, but one should not “anthropomorphize the collective subject” by transferring some concepts of psychoanalysis (trauma) or mental disorders (amnesia) into the mass consciousness.⁵² Concepts of trauma and repression do not shed light on the forces that contribute to the making or unmaking of collective memories.⁵³ Like Confino, Kansteiner raises the question of representation, emphasizing the importance of mediums (discursive, visual, spatial), intermediaries and transfer of memory which helps us to “construct and share our knowledge and feelings about the past”. And then, in his opinion, it is more useful to focus on the construction of collective memories in the process of media consumption. The central focus thus should lie on the interrelationship between those who produce memory (makers), those who consume it (users), and visual\discursive objects of representation in the process of meaning production.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Confino A. “Collective memory and Cultural history: problems of method”, 1393.

⁵¹ Ibid., 1387.

⁵² Irina Savel`eva, “Kontseptsia istoricheskoi pamiati”: istoki i itogi”, 6.

⁵³ Wulff Kansteiner, “Finding meaning in memory...”, 187.

⁵⁴ Wulff Kansteiner, “Finding meaning in memory...”, 196-7.

The Russian researcher Savel`eva seems to be even more critical about the concept of “historical memory”. She argues that these concepts do not meet modern standards of scientific knowledge, and hence, she would rather put the term to the category of “useless”. According to her, his term nowadays starts to replace the notion of “historical consciousness”. In particular, the researcher warns historians to refrain from attempts to “extrapolate cultural anthropological approach onto the mass representations of the past in contemporary society”. Ironically nevertheless, Savel`eva supports the most developed topic – “politics of memory”, which, as she believes, justifies its existence because it studies the images and symbols of significant events or methods of ideologization of the past.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Irina Savel`eva, “Kontseptsia istoricheskoi pamiati”: istoki i itogi”, 10.

Chapter 2. Re/Imagining the war in 1940s

2.1. “Let the heroic images of our great ancestors inspire you!”: propaganda of the Soviet patriotism in 1941-1945

The Second World War, or the “Great Patriotic War” of 1941-1945 as it was heralded in Soviet official culture, transformed the Soviet polity and its subjects, physically and symbolically. After collectivization and constant repressions in the 1930s, there was the strongest confrontation - however hidden - between Soviet society and the state. The war and ultimate victory thus gave the Soviet regime needed recognition and popular support. In some regards, it made possible the pact between the population and the regime. The strong association of victory with the state itself gave the war experience powerful mobilizing potential.

The war also provided splendid material for the creation of patriotic symbols and examples of collective memory. The myth of the “Great Patriotic War” in combination with the myth about the Great October Revolution became a basic point of reference in the Soviet history. According to Carmen Scheide, they functioned in different directions and were aimed at different target groups; thus, they had different integral abilities.⁵⁶ In contrast to the extremely differentiated memory of the Civil War, myth of the “Great Patriotic War” was more pervasive and often overshadowed its predecessor. In the Soviet Union, where people were highly ideologized, it was exactly the war experience through which people, even those who suffered under collectivization, Stalin’s Terror and Party purges, could acquire a Soviet identity. Peasants, for instance, for the first time were not only “integrated into a Soviet triumphant epic”, but also shown as heroes and not as an embodiment of the backward-

⁵⁶ Karmen Shaide, “Kollektivnye i individual’nye modeli pamiati o “Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne” (1941-1945 gg.)”, *Ab Imperio* 3 (2004), 220.

ness.⁵⁷ The recent war thus became a new formative experience which defined the “criteria for legitimate membership and exclusion from the Soviet family”⁵⁸.

From the first moments after the German invasion to the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941 Soviet leadership got paralysed, especially Stalin who still was terrified of provoking Hitler into a premature attack. It was nothing less than a great shock for the whole Soviet population as well. Although Soviet people had been constantly taught about the possibility of the future war, they expected Red Army to “defeat enemy at his own land and with a little blood”.⁵⁹ Population had been exposed to nothing but propaganda about the invincibility of the Red Army. And now they had to accomodate somehow the information that Soviet Army had been constantly retreating in summer-autumn 1941.

The notion of the “patriotic war” was introduced to the Soviet political discourse from the very first days of the war. Since Stalin was too depressed in early days of the war, it was Viacheslav Molotov who made the first official radio address to the population on 22 June 1941. In the appeal, he for the first time designated to the war Patriotic (*otechestvennaia*) alluding to the tsarist name for the war of 1812:

This is not the first time that our nation has had to deal with an arrogant [znavshyisia], aggressive enemy. In its time *our nation* [emphasis added] has risen to the challenge of Napoleon's campaign into Russian in the Patriotic War, and Napoleon suffered defeat and came to his undoing. The same fate will befall the arrogant Hitler, who has proclaimed a new campaign of aggression against our country. The Red Army and our entire nation will once again conduct a victorious Patriotic War for the Motherland, for honor, for freedom.⁶⁰

The fact that Hitler attacked the Soviet Union first allowed Molotov to call this invasion “perfidious” and “treacherous” which made the war from the very beginning “just” and

⁵⁷ Amir Weiner, *Making sense of war: the Second World War and the fate of the Bolshevik revolution* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001), 365. As the author shows, the war had a drastic impact on the ideology, beliefs, and practices of the Soviet regime and its subjects, when various segments of the polity were trying to “make sense of this traumatic event”.

⁵⁸ Amir Weiner, *Making sense of war*, 8.

⁵⁹ It was the most important phrase of Soviet pre-war propaganda from the Soviet march *If War comes tomorrow* and film of the same name (1938) which shows how the Soviet imagined the beginning of the Second World War.

⁶⁰ Vystuplenie po radio Zamestitelia Predsedatelia Soveta Narodnykh Komissarov Souza SSR i Narodnogo Komissara Innostrannykh Del tov. V.M. Molotova, *Pravda*, 22 June 1941, 1.

“liberating”.

The next day *Pravda* published Molotov’s speech coupled with the first reports about “perfidious treason” of Hitler. There was also a very interesting article of party ideologist Iemel’ian Iaroslavskii with a telling title ‘The Great patriotic war of the Soviet people’⁶¹. Iaroslavskii reminded readers that the Red Army which “repulsed a charge [dala otpor] to the Finnish White Guard soldiers in 1939-1940” also “brought the liberation to the peoples of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, Bessarabia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia”.⁶² One can find three key notions in the article: 1) great patriotic war of the Soviet people, 2) liberation of the country from the fascist aggressors, and 3) great victory over Germany. In such way the Soviet ideologist had determined the main conceptual framework for interpretation of the war through which the population of the USSR had to perceive the Soviet-German conflict. Iaroslavskii also mentioned the main historical events which were to evoke patriotic feelings: battles with Germans on Chud Lake in 1242, with Tatars on the Kulik field in 1380, with Poles in Moscow in 1612, Napoleon’s campaign in Russia in 1812.

No sooner than July 3 Joseph Stalin managed to come to his senses to address the Soviet people by radio. His opening words “Comrades, citizens, brothers and sisters, fighters of our Army and Navy! I am speaking to you, my friends!”, as Nina Tumarkin says, represented “an unprecedented statement of his closeness to the people”.⁶³ While Molotov equated the Soviet-German conflict of 1941-1945 with the “patriotic war of 1812”, Stalin stressed it was not just an ordinary war but a “great war of the entire Soviet people against

⁶¹ At the beginning all three words were written with the small letters. Later on the capital letter was introduced for the word “patriotic” in order to distinguish it from the “patriotic war of 1812”; already on the eve of the war first two words started to be written with the capital letters.

⁶² Iemel’ian Iaroslavskii (real name is Gubel’man Minei Izrailevich) himself is considered to be a real creator of the official vision of memory about events of 1941-1945 (Iemel’ian Iaroslavskii, “Velikaia otechestvennaia voina sovetskogo naroda”, *Pravda*, 23 June 1941, 2).

⁶³ Nina Tumarkin, *The living and the dead. The rise and fal of the cult of world war II in Russia* (N.Y.: Basic books, 1994), 58.

the German fascist forces”.⁶⁴ More importantly, the Soviet leader spoke of the decisive character of the war, for “the issue is one of life or death for the Soviet State, for the peoples of the USSR; the issue is whether the peoples of the Soviet Union shall remain free or fall into slavery”.⁶⁵ The “liberating patriotic” war, according to him, aimed not only to defend the Soviet Union but also to “aid to all European peoples groaning under the yoke of German fascism”.⁶⁶ Therefore, as we see, the main elements of the myth of the “Great Patriotic War” are already there: the liberating and antifascist character of the war, the liberation and all-people’s war myths.

Acknowledgments of failures and mistakes of the Soviet government also appeared during the war, particularly in Stalin’s wartime speeches. According to Matthew P. Gallagher, they were full of indirect “references to the moral crisis” during the first months of the war.⁶⁷ For example, in his speech on November 7 1941 Stalin admitted that Soviet military operations not always were successful. He also spoke of army and navy as “still young” and “not yet... professional” calling earlier retreats as “forced”.⁶⁸ Still, the Soviet leader never spoke in public about his responsibility for the “hard battles of the summer and autumn of 1942”.⁶⁹ Moreover, he rather was ready to transfer this responsibility on somebody else. For instance, *The Front* by Oleksandr Korniiichuk published in Pravda on 24 August 1941, as

⁶⁴ Joseph Stalin, «The twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Red Army», Joseph Stalin, *The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union* (New York: Greenwood press, 1945), 15.

⁶⁵ Joseph Stalin, «The German invasion of the Soviet Union», in Joseph Stalin, *The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, 13.

⁶⁶ The full audio version of Stalin’s speech can be found here:
http://www.sovmusic.ru/text.php?fname=st_30741.

⁶⁷ Matthew P. Gallagher, *The Soviet history of World War II. Myths, Memories, and realities* (Westport: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1976, c1963), 14.

⁶⁸ Joseph Stalin, «The twenty-fourth anniversary of the October revolution», in Joseph Stalin, *The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, 23.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 76. Only in 1945 at the famous banquet in honor of the Red Army Stalin actually admitted this responsibility. (See Chapter 2.2).

Amir Weiner argues, was a “direct attack... on the army commanders of the civil war generation” who were portrayed as “those responsible the Army’s initial defeats”.⁷⁰

The main topic of the war propaganda continued to be the popularization of patriotism and ‘awakening of the peoples’ ethnic consciousness for the struggle with “fascist aggressors”. Directive documents, as well as pedagogical literature, carried out the aim of patriotic and moral education, in particular education of a “brave young generation able to use their knowledge for the defense of the beloved motherland”, “burning Soviet patriots ready in any time change their book for the rifle” and “heroic fighters for her dignity, liberty and independence”.⁷¹ The Soviet propaganda, press and radio, had been constantly promoting the ‘necessary’ complex of emotions: love for the country, hatred of the enemy, pride in the Red Army and Navy, faith in the ultimate victory. In fact, Illya Erenburg was the first among publicists to “equate German officers and men, fascists and Germans” to help inspire people for the burning hatred.⁷²

The main specificity of this propaganda, however, was the promotion of ethnic patriotism of almost all Soviet peoples. The notion of Soviet patriotism thus became ethnotized. In the course of time the Great Russian nationalism was actualized in order to activate patriotic feelings of all Soviet nations. However, the notion of motherland began to be identified with the whole USSR, not only with Russia. The word “Russian” becomes a synonym of “Soviet”, “socialist” and “deeply internationalist”. In general, there was a version of multinational patriotism which accommodated national feelings of all Soviet peoples.

Historical memory became a very important referent in the Soviet ideology at that time. Party leadership realized the necessity to address historical topics which would have stronger national connotation and mobilizing capacities. In his speech on November 7 1941,

⁷⁰ Amir Weiner, *Making sense of war*, 43.

⁷¹ L.P.Bushchuk, *Ocherki razvitiia shkol'nogo istoricheskogo obrazovaniia v SSSR* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo akademii pedagogicheskikh nauk RSFSR, 1961), 319.

⁷² Nina Tumarkin, *The living and the dead. The rise and fall of the cult of World War II in Russia* (N.Y.: Basic books, 1994), 73.

the twenty-fourth anniversary of October revolution, at the Red Army Parade Stalin concluded:

... the whole world is looking to you as the force capable of destroying the plundering hordes of German invaders. The enslaved peoples of Europe who have fallen under the yoke of the German invaders look to you as their liberators. A great liberating mission has fallen to your lot. Be worthy of this mission! The war you are waging is a war of liberation, a just war. Let the manly images of our great ancestors—Alexander Nevsky, Dmitry Donskoy, Kuzma Minin, Dmitry Pozharsky, Alexander Suvorov and Mikhail Kutuzov—inspire you in this war!⁷³

The absence of revolutionary heroes and Civil War icons is quite notable here. As Serhii Yekelchuk notes, this list of Russian legendary princes and generals “seems to have provided the multinational Soviet state with a single heroic past to identify with: the familiar Russian tsarist historical mythology”.⁷⁴

Interestingly enough, Moscow *Pravda* and other newspapers, besides publications about Nevsky and Kutuzov⁷⁵, mentioned also such Ukrainian historical figures as Galych Prince Danylo and his struggle against Lithuanians, and Zaporozhian Cossacks in their confrontation with the Polish and Tatars. The inauguration of such images is dated by 2nd of July 1941, as soon as Mykola Petrovsky's article “Military valor of Ukrainian people” appeared. Here the author derives Ukrainian military traditions from Prince Sviatoslav and gives a general definition of Ukrainian history without appealing to class analysis, declaring that “the whole history of Ukraine is filled with heroic struggle for its liberty and independence from foreign invaders”.⁷⁶

Officially a new canon of republican historical heroes was approved in the document from 6 July 1941 when shortly after Joseph Stalin's speech (July 3 1941) Ukrainian government addressed Ukrainian people with an appeal “Comrades workers, peasants and intelligentsia of the Great Ukrainian people! Brothers and sisters! Sons and daughters of the

⁷³ «The twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Red Army», Joseph Stalin, *The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, 37-8.

⁷⁴ Serhii Yekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory: Russian-Ukrainian Relations in the Soviet Historical Imagination* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2004), 26.

⁷⁵ “Oleksandr Nevsky”, *Pravda*, June 27, 1941, 2; “Jak rosiis'ky narod byv nimets'kykh psiv-lytsariv”, *Komunist*, July 29, 1941, 3; N. Podoroznyi, “Brusylovs'kyi proryv”, *Komunist*, July 4, 1941.

⁷⁶ M. Petrovsky, “Viis'kova doblest' ukrains'kogo narodu”, *Komunist*, July 2, 1941, 3.

Great Ukraine!” A passage about Hitler’s attempts to “annihilate our national state” looks a little bit weird here. Among Ukrainian heroes-patriots beside Lenin and Stalin we can find the images of Bohdan Khmelnytsky and Danylo of Galych who “by swords and sabers had been slashing German knights-dogs [psy-lytsari]”.⁷⁷ The most interesting here is a formula of “great Ukrainian people”, as since such honorary title previously was used exclusively regarding to the Russian people, who were promoted to this status in 1937.⁷⁸ Such formula, as Serhii Yekelchuk assumes, “reflected the authorities' attempt to use Ukrainian patriotism as a mobilization tool, but without abandoning the new imperial vocabulary”.⁷⁹ In a state with one dominant “great nation”, the only way to boost the national pride of the largest non-Russian people was to promote them, temporarily, to “greatness” alongside the Russian elder brother.

Later the Manifest ratified on the first Congress of Ukrainian people’s representatives (Saratov, November 26 1941) had appealed to “freedom-loving Ukrainians”, successors of outstanding defenders of “holly Ukrainian land” Danylo of Galych and Petro Konashevych-Sahaydachny, Bohdan Khmelnytsky and Ivan Bohun, Taras Shevchenko and Ivan Franko, Vasyl’ Borhenko and Mykola Shchors (see Appendix 1). During 1942 the Ukrainian State Publishing House in Saratov had issued series of Ukrainian pocket-size booklets under the name “Our Great Ancestors” devoted to figures of Danylo of Galych, Petro Sahaydachny, Bohdan Khmelnytsky, and so on. At the end of 1942 Ufa State Publishing House issued the *Survey of the History of Ukraine* which especially glorified Cossacks. Khmelnytsky’s rebellion here is depicted as “war for national independence” which

⁷⁷ “Do ukrains`kogo narodu. Tovaryshchi robotnyky, seliany, inteligentsiia velykogo ukrains`kogo narodu!”, *Komunist*, July 7, 1941, 1.

⁷⁸ This formula first appeared in the official newspaper of the Ukrainian Communist Party, *Komunist*, from November 15, 1939 in the text of Supreme Soviets letter to Stalin (“Tovaryshu Stalinu”, *Komunist*, November 15, 1939, 1). At this time M. Khrushchev and Ukrainian intellectuals began to use this formula regarding to Ukrainian people.

⁷⁹ Serhii Yekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory*, 25.

in its turn was over by incorporation of Ukrainian lands into Russia, then by the “lesser evil”.

Within the war period party ideologues had organised the broad commemorations of Taras Shevchenko`s days and the founder of “modern musical tradition” Mykola Lysenko in Ufa and Samarqand. Patriotic works of Shevchenko, Franko and Lesia Ukrainka continued being published in huge editions even when the whole Ukraine was under German occupation, mass editions – pamphlets of Shevchenko`s and Franko`s poems – appeared for their contribution on the “occupied territory”. In particular, in May 1943 Ukrainian State Publishing House issued a new edition of canonic collection of Shechenko`s poems, *Kobzar*, in 20 thousands copies⁸⁰, while a famous painter Vasyl` Kasian created a number of posters “Shevchenko`s anger is a weapon towards victory” (see Appendix 2). For the first time after a long break, in 1943, a new Ukrainian orthography had been discussed and it got a final approval only in 1946.

The most central topic of Ukrainian Soviet propaganda from the end of 1942-beginning of 1943 is its anti-nationalistic slant caused, apparently, by understanding of a threat coming from an alternative version of national memory – national narrative – which was connected primary with Ivan Krypiakevych`s activities.⁸¹ Although national history remained a basic material for propaganda, the Soviet notion of Ukrainian historic memory had taken its clear shape. The creating of Bohdan Khmelnytsky`s Order, the only non-Russian military award, illustrates this evolution in the best way. According to the decree of Supreme Soviet Presidium from 10 November 1943 Bohdan Khmelnytsky`s Order was introduced of three degrees for the decorating of military men and partisans who showed “par-

⁸⁰ V. Hrynevych, “Z istorii formuvannia ukrains`kogo radians`kogo patriotyzmu v roky nimets`ko-radians`koi viyny 1941-1945”, in *Problemy istorii Ukrainy: Fakty. Sudzennia. Poshuky: migvidomchy zbirnyk naukovykh prac`*, Vol. 12 (Kyiv, 2004), 358.

⁸¹ At this time Ivan Krypiakevych under a pen-name of Ivan Petrenko and others put forward an alternative view on Ukrainian history (“Korotka istoriia Ukrainy”, “Istoriia Ukrainy vid naydavnishykh chasiv do siogodennia” and others.

ticular resolution and skill..., high patriotism, courage and selflessness in the struggle for liberation of Soviet land from German invaders”.⁸² In two days, on 12th of October, the Ukrainian city Pereyasav was renamed to Pereyaslav-Khmelnysky⁸³. In autumn, when the military operations for Kyiv liberation began, the glorification of this “national hero of Ukrainian people” had reached its culmination. In this time Bohdan Khmelnytsky, as Natalia Jusova points out, practically turned into “mytho-epic hero [heroi-bohatyr]”.⁸⁴ Parallel to the rehabilitation of Cossack`s mythology, the transformation of Khmelnytsky`s image occurred in the official discourse: from the liberator of Ukraine hetman became a spokesman of an idea of “an age-old [spokonvichni] aspirations of Ukrainian people toward the reunification with fraternal great Russian people”.

In the end of October 1943 the *Soviet Ukraine* published Mykola Petrovsky`s article “An unbreakable spirit of Great Ukrainian people” where the author examines the history of Ukraine from Kievan Rus till the “Great Patriotic War”. The images of princes Sviatoslav, Volodymyr Monomach, Roman Mstyslavovych and Danylo of Galych appear here as “great leaders [vogdi]”, Zaporozhian Sich – as “the beginning of new Ukrainian state” and Pereyaslav Council – as an “unbreakable fraternal union”.⁸⁵ The new short survey of Ukrainian history “The reunification of Ukrainian nation in unified Ukrainian state” by Mykola Pokrovsky appeared in the beginning of 1944 when Red Army had crossed the old Polish border and entered Western Ukraine.⁸⁶ The culmination point of this new scheme`s establishment in the mass consciousness intended to become two hundred ninetieth anniversary of Pereyaslav Council, the large-scale propagandist action, held by M. Khrushchev`s initiative on

⁸² Orden Bohdana Khmel`nytskoho, *Pravda*, October 11, 1943, 1.

⁸³ The more detailed information about this topic see: V. Hrynevych, “Jak hetman-“zradnyk” stav herojem, abo deshcho pro sovits`ki manipulatsii istoriiei”, *Pamiatky Ukrainy*, 5, 1991, 32.

⁸⁴ Natalia Jusova, “Zmina aktsentiv v ukrains`kii radians`kii medievistytsi na problemu pryiednannia Ukrainy do Rosii (kintsia 30-ch – 1-I polovyny 40-ch rr. XX st.)”, *Problemy istorii Ukrainy: Fakty. Sudgennia. Poshuky: migvidomchyi zbirnyk naukovykh prats`*. Part 9 (Kyiv, 2003), 387.

⁸⁵ M. Petrovsky, “Nezlamny duch velykogo ukrains`kogo narodu”, *Radians`ka Ukraina*, October 31, 1943, 3.

⁸⁶ M. Petrovsky, “Vossoedenenie ukrainskogo naroda v edinom ukrainskom sovetskom gosudarstve”, *Radians`ka Ukraina*, December 29, 1944, 4.

18th January 1944. Ukrainian press interpreted this fact like “an epochal event” and popularized the ideas of “Ukraine’s freedom and happiness in an unbreakable Stalinist union with Russian people and all Soviet peoples-brothers”.⁸⁷

With series of Soviet military successes at Eastern frontline in 1943, the Soviet official propaganda started to supply image of the victory more intensively. Immediately the rivalry over the victory started. The Red Army, “an army of defense, of peace and friendship among peoples of foreign countries”⁸⁸ as Stalin called it on its twenty-fifth anniversary in February 1943, was the most likely to take all benefits. It had been “waging a heroic struggle without parallel in history”, and its “gallant... men, comrades and political workers” covered the great battles with “unfading glory”.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, Stalin also had his own designs on the victory. As soon as there was something glorious to claim, Stalin’s role became more prominent in the war propaganda. His wise leadership and “military genius” thus were more regularly invoked to “explain successes for which tens of thousands of people had given their lives”.⁹⁰

It was a beginning of a glorious wartime myth where there was no room for memories of hardness of the initiate stages of the war. The words like *surrender* and *retreat* would gradually disappear from the description of Red Army operations having turned to the “preliminary stages of victory”.⁹¹ Even more actively Soviet censors suppressed the evidence of huge human losses at war, for it was a common practice to report fewer human costs. The Soviet war propaganda purposively did not address the question of the victory’s price. Emotions were also ‘censored’. Although mourning was allowed, feelings of fear, doubts and pain remained unspoken. Commemoration of the dead was rarely articulated in the Soviet public

⁸⁷ Khrushchev M.S. *I Ukraina. Materialy naukovo seminaru 14 kvutnia 1994 r., prysviachenogo 100 richchu vid dnia narodzhennia M.S. Khrushcheva* (Kyiv, 1995), 71.

⁸⁸ Joseph Stalin, *The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, 75.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁹⁰ Catherine Merridale, *Ivan’s war. Life and death in the Red Army, 1939-1945* (New York: Metropolitan book, 2006), 188.

⁹¹ Matthew P. Gallagher, *The Soviet history of World War II*, 11.

discourse. For instance, heroic narrative of the siege of Leningrad was not supposed to speak about people's starvation. When Ol'ga Berggolts, the "siege muse", visited Moscow at the summer of 1942, she was surprised to hear a directive: "You can talk about everything, but no recollections of the starvation. None, none. On the courage, on the heroism of the Leningraders, that is what we need... But not a word about hunger".⁹² So, individual suffering became the main target of an "organized forgetting" (Paul Ricoeur) launched by the Soviet state in order to keep the balance with the "official truth". A mythic heroic war thus was to be embodied in the idealised images of the youthful war heroes - Nikolai Gastello, legendary "panfilovtsy", Zoya Kosmodemianskaia, Aleksandr Morozov - who became national symbols of exemplary courage and self-sacrifice. It was much easier and pleasant to commemorate heroism, the so-called "positive memory", than people's misery, for people seldom enjoy revising memory of pain.

Already in 1944, started ambitious projects depicting the popular participation in the war (collecting materials, interviewing, publishing volumes). In March 1943 the first Museum of the Great Patriotic War was established.⁹³ The All-Union *Commission on the History of the Great Patriotic War* besides collecting documents interviewed major commanders and rank-and-file partisans after their return to Soviet lines. Created already in December 1941, the Commission from the very start was subordinated to the Department of Propaganda and Agitation of the VKP(b) and was to create the "documentary base" and subsequently to write "true" histories of the War.⁹⁴ For instance, from the summer of 1944 the Ukrainian Institute of history started to prepare documentary collections of Ukrainian his-

⁹² Catherine Merridale, *Ivan's war. Life and death in the Red Army*, 190.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 188.

