Georgiy
Kasianov

Memory Crash

The Politics of History in and around Ukraine 1980s–2010s

CEU PRESS

Memory Crash

HISTORICAL STUDIES
in Eastern Europe and Eurasia

VOLUME VII

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CEU PRESS
Central European University Press
Budapest–Vienna–New York

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Published in 2022 by
Central European University Press
Nádor utca 11, H-1051 Budapest, Hungary
Tel: +36-1-327-3138 or 327-3000
E-mail: ceupress@press.ceu.edu
Website: www.ceupress.com

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Translated from:
Георгий Касьянов. *Украина и соседи: Историческая политика 1980–2010-х*
© Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, Moscow, 2019

ISBN 978-963-386-380-0 (hardback)
ISBN 978-963-386-381-7 (ebook)
ISSN 2306-3637

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Kas'ianov, H. V. (Heorhiĭ Volodymyrovych), 1961- author.
Title: Memory crash : the politics of history in and around Ukraine, 1980s-2010s / Georgiy Kasianov.
Description: Budapest ; New York : Central European University Press, 2022. | Series: Historical studies in Eastern Europe and Eurasia, 2306-3637 ; volume VII | Includes bibliographical references and index. | The Ukrainian version of this book was published by Laurus Publishing House in Kyiv in 2018. The Russian edition by Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie was published in Moscow in 2019. The English version, abridged and updated, was completed in 2020.
Identifiers: LCCN 2021034152 (print) | LCCN 2021034153 (ebook) | ISBN 9789633863800 (hardcover) | ISBN 9789633863817 (adobe pdf)
Subjects: LCSH: Ukraine--History--1991- | Collective memory--Ukraine. | Collective memory--Government policy--Ukraine. | History--Study and teaching--Ukraine. | Ukraine--Politics and government--1991- | Ukraine--Foreign relations--1991- | Ukraine--Historiography.
Classification: LCC DK508.846 .K3763 2022 (print) | LCC DK508.846 (ebook) | DDC 947.7086--dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021034152
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021034153

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Preface

In the middle of the 2000s, I was involved, somewhat unexpectedly, in the formal evaluation of history textbooks in Ukraine. While reviewing the content of most textbooks on the history of Ukraine, I was stunned not only by the low quality of the tools that were used to educate young citizens but also by the dismal uniformity of textbook content, despite the fact that every grade had two to five titles—produced by different authors with state financing—from which to choose. In fact, I dealt with one single meta-text with some ornamental variations owing to authors' individual cultural backgrounds. It was obvious that the existence of a single officially approved narrative for textbooks was not the only reason for this uniformity; there had to be something else at play. This "something," which some fifty years ago was named the power of discourse, became the focus of my interest.

From 2006 to 2008, I became an involved observer of the massive state campaign to prepare for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Great Famine of 1932–33, which by this time was officially named the Holodomor. The eagerness of respected professional historians to execute the government's orders and cater to "public demand" made an indelible impression on me. I had not yet forgotten a similar situation during the 1980s, when the same people in the same manner followed orders to combat the "falsifications of the bourgeois Ukrainian nationalists about the man-made famine in the USSR."

The promotion of the idea that the famine aimed at the destruction of the Ukrainian nation was obviously at odds with some of the basic rules and procedures of history as an academic discipline. However, at the same time, it was eminently suitable to the ideological and political interests of part of the ruling elite, and it responded to the expectations of a part of society that saw in the genocidal version of the event an explanation for the contempo-

rary problems and challenges in Ukraine. Observing historians, I discovered that while they were often motivated by either a deliberate desire to respond to political demands or banal opportunism, there were other reasons for their conduct. I had a feeling that many historians believed they had some sort of mission and that there was some magic potion — which they themselves invented—that had taken over their minds.

It was easy for me to recognize some of these formulas and stereotypes because in the late 1980s and early 1990s, I had actively helped fill in the "blank spots" of Ukrainian history. I had been a critic of Stalinism and a convinced "enlightener of the people"; however, I believed all of this to be a closed chapter for me and my professional colleagues. By the middle of the 2000s, professional Ukrainian historiography largely outgrew the limits of the classic national canon, but historical politics and the historiography subordinated to its interests reproduced this canon, sometimes grotesquely. My colleagues, whose basic professional qualifications could not be impeached, enthusiastically took part in this enterprise.

The reaction of engaged segments of society was no less impressive: as it turned out, the issues of the past worried them no less than the issues of the present; in fact, sometimes the past worried them more than the present. The mechanisms of state and public demand looked remarkably similar: a segment of elites and society as a whole again voiced claims for "true" history despite this version having been solidly entrenched in school textbooks; another part of the population defended the "untrue" history, and both sides reproduced Soviet-style practices. Even the official requests state organs sent to academic institutes resembled the requests of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. The only novelty was that a much broader circle was involved in making them.

The mysteries and ambiguities of the emergence and development of discursive forms with their powerful influence on society and on those who call themselves intellectuals intrigued me. This is how I came to understand the necessity of studying historical politics. It resulted in several books and a number of articles dedicated to this phenomenon in Ukraine, Russia, and Poland. Some materials written between 2009 and 2015 became a part of this book though, of course, I updated and augmented them. The events of 2015–19 followed with a third advent of the ideologically driven version of national memory and history, where the former was hardly distinguish-

able from the latter, which clearly demonstrated that this topic deserves a meticulously researched study.

It was not an easy decision to write a separate book about historical politics. One of my colleagues whose opinion I trust remarked once that the description of historical politics in a given country in a given period can fit into a single academic article. The appropriateness of this opinion is partially confirmed by the fact that a large majority of works in this area are indeed edited collections.[1] As my book was already largely written, I, being afraid of using a sledgehammer to crack nuts, asked this same colleague to provide me with arguments in favor of writing a monograph. He showed his solidarity with me and expressed thoughts that I include along with my own interpretations.

A general description of the tendencies, developments, and results of historical politics can fit into one article or chapter in a collection dedicated to the topic. However, a detailed report that enables the reader, with historical hindsight, to follow the genealogy of the phenomenon known as historical politics requires a longer format, especially if the study places historical politics in a transnational political context. I was encouraged both by the example of my colleagues who also decided to "catch the rainbow" and tackle sim-

1 See, for instance, the best-known publications over the last decade: Jan-Werner Müller, ed., *Memory and Power on Post-War Europe: Studies in the Present of the Past (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002);* Ulf Brunnbauer, ed., *(Re)Writing History: Historiography in Southeast Europe after Socialism* (New York: LIT Verlag, 2004); Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner, and Claudio Fogu, eds., *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); Michal Kopeček, ed., *Past in the Making: Historical Revisionism in Central Europe after 1989* (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2007); Sorin Antohi, Balázs Trencsényi, and Péter Apor, eds., *Narratives Unbound: Historical Studies in Post-Communist Eastern Europe* (New York: CEU Press, 2007); Małgorzata Pakier and Bo Stråth, eds., *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010); Corina Dobos, Marius Stan, and Mihail Neamtu, eds., *Politics of Memory in Post-Communist Europe,* History of Communism in Europe 1 (Bucharest: Zeta Books, 2010); Maria Lipman and Alexei Miller, eds., *The Convolutions of Historical Politics* (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2012); Uilleam Blacker, Alexander Etkind, and Julie Fedor, eds., *Memory and Theory in Eastern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Étienne François, Kornelia Kończal, Robert Traba, and Stefan Troebst, eds., *Geschichtspolitik in Europa seit 1989: Deutschland, Frankreich und Polen im internationalen Vergleich* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2013); Małgorzata Pakier and Joanna Wawrzyniak, eds., *Memory and Change in Europe: Eastern Perspectives* (New York: Berghahn, 2015); Vladimir Tismaneanu and Bogdan C. Iacob, eds., *Remembrance, History, and Justice: Coming to Terms with Traumatic Pasts in Democratic Societies* (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2015); Julie Fedor, Markku Kangaspuro, Jussi Lassila, and Tatiana Zhurzhenko, eds., *War and Memory in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); and Gelinada Grinchenko and Eleonora Narvselius, eds., *Traitors, Collaborators and Deserters in Contemporary European Politics of Memory: Formulas of Betrayal* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

ilar topics in monograph-length studies and by my own experience studying important aspects of this phenomenon.[2]

Additionally, I also believe that even though Ukraine shares certain similarities with other countries in the turbulent post-Soviet space, it is, nevertheless, a rather specific and complicated case. Cultural and historical diversity, which could have been advantageous for the country, became toxic as a consequence of the politics of history and the irresponsible uses and abuses of the past. Ukraine demonstrates how an overabundance of the past blocks future advancement. Moreover, the country's preoccupation with memory complicates its perception of the world, and conflicts about the past become conflicts in the present.

This book is an account of the historical politics in Ukraine embedded within the broader European context. It delineates the main tendencies and events related to the use of the past for the interests of the present as formulated by certain social, political, and cultural groups. I do not discuss professional history writing and historiographical disputes on the topics outlined below.

* * *

The book consists of three parts. In the first part, I delineate the framework of the study and offer the reader a set of basic formulas and concepts used in this study. I also examine the main tendencies of historical politics in three regions conventionally delineated as Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and the post-

2 See, for instance, Edgar E. Wolfrum, *Geschichtspolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Der Weg zur bundesrepublikanischen Erinnerung 1948–1990* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1999); Elke Fein, *Geschichtspolitik in Russland: Chancen und Schwierigkeiten einen demokratisierenden Aufarbeitung der sowjetischen Vergangenheit am Beispiel der Tätigkeit der Gesellschaft Memorial* (Hamburg and Münster: LIT Verlag, 2001); Georgiy Kasianov, *Danse macabre: Holod 1932–1933 rokiv u polititsi, masoviy svidomosti ta istoriohrafiyi (1980-ti–pochatok 2000-kh)* (Kyiv: Nash chas, 2010). See also the second edition, updated and amended: Georgiy Kasianov, *Rozryta mohyla: holod 1932–1933 rokiv u polititsi, pamiati ta istorii* (Kharkiv: Folio, 2019); Tomasz Stryjek, *Ukraina przed końcem Historii. Szkice o polityce państw wobec pamięci* (Warsaw: Instytut Studiów Politycznych, 2014); Olga Malinova, *Aktualnoye proshloye: simvolicheskaya politika vlastvuyushchey elity i dilemmy rossiyskoy identichnosti* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2015); Oleksandr Hrytsenko, *Pam'yat mistsevoho vyrobnytstva. Transformatsiya symvolichnoho prostoru ta istorychnoyi pam'yati v malykh mistakh Ukrayiny* (Kiev: K.I.S., 2014); Alla Kyrydon, *Heterotopii pam'iati: Teoretyko-metodolohichni problemy studii pam'iati (*Kyiv: Nika-Tsentr, 2016); Oleksandra Haidai, *Kam'yanyy hist. Lenin u Tsentralniy Ukrayiny* (Kyiv: Laurus, 2016); Oleksandr Hrytsenko, *Prezydenty i pam'iat. Polityka pam'iati prezydentiv Ukrainy (1994–2014): pidgruntia, poslannia, realizatsiia, rezultaty (Kyiv: K.I.S., 2017).*

Soviet space. The second part describes the course of action and the functions of the main actors in the historical politics of Ukraine: the state, non-state institutions, and those without whom historical politics would never be possible—historians. Finally, the third and longest part deals with the practices of historical politics: the description and analysis of actions, effects, and consequences. I examine the "nationalization" of the past in its interaction with and struggle against the previous version of Ukrainian history and memory.

As it turns out, even a monograph is not sufficient for an exhaustive treatment of the topic promised in the title of the book. Many stories and events remained outside the scope of this work, and many others were touched upon only superficially.

I do not claim to have managed to stay within the limits of disciplinary objectivity so well described by Allan Megill. I was not simply an observer and eyewitness of the processes described in the book; I was also a participant. Instead of confining myself to academic discussions, I brought my ideas and reasoning to broader circles of listeners, interlocutors, and opponents.

Just like some of my colleagues who try to consider history an academic discipline rather than a mouthpiece of the ruling class or public interest, I learned a lot of things about myself when I shared my findings with the broader public. I made a personal collection of epithets, threats, and specific wishes meant for me: I was an "agent of Moscow" and Washington D.C., a "libtard," a turncoat, and, of course, I do not mention here the vocabulary of those who write on walls and in public toilets. This collection might one day be useful for understanding the public atmosphere[3] and for appreciating the communication culture of a period when the problems of the past, instead of staying in the domain of intellectuals and specialists, started to be discussed by the hoi polloi, by politicians only one step removed from them, and by quill-drivers.

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3 A very telling episode occurred recently. The Ukrainian ambassador to Germany Mr. Andrii Mel`nyk demanded the German-Ukrainian Commission of Historians to exclude me from participation in the academic seminar, unjustifiably accusing me of being a "Holodomor denier." Meanwhile, his wife publicly coined the term "kasianovshchina" to describe those who, under the pretext of "academic freedom," hamper the efforts of Ukraine to ensure the recognition of the Holodomor as genocide. See "SMSky vid posla: Yak Kyiv pozbuvsia nezruchnykh istorykiv," September 30, 2020, https://www.dw.com/uk/smsky-vid-posla-yak-kyiv-pozbuvsia-nezruchnykh-istorykiv/a-55094491; "Zbir koshtiv dlia muzeju Holodomoru," accessed December 12, 2020, https://www.zernapravdy.org/uk/campaigns/sprout-the-grains-of-truth-together-with-svitlana-melnyk/.

In any case, I tried to do my best to stay within the limits of a balanced academic approach to problems in which people are emotionally invested and which pose ethical dilemmas. I must admit that I do not sympathize (and never did) with either the phenomenon or with the large majority of its subjects. The reasons for my attitude are not only ethical, aesthetic, or professional; unfortunately, proponents of historical politics have an explicit or implicit desire (rather explicit in the Ukrainian case) to force everyone to sing along, including people who are not really suited to this exciting activity.

In this somewhat protracted research adventure, I received moral, intellectual, and often institutional support from colleagues and friends, to whom I express my most sincere gratitude.

First, my thanks to Alexei Miller, with whom I started discussing the problems of the interaction of history and politics in the early 2000s. These discussions resulted in a book that still enjoys attention.[4] Despite our friendly relations, or perhaps precisely because of them, our discussions could be very pointed, and we would often agree to disagree, maintaining respect for each other. Communication with Oleksiy Tolochko was no less important for me. Oleksiy is a world-class scholar, erudite and equipped with the most recent findings in the field. He is a true intellectual and fortunately not a public one. These two were the first readers and benevolent critics of this book. The first version of this book was read and commented on by my Polish colleague Tomasz Stryjek, one of the most competent researchers of contemporary Ukrainian historiography and the politics of memory.

Comments given by such high-caliber scholars have helped make my text better at every stage. I paid heed to many of their remarks and suggestions, especially with regard to fringe interpretations, but in many cases I remained steadfast in my reading, so my friends and colleagues are only responsible for the strongest points of the book. I, the author, am responsible for its flaws.

At various stages I was helped by my doctoral students Oleksandra Haidai and Andriy Liubarets who helped me collect materials and improve my text. I am thankful for their time and their effort, and I hope that our cooperation was mutually rewarding.

4 See Georgiy Kasianov and Alexei Miller, *Ukraina—Rossija: kak pishetsia istorija. Dialogi, lektsii, statji* (Moscow: RGGU, 2011).

I received financial and institutional support for my work on the book within the Ukrainian-Swiss project "Ukraine of the Regions"; I also extend my gratitude to Carmen Scheide, Ulrich Schmid, and Benedikt Hauser, who arranged financial support for this project.

A large part of the text of this book was prepared during my residency at Imre Kertész Kolleg in Jena, Germany. I am especially grateful to the group of "student assistants" for their help in accessing and exploring the works of German colleagues. The final version of the text was completed during my stay at the University of Basel within the framework of the Ukrainian Research in Switzerland (URIS) program and at the University of North Carolina, in one of the most charming localities in the United States, Chapel Hill.

The Ukrainian version of this book was published by Laurus Publishing House in Kyiv in 2018. The Russian edition by Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie was published in Moscow in 2019. The English version, abridged and updated, was completed in 2020 under the circumstances of COVID-19.

This publication was completed as a part of the research project sponsored by the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA).

Part

I

Concepts and Contexts

Chapter 1

Notions and Definitions

I do not intend to provide a detailed analysis of the vast literature on the relationship between history and memory, history and politics, tradition and culture, myth and scholarship, historical epistemology, and historical consciousness. For this book, I turn to basic notions and approaches with a purely utilitarian goal: I use them to establish the conceptual framework of my own narrative. Drawing on the experience of several researchers who have already offered their perspective on the questions guiding this study, I will formulate my own definitions to form a base for my narrative.

Historical memory

At first sight, the term historical memory seems tautological: memory is about the past, by definition, like history. At the same time, there is an internal contradiction: the memory of individuals or groups may not coincide with history because history suggests a narrative that ignores the memory variations of individuals and groups. This observation was made by Maurice Halbwachs when he revised his ideas on the interaction of history and memory.

Nevertheless, the adjective "historical" is quite relevant when we mean "collective memory" if only because the engineers, promoters, and carriers of this kind of memory often identify it with history (that is, with a specific narrative of the past) and, in a broader sense, with the past in general, sometimes going so far as to erase all borders between history and memory.

Historical memory is usually represented as a variant of collective memory. The ever-growing number of studies dedicated to various types, functions, and embodiments of collective memory, its consumption, and the apparition of "public history" resulted in such a maelstrom of academic, pop-

ular, and pseudo-academic texts that a simple description and enumeration of the principal ideas and suggestions of various disciplines requires a separate study.[1]

For this reason, I will only mention those well-known works and figures that have had the greatest influence on the scope of interpretation and cognition of the phenomenon known as collective memory. Citing some of them has become a necessary ritual in any work dedicated to the topic, and I address them to delineate the basic framework of my own study. I deliberately omit the voluminous array of literature[2] that itemizes, specifies, or expands ideas that form the conceptual base of *memory studies*. Such an analysis is not on my agenda.

It is customary to trace the intellectual genealogy of memory studies and of the term "collective memory" to the works of the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, who was the first to articulate such basic notions as *les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*, ("social frames of memory") (1926), and *la mémoire collective* ("collective memory") (1950).[3] It should be noted that the term "collective memory" (as a sociological notion) came into being in the intellectual milieu of the emerging Annales school, but in any case, Marc Bloch was the first to react to Halbwachs's formulas, and the subsequently established "history of mentalities" is obviously reminiscent of his ideas.[4]

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1 A substantial and a very representative survey of intellectual and social collective studies from the 1920s–1990s can be found here: Jeffrey K. Olick and Joyce Robbins, "Social Memory Studies: From 'Collective Memory' to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (August 1998): 105–40. A selection of basic readings is included in Jeffrey K. Olick, Vered Vinnitzky-Seroussy, and Daniel Levy, eds., *The Collective Memory Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). A survey of recent trends in the research of the politics of memory with a specific comparison of "Western" and "Eastern Europe" can be found in Małgorzata Pakier and Joanna Wawrzyniak, "Memory and Change in Eastern Europe: How Special?" in *Memory and Change in Europe: Eastern Perspectives*, ed. Małgorzata Pakier and Joanna Wawrzyniak (New York: Berghahn, 2016), 1–19.

2 A sampling of literature in such spheres as cultural anthropology, political science, social philosophy, history of culture, social psychology, museum studies, and so forth proves that the boom of memory studies can rather be linked to the break-up of "big questions" and their reconceptualization within various disciplines.

3 Maurice Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950). This edition (a posthumous publication of Halbwachs's manuscripts) and a number of articles dedicated to his ideas are available online at http://classiques.uqac.ca/classiques/Halbwachs_maurice/memoire_collective/memoire_collective.html. Revised and corrected edition: *La mémoire collective*, ed. Gérard Namer (Paris: Albin Michel, 1997). English translation: *On Collective Memory*, trans. and ed. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

4 Marc Bloch, "Mémoire Collective, Tradition et Coutume: A Propos d'un Livre Récent," *Revue de synthèse historique,* no. 118–20 (1925): 72–83.

Almost synchronously with Halbwachs, German art historian Aby Warburg formulated the notion of *soziales Gedächtnis*, "social memory," which was quite close to the idea of his French colleague and essentially grappled with the same social framework that shapes the structures of collective memory and acts as its mediator.[5] However, Warburg was more interested in the structures of collective memory as reflected in works of art.

Following on the heels of Halbwachs and Warburg is French historian Pierre Nora with his monumental (both literally and figuratively) project *Les lieux de mémoire* ("spaces of memory" or "places of memory").[6] Along with Nora, most diligent researchers also mention his contemporaries and colleagues Philippe Ariès and Jacques Le Goff, who, like him, belonged to the so-called third generation of *Les Annales*.

The late 1980s and early 1990s witnessed Halbwachs's triumphant comeback, this time to the realm of English-language humanities. This event coincided with the growth of public and academic interest in the problems of collective memory. For this reason, the ideas of the French sociologist became extremely useful to a new generation of scholars and greatly influenced the development of memory studies.

Over the last four decades, the study of collective memory has flourished. The most relevant scholars for this study are ones that, in a sense, continue Halbwachs's work. These include American historian Patrick Hutton, with his fundamental *History as an Art of Memory*; British sociologist Paul Connerton, who refreshed the topic with his book *How Societies Remember* and called that attention be paid to the modes of memory transfer through bodily and commemorative practices; American sociologist Jeffrey Olick, who reinterpreted the notion of collective memory; and German historians Jan and Aleida Assmann, who augmented the basic vocabulary of memory studies by adding the dichotomy "communicative–cultural memory."[7]

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5 Kurt W. Forster, "Aby Warburg's History of Art: Collective Memory and Social Mediation of Images," *Daedalus* 105, no. 1 (Winter 1976): 169–76.

6 We can dispense with the obligatory link to the results of this mega project, reflected in a seven-volume edition of the same name. Instead, we will cite the English-language edition that includes forty-six (of over 130) articles published in the United States: Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, 3 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996–98).

7 Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989). It is worth mentioning that Connerton considered the other side of the coin—the forgetting. See Connerton, *How Modernity Forgets* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), as well as his article, "Seven Types of Forgetting," *Memory Studies* 1, no. 1 (2008): 59–71.

Jeffrey Olick suggests taking into account the differences between *collective memory* and *collected memory*. He believes that collected memory can represent "the aggregated individual memories of members of a group." At the same time, he admits that the process of "collecting" individual memories that correlate with each other would inevitably lead to the transformation of individual memories under the influence of other versions, even when they are very similar.[8]

Collective memory, according to Olick, is the opposite of collected memory because instead of individual memories, it is a collection of definitions, symbols, and images common for all members of the community, quite independent of the subjective perception of these individuals. It is easy to discover that "there are clearly demonstrable long-term structures to what societies remember or commemorate that are stubbornly impervious to the efforts of individuals to escape them. Powerful institutions clearly value some histories more than others, provide narrative patterns of how individuals can and should remember, and stimulate [collective] memory in ways and for reasons that have nothing to do with the individual or aggregate neurological records."[9]

Jan and Aleida Assmann advance a position that is quite similar to that of Olick: they proposed dividing collective memory into communicative and cultural memory (1987). Communicative memory, similar to collected memory, is a phenomenon mostly present in the everyday communication between individuals. It is utterly individualized and not well-structured. It functions within the limits of a small social group whose boundaries are defined by this common memory, generally transferred and modified via verbal communication. It is directly linked with individuals' social roles inside a group and with the formation of social identity. As a rule, communicative memory survives for three or four generations and then dies out because of generational change and the growing remoteness of its initial forms.

Cultural memory is somewhat contrary to the communicative one. Its formation and functioning are linked to tradition and this tradition is, in turn, connected to authority. Cultural memory is imposed from the outside; in this sense, it runs counter to communicative memory, and, more-

8 Jeffrey K. Olick, *The Politics of Regret: On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 23.

9 Ibid., 28–29.

over, the two may conflict. Cultural memory is a part of the cultural identity of groups; in its relations with individuals, it is a form of identity that is defined from outside.

While communicative memory deals with concrete "social" time that can easily be measured through generations, cultural memory measures time through historical periods; in this case, time is mythologized. Cultural memory is elaborated and supported by social or government institutions; it can exist and be transferred for centuries and millennia. The only people to have access to the elaboration, preservation, and transfer of cultural memory are those that are given such powers by society or the state—the mnemonic professionals, from priests to writers, historians, and archivists.[10]

It is not difficult to see the point where all researchers agree: a juxtaposition and comparison of individual (collected/communicative) and collective/cultural memory (not excluding a possibility of their close interaction) in order to identify as a category of its own the kind of memory that is an object of intentional construction and social, cultural, and political engineering. The collective (cultural) memory presupposes a political interest. It is the very kind of memory that can be identified with historical memory.

It is already well established that the issue of historical memory is closely related to the question of power, whether political power or the power of discourse. A classical statement by Jacques Le Goff might be exemplary of the conclusion that collective memory was and remains an important issue in the power struggle between social groups. He wrote: "To make themselves the master of memory and forgetfulness is one of the great preoccupations of the classes, groups, and individuals who have dominated and continue to dominate historical societies."[11] Historical memory as a form of collective/cultural memory is simultaneously an object and a subject of historical politics and the struggle for power[12] and control of society: it is both an end in itself and a means to reach this end. In this sense, historical memory is the principal object of historical politics.

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10 These theses were first formulated in the late 1980s. For a brief overview, see Jan Assmann, "Communicative and Cultural Memory," in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin: de Gruyter 2008), 109–118.

11 Jacques Le Goff, *History and Memory*, trans. Stephen Rendall and Elizabeth Claman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 54.

12 The word "power" is used here in a broad sense: political, spiritual, social, cultural, etc., including what is called the power of discourse.

Historical politics

The term "historical politics" or "politics of history" used in an academic context dates from almost half a century ago. It was popularized by the American historian Howard Zinn in his book *The Politics of History* in 1970.[13] This collection of polemical essays debunked the claims of the academic establishment that there existed a neutral and objective history. The author did not claim to have invented the term, but he used it to articulate the problem of interaction between an academic discipline and society, for instance, the capacity of historians to respond to the demands and challenges of modernity and to be socially active. This is how the term "politics of history" appears to have been coined in a discourse that was more journalistic than academic.

In the 1980s, during the famous "historians' dispute" (*Historikerstreit*) in West Germany (1986–1989), the term "historical politics" emerged in a different context and with a different meaning. The dispute among professional historians began when Andreas Hillgruber raised the entangled issues of the suffering of German civilians during the final stage of World War II and the heroism of the Wehrmacht, which defended civilians from the Red Army. Hillgruber's comments quickly acquired nationwide notoriety, and politicians, journalists, and mass media joined the debate. The most controversial article was published in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* by Ernst Nolte, a well-known historian and researcher of the history of fascism. In this article, he protested against the premise of specific German guilt in the crimes of Nazism and, according to his detractors, relativized these crimes by calling attention to similar acts in other countries; genocide and sociocide, concentration camps and deportations, argued Nolte, existed well before 1933–45. Nolte's statement that the Nazi death camps were a kind of response to Stalin's Gulag only added to the controversy. He was joined by another influential historian, Michael Stürmer, who affirmed that the perception of the past that arose among Germans (or was imposed on them from outside) after World War II essentially robs them of normal collective memory and, moreover, hampers free historical research and discussion. The Germans, he asserted, deserve a past to be proud of, and they should be given such a past.

13 Howard Zinn, *The Politics of History*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1990).

Because Stürmer was an advisor to Chancellor Helmut Kohl, left and liberal intellectuals and public figures grouped around Jürgen Habermas and interpreted Stürmer's position as an official manifesto against the ruling neoconservatives and like-minded right-wingers. Stürmer's ideas corresponded to the ideological ambitions of the then-ruling political elite, which tried either to restore or reinvigorate German national identity as the basis of cultural/ethnic nationalism. Opponents qualified these actions as "historical politics,"[14] in other words, as an attempt to manipulate history (ideas of the past) to serve immediate interests of a political force.[15]

The term migrated from the vocabulary of journalism to the academic lexicon, losing its negative and ironic overtones. In 1999, Edgar Wolfrum published a foundational study entitled *Historical Politics in the Federative Republic of Germany: A Path Towards a West German Memory, 1948–1990*. This work not only marked the first use of the notion of historical politics in the title of a monograph but also marked the first attempt at articulating a scholarly definition of the concept. According to Wolfrum, "This is a type of activity and a sphere of politics where various actors use history for their specific political goals. It is addressed to society and carries out the tasks of legitimation, mobilization, politization, scandalization, defamation, etc.; the key issue is who actualizes the discussed experience of the past, with what methods, with what intentions and with what results."[16] The term quickly took hold in academic vocabulary, as exemplified by a whole cluster of works published in the first decade of the 2000s where it was present both in the titles

14 Stefan Troebst believes that the historian Christian Meier was the first to use the term "historical politics" in this discussion. See "Geschichtspolitik," *Docupedia*, https://docupedia.de/zg/Geschichtspolitik, accessed December 12, 2020. He also quotes political scientist Harald Schmid, who pointed out that this term was already in use in journalism in the 1930s, precisely in the context of manipulations of the past in the interest of the present. See Stefan Troebst, "Vom publizistischen Kampfbegriff zum Forschungskonzept: Zur Historisierung der Kategorie 'Geschichtspolitik,'" in *Geschichtspolitik und kollektives Gedächtnis: Erinnerungskulturen in Theorie und Praxis* (Göttingen: V & R unipress, 2009), 53–75.

15 For more detail, see *Forever in the Shadow of Hitler? Original Documents of the Historikerstreit, the Controversy Concerning the Singularity of the Holocaust*, trans. James Knowlton and Truett Cates (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1993). For a wider context of the problem and the development of historical politics in Germany since the *Historikerstreit*, see Stefan Berger, "German History Politics and the National Socialist Past," in *Convolutions of Historical Politics*, ed. Alexei Miller and Maria Lipman (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2012), 24–44.

16 Edgar Wolfrum, *Geschichtspolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Der Weg zur bundesrepublikanischen Erinnerung 1948–1990* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1999), 25.

and in the conceptual frameworks of historians, sociologists, cultural studies scholars, and political analysts.[17]

In the middle of the first decade of the 2000s, when the phenomenon described by the term "historical politics" intensified both in "old Europe" and in the newly enlarged European Union, which welcomed a dozen new members, it became topical in social and political newspeak.

The fact that it was resuscitated in Poland can hardly be surprising given that issues of history have traditionally enjoyed broad public interest in the country. Right-conservative politicians—specifically the Law and Justice Party and its allies—who came to power at the end of 2005, and along with like-minded representatives of public opinion, announced the necessity of implementing a new historical politics (*polityka historyczna*) in Poland in order to strengthen Polish national identity and the unity of the nation.[18] It essentially meant a total revision of the attitude toward the past and targeted action to restore a collective memory that referenced the romantic nationalism of the nineteenth century.[19] Initiators and promoters of the new historical politics declared that Poles should not restrict themselves to the revision of the tragedies and heroism of the twentieth century. Janusz Kurtyka, director of the Institute of National Memory (IPN), suggested pivoting to the experience and special historical role of Poland since the sixteenth century.[20]

The discussion that took place in Poland over the new historical politics was reminiscent of the German *Historikerstreit* both in its scale and in the intensity of its emotions. Their similarity was not, however, only formal. In

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17 Elke Fein, *Geschichtspolitik in Russland: Chancen und Schwierigkeiten einen demokratisierenden Aufarbeitung der sowjetischen Vergangenheit am Beispiel der Tätigkeit der Gesellschaft Memorial* (Hamburg: LIT Verlag Munster, 2001); Horst-Alfred Heinrich and Michael Kohlstruck, *Geschichtspolitik und sozialwissenschaftliche Theorie* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2008); Claudia Fröhlich and Horst-Alfred Heinrich, *Geschichtspolitik: Wer sind ihre Akteure, wer ihre Rezipienten* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2004) and *Geschichtspolitik in Zentraleuropa* (Vienna: Studien Verlag, 2006), 58; François, Kończal, Traba, and Troebst, *Geschichtspolitik in Europa*.

18 For more details, see Robert Traba, *Przeszłość w teraźniejszości: polskie spory o historię na początku XXI wieku* (Poznań: Poznanskie, 2009), and Lena Cichocka and Agnieszka Panecka, eds., *Polityka Historyczna: Historycy, Politycy, Prasa* (Warsaw: Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego, 2005).

19 See Robert Traba, "Polskiye spory ob istorii v XXI veke," in *Istoricheskaya politika v 21 veke*, ed. Alexei Miller and Maria Lipman (Moscow: NLO, 2012), 69–71. To understand the general historical context of the emergence of the "new historical politics" it is also good to consult Ewa Ochman's work dedicated to the "regionalization" of historical memory in modern Poland: *Post-Communist Poland: Contested Past and Future Identities* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

20 "Polska polityka historyczna," *Biuletyn Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej* 5, no. 64 (2006): 16–17.

both cases, it was a problem of formatting or reformatting an identity that triggered the debate. In both cases, there was an attempt to revise the past to further the interests of the present, in this case, the "consolidation" of the nation. Both in Germany and in Poland, the initiators of these attempts hoped to achieve a certain restorative effect on national identity with the help of an imaginary normalization of the past and the restoration of such fragments that, in their opinion, had positive potential for national collective memory. In both countries, the policy was initiated by right-conservative politicians and nationalists. In both cases, the initiators met with strong resistance in segments of society that are commonly referred to as liberal.

Curiously, in German public discourse, the term "historical politics" was negatively coded by the opponents of these policies and deployed with irony and sarcasm. Meanwhile, in Poland during the middle of the first decade of the 2000s, the promoters of historical politics saw it as a redeeming force that could be used for the recovery of national identity. They saw historical politics as a natural phenomenon that was similar to economic or social policy.[21] However, unlike Germany, the new historical politics of 2005 did not initially find any support among Polish professional historians.

These debates, among other things, definitely made the term "historical politics" (*polityka historyczna*) a part of academic vocabulary. In his recent study dedicated to the evolution of the term, Stefan Troebst discovered that similar notions exist in two other global scientific languages: English (*politics of history*) and French (*politique du passé*).[22] The term secured a foothold in both English and French academic dictionaries between the late 1990s and early 2000s, apparently as a response to social and political challenges. The phenomena described by the term "historical politics" emerged full-blown not only in the "new" Central and Eastern Europe but in the "old Europe" as well.

To sum up, in the 2000s, the term "historical politics" and the manifestations it describes took root both in sociopolitical and in academic research vocabularies. It should, however, be remembered that historical politics as exploitation of history for political ends is an ancient phenomenon. Any his-

21 Rafał Stobiecki, "Historians Facing Politics of History: The Case of Poland," in *Past in the Making: Historical Revisionism in Central Europe after 1989*, ed. Michal Kopeček (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2008), 180–81.

22 Stefan Troebst, "Geschichtspolitik: Politikfeld, Analyserahmen, Streitobjekt," in *Geschichtspolitik in Europa seit 1989*, 15–34. This essay is, as of now, the most informative and comprehensive study of the development of the term "historical politics" and its counterparts.

torian can list numerous examples of the use of the described, imagined, and perceived past for the needs of the current moment since the very beginnings of what we call "history" writing. Much of what we currently define as historical politics functioned quite well before the emergence of the term.

The difference between modern historical politics and its earlier prototypes lies in its scale and in the methods it uses. Historical politics is a phenomenon of modernity; its birth and development are inseparable from industrial society, the emergence of the nation-state, mass politics, standardized national languages, and mass education, including historical education. In this sense, historical politics has existed since the moment history became a means of forging mass loyalty, not to a sovereign, but to the largest sociocultural and political community of the modern era, the nation.

Industrial society not only boosts and fuels the emergence of nations but also generates the administrative, technical, and cultural premises for the establishment of homogeneous forms of "collective consciousness."[23] The infrastructure propitious for the shaping of some standard form of mass/collective consciousness (which might be labeled as national identity) results from the proliferation of literacy based on standardized and codified national languages, press, and mass media; from the standardization of education through the opening of schools and then universities to the broader public; and from the industrialization of the means of data storage and transfer. However, this infrastructure is no less propitious for activities that allow for active influence of this process, including historical politics.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the unequivocal use of history and collective memory for the entrenchment of dominant political discourses and for the shaping of a system of loyalties became an integral part of internal and external government policies, a means to establish and legitimize nations, and a tool of political mobilization.[24] The invention of traditions, ideological unification and mobilization, the achievement of a certain level of cultural homogeneity necessary to guarantee collective loyalty to the nation and to the state and the conduct of modern war would have been impossible without the manipulation of history and collective memory.

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23 Here I refer the reader to the works of Ernest Gellner and Karl Deutsch, who substantiated these points.

24 The most recent publications on this topic include a foundational study both in terms of volume and interpretation: Stefan Berger with Christoph Conrad, *The Past as History: National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Modern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

The emergence of the term "historical politics" in the 1990s and its public and academic legitimation coincided with a new level of development of the phenomenon expressed by the term. Technological improvements in the sphere of data transfer, storage, and the dissemination of information, a new level of scientific knowledge, and the total penetration of mass media into all spheres of human life and into every corner of the planet made possible an unparalleled manipulation of "collective consciousness." The development of mass communication rapidly increased the mobilization potential of historical politics. The technological and administrative capacities of governments and other actors engaged in historical politics reached a hitherto unprecedented level.

At the same time, the affirmation of political pluralism, the permeability of cultural boundaries, and the spread of democracy paradoxically increased the conflict potential of historical politics. Political freedoms, together with enhanced access to information management tools, enable any interest group to start articulating and disseminating their own versions of the past in order to organize information and put psychological and political pressure on their opponents. As the number of agents of historical politics exploded, its quality changed.

History and memory

Approaches to the nature of relations between history and memory in different texts can be reduced to three main points: (1) history and memory are contrasted with each other and even seen as incompatible; (2) history and memory are seen as one and the same; (3) history and memory are perceived as two interacting and complementary forms of understanding, interpretation, and representation of the past.

The first and the third approaches are typically and primarily related to research and analysis as they are more characteristic of the academic sphere. The equation of history and memory is more common for political, journalistic, and ideological discourses. However, the formula might also be broadly used in academia.

The most radical statement on the separation and contrast of history and memory belongs to Pierre Nora:

> Memory and history, far from being synonymous, appear now to be in fundamental opposition. Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived. History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer. Memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past. Memory, insofar as it is affective and magical, only accommodates those facts that suit it; it nourishes recollections that may be out of focus or telescopic, global or detached, particular or symbolic—responsive to each avenue of conveyance or phenomenal screen, to every censorship or projection. History, because it is an intellectual and secular production, calls for analysis and criticism.[25]

According to Nora, the divergence, the "civilized divorce" of history and memory, starts with the emergence of the "history of history," in other words, professional historiography. History that used to serve memory turns to criticism and analysis. History-memory is replaced by critical history.[26] At this stage, the historiography essentially disproves and dismisses the right of memory to represent the past adequately. It debunks the myths of memory and puts the past in line according to the rigorous "laws" of historicity, objectivity, and scientific analysis. History pushes memory out of collective representations of the past.

Despite a number of rhetorical exaggerations pointed out by many commentators, Nora clearly articulates the problems associated with separating professional history writing from memory and their interpenetration and interaction in the era of the "acceleration of history," when memory gradually started fading away. This distinction forms part of the analytical core of this book.

The topic was taken up by Patrick Hutton, who paid special attention to the intellectual history of relations between professional historiography and

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25 Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History," in *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, vol. 1, *Conflicts and Division* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 3.

26 Nora, "Between Memory and History," 3–4.

memory. Using the traces of memory to research the past, historians deal less with the past itself than with its images. Memory is not only or perhaps not mostly a part of history as it is a set of representative forms of the past studied by historians, according to Hutton.[27]

His fellow historian Allan Megill suggests dividing historiography into three types: affirmative, didactic, and analytical.[28] Affirmative historiography is especially prone to the equation of history and memory. According to Megill:

> Memory-oriented historiography is a special case of a more general category that we can think of as *affirmative* historiography—affirmative because its fundamental aim is to praise the particular tradition or group whose history and experiences it is recounting. . . . Memory-oriented, affirmative historiography is a version of the "ordinary" or "vulgar" understanding of history. . . . Affirmative historiography subordinates the past to the projects that human beings are engaged in now. It lacks a critical stance on the memories it collects and on the tradition it supports. Indeed, it not only lacks a critical stance on its favored memories and traditions, but actually tends toward a mythification of them.[29]

Affirmative historiography advances the call for the consolidation and strengthening of a society—a people, a nation, a state, a political or a religious group. As this function coincides with the similar tasks of collective memory, the marriage of history and memory in this case is usually presented as the most legitimate option.

Didactic historiography positions itself between affirmative and critical historiography; it might be added that the sense of its existence is reflected in an old formula coined by Cicero: *Historia magistra vitae est*. A certain inclination toward analytical history can be observed because in this case, the experience of the past might be at least formally subordinated to a critical

27 Patrick H. Hutton, *History as an Art of Memory* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1993), 17–22.

28 I refer to Megill, but he is unlikely to be the author of this classification. Any experienced historian could reason like this.

29 Allan Megill, *Historical Knowledge, Historical Error: A Contemporary Guide to Practice*, with contributions by Steven Shepard and Phillip Honerger (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 21, 22.

analysis necessary for learning lessons. At the same time, the role of preceptor played by didactical historiography contradicts its critical function and brings it closer to the affirmative history.

Finally, analytical history/historiography should be distinguished from memory and contrasted to it simply because memory cannot be its own critical test while analytical history is critical toward memory by definition.[30]

At the same time, Megill does not deny the value and importance of memory for history, first, because the feeling of time is impossible without memory and, second, because history works with facts that would have been unavailable without the work of memory.

These arguments by Megill are very useful if we wish to understand the role of historical politics. Historical politics can be described either as a deliberate, purposeful mixing of history and memory, as a dictate of affirmative historiography, or as an attempt to reconcile history with memory within the limits of didactic history. This framework allows us to be reasonably confident when identifying different variants of historical politics.

These strands of thought, approaches, models, and definitions do not pretend to be universal. However, they are necessary in order to protect this study and its perspective from essentialism, that is, a temptation to fully equate these notions with some eternal, immutable elements. The phenomena, events, and facts analyzed below will certainly transcend the borders of the definitions, schemas, and models proposed above. I will also speak not so much about facts and events themselves but rather about their perception by different subjects and objects of historical politics. In other words, we will be second-order observers (to recall the Nicklas Luhmann formula), interested not only in observing processes but also in observing the process of observation; we will pay attention not only to the texts but also to the contexts—intellectual, cultural, social, and political.

Basic definitions

All these approaches are mentioned in the context of the interrelationship between "historical memory" and "collective memory," "historical politics" and "politics of memory." Discussions of collective memory, in one way or

30 Megill, *Historical Knowledge*, 27–28.

another, inevitably point to the need to define the objects and subjects (bearers, agents) of identity. This in turn involves the necessity of clarifying the roles of institutions and interest groups, which moves the study to the arena of politics and policy, unless it is limited to the narrow and strictly specialized dimensions of art history, ethnography, or culture studies.

Let us draw on the terms provided above and formulate some general definitions both for further speculation and for the organization of a coherent narrative that describes historical politics in Ukraine and in the postcommunist space between the end of the 1980s and 2020.

"Historical memory" is a form of collective or cultural memory which claims the status of tradition (which, of course, is in itself invented and constructed). Historical memory is a mythologized form of a group's vision of the past, typically existing as a set of simulacra reflected in texts, symbols, visual images and other sites of memory. Under contemporary circumstances, particularly in the context of the development of "virtual reality" in different shapes and forms, it achieves the status of hyper-reality, which influences what is generally thought to be reality.

Historical memory is a relatively stable set of interrelated collective ideas about a group's past, purposefully designed by means of historical politics, and codified and standardized in social, cultural, and political discourses and stereotypes, myths, symbols, and mnemonic and commemorative practices.

On the one hand, historical memory is a result of cultural, social, and political engineering; on the other, it is also a tool used to shape cultural, social, political, and religious identities then synthetized into one during an era of nationalism. Historical memory becomes an important component of social and cultural resources, or, speaking in broader terms, symbolic capital (to use Pierre Bourdieu's metaphor).[31] The instrumentalization of historical memory by means of historical politics may result in the sacralization of some of its forms and manifestations that acquire certain attributes of a civic religion.

Historical politics aims to construct historical memory and other forms of collective perception and representations of the past, including professional historiography that advances the political interests of a certain group (social, religious, cultural etc.)

31 It is worth paying attention to Ilya Kalinin's thoughts on symbolic capital and rent in historical politics in the case of Russia: Ilya Kalinin, "Proshloye kak ogranichennyy resurs: istoricheskaya politika i ekonomika renty," March 11, 2013, http://polit.ru/article/2013/05/11/past.

Political, cultural, ethnic, and other social groups use historical politics in their struggle for power as well as for the control and redistribution of symbolic capital. Historical politics is an instrument of mobilization for various social groups for the sake of their homogeneity and loyalty, and is a tool of ideological and political control.

Historical politics may be used for the accumulation or appropriation of symbolic capital that can be conducive to the production of social, cultural, and even economic capital. This is what defines the strength, influence, and attractiveness of historical politics for various agents.

The most significant feature of historical politics is the *ideological and political use of both history (i.e., a coherent knowledge and set of ideas about the past) and memory, the pragmatic use of history and memory in internal policy, judicial and legislative practices, and in ideological, diplomatic, and military conflicts. Typically, historical politics is either rooted in existing cultural stereotypes or creates new ones.* Historical politics is specialized in the production and reproduction of simulacra; it creates a hyper-reality that not only replaces reality but can strongly influence it.[32] The "politics of memory" is, in this case, a narrower term, mostly embracing practices related to the shaping of collective/historical memory. It does not include interventions in the sphere of professional historical writing and didactical history.

The circle of agents of historical politics steadily grew over the second half of the twentieth century. The sphere that had previously been totally dominated by the state (in all societies, whether totalitarian, authoritarian, or democratic) is currently accessible to civil society institutions; it can be actively influenced by individuals, business structures, churches, local communities, non-state mass media, educational facilities such as universities, and even informal virtual communities (for instance, groups in social networks). The state continues to play a leading role, but its representatives are increasingly forced to attune to public opinion and the interests of non-state institutes and local communities.

I propose to distinguish several types or models of historical memory. It is worthwhile to begin with an important observation made by Michael Bernhard and Jan Kubik, who proposed their own taxonomy of "memory

32 The term coined by Jean Baudrillard is perfectly suited to characterize the social and cultural products of historical politics.

regimes" in postcommunist societies.[33] It concerns the instability and volatility of memory regimes caused by a large range of circumstances: a political situation, a change of actors at the helm, etc.[34] The models of historical memory and the corresponding historical politics I describe are different from memory regimes: they tend to be stable and rigid, and at least two of them are not elastic.

I suggest naming the first model *exclusivist*. First, it affirms and imposes a homogeneous version of historical memory. Second, it expels from this canonical version an array of myths, ideas, and representations of the past that hamper the shaping of its own "true" version. Third, it excludes "alien" elements of the past or stigmatizes them as extraneous and pernicious. Therefore, the agency or actor achieves cultural and political homogenization through exclusion. This model rejects pluralism.

Within the framework of the exclusivist model in Ukraine, two main narratives of memory[35] related to different forms of cultural and political identity confront each other: *national/nationalist* and *Soviet nostalgic*.[36] At times, an *imperial nostalgic* narrative also joins the battle, providing additional support both for the *Soviet nostalgic* narrative (of which it was, in practice, an ally) and the *national/nationalist* one (for example, nostalgia for the glamor of the Habsburg Empire).[37]

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33 A "memory regime" is a "set of cultural and institutional practices that are designed to publicly commemorate and/or remember a single event, a relatively clearly delineated and interrelated set of events, or a distinguishable past process." See Michael Bernhard and Jan Kubik, eds., *Twenty Years After Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 15–16.

34 Bernard and Kubik, *Twenty Years after Communism*, 16.

35 The "narrative of memory" might exist as a text or as visual image, or the aggregate of them, presupposing the existence of a story. For instance, a monument or a place of memory can include a text. The visual imagery can include a story, as exemplified by the bas-reliefs in the Memorial Complex of the Great Patriotic War in Kiev or by the Soviet monument to Taras Shevchenko in Kharkiv.

36 Any form of collective memory may contain elements of nostalgia. In this case, the Soviet narrative of memory and history inherited from Soviet times turned into the Soviet nostalgic narrative simply because it became a part of the past.

37 The conceptual core of the Ukrainian *national/nationalist* narrative is the idea of uniqueness, singularity, and independence of the community known as the "nation." The exclusivist model of this narrative holds that the nation is congruent with a homogeneous ethnic/cultural/linguistic community, an ethnos, or people. A distinctive feature of this narrative is its penchant for archaic and antiquarian cultural forms and representations of historical experience, which somewhat paradoxically brings its practices closer to the practices of the Soviet period, which readily reduced Ukrainian national identity to antiquarian and ethnographic forms. I distinguish "national" from "nationalist" for purely instrumental/technical reasons. "Nationalist" is a segment of a broader "national" narrative; however, it identifies itself with a certain movement and ideology that brands itself as "nationalist," and this semantic difference is important.

The exclusivist model, by definition, means conflict with those versions of the past that do not fit into its range of ideas and political manifestations. It purports to shape a homogeneous identity by marginalizing or eliminating those representations of the past that do not suit such a homogeneous identity, or by assimilating them. Yet the alternative variants of collective/historical memory are not completely discarded. In the aforementioned conflict, they might be used as representations of the Other, and this Other often plays an important role for defining one's own national "I." Representations of the communist era in Eastern Europe that result from the encroachment of an external Other are very important for the perception of the collective "I" as victim. In other words, the exclusivist model retains the Other but only within the framework of its own representations. It rejects the representations offered by this Other.

The second model is *inclusivist*. It contemplates the integration of different variants of collective/historical memory into one memorial and symbolic space and their unification into one common narrative, for instance unified by the idea of civic patriotism. Cultural and political homogenization is secured through inclusion of non-antagonistic narratives. It presupposes recognition of the formal cultural parity of these narratives. In Ukraine, this model is only used in an ad hoc manner when the changing political situation demands it; it is not the product of a well-considered strategy or articulated need coming from significant and influential social groups. This type of inclusion may tolerate different narratives within a common framework, but it also can contradict pluralism, particularly in its confrontation with the national/nationalist narrative.

For example, Bohdan Khmelnytsky, Mykhailo Hrushevsky, and Lesya Ukrainka are more a part of the "national" narrative, while Stepan Bandera, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) belong to the "nationalist" one.

The *Soviet nostalgic* narrative does not have a clearly articulated central idea because it has lost the basic principle of the Soviet model of history, the class approach. It may include elements related to the "leading" role of Russian culture and Russian language. This narrative affirms the supranational unity of historical experience. Because of political instrumentalization, it is reoriented toward the negation of the national/nationalist narrative, especially its radical manifestations.

The *imperial nostalgic* narrative exists in rudimentary forms and is typically related to regional practices of commemoration and the cultivation of regional peculiarities. In the southern regions (for instance, in Odessa), it is intimately linked to the myth of origin. In the western regions, it is related to the myth of the special cultural political role of the region (for instance, the "Ukrainian Piedmont"), and the Habsburgian imperial heritage is actualized as a sign of cultural closeness to European history.

The third model can be branded as *mixed (ambivalent)*: it is based on the coexistence rather than the fusion of different variants of collective memory, which are sometimes ideologically and politically incompatible but coexist either because of a lack of public interest or the absence of a purposeful policy of neutralization or neglect of their ideological content.

Of course, these typologies are just a tool to define and analyze the main dominating tendencies.[38] There are no pure types in reality. The narrative of memory proposed and imposed by an empire represents an inclusivist model; the same might be true for the Soviet official narrative. However, both would negate the national/nationalist narrative in its politicized form, which gives them some attributes of an exclusivist model. "Common European history" falls under the inclusivist model, but it excludes narratives conducive to ethnocentrism and xenophobia.

The national/nationalist memory narrative rejects the idea of inclusivity given that it is founded on the idea of a singular linguistically and culturally homogeneous ethnic group, that is, on the idea of ethnic/cultural nationalism. In Ukraine, the national/nationalist memory narrative emerged on the basis of the idea of a double antagonism: against the ethnic Other (oppressive ethnic groups) and the political Other (empires and the Soviet Union). This narrative may contain elements of inclusivity (for instance, the appropriation of elements of the Others' narratives).

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38 Recent works provide a number of notions of and references to the inclusive, exclusive, and ambivalent forms of identity, which represents various taxonomies of memory narratives, etc. Ukrainian researchers and columnists who have addressed this topic include Viacheslav Artyukh, Viktoriya Sereda, Volodymyr Kravchenko, Yaroslav Hrytsak, Vasyl Rasevych, Yuriy Shapoval, Andriy Portnov, Volodymyr Kulyk, Mykola Riabchuk, Liudmyla Nahorna, and Alla Kyrydon. Of the most characteristic examples, there is Volodymyr Kulyk, who, proceeding from an analysis of discursive practices in the sphere of politics of memory, distanced himself from Eastern Slavic/Soviet and nationalist narratives. Volodymyr Kravchenko, analyzing various forms of representation of the past through the prism of identities, also proposed distinguishing between identities related to collective memory, such as Soviet, Orthodox Slavic, Ukrainian nativist, and liberal Western, and placing them between the poles of inclusive and exclusive identities. Mykola Riabchuk observed the existence of two projects in the politics of memory: the Ukrainian (or nationalist) and the "Little Russian," both opposed to the Soviet one. See Volodymyr Kulyk, "Natsionalistychne proty radyanskoho: istorychna pam'yat v nezalezhniy Ukrayini," September 20, 2012, http://historians.in.ua/index.php/en/istoriya-i-pamyat-vazhki-pitannya/379-volodymyr-kulyk-natsionalistychne-proty-radianskoho-istorychna-pamiat-u-nezalezhnii-ukraini; Kravchenko, "Boy s tenyu: sovetskoye proshloye v istoricheskoy pamyati sovremennogo ukraniskogo obshchestva," *Ab imperio* no. 2 (2004): 329–67; and Mykola Ryabchuk, "Kultura pamyati i politika zabeniya," *Otechestvennye zapiski*, no. 1 (33) (2007), http://www.strana-oz.ru/2007/1/kultura-pamyati-i-politika-zabveniya.

The Soviet nostalgic narrative of memory and history usually stands alongside the imperial (imperial nostalgic) narrative and blends with it not only in Russia, where such a combination looks quite natural, but in Ukraine as well. Speaking of regional identities, the most obvious examples are Donbass and Crimea. However, the experience of historical politics in Ukraine during the last twenty years demonstrates the biting irony of history. The national/nationalist memory narrative can mix well with the imperial, as evidenced by the popular (though not bereft of masochist undertones) cult of Franz Joseph I and his era in Galicia, while the Soviet nostalgic narrative may merge with imperial dreams about the glorious and glamorous past.

The ability of carriers and promoters of the national/nationalist memory narrative to reproduce the cultural patterns and behavioral patterns characteristic of their Soviet nostalgic antagonist is even more impressive: suffice it to say that the methods, forms, rhetoric, and representations of the so-called "decommunization" of 2015–18 are amazingly similar to Bolshevist iconoclastic rage from a century earlier.

The mainstream of historical politics in Ukraine was determined predominantly by the interaction and conflict between two major narratives of memory: the *national/nationalist* and the *Soviet nostalgic*. Various regional and local narratives should not be neglected; however, they typically reproduce and reflect these two major competing narratives mentioned above. Of course, ethnic Ukrainians are not the only ones to have an established national narrative: Crimean Tatars, Jews, Poles and Russians as well as others also maintain their own national narratives (See Part III).

An important particularity of Ukraine is the regional dimension acquired by these two narratives. The *national/nationalist* narrative predominated in the western regions of Ukraine, especially in Galicia.[39] The *Soviet nostalgic* narrative took hold in the eastern regions and Crimea.[40] The former mostly corresponded to the exclusivist model and the latter to the inclusivist. A mixed model dominated the central part and, to a degree, the southeastern part of Ukraine, with subregional and temporary oscillations either in favor

39 The Lviv, Ternopil, and Ivano-Frankivsk regions, and parts of the Volhynian, Rivne, Zakarpattia, and Chernivtsi regions (*oblasts*). At the same time, Zakarpattia may also be regarded as a nest for two local ethnic narratives (Rusyns and Hungarians), while part of the Chernivtsi region may claim Romanian historical identity.

40 The Kharkiv, Donetsk, and Luhansk regions (*oblasts*).

of either the national/nationalist or the expansion of the Soviet nostalgic narrative.[41] Since 2014, there has been an intense displacement of the Soviet nostalgic and mixed narratives in favor of the national/nationalist one. This shift was followed by the simultaneous expansion of the territory dominated by the exclusivist model of the national/nationalist narrative and the marginalization or elimination of its rivals, especially the Soviet nostalgic narrative ("decommunization"). The inclusivist model functions rather at the level of political declarations or wishful thinking.

Of course, historical politics in Ukraine is not limited to interaction and confrontation between the national/nationalist and Soviet nostalgic narratives. The regional and local accounts mentioned above sometimes fit into the more general scheme and sometimes do not. It is also the placement of national narratives of memory that either run counter to the mainstream narratives or significantly challenge it: examples include Jewish, Polish, Rusyn, Crimean Tatar, and Romani narratives (the last seems to be under construction at the present moment). Holocaust memory conflicts with both national/nationalist and Soviet nostalgic narratives. However, until recently, it has also mostly functioned within the framework of an exclusivist model.

41 The regions (*oblasts*) of Kyiv, Zhytomyr, Chernihiv, Poltava, Sumy, Cherkasy, Kirovohrad, Vinnytsia, Khmelnytskyi, Mykolaiv, Kherson, Odessa, Dnipropetrovsk, and Zaporizhzhya.

Chapter 2

Contexts

This chapter describes and analyzes the all-European context—political, cultural, and social—related to the formation of historical politics in Ukraine. Understanding these contexts will help locate Ukraine on the European map of historical politics and discover both its similarities to some general tendencies and its national peculiarities. The phrase "all-European context" should not be misleading: it only became "common" when states' historical politics had similar dynamics and orientations (for instance, ideological) or when they were produced by the purposeful action of either national governments that agreed on common politics or transnational and supranational European entities. Of course, any community also rests on certain universally adopted basic values.

Since 1945, Europe has thrice found itself in a "post-" phase: postwar (when the memory of war and its legacy were the main topic of historical politics); postcommunism (the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s), when concerns about the postwar arrangement of Europe were amplified by the need to handle its communist past and legacy; and, finally, after the "reunification" of Europe in 2004–2007, when history and memory, viewed by promoters of historical politics as integration instruments, suddenly became counterproductive. Today, after the collapse of the Yalta-Potsdam system, the mass migration crisis, the rapidly mounting political crisis of the European Union, and the crumbling of monuments in the trans-Atlantic space, we might be standing at the threshold of a new "post-" phase.

On stereotypes

Among a great number of stereotypes that await a historian interested in the European past and present, indeed one of the most common and enduring,

more or less boils down to the following formula: the societies of "Western Europe" have successfully established national histories and national historical self-awareness. These are fully-fledged nations that keep the past where it should be: in textbooks, historical novels, works of art, etc. The past, when it is codified in national narratives, does not aggravate the present; old European nations are not sick with the past.

At the same time, societies and nations that lack self-assertion and a definition of national identity are strongly attached to the past. Their historical narratives are, for a variety of reasons, in a state of constant revision; their history and memory are subject to constant political and ideological manipulations and interventions, and are in active use by social groups struggling for power. Winston Churchill's observation that the Balkans "produce more history than they can consume" is readily extended to the whole region known as "Eastern Europe."[1]

This particular stereotype fits very well into the famous East–West dichotomy, one that continues to define the way of thinking of numerous intellectuals, politicians, and researchers, as well as the collective worldview of those in various cultural, political, professional, religious, and other communities.[2] Societies and countries east of the line drawn seventy years ago in

1 Naturally, there are many different versions of "Eastern Europe." After World War II, the term was assumed for all communist-controlled territory between the Iron Curtain and the western border of the Soviet Union. Of course, other entities continued to live in the minds and ideas of non-conformist intellectuals: Central Europe, "kidnapped" by the communists with the connivance of the "West" (Milan Kundera), the Balkans (or southeastern Europe), with their historical and cultural specificity, and the Baltic region (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), which was swallowed by the Soviet Union during World War II. Works dedicated to the history of the establishment and conceptualization of the spatial, cultural, and political ideas of "Eastern Europe" have already become classics of sorts, must-reads for any student interested in this region. Two basic texts in this area are Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994) and Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997). Since the breakup of the communist system, the notion of "Eastern Europe" became more vague; the so-called Central European Four (Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Slovakia) made a strong effort to shed this unpleasant label, even using political projects such as the Visegrád Group to achieve this goal. They replaced it with another label that was hardly a novelty, "Central Europe," which allowed them to leave the perceived borderland for good. Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia recreated the cozy "Baltic" space, and the southeastern Europe of Romania, Bulgaria, and Croatia obtained "real" European identity by becoming full-fledged members of the European Union, leaving the unglamorous Balkan label to their neighbors waiting in the EU's anteroom. As a result, in the first decade of the 2000s, the perceived "Eastern Europe" shifted to the territory of Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova.

2 For a detailed description of this pattern, see George Schöpflin, "The Politics of National Identities," in "National History and Identity, Approaches to the Writing of National History in the North-East Baltic Region Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," ed. M. Branch, *Studia Fennica Ethnologica* 6 (1999): 48–61.

the famous Fulton, Missouri speech by Churchill and seemingly erased by the "reunification" of Europe from the 1990s to the first decade of the 2000s are still regarded as suffering from this "history sickness" nearly thirty years after the Cold War's end.

This view might be an allusion to the categorization of nations and nationalisms as "political/civic," "ethnic/cultural," or even "non-historical." Former non-historical nations (or those that lacked statehood at a certain point of their histories) not only became "historical" in the Hegelian sense, having acquired their own statehood, but also in the Gogolian sense. They were ensnared by a multitude of problems and still burdened with the past, which continues to be important for self-assertion, whereas reputable nations, those that were traditionally historical, had fixed their past in time and, thus, are perceived as having left history to historians.

This comfortable scheme is acceptable as a means of explanation necessary for the initial approach to the topic of "history and politics." It fits quite well into recurring cultural and spatial stereotypes, serving both political discourse and everyday speech while often reducing grand topics to politically incorrect jokes about a "Polish plumber in London" or a "Moldavian *Gastarbeiter*" in Bukovyna.

The thesis about a specific obsession with the past and the excessive dependence of collective identity on interpretations of the past in the aforementioned historical region has a factual basis, corroborated by history of both the "long nineteenth" and "short twentieth" centuries. However, when the scale becomes larger and when we pass from historical and cultural-political geography to topography, this scheme begins to crumble. One discovers that even the "advanced" societies of Western Europe, if not obsessed with the past, do have a constant and politically motivated interest in it.[3] First, the cultural diversity of the region leads to varying levels of obsession with the past. For example, how does Spain and Portugal, the geographically most western European countries, interpret the past in the context of Spanish unity, the civil war of the 1930s, or the period of Franco in the case of the former, or the colonial past and Salazar's rule, in the case of the latter?[4]

3 Not to mention some US states, with their recent fight against "politically incorrect" monuments.

4 See, for instance, articles dedicated to the understanding of the legacy of authoritarian regimes in these countries in Stefan Troebst, ed., *Postdiktatorische Geschichtskulturen in Europa. Bestandsaufnahme und Forschungsperspektiven* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2010).

The famous historians' dispute in Germany previously mentioned and discussions about France's colonial past can serve as classic examples of the interaction between history and politics.[5]

Even a sketchy overview of the postwar history of this Western Europe, an entity that is seen as the antithesis of Eastern Europe, is sufficient to discover the constant interplay of history and politics and a never-ending instrumentalization of history to serve political interests. It is hardly possible to imagine a large-scale political, ideological, and military face-off of two systems—capitalism and communism (and the Cold War)—without constant evocations of history by politicians and statesmen and without the use of history in political discourse and practice both in communist Eastern Europe and in capitalist Western Europe.

In the same vein, it is hard to imagine postwar Europe without the constant evocation of the World War II experience, without reevaluation and reformatting of this experience depending on the geopolitical situation, something that Tony Judt once called the "long shadow of World War Two."[6] In 2006, Richard Ned Lebow wrote: "More than half a century has elapsed since the end of World War II, and almost every country has undergone some kind of wrenching public debate about its role(s) in that conflict and the atrocities for which its government or its nationals were responsible. In some countries controversy surfaced early on; in others it took decades."[7]

Initially, the content and timeliness of such debates were defined by the postwar political situation, by the positions and political strategies of the victors and the vanquished, by the geopolitical situation, and the atmosphere of the early Cold War. Some places (victorious nations) witnessed the renaissance and expansion of national narratives related to the heroic myth of the war (France, United Kingdom), while others (vanquished nations) were dominated by the victim narrative (Germany, Italy). In both cases, history was directly involved in the process of "resetting" national identity.[8] The reevalu-

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5 See, for instance, Jan Jansen, "Politics of Remembrance, Colonialism and the Algerian War of Independence in France," in *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance*, ed. Małgorzata Pakier and Bo Stråth (New York: Berghahn, 2010), 275–93.

6 Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005). Judt defined "postwar" as the whole history between 1945 and the collapse of communism.

7 Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner, and Claudio Fogu, eds., *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 21.

8 See, for comparison, an interesting review of the development of European history studies in Stefan

ation and articulation of renewed (or reinvented) myths, both national and pan-European, were equally important.[9] The last fifty years have witnessed the active promotion of a pan-European identity, and historical politics plays a central role in it.

If we address the events of the last thirty or forty years (the transformation of Holocaust memory into an all-European phenomenon; the *Historikerstreit* in Germany that, in fact, has never ended; discussions on the legacy of communism; debates about comparisons between Nazism and Stalinism; the emergence of pan-European structures trying to promote pan-European historical politics), a thesis can be formulated: neither in the remote past, nor in the recent past, nor in the present is there a substantial difference between the propensity of different nations to argue over the interpretation and representation of the past either in the form of memory or in the form of history. There is also no difference between the desire of various social groups to use the past for the needs of the present, or the logic and the dynamics of the use of history and memory to advance a political agenda.

The specific phraseology of these needs is not really relevant, whether a matter of forging a common "European identity" in the framework of a "united Europe," the "restoration of rights" of such-and-such community as a full-fledged "European" nation, the self-assertion of a nation that "has awakened" or "is being revived," or working out a certain collective responsibility for historical sins. There is always something in common: the past, told either in the form of a historical master narrative or as a dominant narrative of cultural memory, is a part of the present, and, thus, history forms an important part of the political and the cultural space. The differences lie, rather, in the attitude of the society: the intensity of its feelings for issues of the past, its sensitivity to the interpretations and representations of history, and its capacity to implement historical politics. An important position belongs to traditions, the level of development of civil society and dem-

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Berger, "The Power of National Pasts: Writing National History in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Europe," in *Writing the Nation: A Global Perspective*, ed. Stefan Berger (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 47–52 are dedicated to post–World War II history studies.

9 Jan Ifversen, "Myth in the Writing of European History," in *Nationalizing the Past: Historians as Nation Builders in Modern Europe*, eds. Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 452–79. It is worth paying attention to the separation of pan-European history into the "dark" prewar and war period (Europe as the epicenter of two World Wars, ethnic cleansing, genocide) and the "light" postwar (or post-1989) Europe of welfare, stability, the social state, and common values.

ocratic institutions, political and legal culture, etc. In other words, there are some long-standing conditions and contexts that form the framework within which society addresses the problems of historical memory and implements historical politics.

Another difference is the motivations behind a society's "preoccupation with the past." In Western Europe, the more noticeable tendency was to use the past in the interest of building a common European identity and vanquishing xenophobia, racism, and ethnic, cultural, and religious intolerance. The ethnic component in the handling of the past slowly shifted toward inquiring into one's own responsibility. In "Eastern Europe" the use of the past for the needs of the present had a different aim: the restoration of "historical justice," the revival and strengthening of national identity (which was "damaged" during the communist era), the return to the "European family" as self-sufficient cultural and political units, and the identification of the Other as responsible for the troubles and misfortunes of the past.

Finally, it is worth mentioning one additional difference: the eastward expansion of Western Europe and the creation of a "New Europe" in the 2000s brought with it an adjustment of political, social, and economic institutions and practices in postcommunist countries, which were required to match the general rules of the European Union (that had been synonymous with Western Europe), but there was some transfer from east to west as well. A preoccupation with the past as a cultural standard and an essential part of national identity was transferred to the "old Europe" and resulted in a collision of two cultures of memory as well profound shifts in the politics of history in the newly "united Europe."

However, painful debates about the past were not over, despite the expectations of some enthusiasts for a brighter European future. Instead, they regularly break out again and again both in the newly unified Europe[10] and its peripheries. It seems that the supply of history (or historical memory) exceeding demand is a transnational tendency as the recent "war against monuments" on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean proves.

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10 Special attention should be given to the ideas of an American historian of Eastern European origin, István Deák, which transcend the borders of a number of conventional ideas about collaborationism, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, resistance, and retribution. See István Deák, *Europe on Trial: The Story of Collaboration, Resistance, and Retribution during World War II* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2015).

Western Europe

It is not hard to notice that the integration processes in Europe: the blurring of borders inside the European Union, the creation of trans-European structures and a common currency, attempts to introduce an all-European constitution and legislation, went hand in hand with ever-intensifying attempts to form a single European identity. The realization of this task and its implementation took place against the backdrop of massive changes in the continent: the collapse of the communist system, the breakup of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the "velvet divorce" of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the reunification of Germany, war and ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, the expansion of the European Union, and the creation of the "New Europe" that formally abolished its division into "Western" and "Eastern" Europe. This reformatting of geopolitical and imaginary European space coincided with the aforementioned establishment and amplification of the ideology of a unified Europe as a space without inner borders, political or mental. A certain sense of shared history and shared collective/historical memory (in this case, these two notions were not only closely intertwined but often became identical) were expected to play an important role in the establishment of the new identity of a unified Europe. This concept: a shared past, became the linchpin of the historical politics of transnational European structures; it also received significant support from the national governments of the old Europe.

Scholars of a "common European history" distinguish the following major themes: first, attempts to create certain transnational or supranational all-European narratives and spaces of memory; second, the selection of subjects common to the majority of European nations;[11] and third, the formation of supranational institutions and structures that assume specific functions. It is up to these new institutions to create all-European models and strategies that represent shared values and political principles connected to the past and its representations in the present. Attempts to use legislative acts to regulate the interpretations of a number of issues of the past is another all-European tendency worth mentioning.

11 See, for instance, Aline Sierp, *History, Memory, and Trans-European Identity: Unifying Divisions* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

The following is an examination of how these strategies play out. Professional historians began to create narratives of an all-European or common European history as early as the nineteenth century. During this period, the idea of such a narrative as the sum of all national narratives and the interactions of national actors took root. The emergence (or reemergence) of the idea of a unified Europe after World War II fostered demand for historiographical projects that were now related to transnational all-European history based on the idea of integration; this tendency was in line with "affirmative history." Such projects usually have been initiated and sponsored by supranational European structures and, less commonly, by national (mostly German) organizations. All these actors effectively became the main agents of historical politics aimed at European integration. As Aleida Assmann noted, solid national and transnational memory is not formed automatically; it can only take root under the influence of public discourse or media representation. It requires political decisions, bureaucratic institutions, management networks, and adequate financial means.[12]

In 1952, the Council of Europe suggested that a group of historians from several countries discuss the creation of a common European history that promoted and validated the idea of European unity. Already at this stage, historians agreed that a project with such a guiding ideology would be unfeasible without the inclusion of such regions as the Iberian Peninsula or Eastern Europe.[13]

All subsequent initiatives aimed at the establishment of all-European narratives often encouraged by European transnational institutions faced a whole range of hurdles—technical, cultural, and political. The primary obstacle in all European countries was the existence of traditional master narratives that, by definition, contradicted any attempt to propose or impose a common European narrative. Moreover, attempts to implement supranational or common histories usually provoked some sort of defensive reaction: either a growing interest in national history or a revival of autonomist national narratives (Catalonia, Scotland, Flanders)[14] that intended to vin-

12 Aleida Assmann, "The Holocaust—A Global Memory? Extensions and Limits of a New Community," in *Memory in a Global Age: Discourses, Practices and Trajectories*, ed. Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad (Palgrave, Macmillan, 2010), 103.

13 Stefan Berger, with Christoph Conrad, *The Past as History: National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Modern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 344.

14 Berger with Conrad, *The Past as History*, 341–42.

dicate a version of "Europeanness" held by one of the nations that lacked statehood.

Other obstacles include the difficulty of reaching a common understanding of what Europe really is as a phenomenon, although the last decade was visibly marked by a strategy of defining Europe as a peaceful and stable continent;[15] the complications accompanying the process of identifying common unifying topics; an ambiguous stance on overcoming the Eurocentric approach to the European past (in light of post-colonial criticism of Eurocentrism and the "civilizing" role of Europe); and, finally, the difficulty defining "all-European" values capable of supporting the affirmative and didactic components of such a history.[16]

Didactic (in the strict sense) history can also serve as an example of all the aforementioned complications. In the 1950s, bilateral Franco-German, German-Polish, and German-Israeli commissions began to operate. Their activities lasted several decades (with some interruptions) and did not bear much fruit. Some common positions held by German and French representatives on the causes of World War I were already set forth in the mid-1930s. After World War II, the Franco-German Historians Agreement of 1951 launched an almost sixty-year-long project, and final reconciliation only took place in the shape of a single textbook, published in 2006.[17] Recommendations to the German-Israeli commission were published in 1985, but a new commission was created in 2010.[18] Coordinated recommendations to the Polish-German commission emerged in 1972, but their real implementation was unfeasible until the 2000s. In the early 1990s, an attempt was made to create a European history textbook, but it never materialized.[19]

The activities of the International Institute of Textbooks created in 1951 in Braunschweig, Germany (today the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research) initially aimed at eliminating potential

15 Konrad H. Jarausch and Thomas Lindenberger, "Contours of a Critical History of Contemporary Europe: A Transnational Agenda," in *Conflicted Memories: Europeanizing Contemporary Histories*, ed. Konrad H. Jarausch and Thomas Lindenberger (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 7.

16 Jarausch and Lindenberger, *Conflicted Memories*, 7–8.

17 See Mona Siegel and Kirsten Harjes, "Disarming Hatred: History Education, National Memories, and Franco-German Reconciliation from World War I to the Cold War," *History of Education Quarterly* 52, no. 3 (August 2012): 370–402.

18 Karina V. Korostelina, *History Education in the Formation of Social Identity: Toward a Culture of Peace* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 7.

19 Jarausch and Lindenberger, "Contours of a Critical History," 6.

conflicts between the national histories told in school curricula and textbooks on history; this initiative used the slogan "reconciliation and mutual understanding." Since 1989, the institute has had much work to do in Eastern Europe because "newly formed states, particularly in South Eastern Europe, replaced old prejudices with new ones that were based upon ethnic and cultural stereotypes and characterized by nationalistic interpretations of history."[20] Since the 2000s, the institute has supported projects related to European identity; this is the name its most recent project, launched in 2016, carries. Its goal is to search history and geography textbooks for discursive references that would allow for "building a new flexible and modern European identity."[21]

Between 1992–93, the Council of Europe oversaw the establishment of the European Association of History Educators (EUROCLIO), which initially brought together associations of history teachers in eleven Western European and three Eastern European countries.[22] The main focus of this non-governmental organization, which was financially and politically supported by transnational European structures, was on coping with the extremes of national narratives in "Eastern European history" education. The predominance of Western Europeans among its founders initially was intended to ensure the flow of "correct" practices and values toward regions where the reemergence of classic national narratives risked provoking xenophobia and ethnic and cultural intolerance. While this aim was never clearly stated, it is revealed by the proceedings of the association.

Naturally, the association did not steer clear of the "integration" projects aspiring "to develop a sense of European identity, based on common values, history and cultural diversity."[23] In 2007, EUROCLIO supported the idea of a European history textbook, but the project did not succeed. The name of

20 Eckhardt Fuchs and Steffen Sammler, *Textbooks between Tradition and Innovation: A Journey through the History of the Georg Eckert Institute* (Braunschweig, Germany: Georg Eckert Institute, 2016), 10, accessed December 7, 2020, http://www.gei.de/fileadmin/gei.de/pdf/institut/Textbooks_between_innovation_and_tradition.pdf.

21 Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (website), accessed December 4, 2020, http://www.gei.de/en/departments/europe-narratives-images-spaces/europe-and-the-national-factor/europaeische-identitaet.html.

22 Website of the organization: http://euroclio.eu/.

23 This was the definition of one of the aims of the Multi-faceted Memory project dedicated to the memory of Nazism and Stalinism. See: Euroclio, Multi-faceted Memory, accessed December 7, 2020, http://euroclio.eu/projects/multi-faceted-memory/.

another project, "Teaching 'Europe' to Enhance EU Cohesion," which was dedicated to the history of European integration in the history curricula of EU member states, speaks for itself.[24]

It was precisely after the 2004–2007 enlargement of the European Union that the Europe for Citizens Program, financed by the European Commission, was augmented to include a new component, "Active Remembrance,"[25] the aim of which was defined as follows: "fostering action, debate and reflection related to European citizenship and democracy, shared values, common history and culture . . . bringing Europe closer to its citizens by promoting Europe's values and achievements, while preserving the memory of its past."[26] The program financed the projects of civil society organizations; between 2007 and 2013, it sponsored 322 projects, granted a total of 13,949,985 euros (or 14,203,000 euros with additional financing), of which 178 took place in the countries of Western Europe including Italy, Spain, and Greece. These mainly focused on the crimes of Nazism, the Holocaust, and the memory of World War II. The other 144 projects took place in "Eastern Europe," including the Balkans and the Baltic states, with most topics dedicated to the crimes of totalitarian regimes, both National Socialist and Communist.[27] Approximately 1.7 million European citizens and 500 organizations were involved in remembrance projects at the peak of the program in 2011–13.[28]

In April 2014, the program was extended until 2020, with two components instead of four, one of which, European Remembrance, was focused on the "Europe as a peace project." The program with a total budget of 187.7

24 EUROCLIO, "Teaching 'Europe' to Enhance EU Cohesion," (2012), accessed December 7, 2020, http://euroclio.eu/projects/teaching-europe-enhance-eu-cohesion/.

25 Full name: Active European Remembrance, which aims to preserve the sites and archives associated with the deportations as well as the commemoration of victims of Nazism and Stalinism.

26 Europe for Citizens Program, accessed December 7, 2020, https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/europe-for-citizens_en.

27 Calculated based on reports under the generic title "Selected projects" for the years of 2007–13, accessed December 9, 2020, https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/stats_action_4.pdf; https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/sucproj_p4.pdf; https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/action_4_list_selected_projects.pdf; https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/citizen_action4_selection_2010.pdf; https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/12082011_accepted_publication.pdf; https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/20120905_list_result.pdf; https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/rem-selected-2013.pdf.

28 "Ex post evaluation of the Europe for Citizens Program, 2007–2013," Coffey International and Deloitte, 2015, 41, accessed December 8, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/final_efcp_final_report_2015_10_15.pdf.

million euro aimed to "support initiatives which reflect on the causes of the totalitarian regimes that blighted Europe's modern history" and projects that "look at its other defining moments and reference points and consider different historical perspectives. Remembering the lessons of the past is a pre-requisite for building a brighter future."[29] In 2014–19, the program supported 225 projects with a total funding of 16.9 million euro.[30] Again, as authors of the interim evaluation report mentioned, among beneficiaries four Central and Eastern European countries "were disproportionately represented relative to their population."[31]

An ambitious project called the House of European History illustrates an attempt to create a pan-European "space of memory." The idea of establishing this museum was first expressed by Hans-Gert Pöttering, the president of the European Parliament between 2007 and 2009. According to him, the House of European History should become "a locus for history and for the future where the concept of the European idea can continue to grow."[32] The complicated history of the museum's concept includes all the obstacles and controversies that arose every time an attempt was made to form an all-European historical narrative. The project seemed very costly, requiring 56 million euros from the very beginning. An international team of experts decided to clear these ideological and methodological hurdles by using the principle "unity through diversity." The primary mission of the museum is to "enhance understanding of European history in all its complexity, to encourage the exchange of ideas and to question assumptions."[33]

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29 "The 'Europe for Citizens' funding programme for the period 2014–20 is officially adopted!" (2014), accessed November 20, 2020, https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/node/345_fr.

30 Calculated with data from the following sites: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/europe-for-citizens/selection-results/selection-results-european-remembrance-2014_en; https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/efc_european_remembrance_list_of_projects_selection_results_2015_en.pdf; https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/publicationremem2016.pdf; https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/selected_applicants_remem_2017.pdf; https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/european_remembrance_selection_2018.pdf; https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/publication_selected_0.pdf, all accessed December 7, 2020.

31 "Midterm evaluation of the Europe for Citizens Programme, 2014–2020," Executive Summary, 2017, Deloitte, Coffey, European Commission, 2017, p. 1, accessed December 7, 2020, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/efcp_exec_summary_en.pdf.

32 Taja Vovk van Gaal and Christine Dupont, "The House of European History," paper presented at the conference EuNaMus, European National Museums: Identity Politics, the Uses of the Past and the European Citizen, Brussels, January 25, 2012, 44

33 House of European History, Mission and Vision, accessed December 10, 2020, https://historia-europa.ep.eu/en/mission-vision.

The main topics of the permanent exhibits are European history in the twentieth century and the history of European integration. The museum opened in Brussels in May 2017.

Probably the best-known example of a unifying strategy in historical politics is a canonical version of the collective memory of the Holocaust. It exemplifies all the main practices related to the transnational narrative of memory: first, the establishment of a transnational narrative of memory/history; second, the selection of a topic capable of sewing together different national narratives; third, the establishment of transnational institutions to implement the common narrative; and fourth, the regulation of interpretations of the past with the help of memorial laws and legal practices. The canonized historical narrative of the Holocaust looks like a classic example of the combination of affirmative and didactic history and its related practices, including ones at the international level, and exemplifies transnational historical politics.[34]

The process of transforming the Holocaust into a global icon or a universal transnational form of collective/historical memory started in the 1960s and took almost forty years to accomplish.[35] At the state level, Germany, Israel, and the US were initially the main promoters of the Holocaust as a morally and politically important form of collective memory.[36] In the 1990s, the war in the Balkans coupled with ethnic cleansing in the region and the quest for a symbol that would become the backbone of European identity triggered the transformation of the collective memory of the Holocaust and its corollary, a didactic historical narrative, into a sort of canonical version.

It is safe to say that there exists an all-European historical politics in the sphere of Holocaust memory, which aim at the establishment of a supranational community of memory. Since 2005, January 27, the day of liberation for the inmates of the death camp in Auschwitz, is marked in the calendar of memorable dates for the European Union as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Additionally, national-level memorial complexes ded-

34 This is exemplified by the central slogan of this narrative: "Never again!"

35 For a discussion on this topic, see Jeffrey C. Alexander, *Remembering the Holocaust: A Debate* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

36 For more detail, see Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, "Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory," *European Journal of Social Theory* 5, no. 1 (2002): 87–106.

icated to the Holocaust exist in seventeen European countries including Ukraine; eleven of these complexes are specialized museums.[37]

The Holocaust was accepted by the majority of European countries as a form of all-European collective/historical memory. International Holocaust Remembrance Day is officially recognized in eighteen countries of the European Union and six countries have their own date dedicated to the Holocaust.[38] However, when it comes to the perception of the Holocaust at the level of society, one cannot help noticing a number of problems. Even in countries like Sweden and the United Kingdom, indeed countries that pioneered the representation of the Holocaust as a pan-European phenomenon, the level of awareness among certain groups required to teach the Holocaust (history teachers, for instance) is still unsatisfactory.[39] Moreover, attempts to introduce (if not to dictate) a common standard of Holocaust remembrance are rebuffed at the local level, with claims that these experiences are different in various countries, and, therefore, its memory and representation should also be diversified.[40]

The implementation of such an enormous project would certainly have been impossible without international cooperation at the highest level. In 1998–99, just before the final stage of preparations for EU enlargement, Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson, having secured the support of UK Prime Minister Tony Blair and US President Bill Clinton, initiated the Task Force on International Cooperation for Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research. Renamed the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) in 2013, it has become an organization that brings together thirty-one world countries (as permanent members) and ten observer countries; thirty-three of these are European.[41] Only governmental bodies represent their countries in the alliance, ensuring that the project maintains its high political and bureaucratic status. The organization states that its goals are formative and educational (studying and

37 Israel Science and Technology Directory (website), "Jewish Studies: Global Directory of Holocaust Museums," accessed December 8, 2020, http://www.science.co.il/Holocaust-Museums.asp.

38 European Commission, *Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council*, "The Memory of the Crimes Committed by Totalitarian Regimes in Europe, Brussels," December 22, 2010, 4, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0783&from=FR.

39 See data from surveys among teachers in Michael Gray, *Contemporary Debates on Holocaust Education* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 4–5.

40 Assmann, "The Holocaust?" 100–102.

41 The official website of the organization is https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/about-us.

teaching the history of the Holocaust) and political (fighting against xenophobia, racism, and antisemitism). For instance, in 2010–14, the alliance financed ninety-three projects in forty-two countries, including twenty-nine in Europe. Its main targets are representatives of government structures and non-governmental organizations, teachers, and education authorities: these groups amounted to 56.7 percent of the audience.[42] In 2017, the Alliance redrafted its funding strategy for 2019–23 focusing on two major areas: first, safeguarding the record of the Holocaust and genocide of Roma, and second, countering distortion—an agenda that became an urgent issue especially in the former Eastern Europe.[43]

In the countries of Eastern Europe, which were seen as the target audience of the project, the pan-European version of the collective/historical memory of the Holocaust often comes into conflict with national narratives. First, these countries have their own narratives of victimhood that join with each other to form a sort of transnational narrative about Eastern Europe as a victim of communism. Second, they have a number of skeletons in the closet as evidenced by stories of participation in the Holocaust by both ordinary people and prominent figures and organizations that play important roles in the national pantheon (notably in the cases of Poland, Ukraine, and Moldova). However, as noted by Judt, Holocaust recognition became a "contemporary European entry ticket"[44] as there was no way to reject the canonical version of Holocaust memory.

Another complication arises from the use of the Holocaust as a universalized narrative or an all-European form of historical memory: its presence in the text or at least the *context* of legislation that regulates issues related to the interpretation of the past. Fourteen countries in Europe have laws establishing direct criminal responsibility for something called "Holocaust denial." In fact, these laws actually deal with the trivialization of the Holocaust or the perceived justification of Nazi crimes rather than with the Holocaust

42 Calculated in 2016 based on: https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/funding-grant-program/funding-overview. This page no longer exists. In 2015, the funding program was paused. Information about the funding program can be found here: International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, Funding, accessed December 8, 2020, https://2015.holocaustremembrance.com/grant-programme/funded-projects-by-year.

43 IHRA Grant Strategy 2019–2023, accessed December 8, 2020, https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/inline-files/IHRA%20Grant%20Guidelines_call_2021%20%281%29.pdf.

44 Judt, *Postwar*, 803.

itself. Holocaust denial is conventionally interpreted as an open manifestation of antisemitism and an attempt to justify crimes against humanity.[45]

In 2007, the German representative to the European Parliament attempted to introduce a pan-European norm criminalizing Holocaust denial.[46] On April 19, 2007, the European Parliament adopted a draft law that criminalized intentional actions that encourage violence or hatred against a person's race, color, religion, background, or national or ethnic origin; this legislation called for violators to be sentenced to three years in prison. The same punishment was to be applied for the denial or gross trivialization of the crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. While the draft law addressed a wider set of issues, it was primarily embedded within the context of the prohibition of Holocaust denial.[47] The functionality of this law in the all-European context was minimized by the qualification that the law was to be implemented in every European country according to the norms of national legislation.

The adoption of the project was then a politically symbolic act in the same vein as the Framework Decision of the Council of the European Union on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia through criminal law.[48] Like the example above, the decision does not mention the Holocaust (it refers to the articles of international laws on genocide and crimes against humanity), but because the Holocaust is conventionally accepted as the "paradigmatic case of genocide" (Aleida Assmann), it is easy to figure out that the law primarily addresses this topic.

These attempts to codify and regulate issues of interpretation of major historical events (the Holocaust is joined by the mass deportations and deaths of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in 1915, recognized in a number of countries as the genocide of Armenians; by the slaughter of Tutsi people in Rwanda in 1994; by the mass killing of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica

45 For the fullest review and analysis of Holocaust denial practices, see John C. Zimmerman, *Holocaust Denial: Demographics, Testimonies, and Ideologies* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000).

46 Robert M. Hayden, "'Genocide Denial' Laws as Secular Heresy: A Critical Analysis with Reference to Bosnia," *Slavic Review* 67, no. 2 (Summer 2008), 384.

47 Dan Bilefsky, "EU Adopts Measure Outlawing Holocaust Denial," *New York Times*, April 19, 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/19/world/europe/19iht-eu.4.5359640.html?_r=2.

48 Council Framework Decision, 2008/913/JHA On Combating Certain Forms and Expressions of Racism and Xenophobia by Means of Criminal Law, November 28, 2008, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32008F0913.

in 1995; etc.) met with resistance from the liberal public concerned about the potential restrictions to free speech and the potential for an overly broad interpretation of the word "denial." Historians interpreted such attempts as a tendency of the state to interfere with their professional activities.

In 2005, the Freedom for History (Liberté pour l'Histoire) movement emerged in France; it initially included protesters against the state regulation of historical interpretation (at that moment the movement was formed, a law that criminalized the denial of the 1915 genocide of Armenians was being debated). Quite remarkably, this movement was internationalized after the adoption of the Framework Decision of the Council of the European Union. In 2008, the initiators of the movement published the Blois Appeal,[49] declaring the following:

> History must not be a slave to contemporary politics nor can it be written on the command of competing memories. In a free state, no political authority has the right to define historical truth and to restrain the freedom of the historian with the threat of penal sanctions....
> We ask government authorities to recognize that, while they are responsible for the maintenance of the collective memory, they must not establish, by law and for the past, an official truth whose legal application can carry serious consequences for the profession of history and for intellectual liberty in general. In a democracy, liberty for history is liberty for all.[50]

The position of professional historians might have somehow influenced both the very Framework Decision of 2008 and its implementation. According to Pierre Nora, the members of Freedom for History were the ones who convinced Jean-Pierre Jouyet, the French Minister of State responsible for European Affairs, to modify the text of the Framework Decision to limit its scope.[51] A 2014 report notes that a number of EU countries "have

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49 The declaration was signed by over 1,300 historians from forty-nine countries. Liste des signataires de l'Appel de Blois au 9 janvier 2013, accessed December 8, 2020, https://www.lph-asso.fr/index899e.html?option=com_content&view=article&id=61&Itemid=188&lang=en.

50 L'appel de Blois, accessed December 8, 2020, https://www.lph-asso.fr/index6a7b.html?option=com_content&view=article&id=47&Itemid=14&lang=fr.

51 Pierre Nora, "President's Report, Liberté pour l'Histoire's Annual Meeting, June 2, 2012," http://www.lph-asso.fr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=181%3Aune-lourde-annee-pour-les-lois-memorielles&catid=53%3Aactualites&Itemid=170&lang=en.

not transposed fully and/or correctly all the provisions of the Framework Decision, namely in relation to the offences of denying, condoning and grossly trivializing certain crimes."[52]

As we see, European institutions have made considerable efforts and spent considerable funds to establish a common historical memory and common new European identity that is projected into the future. The zeal for integration that defines this historical politics is founded on the idea that insight into the past (especially its tragedies) would be adopted by precisely those societies and states that were seen as necessary components of the "new Europe." These great expectations were fulfilled, but only partially and, apparently, not according to the optimism and intentions of those who professed the return of the part of Europe "kidnapped" by communism. Eastern Europe entered an all-European historical politics with its own stories, burdens and, most importantly, its own agenda.

"Eastern Europe"

By putting quotes around the region discussed in the following section, I am trying to reach a compromise between the reluctance of its political and cultural elites to be known as "Eastern Europe" (or, even worse, "post-communist Europe") and the need to define the perceived borders of territories and societies that, in terms of political geography, became in 2004–2007 (and in 2013) an inseparable part of the "new Europe," inseparable from and, according to politicians, full-fledged members enjoying equal rights. As we analyze historical politics and the trends of professional historiography, we have to use an already existing framework. Moreover, there are several shared features, practices, and tendencies that are typical for the region and that allow for the elucidation of an "Eastern European" variant of historical politics and professional historiography.

Eastern European historical politics, similar to its regional western counterpart, can be characterized by a succession of "post-" states. The authors of a collection of articles dedicated to the cultural memory of Eastern Europe

52 European Commission, *Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on Combating Certain Forms and Expressions of Racism and Xenophobia by Means of Criminal Law*, accessed December 8, 2020, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52014DC0027.

in the 1990s and early 2000s propose qualifying the situation in the region as "post-socialist," "post-catastrophic," and "post-colonial."[53] This formula seems to be acceptable, with two caveats: these characteristics are, to a large extent, static and synonymous, and the second and third are somewhat arbitrary. They reflect the ways and modalities of perception used by cultural and political elites to represent the "past in the present" rather than the real state of the societies in question.

In the 2000s, the "post-communist" positionality of the region was complemented by a new "post": post-accession to the EU. "Returning" to the European family, the prodigal children of Europe found themselves in need of self-reassertion among their elder brothers and sisters who were simultaneously silent about seniority and demonstratively sympathetic about the claims of the newcomers for equal status. This resulted in a counterintuitive situation: on the one hand, a resort to history and memory, which was necessary for self-assertion, triggered the restoration of cultural (ethnic) nationalism with all its negative side effects. On the other hand, the EU variant of "Europeanization" presupposed the neutralization of cultural and political forms of this mode of national self-assertion. In the 1990s, the main impetus for the newcomers was to "go back to their roots" in order to restore a national identity that had been corrupted by communism. In the 2000s, a protective function emerged: the countries of the region felt a need to protect their cultural uniqueness in the wake of the voluntary loss of some of their sovereignty to the European Union and, at the same time, sought to prove the equal value of their historical experience, especially the experience of suffering and loss, that was unknown or neglected in Western Europe.

This shift engendered new impulses to fight against the communist past and its legacies. While in the 1990s the struggle against the heritage of communism in "Eastern Europe" existed in the general context of a movement/return to Europe, in the 2000s, nations of the region started to use it to substantiate their special historical role, explain their complicated development, and unite society in the struggle against "Russian neo-imperialism."

53 Uilleam Blacker, Alexander Etkind, and Julie Fedor, eds., *Memory and Theory in Eastern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 2.

In the internal ideological marketplace of Eastern European countries, the struggle against the communist legacy usually has something to do with urgent political tasks. The range of these tasks may be reduced to four general goals. First, and most obvious is discrediting political opponents; for instance, Lech Wałęsa in 2000 and 2016 and Milan Kundera in 2008 were accused of cooperating with the secret police of the Polish and Czechoslovak communist regimes, respectively. Second, historical politics was used to draw attention away from complex social and economic problems, especially those that real or perceived left-wingers can use to advance their agendas. Naturally, anticommunist vigor enhanced the nation-building agenda, as the fight against the bleak communist past was part of the struggle for a bright national future. Third, there was an effort to use the legacy of the communist past as an explanation for present-day hardships. Finally, and probably most importantly, various actors instrumentalized these legacies or perceptions/representations of them for the legitimation of claims for the special status of those who experienced harm or suffering (the idea of a double genocide is the most obvious example).

The typical position of "post-communism" in regard to historical politics provides a near total negation/condemnation of communism as a totalitarian past; furthermore, the story of indigenous local totalitarianisms are not welcome. However, the intensity of the struggle against everything red varies. In some cases, like Bulgaria, the condemnation and crushing of the communist legacy was slowed by the presence of former officials of the local communist party in the government. Other places, like the Czech Republic, witnessed a radical break with the recent past that did not prevent the political restoration of the left . Elsewhere (Slovakia, Poland), the initial activities of decommunizers were restrained by the recurrent participation of members of the former communist *nomenklatura*—who changed their stripes—in the government. This leaves aside the former Soviet space (with the exception of the Baltic countries), where the Communist *nomenklatura* managed to stay in power; this matter will be examined below.

Stefan Troebst specifies four types of cultures of memory in Eastern Europe when it comes to the assessment of the Communist past: (1) countries with an anticommunist consensus (Baltic countries); (2) countries where such consensus is absent (Poland, Hungary) and where the communist past remains an object of intense debate; (3) countries where society is either indif-

ferent or ambivalent toward this topic (Romania, Bulgaria); and (4) countries where communism did not lose its legitimacy (Belarus, Moldova).[54]

The process of overcoming or reevaluating the communist past was never linear or uni-directional. In the middle of the 1990s, the radical negation of the communist past calmed down due to the excesses of the market economy and shortages of capitalist joy that had been built on the ruins of the socialist welfare state, which made some people yearn for stability. Euro-barometer data collected in five Eastern European countries—Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Czech Republic, and Slovakia—on the eve of accession to the European Union and immediately afterward in 2004–2005 revealed that significant segments of the population were "nostalgic for Communism."[55]

In 2009, 57 percent of East German respondents spoke favorably of the GDR, and 49 percent affirmed that it had more good features than negatives. *Ostalgie* gained supporters not only from among older people who had lived in the GDR but from young people as well.[56] In the same vein, 44 percent of Romanian respondents stated in 2010 that communism was a good idea however poorly implemented,[57] and in Poland, people of different ages felt nostalgia for true communism.[58] Of course, this nostalgia was most acutely felt by older people and social groups suffering from the excesses of the free market. As for young people, the influence of fashion and the propensity for supporting radical ideologies cannot be excluded. However, the very mention of *Ostalgie* in Eastern Europe demonstrates that the decommunization

54 Stefan Troebst, "Halecki Revisited: Europe's Conflicting Cultures of Remembrance," in *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance*, ed. Małgorzata Pakier and Bo Stråth (New York: Berghahn, 2010), 58.

55 Sergiu Gherghina, "Attitudes towards the Communist Past in Five Central and Eastern European Countries," in *Politics of Memory in Post-Communist Europe,* History of Communism in Europe 1, ed. Corina Dobos, Marius Stan, and Mihail Neamtu (Bucharest: Zeta Books, 2010), 165–79, http://ssrn.com/abstract=1932683.

56 Julia Bonstein, "Homesick for a Dictatorship: Majority of Eastern Germans Feel Life Better under Communism," *Spiegel Online International*, July 3, 2009, http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/homesick-for-a-dictatorship-majority-of-eastern-germans-feel-life-better-under-communism-a-634122.html.

57 Elena Dragomir, "In Romania Opinion Polls Shows Nostalgia for Communism," *Balkanalysis.com*, 2011, accessed December 8, 2020, http://www.balkanalysis.com/romania/2011/12/27/in-romania-opinion-polls-show-nostalgia-for-communism/.

58 Christine Esche, Rosa Katharina Mossiah, and Sandra Topalska, "Lost and Found: Communist Nostalgia and Communist Chic Among Poland's Old and Young Generations," *Humanity in Action Polska*, September 2010, http://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledgebase/62-lost-and-found-communism-nostalgia-and-communist-chic-among-poland-s-old-and-young-generations.

in this region should not be portrayed as a linear and uninterrupted process that is unanimously supported.

The situation of postcommunism may also fit the model of self-representation based on the idea of post-trauma. Cultural and political elites of all the postcommunist countries manifest an unfailing ability to repeat the same well-worn phrases about the suffering of their nations during the communist period and compete with their neighbors for the title of the biggest victim. Yet it is important to note that the concept of "exclusive victimhood" is not only related to "decommunization." It is a part of the cultural tradition of the region dating back to the initial establishment of the national histories of "non-historical nations." The image of a "nation-victim-fighter" is popular throughout the region, and, in some cases, it is more than a century and a half old, as evidenced by the archetype of Poland as Messiah, an image that stemmed from nineteenth-century romantic nationalism.

Postcommunism inevitably meant anticommunism. The (re)emergence of national narratives and national mythologies in the 1990s was predicated on the negation of communism as an alien system imposed from the outside, but it was also a strategy of compensation, a return to "historical justice," and these histories marked the victory over an order that restrained or repressed national self-expression. We can only agree with the statement of Sorin Antohi that the traditional way of writing national histories in the region presupposes "nationalism, positivism, cultural pessimism, self-victimization and self-stigmatization."[59] The experience of the twentieth century, which was traumatic by definition, only strengthened the victimhood narrative in collective/historical memory and its practical use in the states of Eastern Europe.[60]

It would, however, be incorrect to present the victim narrative as strictly a pre- and postcommunist formulation. Indeed, during the communist

59 Sorin Antohi, "Narratives Unbound: A Brief Introduction to Post-Communist Historical Studies," in *Narratives Unbound: Historical Studies in Post-Communist Eastern Europe*, eds. Sorin Antohi, Balázs Trencsényi, and Péter Apor (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2007), xii.

60 This is corroborated by reviews of memory politics written by various authors of different countries and different times. See Antohi, Trencsényi, and Apor, *Narratives Unbound*, xii; Małgorzata Pakier and Bo M., Stråth, eds., *A European Memory?*; Alexei Miller and Maria Lipman, eds., *Convolutions of Historical Politics* (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2012); Vladimir Tismaneanu and Bogdan C. Iacob, eds., *Remembrance, History, and Justice: Coming to Terms with Traumatic Pasts in Democratic Societies* (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2015); Małgorzata Pakier and Joanna Wawrzyniak, eds., *Memory and Change in Europe: Eastern Perspectives* (New York: Berghahn, 2015).

era, the narrative of victimhood and heroism was also widely used by the regime; its proponents were the local communist organizers of anti-Nazi resistance. After the collapse of communism, the nation itself became the victim of Nazism and the chief warrior against Nazism while the communist narrative of victimhood and heroism collapsed together with its guardians. This was a part of the collective response to the encounter with the official Western European culture of memory. While Western Europe selected the Holocaust—considered the deadliest crime of Nazism—as its unifying symbol and advanced the idea of the shared responsibility of Europeans for this crime, "Eastern Europe" chose another consolidating symbol of its collective/historical memory: Stalinism and the Soviet postwar occupation stitched together under the label of "Communism." Eastern Europe, now reunited with Western Europe, offered its "warped mourning" as an argument in favor of its equality.[61]

The reevaluation of the communist legacy and the "decommunization" of Eastern European nations was initially perceived as a path to their "revival" or "normalization": this approach was professed by both local political elites aspiring to reunification with Europe as well as European institutions. The resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) adopted on June 27, 1996, is effectively a program of "decommunization," including, among other things, recommendations on lustrations, property restitution, rehabilitation for the victims of repression, the opening of archives of organs of repression, and the "transformation of mentalities (a transformation of hearts and minds) whose main goal should be to eliminate the fear of responsibility, and to eliminate as well the disrespect for diversity, extreme nationalism, intolerance, racism and xenophobia, which are part of the heritage of the old regimes."[62]

The farewell to communism before and during accession to the European Union implied that European institutions would recognize the magnitude of losses and the delayed development of Eastern Europe because of communism and use this to explain the region's "backwardness" as compared with

61 This is the title of Etkind's book. Alexander Etkind, *Warped Mourning: Stories of the Undead in the Land of the Unburied* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013).

62 Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 1096 (1996) on measures to dismantle the heritage of former communist totalitarian systems, accessed May 20, 2018, https://archive.is/Z0Uy#selection-675.0-679.79.

the standards of Western Europe. Regardless of the intention of various segments of Eastern European societies to defend the uniqueness of the region caused by its trauma, a conflict arose between the already well-established variant of a pan-European collective/historical memory based on the recognition of the Holocaust as a central defining event and a "new" Eastern European model that had to be recognized. It is probably for good reason that this recognition coincided with the enlargement of the European Union. In 2005, European institutions began to express concerns about "Communist totalitarianism" for the first time since the middle of the 1990s, and this concern surely did not stem from academic interest.

From the very beginning, a clear-cut ideological framework was in place. Göran Lindblad, a Swedish human rights advocate and dentist who had openly stated his anticommunist beliefs and his negative assessment of the "diabolic Soviet Empire," was appointed the rapporteur of the Council of Europe on "crimes of communist totalitarian regimes." His report became the foundation of the famous PACE Resolution on the "Need for international condemnation of crimes of totalitarian communist regimes" (January 25, 2006).[63]

The resolution included a number of formulas important both for the former Eastern Europe and for the countries of the new Eastern Europe, that is, members of the Council of Europe that lay east of the new EU border. Communist parties and other political organizations that emerged in their place were called upon to reevaluate the activities of their predecessors in light of the resolution's use of the term "crime." The resolution also pointed out that unlike the crimes of Nazism, the activities of totalitarian communist regimes had never been subject to investigation by international judicial organs.[64] In practice, the resolution became an argument in the political struggle (including the sphere of historical politics) against the successors of the communist parties it mentioned and, at the same time, somehow paved the way for the creation of international organizations aimed at investigating the crimes of communism. Finally, the mention of communist crimes alongside Nazi crimes was

63 Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1481 (2006) "Need for International Condemnation of Crimes of Totalitarian Regimes," accessed May 29, 2016, https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML-2HTML-en.asp?fileid=17403&lang=en.

64 Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Resolution 1481 (2006),) "Need for International Condemnation of Crimes of Totalitarian Communist Regimes," 2006, accessed December 8, 2020, http://archive.is/wOdl#selection-679.0-689.79.

an important part of both the text and the context of the document: here we find the start of the movement to introduce the idea of comparing two types of totalitarianism, Nazi and Soviet, at the level of all-European historical politics which ultimately led to the equation of Nazism with communism.[65]

Apparently, from the perspective of Brussels, this idea had an integrative function. On the one hand, the traumatic past of "Eastern Europe" in the age of communism was recognized as an important part of all-European cultural memory (its inclusive model); on the other hand, the traditional European model of representation of the past under the slogan "Never Again" became part of the cultural memory of the old Eastern Europe. This integration of the communist past into European cultural memory was also a concession to the new EU members. In 2007, during a debate in the European Parliament on the introduction of an all-European law criminalizing the denial or trivialization of genocide and crimes against humanity, representatives of the Baltic countries demanded the same measures for the denial of the crimes of the communist regime, but their efforts were rebuffed.[66] The ensuing equation of communism with Nazism appeared to be compensation for this refusal.

In January 2008, several members of the European Parliament created an informal group under an attention-grabbing name: "United Europe–United History." The group included representatives of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Hungary. The declaration of the group and the resolution signed by fifty members of the European Parliament stated that the reunification of Europe created the need for the reunification of history and memory. Until 2004, said the declaration, Europe was constructed without any knowledge of the traumatic history of "Eastern Europe" under communist rule, and this problem required redress in a unified Europe.[67]

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65 Hannah Arendt was the one who equated communism and Nazism as totalitarian ideologies and practices.

66 Arfon Rees, "Managing the History of the Past in the Former Communist States," in *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance*, ed. Małgorzata Pakier and Bo Stråth (New York: Berghahn, 2010), 231.

67 Wojciech Roszkowski, Gyorgy Schöpflin, Tunne Kelam, Girts Valdis Kristovskis, and Vytautas Landsbergis, "'United Europe–United History': A Mission to Consolidate a Common Memory," in *Crimes Committed by Totalitarian Regimes: Reports and proceedings of the 8 April European Public Hearing on "Crimes Committed by Totalitarian Regimes*," ed. Peter Jambrek (Ljubljana: Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, 2008), 303–4.

A voluminous report, *Crimes Committed by Totalitarian Regimes*, prepared by over forty researchers, public figures, lawyers, and politicians effectively became the foundation for the promotion of the idea of equating Nazism and communism.[68] It was a product of a public hearing on crimes committed by totalitarian regimes organized by the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in April 2008.

Later that year, the Prague Declaration on European Conscience and Communism was published in June 2008. This document formulated the problem clearly and eloquently: Europe does not know much about the crimes of communism and does not comprehend their scope. Different interpretations and assessments of communism continue to divide the continent into "East" and "West," and the crimes of communism still await historical, moral, political, and legal assessment. "Europe will not be united," said the declaration, "unless it is able to reunite its history, recognize Communism and Nazism as a common legacy and bring about an honest and thorough debate on all the totalitarian crimes of the past century." The authors of the declaration pointed out the need to recognize the "pan-European responsibility for crimes committed by Communism." August 23, the day the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was signed, was proposed as a commemoration date symbolizing the parallelism between Nazism and Communism; this day was meant to become "a day of remembrance of the victims of both Nazi and Communist totalitarian regimes," similar to January 27, which had already become the pan-European day to remember the victims of the Holocaust.[69] In September 2008, the European Parliament published a declaration urging support for this idea. However, the name of the day was changed to the Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism.[70] In this way, one of the two totalitarianisms received an official address in Moscow, immediately arousing the categorical but unsuccessful protests of the country (the Russian dimensions of Eastern European historical politics of memory is a separate subject).[71] The declaration received support

68 Jambrek, ed., *Crimes Committed by Totalitarian Regimes*.

69 Prague Declaration on European Conscience and Communism, June 3, 2008, http://www.webcitation.org/640tCtAyz.

70 Declaration of the European Parliament on the proclamation of August 23 as European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism, September 23, 2008, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2008-0439+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN.

71 European parliamentarians were mindful of the new Russian invasion of Georgia in August 2008.

from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) at the Vilnius summit on July 3, 2009.

On March 18, 2009, the European Parliament began public hearings on "European Conscience and Crimes of Totalitarian Communism: 20 Years After," which were initiated to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the velvet revolutions. The name of the first session of the hearings was "Our Common History: A Common European Platform." Out of nineteen declared participants, fourteen were researchers, politicians, and public figures from the countries of Eastern Europe.[72] Two weeks later, on April 2, 2009, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on conscience and totalitarianism, calling for the establishment of a Platform of European Memory and Conscience "to provide support for networking and cooperation among national research institutes specializing in the subject of totalitarian history, and for the creation of a pan-European documentation center/memorial for the victims of all totalitarian regimes."[73] After a number of events (conferences, reports, new declarations)[74] and coordination procedures in Brussels, the Platform of European Memory and Conscience was established on October 14, 2011, at the summit of the prime ministers of the Visegrád Group in Prague.[75] As of November 2018, the Platform included sixty-two members (both government agencies and public organizations) from Europe and North America.

It is hard to evaluate the Platform's influence on "European memory and conscience." Its activities have so far been limited to standard awareness-building actions (publication of brochures, conferences, exhibitions), the impact of which is difficult to calculate. In 2012, representatives of the Platform declared their intention to create an international judicial body that would investigate the crimes of the communist regime, but no prog-

72 Public Hearing in the European Parliament: "European Conscience and Crimes of Totalitarian Communism: 20 Years After," March 18, 2009, http://www.ustrcr.cz/data/pdf/tiskove_zpravy/hearing-brussels-2009.pdf..

73 European Parliament resolution of April 2, 2009 on European conscience and totalitarianism, 2009, accessed May 20, 2016, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2009-0213+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN.

74 The timeline of creation of the platform can be found in its first annual report: Platform of European Memory and Conscience: Activity report, October 2011–October 2012, 1–3, accessed May 20, 2016, http://www.memoryandconscience.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/activity_report_2011-2012_PEMC.pdf.

75 Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland.

ress has been reported since then. The latest available report from 2020 on the activities of the Platform speaks about its representatives traveling to see each other, meetings with government officials, and several small conferences and local art activities; it also mentions a number of public statements[76]—the standard toolkit of a public organization of this kind.

However, the symbolic meaning of the Platform is important. The political actions and declarations that led to its creation legitimated the idea of equating communism with Nazism, which was important for political and some cultural elites from the majority of Eastern European countries. It made the position of the new EU members stronger at the international level, representing them as "double victims" and providing them with a good argument to explain their problems with "Europeanization"; it also allowed them to defend their special role and mission in the European Union and in relations with the "New Eastern Europe."

Evaluating the interaction of the Western European and Eastern European models of historical memory, Alexei Miller drew the following conclusion:

> Today it can be affirmed that the Eastern European model, focused as it was on the sufferings of one's nation and on the belief of an existential threat, prevailed against the Western European model, which was mainly focused on the topic of one's own guilt and responsibility. This is partly caused by the fact that the elites of leading Western European countries, for different reasons, chose not to start a hardline confrontation with new EU members on the issue of the politics of memory. Another explanation is a change of attitude: over the last ten years, even the "old Europe" began to have doubts about itself and question the success of the European Union as an integration project.[77]

This somewhat categorical argument can be agreed with if we consider the interaction of two cultures of memory to be a rivalry, which is exactly

76 Platform of European Memory and Conscience, *Democracy matters: 2020 Activity Report*, accessed July 10, 2021, https://www.memoryandconscience.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/activity_report_2020_final.pdf.

77 Alexei I. Miller, "Politika pamyati v postkommunisticheskoi Yevrope i yeyo vozdeystviye na yevropeyskuyu kulturu pamyati," *Politiya* 80, no. 1 (2016): 117.

how the elites of Eastern Europe view things. However, from another perspective, it actually looks more like a consensus: Western Europe formally and symbolically recognizes the importance of assessing the legacy of communism in Eastern European culture, going as far as to equate Nazism and Stalinism, which is an overtly ideological project; however, this also sets the boundaries for such a recognition. The equation of Nazism to communism was still not accepted.

On two occasions, in 2005 and in 2013, the Eastern European members of the European Parliament tried to achieve an all-European ban on the public use of communist symbols using the Nazi bans as their model, but both attempts failed.[78] In the same way, attempts to introduce more piecemeal rules and measures related to the legacy of communism that were equal to the legislation criminalizing the denial and trivialization of the crimes of Nazism failed.

Besides declarations at the highest political level, the European Union was not in a hurry to provide any genuine support for projects based on this equation. The previously mentioned Europe for Citizens Program was supplemented with a special component that follows the Stalinism = Nazism formula. However, when analyzing the financial reports of this component, one discovers that projects funded through this program were few in number (one or two yearly) and always took place in Eastern Europe.

It is also worth mentioning that the "Molotov-Ribbentrop Cocktail," just like any other ideological product, had toxic impurities that were harmful for national identity and provoked additional side effects. The recognition of a Western European perception of Nazi crimes and the inclusion of it in the narrative about the suffering of one's own nation in Eastern Europe inevitably brought up some episodes of the past that challenged representations of these societies' broad claims to victimhood. First, it was a reminder of the Holocaust and one's complicity in it. Indeed, the implementation of the established Western European standard of Holocaust remembrance in Eastern Europe, one of the tacit conditions of European reunification, was and remains quite complicated for a number of reasons. It contradicts

78 "Reconciliation of European Histories (2013) The Ban of Totalitarian Symbols is Not Considered Necessary by the President of the EP," accessed December 12, 2020 https://eureconciliation.wordpress.com/2014/03/05/the-ban-of-totalitarian-symbols-is-not-considered-necessary-by-the-president-of-the-ep/.

the canonical historical myth of the majority of Eastern European nations that they were the main victim (of empires, totalitarian regimes, the hostile Other). The emergence of the "paradigmatic genocide" (Aleida Assmann) provoked a "competition of victims," especially in the context of twentieth-century history.[79] The idea of the victim of a "double genocide" (Nazi and communist) somehow contradicted the need to legitimize the sacred symbol of memory already recognized in the whole of Europe.

Second, there was a need to recognize a certain degree of complicity in the Holocaust, which somewhat tarnished the image of the main victim, the eternal fighter for freedom and democracy. Poland can probably be considered the most graphic example of this problem: in the early 2000s, the shocking discovery of the role that Poles played in the extermination of their Jewish neighbors in Jedwabne became the object of a sharp national debate that somewhat eroded the bases of the national myth of a "victim-fighter" nation,[80] a myth that already was more than a century old by then.

The direct participation of Poles in the extermination of Jews had to be recognized against the backdrop of discussions about Poles who became victims of the ethnic cleansing in Volhynia in 1943. In 2018, the Polish Sejm passed amendments to the law on the Institute of National Memory intended to introduce criminal liability for publicly mentioning the complicity of Poland or Polish citizens in Nazi crimes. The bill also introduced punishments for the denial of the crimes of the Ukrainian nationalists. The amendment provoked intense international debates: opponents of the law believed that the law represented a version of a Holocaust revisionism and imposed limits on the freedom of speech. Polish president Andrzej Duda signed the bill but sent it to the Constitutional Tribunal, which ruled that the law was unconstitutional.[81] (For more details, see Chapter 8).

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79 A distinctive feature of historical politics in "Eastern Europe" and the post-Soviet space is the search for "one's own genocide" that would not be inferior to the Holocaust either in scale or in impact. See: Evgeny Finkel, "In Search of Lost Genocide: Historical Policy and International Politics in Post-1989 Eastern Europe," *Global Society* 24, no. 1 (2010): 51–70.

80 See Paweł Machcewicz, *Spory o historię 2000–2011* (Kraków: Znak, 2012). Machcewicz participated in the discussions, led the Polish Institute of National Memory in 2000–2005, and until 2017 was the director of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk. For an analysis of the Jedwabne discussion, see Maciej Janowski, "Jedwabne, July 10, 1941: Debating the History of a Single Day," in *The Convolutions of Historical Politics*, ed. Alexei Miller and Maria Lipman (Budapest–New York: CEU Press), 59–89.

81 See a detailed account and analysis: Marta Bucholz and Maciej Komornik, "The Polish 'Holocaust Law' Revisited: The Devastating Effects of Prejudice-Mongering," *Cultures of History Forum*, 2019, accessed

In Hungary, the erection of a new memorial representing the country as a victim of the Nazis provoked a similar controversy.[82] The decision to establish a memorial at Liberty Square was made at a closed session of the government, and the monument itself was constructed in one night. Almost immediately, an alternative installation commemorating the Hungarian Jews who were murdered in the Holocaust was established opposite to the official monument.[83]

Another inconvenient topic is collaboration with the Nazis. In many Eastern European countries, those who fought against the communist regime and the victims of this regime happened to be either contributors to institutions or actual soldiers in the military units of the Third Reich,[84] were members of organizations that had much in common with Italian Fascists and German Nazis,[85] or else were notorious antisemites and/or accomplices in the Holocaust.

The challenges associated with the recognition and promotion of the all-European model of Holocaust remembrance are fairly typical for the whole of Eastern Europe, where, according to Nikolay Koposov, the extermination of Jews reached such a grandiose scale precisely because the local population supported it.[86]

Third, the equation of Nazism and communism created an asymmetry in historical politics that was impossible not to notice: former communist regimes already had succeeded in condemning the crimes of Nazism. This led to a surprising situation where, in order to condemn communism, one essentially had to reproduce the anti-Nazi rhetoric of the old "totalitarian Communist regime," which, however, had glossed over the Holocaust.

Finally, the equation of Nazism and Communism produced certain inconveniences for the representatives of Western Europe because the Soviet

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April 20, 2020, https://www.cultures-of-history.uni-jena.de/politics/poland/the-polish-holocaust-law-revisited-the-devastating-effects-of-prejudice-mongering/.

82 Hungary was an ally of Nazi Germany in World War II.

83 Željka, "Erect a Memorial—Erase the Past," Eustory, Historycampus, accessed December 8, 2020, https://www.historycampus.org/2015/erect-a-memorial-erase-the-past-the-memorial-to-the-victims-of-the-german-occupation-in-budapest-and-the-controversy-around-it/.

84 This included national Waffen-SS legions (for instance, Estonian or Latvian) and those in service in local police units or in the occupation administration.

85 For instance, the Iron Guard in Romania, Hlinka Guard in Slovakia, or Ustashe in Croatia.

86 Nikolay Koposov, *Pamyat strogogo rezhima: Istoriya i politika v Rossii* (Moscow: Novoye literaturnoye obozreniye, 2001), 70.

Union had been a participant in the anti-Hitler coalition. In this way, it was not only a question of moral duty but also the need to recognize their responsibility for the postwar reorganization that placed Eastern Europe under communist rule.

However, these inconveniences faded in September 2019 when the European Parliament adopted the resolution "On the Importance of European Remembrance for the Future of Europe" dedicated to the anniversary of the beginning of World War II. The resolution equated the Nazi and communist regimes as those "that carried out mass murders, genocide and deportations and caused a loss of life and freedom in the 20th century on a scale unseen in human history." Moreover, the resolution stressed "that the Second World War, the most devastating war in Europe's history, was started as an immediate result of the notorious Nazi–Soviet Treaty on Non-Aggression of 23 August 1939, also known as the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, and its secret protocols, whereby two totalitarian regimes that shared the goal of world conquest divided Europe into two zones of influence."[87] The resolution unsurprisingly provoked an immediate reaction in Russia: in December 2019, president Putin delivered a lengthy lecture to the leaders of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States accusing top European politicians of an improper revision of the history of World War II. Following this line, Putin blamed the leaders of the interwar West (France, Britain) and Poland for unleashing the war in 1934–38.[88] A new stage of the memory war between Russia and the West began.

The Communism = Nazism idea furthered by representatives of "kidnapped Europe" at the highest political level provoked protests from some Jewish organizations. In both the nationalist narratives of Eastern Europe and in Nazism, anticommunism was traditionally found side-by-side with antisemitism, sometimes fusing with it.[89] The formula of "Jewish Commu-

87 Joint motion for a resolution, September 18, 2019, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/RC-9-2019-0097_EN.html.

88 "Neformal`nyj sammit SNG," accessed December 7, 2020, http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/62376.

89 A graphic novel for children on the defense of Grodno recently published by the Polish Institute of National Memory features a character named Tottenstein with anthropological features very reminiscent of the patterns of antisemitic propaganda. The character helps the occupying Red Army. See Tomasz Robaczewski and Hubert Ronek, *Wojenna odyseja Antka Srebrnego – 1 – Obrona Grodna 1939 r.* (Warsaw: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2015).

nism" was quite popular, and not just in the propaganda of the Third Reich. For instance, representatives of the Simon Wiesenthal Center suggested that the establishment of the new memorial date (August 23) might mean dropping International Holocaust Memorial Day.[90]

Historical politics in Lithuania raised particular controversy: according to Jewish organizations there, the government-sponsored idea of double genocide (under communism) ignored the Holocaust altogether. For instance, the Museum of Victims of Genocide in Vilnius initially did not contain any mention of the Holocaust, which was, according to the most radical critics, a manifestation of deeply rooted antisemitism.[91] The NGO that specialized in the history of the Holocaust in Lithuania essentially found itself in opposition to official historical politics.[92] In 2018, the Museum of Victims of Genocide was officially renamed the Museum of Occupations and Freedom Fights. Recent discussions on *Our People: Journey with an Enemy*, a book devoted to the Holocaust in Lithuania, demonstrated that accepting the involvement of "our people" in the extermination of Jews during World War II still seems to be an extremely sensitive topic.[93] As in Poland at the beginning of the 2000s, public opinion was not ready to accept unpleasant findings about the role of ordinary Lithuanians in the Holocaust. At the same time, the government of Lithuania did not neglect commemorations of the Holocaust at the official level, and scholars did not avoid discussions about these uncomfortable issues.

An assessment of the contributions of "Eastern Europe" to all-European historical politics allows us to distinguish four vectors brought together by a common legacy and interest: "nationalizing" history, overcoming the legacy of communism, condemning communism, and equating communism with Nazism, with a strong emphasis on the former (COMMUNISM = Nazism). How was this topic explored at the national level?

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90 Rabbi Abraham Cooper, "Dropping International Holocaust Memorial Day Would Be World's Final Insult to Survivors; Would Spur New Wave of Anti-Semitism," Simon Wiesenthal Center, January 26, 2010, https://www.wiesenthal.com/about/news/dropping-international.html.

91 Jonathan Freedland, "I See Why 'Double Genocide' is a Term Lithuanians Want. But it Appalls Me," *The Guardian*, September 14, 2010, http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/sep/14/double-genocide-lithuania-holocaust-communism.

92 See the website Defending History, http://holocaustinthebaltics.com/.

93 Ruta Vanagaite and Efraim Zuroff, *Mūsiškiai; Kelionė Su Priešu* (Vilnius: Alma Littera, 2015).

In historical politics, "nationalization" went hand in hand with "decommunization," and dealing with memory and history of the communist past was part of a much broader agenda that included:

1. The rehabilitation of victims of political repression, followed by financial compensation. Almost every "Eastern European" country in the late 1980s and early 1990s adopted special laws on rehabilitation and purged the legislative code of articles related to criminal prosecution for political views. In some cases (the Baltic countries, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania), those who were rehabilitated received material compensation and social benefits.
2. Restitution and material compensation both to private individuals and to institutions (for instance, churches and religious communities). In most Eastern European countries that joined the EU after 2004, the topic of restitution and material compensation also concerned victims of the Holocaust. In some places (the Baltic countries), special agencies were created for the implementation of the policy. In other countries (Poland), the policy of compensation and social benefits also concerned those who could qualify as independence fighters.
3. Judicial trials of representatives of the communist regime. The shortest tribunal took place on December 25, 1989, when Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu were condemned and immediately shot. The most high-profile cases were the trial of Erich Honecker and five other high officials of the GDR (1992–93), which never ended because of Honecker's fatal disease and his emigration to Chile (the other officials on trial received various terms in prison); and the trial of Wojciech Jaruzelski (2008, 2011), which also came to naught because of the poor health of the accused. Before 2000, 23,000 cases related to various human right infringements took place in the GDR, of which 16,000 ended in various sentences.[94] Trials of employees of the organs of repression and Soviet authorities took place in Latvia,[95]

94 Gary Bruce, "East Germany," in *Transitional Justice in Post-Communist Romania: The Politics of Memory*, ed. Lavinia Stan (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 27.

95 The most notorious case was the conviction of Vassili Kononov, a Soviet partisan accused of murdering civilians suspected of collaborating with the Nazis in 1944. The decision of the Latvian court to sentence Kononov to six years in prison was overturned by the European Court of Human Rights.

Lithuania,[96] and Estonia,[97] usually on charges of crimes against humanity or genocide (murders and deportations).

4. Bans on the public use of communist (and Nazi) symbols. In Hungary, the public use of Nazi and communist symbols (hammer and sickle, red star) has been banned since the 1990s. In Lithuania, the public use of Nazi and Soviet symbols (including the symbols of the Lithuanian SSR) have been prohibited since 1993 (the law was amended in 2008). Such acts are punishable with a fine in both countries. In Poland, the distribution of products with such symbols is punishable with the confiscation of said products and imprisonment for up to two years. In Romania, those who distribute fascist, racist, or xenophobic symbols risk prison terms of up to three years. In Estonia, an attempt to introduce such limitations (in 2006) was rejected as hindering the freedom of speech and expression. The Penal Code of Slovakia (2005) proscribes public statements in support of movements that promote violence and menace human rights; the punishment for such utterances is a prison term of between six months and three years.[98] The Constitutional Courts in Hungary (2000, 2013) and Poland (2011) have struck down these laws.

5. Bans on the public denial of the crimes of the communist (and Nazi) regime or on their public justification. Such laws existed in Poland (in 1997–2011), in the Czech Republic (since 1993) and Lithuania (2010).

6. "Memorial" laws. Besides political regulation of public interpretations and representations of the past at the all-European level and in addition to prohibition laws, there are laws and other acts that shape the official space of memory. In Bulgaria, for instance, September 9, the day the communists came to power, is commemorated as the day to remember the victims of communism, and March 10 as the day commemorat-

96 No fewer than 90 court decisions in Lithuania have been pronounced against those who were accused of the repression of Lithuanian citizens. In the most controversial case, the General Prosecutor's Office of Lithuania pressed murder charges against Yitzhak Arad, a citizen of Israel, well-known historian, and retired general of the Israeli Army, who had been a member of a Soviet partisan brigade during the war.

97 In Estonia, the most notorious court case was initiated in 2007 against Arnold Meri, Hero of the Soviet Union and the chairman of the Estonian Anti-Fascist Committee, who was accused of helping organize the deportation of Estonians in 1949. Meri died of an illness in 2009, before the end of the trial.

98 Carlos Closa Montero, "Study on How the Memory of Crimes Committed by Totalitarian Regimes in Europe Is Dealt with in the Member States," report submitted by the Institute for Public Goods and Policy Centre of Human and Social Sciences, CSIC Madrid, Spain, 2008, 302–305, https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a47f10b9-405e-48b7-b406-fb758819a5e8

ing the Holocaust and the day Bulgarian Jews were rescued. Lithuania remembers victims of communism on June 14 (for victims of the deportations), June 15 (for victims of the occupation and the genocide), and January 13 (for those who were killed in January 1991). In Latvia, it is June 14 and March 25 (for victims of the communist terror and the memory of occupations and deportations, respectively). In Hungary, it is February 25 (for victims of the communist dictatorships). In many Eastern European countries, in addition to the pan-European Holocaust Memorial Day, there are national memorial dates dedicated to commemorating this event. In some cases, they are related not only to the victimhood narrative but to the heroic narrative as well (for instance, Poland remembers April 19 as the day of the uprising in the Jewish Ghetto of Warsaw).

7. Lustration.[99] Lustration laws were adopted in Albania (1995, 1998), Bulgaria (1992), Hungary (1994, 1996), East Germany (1990), Latvia (1994), Lithuania (1991, 1999), Poland (1997, 2006), Romania (2006), Slovakia (1991), Czech Republic (1991), and Estonia (1995). Lavinia Stan points out that the field of application and the severity of this legislation varies. In Poland and Hungary, for instance, lustration initially only concerned those who collaborated with repressive institutions like the secret police. Moreover, they did not include any elective offices. In the Czech Republic and in Slovakia, the only persons to be lustrated were the employees and collaborators of the state security apparatus and the party *nomenklatura*. In Bulgaria, only a few people were lustrated because an employment ban was only implemented in the case of research institutions; in Albania, the lustration law was only in effect for several years, before a new election.[100]

All of the aforementioned phenomena do not always have a direct relation with historical politics, but they are very important for the understanding of its political context. The "nationalization" of history and collective mem-

99 Besides Lavinia Stan's work mentioned previously and in the note below, a review and analysis of the politics of lustration can be found in Vladimira Dvořáková and Anđelko Milardović, eds., *Lustration and Consolidation of Democracy and the Rule of Law in Central and Eastern Europe* (Zagreb: Political Science Research Centre, 2007); and Kieran Williams, Brigid Fowler, and Aleks Szczerbiak, "Explaining Lustration in Central Europe: A 'Post-Communist Politics' Approach," *Democratization* 12, no.1 (February 2005): 22–43.

100 Lavinia Stan, ed., *Transitional Justice in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union: Reckoning with the Communist Past* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 248–54.

ory took place against the background of political decommunization: its gradation and results could be different, but the general tendency to push out the communist narrative of history and memory existed everywhere, even in the countries where the communist parties were reorganized or transformed into movements espousing different leftist orientations.[101]

The 1990s witnessed a growing gap between professional historiography and politics in the sphere of history and memory. This decade falls pretty much into the pattern of the nationalization of the past (nationalization of history) which sought the restoration of standard national master narratives and their ideological and political legitimation. These were used for the legitimation of nations and states as sovereign subjects of global history and politics. Starting in approximately the middle of the 1990s, there emerged a tendency to revise these master narratives generally at the level of analytical historiography. These attempts tried to renovate and diversify traditional national narratives, leave the framework altogether, or even to raise doubts about their formative and educative value.

At the level of professional historiography, there was a growing conflict between the revisionism of those who were not content with the framework of the national master narrative and those who saw this narrative as the alpha and omega of national identity. All the "postcommunist" countries experienced discussions about the limitations of the national master narrative. Everywhere its partisans and promoters took on roles as defenders of the nation's "basic values" and guardians of the "national tradition."[102] This process can be characterized as a confrontation between affirmative and analytical historiographies, with public discourse and discussion dominated by the former.[103]

Observing representations of the past in the field of collective/historical (or cultural) memory, we can conclude that two types of confrontation form a central story line: conflict between the inclusivist and exclusivist models,

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101 For research on this topic, see András Bozóki and John T. Ishiyama, eds., *The Communist Successor Parties of Central and Eastern Europe* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2002).

102 See Michael Kopeček, ed. *Past in the Making: Historical Revisionism in Central Europe after 1989* (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2007).

103 For a very detailed description of these processes in Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Romania, and Bulgaria in the 1990s, see Antohi, Trencsényi, and Apor, eds., *Narratives Unbound*. A collection of articles on the same topic featuring countries of southeastern Europe (Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Croatia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Slovenia) can be found in: Ulf Brunnbauer, ed., *(Re)Writing History: Historiography in Southeast Europe after Socialism* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2004).

and the struggle between two or more exclusivist models of memory. The "ambivalent" model was underrepresented mainly because in the confrontation between the national/nationalist memory narrative and the communist narrative, the latter was immediately neutralized and/or stigmatized as incompatible with national identity. It was not just about ethical dimensions (recognizing communism as a form of evil); there were concrete practices.

Alexei Miller proposes distinguishing five such practices (he calls them methods): the creation of specialized institutes to "impose a certain interpretation of the events of the past, profitable to a political force"; political interference in the mass media (more manipulation than direct censorship); manipulation with archive documents and archives; pressure on historians, both moral and material, through the generous financing of interpretations of the past needed by one or another political force (let us add here political pressure through, for instance, memorial laws); and political interference in the content of school curricula and history textbooks.[104] Miller points out that these practices are similar in different countries because of heavy borrowing and copying.

Of course, this similarity can also be explained by shared historical experience, for instance, communism, because all the aforementioned practices existed in the communist period, albeit on a different scale. In fact, historical politics in this region did not invent anything new in this regard: all these methods and practices have been well-known since the establishment of nation states and especially during the "Age of Extremes."[105] What does constitute real novelty in this field is the creation of specialized institutions designated to engage in historical politics. They can rightfully be considered the quintessence of historical politics, where the ideological and political purpose of institutions are clearly articulated and the political uses of history are stated bluntly. Commissions of truth, institutes of memory, and specialized spaces of memory (memorial and museums) are the most egregious examples.

Perhaps the most impressive institution that should be mentioned is the Polish Institute of National Memory, with its research, educational, propagandizing, prosecutorial, lustration, and archival functions.[106] It is appar-

104 Alexei Miller, "Introduction," in *The Convolutions of Historical Politics*, ed. Alexei Miller and Maria Lipman (Budapest–New York: CEU Press), 11–12.

105 See, for instance, Keith Wilson, ed., *Forging the Collective Memory: Government and International Historians Through Two World Wars* (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 1996).

106 Dariusz Stola, "Poland's Institute of National Remembrance: A Ministry of Memory?," in *The Convolutions of Historical Politics*, ed. Alexei Miller and Maria Lipman (Budapest–New York: CEU Press), 45–58.

ently the only institution of its kind to consistently enjoy vigorous financial and political support of the state and an extensive range of responsibilities/competencies.

The history of similar institutions in other countries was different. In some cases (Estonia, Lithuania, Germany), these organs essentially exhausted everything that was included in their initial mandate and stopped their activities in the 1990s to early 2000s. Their functions were assumed by other institutions (without any change of ideological orientation). In some countries, they were created as temporary institutions and political pawns (Moldova, the Russian Federation). In other cases, they actually turned into educational and archival projects (Czech Republic, Slovakia). However, all these institutions have one thing in common: a political motivation in handling the past and a clear-cut mandate to re-format the past in accordance with the current political situation.

Table 1. Specialized Institutes and Commissions in "Eastern Europe"

Institute or Commission (with official site where available)	Year of Creation/ Abolition	Country
Commission of Inquiry for the Assessment of the History and Consequences of the SED Dictatorship in Germany (Enquete-Kommission Aufarbeitung von Geschichte und Folgen der SED-Diktatur in Deutschland")	1992–94	Germany
Institute of National Remembrance (Instytut Pamięci Narodowej), http://ipn.gov.pl	1998	Poland
Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes (Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů), http://www.ustrcr.cz/	2007	Czech Republic
National Memory Institute (Ústav pamäti národa), http://www.upn.gov.sk	2002	Slovakia
Commission for the Study and Evaluation of the Communist Totalitarian Regime in the Republic of Moldova (Comisia pentru studierea *şi* aprecierea regimului comunist totalitar din Republica Moldova)	2010 (no longer exists)	Moldova

Committee of National Remembrance (Nemzeti Emlékezet Bizottsága), https://www.neb.hu	2013	Hungary
Presidential Commission for the Study of the Communist Dictatorship in Romania (Comisia Prezidențială pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste din România). Homepage at the website of the President of Romania Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes in Romania and the Memory of the Romanian Exile (Institutul de Investigare a Crimelor Comunismului și Memoria Exilului Românesc), https://www.iiccr.ro/en/	2006–2007 2009	Romania
Commission of the Historians of Latvia (Latvijas Vēsturnieku Kommisija), homepage at the website of the president of Latvia, https://www.president.lv/en/activities/commissions-and-councils/commission-of-historians	1998	Latvia
International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania (Tarptautinė komisija nacių ir sovietinio okupacinių režimų nusikaltimams Lietuvoje), http://www.komisija.lt/en/	1998	Lithuania
Estonian International Commission for Investigation of Crimes Against Humanity (Rahvusvahelise Inimsusevastaste Kuritegude Uurimise Eesti komisjon), information page, http://www.historycommission.ee/ Estonian Institute of Historical Memory (Eesti Mälu Instituut), http://mnemosyne.ee/	1998–2008 2008	Estonia
Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance, http://memory.gov.ua	2006	Ukraine
Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Counter Attempts to Falsify History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests	2009–12	Russia

Institutions dedicated to historical politics also include new memorials and museums with narrow specializations: they are routinely dominated by the image of the victim-fighter, which is usually related to resistance against a communist regime. The House of Terror in Budapest (Hungary) and Sighetu Marmației (Romania) can be considered the extreme expressions of this position. As Péter Apor has argued:

> The intention is not simply to demonstrate the brutality and barbarity of communist rule in these countries, rather the demonstration of terror represents the regimes as if they had been founded and maintained exclusively by force and profound systems of coercion. The rule of the communist parties thus appears alien to these societies, a result of outside or foreign forces for which the respective nations bear no responsibility. It follows that the dictatorships contradicted the true spirit of these nations since the regimes were imposed on them by means that were impossible to resist. Communism is presented as the conclusion of "fate," a tragic historical event caused by uncontrollable forces; "the Soviets," "the Great Powers" or "the Communists." The history of Communism gains mythical qualities in these museums as a catastrophe, a disaster that remains beyond the limits of human (national) capacities.[107]

This characteristic in general might be applicable to all the museums of this kind, but of course, primarily to those focused on the topic of communist crimes. This includes the Museum of Occupations and Freedom Fights in Vilnius, the National Memorial-Museum of Victims of Occupation Regimes "Lontsky Prison" in Lviv, and the National Museum of the Holodomor Genocide in Kyiv. The equation of communism and Nazism in such institutions usually follows the aforementioned formula, "COMMUNISM = Nazism." The latter is mainly included as a background for the main theme. The similarities drawn between the practices of both regimes is intended to intensify the negative assessment of the former.

At the same time, as Valentyna Kharkhun has argued, ways of representing the communist/Soviet past may change over time. For instance, the con-

107 Péter Apor, "Eurocommunism: Commemorating Communism in Contemporary Eastern Europe," in *A European Memory? Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance*, ed. Małgorzata Pakier and Bo Stråth (New York: Berghahn, 2010), 236.

cept of the Berlin Wall as a symbol of suffering can be replaced with the idea of the same wall as a symbol of resistance (overcoming). The consumerization of representations of the memory of communism is also worth noting, as museums of communism and "Soviet parks" are becoming a source of revenue.[108]

In some cases, organizers of "museums of communism" shy away from the total stigmatization of the communist past. In the Tallinn museum, a large number of the exhibits represent the history of everyday life in the Soviet Union. In the part of the "DDR Museum" (Berlin) dedicated to everyday life, one can even discern a nostalgic touch: visitors can rest on a sofa in a typical room styled after the 1970s and watch black-and-white televisions shows from the era. The museum in Prague promotes a critical attitude toward the communist past by demonstrating the aesthetic and material wretchedness of communism; the exhibits in this museum are openly ironic.

Table 2. Specialized Museums and Memorials

Name, Website	Year of Creation	Place
Soviet Occupation Exhibition Hall page at the website of the Georgian National Museum, http://museum.ge	2006	Tbilisi
Museum of Occupations, Estonia, http://www.okupatsioon.ee	2003	Tallinn
Museum of the Occupation of Latvia, http://okupacijasmuzejs.lv	1993	Riga
Museum of Occupations and Freedom Fights (coupled with the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania), http://genocid.lt	1992	Vilnius
Warsaw Rising Museum, http://www.1944.pl	2004	Warsaw
Berlin Wall Memorial, http://www.berliner-mauer-gedenkstaette.de	1999, 2009	Berlin
DDR Museum (non-state institution) http://www.ddr-museum.de	2006	Berlin

108 V. Kharkhun, "Viyna pam'yatey v muzeyakh komunizmu," November 20, 2014, http://uamoderna.com/md/memory-wars-muzeum-of-communism.

Museum of Communism, Czech Republic, http://www.muzeumkomunismu.cz/	2001	Prague
House of Terror Museum, Hungary, http://www.terrorhaza.hu	2002	Budapest
Memorial of the Victims of Communism and of the Resistance, http://www.memorialsighet.ro	1992	Sighetu Marmației
Museum of Soviet Occupation in Ukraine, http://memorial.kiev.ua/	2001	Kyiv
Holodomor Victims Memorial, http://memorialholodomor.org.ua/	2008	Kyiv
The National Memorial-Museum of Victims of Occupation Regimes "Lontsky Prison," http://www.lonckoho.lviv.ua	2008	Lviv
State Museum of GULAG History, http://www.gmig.ru/	2001	Moscow

The central topic and the main focus of the historical politics of Eastern Europe are the crimes of communism, a perfectly comfortable framework for the synthetic image of the victim of totalitarianism and those who fought against it, which poses new inconvenient questions, this time about the participation (complicity) of one's nation in the communist project.[109] So far the answer to these questions has been quite simple: communism is represented as imported, imposed from outside, as an ideology and a practice alien to national traditions and national identity. This resolute answer, however, provokes another one: to what extent does the struggle against the communist past reproduce cultural patterns and practices of communism itself? Is it not obvious that anticommunist iconoclasm and the reformatting of the symbolic space of memory are reminiscent of the actions of the communists themselves?[110] Historical politics in

109 Uilleam Blacker and Alexander Etkind, "Introduction," in *Memory and Theory in Eastern Europe*, ed. Blacker, Etkind, and Julie Fedor (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 8.

110 Of course, this question is a rhetorical one. Recently, a quite representative meeting of Polish historians took place, dedicated to the right conservative turn in Polish historical politics. Among other things, they discussed the problem of the similarity of today's actions with the ones that were practiced by communist governments: administrative pressure, ideological regulation, "purges" of staff. See Brian Porter-Szűcs, "Historians and the Politics of Memory" December 10, 2016, http://porterszucs.pl/2016/12/10/historians-politics-memory/.

some of its most dramatic manifestations negates pluralism and imposes ideological uniformity. Moreover, all extreme manifestations of historical politics of the "Eastern European" style look like a return to the ideological forms and cultural practices of the pre-communist period. Is it an incredible case of nostalgia for an era when these nations were "non-historical," a nostalgia that takes place in a completely different historical context?

The post-Soviet space

The imagined geography of the post-Soviet space embraces the countries that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union, except for the Baltic States that successfully "returned" to Europe in 2004. If one follows the logic of political geography after 2004, this territory would fall into the "new Eastern Europe," encompassing the countries that compose part of the Eastern Partnership program of the EU (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine), the Central Asian region (Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan), and Russia, which traditionally occupies a position between East and West and claims a special path and mission both in the region and in the world.

Despite obvious differences in political, economic, and cultural development after 1991, every post-Soviet country has experienced a reassessment, rethinking, and rewriting of the past in ways similar to the Eastern European paradigm.[111] This similarity can be explained either by the shared legacy and the shared logic of a "return of the native" or by the borrowing and copying of discourses and practices.

The common scenario of "nationalizing" history was banal: it meant separating out one's own national history from a previously shared past, transforming it from an object of history into its sovereign agent. In this case, national history was separated from previously common history, whether imperial or Soviet. In many cases (Ukraine, Belarus, Armenia, Georgia, etc.) there was

111 For many years, this topic interested the researchers of the Association of Researchers of the Russian Society (AIRO–XXI). See their publications: *Natsionalnyye istorii v sovetskom i postsovetskikh gosudarstvakh*, preface by F. Bomsdorf (Moscow, 1999); *Natsionalnyye istorii na postsovetskom prostranstve*, vol. 2, ed. F. Bomsdorf and G. Bordyugov (Moscow: Fond Fridrikha Naumanna, AIRO–XXI, 2009); *"Voiny pamyati" na postsovetskom prostranstve*, ed. Alan Kasayev (Moscow: AIRO–XXI, 2011); and G. A. Bordyugov and V. M. Bukharayev, *Vcherashneye zavtra: kak "natsionalnyye istorii" pisalis v SSSR i kak pishutsa segodnya* (Moscow: AIRO–XXI, 2011).

already a historiographical tradition of national history that had emerged at the turn of the twentieth century. However, in the Soviet era, all national histories were unified in the framework of the "History of the USSR," and master narratives created before 1917 were declared "nationalist" and banned. These narratives survived either in diaspora or in library collections with restricted access. Research works on problems of national history in national republics belonged to the field of the "History of the USSR." School and university courses on the history of one or another national republic were reoriented to a general history that contemplated the movement toward a society without classes or nations, toward a "new historic community, the Soviet people."[112] National history research in the republics was carried out in the framework of the class approach and was supposed to use local data to provide a rationalization for the idea of the fusion of nations into this new historic community.

This is why the "nationalization of history" also entailed its political sovereignization. It is no coincidence that during perestroika, the issues of history became an integral part of criticism aimed at Moscow, and they were used by local elites first to aid in their own legitimation as national elites and then for the political legitimation of the states that arose in place of the former Soviet republics after 1991. After 1991, the Communist Party and Soviet *nomenklatura* preserved its power almost everywhere (except for short intervals in Armenia and Azerbaijan) and actively supported the "return to the roots" of the nation.

The nationalization of history also played out in a fairly standard way at the local level. First, the condemnation of Stalinist crimes that served as a universal trigger for the nationalization of history often developed into a very critical perspective that sometimes led to the total negation of the Soviet period as a whole. This repudiation was often embedded in postcolonial discourses that regarded the Soviet period as a continuation of imperial rule. Second, the sovereignization of national history and the search for historical roots provoked a literal nationalization of the remote past: research into national features in pre-national periods was always successful. Third, the perceived cohesiveness of national history was assured by filling in the "blank spots" of history when forgotten or previously banned names, events, and

112 The concept of the new historic community—the Soviet people was developed by Communist party ideologists in the 1960s to mark the progress of the USSR toward communism.

facts made their way back to the national narrative. This is why the search for "historical truth" tended to go hand in hand with the restoration of "historical justice." Fourth, there was an obligatory ritual of consulting the already existing narratives, which were now elevated to the status of classic canonical texts both because of their relevance for the purposes of nationalization and because of "rehabilitation syndrome." Everything that had been banned by the communist regime now became influential. As a result, most post-Soviet states adopted into their official historiography and their historical politics a canon of representation of the past based on ethnocentric, or, to use our proposed definitions, a national/nationalist narrative of history and exclusivist model of memory. A new metanarrative emerged (or reemerged) that established the general rules of description, interpretation, and explanation.

In Belarus, an ambivalent model of collective/historical memory emerged that combined the national/nationalist and the Soviet nostalgic memory narratives. In Moldova, the ethnonational narrative was split into "Moldovenists" and "Romanists." In Ukraine, there was an obvious border between the territory dominated by the national/nationalist narrative and the zone where it competed with the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative. In Central Asia, the metanarrative of history-memory was boosted by additional cultural and religious legacies and, quite appropriately, by postcolonial discourse. Russia represents a special case because the national/nationalist narrative established itself in its constituent national republics. The federal center offers an inclusivist model of the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative amplified with an imperial nostalgic one.

What were the generic features of the national/nationalist memory narratives that (re)emerged at the end of 1980s? They were based on a teleological construction within which the importance of one's own nationalized history is substantiated by the need for the existence of one's own unique nation and corresponding state. History is represented as an ontologically predetermined movement toward a supreme goal: the emergence of a national state. The described narrative presupposes the strategy of reasoning, interpretation, and explanation that recognizes the nation as an organic phenomenon, existing objectively beyond historians' ambitions. Such an approach naturally makes the case for the historical *necessity* and *inevitability* of the existence of this concrete nation whose essential characteristics are identified in "historical reality," and, even better, in historical truth."

It is no less crucial that in this scheme, memory is equated with history. It is hard to find a standard narrative of nationalized history that does not contain, directly or implicitly, an idea that history is a form of collective memory of the nation. The term "national revival" ("awakening") assumes that writing history means restoring memory to a nation.

The main subject of history is the people, who are identified with an ethnos/sub-ethnos or a group of genetically related ethnoses/sub-ethnoses. The academic variant of nationalized history means turning this people into a nation. When this method of explanation and interpretation is adopted, such notions as "people," "ethnos," and "nation" start being used interchangeably both in research and in public discourse. This is inextricably linked with one more important component of the canon narrative of nationalized history-memory: cultural exclusivity. The narrative of memory based on an ethnocentric version is exclusivist by definition.

The exclusivist narrative of memory can recognize the presence of the Other, which serves first and foremost as the background that emphasizes one's own national distinctness. Various shades are to be found: the Other can be a neutral background. It can be present both within the borders of one's own territory and outside of them. Of course, the Other could certainly play the role of the enemy that hampers the objective course of history, which is the normal development of "one's own" nation; in doing so, the Other would jeopardize "historical justice."

All the basic features of nationalized history-memory are embodied in the history of "ethnos–people–nation" with its linear character and absolute continuity. The most pronounced example is the scheme of "flowing" national history, passing through various statehood forms or through the existence of an autochthonous/indigenous people with its own cultural and anthropological features.

Virtually all the national histories in the post-Soviet space claim to have at least a thousand-year-long history. Some Ukrainians trace their ethnonational genealogy to the Cucuteni–Trypillia culture (third millennium BC),[113] some Kazakh researchers claim five thousand years of continuous history,[114]

113 See a review by O. Kuzmuk, "Psevdonaukovi teoriyi etnohenezu ukrayintsiv ta ikhiy vplyv na suspilnu svidomist," *Stratehichni priorytety* 11, no. 2 (2009): 110–16.

114 Nurbulat E. Masanov, Zhuldyz B. Abylkhodzhin, and Irina V. Yerofeyeva, *Nauchnoye znaniye i mifotvorchestvo v sovremennoy istoriografii* (Kazakhstana: Daik-Press, 2017), 61–62.

Belarusians look for the origins of their ethnos in the Baltic substrate and the Iron Age,[115] and the peoples of the Caucasus search for their roots in Biblical times and, of course, claim Aryan origins.[116] The described metanarrative perfectly fits into the standard scheme of national history that was formed in the second half of the nineteenth century and has successfully survived in the textbooks of many different countries.[117]

The perceived past of one's nation, seen as a struggle against existential threats, is based on the conflict between the bearers of such views, especially if by force of circumstances, this past was a shared one or imagined as such. Recall the examples of the protracted conflicts between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, Armenia and Azerbaijan, the use of historical arguments in the Georgian-Abkhazian and Georgian-Ossetian conflicts,[118] the "memory wars" between Russia and Baltic countries,[119] or the conflicts around the assessment of the past inside Ukraine with the clear-cut regional affiliations of the parties.

The potential for conflict is greatest in the case of relations between the ex-republics of the USSR and Russia. In virtually all representations of the past based on the ethnonational canon, Russia plays the role of the constituting Other mostly within the framework of postcolonial discourse. In this version, Russia is an eternal tyrant, the colonizer that broke the natural sequence of development of one or another nation, the oppressor of its culture, language, and national identity. And while the European part of the region sees Russia as an obstacle in the path of European development, the Asian part considers it the destroyer of national identity and ancient tradition.

Two countries can be seen as exceptions to this rule: Belarus, where the renaissance of the ethnonational narrative of the early 1990s in its anti-Rus-

115 A. Dzermant and S. Sanko, "Etnageneza belarusaw: navuka i idealyogiya," *ARCHE*, no. 5 (2005), online version, https://arche.by/item/2046. See also Ranier Lindner, "Besieged Past: National and Court Historians in Lukashenka's Belarus," Forum: New Directions in Belarusian Studies, Nationalities Papers 27, no. 4 (1999): 633–37.

116 Viktor A. Shnirelman, *Voyny pamyati: Mify, identichnost i politika v Zakavkazye* (Moscow: Akademkniga, 2003).

117 See Marc Ferro, *The Use and Abuse of History, Or How the Past is Taught to Children*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2003).

118 Shnirelman, *Voyny pamyati*.

119 Eiki Berg and Piret Ehin, eds., *Identity and Foreign Policy: Baltic-Russian Relations and European Integration* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

sian form was halted when Alexander Lukashenka came to power (1994);[120] and Armenia, where the conflict focused on relations with Azerbaijan and Turkey, while Russia is quite often featured as a friendly Other.

The development of historical politics and the master narrative at the base of the ethnonational canon was, to a great extent, propelled by the historical politics of Russia itself. Besides the claims of domination in the post-Soviet region (and, in all likelihood, as a part of these claims), a well-articulated orientalist discourse was presented in the Russian master narrative. Within this discourse, the whole perimeter of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union (including the Baltic region) was represented as an object of the civilizing and modernization mission carried out by Russia.[121] Orientalist and neoimperial discourses produced by a segment of the intellectual elite of Russia fed ethnocentric versions of the past and postcolonial discourses in the countries situated at the borderlands of the previously common Soviet space.

In Russia itself, two interrelated tendencies can be identified.[122] On the one hand, several subjects of the Federation (for instance, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, the republics of the Northern Caucasus) saw a return to the classic ethnonational master narrative based on the idea of a distinct and separate national history in which the imperial and Soviet past serves as an obstacle to the normal development of the nation. This master narrative became the foundation for an exclusivist model of collective/historical memory. In some cases (Chechnya, Ingushetia) the Soviet period (meaning the "shared past") was interpreted as a national trauma because of Stalinist-era deportations. By the end of the 1990s, classic ethnonational master narratives were created (or recreated) in the majority of the national republics

120 In the case of Belarus, it is possible to speak about constant fluctuations between the ambivalent and the inclusivist models of collective/historical memory in historical politics. The ethnonational narrative in the official version of the past exists in the form of basic elements, coexisting with the Soviet nostalgic narrative. See the special issue of the review *Arche* dedicated to the Belarusian politics of memory.

121 See, for instance, Aleksandr A. Danilov and Aleksandr V. Filippov, eds., *Osveshcheniye obshchey istorii Rossii i postsovetskikh stran v shkolnykh uchebnikakh istorii novykh nezavisimykh gosudarstv* (Moscow: Yevraziiskii monitor, 2009); Aleksandr A. Danilov and Aleksandr V. Filippov, eds., *Istoriya Rossii i novykh nezavisimikh gosudarstv v shkolnykh uchebnikakh: Kniga dlya uchitelya* (Moscow: Prosveshenie, 2010); Aleksandr A. Danilov, Aleksandr V. Filippov, *Pribaltika i Srednyaya Aziya v sostave Rossiyskoy imperii i SSSR: mify sovremennykh uchebnikov postsovetskikh stran i realnost sotsialno-ekonomicheskikh podschetov* (Moscow: Prosveshenie, 2010).

122 An insightful analysis of the official historical narrative of the 1990s–2000s was proposed by Olga Malinova. See *Aktualnoye proshloye: Simvolicheskaya politika vlastvuyushchey elity i dilemmy rossiyskoy identichnosti* (Moscow: Politicheskaya entsiklopediya, 2015).

of the Russian Federation. Moreover, several non-national subjects of the Federation also showed a tendency toward the regionalization of history and collective/historical memory,[123] creating their own specific narratives.

On the other hand, the federal center cultivates an integrative or inclusivist narrative based on the idea of a supranational/multinational state. It reveals the legacy of both imperial and Soviet historical tradition. Statehood is seen as a foundation, as a skeleton on which to hang the "common" history. The form of statehood (empire or federation of republics and administrative-territorial units with various levels of autonomy) is nonessential in this case; the crux of the matter is the continuity of state history and the subjugation of all components of historical experience to the idea of statehood. It ensures historical continuity and legitimizes claims about the historical heritage of neighbors. As in the Soviet period, such a model complicates the functioning of the properly Russian ethnonational narrative of history and memory that dissolves into the imperial and Soviet nostalgic narrative, with the leading role of the Russian people as a cultural background.

The relevant historical narrative and politics of memory should preserve the idea of the ethnocultural Russian nucleus and the social and political unity of peoples and nations united around it as equal subjects of a political nation. On the whole, this pattern reproduces a somewhat modified Soviet idea of a "new historical community, the Soviet people," only now the Soviet people are replaced with "Russian nationals" (*rossiyane*). The state is the guarantor of the existence of the political nation and its unifying force in the past, present, and future. History and memory should serve as means of consolidation for Russian nationals (the term *rossiyane*, as opposed to *russkiye*, ethnic Russians, came into use under Boris Yeltsin) or the "Russian nation" (or *rossiiskaya natsia*, the term voiced by Vladimir Putin).

This idea was reflected both in the official historical/historiographical canon and in the build-up of collective/historical memory. The idea of a shared history and a "single textbook" can be mentioned as the most illustrative example.[124] It emerged and developed in parallel to the reformatting of the ideological space after the accession of Putin to power during

123 Viktor A. Shnirelman, "Identichnost i politika postsovetskoy pamyati," *Politicheskaya kontseptologiya: zhurnal metadistsiplinarnykh issledovaniy*, no. 2 (2009): 209–30.

124 I do not discuss other aspects of the story of the common textbook related to corporate interests, access to budget resources, etc.

the increasingly active restoration of the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative (its inclusivist model). The return of the Soviet anthem (now as the anthem of Russia, with a modified text), along with Putin's suggestion to historians that they stop paying attention to only the negative aspects of history (2003), and the large-scale restoration of the Soviet myth of the Great Patriotic War in the public consciousness can be considered the most important landmarks of this path.

It is in this context that we can examine the first attempt to offer a variant to the single textbook that took place between 2006 and 2007 when, with the backing of the top political elite of Russia, Aleksandr Danilov and Aleksandr Filippov published a manual for teachers and a line of textbooks on the history of Russia in the twentieth century. The textbooks were published in numbers that vastly exceeded other similar publications, and these received significant public attention, which can be seen as indirect proof that the government sought a dominant position for these textbooks. Their ideological tendency was obvious: the idea of the greatness of Russia, which was inseparable from the greatness of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, was to become the unifying theme of the historical narrative.[125]

For a number of reasons, and especially because of perceived attempts to relativize certain Stalinist practices, this manual for teachers and line of textbooks were criticized by the liberal part of society and by professional historians, and did not achieve the status of principal textbook, at least not officially.[126] In general, the consistency of the common history offered in textbooks was already ensured by the federal standards on history adopted in 2004, while the diversity of federal textbooks stemmed from commercial interests rather than from ideological diversity. The idea of a shared history was mostly addressed to the subjects and regions of the Federation where the (re)emergence of ethnonational narratives took place during the 1990s.

The next time this idea came to the foreground of political discourse was after the dramatic parliamentary and presidential elections of 2011–12, which were turbulent for Vladimir Putin and were followed by electoral protests. After his reelection as president, Putin formulated it in the following way:

125 For more details, see Alexei Miller, "Istoricheskaya politika v Rossii: novyy povorot?," in *Istoricheskaya politika v XXI veke* (Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoye Obozrenie , 2012), 334–39.

126 See Thomas Sherlok, *Istoricheskiye narrativy i politika v Sovetskom Soyuze i postsovetskoy Rossii* (Moscow: Politicheskaya entsiklopediya, 2014), 269–72.

"I completely agree that there should be some canonical version of our history. Indeed, if we study one version in the east, another version in the Urals and a third version in the European part of the country, it can destroy—and it surely would destroy—the united humanitarian space of our multinational nation, if I may put it this way. There should be a unified canonical approach to the historical periods which are principal, fundamental, and vital for our country, and this should be reflected by a single textbook. I do not see anything wrong in this."[127] No wonder the idea of a shared history and "a single textbook" was enthusiastically supported by the Russian Ministry of Education. According to the minister, there were plans to make the new textbook ready in one year; again, he spoke about a "single textbook."[128]

The reaction of the state-controlled civil organizations to the idea of a shared history was similar. The idea of "a single textbook" was supported by the Russian Historical Society (headed by Sergey Naryshkin, the chairman of the Russian State Duma), by the Association of Teachers of History and the Social Sciences (headed by Alexander Chubaryan, director of the Institute of General History of the Russian Academy of Sciences), by the Russian Military-Patriotic Society (headed by Vladimir Medinsky, Russian Minister of Culture), and by the All-Russian People's Front (headed by Putin himself).

According to sociological data, the general public also liked the idea of a single textbook. Polls carried out in June 2013 by the Levada Center showed that 71 percent of respondents were "fully positive" or "partially positive" about the idea of a single school textbook, 10 percent were negative, and others found it difficult to respond.[129] This being said, according to a survey held by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VCIOM), 52 percent of respondents had not heard about the idea of a single textbook before the survey, and 35 percent had "heard something" about it. However, this lack of information did not prevent 58 percent of respondents from supporting the idea.[130]

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127 "Putin prizval sozdat yedinyy 'kanonicheskiy' uchebnik istorii," accessed April 15, 2017, http://www.ntv.ru/novosti/536176/#ixzz2Oxnjl78F.

128 "Ministr obrazovaniya poobeshchal pokazat yedinyy uchebnik istorii cherez god," accessed April 15, 2017, http://polit.ru/news/2013/03/17/edinyj/.

129 "Levada Tsentr, Rossiyane o shkole i yedinom uchebnike istorii," June 21, 2013, http://www.levada.ru/2013/06/21/rossiyane-o-shkole-i-edinom-uchebnike-istorii/.

130 P'er Sidibe, "Rossiyane 'za' yedinyy uchebnik po istorii," *Rossiyskaya gazeta*, August 16, 2013, http://rg.ru/2013/08/16/uchebnik-site.html.

Despite both official and public support, the single textbook was not produced. Instead, the scholarly community, experts, and teachers began to discuss a single set of standards, the preparation of which developed into a complicated process; the result was that the idea of a single textbook, which was expected to play an integrative role in the Federation, was downplayed. In 2015, new textbooks arrived in the schools. They did not have any groundbreaking concepts in their worldview, but some of their formulas (such as the "Tatar-Mongol yoke") were edited out for the sake of political correctness.

The historical politics of Russia for internal use can be defined by the desire of the federal center to promote the inclusivist model of history and memory, combining elements of imperial, Soviet, and national/regional histories united by a common statist narrative. The victory in the Great Patriotic War presents an example of a universal unifying myth. Criticism of the Soviet past essentially boiled down to the establishment of a narrative of memory about the Stalinist purges. Overall, the negation of the Soviet period, characteristic of the 1990s and the 2000s, stopped and was replaced by its "normalization," not to mention more recent "re-Stalinization."[131]

Academic discourse (barely connected to "socially useful functions") is mainly dominated by analytical works. At the level of affirmative and didactic history, the Soviet period is represented by a heroic and productive narrative with elements of nostalgia.[132]

An exclusivist model based on either the ethnonational or the regionalist narrative prevails at the regional level. However, unlike the 1990s, it does not seem to be in open conflict with the inclusivist model advanced by Moscow at present. Attempts to create a common official version of the past will evidently go on because federal authorities simply do not have another choice.

The exported version of historical politics turned out to be much more conflict prone. During the first decade of the twenty-first century, Russia found itself in permanent conflict over historical issues with Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, and Ukraine (with short-term thaws in relations with Poland and Ukraine). The "memory war" occurred not only in bilateral

131 For more details on the causes of "normalization" and its character within the framework of the doctrine of "total continuity," see Olga Malinova, *Aktualnoye proshloye: Simvolicheskaya politika vlastvuyushchey elity i dilemmy rossiyskoy identichnosti* (Moscow: Politicheskaya Entsiklopediya, 2015), 68–74.

132 One need only watch popular films and TV series about the war or, for instance, the TV series *The Thaw* (2013).

relations but within international organizations as well: Russia successfully blocked Ukraine's attempts to recognize the famine of 1932–33 as an act of genocide of Ukrainians both at the level of the UN and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.[133] Another episode worth remembering is Russia's nearly seven-year struggle for a UN resolution against the glorification of Nazism (the "package" sought to condemn the commemoration of Estonian and Latvian Waffen-SS Legions, and, by the time of the adoption of the resolution, to condemn neo-Nazism in Ukraine).[134]

Russia's active confrontation with its neighbors was not only provoked by their "offensive" actions which directly or indirectly attacked Russia's international prestige (outlined in previous chapter); it was also triggered by internal deliberations.

Alternative (always negative) interpretations of the Soviet past by Russia's post-Soviet neighbors (both those who were already in the "new Europe" and those who aspired to get there) were at variance with the Russian integrative (inclusivist) memory narrative which included recognition of the Soviet period as an important and valuable, albeit controversial, component of Russia's historical experience. The revision of the "Great Victory" myth by Russia's neighbors, the formula "COMMUNISM = Nazism," and the transformation of the liberation from Nazism into occupation by Soviets not only jeopardized Russia's image as a member of the anti-Hitler coalition but undermined its central unifying historical myth.[135] The existence of a unifying narrative of history and memory based on the idea of state greatness, whether imperial or Soviet, played an important compensatory role at the social and psychological levels. According to Levada-Center surveys taken between 2014–16, the most common answer to the question, "What makes you especially proud of Russia?" was the "history of Russia," which was selected more frequently than choices like natural resources, the army, culture, and the country's international status.[136] More than half of

133 See Georgiy Kasianov, "Golodomor i stroitelstvo natsii," *Pro et Contra* (May–August 2009): 38.

134 Critics: UN Resolution on Nazism Too Restrictive on Rights, accessed December 9, 2020, https://www.voanews.com/europe/critics-un-resolution-nazism-too-restrictive-rights.

135 Everywhere along the "western" perimeter of Russia, the "liberating army," a savior from Nazism, turned into an occupying army that replaced Nazi totalitarianism with a communist one.

136 Levada Tsentr, "Natsionalnaya gordost," accessed December 9, 2020, http://www.levada.ru/2016/06/30/natsionalnaya-gordost/.

respondents (53 percent) in 2019 said that they are most proud of the glorious past of their country.[137]

The story of the 2009 establishment and activities of the Presidential Commission of the Russian Federation to Combat the Falsifications of History to the Detriment of Russia's Interests attests to the fact that external challenges were indeed seen as a threat to the very foundations of the country. The commission was preceded by a draft memorial law that suggested establishing a public tribunal to regulate issues of historical politics and to criminalize "encroachment on historical memory."[138] The project triggered vocal protests by liberals and the derision of professional historians. While the commission was established to counter external challenges, all of its practical actions were internal. The start of the commission was marked by attempts to find the accomplices of "falsifications" in the Russian Academy of Sciences, which immediately provoked public indignation on behalf of the active part of the academic community.

The commission can be credited with one direct result of its activity: an amendment to the text of the federal standards on history. It ran as follows: "Danger of falsification of Russia's past in the current situation. The falsification of the modern history of Russia is a danger to the national security of the country."[139] In 2012, under the Putin presidency, the commission's activities stopped. However, the perception of the politics of history as a matter of national security persisted. The activities of the commission, or rather the general situation that led to its creation, had an indirect consequence as well, which was the publication of a number of manuals dedicated to the "falsifications" of the history of Russia in other countries. These manuals were intended for internal use.[140]

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137 M. Mel'nikov, "Russkii opros ot 'Levady': chem my gordimsia i chego stydimsia," accessed December 9, 2020, https://tsargrad.tv/articles/russkij-opros-ot-levady-chem-my-gordimsja-i-chego-stydimsja_179177.

138 See Koposov, *Pamyat osobogo rezhima*, 230–32.

139 "O vnesenii izmeneniy v federalnyy component gosudarstvennykh obrazovatelnykh standartov nachalnogo obshchego, osnovnogo obshchego i srednego (polnogo) obshchego obrazovaniya, utverzhdyonnyy prikazom Ministerstva obrazovaniya Rossiyskoy Federatsii," March 5, 2004., http://www.edu.ru/db/mo/Data/d_12/m39.pdf.

140 Danilov and Filippov, *Osveshcheniye obshchey istorii Rossii*; and Danilov and Filippov, *Istoriya Rossii i novykh nezavisimykh gosudarstv*. These two books, mentioned earlier, are almost identical in their content. The first is represented as a report of the National Laboratory of Foreign Politics, funded by the Fund of Preparation of the Talent Pool within the program "Formation of Non-Confrontational and Integrational Views on History in Russia and Countries of the Post-Soviet Space Among Youth." The second as presented as a manual for teachers. See also Danilov and Filippov, *Pribaltika i Srednyaya*

It is worth noting that this was precisely the period that saw the resurgence of Russian cultural and ethnic irredentism. Ethnic Russian nationalism, officially unwelcomed inside the country, became an important element of external strategy. Care for fellow compatriots abroad was used in the "memory wars," and the Russian-speaking population of these countries became an ally in these wars. It is not a coincidence that the memory wars of 2007–2009 always included an appeal concerning the violation of the rights of Russians in the "near abroad." Protests inside countries with "incorrect" historical politics (Ukraine, Baltic countries) were planned with the local Russian-speaking population in mind.

Surprisingly, the creation of "Medvedev's commission" coincided with the relative normalization of relations with neighbors, especially with Poland and Ukraine. The body was established at a climactic moment of the memory wars, but it was during 2009 that the situation changed dramatically. A thaw in relations with the West, especially with the US, took place.

A normalization dialogue started with Poland at the level of prime ministers, with a meeting between Donald Tusk and Vladimir Putin. On August 31, 2009, Putin published a conciliatory article in *Gazeta Wyborcza* entitled "Are the Pages of History a Pretext for Mutual Grievances or a Basis for Reconciliation and Partnership?" In April 2010, Putin visited Katyń, together with Tusk and publicly condemned the execution of Polish prisoners of war as a "crime of the totalitarian regime." As for President Dmitry Medvedev, he made an official visit to Ukraine in November 2010 and, together with his Ukrainian colleague Viktor Yanukovych, went to the Holodomor memorial in Kyiv, the same one he had defiantly refused to visit when it opened in 2008. However, as future events testified, this thaw was less the result of a strategy change than a series of tactical moves.

A U-turn in the historical politics of Russia took place in 2014 during the "Ukrainian crisis" and the deterioration of Russia's relations with the "West" caused by the annexation of Crimea and Russia's support for Donbass separatists. Large projects to memorialize the victims of Stalinism were suspended. The state-funded program of commemoration of the

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Aziya; T. Guzenkova ed., *"Razzkazhu vam o voyne": Vtoraya mirovaya i Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyny v uchebnikakh i soznanii shkolnikov slavyanskikh stran* (Moscow: Russian Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of Russian Federation, 2012).

victims of Stalinist repressions was reconsidered to make it more "neutral" in terms of the assessment of the Stalinist period. Moreover, since 2014, the public's attitude toward Stalin began to shift toward increasingly positive perceptions. According to Russian sociologist Karina Pipija in the 2000s, the balance of positive and negative attitudes toward Stalin was about fifty-fifty. Between 2008 and 2014, a neutral or indifferent stance prevailed. After 2014, positive assessments of Stalin increased. In March 2019, more than half of respondents expressed a positive attitude toward him, and 70 percent believed he played a positive role in history.[141] The growth of this positive attitude toward Stalin might be explained by the ongoing intensive propaganda campaign on behalf of the myth of the Great Victory launched in 2015. It is also worth mentioning that in 2014, the Russian State Duma adopted a law (2014) on criminal liability for the "propagation of knowingly false information on the activities of the USSR during the years of World War II."

According to the amendments to the Constitution of the Russian Federation (2020) proposed by the top officials of the country, Russia will ensure the protection of the historical truth and will not allow the importance of the heroic deeds of the people in defense of the Motherland to be diminished.[142] In February 2020, the speaker of the Russian Duma Viacheslav Volodin proposed the creation (in cooperation with Serbia) of an international institute for the defense of historical memory. According to him, this institute would help "to take steps in the spheres of humanities and education that would allow us to defend objectivity about that time and to defend the truth about and memory of the fallen."[143]

Soon after, a new actor joined the field of historical politics in Russia. In September 2020, the head of the Investigative Committee of Russia announced the creation of a new department whose major task would be the investigation of previously unknown war crimes from the period of World War II and the "prevention of distortion of historical facts." He linked this

141 Vladimir Dergatchov, "Uroven` odobreniia Stalina rossijanami pobil istoricheskii" record, accessed December 9, 2020, https://www.rbc.ru/politics/16/04/2019/5cb0bb979a794780a4592d0c.

142 Gosudarstvennaya Duma Federal`nogo Sobraniya Rossiiskoy Federatsii Kak Konstitutsija zashitit istoricheskuju pamiat`, accessed December 12, 2020, http://duma.gov.ru/news/48231/.

143 Gosudarstvennaya Duma Federal`nogo Sobraniya Rossiiskoy Federatsii. Viacheslav Volodin predlozhil sozdat` mezhdunarodnyj institut zashchity istoricheskoj pamiati, accessed December 9, 2020, http://duma.gov.ru/news/47769/.

decision to the recent Russia—Europe debates about the causes and consequences of World War II and the unacceptable "positions of some Western powers" regarding outcomes of the war.[144]

The post-Soviet space partly reproduces the scenarios and practices of historical politics in Eastern Europe because of a shared historical experience and a shared Other: Russia. This common legacy also defines similar ways to handle this legacy, which, in turn, favors imitation and borrowing. For example, Ukraine created an institute of national memory in the mold of the Polish one; a similar project was under construction in Russia; and a commission that operated for a period of time in Moldova imitated the experience of the commissions in the Baltic States. The projects of some memorial complexes were clearly emulative. Furthermore, similar to their Eastern European neighbors, cultural and political elites in the post-Soviet space were not very responsive to the idea of recognizing responsibility for the Holocaust (of course, we speak only about the European part of the post-Soviet space).

The role of the main constituting Other in the historical politics of post-Soviet countries was somehow adopted by the ruling Russian elite, who were once again carried away by the idea of a "special path" and demonstrated a determination to support the idea of the special mission of their country, with all the consequences of this role. For Russia's neighbors, its "special path" was an indication of its neo-imperial ambitions.

At the same time, there are noticeable differences between the practices of post-Soviet historical politics when compared to Eastern Europe. Transitional justice practices are few and far between, and they sometimes exist in an embryonic form, that is, limited to the formal rehabilitation of victims of political purges. The restoration of the ethnonational narrative was, in most cases, radicalized by the postcolonial syndrome. Access to the archives of the repressive organs of the Soviet era was either short-lived or inconsistent. The decommunization component of historical politics was also inconsequential, random, and largely dependent on the ever-changing political situation.

144 "Aleksandr Bastrykin vmeste so studentami i kadetami obrazovatel`nykh organizatsiy SK Rossii prinial uchastie v meropriyatii, posviashchionnym pamiati zhertv fashizma," accessed December 9, 2020, https://sledcom.ru/news/item/1498218/.

Into which perceived political and cultural space does Ukraine fit? Since the late 1980s, it has drifted from the post-Soviet to the Eastern European space of historical politics, demonstrating certain common tendencies caused by both shared historical experiences and by borrowing (for instance, the creation of specialized institutions and spaces of memory). Another important difference is that Russia was present not simply as an imagined Other or as an unwanted neighbor. Russia was physically present in the field of Ukrainian historical politics through its own institutions (information agencies, websites, TV channels, Rossotrudnichestvo, the Institute of CIS Countries) as well as through organizations of fellow compatriots and allied Ukrainian political parties. Moreover, punitive and restrictive practices in the realm of historical memory seem to be strikingly similar. Unlike its neighbors to the west, Ukraine was not significantly influenced by EU historical politics, although a number of Ukrainian mnemonic actors declared their adherence to "European principles."

After a short period between the late 1980s and early 1990s, Ukraine did not experience any consistent systematic attempts to settle accounts with the Soviet past until the launch of the decommunization campaign of 2015–19. This campaign was a grotesque and rather incomplete copy of the decommunization practices of the Baltic states and Eastern European countries. Moreover, it tended to glorify persons and organizations in the nationalist movement with dubious reputations. In certain respects, Ukraine is unique: for historical reasons, it has regions with very different collective/historical memories, which makes it difficult to find an inclusive model of historical memory.