⁹⁴ The "Commission" was heir to the tradition of the *Istpart* - the institution that once documented history of the October Revolution (On the *Istpart*, see Frederick Corney, *Telling October: Memory and the Making of the Bolshevik Revolution*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).

As Oleksandr Melnyk argues, besides its direct collecting function, Soviet archivists and historians who worked on the Commission provided vital informational support for the punitive organs of the Soviet state in the process of identifying "war criminals," "collaborators" and other "enemies of the people" (Oleksandr Melnyk, "Learning Like a State: Archives, Repression, and the Politics of Historical Knowledge in Ukraine, 1942-1944", paper draft, presented at Danyliw seminar 28-31 October 2009, Ottawa University).

tory and war history, particularly memoirs about the occupation and letters of ostarbeiters.⁹⁵ This codification campaign, the so-called “perpetuation of the memory” about the war, aimed to provide a solid documentary basis for the state’s claim about all-people’s war. Every city and even village thus had to search, or even create, their own local heroes, to fit this general scheme.

However, at least from 1943-4, after a number of Red Army triumphal operations, the official Soviet propaganda gradually steps back from some liberal moments, and Russo-ophile tendencies⁹⁶ intensify. Gradually there was built a specific hierarchy of patriotic manifestations among various Soviet ethnic groups which can be celebrated in public. In accordance to military successes on the frontline, this model started being revised; therefore, in 1943-44 some peoples were refused in patriotism.

USSR’ victory in a war resulted in the creation of a glorious myth about “Great Patriotic War”, at the same time in the unification of Ukrainian historical memory in frames of unifying concept of the “great Russian people”. According to this idea, all non-Russian peoples had to revise their historical narratives in order to approve their status of “younger brothers” of Russians. “Russians” were celebrated as the “most outstanding people of the Soviet Union” and a “leading force” who actually won the war unlike Ukrainians whom Stalin tended to blame for 1941-2 defeats and considered to be ‘traitors’. Although in his Victory speech (9 May 1945) Stalin attributed victory to “our great people” and the Red Army, his famous toast “To the Russian people!” (24 May 1945) clearly identified this “great people” with the “Russian people” whose “confidence in the Soviet Government proved to be that decisive force which ensured the historic victory”.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Volodymyr Zhyglo, «Dzhereloznavche doslidzhennia ta vydannia dokumentiv z istorii zony viis`kovogo upravlinnia vermakhtu u period 1942-1991», *Aktual`ni problemy vitchyznianoï ta vesvitnoï istorii: Zbirnyk naukovykh prats`* (Kharkiv: KhDU, 2008, Vol.11), 270.

⁹⁶ I mean ideological-political actions against Kazakh’s and Tatar’s historians (1944) directed against nationalistic historiographies of those republics.

⁹⁷ <http://nauka.relis.ru/11/0505/11505014.htm>.

After the tremendous Victory Parade on the Red square in Moscow on 24 June 1945 the war topic tended to fade in the course of time. The war was over and the “period of peaceful development has begun”,⁹⁸ as Stalin put it. Even though the war had to give a way to the postwar reconstruction during late Stalinism, the war experience continued to shape people’s self-identification and living patterns. Illya Erenburg expressed this feeling of unity with the war as following: “I did not understand at first what was the matter with me, but later on, after closely observing other people, I saw that it was not so easy to be done with the war; we had all been poisoned by it”.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ «Victory!», in Joseph Stalin, *The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union*, 161.

⁹⁹ Illya Erenburg, *Post-war years, 1945-1954* (Cleveland and N.Y.: The world publishing company, 1967), 10.

2.2. Post-war purges in literature. Ukrainian *Zhdanovschyna* as a battle for the unified memory of the WWII: fashioning an acceptable past

“We have been attached a large importance and are watched over vigilantly. It is doubtful whether truthful literature is possible now, it is all set in the style of salutes while truth is blood and tears”.
(From writer Ilya Erenburg’s private utterance¹⁰⁰)

On 24 June 1945 the victory parade took place on Moscow Red square. Marshal Zhukov, who was leading the parade¹⁰¹, was giving a speech. The Ukrainian film director Oleksandr Dovzhenko was among the crowd. When Zhukov spoke of the fallen, Dovzhenko was the only one to doff his hat. There was no minute of silence, no pause, no funeral march, as if those millions of victims “had never existed”.¹⁰² The Soviet leadership did not like to draw attention to the casualty rates and losses. Instead, they continued to speak of heroism and ‘selflessness’ of the Soviet people when approximately twenty-seven million of its citizens were dead.

The Second World War or rather the “Great Patriotic war” was a crucial turning point in the history of the Soviet Union. The war presented a rare chance for the “materialization of people’s public spirit”¹⁰³ which for decades had been cultivated as the main principle of loyalty to the Soviet regime. Until the war it was rather an abstract thing. Thus ultimate victory in the war gave the regime necessary recognition and support of the people who, “intoxicated by the victory”, were ready to forgive Stalin everything. As future dissi-

¹⁰⁰ Cited from Merkulov’s official report to Andrei Zhdanov (30 October 1944), <http://www.alexanderyakovlev.org/almanah/inside/almanah-doc/58298>.

¹⁰¹ As a Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army Stalin was expected to lead the Victory Parade of 24 June 1945. However, he ordered marshal Zhukov to «take his place» motivating his decision by saying he was too old to lead the parade. For many, it was a sign that Stalin was exhausted and he had visibly aged.

¹⁰² Maruis Broekmeyer, *Stalin, the Russians, and the War 1941-1945* (Medison, University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 232.

¹⁰³ Elena Zubkova, *Poslevoenoe sovetskoe obshchestvo: politika i povsednevnost`. 1945-1953* (Moskow: ROSSPEN, 2000), 22.

dent Petro Grigorenko remembers, “The doubts which had been knocking the door of my soul before the war disappeared. Stalin again was the great infallible leader [*nepogreshnyi vozhd'*] and a military genius for me. Errors, foolishness and crimes miraculously evaporated or turned to be a brilliant insight [...] But the charm of victory and glorification [*slavoslovie*] of the leader is such that you take all this nonsense for the revelation [*prinimaesh kak otkrovenie*] [...] Everything which was told about Stalin, party or country I perceived as the primary truth”.¹⁰⁴

The Soviet war myth occupied a special position between the formation and disintegration of the Soviet polity, for it both possessed integrating possibilities and “paved the way for the articulation of particularistic identities”.¹⁰⁵ Indeed, the liberation of the occupied territories, particularly Ukraine, in 1943-1944 and the incorporation of millions of Red Army officers, former prisoners of war (POWs), *ostarbeiters*, and civilians, posed serious challenges for the regime. It is most illuminative in the case of guerillas.¹⁰⁶ On the one hand, the Soviet officials were highly suspicious of the reliability of guerillas that had spent the war on the enemy-held territory. On the other hand, the state realized the importance of mythologizing the partisans and underground activists who by their very existence affirmed the legitimacy of the Soviet state. They became the vital subjects of the Soviet myth of “all-people’s war” which in many regards contradicted the actual wartime experience of the veterans. All personal accounts and stories which undermined the official representation of the war were to be suppressed, either silenced or purified. For example, memories of heavy

¹⁰⁴ Elena Zubkova, *Poslevoenoe sovetskoe obshchestvo*, 46.

¹⁰⁵ Amir Weiner, *Making sense of war: the Second World War and the fate of the Bolshevik revolution* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001), 385.

¹⁰⁶ I would use the name guerilla as a general name for both partisans and underground activists. Indeed both of these categories can be attributed to the larger phenomena of the organized Soviet armed resistance to German occupation during the Second World War. They seem to overlap in some characteristics, but they were not identical. In fact, Soviet officials clearly distinguish between these two methods of resistance what they called “antifashistskoie podpol’e” (underground) and “partizanskoe dvizhenie” (partisan). The first primarily lived in the swamps and forests, and openly attacked Germans during raids, while the latter operated in conspiracy usually in the cities and villages.

1941, about mass desertion, panic and captivity were not tolerated. The partisans thus, according to Kenneth Slepyan, became “mythic heroes but only at the cost of the suppressing of many of their actual experiences and memories”.¹⁰⁷

In what follows, I analyze the post-war purges of 1946-8 in the Soviet literature, the so-called *Zdanovschyna*, and trace how this purification campaign was connected to the discussions about representation of war. In this chapter I argue that literary discussions of 1945-1948 in the UkrSSR to some extent were connected with the party line of how to interpret the recent war, and thus with the regime’s striving for the unified vision of the Second World War.

Literary discussions on the war representation in 1944-46

As it was already noted above, the positive image of the Second World war as ‘fair’ and ‘liberating’ was formulated already from the very first days of the German invasion of the USSR. The military success of 1944 and ultimate victory constituted the strongest impulse towards its war mythologizing and codification of memory about it. Already in 1943 started ambitious projects commemorating the memory of the “Great Patriotic War”: the creation of the first *Museum of the Great Patriotic War* (1943), the creation of *Commission on the History of the Great Patriotic War* (1941). Historians and archivists, so-called ‘memory-collectors’¹⁰⁸, played an extremely important role in the process of codification of the memory of the war.

Unlike archivists and historians, who had a limited arsenal of instruments for the mythologizing, the Soviet writers, as ‘engineers of people’s souls’ (Stalin), were “producing

¹⁰⁷ Kenneth Slepyan, *Stalin’s guerillas. Soviet partisans in World War II* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2006).

¹⁰⁸ I call ‘memory-collectors’ people who were involved in the collecting and codification of documents/testimonies from the times of World War II within the frame of so-called “Commission for exploration of the Great Patriotic War”. Among them, we can find archivists, historians, state officials.

not only particular symbols but also [...] verbal substitutes for reality”¹⁰⁹. During the war writers, even if not all of them experienced it personally, considered themselves a part of Soviet fighting entity. They even called themselves “writers` battalion”¹¹⁰ implying that their word was equal to a bayonet. Even before the war had ended, the Ukrainian writers started to speak of “the mass of tremendous facts”¹¹¹ which needed to be drawn in order to depict the great heroic deeds of the Soviet people. At the 1944 Plenum of Ukrainian Writer`s Union (SPU), held in the ‘liberated’ Kyiv, poet Andrii Malyshko called for the preservation of war memory through the literature:

On my question ‘What are you collecting?’ Ivan Le answered ‘I am writing down the thing which is called revenge. You and I can forget a lot of what we have seen but our children should not forget this, let them know how we had lived at this time.’¹¹²

The ‘correct’ representation of war, with its both integrating and disintegrating potential, was an uneasy task. Even though Ukrainian writers-veterans (Andrii Malyshko, Leonid Pervomayskii, Semen Skliarenko, Serhii Borzenko) could express their views more or less openly in 1944, they were expected by Soviet authorities to frame their memories of the war within an official discourse of the “Great Patriotic War”. On the above-mentioned 1944 plenum one critic noted that the hour had struck for when “bitterness of the war, our mistakes should not be portrayed so broadly and passionately” against “our colossal successes”.¹¹³ The readers, he said, might have been puzzled with the reading about poorly organized fords and reconnaissance (“rozvidka”). Therefore, a tale of grand heroic deeds was supposed to substitute these “minor” notes in Ukrainian literature.

The central topic for 1944 discussions within the Ukrainian Writers` Union was the question whether or not one needs personal experience in order to write about the war in a

¹⁰⁹ Evgeny Dobenko, «Socialism as will and representation, or what legacy we are rejecting?», *Kritika*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Fall 2004, 701.

¹¹⁰ Tsentral`ny derzhavnyi arkhiv-muzei literatury ta mystetstva (TsDAMLM), f. 590, op. 1, d. 12, 116.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹¹² TsDAMLM, f. 590, op. 1, d. 12, 47.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 72-3.

‘right’ way.¹¹⁴ Some veterans (usually they were called “frontoviki”) opted for the so-called “life truthfulness” (Sheremet), the truthful representation of the war with all its atrocities (Malyshko) and the “unvarnished” picture.¹¹⁵ As they believed, their combatant experience allowed them to criticise their ‘rear colleagues’ for “impoverished and even distorted depiction of partisan reality” (they used the metaphor of a forest without trees). Littérateurs, as Mykola Sheremet claimed, “managed to write their novels about partisans at several thousands kilometres from the front-line” without even studying the material.¹¹⁶ For their part, writers who spent their war at work behind the lines responded with the criticism of *frontoviks* for ignorance of rear themes and for an excessive enthusiasm about the war topics.

These debates immediately touched upon the problem of limits between fiction and reality. Of course, writers were not expected by authorities to write the story ‘the way it was’. On the contrary, often they were encouraged to produce generalized images and typical characters. Nevertheless, some littérateurs associated themselves with the “chroniclers of the events and witnesses of army heroism”. In Semen Sklarenko’s characterisation, the writer was closer to the historian in his aspiration to “listen to the voice of the war” and “instil [the best] from every soul”.¹¹⁷ However, as critic Novichenko claimed, this “method of primitive cataloguist”, when there is no picture, no image but a “stringing of some parallel and contrasting facts”, could not satisfy authors who were to be “mouthpieces of wishes, thought and conscience of Ukrainian people”.¹¹⁸ The writer yet could bring his ingenuity and imagination to bear in translating history into symbolism. The peculiarity of the postwar

¹¹⁴ For poet Serhii Borzenko, the war indeed was a turning point in his life. Having been «neglected» before war, Borzenko finally got his recognition as a writer and correspondent at front (TsDAML, f. 590, op. 1, d. 12, 97). Indeed, he was the only one war journalist who was given the rank of the Hero of the Soviet Union.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 58-9.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 57.

¹¹⁷ TsDAML, f. 590, op. 1, d. 12, 112-14.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 131, 137.

Soviet writer, as Katerina Clark suggests, was that Stalinist writer was “no longer the creator of original texts” but a “teller of tales”, a “medieval chronicler”.¹¹⁹

What meaning did the writers attach to the World War II in 1944-6? All of them knew that the war was a turning “historical” point in the whole USSR’s history, for it was a “great school of probation [ispytaniia] and examination of all forces of the people”.¹²⁰ War propaganda had been constantly supplying images of triumph and repeating Stalin’s thesis about Red Army as the “army that defends peace and friendship between people of every land” (February 1942).¹²¹ But just a few Ukrainian writers spoke of war from the Marxist position. At the general SPU meeting devoted to preparation for the Victory Day (2 April 1945) the writer Ivan Le declared that WWII was a “culmination of 27-year battles for our idea, idea of Lenin and Stalin” giving a futurist projection for the future. The ultimate victory in this war, according to him, was to become a “starting point for the future reorganisation of the world” in accordance to the communist premises.¹²²

Joseph Stalin definitely shared such view. For him, the war was an “ultimate purgatory of the Revolution and confirmation of an already well-placed system”.¹²³ In his appeal on 9th May 1945 the Soviet leader addressed people as “comrades and compatriots” (in his famed speech of July 3, 1941 he called them “brothers, sisters, friends”) and spoke briefly of a “great victory of our people” stressing “great sacrifices” and “incalculable privations and sufferings experienced by our people in the course of the war”.¹²⁴ However, he expressed no words of gratitude or compassion.¹²⁵ More importantly, Stalin did not even men-

¹¹⁹ Katerina Clark, *The Soviet novel: history as ritual* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 159.

¹²⁰ TsDAML, f. 590, op.1, d. 33, 98. This phrase is taken from Stalin’s electoral speech on 9 February 1946.

¹²¹ Stalin called for this on Red Army twenty-fifth anniversary on 23 February 1943 (Catherine Merridale, *Ivan’s war. Life and death in the Red Army, 1939-1945* (New York: Metropolitan book, 2006), 188).

¹²² TsDAML, f. 590, op. 1, d. 27, 11-11 back.

¹²³ Amir Weiner, *Making sense of war*, 45.

¹²⁴ <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1945/05/24.htm>.

¹²⁵ Nina Tumarkin, *The living and the dead. The rise and fall of the cult of World War II in Russia* (N.Y.: Basic books, 1994), 90.

tion the party and its role in getting victory. So, the victory seemed to belong only to the Soviet people and “heroic Red Army”.

Shortly after this the victory formula was slightly ‘updated’ by Stalin in his famous toast ‘*For the Russian People!*’ at the reception in honour of the Red Army Commanders on 24 May 1945: from now on the victory became the major virtue of the Russian people, the “leading force of the Soviet Union” and “the most outstanding nation out of the nations forming the Soviet Union”.¹²⁶ As is generally known, before this it was the party or proletariat which were always considered a ‘leading force’ while ‘brother peoples of the USSR’ had been always seen as equal. Nevertheless, for the first time the formula ‘Russian people as a leading force’ was used as regards to ethnos, and formula ‘first among equal’ was changed into the stating the Russian superiority. Surprisingly enough, in this toast the triumphal Stalin actually accepted the responsibility of the Soviet government (and his own as well) for the mistakes and ‘moments of a desperate situation’ of 1941-42:

Our government made more than a few mistakes; at times we were in a desperate situation, when our army fell back ... abandoning them [cities] because there was no other way out. Another people might have said to the Government: you have not justified our expectations; go away; we will set up another government, that will make peace with Germany and secure us tranquillity. *This could have happened, bear this in mind* [imeite v vidu, emphasis added].¹²⁷

But the Russian people did not come to this; they believed in the correctness of their government's policy and made sacrifices, to ensure the defeat of Germany. And this trust of the Russian people in the Soviet Government was the decisive strength, which secured the historic victory over the enemy of humanity, - over fascism.

As we see, in 1945 Stalin clearly understood that there were decisive moments at war when he might have lost it. The victory thus offered a new chance for the socialist system and for him as well.

There are a lot of interpretations of this toast but most scholars consider it a program document indicating changes in postwar nationality policy, and final consolidation of the

¹²⁶ For electronic version see: <http://nauka.relis.ru/11/0505/11505014.htm>.

¹²⁷ The phrase I have marked is absent from the press version of a toast. Both newspaper and reports from reception were published in Appendixes to Vladimir Nevezhyn's work: *Zastol'nye rechi Stalina: dokumenty i materialy* (Moscow: SPb, 2003).

For electronic version see: <http://nauka.relis.ru/11/0505/11505014.htm>.

russocentric idea. Some believe it was a strong impulse for Zhdanov's campaign against 'cosmopolitanism'. At the same time, as William O. McCagg argues, Stalin's toast "For the Russian people!", alongside with his subsequent toast from a month later, was the beginning of his attack against the wartime commanders.¹²⁸ Already in spring 1946, all Stalin's main "rivals for Stalin's victory crown"¹²⁹, including Zhukov (he was sent to Odessa), were demoted, disgraced (Rokossovskiy), or imprisoned. All contribution Zhukov made during the war was now attributed to the 'father of the people'.¹³⁰

As a result, 1946 witnessed a new modification of the war myth which downplayed the role of the army and people in securing the Soviet victory. Rather, it was Stalin, with the help of the party, who received all the credit now. Thus the new face of the victory had been forming with the Stalinist profile.¹³¹ From now on, it was Stalin's genius which defeated the Germans; the Soviet people and the Red Army were relegated the secondary roles.

A 'codified' version of the "Great Patriotic War" appeared in winter 1946. In his electoral speech on 9 February 1946, Joseph Stalin provided a list of 'ready-made' answers to what the war was about. In other words, with this speech Stalin drew the contours and gave key concepts for the 'right' understanding of this conflict. In fact, this speech also started the process of "depersonalizing Western policy [...] lumping all the capitalist states together in a common hostile category".¹³² According to Stalin, the recent war and WWI resulted from the crisis in capitalist system, although the former differed from the Great War of 1914-18 by its "anti-fascist and liberating" character. Being the most brutal "war of the peoples for their existence", it, nevertheless, had its positive sides:

But the war was not only a curse. It was also a great school which examined and tested all the forces of the people. [...] The war was something in the nature of an examination of our Soviet system, of our State, of our Government and of our Communist Party, and it

¹²⁸ William O. McCagg, *Stalin embattled. 1943-1948* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978), 76.

¹²⁹ Catherine Merridale, *Ivan's war. Life and death in the Red Army*, 362.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 81.

¹³¹ Beginning from the 1946 till 1950, the 9th May issue of *Pravda* contained the large Stalin's portrait on the front page. (Elena Zubkova, *Poslevoenoe sovetskoe obshchestvo*, 37).

¹³² Matthew P. Gallagher, *The Soviet history of World War II.*, 45.

summed up their work¹³³

Having “tested our order, state, government and party”, the war thus affirmed the viability of the socialist order which proved to be a “vital and stable form of social organization”. Therefore, from now on the war turned to be above all a reminder of the success of the socialist system and its supreme leader.

A broadened summary of this speech can be found in reports of Ukrainian Writers' Union (SPU) conference of ideological work which aimed to “explain and help [writers] to gain deep and correct understanding of questions raised by Stalin, particularly concerning sources of our victory”.¹³⁴ It was believed that such public act of ‘speaking through’ would help them to avoid “ideological confusion” (plutanyna) and “misunderstandings”. One should emphasize that this summary was not just a mechanical postulation of Stalin's points but rather a reflective and detailed interpretation of them. According to the reporter (Zolotoverkhy), Stalin indicated three main factors of “our victory”: social order and “moral-political unity of the Soviet people” (1), multinational state embodied in the “friendship of the peoples” (2), and the Red Army (3). Thus the main tasks of writers were to demonstrate the distinction of the Soviet way of development from the capitalistic one¹³⁵, and, since the war threat was still in the air, to “educate our people to be ready to defend our homeland”.¹³⁶

Interestingly enough, the discussion at the Ukrainian Writers' Union was not limited only to the repetition of Stalin's theses but addressed a range of other important questions. In fact, writers spoke of the origin of Soviet patriotism which did not figure in Stalin's text. Ivan Zolotoverkhy attempted to historicise the notion of patriotism reminding all that patriotism is not a universe notion, for the Soviet patriotism in its nature differs drastically from

¹³³ *Literaturna gazeta*, 10 February 1946, 1.

¹³⁴ TsDAML, f. 590, op. 1, d. 33, 93.

¹³⁵ Strangely enough sounds here Stalin's phrase that we need to ‘study from bourgeois world’. In four months, with the notorious campaign against antipatriotism, Stalin will reverse his position (Ibid., 12).

¹³⁶ Ibid., 10.

the patriotism in pre-revolutionary period when “proletariat did not have homeland” yet.¹³⁷ Another critic stated that, when writing about the war heroism, the writer cannot limit himself only to the war period; on the contrary, he need to give us a retrospective view of the past in order to show the real roots of the Soviet patriotism.¹³⁸ However, Ukrainian writers could not go too far to the past in their search for the roots of Soviet patriotism. Otherwise, they would risk to get criticized for “tracing patriotism from the ancient [pradiv`ski] instincts or old obsolete traditions” like Vasyľ Storozhuk whose character’s heroism was deduced from the influence of XVII-century philosopher Grygorii Skovoroda.¹³⁹

Albeit, it was nationalism which concerned Ukrainian authorities most in 1946. Although national deviations did not dominate discussions of late 1945-mid 1946, the theme of “national narrow-mindedness” (obmezhenist`) was already there. As early as March-June 1946, critics were mainly preoccupied with the criticism of tendencies to embourgeoisement and “subjective sentimentalism” in Ukrainian literature. The new term even emerged to characterise these “remnants of a bourgeois word-view” - the “uncritical attitude to the past”.¹⁴⁰

Gradually the war theme became marginalized in 1946, for active discussions of the war topics fall mainly in the period of 1944-5. It can be explained by the party call for post-war great exploits of rebuilding, when a more pressing problem emerges - the problem of the country’s reconstruction of war damage.

Zhdanov’s campaign as a struggle for the ‘only correct understanding’ of the past

Zhdanov’s ideological drive of 1946-8 represents a complex phenomenon which included ideological purges not only in literature and arts, but also in ideology, philosophy

¹³⁷ This statement is not unique at all and definitely taken from 1930s propagandistic materials.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 32-3.

¹³⁹ TsDAML, f. 590, op. 1, d. 33, 109-10.

¹⁴⁰ TsDAML, f. 590, op. 1, d. 33, 28.

and science. But in fact the party compaign aimed exactly at intelligentsia. Usually understood as an “anti-Western pitch”¹⁴¹ and crusade against liberalism, Zhdanov’s crackdown launched in early 1946 aimed to reassirt the reinforced control over the culture and intended to neutralize the favorable impression of life abroad gained by the Soviet citizens. In many regards it was also a response to the inteligentsia’s sincere hopes for the liberal cultural climate and changes for the better life.

Although the beginning of the *Zhdanovshchyna* is traditionally associated with an attack on Leningrad writers in late summer 1946, its course in other non-Russian republic offers a slightly different perspective. Werner G. Hahn has long suggested that it actually began in June 1946, when Zhdanov’s agent Fedoseyev arrived in the Ukrainian capital Kyiv to correct ideological deviations in history and literature.¹⁴² Interestingly enough, the ideological purge in Ukraine aimed at “nationalism” rather than “western influences”. This constituted a profound distinction between Zhdanov’s crackdown in Russia and Ukraine.¹⁴³ While intellectuals in Moscow and Leningrad were criticized for “apolitism”, “kowtowing before the West” and lack of patriotism, in Kyiv they were condemned for “idealization of the Ukrainian past”, “escape from the Soviet reality” and ignoring class divisions. In a stricter sense, the Ukrainian *Zhdanovshchyna* thus was more oriented toward embattling nationalism than its counterpart in Moscow, being a party’s assault on the Ukrainian national patrimony as well.