Part II

Actors

Introduction

In this part, we will examine the main actors in the field of historical politics. We will start with state institutions, then turn our attention to NGOs and the media, and conclude by observing the role of professional historians in the development and implementation of historical politics. I have included a brief description of the functions of the actors below, but a more detailed description and analysis of their activities will follow in the following chapters.

Discussing the "politics of memory," Michael Bernhard and Jan Kubik proposed a typology of so-called mnemonic actors. Considering their modus operandi, they suggest discerning the following types: (1) *Mnemonic warriors* are actors who try to establish a single, incontrovertible vision of the past, "the only true" interpretation that stands in opposition to all others. They believe in the existence of historical truth and regard it as the foundation of identity. (2) *Pluralists* recognize the existence and validity of other versions of the past. Unlike mnemonic warriors, they are ready to engage in a dialogue and search for different versions of the past that can be combined in the single space of memory. (3) *Abnegators* are those who deliberately avoid active participation in discussions and debates about different representa-

tions of the past, refusing to consider history as a reservoir of knowledge that has practical implications for the present. (4) *Prospectives* see the past in only one practical aspect, as a list of mistakes that should be taken into account in order to build a better future. When out of power, they are generally very critical of the government's actions in the field of historical politics. When in power, they become intolerant of any other views on the past and present and impose their point of view on the whole of society, which turns them into de facto *warriors*.[1]

Of course, this typology of actors does not represent all types of memory actors; further, as admitted by the authors themselves, this typology concerns only societies with political pluralism and democracy. It is not difficult to see that in the case of Ukraine, similar to most postcommunist "memory regimes," the field of historical politics is dominated either by warriors or prospectives.

1 Michael Bernhard and Jan Kubik, eds. *Twenty Years After Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 13–14.

Chapter 3

State Institutions

The total number of types of governmental bodies involved in the production and implementation of historical politics exceeds two dozen. Despite its far-flung infrastructure and the large number of diverse organs that participate, directly or indirectly, in the development and implementation of historical politics, the role of central state agencies in bringing consistency to this field, in many cases, remains uncertain, limited, and contested.

The President

The president proves to be the most self-sufficient figure in the field of historical politics, mainly in terms of mobility. The bureaucratic structures at his disposal are relatively mobile and allow him to make decisions and implement them promptly (or initiate implementation). Local units of the presidential administration (city, regional/*oblast*, district/*rayon* administrations) generally do not play any independent role and merely represent the executive authority of the center, but their role in assuring the adequate implementation of the president's directives on a local level may vary. In theory, all the executive authorities are obliged to carry out presidential orders and decrees, but in practice, this is not always the case.

The presidential administration has subdivisions directly or indirectly involved in the elaboration and implementation of historical politics.[1] They include the Main Department of Humanitarian Politics, the Main

1 Since 1992, this body changed its names several times: from 1992–2004, it was the Administration of the President; from 2005–10, it was the Secretariat of the President; from 2010–19, it was the Administration of the President; and since 2019 its name is the Office of the President of Ukraine.

Department of Information Politics, and the Department of State Awards.[2] They mostly perform technical functions oriented toward the logistics required to implement the president's decisions. Analytics belongs to the sphere of the National Institute for Strategic Studies (NISS), which is occasionally involved in the development of historical politics.[3] The first time the NISS developed a new strategy in the field was in 2005, when a memorandum on the conceptual framework of a state politics of memory was prepared.[4] As the relevant strategy did not emerge in the end, and because historical politics developed as a result of the interaction of the spontaneous concerns of various interest groups, it can be inferred that the NISS shared the destiny of all such analytical centers: the suggestions and proposals of its experts were almost never used by those who implemented historical politics.

The president may directly influence these politics through decrees, directives (according to the constitution, these are binding on all parties), reports, or draft laws. Presidential decrees and directives are mostly of an administrative character: they define the list of commemorative events and assign responsibility for these events to different power bases within the government. To take the Holodomor—of one of the central objects of historical politics since 1991—as an example, presidents addressed this topic between 1993 and 2015 in the following ways: Leonid Kravchuk issued one decree dedicated to the sixtieth anniversary of the tragedy; Leonid Kuchma followed with two decrees and one directive; Viktor Yushchenko issued fifteen decrees, two directives, one speech, and three draft laws; Viktor Yanukovych promulgated one decree for the eightieth anniversary of the tragedy; and Petro Poroshenko issued six decrees.[5] The development of the office of the presidency led to the creation of a certain mechanism for producing routine commemorative decrees that accompany all upcoming anniversaries, for example, Ukraine's declaration of independence, or days associated with important historical events like the Holodomor, victory in the Second World

2 Prezydent Ukrainy. Struktura Administratsii Prezidenta, http://www.president.gov.ua/administration/apu-structure.

3 The official website of NISS: http://www.niss.gov.ua/.

4 I. Simonenko, "Kontseptual'ni zasady derzhavnoyi polityky pam'yati. Analitychna zapyska," 2010, accessed December 9, 2020, http://www.niss.gov.ua/articles/269/.

5 Calculated using: http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/main/1451050681323240/page. The source indicated here is not always topical, so one should follow the link http://zakon.rada.gov.ua and use the web search engine. In this case, the search word was "Holodomor."

War, Independence Day, etc. The president can also influence historical politics by signing or vetoing laws passed by the parliament; exerting influence through the factions of the Verkhovna Rada he controls or through local state administrations (which hold and/or represent executive power at the local level); or, finally, through direct instructions to the executive organs, ministries, and agencies under his control.[6]

The president's position and his personal attitude toward the problems of the past largely define the direction and intensity of his historical politics. The first president of Ukraine Leonid Kravchuk came to the office directly from the ideology department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU). He did not create the political environment; he adapted himself to existing realities. Kravchuk can be considered to be a typical representative of ideocracy, a politician who reached the heights of power with the help of the very structures engaged in the ideological maintenance of communist power. These left an imprint on his entire political career. Kravchuk took power using the slogans of his recent opponents from the "national democratic" camp. Accordingly, his activity in the sphere of historical politics was largely inertial (he continued to "restore historical justice") but, at the same time, its content and orientation were defined by the need to legitimize his own power, which required establishing an appropriate political myth.

Kravchuk did not burden himself with reinventing the wheel. As the foundation of his historical politics he selected the standard ethnonational myth of "national revival," created by the Ukrainian intelligentsia at the turn of the twentieth century, or rather, it was the myth that chose him. It was under Kravchuk, first as head of the ideology department of the Central Committee of the CPU at the end of the 1980s and then as president, that the engineering of the collective/historical memory of the Holodomor began. In his former role he firmly opposed the nationalist mythology about the famine, but as president, he facilitated the state commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the tragedy, which was now presented as a genocide against Ukrainians.

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6 According to the constitution, the president nominates the chairman of the Security Service of Ukraine (to be approved by the parliament), appoints half of the National Council for Television and Radio, appoints ambassadors, and appoints the heads of local administrations. In Yushchenko's time, the Security Service and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs actively promoted the president's historical politics.

In September 1993, he took part in the international scientific conference "Holodomor in Ukraine in 1932–1933: Causes and Consequences." His presence was of great symbolic importance, attesting to the fact that the highest authorities were interested in "restoring the historical truth" about the famine. In his opening speech, Kravchuk declared: "I completely agree that it was a well-planned action, it was a genocide conducted against one's own people. However, I would not stop here. Yes, it was a genocide against one's own people, but they were following the directives from another center."[7] Ten years before, on the fiftieth anniversary of the famine, the very same Kravchuk, in his incarnation as the head of the Department of Propaganda and Agitation of the Central Committee of the CPU, had taken active part in counter-propaganda actions directed against "an anti-Soviet campaign unleashed in the West on the occasion of the so-called '50th anniversary of the man-made famine in Ukraine.'"[8] However, no one wished to remember this: neither ex-dissidents who supported Kravchuk nor the diaspora whose "nationalist insinuations" about the famine he had recently fought with such zeal. Politically, what he had said and done in the past did not matter; what he was saying and doing now mattered more.

By the same twist of fate, as the first president of independent Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk participated in the ritual of the passing of the state symbols of the Ukrainian People's Republic (1918–1920) to the Ukrainian head of state. This ritual was supposed to symbolize the legal continuity of the UPR and modern Ukraine, and it was one of the first public events in the field of historical politics in modern Ukraine.[9] To add another layer to this ceremony, the symbols of the UPR were handed to the president by Mykola Plaviuk, the head of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (Melnyk faction): this group had all but embraced the positions of "democratic nationalism" by that time.

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7 Leonid Kravchuk (Presydent Ukrayiny), "My ne mayemo prava znekhtuvaty urokamy mynuloho! Holodomor 1932–1933 rr. v Ukrayini: prychyny i naslidky. Mizhnarodna naukova konferentsiya," Kyyiv, September 9–10, 1993 r. Materialy (Kyiv, 1995), 10.

8 For more detail, see V. *Litvin, Ukraina: politika, politiki, vlast. Na fone politicheskogo portreta L. Kravchuka* (Kyiv: Al`ternatyvy, 1997), 98–101.

9 A video fragment of this event can be found in "1992: ostanniy prezydent UNR peredaye Kravchuku kleynody" *Istorychna pravda*, January 22, 2012, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/videos/2012/01/22/69657/.

During Kravchuk's presidency, there was an attempt to initiate the production of a multivolume *History of the Ukrainian People*,[10] but this project was unsuccessful because of a lack of funds since Ukraine was suffering a deep social-economic crisis during his years in office. Additionally, Kravchuk was the first president to commemorate the deportation of the Crimean Tatars. He decreed May 18, 1994, to be the first official Day of Sorrow and Memory of Crimean Tatars, Armenians, Greeks, and "persons of other nationalities."[11] Finally, the major project "Rehabilitated by History," which involved the collection of data on victims of political repression in Soviet Ukraine, also began during his presidency.[12]

Kravchuk's rival in the 1994 elections and his successor as president, the technocrat Leonid Kuchma, considered questions of the interpretation and representation of the past in political life purely pragmatically. He used historical politics to boost his own legitimacy but, at the same time, tried to strike a balance between competing memory narratives while also avoiding excesses that would lead to social conflicts. It was under him that the basic set of rituals related to the commemoration of the Holodomor was formed and consecrated by the state (including the Memorial Day of Victims of Holodomor). Furthermore, it was during his presidency that work on the historical rehabilitation of the OUN (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists) and UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army) commenced, although Kuchma avoided speaking on this topic publicly. The new national currency introduced under Kuchma represented a portrait gallery of symbolic historical characters, and Kuchma also established a state holiday important for Ukrainian national self-consciousness, the Day of Ukrainian Cossackdom.[13] In total, seven of his decrees were dedicated to the popularization of history and the development of the Cossacks in modern Ukraine.[14]

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10 R. G. Symonenko, *Do kontseptsii bahatotomnoyi "Istorii ukrayinskoho narodu" (mizhnatsionalyy ta mizhnarodnyy aspekty)* (Kyyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrayiny AN Ukrayiny, 1993).

11 "Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro zakhody shchodo vshanuvannya pam'yati zhertv deportatsii z Krymu,' no. 165/94," April 14, 1994, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/165/94.

12 "Holovna redaktsiina kolehiya naukovo-dokumental`noi serii knyh 'Reabilitovani istorijeju,'" see http://www.reabit.org.ua/.

13 "Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro den' Ukrayinskoho kozatstva,'" no. 966/99 (July 8, 1999), http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/966/99.

14 Calculated with: http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/main.

At the same time, Kuchma respected the nostalgic Soviet version of historical memory, and supported a number of relevant ritual and/or symbolic practices. For instance, he promulgated nine decrees, eight directives, and one law dedicated to the "Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945."[15] It was during his time in office and with his unofficial support that the jubilees of the communist leader Volodymyr Shcherbytsky and Lenin's Young Communist League of Ukraine, relics from the Soviet period, were celebrated. His decrees and directives provided funding for the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the reunification of Ukrainian lands, officialized Defender of the Fatherland Day (February 23, a Soviet holiday), introduced the Day of the Partisan Glory (September 22), and provided for the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Young Guard (*Molodaya Gvardija*) resistance organization.[16]

Viktoriya Sereda, a sociologist who dedicated a special study to the discourse practices of Ukrainian presidents, asserts that Leonid Kuchma followed a "double strategy." On the one hand, he followed the canon of the classic national narrative; on the other hand, he used the effect of national amnesia and "constructed exactly a model of historical past that would favor the 'consolidation of the nation' due to the marginalization of any ideological extremes, both the extreme left (communism) and extreme right (ethnic nationalism) and the suppression of conflict-provoking and controversial events."[17] It can be said with confidence that in his historical politics, Kuchma accurately followed the canon of the standard national narrative, while at the same time incorporating elements of the Soviet narrative either intentionally or because of circumstances. During his presidency, an ambivalent pattern of collective/historical memory dominated the commemorative landscape of the country.

In a similar vein, his historical politics allowed him to successfully avoid conflicts with external ramifications. He was active in the politics of reconciliation with Poland (on the issue of the Ukrainian-Polish conflict in Volhynia

15 Calculated with: http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/main/1451063892868621/page2.

16 September 17 as the anniversary of "reunification" (1939) is a date from the Soviet calendar. The national/nationalist narrative observes January 22, 1919 as the date of "reunification"—on this day, the West Ukrainian People's Republic merged with the Ukrainian People's Republic. The same Leonid Kuchma introduced the Day of Unity to commemorate this event.

17 V. Sereda, "Osobennosti reprezentatsii natsional'no-istoricheskikh identichnostey v ofitsial'nom diskurse prezidentov Ukrainy i Rossii," *Sotsiologiya: teoriya, metody, marketing* no. 3 (2006): 93.

and Galicia in 1943–44) and was an advocate of cooperation with Russia in the field of the "mutual past." It was also during his presidency that the state celebration of the 350th anniversary of the controversial Treaty of Pereyaslav (1654) was held, although it was presented as the anniversary of the "Cossack Council" and not as the "reunification of Ukraine with Russia."[18] Ukrainian and Russian historians worked together on joint projects during Kuchma's time in office, and Ukrainian-Polish and Ukrainian-Russian historical commissions were established.

The ambivalence that characterized Kuchma's historical politics could sometimes produce oddities. For example, in 2001, a military unit known as the "24th mechanized Samara-Ulyanovsk Berdichev Iron Division, Holder of the Order of the October Revolution, Thrice Holder of the Order of the Red Banner, Holder of the Orders of Suvorov and Bohdan Khmelnytsky" (the whole set of Soviet awards) was additionally named after Prince Danylo of Galicia,[19] a figure from the national(ist) historical pantheon. However, for all this ambiguity, at the end of his presidential career, Kuchma published a book literally entitled *Ukraine is Not Russia*, which clearly showed his attitudes toward representations of the past.

Kuchma's successor, Viktor Yushchenko, similar to Leonid Kravchuk, fits the image of an ideocrat: he postulated the necessity of a "spiritual renaissance" for Ukrainians as a precondition of the country's advancement in all other spheres of national life. True history, he believed, was at the core of the reawakening. Yushchenko went down in contemporary history as Ukraine's "historical President," meaning that it was during his term that historical politics reached an intensity and proportion that was hitherto unprecedented, and the mobilization of state institutes for its implementation reached its zenith. The shaping and implementation of historical politics under Yushchenko was performed not only by local state administrations—instruments of presidential power, but also by many other organs that usually perform purely technical functions in this field: the Ministry of Foreign

18 Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, "Pro vidznachennya 350-ricchya Pereyaslavskoi kozatskoi rady," March 13, 2002, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/238/2002.

19 Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, "Pro prisvoyennya pochesnoho naymenuvannya 'imeni knyazya Danyla Halitskogo' 24 mekhanizovaniy Samaro-Ulyanivskiy Berdychivskiy Zalizniy ordena Zhovtnevoi Revolyutsii trychi ordeniv Chervonoho Prapora ordeniv Suvorova i Bohdana Khmelnytskoho dyvizii," April 19, 2001, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/268/2001.

Affairs, the Security Service of Ukraine, the Ministry of Justice, and the State Committee on Radio and Television. Additionally, a special executive organ was established in 2006, the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory. That same year, the first memorial law was adopted; it outlined the right of the state to regulate and direct public opinion in the field of collective/historical memory.[20] There were attempts to introduce administrative and criminal responsibility for the denial of the Holodomor (for more detail, see chapter 7). The total number of Yushchenko's decrees, instructions, and assignments (including one memorial law) dedicated to the Holodomor exceeds forty, making him first in this field among the presidents of Ukraine.[21]

In Viktor Yushchenko's historical politics, ideological, moral, and ethical motives coexisted with utilitarian ones. The instrumentalization of collective/historical memory fit into the general pattern of his face-offs with political opponents and was often used to discredit them morally and politically or to put pressure on them (for instance, on the question of whether the Holodomor was a genocide of Ukrainians). His efforts in the field of historical politics were intricately linked with the most urgent needs of political struggle. In 2009, speaking at a meeting dedicated to the eighteenth anniversary of Ukrainian independence, Yushchenko proposed a three-point plan for dealing with the latest (in other words, permanent) domestic political crisis. The first point was as follows: "To pursue the course toward the revival, the recovery of our historical memory."[22] All of Yushchenko's proposals for dealing with the political crisis of 2006–2007 contained points pertinent to historical politics.[23]

It was under Yushchenko that the canonical version of the collective/historical memory of the Great Famine of 1932–33 was definitively established. Henceforth, it was presented as the Holodomor, a man-made famine intentionally organized by Moscow with the aim of exterminating the Ukrainian peasants, who were the main bearers of national identity and the primary supporters of Ukrainian independence/statehood.

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20 "Zakon Ukrayiny, 'Pro Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini,'" November 28, 2006, http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/376-16.

21 This does not include documents dedicated to personalities and "regular" dates (such as the anniversary of independence).

22 "V. Yushchenko povidomyv pro sviy plan iz vidrodzhennya Ukrayiny," *RBC*, August 24, 2009, http://www.rbc.ua/ukr/news/v_yushchenko_soobshchil_o_svoem_plane_vozrozhdeniya_ukrainy__1251100605.

23 For a more detailed view, see Heorhij Kasyanov, *Danse Macabre: Golod 1932–1933 rokiv u polityts, masoviy svidomosti ta istoriohrafii (1980-ti – pochatok 2000-h)* (Kyiv: Nash chas, 2010), 59–68.

Yushchenko's time in office was also marked by intense efforts aimed at filling the pot of collective/historical memory with memorial dates and events that would fit his vision of the past and, according to him, would make this past more complete. These fall into the pattern of inventing traditions within a national/nationalist exclusive memory narrative: the victory of "Ukrainians over Muscovites" in the Battle of Konotop (1659), "the genocide of Ukrainians" at Baturin (1708), the Battle of Kruty (1918), the Ukrainian revolution of 1917–21, the Holodomor of 1932–33, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). Yushchenko took great pains to create new sites of memory and elevate their status, like the national museum's "Memorial of Holodomor Victims in Ukraine,"[24] the opening of the capital of the Hetmanate in Baturin, and the historical and cultural area "Bykivnia Graves."

Viktor Yushchenko was the first president who attempted to initiate a system-level decommunization of Ukraine's symbolic space. Two of his decrees contain instructions to dismantle monuments and remove place names related to the communist regime.

It was under Yushchenko that the external vector of historical politics took a quantum leap due to his efforts to achieve international recognition of the famine of 1932–33 as a genocide against the Ukrainian people from the UN, the European Parliament, and other institutions. He sought to enrich the national pantheon with such controversial historical figures as Roman Shukhevych and Stepan Bandera; this effort was not met with enthusiasm in Israel, Poland, and the European Parliament. The Russian factor also played an enormous role in the acceleration of historical politics: Russia's political leaders opened a new era of memorial wars with all European members (with the exception of Belarus). Summarizing his presidency, which ended with his failure to win re-election (he received only 5.45 percent of the vote), Yushchenko declared: "I am glad that the nation finally learned about the real aim of the war under the leadership of Bohdan Khmelnytsky, about Vygovsky's victory at Konotop, about Hetman Ivan Mazepa, about Pylyp Orlyk, about the Ukrainian and West Ukrainian People's Republics, about the state of Hetman Skoropadsky, about the

24 Called the "Memorial Museum of the Holodomor Victims" since July 2015.

Holodomor, about Stalin's repression, and about the heroic deeds of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army."[25]

While the nation had "learned" about all the aforementioned persons and events well before Yushchenko's presidency since they were already included in history textbooks, it cannot be denied that Yushchenko significantly expanded the topic range of historical politics and greatly radicalized those components of the national/nationalist memory narrative that previously did not have a clearly articulated ideological message. Practically all the components of the national myth were created or recreated before Yushchenko, but he played an outstanding role in the political instrumentalization of the myth and the radicalization of Ukrainian ethno-symbolism.

Despite the obvious tendency toward the central national/nationalist narrative of memory, in Yushchenko's historical politics there were also puzzling deviations toward both the inclusive and mixed models. Yushchenko did not dare encroach on the central historical myth of the nostalgic Soviet memory narrative, "The Great Patriotic War." Moreover, he attempted, albeit without great success, to find a way to reconcile veterans of the UPA with those of the Red Army. At the same time, it was under Yushchenko that historical politics became more conflict prone, and not just within the framework of competition between the nostalgic Soviet and the national/nationalist memory narratives. The version of the national/nationalist memory narrative promoted by Yushchenko also provoked criticism and discontent from among his liberal allies.

The somewhat antiquarian national identity formulae embraced by the president and a part of his entourage reaches back to the ethnic/cultural nationalism of the second half of the nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth century. Its congruence with the reality of the twenty-first century was problematic. This vision was manipulatively used by Yushchenko's political opponents both in Ukraine and in neighboring Russia and provoked annoyance and aversion among his allies in the liberal, nationally minded intelligentsia. The excessive influence of factions of the diaspora directly or indirectly connected to the ideology of the OUN-B, coupled with domes-

25 "Yushchenko, pererakhuvav svoyi dosyagnennya na posadi presydenta," *TSN,* October 17, 2009, http://tsn.ua/ukrayina/yushchenko-pererahuvav-svoyi-dosyagnennya-na-posadi-prezidenta.html.

tic nationalists allied with Yushchenko, reinforced the vintage character of the ideology and its lopsidedness toward the nineteenth century narrative.[26]

Viktor Yanukovych, president of Ukraine from 2010 to 2014, decided to return to the time-tested pattern of Kuchma's presidency, which boiled down to the avoidance of ideologically sensitive issues and the assertion of ambivalence if necessary. On May 14, 2010, when speaking at the conference of the Civic Council on the Humanities, Yanukovych declared the need for reaching a more sophisticated understanding of historical figures that provoke controversy. He also advocated for "graduality and delicacy" in resolving such conflicts.[27] It should be noted that for Yanukovych, as for Kuchma before him, questions of historical politics were of secondary importance, and his approach toward these issues was conditioned either by the need to legitimize his rule or to challenge political rivals.[28]

To uphold his legitimacy as president of the whole of Ukraine, Yanukovych exploited the standard national memory narrative quite successfully. For instance, he did not encroach on the main sacral symbol of collective/historical memory, the Holodomor. His most significant movement in this field was his public refusal to endorse the thesis of the Holodomor as a genocide of Ukrainians. On April 27, 2010, speaking at a session of the Parliament Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, Yanukovych declared that "to recognize the Holodomor as a fact of genocide against one or another ethnic group would be erroneous and unjust."[29]

The rejection of the version of the Holodomor as genocide was a necessary symbolic gesture for Yanukovych: it alleviated tension in one aspect of Ukraine's relations with Russia. All other components of the corresponding historical myth and related ideological practices were left intact. The man-

26 Organization of Ukrainian Nationalist (*banderivtsi*) was a right-wing underground paramilitary organization founded in 1929 to fight for Ukrainian independence against Poland.

27 "Yanukovich nazval 'naibolshiy destruktiv' v Ukraine," *Unian*, May 13, 2010, www.unian.net/rus/news/news-376684.html.

28 Viktor Yanukovych did not like "humanities" and quite often got into comic situations because of his need to speak on such issues. His most famous slips were made when addressing these topics. He mentioned the poetess "Anna Akhmetova" (instead of Akhmatova) and "the Russian poet" A. Chekhov. A case of direct communication with historical memory led to one of the most comic episodes in his presidential biography: in May 2010, during a ceremony at the Glory Memorial in Kyiv, a massive wreath, blown off by the wind, fell on his head.

29 "Yanukovych, skazav deputatam PASE, shcho Holodomor – ne henotsid," *Unian*, April 27, 2010, http://eunews.unian.net/ukr/detail/193461.

datory visit to the Holodomor Victims Memorial, instituted personally by Viktor Yushchenko, remained an essential part of the itinerary for foreign leaders' visits to Ukraine, as did the laying of a wreath at the Eternal Flame and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on the Alley of Glory, a memorial site established during the Soviet era. The visit of Russian president Dmitry Medvedev on May 17, 2010, was symbolically significant: he visited the Holodomor Victims Memorial although he had defiantly refused to come to its opening when invited by Yushchenko in 2008.

On November 26, 2010, Holodomor Remembrance Day, an address was published on the presidential website in which Yanukovych called the 1932–33 famine "Armageddon," criticized speculations around the number of victims, and urged telling the "truth and only the truth" about the event.[30] The next day, together with Prime Minister Mykola Azarov, he took part in remembrance events at the Memorial of Holodomor Victims in Ukraine (now the National Museum of the Holodomor-Genocide).

Like Kuchma, Yanukovych avoided speaking about the OUN and UPA, preferring to leave these topics to the talking heads of the Party of Regions. They readily used the bogeyman of nationalism to discredit their political opponents. Yanukovych officially played the role of a politician who rejects the conflictual pattern of historical politics. Like his predecessors, he supported the central historical myth of the Soviet era, the Great Patriotic War. He signed seven decrees on various anniversaries related to the war.[31] During his presidency, the commemoration of the Soviet-style war myth became more pronounced, and varied. Yet for all his reticence in the field of historical politics, Yanukovych dutifully met his commitments in the field of inventing and shaping historical tradition and used decrees to celebrate the anniversaries of Ukrainian independence and the adoption of the constitution. Yanukovych signed his last commemorative decree on February 13, 2014, one week before his panicked escape from Ukraine; it was dedicated to the sixtieth anniversary of the accession of Crimea into Ukraine.[32]

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30 "Janukovych zvernuvsia do narodu: 'Holodomor – tse Armageddon,'" *Istorychna pravda*, November 26, 2010, https://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/4cf03c7c73066/.

31 Calculated using http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/main/1453141165681673/page.

32 "Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro vidznachennya 60-yi richnytsi vkhozhdennya Krymu do skladu Ukrayiny' vid," February 13, 2014, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/73/2014.

It is easy to see that all the Ukrainian presidents, when designing and implementing their historical politics, recognized the absolute preeminence of the national/nationalist narrative of collective/historical memory that legitimized the political base of their own presidency. It was the choice of patterns that posed difficulties. Speaking of tendencies, both Leonid Kravchuk and Leonid Kuchma, for different reasons, were inclined toward an ambivalent pattern, while Viktor Yushchenko preferred an exclusive one with a special emphasis on a vintage nineteenth-century style national/nationalist narrative of memory. Despite the inertial reproduction of practices and rituals of the nostalgic Soviet memory pattern, his historical politics was based on an ethnonational narrative. Viktor Yanukovych leaned toward the ambivalent pattern when publicly addressing the topic of historical memory. But at the same time, his ideological watchdogs promoted an exclusive pattern of memory based on the nostalgic Soviet memory narrative.

These general conclusions can be illustrated with data from Oleksandr Grytsenko, who calculated the total number of decrees of three Ukrainian presidents related to the type of memory narrative they promoted.[33]

Table 3. Presidential Decrees Related to Memory Narratives

Ideological Trend of Presidential Decrees	L. Kuchma, 1994–2004	V. Yushchenko, 2005–2010	V. Yanukovych, 2010–2014
Decrees supporting Soviet version of Ukrainian history	12	9	5
Decrees undermining Soviet version and supporting national version	20	89	1
Decrees potentially changing both versions	47	61	11
Total number of decrees and directives in area of historical politics	79	159	17

33 O. Hrytsenko, "Pro derzhavu ta mediynykiv, rytualy ta innovatsii, pro heroya Ukrayiny Shapiro, shyryannya Yanukovycha ta viziyi Yushchenka," accessed May 26, 2017, http://historians.in.ua/index.php/en/istoriya-i-pamyat-vazhki-pitannya/1812-oleksandr-hrytsenko-pro-derzhavu-ta-mediinykiv-rytualy-ta-innovatsii-pro-heroia-ukrainy-shapiro-shyriannia-yanukovycha-ta-vizii-yushchenka.

Petro Poroshenko, who came to power during the dramatic events that took place between November 2013 and February 2014, followed the pattern of historical politics that emerged during Yushchenko's presidency. However, unlike Yushchenko, rather than shaping the narrative himself, he did his best to comply with the demands and requests of different segments of society and the political elite—i.e., those who saw the exclusive national/nationalist pattern of historical memory not only as a source of ideological and moral support but also an important means of political mobilization in internal struggle and defense against external aggression. This does not rule out the possibility that Poroshenko held personal positions related to the problems of the past and their actualization in the present. However, it should be remembered that the fifth president of Ukraine, judging from his political and professional biography, was a hard pragmatist who extensively used memory and history issues solely to achieve his political and business goals.

The political situation (the annexation of Crimea by Russia, the war in the eastern part of the country, and the constant threats to territorial integrity and sovereignty) pushed him toward the version of historical politics that had the highest mobilization potential at the time of his ascent to the presidency. This is probably why Poroshenko in many respects became the worthy successor of Yushchenko. He hurriedly signed memorial laws despite serious criticism even from his political allies. One of these laws (about the legal status of the participants of the struggle for the independence of Ukraine in the twentieth century) was the practical realization of a program created by Yushchenko's decree and was developed with the active participation of the nationalist All-Ukrainian Union "Svoboda" party.

Petro Poroshenko was unequivocal in his support for the decommunization of Ukraine's symbolic space and directly participated in it: he decreed the removal of all Soviet attributes from the names of Ukrainian military units (in most cases, the measure concerned the names of awards received by these units during the Soviet era).[34] He changed the name of one of the most important commemorative dates: "the victory in the Great Patriotic War," present in the decrees of all his predecessors, simply disappeared and was replaced with "the victory over Nazism in the Second World War."[35] Thus, the most emblematic

34 "Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro vnesennia zmin do Ukazu Prezydenta Ukrainy vid 30 zhovtnia 2000 roku,' no.1173," November 18, 2015, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/646/2015/paran38#n38.

35 "Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro vstanovlennia vidznaky Prezydenta Ukrainy yuvileinoi medali

formula of the Soviet era vanished from the official symbolic space of Ukraine. The decree about Defender of Ukraine Day followed: since 2014, it has been celebrated on October 14. As a result, Soviet Defender of the Fatherland Day, celebrated on February 23, re-established by Leonid Kuchma in 1999, was taken off the national calendar. A new date, October 14, was added; it simultaneously referred to three different things: the Day of Intercession of the Mother of God, the Day of the Ukrainian Cossacks, and the symbolic date of the establishment of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (1942).

The president was most active in the promotion of the commemorative practices related to the contemporary history of Ukraine: his decrees celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the student "Revolution on Granite" (October 1990), the twenty-fifth anniversary of the People's Movement of Ukraine, and the fortieth anniversary of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group. He established the Order of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes (commemorating the victims of Euromaidan 2014) and the Memorial Day of the Heavenly Hundred Heroes (February 20), and he laid the base of the museum dedicated to the Revolution of Dignity. But he did not forget about more distant history. In fact, he issued decrees ordering the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the first public performance of the national hymn of Ukraine and the 200th anniversary of the birth of its author,[36] the centennial of the "Victory of the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen on Makivka Mountain,"[37] and the 1,000th anniversary of Saint Prince Vladimir's death.[38] The latter two dates were a vital part of Ukraine's ideological counterattack in its infor-

'70 rokiv' Peremohy nad natsyzmom," no. 249, April 29, 2015, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/249/2015; "Ukaz Presydenta, 'Pro zakhody z vidznachennya u 2015 rotsi 70-yi richnytsi Peremohi nad natsizmom u Yevropi ta 70-yi richnytsi zavershnnya Drugoyi svitovoyi viyny,'" no. 169, March 24, 2015, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/169/2015.

36 "Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro vidznachennya 200-ricchya vid dnya narodzhennya Mikhaila Verbytskoho ta 150-i richnytsi pershoho publichnoho vikonannya natsionalnohohimnu,'" January 12, 2015, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/6/2015.

37 "Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro zakhody z vidznachennya diyalnosti Ukrayinskikh Sichovykh Striltsiv ta 100-ricchya ikh peremohi na hori Makivka,'" April 21, 2015, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/228/2015. In spring and summer 1915, units of Ukrainian Sich Riflemen (USS), part of the Austro-Hungarian army, distinguished themselves in fighting the Russian army for control of the strategic height of the Makivka Mountain. In the 1920s–1930s, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists started the tradition of honoring Ukrainians killed during this fighting.

38 "Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro vshanuvannya pamyati knyazya Kyyivskoho Volodymyra Velykoho–tvortsa serednyovichnoyi yevropeyskoyi derzhavy Ukrayiny-Rusi,'" no. 107, February 25, 2015, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/107/2015.

mation war with Russia. In the case of the former, the commemoration of the military victory of "Ukrainians over Russians" followed the political line initiated by Yushchenko's decrees (the "Victory of Konotop" of 1659, the "Tragedy of Baturin" of 1708). In the case of the latter, the decree was a reaction against official celebrations in Moscow, where Vladimir the Great was presented as a Russian historical figure.

Poroshenko returned to the idea of gaining recognition of the Holodomor as a genocide against Ukrainians at the international level. In 2016, he required the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine "to proceed with efforts aimed at foreign states' and international organizations' recognition of the Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine as a genocide of the Ukrainian people."[39] In 2017, he spoke about this idea to the US Congress, the German Bundestag, the King of Belgium, the UN Assembly, and the president of Israel. Poroshenko personally supported the idea of criminalizing so-called Holodomor denial.[40]

He happily supported the expansion of the nationalist narrative of memory at the national level. At the end of his presidential career, the OUN "March of Ukrainian Nationalists" was officially introduced as a March of the Ukrainian Army; moreover, he used this music piece during his unsuccessful 2019 presidential campaign.

Parliament

The parliament of Ukraine traditionally serves as an arena where different political forces publicly demonstrate their social and political programs (sometimes it devolves into political exhibitionism, outright hooliganism, and flamboyant performances). The sphere of historical politics is no exception in this regard. The rostrum of the parliament and the dedicated committees of the Verkhovna Rada are used to shape the legal frameworks of historical politics and (mostly) to advertise various political groups or coordinate political

39 "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrainy, 'Pro zakhody u zviazku z 85-my rokovynamy Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini–henotsydu Ukrajins'koho Narodu,'" November 26, 2016, http://www.president.gov.ua/documents/5232016-20776.

40 Vystup Prezydenta Ukrainy pid chas vshanuvannia pamiati zhertv Holodomoru, accessed December 7, 2018, http://www.president.gov.ua/news/vistup-prezidenta-ukrayini-pid-chas-vshanuvannya-pamyati-zhe-44698.

pressure against opponents. For nearly the entire period of independence, the parliament's activities in the sphere of historical politics can be described as the confrontation between two exclusivist models of collective/historical memory: the national/nationalist and the Soviet-nostalgic.

The two most ideologically consistent groups in the Verkhovna Rada were the communists, present between 1990 and 2014; and the radical nationalists, who only once managed to get into the Verkhovna Rada on their own party lists (the All-Ukrainian Union "Svoboda") in 2012. In the extraordinary parliamentary elections of 2014, neither communists nor radical nationalists were elected to the parliament through party lists, and in 2015, the Communist Party of Ukraine was banned outright.

Between 1992 and 2018, lawmakers proposed and discussed more than two hundred resolutions, addresses, and draft laws aimed at regulating the sphere of collective/historical memory.[41] Of these, twelve were debated in 1992–2000, twenty-three in 2001–2004, eighty-five in 2005–10, forty-eight in 2011–13, and thirty-nine in 2014–18. As we can see, more than two-thirds of the original proposals emerged in the last decade. Draft laws account for about one-quarter of all these efforts. At final count, the parliament adopted more than fifty resolutions and addresses and ten memorial laws defining the framework and content of state historical politics.

The following calculations help us understand which problems of the past interested parliamentarians in the present. Before 2016, forty-four documents concerned the assessment of the activities of the OUN and the UPA, forty-six dealt with the Holodomor, and forty-nine concerned the anniversaries and jubilees of World War II (before 2015, referred to as the "Great Patriotic War" in the documents) and problems related to the social status of veterans.[42] The veterans issue is also included in the sphere of historical politics because the principal contest was the equalization of rights between veterans of the Soviet Army and the "Great Patriotic War" and veterans of the UPA, which was tantamount to the political recognition of the OUN and UPA.

Normative documents and laws are the most common way for a certain political group to influence historical politics or to self-advertise. Usually, such projects are proposed by groups of deputies representing one

41 My calculation based on: http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc2.
42 My calculation based on: http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc2.

or another parliamentary faction or a group of allied political forces, as was the case of the project to criminalize the denial of the Holodomor/Holocaust. Sometimes, they are proposed by a single MP, although generally they have received the endorsement of that person's parliamentary faction. In any case, there are no personal initiatives in the sphere of historical politics, as they should always be endorsed formally or informally by a certain interest group.

Parliamentary hearings and the resulting adoption of recommendations and reports are one of the forms of communication between parliamentarians and the general public. However, deputies rarely use this method, perhaps because of its lack of efficiency: recommendations or reports adopted as a result of the hearings never had any real force. Between 2000 and 2015, only once have the parliamentary hearings been directly dedicated to issues of historical politics,[43] when parliament debated "About honoring the memory of the victims of the Holodomor of 1932–1933."[44]

As a rule, the resolutions and decisions of the Verkhovna Rada on historical issues have been explicitly formulated as political statements. The aforementioned resolution that followed the parliamentary hearings about the Holodomor clearly emphasized the necessity of recognizing the famine in the Ukrainian SSR as "a genocide of the Ukrainian people" (the same document also spoke about "a genocide of the Ukrainian nation").[45] At times, such statements and decisions could look like political antics. In 2009, it was clear that an alliance of Communists, the Party of Regions, the Lytvyn Bloc, and the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc adopted a resolution to celebrate the ninetieth anniversary of the Young Communist League of Ukraine (Komsomol) just to spite Viktor Yushchenko and his parliamentary supporters. According to the official version of events, this act was the response of MPs to an "ini-

43 These problems were addressed during other hearings dedicated to the issues of humanities, but mostly in a contextual way: Taras Shevchenko yak postat' svitovoho znachennya (do 200-ricchya z dnya narodzhennya), March 15, 2014, Stratehiya humanitarnoyi polityky suchasnoyi Ukrayiny, October 6, 2010, Natsionalna identychnist v Ukrayini v umovakh hlobalizatsiynykh vyklykiv: problem ta shlyakh y zberezhennya, December 9, 2009.

44 Parliamentary Hearing, "Shchodo vshanuvannya pam'yati zhertv holodomoru 1932–1933 roikv," February 12, 2003, ed. D. Tabachnyk, O. Zinchenko, H. Udovenko (Kyiv: Verkhovna Rada Ukrayiny, Kabinet Ministriv Ukrayini, 2003).

45 "Postanova Verkhovnoyi Rady Ukrayiny, 'Pro rekomendatsiyi parlamentskikh slukhan shchodo vshanuvannya pam'yati zhertv holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv,' no. 607–15," March 6, 2003, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/607-15.

tiative by Komsomol veterans."[46] In reality, it was intended as a slap in the face of President Yushchenko and his historical politics, which included the decommunization of Ukraine's symbolic space. In a strange twist, the resolution was adopted on April 1, an unofficial day of laughter, jokes, and pranks—April Fools' Day.

Another body worth mentioning is the temporary special commission of the Verkhovna Rada, which are usually created to examine an especially controversial issue. The most famous example of such a commission in the field of historical politics was a temporary special commission established in 1996[47] called the Temporary Special Commission of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine for Assistance for the Study of Issues Related to the Investigation into the Activity of the OUN-UPA, the confusing name of which indicates the awareness of parliamentary deputies that a compromise between the two polar-opposite assessments of the nationalist movement is impossible. As could be expected, the work of the commission, half of whose members (national democrats[48]) supported the political legitimation of the OUN and UPA and the other half (communists) who opposed it, came to naught. Later, a government-sponsored commission of historians was created with the same goal.

Parliamentarians may also influence historical politics and (self-)advertise at the same time by appealing to the Constitutional Court. The most famous cases in Ukraine were precisely appeals to the Constitutional Court questioning the constitutionality of documents adopted by the Verkhovna Rada or the president in the sphere of historical politics. Ten appeals were made between 2010 and 2019. Almost all of them were, in fact, instances of political self-promotion. Their initiators already knew the answer: none of these appeals fell under the purview of the Constitutional Court. These appeals concerned the most controversial events and symbols in the sphere of historical politics: in the "Victory Banner" case (2011) as well as the decommunization laws case (2019), the Constitutional Court effectively issued a

46 "Postanova Verkhovnoyi Rady Ukrayiny, 'Pro vidznachennya 90-ricchya stvorennya komsomolu Ukrayiny,' no. 1221-17," April 1, 2009, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1221-17.

47 "Postanova Verkhovnoyi Rady Ukrayiny, 'Pro sklad tymchasovoyi spetsialnoyi komisiyi Verkhovnoyi Rady Ukrayiny po spriyannyu u vyvchenni pytan, pov'yazanykh z perevirkoyu diyalnosti OUN-UPA,'" accessed July 12, 2017, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/372/96-вр.

48 National democrats: can mostly be described as right- and center-conservatives, those who proclaimed independence, the supremacy of the Ukrainian language, and an ethnocentric version of the history of Ukraine.

ruling, but the court rejected a hearing on the posthumous awarding of the title of "Hero of Ukraine" to Roman Shukhevych and Stepan Bandera and the memorial laws case.

The Verkhovna Rada's efforts regarding the so-called memorial laws, which were intended to regulate the sphere of historical memory (see Part III), deserve special attention. In total, ten memorial laws have been adopted. The most emblematic ones are the law concerning the recognition of the Holodomor as genocide (2006) and the so-called "decommunization laws" adopted in April 2015. Between November 2015 and July 2016, the Verkhovna Rada adopted thirteen resolutions related to the renaming of 987 villages, cities, and small towns and twenty-five administrative districts.[49] In May 2017, the Verkhovna Rada swiftly adopted a law regarding the display of the "Ribbon of Saint George," which was extremely popular in Russia and among Donbass rebels; the legislation banned its display in Ukraine.

In 2015–19, a kind of ideological monotony in parliament set in, partly as a result of the political situation, and partly due to certain efforts made by the state. Discussions and events that promoted the nostalgic Soviet version of collective/historical memory essentially stopped. Those that sporadically occurred were rarely covered by the media. The agents of this narrative (the communists, the Party of Regions) were removed from the political arena either by law (communists) or by the "nature of things" (the Party of Regions). The representatives of the national/nationalist narrative established a monopoly. This tendency expressed itself most significantly in the adoption of the aforementioned memorial laws of 2015 and in the decommunization process resulting from these laws, which took place from the second half of 2015 to 2019.

Government

Usually, the government as an institution is not supposed to play an independent role in the development of historical politics. Its main function is purely technical: it implements the laws, orders, decrees, and resolutions

49 "Dekomunizatsiya naselenyth punktiv ta rayoniv Ukrayini: pidstavy, protses, pidsumky," 2018, accessed October 20, 2020, http://memory.gov.ua/page/dekomunizatsiya-nazv-naselenikh-punktiv-ta-raioniv-ukraini-pidstavi-protses-pidsumki.

produced by the parliament or the office of president. Every commemorative decree of the president includes instructions to the government and the relevant ministries and agencies. Afterward, the Cabinet of Ministers issues resolutions and orders regarding implementation and budgetary provisions.

This technical role does not mean that the government is passive on questions of historical politics. The success of many parliamentary and presidential initiatives depends on the leaders of the Cabinet of Ministers (prime minister, vice-premiers, ministers, and deputy ministers) and even on middle-ranking officials (heads of ministry departments), who are generally invisible. For instance, during the political crisis of 2006–2007 when the government was led by Yanukovych, Yushchenko's proposals and orders in the sphere of historical politics clearly did not excite the Cabinet, and consequently they faced a number of bureaucratic obstacles.

Usually, the Deputy Prime Minister for Humanitarian Issues is the main figure in the government responsible for questions on historical politics. Under Yanukovych (2010–14), this ministerial position was abolished, but in 2014 it was brought back. Currently, the Deputy Prime Minister on Humanitarian Issues of Ukraine supervises the activities of all ministries and agencies directly involved in the development and implementation of historical politics: the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, the Ministry of Culture, the State Committee on Radio and Television, and the Ministry of Education and Science.

Before the establishment of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, the Ministry of Education and Science played one of the key roles in shaping state historical politics. Under its auspices, state education standards (including on the history of Ukraine) are developed and submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers for approval. The Ministry of Education and Science defines and approves the content of programs and historical curricula. It supervises the selection of textbooks and finances their publication through state budgeting.

A permanent body within the ministry known as the Scientific-Methodological Commission on History is primarily tasked with the analysis of textbooks and other teaching materials to ensure their conformity to state standards and programs. The Institute of Innovative Technology and Content for Education, which was also part of the ministry, was obliged to observe and approve history teaching programs and textbooks and to organize a contest to select state-sponsored textbooks. In general, the Ministry

of Education and Science has followed a rigorous policy of nationalization in history education since 1992, and this has resulted in the establishment of an ethnocentric canon. The exclusivist model of a national/nationalist historical narrative with prevailing ideas of political/state history and national victimology is at the core of this canon (for a more detailed discussion, see chapter 6).

In 2010, the Ministry of Education and Science slightly shifted its ideological orientation. The new minister, Dmytro Tabachnyk, was well known for his negative attitude toward nationalized history and for his loyalty to the Soviet nostalgic version. He gleefully shocked the public with his statements and appraisals of the past in which he denounced and ridiculed Ukrainian nationalism. In an April 2010 interview with the BBC, he declared that the textbooks of Ukrainian history are written from an ethnocentric position and must, therefore, be revised and rewritten from an anthropocentric position.[50] He indirectly alluded to the results obtained by a task force of historians organized under auspices of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory that had proposed looking beyond the ethnocentric version of Ukrainian history for courses taught in schools.

In June 2010, Tabachnyk published a policy paper on the official website of the Party of Regions. He repeated his assertion about an "anthropocentric approach" to history curricula and declared that "the interpretation of national and global history cannot change every time when there is a new President or Minister of Education, and it cannot and should not depend on private tastes, fixations, and phobias of any official."[51] After these words, he immediately gave his own politically motivated interpretation of the history of World War II and his assessment of such persons as Stalin, Shukhevych, and Bandera, putting the second and third, evidently, in the category of "impure ones."

Further actions on the "revision of the school history course" had nothing to do with the implementation of anthropocentric history: they went no further than kicking out several undesirable stories and figures from text-

50 "Tabachnik khochet sdelat' uchebniki po istorii 'gumannymi," *Enovosty*, April 12, 2010, https://enovosty.com/news_politics/full/4195566.

51 "Tabachnik rasskazal, kak budut nazyvat` Banderu v novom uchebnike istorii," June 7, 2010, https://politics.segodnya.ua/politics/tabachnik-racckazal-kak-budut-nazyvat-banderu-v-novom-uchebnike-ictorii-200351.html.

books and reconsidering the interpretations of several events. According to journalists, some textbook authors were given confidential instructions to revise their texts. The picture of the orange Maidan disappeared from the cover of one of the textbooks. The formula "man-made Holodomor" disappeared from the text (the term "Holodomor" remained). The description of the activities of the UPA became shorter. Shukhevych's photo disappeared, and the narrative of Ukrainian events stopped at the year 2004. In another textbook, the description of the UPA also became shorter, and the UPA fought Germans and Bolsheviks with not a word about Poles. The authors said they received instructions to correct their textbooks from the ministry via phone call: the essence of these instructions was to tone down anti-Russian sentiments and reduce the coverage of the UPA.[52]

It should be noted that all these changes were mostly symbolic; besides, it was technically nearly impossible to modify millions of already printed textbooks. However, in the wake of the changes made to the structure of the eleven-year secondary school program (2011), an ambitious plan to reprint all school textbooks (not only history) was set in motion, but this was based on material rather than ideological interests.[53] A frenetic discussion around the changes made to the history textbooks that flared up in 2010–11 seemed to be a massive provocation, and the targets of these changes, i.e., representatives of the opposition, eagerly responded. In Lviv, an "alternative" school textbook for fifth graders was published which included all the stories and personalities that had been "edited" out of the standard textbooks.[54]

The Ministry of Education and Science was also responsible for developing strategies for the patriotic education of young people, and it continuously focused its attention on historical issues. Between 1996 and 2020, the ministry prepared six strategic documents dedicated to "national" or "national-patriotic" education with the word "conception" in the title.[55] None of them

52 Katerina Kaplyuk, "Perepisana istoriya Ukrayiny: Versiya epokhi Dmytra Tabachnyka," *Pravda*, August 26, 2010, http://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2010/08/26/5332444/.

53 In 2018, Ukraine returned to a twelve-year secondary school cycle.

54 H. Tereshchuk, "U Lvovi vydaly 'antytabachnykivskyy' posibnik z istoriyi Ukrayiny," August 8, 2012, http://www.radiosvoboda.org/content/article/24670895.html.

55 Kontseptsiya vykhovannya ditey i molodi v natsionalniy systemi osvity (1996); Kontseptsiya natsionalnoho vykhovannya studentskoyi molodi (2009); Kontseptsiya natsionalno-patriotychnoho vykhovannya molodi (2009); and Kontseptsiya Zahalnoderzhavnoyi tsiliovoyi programy patriotychnoho vykhovannya hromadyan na 2013–2017.

were ever implemented, as it is clear from the repeated complains in this regard in these documents.[56] The basic rhetoric of all the aforementioned formulations was quite similar: it combined the tropes of ethnic/cultural nationalism with references to universal values, the recognition of the rights and liberties of other ethnic groups, to the equality of cultures, etc.

Another central governmental body, the Ministry of Culture, is routinely involved in the development and implementation of historical politics. It manages all the principal museums responsible for transmitting all the fluctuations in the sphere of historical politics of Ukraine to the public; this includes the museums created as a result of historical politics. The director of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory is formally accountable to the Minister of Culture.

Some other ministries and governmental structures are directly involved in the development and implementation of historical politics. This list can easily be found in the operative section of any presidential decree or government resolution on the topic of "memorials."

Table 4. Ministries and Agencies Participating in the Implementation of Historical Politics

Name	Functions
State Committee on Radio and Television	Promoting anniversaries, emblematic events, outstanding historical figures, institutes and organizations
Ministry of Justice	Analyzing legislative acts related to historical politics, involvement in developing the programs of implementation of historical politics
Ministry of Economy	Calculating the cost of remembrance events
Ministry of Finance	Funding remembrance events, goal-oriented programs, activities of other ministries in the field of historical politics
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Promoting Ukrainian history abroad, lobbying for representation of state history politics in international organizations

56 See, for example, "Kontseptsiya natsionalno-patriotychnoho vykhovannya ditey ta molodi Dodatok do nakazy Ministerstva osvity i nauky Ukrayiny vid no. 641," June 16, 2015, C. 2, http://mon.gov.ua/usinovivni/novini/16/06/2015/naczionalno-patriotichne-vixovannya/.

Ministry of Internal Affairs	Ensuring order and safety at public ceremonies and remembrance events
Ministry of Information Politics (created in December 2014)	Providing counter-propaganda and resistance to information aggression, and defense of Ukrainian information space
Prosecutor's Office (not a part of the government)	Prosecuting matters of names and symbols. For instance, enacting the decommunization laws brought the first case of criminal prosecution for "the propagation and the public use of the symbols of the Communist regime in all the territory of Ukraine." The pre-trial investigation was conducted by the Prosecutor's Office of the Lviv Oblast.[57] In April 2017, the Prosecutor's Office of the city of Odessa, at the request of the Security Service of Ukraine, took legal action over the decision of the city council to rename the streets that had changed their names in the course of decommunization.[58] In December 2017, the Prosecutor's Office of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (located in Kyiv) took legal action over the deportation of Crimean Tatars in 1944. In May 2017, this body announced that I. V. Stalin and L. P. Beria were "suspected" of this criminal offense.[59] In June 2019, the Prosecutor's Office of Kryvyj Rih investigated a case of the 'public use of the symbols of the Communist totalitarian regime'[60] (an unemployed citizen put on a t-shirt with the emblem of the USSR to wash the show-windows at a local supermarket)

57 D. Vojko, "L'vovskogo studenta osudili na 2,5 goda za tsitaty Lenina v Facebook," *Strana*, May 15, 2017, https://strana.ua/news/70674-lvovyanina-posadili-na-2-5-goda-za-citaty-lenina-v-facebook.html.

58 Aleksandr Dmytruk, "Prokuratura vidkryla spravu cherez povernennia radians`kykh nazv," *Hromadske*, April 27, 2017, https://hromadske.ua/posts/prokuratura-vidkryla-spravu-cherez-povernennia-vulytsiam-odesy-radianskykh-nazv.

59 "Prokuratura pidhotuvala pidozru Stalinu ta Berii u spravi pro deportatsiu tatar," *Zbruc*, May 18, 2017, https://zbruc.eu/node/66142?theme=zbruc&page=36.

60 "Yedynyj derzhavnyj reestr sudovykh rishen," accessed December 11, 2020, https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/85088106.

National Bank of Ukraine

The National Bank of Ukraine has perhaps the most direct technical connection to the representation of memorable events, historical dates, and historical figures. The very name of the national currency, the hryvnia, is a reference to the idea of the millennial history of Ukraine. The portraits on the banknotes shows a sort of national pantheon: princes Volodymyr the Great and Yaroslav the Wise, hetmans Bohdan Khmelnytsky and Ivan Mazepa, writers and public figures Ivan Franko and Lesya Ukrainka, "the father of Ukrainian history" Mykhailo Hrushevsky, and the philosopher Hryhorii Skovoroda. In 2019, the National Bank issued a one thousand hryvnia banknote with the portrait of Volovymyr Vernadsky, a famous Ukrainian scholar. The banknotes also depict, on the reverse side, historical buildings and symbolic characters that embody the history of Ukraine: from the historical model of the City of the Prince Volodymyr on the one hryvnia banknote to the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy building on the five hundred hryvnia banknote and the historical head office of the National Academy of Sciences on the one thousand hryvnia bill.

The National Bank also mints commemorative coins. The decision to mint a commemorative coin is made by the Board of the National Bank of Ukraine. Between 1995 and 2016 for instance, 723 coins were minted, 218 of them dedicated to the anniversaries of historical events—from the foundation of cities, universities, and government organs to the founding of the constitution, the national currency, and the establishment of zoological gardens, arboreta, and nature reserves. Fifty-two of these were dedicated to Soviet-era anniversaries, while only thirty-five can be attributed to the national/nationalist narrative. However, if we consider historical figures, national ones prevail on eighty-five coinages, while just twenty-four are dedicated to important Soviet-era figures recognized as part of the Ukrainian national narrative. Forty-eight coinages have been dedicated to historical events occurring since the proclamation of independence.[61]

61 Calculated based on data from: https://bank.gov.ua/control/uk/currentmoney/cmcoin/list. Last accessed November 21, 2017.

Ukrposhta

Like the National Bank, the state postal service Ukrposhta is a body responsible for issuing postal stamps, pre-stamped envelopes, and postcards dedicated to historical figures, emblematic events, and commemorative dates. As electronic means of communication become increasingly used, commemorative stamps, like commemorative coins, have become interesting primarily for collectors. Such collections make it possible to follow the evolution of historical politics in Ukraine. While in the 1990s, most events and figures depicted on stamps were related to bygone events or to the Cossack period, new heroes began to circulate in the 2000s: examples include an envelope and a special cancellation stamp issued for the centennial of the birth of Roman Shukhevych and a stamp celebrating the centennial of the birth of Stepan Bandera.

Courts

The involvement of the judiciary in historical politics was hardly occasioned by the purely legal aspects of the latter. It can be asserted with confidence that historical politics itself in many of its manifestations contradicts the principles of the rule of law. However, its promoters occasionally appeal to the law, initiating the legislative regulation in the field of collective/historical memory and a reliance on courts in the pursuit of purely political goals. The use of judicial power as a political tool became common in independent Ukraine precisely during the period when historical politics escalated, and the courts were used to persecute political opponents.[62] A clear correlation can be observed: the intensification of political struggle entails the radicalization of historical politics, with the latter becoming a part of this struggle. The courts entered the arena of Ukrainian historical politics primarily as a tool of symbolic legalization or, on the side, the delegitimation of the actions of one or another interest group in the field of collective/historical memory. Of course, the courts were also used to apply moral and political pressure on opponents and as a site of political propaganda. Below are some famous examples of the courts' role in historical politics.

62 The most graphic examples are the legal prosecution of Yuri Lutsenko, the former minister of Internal Affairs, and Yulia Tymoshenko, the former prime minister.

On January 12, 2010, the Kyiv Court of Appeals started hearing a criminal case initiated by the Security Service of Ukraine "over the perpetration of genocide" by representatives of the supreme authorities of the Ukrainian SSR and the USSR against "a part of the Ukrainian national group." The Security Service had conducted preliminary investigations for almost two years. On January 13, 2010, the judge ruled that J. Stalin (Dzhugashvili), V. Molotov (Skryabin), L. Kaganovich, P. Postyshev, S. Kosior, V. Chubar, and M. Khatayevych were guilty of the crime of genocide as set out in article 442 § 1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (Genocide); the judge also terminated the criminal proceedings on the same day on the basis of article 6 § 8.1 of the Criminal Procedure Code based on the fact that the defendants were no longer alive.[63] It is easy to admit that this two-day trial had a purely symbolic meaning from the legal perspective. The political context, however, was a different story. This trial fits into Yushchenko's historical politics aimed at promoting the idea that the famine of 1932–33 in the Ukrainian SSR was indeed a genocide. The ruling of the court together with the law "About the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine" provided a legal basis for this version of the historical narrative.

There was also a hidden agenda, namely the political defamation of Yushchenko's opponents—the Party of Regions and the Communist Party of Ukraine, who were branded deniers of the genocidal character of the Holodomor. For instance, Deputy Yuri Karmazin referenced the ruling of the Kyiv Court of Appeals in June 2010 when submitting a draft law to change the first article of the Ukrainian law "About the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine." The deputy proposed the following formula: "The Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine is a genocide of the Ukrainian people—a crime of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and its subsidiary, the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine against the Ukrainian people."[64] The draft law was not even considered because by the time it was

63 "Postanova apeliatsiinoho sudu m. Kyyeva u kryminal`niy spravi za faktom vchynennia henotsydu v Ukraini u 1932–1933 rokakh," February 1, 2010, Kharkivs'ka pravozakhysna hrupa http://khpg.org/index.php?id=1265039604.

64 "Proekt Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro vnesennya zmin do statti 1 Zakonu Ukrayiny Pro Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini' (shchodo vyznannya Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini henotsidom Ukrayinskoho narodu—zlochynom Vsesoyuznoyi komunistichnoyi partiyi (b) ta yiyi filialu–Komunistichnoyi partiyi (b) Ukrayiny proty Ukrayinskoho narodu)," June 9, 2010, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=37888.

registered, there was already a new majority in the parliament that supported the new president Viktor Yanukovych.

In Kyiv the same month (June 2010), Volodymyr Volosyuk, a sixty-eight-year-old citizen of Ukraine and a former lawyer and former member of the People's Movement of Ukraine, sued President Yanukovych for "insulting his honor and dignity." In his claim, he specified that Yanukovych, when speaking in Strasbourg on April 27, 2010, denied that the Holodomor was a genocide and in so doing insulted the honor and the dignity of the claimant, whose relatives had died during the famine. Additionally, according to the claimant, Yanukovych violated the Ukrainian law "About the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine," in which the famine of 1932–33 was referred to as genocide and the public denial of the Holodomor was declared illegal.[65] The claimant demanded a public apology from the president directed to both him personally and to the Ukrainian people. Volosyuk claimed to be without party affiliation and to be mainly concerned for the Ukrainian people. However, the nationalist Svoboda took great interest in this case. The interests of the claimant were voiced by a representative of Svoboda, and other members of the party actively promoted the suit in the press. After six months of litigation, during which the case traveled between the Pechersky District Court and Kyiv Court of Appeals, the suit ended as expected: neither the claim nor the claimant's appeal was upheld.[66]

These trials did not spark any notable public interest. The former coincided with the presidential campaign of the winter of 2010, and the latter was not sufficiently attractive to the mass media and had no chance of bringing about a court ruling that would be interesting to the wider public. The legal proceedings related to such well-known historical figures as Roman Shukhevych and Stepan Bandera attracted far more attention.

In October 2007, Viktor Yushchenko awarded the title of "Hero of Ukraine" to Roman Shukhevych "for his outstanding personal contribution to the liberation struggle for the freedom and independence of Ukraine." In September 2008, the Donetsk lawyer Volodymyr Olentsevich filed a lawsuit in the Donetsk District Administrative Court seeking to invalidate the

65 "Volodymyr Volosyuk suditsa z Viktorom Yanukovychem," *Gazeta*, June 16, 2010, http://gazeta.ua/index.php?id=343385.

66 "Sud za dvi khvylyny vypravdav Yanukovycha u spravi pro Holodomor – 'Svoboda,'" *Pravda*, December 8, 2010, http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2010/12/8/5654370/.

decree. The case was dismissed, but Olentsevich, being very insistent, contacted one judicial body after another trying to get his lawsuit considered. In 2009, he reached the Supreme Administrative Court of Kyiv, which agreed to hear his appeal.

While Olentsevich's lawsuits drifted from one judicial body to another, Yushchenko awarded the title of "Hero of Ukraine" to Stepan Bandera in January 2010, again triggering a strong reaction from Ukrainians both at home and abroad. In February 2010, he lost the presidency, and this change of leadership brought with it a change in the attitude of the courts toward historical politics. On April 2, 2010, the Donetsk District Administrative Court, at the request of the same indefatigable Olentsevich, overturned Yushchenko's decree awarding the title of "Hero of Ukraine" to Bandera on the simple grounds that Bandera had never been a citizen of Ukraine and this distinction can only be awarded to citizens of the country. On April 21 of the same year, the same court found Yushchenko's decree awarding the honorary title to Roman Shukhevych to be illegal. In August 2010, the Supreme Administrative Court of Kyiv, responding to an appeal made by Yushchenko, upheld the decisions of the Donetsk court.[67]

The Constitutional Court of Ukraine also joined in the game. On April 6, 2010, it declined an identical request by the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (March 2010) to recognize Yushchenko's decree concerning Bandera as unconstitutional.[68] In October 2010, the same decision was taken concerning the request related to Shukhevych.[69] Both requests were denied on the grounds that they were outside the competence of the Constitutional Court. In 2011, the Constitutional Court had a new opportunity to demonstrate its impartiality and political neutrality when the opposition deputy Yuri Kostenko made a request to verify the consti-

67 "Yushchenko: Shukhevych i Bandera–heroyi v sertsakh ukrayintsiv," *Unian*, August 2, 2011, http://www.unian.ua/politics/526069-yuschenko-shuhevich-i-bandera-geroji-v-sertsyah-ukrajintsiv.html.

68 "Ukhvala Konstytutsiinoho Sudu Ukrayiny pro vidmovu y vidkrytti konstytutsiynoho provadzhennya u spravi za konstytutsiynym podannyam Verkhovnoyi Rady Avtonomnoyi Respubliky Krym shchodo vidpovidnosti Konstytutsiyi Ukrayiny (konstytutsiynosti) Ukazu Prezidenta Ukrayiny 'Pro prysvoyennya S. Banderi zvannya Heroy Ukrayiny,'" April 6, 2010, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/v019u710-10.

69 "Ukhvala Konstytutsiinoho Sudu Ukrayiny pro vidmovu y vidkrytti konstytutsiynoho provadzhennya u spravi za konstytutsiynym podannyam Verkhovnoyi Rady Avtonomnoyi Respubliky Krym shchodo vidpovidnosti Konstytutsiyi Ukrayiny (konstytutsiynosti) Ukazu Prezidenta Ukrayiny 'Pro prysvoyennya R. Shukhevychu zvannya Heroy Ukrayiny,'" accessed February 7, 2016, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/v063u710-10.

tutionality of changes in the Ukrainian Law "On the Perpetuation of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945" (about "the Banner of Victory"). The court recognized these changes as unconstitutional (see chapter 6 for more details).

The years 2015–19 have been marked by an escalation of historical politics in Ukraine, and the judicial authorities have not remained on the sidelines. Local courts busied themselves with requests from citizens and organizations concerning the renaming of streets, cities, towns, and topographical sites.[70] Between 2016 and 2017, no fewer than eight cases related to historical politics were taken up by the Supreme Court and Supreme Administrative Court of Ukraine.[71] Several dozen cases at local courts proceeded. The Constitutional Court took part in all this once again: from July to September 2015, it followed an already established pattern and refused to rule on a case concerning the unconstitutionality of memorial laws adopted on April 9, 2015. Applications for appeal were submitted for every law by the opposition deputies (now represented by the remains of the Party of Regions and the communists). However, in July 2019, the Constitutional Court declared that the law condemning the communist and National Socialist regimes in Ukraine and banning the promotion of their symbols was constitutional.[72] In 2018–19, the long-lasting debate on the renaming of two busy avenues in Kyiv, which were renamed after the leaders of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army—Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych, respectively, turned into a duel between the Administrative Court and the Appellate Court of Kyiv.[73] In the end, the name change was confirmed by the Appellate Court.

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70 See, for instance, "U regionakh oskarzhuyut v sudakh pereymenuvannya u ramkakh dekomunizatsiyi," *Novy narnia*, May 8, 2016, http://novynarnia.com/2016/05/08/u-regionah-oskarzhuyut-v-sudah-pereymenuvannya-v-ramkah-dekomunizatsiyi.

71 See "Zvit holovy instytutu national`noi pamiati za 2017 rik" http://www.memory.gov.ua/page/zvit-za-2017-rik, accessed September 8, 2019; and "Zvit Ukrajins'koho instytutu national'noi pamiati z realizatsii derzhavnoi polityky u sferi vidnovlennia I zberezhennia national'noi pamiati u 2016 rotsi," accessed September 8, 2019, http://memory.gov.ua/page/zvit-ukrainskogo-institutu-natsionalnoi-pam-yati-z-realizatsii-derzhavnoi-politiki-u-sferi-vidn.

72 "Constitutional Court recognizes constitutional law on de-communization," *Kyiv Post*, July 16, 2019, https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/constitutional-court-recognizes-constitutional-law-on-de-communization.html.

73 "Sud vyznav zakonnymy perejmenuvannia kyivs`kykh prospektiv na Stepana Bandery ta Romana Shukhevycha," *Khmarochos*, December 10, 2019, https://hmarochos.kiev.ua/2019/12/10/sud-vyznav-zakonnymy-perejmenuvannya-prospektiv-stepana-bandery-ta-romana-shuhevycha/.

Given the confrontational nature of historical politics in Ukraine, it is clear that judicial authorities will not stay away from getting involved in debates about interpretations of the past.

Security Service of Ukraine (SBU)

According to the Ukrainian Law "About the Security Service of Ukraine" adopted in 1992, the task of the agency is to protect the state sovereignty of Ukraine; its territorial integrity; its economic, scientific, technological, and defense potential; as well as the interests of the state and the rights of its citizens. It also has an obligation to defend Ukraine from the intelligence and subversive activity of foreign special services and from encroachments by organizations, groups, and individuals.[74] Protection of state secrets is also entrusted to the SBU. Since the adoption of this law, the SBU has been involved in the implementation of historical politics in three different ways: 1) as an agency that has a large archive (at the beginning of the 1990s, this archive was used to rehabilitate victims of political repression); 2) as a research institution that publishes collections of documents on the history of repression and of repressive institutions;[75] and 3) as an instrument of historical politics during Yushchenko's presidential term and after the adoption of decommunization laws in April 2015.

On May 22, 2009, the SBU initiated a pretrial criminal investigation on the basis of Article 442 of the Penal Code of Ukraine ("Genocide"). Formally, the case was opened as a result of "appeals by the public." The public was represented by Igor Yukhnovski of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences and acting director of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory; Roman Krutsik, chairman of the Vasyl Stus Memorial Society (one of the founders of the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists); Levko Lukyanenko, chairman of the Association of Holodomor Researchers in Ukraine; and other public figures and deputies of parliament. Special groups of SBU staff (150 persons in total) working in seventeen regions of

74 "Zakon Ukrayiny, 'Pro Sluzhbu bezpeky Ukrayiny' no. 2229-12," version active on December 28, 2015, accessed May 12, 2016, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2229-12.

75 The SBU is one of the founders of the journal *Z arkhiviv VUChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*. See: http://www.reabit.org.ua/magazine/.

Ukraine and having interviewed 533 witnesses[76] for half a year "discovered" something that one could read in school textbooks for at least fifteen years: the "Holodomor genocide of 1932–1933 in Ukraine" was organized by Joseph Stalin, Vyacheslav Molotov, Lazar Kaganovich, and the top leaders of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine as well as the leadership of the repressive organs of the Stalinist regime.

The publication of these findings caused a mini scandal. The SBU issued a list of perpetrators of the 1932–33 famine in Ukraine, defiantly accompanying their party pseudonyms with their birth names and surnames. The resulting list included many Jewish surnames. The Ukrainian Jewish Committee (UJC) immediately reacted to the publication with a statement that the SBU "places responsibility for the Holodomor tragedy on Jews and Latvians."[77] The UJC emphasized that in this particular case, the SBU did not mention several high-ranking Ukrainian party members who were obviously responsible for the disaster.

In 2009, the SBU opened another criminal investigation on the deportation of the Crimean Tatars of 1944. Under Yanukovych, the SBU closed the case (2011) and re-opened it in 2015 after the annexation of Crimea by Russia.

During Yushchenko's term as president, the SBU began to manage the National Memorial Museum of the Victims of Occupational Regimes "Prison on Lontskoho Street," created in 2008–2009 in Lviv; the museum belonged to the agency and the SBU was the formal employer of the museum staff. The involvement of the SBU in historical politics might have had some positive indirect consequences. Volodymyr Viatrovych, the director of the Archive of the SBU between 2008–10 claims that he attempted to make the archive more accessible for both researchers and the wider public.

These efforts immediately stopped when Viktor Yanukovych came to power and the leadership of the SBU changed. An attempt to limit access to the SBU Archive again led to a public scandal. On September 8, 2010, at the Kyiv railway station, SBU operatives arrested SBU employee Ruslan Zabily,

76 "Slidstvo shchodo Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv uzyalosya za formulyuvannya obvynuvachen," *Unian*, August 26, 2009, http://www.unian.ua/society/258481-slidstvo-schodo-golodomoru-1932-33-rr-uzyalosya-za-formulyuvannya-obvinuvachen.html.

77 Zayavleniye Ukrainskogo yevreyskogo komiteta, August 2008, http://www.jewukr.org/observer/e02003/page_show_ru.php?id=2566.

director of the Lviv Museum "Prison on Lontskoho Street," under the pretext that he intended to hand secret data to some third persons (it seems that Zabily had a large collection of document copies from the SBU Archive, which he kept in private data storage). His hard drives and his personal computer were confiscated; according to Zabily, he was interrogated for fourteen hours and then released. On September 24, 2010, opposition members of parliament, including the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc and the remnants of Our Ukraine party, demanded an explanation from Valery Horoshkovsky, the incumbent head of the SBU. Their demand was ignored. On September 27, 2010, the SBU opened a criminal case on the basis of Article 328 of the Penal Code of Ukraine ("Divulgence of State Secrets"). Over the next week, Zabily became probably the most popular figure in news feeds and on political talk shows, and the opposition immediately began a campaign against the "witch hunt," the return to "KGB times," and the persecution of dissidents and "independent historians."[78] Viatrovych, the ex-director of the archive, said that "the Zabily case" was the "Kremlin's action" directed against the UPA.[79]

A number of public actions in Lviv and Kyiv were organized in support of Zabily, and both the Ukrainian and foreign public protested, including professional historians.[80] According to one of the central Ukrainian TV channels referring to a "source in the SBU," the arrest of the historian and the seizure of his hard drives was justified by the fact that he had found documents containing information about KGB agents. The source said that the SBU "would intimidate Zabily a little but would not jail him,"[81] and, in fact, the case was soon closed. The official response of the Chief Investigation Department of the SBU to an inquiry about the Zabily case (May 12, 2016)[82] says that the criminal case was closed on January 27, 2012, for lack of corpus delicti.

After that, the SBU temporarily disengaged from any public activity in the sphere of historical politics and returned to it only after the "Revolution

78 Ruslan Zabily could hardly be portrayed as an independent historian. His works on the history of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists are fairly complimentary.

79 "V'yatrovych: sprava Zabiloho – spetsoperatsiya Kremlya," *Glavred*, September 9, 2010, http://ua.glavred.info/archive/2010/09/09/140047-14.html.

80 "108 vchenykh z usikh universytetiv pidpysali lyst-protest do SBU," *Unian*, September 15, 2010, http://www.unian.ua/politics/401585-108-vchenih-z-usih-universitetiv-svitu-pidpisali-list-protest-do-sbu.html.

81 "Zatrymannyy lvivskyy istoryk "nakopav" materialy verbuvannya KDB," *TSN*, September 16, 2010, http://tsn.ua/ukrayina/zatrimaniy-lvivskiy-istorik-nakopav-materiali-verbuvannya-kdb.html.

82 This answer is kept in my personal archive, received in response to my official request.

of Dignity" as an important archive and as the overseer and watchdog of the "decommunization" process and a security agency charged with protecting the state from "ideological subversion." For instance, in April 2017 the Odessa regional SBU branch demanded that local authorities reverse their decision to restore the old names of the streets that were "decommunized" in 2016.

One of the memorial laws adopted in April 2015 obliged the SBU to transfer its archival collections to the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory. Of all the agencies, the SBU in 2015–19 was the most willing to share its archival treasures with the state institute whose main sphere of activity was historical politics—the UINP.

Ukrainian Institute of National Memory (UINP)

The UINP was established by Viktor Yushchenko, who chose to follow the example of other countries in Central and Eastern Europe, especially Poland. The institute was created within the framework of the program aimed at "preservation of the memory of victims of political repression and holodomors in Ukraine" (therefore, dedicated to the communist past), and its name was borrowed from its Polish counterpart. Even the founders of the institute were not quite sure about its functions, status, and powers, and the twists and turns of its establishment indicate the hidden resistance of bureaucrats and open resistance of politicians. Practically all fifteen years of the UINP's existence have been marked by a quest for institutional identity. It was twice liquidated and reorganized. Only after 2015 did the institute achieve its role, which some observers ironically describe as a "ministry of truth."

In July 2005, Yushchenko asked the government to establish a working group tasked with drawing up a proposal for the structure and areas of responsibility of the Institute of National Memory.[83] In May 2006, the government decreed the creation of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory.[84] It was established as a central body in the executive branch.

83 "Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro dodatkovi zakhody shchodo uvichnennya pam'yati zhertv politychnykh represiy ta holodomoriv v Ukrayini,'" July 11, 2005, http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1087/2005.

84 "Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny Postanova, 'Pro utvorennya Ukrayinskoho instytuta natsionalnoyi pam'yati,'" May 31, 2006, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/764-2006-11.

In July 2006, the government approved the Statute of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory.[85] The institute was charged with the following tasks:

- Participating in the development and implementation of state policy in the restoration and preservation of Ukrainian national memory, including assistance to the state as stipulated by article 11 of the Constitution of Ukraine, in the consolidation and development of the Ukrainian nation, its historical consciousness, and culture.
- Providing a comprehensive study of centuries of Ukrainian statebuilding and the struggle for restoration of statehood in the twentieth century.
- Ensuring the study of the history of other native peoples and national minorities living in Ukrainian territory and their integration into Ukrainian society.
- Implementing a range of measures commemorating the memory of participants in the national liberation struggle and the First and Second World Wars and victims of holodomors and political repression.
- Strengthening Ukrainians' interest in their own history and disseminating objective information about the country in Ukraine and around the world.[86]

The institute was expected to work on proposals for:

- restoring an objective and truthful history of the Ukrainian people;
- propagating the origin of the Ukrainian nation and its language;
- organizing efforts to shape patriotism among the citizens of Ukraine (especially among public employees); and
- selecting the areas of work and methods of restoration for historical truth and justice in the study of Ukrainian history.[87]

85 "Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny Postanova, 'Pro zatverdzhennia Polozhennia pro Ukrains`kyi instytut national'noi pam'yati,'" accessed March 12, 2016, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/927-2006-%D0%BF.

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid.

The institute's range of functions was expected to be quite broad: the development of proposals to promote the idea of the Holodomor as a genocide in the international arena; the elaboration of legal drafts and regulations (including international ones); the establishment of monuments and places of memory and their management structure; the creation of museum exhibitions; the development of proposals on social protection for participants in the national liberation struggle; and the elaboration of procedures to award state awards and honorary titles. In total, twenty-nine functions of the institute were listed.

The establishment of the UINP (2006–2007) coincided with a period of acute political crisis and the struggle between the president and his political opponents (Party of Regions, Communists) over the redistribution of power and who controlled the government. Whether in stature, in real power, or in funding, the UINP was far behind its Polish counterpart. Moreover, contrary to the Polish case, at the time of the establishment of the UINP, Ukrainian elites lacked consensus on questions of historical politics or the role and place of the UINP in the interpretation of the past. The institute was created as an executive (governmental) body, and its functionality was totally contingent on the political situation. Its very existence was questionable on both political and societal levels.

Even in terms of bureaucratic efficiency, the institute was trapped from the very beginning. Between the fall of 2006 and the fall of 2007, the government, of which the UINP was part, was headed by Viktor Yanukovych, the last person who could be suspected of sympathy to any of Viktor Yushchenko's ideas. Another challenge—which might appear as a bureaucratic mockery—was that before 2008, funding for the UINP was controlled by the State Committee of the Archives of Ukraine headed by a representative of the Communist Party of Ukraine.[88] The 2006 state budget assigned 912,400 hryvnias (€152,800) to the institute and a year later, this amount grew to 3,478,000 hryvnias in 2007 (€476,000).[89] According to Volodymyr Verstyuk, the deputy director of the UINP, the institute did not play any

88 Igor Yukhnovskyy, "Pro ideologiyu I polityku Ukrayinskoho instytutu natsionalnoyi pam'yati," *Gazeta*, October 26, 2007, http://gazeta.dt.ua/SOCIETY/pro_ideologiyu_i_politiku_ukrayinskogo_instytutu_natsionalnoyi_pamyati.html.

89 "Zakon Ukrayiny, Pro derzhavnyy byudzhet Ukrayiny na 2006 rik, no. 3235-IV," December 20, 2005, accessed December 11, 2020, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3235-15/page17; "Zakon Ukrayiny pro derzhavnyy byudzhet Ukrayiny na 2012 rik, no. 4282/17," December 22, 2011, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/4282-17/page2#n170.

independent role between 2006 and 2009. In practice, it was all but an executor of decisions made by the secretariat of the president and the vice premier on humanitarian issues (this assessment dates from the era when the UINP reached the peak of its activities).[90]

The UINP became active after the snap elections of 2007 and the creation of a coalition government headed by Yulia Tymoshenko, nominally considered a Yushchenko supporter. Memorial events dedicated to the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Holodomor in Ukraine became the main task of the institute. The funding of the UINP peaked in 2008: it grew to 15,921,000 hryvnias (€2,242,394) because of major memorial events dedicated to the Holodomor. In 2009, the sum allocated was 14,501,000 hryvnias; (€1,381,047); and in 2010 it was 19,236,000 hryvnias (€1,672,695).[91]

Between 2008–2009, the UNIP implemented two large projects. One of them was the creation of the National Book of Memory of the Holodomor Victims in Ukraine. The Institute coordinated the preparation of eighteen regional volumes[92] and published a summary volume.[93] This activity took place within the framework of the "National-Cultural Program of the 1932–1933 Holodomor Research and of the Perpetuation of the Memory of Its Victims for the Period up to 2012." The second large project was the elaboration of the concept of history education in Ukraine.[94] It was the first major attempt to transcend the limits of the national/nationalist exclusive narrative,

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90 "Ukrayinska istorychna nauka i zavdannya instytutu natsionalnoyi pam'yati," *Forum* natsiy no. 11/78 (November 2008), http://www.forumn.kiev.ua/2008-11-78/78-06.htm.

91 "Zakon Ukrayiny, Pro derzhavnyy byudzhet Ukrayiny na 2007 rik, no. 489-V," February 19, 2006, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/489-16/page17; "Zakon Ukrayiny, Pro derzhavnyy byudzhet Ukrayiny na 2008 rik, ta pro vnesennya zmin do deyakykh zakonodavchykh aktiv Ukrayiny, no. 107–17," December 28, 2007, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/107-17/page20; "Zakon Ukrayiny, Pro derzhavnyy byudzhet Ukrayiny na 2009 rik, no. 835/17," December 23, 2009, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/835-17/page15; "Zakon Ukrayiny Pro derzhavnyy byudzhet Ukrayiny na 2010 rik, no. 2154/VI," April 27, 2010, http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2154-17/page16.

92 "Tomy Knyhy pam'yati zhertv Holodomoru v Ukrayini 1932–1933 rokiv," accessed March 23, 2017, http://www.memory.gov.ua:8080/ua/publication/content/1522.htm.

93 *Natsionalna knyha pam'yati zhertv Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini–Kyiv* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo Oleny Telihy, 2008).

94 "Propozytsiyi do kontseptsiyi istorychnoyi osvity v Ukrayini: Materialy II kruhloho stolu Robochoyi narady z monitorynhu shkilnykh pidruchnykiv istoriyi Ukrayiny (Kyiv, zhovtnya 18, 2008 roku)" (Kyiv, 2009), http://history.org.ua/LiberUA/memory.gov.ua-data-upload-content-main-ua-red-102-pdf/memory.gov.ua-data-upload-content-main-ua-red-102-pdf.pdf; "Kontseptsiya ta prohramy vykladannya istoriyi Ukrayiny v shkoli (proyekt)" in *Materialy IV ta V Robochykh narad z monitorynhu shkilnykh pidruchnykiv istoriyi Ukrayiny "Kontseptsiya istorichnoyi osvity"* (Kyiv: Stylos, 2009).

to stop building it on the basis of the idea of the "nation as victim," and to balance the redundancy of political and socio-economic history by introducing elements of historical anthropology. In this case, the UINP acted rather as a coordinator of the effort, as all the major groundwork had been done by professional historians outside the institute. The UINP suffered from a perpetual lack of skilled employees: according to the 2007 staff list, the institute had 105 vacancies, but by 2010 only forty-three people worked there.[95]

The UINP also took part in legislative activity by contributing to the preparation of the first memorial law in Ukraine ("About the 1932–1933 Holodomor in Ukraine"), and to the elaboration of the law on the commemoration of the Ukrainian national liberation movement of the 1920s to 1950s.

In 2010, half a year after the rise of Viktor Yanukovych and the Party of Regions, the UINP was dismantled as part of "the optimization of the central bodies of the state authority."[96] The upsurge of indignation of the "patriotically-minded" had hardly begun to crystallize before the institute was reconstituted in January 2011.[97] Its rank was "lowered," and it became a research facility managed by the Cabinet of Ministers.

For Viktor Yanukovych and his political supporters, the UINP was like a suitcase without a handle: it was not possible to throw it out since that could damage the political image of the ruling party too much. At the same time, an explicit ideological repurposing would not fit into the general philosophy of cynical pragmatism in the domain of historical politics. In fact, because the UINP was reorganized along the lines of academic institutions, its political functions were minimized. Moreover, according to Valery Soldatenko, the institute was given the liberty to select its research priorities and topics. It seems that the main condition of this autonomy was staying out of politics. The budget of the institute was also reduced to the level of a research organization: 4,968,000 hryvnias (€473,143) in 2012, 5,658,000 hryvnias (€523,889) in 2013, and 5,531,000 hryvnias (€507,431) in 2014.[98]

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95 Pavlo Solodko and Valeriy Soldatenko, "Pered namy ne stoyit zavdannya provodyty lyustratsiyu," *Istorychna pravda*, March 23, 2011, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2011/03/23/32857/.

96 "Ukaz Prezidenta, 'Pro optymizatsiyu systemy orhaniv tsentralnoyi vykonavchoyi vlady,'" December 9, 2010, http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1085/2010.

97 "Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny, 'Postanova no. 8, Pro utvorennya Ukrayinskoho instytutu natsionalnoyi pam'yati,'" January 12, 2011, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/8-2011-п.

98 "Zakon Ukrayiny, Pro derzhavnyy byudzhet Ukrayiny na 2012 rik," December 22, 2011, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/4282-17/page2; "Zakon Ukrayiny Pro derzhavnyy byudzhet Ukrayiny

The reorganization and repurposing of the UINP provoked resentment among those segments of society whose representatives saw it as a regulatory and controlling body that ensured the domination of the exclusivist version of collective/historical memory. Moreover, the fact that Valery Soldatenko, a member of the Communist Party of Ukraine, was appointed its director was incredibly frustrating for these same groups.[99] Volodymyr Viatrovych, the ex-director of the SBU Archive, even suggested that the UINP would turn into "an instrument of the rehabilitation of totalitarianism."[100]

In general, the institute continued to work within the standard national narrative; however, it did attempt to move away from the purely nationalist components of this interpretation and the exclusivist model of historical memory by adding in nostalgic Soviet elements, for example, those related to the promotion of the myth of the Great Patriotic War.[101] Additionally, between 2011 and 2014, the UINP focused its attention on the elaboration of the theoretical and conceptual problems of collective/historical memory.

In 2014, the UINP had to adapt to a new political turn. The fall of Yanukovych and the change of power in Kyiv as a consequence of the Revolution of Dignity; the rise of civic patriotism and, thus, the revival of public interest in historical issues; and, especially, the return to power of the carriers and promoters of the exclusive national/nationalist pattern of collective/historical memory determined the direction of the UINP's activities. In July 2014, the UINP was simultaneously liquidated and re-established by a government resolution. The reincarnated institute was then "the central executive body responsible for the implementation of state policy in the sphere of the restoration and preservation of the national memory,

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na 2012 rik," December 29, 2012, r., no. 5515-17, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/5515-17; and "Zakon Ukrayiny Pro derzhavnyy byudzhet Ukrayiny na 2014 rik," no. 719-18," December 31, 2013, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/719-18/page2. All accessed December 11, 2020.

99 Valery Soldatenko is a historian who authored many works on the history of the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–1921. After becoming the director of the UINP, he suspended his membership in the Communist Party of Ukraine.

100 "Na shcho peretvoritsa natsionalna pam'yat pid kerivnytstvom komunistiv?," *Unian*, July 21, 2010, http://www.unian.ua/politics/382058-na-scho-peretvoritsya-natsionalna-pamyat-pid-kerivnitstvom-komunistiv.html.

101 For more detail, see Olekaandr Hrytsenko, "Khronika borotby z natsionalnoyu pam'yattyu," February 13, 2016, http://historians.in.ua/index.php/en/dyskusiya/1791-oleksandr-hrytsenko-khronika-borotby-z-natsionalnoiu-pam-iattiu-pro-stattiu-h-kasianova-chastyna-2.

whose activities are directed and coordinated by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine through the Minister of Culture."[102]

In November 2014, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the new statute of the institute elaborating its responsibilities.[103] Once more, the institute was assigned a broader field of activity, and it was entrusted with more than twenty areas of purview. They included, for instance, keeping track of and preserving the burial places of victims of starvation, state violence, and repression (this function is for some reason mentioned twice), participating in the preparation of legislative acts and international treaties, and offering assistance in the restoration of "the rights of victims of political repression." One of the most urgent tasks was the creation of the Archive of the Institute (apparently, this meant assigning a number of official archives to the UINP). The institute was also obliged to "produce printed materials, films and videos, stage versions and other artistic embodiments of the images of the historical past, including people who resisted the totalitarian regimes."[104] In practice, the institute was given back its enormous range of tasks.

The UINP was now headed by Volodymyr Viatrovych, one of the founders of the Center for Studies of the Liberation Movement (TsDVR), a nongovernment organization specialized in promotion of the party-style history of the OUN and the UPA.[105] The new chairman of the UINP considered the Polish Institute of National Memory to be the ideal model for his institute,[106] although this ideal was permanently unattainable: the whole previous history of the UINP demonstrates the lack of intellectual, managerial, and financial resources necessary to carry out its mission.

Speaking only about the pecuniary dimension of the issue, the budget of the Polish Institute of National Memory in 2013 amounted to 245 mil-

102 "Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny Postanova, 'Pytannya Ukrayinskoho instytutu natsionalnoyi pam'yati,'" July 9, 2014, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/292-2014-п.

103 "Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny Postanova 'Deyaki pytannya Ukrayinskoho instytutu natsionalnoyi pam'yati,'" November 12, 2014, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/684-2014-п.

104 Ibid.

105 After the "Revolution of Dignity," staff members and managers of the TsDVR took the following positions: Volodymyr Viatrovych became the director of the UINP, Alina Shpak (previously the director of the center) became the first deputy director of the UINP, Ihor Kulyk headed the SBU Archive (in January 2016, his place was taken by Andriy Kohut, the head of the archive project of the TsDVR). The TsDVR programs are coordinated by Viatrovych's wife, the journalist Yaryna Yasynevych.

106 "Viatrovych: Instytut natsionalnoyi pam'yati zapratsuye na povnu u nastupnomu rotsi," *Espreso*, November 29, 2014, http://espreso.tv/news/2014/11/29/Viatrovych_instytut_nacionalnoyi_pamyati_zapracyuye_na_povnu_v_nastupnomu_roci.

lion złoty (€57 million) and 405 million złoty (€ 90 million) in 2020.[107] It employs more than two thousand people. The budget of the UINP in 2015 amounted to 8.7 million hryvnias (approximately €364,000), of which three million hryvnias were assigned to "events related to the implementation of state policy in the field of restoration and preservation of national memory" and 5.7 million hryvnias allocated to the management of this process.[108] The state budget for 2016 contemplated an allocation of eleven million hryvnias (€440,000) to the UINP. The maximum number of UINP staff could not surpass seventy people (of which sixty-seven are state employees). In 2018, the budget of the institute increased dramatically, to 57.4 million hryvnias (€1,993,055)—the institute took responsibility for creation of the Maidan Museum and the memorial of the "Revolution of Dignity." In 2019, the budget was 116 million hryvnias (€3,659,305).[109]

Since 2015, the institute has quickly turned itself into a dynamic, proactive, and buzz-generating state agency. It joined the European Platform of Memory and established contacts with the Polish Institute of National Memory (as it turned out, not for long). The director of the UINP made a statement indicating certain political ambitions, including the creation of a "historical lobby" in parliament and a promise that the institute would run "at full capacity" in 2015.[110]

By all accounts, for a while the plan worked: in record-breaking time, the staff of the institute managed to promote four memorial laws, pass them through the committees of the Verkhovna Rada, and achieve their recognition by parliament,[111] despite the fact that all four laws were strongly criticized by the Research-Expert Branch of the Verkhovna Rada due to their juridical flimsiness and inappropriate rhetoric (see chapter 6 for more details).[112] The

107 Najwyższa Izba Kontroli, *Informacja o wynikach kontroli wykonania budżetu państwa w 2013 r. w części 13 Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu* (Warsaw: 2014), accessed on January 22, 2020, http://bip.ipn.gov.pl/bip/kontrole/27,Kontrole.html; Instytut pamięci narodowej – Komisja ścigania zbrodni przeciwko narodowi polskiemu, *Informacja o działalności 1 stycznia 2020 r. – 31 grudnia 2020* (Warsaw: Instytut pamięci narodowej, 2020) 345.

108 "Zakon Ukrayiny, 'Pro derzhavnyy byudzhet Ukrayiny na 2015 rik,'" December 28, 2014, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/80-19/page.

109 "Ukrains'kyi instytut national'noi pamiati, Zvit za 2019 rik," accessed July 12, 2020, https://uinp.gov.ua/pro-instytut/zvity/zvit-za-2019-rik.

110 "Volodymyr Viatrovych Rossiya vede v Ukraini bilshovytsku vijnu," accessed May 12, 2019, http://www.memory.gov.ua/news/volodimir-v-yatrovich-rosiya-vede-v-ukraini-bilshovitsku-viinu.

111 It took less than one calendar week to register the laws, place them on the agenda, and adopt them.

112 "Vysnovok na Proekt Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro pravovyy status ta vshanuvannya pam'yati bortsiv za ne-

fact that all these laws were approved in violation of parliamentary procedures and via "expedited procedure"[113] clearly demonstrated the new style of UINP leadership and the "historical faction" of the parliament, which momentarily coincided with the political coalition in power.[114]

Legal culture and procedures fell victim to political expediency, which in the case of the Verkhovna Rada was a rule rather than an exception). The director of the UINP himself did not deny that political expediency was the main reason for the ultra-fast adoption of these laws. According to him, there was not much time because by the autumn of 2015, the "window of possibilities" for the adoption of such laws closed due to conflicts inside the ruling coalition.[115]

This mode of action somewhat disagreed with the loud-mouthed declarations of the UINP management. In December 2014, right as the aforementioned laws were being prepared, one of the UINP's chief staff members, during an interview with the newspaper *Dzerkalo tyzhnya (Mirror Weekly)* said this:

> The UINP is a tool of public dialogue. The existence of the institute is not a goal in itself. It should hold a dialogue around the heritage of the totalitarian past. The task of the institute is to overcome stereotypes and myths established by Soviet propaganda, to open up the secret archives of the repressive organs and party organs of the USSR, to preserve the memory about the tragic and the heroic pages of struggle for human liberty and dignity, to overcome the conflicts of memory, and to provide critical reflection on the past.[116]

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zalezhnist Ukrayiny u XX stolitti,' no. 2538-1," April 7, 2015, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=54689; "Vysnovok na Proekt Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro zasudzhennya komunistichnoho ta national-sotsialistychnoho (natsistskoho) totalitarnykh rezhymiv v Ukrayini ta zaboronu propahandy yikh symvoliky,' no. 2558," April 6, 2015, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=54670; "Vysnovok na Proekt Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro uvichnennya peremohy nad natsizmom u Druhiy svitoviy viyni 1939–1945 rokiv,' no. 2539," April 3, 2015, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=54649; and "Vysnovok na Proekt Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro dustup do arkhiviv represyvnykh organiv komunistychnoho totalitarnoho rezhymu 1917–1991 rokiv,' no. 2540," April 3, 2015, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/316-19/card3#Files.

113 Only a week elapsed between their registration and their submission to the plenary session, a rapidity most incredible; furthermore, it took the MPs just forty-two minutes to discuss and adopt the laws.

114 "Stenohrama plenarnoho zasidannya," April 9, 2015, http://iportal.rada.gov.ua/meeting/stenogr/show/5842.html.

115 "Zavdannya UINP–stvorennya lehitymnykh instrumentiv dlya podolannya totalitarnoyi spadshchyny–Volodymyr Viatrovych," November 1, 2015, http://www.memory.gov.ua/news/zavdannya-uinp-stvorennya-legitimnikh-instrumentiv-dlya-podolannya-totalitarnoi-spadshchini-vol.

116 Ibid.

It is not hard to notice that dialogue did not work even at the earliest stage of the institute's activities. As for "legitimate tools," their real nature was well demonstrated by the processes surrounding the adoption of the memorial laws. The speed and the lack of transparency in their development and the manner of their adoption excluded any possibility of public debate. Criticism by lawyers was simply ignored. Even within the discussion that took place after their adoption, the UINP chose to ignore the perspective expressed by those who could not be classified as opposition but whose views did not coincide with ideological attitudes and ambitions of the UINP leadership. An open letter[117] by specialists in Ukrainian history (both foreign and Ukrainian) addressed to Petro Poroshenko, president of Ukraine, and to Volodymyr Groysman, chairman of the parliament, urging them to reject two of the four memorial laws[118] had no effect. Poroshenko signed all the laws, promising to make changes later, and the director of the UINP composed a reply letter that, far from indicating his readiness for dialogue, accused some of the signatories of the open letter of playing into the hands of Ukraine's enemies.[119]

The adoption of the memorial laws was not supported by any analysis of public opinion, especially when taking into account regional differences. Between December 2014 and January 2015 (that is, four or five months before the hasty decisions of the parliament), regional differences in the assessment of a number of historical events and personalities, especially those directly or indirectly addressed by the memorial laws, reached critical levels according to a survey of the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the Ukrainian Sociology Service. For instance, while these laws had a mission to fight the ideological heritage of the USSR, the disintegration of the Soviet Union was viewed negatively by 70 percent of respondents in Donbass, 49

117 "Vidkrytyy lyst naukovtsiv ta ekspertiv-ukrayinoznavtsiv shchodo tak zvannoho, 'Antikomunistychnoho zakonu,'" *Krytyka*, April 2015, http://krytyka.com/ua/articles/vidkrytyy-lyst-naukovtsiv-ta-ekspertiv-ukrayinoznavtsiv-shchodo-tak-zvanoho.

118 The laws "On condemnation of the Communist and National-Socialist (Nazi) totalitarian regimes and prohibition of propaganda of their symbols" and "On legal status and celebration of memory of participants of the struggle for the independence of Ukraine" were the most controversial. The laws "On perpetuation of memory of victory over Nazism in the Second World War of 1939–1945" and "On access to the archives of the repressive organs of the Communist totalitarian regime of 1917–1991" were the least controversial.

119 Volodymir Viatrovych, "Dekomunizatsiya i akademichna dyskusiya," *Krytyka,* May 2015, accessed 20 May, 2020, http://krytyka.com/ua/solutions/opinions/dekomunizatsiya-i-akademichna-dyskusiya.

percent in the Lower Dnieper region, and 52 percent in Sloboda Ukraine. The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), glorified as independence fighters in one of the memorial laws, was negatively seen by 68.4 percent of respondents in Donbass, 49.2 percent in the Lower Dnieper Region and 38.6 percent in Sloboda Ukraine. Similar proportions were observed in attitudes toward the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), which was also legitimized by the new laws.[120]

The representatives of the UINP cannot be said to have been unaware of the public mood. One of its policy documents contains a note that in Ukraine, there is a "confrontation of several memory patterns contested across generations and regions. These patterns are based on different perceptions of communist ideology, the Soviet historical experience, and of the Ukrainian liberation movement."[121] To solve this conflict, the leadership of UINP suggested forced decommunization: the elimination of nostalgic Soviet (imperial nostalgic) symbols and their replacement with symbols of the national/nationalist narrative in the public space. The manner in which these laws were implemented between the autumn of 2015 and the beginning of 2016 also showed the propensity of the UINP for conflict in the sphere of historical politics. Decommunization in general did not evoke much resistance, especially as the mass revolutionary enthusiasm of the winter of 2014 that resulted in a wave of anticommunist iconoclasm had already removed some of the most troublesome monuments from the communist era.

At the very beginning, the majority of Ukrainians, however, perceived state-led decomunization as ill-timed and unnecessary as compared to more urgent tasks, such as overcoming the socio-economic crisis. According to a poll in August 2015, 35 percent of respondents had a strongly negative view of decommunization, 55 percent had a moderately negative view, and 10 percent were "relatively loyal."[122] According to another poll (May 2015, online),

120 "Shcho ob'yednuyr ta roz'yednuye ukrayintsiv–opytuvannya hromadskoyi dumky Ukrayiny," March 11, 2015, Democartic Initiative Foundation, https://dif.org.ua/article/shcho-obednue-ta-shcho-rozednue-ukraintsiv-rezultati-opituvan-gromadskoi-dumki.

121 "Rozpochalos hromadske obhovorennya kontseptsiyi Derzhavnoyi tsilyovoyi natsionalno-kulturnoyi prohramy doslidzhen ta populyaryzatsiyi istoriyi Ukrayiny na period 2015–2020 rokiv," September 2014, http://www.memory.gov.ua/news/rozpochalos-gromadske-obgovorennya-kontseptsii-derzhavnoi-tsilovoi-natsionalno-kulturnoi-progra.

122 "Ukrayintsi staly mensh dovirlyvymy i terpymymy," *Sehodnya,* October 7, 2017, http://ukr.segodnya.ua/ukraine/ukraincy-stali-menee-doverchivymi-i-terpimymi-655953.html.

52 percent of respondents believed that the country had more urgent and important problems than decommunization, while 46 percent supported the adoption of such laws now or in the future.[123]

In fact, the UINP made its main field of activity the eviction of the Soviet nostalgic (and the remnants of the imperial) memory narrative, together with the promotion and imposition of the national/nationalist narrative within the exclusivist model of collective memory and the corresponding type of historical politics. To respect political etiquette, the institute demonstrated elements of inclusivity in several of its projects (for instance, elements of Soviet history are included in the World War II narrative). But they clearly pale in comparison to the dominating conceptualization of Ukrainian cultural (ethnic) nationalism that completely excludes any symbolism related to the heritage of the "totalitarian regime," which is regarded as an exclusively Russian heritage. The war is known as World War II, and the term "Great Patriotic War" is completely rejected; for example, World War II is commemorated on May 8 with a poppy instead of the Soviet anniversary on May 9, which is symbolized by the Soviet carnation. World War II is represented primarily by ethnic Ukrainians who participated in the war. The occasional inclusion of Holocaust stories in the general representation of the war can also be considered a departure from the Soviet canon and, at the same time, an attempt to show Ukraine's proximity to "European standards."

After its reconstitution in 2014, the UINP became the initiator of the type of historical politics that, even when aimed at dialogue and reconciliation, promote these values only because external actors (especially the "West") require it. On the whole, the activity of the institute had strong conflict potential, notably in the context of aggravating differences among the regional versions of collective memory. The conflict potential was mainly engendered by the tactic of administrative and political obstruction of one version of collective/historical memory (the Soviet nostalgic) to benefit another (the national/nationalist). In several respects, such activity is aimed at the physical elimination of the former. This is especially noticeable in its decommunization tactics, which boiled down to the forced ousting of the nostalgic Soviet narrative of collective/historical memory from Ukrainian

123 "Sotsiolohy diznalysya pro stavlennya ukrayintsiv do dekomunizatsiyi," *Newskraine*, July 7, 2015, http://www.newskraine.com.ua/соціологи-дізналися-про-ставлення-ук/.

public space and its partial replacement—sometimes voluntary, sometimes forced—by the national/nationalist narrative, with a heavy emphasis on the nationalist component.

The very first reactions to the implementation of the memorial laws proved that such tactics provoked conflicts with "problem" regions in the eastern and southeastern part of the country. The leadership of the institute explained such actions by the need for "dialogue" and "consolidation" and the necessity to unite society in the face of external threat. However, such a position automatically transformed the bearers of alternative versions of collective/historical memory into "enemy agents" with whom no dialogue was/is possible.[124]

In reality the planned ideological homogenization was expected to happen not as a result of consensus and dialogue but as a result of the forced replacement of one narrative with another. On the one hand, this stance can be considered a response to the actions of Russia (hybrid war, including information warfare), whose leadership uses the nostalgic Soviet narrative as an important component of the ideological substantiation of its own power. On the other hand, it can be explained by the inherent traits of the national/nationalist narrative of historical memory, based on the principle of ethnocentrism which does not leave room for pluralism. A conflict was inevitable with a similar narrative in Poland, which was similarly promoted by top political leaders.

Formal attempts at communication and explanatory work with the carriers of other versions of collective/historical memory have so far seemed unconvincing and have provoked intermittent misunderstandings and conflicts. For instance, there is the policy of changing names: in Kirovograd, during an informal referendum the majority of inhabitants voted to change the name of the city back to its historical, imperial name, Yelisavetgrad; this was unacceptable for the UINP despite fitting the decommunization program. Likewise, in Dnepropetrovsk, 90 percent of inhabitants voted to keep the name of the city.[125] These examples speak for themselves.

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124 See, for instance, the project of the State Target National Cultural Programme of "Ukrainian History Studies and of Popularisation of Ukrainian History for the period of 2015–2020," September 2014, http://www.memory.gov.ua/news/rozpochalos-gromadske-obgovorennya-kontseptsii-derzhavnoi-tsilovoi-natsionalno-kulturnoi-progra.

125 "Ponad 90% zhyteliv Dnipropetrovska–proty yoho pereymenuvannya," *Pravda*, September 24, 2015, http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2015/09/24/7082461/.

So far, the most ambitious plans of the institute included the creation of the Archive of National Memory. In 2015–16, a review of the collections of the SBU archive was begun in order to transfer them to the UINP archive. Considering the physical and financial resources of the institute, the task was technically arduous: the collections in question included 910,000 volumes of archival files preserved in the SBU Sectoral State Archive and its regional departments.[126] The staff of the institute was unable to handle this task (as of February 2016, the UINP employed forty-four people and had ninety-seven vacancies), so the transfer was implemented by means of a simple administrative reassignment of the SBU archival departments to the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory.[127] The SBU archives would be followed by the archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Justice, Foreign Intelligence Service, Prosecutor General's Office, State Judicial Administration, State Penitentiary Service, State Border Service Administration, and so on. However, by 2020 only the SBU archive was open to the broader public, while the archives of the other institutions listed above remained untouched.

According to statements that the leadership of the institute made in 2015, a separate law on the UINP was under preparation, which would raise the institute to a new administrative and bureaucratic level and provide for the development of the infrastructure of memorials and other places of memory. In December 2016, the government passed a resolution to create the specialized state UINP archive and planned to find a place for such an archive in three months. Premises for the archive were found and assigned to the institute only at the end of 2019 and then the project was halted.

The year 2016 saw the establishment of the National Memorial Complex to the Heavenly Hundred Heroes and Revolution of Dignity Museum within the institute: almost five million hryvnias were spent on this museum in the first year of its establishment. In 2018, the Maidan Museum began its activities in several rooms of the newly renovated House of Trade Unions (burned down during the revolt in the winter of 2014). That same year, a German architecture agency won an international competition for the memorial

126 "U SBU anonsuvaly peredachu arkhiviv 1917–1991 rokiv do instytutu natsionalnoyi pam'yati," *Tyzhden*, December 2, 2015, http://tyzhden.ua/News/152981.

127 M. Pyetsukh, "Volodymyr Viatrovych: denatsifikatsiya tezh pochynalasya z zhorstkykh zakhodiv," *Pravda*, February 14, 2016, http://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2016/02/14/7098924/.

complex project. However, construction would not begin until 2021 because the territory designated for construction cannot be used until the official investigation of the Maidan massacre is completed (the memorial is to be built exactly at the site where the majority of the killings occurred).

The institute's 2016 report repeatedly mentions the need to create "regional units of the UINP" despite the fact that the institute in Kyiv has only a little more than 50 percent of its staff positions filled.[128] By 2019, the institute managed to establish four regional offices with eight employees in total.[129]

After the dramatic "electoral revolution" in the spring–summer of 2019 (presidential and parliamentary elections) there were "great expectations" that the UINP would shift to a more balanced approach. The former head of the institute began his political career as an MP in Poroshenko's European Solidarity party, but the new government announced an open competition for the position of the UINP head. However, in spite of these moves, the establishment already possessed a certain institutional memory. Moreover, other top staff members were the major promoters of Soviet-style decommunization, and they retained their positions. The newly appointed director, Anton Drobovych, who had previously worked in the field of Holocaust education, confirmed his commitment to several major initiatives from the previous period: decommunization, the recognition of the Holodomor as an act of genocide at the international level, the construction of the Memorial of the Revolution of Dignity, and the development of the institute's archive. At the same time, he promised to ensure a more balanced politics of memory and proposed the organization of a dialogue with the broader society about various historical controversies.[130]

Local authorities and self-government bodies

The activities of local authorities and self-government bodies in the field of historical politics serve as a perfect illustration of the regional dimension of

128 "Zvit Ukrayinskoho instytutu natsionalnoyi pam'yati z realizatsiyi derzhavnoyi polytyky u sferi vidnovlennya i zberezhennya natsionalnoyi pam'yati u 2016 rotsi," http://memory.gov.ua/page/zvit-ukrainskogo-institutu-natsionalnoi-pam-yati-z-realizatsii-derzhavnoi-politiki-u-sferi-vidn.

129 "Zvit Holovy Ukrains'koho Instytutu Natsional'noi Pamiati za 2019 rik," accessed December 11, 2020, https://uinp.gov.ua/pro-instytut/zvity/zvit-za-2019-rik.

130 "Persha preskonferentsia holovy UINP Antona Drobovycha: Tezy," *Istorychna pravda*, December 23, 2019, accessed September 1, 2021, https://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2019/12/23/156776/.

various narratives and patterns of historical memory. In the regions, different state bodies (district, city, local administrations) appointed by and representing the central state authority interact with local elected self-government bodies (regional, district, city councils, municipalities). Such a separation of powers often leads to clashes and open conflicts over various issues, from budget policy to running the state, and from the development of infrastructure to social welfare issues. On the one hand, these institutions act as autonomous subjects in this sphere, reflecting the collective interests of regional elites and the moods of local communities; on the other hand, they serve as proxies for national actors, usually political parties or large interest groups.

In 1990, when three oblasts and a number of municipal councils in Western Ukraine came under the control of the People's Movement of Ukraine (*Rukh)* and its allies, the first traces of possible institutional conflict between the central government in Kyiv and regional self-government bodies became visible. During the Orange Revolution of 2004 and its aftermath, regional and local councils found themselves participating in the face-off between those who supported different claimants to the presidential authority. A number of regional and municipal councils in the west endorsed Viktor Yushchenko, while the supporters of Viktor Yanukovych conducted the famous congress of councils of Eastern and Southeastern Ukraine in Severodonetsk on November 28, 2004, which led to accusations of separatism. This pattern was repeated in 2014.

In the intervening years between the revolutions, local self-government bodies did not remain idle. Historical politics at this level represented general Ukrainian tendencies, probably in their most perfect form.

The powers and competencies of local councils (rural, village, district, city, regional) in the sphere of historical politics are defined by legislation, regulations, and by-laws. For instance, the authority to rename streets and topographic objects is regulated by Article 37 of the Law of Ukraine "On local self-government." This function is ranked with "questions of administrative-territorial structure," which is not much relevant to the issue.[131] Another important field of activity, namely the erection of new monuments, is regulated by the decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine: "Some questions

131 "Zakon Ukrainy, 'Pro mistseve samovriaduvannia v Ukraini,'" May 21, 1997, http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/280/97-вр.

on the construction (creation) of monuments and places of memory" (2004). According to this document, the construction of monuments of national (state) significance is part of the competency of the Cabinet of Ministers, while monuments on the local level can be erected by the decision of local executive or self-government organizations.[132] In matters related to the preservation of monuments and places of memory, local self-government bodies, unlike the executive authorities, do not have any tangible power. However, they can have a formal ownership over monuments and places of memory.

Let us observe several of the most typical examples of the participation of local self-government organizations in historical politics on the regional level. In three western regions of Ukraine, regional and city councils started decommunization early, in 1990, despite being formally Soviet: they dismantled Lenin monuments even though such actions did not comply with existing legislation.[133] By the middle of the 1990s, such topographic markers as streets and squares in cities and towns were renamed in this region en masse. Lenin streets and other locations named after Soviet or Communist Party leaders were first to disappear, followed by those named for Russian political and cultural figures; the names of Ukrainian historical figures, both local and national, took their place.

Between 1996 and 1998, regional and city councils in the same region officially recognized UPA soldiers as fighters for Ukrainian freedom and granted them social guarantees and preferences at the expense of local budgets. Considering the state of these budgets, it is obvious that the significance of such decisions was rather political and symbolic, but in the 2000s, the policy persisted. For instance, in 2013 the city councils of Lviv, Ternopil, and Ivano-Frankivsk decided to make additional monthly payments not only to UPA veterans but also to those who served in the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS (1st Galician).[134] These social decisions were undoubtedly a response to the historical politics of the central government during the Yanukovich presidency, which were favorable to the reincarnation of the nostalgic Soviet memory narrative. All these actions took place only in the Western regions, where the local population was hostile to and alienated

132 "Kabinet ministriv Ukrainy Postanova, 'Dejaki pytannia vstanovlennia (sporudzhennia) pamiatnykiv i monumentiv,'" September 8, 2004, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1181-2004-%D0%BF.

133 The Lviv, Ternopil, and Ivano-Frankvisk oblasts.

134 See the tag of the *Tyzhden* newspaper: http://tyzhden.ua/Tag/ветерани УПА.

from the Soviet and Russian imperial heritage. In general, Ukrainians were not too preoccupied with historical politics in the 1990s: an overwhelming majority of the population was far more concerned with survival given the severe social and economic crises.

The situation changed radically starting in the middle of the first decade of the 2000s, when there was an escalation of historical politics. During the Orange Revolution, local councils began to take part in national politics, including the political contextualization of the past. The confrontation of the national/nationalist and nostalgic Soviet narratives became the central plot of this politics. This situation reached its peak between 2014 and 2019, when the politics of decommunization became an all-Ukraine enterprise.

Let us look at several examples.

In November 2008, by a decision of the Kharkiv City Council (on the initiative of a deputy of the Communist Party of Ukraine), a memorial stone to UPA soldiers that had been installed in 1992 was declared illegal. It was also in Kharkiv that a decision was taken within the framework of the national campaign dedicated to the seventy-fifth anniversary of the 1932–33 famine, to erect a Holodomor monument. Kharkiv was the capital of Soviet Ukraine until 1934. Discussions over the location of the monument that took place in summer 2007 triggered an open political conflict between the mayor's office and the city council on the one hand, and the regional state administration on the other. Mayor Mykhailo Dobkin and the majority of members of the city council were members or allies of the Party of Regions. The regional administration was headed by Arsen Avakov, who was appointed by Viktor Yushchenko. Avakov and his supporters insisted that the monument should stand in the city center. Their opponents, using various pretexts, worked to move the monument farther from downtown Kharkiv. Moreover, under the pressure of communist deputies, the Kharkiv Oblast Council refused to recognize the Holodomor as genocide. The city council and the mayor's office won the struggle: the monument found its home on the outskirts of Kharkiv in November 2008.[135]

In Odessa, the city council decided to restore the tsarist-era monument to the founders of Odessa (with the central figure of Catherine the Great fea-

135 Tatyana Zhurzhenko, " Vshanovuyuchy holod yak henotsid: superechlyvi znachennya memorialiv zhertvam Holodomoru," *Ukrayina moderna,* November 28, 2015, https://uamoderna.com/md/zhurzhenko-holodomor-memorials.

tured prominently) as early as 1995, but the implementation of this decision began only in 2007, when the city council decided to reconstruct the historical look of Katerynynska Square. This decision, seemingly quite innocent, had strong conflict potential: the restoration of a monument whose central symbol was the Empress of Russia (and the "oppressor of Cossack freedoms") was a sharp repudiation of Yushchenko's historical politics. In spite of several loud public scandals that led to a physical face-off between the police and opponents of the restoration, and in spite of protests from President Yushchenko, the refurbished landmark was unveiled in autumn 2007.

That same year, the Lviv Regional Council decided to erect a monument to Stepan Bandera. In this case, the monument had majority support so the discussions focused on the installation area (the proposal was to erect it near the Opera House, where a granite Lenin had stood during the Soviet era), its design (too obviously reminiscent of the Soviet monumental style), and its size (the mayor's office was unhappy about the total area occupied by the statue).

It goes without saying that the mass colonization of the symbolic space of three western regions by images of Bandera during the first decade of the 2000s was also initiated by local self-government bodies. In 2010, their zeal for promoting the memory of the OUN leaders was buoyed by developments in the east of the country. When the Donetsk court ruled that awarding the title of "Hero of Ukraine" to Roman Shukhevych and Stepan Bandera was illegitimate (2010), the city councils of Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Ternopil, and Lutsk responded by making them their honorary citizens. Simultaneously, the Lviv Regional Council appealed to citizens to stop celebrating May 9 as the day of victory in World War II and instead to commemorate it as the Memory Day of Victims of the Second World War.[136] Furthermore, in 2011, Lviv deputies asked the Constitutional Court for an official explanation about the name of the day of remembrance, but their request was rejected. The Lviv City Council's decision on May 8, 2013, to celebrate the Day of Sorrow and Celebration of the Memory of the Victims of Totalitarian Regimes and the Victims of the Second World War and to prohibit any use of Soviet, communist, and Nazi symbols in the territory of Lviv, fits the same pattern: it was adopted the day before the "Soviet" Victory Day of May 9.

136 "Lvivska oblasna rada rozglyane protest prokuratury shchodo 'Velykoyi vitchiznyanoyi,'" *Zaxid*, June 3, 2010, http://zaxid.net/news/showNews.do?lvivska_oblrada_rozglyane_protest_prokuraturi_shhodo_quotvelikoyi_vitchiznyanoyiquot&objectId=1103806.

In Poltava, the role that the local authorities played in erecting a monument to Ivan Mazepa is particularly interesting. The city council made this decision, but the funds that were collected were insufficient to complete the project. In 2007, President Viktor Yushchenko became personally involved. According to his decree "About the celebration of the 300th anniversary of events related to the Hetman Ivan Mazepa's military and political actions and the conclusion of a Ukrainian-Swedish Alliance," 1.5 million hryvnias were allocated from the state budget for the monument, and the regional level state administration took on the role of commissioner. The installation of the monument was scheduled for 2009 on the three hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Poltava, but at the end of 2008, the regional council, controlled by a coalition of the Party of Regions, the Lytvyn Bloc, the communists, and the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, decided to return the funds to the state budget. As a result, fundraising for the monument was conducted by the Poltava branch of the Prosvita society, and the monument—the artistic features of which became the object of heated debates and mockery—was installed with allocations from the city council only in 2016.[137]

Of course, the participation of elected self-government bodies in historical politics is not limited to issues regarding the reorganization of symbolic space. Besides the aforementioned decision of the Kharkiv Regional Council that denied the Holodomor = genocide formula, the Donetsk City Council deserves a mention. The members of this body addressed the Party of Regions members of parliament in 2009, demanding they create a commission to revise history textbooks to ensure that lessons on "historical truth" could be conducted in schools.[138] Likewise, in summer 2012, the mayor's office of Lviv funded a school textbook on Ukrainian history for the fifth grade that was advertised either as a supplement to the official textbook or a replacement. The regular national textbook approved by the Ministry of Education was, according to the inhabitants of Lviv, incorrectly modified by the central authorities, and thus distorted historical truth.[139]

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137 "Nastoyashchaya istoriya pamyatnika Mazape v Poltave: syuzhet dlinoi v 11 let," June 1, 2016, Truth and Transparency Committee, http://www.fttc.com.ua/2016/06/nastoyashhaya-istoriya-pamyatnika-mazepe-v-poltave-syuzhet-dlinoj-v-11-let/.

138 "U Donetsku zibralys zminyuvaty istoriyu," *Ukrayinska pravda*, September 24, 2009, https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2009/09/24/4202189/.

139 Halyna Tereshchuk, "U Lvovi vydaly 'antytabachnykivskyy' pidruchnyk z istoriyi," Radio Svoboda, August 8, 2012, http://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/24670895.html.

Local government and self-government organizations have long preserved a certain level of autonomy in the field of historical politics. The situation changed in 2015. The law "On the condemnation of the Communist and National-Socialist (Nazi) totalitarian regimes and the prohibition on the propagation of their symbols" made it incumbent upon local authorities and self-government bodies to take part in the decommunization of the public space. In cases where these institutions fail to undertake the measures prescribed by the law within the statutory deadline, the right to change names reverts to the Verkhovna Rada and the Cabinet of Ministers. Moreover, the central government declared that resistance to decommunization by representatives of the local authorities was a criminal offense. Thus, the autonomy of local authorities and self-government bodies in the field of politics of history was reduced, mostly as a means to do away with the nostalgic Soviet narrative. However, "problem" regions (mostly eastern and southern) have sought to recover their autonomy in the sphere of historical politics. In May 2017, the Odessa City Council annulled a decision made by Mikhail Saakashvili, the ex-governor of the region, and brought back some of the communist-era names of streets.[140] Similarly, the Soviet-era wall of fame devoted to Odessa citizens—Heroes of the Soviet Union and Heroes of Socialist Labor—remains untouchable.

In June 2019, the Kharkiv city council restored the name of the Soviet icon, Marshal Georgiy Zhukov to an avenue that had been renamed after 2015.[141] In December 2019, the mayor of Kakhovka revolted against the UINP, rejecting the demand to remove the Soviet monument "Tatchanka" (the name for a machine-gun carrier).[142] After fierce public debates, the new leadership of the UINP proposed the creation of an open-air museum of monumental propaganda organized around this monument.[143]

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140 "Vlada Odesy povernula nazvy chastyni dekomunizovanykh vulyts," *Ukrinform*, April 26, 2017, https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-regions/2218251-vlada-odesi-povernula-nazvi-castini-dekomunizovanih-vulic.html.

141 "Mis'ka rada povernula prospektovi Petra Hryhorenka imia marshla Zhukova," June 19, 2019, https://kh.suspilne.media/news/27121.

142 "Institut natspamiati potreboval snesti znamenituju 'Legendarnuju tachanku' v Kakhovke: Mer goroda poobeshal borot'sia za nee do poslednego," *Strana*, January 12, 2020, https://strana.ua/news/244273-dekommunizatsija-v-kakhovke-lehendarnuju-tachanku-demontirujut.html.

143 "Posle vozmushchenii Borodianskii otkazalsia ot planov snosit 'tachanku' v Kakhovke," *Strana*, January 19, 2020, https://strana.ua/news/245285-tachanka-v-kakhovke-borodjanskij-reshil-na-snosit-lehendarnyj-pamjatnik.html.

Archives and museums

As already mentioned, open access to the archives, especially to the archives of repressive organs, is one of the central questions of "democratic transition" and "transitional justice" in postcommunist countries. Since the second half of the 1980s, the archives have been a distinct object of public interest in Ukraine. In 1990, the publication of documents about the 1932–33 famine, which had hitherto been inaccessible even for party personnel, became a major dimension of political struggle against the ruling party.

From the end of the 1980s to the beginning of the 1990s, the archives were involved in the rehabilitation of victims of political repression. The SBU Archive got involved in the process, handing over the personal files of victims of political repression to the Public Prosecutor's Office to have their sentences reviewed. The following figures give an idea of the scope of this work: 180,000 persons were rehabilitated between 1989 and 1991, and almost 249,000 between 1992 and 2001.[144]

Public activists and politicians, as well as historians who professed affirmative history, believed that the opening of archives and access to data (previously concealed by the communist regime) would pave the way to historical truth. These expectations were only partially met: the "archival revolution" did not happen even where the greatest revelations were expected. For instance, the "smoking gun" demonstrating Stalin's intention to destroy or subdue the Ukrainians with the help of the 1932–33 famine was never found. The vulgar positivism of some historians who hoped to discover something in the archive storerooms that would radically change perceptions and interpretations of the period of totalitarianism proved futile. In the 1990s–2000s, the mainstream Ukrainian historiography of the "great terror" followed the patterns and representations of the "totalitarian school" which had been developed without broad access to the archives. The opening of the archives of the repressive organs (in fact, only one of them) after 2015 played a positive role in the general democratization of Ukrainian society and in the broadening of knowledge about the Soviet period, but it has not yet influenced the state of the art.

144 Dmitro Vedeneyev, "Analitychyy oglyad, 'Nezakonni politychni represiyi 1920-kh–1950-kh rokiv ta problemи formuvannya natsionalnoyi pam'yati,'" March 2014, accessed January 20, 2018, http://www.memory.gov.ua:8080/ua/publication/content/1650.htm.

The archives are regularly included in various events related to representations of the past in the public space: exhibitions, commemorations, public debates. In most cases, they are there to help carry out the orders of the central authorities and do not have any autonomous role.

Certainly, the archival sphere also played a part in the games of various politicians. For example, during the political crisis of 2006–2007, the parties united in their opposition to President Yushchenko (the Party of Regions, communists, and socialists), which controlled the parliament and the government, appointed the communist Olha Hinzburh to the position of the Head of the State Committee of the Archives of Ukraine. It was an act of defiance: a system that included 789 archives was now headed by a person who had no professional training (Hinzburh was an expert in the construction of reinforcement structures) and was quite militant about limiting access to the archives.[145] This archival neophyte was a convinced opponent of promoting the Holodomor = genocide formula in the public space.

A new escalation of historical politics after 2014 made the archives, once again, the focus of attention for "mnemonic warriors." The introductory clause of the Law of Ukraine, "On access to the archives of the repressive organs of the communist totalitarian regime of 1917–1991" (2015) expressly states that the closure of the archives was a precondition of the annexation of Crimea and the military conflict in eastern Ukraine.[146] According to the authors of the law, access to the aforementioned archives could contribute to a better understanding of contemporary history and the prevention of conflicts and animosity. As previously mentioned (see the section on the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory), a grandiose project was declared in 2015, which stipulated the transfer of the archives of the "organs of the totalitarian repressive regime" to the management of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory: it involved ten archives of various agencies, including those with a very specific institutional memory.

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145 By the beginning of the 2000s, the committee controlled 7 central archives, 24 regional archives, 487 archive departments of district administrations, and 163 archive departments of municipal councils. See G. V. Boryak and I. B. Matyash, "Formuvannya systemy arkhivnykh ustanov ta rozvytok ukrayinskoyi arkhivystyky," *Arkhivni ustanovy Ukrayiny*. Dovidnyk. Vol. I. Derzhavni arkhivy (Kyiv: Derzhkomarkhiv Ukrainy, 2005), 19.

146 "Zakon Ukrainy Pro dustup do arkhiviv represyvnykh organiv komunistychnoho totalitarnoho rezhymu 1917–1991 rokiv," April 9, 2015, http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/316-19.

Museums are also directly involved in historical politics by virtue of their function. According to the State Statistics Service, the number of museums in Ukraine more than doubled between 1990 and 2017, from 214 to 574 (this figure includes state-owned and community museums, and there are different estimates available for the general number of museums). Meanwhile, the number of museum visits decreased by half, from 31.8 million per year to 16.4 million per year.[147] Almost all commentators blame these figures on the weakness of the coordinated state policy on "increasing the role of museums in shaping the collective ideas about the history of Ukraine."[148] In the 2000s, there were attempts to implement standard representations of historical memory in museum exhibitions (on the Holodomor, for example), but these did not gain any traction.

In general, according to recent studies, during the 1990s and the 2000s, museums witnessed the coexistence of Soviet and national/nationalist memory narratives (with a growing share for the latter).[149] At the same time, this was a period of gradual expansion for the national/nationalist narrative, mostly through the creation of new museums and memorial complexes and partly through the banishment and replacement of the nostalgic Soviet narrative from existing museums or through the "nationalization" of Soviet-era exhibitions. This trend has become notably stronger with the development of the decommunization policy after 2015, which involved editing museum exhibitions related to the Soviet period. It is remarkable that this nationalization often faced little resistance because the myth advanced fit very well with both the Soviet nostalgic and the national/nationalist standards of representation, e.g., the Cossack myth. An example is the Chyhyryn Historic and Cultural Reserve, which was created in the Soviet era in 1989 and given the status of "national" in 1995, during the independence years.[150]

An analysis of the operations of history-related museums (there were 128 such museums) carried out by the National Institute for Strategic Studies in 2007 demonstrated strong regional differences in representations of the national/nationalist and nostalgic Soviet narratives. Unsurprisingly,

147 State Statistics Service of Ukraine, Culture, accessed December 11, 2020, http://ukrstat.gov.ua/.

148 Alla Kyrydon, "Muzeyi yak instytutsiyi pam'yati," *Ukrayina, Yevropa svit* 16, no. 1 (2015): 195.

149 V. Kharkhun, "Radyanska spadshchina yak ob'yekt polityky pam'yati v Ukrayini (muzeynyy aspect)," *Agora* 17 (2016): 75–86.

150 "Natsional'nyi istoryko-kul'turnyi zapovidnyk 'Chyhyryn,'" http://chigirinzapovidnyk.org.ua/.

the former dominated in the western and central regions of Ukraine, and the latter ruled in the eastern regions and in Crimea.[151] From the 1990s to the beginning of the 2000s, twenty-five local museums dedicated to the nationalist movement and its leaders were founded in the western regions.[152] Museums dedicated to the plight of Ukrainians under the heel of occupation forces complemented them; in general, they narrated the horrors of the "Communist terror."[153] Meanwhile, in eastern regions like Donbass and Crimea, not only have exhibitions and representations of the Soviet period remained virtually unaltered, but new ones, often quite exotic, have been created in institutions such as the Museum of Victims of the Orange Revolution in Luhansk (2007).

The regionalization of museological interpretations of historical memory in Ukraine is aggravated both by the weakness of Kyiv's regional policy and by the fact that local history museums are funded by local authorities (councils). Consequently, their message can vary considerably, depending on prevailing political forces in the area.

151 The author of the study presented the national narrative as an "objective" one. See "Muzeyi istorychnoho profilyu yak instrument derzhavnoyi polityky pam'yati," 2015, accessed January 18, 2019, http://old.niss.gov.ua/monitor/april08/20.htm.

152 Kharkhun, "Radyanska spadshchina," 86.

153 "Memorialnyy muzey totalitarnykh rezhymiv 'Terytoriya Teroru,'" http://territoryterror.org.ua/; "Ternopilskyy istoriko-memorialnyy muzey politychnykh v'yazniv," http://www.karpaty.info/ua/uk/te/to/ternopil/museums/memorial/; and "Muzey-memorial zhertv okupatsiynykh rezhymiv 'Tyurma na Lontskoho,'" http://www.lonckoho.lviv.ua/.

Chapter 4

Non-governmental Organizations

Actors of historical politics discussed in this chapter belong overwhelmingly to the category of non-governmental organizations, yet their influence on state historical politics is often significant. It can be direct, due to the physical presence of representatives of these organizations in central government bodies or in local self-government. It can also be indirect, through lobbying and participation in political actions, and through opposition activities, mass media, social networks, and so forth.

It is difficult to take stock of all the non-governmental organizations that, with varying degrees of intensity, participate in historical politics at all levels, from national to local. For instance, the state register of civil organizations counted as many as 352 political parties in December 2020.[1] However, the majority of these exist only on paper. The Ukrainian Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments established in 1966 lists almost five hundred local divisions (no one knows how many of them really function).[2] The register of civil organizations involved in the field of historical memory includes the names of several hundred organizations with a broad range of interests, from hobby-like activities (historical fencing) and the cultivation of the Cossack heritage to the search for and preservation of the burial sites of dead soldiers[3] or victims of repression.[4]

The following chapter addresses the most typical examples of non-governmental organizations, assessing their role and influence in historical politics.

1 Ministerstvo yustytsii Ukrainy, Departament derzhavnoi reestratsii ta notariatu, accessed December 12, 2020, http://ddr.minjust.gov.ua/uk/ca9c78cf6b6ee6db5c05f0604acdbdec/politychni_partiyi/.

2 "Ukrayinske tovarystvo okhorony pam'yatnykiv istoriyi ta kultury," http://pamjatky.org.ua/?page_id=420. The resource is no longer available (December 12, 2020).

3 See http://rgo.informjust.ua/.

4 See http://rgo.informjust.ua/.

Many civic institutions are quite similar in terms of their actions and rhetoric, and the diversity of names does not necessarily imply variety in the types of actions they perform. Consequently, the cases discussed here will be able to give a general impression of certain types and archetypes of actors of this type.

Political parties

The first decade of Ukrainian statehood witnessed the creation of a multiparty system and the development of political pluralism. The large majority of political parties that emerged during this time (by the end of the 1990s, their number was close to 150) were basically short-term political projects. As a whole, this majority hardly took any interest in historical politics. Until the beginning of the 2000s, the confrontation between the national/nationalist memory narrative—backed by the state since 1992—and the Soviet narrative—swiftly transforming into the Soviet nostalgic narrative—was a central issue in the realm of historical politics. Accordingly, it resulted in a division of labor between political parties that traditionally professed a certain ideology and worldview. Drawing on tradition and for the sake of simplicity, we can divide them into "left" and "right."

The left versus right pattern helps illuminate a clear outline of the fundamental conflicts that form the basis of historical politics in Ukraine. Among five political parties and blocs represented in the Seventh Verkhovna Rada (2012–14, right before the "left" parties departed the political arena), two were leaders in terms of their share of historical questions raised in policy documents and public presentations: the Communist Party of Ukraine (63 percent) and the nationalist All-Ukrainian Union "Svoboda" (46 percent).[5]

Among political parties on the left, the most influential players were the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU),[6] the Socialist Party of Ukraine (SPU), and the Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine, which broke away from the SPU in 1996. The Communists were the most interested in and consistent

5 "Suchasni studiyi pam'yati na shlyakhu do formuvannya demokratychnoyi politychnoyi kultury suspilstva," 2014, http://www.memory.gov.ua:8080/ua/publication/content/1665.htm. The author is not indicated. The methods of calculation are not described.

6 It was created in 1993 at a congress in Donetsk as a successor to the Communist Party of Ukraine, which was banned by the Presidium of the Verkhovna Rada in August 1991. There were two other Communist parties, the CPU (renewed) and the Communist Party of Workers and Peasants, but they were so local in their scope that they only became known after their ban in the summer of 2015.

on issues of historical politics. They advocated on behalf of the Soviet-style Marxist-Leninist interpretation of history, representing the Soviet period as the "Golden Age" of the history of Ukraine, thus, investing in the promotion of the Soviet-nostalgic narrative. In the 1990s, the Communists were the main opponents of the nationalization of the history of Ukraine. An analysis of the party's media from the 1990s demonstrates that the range of topics in which the CPU was interested remains unchanged. The defense of the Soviet myth of the "Great Patriotic War," the denial of the nationalist heroic myth of the OUN–UPA, and the denial of the genocide interpretation of the Holodomor[7] are the CPU's core positions.

The Holodomor question was a convenient tool to manipulate social issues against those who hold power. For instance, in 2000, protesting against government plans to open the land market,[8] Communists used the slogan "No to land sales and to the Holodomor 2000!"[9] The radical-minded CPU members are ready to defend even Stalinism, which is generally condemned by the more moderate leftists. Communists established their own commemorative date, March 5, as "the day of Stalin's memory," and on the party website, one can find a number of enthusiastic articles about the "leader of peoples."[10] To protect and promote the Soviet nostalgic narrative, Communists used the parliament. Between 1994 and 2014, their faction was among the most active in developing and lobbying for draft laws, resolutions, and addresses by the Verkhovna Rada concerning the interpretation and representation of the past.

The Socialist Party of Ukraine was less visible in the field of historical politics. The evolution of the party in the 1990s led to the rejection of the Lenin cult and to a moderately critical assessment of the Soviet period. In 2003, the Socialists joined the promoters of the Holodomor as genocide. In November 2006, the SPU supported the law designating the famine of 1932–

7 For more detail, see Svitlana Kostyleva, *Novitnya kompartiyna presa Ukrayiny pro storinky radyanskoho minuloho, Henotsid Ukrayinskoho narodu: istorychna pam'yat ta polityko-pravova otsinka; Mizhnarodna naukovo-teoretychna konferentsiya lystopada 25, 2000 r* (New York: Materialy, 2003), 573–82.

8 Since 1996 agricultural lands in Ukraine have been redistributed among land shareholders (peasants who live in the countryside) as private property shares (up to 6 hectares per person). The agriculture land market should start in the Fall 2021.

9 S. Kostyleva, *Novitnya kompartiyna presa Ukrayiny pro storinky radyanskoho minuloho, Henotsid Ukrayinskoho narodu*, 579.

10 See, for instance, "Ko dnyu pamyati I. V. Stalina," *KPU*, March 5, 2013, http://www.kpu.ua/ru/50677/ko-dnyu-pamyati-i-v-stalina.

33 as genocide, using the formula proposed by Oleksandr Moroz, the leader of the party and then-speaker of the Verkhovna Rada. According to one of the Socialist MPs, his faction used a broad interpretation of genocide: "The genocide of the Ukrainian people," he said, "impacted every Ukrainian, Russian, Jew, Moldovan, Belarusian, Romanian—every person who lived under Stalin's heel back then."[11]

The "Progressive Socialists" were known in politics mainly because of their scandalous leader Nataliya Vitrenko. It was she who started litigation that aimed to repeal President Yushchenko's decree legitimizing the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army as participants in the struggle for independence. The PSPU always spoke out against closer relations with NATO and the "West" and took an active part in public anti-nationalist actions, for instance, street fights against nationalists in Kyiv on October 14, the anniversary of the UPA.

At the end of the 1990s, a powerful financial-industrial group formed in Ukraine, springing from the "gray" privatization of the Donbass industrial complex. Since the early 2000s, it was an increasingly influential regional conglomerate of "red directors," industrialists, financiers, managers, and state bureaucrats. In 1997 they created their own organization for political representation, the Party of Regional Revival of Ukraine, renamed the Party of Regions in 2001. Initially, the leaders of the Party of Regions were not very interested in issues of symbolic capital: they were more interested in physical capital, the capitalization of assets they secured during the "primitive accumulation" of the 1990s, and their participation in the distribution of state financial flows, preferences, and benefits. Until the 2010s, historical issues were all but absent from the policy documents of the party.

In the field of practice, using the past to serve the interests of the Party of Regions in the present was initiated by hired spin doctors during the presidential campaign of 2004 when, in order to discredit their principal opponent, Viktor Yushchenko, they used symbols identifying him with Nazism and xenophobic nationalism. This task was made easier by the fact that Yushchenko's allies included political forces professing the basic principles of Ukrainian "integral nationalism" (for instance, the All-Ukraine Union

11 "Tochka zoru, Oleksandr Baranivskyy," November 29, 2006, http://www.spu.in.ua/uk/point_of_view/1/3109/.

"Svoboda" or the Ukrainian National Assembly-Ukrainian National Self-Defense). Since the middle of the first decade of the 2000s, the Party of Regions has increasingly used the methods and technologies of historical politics to perform current and prospective political tasks.

The upper ranks of the party began to promote "ideologists" such as Dmytro Tabachnyk,[12] who had once been a professional historian, and Vadym Kolesnichenko, an MP from the city of Sevastopol. In 2006, the Party of Regions resisted Yushchenko's attempts to promote the law designating the Holodomor as genocide in the Verkhovna Rada. In historical politics, this party, representing the interests of big business, was, in fact, allied with the Communists, which by definition should have been its opponents given that the Party of Regions represented "exploiters" and "capitalists." For the Party of Regions itself, the Soviet nostalgic narrative was more a convenient tool than the manifestation of any deeply held beliefs of the party leadership (with the probable exception of several older industry managers who began their careers in the Soviet Union). As cynical pragmatists, these party leaders merely chose the most advantageous ideological backing for their economic and political activities.

The Soviet nostalgic version of historical memory was expedient for the Party of Regions because of a wide range of external circumstances. First, it was popular in Donbass because the Soviet period (except the 1980s) was the "golden age" of the region, the era when miners and industrial workers belonged to the most privileged and well-paid strata of the working class. Second, the propagation of the nostalgic version of the Soviet past served the interests of local industrial-bureaucratic clans because it supported the system of social patrimonialism that had emerged during the Soviet period. Within this system, it was local administration that routinely made decisions on all issues. The Soviet nostalgic narrative was also expedient as an antithesis to the national/nationalist narrative, which was seen as an exter-

12 Dmytro Tabachnyk completed his postgraduate studies at the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR and became well known in the late 1980s as a gifted and prolific political essayist who denounced Stalinism. He began his political career in the Kyiv City Committee of the Komsomol, later becoming a deputy of the Kyiv Council. In 1991, he defended his candidate (equivalent to PhD) thesis, and in 1995, his doctoral thesis (equivalent to a German Doctor habilitatus). Both were dedicated to Stalinist repression. Tabachnyk was one of the few high-ranking members of the Party of Regions who could make competent statements on historical issues. His views are decidedly pro-Russian: he supported "Eurasianism" and called himself a Little Russian. He is one of the most radical critics of "Galician nationalism."

nal threat proceeding from either Kyiv (which could be blamed for the social and economic hardship of the region) or "Western Ukraine," the stronghold of "Banderites." In Donbass, the Soviet nostalgic narrative was not only a part of the communicative memory but also an object of dedicated preservation, reconstruction, and cultivation enacted by the local ruling class represented by the Party of Regions.

Besides the major players mentioned above, there are several specific local ventures, two of them worth mentioning: the Motherland Party (created in Odessa in October 2008), and the Russian Unity Party (created in Simferopol in 2010). These parties, which were rather short-term mobilization projects, soon became well known in Ukraine because of their involvement in public scandals involving "identity" issues. The activists of these parties carried out a motor rally, "On the Roads of Victory," that turned into a provocative raid on Lviv on May 9, 2011, which led to street skirmishes.[13] In 2012, the same international motor rally started in Sevastopol and, after passing through a number of Ukrainian cities, ended in Moscow.[14] The activists of the Motherland Party notoriously attacked the office of the Prosvita Society in Odessa in 2008.

National democratic and nationalist groups and parties were the most consistent rivals to and opponents of the Soviet nostalgic narrative. They represented no less than two dozen petty political parties. From the late 1980s to the early 1990s, the People's Movement of Ukraine for Perestroika (Rukh) played a prominent role in instrumentalizing the past to rival the monopoly held by the ruling Communist Party over the interpretation of the past. Initially, from the end of the 1980s to the beginning of the 1990s, Rukh was a broad alliance of "national communists," nationalists, national democrats, democrats, and the creative intelligentsia whose membership reached no less than about 300,000.[15] In the early 1990s, it took the form of a political party known as the People's Movement of Ukraine, which almost immediately led

13 Aleksandr Chalenko, "Deputat ot 'Rodiny' rasskazyvayet, kak eto bylo vo Lvove 9 maya," May 11, 2011, *Ukrayinska pravda*, http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/chalenko/4dcabd581204e/.

14 Dorogami Pobedy–k obshchemu Soyuzu! Obshchaya istoriya obyedinyayet, May 9, 2012, http://www.russkie.org/index.php?module=printnews&id=25853.

15 A dozen PhD theses have been dedicated to the People's Movement of Ukraine. The first analytic work: O. Haran, *Ubyty drakona: z istoriyi Rukhu ta novykh partiy Ukrayiny* (Kyiv: Lybid, 1993). For an example of "party" history, see Hryhoriy I. Honcharuk, *Narodnyy Rukh Ukrayiny Istoriya* (Odessa: Astroprint, 1997).

to a series of internal rivalries and splits. Thanks to the People's Movement (when it was not yet a party), history was brought to the streets: this organization was one of the major forces behind such large-scale events as the "Chain of Unity" (January 1990) and the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Zaporizhzhia Cossacks in August 1990.

In the second half of the 1990s, the party and its adherents lost their influence, and in 1999, one of its biggest factions split off to become the Ukrainian People's Party, which was not much different ideologically from the People's Movement. In 2002, MPs from the People's Movement who were elected as part of the Our Ukraine Bloc proposed a law calling for the "objective and honest evaluation" of the contribution of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) to the struggle for Ukrainian independence. Between 2005 and 2008, the People's Movement repeatedly raised the issue of the status of the UPA veterans[16]

Several small parties usually described under the umbrella term "national democrats," which varied from Christian democrats to conservatives and included several groups created solely for the purpose of passing the electoral barrier such as the People's Self-Defense Political Party, can be counted among the political forces ideologically close to the People's Movement.[17] National democrats occasionally united into electoral blocs and coalitions (2002, 2004, 2007) in order to reach their short-term political goals. The best-known electoral alliance, Our Ukraine, and its political vestiges were probably the most active agents of historical politics during both their rise and their decline.[18] Some national democrats also made eclectic alliances with, for example, the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc or the populist Oleh Lyashko Radical Party. In general, they were famous for their propensity for conflict—both inter- and intra-party, their poor management, and by their inability to work together for long.

16 Marina S. Kucheruk, "Borotba Narodnoho Rukhu Ukrayiny za vyznannya biytsiv OUN-UPA uchasnykamy natsionalno-vyzvolnykh zmagan," *Naukovi pratsi [Chornomorskoho derzhavnoho unyversytetu imeni Petra Mohyly]. Ser.: Istoriya* 198, no. 186 (2012): 18–21.

17 See, for example, the Ukrainian Republican Party "Sobor," the European Party of Ukraine, the Party of Defenders of the Fatherland, the Christian-Democratic Union, and "Our Ukraine."

18 The People's Union "Our Ukraine" was created in the spring of 2005 as a political force supporting President Viktor Yushchenko. The party quickly declined because of internal strife and low-quality management: it won 14 percent of the vote in the parliamentary elections of 2006 and 2007 (when it was the pro-presidential party) and less than 2 percent in the parliamentary elections of 2012.

Issues of interpretation and representation of the past were and probably are among the few topics that ensured unity in this sphere. Practically all the representatives of the national democrats followed the exclusivist model of the national/nationalist narrative; unconditionally supported Yushchenko's historical politics; and were inclined to favor the antiquarian and archaic version of Ukrainian national history. Moreover, national democrats willingly supported the active promotion of the nationalist narrative, for instance, advocating for the "historical rehabilitation" of the OUN and the UPA, which actually proved to be the promotion and glorification of these groups.

Their allies, the nationalists, represent two groups of organizations: émigré and inland parties and groups. Émigré organizations returned to the "heartland" at the beginning of 1990s. The "Bandera OUN" created its representation in the form of the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists (KUN) with the legal status of a political party.[19] The "Mel`nyk OUN" moved to Ukraine under its own name, and registered as a non-governmental, non-party organization. It is not hard to guess that these groups contributed to the popularization of the history of the nationalist movement. The KUN struggled unrelentingly for state recognition of members of the OUN and UPA as combatants and the soldiers of the latter as war veterans. Slava Stetsko (1920–2003), the head of the organization, authored the first draft law dedicated to this problem. The "Mel`nyk OUN" also created the Oleh Olzhych educational center and library and the Olena Teliha publishing house.

Émigré nationalist organizations were involved in the organization of structures that practiced radical street methods of historical politics. For instance, in 1993, the Bandera OUN spearheaded the creation of the All-

19 The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) was created at the beginning of 1929. Initially it was a conglomerate of youth nationalist organizations from western Ukraine and Ukrainian army veteran organizations from émigré circles (the Ukrainian Military Organization). OUN ideologists promoted the idea of a permanent national revolution (including the most violent military forms of the struggle) that would result in the creation of the Ukrainian national state under one single supra-party organization headed by a supreme chief. In 1941, the OUN split into two parts. One, represented by younger "practitioners" from the western Ukraine—the majority of those involved in terrorist activities against the Second Polish Republic (which was considered by them to be an occupying power), formed a "revolutionary" OUN headed by Stepan Bandera. Since that time, members of this faction have called themselves Banderites (*banderivtsi*) or the Bandera OUN. The older generation of the OUN, mostly from émigré circles in Western Europe, was headed by colonel Andriy Melnyk; they were informally called Melnikites (*melnykivtsi*) or the Mel'nyk OUN. Both factions claimed "legitimacy" and collapsed into "fratricidal conflict" during World War II. For more details, see the classical work on the topic: J.A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 3rd. ed. (Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1990).

Ukrainian Organization "Stepan Bandera Trident" (Tryzub); this became a de facto paramilitary unit. The members of Tryzub took part in various protests, including violent ones ("Ukraine without Kuchma," in 2001), and stood guard on the Maidan in the fall of 2004. One of their most notorious acts was the destruction of the Stalin bust (monument) in Zaporizhzhya in December 2010.

During the "Revolution of Dignity" of 2014, the Tryzub leadership directed the formation of a new right-wing political force, the Right Sector, which took an active part in the confrontation with riot police at the Maidan and later in the destruction of Lenin monuments during the winter of 2014. One of the former founders of Tryzub, Andriy Parubiy, became commandant of Maidan Self Defense—a civil self-defense force, organized by protesters—during the winter of 2013–14 (he had given up his membership in Tryzub by this time) and speaker of the Verkhovna Rada in April 2014.[20] At that time, he was an MP from the People's Front Party, which could be ideologically defined as Populist if populism can be considered an ideology. In this position, he contributed much to the decommunization of Ukrainian memorial space from 2015 to 2017.

In the "right" segment of historical politics, a prominent role has been played by the All-Ukrainian Union "Svoboda," created in 1995 as the Social-National Party of Ukraine (and renamed in 2004). Its political program was based on the ideas of Yaroslav Stetsko, the chief theoretician of the Bandera OUN in the 1940s to 1950s. The representatives of the party in parliament authored and co-authored dozens of draft laws and resolutions promoting the radical version of the national/nationalist narrative. Svoboda was active in cultural vandalism and the destruction of Lenin monuments as well as in public anticommunist actions in the streets.

The political program of Svoboda contains sections specifically dedicated to issues of historical politics. It delineates a range of tasks like amending the constitution to include statements on legal continuity between the modern Ukrainian state and the Kievan Rus as well as "three centuries of the national liberation struggle of Ukrainians." No less important is the demand to officially acknowledge "the fact" of the occupation of Ukraine

20 Maidan Self Defense is the name of a civil society organization created in December 2013 after a peaceful group of protesters was severely beaten by the police. In the course of events of the "Revolution of Dignity," Maidan Self Defense turned into a kind of people's guard organization. It was dispersed in the spring of 2014.

between 1918–91 by Bolshevik Russia. The party insists that the Verkhovna Rada, United Nations, and European Parliament recognize the "genocide of Ukrainians in the twentieth century" and proposed the introduction of a course on the history of the genocide of Ukrainians in the twentieth century into the school curricula. Svoboda demanded free access to the archives of state organs responsible for political repressions, recognition of the status of the UPA, and the creation of a state memorial museum on the "Armed Struggle of the Ukrainian Nation for Independence," among other things.[21]

As can easily be seen, many state actions in the field of historical politics since the summer of 2015 have implemented some of Svoboda's goals, despite the fact that the party failed in the elections of autumn of 2014 and did not manage to get into parliament by party list. Additionally, Svoboda was extremely active at the local level: it is mostly due to the party's actions at local councils in Central Ukraine and Kyiv that many central streets in oblast centers were renamed between 2015–17 after OUN and UPA leaders.

Civil society organizations

Ukrainian researchers have already addressed the role of civil organizations[22] in historical politics.[23] They even propose a sort of taxonomy to distinguish these entities according to their functions. One group is composed of those involved in research, and the preservation, development, and popularization of historical memory. Another is identified by their membership: veteran organizations, Cossack associations, organizations of repression victims, national minorities, and so forth. To diversify the picture, it might also be appropriate to distinguish between those that were actually created by active citizens and, thus, exemplify the self-organization of civil society at the grassroots level and those that were sub-projects of political parties and shadow interest groups. The latter imitate civil society and are used to enhance the public legitimacy of certain versions of historical memory.

21 See "Prohrama VO Svoboda–prohrama zakhystu ukrayintsiv. VI. Istorychna spravedlyvist. Tyahlist derzhavotvorennya ta podolannya naslidkiv okupatsiyi, 2015," http://svoboda.org.ua/party/program/.

22 "Civil organizations" refer to non-governmental entities formally created by groups of citizens.

23 L. Chupriy, "Rol hromadskykh orhanizatsiy u formuvanni istorychnoyi pam'yati Ukrayinskoho narodu, 2009," May 2, 2016, http://old.niss.gov.ua/monitor/Juli2009/32.htm; O. Ya. Volyanyuk, "Hromadski formuvannya u haluzi polityky pam'yati suchasnoyi Ukrayiny," *Social Science*, no. 3 (2009): 122, https://social-science.uu.edu.ua/article/151.

As a rule, the types of activities organized by civil organizations in the sphere of historical politics might not be perceived as innovative or diverse. In most cases, they deal with routine matters related to cultural, educational, and propaganda projects (exhibitions, publication of leaflets, creation of private museums); public actions (demonstrations, vigils, collective public addresses, memorial events); and advocacy (work with authorities to promote or block policies aimed at advancing certain representations of historical memory). However, in many cases, they provoke controversy, outrage, and scandal.

The history of the participation of civil organizations in historical politics requires a separate systematic study. According to a rough estimate made in 2009, no less than 2,000 civil organizations in Ukraine have been directly or indirectly involved in activities related to historical memory.[24] We will concentrate mostly on those that were actively involved in historical politics within the above-suggested framework of interaction and confrontation between different memory narratives.

It should be noted that the agents and advocates of the national/nationalist memory narrative initially (in the late 1980s) were opponents of the official historical politics promoted by the ruling Communist Party. When Ukraine became independent, these groups essentially turned into promoters of the official, "state-building" historical politics for the purpose of advancing and imposing the national/nationalist narrative. Organizations that backed the Soviet nostalgic or imperial narrative found themselves in opposition to the basic tenets of official historical politics.

The "invasion" of civil society organizations into the sphere of historical politics and the end of the state monopoly in the field occurred in the late 1980s. Civil organizations took active part in production and reproduction of history and memory. Groups created during the Soviet period (for instance, the Ukrainian Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments) were challenged by the newly established ones, such as the Memorial Society, the Kyiv Culturology Club, and others. Interestingly, both types merged into one current in their criticism of the extremes of the Soviet system and their call for the reinvention of the "true" history of Ukraine without blank spots and taboos. They have played an

24 Chupriy, "Rol hromadskykh orhanizatsiy."

enormous role in destabilizing the foundations of the official Soviet memory narrative and aggressively promoting the national/nationalist alternative. When the latter was elevated to the level of an official canon, larger stakeholders (political parties and movements) joined the realm of historical politics, pushing civil organizations to the margins of the field, at least on the national level.

What follows are several typical examples of activities performed by organizations that promote the national/nationalist memory narrative. Most of them emerged and evolved in the process of combating the Soviet narrative in the late 1980s, when "battles for history" were an important element of anticommunist and anti-Soviet mobilization.

The All-Ukrainian Vasyl Stus[25] Memorial Society (Memorial) was established in March 1989 and registered in 1992 as a cultural-educational, human rights, and philanthropic organization. In 2014, Memorial was re-registered as a "human rights organization."[26] Initially, the activists of Memorial mostly contributed to the rehabilitation of the victims of political repressions, searched for the burial sites of those who were killed by Soviet repressive institutions, and took care of the new monuments. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Memorial initiated and took part in almost all public opposition activities, even when they did not involve history. In April 1991, to a great extent because of pressure from Memorial and its political allies, the Supreme Council of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic adopted the law "On the Rehabilitation of the Victims of Political Repression in Ukraine."[27] From the 1990s to the 2000s, Memorial was engaged in uncompromising criticism of the Soviet system (mainly by uncovering its crimes)[28] and in the popularization of the struggle of Ukrainians against the Soviet regime. The latter naturally led to the promotion of apologetic representations of the memory and history of the OUN and UPA;[29] for instance, six out of nine student essays selected for the short list of the Memorial Society competition on the

25 Named after the Ukrainian poet and political dissident Vasyl Stus, who died in a Soviet prison camp in 1985.

26 Official site of the organization: http://memorialstusa.com.ua/

27 "Zakon Ukrainy, 'Pro reabilitatsiyu zhertv represkomunistychnoho totalitarnoho rezhymu 1917–1991 rokiv,'" March 13, 2018, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/962-12.

28 In 2007, the Kyiv branch of Memorial established a "Museum of Soviet Occupation."

29 It should be noted that the most active of the local Memorial organizations (in Kiev) has been headed since 1999 by Roman Krutsik, a cofounder of the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists.

history of Ukraine were dedicated to Ukrainian nationalism and the nationalist movement.[30]

The All-Ukrainian Society of Political Prisoners and Victims of Political Repression, founded in June 1989 in Kyiv and registered in 1992, can be considered as analogous with Memorial. According to the Society itself, it has chapters in twenty-two regions of Ukraine and boasts some forty-thousand members. The statute of the Society defines its goals and objectives as follows: research and dissemination of information about the national liberation struggle in Ukraine after 1917, especially in the context of the fates of political prisoners; "restoration of the truth about the activities of the OUN-UPA as a legitimate struggle of the Ukrainian people for its liberty, independence and statehood"; the search for and compilation of records of political prisoners and victims of political repressions; keeping track of the burial places of fighters and victims; and cultural educational work, like participation in public events and state commemorations aimed at the "revival of the natural and historical environment."[31] From the end of the 1980s to the beginning of the 2000s, Society activists organized the reburial (in Kyiv) of the most famous Ukrainian political prisoners who died in Soviet prisoner camps in Siberia (Vasyl Stus, Yuriy Lytvyn, Oleksa Tykhy in 1989; Mykhailo Soroka in 1991; Marta Bandera, Stepan Mamchur in 2002, Kyrylo Osmak in 2004). The Society actively endorsed efforts to recognize the OUN and the UPA as combatants fighting for the freedom of Ukraine and to make the status of their veterans equal to the social and political status of Soviet veterans of the Great Patriotic War.

In the western regions of Ukraine, representatives of the Society even succeeded in securing symbolic social benefits for their members from the local authorities (reductions in costs of utility services, increased retirement allowances). It publishes *Zona* magazine (the last issue placed on the website of the Society dates from 2011). During Yushchenko's presidential term, the Society supported all initiatives aimed at the promotion of the national/

30 "28 travnya vidbulos pidbyttya pidsumkiv Konkursu studentskykh naukovykh robit z istoriyi Ukrayiny," May 30, 2015, http://www.memorial.kiev.ua/novyny/1393-28-travnia-vidbulos-pidbyttia-pidsumkiv-konkursu-studentskykh-naukovykh-robit-z-istorii-ukrainy.html.

31 See: http://repressed.org.ua/. This information is current as of January 20, 2013. Currently, access to a number of materials on the website is limited. Further information about the activity of the society can be found in *Zona* magazine at: http://repressed.org.ua/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=69&Itemid=53.

nationalist memory narrative, mainly providing him with "moral-political" support in statements, participation in events, and so forth. As the organization includes mostly retired people of advanced age, the poorest stratum of society, its financial and organizational capacities and its influence at the national level are very limited.

It is worth mentioning some ideological relatives of these organizations that are active on both the national and local levels. The Roman Shukhevych All-Ukrainian Fraternity of OUN-UPA Soldiers[32] (registered in 1995) proves to be one of the most active in the propagation and glorification of the Ukrainian nationalist movement of the 1920s to 1950s. The Lviv Regional Society "The Quest" (registered in 1996), the major tasks of which are "to search and study the biographies of the unknown victims of wars and repressions, the search for the sites of their burials, and the restoration of historical truth," focuses mostly on the history and memory of the nationalist movement. The philanthropic foundation "Heroika" concentrates its effort on the "popularization of the history of the First (1917–20) and the Second (1939–50s) Liberation Struggle," merging them into one single narrative, the memory of the Ukrainian revolution and the nationalist movement of World War II.[33]

The Center for Studies of the Liberation Movement (TsVDR or the Center) created in 2002 in Lviv deserves special attention. The center advertises itself as an independent civil organization "that studies various aspects of the Ukrainian liberation movement in the twentieth century, the politics of national memory and the processes of overcoming the legacy of the totalitarian past in the countries of the former USSR, Central and Eastern Europe."[34] Initially, the center received funding from the OUN-B related entities of the Ukrainian diaspora while OUN-B recognizes TsDVR as its "facade organization." For a long time, the Center focused its efforts primarily on research and the organization of an archival collection dedicated to the history of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, as well as the popularization of their "glorious past."

32 Official site: Vseukrains`ke bratstvo vojakiv OUN-UPA im. Henerala Romana Shukhevycha—Tarasa Chuprynky http://rgo.informjust.ua/.

33 Official site: Heroika http://geroika.org.ua/about-us-in-english/. Liberation Struggle (Vyzvol`ni Zmahannia): the term was introduced in the early 1920s for the period 1917–1921. Often mixed with the term "the Ukrainian Revolution."

34 Official site: http://cdvr.org.ua/про-нас.

During Yushchenko's presidency, the organization obtained direct access to the highest echelons of power and, thus, to the formation of the politics of history. Volodymyr Viatrovych, the Center's director, was first appointed the head of the archival division of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory (which, in fact, did not yet exist), then promoted to the position of "research and study" advisor to the head of the Security Service of Ukraine, and finally became the director of the SBU archive (2008–2010). In the same period, the Center became the de facto main executive of the National Memorial Museum of Victims of Occupation Regimes, or Loncky Prison,[35] the newly created institution that formally belonged to the SBU.

TsDVR's real moment of fame, however, came only after the Revolution of Dignity. The center functionaries obtained top positions at the governmental institutions responsible for the formation of historical politics. TsDVR staff members constituted the core of the "historical memory" group within the civic movement named the Reanimation Package of Reforms (RPR), and they presented their findings and activities as an achievement of civil society though, in fact, they were a proxy of UINP.

The history of TsDVR is remarkable in the sense that members of one non-governmental organization promoted the national/nationalist memory narrative (reserving special attention for the nationalist component), received direct access to administrative resources at the top state level, and spearheaded a massive effort aimed at the eviction of the Soviet nostalgic narrative from the memory space.[36] The greatest success in this field, the so-called decommunization of 2015–18, was achieved thanks to the aforementioned administrative resources and the support they received from high levels of government.

One more important example of a civil society organization that directly influenced the shaping and implementation of historical politics is the Association for Research of the Holodomors in Ukraine, registered in September 1992. The association emerged at the initiative of the writer Volodymyr Manyak, one of the main promoters of the idea of the Holodomor as a genocide of the Ukrainian people. Promotion of this version of the event became the principal activity of the association. From the moment of its for-

35 Official site: http://www.lonckoho.lviv.ua/.

36 For a more detailed view of the activities of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, see the previous chapter.

mation, it included professional historians as its most devoted and active members, such as Oleksandra Veselova (1939–2015) and Vasyl Marochko (who continues to chair the board of the organization). The association is an example of a genuine grassroots initiative. During its most productive years (the 1990s), it existed almost exclusively because of the enthusiasm of its members (at its height, it counted around seven hundred members and thirty-seven local chapters).[37] It defined its main task as "the research and preservation of the people's historical memory of one of the most tragic pages of history, the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine, as well the famines of 1921–1923 and 1946–1947."[38]

The regular activity of the association—the search for the burial places of the victims of the 1932–33 famine, the creation of monuments and memorial sites, and research—was complemented by a massive effort to promote the formula "famine = genocide of Ukrainians" at the level of national historical politics. In June 1993, the association proposed the creation of a temporary commission of the Verkhovna Rada whose task would be to prove the genocidal nature of the famine. The materials of the case had to be transferred to the International Court of Justice in the Hague.[39] In November 1998, the association recommended that the Ukrainian government create an Institute for Research on the Genocide of the Ukrainian People. Two years later, the members of the association repeated their suggestion, albeit changing the formula to the Institute for the Research of the Genocide of the Ukrainian Nation.[40] In 2002, the MP Levko Lukyanenko, the incumbent head of the association, submitted an official plan for the creation of the institute to the government.[41] It seems to have been the first attempt to create a state institution specialized in historical politics, a kind of prototype of an Institute of National Memory. In 2006, the members of the association vigorously contributed to the adoption of the law "On the Holodomor of 1932–1933." According to Stanislav Kulchytsky, he and Vasyl Marochko personally prepared and filed a package of

37 Oleksandra M. Veselova, "Asotsiatsiya doslidnykiv holodomoriv v Ukrayini," in *Entsyclopediya Istorii Ukrainy,* 2003, accessed May 12, 2015, http://www.history.org.ua/?termin=Asotsiatsiia_doslidnykiv.

38 Ibid.

39 "Propozitsiyi shchodo vshanuvannya 60-kh rokovyn holodomoru v Ukrayini." Undated typescript document held in the author's personal archive.

40 Oleksandra M. Veselova, *Z istoriyi stvorennya i diyalnosti Asotsiatsiyi doslidnykiv holodomoru v Ukrayini (ADHU)*, (Kyiv: Vyd-vo ADHU, 2007) 82, 90.

41 Oblikovo-kontrolna kartka No. 4452/2 vid July 12, 2002. Author's personal archive.

documents that sought to convince MPs to vote for the draft law which legitimized the genocidal interpretation of the event.

Speaking of non-governmental organizations that support and cultivate the national/nationalist narrative of historical memory, it is impossible not to mention the Ukrainian Cossack formations. Cossack organizations have always enjoyed the special attention and patronage of the state, albeit in mostly formal and symbolic ways. President Kuchma, for instance, issued five decrees in support of the Cossack movement and established a commemorative date on October 14—the Day of Ukrainian Cossacks. A three year national program for the "revival and development" of Ukrainian Cossackdom between 2002 and 2005 was adopted; however, it was never implemented.[42]

Viktor Yushchenko, who issued two decrees in support of the Cossacks, was elected Ataman (Chieftain) of the Ukrainian Cossacks as symbolic support for his politics of history. Another plan for a state national program for the development of the Cossack movement was produced by the succeeding government with the same outcome as its predecessor.[43] Curiously, the preamble of this project, approved by the government, listed the problems of the Cossack movement. The document mentioned the negative public perception of Cossack organizations (identified as a legacy of the Soviet policy of "persecution of Cossack traditions"), the fragmentation of Cossack organizations, and the lack of control over them (particularly in relation to their possessions of arms, including firearms).[44] The four-page plan indicates the seriousness of the intention to develop Cossackdom. It serves as a brilliant example of bureaucratic rhetoric and verbiage. Probably the most important state action in the field occurred in 2008, when the open-air museum "Cossack Tombs" (created back in 1966) on the site of the Battle of Berestechko (1651) was given national status.

This quite formal attitude of the government to "initiatives from below" probably enabled the Cossack movement to preserve its grassroots status. By 2011, according to some estimates, Ukraine counted more than seven hundred Cossack organizations with some three hundred thousand members:

42 "Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro Natsionalnu prohramu vidrodzhennya ta rozvytku Ukrainskoho kozatstva na 2002–2005 roky,'" November 15, 2001, http://zakono.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1092/2001.

43 Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny, "Rozporyadzhennya vid veresnya 17, 2008 roku, Pro skhvalennya Kontseptsiyi Derzhavnoyi tsilyovoyi natsionalno-kulturnoyi prohramy rozvytku Ukrayinskoho kozatstva na 2009–2011 roky," September 17, 2008, http://zakono.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1237-2008-p.

44 Ibid.

approximately forty of these organizations held all-Ukrainian status, 255 were regional, while the influence of the rest was limited to a district *(rayon)* or municipality.[45] Cossack organizations initiated and participated in the restoration of churches and monasteries and the erection of monuments to the outstanding historical figures of the Cossack era: Bohdan Khmelnytsky (in Odessa), Ivan Vyhovsky and Ivan Samoylovych (in Zhytomyr Region), Petro Sahaidachny (in Kyiv), Ivan Bohun (in Vinnytsia Oblast), and Ivan Mazepa (in Galați, Romania). They invariably took an active part in public commemorative actions to celebrate the emblematic events of Cossack history.[46]

Cossack organizations became more visible at the national level during the Maidan events in Kyiv from November 2013 to February 2014. Some of them took active part in defending the Maidan (a Cossack Hundred was formed), and the events themselves were marked by the active use of Cossack rituals and Cossack heroic rhetoric which was enthusiastically received by the public.[47]

The overview of civil organizations functioning within the framework of the national/nationalist memory narrative should not omit the most emblematic example of a non-governmental institution that, for all practical purposes, represents state politics. The international philanthropic foundation "Ukraine 3000" was created in 2001, although, as public financial statements of the foundation start only in 2005, it can be inferred that it became genuinely active after this date. Kateryna Yushchenko, the wife of President Yushchenko, chaired the supervisory board, a fact that may explain the greatly increased activity of the foundation between 2005–10. During this period, cash donations to the foundation totaled 63.4 million hryvnias. When Yushchenko left office, donations decreased: between 2011–15, they totaled only 25.4 million hryvnias (over this period of time, the hryvnia itself was devalued three times).

The program branch of the foundation, called "Yesterday," was assigned historical politics. Support for museums and publishing houses and the promotion of the genocide version of the famine of 1932–33 were its major areas of responsibility. In three years, expenditures soared to almost 10 times

45 Yu. H. Kalnysh, "Suchasne ukrayinske kozatstvo," December 21, 2011, http://sd.net.ua/2011/12/21/suchasne-ukrayinske-kozactvo.html.

46 Chupriy, "Rol hromadskykh orhanizatsiy."

47 The word "hundred" is a conventional name borrowed from Cossack practice. This "hundred" could include from several dozen to several hundred people during the Revolution of Dignity, taking into account the rotation of participants in the course of the protests.

their original levels: from 112,300 hryvnias in 2006 to 1,138,000 hryvnias in 2009.[48] This foundation developed the Lessons of History program, which aimed to "bring society as much truth as possible about the greatest tragedies of the Ukrainian people." Among the latter, the famine of 1932–33 enjoyed special attention. The funds of the foundation were used to collect oral evidence of this event, to publish nine books about the Holodomor, and to hold contests for banners and works of journalism. The most famous action organized by the foundation was the creation of a touring exhibition, "Execution by Hunger—The Unknown Genocide of Ukrainians." The text of the placards was translated into eight languages,[49] and the exhibit traveled around the world with the support of the foreign diplomatic missions of Ukraine.

We will conclude with a typical example of cooperation between various actors (parties, civil organizations) in the promotion of the national/nationalist narrative. A street banner in Lviv calling for a public celebration (which included an assembly, theater show, and concert) of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the "Act of Restoration of Ukrainian Statehood"[50] lists partners and co-organizers of the event: the Taras Shevchenko Prosvita Society, the Stepan Bandera Center for National Revival, the Society of Political Prisoners and Victims of Political Repressions, the Alliance of Ukrainian Women, the League of Ukrainian Women, the Memorial Society,[51] the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists, the People's Movement of Ukraine, and the All-Ukrainian Union "Svoboda," with the support of the regional state administration and the regional Council of People's Deputies.[52]

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48 Calculated using the following data from the official site of the foundation: http://www.ukraine3000.org.ua/statements/5240.html; http://www.ukraine3000.org.ua/img/forall/2006.pdf; http://www.ukraine3000.org.ua/img/forall/Zvit2007.pdf; http://www.ukraine3000.org.ua/img/forall/U3000-2008.pdf; http://www.ukraine3000.org.ua/img/forall/Fin_Report_U3000_2009.pdf; http://www.ukraine3000.org.ua/img/forall/Fin_Report_U_3000_2010.pdf; http://www.ukraine3000.org.ua/img/forall/U3000_2012.pdf; http://www.ukraine3000.org.ua/img/forall/U3000-2013.pdf; http://www.ukraine3000.org.ua/img/forall/FinZvitU30002014.pdf; http://www.ukraine3000.org.ua/img/forall/2015.pdf. Accessed July 29, 2016.

49 Blahodiyna prohrama "Uroky istoriyi," December 11, 2005, http://www.ukraine3000.org.ua/yesterday/vchora/5216.html.

50 After this action was taken by the Bandera OUN in Lviv on June 30, 1941, the Nazis began persecution of its initiators and adopted repressive sanctions against the Bandera OUN.

51 It should not be confused with a Russian organization of the same name. See its website, http://www.memoria.com.ua/.

52 Author's personal archive.

Now we move to an overview of the activities of civil organizations representing the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative. Some of them belong to the Soviet legacy itself: for instance, the Organization of Veterans of Ukraine in close cooperation with the Communist Party of Ukraine (and traditionally chaired by a CPU member). The main goal of the organization is the social protection of Soviet Army veterans and combatants.[53] However, it was probably one of the most visible entities in the sphere of historical politics. The organization holds the "heroic-patriotic education of the young," the "contribution to the perpetuation of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945, the preservation of monuments and memorial sites dedicated to the protectors of the Motherland," and work "strengthening the friendship between peoples"[54] as its core activities.

The activists of the organization took part in all of the public commemorative activities related to the anniversaries of World War II. This event was interpreted and represented exclusively as the "Great Patriotic War," the most important formula of the Soviet narrative. Members of the organization did their best to block attempts to rehabilitate and glorify the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists both at the political level and in the field of "rewriting history."[55] "We angrily condemn new attempts of certain political forces in Ukraine to rehabilitate the war-dogs of OUN-UPA," declared an address of the Kyiv Organization of Veterans of Ukraine. "It is a cynical humiliation of the blessed memory of the dead soldiers of the Great Patriotic War and a hateful outrage upon the living veterans of war and labor!"[56]

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53 The organization includes as its collective members such groups as the Ukrainian Alliance of Peacekeeping Soldiers, "Cubans," (those who served in Cuba), "Afgans" or the Ukrainian Alliance of Afghanistan Veterans, the All-Ukrainian Organization of Disabled Veterans of War and Armed Forces etc., 2012, http://www.rada-veteran.kiev.ua/организация-ветеранов-украины. This link is not available anymore.

54 Statut Orhanizatsiyi veteraniv Ukrayiny, 2012, http://www.rada-veteran.kiev.ua/статут-організації-ветеранів-Ukrayiny. This link is not available anymore. Information about the organization can be found here: http://zvitiaga.org/catalog/award/organizaciya-veteraniv-ukrayini

55 See, for instance, Zayavleniye Prezidiuma Luganskoi gorodskoi organizatsii veteranov Ukrainy (2005), http://oblrada.lg.ua/node/2501; Sovet Organizatsii veteranov Ukrainy vystupayet protiv 'iskusstvennogo primireniya s veteranami OUN-UPA, 2005, accessed January 19, 2016, http://podrobnosti.ua/209863-sovet-organizatsii-veteranov-ukrainy-vystupaet-protiv-iskusstvennogo-primirenija-s-veteranami-oun-upa.html; Protiv falsifikatsii istorii, 2005, accessed January 19, 2016, http://kyiv-vestnik.com.ua/public_s924.html.

56 "Otchetno-vybornaya konferentsiya Kievskoi gorodskoi organizatsii veteranov Ukrainy," December 16, 2012, http://www.kpu.ua/ru/28310/otchetno-vybornaya-konferenciya-kievskoj-gorodskoj-organizacii-veteranov-ukrainy.

The organization was the most steadfast opponent of Yushchenko's historical politics, which was seen by its leaders as systematic "ideological and information warfare against the historical memory of the people."[57] They especially criticized him for negating the Soviet experience and praising nationalist organizations and leaders. In the spring of 2015, the organization condemned the Verkhovna Rada's adoption of laws honoring the participants of the national liberation struggle (in this case nationalist organizations) and banning communist symbols.[58]

The next civil society organization can serve as an example of a purely political project, essentially transferring the interests of one specific party to the non-party sector. The All-Ukrainian Civil Organization "Human Rights Public Movement" of "Russian-Speaking Ukraine"[59] (RU) was established in March 2008 in Severodonetsk at the all-Ukrainian "Congress of deputies of all the levels." RU proclaimed the defense of the rights of Russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine and national minorities as its main goal. Equally important tasks were "the popularization of shared history as the integrating factor for all East Slavic peoples" and "counteraction to the propaganda and rehabilitation of Fascism and Nazism in Ukraine as well as to the actions aimed at the rehabilitation, glorification, and social legitimation of persons and formations that took part in World War II on the side of Germany and its allies."[60] The board of the RU was headed by Vadym Kolesnichenko, the Verkhovna Rada MP from Sevastopol and one of the most well-known and scandalous speakers of the Party of Regions. In 2012, he claimed that the RU brought together more than 120 civil society organizations and counted some ten thousand members. He also claimed that the organization was financed solely by ordinary Ukrainian citizens.[61] This statement was more wishful thinking than reality.

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57 "Zayavleniye Soveta Organizatsii veteranov Ukrainy v zashchitu istoricheskikh i dukhovnykh tsennostey naroda Ukrainy (2008)," *Rabochaya gazeta,* December 16, 2008, http://rg.kiev.ua/page5/article12891/.

58 "Orhanizasiya veteraniv Ukrayiny vymahaye vid Prezidenta ne pidpysuvaty antykomunistychni zakony," April 2015, http://ww.kpu.ua/ru/81019/organizatsija_veteraniv_ukrajiny_vymagaje_vid_prezydenta_ne_pidpysuvaty_antykomunistychni_zakony.

59 See: http://r-u.org.ua. The link is not available, the organization is no longer functional.

60 See: O nas, http://r-u.org.ua. The link is not available, the organization is no longer functional.

61 Vadim Kolesnichenko, "'Russkoyazychnaya Ukraina' na svoyom primere prizvala vse obshchestvennyye organizatsii otchitatsya za svoyu deyatelnost," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, blog, February 18, 2012 , http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/kolesnichenko/4f3fc68719ff1/.