Yet Ukrainian republic was not a unique testing ground for *Zhdanovshchyna*. During mid- to late 1940s the wave of denunciations of national historiographies swept across the

¹⁴¹ Herman Ermolaev, *Censorship in the Soviet Union, 1917-1991* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997), 104.

¹⁴² Werner G. Hahn, *Postwar Soviet politics. The fall of Zhdanov and the defeat of moderation, 1946-53* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1982), 48.

¹⁴³ No scholar yet managed to produce an explicit explanation of this Ukrainian specificity. Apparently, as Serhii Iekel’chuk suggests, it was connected to the difficulties the Soviet leadership was encountering with the Sovietization of Western Ukraine, particularly with the fierce nationalist guerilla resistance (Serhii Iekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory: Russian-Ukrainian Relations in the Soviet Historical Imagination* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2004), 63).

USSR and touched almost every non-Russian republic (Armenia, Kazakh, Tatar, Bashkir, Bielorussian). As David Brandenberger argues, Stalin's comment to film director Eisenstein during their famous 1947 conversation - "we must overcome the revival of nationalism that we are experiencing with all the [non-Russian] people" - reveals the real roots of this campaign.¹⁴⁴ In all cases, except Russian, the republican pre-war historical narratives were attacked, for they posed a challenge to the Russians' leading role within the Soviet family of the peoples.

Like in Leningrad, Zhdanov's purge in the UkrSSR was a reaction to the relaxation of ideological control during and immediately after the war which led Ukrainian historians to publish books with a less russified version of history and prompted Ukrainian writers to demand for freedom from censorship and party control. The situation was complicated by the fact that such demand came from a high-profile litterateur Petro Panch who, alongside with critic Ia. Gorodskoi, on the June meeting of prose writers demanded the right to make mistakes so that "our creative works will not be boring as they often are".¹⁴⁵ One might draw a parallel with the case of Russian writer Vsevolod Vyshnevsky who on the X Plenum of Soviet Writer's Union in Moscow "suddenly claimed the freedom of speech as a result of victory over fascism".¹⁴⁶ Not without reason, the main ideologue of Ukrainian *Zhdanovshchyna* Dmytro Manuil'sky called the "right to err" a "demagogic demand of Vishnevsky".¹⁴⁷ So, already at the meeting of 10 June 1946, in the presence of the second secretary of TsK VKP(b) Demian Korotchenko, the Ukrainian Central Committee ideology chief Kost' Lytvyn announced that there were many "shortcomings and even ideological breakdowns" in activity of Ukrainian writers.

¹⁴⁴ David Brandenberger, *National bolshevism. stalinist mass culture and the formation of modern Russian national identity* (Cambridge: Harvard university press, 2002), 187.

¹⁴⁵ *Radians'ka Ukraina*, 18 August 1946.

¹⁴⁶ TsDAML, f. 590, op. 1, d. 27, 27.

¹⁴⁷ Tsentral'ny derzhavny arkhiv hromads'kykh ob'ednan' Ukrainy (TsDAHO), f. 1, op. 23, d. 2499, 51. Indeed, Ukrainian Writer's Union Chairman Maksym Ryl'sky, who had backed Panch and Gorodskoi, spoke about Vishnevsky incident at the meeting of Kievan writers on 20 June 1945.

However, it should be emphasized that the 1946 persecutions of Ukrainian intelligentsia did not appear unexpectedly. Already in 1944, the Moscow ideologists, and Josef Stalin personally, launched an extensive public persecution of Oleksandr Dovzhenko's novel and movie script *Ukraine in Flames* during which the author was accused of 'nationalism' and 'revising Leninism'. Although it did not develop into a purge of 'nationalism' in Ukraine, the Dovzhenko affair was a paradigmatic case which constituted a "warning to the intellectuals who identified with the wartime cult of national patrimony"¹⁴⁸. As soon as there appeared further incidents of similar nature Moscow opted for a large-scale purge of 'nationalists' in the republic.

Even though Panch affair as a disturbing signal was a very important issue for discussion in early June 1946, no less party's attention was paid to contemporary themes which were to be "evidences of a grandour of the Soviet order".¹⁴⁹ According to Andrei Zhdanov, a "resolute literature's turn to the topics of contemporaneity"¹⁵⁰ was to emphasize the socialist present at the expense of a national past. On 4 July *Literaturna gazeta* informed its readers that the main task of the "literature is by means of artistic word to inspire [pidnosyty] the Soviet reader for full and rapid accomplishment of Stalin's plans of building of communism".¹⁵¹ The party decided to stimulate Soviet writers for creating great monumental 'canvas' about ordinary Soviet people. In order to "reestablish the connection to the life"¹⁵² Ukrainian writers were expected to move to the countryside and live there for a while. Therefore, the heroic of the war would have to give a place to immediate wants of the postwar era.

In UkrSSR, *Zhdanovshchyna* meant above all the establishment of a pervasive control over representation of the Soviet life and people's history. During the republican

¹⁴⁸ Serhii Iekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory*, 57.

¹⁴⁹ TsDAHO, f.1, op. 23, d. 2499, 17.

¹⁵⁰ *Literaturna gazeta*, 19 December 1946.

¹⁵¹ *Literaturna gazeta*, 4 July 1945, 3.

¹⁵² TsDAHO, f.1, op. 23, d. 2499, 98.

conference of 24-6 June 1946, Lytvyn and other speakers focused almost mainly on the ideological mistakes in artistic and scholar representations of the Ukrainian past.¹⁵³ The new signal came from the July 20 *Kul'tura i zhyzn`* (Agitprop's mouthpiece) where Head of Agitprop's Propaganda Section Sergei Kovalev wrote an article "To correct mistakes in the coverage of some questions of the history of Ukraine" demanding further correction of errors in the presentation of Ukrainian history.¹⁵⁴ However, from 15 August 1946 serious ideological mistakes and 'national deviations' of Hrushevs'ky type were to be found primarily in literature and arts.¹⁵⁵ In this way Ukrainian intellectuals had been thought the new proper (russocentric) version of Ukrainian Soviet historical memory.

In contrast to the Ukrainian case, the official representation of Russian national past and its relevance to the Soviet present "remained largely unchanged during the early post-war period".¹⁵⁶ What was new was Stalin's emphasis on the dangers of foreign influences. In famous Moscow's decree (14 August 1946) on Leningrad literary journals *Zvezda* and *Leningrad*, litterateurs Anna Akhmatova and Mikhail Zoshchenko were severely attacked for the 'lack of patriotism' and 'apolitism' in their works. For the following decades they became symbols of "vulgar lampoon [poshly paskvil'] on the Soviet present" (Zoshchenko) and "pessimistic and devoid of ideology [bezideinaia] poetry"¹⁵⁷ (Akhmatova).

Ukrainian *Zhdanovshchyna* was distinguished in its "unusual sensitivity to the questions of history".¹⁵⁸ A series of KP (b) U Central Committee resolutions from August-

¹⁵³ For instance, a recent textbook *A Survey of the history of Ukrainian literature* was criticized for ignoring the class division in pre-revolutionary Ukraine and not paying enough attention to the progressive ties with the Russian literature. Yet, besides this survey, ideologues mentioned only one example (of L'viv professor Korduba) of "national deviations" and Hrushevs'ky's influence in history. (Serhii Iekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory*, 63).

¹⁵⁴ Kovalev repeated earlier criticism of *Survey* and Lviv incident but broadened the scope of attack, adding volume 1 of the *History of Ukraine* (1943) to a list of works with serious mistakes (Werner G. Hahn, *Postwar Soviet politics*, 49).

¹⁵⁵ Historian Mykhaylo Hrushevs'ky (1866-1934), former leader of Ukrainian national movement and «father» of Ukrainian national historiography, developed the concept of independent development of Ukrainian history. After his death in 1934, Hrushevs'ky became the symbol of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism.

¹⁵⁶ David Brandenberger, *National bolshevism*, 192.

¹⁵⁷ *Vitchyzna*, July-August 1946 (#7-8), 8.

¹⁵⁸ Serhii Iekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory*, 65.

October 1946 all targeted Ukrainian literature and arts for “national escapism into the pre-revolutionary past”. The Ukrainian equivalent of Moscow’s 14 August resolution (“About the Journal *Vitchyzna*”) from 1 October 1946 denounced the journal *Vitchyzna* (*Motherland*) not for “kowtowing before the bourgeois culture of the West” but for “propaganda of bourgeois nationalist ideology”.¹⁵⁹ In particular, on general meeting of Kyiv writers (27-8 August 1946) *Vitchyzna* was criticized for publishing works which “cultivated national narrow-mindedness” and tended to “explain contemporary phenomena from the point of view of the past”.¹⁶⁰ Still, it is significant to note that there were some attempts to search for Zoshchenko-like mistakes. For instance, Iurii Mokriev’s tale *Monkey story* was denounced as a “slander for the Soviet people” (direct translation of Zhdanov’s vocabulary), while his another story (*Kashevar*) initiated the discussion on whether silly man can accomplish a feat at war.¹⁶¹

In general, among works mentioned in the 1 October resolution very few, including Varvara Cherednichenko’s *I am happy Valenyna*, were portraying the World War II but many dealt with historical topics. Apparently, that is why *Vitchyzna* was also reproached for neglecting “leading topics of contemporaneity” - above all, victory of the Soviet people in the Great Patriotic War” and “heroic struggle of the Soviet people for accomplishing a new Stalin’s five-year plan”.¹⁶²

Even though the war themes were a sideline during Zhdanov’s purification campaign of 1946, the ‘Soviet’ experience of the recent war remained the main source of regime’s legitimacy. In Katerina Clark’s observation, Andrei Zhdanov’s famous lecture on 21 September 1946 elevated the war “to the status of a second revolution in the roster of Great

¹⁵⁹ «Pro zhurnal «Vitchyzna». Z postanovy TsK KP(b)U», *Vitchyzna*, July-August 1946 (#7-8), 35-7.

¹⁶⁰ TsDAML, f. 590, op. 1, d. 36, 35-6.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 104.

¹⁶² «Pro zhurnal «Vitchyzna». Z postanovy TsK KP(b)U», *Vitchyzna*, July-August 1946 (#7-8), 36.

Moments - a revolution that had wrought a qualitative change in Soviet man".¹⁶³ The war thus, according to Zhdanov, brought a radical change in Soviet Man, who was now more sophisticated than he had been before:

With each day our people attain an ever higher level. Today we are not the people we were yesterday, and tomorrow we will not be as we were today. We are already not the same Russians we were before 1917. And Russia [Rus`] is not the same, and our character has changed too. We have changed and grown up together with these transformations which had radically changed our country's face.¹⁶⁴

While distinguishing the postwar USSR from the pre-Revolutionary era, Zhdanov linked the war with 1917 events, referring to it as a revolutionary chain. At the same time, as David Brandenberger indicates, his "ethnic particularism" ("We Russians") and "thousand-year pedigree" ("Rus`") was "remarkably awkward".¹⁶⁵

However, *Zhdanovshchyna* had another implicit implication - Stalin's attack upon the army. In his speech at Central Committee VKP (b) meeting of organizational bureau on 9 August 1946 which indeed marked the beginning of Zhdanov's campaign, the Soviet leader openly challenged the privileged position of the 'front-line' writers. "It does not matter whether he is a serviceman [malo li chto voennyi], whether he has high ranks... if he is weak in literature [v literature slab]", stated Stalin. "These people have been fighting [dralis`] very well at war; but you do not have to think there were no whimpering [khnykaiushchyi] people and writers like Zoshchenko. There were all kinds [vsiakie byli]. [...] One cannot think that all of them were angels, the real men. Is it possible? Everything happened [vsiakoe byvalo]. These people should have been treated like the others - if you write well, you will get esteem and respect; if you write badly you have to study".¹⁶⁶ The war experience thus did not matter much; what mattered was writers' ability to correspond to people's needs and wishes.

¹⁶³ Katerina Clark, *The Soviet novel: history as ritual*, 198.

¹⁶⁴ *Literaturna gazeta*, 26 September 1946, 1.

¹⁶⁵ David Brandenberger, *National bolshevism*, 193.

¹⁶⁶ *Vozhd` i kul'tura. Perepiska I. Stalina s deiateliami literatury i iskusstva. 1924-1952* (Moscow: Chelovek, 2002), 219-20.

Zhdanov's campaign against Leningrad leading writers also affected a Leningrad 'blocade muse' Olga Berggol'ts who had to "blow up the authority of 'Zoshchenko and Akhmatova'" (she did not denounce them).¹⁶⁷ Soon after the war finished Berggol'ts' poetry became neglected, as since as her image of Leningrad blockade of 1941-44 with all its suffering and horrors did not actually fit the official vision of 'heroic defense of Leningrad'. Still, one needs to emphasize that during Zhdanov's attack Berggol'ts was criticized for failing to criticize her Leningrad colleagues which had little to do with the representation of the war.

In Ukrainian memories of the Second World War, there were other 'harmful' episodes to be purified. For instance, words like *retreat* and *surrender* would never feature in the annals of Red Army operations, and Ukrainian literature as well. Neither desertion nor captivity were ever mentioned in public or allowed to enter the pages of literary epos of the "Great Patriotic War". For instance, at the conference of Ukrainian Writers' Union (12-14 March 1946) Ivan Zolotoverkhy denamed any attempts to justify captivity and called it an "intolerable [neprypustymy] and alien phenomenon for our ideology", as for "our literature should lift up the reader in such way that he considered captivity an impossible phenomenon".¹⁶⁸ In fact, Ihor Masenko's realistic poem *The only one in the field (Odyn v poli)*, devoted to the drama of soldier-"otochenets"¹⁶⁹, was mentioned in October 1 resolution as one which instead of "courageous and devoted patriot of the Soviet motherland" portrays a "coward who having betrayed his duties as Red Army soldier remains at enemy's rear and suffers from his loneliness".¹⁷⁰ In contrast to party's expectations, the author tried to uncover all difficulties of '1941 humiliating retreat'. Such episodes, of course, underlined the official version of WWII and, therefore, were to be 'forgotten'.

¹⁶⁷ Aleksandr Rubashkin, «Luna gnalas` za nami, kak gepeushnik»// <http://magazines.russ.ru/zvezda/2010/3/ru9-pr.html>

¹⁶⁸ TsDAML, f. 590, op. 1, d. 33, 117-18.

¹⁶⁹ «Otochentsy» (encircled) are stragglers cut off enemy lines in the great encirclement battles of 1941.

¹⁷⁰ «Vyshche prapor bil` shovyts`koi partiinosti v literaturi!», *Vitchyzna*, July-August 1946 (#7-8), 41.

Relationship with the West, and especially attitude to the Allies, was surely a very sensitive topic during 1946 ‘struggle against cosmopolitism’. In 1946 journal *Ukraina* published a novel *Modry Kamen`* by the young Ukrainian writer-frontovik Oles` Honchar which described a tragic love of the Soviet soldier and a young Slovak girl.¹⁷¹ Absent from the list of resolution about *Vitchyzna*, this novel, however, was severely criticized in 1946 and figured as a “harmful” work in discussion of Moscow’s resolution in late August.¹⁷² On 2 September 1946 in his letter to close friend, Oles` Honchar wrote, “I am paralyzed. I would prefer only one thing - that literature would leave me alone and would not follow me like a mania. Otherwise, it will put me to death. [...] One can expect support from nowhere, everyone is looking around [ogliadaiet`sia]”.¹⁷³

Thus portrayal of love with a foreigner was the main ‘mistake’ of the young writer. Interestingly enough, just one year later after this incident Ilya Erenburg finished his new novel *The Storm* where a Soviet citizen falls in love with a French woman. He immediately found himself in the center of ferocious attacks of critics. But soon quite unexpectedly Stalin advocated *The Storm* by saying that “But I like this Frenchwoman, she is a nice girl. And besides, *such things do happen in real life* [emphasis added]”.¹⁷⁴ Stalin defended the right of Erenburg`s characters to love each other, but shortly after this (November 1947) issued a law prohibiting marriages between Soviet citizens and foreigners, even if they were subjects of socialist countries. Therefore, what was allowed for Erenburg in 1947 did not work for republic litterateurs already in 1946. Oles` Honchar learned his lesson well: in his 1964 novel *In a moment from happiness* (*Za myt` vid shchastia*) a soldier’s love for a foreign

¹⁷¹ This is an autobiographical novel, and one might easily recognize a Slovak woman Iuliia from Honchar`s diary in Teresa, main character of *Modry Kamen`* (Oles` Honchar, *Katarsis* (Kyiv, 2000). In another his major work *Standard-Bearers* (*Praporonostsi*) Honchar also includes this episode.

¹⁷² From resolution of general meeting of Kyiv writers (27-18 August 1945), TsDAML, f. 590, op. 1, 36, 2.

¹⁷³ Oles` Honchar. *Lysty* (Kyiv: Ukrain`s ky pys` mennyk, 2008), 59. It is important to note that already in 1948 critic Berezhny (Honchar`s friend) will call *Modry kamen`* an «adornment of Ukrainian novels» (*Ukraina*, August 1948, #8, 13).

¹⁷⁴ Ilya Erenburg, *Post-war years, 1945-1954* (Cleveland and N.Y.: The world publishing company, 1967), 45-6.

woman ends up with a death of the first, for “the law does not allow it [...] we cannot marry foreigners”.¹⁷⁵

Besides this “inhuman law”, which, according to Erenburg, “caused many tragedies”,¹⁷⁶ the year 1947 did not see an annual Victory Parade. It also showed that the purification campaign in Ukraine did not end; moreover, it intensified with the arrival of Lazar Kaganovich in Ukraine in late February 1947. Kaganovich replaced Nikita Khrushchev as the Communist Party of Ukraine’s new first secretary who suddenly fell into Stalin’s disgrace after he dared to request for food assistance for Ukraine during the 1946 famine.¹⁷⁷ Other scholars claimed that it was Khrushchev’s rival in Moscow Georgii Malenkov who tried to discredit him.¹⁷⁸

However, whatever the reason for Khrushchev’s demotion was, the “second advent [pryshestia] of Kaganovich’s”¹⁷⁹ to Ukraine had little “to do with any ‘national deviations’ in the republic’s intellectual life”¹⁸⁰, as Serhii Yekelchuk argues. The scholar persuasively shows that neither Kremlin bosses, nor newly Ukrainian party’s first secretary at first had any intention to purge Ukrainian historians or writers. It was rather Kaganovich’s private interest which resulted in a massive attack on Ukrainian intellectuals in spring-autumn of 1947. In his memoirs, Kaganovich in the following sentences expressed the roots of this campaign: “Nobody can deny that Germans had left known traces of their ideology. We still have in the Western Ukraine many hidden Banderavites, a large number of repatriated. They bring their own elements of the enemy ideology...”.¹⁸¹ Most scholars tend to believe that if

¹⁷⁵ http://chtyvo.org.ua/authors/Honchar/Za_myt_schastia/.

¹⁷⁶ Ilya Erenburg, *Post-war years, 1945-1954*, 46.

¹⁷⁷ Iurii Shapoval, *U ti tragichni roky. Stalinizm na Ukraini* (Kyiv: Politvidav Ukrainy, 1990), 128.

¹⁷⁸ Yaroslav Bilinsky, *The Second Soviet republic. The Ukraine after World War II* (N.Y.: New Brunswick, 1964), 234-5.

¹⁷⁹ O.S. Rubliov, Iu.A. Cherchenko, *Stalinshchyna i dolia zakidnoukrains'koi intelihentsii* (Kyiv, 1994), 219. Lazar Kaganovich had a notorious reputation in the Ukrainian republic as one who enthusiastically purged the ‘Ukrainian communists’ (struggle with «chvyliovism») during his first Ukrainian period (1925-8).

¹⁸⁰ Serhii Yekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory*, 72.

¹⁸¹ Lazar Kaganovich, *Pamiatnye zapiskirabochego, kommunista-bol'shevika, profsoiuznogo, partiinogo I sovetsskogo gossudarstvennogo rabotnika* (Moskva: Vagrius, 2003), 551.

Stalin had not summoned Kaganovich to Moscow in mid-December 1947, this campaign on “unmasking of bourgeois nationalism” in Ukraine could have developed to the new ‘shooting campaign’ (like purges of early 1930s).¹⁸² Apparently, in 1947 there was no use of such massive purge.

As materials of Ukrainian Writers` Union suggest, Kaganovich`s primary targets in literature were high-rank writers - poet Maksym Ry`lsky (for his speech *Slovo pro ridnu matir* in 1943), belletrists Iurii Ianovs`ky (for his novel *Zhyva voda*) and Ivan Senchenko (for the novel *His generation*). All three used to be members of so-called *Vaplite*, a writers` organization which existed in Kharkiv in 1926-8 and was headed by Mykola Khvylioviy.¹⁸³ On the Plenum of Ukrainian Writers` Union from 19 September 1947 a ‘bard of Revolution’¹⁸⁴ Iurii Ianovs`ky was personally attacked by Kaganovich. His novel *Alive water* (*Zyva voda*) was denounced as one that “slanders the Soviet reality” and “mocks the Soviet people”.¹⁸⁵ Ianovs`ky`s main mistake in his own words was the wish to “show all terror of fascist attack who devastated our villages and collective farms”.¹⁸⁶ Too realistic portrayal of the Soviet reality was not permitted

Interestingly enough, 1947 criticism of “classics” coincided with the promotion of the young writers, in particular, of Oles` Honchar who after his new novel *Standard-bearers* was especially celebrated (See Chapter 3.1). The ‘classic’ of Ukrainian Soviet literature Mykola Bazhan poetically called him a “far-seeing eye [daleke oko] and highly patriotic

¹⁸² Ibid., 83; O.S. Rubliov, Iu.A. Cherchenko, *Stalinshchyna*, 217-20; Iurii Shapoval, *Ludyna i systema. Shtrykhy do portretu totalitarnoi doby v Ukraini* (Kyiv, 1994), 218-19.

¹⁸³ VAPLITE (Vil`na Akademia Proletars`koi Literatury) or Free Academy of Proletarian Literature has taken an independent position and was standing on the grounds of creation the new Ukrainian literature by qualified artists who put in front of them the demand of improvement and mastering the best achievements of western-European culture. The members of VAPLITE became one of the first targets of Stalin`s terror in 1930s.

¹⁸⁴ Ianovs`ky`s novel about October revolution *Riders* (*Vershnyky*) is considered a classic of Ukrainian Soviet Literature.

¹⁸⁵ TsDAHO, f.1, op. 23, d. 4511, 62, 71-75.

¹⁸⁶ TsDAHO, f.1, op. 23, d. 4511, 37.

[vysokopatriotychne] heart”.¹⁸⁷ However, even though Ianovs`ky affair was a devastating critic, it seems that 1947 attack on intellectuals did not have a systematic character, for it was a critic organized by Lazar Kaganovich himself. The fact that already in 1948 Iurii Ianovs`ky got Stalin’s prize for his *Kyiv stories* (*Kyivs`ki opovidannia*) proves this idea as well.

So, as we have seen, from 1946 by 1948 public remembrance of the war was almost banned. The war finally came to be associated above all with the socialist state and its success in building the communism. From 1946 until near the end of Stalin’s life, the history of World War II was a “virtually a forbidden topic for the Soviet professional historians”.¹⁸⁸ With inauguration of *Zhdanovshchyna* and its call for a “decisive turn to the topics of contemporaneity”¹⁸⁹ and doctrine of “conflictlessness” (*bezkonflitnost`*) it also became a rare theme on public debates on the Ukrainian literature. In 1948 even the Victory Day ceased to be a holiday and turned to an ordinary working day¹⁹⁰.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., .

¹⁸⁸ Matthew P. Gallagher, *The Soviet history of World War II. Myths, Memories, and realities* (Westport: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1976, c1963), 82.

¹⁸⁹ *Literaturna gazeta*, 19 February 1946, 1.

¹⁹⁰ The Victory Day was reestablished as a holiday only during Brezhnev`s times in 1965 in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the victory. (Karmen Shaide, “Kollektivnye i individual`nye modeli pamiati o “Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne” (1941-1945 gg.)”, *Ab Imperio* 3 (2004), 218).

Chapter 3. Narrating the “Great Patriotic War”: the writer as a state agent.

3.1. Oles` Honchar and his war: personal memories vs. ideology

Oles` Honchar (1918-1995) is the central figure of this chapter, since he used to be a major figure of the Soviet Ukrainian post-war literary establishment – the recipient of Stalin¹⁹¹, Lenin and Shevchenko Prizes. During the entire Soviet period there was only one Soviet writer of Ukrainian origin that could be comparative to Oles` Honchar by the quantity of government awards - Oleksandr Kornychuk¹⁹². Having grown up in early 1930s and personally experienced the WWII, Honchar was involved (consciously or not) in the creating of the myth of Great Patriotic War in the UkrSSR. Here, the striking fact is that undoubtedly absolute classic of Ukrainian Soviet literature, the “hero-writer”¹⁹³ had easily been transformed into the “patriarch of Ukrainian national literature”¹⁹⁴. Thus, Honchar appears to be controversial enough: we can speak about his dual identity as a Soviet phenomenon¹⁹⁵.

This chapter aims to reveal this duality of the Soviet identity in the case of Oles` Honchar. What is important is to trace the influence of the official discourse of the “Great Patriotic War” in Honchar`s writings and determine its main components. A micro scale is very useful here, since it makes it possible to reconstruct the Soviet war myth in its totality.

¹⁹¹ His famous trilogy *Praporonostsi* (*The Standard-Bearers*) which in 1946-1948 received the second Stalin's Prizes is considered to be a constant part of the official Soviet culture of memory about the Second World War.