The best-known achievement by the RU was the traveling exhibition "The Volhynia Massacre: Polish and Jewish victims of the OUN-UPA," created in cooperation with the Polish Society for the Perpetuation of the Memory of Victims of the Crimes of Ukrainian Nationalists (the well-known Polish nationalist civic organization). The opening of the exhibition in Kyiv in April 2010 provoked a public scandal: representatives of Svoboda and other nationalist units started picketing the exhibition and then damaged some of its artifacts.[62] The cultural attaché of the Polish embassy in Ukraine called the exhibition "a powerful provocation."[63] The exhibition traveled from one region of Ukraine to another and was banned by local authorities in the western regions of the country.

In January 2015, the Security Service of Ukraine declared Vadym Kolesnichenko wanted (by this time, he had become a citizen of Russia). One of the leaders of RU, Oleg Tsaryov (also a former member of the Party of Regions) became speaker of the united parliament of the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk "People's Republics" in June 2014. Like his colleague, he was listed as wanted by the SBU (he is currently living in Moscow). However, the website of the RU continued to function until 2017, and the organization was in the list of civil associations registered by the Ukrainian Ministry of Justice for a while (a new registration certificate was issued in March 2015).

Russia-based civil organizations[64] were also active in Ukraine. The Institute of CIS countries[65] headed by Konstantin Zatulin (repeatedly declared persona non grata in Ukraine) deserves special mention. The website of the institute featured a "Ukrainian branch" with an address in Kyiv.[66] The register of civil associations of the Ukrainian Ministry of Justice lists a branch of the institute registered in 2009 as a legal entity in Sevastopol (with a branch in Kyiv). The institute published a digital magazine, *Monitoring "Ukraina*,"[67] mostly featuring a bibliography of Ukrainian and Russian media

62 "Pivtora desyatka natsionalistiv zayshly na vystavku, prysvyachenu zhertvam UPA, i pochaly znyshchuvaty kartyny ta inshi eksponaty, April 8, 2010," http://tsn.ua/ukrayina/v-kiyevi-aktivisti-svobodi-rozgromili-vistavku-prisvyachenu-zhertvam-upa.html.

63 "U Polshchi zasudyly fotovystavku 'Volynska rizanyna,'" April 10, 2010, http://censor.net.ua/forum/517576/u_polsch_zasudili_fotovistavku_volinska_rzanina.

64 The majority of these organizations active in the field of the politics of history belong to and are funded by state proxies, directly or indirectly.

65 Also known as the Institute of Diaspora and Integration. Official site: https://i-sng.ru/.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid. https://i-sng.ru/biblioteka/zhurnaly/informacionno-analiticheskiy-monitor-zhurnaly/.

publications. In the 2000s, especially between 2007 and 2013, the institute repeatedly joined various events that criticized Yushchenko's historical politics and promoted the Soviet nostalgic narrative. In October 2008, the SBU submitted a request to the Ukrainian Ministry of Justice to cancel the registration of the institute as an anti-Ukrainian organization.[68] In 2013, representatives of the right-wing parties demanded the closure of the branch as a "sabotage organization."[69] In 2018, the Kyiv branch was represented by one person only and did not function.

This overview would be incomplete without mentioning the non-governmental organizations representing a perspective between the two dominant memory narratives described above. The *Nova Doba* Association of Teachers of History and Social Science created in 2001 is one of the most active and influential civic organizations working in the sphere of didactic history.[70] It is a member of Euroclio and mainly works with history teachers and high school students. It actively promotes an inclusive model of historical memory, implements projects aimed at nurturing cultural tolerance through history teaching, organizes training, and publishes textbooks both for teachers and students. *Nova Doba* is supported mostly by international donors.

One of the best-known all-Ukrainian organizations showing an active interest in issues of history is the Congress of the National Communities of Ukraine,[71] which publishes the newspaper *Forum of Nations* that contains permanent columns like "Babyn Yar," "History," and "Crimes of Totalitarianism" and organizes public actions aimed at the development of a culture of tolerance. The executive director of the congress is Yosyf Zisels, a well-known public figure and participant in the human rights movement of the 1970s and 1980s. Like *Nova Doba*, the congress defends the principles of multiculturalism in representations of the past.

Special mention should be given to non-governmental organizations working with dimensions of cultural memory that sometimes do not fit into mainline historical politics and often are in latent conflict with it. In 1999, the Tkuma Ukrainian Institute of Holocaust History Studies was estab-

68 "Filial institute SNG nameren borotsa za pravo deyatelnosti v Ukraine, October 20, 2008," http://news.liga.net/news/politics/426296-filial-instituta-sng-nameren-borotsya-za-pravo-deyatelnosti-v-ukraine.htm.

69 "UNP trebuet vozbudit` ugolovnoe delo protiv Kornilova," April 2, 2012, http://kornilov.name/unp-trebuet-vozbudit-ugolovnoe-delo-protiv-kornilova/#more-1861.

70 Official site: http://www.novadoba.org.ua/.

71 Official site: http://kngu.org/.

lished in Dnipropetrovsk.[72] In 2002, the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies was founded in Kyiv as a charity foundation attached to an academic establishment, the Institute of Political and Ethno-National Studies of the National Academy of Sciences.[73] Both organizations combine research and educational activities dedicated to the study of the history of the Holocaust in Ukraine with the promotion of Holocaust education. The Civic Committee for the Perpetuation of the Memory of the Victims of Babyn Yar created in 2003 works in the same vein.[74] It was largely thanks to their efforts, which had long been supported mainly by Western partner organizations, that Holocaust memory returned to the Ukrainian memorial landscape.

To conclude, it is worth mentioning a non-governmental organization that occupies a special place in historical politics without directly participating in it. For a quarter of a century, the International Renaissance Foundation, established in 1991 by the American philanthropist George Soros,[75] has consistently supported projects aimed at the promotion of an inclusive model of historical memory and a culture of tolerance. The foundation financed translations of non-fiction books in the fields of humanities and social science from European languages, sponsored projects that aspired to overcome xenophobia and cultural intolerance in history teaching, and assisted in the organization of events (summer schools, conferences, workshops, cultural and artistic events, and exhibitions) aimed at overcoming the extremes of the national/nationalist narrative and offering balanced criticism of the Soviet nostalgic version of historical memory.

Mass media and web-based communities

The mass media traditionally plays an important role both in promoting and disseminating basic memory narratives. During the perestroika years, opposition newspapers, information leaflets, and brochures were very important for the mobilization of critics and opponents of the regime, and the questions of the past were widely used in them. Television and radio, which were totally controlled by the authorities, mostly protected the official (Soviet) memory narrative.

72 Official site: http://tkuma.dp.ua/index.php/ua/pro-nas.
73 Official site: http://www.holocaust.kiev.ua/.
74 Official site: http://www.kby.kiev.ua.
75 The foundation is a Ukrainian legal entity.

That being said, the first "mnemonic warriors" of the opposition came from the official mass media. For instance, *Literaturna Ukrayina* (Literary Ukraine), the newspaper of the Union of Writers of Ukraine (and of the Party Bureau of the Union of Writers of Ukraine), became the mouthpiece for the intelligentsia, which produced its own Fronde. They published texts about the famine of 1932–33 and the Stalinist repressions. Thick literary journals also became involved in the revision of the past: *Zhovten* (renamed *Dzvin* in 1990), and *Prapor* (renamed *Berezil* in 1991) in Lviv and Kharkiv, *Kur'yer Kryvbasu* in Kryvyi Rih, and *Vitchyzna* and *Dnipro* in Kyiv. Starting in 1989, even official party propaganda outlets like *Pod znamenem leninizma* began to criticize "the extremes of Stalinism." Independence, and especially the boom of digital media, led to the marginalization of all the literary journals, which lost their status as masters over the minds of the intelligentsia.

The media has enormously expanded in the years following independence with the appearance of a number of new media outlets. Many of them were involved in elaborating and disseminating competing versions of the past. The newspaper *Den'* (The Day), published since 1996, became the best-known and most vigorous promoter of the national/nationalist narrative. In its advertising space, the editorial board defines itself as follows: "*Den'* has strengths which distinguish it from other print media outlets. It is influential, daily, and distributed nationwide. Published in Ukrainian, Russian, and English, it has nothing in common with the yellow press."[76] Over the last twenty years, the newspaper has acquired a relatively stable and devoted audience: analysis of readers' responses and comments shows that its active audience is largely composed of supporters and partisans of an ethnocentric version of Ukrainian history.

Den' is the only all-Ukrainian newspaper that consistently promotes the idea of a "correct," "true" history of Ukraine.[77] It carried out a multi-year project, *Ukraina Incognita*, that sought to fill in the blank spots of history; it consisted of a regular column and a series of books that republished the articles

76 Advertisement: https://day.kyiv.ua/en/advertisement.

77 Other media that often invoke the topic of historical memory include *Zerkalo nedeli* (with a permanent column entitled "History"), the newspapers *Ukrayina moloda* and *Silski visti*, and, the magazine *Ukrayinskiy tyzhden* magazine (also with a permanent column entitled "History"). In general, they follow the national/nationalist narrative. The newspaper *2000* supported a highly critical attitude toward the extremes of this approach. It should also be noted that the Russian media, such as *Komsomolskaya Pravda v Ukraine*, *Fakty i kommentarii*, *Vesti, Regnum*, *Rosbizneskonsalting (RBK)*, and others were permanently present in the Ukrainian media space.

from this column. These collections included *Dvi Rusi* (Two Rus', 2003), *Syla miakhoho znaku* (The Strength of the Soft Sign, 2011), *Povernennia v Tsarhorod* (Return to Tsargrad, 2015), *Sestra moja Sofija* (My Sister Sophia 2016), and *Ave: Do stolittia het'manatu Pavla Skoropodskoho* (Ave: To the Centenary of the Hetmanate of Pavlo Skoropadsky, 2018). Declaring that history is the most powerful source of Ukrainian identity, Larysa Ivshyna, the chief editor of the newspaper and a great enthusiast of its *historical* projects, described the mission of the project (and of all the other actions of her newspaper in the field of historical politics) in the following way: "The attentive 'reading of processes' that took place and are currently taking place in the post-Soviet space convinced me that we observe the struggle not just for resources, not just for petroleum and gas, but, first and foremost, for a place in history."[78] According to one of the regular writers for *Den'*, the well-known historian Stanislav Kulchytsky, "*Den'* chose history as a weapon, not an ordinary tool for self-education. *Den'* fights for the genuine modern Ukrainian truth and genuine Ukrainian historical truth."[79]

This mention of "historical truth," typical for affirmative and didactic history, brings us to another large media project, the *Historical Truth* website, which was created in 2010. It soon became one of the most popular digital media sites (the owners claim twenty-one million visitors have visited the site over the past ten years). The website of the project defines its philosophy in the following manner: "We are open to all competent points of view and opinions, we do not publish sponsored articles, we do not participate in party and electoral campaigns, but we reserve the right to have our own opinion about all events, figures, and phenomena, whether from today or yesterday."[80] Journalist Vakhtang Kipiani, the chief editor of the website, demonstrates his adherence to a relatively balanced variant of the national/nationalist narrative of historical memory. The content of the website reflects his position: it is hard to find an article or material promoting the Soviet nostalgic narrative.[81] At the same time, the archive contains a lot of artifacts and documents from the Soviet period, some of which are absolutely unique because

78 "Pro proekt 'Ukraina incognita,'" August 18, 2011, http://incognita.day.kiev.ua/about.html.

79 Stanislav Kulchytsky, "Kermanychy maly b korystuvatysya nadbannyam 'Dnya,'" October 6, 2016, https://day.kyiv.ua/uk/article/podrobyci/kilka-sliv-na-zahyst-klyuchevskogo.

80 "Pro proekt 'Ukraina incognita.'"

81 Supporters and other adherents of the Soviet nostalgic narrative could speak to a broader public through blogs on *Ukrayinska pravda* (Ukrainian Truth), of which *Historical Truth* is a part.

the archive project of the website accumulates documents from personal collections gathered on a voluntary basis. It should also be noted that *Historical Truth* occasionally publishes studies, articles, and materials critical of the Ukrainian national/nationalist narrative. This website is also rich in representations of the history and memory of non-Ukrainian ethnic groups.

Another important Internet project is the *Historians in Ukraine* website,[82] founded in January 2012 as a web resource and a forum for professional discussions. According to one of the site's founders, historian Andrii Portnov, the need for the site stemmed from a request for "rational-critical self-assessment that is steadily losing its position in Ukraine to loud and alluringly primitive propaganda, complacency, and narcissism, increasingly overt aggression . . . and apathy that all the time becomes more and more all-encompassing."[83] It is difficult to assess the popularity and influence of this website (its Facebook page has about eight thousand followers). Currently, it is one of a few websites that regularly publishes and discusses analytical materials on historical politics and has a special column dedicated to these issues. Portnov himself is one of the most active researchers of historical politics. The editors of the website (Volodymyr Masliychuk, Volodymyr Sklokin, Vladyslav Yatsenko, Mykhailo Haukhman, Hryhorii Starykov, Serhii Hiryk, Vadym Nazarenko, and Volodymyr Sklokin) also actively participate in discussions on the problems of historical memory both in real and virtual settings.

The founders of the most recent internet project, *Lykbez* (Historical front), created in the summer of 2014, openly declare their desire to influence historical politics. The website was established on the initiative of the civil organization Research Society for the Humanities. According to its declaration, it is a "civic education project founded in the summer of 2014 with the goal of the popularization of Ukrainian history and the debunking of propaganda and historical myths."[84] The structure and the name of the project suggest that its main tasks were to counter Russia's information war and act as a sort of counter-propaganda based on bringing "historical truth" to the general public. The "Topical" column includes Donbass, Crimea, and southeastern Ukraine. According to the founders of the website, these ter-

82 Website: www://historians.in.ua.

83 Do nashykh chytachiv, 2012, http://historians.in.ua/index.php/en/pro-nas/61-do-nashikh-chitachiv. Since 2017 the site has a new design and the old links are unavailable.

84 Official site: http://likbez.org.ua/meta-proektu.

ritories require special attention, and the website plays an important role in the "exposure of propaganda and historical myths" (the website has many texts in Russian).[85] The presence of professional historians in the organization, some of whom follow the canons of analytical history both on the website itself and in the organization's public projects (public lectures, book publishing), ensures a certain balance that allows one to treat the somewhat bellicose name of the website with a certain degree of self-irony. The site publishes many texts that are somehow closer to a balanced academic discussion than to counter-propaganda, though the latter is also present.

Historical topics also occupy a privileged place on the information portal *Zaxid.net*. This website is currently one of the few that support liberal discourse in the field of historical politics. The editors are among the most ardent critics of the extremes of the national/nationalist narrative and its political representatives (for instance, Vasyl Rasevych)[86].

It is hard to evaluate the influence of all the aforementioned projects because neither the number of printed copies in circulation nor the number of followers and website views provides any clear evidence. The number of active discussants of these publications on Facebook, as a rule, does not exceed a few dozen.

The most influential media in Ukraine is television. From the late 1990s to the early 2000s, all the main all-Ukrainian television channels were privatized or established by private persons, mostly by oligarchs; their information policy quickly became dependent on the preferences and political orientations of their owners. These preferences, in turn, were dependent on proximity to central state power. The positions of the major TV channels on historical politics were determined by the participation of their owners in the political sphere.[87] Generally, issues of history did not play an important role in programming. Interest in historical issues was based largely on commercial, rather than political, considerations.

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85 "O proekte," 2014, http://likbez.org.ua/meta-proektu.

86 See zaxid.net.

87 According to one of the recent ratings, the top 10 popular TV channels are Inter, 1+1, ICTV, Ukraine, STB, Novy kanal, TET, NTN, 2+2, and PixelTV. See Nazvany samye reitingovye kanaly Ukrainy, June 10, 2019, https://ubr.ua/market/media-market/nazvany-samye-rejtinhovye-telekanaly-ukrainy-3883578. For data on the owners of these channels, see "Vlasnyky ukrayinskikh telekanaliv: khto vony?" Infographics, April 10, 2016, http://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-infografika/1997592-vlasniki-ukrainskih-telekanaliv-hto-voni-infografika.html.

The most notorious television program that elicited a major public response was *Great Ukrainians*, which was broadcast in 2007–2008 by Inter, the highest-rated channel in Ukraine. Viewers from across Ukraine chose ten "great Ukrainians," including seven historical figures,[88] five of whom were known to Ukrainians because they were featured on national banknotes. All ten became characters in short educational films broadcast by the same channel. It was a commercial project, but the response it generated delivered clear evidence of the strong public interest in the problems associated with the interpretation of the past. It should be noted that Inter could be regarded as a major promoter of the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative. It broadcast Russian-made television series that advanced the myth of the Great Patriotic War, although in this case as well, it was essentially commercial interest that played the leading role in this decision. Inter also produced two large digital video projects in the computer animation genre, *Great Patriotic War* (2005) and *The Country: The History of the Ukrainian Lands* (2006), together totaling 183 episodes of television.

Among the national-level television channels, three have shown a more or less consistent interest in historical issues: the First National Channel recently launched the project *Declassified History*; the 1+1 Channel celebrated the first anniversary of independence by starting the *Ukraine: The Retrieval of Our History* project; and the Channel 5 has a series called *Historicisms*. Among regional channels, ZiK, which is mostly broadcast in the western regions of Ukraine, hosts the project *Historical Truth with Vakhtang Kipiani*. Recently this channel went national.

Russian media were also present in Ukraine, broadcasting either through cable television operators or through satellite television. By 2014, sixty-six Russian television channels were available in Ukraine at the national level.[89] They were especially popular in the eastern and southeastern regions. Some of them actively participated in the "memory war" with Ukraine in 2007–10.

88 In descending order: Prince Yaroslav the Wise, Nikolai Amosov, Stepan Bandera, Taras Shevchenko, Bohdan Khmelnytskyy, Valeriy Lobanovskyi, Viacheslav Chornovil, Hryhorii Skovoroda, Lesya Ukrainka, and Ivan Franko.

89 Calculated using data from "Natsional'na Rada Urainy z pytan' telebachennia o radiomovlenni: Rishennia vid kvitnya 2, 2008 roku N 652 Pro zatverdzhennya Pereliku prohram, zmist yakikh na terytoriyi Ukrayiny ne obmezhuyetsya zhidno z ch. 1 st. 42 Zakonu Ukrayiny 'Pro telebachennya i radiomovlennya,'" April 2, 2008, http://search.ligazakon.ua/l_doc2.nsf/link1/FIN37153.html.

Russian channels were also the main providers of popular history series about the "Great Patriotic War."[90]

The annexation of Crimea and the war in Eastern Ukraine combined with information warfare led to prohibitive measures against the Russian mass media. By February 2016, thirty-three Russian television channels were banned in Ukraine,[91] including those that paid particular attention to history issues (TVCI, Rossiya-1, NTV, Zvezda, REN-TV). In the following years, about a dozen other Russian channels were banned. Since 2017, the ban has also extended to Russian social networks and internet services (VKontakte, Odnoklassniki etc.).

Discussing actors and agents of historical politics, we usually focus on institutions since they have a systemic impact on the elaboration, development, and implementation of historical politics. However, it seems obvious that all these institutions alone would not be able to perform their functions without certain human capital. Historical politics is a process and result of the efforts of people who work in the aforementioned places: state employees of different ranks, politicians, public figures, "discourse-mongers" (journalists, writers, cultural professionals), and others. In this cohort, a special place belongs to the professional group whose main occupation is to study, interpret, and explain the past.

90 In the period 2004–13, forty such series were made, nine of them represented as Russian-Ukrainian coproductions. Calculation based on data from "Sovremennyye rossiyskiye serialy o Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine, 2015," https://afisha.mail.ru/series/selection/448_sovremennie_rossiiskie_seriali_o_velikoi_otechestvennoi_voine/. Access to this resource in Ukraine has been blocked by the Ukrainian authorities since April 2017.

91 "Spysok zaboronenykh rosiyskykh telekanaliv zbilshyvsya mayzhe vdvichi," 24TV, February 11, 2016, http://24tv.ua/spisok_zaboronenih_rosiyskih_telekanaliv_zbilshivsya_mayzhe_vdvichi_n657143.

Chapter 5

Historians

In this chapter, I will try to give a short outline of the roles that historians played as agents of historical politics and the role of professional history writing in shaping and implementing it.[1] I will deal mostly with generalities on the nature of historians' involvement in the politics of history. More concrete and detailed observations of their input in the development and implementation of historical politics will be provided in the next part of the book. The specific problems of the development of professional historiography are not discussed.[2]

Communists to Nationalists

In the late 1980s, I witnessed—and took part in—an unbelievably quick transition from the Soviet memory narrative and Soviet method of description and interpretation of the past to the national/nationalist narrative. During perestroika, the role of history and historians became one of the most burning issues. Long a purely state enterprise, history shifted into the public domain. The state (represented by the ruling party) demanded that historians give "efficient and timely responses" to the challenges shaped by the

1 Valeriy Smoliy, ed., *Istoryk i Vlada: Kolektyvna monohrafiya* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy, 2016) is a collection of articles dedicated to the issue of relations between historians and power. The quality of articles varies from naïve and bombastic discourses about Ukrainian historians who liberated themselves from the communist oppression in independent Ukraine to highly detailed discussions about the nature of the interaction between historians and the authorities.

2 A number of works have already been dedicated to this topic, including some by the present author. In his voluminous monograph, Polish historian Tomasz Stryjek provided an attentive observation from outside. See his *Jakiej przeszłości potrzebuje przyszłość? Interpretacje dziejów narodowych w historiografii i debacie publicznej na Ukrainie 1991–2004* (Warsaw: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, Oficyna Wydawnicza RYTM, 2007).

new situation. The politically active part of society craved "historical truth," which in a somewhat paradoxical way mirrored the requests of the state. The demand was the same, but the goal behind it was very different. Revision, criticism, and refutation of the previous (mostly Soviet) historical experience, in fact, required that historians do the same things they always did during the Soviet times: furnish historical research for ideological demands. The only difference consisted in the fact that the number of these demands doubled. Previously the state (party) had been the sole patron, contractor, and customer of historians. Once the mono-ideological political system disintegrated, new political actors and different social groups also became customers. As both the number of actors in the field of historical politics and the demand for their services grew enormously, the supply and market of symbolic capital also started to expand.

When a sovereign Ukraine was added to the political map of the world, the new state readily commissioned ideological and educational services from historians—in the same manner as it had been doing before. But now the new ruling class saw the goal of history not as the achievement of a classless society but rather the state's self-affirmation as a nation, not to mention the self-legitimation of Ukraine's new rulers. To go back to the aforementioned scheme of Allan Megill, it might be stated that the demand for affirmative and didactical history writing in independent Ukraine was no less than it had been in the Ukrainian SSR. The ideological vector, for sure, changed and so did historians with regard to their orientation in space and time. In very broad terms, it was an about-face from communism to nationalism.

The most curious element of this shift was the change in outlook of those historians who had specialized in fighting "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism." It was this cultural milieu (of course, not limited to only professional historians) that gave birth to the most radical supporters of "Ethnic Studies" (*narodoznavstvo*), "Scientific Nationalism," and "Ethno-State-Building Studies" (*ethnoderzhavotvorennia*). The staff of "History of Ukraine" university departments established in the early 1990s consisted mostly of professors who had taught the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which had been obligatory for all students regardless of discipline.[3] In 1991,

3 These departments were established to provide compulsory one-semester courses on the history of Ukraine to students from all departments, including those in science, finance, math, biology, dentistry, etc. In fact, these courses repeated the content taught in secondary school.

they began teaching the history of Ukraine with the same educational-ideological purpose and in the same manner.

A notable example of this transition was the largest government commission of historians during the late perestroika period. The "Republic's Program of the Development of History Studies, Improvement and Propaganda of the History of the Ukrainian SSR" was prepared by a group of historians from different research institutions of the Academy of Sciences following the decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine (1989). The document itself, which was presented as perestroika in the field of historical research and teaching, exemplified a curious compendium of topics and notions, mixing Soviet and national/nationalist historical stereotypes and metaphors. For instance, the theme "The OUN and the UPA during the Great Patriotic War" placed two opposing narratives under one title.

The process of preparation and approval of this program graphically illustrates the dynamics of change in the political situation and, therefore, the trajectory of the turnaround for historians. The decision to create it was made at the top of the ruling party hierarchy in February 1989, and it testified to the attempts to seize initiative away from the national democratic opposition in the battle for the past, which quickly transformed into the struggle over the very existence of the communist *ancien régime*. Preparations for the new program lasted until the fall of 1989, and the moment it was finished, the composition of the ruling elite and its ambitions had changed. By the end of 1989, even the central party media had begun to publish articles condemning "Stalinism." Between the winter and summer of 1990, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine passed a series of "historical" resolutions that condemned the Stalinist purges and "ideological" resolutions of the 1940s–50s and acknowledged the famine of 1932–33. Needless to say, historians co-authored these resolutions, having received requests from the top party leadership. Traditionally and because they were duty-bound, all the institutes of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences were involved in the preparatory work and drafting of these resolutions.

The final version of the Republican Program was approved at a session of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPU in July 1990, a week after the adoption of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Ukraine by the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR on July 16, 1990. The program fits very well into the political ambitions of the new-fledged group of so-called

National Communists within the ruling party; while not opposed to the Soviet regime, they nevertheless engaged in a power struggle with the union center over greater autonomy for Ukraine. The historians who took part in the preparation of the program changed together with the party line, to quote an expression from an old Soviet joke.[4]

Stanislav Kulchytsky, a historian and one of the key figures in the preparation of the program, later said that the staff of the Central Committee of the CPU did not meddle in the development of the program. Moreover, "they authorized us to send it to the interested parties and state bodies without any censorship," he wrote many years later.[5] He explained this complacency on the part of the *apparatchiks* as the attempt of the new party leaders to maintain control of the situation by approving the program. This explanation needs one adjustment: party leaders absolutely relied on the historians who worked on their commission. These historians did not require any control; they knew perfectly what needed to be done. At that moment, they performed a dual task: to preserve the Soviet scheme of history, and to mix it with those elements of the national/nationalist narrative that would enhance the autonomist—however Soviet-loyalist—ambitions of the ruling elite.

After 1991, the affirmative-didactical history represented by official historiography concentrated its efforts on the promotion of one single narrative of the past, the national/nationalist one. A large-scale nationalization of Ukrainian history commenced (see chapter 6). Professional historians found themselves at the epicenter of this process. As before, the majority carried out their "state contract": shaping the national narrative, disseminating this narrative through the education system, supporting the state ideology, legitimizing the new state, and satisfying the public demand for history.

In 1993, the state, embodied by President Leonid Kravchuk, explicitly requested the creation of a "history of the Ukrainian people." Academic institutions immediately began to prepare a multi-volume publication in the image and likeness of the *History of the Ukrainian SSR*.[6] The project was not implemented due to a lack of funds caused by the deep economic cri-

4 The joke goes as follows:
Question: Did you strictly follow the party line, or did you deviate?
Answer: I deviated together with the party line.

5 "Prohrama rozvytku istorychnykh doslidzhen v URSR," *Istoriya ta istoriohrafiya v Yevropi* 3 (2004): 160.

6 This mega-project, which lasted from the 1970s to the beginning of the 1980s, comprised of 8 volumes, 10 books that were published in Ukrainian and Russian.

sis. However, in the mid-1990s, scholars at the Institute of the History of Ukraine in the National Academy of Sciences published a two-volume work, *History of Ukraine: A New Vision*, and in the late 1990s, Ukraine finally obtained its new master narrative, a fifteen-volume work, *Ukraine through the Centuries* (winner of the State Prize of Ukraine).[7] It was completed in large part by academic historians. Despite its recognizable name, the project of the Ukrainian millennium did not match the title because while some authors followed the idea of the "millennium of Ukrainian statehood," others did not. In essence, every volume reflected a version of a certain period of Ukrainian history as understood and interpreted by the author of the volume. Consequently, it could be entitled *Ukraines through the Centuries*.

Another important mega-project completed during this period was a new generation of school textbooks on history that represented the Ukrainian master narrative in its purest and most radical form. Here too, professional historians accounted for the majority of authors (see chapter 6).

For most Ukrainian historians, the transition from communism to nationalism went quickly and smoothly. This ease was determined by many factors. One was the habit of servility to the authorities and to the political agenda cultivated in mono-ideological systems. The desire to conform to the expectations of the public was conveniently wrapped in the idea of service to the people. It also might be explained by insight triggered by learning new facts that were previously unknown or taboo. We can also count opportunism, career aspirations, and the underdevelopment of analytical historiography as among the reasons for an uncomplicated transition. Finally, elementary survival issues should not be neglected. In the early 1990s, thousands of those who taught courses on the history of the Communist Party, Scientific Communism, Scientific Atheism, and so on were threatened with unemployment. The problem was especially acute in higher education establishments that did not specialize in the humanities. In such places, the departments of the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union mutated into departments of political history.[8] Obviously, most party historians and specialists in Scientific

7 *Istoriya Ukrayiny: nove bachennya*, vols. 1–2 (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo Ukraina, 1995); *Ukrayina kriz viky*, 13 vols. (Kyiv: PUB, 1998–1999). Two additional volumes were published later.

8 See, for instance, the Department of Political History at Kharkiv Polytechnical Instite; the Department of Ukrainian History and Ethno-Politics at Dnipropetrovsk National University, and the Department of History at Poltava National Technical University.

Communism and atheism were perfectly suited to meet the needs of a newly created state through an affirmative Ukrainian history.

Those who took part in the process are sometimes quite candid about this historical-ideological shift. For instance, the establishment of the Department of History and Culture of Ukraine in the Vinnytsia State Pedagogical University explained its transformation as the result of a "social-national request conditioned by the democratic processes initiated in the country since the middle of the 1980s."[9]

The reversal might look striking due to the seemingly radical change of values. In the Soviet period, communist ideologues considered nationalism as probably the principal enemy, and historians fought against it tooth and nail. However, confronting the worldview or ethical foundations or representations of the past in communism and nationalism might lead to the conclusion that these two have a lot in common. Both appeal to the idea of liberation: of man (humankind) for the former, and of the nation in the latter. Both see conflict and struggle (class or national) as the driving force of history. In both cases, the view of the historical process is based on the recognition of its teleological predestination, a movement toward a preassigned goal. Both stop history when this goal is achieved and immediately open a new era. Both put the interests of the community above those of the individual and demand that the historian should serve "the people." No less important is that both worldviews (or ideologies) have a habit of turning themselves into sacral constituents, becoming a kind of civic religion. (There are some well-known cases of the "conversion" of party members—and historians—into priests). Such similarities between the two worldviews may also, perhaps, explain their reciprocal hostility.

In this context, the passage of the majority of historians from communism to nationalism might not look excessively unnatural. The methods of understanding and interpreting the past for the sake of the present; the zeal for a single normative truth; the desire to serve a certain collective entity; the drive for 'historical justice'; these were all very similar. The only thing that changed was the reference group—in one case, it was a social class or party, in another, the nation.

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9 Fakul'tet istorii, prava i publichnoho upravlinnia, Kafedra istoriyi ta kultury Ukrayiny, accessed May 19, 2016, http://www.vspu.edu.ua/faculty/histor/history_iku.php.

Nevertheless, the foundations for future divergences between affirmative and didactical history on one side, and analytical historiography the other, were already set in the 1990s. These discrepancies were provoked, shaped, and enhanced through the broadening and intensification of contacts with broader global cultural and intellectual exchanges, the diversification of social functions, and the role of historians.

The roles of historians

In the 1990s, a certain division of labor arose among historians. An absolute majority of those who studied and taught the history of Ukraine turned into nativists. An affirmative-didactic history became the credo and method of their professional endeavors. A minority, usually those dedicated to the achievements, secrets, and intellectual charms of "Western" historiography, fluent in foreign languages, and involved in a larger intellectual world, found itself in conflict with the majority over many issues. Among them were the social functions of history and the extremes of the national master narrative that had already played the role of symbolic capital for a segment of the ruling class and cultural elites.

The creation of this master narrative often boiled down to the establishment of dominant canonical discourses of the national/nationalist narrative that became the conceptual framework of historical politics. In their role as discourse creators, historians became the main providers of goods on the symbolic capital market. The process consisted of several stages. First, a situational request from the state or society was formulated, often with the participation of historians themselves. Then a research discourse was created (or borrowed) to meet the request, and these discursive forms were then translated into practice (learning/acceptance/diffusion of the discourse). The most interesting stage followed, when the discourses, having taken root and having been given unreserved acceptance by the public, came back to the research community as undisputedly legitimate canons.

I will illustrate this with three examples. In the middle of the 1980s, some Ukrainian historians were involved in counter-propaganda activities to oppose "the insinuations of Western propaganda" about the famine of 1932–33. What was seen as an "insinuation" was the image of the famine as a genocidal action directed against ethnic Ukrainians of the USSR, an image that

was formed through the efforts of part of the Ukrainian diaspora in North America. The Communist Party mobilized Soviet Ukrainian historians to prove that there was no famine; they were only allowed to mention "food difficulties" sometimes.

In the second half of 1980, during the *glasnost* period, these same Ukrainian historians, under pressure from the political situation, public opinion, and new, previously unknown evidence, recognized the fact of a massive man-made famine. Moreover, they started, for all intents and purposes, to re-transmit the image of the famine that had been produced within the framework of a political project that painted the Soviet Union as an evil empire. Relying on the arguments of their recent opponents, usually branded as "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists," these historians centered their explanatory and illustrative schemes on the word "genocide."[10]

The famine of 1932–33 as genocide fit well into the general line of negating the Soviet past that had been popular from the late 1980s to the early 1990s. It was popularized by history textbooks and translated into society. In the 1990s, it was canonized by the decrees of President Leonid Kuchma, and in 2006, it became the object of a separate law. There were even attempts to criminalize its public denial (see chapter 7). Professional historians also took part in the popularization of the genocide version of the famine. In 2019, according to surveys, about 80 percent of respondents agreed with the statement "the Holodomor was a genocide," and this figure became instrumental in proving the validity of the statement. The canonical discourse created by the historians had finally acquired power over the historians themselves.

The second revealing example did not produce similar repercussions, but this fact does not decrease its illustrative value. The term "Ukrainian National Revolution of the Middle of the Seventeenth Century," proposed by Valeriy Stepankov and Valeriy Smoliy, first appeared in academic use in the late 1990s. Academic discussions and critiques of the term itself (which represents shameless anachronism) and its underlying concept had no influence whatsoever on its social dissemination. It firmly established itself in course curricula and in textbooks and reached further legitimacy through state examinations. It was, however, rivaled by another historiographic archetype. In 1998 at the state level, Ukraine officially celebrated

10 Among these, Stanislav Kulchytsky and Vasyl Marochko were the most important figures.

the anniversary of the start of the "Liberation War of the Ukrainian People in the Middle of the Seventeenth Century."[11] In 2008, it celebrated the next anniversary of the same event, this time under the name of the "National Liberation Struggle of the Ukrainian People."[12] However, despite the difference in name, both terms and concepts complement each other. The discursive forms created by historians (as in the case of the *Holodomor*) have been legitimated by state practice.

The third example of the importance of historians as "discourse-makers"—this time at the level of didactic history—is their role in writing textbooks. The 1990s saw the emergence of the canon discourse of Ukrainian history, the ethno-national and ethnocentric narrative consisting of a set of easily recognizable and easily repeatable stereotypical forms—a basic package of ideas about Ukrainian history. The majority of those who wrote the textbooks belonged to academic institutions and universities.[13] The history in textbooks is also curious in the sense of how the historian-created discourses later influenced historians themselves. Discussions on how many textbooks should exist for one subject (in this case, the history of Ukraine) seem somewhat abstract because different authors, in fact, follow the same canon they constructed (or borrowed).[14] If we speak about a standard national narrative, one generic textbook would really suffice from the point of view of content and main plotlines.

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11 "Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny, Postanova, 'Pro vidznachennya 350-ricchya pochatku Vyzvolnoyi viyny Ukrayinskoho narodu seredyny XVII stolittya,'" January 26, 1998, http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/95-98-п.

12 "Ukaz prezydenta Ukrainy, 'Pro vidznachennya u 2008 rotsi 360-yi richnytsi podiy, pov'yazanykh z pochatkom natsionalno-vyzvolnoyi viyny Ukrayinskoho narodu seredyny XVII stolittya,'" February 1, 2008, http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/78/2008.

13 There are 24 titles on the list of textbooks on the history of Ukraine. The list includes 25 authors and co-authors, including eight dr. habil. and five PhDs in history, a corresponding member of the National Academy of Sciences, a full member of the National Academy of Sciences, and two dr. habil. and two PhDs in pedagogy (historians by education). Three work in the National Academy of Sciences, 15 work in universities, two are employed by the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences, and three work for postgraduate pedagogic institutes. Three are schoolteachers. Calculations based on data from: "PERELIK navchalnykh prohram, pidruchnykiv ta navchalno-metodychnykh posibnykiv, rekomendovanykh Ministerstvom osviti i nauky Ukrayiny dlya vykorystannya v osnovniy i starshiy shkoli u zahalnoosvitnikh navchalnykh zakladakh z navchannyam ukrayinskoyu movoyu u 2015/2016 navchalnomu rotsi: Osnovna i starsha shkola, 2015" http://mon.gov.ua/activity/education/zagalna-serednya/perelik-navchalnix-program.html. Personal data of the authors obtained from open sources.

14 In fact, these textbooks conceptually reproduce the aforementioned national master narrative created in the late nineteenth century and the first third of the twentieth century.

Another important function of professional historians in the development and implementation of historical politics is expertise. Historians are often invited as experts by state bodies. The practice goes back to the Soviet period, when state institutions used historical research institutions for ideological purposes on a regular basis. According to calculations made by Andriy Liubarets at my request, between 2005 and 2010 (a period of acceleration in historical politics), the Institute of the History of Ukraine in the National Academy of Sciences received 572 requests,[15] most of which (475) came from state organs: the Secretariat of the President, the Verkhovna Rada, regional state administrations, ministries, the National Bank, Ukrposhta, and the Prosecutor General's office. Other requests came from the mass media, deputies, civic organizations, and individuals. Between 2010–13, there were 372 such requests, and again most of them (292) came from state institutions. The absolute majority of these requests asked for expertise that was needed to prepare laws and other legislative acts, organize commemorative events, prepare educational materials, develop state programs, establish museums and other memory spaces and expand their activities, regulate the archives, and so on.

Historians who worked at state-funded institutions performed expert functions in the framework of their routine duties. In addition to the Institute of the History of Ukraine, state historical politics were also serviced by the historians of the Institute for Political and Ethno-National Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and the Institute for Strategic Studies under the president of Ukraine. On the regional level, such functions were usually carried out by the local branches of the National Academy of Sciences (for instance, in Lviv) and universities (which are also very active in the development and popularization of local and regional historical studies).

The involvement of historians in special commissions that determine "historical truth" can also be seen as a legacy of the Soviet period. The commission on which historians from two academic institutes served and was created at the end of 1986 to disprove the "fabrications" about the famine of 1932–33 has already been mentioned. Another famous example of such a body in independent Ukraine was the government commission created under the Ukrainian

15 Calculations were made on the basis of files from the Archive of the Institute of History of Ukraine of the National Academy of Sciences.

Cabinet of Ministers in 1997. A team of historians assigned to the commission were tasked with preparing an expert report on "the problem" of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army.[16]

In the 1990s and in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the Ukrainian-Polish and Ukrainian-Russian commissions of historians were created to provide an expert assessment of history textbooks and to elaborate recommendations on "controversial issues" in the past. Historians also served on explicitly political projects. For instance, in 2009, they helped the Security Service of Ukraine during the investigation of the famine of 1932–33 which ended with a one-day show trial of perpetrators of the Holodomor in Ukraine.

At times, historians get an opportunity to directly influence historical politics as representatives of the power structure. For instance, between 1997 and 1999, Valeriy Smoliy, the director of the Institute of the History of Ukraine since 1993, was also the Deputy Prime Minister of Humanitarian Issues for the government. His friend Volodymyr Lytvyn, who began his career as a professional historian, was also serving in highest ranks of political power at the same time as Smoliy: between 1995–1999 he was the chief assistant to President Leonid Kuchma, from 1999–2002 he was the head of administration of the president, and in 2002–6 and 2008–12 he was the speaker of the Verkhovna Rada. Kuchma, it seems, heavily relied on their opinions when choosing a strategy in the sphere of historical politics. These historians largely influenced the establishment of state practices and rituals commemorating the Holodomor, the creation of a government commission on the OUN and UPA, and, finally, they managed to promote an ambivalent variant of the politics of history in the 1990s. They were also directly involved in the production of Kuchma's 2003 book, *Ukraine is Not Russia*.

Another statesman who began his career as a professional historian, Dmytro Tabachnyk, was the Deputy Prime Minister on Humanitarian Issues in the Yanukovych governments (2002–2003, 2006–2007), and minister of Education and Science in 2010–14, when his patron became president. Unlike his aforementioned colleagues, Tabachnyk used his position to publicly criticize the national/nationalist memory narrative and largely contributed to the development of the internal memory war in Ukraine.

16 Oksana Myshlovska, "Establishing the 'Irrefutable Facts' about the OUN and UPA: The Role of the Working Group of Historians on OUN-UPA Activities in Mediating Memory-based Conflict in Ukraine," *Ab imperio* 1 (2018): 223–54.

The most recent example of somebody who started as a professional historian and joined executive power circles was the director of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, Volodymyr Viatrovych. He was one of the main proponents and promoters of affirmative historical politics in 2015–19, he was a lobbyist on behalf of the memorial laws of 2015 aimed at the marginalization and elimination of the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative, and he simultaneously promoted and propagated the national/nationalist narrative.

In the last decade, the role of historian as public intellectual has become more and more popular. The historian's business requires time away from the noise and, therefore, is not very compatible with the functions of a public intellectual obliged to promptly react to the latest news and maintain a busy public agenda. Accordingly, public intellectuals are not numerous among historians. However, with the boom of electronic media, historians wishing to combine their trade with the vocation of journalist, political essayist, or opinion maker have found it easier to reach the public. The most public-oriented Ukrainian historians who chose this way of working are Yaroslav Hrytsak, Vasyl Rasevych, and Andrii Portnov. Among non-Ukrainians, Timothy Snyder, a highly respected American historian who also wrote a number of best sellers in the genre of popular history, is the most famous. For some time, public intellectuals (including historians) used as their rostrum *Krytyka* magazine, which borrowed its format from the *New York Review of Books*.[17] However, as the sphere of electronic media has grown wider, intellectuals have begun using specialized websites and social networks to reach the public.[18]

While the role of the public intellectual (as well as the term itself) should probably be considered a loan from another type of culture, the role of educator and "enlightener" is obviously part of an older tradition started by the *narodniki* and was readily adopted by the Soviets. Back during the era of perestroika, historians actively participated in the "popularization" of the historical breakthroughs of the second half of the 1980s. The state itself supported them through the *Znannia* (Knowledge) Society. These activities decreased in the 1990s: the collapse of popularization infrastructures

17 Official site: https://krytyka.com/ua.

18 Websites such as www.zaxid.net, www.zbuc.eu, www.historians.in.ua and www.uamoderna.com can be considered intellectual forums with an active presence of historians.

meant that enlightenment in its classical form ended. However, this role was assumed by newspapers and magazines. In the 2000s, the information/media and communication revolutions opened new possibilities for the promoters of public historical education.[19] However, historians did not begin to utilize these opportunities until recently. The project that we mentioned above, *Likbez: The History Front*, which uses media technology to "popularize historical knowledge" is an example.

The name of this project brings us to the next embodiment of the role of a historian: "a soldier of the ideological front," a mnemonic "warrior" of the memory wars both inside and outside national borders.[20] This role is often combined with an educational zeal. The warriors of the "true history" often sincerely believe that the "enlightenment of the masses" is the best weapon in fighting for historical truth. The leader and founder of the *Likbez* project stated in one of his interviews that "the main weapons of a Ukrainian historian are facts and enlightenment."[21] The role of soldier of the ideological front is usually accentuated by external circumstances. At present, a mobilization on this front is happening as a response to the hybrid war with Russia and as a part of the controversies with Poland over the past. As a rule, historians who see themselves as soldiers in this way rarely participate in the direct production of propaganda or counterpropaganda (though it also happens, for instance, in the activities of the UINP). Their participation in the memory wars is often masked by the use of research arguments seeking to disprove unscientific, ideologically motivated fabrications by the opponents of their position.[22]

Sometimes even foreign historians become Ukrainian soldiers on the ideological front. For instance, English/American historian Robert Conquest

19 From 2004 to 2019, the share of the regular Internet users grew from 12 percent to 71 percent. See Volodymyr Pyrih "Kilkist' korystuvachiv Internetu v Ukraini zrosla do 62%," March 28, 2016, http://zaxid.net/news/showNews.do?v_ukrayini_suttyevo_zrosla_kilkist_internetkoristuvachiv&objectId=1387023; "Maizhe 23 mln ukraintsiv rehuliarno korystujutsia Internetom. Doslidzhennia," November 11, 2019, https://mind.ua/news/20204323-majzhe-23-mln-ukrayinciv-regulyarno-koristuyutsya-internetom-doslidzhennya.

20 I was acquainted with this phrase back when I was a student. It was often coupled with the adopted phrase, "Of all sciences, history is the most political one," whose author, Marxist historian Mikhail Pokrovsky, was usually not mentioned.

21 Sergei Makhun and Kirill Galushko, "Glavnoye oruzhie ukrainskogo istokika–fakty i prosvetitelstvo," *Zerkalo nedeli*, February 26, 2016.

22 To give an example, I will mention this book: F. Turchenko, and H. Turchenko, *Proyekt "Novorosiya" i novitnya rosiysko-ukrayinska viyna* (Zaporizzhya: Instytut istorii Ukrainy, 2015) 166.

(1917–2015) and Italian historian Andrea Graziosi were awarded the Order of Prince Yaroslav the Wise "for their substantial personal contributions to the study of *holodomors* in Ukraine, for attracting the attention of the international community to the recognition of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people, and for their active social stance to honor the victims of the tragedy."[23] It can be said that both decorated intellectuals deserved their awards because their names are actively used to promote the genocide version of the Holodomor, but they themselves might be unaware of their crucial importance. However, there is a more impressive case in American historian James Mace (1952–2004), who became an icon of the national/nationalist memory narrative. Mace was the research director of a US congressional commission that articulated the idea of the Holodomor as genocide on the political level in the mid-1980s. He helped Robert Conquest gather materials for his 1986 book *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* that gave this idea academic backing. In the 1990s, Mace moved to Ukraine and became one of the most active participants in the historical projects of the *Den'* newspaper. He formulated the idea of Ukraine as a "post-genocide society" that fits into the general trends of the national/nationalist narrative that is imbued with "lachrymose-genesis."[24]

To sum up the problem of role choice, a preliminary conclusion can be made: most historians simply follow the political agenda and respond to public requests, ensuring the re-transmission of dominant discourses and never seeing anything wrong with this. They maintain the functions of affirmative and didactic history and related memory models. A minority tries to meet the requirements of some basic canons of analytical history. Maintaining the role of an academic who is above politics is technically possible as a goal and mode of behavior. However, when history is constantly being mobilized by a political agenda, there are few chances for such historians to rent a small room in the "ivory tower."

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23 "Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro vidznachennya derzhavnymy nahorodamy,'" November 26, 2005. http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1654/2005.

24 This is an ironic term used by Mark von Hagen (1954–2019) to characterize Ukrainian historical victimology.

Part III

Practices

In this part of the book, I will provide a historical overview of developments in the field of the politics of history from the end of the 1980s to the present. The sixth chapter deals with the process of separation/emancipation of the national/nationalist memory narrative from the Soviet one and observes the transformation of the latter into the Soviet-nostalgic version of the past. Chapter seven illustrates the process of re-adjustment and re-design of the memory space required by the nationalization of the past. It provides several cases that exemplify the actions, counteractions, and interactions of the major actors in the field. Special attention is devoted to the memorial laws and attempts to criminalize deviations from the official line. The final chapter considers the international aspects of historical politics as exemplified by Ukraine's relations with its two main historical neighbors: Poland and Russia.

Chapter 6

Historical Politics: An Overview

This chapter presents a short historical summary of important events related to the development of historical politics in Ukraine from the end of the 1980s to 2017–20. The main topic is the "nationalization" of the past within the context of Ukraine's emergence and formation as a sovereign state. We will explore the establishment and the functioning of the national/nationalist memory narrative as it interacts with and struggles against the Soviet (and in some cases the imperial) nostalgic memory narrative.

The Nationalization of the Past

The term "nationalization of the past" might be equal to "redistribution of the past," with the past represented as a public asset that belongs to the nation. This process has become standard in modern history and is associated with national self-determination, the establishment of certain political regimes, and the dissolution of empires. In a sense, such connotations are valid: the nationalization of the past, on the one hand, is the appropriation of certain fragments of this past by a collective entity, which attains the object of self-determination, in this case, the nation. On the other hand, it is the readjustment of these fragments into a coherent master narrative and ultimately its appropriation by the state that allegedly represents the nation. The nationalization of the past embraces both history (master narrative) and memory. The central task of this nationalization is the transformation of the group in question into the "historical" nation (either real or imagined). It is a process of separation from the previously common narrative, and/or the transformation of the "historical" group from an object into the sovereign agent of history.

The Ukrainian version of this story fits into the standard narrative of self-determination over the past as implemented by cultural and political elites in the age of nationalism. The first attempt at the nationalization of the Ukrainian past took place at the turn of the twentieth century, when the first systematic master narrative, Mykhailo Hrushevsky's *History of Ukraine-Rus'* emerged, together with similar versions authored by Hrushevsky's contemporaries and followers including Dmytro Doroshenko, Natalia Polonska-Vasylenko, and others. This narrative was preserved in émigré and diaspora historiography after the beginning of Soviet rule in Ukraine.

In the Soviet period, the Ukrainian master narrative was absorbed by the Soviet account of the past and tailored to fit the orthodox-Marxist class approach to history. The latter did not deny the historicity of the Ukrainian nation but emphasized its class character and its temporality. This adjustment resulted in subordination of the "Ukrainian theme" to social-economic determinism and to the idea of evolution to a classless and nationless humanity. In fact, the core of the classical Ukrainian historical narrative with its populist overtones fit perfectly with the Soviet conceptualization of the past in which "the people" was the major actor.

Ukrainians and Ukraine retained their status as agents of history but only within the framework of the Soviet version of Marxism and Soviet teleology, which maintained that the essence of history is in the liberation of mankind from national, class, religious, racial, and other restraints. In more concrete terms, this involved the subordination of the "history of Ukraine" as a separate subject to the grand narrative of the "history of the USSR." It preserved those elements of national uniqueness permitted by the Soviet master narrative (similarly to the other republics of the USSR), but only with the understanding that the general direction of the historical process should be reoriented toward achieving a classless society and the melting of nations into a new historical entity, "the Soviet people."[1] "National history" proper was marginalized to the regional level: the teaching of the "History of the Ukrainian SSR"[2] in schools was a supplementary part of the "History of

1 The eight-volume (ten-book) *History of the Ukrainian SSR* published in the 1970s in Ukrainian and republished in Russian in the early 1980s can be considered a printed monument of this version. See Iu. Iu. Kondufor, et al., eds. *Siatoriya Ukraiins'koi RSR (u 8 tomakh, 10 knyhakh)* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1977–79).

2 A. I. Zyakun, "Formuvannya natsionalnoyi kontseptsiyi shkilnoyi istorychnoyi osvity v pershe desyatylittya nezalezhnosti Ukrayiny," *Sumska starovyna*, no. XVI–XVI (2005): 133–34.

the USSR" course; doctorates on Ukrainian history were permitted under the "History of the USSR" label; and institutions of higher education did not have departments on the history of Ukraine because those courses were located in Soviet history departments.

In the second half of the 1980s, however, this system faced serious challenges. Attempts to reform it (*glasnost* and *perestroika)* caused large-scale destabilization. Calls for "true history" became a part of the political agenda of the emerging opposition. In Ukraine as well as in many other Soviet republics, this claim meant emancipating the national historical narrative from the Sovietization of the past and transforming it into a sovereign history. These aspirations naturally concurred with a broader political agenda: calls for greater sovereignty of the republic, and later, for independence.

The second stage of nationalization of the past took place when Ukraine achieved independence. The national/nationalist narrative received full citizenship in independent Ukraine. However, it had to co-exist with the remnants of the Soviet narrative that persisted in public discourse and practices as well as in history and memory. A swift restoration and spread of the national/nationalist narrative in its archaic and antiquarian form took place in the 1990s and early 2000s. However, the ruling class (especially during Kuchma's presidency) took pains to slow down the process of evicting the Soviet nostalgic narrative, believing that excessive radicalism could give rise to serious conflicts, and used ideological ambivalence to prop up their legitimacy.

In the middle of the first decade of the 2000s, a segment of the ruling political and cultural elites attempted to more intensely promote the national/nationalist narrative of history and memory. While it still showed some deference to supporters of the Soviet nostalgic narrative of history, a new post-independence wave of the nationalization of the past caused an open conflict between the two camps, not least because the battlefield between the nationalists and the communists was stormed by new actors who had previously not been very interested in historical politics. External actors, particularly some foreign powers, intervened: Russia played a decisive role in the radicalization of the politics of history in Ukraine. The instrumentalization of the past reached new levels as a result of the development of information technologies and greater sophistication in the means of mass psychological manipulation.

The years 2010–14 saw attempts to ideologically edit the nationalized past. These efforts sought to eliminate or neutralize its "nationalist extremes" and reanimate elements of the Soviet nostalgic narrative. However, the foundations of the classical national narrative remained untouched. After the "Revolution of Dignity," the civic revolt in the winter of 2013–14, a radical turn toward the nationalized past occurred. It was followed by the expulsion of the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative and by attempts to eliminate the Russian imperial legacy in the realm of public memory. External factors—the annexation of Crimea, the war in Donbass backed by Russia, and the memory war with Poland—again played a crucial role in the radicalization of historical politics and the fortification of the national/nationalist memory narrative.

"Sovereignization"

The sovereignization of history in the Ukrainian SSR in the late 1980s and early 1990s followed a pattern similar to analogous processes going on in other post-Soviet republics.[3] Initially, historians focused on "blank spots" of history; these were mainly to be found in the Soviet period, with its abundance of forbidden topics and personalities. The revision of the Soviet version of the history of this period became the foundation for its repudiation, and Stalinist crimes, victims of purges, banned names, national tragedies, and wartime losses were prioritized and received the most public attention. The logic of events resembled the Khrushchev thaw of the second half of the 1950s and early 1960s. However, criticism of the Soviet experience was no longer limited to the condemnation of the "wrong" communism, embodied by Stalin and Stalinism, and the assertion of "true" communism as represented by Lenin. Very soon the entire communist period was labeled a total disaster, a period of unprecedented suffering of the Ukrainian nation.

The revision of the Soviet (communist) historical past became a point of departure for the reconsideration of the whole "millennial" history of

3 A detailed story about rewriting national histories in the 1990s can be found in a collection of articles, published twice in Moscow in 1999 and 2003: Karl Aimermakher and Gennadiy Bordyugov, eds., *Natsional'nyye istorii v sovetskom i postsovetskom prostranstve* (Moscow: Fond Fridricha Naumanna, AIRO-XX, 2003), 432. The subsequent period is covered in another volume: Falk I. Bomsdorf and Gennadiy Bordyugov, eds., *Natsional'nyye istorii na postsovetskom prostranstve*, vol. 2 (Moscow: Fond Fridricha Naumanna, AIRO-XX, 2009) 372.

Ukraine. The Soviet mono-ideological variant of history did not leave much space for other versions of the past, especially those that cherished the national/nationalist memory narrative as a separate biography of the nation. Therefore, its revision necessitated a search for alternatives, which in the concrete situation of the second half of the 1980s meant the denial of the official Soviet version and the search for the "honest," "genuine," "proper," "true" history. And there was no need to invent anything new. One could merely address the narrative that existed in the works of pre-1917 and émigré historians. Its legitimacy was unquestionable since it was banned during the Soviet years, and some of its founders were eliminated both from history and memory. The restoration of the "true" national historical narrative and its confrontation with "false" Soviet history resulted in open conflict between them.

For one side of the conflict, the ruling Communist Party, control over historical memory and resistance to any systemic changes in its ideological content was the highest priority. For its opponents, burgeoning noncommunist and anticommunist civic organizations, the most important task was to promote an alternate, non-Soviet past and a counter-memory.[4] The confrontation in this sphere developed simultaneously with clashes over the official status of the Ukrainian language (leading to the adoption of the Law on Languages in 1989), the rise of the environmentalist movement provoked by the Chernobyl disaster in April 1986, and the expansion of the labor movement in Donbass caused by the deterioration of the social and economic situation.

The most significant topic on the battlefield of history in the second half of the 1980s was the Great Famine of 1932–33, which was destined to become the central and most contentious historical event of the twentieth century. Previously this event was prohibited in historical writing and was a core dimension of suppressed historical memory in Ukraine, presumably as a result of actions taken by the communist regime.

4 A list of the main non-state agents of historical politics who opposed the Communist Party in the second half of the 1980s includes the following: The People's Movement of Ukraine (created in 1989), Ukrainian Helsinki Union (UHS), Republican Party of Ukraine (created on the base of the UHS in 1990), Taras Shevchenko Society for the Ukrainian Language (created in 1988, reorganized into the Prosvita Society in October 1991), Memorial Society, All-Ukrainian Society of Victims of Repression (1989), Kyiv Culturology Club (1987), Society of Friends of Lev (Tovarystvo druziv Leva, 1987), Green World Society (Zelenyy Svit, 1988), Club "Heritage" (Spadshchina) under the state-owned Kyiv House of Scholars (1987), and Hromada student society under the Taras Shevchenko Society at Kyiv State University.

The theme of the Great Famine competed in popularity with the rediscovered story of the Stalinist repressions and the Chernobyl tragedy. They formed a sort of axis used to spin a broad political campaign to discredit Soviet communism and by extension Soviet rule. It created a powerful emotional background that amplified public resentment against the authorities of the USSR, Moscow, and the Communist Party leadership, who were blamed for Chernobyl, the deterioration of the social and economic situation, and for past grievances and tragedies. In the meantime, the ruling party initially continued to follow the canons of the Cold War and counterpropaganda established at the beginning of the 1980s. It also addressed the famine of 1932–33 but directed its efforts against the "insinuations of nationalist propaganda" coming from abroad. The whole enterprise began with a counter-campaign against the crusade launched by the Ukrainian diaspora in North America devoted to the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the famine.

At the end of 1986, several months after the Chernobyl catastrophe, the Central Committee of the CPU created a special commission bringing together representatives of two research institutions, the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR and the Institute of the History of the Party under the Central Committee of the CPU. In the first session of the commission, its members were allowed to watch the movie *Harvest of Despair* and were presented with materials from a US Congressional commission tasked with gathering evidence to support the genocide version of the 1932–33 famine in Ukraine. The party leadership directed the commission of Ukrainian historians to prove that there was no famine at all. The commission members obtained access to previously classified archive materials. These documents were a new discovery both for the historians and for the Ukrainian party leadership, and they proved there was a large-scale famine between 1932–33. At that moment, however, nobody had the heart to make these findings public.

Assistance came from Moscow, by now the epicenter of publicity and the total revision of Soviet history: the second volume of the *History of the Peasantry of the USSR* used the term "famine" in the chapter devoted to the early 1930s. In September 1987, the word "famine" appeared in the public discourse in the official mass media.[5] The famine was interpreted as a result

5 V. Danilov, "U kolkhoznogo nachala," *Sovetskaya Rossiya,* October 11, 1987.

of the deviation from "Leninist agrarian policy." This scheme still followed the "good Lenin/bad Stalin" pattern. By fall 1987, the task of the commission evolved from the denial of the famine to the "correct" explanation of the event. In December 1987, Volodymyr Shcherbytsky, the first secretary of the Central Committee of the CPU, used the term "famine" to refer to the tragedy of the early 1930s in an official speech dedicated to the seventieth anniversary of the "Great October Socialist Revolution," explaining that the famine was a result of a drought.[6]

The highest authority had lifted the taboo. From there, events went in two different directions. The official historiography initially tried to explain the famine of 1932–33 as "deviations from the Leninist agrarian policy" or a departure from its principles. In the first months of 1988, official media still preferred to use the term "food shortages"[7] instead of famine. In the meantime, the national democratic intelligentsia, including the elite "Frondist" literati, focused on discussing the famine solely as a Ukrainian national tragedy. Thick magazines published translations of extracts from *The Harvest of Sorrow* by Robert Conquest, eyewitness testimony, and literary texts dedicated to the tragedy. Some mass media even started special columns such as "By the Paths of Pain and Sorrow" (*Ukrayina* weekly paper) or published extracts from the *White Book* (*Dzvin*, Lviv). In February 1988, speaking at a party gathering of the Kyiv chapter of the Union of Writers of Ukraine, its secretary Oleksa Musiyenko mentioned the mass famine of 1932–33 together with the "criminal extermination of Leninist cadres." The word "holodomor" was used in his speech, which was published in *Literaturnaya Ukraina,*[8] the leading newspaper for the intelligentsia that would soon become the mouthpiece of the national democratic opposition. Perhaps this was first public use of the word that soon became one of the most potent symbols of Ukrainian nationalized history.

In the meantime, the leadership of the ruling party tried to tighten the screws. In March 1988, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPU

6 V. V. Shcherbytsky, "Pid praporom Velykoho Zhovtnya kursom perebudovy. Dopovid chlena Politbyuro TsK KPRS, pershoho sekretarya TsK Kompartiyi Ukrayiny V. V. Shcherbytskoho na urochistomu zadisanni, prysvyachennomu 70-ricchyu vstanovlennya Radyanskoyi vlady na Ukrayiny 25 hrudnya 1987 roku," *Radyanska Ukrayina*, December 26, 1987, 1–2.

7 Compare with S. V. Kulchytsky, "Do otsinky stanovyshcha v silskomu hospodarstvi USRR v 1931–1933 rr.," *Ukrayinskyy istorychnyy zhurnal* no. 3 (1988): 15–23.

8 O. H. Musiyenko, "Hromadyanska posytsiya literatury i perebudova: Dopovid' O.H.Musiyenka na partiynykh zborakh Kyivskoyi orhanizatsiyi SPU," *Literaturna Ukrayina*, February 18, 1988.

adopted a resolution condemning the article by historian Yuri Hamretsky[9] about the Ukrainian National Communist Vasil Shakhrai, who advocated for greater autonomy for communist Ukraine. Hardliners considered this publication an ideological deviation. However, the article was published in *Radyanska Ukrayina*, the organ of the Central Committee of the CPU, and the censors did not stop it. This fact indicated the presence of situational allies of the national democrats in the central organs of the party; this group would later to be known as the "Sovereign Communists."

In April 1988, the Central Committee of the CPU sent a warning signal to its main research center, the Institute of the History of the Party under the Central Committee of the CPU. A special decree criticized the work of this institution and declared that its research activities did not meet the expectations of the party leadership and that they were incapable of meeting the challenges of the time.[10] The key failure of the institution was its lack of a proactive position in the fight against the "nationalists." In July of the same year, the newspaper *Literaturna Ukrayina* published an article by Kyiv philologist Serhiy Bilokin about Mykhailo Hrushevsky;[11] it rehabilitated the "father of Ukrainian history" who had previously been mentioned only rarely and with the obligatory label of "bourgeois nationalist." Historians from the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR proved their fidelity to the regime, using official media to publish their angry responses to Bilokin's article.[12] The publication of the article about Hrushevsky in a mass newspaper "for the intelligentsia" clearly demonstrated how far the revision of the Soviet historical narrative, which was silent on Hrushevsky, had gone.

In October 1988, the first secretary of the Central Committee of the CPU Volodymyr Shcherbytsky reproached scholars of the humanities and social sciences, declaring that their efforts to fill in the "blank spots" of history were "not energetic enough."[13] The criticism was well-deserved: writers,

9 Yuri Hamretsky, "Yak lyublyat ridnu matir . . . (Do 100-richchya Vasylya Shakhraya)," *Radyanska Ukrayina,* February 27, 1988.

10 *Ukrayina: khronika XX stolittya. 1986–1990 roky* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy, 2006), 137.

11 S. Bilokin, "Mykhailo Hrushevskyy," *Literaturna Ukrayina*, July 21, 1988.

12 V. Sarbey, "Yak nam stavytysya do M. Hrushevskoho? Z pryvodu deyakykh nekompetentnykh publikatsiy," *Radyanska Ukrayina*, no. 197 (20299) (August 27, 1988): 2; and R. H. Symonenko, "Pravda istoriyi–virnist istoriyi," *Komunist Ukrayin* 751, no. 9 (1988): 81–82.

13 V. V. Shcherbytsky, "Pro robotu po vykonannyu v respublitsi rishen XIX Vsesoyuznoyi konferentsiyi KPRS, lypnevoho i veresnevoho (1988 r.) Plenumiv TsK KPRS: Dopovid...na Plenumi TsK Kompartiyi Ukrayiny 10 zhovtnya 1988 roku, *Radyanska Ukrayina*, no. 233 (October 11, 1988): 3.

essayists, journalists, and public activists successfully eliminated these historical gaps by replacing them with content that was considered a celebration of nationalism by the authorities. Historians, constrained by the institutional and ideological control of others, lagged behind their scholarly peers, together with their party supervisors. In fact, they were accustomed to the implementation of ideological directives, not to proactive moves.

Meanwhile, the pressure from below became stronger. In December 1988, the KGB of the Ukrainian SSR observed growing demand to recognize the yellow and blue flag and the trident as the national symbols of Ukraine (officially, they were banned in the Ukrainian SSR as nationalist). Many moved beyond demands: the KGB reported displays of yellow and blue flags in the Kyiv, Rivne, Ivano-Frankivsk, Khmelnytskyi, Chernivtsi, and Lviv regions.[14] By the fall of 1989, the yellow and blue flag became a habitual sight at public events organized by the national democrats and nationalists.

In December 1988, the Central Committee of the CPU announced plans to prepare an all-Ukrainian program of study and to begin teaching a history of the Ukrainian SSR that would meet the "demands of the time." However, when work on the new program commenced, it was still based on the formal juxtaposition of "bad Stalin" and "good Lenin" and promoted the idea of "Socialism with a human face."[15]

In 1989, the famine of 1932–33 and the extermination of the Ukrainian intelligentsia during the Stalinist repressions were openly discussed as important events of the Soviet period. One year later, and the whole communist and Soviet system came under attack, not just for their "shortcomings," but for their entire ideological basis. Party bureaucracy lagged behind, unable to cope with the "spontaneous" revision of the past, which placed Ukraine's suffering during the Soviet era front and center.

In January 1989, the leadership of the Central Committee of the CPU submitted a lengthy memorandum on the status of historical research in the republic. The style of the document is compelling: according to Stanislav

14 Informatsiyne povidomlennya KDB URSR pershomu sekretarevi TsK KPU V.V. Shcherbitskomu pro spekulyatsiyi shchodo ukrayinskoyi natsionalnoyi symvoliky, December 19, 1988. Compare with *Shlyakh do nezalezhnosti: suspilni nastroyi v Ukrayini kin. 80-kh rr. XX st. Dokumenty i materialy* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy, 2011), 248–50.

15 "Socialism with a human face"—a metaphor used by the communist leader of Czecholsovakia Alexander Dubček in 1968. Since 1986, the phrase was widely circulating in the Soviet Union as a generic description of perestroika goals.

Kulchytsky, "semantic ambivalence" might be its main feature. Indeed, the phrasing of the memorandum could satisfy both the ideologically orthodox members of the Central Committee and their opponents in the national democratic camp. For instance, the authors observed that "many complicated phenomena and facts are represented insufficiently, inconsistently, and sometimes even prejudicially."[16]

A resolution of the Central Committee of the CPU published in February 1989 demanded that the preparation of the program mentioned above start immediately. However, the most radical suggestion coming from above was to introduce a separate course on the history of the Ukrainian SSR in secondary schools, vocational schools, and institutions of higher education (as mentioned, the relevant course already existed but only as a supplement to the history of the USSR). This resolution might be a decent example of the incongruence between idea and implementation. The desire to take over the initiative and to keep the revision of the past within the established official framework contradicted the essential elements of the opposition and broader Ukrainian society's demands.

The development of the program was then entrusted to a new dedicated commission that brought together members of various academic institutions. The commission generated questionnaires, sent them to the institutes of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR specialized in humanities, and used the answers to develop recommendations. However, this work was influenced by factors well beyond the control of the ideological machinery of the party. Despite the clearly established framework that recommended writing on the history not of Ukraine but *Soviet Ukraine*, proposals from different institutions were about Ukrainian rather than Soviet history. Published sources on the history of Ukraine alone numbered eighty-seven, and they presented an impressive mix of documents designed to satisfy a wide range of demands from the chronicles of the Ancient Rus' and the Cossacks to the congress and conference proceedings of the Communist Party of Ukraine.[17]

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16 S. V. Kulchytsky, "Prohrama rozvytku istorychnykh doslidzhen, polipshennya vyvchennya i propahandy istoriyi URSR na 1991–2000 roky," yak istoriohrafichne yavyshche, *Istorychna nauka na porozi XXI stolittya: pidsumky ta perspektyvy: Materialy Vseukrayinskoyi naukovoyi konferentsiyi (Kharkiv, 15–17 lystopada, 1995 r.*) (Kharkiv: Avesta, 1995), 139.

17 Kulchytsky, "Prohrama rozvytku istorychnykh doslidzhen," 140. For the full text of the program, see *Istoriya ta istoriohrafiya v Yevropi*, no. 3 (2004): 159–78.

By the fall of 1989, the job was done. The product reached its customer, the Central Committee of the CPU, but by this time, the party leadership of the republic had far too many other concerns besides history. Early September 1989 was marked by the founding congress of the People's Movement of Ukraine for Perestroika (Rukh). The new political force, representing an unstable but large conglomerate of national democrats, nationalists, and part of the establishment, became the first mass political organization to compete with the CPU. The idea of depriving the ruling party of its political monopoly was already present in social discourse; in May 1989, the first Congress of the People's Deputies of the USSR discussed the abolition of article 6 of the constitution of the USSR, which stated that the Communist Party is the single ruling force in the Soviet Union.

In the meantime, tensions over rewriting the past reached a new stage. Criticism that disavowed the Soviet experience was enhanced by an anti-imperial component. The story of the "celebration" of the anniversary of the Battle of Poltava (1709) revealed deep resentments about the imperial past among the "nationally conscious" segment of society.[18] Early in 1989, some all-USSR non-governmental organizations (including the official Society for Protection of the Monuments of Culture and informal military history clubs) began to prepare for the anniversary of the event. Members of patriotic military clubs in Moscow prepared a parade of actors dressed as soldiers in Peter the Great's army to march on the streets of Poltava, and several staged scenes from the battle. In Kyiv and Poltava, these plans provoked indignation among national democrats, who decided to use the case of Poltava to present their vision of the event. The Poltava organization of Rukh delivered an address, "To the society of Ukraine and the whole Soviet Union," where it declared that Peter I destroyed Ukrainian autonomy, which had existed since the Pereyaslav Treaty (1654), and killed "thousands and thousands of peaceful inhabitants of Ukraine." The celebration of the anniversary was qualified as "a shameful act of disrespect to the people of Ukraine." Responding to this call, groups of protesters from Lviv, Kyiv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Mykolaiv, and Dnipropetrovsk (over one hundred people) headed to Poltava. They prepared banners like "Peter I is the Butcher of the Ukrainian People" and "Eternal Glory to the Hetman Mazepa." By July 6, 1989, dozens of radically minded

18 In Ukrainian, the term "nationally conscious" is *natsional'no svidomy*.

Russian fans of Peter the Great and Ukrainian admirers of Mazepa planned to meet in Poltava with foreseeable consequences. This prompted the authorities to resort to decisive measures, preventing some participants from boarding the train in Moscow and arresting others (by the KGB and the police) at the Poltava train station. Ukrainian counter-protesters were isolated in the same way. The militia detained about sixty people and sent them back home. The local communist party committee reported that Poltavians met attempts to "sow hatred between the Russian and Ukrainian people" with a "torrent of protests," which was an obvious exaggeration, for neither torrents nor protests were seen in Poltava.[19]

The year 1990 started with one of the largest and most successful actions organized by Rukh: the celebration of the Day of Unity of Ukraine, the anniversary of the unification of the West Ukrainian People's Republic and the Ukrainian People's Republic (January 22, 1919). This action was overtly political in the sense that it was undertaken in the absence of a round date anniversary (1990 marked the 71st anniversary). The "reunification of 1919" was promoted exclusively as an event of true Ukrainian history; this act, implementing the "age-old aspirations of the Ukrainian people," was contrasted with the "reunification of 1939" a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, which had been officially condemned at the highest state and party levels at the time. It should be mentioned that January 21, 1990, the day of the planned event, was also the anniversary of Vladimir Lenin's death (a date on the official Soviet calendar).

The initial idea (borrowed from the Baltic Popular Fronts that had organized a human chain between the capitals of the Baltic republics a year earlier) was to organize a human chain between Lviv and Kharkiv, the "West" and the "East," the capital of the "Ukrainian Piedmont" and the former capital of the Soviet Ukraine, on the day before the anniversary of reunification. However, during the preparations, the organizers became aware of the utter impossibility of bringing a sufficient number of people in Eastern Ukraine onto the streets. The "living chain" had to be shorter. On January 21, 1990, tens of thousands of people formed a human chain along the highway Kyiv–Zhytomyr–Rivne–Ternopil–Ivano-Frankivsk–Lviv, their hands linked, some

19 Yuriy B. Smolnikov, "Problema vidrodzhennya ukrayinskoyi movy ta istorychnoyi pam'yati v Ukrayini (dr. polovyna 80-kh–poch. 90-kh rr. XX st.), Teoretychnyy analiz," PhD diss. (Instytut istorii Ukrainy NAN Ukrainy, Kyiv, 2005), http://www.disslib.org/problema-vidrodzhennja-ukrayinskoyi-movy-ta-istorychnoyi-pam-jati-v-ukrayini-teoretychnyi.html

of them with banners explaining the meaning of the action. In some places, yellow and blue flags were waved above the living chain, their numbers growing as you traveled westward. In the cities and their environs, people were able to join hands; farther away from urban areas, the chain grew thinner, and sometimes the distance between demonstrators was ten or fifteen feet.

The number of participants who came to the streets was about 450,000, according to the official data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and about one million, according to the organizers (although one of the leaders of the People's Movement, faithful to the principles of Soviet-style megalomania, claimed that over five million people took to the streets). Rallies organized in the cities connected by the living chain were followed by calls for independence; this was the case not only in Kyiv or Lviv but even in deeply provincial Zhytomyr, where one of the most popular slogans was "Soviets without Communists—and on to independent Ukraine."

This action challenged the official politics of history by endorsing not only the historical but also the social and political legitimacy of the Ukrainian nation-statehood of 1918–20. This period was still demonized by official ideology, with the epithet "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists" used as a standard figure of speech. At the same time, references to non-Soviet Ukrainian statehood was intended to show (and did show) multiple social groups' support for sovereignization of the republic, and their voices now becoming increasingly louder. A leaflet created by Rukh and distributed on the eve of the Day of Unity of Ukraine, proclaimed: "The ideals of the People's Republic of Ukraine are our ideals as well. The cause our fathers and grandfathers struggled for is our cause today. . . . Let us then fight for [Ukrainian] liberty and its independence, both economic and political."[20]

On February 4, 1990, the state newspaper *Radyanska Ukrayina* published a summary of the resolution of the Central Committee of the CPU, "On the Necessity of Research and Objective Evaluation of Some Pages of the History of the Communist Party of Ukraine in the 1930s–1940s and the beginning of the 1950s." The rhetoric of the resolution was remarkable: it spoke about studying a complex of issues about the famine of 1932–1933, distortions and mistakes in the "implementation of nationality politics, economic and cultural development—in particular in the western regions of the

20 O. V. Haran, *Ubyty drakona: Z istoriyi Rukhu ta novykh partiy Ukrayiny* (Kyiv: Lybid 1993), 81.

Ukrainian SSR, and other problems caused by the cult of personality and its consequences." It was an obvious concession to opponents. Three days later, on February 7, 1990, the Central Committee of the CPU published the resolution "On the Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine and on the Publication of Related Archival Materials."[21] This development was far more significant. The publication of this resolution symbolized not just a concession, but an outright capitulation of the ruling party concerning the interpretation of an event whose very mention had only recently been taboo.

In March 1990, elections to the Supreme Council (Verkhovna Rada) of the Ukrainian SSR and local councils added to the intrigue. The results of the elections unpleasantly surprised the ruling party. Almost 30 percent of seats in the Supreme Council, which was quickly becoming the most influential political body in Ukraine, went to the national democrats and their allies; while this did not give them a majority when casting decision-making votes, it did grant them unprecedented status to pressure the authorities and publicize the ideas of the democratic opposition.[22] In three western regions, self-government bodies (regional/oblast councils and some municipal councils) came under the control of Rukh. Now they had an institutional springboard for both political actions and the revision of history "in the field." Moreover, the essence of the conflict changed; it was no longer a confrontation of ideologically different organizations but a face-off between party organs and the Soviets (councils). In other words, the conflict now moved inside the system. In March 1990, the Third Extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR adopted a new version of article 6 of the constitution of the USSR, which permitted the creation of "other political parties."

Immediately after the March 1990 elections, the rhetoric around "correct" history radicalized. In April 1990, deputies of the Lviv Regional Council (chaired by Viacheslav Chornovil, one of the leaders of Rukh) delivered a statement attacking the "fact of the double occupation of Ukraine by the armies of the RSFSR in 1919 and the USSR in 1939." The deputies called out Ukraine's presence in the USSR as illegal because its incorporation into the Soviet Union

21 Postanova TsK KPU, "Pro holod 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraini ta publikatsiyu poviazanykh z nym arkhivnykh materialiv" *Radyanska Ukrayina*, February 7, 1990, 1.

22 To put this into perspective: in the Russian Federation, the opposition received 40 percent of the seats in the Supreme Soviet of the republic. This figure amounted to 65–74 percent in the Baltic republics and 8 percent in Belarus.

was carried out by "occupying authorities."[23] Yellow and blue flags were raised over local government buildings in some cities of Western Ukraine.

On April 22, 1990, an event took place in Kyiv that reached a level of ideological conflict hitherto unprecedented for the capital of a constituent republic of the Soviet Union. A march ostensibly dedicated to the protection of the environment (and authorized by the city council, where 40 percent of the deputies represented the national democrats and their allies) organized by Rukh, the Union of Independent Ukrainian Youth, the Taras Shevchenko Society for the Ukrainian Language, the Memorial foundation and the "*Zelenyy svit*" (Green World) association, culminated in laying a barbed wire wreath by the Lenin monument (the prosecutor's office would initiate a case "over the facts of exceptional cynicism"). The demonstrators carried slogans like "For the united independent Ukrainian state" and "No to the Soviet Empire!"[24] The inspiring example of the Baltic republics, where the supreme councils declared independence between March and May 1990, was certainly one reason for the radicalized slogans and actions.

In June 1990, the Central Committee of the CPU issued another historical decision, rescinding the "politically erroneous" resolutions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine from the late 1940s to early 1950s related to literature, art, and historical studies. Eight resolutions from that period, notably those that developed into a "struggle against Ukrainian nationalism" and "cosmopolitanism," were denounced. This decision was an important signal for those who saw the revision of history as one of the most significant dimensions of the anti-CPU struggle: the chronological framework of the crimes of the communist regime was expanding beyond the customary 1920s–1930s period. This move, however, did not elicit the expected reaction because it nearly coincided with the first stage of the 28th Congress of the Communist Party of Ukraine in Kyiv. The congress adopted the resolution "On State Sovereignty of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic."

On July 16, 1990, the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR issued the "Declaration on State Sovereignty of Ukraine" after a very dramatic period of debate. The declaration proclaimed the supremacy of the republic's legislation over USSR laws; autonomy in the field of foreign relations; and the full

23 See Smolnikov, "Problema vidrodzhennya ukrayinskoyi," 121.

24 Oleksandr Kovalchuk, *Ukrayina: khronika XX stolittya: Roki 1986–1990* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy NAN, 2006), 305.

authority of the Ukrainian government over lands and resources. Regarding political symbolism, the document was significant because it substituted "Ukraine" for "the Ukrainian SSR." The declaration also contained a passage about the "national and cultural recovery of the Ukrainian nation, its historical consciousness and traditions, and national and ethnographic features."[25] It is notable that on the very same day, the Supreme Soviet adopted a resolution that established a new national holiday, July 16, to be celebrated as the Independence Day of Ukraine.

Five days after the adoption of the Declaration on State Sovereignty, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPU approved the resolution "On Implementation of the Republican Program of Development of Historical Research, Improvement of Study and Propaganda of the History of the Ukrainian SSR" (July 21, 1990). The program, prepared as early as the fall of 1989, was an incredible combination of the usual rhetoric of Marxism-Leninism and the conventional markers of the cultural nationalism of the nineteenth century. For instance, the history of Ukraine (this name replaced the Ukrainian SSR in some parts of the text) was framed within a conventional Soviet-Marxist paradigm: as an evolution of socioeconomic formations. The Soviet period was billed as the age of building socialism. At the same time, it contained hybrid definitions useful for both sides like "ethnic processes in the territory of Kievan Rus'," "Ukrainian feudal town," "Ukrainian nation, its formation, structure and history of development," and "Ukrainian national revival" (all listed, by the way, as historical research priorities).[26]

The program was a product of an ideological compromise between "sovereign communists" and nationalists.[27] At the same time, it was the last attempt of the ruling party to restore control over the process of rewriting the past. Paradoxically, it provided legal grounds for the sovereignization of national history and triggered a process of mass reproduction of the "sovereign" ver-

25 "Deklaratsia pro derzhavnyi suverenytet Ukrainy," July 16, 1990, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/55-12.

26 "Respublikanska prohrama rozvytku istorychnykh doslidzhen, polipshennya vyvchennya i propahandy istoriyi Ukrayinskoyi RSR," 6–12. All references are given for a photocopy of the original document from the author's personal archive. The official text of the resolution was published in *Ukrayinskyy istorychnyy zhurnal*, no. 11 (1990): 12.

27 The terms "nationalism" and "nationalists" are used in the standard sense, referring to the part of society that stands up for the idea of the cultural and historic uniqueness of one's nation and its equality with other nations.

sion of history through the educational system. It launched the creation of a whole hierarchy of ideological precedents that legitimated the process of separation of Ukrainian national history from the previously common transnational "History of the USSR," entailing the separation of Ukraine itself.

The political turnaround and its consequences became apparent in early August. The massive celebration of the Days of Cossack Glory in the first week of August 1990 initiated by the Rukh was presented in a very favorable light by the official media. A series of articles urged people not only to celebrate the prominent date (the five hundredth anniversary of the Zaporizhian Sich, an arbitrary date) but to use the event for the revival of "Ukrainian national spirituality."[28] *Radyanska Ukrayina* published a cartoon with Karl Marx shaking hands with a Cossack. The image was accompanied with a reference to Marx's *Chronological Notes* where he called the Zaporizhian Sich "a Christian Cossack Republic" and a caption in which the founder of Marxism congratulated the Cossacks on five hundred years of "national glory."

Pravda Ukrainy, the newspaper of the Central Committee of the CPU, declared that from the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, Ukrainian lands were more advanced than their neighbors. The author informed readers that the literacy levels of this population were very high (higher than that of their neighbors, i.e., Russia), and that in the seventeenth century, Cossack Ukraine already had a market economy and Cossack households were presented as prototypes of contemporary farming. This anachronistic newspeak became the norm in the following decade.[29] National democrats saw the ideological content of the celebrations in a more practical light. On July 15, 1990, one of the local groups of Rukh published a resolution that provides insight into the expectations of the ordinary members of the organization, which already counted over half a million members. The resolution said: "Celebrating the 500th anniversary of the establishment of the Zaporizhian Sich, we observe the steady movement of our people toward liberty, self-governance, and independence, in conformity with the will of our ancestors."[30]

The celebration itself took place in several southeastern regions of the Ukrainian SSR. Its central event was a festival on Khortytsia island near

28 Karel C. Berkhoff, "'Brothers, We Are All of Cossack Stock': The Cossack Campaign of Ukrainian Newspapers on the Eve of Independence," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 21, nos. 1/2 (1997): 124–25.

29 A. Panchenko, "Vozrozhdeniye slavy kazatskoy," *Pravda Ukrainy*, July 31, 1990.

30 See Smolnikov, "Problema vidrodzhennya ukrayinskoyi," 162.

Zaporizhzhya. Despite all the efforts of party organs, it caused undesireable consequences and clashes. The scale of the event exceeded all expectations: hundreds of thousands of people came from all over Ukraine and other regions of the USSR. The list of visitors was not drawn up by party bodies but rather by Rukh and other NGOs. Moreover, the participation of official representatives turned into a series of episodes that were highly unpleasant. For instance, the attempt of Ivan Plyushch, deputy chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Ukrainian SSR, to speak at a rally was interrupted by whistles and the chant *Hanba!* (shame!), the most popular word lobbed at party officials at such events. Several speakers simply badmouthed communism and Soviet rule. Volodymyr Yavorivsky, a member of parliament from Rukh, ignited the crowd by calling for the skull of the Zaporizhian military leader Ivan Sirko to be brought back from Moscow.[31] His words were so electrifying that it took significant effort to prevent a fight and preserve the skulls of the party officials present at the rally. The official press kept silent about these episodes.

"Cossack tales" provoked one more curious surge of historical mythology. In July 1990, the Verkhovna Rada discussed, in all seriousnessness, the issue of "Polubotok's treasure." According to the information offered by one of the MPs of Rukh, in the early eighteenth century, Hetman Pavlo Polubotok deposited a large sum of gold in the Bank of England. In July and August 1990, the press engaged in a lively discussion on the amount of money that Ukrainians could expect to gain if Polubotok's treasure could be found. Enormous amounts were mentioned—up to £300,000 per every inhabitant of Ukraine. This story is intriguing not only as a case of the sudden anticipation of a miracle by people who were experiencing financial hardship and worsening living conditions; it also shows that modern Ukrainians consider themselves the direct heirs of a Cossack Hetman as a matter of course.

The participation of party bodies in the development of "Cossackology" entailed further concessions. In August 1990, the deputy director of the Institute of the History of the Party under the Central Committee of the CPU appealed to historians to provide an "objective and unbiased" account of Hetman Ivan Mazepa,[32] one of the main antiheroes of the Soviet histori-

31 The skull was in the Moscow laboratory of the sculptor Gerasimov, who aimed to recreate the portrait of the legendary hetman.

32 T. Larina, "Vosstanovit' pravdu istorii," *Pravda Ukrainy*, August 12, 1990.

cal mythology. This appeal was undoubtedly meant to neutralize attempts by the national democrats to link Mazepa's name primarily to the struggle for independence, which inevitably led to anti-Russian aims. However, from the perspective of "historical truth," this appeal was understood correctly: over the next year, Ivan Mazepa, recently branded a "traitor" and "turncoat," became a wise, prudent ruler, patriot, intellectual, and patron of the arts, and this image took its place firmly in the national pantheon. By the end of 1990, dust settled around the issue of rewriting history. The official magazine of two institutes—the Institute of History and the Institute of the History of the Party under the Central Committee of the CPU—published an article claiming the existence of a fully-fledged *Ukrainian* feudal statehood in the seventeenth century.[33]

In summer and fall of 1990, fights over history moved to the last territory not yet yielded by the ruling party: the core symbols of communist mythology. The struggle took place in Western Ukraine. In Chervonohrad, Lviv Region, on August 1, 1990, a local council decided to dismantle its Lenin monument. A week later, another monument was removed in Ternopil, an oblast capital. In September, the Lenin monument disappeared from Opera Square in Lviv. It was during the same period that Lenin's stone image disappeared from the central squares of Ivano-Frankivsk, Kolomyia, Boryslav, Radekhiv, Mykolaiv (Lviv oblast), and Drohobych. The protests of communist party organs were ignored. Lenin monuments were also demolished or damaged in eastern Ukraine, though only as part of the general anticommunist fervor, not with the nationalist and anti-Soviet flavor common to western Ukraine, where Lenin's name was synonymous with the national tragedies of Ukraine. The ruling party lost here as well: the statues were not returned, and the frailty of these previously immoveable symbols of communism became engraved in people's minds. The war on monuments coincided with an increasing number of rallies against the signing of the New Union Treaty proposed by Gorbachev and the proliferation of calls for the dissolution of the CPU.