¹⁹² Written after Stalin's order, Kornychuk's *The Front* (1942), as Amir Weiner claims, was an evidence of Stalin's ideological shift and a direct «attack on pillars of the prewar revolutionary myth, of which the civil war was a major component». (For details see: Amir Weiner, *Making sense of war: the Second World War and the fate of the Bolshevik revolution* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001), 45).

¹⁹³ Oksana Zabuzhko, *Notre Dame D'Ukraine. Ukrainka v konflikti mifologii* (Kyiv, 2006), 596.

¹⁹⁴ As it turned out Oles` Honchar even “was among the first Ukrainian dissidents in 1960-s”. According to present interpretations, he also became “a spiritual leader of Ukrainian nation and conscience of his people” in 1980-s (Valentyna Halysh, *Oles` Honchar – rzurnalist, publitsyst, redactor: evolutsia tvorchoi maysternosti* (Kyiv, 2004), P.111). The name of “dissident” Honchar earned because of his novel *Cathedral* (*Sobor*) which in 1968 was heavily criticised by party leaders for its “nationalism”.

¹⁹⁵ Orlando Figes, *The Whisperers: private life in Stalin's Russia* (New-York, 2007), Introduction; Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on my mind. Writing a diary-under Stalin* (Cambridge, 2006), P.20.

In order to accomplish our tasks we will take two main sets of texts – Honchar`s diary records from 1943-1945¹⁹⁶, including his “front poetry”, and various editions of *Standard-bearers*. It is necessary to take note of the different character of both texts, inasmuch as the first one, of course, can be seen as an insight into the author`s consciousness, while the author`s “ego” in *Standard-bearers* is more diffused and exposed to exterior influence. Therefore, we can speak about different types of sources and their cognitive values.

Oles` Honchar: a biographical sketch

Oleksandr (later Oles`) Honchar (1918-1995) belongs to the generation of so-called “children of revolution”, born in the revolutionary time and raised on the ideals of communism and inspired by a sincere belief in the “bright future”. This generation was expected to make a reality of all these “burning” revolutionary ideas and to become the builders of a new socialist society. The case of Honchar is an apt example of controversial Soviet nationality policy, correlation between national (Ukrainian) and international (Soviet) within one identity. Ukrainian by origin, communist by views, he was supposed to unify all these notions together in his consciousness and writings.

Oles` Honchar was born on 3rd of April 1918 (the date is still under the debate) in a workers` village Lomivka near Katerynoslav (now Dnipropetrovsk); however, he was raised in the family of his grandfather and grandmother in the Poltava region in village named Sukha. Surely that should have had the strong impact on child`s identity. The majority of scholars who study Honchar`s creative work usually pick up the information about his early period from the so-called “Writer reflections...” from 1971 which can be to a great extent considered to be an official “canonized” biography of our hero. This article tells us that “his

¹⁹⁶ Honchar`s war diary records include: 1 note-book where the author speaks about his imprisoning; 3 copy-books: one dates from 25th September 1943 till 29 December 1944, second – from 4th January till 9th August 1945, the third – from 3rd October 1945 till his demobilization, 12th November 1945.

first literary teachers” were works of Ukrainian classics – the national bard Taras Shevchenko (when reading *Kobzar* Honchar’s grandmother and aunt “were shedding tears”¹⁹⁷), Panas Myrny, Ivan Franko, Nechuy-Levyts`ky, Lesia Ukrainka, Arkhyp Teslenko, Stepan Vasyľchenko and others. Only later in the university he discovered the works of the Russian (Gohol`, Tolstoy, Turgenev, Chekhov), and Soviet writers (Andriy Holovko and Hrygoriy Kosynka).

The childhood and adolescence of Oles` Honchar fell in the period of late 1920s and early 1930s which were marked by ‘heroics’ of first five-year plans, industrialization and collectivization. Beside this, it was also a time of 1932-1933 Famine which probably touched Honchar’s family as we know that Poltava region suffered significantly from a good shortage at that time. Years of 1934-1941 in Honchar’s life are primarily connected with his native city Kharkiv, particularly with studies at Kharkiv College of Journalism (1935-1938) and Kharkiv University (Philological Faculty, 1938-1941).

From the very first days of war Honchar was enrolled in a student’s battalion, the so-called *studbat*, and after few weeks of training he discovered himself in the center of combat. In fact, he was among those who defended Kyiv and was encircled by German troops in July-August 1941. As a result, up to 90 percent of the conscripts who had been called up for the Battles of Kyiv and Kharkiv were dead¹⁹⁸. Wounded twice, captured in 1942-1943, Honchar went through the whole war as a soldier of Red Army starting near Kyiv and finishing in Prague. The war itself, like for the others, had a huge impact and significance in Honchar’s life. Oles` Honchar once noted that he was never such a free person as during war years. In fact, for many people whom we call “front-line generation” (frontovoe pokolenie) the war itself became some sort of “school of life” where their identity was

¹⁹⁷ Honchar O. „Pys`mennyts`ki rozdumy (Jak stvoriuvalysia “Praporonosti”. Vidpovid` na anketu zhurnalu “Voprosy literatury”)”, in *Honchar O. Pys`mennyts`ki rozdumy. Literaturo-krytychni statii*. (Kyiv, 1980), 233.

¹⁹⁸ Catherine Merridale, *Ivan’s war. Life and death in the Red Army, 1939-1945* (New York: Metropolitan book, 2006), 338.

shaped. Similarly to Konstantin Simonov for whom the war was the making of a Stalinist and proletarian writer¹⁹⁹, the war shaped Honchar`s entire outlook of the world and his Soviet identity, in particular.

In winter 1945, after demobilization, Honchar moved to his sister`s house in Dnipropetrovs`k where he finished his education. At the same time he began working on the most important work of his life *Praporonosti* (*The Standard-bearers*). Honchar will remain famous in Ukrainian history first of all as an author of this trilogy about the Second World War, all three parts of which (*The Alps* and *The Blue Danube* in 1947, and *The Gold Prague* in 1948) got Stalin`s Second Prizes. According to calculations of Mykola Koval`, the trilogy was published in 31 editions in Ukrainian, 44 in Russian, and 22 - in languages of the Soviet peoples.²⁰⁰ The novel itself was oriented both on the youth, and children of school age (issued in series *School library*) while veterans and Soviet soldiers (series *Library of the soldier and sailor*)²⁰¹ composed a big segment of its audience. Without doubt, *Standard-bearers* can be considered a central work in Ukrainian Soviet discourse about the war. Perhaps, alongside with such canonic works as *Young Guard* by Fadeev it was the Ukrainized version of myth about the *Great Patriotic War*. An interesting testimony of Lubomyr Senyk serves as an illustration of work`s complete integration into the Soviet mythology. He mentions one Hungarian museum with an exposition devoted to the *Terror of 1956*. There, a set of books of international origin is placed among the “torture tools” and considered to be “occupying”; the novel *Standard-bearers* is one of them.²⁰²

The starting part of *Standard-bearers* (*The Alps*) was written and firstly published in journal *Motherland* (Vitchyzna) in 1946. Initially, author`s intent was to name it *Arrow to the West* which was to be a “great, passionate, but unbiased story about dead people, about

¹⁹⁹ Figes Orlando, *The Whisperers: private life in Stalin`s Russia* (New-York, 2007), 409.

²⁰⁰ Afterwords of Koval` see in Honchar O. *Povne vydannia...*

²⁰¹ Oles` Honchar, *Zlata Praga* Transl. Shapiro (Moskva, 1949), 146.

²⁰² “Oles` Honchar: molodeche oblyccia y... posharpani nervy”, *Lvivs`ka gazeta “Ukraina i chas”* (21\04\2008).

mistakes and suffering of millions of people”.²⁰³ Later, in interview of 1971, Honchar was already thinking in other categories asserting that this book was to narrate about “great liberation campaign”. Its success can partially be explained, as Pavlo Zagrebel`ny assumes, by the postwar “favorable political conditions” where party expressed the “wish of all world” to “see liberators as heroes of a just war on the pages of literary work”²⁰⁴. While film director Oleksandr Dovrzenko and witer Yurii Yanovs`ky were condemned for nationalism in their works, in the UkrSSR there was a real need in literature which could fit the official memory model of the “Great Patriotic War” which still had to be written. Exactly such work as *Standard-bearers* became that “monumental equilibration”, “bravura victory epopee of Soviet weapon – in hands of ordinary people... without any sings of running into nationalism”.²⁰⁵

Two worlds, two author`s “ego”: on the basis of “war diaries” and Standard-bearers

The understanding of any individual autobiographical and diary records is closely connected to the theoretical concept of historical memory of Maurice Halbwachs²⁰⁶. According to the French scholar, the individual memory as ‘conscious or unconscious process of granting sense to fragmented images’ always falls under the influence of an actual reality (“social frames” in Halbwachs` term).²⁰⁷ The two texts, under consideration, uncover these layers and memory models, both collective and individual, which could be evidence of author`s belonging to one or another value system, and his identity. It is also important to reconstruct the model of memory about the Second World War in the author`s interpretation given in *Standard-bearers*. In war diaries of Oles` Honchar, one can find elements of the

²⁰³ Oles` Honchar, *Katarsis* (Kyiv, 2000), 100.

²⁰⁴ Petro Zagrebel`ny, «Praporonosti O. Honchara i zobrazhennia ludyny na viini», in *Materialy tvorchoi konferentsii*. (Kyiv, 1985), 4.

²⁰⁵ Ivan Koshelivets`, “Mozhna odverti?”, *Suchasnist`* 10 (1997), 117.

²⁰⁶ See Maurice Halbwachs, *On collective memory*, ed. and trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chikago, 1995).

²⁰⁷ Shaide Karmen, “Kollektivnye i individual`nye modeli pamiati o “Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne” (1941-1945 gg.)”, *Ab Imperio* 3 (2004), 214.

official interpretation of war, and, furthermore, some traces of author's belonging to the Soviet memory culture of WWII. Isolating these elements in the texts will be the reference point in our analysis.

The historical image of Soviet soldier as a 'liberator' occupies a dominant place in Honchar's heroic epos. Although this 'liberation' motif is not central in diary records, it begins to dominate in *Standard-bearers*. Honchar was definitely subjected to the influence of the postwar official propaganda (See Appendix 4). For example, in diary records we find words 'liberation' or 'liberator' only in several places, since the author primarily operates with military terms like "force", "occupy" or "repel". Only once we come across the conscious identification with 'the liberators': "we, liberators, could not be indifferent to the destiny of the world"²⁰⁸. On the contrary, the trilogy itself abounds with highly ideological phrases like "the enslaved peoples of Europe... we have to liberate them"²⁰⁹ or "the just [spravedlyvi] armies always have a beautiful destiny".²¹⁰ Nevertheless, it seems that this idea of 'liberation' was imposed later, approximately in the second edition of the novel's manuscript.²¹¹ For instance, in the first version the monologue between main characters Chernysh and Sahayda ends with: "Maybe, that is why the Fatherland becomes for us the dearer... the more torments we feel for it".²¹² In the further editions instead we have a new phrase: "The magnanimous [velykodushny] people who sent its armies of thousands to rescue the others"²¹³, for the liberation of Europe".²¹⁴

²⁰⁸ Oles` Honchar, *Katarsis* (Kyiv, 2000), 117. All further references to the diary will be given according this edition.

²⁰⁹ Oles` Honchar, "Al`py", *Dodatok do zhurnalu "Ukraina"* 4 (1947), 121.

²¹⁰ The first edition of *Standard-bearers* (1946), in Arhive Instytutu literatury im. T.G.Shevchenka (AILT), f. 96, d.1, l. 1-2.

²¹¹ One can trace the genesis of Honchar's writing on the basis of manuscripts kept in the Archives of the Institute of Literature. There are two manuscripts of the *Standard-bearers* (one unfinished from 1945 and from 1946) and one page-proof version (from 1949). These three versions substantially differ, so I will refer to them as «the first», «the second» and «the final» editions of *Standard-bearers*.

²¹² The first edition of *Standard-bearers* (1946), AILS, f. 96, d.1, 73.

²¹³ The final edition of *Standard-bearers* (1949), in AILS, f.96, d.3, l. 111.

²¹⁴ The second edition of *Standard-bearers* (1946), in AILS, f.96, d.2, l. 127.

The logic of understanding of *Standard-bearers* is the following: the Soviet soldier, “Ivan”, consciously and confidently follows the “hard and responsible road”, bearing “liberation” to Europe and promising “to baptize it to new better faith” (Al`py, 1947, 62). From the later editions we can also learn that the Soviet Army is “the most progressive army in the world”²¹⁵ (the phrase was added in the Russian translation of 1948), and the Soviet people is “generous” and sacrificial people who “had bravely met the invasion of German hordes and pays for Europe’s liberation by its own blood”.²¹⁶ Furthermore, the author frequently stresses on the importance of “historical mission” which is carried out, for example, by lieutenant Kozakov, “the rescuer of Europe and world civilization” (Al`py, 1947, 171). Here, we also find a phrase reminding us Soviet propaganda: “To step back is already a treason. There is no room to retreat... remember one thing: we have a great mission. So, let us fight to the bitter end!” It is possible to draw a parallel with the famous Order # 227 from July 28, 1942 (code name “No step back!”) aimed to reduce mass army desertion. As many scholars believe, exactly this order played its decisive role in Stalingrad battle.²¹⁷

The description of combat in Honchar`s diary records as well is marked with a lofty pathetic tone when he speaks about “heroic mission of Soviet army” and the evaluation of the Second World War as a whole. The author’s perception of the surrounding events and people generally fits the Soviet myth about the “Great Patriotic war”. This, in particular, can be traced in Honchar`s inclination to glorify his place and role of Soviet army in the war. The author describes “the great”²¹⁸ and “grandiose” (Katarsis, 2000, 82) battle for Budapest, “epic” battle for river *Gron* (P.85); tells us about “final accord of our great battles” (P.90) and “battles filled with tragic greatness” (P.92). In addition, he brings such rhetoric figures

²¹⁵ Aleksandr Honchar, „Znamenostsy”, *Roman-gazeta* 11 (1948), 8.

²¹⁶ Oles` Honchar, “Al`py”, *Dodatok do zhurnalu “Ukraina”* 4 (1947), 203.

²¹⁷ Catherine Merridale, *Ivan`s war. Life and death in the Red Army, 1939-1945* (N.Y. 2006), 157.

²¹⁸ Oles` Honchar, *Katarsis* (Kyiv, 2000), 79.

as “striving for the victory” (P.60), “dust of victory” (P.91) which is opposed to the “bitter dust of 1941” (P.87).

The patriotism and love for the Fatherland, of course, occupy the dominant position in both texts. Let us try to indicate all those thematic blocs which are typical for the Soviet patriotic discourse. “We respect patriotism in every nation... because we are patriots too”²¹⁹, says first sergeant Bagirov, stressing the right of any nation for self-determination, the slogan taken by Bolsheviks from the very beginning of their fight for power. For instance, Honchar’s *Diaries*’ significant feature is the author’s stressing on sacrifice of those who “rescued our fatherland without pity for their own lives”(P.110). Oles’ Honchar as well is ready to sacrifice his life, assuming that he “does not regret if he will perish in the combat”, since “it is still the best death to die for the Fatherland, Ukraine”²²⁰ (P.40). The question of whether writer equates Fatherland with Ukraine or not is another story to which we will come back later.

Yet Honchar’s patriotism from the *Diaries* is not just a blind service in the name of great aims, but also, after Lev Tolstoy, “the survival of ancient times” and “slavery self-subordination to those who in power” (P.32). According to his thoughts, only in ancient times was it a valor for the “peoples who were fighting barbarians, not equals”. It is easy to follow author’s thought here: he gradually casts the idea that exactly his (Soviet) patriotism is a real and “valiant”, as long as Soviet Army is fighting against “fascist barbarians”. Such peculiar “barbarization” or, using term of Edvard Said, “orientalization” of an adversary (and the whole Europe as well) is enough clearly articulated in *Diaries*, and especially in *Standard-bearers*.

²¹⁹ Oles’ Honchar, “Al’py”, *Dodatok do zhurnalu “Ukraina”* 4 (1947), 185.

²²⁰ Any person with classical education without any doubts will recognize in these words the verse of Horace-Cicero «Dulce Pro Patria Mori» (“how sweet to die for the fatherland”). (About its transformation in Middle Ages see: Kantorowicz E., “Pro patria mori in Medieval political thought”, *The American historical review*, Vol.56, #3, (Apr., 1951), 472-492).

What Oksana Zabuzhko calls Honchar's "myth of "our" Soviet/Russian superiority over Europe"²²¹, by rhetoric and language forms is quite close to the orientalist discourse described by Said. Like in orientalism, there is a clear polarization of the world into two words which oppose each other: in Said – "West" (Europe) and "East" (Orient)²²², in Honchar – the USSR and Europe. There is also a clear division into "barbarians" and "civilizers". What is the most interesting here is that exactly Europe (the "colonizer"), Germany and Romania, plays a role of "barbarians" who are to be "baptized to better faith" (*Al'py*, 1947, P.62). Hence, "orientalism" of Oles' Honchar can be seen as "East's" specific reaction to European discourse according to which Europe for ages "imagined" Russia (and then USSR) as a "barbarian at the gate". Perhaps, it would be more appropriate to call it "occidentalism". It is interesting to mention that Kutuzov used the same tactics in his polemics with Napoleon calling French invasion a "new variant of destructive Mongol conquest".²²³ As since Soviet propaganda from the very beginning of war compared Hitler's aggression to Napoleon's campaign in 1812²²⁴, one can easily determine the author's source of information.

For the first time the category of "barbarians" appears in *Diaries* when author reflects about "patriotism" in Tolstoy's interpretation (P.24). In the other place Honchar neatly equates "German fascists" with "barbarians" appealing to the mutual experience in a form of "us, people who defeated barbarians" (P.116). *Standard-bearers* is rich in various Soviet codes like "victims among our people" who "bravely met the invasion of German hordes"

²²¹ Oksana Zabuzhko, *Notre Dame D'Ukraine. Ukrainka v konflikti mifologii* (Kyiv, 2006), 595.

²²² Edward Said, *Orientalism. Zapadnye kontseptsyi Vostoka* (Sankt-Peterburg, 2006), 52.

²²³ Phrase is taken from citation «it was a new edition of the destructive Mongol conquest, thus describing Napoleon himself as a barbarian», (Tartakovskii A.G. *Voennaya publicistika 1812 goda*. Moscow, Nauka, 1967, p.135. Cited from: Alexey Miller, *Natsionalizm i formirovnie natsii: teorii, modeli, kontseptsii* (Moskva: Rossiyskaia Akademiia Nauk, 1994).

²²⁴ On 22nd of 1941 Molotov gave a radio speech where he compared Hitler's aggression with Napoleon's campaign. He also assured the audience that "Red Army and the whole our people will conduct triumphal patriotic war" similarly to the "Russian people who answered Napoleon with a "patriotic war" ("Vystuplenie po radio Zamestitelia Predsedatelia Soveta Narodnykh Komissarov Soiuza SSR i Narodnogo Komissara Inostrannykh Del tov. V. M. Molotova", *Pravda* 22 June 1941, 1.

(P.103). In general, it is possible to say that among “barbarians” are mainly Germans and their satellites, i.e. “enemies at the front”. It is not an accident that interview of Oles` Honchar from 1971 contains more prevalent formulations. For instance, reflecting about his life at the front and “historical roads of his people”, the writer gives us quite traditional narrative:

It was time when innumerable Mongol hordes had been trampling down our land, annihilating the indigenous population in animal manner, burning beautiful temples and libraries, devastating the already known culture of Kievan Rus with the fierceness of frantic vandals... it was an invasion of benighted and savage nomads who considered the robbery to be their ordinary occupation and who did not have an idea about values of human culture and civilization.

In the XX century, after Honchar, “the swarms, vomited out by the capitalist state which gave to the world Goethe and Beethoven, were moving upon us”. The further statement about “stinking explosion of fascist barbarism which befogged [zatumanyv] Europe and with its entire devastating force have burst [vlomyvsia] in our young constructing world”²²⁵ does not require any further comments.

The brightest example of this ‘orientalisation’ is the episode when main character Chernysh, having awakened in the night, is complaining to his subordinate Kozakov that he cannot sleep because of a flea. As an answer, he gets an ironical answer of a clear orientalist manner: “What do you want [shcho zh ty khochesh].. Asia [aziaty]”²²⁶. What is interesting is that in the next edition this phrase is changed to “What do you want.. Europe».”²²⁷

Metaphors of “great wretchedness” (*Al`py*, 1947, 8) and characteristics of “beggarly misery country” (*Al`py*, 1947, 22) prevail in Europe`s description in *Standard-bearers* of 1949. The author uses negatively marked characteristics like “greedily”, “wildely” or “beggary” to depict the “Europeans”²²⁸. In the *Diaries* we also have Romania`s depiction as a

²²⁵ Oles` Honchar, „Pys`mennys`ki rozdumy. (Jak stvoriuvalysia “Praporonosti”. Vidpovid` na anketu zhurnalu “Voprosy literatury”)”, in *Oles` Honchar, Pys`mennys`ki rozdumy. Literaturo-krytychni statti* (Kyiv, 1980), 225.

²²⁶ AILS, f.96, d.1, 8.

²²⁷ Added in the final edition. AILS, f.96, d.3, 15.

²²⁸ The final edition of *Standard-bearers* (1949), in AILS, f.96, d.3, 11.

“poor, uncivilized country” where “fields are worked up badly, in a barbarian way. No machinery. No roads. No clothes”.²²⁹ All these words were added in the final part of the novel which dates back to 1949. As we know, from spring 1946 relations between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers went from bad to worse²³⁰. With the Berlin blockade of 1948-9 the Soviet-Western confrontation grew into the hot war. In the way described above literature was trying to subjugate the Europe symbolically showing the Soviet superiority over it.

The so-called ‘othering’, i.e. the opposing of the ‘self’ (‘us’) to ‘the other’ (‘them’), in the novel is also marked by the conscious Honchar’s striving to refute Europe’s orientalist discourse. That is why he puts the following words to Hungarian artist Ferenc’s mouth: “I know what these barbarians [meaning Soviets] are about... I had been living among them for three years like among brothers...” (*Al’py*, 1947, 184) as a reaction to the radio announcement that “Asian barbarians are approaching from the East”. Moreover, his character openly postulates that “Russians [rus’ki] are not such barbarians as it was written about them”.

As an opposition to a generalized “us” image (“our”) there always should be the opposite image of “them” (stranger\other). As everybody knows, any identity is formed in opposition to “the other”. For example, the idea of Europe’s hegemony, after Said, was based on a simple opposition of “us” (Europeans) to “them” (Eastern people).²³¹ The same opposition surely is central in a *Diaries* narrative. The volunteer in Red Army from the very beginning, the prisoner of Kharkiv’s jail in summer 1942²³², Oles’ Honchar neatly identifies himself with the “Soviet soldier”, and ascribes label “enemies” to Nazi army calling them “Hitlerites” (*Katarsis*, 92), “cultural descendants of dog-knights” (P. 75), “occupants” and “fascists” (P.35-57). Among “enemies” are also captured Vlasovites, “scoundres” who are

²²⁹ Oles’ Honchar, *Katarsis* (Kyiv, 2000), 62.

²³⁰ William O. McCagg, *Stalin embattled. 1943-1948* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978), 254.

²³¹ Edward Said, *Orientalism. Zapadnye kontseptsii Vostoka* (Sankt-Peterburg, 2006), 16.

²³² About his stay in a camp and Honchar’s relationship with his former teacher Yuri Sheveliov one can read in “Unfabled novel of life” written on 25th of June 1995. (Oles’ Honchar, *Katarsis* (Kyiv, 2000), 135)

“even worse than Germans” (P.73) and Ukrainians who were collaborating with Germans (P.12).

The binary opposition “us\them” in *Standard-bearers* is created by the opposition of “native sunny land” to “alien land” and “unknown fields” where even “the land is heavier”, “our” (Soviet) culture to their (European) backwardness, “Ivan” to “Fritz”.²³³ Hence, often not only Germans or Romanians play the role of “the other”, but also “Europe” as a whole. The usage of label “fascist” needs to be mentioned here in details. For example, it is typical for the *Diaries* to use more neutral epithet regarding Germans like “Germans” or “adversary”. The author uses neutral terms when depicting military operations and negative ones when mentioning “fascist atrocity”. Honchar’s insets and changes made during working on the final manuscript of *Standard-bearers* can tell us a lot. As we have found, there is a tendency towards its “ideologization” in the final text: the author purposefully changes neutral indications like “Germans” and “shvaby” to “fascists”²³⁴, “fascist thugs”²³⁵, or “fascist hordes”.²³⁶ When the German Democratic Republic was established in 1949 (the year of correction), the word Germans lost its traditional war negative connotation, as since from now Germans could be also “good” and “brothers”.

Still, the main leitmotif of this literary work remains the affirmation of Soviet superiority over Europe which is stressed from time to time. For example, “cultural” Soviet warriors are wondering that illiterate people still live in “Europe” commenting it with: “Yeah, one say culture! [kazhut` kul`tura].. They still have illiterate ones in villages...”.²³⁷ Later the same phrase is transformed into “There is backwardness in their villages, brothers... just a

²³³ The generalized image of “Ivan”, Russian equivalent of British Tommy and German Fritz, was in the center of Soviet patriotic myth. (For more detailed information about soldiers’ everyday life see: Catherine Merridale, *Ivan’s war. Life and death in the Red Army, 1939-1945* (N.Y., 2006).

²³⁴ AILS, f.96, d.3, l. 195, 232.

²³⁵ Ibid., 203.

²³⁶ Ibid., 193.

²³⁷ AILS, f.96, d.1, 22.

few schools and there is no likbezy [liknepy]²³⁸... benighted, benighted [temni]..."²³⁹. "Eh you! [ekh ty!].. Europe", says "our" combatant graciously to the Hungarian "artist-capitalist" who is not even able to chop the firewood. Interestingly enough, "our" songs ("The song about Stalin", "Est` na Volge utios", "Oi hai, maty!") are turned out to be of a higher value in "Europe" than "their own", since he questions "Do they really have such?"

Yet, according to the author's logics, the "strength" is not in songs. "Our people" are "rich in different and more important way", for they have 1) "such a faith that illuminated the path for the entire mankind"; 2) "such state who had withstood like a rock in such menacing storm"; 3) «such people who... survived everything". Finally we arrive to a ready-made triad "Leninism-state-the people". All this seemed to be a "creative summary" of the famous Stalin's 9 February 1946 speech (For detailed analysis of a speech see Chapter 2.2).

The notion of "fatherland" and group identity

It is known that, after Karl Marx, "workers did not have a fatherland."²⁴⁰ According to Lenin, "the fatherland is there where the revolution is"; thus, "to defend revolution means to defend fatherland".²⁴¹ But in 1931 it turned out that workers do have their fatherland, and already in 1934 *Pravda* pointed out that "although the workers do not have their fatherland, October revolution had created workers` state in the midst of capitalist encirclement" where the patriotic loyalty to fatherland is not only possible, but even desirable.²⁴² Therefore, as we see, after 1931 the Soviet "fatherland" above all meant the "worker\socialist state", i.e. the entire USSR. At the same time, as it was indicated earlier, the Soviet leadership actively

²³⁸ *Likbez* (from Russian abbreviation Likvidatsia bezgramotnosti) is a campaign for eradication of illiteracy in the Soviet Union which was held in 1920s-1930s. In Honchar's text, it sounds as «liknep» (translation in Ukrainian).

²³⁹ AILS, f.96, d.3, 26.

²⁴⁰ Karl Marks, *Manifest Komunisticheskoy partii* (Moskva, 1968), 34.

²⁴¹ V. I. Lenin, *Polnoye sobraniye sochineniy. 1870-1924*. Vol. 36 (Moskva, 1958-1975), 82.

²⁴² David Brandenberger, "From proletarian internationalism", 8.

promoted the feeling of local\ethnic patriotism in all Soviet officially recognized peoples. It seems possible to speak about two “fatherlands”: Fatherland with a capital letter (the Soviet Union) and fatherland with a small letter (purely geographic notion). Thus, expression “Ukrainian Soviet patriotism”, in our opinion, is apt, as it combines these two fatherlands in one expression.

First of all, it should be stressed on some technical problems with the translation of such words like “rodina” (in Ukrainian – bat`kivschyna) and “otchizna” (“vitchyzna”) to English. This question is of current importance, as since the majority of Honchar`s diary was written in Russian, and the language of *Standard-bearers* is, of course, Ukrainian. Therefore, we will use English “fatherland” (lat. “patria”) for Russian “rodina” and Ukrainian “bat`kivschyna”, and “homeland” (“patrimony”) – to Russian “otechestvo\otchyzna” and Ukrainian “vitchyzna”.²⁴³ For example, the Russian translation of *Standard-bearers* (1948) transforms Ukrainian “bat`kivschyna” to “rodina”.²⁴⁴ Interestingly enough, it should be stressed that in his diary Honchar primarily uses the notion of “fatherland” (“rodina\bat`kivschyna”) in the meaning of “the state” (the USSR), while for the 1971 text it is very typical to use the word “homeland” (“vitchyzna”) in the same sense.²⁴⁵

What is, nevertheless, concealed under Honchar`s “maty-bat`kivschyna” and in what sense he uses these words? It needs to be mentioned that there are two different spellings of the word “fatherland” in diary records: “Rodina” and “rodina” what is just an additional prove of our idea about existence of “big” and “small” fatherlands. For instance, one can “suffer hardship” for the sake of the first (Rodina, P.73) and die for it (P.40), while one

²⁴³ David Althoen, for instance, in his analysis of Polish 16th-17th century political discourse translates the word “ojczyzna” (Polish equivalent of “patria”) as “motherland”. See his highly interesting and challenging research: Althoen David, “That noble quest: from true nobility to enlightened society in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, 1550-1830” (Dissertation defended at Michigan University in 2000).

²⁴⁴ Aleksandr Honchar, „Znamenostsy”, *Roman-gazeta* 11 (1948), 8-9.

²⁴⁵ For example, the expression “Socialist Homeland” (both letters with capital letter) does not leave any doubts what it means (Oles` Honchar, „Pys`mennyts`ki rozdumy (Jak stvoriuvalysia “Praporonostsi”. Vidpovid` na anketu zhurnalu “Voprosy literatury”)”, in Oles` Honchar, *Pys`mennyts`ki rozdumy. Literaturo-krytychni statti.* (Kyiv, 1980), 225).

misses the latter (rodina, P.72), “recollects its aroma” (P.77) and “dreams to come back to” (P. 105). So, Honchar equates “Fatherland” (“Rodina”) with the Soviet state, including the state’s territory, system of government, law and ruling authority, and means Ukraine, his native Kharkov (home, patrimony), when speaking about “fatherland”.

The identification of “the state” and “Fatherland” appeared also from the later amendments inserted into manuscript of *Standard-bearers* (1949): in one place the phrase “he [...] felt himself to be a genuine man, loyal to *his state*” is changed to “he felt himself to be a genuine man necessary for his *Fatherland*”.²⁴⁶ The additional proof for the identification of “fatherland” with the territorial unit is the author’s expression “Hitler’s fatherland” concerning Austria.²⁴⁷ The word “homeland” (“otchyzna”) appears just a few times in *Diaries*: for the first time – in the phrase “dym otechestva nam sladok i priyaten”²⁴⁸ (P.78), for the second time – in his memoirs about “ordinary people” who “saved our Homeland not sparing themselves” (P.110). In none of these cases the notion of “nation” (Ukrainian) figures as virtue or the object of devotion.

The ideal image of “Fatherland” in *Standard-bearers* is associated first of all with ideological\socialist state “from the North to Pamir” (*Praporonosti*, 1975, 124), although the author more frequently calls it “homeland” (“vitchyzna”). To give an example, let us take the following fragment: “Homeland has taught him (Chernysh) to ascend to the highest peaks not only in sport” (*Al`py*, 1947, 82). “Fatherland” (“bat`kivschyna”) is present also in the most quoted fragment: “All, we give you all, Fatherland! All! Even our hearts. And the one who did not feel that happiness, that beauty of faithfulness, did not live in the right way!” (*Al`py*, 1947, 66). However, it will be useful to compare a set of symbols embodied in the notion of “Fatherland” in Honchar’s *Standard-bearers* and *Front poetry*. The “father-

²⁴⁶ AILS, f.96, d.3, l. 157.

²⁴⁷ Oles` Honchar, *Katarsis* (Kyiv, 2000), 99.

²⁴⁸ Aphorism of Chadsky from Griboiedov’s “Gore ot uma” is a not very precise copy of Derzhavin’s verse. As it turned out, the verse itself comes from Homer’s “Odyssey” and Latin proverb «Et fumus patriae dulci».

land” of Chernysh in the novel is a “distant border river, and sunny fields behind it [Ukraine?], and graduation party in a college, and mother... and long caravan in sand” (Kazakhstan where the character had grown up).²⁴⁹ In Honchar’s verse “The thought about fatherland” the latter is primarily associated with Ukraine, namely “sunny land” which spreads behind the river Prut, steppes, peaks of Carpathian mountains, “white chains of houses” and “blossoming cherry-trees”.²⁵⁰ It is a quite standard set of symbols which migrates in literature from the time Romanticism.

The notion of “Fatherland” is closely connected to the myth of collective “us”. It plays a very important role in Honchar’s self-identification. In *Diaries* the author clearly identifies himself as a part of collective “us” – army (regiment). Already in the novel the army/regiment is called “our friendly family” where “people are maturing quickly” (*Al’py*, 1947, 15) and “become related with”, since “joys, and pains, and memories became common for them” (*Praporonosti*, 1975, 273). Besides, there is a whole spectrum of “collective identities”: “fatherland who is looking... through relatives’ eyes from behind Prut” (*Al’py*, 1947, 32), and party (“we”-Bolsheviks, *Al’py*, 1947, 81), and “brothers-Slavs” (*Katarsis*, 94, 90, 94). The latter formula from some time became a “commonly adopted name among soldiers when they were in a good mood” (*Al’py*, 1947, 83). Interestingly enough, not only Ukrainians, Bielorrussians and Russians appeared to be “Slavs” in a regiment, but also Tajiks and Uzbeks.

The author’s usage of categories of ‘ethnic identification’ is another interesting question. We can speak about Honchar’s conscious awareness of belonging to Ukrainian ethnos, Ukraine’s identifying as “native land” (*Katarsis*, 45) and “home” (64). Enough traditionalist metaphors of “Ukrainianess” can also be found here: “blue Dniepr”, “white cherry gardens” and “bright sun” of Ukraine (P.47). One can trace the passionate author’s love for Ukrainian

²⁴⁹ AILS, f.96, d.3, l. 98.

²⁵⁰ Oles’ Honchar, “Dumy pro Bat’kivchynu” (1940), *Frontovi poezii* (Kyiv, 1985), 30.

language: he constantly copies out various expressions and proverbs, examples of Vinnitsa dialect; thus, makes notes for his future literary characters, even though, the majority of entries in the *Diaries* records were made in Russian. As comparative analysis of manuscript shows, we conclude that the text had been constantly “Ukrainianized”: the Russisms have been deleted and changed into the Ukrainian ones²⁵¹. If we look at “personal composition” of characters in the novel, we will see that the majority of them have Ukrainian surnames (Vakulenko, Kozakov, Khoyet`sky, brothers Bozhenko, Buz`ko, Sahayda).

Besides external attributes (territory, language, state), every person needs to feel the connection with the collective whole – ethnos\ nation – what Benedict Anderson calls “imagine community”. Thus, the categories of “nation” and “people” are extremely important for our research. Let us look at author’s understanding of these terms. It seems that “nation” in the novel tends to mean just a geographical notion. For example, the toponym “Siberians” appears among the other “nations”: Ukrainians, Bielorussians and Tajiks. The phrase “as if all nations of the world gathered here” (P.128) implies the same idea. Such interpretation of the notion evokes first of all associations with “Western\civil” model of nation according to which the nation is connected, first of all, to the spatial or territorial imagination.²⁵²

The notion of ‘people’ in the novel is totally different: “the people” as a totality of inhabitants of the polity (USSR), *narod* as the civic nation.²⁵³ The expression the “Soviet people” itself implies this civil component parts. The concept of “people” was central to Soviet ideology which boasted that a state ruled by the peoples had been created in the

²⁵¹ Perhaps, the author decided to listen to the advice of Yury Yanovs`ky “to pay attention to the language”. (The answer of Yanovs`ky to Honchar`s letter from 9 October 1946, AILS, f. 116, d.3019).

²⁵² Antoni Smit, *Natsional`na identychnist`* (Kyiv, 1995), 18.

²⁵³ For instance, the term *narod* in Romanov`s Empire from the time of Peter the Great used to denote not just ethnic\cultural, but a political unity – the inhabitant of the state. For more detailed information about development of concepts of nationality in Russia see: Knight Nathaniel, “Ethnicity, nationality and the masses: Narodnost` and Modernity”, *Imperial Russia, in Russian Modernity. Politics, Knowledge, Practices*. Edited by David L. Hoffmann and Yanni Kotsonis, 2000.

USSR. Yet the abstract concept of “people” suggests that the Soviet citizens are one entity with one voice. That voice, the Soviet leaders implied, was purely loyal vis-a-vis to the regime, as was the regime to the citizens.²⁵⁴ Exactly in this point of view one should understand phrases like “generous” and sacrificial people who “had bravely met the invasion of German hordes and paid for Europe’s liberation by its own blood” (*Al’py*, 1947, 111). Here, quite unexpectedly, we meet with “ethnotization” of the notion of “the Soviet people” when some specific ethnic features are ascribed to it. The expression “Soviet... by origin”²⁵⁵ presumes the existence of some kind Soviet of people\ nation, coherent community which has its name and common origin.

Still, we are more interested to answer the question whether it is possible to find more or less evident traces of Honchar’s nationalism. As the analysis shows, the word “nation” (“natsia”) was not found in *Diaries*²⁵⁶, although there are several mentioning of “people” (“narod”). The latter, above all, is used to indicate the people of the land or assembled humanity (*Katarsis*, 27). In other place the word “people” is directly identified with the «ordinary people» (“prostoy liud”, Herzen’s idea) which is “bridled and put into traps of laws and obligations” (*Katarsis*, 32-33). Still, the word-combination “Ukrainian people” is present in *Diaries* records, but in rather traditional for the Soviet slogan tone “the representatives of happy and hard-working Ukrainian people” (*Katarsis*, 26) or just in neutral “the flower of the Ukrainian people” (*Katarsis*, 24).

Answering the question of Honchar’s ethnic\ national identification, we hardly can speak about his nationalism. There is no use to look for passionate confessions of love for Ukrainian nation and readiness to die for it. Ukrainian is present here, starting with the lan-

²⁵⁴ *The People’s war. Responses to World war II in the Soviet Union*. Edited by Robert W. Thurston and Bernd Bonwedsch. (Urbana and Chikago, 2006), 2.

²⁵⁵ Oles’ Honchar, *Praporonosti* (Kyiv, 1975), 309.

²⁵⁶ There is, however, the mention about “national songs of Hungarian girls”. So, the “nation” means the culture first of all (P.74).

guage, but it rather resembles Stalin's formula "national by form, socialist by content". It is a sort of mixture of ethnographic interest and local patriotism.

Symbols that inspire, or semiotics of the "Soviet patriotism"

Since we have already studied the abstract feature of collective identity (the content), we will continue with its non\material embodiment (forms) – a set of common values, symbols and traditions. The symbols themselves – flags, coins, hymns, monuments and ceremonies – remind members of cultural (political) community about their common heritage, inspire and maintain the sense of common identity. Hence, Soviet, and Ukrainian, symbols will be our next research objects.

Running a few steps forward, we will point out that that there is not so much 'Ukrainianess' in both texts, but a lot of 'Sovietness'. The pages of *Standard-bearers* are rich for mentions of Lenin, Stalin, "Katiusha", and "International" (*Praporonostsi*, 1975, P.84), the Kremlin (P.102), Central Committee, kolkhoz, Dniprogess, Pavka Korchiagin (P. 248), and Commune of Paris (P. 396). The author often resorts to excurses to the past among which topics of the "Great Patriotic war" surely dominate. At that time the scheme of the Soviet version of pre-Revolutionary past was almost shaped, but model of memory about the Second World War was still in a progress. For example, the key points of *Standard-bearers* are Stalingrad battle and forces crossing of the Dnieper, Leningrad blockade and excurses to 1941. Here we find patriotic pathos – Matrosov (*Praporonostsi*, 1975, P.252), "destroyer of German tanks" Samitlo Polischuk (P.33), the hero of Budapest assault Capitan Osipenko (P.223), mythical "Stiopka z Rus`ka" (P.308), Slovak communist Jan Pepa (P. 197) and Tito (P.206).

But even *Standard-bearers* in some places go beyond the official version of war which features the decisive role in the victory to the Russian people and Stalin, in particu-

lar²⁵⁷. In his *Diaries* Oles` Honchar heartily records the main dates from the Second World War mentioning Stalingrad several times. The author calls 6th of June 1944 “joyful” and “great day” (the day of opening of the Second Front)²⁵⁸. But the most characteristic here is the absence of the Moscow battle, “the radical turn” in the war, and displacement of emphasis towards the “decisive” character of battles for Budapest and Gron which even cannot be compared with the Stalingrad battle (*Katarsis*, 84). In the novel we can find record of the battle near Bendery which, according to the author, was “one of the brightest battles of the Great Patriotic war”, “the genuine new Cannes”, but I doubt whether we can find the information about it in Soviet textbooks. Concerning *Diaries*, it has to be stressed that there is not any mentioning about party or its leader; *Standard-bearers*, on the contrary, are saturated with various ideologemes.

The historical pantheon of heroes in *Standard-bearers* include primarily military leaders (Suvorov, Men`shykov); this, in fact, prove the effectiveness of historical propaganda in the army. We can find here also the mention about “the first printer” Ivan Fedorov (*Al`py*, 1947, 147) and extracts from *Slovo o polku Igorevim*. Prince Men`shykov is an absolute leader here; his personality is closely associated with Poltava battle of 1709 and Cossack hetman Ivan Mazepa. The latter, as it is known, is a national hero in Ukrainian nationalist discourse and “a traitor” – in Soviet\Russian one.

Therefore, one can easily trace the Soviet identity of our hero, but it is necessary to determine what portion of “Ukrainianess”, besides language, is present there. The *Diaries* unfortunately gives a really few hints: the only record about “incorruptible Shevchenko” (P.27) and characteristics of Ukrainian soldiers as “descendents of Zaporozhians, cheerful, mild, polite in rustic manner and obliging”²⁵⁹. Indeed, it resembles more a distance glance, since “Ukrainians” in this case are just ordinary soldiers. It will be strange enough to note

²⁵⁷ V. Lebedev, *Veliky rosiys`kyi narod – vydatna natsia* (Kyiv, 1946), 21.

²⁵⁸ Oles` Honchar, *Katarsis* (Kyiv, 2000), 64.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 64.

that *Standard-bearers* also have some portion of ‘Ukrainianness’. Ukrainian ethnographic symbols are sometimes subtly present in the text. For instance, the image of red guelder-rose (*Praporonosti*, 1975, 141) and “embroidered towel” with bread and salt (P.185, 291) are the characteristic Ukrainian associative images here. Ukrainian historical topics include mentions about Chumacks (P.231) and Karmaliuk (P.238). The finale feature to this will be Ukrainian songs known and loved by everyone.

Oles` Honchar`s identification the Soviet culture is marked also by his mention of the main Soviet holidays, for instance, the holiday of “Great October” (*Katarsis*, 27), First of May (P. 47) and 8th of March (P.73). The other marker will be the author`s evaluation of cinema and literary works, and the system of authority given in the text. Among the most symbolic things here are the following pre- and postwar “bestsellers”: films *Aleksandr Nevsky* by Sergey Eizenshtein (1938), *The Front* shot after Korniyshuk`s play, and Horbatov`s story *The unconquered* (*Nepokorennye*). Korniyshuk`s play *The Front*, despite some criticism, was approved by Stalin, as it was to “have an educational importance for Red Army and its leadership”.²⁶⁰ It has got more or less neutral evaluation from Honchar, since it had “a lot of truth about 1941”.²⁶¹ The author calls Horbatov`s story, written in 1943 within party task “to teach how real patriots should behave in the conditions of occupation”, a “very truthful book”²⁶². What is even more interesting and symbolic enough that after the war *The Unconquered* by Horbatov and *Standard-bearers* by Honchar were very often published in one book, thus, in the official memory culture of war they were treated as equivalent.

However, the official patriotic film *Aleksandr Nevsky* by Sergei Eizenshtein had a stronger influence on our hero. The film was shot in 1938 on the personal order of Stalin in

²⁶⁰ B. G. Soloviov , Sulhodeev V. V., Polkovnik Stalin. Gl.3 //www.thewalls.ru/truth/main_5.htm

²⁶¹ Oles` Honchar, *Katarsis* (Kyiv, 2000), 88.

²⁶² Ibid., 86.

order to help to mobilize the Soviet people for the defense of their native land.²⁶³ As Benjamin Schenk asserts, it had influenced “the formation of Soviet image of national hero more than all historical novels or propagandist leaflets taken together”.²⁶⁴ The author’s reaction to the film view, in general, fits the planned scenario of its perception in the USSR: for him, the picture appeared to be “extremely modern”, while before the war some scenes from it seemed to be “improbable”.²⁶⁵ Another important marker of Honchar’s “right” thinking is an ideological formula “German dog-knights” (“nemetski psy-rytsari”), since exactly this historical episode of 1442 already from the mid 1930-s became the essential part of education of a real Soviet patriot.²⁶⁶

Honchar’s integration into the Russian cultural space can be the last evidence of his belonging to the Soviet school. For instance, he places Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Gor’ky among the most authoritative writers, and even compares himself to Esenin.²⁶⁷ Quotations made by the author from verses of Akhmatova, Gippius and Siverianin, and remark about the “powerful verse” of Simonov are very characteristic. What is important is that we do find any traces of discourse of “great Russian people” neither in *Diaries* nor in *Standard-bearers*. The formula of “elder brother” appears only in one case - in the end of the third novel’s part *Golden Prague*. But term of “elder brothers” here refer to the “red Soviet” flags with sickle and hammer in reference to the Czechoslovak tricolor ones.²⁶⁸

Summing up, we can say that Oles’ Honchar to some extent was a product of Soviet culture, and its ideology, in particular. Brought up in the Soviet state, he had to be heavily integrated into that culture. A manner of thinking, usage of language and symbols let us

²⁶³ „Patriotism is our topic” – wrote Eisenstein in his article speaking about main film` idea.

²⁶⁴ F. B. Shenk, “Politicheskii mif I kollektivnaia identichnost’: mif Aleksandra Nevskogo v Rossiyskoy istorii (1263-1998)”, *Ab Imperio* 1-2 (2001), 160.

²⁶⁵ Honchar Oles’, *Katarsis* (Kyiv, 2000), 88.

²⁶⁶ In usual Soviet interpretation the Kulikov battle “had restrained the movement of “German occupants” („Drang nach Osten”) who “conducted the colonization by means of total extermination and robbery of enslaved peoples”. From: “Postanovlenie zhuri pravitel’svennoy komissii po konkursu na luchshy uchebnik dlia 3-go i 4-go klassov sredney shkoly po istorii SSSR”, in *K izucheniu istorii. Sbornik* (Moskva, 1942), 37.

²⁶⁷ Honchar Oles’, *Katarsis* (Kyiv, 2000), 68.

²⁶⁸ Oles’ Honchar, *Praporonosti* (Kyiv, 1975), 421.

speak about Honchar`s deep involvement in Soviet discourse of the “Great Patriotic War”. Some important elements of official memory culture about the Second World War are present in both diary records and *Standard-bearers*. Let us name them: the myth about the moral and political coherence of Soviet society, the ‘liberation’ myth, stress on heroism and self-sacrifice of ordinary people, Slav brotherhood, examples of self-denying patriotism and devotion to Fatherland.

Yet, we should emphasize that some crucial element of the Soviet myth about “victory over fascism” are absent in Honchar`s writing. First of all, it concerns Stalin`s decisive role in the war, chronology of events and their interpretation, and concept of “elder brother” as well. It can be an evidence of certain independent judgment and evaluation of the author when speaking about Second World War. Moreover, despite Honchar`s inclination to heroization of war and Red Army, in diary records we can find a statement about “absurdity and crimes of this war” where the “soldier, morally and physically crushed, dies for nothing”.²⁶⁹

Independent of how the author positioned himself, his famous trilogy *Standard-bearers* became one of the many elements of an emerging official memory culture about the “Great Patriotic War”. Its “liberating” motive and its “orientalising” discourse in particular, for many years designed people`s attitude towards Europe and the West in general. With the closure of “iron curtain” such books, besides newspapers, were the only possible source of information about Europe in the Soviet Union.

²⁶⁹ At the very beginning. Honchar Oles`, *Katarsis* (Kyiv, 2000), 9.

3.2. Creating a New Soviet Ukrainian Heroine: Lialia Ubyyvovk's case

"Today or tomorrow, I do not know when, I will be shot because I cannot act against my conscience, because I am a Komsomol member" (From the letter of Lialia Ubyyvovk to her relatives on May, 1942)²⁷⁰.

Women have tended to be peripheral characters in Soviet literature. They were not ignored, but most often portrayed in the traditionally feminine roles of wives and mothers, or in a symbolically generalized image of "motherland". As Eliot Borenstein claims, Stalinist paternalism along with "the inclusion of women in a strong yet subordinate role" resulted in "the continued masculinity of Soviet iconography and the leading role played by the male hero in both art and fiction."²⁷¹ However, during the Second World War, women's habitual functions drastically changed – dozens of women volunteered for military service and had a chance to do a man's job. For instance, in Ukraine, no fewer than 30,697 women were part of the partisan movement and the underground.²⁷² And yet, despite the huge role played by girls and women in the partisan movement, only one woman – Aleksandra Zakharova – rose to occupy the key post of unit commissar (in the 207th Gomel Region Partisan unit).²⁷³

Even though men continued to dominate in war literature, women were publicly celebrated for their self-sacrifice and courage. Most well known among wartime heroines was Zoia Kosmodem'ianskaia, a schoolgirl partisan who was captured and tortured by the Germans. She did not break under interrogation and went to her death defiantly. Olena Ubyyvovk, known simply as Lialia, also became a well-known heroine in the Ukrainian

²⁷⁰ Tsentral'ny derzhavny arkhiv hromads'kykh ob'iednan' Ukraini (TsDAHOU), f. 7, op. 10, d. 176, l. 14-15

²⁷¹ Eliot Borenstein, *Men without women. Masculinity and revolution in Russian fiction, 1917-1929* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000), 274.

²⁷² John Erickson, "Soviet Women at War", in *World War II and the Soviet People* (St. Martin Press, 1993), 52.