The elimination of communist symbols from public spaces was accompanied by active efforts to replace them with nationalist symbols. A pub-

33 Valeriy Smoliy and O. Hurzhyy, "Stanovlennya ukrayinskoyi feodalnoyi derzhavnosti," *Ukrayinskyy istorychnyy zhurnal* no. 10 (1990):10–20.

lic campaign seeking to rehabilitate the OUN and UPA unfolded in western Ukraine and was supported not only by the anticommunist opposition but also by local authorities, which were represented by different types of councils. In spring 1990, the oblast councils of Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Ternopil, all dominated by representatives of Rukh, declared the political rehabilitation of the OUN and the UPA.

On June 30, 1991, Lviv opened the first mass rally to commemorate the anniversary of the Act of Restoration of Ukrainian Statehood (June 30, 1941) declared by the OUN-B. In July, plaques commemorating Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych were installed in Drohobych in the Lviv oblast, and Krakovets in the Ivano-Frankivsk oblast. In October, in the midst of the Kyiv student "Revolution on Granite,"[34] a memorial cross "to the heroes of the OUN and UPA" was installed in Ivano-Frankivsk, and a monument to Stepan Bandera appeared in Staryi Uhryniv. A memorial house to Stepan Bandera was established in Volya-Zaderevatska, and a memorial tomb to the members of the OUN and the fighters of the UPA was established Ternopil. The glorification of Bandera's image began in the exact style of Soviet propaganda. The Lvov newspaper *Za vilnu Ukraiyinu* wrote: "Bandera embodied all the best, greatest traits of the Ukrainian people, becoming a burning symbol of freedom and independence for hundreds of thousands, for millions."[35]

By 1991, the competition between the Soviet and the national/nationalist memory narratives ended with the victory of the latter. In April 1991, the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR adopted the law "On the Rehabilitation of the Victims of Political Repression in Ukraine."[36] The law mentioned the years 1917–91 as the period of political repression against the "citizens of Ukraine." On the regional level, an appeal to the past in the fall of 1991 went hand in hand with the idea of splitting away from the USSR ("Moscow"), which was seen as responsible for all the woes of the Ukrainian

34 Mass protests of students in Kyiv in October 1990, which resulted in the resignation of the government.

35 The name of the newspaper (*For a Free Ukraine*) is an interesting topic in itself: the new edition, founded after the annexation of western Ukraine by the USSR in September 1939, received its name to symbolize the freedom brought by the Soviets. After the March 1990 elections when national democrats took power in the regional council, the name of the mouthpiece of the former party organ took on the completely opposite meaning.

36 "Zakon Ukrains'koi Radians'koi Sotsialistychnoi Respubliky 'Pro reabilitatsiyu zhertv politychnykh repressiy na Ukraini,'" April 17, 1991, http://zakono.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/962-12.

nation. On the eve of the independence referendum held on December 1, 1991, Ukrainian national television aired the film *Famine-33* by Ukrainian director Oles Yanchuk, which was based on the autobiographical novel *Yellow Prince* by Vasyl Barka and sponsored by the Ukrainian diaspora. The horrors of the Soviet past were to convince Ukrainians to vote for independence. Referendum 1 legitimated the Act of Declaration of Independence of Ukraine that had been adopted August 24, 1991. Most (90.3 percent) voters said "Yes" to independence. Less than a week later, following the Belavezha Accords signed by B. Yeltsin, L. Kravchuk, and V. Shushkevich, the Soviet Union ceased to exist. By law, Ukraine became an independent state. Once independence was achieved, the sovereignization of the past transformed into the nationalization of history.

Nationalization

In the early 1990s, independent Ukraine followed a pattern common among all post-Soviet societies: a new state and its ruling class needed historical legitimation. The formula for success was also predictable: a national master narrative, a biography of the nation that confirmed historical continuity and the presence of the nation on the map of European history.

Ukraine had some advantages that allowed it to complete its legitimation quickly. A classic master narrative based on foundations laid by Mykhailo Hrushevsky and preserved by émigré/diaspora historiography was already available. Furthermore, the Soviet version of the past did not negate Ukrainian history but merely reduced it to the class approach, so a significant part of the master narrative only needed to be readjusted according to the basics of national teleology. Ukraine also inherited powerful educational infrastructures that could simply be repurposed for new tasks that were made easier because most personnel were already accustomed to such "repurposing" (see chapter 5).

In the first half of the 1990s, the standard ethnonational narrative of history and memory, which represented Ukrainian history as a never-ending chain of suffering, hardship, struggle for survival, and eternal yearning for national self-determination, quickly re-emerged and took precedence over other narratives. Its restoration relied on the aforementioned historiographical tradition that allowed it to be complemented with periods not covered by

its predecessors while never abandoning the traditional interpretive framework. Revision followed the pattern of teleological history that starts in the present (1991) with the existence of the independent state of Ukraine and its current political borders and then moves backward in time. True, the principle of respect for political borders in the historical narrative was often violated in favor of ethnic borders—an understandable effect of the ethnocentrism of this narrative.

This revisionist history followed its own unpretentious logic: after a decisive reinterpretation of the Soviet period (in the style of the Nuremberg trials), it looked toward the experience of national statehood following the end of World War I. Special attention was now reserved for the history of the Central Rada, the Ukrainian People's Republic, the Western Ukrainian People's Republic, and the Hetmanate (1918–20). In August 1992, at the assembly of the Verkhovna Rada dedicated to the anniversary of independence, Mykola Plaviuk (1925–2012), president of the State Center of the Ukrainian People's Republic (in exile) and the chief of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (Melnykivtsi branch), handed Leonid Kravchuk, president of Ukraine, the state symbols of the Ukrainian People's Republic and a document certifying that modern Ukraine is the legal successor of the Ukrainian People's Republic.[37]

The next period to receive the special attention of the creators of Ukrainian national mythology was the late medieval to early modern era. The Cossack age, including the Hetmanate, became the golden age of Ukrainian history. The Cossack myth that had fit comfortably in the Soviet-era Ukrainian historical narrative as an example of struggle against class and national oppression was similarly adaptable to Ukrainian national historical teleology and was used as evidence of the archetypal democratic nature of Ukrainians, their love of freedom, and their capacity for self-organization. This myth was also represented in a quite antiquarian, if not grotesque, manner. The early 1990s marked an abundance of various events with people dressed as the "Cossacks of old" and by the tremen-

37 "1992: ostanniy presydent UNR peredaye Kravchuku kleynody," video, *Istorichna pravda*, January 22, 2012, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/videos/2012/01/22/69657/. Just two years before this exciting moment, Leonid Kravchuk was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (he left the party after the putsch of August 1991). Mykola Plaviuk headed the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (Melnyk) in 1992, which conducted its first legal congress in Ukraine in 1993.

dous growth of Cossack organizations. The first contemporary Cossack organization, "The Ukrainian Cossackdom," was created in October 1991: Viacheslav Chornovil, a famous Ukrainian dissident who ran against Leonid Kravchuk in the 1991 presidential elections, was elected as its first Hetman, and Viktor Yushchenko became Hetman in 2005. By the beginning of the 2000s, Ukraine counted no less than ten national and over five hundred regional Cossack organizations.[38] It is hard to judge if their sociopolitical influence was prominent on the national level, but it was quite visible at the local level, especially in issues of local historical politics.

Kievan Rus' was also an example of early statehood. Starting with Kievan Rus', the narrative went back through the ages and reached the early tribal forms of social organization in the "home" territories, which were considered the home of indigenous peoples for centuries. As a result, a full-fledged scheme of national history emerged, stretching from ancient history to the "triumph of historical justice," i.e., the creation of an independent state. Ukraine got its metaphorical "millennium," which was certainly longer than standard calendar time (for more details, see chapter 5). Further, a collection of texts dedicated to the history of Ukrainian political thought published on the tenth anniversary of independence was named *A Thousand Years of Ukrainian Political Thought*.[39]

In 1993, the state-owned Kievnauchfilm studio carried out a large project funded by the state called *Unknown Ukraine: Sketches of Our History*. One hundred and four films were produced, representing the most comprehensive visual version of nationalized history from the most ancient period (the Aryans) to 1992. The first film asserted that Ukrainians had been deprived of a national memory, advancing an analogy between historical and psychiatric amnesia. The last film, dedicated to the events of 1991–92, carried the title *Restored Independence.* The whole series represented the theme of continuity with ancient history.

Antiquity and historical continuity became the cornerstones of the symbolic space of statehood. At the beginning of the 1990s, Ukraine acquired essential symbols of statehood, which naturally harkened back to ancient times. The coat of arms of Ukraine, a gold trident on an azure background,

38 "Hetmany v istoriyi Ukrayinskoho kozatstva," October 13, 2015, http://lib.pnpu.edu.ua/novyny/1361-getmani-v-istoriyi-ukrayinskogo-kozatstva.

39 *Tysyacha rokiv ukrayinskoyi suspilno-politychnoyi dumky*, 9 vols. (Kyiv: Dnipro, 2001).

was approved by the Verkhovna Rada in February 1992; it was a reference to Kievan Rus' and the Ukrainian People's Republic of 1918–20. The state flag of Ukraine, officially approved by the Verkhovna Rada in January 1992, also confirmed links with the past. A recent statement issued by the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory says: "The yellow-blue colors symbolized the Kiev State even before the Christianization of Rus." It goes on to say that "in the course of historical development," the yellow and blue standard was a symbol of the struggle of the Ukrainian people for social and national liberation.[40]

The anthem of Ukraine was also selected from the archives: in January 1992, the parliament approved music written by Mykhailo Verbytsky in the middle of the nineteenth century. The textual part of the anthem remained in limbo for a while because Pavlo Chubynsky's lyrics, dating from the same era, generated too much controversy. Attempts to write new lyrics were unsuccessful until a judgment worthy of Solomon was made in 2003: the first stanza and the refrain of Chubynsky's text were to become the official anthem of Ukraine. Communist and socialist MPs did not vote in favor of this decision.

In 1992, Ukraine started the transition to its new currency. In parallel with Soviet rubles, temporary banknotes called karbovanets—also known as coupons—were introduced; the word karbovanets was a reference to the Ukrainian People's Republic. National history was presented here in its most archaic variant: banknotes featured either a Soviet-era group sculpture of the legendary founders of Kyiv—Kyi, Shchek and Khoryv, and their mythical sister Lybid—or Prince Volodymyr the Great, with the reverse side of most notes displaying the architectural complex of Saint Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv. The 500,000 karbovanets banknote featured the Kyiv Opera Theater, and the one million karbovanets banknote featured the Soviet monument to Taras Shevchenko. It also symbolized the transformation of most Ukrainians into millionaires and became a monument to the runaway inflation that by 1993 reached 10,206 percent per year.

In 1996, a permanent currency was introduced, the name of which, hryvnia, was a direct reference to the antiquity of Ukrainian statehood, the

40 "Derzhavnyy prapor Ukrayiny," accessed December 13, 2020, http://www.memory.gov.ua/publication/derzhavnii-prapor-ukraini.

Kievan Rus' (where this currency was born) and, again, to Ukrainian statehood in 1918–20. The group of historical characters depicted on the new money also showed Ukraine's rich historical and cultural heritage. The gallery of portraits started with the same Volodymyr the Great (the one hryvnia banknote), followed by Yaroslav the Wise (two hryvnias), Bohdan Khmelnytsky (five hryvnias), and Ivan Mazepa (ten hryvnias), whose presence in the national pantheon was now indubitable. The twenty-hryvnia banknote featured a portrait of Ivan Franko, the fifty-hryvnia bill was occupied by Mykhailo Hrushevsky, and the one hundred hryvnia note by Taras Shevchenko. In 2001, Lesya Ukrainka joined the ranks of historical characters on the two hundred hryvnia banknote; in 2006, Hryhorii Skovoroda followed on the five hundred hryvnia note. In 2019, the National Bank printed a one-thousand-hryvnia banknote with the portrait of Volodymyr Vernadsky, the famous Ukrainian scholar and founder of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.

The architectural series of the new currency also mainly referenced ancient history: cathedrals, churches, and castles. The youngest architectural symbols depicted on the hryvnias were the buildings of Kyiv and Lviv Universities, and the Pedagogical Museum (Central Rada) in Kyiv. The visual imagery of the officially recognized memory narrative was now set: it was largely antiquarian and archaic, with the twentieth century represented by two literary figures and one historian. It did not contain any signs or symbols of the modern industrial society that had emerged in Ukraine in the twentieth century.

The twentieth century was represented in the national master-narrative by the following phenomena and landmarks: the Ukrainian national movement of the late nineteenth to early twentieth century (as a precondition of the establishment of statehood), World War I (as a tragedy of the Ukrainian nation divided between warring powers), Ukrainian statehood of 1918–20 (the Ukrainian People's Republic and the Hetman State), and the three famines of 1921–23, 1932–33, and 1947 (as tragedies of a nation subjected to foreign/communist domination and a testimony of the desire of the Soviet Union to exterminate the peasantry, the foundation of the nation). These events were followed by the nationalist movement of the 1920s to 1950s (as an example of the tragic and heroic struggle of the nation for its liberty), World War II (as an example of the tragedy of a stateless nation that found

itself in the epicenter of fighting between two totalitarian regimes), the political repression of the 1920s–1950s (as a story of the extermination of the intelligentsia—the brain of the nation—and the suppression of any opposition), the Khrushchevian Thaw and the Sixtiers, Brezhnevian Stagnation, Gorbachev's perestroika and the ultimate triumph of historical justice: the miraculous transformation of Ukraine into an independent state in 1991. Within this narrative, the Soviet period was portrayed as a dark era of totalitarianism, national oppression, and endless attempts to assimilate or even destroy the Ukrainian nation.

Of course, the educational sphere became one of the principal areas of large-scale nationalization of the past. During the 1991–92 academic year, the history of Ukraine course was introduced into the school curriculum. In 1992, the Ukrainian Ministry of Education published its program statement, "Conception of History Education in Schools," and in 1995 a group of university professors prepared the "Conception of Lifelong Historical Education." One of the basic aims of these statements, in addition to the "humanization" of historical education, was the "revival of the Ukrainian mentality."[41] According to this document, the history of Ukraine needed to be prioritized in the historical disciplines that also covered broader world history.

The introduction of elements of national history into the primary schools, through extracurricular activities, was already planned. Students would then start the history of Ukraine course in the fifth grade through short stories, a method that was obviously borrowed from Soviet practices. This introductory course aimed to cover the whole "Ukrainian millennium" from the early Slavic era to contemporary Ukraine. The "Conception" did not become an official mandate; the development of history education in schools and the filing of education plans and curricula followed the logic of the political situation, giving priority to the ethnocentric version of the history of Ukraine with an increased focus on the history of statehood. The prototype of the first textbook on the history of Ukraine for high school was prepared in the same manner.[42]

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41 A. I. Zyakun, *Navchalna literature z istoriyi kintsya 80–90-ihk r. XX st.: istoriohrafichnyy analiz* (Sumy: VVP "Mriya-1" TOV, 2011), 42.

42 M. V. Koval, S. V. Kulchytskyy, and Yu. O. Kurnosov, *Istoriya Ukrayiny. Materialy do pidruchnyka dlya 10-11 kl. serednikh shkil* (Kyiv: Raiduha, 1992).

The outline of the new didactic history was shaped by the "classical" schemes of the positivist historiography of the nineteenth century. The years 1990–99 saw the republication of syntheses of the history of Ukraine authored by prerevolutionary and émigré/diaspora historians—Mykhailo Hrushevsky, Natalia Polonskaya-Vasylenko, Oleksandra Efimenko, Dmytro Doroshenko, and others—sixty-four titles in total, of which fifty-three were published between 1990–93.[43] These works greatly influenced both authors of school curricula and textbooks and academic historians, resulting in an uncritical reproduction of the ethnonational narrative of the late nineteenth century in the school curricula and in textbooks. This narrative was perceived and presented by its authors as "historical truth."

In the early 1990s, the book *Ukraine: A History* written by Ukrainian-Canadian historian Orest Subtelny (1941–2016) became a genuine bestseller in Ukraine. This book, which presented the topic in a simple, transparent, and well-organized narrative written for an English-speaking audience, was translated into Ukrainian and Russian and became a successful commercial project: it sold in record numbers and became a de facto teaching aid in schools and universities.[44] The book came from the "West," lending it a special aura of truthfulness and indicating its conformity to high scholarly standards. Its language was vivid and easy to understand, unlike the ponderous writings of the classics of Ukrainian historiography. Its narrative and explanatory strategy followed the principles of ethnonational history and fit quite well within the schema designed by Hrushevsky and his followers; however, the author based his conceptual framework on the modernist approach. Later, the author of a popular fifth grade history textbook wrote: "At the beginning of the 1990s, Orest Subtelny helped us learn our own past, awaken our consciousness, [and] restore our heritage that they tried to erase, eradicate, kill with hunger and bullets for many centuries."[45]

The historiographical cannon obeyed the same principles. During one of the official events of 1993, Leonid Kravchuk, president of Ukraine, regretted that the "Ukrainian people do not have a history." To address the issue,

43 Zyakun, *Navchalna literature*, 55.

44 Subtelnyy, *Ukrayina: Istoriya* (Kyiv: Lybid', 1991). The book is on a University of Toronto list of the one hundred most influential publications.

45 V. Mysan, *Yak my vchylysya vchyty istoriyu: osobysti notatky pedagoga pro pershe desyatylittya shkilnoyi istorichnoyi osvity u nezalezhniy Ukrayini*, August 28, 2016, https://uamoderna.com/event/mysan-history-education-ukraine.

the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine proposed a fifty-volume history of the Ukrainian people. The conceptual essence of the project was laid out in a brochure authored by Rem Symonenko of the Institute of History of Ukraine of the National Academy of Sciences: "Reassertions of a truly national history, its restoration as the past of the Ukrainian ethnos on its own autochthonous territory: this means Ukrainian history as an original uninterrupted process the main objective of which is the Ukrainian people, from its very first origins to modern sovereign statehood."[46] The same year, there was an attempt to introduce a course of Ukrainian political science or "scientific nationalism" into universities, but it encountered criticism from part of the academic community.[47] Odd as it was, the concerns raised reflected the seriousness of the position of its authors, which also exemplified the attitudes of some in academic leadership positions: "scientific communism" was bound to cede its place to "scientific nationalism." Neither of the projects mentioned above were implemented.

The aforementioned mass "repurposing" of the educational and cultural infrastructure was a part of this process. The introduction of the new history course in the university curricula meant an immediate demand for qualified teachers, but this challenge was easily addressed: for instance, Departments of the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (a semester-long course—or sometimes a one-year course—on the history of the CPSU that was mandatory for students of all subjects) were renamed Departments of the History of Ukraine, and those who taught the history of the party were tapped to teach the history of Ukraine, a course that also became mandatory for students of all subjects. The Lenin and Marx portraits in history faculties were replaced by that of Mykhailo Hrushevsky, the new icon of Ukrainian history.[48]

The nationalization of the past provoked a kind of institutional boom. In 1990, there were twenty-one history departments in the Ukrainian SSR,

46 R. H. Symonenko, *Do kontseptsiyi bahatotomnoyi "Istoriyi Ukrayinskoho narodu" (mizhnatsionalnyy ta mizhnarodnyy aspekty)* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy NAN Ukrainy, 1993), 7.

47 The essence of the innovation and its criticism are to be found in Ye. Bystrytskyy's article "Chomu natsionalizm ne mozhe buty naukoyu," *Politychna dumka*, no. 2 (1994): 30–35, http://bystrytsky.org/why94.htm#A6.

48 Hrushevsky became both an icon and a monument. His *History of Ukraine-Rus* was republished in 1991–98, as a part of the series *History Monuments* edited by the Institute of Ukrainian Archeography (created in 1992). Monuments to Hrushevsky were unveiled in Lviv (1994), Kyiv (1998), and Lutsk (2002). The street in Kyiv where the parliament and the government are located was given the historian's name in 1991.

most of them located in regional pedagogical institutes. According to the calculations of Volodymyr Masliychuk, twenty-four departments of history in higher education establishments preparing specialists were established from 1991–99.[49] The history of Ukraine was a major field of study. Between 1993 and 2002, 192 doctoral and 1,243 candidate (equivalent to PhD) theses in history were defended in Ukraine, which amounted to one-third of all theses completed during this period.[50] Taking into account the structure of demand, it is safe to assume that an overwhelming majority of these theses were dedicated to the history of Ukraine.

In the meantime, the history of Ukraine reached the status of a self-sufficient sphere of didactic and patriotic education. By the end of the 1990s, the canon of school history was finalized and was defined by ethnocentrism, ethnic exclusiveness, and elements of xenophobia. After an analysis of more than a dozen textbooks on the history of Ukraine, Natalya Yakovenko concluded that they contained negative ethnic stereotypes of Poles, Germans, Tatars, and Russians.[51] A poll of advanced students of history at Ivan Franko Lviv National University (2008) confirmed that school textbooks are one of the main sources of negative ethnic stereotypes.[52]

From the end of the 1990s to the beginning of the 2000s, the axiological limitations and ideological extremes of the ethnocentric version of Ukrainian history became an object of discussion between foreign and Ukrainian historians, specialists in cultural studies, and sociologists.[53] While these dis-

49 Volodymyr Masliychuk, "Ne tilky tsyfry!" January 19, 2012, http://www.historians.in.ua/index.php/en/institutsiji-istorichnoji-nauki-v-ukrajini/94-volodymyr-masliychuk-ne-tilky-tsyfry.

50 Leonid Zashkilnyak, "Metodolohichni aspekty svitovoho istoriohrafichnoho protsesu i suchasna ukrayinska istorychna nauka," in *Ukrayinska istoriohrafiya na zlami XX i XXI stolit: zdobutky i problemy* (Lviv: L'viv Natsional'nyi universytet im. I. Franka, 2004), 45.

51 Natalya Yakovenko, "Polshcha ta polyaki v shkilnykh pidruchnykakh istoriyi, abo vidlunnya davnyoho y nedavnyoho minuloho," 1999, http://litopys.org.ua/yakovenko/yak14.htm.

52 See Olena Arkusha, "Polskyy i rosiyskyy chynnyky u formuvanni suchasnoyi natsionalnoyi svidomosti halytskykh ukrayintsiv: istorychnyy dosvid i suchasni paraleli," in *Istorychni mify i stereotypy ta mizhnatsionalni vidnosyny v suchasniy Ukrayini*, ed. L. Zashkilnyak (Lviv: Instytut ukrainoznavstva im. I. Krip'iakevycha, 2009), 144–209.

53 For more details, see Nancy Popson, "The Ukrainian History Textbook: Introducing Children to the 'Ukrainian Nation,'" *Nationalities Papers* 29, no. 2 (2001): 325–50; Jan Germen Janmaat, "Nation-Building in Post-Soviet Ukraine: Educational Policy and the Response of the Russian-Speaking Population" (PhD diss, University of Amsterdam, 2000); a collection of articles: Magdalena Telus and Yuriiy Shapoval, eds. *Ukrayinska istorychna dydaktyka: mizhnarodnyy dialog (fakhivtsi riznykh krayin pro suchasni ukrayinski pidruchnyky z istoriyi)* (Kyiv: Heneza, 2000); Taras Kuzio, "History, Memory and Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet Colonial Space," *Nationalities Papers* 30, no. 2 (2002): 241–64; Georgiy

cussions did not have much impact on the curricula courses on the history of Ukraine, they brought the issue to the attention of the wider public: the ethnocentric narrative of Ukrainian history promoted by the national educational system could not stretch to include the ethnocultural and civilizational diversity of Ukraine.

The Soviet period, as might be expected, was maligned in textbooks, leading to a radical transformation of interpretation: the pathos of "socialist construction" was superseded by a bleak picture of the never-ending suffering of Ukrainians oppressed by Soviet totalitarianism. Following the same model, the older periods of history were retranslated as centuries of suffering and oppression for the freedom-loving Ukrainians and their eternal struggle against foreign domination. As in many other fields of historical politics, the sphere of history education preserved Soviet-style semantic patterns. In the Soviet version, the period before 1917 was depicted as the era of oppression and struggle. In the Ukrainian nationalized version, Ukraine's suffering and struggle were prolonged until 1991. This year marked the advent of the era of historical justice with the realization of the "centuries-old aspirations of the Ukrainian people." The idea of the perpetual struggle of the Ukrainian people/nation for liberation and statehood replaced the Soviet canon of eternal struggle against class oppression.[54]

At the same time, elements of Soviet mythology remained in the school curriculum as part of the general portrait of the past. For example, the term "Great Patriotic War" was present in several textbooks, though the emphasis was on the contribution of Ukraine and Ukrainians to the "Great Victory." In the search for a suitable name for the period between 1941 and 1945 while

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Kasianov, "Rewriting and Rethinking: Contemporary Historiography and Nation Building in Ukraine," in *Dilemmas of State-Led National Building in Ukraine*, ed. Taras Kuzio and Paul D'Anieri (Westport, CT–London: Praeger Publishers, 2002), 29–46; N. Honcharenko and M. Kushnaryova, "Shkola inshuvannya," *Krytyka*, no. 4 (2001): 6–7; Jan G. Janmaat, "Identity Construction and Education: The History of Ukraine in Soviet and Post-Soviet Schoolbooks," in *Dilemmas of State-Led Nation Building in Ukraine*, ed. Taras Kuzio and Paul D'Anieri (Westport, CT–London: Praeger Publishers, 2002), 171–90; and Natalya Yakovenko, *Polshcha ta polyaky v shkilnykh pidruchnykakh istoriyi*. See also Natalya Yakovenko, *Paralelnyy svit: Doslidzhennya z istoriyi uyavlen ta idey v Ukrayini XVI–XVII st.* (Kiev: Krytyka 2002), and Natalya Yakovenko, "Akademichnyy pidruchnyk: kanon i novatsiya," *Krytyka*, nos. 7–8 (2007); Georgiy Kasianov and P. Polianski, eds., *Pidruchnyk z istoriyi: Problemy tolerantnosti; Metodychnyy posibnyk dlya avtoriv ta redaktoriv vydavnytstv* (Chernivtsi: Bukrek, 2012).

54 O. Radzivill, "Transformatsiya obrazu radyanskoho mynuloho v ukrayinskykh pidruchnykakh z istoriyi," *Kultura istorychnoyi pam'yati: yevropeyskyy ta ukrayinskyy dosvid* (Kyiv: IPIEND im. Kurasa, 2013), 400–401.

trying to avoid the Soviet formula, the term "Soviet-German War" was sometimes used. The remnants of a nationalized Soviet narrative were counterbalanced by facts, events, and persons that had previously been absent in the school curriculum or featured only as antiheroes. For instance, the history of the Ukrainian nationalist movement was fully integrated into the curriculum.

Previously the "Great October Socialist Revolution" and the "Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union" played central roles in the curriculum for the history of the twentieth century. These were replaced with the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–20, which symbolized the struggle for independence and Ukrainian statehood, and the Great Famine of 1932–33 (the Holodomor), which was held out as the greatest tragedy in the history of the Ukrainian nation. World War II—which sometimes integrated the "Great Patriotic War" conceptualization—was presented as a catastrophe for a nation that lacked its own (genuine) state. This topic was significantly amplified by a mythology of resistance that centered on the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army as staunch and uncompromising independence fighters; this heroic history balanced out the narrative of victimhood and suffering.

The nationalization of formal history education led to the expansion of the national/nationalist history narrative to the pre-national era. Ukrainian history flowed continuously from one era to another. Kievan Rus' again became the cradle of Ukrainian nationhood and statehood, the Halych-Volhynia Principality marked its continuation. The "Polish-Lithuanian period" was represented as an age of foreign domination and oppression as well as "latent statehood" and a sign of the vitality of the Ukrainian nation, and the Cossack period confirmed the Ukrainian penchant for freedom and democracy and their capacity for self-organization.

Bohdan Khmelnytsky, formerly a fighter against social, national, and religious oppression in the Soviet narrative, was now the central figure of the "national revolution" of the mid-seventeenth century and the leader of the Ukrainian state. Ivan Mazepa (a traitor in the Russian imperial and Soviet narrative) became the symbol of the independence struggle, and Hetman Pylyp Orlyk was credited as the author of the "first constitution in Europe." The period when Ukrainian lands comprised a part of empires was presented through a colonial lens, which was not substantially different from the Soviet

version of Ukrainian history. The major difference was that now the pattern encompassed, implicitly or explicitly, the Soviet period, leading to unmistakable conclusions. Of course, the "Ukrainian millennium" proved the transcendent existence of the Ukrainian nation.

The rewriting of history curricula according to the canons of the ethnonational narrative and its adoption in schools was met with the incomprehension and even aversion of some of the very persons expected to implement it—history teachers. Even in the early 1990s, regional differences in the approach to history education were noticeable, and new textbooks embedded in the new national historical framework were met with resistance, primarily in the southeastern regions of the country.[55] This was hardly surprising because the proposed national/nationalist narrative was perceived as the negation of the Soviet version. Teachers in the eastern part of the country disliked the wholly negative assessment of the Soviet past and expressed discontent with the "excess of nationalism," which often meant the appearance of events and characters from anti-Soviet history on the pages of textbooks. The glorification of the OUN, UPA, and the leaders of the nationalist movement were met with special antipathy.[56]

Defenders of the Soviet narrative acted as the main opponents and critics of the exclusivist ethnonational model of the past until the end of the 1990s. In the late 1990s, new actors and critics came on the scene. European institutions proposed their own alternative to the dominance of the ethnonational narrative following their experiences in the countries of Eastern Europe. In 1997–98, the Council of Europe instigated workshops on "Reforming the Teaching of History in Ukraine," mingling teachers, experts, and decision-makers. The topic of one of these workshops was formulated in a very diplomatic manner: a reform of the curricula with a special emphasis on "sensitive topics" and "the role of notorious historical figures." One of the guidelines proposed by European experts read as follows: "the textbooks should be free of political or ideological stereotypes, which could reinforce the political problems of the day, and should contain no information which could be

55 Fedir Turchenko, *Ukrayina: povernennya istoriyi; Heneza suchasnoho pidruchnyka* (Kyiv: Heneza, 2016), 23–30.

56 Peter W. Rogers, "'Compliance or Contradiction'? Teaching 'History' in the 'New' Ukraine; A View from Ukraine's Eastern Borderlands," *Europe-Asia Studies* 59, no. 3 (2007): 506, 513–14.

interpreted from a nationalistic or xenophobic point of view."[57] Ukrainian participants (including representatives from the Ministry of Education) recognized the problem and went so far as to promise necessary corrections and amendments to the curricula and textbooks (the country was preparing to transition to the twelve-year system of secondary education), for instance, dropping the mono-ideological and propagandistic approach to history teaching.[58]

It is possible to evaluate the scale of implementation of these good intentions and assurances if we look at the results of a thorough study of history curricula and textbooks carried out ten years later by two independent groups of Ukrainian historians and teachers between 2007 and 2010. One group was comprised of university teachers and professors who worked under the auspices of the recently created Ukrainian Institute of National Memory and analyzed textbooks published in the late 1990s and early 2000s.[59] The second group, school teachers and university professors, analyzed history textbooks published after 2005. Working independently from each other, they arrived at similar conclusions. In particular, they observed the following:

- The equation of notions of "ethnos" and "nation";
- The domination of political and military history;
- The presentation of historical processes from the point of view of "national interest";
- The predominance and justification of the idea of conflict (social, national);
- Ethnocentrism, elements of xenophobia, and cultural intolerance; and
- The lack of attention for distinctiveness of regional history.[60]

57 Pavlo Poliansky, "The Reform of History Teaching in Ukraine," Report, Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 2000), 6, accessed December 13, 2020, https://rm.coe.int/09000016804944444.

58 Poliansky, "Reform of History Teaching in Ukraine," 16–17.

59 In this case, institutional affiliation did not play any important role; the composition of the expert group headed by Professor Natalya Yakovenko was a more important factor.

60 Natalya Yakovenko, ed., *Shkil'na istoriya ochyma istorykiv-naukovtsiv*: *Materialy Robochoi narady z monitorynhu shkil'nykh pidruchnykiv istorii Ukrainy* (Kyiv: Ukrainskyi instytut national'noi pamiati, 2008), 122; Natalya Yakovenko, ed., *Propozitsiyi do kontseptsiyi istorychnoyi osvity v Ukrayini: Materialy III Robochoi narady z monitorynhu shkil'nykh pidruchnykiv istorii Ukrainy* (Kyiv: Ukrainskyi instytut national'noi pamiati, 2009), 28; N. Yakovenko et al., *Kontseptsiya ta prohramy vykladannya istoriyi Ukrayiny v shkoli. Proekt* (Kyiv: Stylos, 2009), 88; Kasianov and Polianski, *Shkola tolerantnosti*, 20–21; Georgiy Kasianov, ed., *Istorychna osvita v polikulturnomu suspilstvi: vyklyky ta perspektyvy dlya Ukrayiny; Materialy mizhnarodnoho kruhloho stolu* (Kyiv: lipnya, 13, 2011), 46–49.

Of course, textbooks on the history of Ukraine in the 2000s had changed both in content and discourse since the 1990s, but all the hallmarks of the period of the nationalization of the past remained intact despite social criticism and the efforts of some historians. This can be partly explained by institutional and cultural factors such as the oligopoly of publishing houses unwilling to pay for textbook revisions, the absence of a system of genuine peer review, and the inertia of authors. At the same time, the reclamation of the past did not automatically lead to the desired changes in the present. Rewriting history according to the standards of an ethnocentric narrative was, rather, a compensation for the existing social, political, and economic context of Ukraine at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century. The "titular ethnos" in independent Ukraine had not reached the level of well-being, economic development, and cultural influence that would have permitted its representatives to declare that the main tasks of the belated modernity project had indeed been accomplished.

The nationalization of the past in its nostalgic and antiquarian version (a part of the project of "making Ukrainians") had already reached its limit in the late 1990s. The history curriculum for schools, remodeled using templates from nineteenth-century populist historiography, did not create an attractive image of the past. The Soviet memory narrative with its optimistic utopian promises was discarded. The Soviet past represented a tragedy, a failure, a break in the "normal" development of the Ukrainian nation, and it ceased to exist. However, no narrative of the past appeared that could lead to historical optimism. A dreary past gave rise to a present that was no less bleak; such a past could at best be used to explain the failures and difficulties of the present. In 1999, according to UN data, 42 percent of Ukrainians belonged to the categories of "poor" and "very poor." Poverty became the distinguishing feature of those groups that had most to do with the implementation of state historical politics: teachers, professors, researchers, and the staff of museums and cultural and educational institutions. In the second half of the 1990s, they were also touched by the widespread phenomena of hidden unemployment (for instance, lengthy unpaid holidays) and the late payment or underpayment of wages. Even when paid, wages could only cover the most basic of needs, at best.

The discrepancy between expectation and reality led to increased resentment and discontent. A segment of the Ukrainian intelligentsia and politi-

cians, national democrats or nationalists, readily came to the conclusion that the troubles and misfortunes of Ukraine were caused, on the one hand, by the communist/Soviet legacy in politics, economics, and mass consciousness and, on the other, uncertainty and inconsistency in nation-building, primarily in the area of language, and, of course, the sphere of historical politics.[61]

Despite the ambivalence of state historical politics between the 1990s and the early 2000s, the nationalization of the past remained its main vector. However, both the nationalization itself and the hesitant and, in many cases, reluctant removal of the Soviet narrative were not the result of plans elaborated by a group of visionaries in power. To a great extent, the processes associated with the nationalization of the past might be considered spontaneous actions or the contingent responses of various agents of historical politics to the challenges of belated nation-building—not always carefully considered and often dictated by the immediate circumstances and the logic of the situation rather than by a well-considered strategy.

The implementation of an antiquarian, culturally hermetic, and traumatized national narrative of historical memory was also complicated by the existence of a strong Soviet nostalgic narrative firmly rooted in the minds of millions of Ukrainian citizens. Moreover, nationalized history itself was highly reminiscent of the Soviet Ukrainian narrative (ethnographic, antiquarian), expanded by the addition of topics and figures that had previously been taboo. Paradoxically, the "nationalizers" who were supposed to modernize the Ukrainian historical narrative instead enthusiastically promoted the same antiquarian and archaic version of history and memory that had been popularized with equal enthusiasm by the Soviet regime, therefore never allowing Ukrainian history to embrace modernity.

All these issues accumulated in the conflicts that surfaced because of the intensification of the nationalization of history that took place after the Orange Revolution of 2004. This is not to say that these conflicts were not visible before the acceleration of historical politics. In the 1990s, the main defenders and promoters of the Soviet narrative that was quickly turning into Soviet nostalgia were prominent in public attacks concerning the "nationalized" version of Ukrainian history and memory. The main targets

61 The reform of Ukrainian orthography, elaborated in 1999, was not implemented at that time, not least because of excessive politicization. The plot line, once again, boiled down to the confrontation between the Soviet spelling and the "correct" or "national" one.

of their criticism were the canonical version of the Holodomor as the genocide of Ukrainians and the attempt to politically rehabilitate the OUN and UPA. As the ruling elite adhered to an ambivalent model in its historical politics, the confrontation between the national/nationalist and Soviet nostalgic memory narratives took place between "mnemonic warriors" devoid of a mass audience. One side of the conflict involved both nationalists, whose influence was limited to Western Ukraine, and national democrats, who had largely lost their influence by the late 1990s (their presence in politics was mainly due to their base of support in the rural regions and small towns of central Ukraine). The communists, whose influence was significant in the eastern and, to a certain extent, southern regions of Ukraine, were their main rivals. Since the middle of the first decade of the 2000s, this open confrontation between the national/nationalist and Soviet nostalgic memory narratives has escalated. It was at this very moment that the conflict moved to the level of mass politics.

National democratic and nationalist groups, fragmented and riven by internal strife, achieved political representation through the Our Ukraine Bloc in the parliamentary elections of 2002. Two years later, the dramatic presidential elections of 2004 made Viktor Yushchenko, the leader of this bloc, president of Ukraine. Consequently, these segments of the Ukrainian political class reached the highest echelons of political power. These ideologically motivated groups became major promoters of a "nationalization" of the past that implied a more intense promotion of the national/nationalist narrative and a more severe expulsion of the Soviet nostalgic interpretation.

Meanwhile, a new actor joined the ranks of supporters and promoters of the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative in the field of historical politics: the Party of Regions, with all its financial and organizational resources. Previously, this group was scarcely interested in historical politics. However, the big business conglomerates of eastern Ukraine were quite satisfied with the state of affairs when Soviet identity helped them keep control of the region that created their wealth.

Agents and promoters of both narratives actively inscribed issues related to the interpretation of the past into their actual political agendas. For instance, Viktor Yushchenko and his supporters used the famine of 1932–33 to discredit their opponents during the political crisis of 2006–2007. Communists and Party of Regions members accused their "orange" oppo-

nents of glorifying Nazi collaborators (the OUN and UPA) with their revisionist approach to the Great Patriotic War as well as using the past to divide the country. In the middle of the 2000s, history and memory began to be instrumentalized in the struggle for power.

Finally, after 2005, partisans of the Soviet nostalgic narrative in Ukraine acquired an external ally—the ruling class of the Russian Federation. In Russia, the Soviet nostalgic version of the memory narrative (mostly the myth of the Great Victory of 1945), enhanced by the imperial nostalgic version, became the ideological basis for and self-legitimization tool of the ruling elite that came to power in the late 1990s. The common stance on the past based on this narrative also served as the foundation for internal cohesion. In the middle of the 2000s, the escalation of historical politics of Russia, especially in connection with the active promotion of the idea of the "Russian world" and the protection of Russians living abroad, helped create an alliance with the promoters of the Soviet nostalgic narrative in neighboring countries, especially Ukraine.

In Ukraine, the adherents of the national/nationalist memory narrative also had an external ally, the Ukrainian diaspora, which was well represented by civil society organizations and academic institutions (for example, the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies and the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard University). Representatives of these diaspora organizations played an active role in promoting the canonical discourse of the Holodomor as genocide[62] and significantly contributed to the popularization of the nationalist narrative, particularly the social and political legitimation of the OUN and UPA

Starting in the middle of the 2000s, two narratives, both evolving into a more exclusivist approach, began their territorial expansion, as their respective supporters strove for influence at the national level. This was probably caused by the "The Battle for Kyiv" that took place during the 2004 presidential elections and resulted in the clash of representatives of two regions whose attitude toward historical issues was based on two mutually exclusive memory narratives. Industrial and financial elites of Donbass relied on the Soviet nostalgic narrative; in this respect they became allies with the Russian

62 See Georgiy Kasianov, *Rozryta mohyla: holod 1932–1933 rokiv u politytsi, pamiati ta istorii (1980 ti–2000-ni)* (Kharkiv: Folio, 2019) 21–29.

ruling elite that had begun their ideological, economic, and political expansion along the geopolitical perimeter of Russia. Commercial, financial, and bureaucratic elites, along with the middle class of Galicia, the new *nomenklatura*, a part of the intelligentsia, and the academic community both in central Ukraine and among the Ukrainian diaspora were oriented toward the national/nationalist narrative. As noted above, between these two poles a space of ambivalence was created that eventually became a battlefield.

Opinion polls provide incomplete but important insight into the minds of these territories at the moment when the escalation of historical politics began. For instance, according to data from the Razumkov Center, in 2005 almost 46 percent of respondents in western Ukraine agreed with the statement, "Ukraine is the only heir of Kievan Rus'," as opposed to 26 percent in the center, 17.6 percent in the east, and 9.6 percent in the south. The statement, the "History of Ukraine is an integral part of the great Eastern Slavic people, as is the history of Belarus and Russia," was supported by 17.4 percent respondents in the western regions of Ukraine, 41.5 percent in the central part of the country, 60 percent in the south, and 54 percent in the east.[63]

The efforts of Viktor Yushchenko and his supporters, who opened a new era of historical politics, sought to expand the scope of the national/nationalist narrative in space and time. For instance, one of its central elements, "the Holodomor as genocide," (ideologically and politically significant both as a rejection of the Soviet narrative and an affirmation of the national one) was elevated to the level of national commemorative practices. Similar attempts to promote the nationalist narrative, especially the heroic myth of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, complemented this policy between 2006 and 2010.

There were two ways to expand the national/nationalist memory narrative: on the one hand, the space of memory was packed with new places and symbols previously absent in the classical national narrative (mainly the events, dates, and historical figures of the twentieth century); and on the other hand, a revival of the classical narrative brought back into circulation names and dates that had been partially forgotten or taboo. This happened not only in the pages of textbooks and scholarly works but in the public

63 "Spil'na identychnist' hromadian Ukrainy: osoblyvosti i problemy stanovlennia," *Natsional'na bezpeka I oborona* 7, no. 79 (2007): 3–21, https://razumkov.org.ua/uploads/journal/ukr/NSD79_2006_ukr.pdf.

space as well. The basic framework of national history did not change: a millennium of statehood (ensured by the transition from one state form into another); the continuity of history rooted in prehistoric times; and pathos of suffering and struggle.[64]

The Soviet period (as a tragic time, the rupture of national history) was mainly represented by the famine of 1932–33 and political purges and repressions. At the level of visual national symbols, monuments, and sites of memory, this narrative was represented by the newly erected Bykivnia Graves National Historic Memorial and the Holodomor memorials in Kyiv and Kharkiv. The national narrative was represented by the Hetmans' Capital memorial complex in Baturyn, the memorial to the heroes of Kruty, the Chyhyryn Historic and Cultural Reserve, and Khortytsia National Park (this had been created in the Soviet period). Monuments to Prince Danylo of Halych, Petro Sahaidachny, Ivan Mazepa, Mykhailo Hrushevsky, Symon Petliura, and Nestor Makhno were erected in Ukrainian cities. Hundreds of streets took the names of figures from the national/nationalist narrative.

The period after the Orange Revolution witnessed the visible reinforcement and territorial expansion of the nationalist memory narrative, which had previously been mainly localized in the western part of the country, especially in the regions of Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Ternopil. This narrative was already represented by its promoters in a distilled form: Ukrainian radical nationalism was understood and presented exclusively as a national liberation movement that played an exceptional role in the achievement of independence. The dark sides of the nationalist movement became the object of a purposeful amnesia.

In 2005, a commission of historians created by the government submitted a report that assessed the activities of the OUN and UPA.[65] Despite differences of opinion between the members of the commission on the com-

64 A commercial media project carried out in 2007 by the StarMedia Company was symptomatic in this sense. A hundred episodes of historical animation ranged from the Bronze Age to Bohdan Khmelnytsky's death. The authors chose to base it on works by Ukrainian historians from the nineteenth to the first third of the twentieth century that served as both the source of inspiration and the factual basis of the project. See "Istoriya Ukrayiny," video, YouTube, 2007, accessed April 12, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNHlpbN2c0aTuXLaEdk8O3tstbyzeU3Fs.

65 *Orhanizatsiya ukrayinskykh natsionalistiv i Ukrayinska povstanska armiya: Fakhovyy vysnovok robochoyi hrupy istorykiv pry Uryadoviy komisiyi z vyvchennya diyalnosti OUN i UPA, NAN Ukrayiny; Instytut istoriyi Ukrayiny* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2005) 53.

prehensive coverage of the topic, the general conclusion was quite loyal to these organizations and, thus, provided a precondition for their full "political rehabilitation."[66] By this time, though, de facto rehabilitation already happened: the OUN and UPA became a fixture in Ukrainian school textbooks as heroes of the national liberation movement. After 2005, the political rehabilitation of the OUN and UPA was effectively converted into the glorification of these organizations on the level of state historical politics, leading to their transformation into one of the central elements of the national/nationalist narrative.

Inspired by the findings of the academic commission, Yushchenko charged the government with producing a program of "comprehensive study and objective coverage of the activities of the Ukrainian liberation movement" for 2006–2007. The aim of the program was the "consolidation and development of the Ukrainian nation, providing historical justice for the participants of the Ukrainian liberation movement, the promotion of the process of national reconciliation and mutual understanding, and the recovery of national memory." Judging by the text of the degree, the "Ukrainian liberation movement," in Yushchenko's eyes, was synonymous with the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and its predecessors and political branches: the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO), Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), and Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council (UHVR).[67] Apparently, it was not accidental that the decree was published on October 14, the day celebrated by Ukrainian nationalist organizations as the anniversary of the establishment of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army.

On October 14, 2005, the Kyiv city center had its first street rally dedicated to the anniversary of the creation of the UPA; before that, such events only took place in the western regions. The march culminated in a physical clash between nationalists, represented by the Ukrainian National Assembly–Ukrainian Nationalist Self-Defense, and "leftists" mobilized by the Progressive Socialist Party and the communists. Henceforth, marches

66 For a detailed account, see Oksana Myshlovska, "Establishing the 'Irrefutable Facts' about the OUN and UPA: The Role of the Working Group of Historians on OUN-UPA Activities in Mediating Memory-based Conflict in Ukraine," *Ab Imperio,* no. 1 (2018): 223–54.

67 "Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro vsebichne vyvchennya ta ob'yektyvne vysvitlennya diyalnosti ukrayinskoho vyzvolnoho rukhu ta spriyannya protsesu natsionalnoho prymyrennya,'" October 14, 2006, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/879/2006.

dedicated to the UPA became an annual even in Kyiv, with local authorities cautiously separating participants and opponents by assigning them different parts of the city center.[68]

Between 2005 and 2010, the National Bank issued commemorative coins dedicated to Roman Shukhevych, Olena Teliha, and Oleh Olzhych.[69] As already mentioned, portraits of Roman Shukhevych and Stepan Bandera appeared on postage stamps and envelopes issued by the state postal agency Ukrposhta. In 2007, President Yushchenko ordered the government to commemorate Yaroslav and Yaroslava Stetsko, the leaders of the OUN-B after Bandera's death. Their names were to be given to streets, avenues, squares, and educational institutions. The Ministry of Education had to provide "objective coverage of the Ukrainian liberation movement and the participation of Yaroslav and Yaroslava Stetsko in the curricula and new textbooks of educational institutions."[70]

In 2007, following another Yushchenko decree, Ukraine celebrated the sixty-fifth anniversary of the creation of the UPA. Between 2006 and 2010, the president conferred the title of Hero of Ukraine on Roman Shukhevych, his son Yuri Shukhevych, and Stepan Bandera. The same period saw the national screening of the television series *Sobor na krovi*, dedicated exclusively to the history of the OUN, UPA, and related nationalist organizations.[71]

On January 1, 2008, a torchlit procession dedicated to the birthday of Stepan Bandera took place in Kyiv, organized by the All-Ukrainian Union "Svoboda." Kyiv authorities did not interfere. The event in the capital, a rallying point for nationalists from other regions, became annual and acquired special meaning after 2010, when Viktor Yanukovych and the Party of Regions rose to power. Participants in the processions saw them as protests against the Yanukovich regime, while representatives of the "regime"

68 Valerya Burlakova, "Za visim rokiv marshi UPA pererosly iz sutychok z komunistamy u protystoyannya z vladoyu," *Ukrayinskiy Tyzhden*, October 13, 2013, http://tyzhden.ua/Society/91142.

69 See National Bank of Ukraine, https://bank.gov.ua/control/uk/currentmoney/cmcoin/list (last accessed May 20, 2021).

70 "Pro vshanuvannya pam'yati Yaroslava i Yaroslavy Stetsko," Ukaz Presydenta Ukrayiny vid 16.05.2007, May 16, 2007, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/419/2007.

71 "Sobor na krovi," 10 episodes, available online at: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhcYfZkUVxIzbuqeaKl5xgTZ2Tux0EJj. The title of the TV series plays on the double connotation of the Ukranian word *sobor*, which means both "cathedral" and "unity" (hence the title can be translated both as "Cathedral [built] on blood" and "Unity of blood." The series did not contain unrestrained apology for the OUN and UPA.

willingly used the actions of the nationalists to launch a campaign against "fascism in Ukraine" (for instance, the government-sponsored "antifascist marches" of the spring of 2013).

The expansion and radicalization of the national/nationalist memory narrative carried out by the state authorities coincided with the intensified political instrumentalization of the Soviet nostalgic narrative. Supporters of the latter regarded the growth of nationalism in public life, both real and perceived, as a suitable opportunity to discredit Yushchenko and preserve the loyalty of those who valued and cherished the Soviet nostalgic narrative.

In the middle of the 2000s, the regional schism around "historical issues" increased and reached the national level. Prior to that, the promoters of divergent narratives rarely met each other in person. Manifestations of the national/nationalist narrative in its moderate version might cause some discontent but were rarely actively instrumentalized in the eastern parts of the country. The state did not care much about the range and the depth of its internalization. The bureaucracy in Kyiv was content with statistics showing the growing number of Ukrainian schools and printed copies of history textbooks. The Soviet nostalgic narrative in the southeast was preserved and cultivated by local elites as a means of maintaining Soviet-type social hierarchies, systems of loyalties, and patrimonialism.

According to polling by the Razumkov Center in 2009, 73.4 percent of respondents in the southern regions (including Crimea) and 51.7 percent in the eastern regions responded affirmatively to the question, "Do you wish to restore the Soviet Union and the socialist system?" On average, 49.2 percent of the Ukrainian population agreed with them.[72] According to opinion polls from the Rating-Group in 2010 that used a different methodology, 46 percent of respondents regretted the collapse of the USSR.[73]

During Yushchenko's time in office, some attempts were made to force the Soviet nostalgic narrative from the symbolic space. However, local authorities, especially in the regions east of Dnipro, did not take the presidential decrees on decommunization seriously; moreover, there was clear evidence of

72 See http://www.razumkov.org.ua/ukr/poll.php?poll_id=288, accessed January 12, 2016. Southern regions: Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Odessa, Kherson, and Mykolaiv; eastern regions: Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhya, Kharkiv, Donetsk, and Luhansk.

73 Nostalhiya za SRSR ta stavlennya do okremykh postatey, May 5, 2014, http://ratinggroup.ua/files/ratinggroup/reg_files/rg_historical_ua_052014.pdf.

sabotage in many cases.[74] There were also halfhearted attempts to integrate part of the Soviet nostalgic narrative into the national/nationalist interpretation, such as the reconciliation between Soviet veterans and UPA combatants and awarding of the title of Hero of Ukraine to Oleksiy Berest, who participated in the symbolic hoisting of the Flag of Victory over the Reichstag; Oleksandr Momotenko; Lieutenant General Kuzma Derevyanko, the head of the Mykolaiv Organization of Veterans; machine gunner Mykhailo Vasylyshyn; Tatiana Markus, a member of the Soviet underground during the Nazi occupation; and to miners, directors of enterprises; and others.

Both decommunization (linked with the "Holodomor as genocide" formula) and attempts at reconciliation only aggravated the growing conflict: the former was seen as an attack on the sacred past, and the latter as evidence of weakness and political maneuvering. The promotion of the Ukrainian nationalist movement myth was particularly irritating and, at the same time, useful for mnemonic warriors from the east. First, it was a direct disavowal of the Soviet experience and memory in which the OUN and UPA were regarded as collaborators and accomplices of the Nazis. Second, it provided the perfect grounds for manipulating public opinion in the regions where the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative dominated or was strong. Yushchenko and his allies were easily presented as promoters of "Ukrainian fascism."

In the middle of the 2000s, thanks mainly to the efforts of Communists and Soviet veteran organizations, the anti-nationalist rhetoric of the Soviet times re-emerged in public discourse. The open letter of the Kirovograd Oblast Organization of Veterans addressed to Volodymyr Lytvyn, the speaker of the Verkhovna Rada, reads: "The OUN and the military structures of the UPA branded themselves as pro-fascist organizations, as servitors of fascism, as agents of the fascist regime in the territory of Ukraine. This is why the recognition of OUN members and UPA fighters is confrontational, as veterans of a 'Resistance movement' in the Great Patriotic War, it is considered an insult to the memory of Soviet soldiers killed in action

74 "Ukaz prezydenta Ukrainy 'Pro zakhody u zv'yazku s 75-mi rokovynamy Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini,' no. 250" (March 28, 2007), https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/250/2007#Text; "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrainy 'Pro dodatkovi zakhody shchodo vshanuvannya pam'yati zhertv Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraini,' no. 432" (June 12, 2009), https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/432/2009#Text. The relevant item is simply a legible copy of the text of the previous decree.

and hundreds of thousands of people who became victims of the OUN."[75] The veterans also demanded that the new generation of history textbooks be edited and amended in order to show the "truthful and unbiased story about the mass participation of the Ukrainian people in the fight against fascism," and also the "negative and treacherous role of the OUN-UPA, and the collaboration of their strongmen with the Hitlerites."[76]

Passions around "nationalist traitors" and "Soviet heroes" went beyond purely symbolic debates. For instance, attempts to politically rehabilitate the UPA were combined with efforts to equalize the social status and benefits for its veterans with those of veterans of the Great Patriotic War. The 1993 law "On the Status of the Veterans of War, Guarantees of Their Social Protection" provided for such an option only for those UPA soldiers who were rehabilitated as victims of political repression, took part in the anti-Nazi struggle between 1941–44, and did not participate in crimes against humanity. This law denied the status of the military veteran to anybody who fought against the forces of the Red Army or the NKVD.

Between 2002 and 2009, thirteen draft laws and resolutions promoting the introduction of equal status in various forms were registered in the Verkhovna Rada, nine of them between 2005 and 2009.[77] Almost every one of these projects appealed to reconciliation and the restoration of "historical truth" or justice. Some of them sought to "legalize" OUN members as well, recognizing them as war veterans. Communists and their allies did their best to block these projects and to submit counter-drafts. Two such draft laws and one draft resolution were dedicated to the "Status and Social Guarantees for the Citizens of Ukraine—Victims of the OUN and UPA in 1939–1941, during the Great Patriotic War and in the Postwar Years."[78] Naturally, they also looked for "historical justice."

Opinion polls from this period signaled a clear-cut regional repartition of attitudes on this matter. At the end of 2007, 73.7 percent of respondents in the

75 "Holovi Verkhovnoyi Rady V. Lytvynu. Orhanizatsiya veteraniv Ukrayiny. Orhanizatsiya veteraniv m. Kirovohrada," open letter, February 22, 2005, author's personal archive.

76 In 2005, the first fifth-grade history textbooks written according to the new 12-year school program were published.

77 Calcualted using data found at the official WEB portal of Verkhovna Rada: http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua. Bookmark: Zakonotvorchist. Tags: UPA, Ukrayinska povstanska armiya.

78 Cf., for instance, "Proyekt zakonu pro status i sotsialnyy zakhyst hromadyan Ukrayiny, yaki poterpily vid diy OUN i UPA v 1939–1941 rokakh, v period Velykoyi Vitchyznyanoyi viyny ta pislyavoyenni roky vyd," February 7, 2006, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=26819.

western part of the country supported bestowing the status of national liberation fighters on OUN members and UPA soldiers, either fully or subject to conditions; 37.9 percent of respondents in the center and southeast of the country supported this idea, and only 13.4 percent in Donbass and Crimea were in favor of this.[79] In 2010, the issue of the reconciliation of the Soviet Army veterans and UPA veterans divided respondents into three practically equal groups: 32.9 percent saw it in a positive light, 33.2 percent had a negative view, and 33.9 percent were undecided or were not interested in the issue.[80]

Viktor Yushchenko joined the game. In January 2008 he submitted the draft law "On the Legal Status of the Participants of the Struggle for the Independence of Ukraine in the 1920s–1990s."[81] The draft represented an attempt to radically change the status and political legitimation of the whole history of Ukrainian radical nationalism, particularly the OUN, from the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO) to the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council (UHVR).[82] It was the first and most determined attempt to elevate the nationalist memory narrative to the national level. The draft law was submitted when Yushchenko could count on a favorable majority in the Verkhovna Rada and its submission status was listed as "urgent." In March of the same year, supporters of the president tried to approve the draft law "in general," but the document was not even included in the list of issues to be addressed at the plenary sessions. In December 2008, the draft law was taken off the table when the president lost the support of the second largest parliamentary group, the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc.[83]

Defeated in parliament, Yushchenko used the only means at his disposal to resolve the issue. In January 2010, he signed a decree: "On Honoring the

79 "Stavlennya naselennya Ukrayiny do nadannya voyakam UPA status uchasnykiv natsionalno-vyzvolnykh zmagan," Press release, Fonde "democratic initsiativi" im. Ilka Kucheriva, January 28, 2008, http://dif.org.ua/ua/archive/press_releases_archive/stavlennu-uchasnikiv-nacionalno-vizvolnih-zmagan.htm.

80 "Opros Tsentra im. A. Razumkova," Survey report, 2010, accessed August 20, 2016, http://www.razumkov.org.ua/ukr/poll.php?poll_id=550.

81 Proyekt Zakonu Ukrayiny, "Pro pravovyy status uchasnykiv borotby za nezalezhnist Ukrayiny 20-kh–90-kh rokiv XX stolittya," January 10, 2008, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=31295.

82 The leaders of the UVO initiated the creation of the OUN in 1929 as a political wing of their organization.

83 In June 2011, a clone of this draft law was submitted by a deputy from the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc. Now the list of those who struggled for independence also included organizations and state formations from the 1917–1920 period and the Ukrainian Helsinki Union (Group). See "Proyekt Zakonu pro status uchasnykiv borotby za nezalezhnist Ukrayiny v XX stolitti," June 15, 2011, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=40664.

Participants of the Struggle for the Independence of Ukraine in the twentieth century."[84] This time, he listed all those who fought politically or in military groups connected to the independence of Ukraine, from the Central Rada to the OUN, UPA, and Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council (UHVR). The presidential decree charged the government with preparing a new draft law on the legal status of the participants of the struggle for independence.

His opponents also wasted no time. In September 2009, communists registered a draft resolution on the "Day of Remembrance of Victims of the Terrorist Gangs of the OUN-UPA."[85] The radical rhetoric was understandable: a presidential election campaign was gaining traction in the country. On April 1, 2009, the parliament adopted a resolution on celebrating the ninetieth anniversary of the Komsomol in Ukraine.[86] It is hard to say whether it was intentional or a coincidence, but the project was adopted on April Fool's Day. In April 2010, Nataliya Vitrenko, the leader of the Party of Progressive Socialists, filed a lawsuit seeking to cancel Yushchenko's decree on celebrating the participants of the independence struggle. Proceedings took three years, and the case was heard in courts on three levels, until the final decision by the Supreme Administrative Court of Kyiv upheld Yushchenko's decree.[87] However, nobody was going to implement it by that point.

Counterattacks took place, and not only in parliament. In the fall of 2007, the city of Krasnodon in Luhansk Oblast enthusiastically celebrated the sixty-fifth anniversary of the Youth Guard (*Molodaia Gvardija*) organization;[88] almost two years later in May 2009, Krasnodon celebrated the sixty-fifth anniversary of the Museum of the Young Guard.[89]

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84 "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrainy 'Pro vshanuvannia uchasnykiv borot'by za nezalezhnist' Ukrainy u XX stolitti,'" January 28, 2010, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/75/2010.

85 Proyekt Postanovy, "Pro vshanuvannya Dnya pam'yati zhertv terorystychnykh band OUN-UPA," September 3, 2009, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=36002.

86 "Postanova Verkhovnoyi Rady Ukrayiny Pro vidznachennya 90-richchya stvorennya komsomolu Ukrayiny vid," April 1, 2009, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1221-vi.

87 "Sud ostatochno vyznav voyiniv OUN-UPA bortsyamy za nezalezhnist," *Ukrayinskiy Tyzhden*, February 5, 2013, http://tyzhden.ua/News/71503.

88 The "Youth Guard," an underground organization created in 1942, was glorified in the novel by the Soviet author Alexander Fadeyev and in the cult movie by Sergei Gerasimov (1948). The Youth Guard was one of the most significant symbols of the Soviet myth of the Great Patriotic War. In the years of perestroika and after 1991, alternative versions emerged claiming that it was, in reality, an underground organization of the OUN.

89 "V Krasnodone otprazdnovali yubiley Ordena Druzhby narodov muzeya 'Molodoi Gvardii,'" *Cxid*, May 18, 2009, http://cxid.info/v-krasnodone-otprazdnovali-ubiley-ordena-drujby-narodov-muzeya-molodaya-gvardiya-n60380.

The next year, again with the support of the local authorities in Luhansk, a monument dedicated to the residents of the region "who died at the hands of the nationalist hit squads of the OUN-UPA" was unveiled. A similar monument, "A Shot in the Back," was erected in Simferopol in 2007. In October 2006, confrontations between nationalists and communists took place in Kharkiv near the UPA memorial stone laid in 1992 by activists of the People's Movement. The mayor of the city, Mikhail Dobkin of the Party of Regions, planned to follow the example of Simferopol and erect a monument to the victims of the OUN and UPA.[90] In November 2008, two days after the unveiling of the Holodomor memorial, an "international" (in fact, Ukrainian-Russian) conference took place in Kharkiv organized by the Russian Foundation "Historical Memory" and the Federal Archival Agency of the Russian Federation. The conference simply broadcast ideological invectives against Viktor Yushchenko and his policy of promoting the Holodomor as genocide, creating a scandal in Kharkiv and provoking street protests by Svoboda.[91] In Odessa in September 2008, the local Prosvita offices were attacked by activists of the *Rodina* and *Forpost* non-governmental organizations.[92]

When supporters and promoters of the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative (the Party of Regions and communists) rose to power in 2010, it seemed the hour of their revenge had come. The page dedicated to the Holodomor disappeared from the president's website, provoking predictable outbursts by opponents of Yanukovych, but it was quickly restored. Viktor Yanukovych refused to consider the Holodomor as genocide, but otherwise he left the canonical version of the national/nationalist narrative untouched. All other components of the national historical myth and related ideological practices were unaffected.

In 2010, the Party of Regions used an additional resource to address the problem of Ukrainian-Polish relations during World War II. A moving exhibition, "Volhynia Massacre: Polish and Jewish victims of the OUN-UPA," toured Kyiv and the major cities of eastern and southern Ukraine, such as Kharkiv, Luhansk, Odessa, and Sevastopol from the spring to the fall of

90 Tatiana Zhurzhenko, "'Chuzha viyna' chy 'spilna peremoga'? Natsionalizatsiya pam'yati pro Drugu Svitovu viynu na ukrayino-rosiyskomu prykordonni," *Ukrayina moderna*, no. 18 (2011): 118.

91 Tatiana Zhurzhenko, "'Capital of Despair': Holodomor Memory and Political Conflicts in Kharkiv after the Orange Revolution," *EEPS: East European Politics and Societies* 25, no. 3 (2011): 631.

92 "V Odesi skoyily khlihans'kyj napad na ofis Prosvity," Radio Svoboda, September 22, 2008, http://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/1202041.html.

2010. Curiously, this action recalled similar events from Yushchenko's time in office, repeating the techniques and methods used in the moving exhibition "Ukraine Remembers! Holodomor of 1932–1933—The Genocide of the Ukrainian People."

Allies of the Party of Regions were even bolder and more radical. On the eve of Holodomor Victims Remembrance Day, the editor of the regional CPU newspaper in Luhansk (and a deputy of the regional council) declared in her blog that she was going to celebrate with her friends this day: "we will eat delicious food, joke, and even dance."[93] A week later in the same blog, she praised the actions of the authorities in 1932–33 directed "against the kulaks" and used epithets and profanities to characterize those who observed the remembrance day. In Zaporizhzhia, local communists put a bust of Joseph Stalin on the porch of the house hosting the regional committee of the CPU.

The return to the Soviet nostalgic narrative in 2010–13 on the national level was mostly conveyed through the promotion of the myth of the "Great Patriotic War" inherited from the Soviet era: the standard memorial practices related to round-numbered anniversaries and honors bestowed on Soviet partisans, the Red Army, and the memory of war victims were restored. In May 2011, the parliament introduced a "new" annual ritual, "a minute of silence to commemorate those who died in the Great Patriotic War"; this was actually the revival of a Soviet-era practice.[94] Between 2010 and 2011, the government issued a set of resolutions which celebrated "non-round" anniversaries of the liberation of Ukraine from "Fascist German invaders," and in 2013, the president's decree began preparations for the seventieth anniversary of the Great Victory (to be celebrated in 2015). Between May and September of the same year, the parliament initiated the passage of more than a dozen resolutions dedicated to the anniversary dates of the liberation of Ukrainian cities and regions from the same German Fascist invaders: fifteen such projects were registered.[95]

On the local level, the Soviet nostalgic narrative triumphed mostly in

93 "Za znevagu nad zhertvamy Holodomoru ne posadyat: Luhanska komunistka prodovzhuye 'pirshestvo,'" *Istorichna Pravda*, December 1, 2010, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2010/12/1/7080/.

94 "Pro zaprovadzhennya v Ukrayini osoblyvoyi tseremoniyi–provedennya 22 chervnya kozhnoho roku Khvylyny pam'yati za zahiblymy u Velykiy Vitchyznyaniy viyni 1941–1945 rokiv," Postanova Verkhovnoyi Rady Ukrayiny, May 20, 2011, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3430-17.

95 Calculated based on the information found at the official website of Verkhovna Rada: http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/main.

those regions where its dominance was never threatened. In several cases, it made a comeback in the symbolic space of places where it had been sidelined by the previous authorities. For instance, the mayor of Odessa, a member of the Party of Regions, decided to reconstruct the wall of commemorative plaques to the Heroes of Socialist Labor.[96] The years 2011–13 also saw several attempts to reestablish the Soviet nostalgic narrative in the territories where the national/nationalist narrative had traditionally dominated. These deliberate provocations never failed to arouse reactions from nationalists.

While promoting the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative, the historical politics of 2010–13 never negated the bases of the national/nationalist memory narrative, especially its antiquarian dimensions. Its legitimizing function was recognized by all the groups that rose to power, including those who exploited "anti-nationalist" discourses. In 2010, the tricentennial of "Pylyp Orlyk's Constitution" was celebrated (in spring, schools held a competition on knowledge of the document while universities organized a student essay contest) along with the 440th birthday of Hetman Petro Sahaidachny. The government created the Coordination Committee on the Issue of the Development of the Cossackdom of Ukraine in 2011; however, it was a purely symbolic act. In 2012, the 360th anniversary of the foundation of Chortomlytska Zaporizhska Sich was commemorated. Topics directly related to the nationalist movement in Ukraine were almost always the ones that sparked controversy.

The dramatic events of the winter of 2013–14, the annexation of Crimea, the "Russian spring" in Donbass, the attempts to repeat it in Kharkiv and Odessa, and the war in eastern Ukraine led to a crucial turn in historical politics and a new wave of the nationalization of the past. The confrontation between protesters and the authorities on the Maidan gave new life to the OUN slogan "Glory to Ukraine—glory to the heroes!" The slogan now referenced protesters regardless of their political affiliation. Compare this political ecumenicalism with another nationalist slogan, "Glory to the nation—death to the enemies!" which is still in use only among radical nationalists. The heroic Cossack myth was resurrected on the Maidan both as a form of ideological support and in everyday practice: for example, in the names of self-defense units (*sotnia*, the hundred), the use of the term *pobratymy* ("sworn brothers") as the self-des-

96 "V Odesi vidkryly memorial Oleksandru II-mu i Heroyam Sotspratsi," *Istorichna Pravda*, September 3, 2012, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2012/09/3/93100/.

ignation of the members of these units, and the integration of Cossack symbols into the emblems of these units. It was on the Maidan that the myth of heroic self-sacrifice (Cossackdom, the Ukrainian People's Republic, the heroes of Kruty, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army) superseded the victimhood mythology (the Holodomor). Due to the nature of things, Russia recovered its status as the main historical enemy of Ukraine; the threat of its eastern neighbor was first represented by Vladimir Putin and then, after the annexation of Crimea and the start of war in Donbass, in a more general form.

Simultaneously, the Soviet nostalgic narrative itself transformed into a quasi-ideology of war in the territories of Donbass controlled by separatists and supported by Russia. The anti-"Banderovites" myth cultivated earlier evolved into the idea of "Ukrainian fascism," which became the rallying cry of pro-Russian separatists. The myth of the "Great Patriotic War" was retranslated into the collective consciousness as a simulacrum of a new war "against the fascists."[97] This pattern was epitomized by a T-34 tank, removed from its pedestal in Kostyantynivka and restored with the inscription "On to Kiev!" painted on it (during World War II, they used to adorn tanks with the phrase "On to Berlin!"). The parade of prisoners of war (Ukrainian army soldiers and voluntary battalions) through Donetsk in August 2014 seemed like a somewhat parodic and tragic copy of the "parade" of Wehrmacht prisoners in Moscow in July 1944. Meanwhile, "historical" arguments were used as justification for the annexation of Crimea and the support of separatism in eastern Ukraine, which were predicated on the idea of "*Novorossiya*" (see chapter 8).

State-level historical politics in Ukraine in 2014–19 moved in two different directions. First, during Yushchenko's presidency, the nationalist memory narrative became significantly stronger. Second, the "spontaneous" decommunization of the winter of 2014 (the so-called "Leninfall" orchestrated by members of nationalist organizations, primarily Svoboda) mutated into state policy with the adoption of new memorial laws in April 2015. The law "On the Condemnation of the Communist and National-Socialist (Nazi) Totalitarian Regimes and Prohibition of Propaganda of their Symbols" outlawed all public representations of communism (with some exceptions related to scholarly research and the arts).

97 The whole array of slogans used by the separatists was caricatured in Sergei Loznitsa's movie *Donbass* (2018) during the scene where alleged rebels were interviewed by a German journalist.

At the same time, the law "On the Legal Status and Celebration of the Memory of Participants of the Struggle for the Independence of Ukraine" provided special status for organizations, events, and figures represented as fighters for independence. If we consider that by the time the law was adopted, most organizations listed therein were already presented in the officially recognized national narrative (including textbooks), it is easy to see that the main goal of this law was to promote and legalize the OUN and the UPA.

Politics at the local level complemented the efforts of the center. At the end of January 2018, the council of Lviv oblast recommended flying the flag of the OUN on administrative and communal buildings (this also included schools). Following Lviv, the Ternopil city council made the same decision in early February. In mid-February, the initiative was picked up by the deputies of the Ivano-Frankivsk city council, who presented a list of twenty-three days during the year when the flag of the OUN should be flown. In March 2018, the Zhytomyr regional council scheduled days when this flag should be displayed on the buildings of local official institutions (six such days were chosen). The Khmelnytskyi city and regional councils then joined the parade. In mid-March after a heated debate, a similar decision was made by the Lviv city council,[98] and a few months later in May 2018, the city council of Poltava joined the OUN flag fan club.[99] The city mayor supported this decision.

Across Ukraine, it was the local deputies of Svoboda who initiated these processes. The set of memorable dates was basically the same everywhere: it primarily included significant dates in the history of the OUN and the UPA. In the western regions, the birthday of Stepan Bandera was the most important, while in the central regions, the list of days was much shorter, and representatives of Svoboda placed emphasis not on the "flag of the OUN" but rather on the less controversial "flag of the struggle."

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98 "U Zhytomyrskij oblasti rekomenduvaly vyvishuvaty prapory OUN," March 7, 2018, https://ua.korrespondent.net/ukraine/3948738-u-zhytomyrskii-oblasti-rekomenduvaly-vyvishuvaty-prapory-oun; Frankivs'ka mis'krada na yaki sviata u mistsi budut 'vyvishuvaty prapor OUN, February 15, 2018, https://kurs.if.ua/news/frankivska_miskrada_vyznachyla_na_yaki_svyata_u_misti_budut_vyvishuvaty_prapor_oun_spysok_63028.html; "Khmel'nyts'ka mis'ka rada: Vykonavchyj komitet Pro vykorystannia chervono-chornoho prapora OUN na terytorii mista Khmel'nyts'koho," March 13, 2018, http://www.khmelnytsky.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=41230:q-q&catid=331:2011-10-04-08-37-56.

99 "Mer Poltavy pidtrymav rishennia shchodo vstanovlennnia chervono-chornykh praporiv pered mis'kradoyu," *internet-vidannya "poltavshchina"* May 24, 2018, https://poltava.to/news/47127/.

Beyond "party" nationalists, a broader circle of actors, from president Poroshenko to "cultural figures," joined in the policy of promoting the nationalist narrative of memory throughout Ukraine. In 2017, *Chervony* was released: a feature film that presented (and lionized) the story of a UPA soldier who led an uprising in a Stalinist-era camp. That same year, several popular Ukrainian rock performers recorded the "new march of the Ukrainian army," which is an adapted version of the 1932 OUN march. The presidential guards and orchestra took part in the music video. The performance of the march was accompanied by rifle spinning and took place against the background of the coat of arms of the OUN. The year after, the march was officially performed during a military parade on Independence Day.

According to surveys carried out by the Rating sociological firm in 2013–15, the population's positive attitude toward OUN and UPA was growing. For example, the share of respondents who agreed with the assertion that the OUN-UPA should be recognized as "participants in the struggle for independence" increased during this period from 27 to 41 percent. The proportion of opponents of this idea decreased from 52 to 38 percent. Maximum support was expressed by the residents of western Ukraine (76 percent), residents in eastern and southern Ukraine expressed the least support (23 percent and 27 percent, respectively), and central Ukraine maintained its traditional middle spot, with 42 percent of residents expressing support.[100]

These data correlate with the results of another study. According to a survey by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) in October 2017, responses to the question "Do you support the recognition of the OUN-UPA as participants of the struggle for state independence of Ukraine?" were distributed as follows: "yes" and "rather yes" were indicated by 65.9 percent of respondents in the west, 39 percent in the central regions, 28.7 percent in the south, and 13.3 percent in the east. "Most likely no" and "no" were indicated by 22.8 percent of respondents in the central regions (here was also the largest share of those who "found it difficult to answer," 33.2 percent), 43.2 percent in the south, and 50.3 percent in the east.[101]

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100 "Stavlennia do vyznannia OUN-UPA, zhovten'" Survey report, Rating Group Ukraine, 2015, October 12, 2015, http://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/dinamika_otnosheniya_k_priznaniyu_oun-upa.html.

101 "Pidtrymka vyznannia OUN-UPA uchasnykamy borot'by za derzhavnu nezalezhnist' Ukrainy," Survey report, Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, October 13, 2017, http://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=718.

In September 2017, the Rating agency asked the same question to the same number of respondents. This time the share of those who supported the idea of recognition of members of the OUN-UPA as "participants in the struggle for independence" reached the highest score ever: 49 percent; at the same time, the proportion of opponents dropped to 29 percent, with 23 percent of those selecting the option "difficult to answer." The regional division in attitudes persisted: the percentage of support for the recognition of OUN-UPA members reached 80 percent in the west and 51 percent in the center, while the east recorded 19 percent pro and 53 percent con, and in the south 30 percent were in favor and 46 percent opposed recognition.[102].

The following year, however, the situation changed slightly. The percentage of those who supported the recognition of the OUN-UPA as fighters for independence dropped to 45 percent while the share of opponents rose to 33 percent. Regional discrepancies remained almost the same. The western regions of the country had the highest proportion of those in favor despite a considerable drop to 71 percent. The center stood at 45 percent pro and 29 percent con, with 23 percent undecided, whereas the east surprised observers with an increase in the percentage of supporters of recognition (up to 26 percent), although the percentage of opponents remained almost the same: 52 percent. In the south, the picture was the same: 30 percent were in favor and 46 percent opposed the proposition.[103]

There are three major explanations for the growth of the share of sympathizers/supporters of the OUN and UPA after 2014. First, the polls did not cover the territories under the control of the self-proclaimed Luhansk and Donetsk People's Republics and Crimea. Therefore, the share of those who would undoubtedly hold a negative attitude toward these organizations decreased. Second, the media's intensive promotion of the UPA heroic myth on the front lines in the east, as well as the expansion of this myth into central Ukraine could influence public opinion to certain extent. Third, the wording of the question programmed a positive answer: UPA soldiers were fighters for independence by default; one of the memorial laws passed in 2015 made this status official. Furthermore, the law made "the public denial of the

102 "Do dnia zakhysnyka Ukrainy," Survey report, Rating Group Ukraine, October 5, 2017, http://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/ko_dnyu_zaschitnika_ukrainy.html.

103 "Do dnia zakhysnyka Ukrainy: zhovten'" Survey report, Rating Group Ukraine, 2018, October 9, 2018, http://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/ko_dnyu_zaschitnika_ukrainy_oktyabr_2018.html.

legitimacy of the struggle for the independence of Ukraine in the twentieth century" illegal. (See Chapter 8)

Once again, the sociological data shown above indicates persistent regional divisions in the attitudes toward the most important icons of the nationalist narrative, with the south and east of the country proving to be the most resistant.

We may summarize the analysis of the process of nationalization of memory and history in Ukraine from the 1990s to the 2010s in the following points. The restoration and promotion of the national/nationalist memory narrative, followed by the expulsion of the Soviet nostalgic narrative and then the partial nationalization of the latter between the 1990s and 2000s, fits the standard trajectory of the establishment of statehood, the shaping of a new system of identities and civil loyalties, and the development of political elites.

The most evident problem of this process was the intellectual quality and merits of its main agents—the cultural and political elites. At first, the nationalized party and Soviet *nomenklatura* relied on habitual approaches and methods, which are easily applicable in mono-ideological systems but not very efficient in pluralistic societies. Through inertia, these methods continued to function in the 1990s and 2000s, but by this time, their efficiency was questionable, as the number of agents of historical politics continued to increase and the society itself was changing rapidly. With the advent of the information era and the development of electronic communication, the administrative bureaucratic practices of historical politics inherited from the Soviet era faced a new set of challenges. However, a new generation of nationalizers continued to follow the Soviet-like practices in the field.

Cultural and political groups who acted as promoters of the national/nationalist narrative were unable to create a new agenda. They selected an exclusivist model of historical memory that was created a century earlier under very different social, cultural, and political conditions. Or, alternatively, this model selected them. This archaic, antiquated vision of the past shaped by the needs of the present did not correspond to Ukraine's historical situation at the end of the twentieth century. In practice, the "return to roots" that seemed natural and necessary to partisans of the "national renaissance" resulted in the archaization of the historical identity of the target audiences. The habitual metaphor of "national revival" that became a rallying slogan at

the end of the nineteenth century was taken too literally at the end of the twentieth century and proved a semantic trap for its own admirers.

All the problems, antagonisms, and conflicts described above appeared quite clearly during the "reformatting" of spaces of memory, which are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 7

Spaces of Memory

When using the term "spaces of memory," I have two possible connotations in mind. First of all, there is Pierre Nora's concept of *les lieux de mémoire*: these include a great number of carriers of information and cultural codes, from monuments and the names of topographical features to collections of documents and "documentary" films. I will also mention locations related to historical and political geography, the territories where a given form of representation of historical memory or mentality prevails.

In terms of spaces of memory, regional differences are important: in western Ukraine (especially Galicia), the national/nationalist narrative in its exclusivist form immediately became dominant.[1] It was supplemented by a regional variant of the imperial nostalgic narrative, though in this case, it focused on the glamor of the Habsburg Empire. Central Ukraine remained in the sphere of influence of the ambivalent model for a long time.[2] All the aforementioned narratives coexisted with regional narratives, usually with local variations of the general schemes. For instance, the memory of the "Sich Riflemen" was quite popular in western Ukraine, while central Ukraine preserved stereotypical forms of memory about the Cossacks. Finally, the southeastern regions (especially Donbass) and Crimea remained an almost untouched repository of the Soviet, imperial, and Soviet nostal-

1 The notion of "Western Ukraine" in this case includes the Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Ternopil regions or oblasts (Galicia), the Volhynian and Rivne regions (Volhynia), and the Zakarpattia and Chernivtsi regions (Bukovina). The preeminence of the national/nationalist memory narrative in this region did not imply full homogeneity. While Galicia was dominated by the exclusivist model of this narrative, the ambivalent model was also present in Volhynia, Zakarpattia, and Bukovina.

2 Central Ukraine in this case includes the Khmelnytskyi, Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Chernihiv, Poltava, Sumy, Kirovohrad, and Cherkasy regions.

gic narratives.[3] Since 2014, the Soviet nostalgic and, to some degree, imperial narratives are being expelled from central, eastern, and southern Ukraine, and, correspondingly, the influence of the exclusivist model of the national/nationalist narrative is growing.

The cult of Lenin (or sometimes even Stalin) is an extreme version of the Soviet nostalgic narrative, while the nationalist narrative has its own extreme—the cult of Bandera. However, between these two poles there is sizeable territory on which both "places of accord" and "spaces of uncertainty" can be found. As previously mentioned, this includes places and narratives of memory that transmit the archaic and antiquated variant of the national/nationalist narrative: Kievan Rus' and the era of princes, Cossackdom and the Hetmanate (except for Mazepa), and outstanding cultural figures from Hryhorii Skovoroda to Taras Shevchenko, Ivan Franko, and Lesya Ukrainka.

This also includes the communicative and cultural memory of the 1986 Chernobyl disaster and the war in Afghanistan (1979–86), which also periodically (following the calendar) come into focus for the agents of historical politics. "Places of uncertainty" may include spaces of memory that find themselves on the margins of historical politics. These "peripheral" genocides as I dub them, include both the inclusivist and exclusivist versions of the Holocaust; the deportation of the Crimean Tatars and other peoples in the region in 1944; and the murder of Roma and Sinti peoples.

Lenin, Bandera, and Others

The image of Vladimir Lenin was the central sacred symbol of the Soviet memory narrative. Lenin is featured in a number of Soviet-era monuments in Ukraine. According to various data, by 1990, there were between four thousand and five thousand statues of Lenin in public places across the Ukrainian SSR: they stood in squares, in front of official Soviet and party agencies, in front of schools and hospitals, and in industrial and recreational areas.[4]

3 The southeast includes the Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhya, Mykolaiv, Kherson, and Odessa regions (in the south) and the Kharkiv, Donetsk, and Luhansk regions (in the east).

4 Oleksandra Haidai, *Kam'yanyy hist: Lenin u Tsentralniy Ukrayiny* (Kyiv: Laurus, 2016), 47.

Since 1990, both Lenin monuments and toponyms began to be removed from the public space of Ukraine. In Galicia, Lenin disappeared from almost everywhere during the first years of independence. In Kyiv, of the two monuments to the "leader of the world proletariat" that stood in the city center, the newer one (the monument to the October Revolution) in October Revolution Square was dismantled in September 1991, and the square was renamed Maidan Nezalezhnosti. The monument built in 1946 had had the status of a national heritage site and, therefore, remained intact until June 2009, when it was vandalized by members of a Ukrainian nationalist organization.[5]

All Lenin monuments were removed from the national register of cultural heritage sites in 2009 in accordance with Viktor Yushchenko's decrees. At the time, the register listed 2,082 Lenin monuments in Ukraine. According to Olexandra Haidai, this figure does not represent the real number of Lenin monuments, since many of them were not included on the register.[6] For instance, virtually all industrial enterprises had statues of Lenin in their inner courtyards, some of them enormous. For a long time, an enormous head of Lenin disguised by Ukrainian symbols stood in the assembly hall of the Institute of the History of Ukraine in Kyiv. In July 2013, the website dedicated to Lenin monuments indicated their total number in Ukraine as 2,358.[7] The hunt for Soviet monuments became a part of Svoboda and other right-wing organizations' self-advertisement strategy. After 2010, this specific kind of political activity was part of the confrontation between these organizations and "Yanukovych's neo-Soviet regime."[8] The most famous episode of the period took place in Okhtyrka, Sumy oblast, in February 2013. A dozen Svoboda members led by an MP and equipped with a truck and a towrope toppled a local Lenin monument. Local residents participated in the action as passive observers.[9]

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5 The action was initiated and carried out by Mykola Kokhanivsky, a member of the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists (the political superstructure of the OUN (Bandera) in 2014–15. He was the head of the OUN volunteer battalion that fought in Donbass.

6 Haidai, *Kam'yanyy hist*, 51.

7 See the online resource "Pamiatniki Leninu," http://leninstatues.ru/.

8 Paradoxically, this "neo-Soviet" regime of memory was sustained by the big capitalists.

9 "Na Sumshchyni "svobodivtsi" zruynuvaly pam'yatnyk Leninu," Istorichna Pravda, February 16, 2013, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2013/02/16/112704/.

From late 2013 to early 2014, Ukraine became a space of mass destruction of Lenin monuments, which was called the *Leninopad* ("Leninfall"). It started on December 8, 2013, when Svoboda members toppled a Lenin monument in Kyiv, subsequently destroying it with sledgehammers. The Maidan participants enthusiastically welcomed this action, perceiving it as a generalized symbol of protest. The precedent was set. In this moment of antagonism with the authorities, the destruction of one of the central symbols of communism was important and provided at least some psychological relief to protesters by giving them a sense of moral victory. Curiously, the Leninfall initially started in central Ukraine, where the attitude of the local population toward these monuments was generally indifferent.[10] According to unverified data, 142 Lenin monuments in central Ukraine were destroyed between December 8, 2013 and February 20, 2014. In Volhynia and the southern part of the country, there were isolated cases of removal of Lenin monuments. The most massive outbreak of iconoclasm took place after Yanukovych's escape: in three days between February 21 and 23, crowds destroyed 158 Lenin monuments.[11]

The vigorous Leninfall combined spontaneity with systematic elements. As a rule, a well-organized group of initiators, whose actions were coordinated, led the crowd. In many cases, this group represented Svoboda or other nationalist organizations, such as Right Sector. The simultaneity of the most massive action in February 2014 proves that the Leninfall was not just a spontaneous act of "revolutionaries." In some cases, the dismantlement of Lenin monuments happened by the decision of local authorities, lending an aura of legality to the action; this decision was often made under pressure from the nationalist lobby of local councils.[12]

According to the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, five hundred Lenin monuments disappeared by the end of 2014. Some 1,700 stayed in place.[13] After April 2015, Ukraine outlawed all monuments to Lenin and other communist figures: while earlier (especially since 2009), local authorities were in charge of deciding on their removal from public space,

10 The Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Poltava, Cherkasy, Chernihiv, and Khmelnytskyi regions.

11 "Heohrafiya ta khronolohiya 'Leninopadu' v Ukrayini u 2014 rotsi: infohrafika, 2014," accessed May 13, 2016, http://4vlada.com/rivne/33700.