²⁷³ Ibid., 68.

Soviet Socialist Republic. In fact, Olena Ubyyvovk²⁷⁴ is the only female among graduates from Kharkiv University to be awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union.²⁷⁵

Lialia was, it is believed, a leader of the youth underground organization called *Unconquered Poltava girl (Neskoryma Poltavchanka)*, which existed in occupied Poltava from November 1941 to May 1942. The group numbered twenty people and was primarily engaged in the distribution of information (mainly of an ideological character) among the city population. In May 1942, all the main members of the organization were arrested by the Germans and later executed. Like Kosmodem'ianskaia, Lialia was a devoted Komsomol member who demonstrated strong political loyalty to the Soviet regime. Her biography seems to be stainless. One might call Lialia's image a sort of female embodiment of the very famous male hero Oleh Koshevoy from *Young Guard (Molodaia gvardiia)* by Aleksandr Fadeiev. Indeed, many parallels can be drawn with the Krasnodon underground organization. This and a set of other important questions are to be analyzed in this paper.

The Post-War Interpretation of Lialia's Story

Lialia Ubyyvovk's story became cluttered over time with numerous legends, so it is very difficult to distinguish the factual data from fiction. Nevertheless, in Soviet public discourse, there existed one central narrative of what happened in Poltava in 1941-1943. Formulated on the eve of the Second World War, it was reproduced and amplified in post-war Ukrainian literature in the works of such authors as Vasył Storozhuk, Mykola Nagnybida, Oles' Honchar and Petro Lubens'kyi. This chapter aims to deconstruct this central narrative and understand the historical context of its creation.

The first piece of information about Lialia Ubyyvovk's activity appeared in 1944, when the Ukrainian State Publishing House issued a booklet series entitled "Heroes of the

²⁷⁴ "Ubyyvovk" in Ukrainian means «Kill-the-Wolf».

²⁷⁵ http://www-history.univer.kharkov.ua/old/publications/Vihovancy_Kharkiv_Univercity_Bibliography.html

Great Patriotic War”.²⁷⁶ In the same year, the Central Committee of the Lenin Young Communist League of Ukraine (LYCLU), while “searching for organizations which carried out underground activities on the territory of Ukraine in 1941-1945”,²⁷⁷ began collecting materials about the organization *Unconquered Poltava girl*. In its resolution from 21 November 1944, the Poltava Regional Committee of the LYCLU petitioned the Supreme Council of the USSR about conferring a posthumous Hero of the Soviet Union award to Olena Konstantynivna Ubyyvovk, who “with courage and Bolshevik firmness endured tortures and met her death at the hands of German butchers, remaining a faithful daughter of the Ukrainian people”²⁷⁸. Lialia’s description here as a “daughter of the Ukrainian people”²⁷⁹ is unique, for later she was most often referred to in a neutral formula which stressed her political loyalty (“leader of the Komsomol underground organization of Poltava” or simply “the faithful komsomolka”).

A set of archival documents from 1944-1945 and literature from 1944-1959 allow us to reconstruct this process of the ‘mythologization/re-making’ of Lialia’s image, which produced the canonized version of her story which later underlay post-war representations. The interpretation of the significance of the organization’s activity tends to grow over time. While in 1944 its practical role did not go beyond “anti-fascist agitation through the propagation of the reports of the Soviet Bureau of Information” and “the recruitment of working youth into the underground movement”,²⁸⁰ the 1945 interpretation already included statements that group participants “hampered the mobilization of the Soviet people for hard labor in Germany,” “liberated Soviet prisoners of war from camps” and “had been preparing

²⁷⁶ Vasyl’ Storozhuk, *Lialia Ubyyvovk* (Kharkiv: Ukrains’ke derzhavne vydavnytstvo, 1944).

²⁷⁷ Tsentral’ny derzhavnyi arkhiv hromads’kykh ob’iednan’ Ukrainy (TsDAHOU), f. 7, op. 10, d. 176, l. 5.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., l. 6.

²⁷⁹ TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 176, l. 6, 8. Vasyl’ Storozhuk also calls Lialia and her friends ‘the unconquered representatives of their people’ (Vasyl’ Storozhuk, *Lialia Ubyyvovk* (Kharkiv: Ukrains’ke derzhavne vydavnytstvo, 1944), 32).

²⁸⁰ From resolution of Poltava regional Committee of LYCLU (November 21, 1944) “About activity of Komsomol-youth group of Poltava city” and response to it (November, 23 1944), see TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 176, l. 5, 13.

subversive acts which could not be realized because of treason.”²⁸¹ Mykola Nagnybida went further in his lyrical poem, claiming that Lialia even “fired at a German who had hanged peaceful Poltava inhabitants.”²⁸² Finally, an almost espionage-like story can be found online, according to which ‘young patriots’ managed to wreck a city electric power station. In order to catch the saboteurs, the German authorities allegedly called for help from the special group ‘Zeppelin’, punitive troops from the ‘Dead Head’ SS division, and even from a special espionage school named ‘Orion-00220.’²⁸³

The main question here, however, is to analyse the composition of the Poltava organization and determine the distribution of power within the group itself. According to the popular version, the Poltava underground organization numbered about twenty people, six of whom constituted the core: Olena (Lialia) Ubyyvovk, Sergey Sapigo, Serhy Il’ievs’kyi, Borys Serga, Valentyn Soroka and Leonid Puzanov.²⁸⁴ As one can assume from the name of the Poltava underground group, Lialia played an important role in its activities. However, her involvement in the group’s decision-making process varies in the literature. Perhaps the most radical variant of this — the image of ‘Lialia-dictator’ — is given by Boris Levin and Petro Lubens’kyi.²⁸⁵ Having been a secretary at the university Faculty Komsomol Organization,²⁸⁶ Lialia seems to have had good organizational skills. In fact, she played an enormous

²⁸¹ TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 176, l. 9.

²⁸² Mykola Nagnybida, *Lialia Ubyyvovk* (Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo ‘Molod’, 1946), P. 12.

²⁸³ See site: http://poltava.info/person/index/ubiyvovk_lyalya.htm/ Indeed, documents do contain some information about special German punitive troops which arrived to Poltava in early spring 1941, but their appearance can be rather explained by the rise of overall guerilla activity in the occupied territory and Poltava’s incorporation into the Reichkommissariat “Ukraine”, rather than by Lialia’s group activity. Moreover, Hitler was expected to visit Poltava in June 1942.

²⁸⁴ Some authors mention only five active participants of a group, omitting in such way, perhaps, ‘uneasy’ pages of the story. For example, in Storozhuk’s essay, where all characters beside Lialia’s are shown episodically, there are only five ‘unconquered representatives of their people’, without Borys Serga. Plus, Sergey Sapigo turns here to be simply Sapega (Vasyl’ Storozhuk, *Lialia Ubyyvovk* (Kharkiv: Ukrain’s’ke derzhavne vydavnytstvo, 1944), 31, 22).

²⁸⁵ Borys Levin, *Geroini*, Vol. 2 (Ocherki o zhenschynakh – Geroiakh Sovetskogo, M.: Politizdat, 1969, http://www.a-z.ru/women_cd2/12/11/i80_105.htm; Pavlo Lubens’kyi, “Neskorena poltavchanka (Lilia Ubyyvovk)”, in *5 p’ies* (Kyiv: derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhnioi literatury, 1959), 72-134.

²⁸⁶ Iu.I. Zhuravskiy, B.P. Zaytsev, B.K. Mygal’, *Kharkovskii universitet v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny* (Kh.: Vyscha shkola, 1989), P. 143.

role in the activity of the Poltava underground organization (she was a formal leader of organization, she established connections with the partisan movement, and she rescued ‘trusted’ people). Nevertheless, such ‘Lialia-centrism’ by the authors marginalizes the other core members, creating a distorted picture of the past.

Archival materials, where the characteristics of all the main participants can be detected, suggest a more balanced story, with a distribution of duties within Lialia’s group and everyone contributing to ‘the public good’. For instance, Leonid Puzanov, a Russian from Siberia, worked in the ‘Metal’ factory in Poltava and was responsible for weapons (he even made a hand machine-gun), Valentyn Soroka – for radio, and Borys Serga – for collecting and distributing propaganda material (leaflets) and information among the population. Lialia was supposed to keep connections with ‘trusted’ people’ (with a POW hospital and Zharov’s partisan detachment), while Seghy Il’ievs’ky, a group secretary, made up plans and knew everybody’s surname. Finally, Sergey Sapigo was the organization’s chief of staff.²⁸⁷

Sergey Sapigo, a former reporter of “Krasnaia Zvezda”, where Andrei Platonov, Vasilii Grossman, Aleksei Tolstoi, Ilya Erenburg and Konstantin Simonov worked, is a very interesting figure (see Appendix 5). He seems to be a controversial figure who was not so easy to integrate into the post-war official narrative of the heroic deeds of the Ukrainian underground movement. First, Sapigo (not Sapiga or Sepigo²⁸⁸), by his age (in 1941 he was thirty years old, almost ten years older than the others) and by his status (Red Army captain and Communist Party member),²⁸⁹ does not easily fit with a ‘Komsomol-youth organization’. Second, as a former prisoner of war (he was captured by the Germans in the fall of

²⁸⁷ TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 176, l. 10. In fact, such a formula ‘Ubyyvovk’s group or organization’ is widely used in popular literature.

²⁸⁸ Oles’ Honchar calls him Sapiga (the author supposedly wanted to make it easier to spell), while Vasyl’ Storozhuk uses Sepiga (the work was written in 1944, when all details of the case were still to be investigated).

²⁸⁹ Borys Serga also was a party member and a political commissar of the Red Army. (TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 212, l. 19).

1941 near Kyiv and escaped to Poltava in November 1941), Sapigo might have been – and surely was – considered by the regime to be a ‘suspicious person’. Third, after his return to Poltava, Sapigo started working for the Ukrainian Red Cross, a “demagogical puppet organization,”²⁹⁰ headed by Halyna Viun, who got along well with both factions of the OUN (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists). According to Karel C. Berkhoff, this organization, officially established in early November 1941 with the help of the local German authority, aided Soviet POWs with food and helped to release (‘buy’) many of them, though those released were primarily Ukrainians. As he claims, the Poltavan Red Cross managed to do quite a lot to help Soviet POWs, in large measure thanks to the late introduction of civilian rule in the Poltava region (September 1942) and to two sympathizing German intelligence officers.²⁹¹

It is obvious that such ‘dark’ pages in Sergey Sapigo’s biography were difficult to explain. Therefore, until 1965, he was considered by the Soviets to be a “traitor to the fatherland.” Even his colleagues from *Krasnaia Zvezda* apparently thought so, claiming that Sapigo “joined the Germans and worked at a German commandment’s office in Poltava.”²⁹² New details on the case and some personal perspective appeared in 1965, when the chief director of ‘Krasnaia Zvezda’ published Sapigo’s letter from about 1942 (see Appendix 6). Here, Sergey described his attempt to break out of the so-called ‘Kyiv pocket’²⁹³, escape from captivity and return to Poltava:

Having arrived in Poltava with a borrowed name,²⁹⁴ I have decided to move further, to Kharkiv... But I could not... I had to return to Poltava... Having established connections with Communists doing underground work, I began to help them as much as I could.

²⁹⁰ An almost “classic” expression used in Soviet literature for the Ukrainian Red Cross (Oles’ Honchar, *Neskorena poltavchanka* (Zemlia gude). Povist’ (Kyiv: ‘Molod’, 1965), 76).

²⁹¹ Karel C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair. Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 109-110.

²⁹² David Ortenberg, *Sorok tretii. Rasskaz-khronika* (Moskva: Izdatel’stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1991), 160.

²⁹³ ‘Kyiv pocket’ or ‘Kyiv pot’ are the terms used to refer to the Battle of Kyiv, which resulted in a very large encirclement of Soviet troops in the vicinity of Kyiv at the beginning of the Soviet-German War of 1941-1945.

²⁹⁴ He went by the false name of Danilo Ivanovysh Burachenko (Ortenberg, 168; TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 212, l. 10).

Fortunately, one of my friends, the former functionary of the city council, Markin, had a radio set.²⁹⁵ We put the wireless on, listened to 'Posledniie izvestiia' from Moscow, duplicated them in handwriting, and then delivered them to our comrades, and they – to the people.²⁹⁶

Sapigo does not mention Lialia's group in his letter (obviously, he did not want to name people because of a conspiracy). In some documents, one finds the statement that Olena Ubyyvovk and Sergey Sapigo previously knew each other in Kharkiv. Nevertheless, as more reliable sources suggest, particularly Sapigo's father, Sergey became acquainted with Lialia through Maksim Strazhko, who introduced him to Valentyn Soroka²⁹⁷. So, Sergey Sapigo seems to have started underground activity before meeting Lialia and joining *Unconquered Poltavan girl*.

In fact, as Ortenberg points out, Sergei Sapigo "introduced many changes into the activities of 'Unconquered Poltavan girl'."²⁹⁸ A list of his tasks and achievements is almost identical to what is usually listed for Lialia. Honoured by the Order of the Red Star for his fight in the winter war of 1939, Sergey Sapigo most probably played the role of 'power broker' or mentor, since he was undoubtedly the most experienced person in the group. If one were to list members by order of importance, the former correspondent would be second after Lialia among the three persons (besides Lialia and Serhy Il'ievskii) whom the LYCLU regarded deserving of the title Hero of the Soviet Union.²⁹⁹

There is a little data on the biographies of the remaining 'heroes'. In any case, we know for certain that almost all of the group's male members were wounded Red Army 'ok-ruzhentsy' (stragglers cut off from enemy lines in the great encirclement battles of 1941)

²⁹⁵ Supposedly this wireless did not belong to Markin, but to a German officer who rented a room from him (David Ortenberg, *Sorok tretii. Rasskaz-khronika* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1991), 169). This information, in fact, produced a controversial story, since some authors were telling the same story about Valentyn Soroka. Although, according to archives, Lialia's group had its own radio set; components for it group participants had bought for salt and wheat' (TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 212, l. 11).

²⁹⁶ David Ortenberg, *Sorok tretii. Rasskaz-khronika* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1991), 165.

²⁹⁷ TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 22, d. 495, l. 15.

²⁹⁸ David Ortenberg, *Sorok tretii. Rasskaz-khronika* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1991), 169.

²⁹⁹ TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 212, 9.

and escaped prisoners of war³⁰⁰ who returned to Poltava in the fall of 1941. Most of them, except for Leonid Puzanov, were students of Kharkiv University and used to live in Poltava, although Sergei Sapigo studied in the Kharkiv Red Officers School in the late 1930s. Thus, we can safely suggest that Valentyn Soroka, Serhy Il'ievs'kyi and Borys Serga,³⁰¹ as first volunteers, were mobilized in so-called Kharkiv 'student battalion' (*studbat*) that was organized on the 29th of June 1941 in the Malinovka military camp (Chuhuev city) and sent to the front (to defend Bila Tserkva) in early July³⁰². In fact, Oles' Honchar, the author of a classic novel about this Poltava komsomol group, *The Land is Buzzing*, lived a similar experience: as a Kharkiv studbatovets (soldier of student battalion), he also participated in heavy battles defending Kyiv, was wounded and captured by the Germans in July-October 1941, but then spent two years in POW prison at Kharkiv.

Lialia, although she intended to join the Kharkiv Komsomol battalion,³⁰³ which was to be formed in late August 1941, returned to Poltava before it was occupied by the Germans. This was between the end of August, when Lialia was still working in Kharkiv on a political commission,³⁰⁴ and the 18th of September 1941, when the Germans entered Pol-

³⁰⁰ TsDAHOU, f. 7, Op. 10, d. 212, l. 19. Borys Serga was wounded in hand and captured in September 1941 near Kyiv, while Valentyn Soroka fell into encirclement around Chernigiv (TsDAHOU, f. 1, Op. 22, d. 495, l. 16).

³⁰¹ Still, Poltavan historian Iryna Petrenko provides a few interesting details concerning the biography of Borys Serga. As she claims, he was married, had two daughters and was a party member (!) from 1940. Besides, Serga was conferred the rank of *politruk* when he volunteered to front.

(Iryna Petrenko, *Malovidomi fakty biografii Borysa Sergy – chlena shtabu pidpil'noi molodizhnoi grupy "Neskorena Poltavchanka"*, in: *Malovidomi storinky istorii Druhoi svitovoi viyny v Ukrainy ta na Poltavshyni: zbirnyk naukovykh statey za materialamy Vseukraiins'koi naukovoï konferentsii vid 23-24 travnia 2007* (Poltava: Poltavs'kyi derzhavnyi pedahohichnyi universytet im. Korolenka, 2007), 144).

³⁰² Matvii Aronov remembers that of 1510 'studbatovets's only 36 returned. The first group of 500 (124 – from Kharkiv university and 69 – from Aviation Institute) arrived to Chuhuiev at the end of June 1941 (Zaitsev B.P., Myhal' B.K., Posokhov S.I., *Kharkivs'ki studbativtsi* (Kh.: Biznes-inform, 1999),).

³⁰³ Vasyl' Storozhuk, *Lialia Ubyyvovk* (Kharkiv: Ukrain's'ke derzhavne vydavnytstvo, 1944), 7. Komsomol battalion was formed at early September 1941 and included mainly Kharkiv university communists and komsomol members. About 1380 volunteers were sent to defend Moscow (to Nara-Fominsk) in mid October 1941. (Zaitsev B.P., Myhal' B.K., Posokhov S.I., *Studbat. Kharkivs'ki studbativtsi* (Kharkiv: Vydavnytstvo "Avto-energiia", 2005, 15).

³⁰⁴ Berzhanskii L.S., Kovaliov S. E., *Kharkivs'kyi komsomol'skyi batalion u bytvi za Moskvu*, in *Plem'ia komsomol's'ke. Zbirnyk spogadiv z istorii Kharkivs'koi komsomol's'koi organizatsii (1918-1968)*, (Kh.: Prapor, 1968), 159.

tava. Before the ‘occupation’, she managed to work in the Poltava first aid station.³⁰⁵ A “list of the members of the Komsomol and youth who participated in underground organizations in temporary occupied Ukraine” includes a strange note that Lialia, together with Serhy Il’ievs`kyi, “joined the organization” in April 1941.³⁰⁶ Despite its evident absurdity (the war broke out only in June 1941), this note proves that the group which soon would bear Lialia`s name was established by both her and Il’ievs`kyi around September-October 1941 or even later, in November. In April 1942, the group included “more than twenty individuals.” Sapigo and Soroka joined in November 1941, and Puzanov and Serga in the beginning of 1942.³⁰⁷ Therefore, the underground organization ‘Unconquered Poltava girl’ operated during a short period of time, from about October/November 1941 until 5-26th of May 1942, when the main members were arrested and executed by the Germans.

In most official publications about Lialia`s group, the usual presentation is that there was no alternative to their struggle. Even though *Unconquered Poltava girl* was collaborating with the partisan detachment of the communist Zharov, which was established in the Dikan`ka forests, Lialia`s organization seems to be the only force that resisted German authority in the city itself. However, looking at the full picture, it turns out that, besides the *Unconquered Poltava girl* there were two other so-called ‘patriotic groups’, one headed by Tykhon Syrychenko (seven people) and another led by Petro Tokar` (forty people). These groups operated in Poltava during the whole period of Nazi occupation (September 1941 – September 1943). As archival materials from the 1960s show, they conducted activities very similar to those of Lialia`s organization (printed and distributed “anti-fascist” leaflets, released Soviet POWs, provided food and clothing to POWs, gathered weapons). Styrychenko`s group, for instance, also “took part in setting off the explosion of a

³⁰⁵ Iu.I. Zhuravskiy, B.P. Zaytsev, B.K. Mygal`, *Kharkovskii universitet v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny* (Kh.: Vyscha shkola, 1989), P. 143.

³⁰⁶ TsDAHOU, f. 7, Op. 10, d. 212, l. 19.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 20; TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 176, l. 12.

German restaurant.”³⁰⁸ This interesting episode, as we will see later, was partially used by Oles` Honchar in his novel and attributed to Lialia`s group. If speaking about *komsomol youth organizations*, one should mention that they appeared only in June of 1942.

The situation with the *partisan* and *communist underground organizations* was even worse since most of them ceased to exist already in January of 1942, to a large extent because of natural conditions (in the Poltava region there are almost no forests, the winter of 1941\1942 happened to be very severe³⁰⁹) and the hostility of the local population as well. Moreover, Poltava, due to its strategic value (it was a center for army headquarters and military bases of the entire southern front), had an enormous concentration of German troops. Thus, in Poltava, like all over occupied Ukraine, the first attempts at guerilla activity in 1941 were a complete failure.

At the same time, one should also keep in mind that the Poltava resistance movement was not strictly limited to the people loyal to the Soviet regime. The so-called ‘*nationally conscious*’ Ukrainians (about thirty people), including both OUN (b) and OUN (m), were very much present in the city, working usually in the German administration. With the arrest of the main local OUN activists in late spring of 1942, the rest had to go underground, although the above-mentioned Ukrainian Red Cross continued to function until August of 1942³¹⁰. Even though the methods of the Soviet and Ukrainian organizations differed a lot, some aspects of their activity, helping POWs, for example, coincided. Yet the Ukrainians (but only before Poltava`s incorporation into the Reichkommissariat in late summer 1942), due to their legal status, had more resources and mechanisms for this than Lialia`s group.

³⁰⁸ TsDAHOU, f. 57, Op. 4, d. 270, l. 72.

³⁰⁹ Matthew Cooper, *The Nazi War against Soviet Partisans 1941-1944* (New-York: Cooper and Lucas Ltd., 1979), 18.

³¹⁰ Karel C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair. Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 110.

Still, reading various texts from the late 1940s, it is impossible to find one monolithic master narrative. When reading Lialia's letters (the full version), one is surprised to learn that she describes her conditions in prison as "quite good" since she was treated better than her colleagues, and even parcels from home (except perfume) all reached her.³¹¹ Her request for opium, addressed to her father (he was a doctor), suggest that their correspondence was not censored by the Germans at all. In addition, the fact that Lialia was able to write letters is evidence of her sufficiently normal physical condition. According to Iulia Iarmolenko, the Germans did not torture Lialia like the others, but respected her and referred to her only as '*Frøulein*'.³¹² In fact, both Lialia and Serga were allowed to write letters to their relatives.³¹³ All these details tell us much about the Germans' attitude towards the detained '*activists*'.

Now we arrive at the most problematic and controversial part of our story – the question of treason. It is believed that the '*Unconquered Poltava girl*' organization ceased to exist because its main activists had been reported to the Gestapo and arrested on 5-10th of May 1941. Who is to be blamed for this? In the canonical version of the story, a former POW Valentyna Terent'ieva (in Honchar's book - Halka Korol'kova) is considered to be a "*foul traitor*". Believed to be reliable, Valia, in April 1942,³¹⁴ was assigned to cross the front-lines with a detailed written report on the Poltava underground activities, find a military unit and report about the Poltava underground work to the staff of the *Ukrainian Partisan Movement*. In a three-kilometer walk from the front, in the Oleksandroviski region of Kharkiv oblast, she was caught by agents of Romanian military intelligence and

³¹¹ TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 176, l. 14.

³¹² One more amazing fact is that the floor of Lilia's prison cell had been daily washed. (Iuliia Iarmolenko, "Partyzanku Lialiu povazhaly ne til'ky odnodumtsi, ale i nimtsi", *Kraieznavche kolo* (18-20 lystopada, #46, 12). The personal file of Olena Ubyyvovk is kept in Archive of Security Service of Ukraine, but still is classified.

³¹³ Iryna Petrenko, "Malovidomi fakty biografii Borysa Sergy – chlena shtabu pidpil'noi molodizhnoi grupy "Neskorena Poltavchanka", in: *Malovidomi storinky istorii Druhoi svitovoi viyny v Ukrainy ta na Poltavshyni...* (Poltava: Poltav'skyi derzhavnyi pedahohichnyi universytet im. Korolenka, 2007), 147.

³¹⁴ Ibid., 147.

transferred back to Poltava. After two days of torture, Terent`ieva ‘betrayed’ the group, naming people she knew.

As we know from documents, a person with such a name did really exist. There is data proving that, after the Red Army’s return to Poltava, Terent`ieva was arrested by the NKVD,³¹⁵ tried by a *Military Tribunal Court* and shot.³¹⁶ Still, Terent`ieva’s case is indeed a very shady business since there is insufficient evidence to prove her guilty. Archival materials show that the punitive organs, being first “interpreters” of Lialia’s story, were the ones who produced this version and thus established it as an inseparable part of the official master-narrative. Already in November 1944, the Head of the N.K.G.B. (State Security Committee) claimed that Terentyeva “betrayed” (“vydala”) the group. However, the motif of ‘treachery’ is almost absent in the post-war literature of 1944-1946. The first book that intentionally develops this episode is *‘The Land is buzzing’ (Zemlia hude)* by Oles` Honchar. Petro Lubens`kyi in his play, written for the youth theatre in 1959, writes an even more simple story, with strict divisions of negative and positive heroes, alleging that Valentyna Terent`ieva (he uses her real name) consorted with the Germans from the very beginning³¹⁷.

There is another interesting detail. While in the documents of 1944-1945, Terent`ieva is already present in Lialia’s case, a gender switch occurs in the portrayal of the “traitor”. In 1944, according to Storozhuk, it was a male “wretched betrayer” (‘pidlyi zradnyk’) who “by night has given away the addresses of underground members to the Gestapo.”³¹⁸ Lialia’s letters to relatives³¹⁹ (see Appendix 7), written from prison, also cast

³¹⁵ TsDAHOU, f. 1, op. 22, d. 495, l. 9.

³¹⁶ TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 176, l. 7-8. Iryna Petrenko gives a very interesting detail of this case, arguing that after the war the widow of Borys Serga got married to the Head of the Military Tribunal Court, Vasylii Uchaev, who passed a sentence to Valentyna Terentyeva.

³¹⁷ Pavlo Lubens`kyi, “Neskorena poltavchanka (Lialia Ubyyvovk)”, in *5 p`ies* (Kyiv: derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhnoi literatury, 1959), 105.

³¹⁸ Vasyi` Storozhuk, *Lialia Ubyyvovk* (Kharkiv: Ukrains`ke derzhavne vydavnytstvo, 1944), 23.

little light on this question. She does not name anybody, but appeals to her father with the following:

Tell friends: I am sure that my death will be revenged. *He, traitor, slandered me and Sergei*. Sergei is an attaboy [molodets], do not forget to deliver all this. Every word here is a testament. If I know that everything will be done, I will not worry³²⁰.

Later Lialia writes that “treachery is also a method” by which they (Germans) “want to cause dissension among us.” She mentions Sergei again (“by none of his words did he betray us”³²¹), but we can not tell which Sergei, Il’ievs`kyi or Sapigo, she had in mind. She even seems to defend Sergei, when she claims that “Sergei is not guilty” of what happened since he “has tried to do everything he could in order to save me.” Official citations of Lialia’s letters do not usually include her mention of Sergei or gender references to the “traitor”. On the contrary, already in 1961, Valia (Terent`ieva), not a male, is blamed as the “traitor”.³²²

It should also be noted that not all Lialia’s letters (four) appeared in the press (the earliest in 1944, in Storozhuk’s book), but only extracts. Moreover, many of them were paraphrased and even “corrected”. We easily can trace these changes since we have copies of Lialia’s letters made in 1944. For example, “*The report about the activity of the Komsomol organization in Poltava region during the period of the Great Patriotic war*” (1944) includes a specific list and a significant “correction” of these letters. First, in order to underline Lialia’s political loyalty, it changes the word order in her sentences. Thus, in the original sentence, ‘Today or tomorrow, I do not know when, I will be shot because *I cannot act against my conscience*, because *I am a Komsomol member*’, the last two word-

³¹⁹ Copies of Ubyyvovk’s letter, which date 12-13th, 13-14th, 23th, 24-25th of May 1942, are to be found in archives (TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 176, l. 14-15).

³²⁰ Ibid., 14.

³²¹ TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 176, 15.

³²² Instead of phrase ‘he, traitor’ there is ‘Valia is a traitor’ who ‘slandered on me and Sergei’ (*Govoriat pogibshyie geroi. Predsmertnyie pis`ma sovetskikh bortsov protiv nemetsko-fashytskikh zakhvatchikov*, 1941-1945 (M.: Izdatel’stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1961), 67).

combinations are reversed.³²³ The change implies a more “correct” image of Lialia, who is first of all komsomolka and only later a human being. Yet, in Lubens`kyi`s interpretation, the same sentence does not even convey a choice, since Lialia is supposed to “be shot because she is komsomolka”.³²⁴ Second, Lialia`s “I am not alone and feel love and support around me” is changed to “I am not alone, my death will be revenged. Fatherland, Stalin, Victory are accompanying us!”³²⁵

As we see, the real or ‘alive’ Lialia constantly disappears after such ideological interventions, while mythical Lialia emerges. Thus, in the volume *Soviet Partisans* from 1961, she is almost “absent” while engaging in a traditional ideological tirade:

We managed to do a little, but we are frankly striving to do more for the happiness of our people (*ludei*), for our fatherland. We have been her faithful children in life and will die the same... Young boys (*iuoshi*) and girls (*devushki*) are all cheerful and behave themselves perfectly. None of us regrets his refusal to repent... We fight for our life by other methods and know what we are doing. Our life is in our beliefs, in our honor, in our purity for the Fatherland, for the Party which has brought us up to be such. It is not frightful to face death for this and I feel calm³²⁶.

Such mythologizing and ‘dehumanization’ of Lialia`s public image affected only the external forms of her representation, but not the content itself (there was no need for this). As most materials suggest, especially Lialia`s personal letters, the real image of our heroine did not drastically differ from the ‘imagined’ one. Both in the original letters and their official version, Lialia emerges as a devoted komsomolka and supporter of the Soviet regime who is consciously ready to die for the idea. What we have here is rather the ‘purification’ or ‘masking’, the suppression or omission of all ‘unsuitable’ elements underlining the official discourse of the Second World War, not the pure ‘invention’.

³²³ This formula is reproduced in Storozhuk`s book where he quotes Lialia`s letter. (Vasyl` Storozhuk, *Lialia Ubyyvovk* (Kharkiv: Ukrain`ske derzhavne vydavnytstvo, 1944), 30.)

³²⁴ Pavlo Lubens`kyi, “Neskorena poltavchanka (Lilia Ubyyvovk)”, in *5 p`ies* (Kyiv: derzhavne vydavnytstvo khudozhnioi literatury, 1959), 129.

³²⁵ TsDAHOU, f. 7, op. 10, d. 234, l. 25. Vasyl` Storozhuk uses the same abstract in his work. (Vasyl` Storozhuk, *Lialia Ubyyvovk* (Kharkiv: Ukrain`ske derzhavne vydavnytstvo, 1944), 31).

³²⁶ *Sovetskie partizany. Iz istorii partizanskogo dvizhenia v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny* (M.: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1961), 514.

The “right” portraying of the war: looking for appropriate examples

Yet, this “bronze” Lialia, even with the ardent speeches, is far from a perfect fit for the Soviet grand narrative of the all-people’s war against “fascism”. There are still some vital elements are missing. Literature plays a central role in this process, creating bright and inspiring characters. The literary image of Lialia as an unbreakable heroine began to form immediately after the liberation of the Poltava region in September 1943. This was as soon as state officials realized the importance of mythologizing the partisans and the underground movement, and first materials about Lialia’s group appeared. These narratives of mass struggle were a vital part of the Soviet myth of mass popular support during World War II.

Both Vasyl` Storozhuk and Mykola Nagnybida, who were writing about Lialia in 1944-1946, were involved in this process of narrative-writing. Storozhuk`s assay from 1944 about Lialia is the first literary example of it. Although the author seems to work diligently with archival materials (there are many details of Lialia`s childhood, for example), fictional motives are quite visible here, for example, an episode with Lialia reading letters to the “mothers”. At the same time, Nagnybida`s lyric poem tends to break up with documentary character, conveying the internal feelings of the heroine and stressing her relationship with her mother and Poltava, in particular. In fact, his Lialia is more a local patriot than universal, for even her last words were about her beloved Poltava.

Zhdanov’s campaign of 1946 brought the further correction of Lialia`s story. In the course of August-October purges against ‘national deviations’ in Ukrainian literature Nagnybida`s poem about Lialia was subjected to criticism. As *Literaturna Ukraina* informs, the author “did not find a real heroic tone for his poem, having changed it into idyl-domestic [idylichno-pobutoviy]”. Thus, as critic said, Nagnybida failed to draw a “truthful image of heroine”, for he did not mention her belonging to komsomol and made Lialia`s image too

“confined” (poltavs`ka obmezhennist`). For “real Lialia”, according to the article, it was typical that “she is raised by the party and komsomol”, that “she struggles and devotes her life for the happiness of all Soviet people”.³²⁷ Following the logic, we see that Nagnybida’s stressing on Lialia’s Poltava patriotism does not work here, for it the character needs to be more typologized and universalized. In 1947, Nagnybida was furtherly criticised: “one cannot feel the most important - the process of birth and strengthening of a heroic origin [nachalo] in her soul”.³²⁸

Oles` Honchar with his *The Land is buzzing*, written in 1946-1947, apparently had taken all criticism into account. In fact, he created a canonical image of Lialia that skilfully combines documentary and fictional elements, producing, according to Oskots`kyi, a “generalization that emerged from a document.”³²⁹ In his letter to Lialia’s father in 1947, Honchar writes, “The story turned out to be rather a song-like thing than a biographical one... I aimed not to describe their activity, but rather to show the most important – the souls of the young heroes — and to celebrate them.”³³⁰ The story itself first appeared in a newspaper *Molod` Ukrainy* (June-October 1947), journal *Dnipro* (#6-7, 1947), and *Znamia* (#4, 1948). While working on his *Alpy* (the first part of his famous *Standard-bearers*), Honchar heard some stories about Lialia. Later, he discovered that both of them had studied at the same Kharkiv University, but at different departments (Honchar – philological, Olena - astrological). In addition, they were of the same age, both born in 1918. The image of Lialia, “noble, pure, as if weaved from the sun”, fascinated him and Oles` started writing a

³²⁷ M. Dolengo, «Na solom`ianiy struni», *Literaturna hazeta*, 12 September 1946, 3.

³²⁸ Elisaveta Starynkevych, «Obraz heroini», *Literaturna hazeta*, 11 December, 1947, 2.

³²⁹ Cited in: Oles` Honchar, *Tvory v semy tomakh*, T.3 (K.: Kypiv : Vyd-vo khudozhnon literatury "Dnipro", 1987), 501.

³³⁰ Oles` Honchar, *Lysty* (K.: Ukrainsk`kyi pys`mennyk, 2008), 73.

“lyrical, white apple story”.³³¹ As the author remembers, the story was to be devoted to the 30th anniversary of the October Revolution and was requested by the LYCLU.³³²

A very important question is that of the visual representation of Lialia and her visualization in literature. Body, in this regard, plays a significant role. As many scholars have noted, both early and high Stalinist culture was greatly preoccupied with the body. Indeed, the body as a physical site for spiritual transformation plays a central role in Bolshevik and Stalinist discourse. As Lilya Kaganovsky suggests, besides the very traditional image of healthy, virile and handsome citizens, “other symbols of the Stalinist body were being offered by literature and film.” The so-called “disabled heroes” (paralyzed Pavka Korchagin, a real man “minus two feet” Aleksei Meres`iev), according to her, “represented the inverse of the fantasy of extravagant virility.”³³³ The representation of a suffering or a tortured body, in particular, is important for our discussion.

Katerina Clark in *The Soviet Novel* suggests that bodily mutilation is one of several ritualistic components of the socialist realist novel’s master plot, part of the ethos of “ritual sacrifice”.³³⁴ A disdain for one’s own body is a prominent feature of Soviet heroic rhetoric. An almost archetypical (even unrealistic) image of such a hero can be found in *Pravda*, depicting the torture of a *Young Guard* participant:

..Сережа перенес все муки, которые чинили ему озверелые фашисты. Он улыбался, когда четыре толстых «цыганских иглы» по самое ушко вонзились в его пальцы. Улыбался, когда ему зажали ноги между половинками двери, улыбался, когда раскаленным добела железным прутом жгли его ладони³³⁵.

In fact, Lialia’s early depiction is a very naturalistic one, in terms of body representation. Storozhuk gives a detailed description of the torture she was subjected to. It needs emphasizing that this stress on physical suffering and bodily mutilation is typical for

³³¹ Ibid., 60, 68.

³³² The copy of Honchar letter to Nadtochyi M.N. (7.X.1947), TsDAHOU, f. 57, Op. 4, d. 271, 68.

³³³ Lilya Kaganovsky, *How the Soviet man was unmade. Central fantasy and male subjectivity under Stalin* (University of Pittsburg Press, 2008), 7.

³³⁴ Katerina Clark. *The Soviet Novel: History as ritual* (Chikago: Chikago university Press, 1981), 177-178.

³³⁵ *Sovetskiye partizany. Iz istorii partizanskogo dvizhenia v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny* (M.: Gosudarstvennoie izdatel’stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1961), 533.

Storozhuk and Nagnybida, while in Honchar`s narrative, the motif of physical destruction is almost absent. While Lialia of 1944-1946 is “mutilated”, “in wounds crucified”³³⁶ (Nagnybida), “pale and exhausted”, with “broken arms”³³⁷ (Storozhuk), Honchar`s heroine does not have any evident traces of bodily mutilation. Moreover, she is “not bloody”, “not beaten”, and “not even uncombed”, her clothing is not “torn”.³³⁸ Her iconic picture (see Appendix 8) by artist Reznichenko rather resembles a Madonna, with her long blonde hair and calm, but determined, glance.³³⁹ While it is known that Lialia had dark short hair and oval-shaped face (see Appendix 9), in Honchar`s description she is a “tall girl with a childish name and goldish hair”, delicate and slim.³⁴⁰ (Appendix 10) In Honchar`s story, there is a strong opposition to Lialia – the portrayal of Halka Koroľkova (Valia Terent`ieva served as a prototype for this character). In contrast to the noble and prudent Lialia, the author portrays Halia as “rude, with a sharp tongue” and lacking “political reliability”.³⁴¹ This literary transformation of Lialia`s image might have been the authors` attempt to contrast internal rigidity/strength with outer delicacy in order to make Lialia`s character brighter and more alluring.

An even more drastic change in the interpretation of Lialia`s story occurs with the appearance of Honchar`s book. A very crucial moment absent in the literature of 1944-1946 has to do with the issue of the Party`s leadership role, which actually defined the basis of the regime`s post-war legitimacy. Neither Nagnybida, nor Storozhuk included a scene of a meeting with the secretary of the obkom, Fedir Stepanovych, who instructs Lialia on what she is supposed to do staying in the “occupied territory”. In Honchar`s book, however, the

³³⁶ Mykola Nagnybida, *Lialia Uvyyvovk* (Kyiv: Derzhavne vydavnytstvo ‘Molod’, 1946), 11, 14.

³³⁷ Vasyl` Storozhuk, *Lialia Ubyyvovk* (Kharkiv: Ukrain`ske derzhavne vydavnytstvo, 1944), 24, 26.

³³⁸ Oles` Honchar, *Neskorena poltavchanka (Zemlia hude)*, (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo ‘Molod’, 1965), 182.

³³⁹ This image was even included into the canonical volume, a codified version of Ukrainian Soviet art. (See: *Iskusstvo sovetskoi Ukrainy* (M.: ‘Iskusstvo’, 1957, 237).

³⁴⁰ Oles` Honchar, *Neskorena poltavchanka (Zemlia hude)*, (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo ‘Molod’, 1965), 62. In Lubens`kyi`s play, Lialia is the same, “slim, beautiful girl with childish name and goldish hair” (Lubel`skyi, *Neskorena Poltavchanka*, 96).

³⁴¹ Oles` Honchar, *Neskorena poltavchanka (Zemlia hude)*, (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo ‘Molod’, 1965), 129.

Communist Party is depicted as the inspiration and the leader of the young resistance movement.

Who was thus this *Fedir Stepanovich*? Was he a real historical figure? In his letter to Maria Nadtochiy (the wife of the secretary of the Poltava underground obkom Kondratenko), Honchar writes that he wanted to “give a generalized image of the Bolshevik, the inspiration of Komsomol members” (*vdokhnovitel'ia komsomoltsev-podpol'schikov*).³⁴² He even mentions two communists – Fedir Stepanovich Kondratenko, the secretary of the Poltava underground obkom of the KP(b)U in the Hadiach area, and the secretary of the Shyshatski raikom - among the main prototypes for his generalized image of Fedir Stepanovich. As archival documents suggest, the Poltava underground obkom of the KP(b)U did function in the Poltava region, primarily in the village of Rymarovka in the Hadiach region, from September 1941 until January 1942. In any case, by January 1942, most members of the Party underground, including Kondratenko himself, had already either perished in combat near khutir Vesely³⁴³ or had left for other oblasts.

Thus, Honchar does pay attention to the historical facts. Nevertheless, he was also very conscious about what should be added in order to fit the official discourse. Certainly, he knew about the controversy surrounding Aleksandr Fadeev's novel *The Young Guard* (1945) in 1947 (For details see Chapter 3.1) and was aware of a threat of ‘falling too much close to the reality’. In fact, despite of very positive reviews in the press, *The land is buzzing* was criticised for the “uninsufficient demonstration of a party's role” and “bolsheviks` leading the underground work”³⁴⁴. However, according to the critic, the author managed to produce a ‘right depiction’ of heroism of all Honchar's heroism who “immediately”, “without hesitations and doubts” come to the underground. Honchar's novel

³⁴² Oles` Honchar, *Neskorena poltavchanka*, 68.

³⁴³ Like partisans, party underground Poltava generally operated till 1942. Since that time, there was no underground RK KP(b)U in Hadiach region (TsDAHOU, f. 57, op. 4, d. 270, l. 19, 39-41).

³⁴⁴ Mykola Sydorenko, “Pokolinnia neskorenykh”, *Literaturna hazeta*, 9 October 1947, 2.

thus positively contrasted with the other works which tried to explain patriotism by the “ancestors’ cossak blood”, wish for an individual revenge, enemy’s hardness, ‘interior struggle’ and ‘search’.³⁴⁵ Therefore, with Honchar’s novel, the canonic image of Lialia as the unbreakable heroine who followed the Party’s instructions had been finally shaped.

The image of Lialia as an unbreakable heroine was “reconstructed” already in 1944-1945, continuing after the war, with the help of writers as well. Oles’ Honchar, with his canonic work *The Land is buzzing* written in 1946-1947, played an enormous role in this process. In addition, alongside Honchar’s ‘poetic novel’, there was also an official interpretation of events. They coincided, but were not identical since literature is always inclined to generalize. Even before the war had ended, the Soviet authorities realized the importance of mythologizing the partisan and underground movements since these were the main sources of the regime’s legitimization. Various projects documenting popular participation in the war started early on (from collecting archival materials and interviews to the production of unit volumes). The history of the organization *Unconquered Poltava girl* and Lialia Ubyyvovk is a part of this story.

As in the case of Soviet partisans who, according to Kenneth Slepyan, became mythic heroes but “only at the cost of the suppression of their actual experiences and memories,”³⁴⁶ Olena Ubyyvovk was also celebrated as a great Soviet heroine, but at the expense of vanishing as a person, a human being. In the process, she became a strong ideological symbol and “political monument”. On the one hand, personal accounts and facts that did not fit the post-war official narrative were omitted or “purified”, and often other details were added as well. On the other hand, Lialia’s personal traits and individualism were smoothed over in order to present her as inseparable part of a large collective whole - the Soviet ‘fighting’ family of the people.

³⁴⁵ Mykola Sydorenko, “Pokolinnia neskorenykh”, *Literaturna hazeta*, 9 October 1947, 2.

³⁴⁶ Kenneth Slepyan, *Stalin’s guerillas. Soviet partisans in World War II* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2006).

One should not interpret this deconstruction of the Soviet official narrative as an attempt to reduce the role of Olena Ubayvovk or to refute the Soviet account as 'false'. It is clear that Lialia was a devoted komsomol member and died for her convictions. However, she also was a human being, not a bronze statue. The real Lialia did not differ much from the 'imagined' one. But her history presented 'usable' material for mythologizing. More generally, the process of 'reinventing' the memory of the Poltava underground organization was a part of a wider, all-Union enterprise of codification and memory 'correction' about the "Great Patriotic War", in which, very often, there was no room left for personal remembering and individualism.

Conclusions

The Second World War was a watershed in the history of the Soviet Union. Besides being a devastating event, it indeed became a “gulp of fresh air” for Stalin’s regime, for it gave it the needed popular support and recognition. The war or rather ultimate victory in it thus legitimized the Soviet regime providing numerous possibilities of influence and control over society. Pervasive in its scope, the World War II was a “quintessential total war of modernity” in a full meaning of this word, as it had touched almost every citizen of a vast many-mullioned country. Thus it was the ultimate victory in the war which became a “common” unifying knowledge for the Soviet people and the main point of reference.

Still, the legacy of the Second World war was enough controversial, for it possessed both integrating and disintegrating capacities. On one hand, as a memory of a triumphant victory it had strong mobilizing and integrating potential to become an important element for people’s own sovietization. In other words, it was a formative experience, a «laboratory» of a “Soviet Men”. On the other hand, as a memory of occupation, collaboration and nationalist resistance, the war posed serious problems and challenges for the Soviet leadership. The vast territories, as well as its inhabitants (veterans, former forced labor workers, former prisoners of war, those who spend war “under occupation”), were to be reintegrated into the Soviet polity. Before this they needed to be “cleansed” of various “foreign” and enemy influences.

In this study, I tried to show various usages of the memory of the war by the Soviet authorities in their striving for one “correct” vision of 1941-45 events. In general, this is a story of how the Second World War has turned to the “Great Patriotic War” of the Soviet people. Formulated already at the beginning of the Soviet-German war of 1941-45, the myth of the war included its main components: liberating and patriotic character of the war, all-people’s myth, and struggle for the country’s life and death. With the first decisive Soviet

military successes in 1943-44 it became also a triumph of the Red Army and Stalin's "military genius" in particular.

Gradually topics of retreats and mistakes disappeared from the press and official documentation. All memories which did not fit this proper heroic version of the war were subjected to the so-called "organized forgetting" which the Soviet authorities started to practice already in 1944. For example, memories of initial defeats of 1941-2, hardness of the first days, panic and desertion, encirclement and tragedy of the Soviet prisoners of war were to be either silenced or purified. It was rather victory than the war itself that was to be remembered in the Soviet public discourse of the "Great Patriotic War".

1946 witnessed a new modification of the war myth which downplayed the role of the army and people in securing the Soviet victory. Rather, it was Stalin, with the help of the Party, who received all the credit now. Thus the new face of the victory had been forming with the Stalin's profile. From now on, it was Stalin's genius which defeated the Germans; the Soviet people and the Red Army were relegated the secondary roles. Already in spring 1946 the Stalin's main rivals for the victory, including Zhukov, were disgraced, dismissed or imprisoned. From 1946 until the end of Stalin's life, the history of World War II was a "virtually forbidden" topic for the Soviet professional historians. With inauguration of *Zhdanovshchyna* in 1946 and its call for a "decisive turn to the topics of contemporaneity" and doctrine of "conflictlessness" it also became a rare theme in public debates in Ukrainian literature. In 1948 even the Victory Day ceased to be a holiday and turned to an ordinary working day.

In this work I also tried to connect the post-war purges (1946-1948) in the Ukrainian literature, the so-called Zhdanov's campaign, with the official line of how the war should be represented in literary works. I argued that Ukrainian *Zdanovshchyna*, besides being a crackdown against western influences and nationalism, had another implicit dimension –

authorities' drive for the unification of a memory of the WWII. Although it was not a dominant motif of Ukrainian *Zhdanovshchyna*, it was enough visible to call this purification campaign a 'parallel assault'. Indeed, as I showed, in 1946 Ukrainian *littérateurs* were criticized for two kinds of deviations: "nationalistic" and "too realistic". On the one hand, writers were accused of being 'contaminated' by the 'bourgeois nationalist' influences. On the other hand, their main mistake was inability to present the proper heroic picture of the "Great Patriotic War", since "realistic" naturalistic representation of the war was not greeted at all. The demand for heroization of the war experience thus was the leading principle to follow.

At the same time Ukrainian writers encountered another very serious dilemma of how to reconcile notions of 'Soviet' and Ukrainian experience of the war. Even though the Soviet state promoted ethnic particularism, any attempt to show specifically Ukrainian experience of the war (Dovzhenko's case in 1944) was treated as 'nationalism' and was to be suppressed. The notion of a "selfless struggle of the Soviet people against fascism" tended thus to absorb the national experience of the war. Since the "Soviet" after the war was more often associated with the 'Russian', Ukrainian writers were expected to position Ukrainian narrative of the war into a proper relationship with their "elder brother". In such situation Ukrainian intellectuals, like a robe-walker, were trying to keep the right balance between two "evils" – nationalism and cosmopolitanism.

The Ukrainian *Zhdanovshchyna*, like all around the Soviet Union, did not end with Zhdanov's death in 1947. 'Ideological education' of Ukrainian intelligentsia continued until near Stalin's death in 1953. Nevertheless, it entered a new stage when it became also an assault against literary "classics" (Iurii Ianovs'ky, Maksym Ryl'sky, Ivan Senchenko).

Even though the war topics gradually disappeared from the Soviet public discourse after 1948, literature continued to supply image of the triumphant victory of the Soviet Un-

ion over “fascism”\imperialism. As I tried to show in my work, Oles` Honchar`s trilogy *The Standard-bearers* (1946-8) became the central work in the Ukrainian narrative of the war which, in particular, contained such elements: myth about the moral and political coherence of Soviet society, the ‘liberation’ myth, stress on heroism and self-sacrifice of ordinary people, Slav brotherhood, examples of self-denying patriotism and devotion to the Fatherland. The so-called ‘liberation myth’ and the affirmation of the Soviet superiority over Western culture was the major leitmotif of the Soviet postwar literature. With a stress on this ‘liberating’ motive, *The Standard-bearers* for many years designed people’s attitude towards Europe and the West in general. With the closure of “iron curtain”, such books, besides newspapers, were the only available source of information about Europe in the Soviet Union.

As Lialia Ubyyvovk’s example shows, the Soviet myth of “all-people’s war” constituted another very important element of the Soviet official narrative of the World War II. The story of Poltava underground organization *Unconquered Poltava girl* was a part of a broad state’s campaign documenting the mass popular participation in the war, according to which all Soviet cities and villages were to find (or invent) their own local heroes. In their search for the “usable past”, state officials and writers usually were giving preference to the ‘dead heroes’. Very often partisans or underground activists, like Lialia Ubyyvovk, became mythic heroes on the expense of their human traits and actual experience. In the course of such ‘ideological intrusion’ the person was turning to the ‘political monument’ and ‘purified’ of all ‘non-fitting’ details. Most importantly, such ‘dehumanization’ was needed to present hero as inseparable part of the Soviet collective – a large family of the peoples. Thus very often this “correction” of the memory of WWII did not have much space for personal remembering and individualism.