12 Haidai, *Kam'yanyy hist*., 113–16.

13 Za rik v Ukraini znesly maizhe pivtysiachi pamiatnykv Leninu, 2015, January 23, 2020, http://memory.gov.ua/news/za-rik-v-ukraini-znesli-pivtisyachi-pam-yatnikiv-leninu.

this national-level legislation now obliged local authorities to dismantle the Soviet-era monuments. This enthusiasm for iconoclasm was mostly a sign of revolutionary fervor and chaos, not an indicator of general attitudes toward the monuments. According to a nationwide opinion poll of six thousand Ukrainians, the liquidation of Lenin movements was very controversial. The share of those who approved of the Leninfall and those who disapproved of it stood equal at 39 percent, while the rest remained disinterested.[14]

The "Leninfall" soon turned into "Leninocide." By June 2016, the total number of Lenin monuments dismantled since December 2013 reached 1,221. Some nine hundred monuments remained in place, mostly in the eastern regions of Ukraine. Among the territories under the control of Kyiv, the leader was Kharkiv: seventeen Lenins remained on their pedestals for some time.[15]

The result of this purge was that many public places became vacant. The statues of Lenin had generally been the focal points of their surroundings, and their absence was conspicuous. The excessive number of Lenin monuments, a testament to the existence of a formal civil cult, made the problem of its replacement topical. A figure as appealing as Lenin was now required. Taras Shevchenko, the main cult figure of the national/nationalist narrative, already had a sufficient number of Soviet-era monuments, putting him in second place after Lenin. According to the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Shevchenko monuments are present in thirty-five countries across the world, and their total number amounts to 1,384. Of these, Ukraine is home to 1,256 sculptural images of the poet, a majority established during the Soviet era.[16]

There was no universal replacement for Lenin. In Kyiv, the pedestal of the Lenin monument was taken over by a "golden" toilet and then by a statue of the Mother of God. In the summer of 2016, the pedestal became an artistic installation: everyone who wished to could take the place of the statue for several minutes. In 2018, a huge blue hand was placed next to the pedestal. In Poltava, there were plans to create an alley dedicated to the heroes of the Heavenly Hundred and a chapel. In Trostyanets, a district center in

14 University of St. Gallen, Survey infographic: Historical memory http://www.uaregio.org/en/surveys/data-visualizations/survey-infographics/historical-memory/, accessed January23, 2020.

15 "Pamiatniki Leninu, sniesionnyie na Ukraine s dekabria 2013 hoda," accessed December 15, 2020, http://leninstatues.ru/leninopad.

16 "MZS pidrakhuvalo kilkist pam'yatnykiv Shevchenkovi u sviti," *LB*, March, 9, 2015, http://ukr.lb.ua/news/2015/03/09/297964_mzs_pidrahuvalo_kilkist.html.

Vinnytsia oblast, the monument to Lenin was replaced with a fountain. In Kremenchug, the site once occupied by the leader of the revolution was taken over by an image of the *vyshyvanka* (the traditional Ukrainian embroidered shirt). In Freedom Square in Kharkiv, a public garden with a fountain filled the space. In Druzhkovka in Donetsk oblast, the local authorities suggested installing a figure of a Cossack. In Kodym, Odessa oblast, a bust of Taras Shevchenko took Lenin's place. In some villages, existing images of Lenin were reshaped into images of Taras Shevchenko—by adding a mustache and some hair.

Heroes of the nationalist movement represent the most radical alternative to Lenin, and Lenin's main rival is Stepan Bandera, though the latter's cult was, for a long time, limited to western Ukraine, most notably Galicia. Between 1990 and 2014, local authorities installed forty-six monuments and sixteen memorial plates in honor of the leader of the OUN.[17] A sudden increase in the birth rate of stone Banderas took place after 2007, starting with a sculptural-architectural ensemble that appeared in Lviv. Making a monument in the image of the OUN leader was part of the revival and proliferation of his cult in the region. The figure of Bandera, who was represented as a tireless and fearless freedom fighter, became a symbol of anticommunism. It served as a counterweight to the revitalization of the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative and the antithesis of Lenin. Ironically, this image was, in some ways, Lenin's visual alter ego. Both were fanatical revolutionaries, ascetics, ready to sacrifice themselves and others for the principal cause of their lives. Both were short and had physical defects. Both were intolerant not only of enemies but also of allies who deviated from their orthodox perspective. Both represented a radical interpretation of a certain worldview. Finally, both were the objects of political cults and became sacralized figures. In other words, Bandera was the Lenin of nationalist discourse and, thus, visual representations of him were unsurprisingly the same. Having destroyed the cult of Lenin the communist, the bearers of the nationalist narrative simply installed their own in his stead.

However, Bandera did not—and probably will not—become a unifying symbol for the majority of Ukrainians. In April 2014, when Bandera's por-

17 Andre Liebich and Oksana Myshlovska, "Bandera: Memorialization and Commemoration," *Nationalities Papers* 42, no. 5 (2014): 751–52.

trait had already been hanging at the Kyiv Maidan for the three months and the OUN slogan "Glory to Ukraine—glory to the heroes!" had moved well beyond the limits of the nationalist movement, the attitude toward the main icon of Ukrainian radical nationalism remained controversial. According to an opinion poll by the Rating group, 48 percent of Ukrainians saw Bandera in a negative or "rather negative" light, while only 31 percent had a positive or "rather positive" view of him (it should be noted, however, that the latter group grew by 9 percent over two years). In central Ukraine, 39 percent assessed Bandera negatively as opposed to 28 percent who held a positive attitude toward him. In southern Ukraine, these figures amounted to 69 percent and 15 percent, respectively, and in eastern regions (excluding Donbass), the figures were 70 percent negative and 8 percent positive. The polarization of opinions followed not only geographic but ethnic lines as well: only ethnic Ukrainians expressed positive views of Bandera.[18]

Nevertheless, the promotion of Bandera's name became trendy between 2014 and 2019. This development can be regarded as a consequence of the deliberate promotion of the nationalist narrative both by the central authority (UINP) and local agents of historical politics. For instance, due to the decommunization of street and avenue names in 2015 and 2016, those bearing the name of Stepan Bandera emerged in Bila Tserkva, Kyiv, Sumy, Brovary, Zhytomyr, Korosten, Khmelnytskyi, Shepetivka, and Uman.[19] Almost everywhere, representatives of Svoboda lobbied local councils for these name changes. In 2016, memorial plates to Bandera were installed by the representatives of Svoboda in Cherkasy and Khmelnytskyi without the approval of local authorities.[20]

The multiplication of stone Banderas and the expansion of his name into central Ukraine led to curious aesthetic accidents: many monuments looked like twins and had obviously been produced by the same company. Others were very "unconventional." For instance, a monument to Bandera

18 R. Hankevych, "Za dva roky pozytyvne stavlennya do Bandery zroslo: Opytuvannya," Zaxid, May 5, 2014, http://zaxid.net/news/showNews.do?za_dva_roki_pozitivne_stavlennya_do_banderi_zroslo__opituvannya&objectId=1307967.

19 Zhytomyr became a virtual "OUN stronghold" in central Ukraine: in the winter of 2016, the names of its streets were changed to immortalize not only Bandera but also Olena Teliha, Yevhen Konovalets, Vasyl Kuk, Mykola Stsiborskyi, and Roman Shukhevych. See the official website of the Zhytomyr city council: http://zt-rada.gov.ua/news/p5840.

20 Data provided by Oksana Myshlovskaya.

in Truskavets (2010) represented the leader of the Nationalists with amputated limbs.[21]

In some cases (such as in Uman') the decisions of the local councils to rename streets after Bandera were overturned by the courts. In Cherkasy, the local council decided not to rename one of the streets after Bandera following heated debates. In Poltava, discussions lasted for almost two years and, in the end, Bandera "did not come" to the city.

Right after the Maidan events, the Bandera cult became a sort of fashion logo. The neologism *zhydobanderivtsi* (Judeo-Banderites) became popular as an ironic representation of the unity of ethnic Jews and nationalists in the struggle against Russia's aggression in Ukraine. The most famous public figure who wore the T-shirt with this inscription was Ihor Kolomoyskyi, who also financed the voluntary military battalion "Dnepr." This trend faded in a year.

Beyond the ideologically incompatible but similar representations of polar opposites—the Soviet-nostalgic narrative and national/nationalist memory—the standard version of the national/nationalist narrative also includes the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), which is often mentioned alongside the OUN-B, and a small pantheon of nationalist figures primarily from the Banderite group: Roman Shukhevych, Yuri Shukhevych, Yaroslav Stetsko, and Yaroslava Stetsko. Other important figures in the nationalist movement such as Yevhen Konovalets, Andriy Melnyk, Lev Rebet, and Daria Rebet remain on the margins of this narrative or, at least, do not attract much public attention. In the Soviet nostalgic narrative, the central position belongs to the myth of the "Great Patriotic War," though a revived cult of Joseph Stalin can be considered its extreme manifestation. However, Stalin was an iconic figure only for some communists and veterans of the war.

The contrasting narratives coexisted rather peacefully in parallel (but distinct) spaces; the situation changed only when, through the efforts of mnemonic warriors (primarily political parties and NGOs created with the help of these parties), these narratives clashed. Skirmishes between supporters and opponents of the UPA in Kyiv in the fall of 2005; the battle over the draft law and resolution in the Verkhovna Rada in 2004–13; and confronta-

21 "U Truskavtsi Banderi amputuvaly nohy I povernuly do tablychky 'Analizy,'" August 9, 2012, http://zik.ua/news/2012/08/09/u_truskavtsi_banderi_amputuvaly_nogy_i_povernuly_do_tablychky_analizy_363070. (Site discontinued.)

tions over the "Victory Banner" in the regional centers of Galicia in 2011–13 all represent tangible traces of the conflict over historical politics. One more example is the "war of monuments," which evolved into a war of memory extermination. Acts of vandalism (inflicting damage on monuments, coating them with paint or feces, leaving insulting inscriptions and symbols on them, etc.) became common. Monuments to Lenin, Bandera, the Holocaust, the Holodomor, Soviet soldiers, and UPA soldiers became favorite targets for vandals.[22]

The story of the monument to Joseph Stalin in Zaporizhzhia serves as an example of the most radical manifestation of the issue of symbolic memory space. In May 2010, communists and representatives of the Soviet Army veterans' organizations installed a bust of Stalin near the façade of a residential building hosting the regional committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. The official unveiling of the monument (which took place despite a ban by local authorities) turned into a scandal: Svoboda organized a counter-protest, Stalin fans bombarded them with eggs. The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Thomas Hammarberg "expressed regret." On December 27, 2010, nationalists from Tryzub made their position clear by cutting off the head of the monument with the help of a chain saw.[23] The admirers of Stalin restored the bust. On New Year's Eve (from December 31, 2010, to January 1, 2011), Tryzub members destroyed the sculpture with the help of explosives.[24] The perpetrators of the action were sentenced to two or three years in prison with suspended sentences, and Stalin's bust was restored and moved to a special glass annex.[25] The Revolution of Dignity delivered the final blow to the Stalin bust: in November 2017, local activists destroyed the sculpture and its fragments were piled onto the monument to the victims of the famine of 1932–33.

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22 See a list of news stories about vandalism in the online newspaper *Istorichna Pravda:* http://www.istpravda.com.ua/tags/tag_вандалізм/page_1/.

23 The full name of organization is the All-Ukrainian Organization Tryzub, which is named after Stepan Bandera. A video of the event was published by Prioritetinform (YouTube channel), "Pamiatniku Stalina v Zaporozhie otrezali golovu," YouTube video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBS2PAk6ioo&ab_channel=prioritetinform; See also "Pamiatnik Stalinu v Zaporozhie ostalsia bez golovy," *Focus*, December 28, 2010, https://focus.ua/politics/163329.

24 "Pam'yatnyk Stalinu v Zaporizhzhi znyshcheno povnistyu," *Dzerkalo tyzhnya (novyny)*, January 1, 2011, http://news.dt.ua/news/83700.

25 "Tryzubytsyam daly za holovu Stalina po 3 i 2 roky," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, December 12, 2012, http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2011/12/12/6830674/.

At the same time, the national/nationalist space was expanding. Figures, events, and antiheroes that had previously been forbidden in the Soviet narrative entered the public arena: the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–20, Nestor Makhno, the heroes of Kruty, the repressions of the 1920s–30s, the famine of 1932–33 (often integrated with famines of 1921–23 and 1947), the oppression of the intelligentsia in the late 1940s to early 1950s, and, of course, the nationalist movement. In 2009, city landscapes exhibited sculptural figures of new and (very) old heroes: nine monuments to Mykhailo Hrushevsky, five to Viacheslav Chornovil, three to Roman Shukhevych, and two to Prince Danylo of Halycz, Petro Sahaidachny, Ivan Mazepa, and Nestor Makhno were erected.[26] Between 2005 and 2010, Viktor Yushchenko's decrees celebrated the jubilees of Prince Roman Mstislavovych of Halycz, Petro Kalnyshevsky, the last Kosh Otaman of the Zaporizhian Host, Acting Hetman Pavlo Polubotok, literary historian Serhiy Yefremov, historian Vyacheslav Lypynsky, poet Vasyl Stus, dissident Petro Hryhorenko, and composer Volodymyr Ivasyuk. These characters were all commemorated with toponyms.

Two other cases of remembrance that belong to the national/nationalist memory narrative will be examined in the next section. According to their promoters, they are universal symbols and have unifying potential. The first is the historical myth about the heroes of Kruty and the second is the Holodomor.[27]

The "Battle of Kruty": From Victims to Heroes

The myth about the heroes of Kruty is a part of the wider representation of the event known as the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917–20.[28] In the postcommunist memory space of Ukraine, this revolution replaced the Soviet myth

26 I. M. Symonenko, "Memorialnyy prostir Ukrayiny: kryzovyy stan ta shlyakhy ozdorovlennya," *Stratehichni prioritetyi* 13, no. 4 (2009): 55.

27 This notion means the set of stereotypical ideas and canonical discourse practices describing and interpreting the concrete historical event: the famine of 1932–33 in the Ukrainian SSR. See Georgiy Kasianov, *Rozryta mohyla: Holod 1932–1933 rokiv u polityts̀i, pamiati ta istorii (1980-ti–2000-ni)* (Kharkiv: Folio, 2019), 7.

28 On January 29, 1918, two small units of the Ukrainian People's Republic, partly composed of university and high school students, fought an uphill battle against the numerically superior Bolsheviks at the village of Kruty, some 130 kilometers northeast of Kyiv.

of the "Great October Socialist Revolution and civil war." The standard representation of this period in Ukraine holds that the Ukrainian Revolution was the climax of the national liberation movement, the reincarnation of Ukrainian statehood that perished in the past. The Ukrainian Revolution is a unique event that should be distinguished from the Russian Revolution and even juxtaposed to it.

The myth of victimhood and heroism about the heroes of Kruty began to take shape soon after the event itself. Contemporaries who wrote and spoke about this event interpreted it as a sad and tragic chapter of history. After the establishment of Soviet power in Ukraine, the ideologues of the nationalist movement created a heroic myth that treated it as a Ukrainian Thermopylae. This is how, according to Andriy Liubarets, two variants of the myth emerged, one of victimhood and one of heroism.[29] The first mention of the "heroes of Kruty" in the public discourse of contemporary Ukraine dates back to the late 1980s. In the following decade, the story made it into school textbooks. On the official level, the state first paid attention to the event in 2003, when Leonid Kuchma ordered the celebration of the eighty-fifth anniversary of the battle, with the stated aim of "establishing a higher political culture in society, raising the youth in the spirit of patriotism, showing respect to the historical past of the Ukrainian people and honoring the memory of those who died for the Motherland."[30] During Yushchenko's term, the myth about the heroes of Kruty began to occupy a much more important place in state historical politics. Between 2006 and 2009, the president issued four decrees dedicated to the anniversaries of the event. The first two spoke about the "heroic death of young men in the battle of Kruty," and the other two about the "the Ukrainian young men's feat of arms,"[31] indicating a shift of emphasis from victimhood to heroism.

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29 Andriy Liubarets, "Biy pid Krutamy v istorychniy pam'yati: Yak ekspluatuyetsya mif," *Istorichna Pravda*, January 29, 2012, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/research/2012/01/29/70470/.

30 "Rozporyadzhennya Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro vshanuvannya pam'yati heroyiv Krut,'" January 24, 2003, http://zakono.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/12/2003-рп.

31 See "Rozporyadzhennya Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro vshanuvannya pam'yati heroyiv Krut,'" January 21, 2006, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/10/2006-рп; "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro vshanuvannya pam'yati heroyiv Krut,'" January 15, 2007, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/15/2007; "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro vshanuvannya pam'yati heroyiv Krut,'" December 22, 2008, http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1188/2008; and "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro vidznachennya richnytsi podvyhu heroyiv Krut,'" December 1, 2009, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/985/2009.

This point was pressed by nationalist organizations that carried out their own commemorative rituals, which were often counterposed to the official ceremonies (the anniversary of the event was already celebrated according to a certain standard, with a torchlit procession). Between 2006 and 2008, a memorial and museum complex was created near the village of Pam'yatne in Chernihiv oblast. A feature film was planned (it was produced much later, in 2019), and in 2008, a reenactment of the battle was organized by amateurs on the site of the event. In January 2009, speaking at the House of Officers in Kyiv, Yushchenko expressed his support for the public initiative to move the Day of the Defender of the Fatherland from February 23 (a date established in the Soviet period and legally affirmed by Leonid Kuchma in 1999) to January 29. "The day of the feat of arms at Kruty," said the president, "is our real national Day of the Defender of the Fatherland. It will inevitably—I am deeply convinced of this—remain close to the heart of any Ukrainian warrior and citizen."[32] The proposal, which was criticized by proponents of the Soviet nostalgic narrative, did not go any further.

After 2007, official celebrations of the heroes of Kruty became common. On the anniversary of the event, top officials laid flowers on the memorial cross at Askold's Grave in Kyiv, and the museum and the memorial complex became a place of demonstrations of mourning and prayer services. Even during the brief revival of the Soviet nostalgic narrative, the authorities did not encroach on the myth of the heroes of Kruty. Every year, Prime Minister Mykola Azarov accurately carried out the ritual honoring the heroes at Askold's Tomb. Viktor Yanukovych also mentioned this event every year, generally emphasizing its tragic dimensions. In 2013, the Verkhovna Rada, in a rare display of consensus, voted by roll call in favor of the resolution, "In Commemoration of the Feat of Arms of the Heroes of Kruty,"[33] which had been submitted by the representatives of Svoboda. The text contained direct criticism of the historical politics of the Party of Regions, but this did not stop the majority of MPs from supporting the resolution.[34] All the communist MPs abstained from voting. The resolution suggested a wide range of

32 "Yushchenko predlagayet perenesti Den zashchitnika Otechestva s 23 fevralya na 29 yanvarya," *Korrespondent*, January 29, 2009, http://korrespondent.net/ukraine/politics/725571-yushchenko-predlagaet-perenesti-den-zashchitnika-otechestva-s-23-fevralya-na-29-yanvarya.

33 "Postanova Verkhovnoyi Rady Ukrayiny, 'Pro vidznachennya podvyhu heroyiv boyu pid Krutamy,'" May 16, 2013, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/261-18.

34 The story about the exploits of the heroes of Kruty was removed from the new fifth-grade history textbook.

fairly standard commemorative practices. The only elements that appeared somewhat novel were the suggestions to confer the title of Hero of Ukraine on those who died in the Battle of Kruty and to provide free transportation for students to the Pam'yatne memorial on the day of remembrance.

The myth of the heroes of Kruty was recognized by the majority of actors, including antagonists. Of course, their motivations when invoking the topic were different. For Leonid Kuchma and later for Viktor Yanukovych and the Party of Regions, the use of this myth was purely pragmatic and served to legitimate their power. For the national/nationalist narrative zealots, it was an important part of the struggle over ideas and the promotion of the ethnonational myth that proved the loyalty of the Ukrainian nation and its capacity for self-sacrifice and fighting ability. In the eyes of the radical nationalists, the battle was the apogee of confrontation with Ukraine's eternal enemy, Russia. For them, the emphasis needed to be shifted from victimhood to heroism.

The myth about the heroes of Kruty spilled onto the streets during the Revolution of Dignity in the winter of 2013–14: appeals to remember the events of the winter of 1918 were heard echoing from the Maidan. A new slogan emerged, "Our Kruty," referring to the deaths of Maidan protesters. In January 2014, after the first deaths in Kyiv, an inscription was placed on Hrushevsky Street, near the barricade: "Our Kruty are here!"[35] The homily at the annual prayer service near the memorial sign of Askold's Tomb on January 29, 2014, made an explicit link between the events of 1918 and current events.[36]

Since 2014, the heroic myth has completely eclipsed the tragic one. A poster created by the UINP (2016) declared: "Kruty is a battle for the future. Ukraine became possible thanks to the army." The story told by the UINP was about the overwhelming power of the enemy and the boundless heroism of the patriots, a rather typical formulation for this kind of propaganda. A new plot also emerged: through their sacrifice, the heroes of Kruty detained the enemy for four days, which bought time for the representatives of the Central Rada to sign a treaty with the Triple Alliance (another allusion to the myth of Thermopylae). According to the UINP version, as a result

35 Valeriya Burlakova, "Nashi Kruty tut! Zahibel lyudey i ne zupynyla boyiv na Hrushevskoho," *Ukrainskyi Tyzhden*, January 23, 2014, http://tyzhden.ua/Society/99765.

36 Sermon titled "Nashi Kruty...," delivered on January 29, 2014, http://kyiv-pravosl.info/2014/01/31/nashi-kruty-propovid-29-sichnya-2014-r-b/.

of the battle of Kruty, the Ukrainian People's Republic was recognized as an independent state, Ukraine withdrew from World War I (for some reason, the West Ukrainian People's Republic is forgotten), and Germany and Austria-Hungary "granted military aid" to Ukraine[37] and liberated it from the Bolsheviks.[38] Interestingly, German and Austrian historiography considers this "military aid" to be "an occupation."[39] The fact that the Germans and Austrians backed the coup d'état that ended the existence of their Ukrainian "ally" is also muted by official presentations.

The annexation of Crimea and the war in the east greatly strengthened the military propaganda potential of the event and, of course, its anti-Russian character. On January 29, 2016, President Petro Poroshenko gave a "Lesson of Courage" at the Ivan Bohun Military High School (previously Alexandr Suvorov Military School), drawing a parallel between contemporary events and 1918. In one of the most popular internet resources in Ukraine *Istorychna pravda*, an article about Kruty, based on UINP materials, represents the Battle of Kruty as part of the "Russo-Ukrainian War," and the Bolsheviks, mentioned in the beginning of the article, turn into "Russians" by the end: aggressors acting on their base instincts, annihilating all rules.[40] Commemorations dedicated to Kruty were held on the battlefield,[41] and the director of the UINP followed the president in calling the heroes of Kruty "an example for modern soldiers."[42] The event itself obtained a new official interpretation: it was designated a victory.[43]

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37 Modern German and Austrian historiography qualifies the post-Brest-Litovsk actions of armies which "granted military aid" as occupation.

38 President of Ukraine Volodymr Zelensky (official wbsite), "Vystup Prezydenta pid chas Uroku Myzhnosti dlya litseyistiv Kyivskoho viyskovoho litseyu imeni Ivana Bohuna ta kursantiv vyshchykh viyskovykh navchalnykh zakladiv z nahody vshanuvannya pam'yati Heroyiv Krut," video, January 29, 2016, https://www.president.gov.ua/videos/vistup-prezidenta-pid-chas-uroku-muzhnosti-u-kiyivskomu-vijs-180.

39 See, for instance, Wolfram Dornik, et al., *Die Ukraine zwischen Selbstbestimmung und Fremdherrschaft 1917–1922* (Graz: Leykam, 2011), English edition: *The Emergence of Ukraine: Self-Determination, Occupation, and War in Ukraine, 1917–1922* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2015).

40 "Kruty–ne porazka, a peremoha–istoryky" (infographics), *Istorichna Pravda*, January 29, 2016, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2016/01/29/148894/. The "historians" mentioned in the article turned out to be just one person, Volodymyr Viatrovych, the director of the UINP.

41 "Tut nashi Kruty–cherkaski molodorukhivtsi, yaki perebuvayut na Skhodi," January 29, 2015, http://provce.ck.ua/tut-nashi-kruty-cherkaski-molodoruhivtsi-yaki-perebuvayut-na-shodi/.

42 Volodymyr Viatrovych, "Kruty–biy za maybutne," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, January 29, 2019, http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/viatrovych/56ab02d9b630d/.

43 "U p'yatnitsyu, 29 sichnya, Ukrayina vshanovuvatyme pam'yat Heroyiv Krut," official website, President

The recasting of Kruty tied the battle even more closely to the current situation: the "Kruty heroes" were called the "first Cyborgs," the latter a nickname for the Ukrainian defenders of the Donetsk airport in 2014.[44] President Poroshenko started his electoral campaign for his second term in 2019 with a pompous public event titled "From Kruty to Brussels. We follow our own path," signifying his commitment to the great deed of the past.

Recently, top officials signaled a shift in the public representation of Kruty. After regular commemorative actions on January 29, 2020, President Zelensky wrote on his Facebook page: "This story is not about victory or defeat, not about an assessment of commanders' decisions, not about historical or geopolitical outcomes. It is, first of all, about ubelievable courage and the brief lives of very young, not fully trained cadets, students, and gymnasium pupils who rose up to defend the Ukrainian state and were able to stop the enemy who overwhelmed them in numbers and arms."[45]

The Holodomor

Representations of the *Holodomor* were also initially dominated by the victimhood discourse.[46] The rhetorical forms and strategies of representation were elaborated in the North American Ukrainian diaspora. The recollection of the story of the famine of 1932–33 and its public depiction was first an initiative of public activists engaged in the defense of human rights in the Ukrainian SSR, notably those who supported Ukrainian dissidents. The famine was presented as a crime of the communist regime against Ukrainians. Later the *Holodomor* became a part of the crusade against the "Evil Empire"—the USSR.

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of Ukraine Volodymr Zelensky, January 28, 2016, http://www.president.gov.ua/news/u-pyatnicyu-29-sichnya-ukrayina-vshanovuvatime-pamyat-geroyi-36676.

44 Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, "Biy za maibutnie Ukrainy: 29 sichnia – den' pamiati polehlykh pid Krutamy," accessed December 12, 2020, http://www.memory.gov.ua/news/bii-za-maibutne-ukraini-29-sichnya-den-pam-yati-poleglikh-u-boyu-pid-krutami.

45 Volodymyr Zelensky, Facebook page, January 29, 2020, https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=2449015495348812&set=a.1768961800020855.

46 I put this term in italics to distinguish it from the official name of the event inscribed in the law and international documents. In this case, the *Holodomor* is not the name of the event, but a term which describes a set of stereotypes, public representations, and commemorative practices that represent the canonical version of the event.

Creators of the stereotyped cultural memory of the Great Famine of 1932-33 in the Ukrainian SSR utilized the experience of the representation of the Holocaust and the Armenian genocide of 1915.[47] Basic tropes about the famine of 1932–33 created in the first half of the 1980s were transferred to the territory of continental Ukraine after 1986, where they partly matched different forms of communicative memory.[48] During the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the memory of the famine was intensely inscribed in the aforementioned stereotypical forms. As a result, by 1990, a canonical version of the *Holodomor* already existed, which represented the famine of 1932–33 (the Holodomor) as the genocide of Ukrainians organized by the totalitarian communist regime. On the metaphorical level, this regime was symbolized by "Moscow."

As mentioned before, representations of the *Holodomor* in the public sphere in the 1990s were mainly promoted by non-governmental organizations, right-of-center political parties or the national democrats, and by some professional historians; the state only provided moral and organizational support for these groups, which was still very important for their legitimation. The first national commemorative action was organized in 1993 following a resolution issued by Leonid Kuchma's government. On September 10, state flags flying on all state buildings throughout the entire country were lowered for four hours.[49] In October 1998, a special government resolution dedicated to the sixty-fifth anniversary of the famine of 1932–33 was adopted, and it included a list of commemorative events to be organized by state bodies.[50] That same year, Leonid Kuchma established the Day of Remembrance of Victims of the Holodomor; in 2000, he renamed it the Day of Remembrance of Victims of the Holodomor and Political Repression, and

47 It is worth mentioning that Ukrainian authorities are not positive at all about discussing the recognition of the massacre of Armenians in 1915. The major concern here is not to endanger relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan. Two attempts to pass a special declaration of the Parliament dedicated to the massacres of Armenians of 1915 failed. See Oleg Kapriak, "Chomu Ukraina ne vyznala virmen's'ku trahediju henotsydom," *BBC News*, April 24, 2015, https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/politics/2015/04/150424_armenia_ukraine_ko.

48 The process is described in detail in Kasianov, *Rozryta mohyla*. See also Georgiy Kasianov, "Holodomor and the Politics of Memory in Ukraine after Independence," in *Holodomor and Gorta Mór: Histories, Memories and Representations of Famine in Ukraine and Ireland*, ed. Christian Noack, Lindsey Janssen, and Vincent Comerford (New York: Anthem Press, 2012), 167–88.

49 "Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny Postanova, 'Pro vshanuvannya pam'yati zhertv holodomoru v Ukrayini u 1932–1933 rokakh,'" September 10, 1993, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/718-93-%D0%BF#Text.

50 "Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny Postanova, 'Pro 65-ti rokovyny holodomoru v Ukrayini,'" October 26, 1998, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1696-98-%D0%BF#Text.

in 2004 changed its name once more to the Day of Remembrance of Victims of Holodomors and Political Repression. Beyond their symbolic and political character, Kuchma's decrees also had a purely technical character: they established a commemoration date.

However, the decree "On the events related to the seventieth anniversary of the Holodomor in Ukraine" promulgated in 2002 already lists practically all the main commemorative and ritual practices pertaining to the famine of 1932–33 that had been established in the 1990s.[51] The presidential decree conferred on them the status of activities recommended by the state. Quite significantly, the text of the decree also made it obvious that the term "Holodomor" became firmly established in the language of the state bureaucracy (it appeared in other decrees as well). In a way, the decree was also a part of the political game in terms of relations between the president and the emerging parliamentary opposition. It may have been an attempt to seize initiative because an appeal to the tragic historical past offered the president a convenient opportunity both to show his human side and to prevent the use of this past in an undesirable context. By the end of 2002, on December 6, Kuchma issued an order to construct a memorial for victims of the Holodomor and political repression in Kyiv (though this was not enacted during his term).

In 2003, an important step was made to promote the *Holodomor* in social and political discourse: parliamentary hearings dedicated to the famine of 1932–33 were held. The seventieth anniversary of the tragedy coincided with the aggravation of internal political conflicts caused by the approaching presidential election and by Kuchma's attempts to carry out parliamentary reform aimed at curtailing its authority in the president's favor. It should be noted, that 2003 was the anniversary of another complicated date, the Ukrainian-Polish conflict, or the Volhynia massacre of 1943. Lastly, 2003 was the Year of Russia in Ukraine, which contributed to the symbolism of debates about the famine of 1932–33, especially for those in the political elite who saw Russia as the eternal oppressor of Ukraine.

Of course, the anniversary of the famine of 1932–33 was bound to become a point of contention in political debates. The ill-sorted opposition, brought

51 "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro zakhody u zv'yazku z 70-my rokovynamy holodomoru v Ukrayini,'" March 20, 2002, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/275/2002.

together only by the struggle against Kuchma's pretentions to build a super-presidential power structure, immediately fell into discord when center-right parties that had formed the Our Ukraine Bloc initiated special parliament hearings dedicated to the famine of 1932–33. Communists, the temporary allies of Our Ukraine in the struggle against Kuchma, were dead set against this idea. At the same time, the "oligarchic" factions that, at the time, did not give much weight to the problems of historical politics, supported the initiative with the blessing of Leonid Kuchma.

The special hearings in the Verkhovna Rada took place on February 12, 2003. National democrats and their allies from the other right-wing parties routinely denounced the "criminal totalitarian regime," never forgetting to attack the current regime which they also considered criminal. Accusations against the ruling "anti-people party" were readily supported by the communists who, nevertheless, flatly refused to assume any responsibility for the crimes of their predecessors despite the efforts of national democrats and right-wingers. The regime in power associated contemporary problems in Ukraine with the painful traumas of the past. Dmytro Tabachnyk, vice premier of the government, said that "the starvation of 1933 is not the historical past, it is a deep social and demographic catastrophe of the twentieth century, a never-healing moral and psychological wound that torments the memory of the eyewitnesses with sharp pain. Social and physiological fear engendered by mass purges and holodomors lives in the consciousness of many generations. It sank deeply into the genotype of the nation and is a strong hindrance to the democratization of our society."[52]

National democrats and right-wingers echoed the authorities: in their opinion, the *Holodomor* exterminated the best of the nation, dealing a crushing blow to the Ukrainian nation and destroying its gene pool. Pavlo Movchan, a former writer and an MP representing Our Ukraine party, declared that "the intellectual, energetic, actively creative force of the nation was sapped for many years. Any resistance to the acts of violence in all the spheres of national and social life was broken."[53]

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52 Verkhovna Rada Ukrainian Comitate z Pitani prav Ludiny, Natsionalnich Menshin i Mizhnationalnyh Vidnosin, "Parlaments'ki slukhannia shchodo vshanuvannia pamiatizhertv holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv," minutes, February 12, 2003, http://lib.rada.gov.ua/static/LIBRARY/povni_text/parlament_sluhan/golodomor.html#ТАБАЧНИК.

53 Ibid.

Those on the left portrayed the famine of 1932–33 in their own way. Petro Symonenko, the leader of the communists, declared that the genocide was happening in the present day and there was no need to look for it in the past. "From this tribune, I speak to the gentlemen in power, with a proposal, a demand to stop lying about the Soviet past and assume responsibility for the criminal policy they are perpetrating today—a policy of genocide," he said.[54] Not long before, in 2000, the communists organized public protests against the privatization of land, using the slogan "No to the land sale and to the Holodomor 2000!"

On May 14, 2003, in compliance with the recommendations of the parliamentary hearings, a special session of the Verkhovna Rada dedicated to the famine of 1932–33 took place (although according to data from the nongovernmental Laboratory of Legislative Initiatives, it only lasted several minutes). Parliament (without the participation of the communists) voted by a majority of 226 representatives to adopt the text of an address to the Ukrainian people in which the famine of 1932–33 was defined as a genocide against the Ukrainian people. Also in 2003, the first attempt was made in the United Nations to have the famine of 1932–33 recognized as an act of genocide.

By the middle of the 2000s, the canonical version of the *Holodomor* finally took root in Ukraine, contested only by the communists. They did not deny the fact that there was a famine in 1932–33, but they did not accept the idea of a deliberate, organized famine. The regime used the *Holodomor* as a means to legitimize itself and to demonstrate its unity with the people. For national democrats, it offered a way to criticize the authorities and explain the difficult situation of Ukrainians in the present; for nationalists, it was a convenient topic and a pretext to accuse Moscow of wrongdoing.

In the middle of the 2000s, the promotion of the *Holodomor* reached the state level, becoming a part of a consciously enforced government policy. The governing bodies of the "presidential vertical" (oblast, rajon [district], city administrations, some ministries and committees controlled by the president, and the Security Service of Ukraine) were all deployed to achieve its implementation. Viktor Yushchenko created a special body—a coordination committee that included representatives of ministries, NGOs, researchers,

54 Ibid.

public figures, and representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora—to prepare for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the famine.

The state began to finance research and memorial events: the budget sponsored the construction of a memorial honoring the victims of the Holodomor in Kyiv, the creation of a "Book of Memory," and contests for student works and studies dedicated to the topic. In 2006, the government established the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory with the status of an executive body; under its auspices, the megaproject "Book of Memory" was carried out between 2007–2008.[55] The project included the compilation of the names of some eight hundred thousand victims of the famine of 1932–33. For all its bureaucratic flaws, the project turned out to be a massive undertaking. It involved thousands of people in eighteen regions of Ukraine: teachers, students, employees of cultural and educational institutions, university professors, and members of NGOs. They identified eyewitnesses of the famine, conducted interviews, worked with the archives of civil registry offices, and compiled lists of those who perished.

In 2006, Viktor Yushchenko and his allies succeeded in approving a special law "On the Holodomor of 1932–1933" that formally established the official representation of the event as "an act of genocide of the Ukrainian people." In February 2008, Yulia Tymoshenko's government approved the funding of the National Program of Studies of the Holodomor and Perpetuation of its Memory until 2012 although this political and bureaucratic fantasy was shattered by the financial and economic crisis of 2008.[56]

It was in connection with the promotion of the *Holodomor* that civil servants were held accountable for lack of zeal when executing the tasks mandated by the president. In October 2007, Viktor Yushchenko signed a special decree reprimanding the administrative heads of the Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, and Odessa oblasts and demanding the punishment of employees of regional and municipal administrations in Dnipropetrovsk,

55 This project was carried out in the mold of other large-scale projects: "Rehabilitated by History" started in 1992 and was dedicated to the victims of repressions. See the project website: http://www.reabit.org.ua/aboutus/about_reabit/. The "Book of Memory of Ukraine" started in the Soviet times, in 1989, and then was renewed in 1992 and dedicated to Ukrainians killed in World War II. In total, 257 volumes were published.

56 "Pro skhvalennya Kontseptsiyi Zahalnoderzhavnoyi natsionalno-kulturnoyi prohramy doslidzhennya Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini ta uvichnennya yoho zhertv na period do 2012 roku," February 27, 2008, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/364-2008-p.

Kyiv, Mykolaiv, and Khmelnytskyi.[57] Six months later, the district heads of the Kherson, Luhansk, and Khmelnytskyi oblasts were personally reprimanded as well.[58]

In 2008, which had been officially declared the year of memory for Holodomor victims, a number of national remembrance actions were carried out under the auspices of the state, such as "Light a Candle," "ever-burning candle," etc.[59] In most Ukrainian regions, November 2008 was marked by a number of mourning demonstrations, concerts, artistic and literary contests, student essay contests, the laying of wreaths and bouquets, and memorial lessons in schools. New memorial spaces were created, such as exhibitions in museums, schools, and libraries. Crosses, memorial signs, and burial mounds were erected and memorial complexes emerged.[60] By mid-2008, the number of memorials, monuments, and memorial sites to the Holodomor of 1932–33 reached around 4,500.[61] By 2017, this number was about seven thousand according to the data from the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium.[62]

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57 "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro personalnu vidpovidalnyst posadovykh osib za nezadovilnyy stan pidhotovky zakhodiv u zv'yazku 75-my rokovynamy Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini,'" October 26, 2007, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1021/2007.

58 "Rozporyadzhennya Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro prytyahnennya do personalnoyi posadovykh osib za nezadovilnyy stan pidhotovky zakhodiv u zv'yazku 75-my rokovynamy Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini,'" February 4, 2008, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/36/2008-рп.

59 "Light a Candle" is an annual ritual that became a national event in 2003. On Remembrance Day of the victims of the famine of 1932–1933 (the fourth Saturday in November), anybody who wishes places a lighted candle in their window. The "ever-burning candle" is a sheaf 1.5 meters high weighing 200 kilograms made of beeswax collected in all the regions of Ukraine. In 2008, it traveled from one country to another (the total number of countries, 33, was to match the date of the tragedy), with requiems and rallies held at its arrival; by the fall, this symbol had toured all the regions of Ukraine as well. The "ever-burning candle" finished its pilgrimage at the Memorial of Holodomor Victims in Ukraine, opened in November 2008 in Kiev, where it became one of the first exhibit items. Between June and November 2008 "33 minutes," a public event, took place every Saturday and Sunday in public places such as squares or near the surviving monuments and memorials of the "totalitarian regime figures." The names and surnames of those who died of hunger in 1932–33 were read aloud for 33 minutes.

60 Kalinovy Hai (Guelder-Rose Grove) features over 200 guelder roses planted by MPs led by Yushchenko in 2007 on the slopes of Dnipro not far from the Kiev Monastery of the Caves. At the same place, the Memorial of Holodomor Victims (now National Museum of Holodomor-Genocide) was opened in 2008, centered on a 26-meter candle-like chapel.

61 Oleksandra Veselova, "Memorialni znaky i pam'yatnyky zhertvam holodu-henotsydu 1932–1933 rr. v Ukrayini," Krayeznavstvo nos. 1–2 (2009): 177.

62 "V Ukraini stvoriat' reyestr pokhovan' zhertv Holodomoru" Galinfo, March 31, 2017, accessed December 15, 2020, https://galinfo.com.ua/news/v_ukraini_stvoryat_reiestr_pohovan_zhertv_golodomoru_256301.html.

In general, the promotion of the genocide interpretation of the famine of 1932–33 is usually viewed as a success for Yushchenko's historical politics. The campaign of 2007–2009 attracted unprecedented institutional and financial resources from the state, NGOs, and political parties.[63] It would be fair to say that by the beginning of this campaign, the *Holodomor* was no longer a blank spot. According to the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, in 2006, 94 percent of respondents had heard of or read about the Holodomor and 69 percent of them believed that the Soviet authorities were to be blamed for the famine. Of this number, 84 percent were sure that the authorities deliberately organized the famine.[64] These results raise the point that in their calls for historical "truth," Yushchenko and his supporters were preaching to the choir.

According to the same opinion poll, only 14 percent believed that the Holodomor exclusively targeted ethnic Ukrainians. At the same time, 60.9 percent of respondents agreed that it was an act of genocide, which suggests that they did not see the term "genocide" as related only to ethnic Ukrainians.[65] The results of opinion polling between 2010 and 2013 are even more interesting because the share of respondents that saw the Holodomor as the "genocide of Ukrainian people" steadily grew: from 61 percent in 2010, it initially decreased within the predetermined margin of error, and then reached 66 percent in 2013.[66] In 2015, according to the same polling center, it reached 80 percent, a result represented by the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory as a triumph for Yanukovych's opponents.

Opinion polls after 2014 did not include the population of regions under the control of the so-called Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics (approximately one-third of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts). Neither did it include annexed Crimea. These regions usually "blemished" the results. As for the eastern part of the country (meaning a de facto frontline zone controlled by Ukraine), 64 percent of respondents recognized the Holodomor

63 The Kyiv memorial alone cost almost $70 million (about UAH350 million); the budget for the second phase of the memorial construction was about UAH 1 billion, about $40 million.

64 "Dumky naselennya Ukrayiny pro Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv," November 9, 2006, http://www.kiis.com.ua/materials/pr/2006/prelease_november09_2006.pdf.

65 Kyivs'kyj mizhnarodnyj instytut sotsiolohii Dumky naselennya Ukrayiny shchodo vyznannya Holodomoru 1932–1933 rr. henotsydom, November 20, 2007, http://kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=448&page=41.

66 Nazariy Polishchuk, "Stavlennia naselennia do Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv, lystopad 2013 (dynamika ta heohrafiya)," November 23, 2013, http://infolight.org.ua/content/stavlennya-naselennya-ukrayini-do-golodomoru-1932-1933-rokiv-listopad-2013-dinamika-ta-geografiya.

as an act of genocide in 2015, although according to the presentation of results, "east" meant the whole eastern territory of Ukraine, including the zone where the opinion poll was not held.[67] In 2016, the same poll signaled that 72 percent of respondents believed the genocide interpretation of the Holodomor, and in 2017, this share grew to 77 percent. A year later, the percentage of respondents who supported the Holodomor = genocide formula was 56 percent in the east and 65 percent in the south.[68] In 2019, 82 percent of respondents believed that the Holodomor was a genocide.[69] No opinion poll ever included questions about the meaning of genocide.[70]

The promotion of the canonical and official version of the *Holodomor* as one of the central symbols of the national/nationalist memory narrative went hand in hand with attempts to evict Soviet symbols and narratives from the memory space. At first, such actions were explained by the need to honor the victims of famines and purges, and then by the necessity to overcome the heritage of a totalitarian regime. Yushchenko addressed the topic of decommunization twice. In March 2007, he instructed regional state administrations, the government of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, and the municipal organizations of Kyiv and Sevastopol to "statutorily conduct actions in order to dismantle monuments and memorial signs dedicated to the persons involved in organizing and implementing the Holodomor of 1932–1933 and political repression, as well as to statutorily rename streets, squares, lanes, avenues, parks, and public gardens, whose names are related to these persons."[71] This formula was repeated verbatim two years later (in

67 However, the Rating Group presentation does not specify the regional parameters of the poll: Rating Group Ukraine, "Sotsiolohichna hrupa Reitinh: Dynamika stavlennya do Holodomoru," November 24, 2015, http://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/dinamika_otnosheniya_k_golodomoru_noyabr_2015.html.

68 Rating Group Ukraine, "Sotsiolohichna hrupa Reitinh: Dynamika stavlennia do Holodomoru: lystopad 2017," November 20, 2017, http://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/dinamika_otnosheniya_k_golodomoru_noyabr_2017.html Accessed November 24, 2018.

69 Rating Group Ukraine, "Sotsiolohichna hrupa Reitinh: Dynamika stavlennia do Holodomoru 1932–1933 rr," November 19, 2019, http://ratinggroup.ua/research/ukraine/dinamika_otnosheniya_k_golodomoru_1932-33_gg.html.

70 During a public discussion on October 2, 2019, Liubomyr Mysiv, the deputy director of Rating Group Ukraine admitted that the questions in the questionnaire were formulated to influence respondents. See the following video (59:44 to 1:00:31): "Polityka pamiati v Ukraini: prypynyty nemozhlyvo prodovzhyty?," YoutTube video, October 2, 2019, https://youtu.be/FJMpRDuXsXI.

71 "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro zakhody u zv'yazku z 75-my rokovynamy Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini,'" March 28, 2007, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/250/2007.

2009) in a presidential decree dedicated to "additional measures" honoring the Holodomor victims, as well as in a governmental resolution, adopted several months later.[72]

The reason for such persistence was the lack of cultivation of this aspect of historical politics. Galicia remained the only region where the memory space went through a radical change from communist symbols to national and nationalist ones. In all other territories, the Soviet memory narrative remained almost untouched. Central Ukraine was dominated by an ambivalent model of historical memory that can be illustrated by the example of January Uprising Street in Kyiv. In 2007, this street was renamed Ivan Mazepa Street, erasing the Soviet name related to the memory of the Bolshevik-inspired uprising at a munitions factory in January 1918. However, Ivan Mazepa Street begins at Arsenal Square, which features a Soviet monument—a piece of artillery on a pedestal, a symbol of the January Uprising. The street ends at Glory Square (a Soviet name), where one of the most iconic and important memorial complexes of the Soviet era—the Memorial and Park of Eternal Glory—is located. Moreover, sometimes even after being renamed, the "old" symbols did not disappear from the memory space. For example, in 1997, one of the central streets in Kyiv was renamed Sich Riflemen Street on the anniversary of the Ukrainian Revolution, but the official addresses on this street retained the old name, Artema Street, until 2015.

Speaking at the Bykivnia Graves National Memorial Reserve on the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Political Repression on May 17, 2009, Yushchenko proclaimed the need to "cleanse" the symbols of the regime that exterminated millions of people from the public space.[73] He said, "these [symbols] are not part of our history as some people wish to say with cynicism. These are a part of the communist system. These are symbols of mur-

72 "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro dodatkovi zakhody shchodo vshanuvannya pam'yati zhertv Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini,'" June 12, 2009, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/432/2009; and Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny, "Rozporyadzhennya vid lystopada 25, 2009 r. N 1429-r 'Pro zatverdzhennya planu zakhodiv na 2009–2010 roky iz vshanuvannya pam'yati zhertv Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini, dalshoho doslidzhennya temy holodomoriv v Ukrayini,'" November 25, 2009, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1429-2009-p.6.

73 In 2007, Viktor Yushchenko separated the Remembrance Day of Victims of Political Repression from the Remembrance Day of Victims of the Holodomors, assigning it an independent date, the third Sunday of May. The Remembrance Day of Victims of the Holodomors continued to be observed on the last Saturday of November.

der, whose preservation is a blasphemy against those who perished."[74] In this speech, the president listed Bykivnia, Babyn Yar, Auschwitz, and Solovki, following the standard "Eastern European" formula of equating communism with Nazism. The speed of the cleansing did not satisfy the head of state and the supporters of his historical politics. According to Yushchenko, over four hundred monuments to representatives of the "communist regime" were dismantled between 2007 and 2008, and over three thousand roads, streets, squares, lanes, alleys, and so on changed their names (the total number of entities with "communist era names" was no less than fifty thousand).[75] However, the use of presidential decrees and official resolutions to punish high-ranking local officials proves that this direction of historical politics was met with especially stubborn resistance, mockery, and sabotage even in those institutions under the direct control of the president.

With regard to local self-governing bodies, this resistance was open, especially in the regions dominated by the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative. For instance, in September 2008, the Donetsk Oblast Council rejected a resolution on the liquidation of the symbols of totalitarianism in the region (the draft law proposed by "orange" council members had no chance of success; its submission was part of a political ploy).[76] In January 2008, local councilors in Dnipropetrovsk delivered a public statement to "stop the falsification of history": they were nervous because of the glorification of the OUN and UPA and the destruction of "monuments of the Soviet period."[77] On May 9, 2008, speaking at a Victory Day rally in Luhansk, the head of the local council condemned Yushchenko's policy and the glorification of the OUN and UPA. The "Museum of the Victims of the Orange Revolution" was opened in Luhansk with a kitschy exhibition that drew parallels between the OUN, the UPA, Nazism, and the leaders of the Orange Revolution.[78] Decommunization stopped after 2010 but returned again as official policy in 2015.

74 "Ukrayina vshanovuye Den' pam'yati zhertv komunistychnykh represiy," Radio Svoboda, May 17, 2009, http://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/1733626.html.

75 Ibid.

76 I. M. Symonenko, "Memorialnyy prostir Ukrayiny: kryzovyy stan ta shlyakhy ozdorovlennya," *Stratehichni prioritety* 13, no. 4 (2009): 58.

77 Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Rada (official website), "Zayava deputativ Dnipropetrovskoyi oblasnoyi rady 'Zupynymo falsyfikatsiyu istoriyi,'" January 29, 2008, http://oblrada.dp.ua/press/news/2008-01/722.

78 "Muzey zhertv Oranzhevoy revolyutsii v Luganske: Shokiruyushchiy fotoreportazh," Censor.net, August 16, 2008, http://censor.net.ua/photo_news/13997/muzeyi_jertv_oranjevoyi_revolyutsii_v_luganske_quotshokiruyuschiyiquot_fotoreportaj.

Overall, the failure of decommunization as part of the efforts to promote the Holodomor as one of the central myths of the national/nationalist narrative does not eclipse the general success of this affirmative representation of the past. The "Holodomor as the genocide of Ukrainians" formula has rooted itself quite firmly in the social consciousness of the majority of the population. However, it is difficult to assess the population's level of understanding of the concept of "genocide" in connection with the famine of 1932–33 because it has never been studied.

"Peripheral" Genocides

The Soviet nostalgic narrative was not the only rival of the national/nationalist version of history. The list of memory spaces that became alien, undesirable, challenging, or even unacceptable included fragments of historical memory of several minority ethnic groups, specifically Jews, Poles, Romani groups, and the Crimean Tatars.

The "Jewish theme" is a very sensitive subject in Ukrainian history and collective memory (in this sense, Ukraine really belongs to Europe, especially Eastern Europe). The exclusivist model of historical memory based on the ethnonational narrative inevitably represents Jews as the Other, and this Other often carries archetypal characteristics of an exploiter and oppressor. If the ethnocentric version of Ukrainian affirmative history and collective memory recognizes Jews as a part of the common past of Ukraine, in the popular discourse they are often seen as the antagonist, which can be traced back to specific cultural stereotypes that move in a straight line from Jewish innkeeper and Jewish usurer to Jewish commissar or Bolshevik. This stereotype, alive and well on the popular level, sometimes rises to the surface of more official discourse, and apparently it is no coincidence that such comebacks happen at moments when the real or perceived competition between different memory narratives is heightened. For instance, there have been attempts to specifically accuse the Jews among the Soviet leaders of the 1930s of masterminding the Holodomor. In some cases, these efforts have been explicit, as with the blatantly antisemitic remarks of the representatives of the Interregional Academy of Personnel Management.[79] In other

79 *Komu buv vyhidnyy Holodomor?* (Kyiv: MAUP, 2004), 56, 61, 62. Of course, there were discussions about the international Zionist conspiracy and the famine of 1932–1933 as one of its results. One of the conferences of the Interregional Academy of Personnel Management (November 2005) bore the title "The

cases, the stereotype was invoked in a more delicate way: for instance, the SBU published a list of those responsible for the organization of the famine of 1932–33, citing not only their party pseudonyms but their real names and surnames as well. The publication of the list, which was incomplete and contained errors, triggered a protest from the Ukrainian Jewish Committee.[80]

The "Jewish theme" seriously hampers the shape and function of the Ukrainian national/nationalist memory narrative and even sometimes opposes it, given that this narrative is based on ideas of victimhood and heroism in different proportion depending on the historical period. Relations with the Jews and their collective memory make conflict unavoidable. In the public space, the representation of Ukrainians as the eternal victims of oppression, including by Jews (from usurers to NKVD agents) collides with representations of Jews as eternal victims, oppressed by Ukrainians (from Cossacks and haidamaks to the OUN and communists). The extreme version of the Jewish historical narrative sometimes depicts Ukrainians as naturally born antisemites (very similar to the stereotype of a "Ukrainian throat cutter" in Polish mythology).

The somewhat morally puzzling process of myth-building around the number of Holodomor victims can be seen as the climax of the "victimhood olympics."[81] It is well known that Viktor Yushchenko, who was well-informed about the numerous and diverse studies of historians and demographers of the 2000s, chose to ignore their data and insisted that the total number of Holodomor victims amounted to seven to ten million people. The source of his inspiration is no secret: it was actively defended by the "nomenklatura" of the Ukrainian diaspora, in particular the leadership of the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC).[82] The June 1, 2008 report of the International Coordination Committee of the UWC headed by Stefan

Jewish-Bolshevik Coup of 1917 as the Prelude to the Red Terror and Ukrainian Holodomors." (See the website of the event, http://maup.com.ua/ua/pro-akademiyu/novini1/usi-novini1/tekst_vistupu_georgiya_schokina_na_konferencii_evreysko-bilshovickiy_perevorot_1917_roku_yak_peredumova_chervonogo_teroru_ta_ukrainskih_gol.html.)

80 "Yevrei vidreahuvaly na spysok vynnykh u holodomori, opublikovanyy SBU," "Online portal zakordonnykh ukrainian" blog, July 28, 2008, https://ukrajinciberlinu.wordpress.com/2009/11/27/ євреї-образилися-на-список-винних-у-го/.

81 This was clearly expounded by Jean-Paul Himka, whose position on Holodomor mythology and Ukrainian participation in the Holocaust provoked an outcry among part of the Ukrainian diaspora, including representatives of the academic establishment.

82 See, for instance, Askold S. Lozynskyj "The Case for Seven to Ten Million," 2008, http://www.holodomorsurvivors.ca/Docs/IHC-The-Case-for-7-Million.pdf. More details on manipulations with the number of Holodomor victims are found in Kasianov, *Rozryta Mohyla*, 219–24.

Romaniw, the leader of the OUN (Bandera faction), clearly contained the figure of seven to ten million victims, which was to be promoted to the presidential secretariat and the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory.[83] The victimhood competition evolved in the context of a political situation in which the formula "seven to ten is greater than six" played an important role. Stanislav Kulchytsky recalled, that the head of the World Congress of Ukrainians Askold Lozynskyj insisted on 7–10 million simply because it is bigger than 6 million, the number of Jews who perished during Holocaust.[84] Lozynskyj in turn suggested that Kulchytsky and his followers deliberately reduce the number of Holodomor victims to avoid competition with the Holocaust.[85]

The very term "Holocaust" was appropriated. During the period of active build-up of the cultural memory of the Holodomor, the famine of 1932–33 was quite often called the Ukrainian Holocaust.[86] It should be mentioned that this pattern of manipulation of the figures was not appropriated even by the majority of supporters of the genocidal version of *Holodomor* in Ukrainian academia.

The "victimhood competition" was aggravated also because of challenges that hampered efforts to establish a heroic narrative. As in many other countries in "Eastern Europe," Ukrainian heroes and victims often turn out to be antiheroes and murderers in the historical memory of their neighbors. For example, the standard national/nationalist narrative of Bohdan Khmelnytsky and the Cossack war of the mid-seventeenth century (represented as a national

83 Mizhnarodnyy Komitet Holodomoru. 75-ta Richnytsya Vidznachennya Ukrayinskoho Henotsydu 1932–1933. International Holodomor Committee (IHC) for the 75th Commemoration of the Ukrainian Genocide 1932–1933, 5–6. Author's personal archive.

84 *Istoryk na zlami epokh. Stanislav Kultchytsky. Materialy do bibliohrafii, interv'iu, spohady*, (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy NAN Ukrainy, 2016), 359–60.

85 Askold Lozynskyj, "Zahadkovi pidrakhunky zhertv Holodomoru," 22 April, 2018, *Ukrinform,* https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/2446572-zagadkovi-pidrahunki-zertv-golodomoru.html.

86 See, for instance, Yu. Mytsyk, ed., *Ukrayinskyy holokost, 1932–1933: Svidchennya tykh, khto vyzhyv* vols. 1–4 (Kyiv: Vydavnychyi dim KM "Akademia", 2003–2007); V. Kmet', "'Ukrayiskyy Holokost: pam'yat buttya, uroky maybutnyoho,' vidkryta lektsiya Vasylya Kmetya do Dnya pam'yati zhertv holodomoriv v Ukrayini," *Velych L'viv*, November 24, 2014, http://velychlviv.com/ukrayinskyj-golokost-pam-yat-buttya-uroky-majbutnogo-vidkryta-lektsiya-vasylya-kmetya-do-dnya-pam-yati-zhertv-golodomoriv-v-ukrayini/. Sometimes the "Ukrainian Holocaust" serves as an umbrella term for the famine and the purges of the 1930s; of course, it only applies to ethnic Ukrainians. Volodymyr Zvyglyanych, *Ukrayinskyy Holokost: Istoriya i suchasnist*, November 20, 2006, *Ukrayinska Pravda*, http://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2006/11/20/3179485/.

revolution) is usually silent on the "Jewish topic," at least in the public memory space. The glorification of "popular uprisings" and their leaders means at best "filtering" this topic out of public discourse, and at worst entails representing the extermination of Jews by the masses as a normal reaction against oppressors (such views, however, continue to be expressed covertly).[87] Glorification of the twentieth-century Ukrainian nationalist movement, in which the movement is presented as "fighting against two totalitarianisms" goes hand in hand with the aggressive rejection of reminders of the OUN's antisemitism and the participation of Ukrainian nationalists in the Holocaust.[88]

The efforts of Yushchenko and Ukrainian diplomats to obtain recognition from international organizations that the famine of 1932–33 was a genocide of Ukrainians failed to get the support of the country where the Holocaust is an important part of the national mythology. Speaking at the Israeli Knesset on November 14, 2007, Viktor Yushchenko urged Israel to recognize the Holodomor as an act of genocide.[89] Israeli parliamentarians met the words of the Ukrainian president with emphatic silence.[90] The Israeli position was later clarified by its ambassador to Ukraine, Zina Kalay-Kleitman.[91] The ambassador explained that "Israel recognizes as an act of

87 See the photo published online in "V Umani vidkryly pam'yatnyk Honti i Zaliznyaku, foto," *Istorichna Pravda*, November 25, 2015, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2015/11/25/148752/.

88 When debating Jean-Paul Himka on the participation of Ukrainian nationalists in the Lviv pogrom of the summer of 1941, Askold Lozynskyj, president of the World Congress of Ukrainians in1998–2008, remarked that when "agents who had been persecuted and stateless for years" accuse Ukrainian nationalists of anti-Jewish actions, they try to conceal their own sins, like the fact that many Jews served in the NKVD. The argument was repeated by Marco Levytsky, the editor of *Ukrainian News*, who decided to substantiate his report with figures. He calculated that Jews accounted for 3.92 percent of the senior staff of the NKVD, while their share in the total Soviet population amounted only to 1.78 percent. See Himka, "Interventions: Challenging the Myths of Twentieth-Century Ukrainian History," in *The Convolutions of Historical Politics*, ed. Alexei Miller and Maria Lipman (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2009), 232.

89 "Yushchenko prosit Izrail' priznat' Holodomor genotsidom," November 14, 2007, https://ukraine.segodnya.ua/ukraine/jushchenko-procit-izrail-priznat-holodomor-henotsidom-80694.html.

90 The visit was postponed several times. Yushchenko's historical politics rang alarm bells for the Israeli political elite. They were especially annoyed by the actions taken by the head of state to glorify the OUN–UPA and the leaders of the Ukrainian Nationalist movement, who were considered antisemites and accomplices in the extermination of Jews during World War II. The visit took place during the year when Roman Shukhevych, chief commander of the UPA, was posthumously awarded with the title of "Hero of Ukraine."

91 Vladimir Kravchenko (interviewer), "Zina Kalay Kleitman: Izrail ne mozhet priznat Golodomor aktom etnicheskogo genotsida," *Zerkalo nedeli,* September 27–3 October 3, 2008. A telling detail: the interview with the Israeli ambassador was dedicated to the issues of Israel's foreign policy. Only one question was related to the famine of 1932–1933; however, the editors chose to put the answer to this question in the headline of the article.

genocide something that has been recognized by international law. Namely, the extermination of people on ethnic grounds is genocide. The Holocaust was one such instance. Israel cannot recognize the Holodomor as an act of ethnic genocide. At the same time, it considers the Holodomor the greatest tragedy of the Ukrainian people."[92]

In September 2016, speaking in the Ukrainian parliament on the anniversary of the tragedy in Babyn Yar, Israeli President Reuven Rivlin declared that many Ukrainians had been Nazi accomplices in the murder of Jews and pointed specifically at the OUN's role in these killings, provoking the anger of defenders of the national/nationalist narrative.[93] It was probably to redress this situation that the Presidium of the Knesset put the examination of a resolution that would recognize the Holodomor as genocide on its agenda in November 2016, leading to jubilant reports and commentaries from some journalists and members of the political elite: the information agency headlines already spoke of future recognition. However, the topic suddenly disappeared from the media landscape. It turned out that the issue was transferred to committee, effectively nullifying the prospect of this much desired (by Ukraine) resolution's adoption by the Knesset.[94]

Knowledge of this context can probably help explain the marginal role of the Holocaust in the historical politics of the Ukrainian state. According to different assessments, between 900,000 and 1.5 million Jews were exterminated by the Nazis, their allies, and local collaborators in Ukrainian territory.[95] As many as 2,634 Ukrainians were listed by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations by January 2019.[96] Nevertheless, a considerable part of Ukrainian society is still not in a hurry to adopt the Holocaust as a part of "its own" history. The internalization of this tragedy as an integral part of Ukrainian history is still very far away. While in the Soviet official narrative, the annihilation of Jews was only present as part of the general dis-

92 Kravchenko, "Zina Kalay Kleitman."

93 Reuven Rivlin, accessed May 12, 2019, http://112.ua/mnenie/u-evreyskogo-naroda-dlinnaya-istoriya-kotoraya-svyazyvaet-ego-s-ukrainoy-341896.html.

94 Vladimir Kravchenko, "Knesset: shag vpreryod i dva shaga nazad," November 19, 2016, http://zn.ua/columnists/knesset-shag-vpered-i-dva-nazad-230694_.html.

95 The Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center claims the figure of 1,500,00 on its interactive map. See Babyn Yar website, accessed December 12, 2020, http://babynyar.org/byhmc/historical/exploremap.

96 "U Dnipri vidbudetsia mizhnarodnyj forum 'Pravednyky narodiv svitu,'" *UA Dnipro*, July 9, 2019, https://dp.suspilne.media/news/29733.

cussion on the extermination of "Soviet citizens," in the official Ukrainian version of collective memory, the Holocaust was alienated by the exclusivist ethnonational narrative, becoming an event peripheral to the Ukrainian national narrative. Moreover, as mentioned above, the Holocaust was often part of the broader competition of victims in Ukrainian historical politics. Between 2006 and 2019, various sociological institutes conducted approximately a dozen sociological surveys on attitudes toward the Holodomor. None were dedicated to the Holocaust. In 2020, the Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center, a non-governmental organization, announced that it had commissioned a survey.[97]

Babyn Yar in Kyiv became the primary place of official Holocaust memory in Ukraine. In September 1991, the Cabinet of Ministers approved a resolution dedicated to the fiftieth anniversary of the executions at Babyn Yar.[98] The document spoke of the "mass extermination of Soviet citizens, in particular Jews, by German Fascist invaders."[99] Leonid Kravchuk, the then-speaker of parliament, took part in the commemoration ceremony in Babyn Yar, apologizing on behalf of Ukrainians who took part in the extermination of Jews.[100] In 2001, Leonid Kuchma honored the memory of victims of Babyn Yar and laid a wreath at the new monument to executed children. In 2007, Yushchenko did the same, also laying a wreath at a cross, erected in memory of members of the OUN executed at Babyn Yar.[101] Two years later, in his speech dedicated to another anniversary of the tragedy, Yushchenko said that Babyn Yar is a common grave where over one hundred thousand of "our compatriots" are buried: Jews, Roma, Ukrainians, Russians, prisoners of war, members of the Soviet underground, and mem-

97 See news posts on Babyn Yar's official website: https://babynyar.org/en/news

98 Babyn Yar was the place of mass executions in Kyiv in 1941–43. In two days in late September 1941, almost 34,000 Kyiv Jews were shot there. In the early 1960s, the grounds were covered with earth and became a park. In 1976, a monument to "Soviet citizen" victims of the Nazi occupation was installed in the vicinity of Babyn Yar. Since 1991, a great number of memorial objects have been erected around the monument, dedicated to Jews, Romani, Ostarbeiter, prisoners of war, priests, Soviet resistance fighters, and nationalists. The 1976 Soviet monument became the most universal sign for all the victims.

99 Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny, Postanova, "Pro zakhody u zv'yazku z 50-richchyam trahediyi Babynoho Yaru," September 10, 1991, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/192-91-п.

100 Leonid M. Kravchuk, "Vystup Holovy Vekhovnoyi Rady Ukrayiny L. Kravchuka na memorialniy tseremoniyi u Babynomu Yaru 5 zhovtnya 1991 roku, L. M. Kravchuk," *Golos Ukrayiny*, October 8, 1991.

101 "Yushchenko vshanuvav pamiat' zhertv babynoho Yaru," *Korrespondent*, September 29, 2007, http://ua.korrespondent.net/ukraine/303076-yushchenko-vshanuvav-pam-yat-zhertv-Babynnogo-yaru.

bers of the OUN.[102] In 2010, Yushchenko conferred the status of National Reserve on Babyn Yar, which did not affect the position of this place of memory in any meaningful way. Yushchenko was the first top official to use the word "Holocaust" in his official speeches. His predecessor did his best to avoid this term.

Yushchenko addressed the topic in an utilitarian manner. First, he used the Holocaust to promote the Holodomor internationally and nationally. Second, in 2007–2009 he promoted the idea of legal prosecution for "Holodomor denial." The existence of civil and criminal penalties for the trivialization and banalization of Nazi crimes in some European countries, often interpreted as prosecution for public Holocaust denial, was used as a precedent for the promotion of similar practices in Ukraine concerning Holodomor denial. This handling of the Holocaust was extremely pragmatic: its memory was used for the political instrumentalization of the memory of the Holodomor.[103]

International Holocaust Remembrance Day, established by the international community in 2005, became the national commemorative date in Ukraine in 2011, following a resolution of the Verkhovna Rada drafted by a communist MP.[104] As noticed by a Ukrainian expert, the text of the resolution was reminiscent of the Soviet practice of commemorating Babyn Yar victims as "victims of Fascism" (the word "genocide" was not present in the resolution).[105] At any rate, while top state officials began to mention the Holocaust annually on January 27, this did not change the status of this event's memory. Communists appealed to Holocaust memory because it was a good pretext to memorialize the role of Ukrainian nationalists in the tragedy.

The construction of the historical memory of the Holocaust in Ukraine was mostly done by non-governmental organizations, both Ukrainian and foreign (the most prominent place among the former belongs to German foundations). The Thukma Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies, the Center for Studies of Memory Policy and Public History

102 "Yushchenko vshanuvav pam'yat rozstrilyanykh u Babynomu Yaru," *TSN*, September 29, 2009, http://tsn.ua/ukrayina/yushchenko-vshanuvav-pam-yat-rozstrilyanih-u-Babynnomu-yaru.html.

103 For more details, see the section on memorial laws in this chapter.

104 "Postanova Verkhovnoyi Rady Ukrayiny, 'Pro 70-richchya trahediyi Babynoho Yaru,'" July 5, 2011, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3560-vi.

105 P. Dolganov, "Formuvannya ta implementatsiya memorialnoho zakonodavstva Ukrayiny u sferi vshanuvannya zhertv henotsydiv i podolannya yikhnikh naslidkiv," *Holokost i suchasnistI* 13, no. 1 (2015): 26–28.

"Mnemonics"[106] in Rivne are the principal Holocaust research and public history institutions in Ukraine, along with the Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities (VAAD). In 2002 on the initiative of the Catholic priest Patrick Desbois, a project to identify and document locations where Jews were executed was launched in Ukraine. In 2010, with the support of the American Jewish Committee and the German Foreign Ministry, the project was rebranded as "Let us protect the memory!" The new name suggests not only the identification of and care for the burial places of Holocaust victims, but also educational events involving the local population.[107]

A similar situation is observable in the sphere of research and education. In 2000, the Ukrainian Ministry of Education and Science recommended that universities start teaching a course on the history of the Holocaust. According to John-Paul Himka, ten universities' centers of Ukrainian history introduced such courses by the end of the 2000s.[108] Before the middle of the 2000s, only fleeting mentions of the extermination of Jews were to be found in school textbooks on Ukrainian history. The Holocaust was included in world history textbooks, but only as a European event. An academic volume dedicated to the political history of Ukraine in the twentieth century (produced by the parliamentary publishing house) did not mention the Holocaust at all on the pages dedicated to World War II.[109] In 2013, Himka also notes that the events dedicated to World War II that were planned by the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory in the second half of the 2000s never mentioned the Holocaust.[110]

In 2006, the word "Holocaust" made its appearance on the university history examination. In 2009, a report from the Ministry of Education and Science on the "Study of the History of the Holocaust in General Educational

106 Tsentr studii polityky pamiati ta publichnoi istorii "Mnemonika," official website: https://mnemonika.org.ua/.

107 "Zakhyst i memorializatsiya mists masovykh vbybstv yevreyiv Ukrayiny," 2019, http://www.protecting-memory-ua.org/.

108 John-Paul Himka, "The Reception of the Holocaust in Post-Communist Ukraine," in *Bringing the Dark Past to Light: The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Europe*, ed. John-Paul Himka and Joanna Beata Michlic (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press 2013), 641.

109 This was noted by Anatoly Podolsky. See Podolsky, "Ukrayinske suspilstvo i pam'yat pro Holokost: sproba analizu deyakykh aspektiv," *Holokost i suchasnist* 5, no. 1 (2009): 49. He refers to: V. Baran, O. Boiko, V. Verstiuk, S. Vidnianskii, V. Hrechenko *Ukraina: politychna istoriya. XX – poch. XXI stolittia* (Kyiv: Palaments'ke vydavnytstvo, 2007)

110 Himka, "The Reception of the Holocaust," 646.

Institutions" stated that the ministry called for the "study of particular topics as part of the curricula of courses on the history of Ukraine and world history in general educational institutions," and called attention to a student contest on the "History and lessons of the Holocaust" that was held "with the support" of the ministry. An optional course on Holocaust history was offered in a number of schools, and the exhibition "Anne Frank House" traveled across the country. The report also mentioned a traveling exhibition "The Development of Tolerance through the Example of Holocaust History," which existed from 2002–2009. The document recommended publishing textbooks on the subject and organizing workshops for teachers.[111] The same recommendations were on the table thirteen years later.[112] Textbooks for the history of Ukraine and world history (two courses taught separately) contained brief information about the Holocaust in Ukraine. In some cases, the topic is dealt with in a special section,[113] and in others, it is limited to several lines about the mass killings of Jews.[114] Some textbooks mention the Righteous Among the Nations.

"The Holocaust in Ukraine and Europe" as a separate topic in the program of a new, integrated course called "History: Ukraine and the World" for grades 10 and 11 in secondary schools was presented as a joint program of the Ministry of Education and Sciences and the UINP.[115] This subject was to replace the two separate history courses. Between 2016 and 2017, it was common practice in Ukrainian schools to have an annual "class hour" or special lesson on January 27 dedicated to International Holocaust Remembrance Day. This activity is not centrally coordinated or directed, so there is no data about the number of these events available.

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111 "Vyvchennya istoriyi Holokostu v ZNZ Ukrayiny," Internal report by the Ministry of Education and Science, author's personal archive.

112 See Ministerstvo osvity I nauky Ukrainy, "Navchal'ni prohramy dlia 10–11 klasiv," September 1, 2018, https://mon.gov.ua/ua/osvita/zagalna-serednya-osvita/navchalni-programi/navchalni-programi-dlya-10-11-klasiv.

113 Olena I. Pometun and Nestor M. Hupan, *Istorija Ukrainy: Pidruchnyk dlia 11 klasu zahal'noosvitnikh navchal'nyx zakladiv; Akademichnyj riven'* (Kyiv: Osvita, 2011), 29–31.

114 Fedir G. Turchenko, *Istorija Ukrajiny Pidruchnyk dlia 11 klasu zahal'noosvitnix navchal'nyx zakladiv. Profil'nyi riven'* (Kyiv: Heneza, 2011), 3; and Stanislav V. Kulchytsky and Yu. H. Lebedeva, *Istorija Ukrajiny. Pidruchnyk dlia 11 klasu* (Kyiv: Heneza, 2011)

115 "Ukrainskiy instytut national'noi pamiati, Volodymyr Viatrovych predstavyv konstseptsiyu vykladannia istorii dlya 10–11 klasiv," accessed December 19, 2020, http://memory.gov.ua/news/volodimir-vyatrovich-predstaviv-kontseptsiyu-vikladannya-istorii-dlya-10-11-klasiv. The role of the UINP in the development of a new program is unclear: the institute did not have personnel capable of doing this, and it was not an area of its competence.

The author of the 2009 report referred to "non-governmental organizations," but forgot to mention that, in fact, these organizations alone carried out all the events listed in the report and did so with the financial support of foreign donors. Support from the Ministry of Education and Science simply meant that the ministry did not interfere in these efforts. In 2009, the ministry planned a contest called "Lessons of the Holocaust—Lessons of Tolerance." The contest description, which was initiated by Tkuma, was edited several times. First it spoke about the "lessons of the Holocaust," then about the "study of the history of the Holocaust and holodomors," and finally about the "support for the study of Ukrainian history: the holodomors in Ukraine, the events of World War II, and the Holocaust."[116]

In 2008, Anatoly Podolsky, one of the pioneers of Holocaust studies in Ukraine, wrote: "the state (as represented by the Ministry of Education and Science) created neither any formal obstacles to teaching the history of the Holocaust nor any possibilities for such teaching (number of class hours, textbooks, teacher training)."[117] This conclusion applies today: the dissemination of information about the Holocaust and everything that falls under the category of *Holocaust education* is still the prerogative of Ukrainian and international non-governmental organizations. In 2016, another enthusiast of Holocaust education in Ukraine, Ihor Shchupak, credited the same ministry with the permanent support of Holocaust education.[118] Nevertheless, this praise again concerns only "in-kind" support, not any serious financial or managerial commitment.

Holocaust museums in Odessa (2009) and Kharkiv (1996) were established on the initiative of private citizens and ongoing donations. The construction of the Museum of the History of Jews and the Holocaust in Dnipropetrovsk (2012) was funded by private members of the local Jewish community (including the well-known billionaires Ihor Kolomoyskyi and Gennadiy Bogolyubov). As a Holocaust researcher in Ukraine commented in an unofficial conversation, "the memory of the Holocaust in Ukraine remains the concern of Jews."

116 "Polozhennia pro Mizhnarodnyy konkurs 'Uroky Holokostu—uroky tolerantnosti,'" internal provision by the Ministry of Education and Science, author's personal archive.

117 Anatoly Podolsky, "Aktualnist i stan vykladannya istoriyi Holokostu v suchasniy Ukrayini," accessed August 21, 2016, http://old.vaadua.org/Hadasot/2008-01/Had%2001-2008.htm.

118 Ihor Shchupak, "Uroky Holokostu v ukrainskiy istorychniy nautsi ta osviti: vid naratyvu do osmyslennia j postanovky suspil'noho pytannia ta pokajannia (do 75-I richnytsi trahedii Babynoho Yaru)," *Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal* no. 5 (2016): 191–92.

More recently, certain changes related to Holocaust memory began to emerge. Since November 2015, President Petro Poroshenko published three decrees dedicated to the organization of memorial events for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Babyn Yar tragedy (2016). The first decree mentions "one of the most tragic pages of the Holocaust, the mass murder of Kyiv Jews" and proposes the creation of a permanent exhibition dedicated to the Holocaust in the National Museum of the History of Ukraine in World War II.[119] The Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, when preparing a moving exhibition on the history of World War II, dedicated separate panels to the Holocaust and to the Ukrainians who were honored as Righteous Among the Nations.[120] In 2017, the UINP financially co-sponsored one thousand copies of a guidebook on Babyn Yar for teachers, prepared by the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies. The official website of the institute presents some brief information about the Holocaust in Ukraine on the page dedicated to International Holocaust Remembrance Day. In December 2015, President Poroshenko delivered a speech in the Knesset and apologized on behalf of Ukraine for the deeds of those Ukrainians who collaborated with the Nazi regime in the extermination of Jews.[121]

At first glance, the official line since 2015 seems to promote an inclusive concept of the Holocaust, including the listing of victims of different ethnic, religious, social, and political groups—among them Ukrainian nationalists—with a special emphasis on Jews as the primary target of murder. At parliamentary hearings on September 27, 2016, the term "Holocaust" was again assigned to the Babyn Yar massacres. The recommendations of the hearings pointed out that two-thirds of the victims at Babyn Yar were Jews, and mentioned other victims: Ukrainians, Roma, POWs, Ukrainian nationalists, and "representatives of different political views, beliefs, and nationalities." However, this inclusiveness provoked new tensions. Mentioning Ukrainian nationalists—who took active part in the killing of Jews and included antisemitism in their political programs—as equal victims of the Nazi regime has sparked public debates about the moral and political legitimacy of this approach.

119 "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro zakhody u zv'yazku z 75-my rokovynamy trahediyi Babynoho Yaru,'" August 12, 2015, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/471/2015.

120 "Ukrains'ka Druha Svitova," exhibition, accessed December 18, 2020, http://www.ww2.memory.gov.ua/vystavka/.

121 Speech of the president of Ukraine in Israeli Knesset, December 31, 2015, https://ukrainianjewishencounter.org/en/news/speech-of-the-president-of-ukraine-in-the-israeli-knesset/.

In 2016, the Ministry of Education and Sciences issued a special plan for the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of Babyn Yar. The plan listed seven types of activities including special lessons, commemorative events in schools, excursions, seminars, and so on

In January 2018, representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Culture, the director of the National Historical-Memorial Reserve "Babyn Yar," the director of the charitable foundation Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial Center, and the mayor of Kyiv, Vitalii Klitchko, signed a memorandum on the creation of a Memorial of the Holocaust "Babyn Yar" in Kyiv. The aim of the parties was to build a memorial and museum on the scale of Yad Vashem by 2021. Three years later, the future of the project remained uncertain for a number of reasons. The discussions about the concept soon turned into a competition between two projects: one elaborated by Ukrainian scholars and the public and the other designed by an international team of historians and mnemonic activists, supported by individual donors (more substantial in financial terms—the budget announced by the sponsors was $100 million) and politically sheltered by the state.

Discussions on the competing concepts of the new memorial at Babyn Yar at one point resulted in the publication of an open letter by the Ukrainian historians and prominent figures. The signatories objected to the "one-sided" approach of the concept (called "historical narrative") proposed by the international team, which, in the opinion of the signatories, tended to represent Babyn Yar as an exclusively Jewish tragedy.[122] They also resented the idea of representing the Babyn Yar story in isolation from the European Holocaust. The authors and signatories proposed the construction of two museums: one devoted to the Holocaust (where only Jewish victims would be represented) and the second—the museum of Babyn Yar—where the memory of all other victims would be included.[123] In the meantime, the private project also underwent serious modifications. Its sponsors (Russian billionaires of Jewish origin) decided to invite the contribution of Russian producer Ilya Khrzhanovsky of the controversial *Dau* project. His vision for

122 See the monograph-length document: "Istorychnyi naratyv Memorial'noho Tsentru Holokostu 'Babyn Yar,'" on the official website of Babyn Yar, accessed December 19, 2020, http://babynyar.org/en/narrative.

123 "A Letter of Concern by Ukrainian Historians Regarding the Plans to Construct the Babi Yar Holocaust Memorial Center," *Historians*, April 2, 2017, http://www.historians.in.ua/index.php/en/ogoloshennya/2146-a-letter-of-concern-by-ukrainian-historians-regarding-the-plans-to-construct-the-babi-yar-holocaust-memorial-center, accessed September 20, 2021.

the Babyn Yar memorial site was unacceptable to many (some called it "the Holocaust Disneyland")[124] including members of the international team (some respected scholars left the project in the protest).[125]

In recent years, the Holocaust and the fate of Ukrainian Jews in World War II have received more attention from the state and the broader public. It is unclear, however, if this interest was triggered by the anniversary or is part of the broader shift to a more inclusive model of historical memory. Ukraine is still not a member of the International Holocaust Research Alliance; although negotiations started in 2005, the prospects for Ukraine's inclusion are unclear. The rise of right-wing populism in Ukraine after 2014 combined with spontaneous manifestations of grassroot antisemitism, vandalism of Jewish sites of memory, and the open glorification of the OUN, UPA, and Ukrainians who served in Nazi military units, further complicates the issue.

The exclusion of another ethnic group from the historical memory of World War II in Ukraine is even more controversial. In the course of preparations for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Babyn Yar massacres, the government also planned a conference called "The Forgotten Genocide of the Romani."[126] The title of the conference serves as a perfect description of the current level of commemoration of the extermination of the Romani during World War II. Just recently, this dimension of the Holocaust was a huge blank spot on the map of historical memory in Ukraine. The genocide of Romani and Sinti people found itself "on the far margins" of historical politics not only because of the rivalry among "big" memory narratives but also because of the absence of institutions and agents capable of constructing, preserving, and promoting its cultural memory. According to Mykhaylo Tyaglyy, a pioneer of Romani genocide research, the peculiarities of their nomadic culture resulted in the scarcity of material traces, some of which were erased together with their guardians.[127] Roma people do not have their

124 Vladislav Davidzon, "Ukraine's 'Holocaust Disneyland,'" *Wall Street Journal,* July 9, 2020, https://www.wsj.com/articles/ukraines-holocaust-disneyland-11594336467.

125 See the thematic page "Holocaust" in the online newspaper *Istorichna Pravda*, https://www.istpravda.com.ua/themes/holocaust-history/.

126 "Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny, Rozporyadzhennya 'Pro zatverdzhennya planu zakhodiv u zv'yazku z 75-my rokovynamy trahediyi Babynoho Yaru,'" December 30, 2015, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1410-2015-%D1%80#n8.

127 Myhaylo Tyahlyy, "Peredmova vid uporyadnyka," in *Peresliduvannya ta vbyvstva romiv na terenakh Ukrayiny u chasy druhoyi svitovoyi viyny: Zbirnyk dokumentiv, materialiv ta spohadiv*, ed. Myhaylo Tyahlyy (Kyiv: Ukrains'kyi tsentr vyvchennia Holokostu, 2013), 7.

own agents of historical memory; this function was assumed by politicians and non-governmental organizations outside of the Roma community.

It should also be mentioned that the Ukrainian population displays the highest level of social distance (xenophobia index or Bogardus scale) toward the Roma: it reached 5.5 points in 2007[128] and remained almost unchanged in 2018—5.66 (the highest level of negative attitudes toward foreigners equals 7 on this scale).[129] According to a spring 2017 sociological survey, 47 percent of respondents believe that the rights of the Roma should be restricted.[130] Roma are still a primary target of ethnic violence and xenophobia. In spring 2018 alone, four attacks on Roma camps occurred in Kyiv (April 20), Lviv oblast (Rudno, May 9), and Ternopil oblast (May 22), and on the outskirts of Lviv in June 2018 (one inhabitant of the Roma camp there was killed and four were seriously injured). In all these cases, the police began a criminal investigation, but there were limited prospects that the perpetrators of the attacks would be brought to justice.

In October 2004, the state, represented by the Verkhovna Rada, commemorated the "Holocaust of the Roma": upon the suggestion of a communist deputy, a resolution was approved establishing the "International Day of the Roma Holocaust."[131] The resolution suggested August 2 as the day of observance and even proposed including the Roma in the list of persons who suffered during the occupation, which would formally make them eligible for compensation.[132] In August 2009, Yushchenko gave an address on the International Day of the Holocaust of the Roma, promising that the "truth about the ethnocide of the Roma people will become an integral part of all-Ukrainian national memory."[133] No action was taken to ful-

128 Volodymyr Paniotto, "Dynamika ksenofobiyi y antysemityzmu v Ukrayini (1994–2007)," (Kyivskyi Mizhnarodny Institut Sotziology, 2007), http://www.kiis.com.ua/materials/articles/xenophobia_antisemitism.pdf.

129 Kyivskyi Mizhnarodny Institut Sotziology, "Mizhetnichni uperedzhennia v Ukraini," October 4, 2018, http://kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=793&page=1.

130 Aleksandr Dmytruk, "Ponad 50% ukraintsiv skhvaliuyut' obmezhennia prav narkozalezhnykh ta eks-zasudzhenykh Dozlidzhennia," *Hromadske*, July 5, 2017, https://hromadske.ua/posts/ponad-50-ukraintsiv-skhvaliuiut-obmezhennia-prav-narkozalezhnykh-ta-eks-zasudzhenykh-doslidzhennia.

131 "Postanova Verkhovnoyi Rady Ukrayiny, 'Pro vidznachennya mizhnarodnoho dnya holokostu romiv,'" October 8, 2004, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2085-15.

132 The date of the so-called Gypsy Night in Auschwitz in 1944, when those who lived in the Roma sector of the camp were exterminated.

133 Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union, "Prezydent poobitsyav romam pidtrymku," August 4, 2009, http://old.helsinki.org.ua/index.php?id=1249380696.

fill this promise. Currently, the efforts of non-governmental organizations have helped identify 130 places of extermination of the Romani and Sinti in Ukraine, and fifteen of them have been marked with memorial plaques.[134] The memorialization of the genocide of the Roma and Sinti has been carried out by a small number of supporters and is mainly sponsored by foreigners. At times, this leads to conflicts with those in power. Two attempts at establishing a monument to the Roma, a *kibitka* (nomad tent wagon) in Babyn Yar, were aborted by Kyiv city authorities because of the failure of the organizers to comply with formal requirements (unsurprisingly, several other memorial signs in Babyn Yar that failed to comply with formal regulations remained untouched). In the end, Kamyanets-Podilskiy became the home of the monument. Only in 2017 was a copy of the monument placed at Babyn Yar.

The history of the Crimean Tatars occupies a special place in Ukrainian historical memory. In the canonical version of the Ukrainian ethnonational narrative, this ethnic group was traditionally represented as a historical Other: either a perfidious and unreliable temporary ally or an outright enemy. This stereotype was particularly strong in school textbooks. According to the research project "Tolerant Textbooks—a Tolerant Society," which carried out an analysis of fifty-two social science textbooks in 2010–11, twenty-eight of them were found to contain 170 intolerant statements. Most of these concerned the Crimean Tatars.[135]

The Crimean Tatars entered the space of historical politics in 1994. In April of that year, Leonid Kravchuk published a decree, "On the Events Honoring the Memory of Victims of Deportation from Crimea," which referred to Crimean Tatars, Bulgarians, Armenians, Greeks, and "persons of other nationalities."[136] A commemoration date was fixed on May 18. In 2003, President Leonid Kuchma ordered the observation of the sixtieth anniversary of the deportation. The name of this document listed the victims of

134 "Henotsyd romiv i Holokost v Ukrayini," Hromadske Radio, April 4, 2016, https://hromadskeradio.org/programs/zustrichi/genocyd-romiv-i-golokost-v-ukrayini.