Appendices

Appendix 1

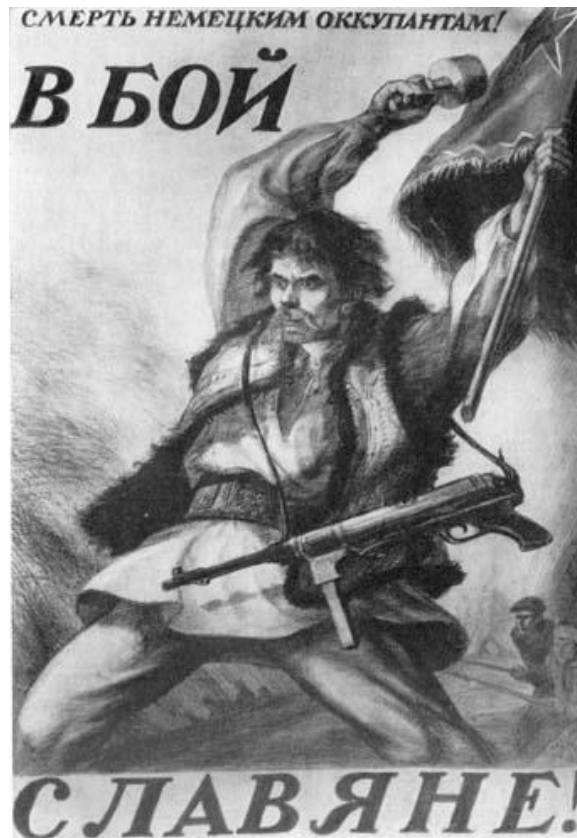
Caricature images on historical subject during the Soviet-German war 1941-1945



Source: newspaper Komunist (Kyiv) from 1941-1943.

Appendix 2

Ukrainian Soviet propaganda posters



Vasyl` Kasian To the fight, Slavs!(poster, 1942)
Source: Hrynevych V., «Mit viiny ta viyna mitiv»
(*Krytyka*, 5, 2005).



Propaganda poster. Vasyl` Kasian (1942), from the series «Shevchenko`s anger»

Appendix 3

НЕ БАЛУЙ!



Soviet Poster about «lessons» of the «Great Patriotic war».
«Ne baluy!». Viktor Govorkov (1947).

Source: Artamonova S.N., Russkii plakat: XX vek, shdevry (Moskva: Kontakt Kultura, 2000), 103.

Appendix 4



«Ukraine is free!» Kyiv, 1944. The Soviet poster illustrating the «liberation» myth.

Source: taken from the cover of Weiner`s book (Amir Weiner, *Making sense of war: the Second World War and the fate of the Bolshevik revolution* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001).

Appendix 5



**Portrait of Sergey Sapigo (-1942), a correspondent of
*Krasnaia Zvezda***

Source: David Ortenberg, *Sorok tretii. Rasskaz-khronika* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1991), illustrations.

For electronic version: http://www.victory.mil.ru/lib/books/memo/ortenberg_di3/index.html

Appendix 6

The Letter of Sergey Sapigo (1942), addressed to David Ortenberg:

«Здравствуйте, дорогой редактор, боевые друзья и товарищи славного коллектива редакции «Красная звезда»! Как бы я хотел вас видеть и каждому пожать крепко руку. Увы, меня отделяют от вас сотни километров вражеского кольца, разорвать которое я не в силах. Находясь в подземной Украине, я душою, сердцем и кровью до последнего моего дыхания был, есть и буду с вами.

А теперь опишу, что случилось со мной и моими друзьями. Не исключена возможность, что кому-нибудь из них удалось прорваться через окружение. Однако считаю своим долгом сообщить хотя бы вкратце о действиях корреспондентов и о себе.

Корреспонденты «Красной звезды» Александр Шуэр, Борис Абрамов, Яков Сиславский, Борис Лапин, Захар Хацревин, Алексей Лавров, я, а также Иосиф Осипов, Михаил Сувинский («Известия»), Яков Цветов («Правда») и ряд других попали в так называемый «киевский мешок». Мы были окружены и узнали об этом только накануне отступления наших войск из Киева. Начальник одного политотдела приказал мне организовать отряд и отправиться в обоз для охраны тыловых учреждений. Нарушение приказа грозило расстрелом. Как я ни бился, чтобы попасть в действующие части, ничего не выходило. Видя такое дело, я связался с членом Военного совета, получил разрешение покинуть обоз и примкнуть к боевой части. Но уже было поздно.

По нашему расположению — Дарницкий лес — враг открыл минометный и артиллерийский огонь. Несмотря на это, мне удалось вывести корреспондентов из-под обстрела и километров на пятьдесят прорваться в сторону своих. Здесь, под Борисовом, встретив сопротивление немцев, наш отряд разбился на группы, которые пошли по разным направлениям, чтобы, соединившись с отступающими частями, пробиваться вперед.

Со мной остались: мой неизменный друг и товарищ Саша Шуэр, боевые соратники Абрамов, Лавров, а из «Известий» Осипов и Сувинский. После всяких эпизодов и приключений мы продвинулись еще на пятьдесят километров. 21.IX.41 г.

нам удалось соединиться с действующими частями 33-й стрелковой дивизии. Бойцы этой дивизии дрались, как львы. Командир дивизии Соколов умело руководил боем, опрокидывая немцев, и пядь за пядью продвигался вперед.

Немцы быстро сделали перегруппировку и начали теснить нас к болоту. Тут же на глазах бойцов героически погиб Соколов, ранен был комиссар. Боевые порядки остаются без руководства. Мы быстро организуем из тыловиков два отряда и бросаем их в бой. Это позволило на левом фланге задержать противника. Но дрогнул [163] правый фланг, и немцы просочились к нам в тыл. Артиллерийский полк, с которым мы наступали, снялся с занимаемых позиций, и мы двинулись за ним. Несмотря на бешеный пулеметный, минометный и артиллерийский огонь, нам удалось прорвать вражеское кольцо и направиться к месту переправы. Немцы вели огонь из всех видов оружия. С водонапорной башни били два вражеских пулемета, преграждая нам путь к переправе. Полковник Воронов, авиатор, приказал мне с группой бойцов уничтожить огневые точки. Когда я выполнил эту задачу, Шуэр, Абрамов, Осипов и Сувинский с криком «ура!» бросились в переулок, где засели немцы, и давай их там колотить. Лавров, художник, тоже не дремал: залег за башню и вел огонь по немцам, делавшим перебежки.

Уничтожив вражеских пулеметчиков и доложив об этом полковнику, я решил примкнуть к Шуэру и другим товарищам, но на том месте, где, как я предполагал, они находятся, их не оказалось. Они далеко уже продвинулись вперед, а я с группой бойцов оставался как бы у них в тылу. Видя новую опасность, я обошел правый фланг немцев и проскочил в лес, где сосредоточились наши уцелевшие подразделения.

Здесь я встретил Абрамова и Осипова. Они были бледны и едва не в слезах. Я сразу догадался, что случилось страшное. «Сергей, — еле промолвил Абрамов, — твой друг погиб». У меня затряслись руки и ноги, к горлу подкатил комок, и я упал на землю. Я понимал, что война без жертв не бывает, однако не смог примириться с мыслью о гибели моего учителя и душевного друга... Когда я пришел в себя, Абрамов рассказал о героической смерти Шуэра. Выбив немцев из переуллка, Шуэр, Абрамов, Осипов и Сувинский побежали дальше по огородам. Уже на краю села их встретил огонь немецких автоматчиков, засевших на чердаках и в сараях. Бойцы залегли. Саша спросил: «Кто здесь командир?» Ответа не последовало. Тогда он, поднявшись во весь рост, громко скомандовал: «За мной, вперед! Ура! За Родину!» В

этот момент вражеская пуля оборвала жизнь бесстрашного бойца фронта и печати, общего любимца «Красной звезды».

Утром 23.IX бойцы, находившиеся в лесу, оставшись без командиров, стали продвигаться дальше. Абрамов, Осипов и Сувинский пошли с левого фланга, а я с правого, где неподалеку стояла германская батарея. Расчет был такой: подойти через лощину к позициям батареи, уничтожить огневые точки. Нас было человек сто. Как только вышла левая группа, немцы открыли артиллерийский и пулеметный огонь. По нашему отряду, двигавшемуся в лощине, не стреляли. Нам уже оставалось каких-нибудь пятьсот метров до цели. И как только мы показались на бугре, поблизости раздался сильный взрыв, меня отбросило в сторону, и больше я уже ничего не помнил. Только на второй день пришел в сознание.

Оглянулся: вокруг меня лежат раненые. Стараюсь осмыслить, что со мной произошло, но сознание теряется, в глазах темно, почти ничего не слышу. Когда я стал кое-что соображать и начал едва шевелить руками, [164] мне рассказали следующее: как только взрывной волной меня отбросило в сторону, ко мне подошли лейтенант Василий Сонин и лейтенант-танкист Петр Ефимов. Зная, что я капитан, — а немцы были от нас уже в пятистах метрах, — они быстро сняли с меня знаки различия. Так немцы приняли меня за красноармейца, как контуженного отправили в сарай к раненым, где лежали Сонин с перебитой рукой и Ефимов, раненный в плечо.

Когда сознание мое более или менее прояснилось, передо мной встал вопрос: что делать? Покончить жизнь самоубийством или пересилить свое отвращение к фашистским извергам, подлечиться, встать на ноги и нанести удар по врагу в тылу? Судите сами — правильно ли я поступил? Мне кажется, да.

Мои товарищи, лейтенанты Сонин и Ефимов, вместе с несколькими бойцами, как малость окрепли и стали ходить, убежали из лагеря. Мы условились о встрече, поскольку в день их побега я едва поднимался с постелей. Они должны были меня ждать в Ново-Басанском лесу. 15 октября ночью младший лейтенант Дмитрий Курочкин, младший командир-танкист Николай Пашенный, командир зенитной батареи Петр Шварцман, я и группа красноармейцев бежали из лагеря. Двигаясь только ночью, а днем ориентируясь и прячась в снопах на скошенных полях, нам удалось пройти более шестидесяти километров. Ново-Басанский лес был уже близок.

Но в этот момент произошло такое событие. Наши товарищи совместно с партизанами взорвали в Ново-Басане штаб немецкой части. Немцы в панике стали разбегаться кто куда. Завязалась перестрелка. Шесть солдат мы уложили на месте. Двух тяжело ранили.

Командир батареи Шварцман был ранен, был и я ранен в ногу — пробило насквозь левую ступню. Собравшись с силами, мы с помощью товарищей направились в сторону населенного пункта, чтобы спрятаться в хлебах или траве. Так прошли семь километров. Через 10–15 минут, когда мы остановились на отдых, по лесу открылась стрельба. Немцы окружили лес и в течение двух часов поливали нас свинцом. Нам нечего было думать о движении: почти все села и подступы к ним, а также дороги были под контролем немцев. Голодные, без воды, мы вынуждены были сидеть на месте.

С моей раненой ногой делалось что-то невероятное, она распухла, бинта не было. Его заменила нательная рубаша, которая по цвету мало чем отличалась от чернозема. Поднялся, чтобы идти с товарищами, но тут же упал. Помощи ждать не приходилось, товарищи сами еле двигались. Видя безвыходное положение, я попросил красноармейца из 187-й дивизии Стражко пристрелить меня, а самому с группой пробиваться вперед, к фронту, и во что бы то ни стало доставить в редакцию мою предсмертную записку.

Стражко согласился. Я написал записку, простился с товарищами и закрыл глаза. Несмотря на значительную потерю слуха, я отчетливо слышал, как Стражко послал патрон в патронник, как щелкнул затвор. Проходит десять секунд, двадцать, минута, я не [165] открываю глаза, наконец не выдержал и полюбопытствовал, почему так долго нет выстрела.

Оглянулся — возле меня никого нет. Видимо, сердце молодого красноармейца дрогнуло, ему оказалось не под силу выполнить свое обещание. Я же пристрелить себя не мог. Не знаю, где теперь Стражко, не знаю, что случилось с моими товарищами. Доставил ли кто-нибудь из них записку в редакцию или нет? Знает ли редакция о моей судьбе и о моих товарищах по фронту? Маловероятно.

Оставшись один, я решил двигаться на четвереньках, сколько могу. План был таков: доползти до крайней хаты и попросить на несколько дней укрытия. Крестьянин Петр Константинович Шевченко из деревни Малые Круполы был честным человеком. Я не скрыл от него ничего. Здесь в деревне разместился подпольный госпиталь для наших раненых бойцов. Я отправился туда. Я решил рассказать о себе хирургу Белканию и его помощнику Субботину. Врачи дали слово оказать мне помощь не только медицинскую. Они посоветовали мне переменить фамилию, что я и сделал. Начал усиленно изучать украинский язык. Благодаря врачам я попал в киевский лазарет. После двух с половиной месяцев рана моя зажила, и я добился при содействии врачей пропуска в Полтаву.

С поврежденной ногой, передвигаясь через населенные пункты по десять — пятнадцать километров в сутки, я добрался 15 декабря до Полтавы, где проживает мой отец. По дороге собрал много богатейшего материала о героических делах советских людей в тылу врага. И если каким-либо чудом мне удастся уцелеть и возвратиться в родной коллектив, мы создадим великолепную летопись о «подземной» Украине, которая не покладая рук ведет борьбу против озверелого фашизма.

Прибыв в Полтаву под чужой фамилией, я решил пробираться дальше, на Харьков. Но не тут-то было. На каждом шагу немцы проверяли документы. Пришлось возвратиться в Полтаву. Но и здесь мне проживать опасно: многие знают меня, и какая-нибудь сволочь, фашистский подлабузник, может выдать меня. Но я решил исполнить свой партийный долг. Связавшись с коммунистами, работающими в подполье, стал оказывать им помощь чем только мог.

К счастью, у одного из товарищей, бывшего работника горсовета Маркина, есть радиоприемник. Мы включаем Москву, слушаем «Последние известия», затем размножаем их от руки, передаем своим товарищам, а те — народу. Вообще о моей подпольной деятельности вам может рассказать мой отец, и если я погибну, то прошу обратиться к нему. Он назовет вам фамилии коммунистов, расскажет, что нами сделано.

План у меня такой: если не сцапает гестапо, то с приближением фронта покину Полтаву и постараюсь перейти к нашим.

Дорогие друзья и товарищи! Все, что я описал, правда. За каждое слово отвечаю головой. У меня, человека, которого вскормила и воспитала Советская власть, партия, другой дороги быть не [166] может. Вся моя семья до мозга костей принадлежит только родному отечеству. Два моих брата сражаются с фашистами, я десятки раз участвовал в боях, и никогда рука моя не дрогнула, посылая пули в заклятого врага.

Знайте, товарищи, где бы я ни находился, что бы я ни делал, всегда был и остаюсь коммунистом. Знайте и то, что, находясь в тылу врага, я никогда не позволю очернить славный коллектив «Красной звезды», воспитанником которой являюсь.

Итак, если нет Абрамова, Лаврова, Сиславского, Лапина, Хацревина, Осипова, Сувинского, Цветова, знайте, что они героически дрались с врагами и вели себя в боях достойно, как подобает военным журналистам. Не забывайте кристальной души человека, отважного бойца фронта и печати Саши Шуэра.

Я не сомневаюсь, что Красная Армия наголову разобьет фашистских людоедов. И если я погибну, то кровь свою отдам только за свою любимую родину — СССР.

Жму всем руки и целую крепко.

Прощайте!

Ваш воспитанник Сергей Сапиго».

(Extract from: David Ortenberg, *Sorok tretii. Rasskaz-khronika* (Moskva: Izdateľ'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1991, 165)

Appendix 7

Copies of Ubyyvovk's letter, which date 12-13th, 13-14th, 23th, 24-25th of May 1942, are to be found in archives (TsDAHOУ, f. 7, op. 10, d. 176, l. 14-15)

Копии писем Лялички Убийвовк, расстрелянной оккупантами фашистами 26 мая 1942 года, около 7-8 часов вечера. Арестована 6 мая 1942 года.

Письмо 1\ получено с 12 на 13 мая 1942 года.

Папа родной! Ты мужчина и должен перенести все, что будет, как мужчина. У меня один на сто шансов выйти отсюда. Виноват в этом не Сергей, он сделал все, что мог для того, чтобы спасти меня.

Я пишу не с горяча, а хорошо все обдумав. Надежду не теряю до последней минуты и присутствия духа. Но если я погибну – помни вот мое завещание:

Мама, верно не переживет моей смерти, но ты должен жить и мстить, когда будет возможность.

Отсюда, из самого сердца фашизма, я ясно вижу, что это такое все утонченное зверство. Смерти не боюсь, но хочу, если не будет выхода, погибнуть от своей руки, поэтому заклинаю тебя всем, что для тебя свято, своей любовью ко мне, принести мне сегодня же опию, у нас дома есть в бутылке, ровно столько, сколько это нужно, чтобы умереть, не больше и не меньше, чтобы не промазать.

Я верю, что ты, любя меня, это сделаешь. Помни, что я пишу не с горяча и поспешности тоже не сделаю. Налей пузырек и вложи в хлеб, лучше в кастрюлю с супом, суп я вылью вон.

Я выполню свой долг – не впутаю невинных людей и если нужно стойко умереть. Но чтобы избавить меня от мук, передай сегодня же, пока можно видеть, опий или морфий – тебе виднее, смертельную дозу и будь молодцом, чтобы не сделать мне хуже. К 5-ти часам меня приведут в тюрьму и там меня можно будет увидеть.

Друзьям передай: я уверена, что моя смерть будет отомщена. *Он предатель* наговорил на меня и Сергея. Сергей молодец и все это не забудь передать. Каждое это слово – завещание. Если я буду знать, что все будет выполнено, - я буду спокойна.

Еще надежда есть, но решение мое неизменно, если ее не будет. Маму пока не волнуй.

Целую вас всех от всего сердца. Привет друзьям.

Письмо 2-е получено с 13 на 14 мая 1942 г.

Здравствуйте мои дорогие!

Много я не могу писать, но привет хочется передать. Условия у меня тут довольно хорошие. Передачи получаю полностью, кроме духов. Если хотите передать что-нибудь – духи или сигареты – приносите в тюрьму, тут меньший контроль.

Шансов выйти отсюда я имею очень, и очень мало, я, конечно голову не теряю, если удастся – выйду. Но явной подлости я не буду покупать жизнь. В конце концов умирать в жизни один раз и жизнь теперь стоит дорого, особенно ясно я вижу это здесь. – Мне очень и очень жаль, что я причиняю Вам столько горя, поверьте я никогда Вас не забывала и не забываю.

В передачах продуктов мне хватает, а хлеба маловато.

Очень жаль, что папа не передал, что я просила, пока была этому возможность, а теперь уже пожалуй не удастся. Я никогда не делала поспешных поступков, и никогда не теряю головы. Сейчас я чувствую себя хорошо, переживаю только за Вас.

Помните – Сергей ни в чем передо мной не виноват – он сделал все еще больше чем все, чтобы спасти.

Во всем виноваты условия, несоответствующие содержанию.

Вообще я сделала глупость, сказав о ВЛКСМ. Ну, не важно. Сейчас со мной обращаются хорошо, корректно, лучше чем с другими, но это не показатель.

Целую всех крепко, крепко.

Целую маму, папу, Варичьку, Глафиру, Анюту, Лелю, Игоря

Третье письмо получено 23 мая 1942 года

Дорогие мои, родные мои!

Мне очень жаль, что пришлось так огорчить Вас. И очень жаль, что Вы совершенно не понимаете меня. Все равно мне жизни не было бы при данных условиях. Так нужно, чтобы смерть принесла какую-нибудь пользу. Вспомните все процессы, что делает раскаяние – бесполезное унижение и обесценивает все предыдущее, а жизни все равно не спасает.

Папа, ведь 17 сентября мы были вместе целый день. А здесь бархатные лапки как ты взрослый человек и такой доверчивый, излишней доверчивостью ты можешь окончательно предать меня. Все самые утонченные попытки используются в своих целях. Свидание с вами было допущено совершенно из человеколюбия. Описать невозможно. Нужно тут побывать и все увидеть, чтобы своими собственными глазами убедиться в этом.

У меня есть, но то, , что они говорят, очень маленький шанс выйти отсюда и я сделаю все, чтобы его использовать. А относительно предательства – это тоже метод – я же читала показания Сергея – ни одним словом он не предал.

Стараясь внести раздор среди нас – стремятся больше погубить. Я же подписывала показания. Хорошо, что я немного понимаю немецкий язык. А кто не понимает!? И этим людям Вы верите! И хотите толкнуть меня на предательство. Не то нужно делать. Я, конечно, постараюсь сохранить жизнь. Но если не удастся, - мстить за меня нужно! Я не боюсь умереть – все люди умирают и если придется умирать – то так, чтобы от этого была максимальная польза. Верьте же мне, а не им. Я борюсь за свою жизнь и знаю, что делаю, мне изнутри виднее, чем Вам снаружи. Я не ребенок и могла бы Вам доказать, что права я.

Крепко, крепко всех целую от всего сердца. Ляля.

4-е письмо

получено с 24 на 25 мая 1942 года

Родные мои папа, мама, Варичка, Глафира!

Сегодня, завтра, я не знаю когда, меня расстреляют за то, что я немогу ити против своей совести, за то, что я комсомолка. Я не боюсь умереть и умру спокойно. Но я твердо знаю, что выйти отсюда я не могу, поверьте, я пишу не сгоряча, а совершенно спокойно. Обнимаю Вас всех в последний раз и крепко, крепко целую.

Я не одинока и чувствую вокруг себя много любви и заботы. Умирать не страшно.

Целую всех от всего сердца.

Appendix 8



А. И. Резниченко. Ляля Убийвовк в тюрьме.
Иллюстрация к повести О. Гончара «Земля гудит». 1950

Source: *Iskusstvo sovetskoi Ukrainy* (M.: "Iskusstvo", 1957, 237

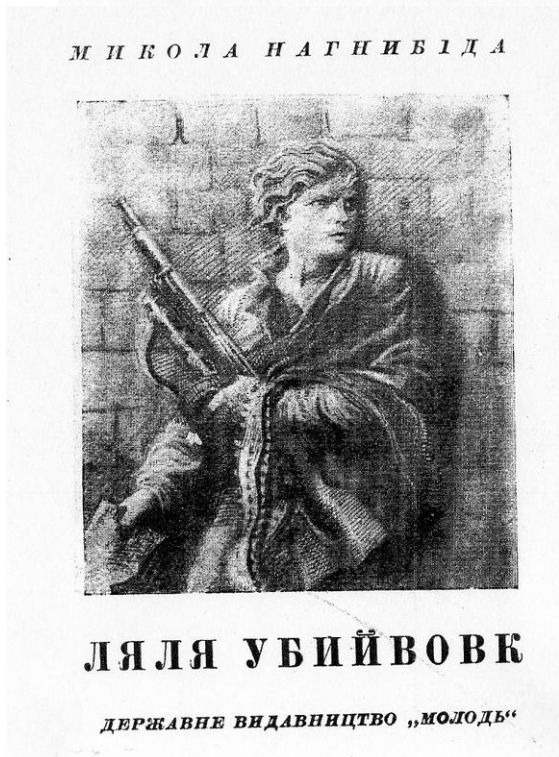
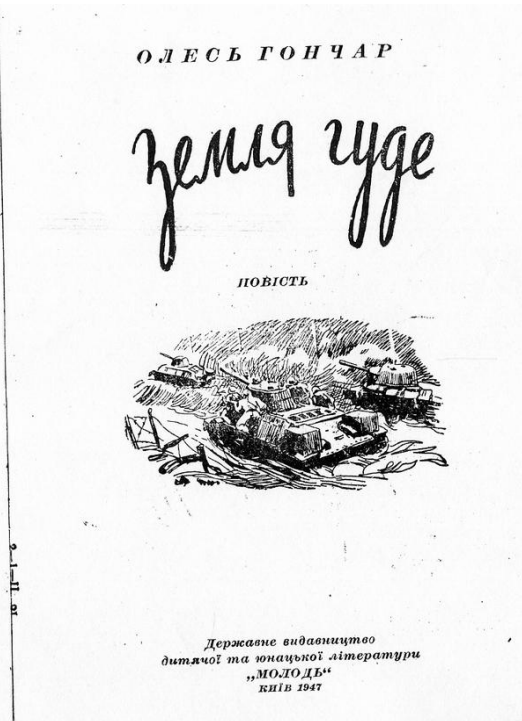
Appendix 9



Ubyyvovk`s most popular portraits

Appendix 10

Various visual representations of Lialia`s image



Portrait from Vasyľ Storozhuk`s assay

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op. 22, d. 495

op. 23, d. 2499, 4511

f. 7

op. 10, d. 176, 234, 212

f. 57

op. 4, d. 270, 271

TsDAMLM

Tsentrāl'ny derzhavnyi arkhiv-muzei literatury ta mystetstva (Central State archive-museum of literature and arts)

f. 590 (Writers`s Union Of Ukraine)

op. 1, d. 12, 27, 32, 33, 36.

AILT

Arhive Instytutu literatury im. T.G.Shevchenka (Archives of T.G. Shevchenko Literary Institute)

f. 96 (Oles` Honchar` collection)

d. 1, 2, 3

f. 116, d. 3019

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