135 Gulnara Bekirova "'Oy tataryn, bratichok, tataryn, prodav sestrytsyu zadarom...,' Yaki tsinnosti pryshcheplyuye yunym hromadyanam Ukrayinska derzhava cherez shkilni pidruchnyky," *Ukrainskyi Tyzhden*, April 4, 2015, http://tyzhden.ua/History/132828.

136 "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrainy 'Pro zakhody shchodo vshanuvannia zhertv deportatsii z Krymu,'" April 14, 1994, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/165/94.

the deportation as "Crimean Tatars and persons of other nationalities."[137] In addition to more formal and ritualistic events, the president asked for funds to restore the Palace of the Khans in Bakhchisaray. In 2009, Yushchenko published a decree commemorating the sixty-fifth anniversary of the deportation of "Crimean Tatars and other persons on ethnic grounds."[138] This decree included a broad program of commemorative events textually similar to the other commemorative decrees issued by Yushchenko; the implementation of this program depended on the enthusiasm and consciences of civil servants. The decree also requested verification for resettlement assistance programs for returnees: this action was extremely controversial. Public conflicts and protests and even illegal land seizures by Crimean Tatars became routine due to the reluctance of the Crimean authorities to peacefully resolve conflicts related to repatriation.

The standard calendar was used to commemorate the event referred to as genocide among Crimean Tatars; they used this terminology in their observations of the May 18 memorial day, and they expected the state to do the same. The Qurultay (the supreme representative body of Crimean Tatars) established a special commission to investigate the genocide of the Crimean Tatar people. In May 2009, Viktor Yushchenko ordered the Security Service of Ukraine to investigate whether the deportation was an act of genocide (the investigation of the Holodomor was initiated around the same time). According to Gulnara Bekirova, the SBU stopped their investigation in 2011.[139] In May 2015, SBU relaunched this symbolic investigation.[140]

On the formal level, the state half-heartedly recognized the tragedy of the Crimean Tatars but relegated it to the margins of the Ukrainian memory space. The most important contribution of the state was the inclusion of information about the 1944 deportation in history textbooks.

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137 "Rozporyadzhennya Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro 60-tu richnytsyu deportatsiyi z Krymu krymskikh tatar i osib inshykh natsionalnostey,'" September 15, 2003, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/286/2003-рп.

138 "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrayiny, 'Pro zakhody u zv'yazku z 65-my rokovynamy deportatsiyi z Krymu krymskykh tatar ta inshikh osib za natsionalnoyu oznakoyu,'" April 30, 2009, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/281/2009.

139 Gulnara Bekirova, "Pytannya deportatsiyi tatar z Krymu zalyshayetsya dyskusiynym," *Zaxid*, February 15, 2011, http://zaxid.net/news/showNews.do?gulnara_bekirova_pitannya_deportatsiyi_tatar_z_krimu_zalishayetsya_diskusiynim&objectId=1122777.

140 "SBU vidnovylo robotu hrupy z rozsliduvannia deportatsii kryms'kykh tatar," Radio Svoboda, May 18, 2015, https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news/27022581.html.

The situation evolved with the loss of Crimea in the spring of 2014: the political leadership of the Crimean Tatars opposed the annexation, and the Russian authorities reacted by banning the activities of the Mejlis, which was branded as an extremist organization.[141] A crackdown on Crimean Tatar activist organizations in the annexed region followed. The tragedy of 1944 became highly politicized. Remembrance of this tragedy began to interest the Ukrainian state. On November 12, 2015, the Verkhovna Rada recognized the 1944 deportation as a "genocide of the Crimean Tatar people" and established an official commemoration date on May 18, now called the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Crimean Tatar Genocide.[142] For the first time, this day was observed at the national level. In May 2016, the Ukrainian parliament adopted a statement to international organizations about the genocide of the Crimean Tatar people and the violation of their rights and liberties by the Russian Federation. The 1944 tragedy was seen through the lens of current events. The Verkhovna Rada proposed that May 18 be observed as the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Crimean Tatar Genocide and that the current occupation of Crimea by Russia be condemned.[143] Never before had the deportation of Crimean Tatars in 1944 attracted so much attention from the state and society: the scale of the commemoration of May 18 was huge. Crimean Tatar singer Jamala won the Eurovision Song Contest that month with her song "1944," and this pop culture event became a part of Ukrainian political life.

The existence of "peripheral" genocides might be a consequence of the archaism of the Ukrainian national project, which continues to rely on an exclusivist model of historical memory that presents the past through the prism of the history of distinct ethnic groups. Certain departures from the latter in favor of an inclusivist model tend to be related to oscillations in the political climate and do not indicate a long-term strategy. State events dedi-

141 The Mejlis is a traditional public executive body of the Crimean-Tatar people, a kind of informal government.

142 "Postanova Verkhovnoyi Rady Ukrayiny, 'Pro vyznannya henotsydu krymskotatarskoho narodu,'" November 12, 2015, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/792-19.

143 "Zvernennya Verkhovnoyi Rady Ukrayiny do Orhanizatsiyi Ob'yednanykh Natsiy, Yevropeyskoho Parlamentu, Parlamentskoyi Asambleyi Rady Yevropy, Parlamentskoyi Asambleyi OBSYe, Parlamentskoyi Asambleyi NATO, svitovykh lideriv ta vsikh chleniv mizhnarodnoho spivtovarystva shchodo vshanuvannya zhertv henotsydu krymskotatarskoho narodu ta zasudzhennya porushen Rosiyskoyu Federatsiyeyu prav i svobod krymskotatarskoho narodu," May 11, 2016, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1348-19.

cated to the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Babyn Yar tragedy in Kyiv demonstrated the readiness of part of the ruling class to accept the European model of Holocaust remembrance (or at least its rhetoric), but whether it resulted from political expediency or from the genuine internalization of this discourse remains unclear.[144] The recognition of the 1944 deportation of the Crimean Tatars as genocide was undeniably the result of a contemporary political agenda. However, the story of extermination of the Roma and Sinti remains marginal to the core national narrative of Ukraine. Moreover, Ukraine belongs to the group of countries that has not recognized the Armenian genocide of 1915.

Even as there are shifts in the historical politics, the examples outlined above demonstrate that these national tragedies continue to be considered an issue only for 'Others' in Ukraine. They are excluded from the national memory narrative, which cultivates its own tragedies and, in certain cases, turns the heroes in someone else's tragedies into villains (the case of the OUN and UPA is the most significant in this regard). Situational inclusion stimulated by external factors and actors and often simulated by internal memory warriors does not help elaborate genuine social or political inclusion, that is, the internalization of the ethnic Other that has lived on the same territory for centuries as an integral part of the collective Self.

Memory Laws

"Memory laws" regulate methods and forms of commemorative practices in the public space. The experience of the 1990s and 2000s singles out two main types of legislative practices in the sphere of collective/historical memory regulation. The first simply establishes certain commemorative practices and rituals, and the second introduces limitations and establishes punishments for their violation.[145] The first type usually presupposes the existence of a public consensus, and the second bears witness to identity and civil loyalty issues and the absence of consensus. International Holocaust Remembrance

144 For more detailed insights into the nature of the Holocaust negligence in Ukraine, see Anna Wylegala, "Managing the Difficult Past: Ukrainian Collective Memory and Public Debates on History," *Nationalities Papers* 5, no. 45 (2017): 780–97.

145 For a more extensive and detailed reading, see Nikolay Koposov, *Memory Laws, Memory Wars: The Politics of the Past in Europe and Russia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018). Koposov provides detailed arguments about the term in different discursive and political contexts.

Day (January 27) belongs to the first type; the laws on Holocaust denial, in force in more than a dozen European countries, exemplify the second. The second type of laws usually causes public conflict which sometimes have to be resolved through additional legislation (for example, the Spanish Constitutional Court nullified the law on criminal penalties for Holocaust denial). Sometimes they give rise to new protest movements, as in France, where the desire of the state to regulate interpretations of the past produced the Freedom for History movement, which became popular among professional historians in different countries.

The string of memory laws adopted in Ukraine since independence starts with the law of 2000 "On the Perpetuation of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945."[146] The idea behind the law was actually to integrate the Soviet memory narrative about the "Great Patriotic War" into the Ukrainian national narrative in accordance with the general trend of historical politics during Kuchma's presidency. The former communist *nomenklatura*, having taken over the reins of power, used the standard national memory narrative to legitimize its position as the national elite while at the same time paying homage to the Soviet nostalgic variant of collective/historical memory. Commemorative practices, rituals, and symbols established by this law copied and repeated Soviet modes of action (e.g., the creation of "corners of military and labor glory" in educational institutions, agencies, and enterprises). May 9 was established as the official day of commemoration, and the day would be marked annually with government decrees.

The law from 2000 returned to the limelight under Viktor Yanukovych when the ruling parties began to resuscitate the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative and discredit the national/nationalist narrative (by stigmatizing its nationalist dimension). In 2011, the communists initiated changes in the law related to the use of the so-called Victory Banner during events dedicated to Victory Day (May 9) and other episodes from the Great Patriotic War (June 22, the day marking the beginning of the war and October 28, the "Day of Ukraine's Liberation from the German Fascist Invaders").[147] Subsequent

146 "Zakon Ukrayiny Pro uvichnennya Peremohy u Velykiy Vitchyznyaniy viyni 1941–1945 rokiv," no. 1684-14, April 20, 2000, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1684-14.

147 The "Victory Banner" is a copy of the banner of a Red Army unit that was hoisted above the Berlin Reichstag on May 1, 1945. The banner and the staged photograph of its hoisting became the main visual symbols of the Soviet historical myth about the victory in the "Great Patriotic War."

developments testify to the fact that the initiative of the communists was a part of a larger strategy to provoke public incidents and discredit the opposition by identifying it with fascism (a strategy used by the authorities during the 2004 presidential campaign). According to the law approved by the parliament and signed by Viktor Yanukovych, the "Victory Banner" was to be raised alongside the state flag of Ukraine during commemorative events dedicated to the "Great Patriotic war."

As expected, the law provoked nervous reactions among nationalists (the All-Ukrainian Union "Svoboda") and their allies in the opposition, who tried to cancel the decision by submitting another draft law.[148] The parliament, controlled by a pro-Yanukovych majority since his accession to power, quickly rejected it. The very fact that this draft law was discussed at all (it came into force at the end of May 2011) immediately created conflict. On May 9, 2011, skirmishes took place in Lviv in the vicinity of the Soviet-built Hill of Glory Memorial; radical nationalists clashed with partisans of the "Victory Banner" from Odessa (Russian Unity organization, Rodina Party), who were less numerous but well organized.

In June 2011, responding to an appeal by the opposition MP Yuri Kostenko, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine recognized a number of points in the law as unconstitutional.[149] This decision did not stop conflicts involving the "Victory Banner" and the red flag in general. In 2012 and 2013, representatives of the Communist Party of Ukraine persistently organized public actions with red flags to celebrate May 9 in western Ukraine (Lviv, Ternopil), and members of Svoboda were eager to physically oppose them.

In April 2015, the first memory law in the modern history of Ukraine ceased to exist. A new law that completely transformed the memory narrative about World War II replaced it. It removed Soviet formulas from commemorations of the war; the "Victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945" mutated

148 Verkhovna Rada Ukrayiny, "Proekt Zakonu pro skasuvannya Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro vnesennya zmin do Zakonu Ukrayiny,' 'Pro uvichnennya Peremohy u Velykiy Vitchyznyaniy viyny 1941–1945 rokiv, shchodo poryadku ofitsiynoho vykorystannya kopiy Prapora Peremohy,'" May 25, 2011, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=40477.

149 "Rishennya Konstytutsiynoho sudu Ukrayiny u spravi za konstytutsiynym zvernennyam hromadyanyna Kostenka Yuriya Ivanovycha shchodo ofitsiynoho tlumachennya okremykh polozhen pidpunktiv 1, 2 punktu 1 Zakonu Ukrayiny 'Pro vnesennya zmin do Zakonu Ukrayiny "Pro uvichnennya Peremohy u Velykiy Vitchyznyaniy viyny 1941–1945 rokiv" shchodo poryadku ofitsiynoho vykorystannya kopiy Prapora Peremohy,'" June 16, 2011, http://zakono.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/v006p710-11.

into the "Victory over Nazism in World War II." The label of "Victory Day," which had been traditionally celebrated on May 9, also changed; the new official name of the holiday was the "Day of Victory over Nazism in World War II." Another innovation was the introduction of May 8 as the Day of Memory and Reconciliation, which was intended to demonstrate the convergence of Ukrainian historical politics and European memorial practices.[150]

The most famous Ukrainian memorial law from the first decade of the twenty-first century was arguably the 2006 law "On the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine." The preparation and enactment of the law became a political tragicomedy that developed against the background of a general political crisis caused by the breakup of the "democratic coalition"[151] and the emergence of the "anti-crisis coalition," which brought together the Party of Regions, representatives of big business, and communists and socialists—parties that in reality should have been ideological adversaries.[152] President Viktor Yushchenko submitted the law to the parliament, marking it as "urgent." Three of six articles of the draft law virtually opened a new page of historical politics in Ukraine. The first article qualified the "Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine as a genocide of the Ukrainian nation," the second prohibited the "denial of the fact of the Holodomor," and the sixth addressed "administrative responsibility for the public denial of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine."[153]

Representatives of the Party of Regions proposed an alternative draft law that did not include the word "genocide" and stated that the famine did not only affect Ukrainians. They presented the event as the "national tragedy of the Ukrainian people."[154] Because the genocide version of the Holodomor

150 Zakon Ukrayiny "Pro uvichnennya peremohy nad natsizmom u Druhiy svitoviy viyni 1939–1945 rokiv," no. 315–19, April 9, 2015, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/315-19.

151 The name for supporters of Yushchenko in the Orange revolution: National democrats, right-center and right-conservative, and nationalist parties allied with Socialists.

152 For more details, see Georgiy Kasianov, *Ukraina 1991–2007*: *Ocherki noveyshey istorii* (Kyiv: Nash chas, 2008), 415–31. While nobody was surprised by the political promiscuity of the leadership of the CPU, the decision of the Socialist Party to enter the coalition with the "capitalists and oligarchs" was shocking and caused the political meltdown of the party.

153 "Prezydent Ukrainy vnis na rozhliad parlamentu zakonporekt 'Pro Holodomor 1932–1933 rr. v Ukraini'" November 2, 2006, https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-polytics/407539-prezident_ukrani_vns_na_rozglyad_parlamentu_zakonoproekt_pro_golodomor_1932_1933_rokv_v_ukran_517443.html.

154 "Stenohrama plenarnoho zasidannya," November 28, 2006, http://iportal.rada.gov.ua/meeting/stenogr/show/1356.html. The texts of these draft laws are currently absent from the website of the Verkhovna Rada but, at least theoretically, can be obtained upon request.

was also opposed by top Russian leaders, it gave opponents an additional pretext to accuse the Party of Regions of defending alien interests.

The dramatic discussion of the presidential draft law in the Verkhovna Rada on November 28, 2006, collapsed into political buffoonery. Almost every participant interpreted the events of 1932–33 through the lens of the current political situation. The presidential faction ("Our Ukraine") and its allies (the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc) wept over the current dismal state of the Ukrainian nation as the result of holodomors and political repressions and accused opponents of the draft law of being amoral. Their adversaries, in turn, vociferously accused the president and his allies of cynically using the events of 1932–33 to advance their selfish political goals. The leader of the socialists, Oleksandr Moroz, even suspected the presidential draft law of being an attempt to establish a dictatorship in Ukraine, and the communists declared that Yushchenko's initiative would provoke a "chain reaction of confrontation in Ukraine," violate the constitution, and lead to strained relations with Russia. They used this occasion to call for Yushchenko's impeachment.[155]

In response, the MPs of the majority factions (the Party of Regions and the communists) at first flatly refused to consider the presidential draft law and then voted it down. The opposition managed to vote down the alternative draft law, and Ukraine would probably have never passed one of its most famous memorial laws. Moroz, who in addition to leading the socialists, was also the speaker of the parliament, saved the situation. In the recess between the morning and evening plenary sessions, he edited the presidential version. Most notably, he replaced the word "nation" with "Ukrainian people," toned down the wording of the section banning Holodomor denial, and added a mention of other peoples in the USSR who suffered from the famine of 1932–33. As a result of a roll-call vote, this version of the law was adopted, thanks to the socialists who voted in favor of it.[156]

The law stated that "public denial of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine is an insult to the memory of the millions of victims of the Holodomor, a humiliation of the dignity of the Ukrainian people, and is unlawful."[157]

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155 Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy, "Stenohrama plenarnoho zasidannia 28 lystopada 2006 roku," November 28, 2006, http://iportal.rada.gov.ua/meeting/stenogr/show/1356.html.

156 Verkhovna Rada Ukrainy, Stenohrama plenarnoho zasidannia 28 lystopada 2006 roku.

157 "Zakon Ukrayiny 'Pro Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini,'" November 28, 2006, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/376-16.

On December 21, 2006, Yaroslav Kendzor and Refat Chubarov, MPs from Our Ukraine and the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, respectively, registered a draft law introducing modifications of the Ukrainian Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, "On Responsibility for the Public Denial of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 as the Genocide of the Ukrainian People."[158] Communist and Party of Regions MPs demanded that the draft be remitted, which was done. At this stage, President Yushchenko decided to join the fray. On March 28, 2007, he submitted a draft law "On Introducing Modifications into the Ukrainian Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure (On Responsibility for Denial of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 as a Genocide of the Ukrainian People and Denial of the Holocaust as a Fact of Genocide)." He repealed his allies' previous draft, introducing something new: the mention of the Holocaust. He proposed the introduction of criminal responsibility for "the denial of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 as the genocide of the Ukrainian people and the Holocaust as the genocide of the Jewish people."[159] He proposed that public actions as well as the "fabrication and propagation" of relevant materials associated with denialism be punished with a fine of between 100 and 300 percent of tax-exempt minimum wages or imprisonment for up to two years.[160] For repeat offenders or civil servants, the same acts carried a prison term of up to four years.[161] From this point on, all variants of the "criminalization of denial" used this standard set of measures: administrative responsibility, fine, and imprisonment.

Technically, the goal of the law was to concretize the provisions of the previous law from 2006. Informally, the draft law of 2007, which introduced a maximum penalty for civil servants, was apparently meant to intimidate local authorities in the eastern and southern regions. It was here that there

158 "Proekt Zakonu 'Pro vnesennia zmin do Kryminal'noho ta Kryminal'no-procesual'noho kodeksiv Ukrainy,'" March 29, 2007, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=29881.

159 "Poyasnyuvalna zapyska do Proektu Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro vnesennya zmin do Kryminalnoho ta Kryminalno-protsessualnoho kodeksiv Ukrayiny,'" 2, March 29, 2007, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=29881.

160 Meaning 1,700–5,100 hryvnias or approximately $340–$1,020, according to the official exchange rate of the Ukranian National Bank.

161 "Poyasnyuvalna zapyska do Proektu Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro vnesennya zmin do Kryminalnoho ta Kryminalno-protsessualnoho kodeksiv Ukrayiny,'" C. 2, accessed June 20, 2009, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=29881. These documents (the law draft and explanatory notes) are not available at this link anymore. However, since the law draft was resubmitted in December 2007, they are fully reproduced here: http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=30993.

was no enthusiasm for the presidential decrees on preparations for the seventy-fifth anniversary of the tragedy. The draft law also might have been a tactical move in the complex political confrontation between the president and the hostile parliamentary majority, through which the government—also controlled by enemies of Yushchenko—gained momentum. It would be safe to say that the criminalization of Holodomor denial had already become an idée fixe of Yushchenko. The appearance of the mention of the Holocaust was evidently meant to strengthen the presidential initiative by evoking a broader European practice; the draft contained direct references to relevant laws in other European countries.

The explanatory note attached to the draft contained some very interesting turns of phrase. For instance, it affirmed that the "adoption of the law will be conducive to the consolidation of the Ukrainian people, citizens of all ethnic origins, around the ideas of promoting intolerance for any manifestations of violence in society, increasing respect for the lives, rights and liberties of the citizen, and establishing harmony and civil peace in Ukraine."[162] The document never explained how the criminal prosecution for the "incorrect" interpretation of the Holodomor and the Holocaust would help achieve the aforementioned noble goals.

The criminalization effort was a purely demonstrative action, an act of moral and political pressure against opponents. Using his position as speaker, Moroz chose the end of May 2007 to debate the legislation (even though the draft law was submitted as "urgent"). However, on April 1, 2007, the president had already dissolved the Verkhovna Rada (he had to do it three more times over the following six months because the MPs became unruly and resisted dissolution). At the same time, Yushchenko accused the "anti-crisis coalition" of attempting to usurp power. In the spring of 2007, the draft law on the "criminalization of denial" became a part of political negotiations with the "anti-crisis coalition." It was included in a package of political compromises that included a number of far more important laws about changes to the constitution and the opposition.[163]

162 "Poyasnyuvalna zapyska do Proektu Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro vnesennya zmin do Kryminalnoho ta Kryminalno-protsesualnoho kodeksiv Ukrayiny,'" December 7, 2007, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=30993.

163 "Yushchenko perezavantazhyv matrytsyu," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, April 25, 2007, https://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2007/04/25/3232170/. The article contains a photocopy of the text of the "political deal."

After snap parliamentary elections in October 2007, Yushchenko stated his intent to pass this draft law through the new parliament now that he faced the prospect of having a loyal majority in the parliament. He carried out his promise in December of that year, when the presidential draft on the criminalization of Holodomor and Holocaust denial was mentioned in the list of thirteen other "urgent" draft laws.[164] This time, the need to introduce criminal responsibility for the denial of the genocidal character of the Holodomor and Holocaust was augmented by the "need to deter the relevant conduct and, therefore, to prevent harm to society, to make it impossible to abuse a physical or a legal person, society or the state."[165] A month later, in January 2008, the presidential draft was duplicated by the legislative initiative of two MPs representing the presidential faction "Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense." They intended to punish Holodomor denial (without mentioning the Holocaust this time) with up to six months of probation or three years in prison.[166]

The Party of Regions successfully blocked the draft, and it was rejected. In 2010, after a break caused by yet another political crisis, conflict among Yushchenko's allies, and the presidential election, the issue of the "criminalization of Holodomor denial" returned to the agenda in the habitual context of undermining political opponents. Vasyl Kiseliov of the Party of Regions showed concern for the wrongful use of the word "genocide" in referring to the Holodomor and proposed amending the law "On the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine" by replacing the word "genocide" with the word "tragedy" in the first section.[167] The opposition quickly struck back: parliamentarian Yuri Karmazin submitted a draft law that had an incredibly long but eloquent name.[168] An indefatigable member of the Party of Regions

164 A coalition of "frenemies" emerged when the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc allied with Yushchenko's supporters in Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense bloc.

165 "Poyasnyuvalna zapyska do Proektu Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro vnesennya zmin do Kryminalnoho ta Kryminalno-protsessualnoho kodeksiv Ukrayiny,'" December 7, 2007, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=30993.

166 "Proekt Zakonu pro vnesennia zmin do Kryminal'noho Kodeksu Ukrainy (shchodo vidpovodal'nosti za publichne zaperechennia faktu Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv yak henitsydu Ukrains'koho narodu," accessed December 20, 2020, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_2?id=&pf3516=1427&skl=7.

167 "Proekt Zakonu pro vnesennya zmin do statti 1 Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini,'" May 26, 2010, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=37774.

168 "Proekt Zakonu pro vnesennya zmin do statti 1 Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini' (shchodo vyznannya Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini henotsydom Ukrayinskoho narodu—zlochynom Vsesoyuznoyi komunistichnoyi partiyi (b) ta yiyi filialu-Komunistichnoyi

responded with an updated version of a proposal that suggested the removal of the words "criminal totalitarian regime" from the text of the law. Both actors and spectators were evidently exhausted: all three draft laws were withdrawn.

However, the propaganda potential of the topic was apparently not yet exhausted. At the end of 2010, Stepan Kurpil, a member of the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, proposed supplementing the 2006 law with a reference to penalties for the "denial of the Holodomor as genocide" and amending the Code of Administrative Offenses with an article on administrative responsibility (a fine) for denial.[169] The draft targeted Yanukovych who, as already mentioned, publicly spoke out against the use of the word "genocide" when referring to the Holodomor.

In November 2014, the topic resurfaced in parliament. The All-Ukrainian Union "Svoboda" did not make it into the parliament in the snap elections of October 2014, and in the final days of the "old Verkhovna Rada," MPs decided to again propose the introduction of criminal sanctions "for the denial of the Holodomor as a fact of genocide of the Ukrainian people and the Holocaust as a fact of genocide of the Jewish people." The text of the explanatory note implied that Holocaust rhetoric was already routinely used as a stand-in for the idea of criminalizing the "denial of the Holodomor" (this use of the Holocaust by the members of a party with notoriously antisemitic leadership was like a bad joke).[170] Nationalist MPs decided to think big and proposed punishment for those who "deny the fact" with imprisonment for a period of between six months and three years or up to five years for repeat offenders. The draft law was submitted on the

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partiyi (b) Ukrayiny proty Ukrayinskoho narodu," June 9, 2010, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=37888.

169 "Proekt Zakonu pro vnesennya zmin do statti 1 Zakonu Ukrayiny 'Pro Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini' (shchodo vidpovidalnosti za publichne zaperechennya faktu Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv, yak henotsydu Ukrayinskoho narodu)," December 9, 2010, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=39189; "Proekt Zakonu pro vnesennya zmin do Kodeksu Ukrayiny pro administratyvni pravoporushennya (shchodo vidpovidalnosti za publichne zaperechennya faktu Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv, yak henotsydu Ukrayinskoho narodu)," December 9, 2010, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=39189.

170 "Proekt Zakonu pro vnesennya zmin do Kryminalnoho ta Kryminalnoho protsesualnoho kodeksiv Ukrayini (shchodo vstanovlennya vidpovidalnosti za publichne zaperechennya faktu Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv, yak faktu henotsydu Ukrayinskoho narodu), Holokostu yak faktu henotsydu yevreyskoho narodu)," November 24, 2014, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=52360.

eve of the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Holodomors (commemorated on November 22 in 2014) but was later withdrawn because of the end of the parliamentary term.

The next incarnation of the criminalization of denial (in 2015) was arguably the draft submitted by Oleksandr Feldman, an "independent" MP from Kharkiv, a millionaire, and a well-known Jewish figure. In his explanatory note, which was mostly dedicated to the Holocaust and used the Holodomor as an additional argument in favor of the law, Feldman remarked that the establishment of a substantial fine or prison sentence for the "denial of the Holocaust or Holodomor" would "help protect the reputation and rights of persons who suffered from the Holocaust and raise Ukraine's credibility at the international level."[171] In 2016, the draft disappeared from the website of the Verkhovna Rada because the relevant parliamentary committee assessed it as "having no prospects": it was in conflict with a law adopted two weeks earlier that glorified the OUN and UPA.

In February 2016, a new attempt to introduce criminal punishment for denial was undertaken by a group of MPs. This time the Holocaust and deportation of Crimean Tatars accompanied the Holodomor, and sanctions for denial ranged from a serious fine (equivalent to $1,400 to $6,300) to up to five years imprisonment.[172] Once again, this draft law never reached the plenary session and attempts to pass a special resolution failed.

President Poroshenko picked up the theme in 2017. Speaking at the ceremony dedicated to the anniversary of the Holodomor, he proposed sanctions for Holodomor and Holocaust denial.[173] MPs from the nationalist party Svoboda supported the president's initiative and submitted the latest in the series of criminalization laws. They did not care about the Holocaust, however: the law draft contained references to only the Holodomor. Nationalists proposed the same range of sanctions proposed by "democrats": a fine and

171 "Poyasniuval'na zapyska do Proektu Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro vnesennya zmin do deyakykh zakonodavchykh aktiv Ukrayiny (shchodo kryminalnoyi vidpovidalnosti za zaperechennya Holodomoru ta Holokostu),'" April 29, 2015, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=54987.

172 "Zakon Ukrainy, 'Pro vnesennia zmin do dejakykh zakonodavchyx aktiv Ukrainy (shchodo kryminal'noi vidpovidal'nosti za zaperechennia Holodomoru, Holkostu, henocydu kyms'ko-tatars'koho narodu),'" February 9, 2016, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=58243.

173 See the official website of the President of Ukraine: http://www.president.gov.ua/news/vistup-prezidenta-ukrayini-pid-chas-vshanuvannya-pamyati-zhe-44698.

up to five years imprisonment.[174] The same project was resubmitted by a single MP from Svoboda in September 2020, but it was not included on the agenda. The total number of attempts to criminalize "Holodomor denial" reached thirteen.

The practice of using the questions of history to advance the current political agenda reached its somewhat cartoonish form during the adoption of the so-called dictatorship laws on January 16, 2014, at the height of the mass political actions that turned into a revolt in Kyiv and cities in western and central Ukraine that was later christened the Revolution of Dignity. The goal of the "dictatorship laws," as they were called by representatives of the opposition, was to tighten the screws on participants in demonstrations. Another objective was to substantially restrict the freedom of speech in Ukraine.

The total "package" of eleven laws included two that were pertinent to historical issues.[175] The first law proposed criminal sanctions for the "public denial or justification of the crimes of fascism" by adopting amendments to article 436 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine ("Propaganda of War").[176] The text mentioned the "Waffen SS organization," those who "fought against the anti-Hitler coalition and collaborated with fascist occupiers." This law, prepared by communist MPs, served a dual function. On the one hand, it was part of the strategy of labeling their opponents as "fascists"; their opposition included the nationalist All-Ukrainian Union "Svoboda," for whom the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS (1st Galician), together with the OUN and UPA, was an integral and glorious part of historical memory and, of course, a core part of their ideological arsenal. By this point, the use of the "fascist" label to refer to the entire opposition had already become commonplace in the government.[177] On the other hand, the intention to expand

174 "Zakon Ukrainy, 'Pro vnesennia zmin do dejakykh zakonodavchyx aktiv Ukrainy (shchodo kryminal'noi vidpovidal'nosti za zaperechennia Holodomoru),'" November 21, 2017, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=62982.

175 Only seven laws were "dictatorship laws" (limiting constitutional rights and liberties); the whole package, for instance, included the law on the 2014 state budget.

176 "Zakon Ukrayiny 'Pro vnesennya zminy do Kryminalnoho kodeksu Ukrayiny shchodo vidpovidalnosti za zaperechennya chy vypravdannya zlochyniv fashyzmu,'" no. 29-18, January 16, 2014, http://zakono.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/729-18.

177 Between May 14 and May 18, 2013, the ruling Party of Regions organized a series of rallies (marches) under the slogan "To Europe—without Fascists!" In a strange twist, the final event, the march on May 18 (Europe Day) in Kyiv, coincided in time and place with the final action of the opposition's "Rise, Ukraine!" directed against the Party of Regions. The term "fascists" was used by the ideologists of the Party of Regions to refer to the All-Ukrainian Union "Svoboda" and sometimes to the entire opposition.

the legal grounds for prosecuting political opponents was evident: from now on, any mention of the OUN or UPA as representatives of the national liberation movement could be interpreted at will. It should be remembered that, at the time, the OUN slogan "Glory to Ukraine—glory to heroes!" was adopted by Maidan protesters as a common slogan. Nationalist organizations including Svoboda and Right Sector played a prominent role in the organized violent resistance to government forces. The second law in a way supplemented the first.[178] It also proposed changes to the criminal code, this time to article 297 on the "Desecration of graves." The explanatory note mentioned real cases of desecration of graves of Soviet Army soldiers in western Ukraine (Lviv, Chervonohrad). It was automatically assumed that any such actions were perpetrated by the nationalists (that is, "fascists").

The adoption of the dictatorship laws triggered the violent escalation of street protests in Kyiv; fighting on the barricades erupted in the capital, and new "Maidans" emerged in large cities in western and central Ukraine. Under pressure from protesters and the parliamentary opposition, the laws were retracted on January 28, 2014, but on the same day, the same majority adopted memorial laws similar to those that had made up part of the "dictatorship" package.[179]

Not surprisingly, the promotion of the new portion of the memory laws after the Revolution of Dignity can be considered a continuation of the use and misuse of the past for immediate political goals, without any consideration of the social consequences. The memorial laws adopted between April to May 2015 laid the groundwork for the dramatic change of the collective/historical memory landscape in Ukraine and provoked short-lived protests and half-hearted debates among intellectuals.[180]

178 "Zakon Ukrayiny 'Pro vnesennya zminy do statti 297 Kryminalnoho kodeksu Ukrayiny shchodo vidpovidalnosti za oskvernennya abo ruynovannya pam'yatnykiv, sporudzhennykh v pam'yat tykh, khto borovsya proty natsyzmu v roky Druhoyi svitovoyi viyny–radyanskykh voyiniv-vyzvolyteliv, uchasnykiv partyzanskoho rukhu, pidpilnykiv, zhertv natsystskykh peresliduvan, a takozh voyiniv-internatsionalistiv ta myrotvotsiv,'" no. 728-18, January 16, 2014, http://zakono.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/728-18.

179 "Zakon Ukrayiny 'Pro vnesennya zminy do Kryminalnoho kodeksu Ukrayiny shchodo vidpovidalnosti za zaperechennya chy vypravdannya zlochyniv fashizmu,'" no. 735-VII, January 28, 2014, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/735-18; "Zakon Ukrayiny 'Pro vnesennya zminy do statti 297 Kryminalnoho kodeksu Ukrayiny shchodo vidpovidalnosti za oskvernennya abo ruynuvannya pam'yatnykiv, sporudzhenykh v pam'yat tykh, khto borovsya proty natsizmu v roky Druhoyi svitovoyi viyny–radyanskykh voyiniv-vyzvolyteliv, uchasnykiv partyzanskoho rukhu, pidpilnykiv, zhertv natsystskykh peresliduvan, a takozh voyiniv-internatsionalistiv ta myrotvortsiv,'" no. 734-VII, January 28, 2014, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/734-18.

180 One of these laws was discussed in the beginning of the chapter.

It might be too early to assess the long-term consequences of these laws, but the main ideological substance of two of them is already obvious: the elimination of the Soviet nostalgic memory narrative from the symbolic memorial space and its replacement with the national/nationalist representation of the past. Two of the four laws in the package deserve special attention: "On the Legal Status and Celebration of the Memory of Participants of the Struggle for the Independence of Ukraine in the Twentieth Century"[181] and "On Condemnation of the Communist and National-Socialist (Nazi) Totalitarian Regimes and the Prohibition of the Propagation of their Symbols."[182] The former aimed to "recognize *the participants of the struggle for the independence* of Ukraine in the twentieth century as the *main* actors in the struggle *for the restoration of the independence* of Ukraine—*fighters for the independence* of Ukraine in the twentieth century" (my italics).[183] The law suggested establishing a legal status for independence fighters, defining the right of such persons "to receive state and municipal benefits." As follows from the text of the law, by "legal status," the authors meant their official recognition as "independence fighters," that is, those who "took part in all forms of the political, armed, or any other collective or individual struggle for the independence of Ukraine in the twentieth century." The formula is followed by a long list of such organizations, most of which had long ceased to exist; the list starts with the state bodies of the Ukrainian People's Republic and ends with the People's Movement of Ukraine (Rukh). The law mentions "other organizations, structures, or formations" that can be added to the list by the government.

The most impressive provision of the law is the article establishing sanctions for the "violation of legislation on the status" of the independence fighters. Irrespective of their nationality, people who took the liberty of publicly showing "contemptuous disregard" for the independence fighters or "hampering the realization of their rights" should bear responsibility "as set forth by law." The final formula deserves to be reproduced in full: "The pub-

181 "Zakon Ukrayiny 'Pro pravovyy status ta vshanuvannya pam'yati bortsiv za nezalezhnist Ukrayiny u XX stolitti,'" no. 314-19, April 9, 2015, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/314-19.

182 "Zakon Ukrayiny 'Pro zasudzhennya komunistychnoho ta national-sotsialistychnoho (natsystskoho) totalitarnykh rezhymiv v Ukrayini ta zaboronu propagandy yikhnyoyi symvoliky,'" no. 317-VIII, April 9, 2015, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/317-19.

183 "Zakon Ukrayiny 'Pro pravovyy status ta vshanuvannya pam'yati bortsiv za nezalezhnist Ukrayiny u XX stolitti,'" no. 314-19, April 9, 2015, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/314-19.

lic denial of the fact of the rightfulness of the struggle for the independence of Ukraine in the twentieth century is recognized as an outrage against the memory of the fighters for the independence of Ukraine and the degradation of the dignity of the Ukrainian people and is illegal."[184] Nobody was able to explain what "the fact of the rightfulness of the struggle for independence" meant or how it is possible to deny it.

The strategy to promote the idea of punitive sanctions was the same used on the issue of the criminalization of Holodomor denial. In January 2017, MP Yuri Shukhevych, the son of Roman Shukhevych and a recognized participant in the struggle for Ukrainian independence, submitted a draft law with an intricate name that mentioned the Holodomor together with "independence fighters." The draft addressed the denial of both the "fact of the rightfulness of the struggle for the independence of Ukraine" and the "fact of the Holodomor of 1932–1933."[185] Sanctions ranged from fines and six months detention (if a first-time offense) to heavy fines and imprisonment for up to five years if the crime is a repeat offense or if perpetrated by a "representative of authority" or a group.

In December 2018, the Ukrainian parliament passed a new law that finalized the equalization of the rights of Soviet and nationalist veterans. Since then, veterans of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and other nationalist military formations, members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, and all "persons who took part in the struggle for independence in the twentieth century" received equal status with those who fought in the ranks of the anti-Nazi coalition. The major aim, however, was not social benefits. The law excluded a previous formulation that withheld this status from those who were involved in crimes against humanity.[186] The major aim of this amendment was to whitewash the image of organizations whose collaboration with the Nazis and role in the Holocaust and other ethnic cleansings had attracted a lot of attention in public discourse. In terms of social jus-

184 Ibid.

185 "Proekt Zakonu pro vnesennya zmin do deyakykh zakonodavchykh aktiv Ukrayiny shchodo vstanovlennya vidpovidalnosti za zaperechennya faktu pravomirnosti borotby za nezalezhnist Ukrayiny u XX stolitti, faktu Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukrayini,'" January 20, 2017, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=60975.

186 "Proekt Zakonu pro vnesennia zmin do Zakonu, 'Pro status veteraniv viiny, harantii ikh sotsial'noho zakhystu" shchodo posylennia sotsial'noho zakhystu uchasnykiv borot'by za nezalezhnist' u XX stolitti,'" June 22, 2018, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=64282.

tice, the new law was a rather symbolic act since the number of UPA veterans was about 1,200 by the end of 2018, according to data collected by the R. Shukhevych Brotherhood of UPA Soldiers.[187]

The law "On the Condemnation of the Communist and National-Socialist (Nazi) Totalitarian Regimes and the Prohibition of the Propagation of Their Symbols" was, for all intents and purposes, an extensive reorganization of the symbolic space of collective/historical memory in Ukraine. The law condemned the regimes specified in its name, defined the legal grounds for prohibiting the propagation of their symbols, and established procedures for their elimination from the public space, including a full ban on their use as toponyms and the names of political parties.

The mention of the National Socialist (Nazi) regime in the law followed the decommunization scenario of Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic states. In this setting, "denazification" seemed to have a purely ritual meaning because of the physical lack of anything to denazify.[188] However, at the same time, equating Nazism with the Soviet variant of communism was used to discredit the latter morally and politically, helping local rightist and right-conservative politicians who intermittently came to power and usually struggled against the communist heritage.

By equating communism with Nazism, the authors claimed to "follow European practices" (The European Parliament in 2008 and OSCE in 2009 famously equated "Stalinism" with "Nazism").[189] "Nazism" was intended to play a role similar to that of the Holocaust in the criminalization of Holodomor denial, appearing regularly but as a side issue. This approach becomes especially evident in a textual analysis of the law, as all mentions of Nazism are evidently "technical," playing a "supporting role" (for instance, the "symbols of Nazism" reduced exclusively to the symbolism of the NSDAP).[190] The prohibition in the law is against communism in its broad-

187 "Prezydent pidpysav zakon pronadannia status veteraniv voiakam OUN I UPA," Zaxid.net, December 23, 2018, https://zaxid.net/prezident_pidpisav_zakon_pro_nadannya_statusu_veteraniv_voyakam_oun_i_upa_n1472511.

188 In these regions, Nazi symbols and "places of memory" were liquidated long ago by the communist regime.

189 The law refers to six documents adopted by the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE.

190 "Zakon Ukrayiny 'Pro zasudzhennya komunistychnoho ta national-sotsialistychnoho (natsystskoho) totalitarnykh rezhymiv v Ukrayini ta zaboronu propagandy yikhnyoyi symvoliky,'" no. 317-19, April 9, 2015, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/317-19.

est sense—as a symbol, as a system of values, and as political practice. The law bans all uses of communist/Nazi symbols in the public sphere, itemizing the cases of such use and providing a detailed list of symbols, images, names, memorial signs, and other vestiges of the communist past to be removed and banned. The authors also created a list of exceptions and cases where the ban is not applicable such as in research, art, and educational material, as long as such uses "do not entail propaganda of the criminal character of the communist totalitarian regime of 1917–1991, [or] of the criminal character of the National Socialist (Nazi) totalitarian regime."[191]

According to expert opinion, some articles of the law challenged the constitution, and some contradicted other existing laws.[192] Nevertheless, the law was hastily adopted and, together with the law on the glorification of independence fighters, immediately became the object of heavy criticism not only from expected opponents like the communists or the fragments of the former Party of Regions, but also from those who were seen as allies. The procedure used to adopt the laws was the first issue to trigger an outcry: they were "unanimously approved" on the same day in a package with two other less provocative memorial laws during a parliamentary session which looked rather like a rally; there was no discussion of the laws—a breach of regulations—and a total disregard for the opinion of external reviewers. Critics from the scholarly community were particularly alarmed by the desire of the state to regulate the interpretation and the representation of the past, and to limit what could be said about it. Fundamentally, the laws limited freedom of speech and enhanced the capacity for bureaucratic despotism. Soon after the adoption of these laws by the parliament, a collective letter signed by sixty-three "foreign experts on Ukraine" (the signatories included a number of Ukrainian citizens as well) was addressed to the chairman of the Verkhovna Rada, Volodymyr Groysman, and President Petro Poroshenko; it urged them to reject two of the four memorial laws.[193]

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191 "Zakon Ukrayiny 'Pro zasudzhennya komunistychnoho.'" This is one of the most obscure passages in the text of the law, probably a result of haste and a lack of legal competence on the part of the authors.

192 "Vysnovok na Proekt Zakonu Ukrayiny 'Pro zasudzhennya komunistychnoho ta national-sotsialistychnoho (natsystskoho) totalitarnykh rezhymiv v Ukrayini ta zaboronu propagandy yikhnyoyi symvoliky,'" reg. no. 2558, April 6, 2015, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=54670.

193 "Open Letter from Scholars and Experts on Ukraine Re. the So-Called 'Anti-Communist Law,'" *Krytyka,* April 2015, https://krytyka.com/en/articles/open-letter-scholars-and-experts-ukraine-re-so-called-anti-communist-law..

The letter expressed apprehension about the ban on potential criticism of the OUN and the UPA (with administrative and even criminal penalties). The authors wrote, "Not only would it be a crime to question the legitimacy of an organization (UPA) that slaughtered tens of thousands of Poles in one of the most heinous acts of ethnic cleansing in the history of Ukraine, but it would also exempt from criticism the OUN, one of the most extreme political groups in Western Ukraine between the wars, and one which collaborated with Nazi Germany at the outset of the Soviet invasion in 1941."[194] In another passage, the letter explained that the total condemnation of the Soviet period may lead to "absurd and unjust consequences," enabling the prosecution of those whose positive assessments of the Soviet period could be interpreted as "propaganda of Communism." All addressees ignored this appeal. In May 2015, President Poroshenko enacted the bill. Volodymyr Viatrovych, the director of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, hastened to brand the open letter as a document that could be used in Russia's information warfare against Ukraine.[195]

On May 27, 2015, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted a special resolution that launched the implementation of the decommunization law concerning the ban on legal entities and political parties. In practice, the law was about depriving the Communist Party of Ukraine of its political identity—its name, symbols, and official policies. The extensive document contained detailed instructions to the Ministry of Justice and its local bodies on the actual prohibition of any political party or social organization that would use the symbols of the "Communist totalitarian regime" (including, for instance, the hammer and sickle).[196] A special commission created by the Ministry of Justice discovered three parties in Ukraine with the word "communist" in their name, two of them being the long-ailing Communist Party of Ukraine (renewed) and the Communist Party of

194 Ibid.

195 Quite soon this formula became a commonplace in combating any criticism of the nationalist narrative of the past.

196 "Kabinet ministriv Ukrayiny Postanova vid travnya 27, 2015 r. no. 354, 'Pro poryadok pryinyattya rishen shchodo nevidpodvidnosti diyalnosti, naymenuvannya ta/abo symbolyky yurydychnoyi osoby, politychnoyi partiyi, yiyi oblasnoyi, miskoyi, rayonnoyi orhanizatsiyi abo inshoho strukturnoho utvorennya, peredbachenoho statutom politychnoyi partiyi, inshoho ob'yednannya hromadyan vymoham Zakonu Ukrayiny Zakon Ukrayiny "Pro zasudzhennya komunistychnoho ta national-sotsialistychnoho (natsystskoho) totalitarnykh rezhymiv v Ukrayini ta zaboronu propagandy yikhnyoyi symvoliky,'" May 27, 2015, http://zakon5.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/354-2015-п.

Workers and Peasants. The Communist Party of Ukraine chaired by Petro Symonenko that had recently been defeated in the Verkhovna Rada elections was also listed. The names, symbols, and charters of all three parties were found to be illegal, and they were now facing a dilemma: change their identity or to stop their activities. Minister of Justice Pavlo Petrenko signed orders excluding the aforementioned parties from the electoral process.[197] Not much is known about the reaction of the two communist parties that existed solely in the registers of the Ministry of Justice; however, for the CPU, gloomy after its failure in the parliamentary elections, decommunization was a godsend.

In July 2015, the CPU filed a lawsuit against the Ministry of Justice; the case moved through the administrative courts, leading to the CPU being "banned" one day and "unbanned" the next. In October 2015, the communists were unable to participate in local elections under their name. In December 2015, the CPU leader announced that the party would apply to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). In May 2017, a group of forty-six MPs from the opposition (the remnants of the Party of Regions) submitted an inquiry to the Constitutional Court about the legality of the decommunization law.[198] The case was closed in July 2019; the Constitutional Court recognized the constitutionality of the law "On the Condemnation of the Communist and National-Socialist (Nazi) Totalitarian Regimes and the Prohibition of the Propagation of their Symbols."[199] This verdict was not unanimous; four judges abstained.

Despite the ban, the CPU was still active in public life, claiming 50,000 members (2018) and local branches in all the regions of Ukraine.[200] In February 2019, the CPU announced that the ECHR would consider the

197 "V Ukrayini ofitsiyno zaboronyly KPU," TSN, July 24, 2015, http://tsn.ua/politika/v-ukrayini-oficiyno-zaboronili-kpu-462089.html.

198 Roman Kravets, "Prizrak kommunizma ili pochemu zapreshchennaja KPU prodolzhajet svoju dejatel'nost," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, August 30, 2018, https://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/articles/2018/08/30/7190350/.

199 Imenem Ukrainy, "Rishennia Konstytutsiinoho sudu Ukrainy u spravi za konstytucijnym podanniam 46 deputativ shchodo vidpovidnosti Konstytutsii Ukrainy (konstytutsiinosti) Zakonu Ukrainy 'Pro zasudzhennia komunisychnoho ta national-sotsialistychnoho (natsysts'koho) totalitarnykh rezhymiv v Ukraini ta zaboronu ikh symvoliky,'" July 16, 2019, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/v009p710-19.

200 Kravets, "Prizrak kommunizma ili pochemu zapreshchennaja KPU."

case, but Petro Symonenko, the leader of the CPU, was not permitted to take part in the presidential elections in Ukraine later that year.[201]

In the meantime, the decommunization of symbolic space was enacted across the entire country: commissions of "public representatives" were created by local authorities and independent bodies to prepare proposals for the total overhaul of toponyms and the "cleansing" of monuments and memorial spaces of the communist regime (the "Nazi totalitarian regime" evidently did not cause such problems). The decommunization of the public space met with mixed reactions. Opinion polls showed a lack of interest in the problem; many Ukrainian citizens believed that the country had more pressing issues than the toppling of statues or the changing of street signs.[202]

At the end of 2015, Ukraine received the "preliminary conclusion" of the Venetian Commission on its main decommunization law. It suggested a "more extensive" list of banned symbols; a clear definition of the term "propaganda," especially in cases when a criminal penalty is proposed; and a clear definition of and limits for the notion of "crimes of the regime" that are not to be publicly denied (that is, clarifying the crimes mentioned in the law). The commission suggested restricting criminal penalties only to such breaches of the law that constitute a real threat to society. A separate paragraph suggested banning political parties and non-governmental organizations only in exceptional cases and as a last resort.[203] The commission scolded the authors of the law for its hurried passage, for the absence of public discussion, and for the vagueness of its language, including the aim of the law.[204]

In May 2016, a group of MPs proposed a draft law that implemented the recommendations of the Venetian Commission. Sanctions were mitigated, but criminal penalties (from large fines to imprisonment for two to five

201 "ESPCH rassmotrit obrashchenie Kompartii Ukrainy otnositel'no antikonstitutsionnogo nedopuska Petra Simonenko k uchastiyu v vyborakh prezidenta Ukrainy," May 28, 2018, https://www.kpu.ua/ru/93025/espch_rassmotryt_obraschenye_kompartyy_ukrayny_otnosytelno_antykonstytutsyonnogo_nedopuska_petra_symonenko_k_uchastyju_v_vyborah_prezydenta_ukrayny.

202 Olena Konoplia, "Ukraintsi staly mensh dovirlyvymy i terpymymy," accessed May 20, 2019, http://ukr.segodnya.ua/ukraine/ukraincy-stali-menee-doverchivymi-i-terpimymi-655953.html.

203 Joint Interim Opinion on the Law of Ukraine on the Condemnation of the Communist and National Socialist (Nazi) Regimes and Prohibition of Propaganda of their Symbols. Adopted by the Venice Commission at its 105th Plenary Session Venice (December 18–19, 2015), 4, accessed Aprill 12, 2016, http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdf=CDL-AD%282015%29041-e&lang=EN.

204 Joint Interim Opinion on the Law of Ukraine, 18–21.

years) remained in place for the public denial of the Holodomor, Holocaust, or deportation of Crimean Tatars, and for the trivialization of crimes against humanity, military crimes, crimes of aggression, "and other crimes." The text of the law contains a passage denouncing propaganda on behalf of the communist or Nazi regimes, for instance, the "public apology for the establishment of Soviet rule in the territory of Ukraine or in separate administrative-territorial units; [and] public apology for the persecution of fighters for the independence of Ukraine in the twentieth century" by Soviet and Nazi government authorities.[205] For various reasons, the draft law got stuck in committee. In November 2016, MPs representing the Petro Poroshenko Bloc suggested adopting the draft law in its first reading, but it went no further. In summer 2019, this draft law was excluded from consideration due to the expiration of the term of the Verkhovna Rada elected in 2014.

Meanwhile, the process of decommunization in Ukraine focused predominantly on the public space: localities, districts, streets, squares, side streets, and other "topographic objects" were renamed, and monuments and memorial signs were removed. Even with this decommunization underway, at least one-third of the population regretted the breakdown of the USSR according to an opinion poll from May 2014. The nostalgia increased the further east one went: while only 33 percent of respondents in Central Ukraine expressed regret, this figure increased to almost 50 percent in eastern and southern Ukraine and 60 percent in Donbass.[206] In August 2015, according to opinion polls conducted by the FAMA sociological agency, almost 90 percent of respondents expressed a negative view of decommunization; most of them were unhappy with its top-down character, its "bad timing" (there were

205 "Porivnyalna tablitsya do proyektu Zakonu Ukrayiny, 'Pro vnesennya zmin do deyakykh zakonodavchykh aktiv Ukrayiny u sferi zasudzhennya totalitarnykh rezhymiv shchodo pryvedennya yikh u vidpovidnist do vymoh statti 10 Konventsiyi pro zakhyst prav lyudyny i osnovopolozhnykh svobod,'" May 20, 2016, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=59178.

206 "Pro rozpad SRSR dosi zhalkuye tretyna ukrayintsiv," *Racurs*, May 5, 2014, https://racurs.ua/ua/n26730-pro-rozpad-srsr-dosi-jalkuie-tretyna-ukrayinciv.html. Regret for the USSR was hardly related to any ideological motives. People regretted a certain ideal model, associated with stability, social justice, and confidence in the future. Regret that the USSR broke down did not automatically imply a desire to recreate it, as testified by the perpetual decrease of support for the CIS through the 2000s. According to an opinion poll held by Razumkov Center in September 2016, the idea of creating a union state of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine as equal subjects was supported by 18 percent of respondents and opposed by 69 percent. See "Ukrayintsi vyznachylysya shchodo chlenstva v NATO, YeS, SND ta maybutnikh vidnosyn z RF–opytuvannya," *Ukrainskyi Tyzhden*, September 27, 2016, http://tyzhden.ua/News/174867.

more urgent problems), and the absence of public discussion on the issue.[207] These figures indicate the extent of open or hidden resistance to top-down decommunization, which was especially strong in the regions it specifically targeted: Donbass (territories under Ukrainian control), Sloboda Ukraine, and the southeast. By February 2016, only 47 percent of the decommunization plan had been implemented[208].

The greatest "schedule delay" was in central and southern Ukraine, namely in Poltava, Odessa, Sumy, Mykolaiv, and Kherson.[209] Oleksandr Mamay, the mayor of Poltava, defiantly refused to take any action on renaming the streets; this did not stop him from being reelected in October 2015. An informal referendum held in Kirovohrad during local elections showed that a majority of its inhabitants supported the return to the historical name of the city, Yelisavetgrad. As the law said nothing about imperial heritage (which is, of course, unacceptable to the authors of the law), these results were an unpleasant surprise, especially when it was publicly insinuated that the city had been named after St. Elizabeth rather than the Russian Empress Elizabeth Petrovna. Finally, in July 2016, Kirovohrad was renamed Kropyvnytskyi in honor of a famous classical Ukrainian playwright. The transformation of Dnipropetrovsk into Dnipro failed to excite local inhabitants (they suggested keeping the old name), but the name change was accepted without much of a fight.[210] The renaming of Komsomolsk in Poltava oblast, a city built in the early 1960s, followed the Kirovohrad model: despite the protests of locals, the Verkhovna Rada rechristened the city Horishni Plavni. In Odessa, the monument to Lenin was transformed into a statue of Darth Vader. The Odessite sense of humor could not compete with the seriousness of the commitment of city council members in Volnovakha, Donetsk Region: unwilling to topple a monument to Vasily Chapayev, an icon of Soviet mythology, they decided to

207 "Konflikt v media I media v konflikti: FAMA; Serpen'-Veresen' 2015," 29–32, accessed October 29, 2015, http://journalism.ucu.edu.ua/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Konflikt-v-media-i-media-v-konflikti-Fama-Serpen-Veresen-2015.pdf.

208 "Dekomunizatsiiyu vykonano na 47% – instytut natspamiati" (infographics), *Istorichna Pravda*, February 12, 2016, https://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2016/02/12/148925/.

209 "Mariupil, Kharkiv ta Dnipropetrovsk–lidery z dekomunizatsiyi," UA1, accessed October 22, 2016, http://ua1.com.ua/society/mariupol-harkiv-ta-dnipropetrovsk-lideri-z-dekomunizaciji-16636.html.

210 The appeal of the 48 MPs of the Verkhovna Rada to the Constitutional Court was rejected.

rebrand it as "Cossack."[211] In the village of Tkhorivka, Kyiv oblast, Lenin's moustache was lengthened and its direction was changed to transform a statue of Ilyich into Taras Shevchenko. In July 2016, Andriy Parubiy, chairman of the Verkhovna Rada and one of the main champions of decommunization, declared that the renaming of (most) cities and administrative districts was over (a total of 1,012 had changed their names).[212]

Polling done by the Razumkov Center in the spring of 2016 confirmed the consistency of regional differences in responses to decommunization. For instance, the change of the name of the May 9 holiday was supported by 57 percent of respondents in western Ukraine and 42 percent in central Ukraine. In other regions, 47–50 percent of those surveyed did not support it. The condemnation of the "communist totalitarian regime" and the ban on its symbols was endorsed by 82 percent of respondents in western Ukraine and 58 percent in central Ukraine. In the east and in the south it was supported by 34 percent and 30 percent, respectively, and rejected by 36 percent and 38 percent. The recognition of organizations listed in the text of one of the memorial laws (including the OUN and the UPA) as fighters for independence was supported by 76 percent of respondents in the western part of the country and 46 percent in the center. The same idea generated support among 26.8 percent of respondents in the east, 20.1 percent in the south, and 21.1 percent in Donbass. Those who did not support the idea in the three latter regions amounted to 39.6 percent, 24.4 percent, and 37.5 percent, respectively.[213]

Another opinion poll from November 2016 also verified the existence of substantial regional differences in regard to the politics of decommunization. According to the Rating Group's survey, 35 percent of Ukrainian respondents supported the renaming of inhabited localities and streets while 57 percent opposed it. Whereas in western Ukraine 63 percent were in favor of the renaming campaign, only 32 percent supported it in central Ukraine (45 percent opposed it), 19 percent in the south (with 54 percent against),

211 "Volnovakhskiy gorodskoi sovet. Reshenie gorodskogo soveta o pereimenovanii pamiatnika," October 16, 2015, http://volnovakha.dn.gov.ua/o-pereymenovanyy-pamyatnyka/.

212 "Kirovohrad pereymenovano, Dekomunizatsiya mist i sil Ukrayiny zavershylasya," *Istorichna Pravda*, July 14, 2016, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2016/07/14/149140/.

213 Tsentr Rozumkova, "Identychnist hromadyan Ukrayiny v novykh umovakh: stan, tendentsiyi, rehionalni osoblyvosti: Informatsiyno-analitychni materialy do fakhovoyi diskusiyi, 'Formuvannya spilnoyi identychnosti hromadyan Ukrayiny: perspektyvy ta vyklyky,'" June 7, 2016, http://dontsov-nic.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Identi-2016.pdf, 16, 99.

and 18 percent in the east (with 65 percent against).[214] By the end of 2016, there were attempts in the central and southeastern parts of Ukraine to challenge the renamings in court.[215]

Yet another poll conducted in Ukraine by the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the National Center of Polish Culture at the same time revealed that 58 percent of the population viewed decommunization negatively versus 34 percent who viewed it positively.[216] This data partly correlates with the results of a sociological poll (conducted by phone) organized by the *Sociopolis* team in May 2017: 32 percent of respondents supported decommunization, 41 percent expressed negative attitudes toward it, and 25 percent were indifferent.[217]

The fourth memorial law, the so-called archival law, seemed to be the least controversial, at least initially.[218] The idea of ensuring access to the archives of repressive organs was a major part of the decommunization process in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Balkans after the collapse of the communist system. Together with lustration, it was one of the core elements of transitional justice policy.[219] The authors justified the necessity of such a law on both humanitarian and urgent political grounds. For instance, they declared that "the closure of the archives became one of the preconditions for the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and the military conflict in the territory of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts."[220] The law contains a list of "repressive organs," including all the law enforcement bodies of the "totalitarian communist regime" including the *militsiya* (police), courts, prosecu-

214 Rating Group Ukraine, "Stavlennya do okremykh istorychnykh postatey ta protsesu dekomunizatsiyi v Ukrayini," November 17, 2016, http://ratinggroup.ua/ru/research/ukraine/otnoshenie_k_otdelnym_istoricheskim_lichnostyam_i_processu_dekommunizacii_v_ukraine.html.

215 "Zvit Ukrayinskoho Instytuty natsionalnoyi pam'yati z realizatsiyi derzhavnoyi polityky u sferi vidnovlennya i zberezhennya natsionalnoyi pam'yati v 2016 rotsi," accessed November 29, 2017, http://memory.gov.ua/page/zvit-ukrainskogo-institutu-natsionalnoi-pam-yati-z-realizatsii-derzhavnoi-politiki-u-sferi-vidn.

216 Narodowe Centrum Kultury (Warsaw), "Ukraińcy o historii, kulturze i stosunkach polsko-ukraińskich," report, 2017, 57.

217 Sotziopolis, "Stavlennia meshkantsiv Ukrainy do polityky dekomunizatsii (kviten' 2017 roku)," April 2017, http://sociopolis.ua/uk/doslidzhenya/doslidzhenya/224-decomunisation-april-2017/.

218 "Zakon Ukrayiny 'Pro dostup do arkhiviv represyvnykh orhaniv komunistychnoho totalitarnoho rezhymu 1917–1991 rokiv,'" no. 316–19, April 9, 2015, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/316-19.

219 For more details, see Lavinia Stan, ed., *Transitional Justice in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union: Reckoning with the Communist Past* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

220 "Zakon Ukrayiny 'Pro dostup do arkhiviv represyvnykh orhaniv'" (no. 316–19).

tors' offices, and the penal system. The chronological limits of the totalitarian communist regime were defined as 1917–91, similar to the decommunization laws. The law mentioned "unofficial collaborators of repressive organs," for example, "informants of all categories"[221] According to the law, access to all information about these people was to be unrestricted. At the same time, the law stipulated the right of "victims of repressive organs" to be protected by limitations on access to their personal files.

The law provided for the creation of a specialized state archive under the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory (UINP) and established a two-year term during which all the documents from the years 1917–91 were to be transferred to this archive from the following agencies: the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Justice, the Security Service of Ukraine, the Foreign Intelligence Service, the Prosecutor General's Office, the State Judicial Administration, the State Penitentiary Service, and the State Border Service Administration.[222]

The law sent tremors throughout the archival world: the idea of transferring the archives of state institutions to the specialized archive created under the aegis of the UINP was not only unprecedented but inconceivable from a technical point of view. At present, no one is capable of evaluating the total volume of documents to be transferred to the specialized archive of the UINP, an organization that only employed about seventy people, including archival technicians. To put in layman's terms, the law indulges in wishful thinking.

By 2020, the SBU archive was the only institution from the list that had provided near-unrestricted access to its files. Direct contact and cooperation between the UINP and the SBU Archive was ensured through a management reshuffle: in early 2016, the newly appointed director of the SBU Archive moved to the UINP with the goal of preparing for the creation of the specialized archive. His position in the SBU was taken over by a member of the Center for Research of the Liberation Movement (TsDVR). To give an idea of the scale of work in the case of the SBU Archive alone, the collections to be moved included 910,000 volumes of files preserved in the Central Archive of the SBU and its regional departments (37,000 linear meters).[223]

221 Ibid.

222 As of 2019, only the Security Service Archive was accessible in full compliance with the law.

223 "U SBU anonsuvaly peredachu arkhiviv 1917–1991 rokiv do Instytuty natsionalnoyi pam'yati," *Ukrainsky Tyzhden*, December 2, 2015, http://tyzhden.ua/News/152981.

The UINP obtained the premises to house the archive only in 2019. However, no funding for the renovation of an abandoned building in the outskirts of Kyiv was provided. The lack of qualified archival specialists available to ensure relevant services or access continues to be another problem. Besides the practical issues concerning the implementation of the archive law, it is probably safe to assume that the institutions listed in the law probably do not feel much enthusiasm for the additional burden of transferring their records and likely lack the technical capacity to accomplish the transfer: moving the documents not only involves moving tons of papers from one building to another but also requires a colossal amount of work and technical tasks related to the cataloguing and tracking of documents.

In May 2017, the Ukrainian parliament passed one more memorial law. This time, MPs took issue with the St. George Ribbon. This artless symbol replicating the colors of the Imperial Order of St. George was "invented" in 2005 by the RIA news agency, and it became incredibly popular among Russians and some Ukrainians.[224] Starting in 2014, especially during the Donbass War, the St. George Ribbon became an ideologically important symbol of separatism, and in Ukraine, it began to be considered a sign of support for the "kolorady" (the comparison of people with the Colorado potato beetle, which had the same colorings as the ribbon, helped dehumanize the enemy). Attempts to wear the stripe on May 9, Victory Day, provoked public scandals usually provoked by right-wingers. Commenting on a resolution by parliament, Petro Poroshenko declared that in Ukraine, the St. George Ribbon is not a symbol of World War II; instead, "it is the symbol of aggression of 2014–2017 against Ukraine. Gunmen bedecking themselves with these ribbons are killing our fighters every day, right now."[225] The law that banned the St. George Ribbon introduced modifications into the administrative offense legislation. Wearing the ribbon (except for special cases listed in the text of the law) was punished with a fine; in the case of repeat offenses, the fine was doubled and there was the possibility of a fifteen-day jail sentence.

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224 For more details, see Alexei Miller, "O georgiyevskoy lente i drugikh simvolakh v kontekste istoricheskoy politiki," Carnegie Moscow Center, June 23, 2012, http://carnegie.ru/proEtContra/?fa=49074.

225 "Poroshenko poyasnyv, chomu v Ukrayini zaboronyly heorgiyivsky strichku," May 21, 2017, http://ukr.segodnya.ua/politics/pnews/poroshenko-obyasnil-pochemu-v-ukraine-zapretili-georgievskuyu-lentochku-1022786.html.

Memory warriors presented the Ukrainian memorial laws as the embodiment of their desire to emulate "European," or, to be specific, "Eastern European" practices. However, such an imitation is problematic because Ukraine, unlike its models, has weak traditions of pluralism, democracy, and civil society. The story of their adoption is telling in itself. The memorial laws that formed part of the package of dictatorship laws in the winter of 2014 were adopted by Yanukovych supporters in the same fashion as those enacted in April 2015 by Yanukovych's opponents.

The political culture in Ukraine presupposes that any law that regulates the understanding and representation of the past inevitably leads to the bureaucracy's dominance and to a victory (usually temporary) of one historical narrative over those held by other social groups; the recent experience of decommunization corroborates this somewhat anecdotally.

In May 2017, for instance, the Halyts'ky district court in the city of Lviv accused a student from the local university of the crime of communist propagandizing. The court based its prosecution on the fact that the defendant published quotations from Lenin's works on Facebook. The local prosecutor's office requested a two and half years prison sentence, but since the defendant wholeheartedly admitted guilt, the sentence was "mild"—one year of probation. Curiously, the court ruled that the material evidence in the case (for example, a copy of Marx's *Das Kapital*), which was recognized as the corpus delicti, be destroyed.[226] In October 2019, the district court in Kryvyy Rih sentenced a local jobless person to one year in prison for wearing a t-shirt with the emblem of the USSR in public. The garment was considered to be propagating a symbol of the communist regime (the defendant put on an old t-shirt to perform his temporary job washing windows at the local shopping mall). The man pleaded guilty, and the court decided to change the sentence to one year of probation. The case was registered by the court under the following titles: "Criminal cases; Crimes against peace, security of humankind and the international legal order; and Propaganda of war." The fact that the official name of the court is Dzerzhinsky District Court[227] adds

226 "Real'nyj termin za Lenina v socmerewi i 'Kapital' Marksa," Gromadskoye radio, May 12, 2017, https://hromadske.radio/news/2017/05/12/realnyy-termin-za-lenina-v-socmerezhi-i-kapital-marksa-podrobyci-spravy.

227 The district and the court bear the name of Felix Dzerzhinski, the founder of the Soviet secret police and definitely the person whose name is forbidden in public space. Using this name in the title of the court itself can be considered as a propagation of communist symbols.

special charm to this story.[228] In November 2020, a pensioner from Kherson oblast was about to be sentenced to five years imprisonment for posting pictures and postcards with Soviet symbols as well as portraits of Soviet officials on her personal page on the social network *Odnoklassniki* (Classmates). Needless to say, she pleaded guilty, confessed, and, was sentenced to one year of probation.[229] According to the General Prosecutor's Office, in 2015–2019 the police opened 119 cases under art. 436-1; thirteen people were summoned to the courts.[230]

The internal incoherence of most of the laws we examined is obvious: at their core, they are destined to overcome the burdensome legacy of the communist regime, or, to put it in a broader context, the Soviet heritage. The texts of these laws always contain a statement about the authors' aim to achieve consensus and harmony in society. However, the methods used to elaborate, promote, and adopt these laws, their wording, and the manner of their implementation are reminiscent of the very cultural patterns they are intended to overcome.[231] The anticommunist iconoclasm is reminiscent of the ecstatic destruction of imperial monuments by the Bolsheviks, and the decommunization of topography is nothing but the flip side of its communization. Moreover, decommunization politics did not accomplish its major objective: the ideological homogenization of society. According to the most recent opinion poll conducted by the *Demokratychni initsiatyvy* foundation, the dividing lines between those who supported decommunization and the opponents of this politics remained in place, and regional divisions did not change. Some 32 percent of Ukrainians expressed a positive attitude toward the ban on communist symbols and 30 percent affirmed the renaming of cities and streets, while 34 percent held negative attitudes toward the ban, and 44 percent were negative about renaming. The West provided the highest share of those who supported the ban: 45.3 percent (24.3 were against),

228 Vyrok imenem Ukrainy, October 11, 2018, http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/85088106. After seven years of decommunization the court still bears the name of Felix Dzerzhynsky—the chief of the Bolsheviks' secret police and one of the main symbolic figures of the communist regime.

229 Vyrok imenem Ukrainy, November 11, 2020, https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/92804835.

230 Valeriia Hurzhii, "V Ukraini za piat' rokiv oblikovano majzhe 120 provadzhen' xherez totalitarnu symvoliku," *UNN* (Ukrainian National News Agency), February 4, 2020, https://www.unn.com.ua/uk/news/1850314-v-ukrayini-za-pyat-rokiv-mayzhe-120-provadzhen-cherez-totalitarnu-simvoliku.

231 As we have already seen, the package of memorial laws was submitted to the respective committees of the parliament without any preliminary discussion; it was registered and scheduled for the plenary meeting in just one week and was "discussed" and adopted by the MPs in only 40 minutes.

and those in support of renaming: 43.6 percent (with 30.3 percent against). Central Ukraine retained its status as the region of ambivalence. Here, 32.7 percent of respondents supported the ban, while 31.6 percent did not approve it, and 35.8 percent were either indifferent or did not have any attitude toward the issue. Interestingly enough, the share of the opponents of renaming here was quite high—42.2 percent, while the proportion of the proponents amounted to 28.5 percent. Not surprisingly, the highest group of opponents of the ban and renaming was observed in the south: 41.5 and 56.8 percent, respectively, and in the east: 44.2 and 51.9 percent.[232]

232 Ilko Kucheriv Democrative Initiatives Foundation, "Shostyi rik dekomunizatsii: pisumky ta prohnozy," survey report, May 2020, accessed November 12, 2020, https://rpr.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/20237213345f0f61d4b300e5.09547832.pdf.

Chapter 8

Historical Politics: Beyond Borders

This chapter explores historical politics as a tool of international relations. It will focus on how the politics of history shaped (bilateral) relations between Ukraine and its two most important neighbors, Poland and Russia, on subjects and topics that, in my opinion, best characterize the essence and currents of historical memory and politics in and between these states.

The well-known formula, "foreign policy is the continuation of domestic politics" acquires a special meaning in the case of historical politics. When a nation outfits its own internal space of collective historical memory, separating it from the previous "common space," it nearly always has to sort things out with its neighbors. The symbolic significance, political importance, and conflict potential of this process expand enormously if and when historical relationships are considered in the context of dominance and subordination, from a postcolonial perspective, or as a history of competing national projects.

The solutions to these numerous dilemmas depend on a great number of social, political, economic, cultural, and other factors. Attempts to cope with the past almost invariably involve conflicts, either over the partition of property (civilizational and cultural achievements, "disputed" territories, invented traditions) or over historical grievances, oppression, enemies, and injustice.

Ukraine–Poland: "Thorny Issues"

Poland is the largest and most influential neighbor of Ukraine in "Eastern Europe." Together with Canada, Poland was the first country to recognize Ukrainian independence on December 1, 1991, the day after the indepen-

dence referendum. Regardless of political affiliation, Polish political elites and influential intellectuals have invariably considered Ukraine an important strategic partner in the post-Soviet space and the new "Eastern Europe." Moreover, they have been advocates of Ukraine's position in Europe, albeit with varying levels of intensity. In 2017, a majority of Poles (67 percent) supported the idea of Ukraine joining the EU and 76 of Poles percent believed that Ukraine belongs to Europe.[1]

Poland has always been the primary destination of Ukrainian migrant workers, and trans-border cooperation with Poland is more intense than with any other neighbor. According to various data, the number of Ukrainians working in Poland in 2019 was between 1.2 and 1.5 million.[2] As a country known for its successful reforms, Poland is a role model for Ukraine. The words "cooperation" and "mutual understanding" have become the magic ingredients in relations between the two states. Their political cohabitation is made easier by the existence of a common Constitutive Other, Russia, and similar "ontological anxiety"[3] primarily concerning their self-identification between "East" and "West" and their relations with Russia. Poland increasingly plays the role of the "West" for Ukraine, and Ukraine, correspondingly, the role of the "East" for Poland.

All these similarities do not mean that there are no serious discrepancies in the two countries' assessments of the mutual past; indeed, this was already a terrain riven with conflict in the nineteenth century, when national histories emerged as core components in the process of "national revival." Both countries produce more history than they can consume, and that history is not easily digestible. The list of controversial historical topics already starts in the fourteenth century (ownership of Galicia) and continues on into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (the Union of Brest, the Cossack wars, and the Cossack state), and then heads into the nineteenth century (the Polish

1 Opinion poll results, Yalta European Strategy, 2017, accessed May 11, 2018, https://yes-ukraine.org/en/yes-annual-meetings/2017/polls.

2 "Ukrinform Blyz'ko 1,5 mln ukraintsiv pratsiuiut' u Polshchi: Eskpert," *Ukrinform*, accessed December 12, 2020, https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/2735716-blizko-15-miljona-ukrainciv-pracuut-u-polsi-ekspert.html.

3 The notion of "ontological anxiety" was used by Alexander Astrov to describe the politics of history in the Baltic states between 2004 and 2007. See "The 'Politics of History' as a Case of Foreign-Policy Making," in *The Convolutions of Historical Politics*, ed. Alexei Miller and Maria Lipman (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2012), 117–40. Obviously, the concept is fully applicable to the broader postcommunist region.

presence in Right-Bank Ukraine, the problem of Eastern Galicia). However, the most heated disputes, which often transcend debates among academics or journalists, concern the "short twentieth century": the Ukrainian–Polish War of 1918–19, the brief history of the West Ukrainian People's Republic, the "Ukrainian question" in interwar Poland, Ukrainian–Polish confrontation in Eastern Galicia and Volhynia during World War II, and Operation Vistula of 1947.

It is important to note that a certain division of labor emerged in discussions and face-offs over historical issues in both countries. In Poland, the political instrumentalization of the past in its most conflictual form was usually actualized by right-conservative (for instance, the Law and Justice Party or PiS) and right-wing organizations (such as *Kresy*) and veterans societies. Recently, the populists jumped in. In Ukraine, this role was mostly played by the "national democrats," and right-wing (nationalist) organizations, such as the All-Ukrainian Union "Svoboda," mostly based in western Ukraine. Similar to their Polish colleagues, they cultivate an exclusivist model of collective/historical memory based on the ethnocentric national/nationalist narrative.

After the Orange Revolution, new actors joined the Ukrainian–Polish discussion about the past: the Ukrainian communists, who were destined to fight Ukrainian nationalism as a matter of course and because of the political situation, and the Party of Regions, whose leaders figured out that the past could be used to further the interests of the present during the 2004 presidential campaign. Quite remarkably, Ukrainian capitalists and "leftish" politicians became virtual allies of Polish right-wing groups and conservatives in their struggle against Ukrainian nationalism. All these forces intensified confrontational rhetoric both inside and outside the country.

The liberal and democratic intelligentsia and part of the Roman Catholic Church chose reconciliation and the principle "We forgive and ask for forgiveness,"[4] which was formulated on the occasion of the Poles' reconciliation with the Germans. On the international level, presidents played the role of mediators trying to stay above the quarrel. Leonid Kuchma and Aleksander Kwaśniewski were key players in the dialogue of reconciliation. This status quo was disrupted by Viktor Yushchenko, who personally took part in the

4 In the case of Ukraine, we are speaking about the Greek Catholic Church.

veneration of the OUN, UPA, and their leaders, which effectively transformed him from a mediator into a participant in the confrontation.

Both countries had a centuries-old tradition of stereotyping their neighbor and this tradition was part of the debate. An analysis of studies dedicated to the relationship between Poles and Ukrainians and their stereotypes about each other indicate that the 1990s was the most complex period in their relations with each other. During this decade, the perception of Poles deteriorated in Ukraine. Between 1992 and 2002, the index of national distancing of Ukrainians from Poles (on the Bogardus social distance scale) increased from the relatively balanced score of 3.77 to the much higher 5.01 (out of 7).[5] This dynamic, of course, was a result of a broader set of factors that do not directly involve historical issues. In Poland, the score reached 4.64, notably in regions bordering Ukraine.[6]

Ethnocultural stereotypes were entrenched in school history courses. A content analysis of four Polish and five Ukrainian secondary school history textbooks in use in the early 2000s found that Ukrainians were mentioned 56 times in Polish textbooks, 38 times as an adversary and 12 times as a national minority. In Ukrainian textbooks, Poles received 268 neutral mentions, 49 mentions as an adversary, and 15 as a national minority, 34 positive mentions and 79 negative ones.[7]

A study of negative ethnonational stereotypes in fourteen Ukrainian textbooks from 1997–98 carried out by the Ukrainian historian Natalya Yakovenko also came to some alarming conclusions: Ukrainian students received the message that "Poland and Ukraine are ultimately separate political, social, and cultural organisms, connected to each other exclusively by antagonism."[8] Textbooks covered the most challenging topics of the common Ukrainian and Polish past, and according to members of the intergovernmental Ukrainian-Polish commission on school textbooks,[9] the most dif-

5 Nataliya V. Panina, "Nepodolana dystantsiya," *Krytyka* 7–8 (2003): 18.

6 Joanna Konieczna, "Polacy–Ukraińcy, Polska–Ukraina: Paradoksy stosunków sąsiedzkich" (Archived article from 2003) May 8, 2019, http://www.batory.org.pl/ftp/program/forum/ukraina_ue/polacy_ukraincy_paradoksy_stosunkow.pdf.

7 Viktoriya Sereda, "Vplyv polskykh ta ukrayinskykh shkilnykh pidruchnykiv z istoriyi na formuvannya polsko-ukrayinskykh stereotypiv," *Visnyk Lvivskoho universytetu,* Seriya "Istoriya," 35–36 (2000): 393.

8 Natalya Yakovenko, "Polshcha ta polyaki v shkilnykh pidruchnykakh istoriyi, abo vidlunnya davnyoho y nedavnyoho minuloho," in *Paralelnyy svit: Doslidzhennya z istoriyi uyavlen ta idey v Ukrayini XVI–XVII st*., (Kyiv: Krytyka, 2002), 375.

9 The commission was created in 1993 to "improve the content of school textbooks on history and geogra-

ficult topic on which to come to a mutually acceptable interpretation was the activities of the OUN and UPA in the 1930s and 1940s.[10]

Since the early 2000s, there was a positive trend in the mutual perception of Ukrainians and Poles that became more manifest after the Orange Revolution and the accession of Poland to the European Union. In the sphere of collective/historical memory and related stereotypes, it was probably at least partly due to the activities of the Ukrainian–Polish commission on textbooks. Włodzimierz Mędrzecki acknowledged improvements in the new generation of Polish history textbooks published in the early 2000s: the discussion of topics involving Ukraine became more balanced.[11] Ukrainian textbooks also showed a tendency toward editing out negative cultural connotations.[12] Sociologists found the improvement in mutual perception remarkable. According to the Polish Institute of Public Affairs (Instytut Spraw Publicznych), in 2013 the Bogardus social distance score reached its lowest point: 1.11 in Poland and 0.94 in Ukraine.[13] However, the same study observed that historical questions are one of the most problematic issues in Polish–Ukrainian relations. Of all Polish respondents, two-thirds believe that there are events in the past for which Ukrainians should feel guilty. Only two-fifths of Ukrainians agreed. At the same time, half of the respondents in both countries agreed that Poles should make amends to Ukrainians for their past sins.[14]

Two examples of historical controversies serve as vivid illustrations of difficulties that loom over the Ukrainian–Polish dialogue about the past.

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phy." It assembles twice a year, analyzes the content of textbooks, identifies controversial issues and conflicting interpretations, makes a list of such passages, and offers recommendations. Implementation of these recommendations is entirely conditional on authors and publishing houses.

10 Interview with Stanislav Kulchytsky (Ukrainian co-chairman of the commission), Kyiv, May 17, 2005; P. B. Polyanskyi, "Pro ukrayinsko-polsku komisiyu ekspertiv z udoskonalennya zmistu shkilnykh pidruchnykiv z istoriyi ta heohrafiyi," *Ukrayinskyy istorychnyy zhurnal* no. 1 (1999): 151–53; and Pavlo Polyanskyi (member of the commission), interview by Georgiy Kasianov, May, 15, 2005.

11 V. Mendzhetski, "Obraz Ukrayiny ta ukrayintsiv u polskykh pidruchnykakh u 1999–2005 rokakh," in *Obraz Inshoho v susidnikh Istoriyakh: mify, stereotypy, naukovi interpretatsiyi*, ed. Georgiy Kasianov (Materialy mizhnarodnoyi naukovoyi konferentsiyi, Kyiv, December 15–16, 2005), 143–44.

12 Gerogiy Kasianov and B. Polianski, eds., *Pidruchnykh z istoriyi: problem tolerantnosti* (Chernivtsi: Bukrek 2012), 20–21.

13 Joanna Fomina, Joanna Konieczna-Sałamatin, Jacek Kucharczyk, and Łukasz Wenerski, *Polshcha–Ukrayina, polyaky–ukrayintsi: Pohlyad z-za kordonu* (Warszawa: Fundacja Instytut Spraw Publicznych, 2013), 43.

14 Ibid., 70.

The first is the story of the restoration of the memorial complex dedicated to Polish soldiers killed in the Ukrainian–Polish War of 1918–19 in Lychakiv Cemetery in Lviv. It is a compelling case of a local debate breaking onto the international political stage. The second is the debate on the Ukrainian–Polish conflict during World War II and the Volhynian tragedy of 1943, an illustration of an entangled national and international discussion.[15]

The Cemetery of Eaglets is a memorial complex that was constructed in 1939 as a place of memory for Polish soldiers who died in 1918–19; it fell into disrepair during the Soviet period. In the middle of the 1990s, with the Ukrainian (national) government's agreement and with the approval of the Lviv city council, Poland undertook the restoration of the complex. In 2000, the Lviv city council passed a special resolution to end the reconstruction, though Poland insisted that the monument be rebuilt following the 1939 design.

The unveiling of the restored memorial was scheduled for May 21, 2002; the two countries' presidents, Aleksander Kwaśniewski and Leonid Kuchma, were expected to appear at the event. However, the ceremony never took place: the president of Poland cancelled his visit because the Ukrainian side (the Lviv city council) refused to approve the commemorative inscription at the entrance of the memorial that favored the Polish side. The bone of contention was one word: while the Polish side insisted that the death of its soldiers had been heroic, the Ukrainians insisted that this term be omitted. There was no mention of a "heroic" death in the inscription for the neighboring memorial to the soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician Army, and the deputies demanded equality. Making the situation more complicated, the controversial word had been present in the original 1939 inscription.[16] Moreover, the Polish side insisted that the memorial should include monuments to French and American soldiers who had also fought and died for Poland and pushed for the addition of specific sculptural symbols (the *szczerbiec* sword, and lions on pylons), which were also unacceptable for Lviv city council deputies, preoccupied as they were with ideological purity. The latter were also

15 Other stories, some local (such as events in Huta Pieniacka in February 1944) and some nation-wide (such as Operation Vistula in 1947) and their representations do not differ in discourse practices, positioning, or contexts from those we chose as examples.

16 See debates on the website of Radio Svoboda (Radio Liberty), "Pryamyi efir: chy pohovaly ukrayinsko-polsku druzhbu na Lychakivskomu tsvintari u Lvovi? Chomu do Lvova ne pryyikhav prezydent Polshchi Oleksandr Kvasnyevskyi?," Radio Svoboda, May 22, 2002, http://www.radiosvoboda.org/content/article/890033.html.

infuriated by the fact that the agreements with the Polish side had been brokered at the presidential/national level, without their participation.

While the Poles were unanimous in their position, the opinions of the Ukrainians (those who knew about the conflict) on the matter were divided. Kyiv, as represented by Leonid Kuchma and those parliamentarians who supported him, advocated for accepting the Polish conditions. Lviv liberal intellectuals shared this position although their motives were different: they considered it nonsensical that the past should continue to cast a pall over the present and future of Ukrainian–Polish relations. The conflict remained frozen in its latent phase without provoking much outcry either in Poland or Ukraine. More important things arose: Poland prepared for the European Union membership referendum, and Ukraine witnessed a mass protest, "Rise up, Ukraine!" organized by the united anti-Kuchma opposition in the autumn of 2002. Finally, a new topic emerged in 2003 that was much more important than any debate over the "Cemetery of Eaglets," the sixtieth anniversary of the Volhynian tragedy.[17]

The Polish side was well prepared for this anniversary. A number of studies on the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in Volhynia and Galicia during World War II were carried out due to the initiative of the Institute of National Memory, the Council for the Protection of Struggle and Martyrdom Sites, and the National Security Bureau under the president of Poland. In 2000, Władysław and Ewa Siemaszko published the book *The Genocide of Poles in Volhynia Committed by Ukrainian Nationalists, 1939–1945*. It was 1,500 pages long and was primarily based on oral testimonies.[18] The book, which was recommended for adoption in schools, immediately provoked fierce debate in Poland between Polish and Ukrainian minority politicians, researchers, and public figures. Polish Ukrainians believed that the book's narrative and evidence was lopsided and cherry-picked; they also stated that the events represented in the book were consequences of the national policy of the Second Polish Republic. The book was also considered controversial among Polish historians who worked within the framework of analytical

17 For a very detailed and thorough analysis of political and academic debates on the Polish–Ukrainian confrontation during World War II, see Oksana Kalishchuk, *Ukrayinsko-polske protystoyannya na Volyni ta v Halychyni u roki Drugoyi svitovoyi viyny. Naukovy i suspilnyi dyskursy* (Lviv: Instytut ukrainoznavstva im. I. Kripiakevycha, 2013).

18 Władysław Siemaszko and Ewa Siemaszko, *Ludobojstwo, dokonane przez nacionalistow ukrajinskich na ludnosci polskiej Wolynia, 1939–1945*, vols. 1–2 (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo von Borowiecky, 2000).

history.[19] However, this controversy did not prevent the book from becoming the touchstone of the genocidal version of events in Volhynia and the debate between representatives of Poland and Ukraine in 2000s.

The debate was unsurprisingly touched off by veteran organizations of the *Armia Krajowa* (Home Army), associations of residents from the "eastern Polish lands" (*Kresy*), and other right-wing organizations such as the Association for the Perpetuation of the Memory of Victims of Ukrainian Nationalists. These groups were responsible for the confrontational stance that was then picked up by their colleagues and adversaries from far-right Ukrainian organizations and even by some Polish and Ukrainian historians.

In broad strokes, those who wanted to "revive the memory of Volhynia" in the Polish collective consciousness used the following argument: a systematic mass extermination of Polish civilians began in Volhynia in the spring through the fall of 1943 and continued on a smaller scale until 1945. The massacre was initiated by the OUN with the help of the units of the UPA, with the goal of physically removing the Polish population from the region. Ukrainian peasants of Volhynia also participated in the mass murders. The total number of victims was between 38,000 and 60,000 (in some estimates, the figures 100,000–150,000 are advanced). The scale of the massacre of Polish civilians cannot be compared either to the retaliatory strikes of the Home Army and other Polish paramilitary units or to Operation Vistula, the deportation of Ukrainians from the eastern borderlands of Poland to the western regions of the country in 1947. The Ukrainian state must officially recognize the genocide of the Poles and apologize. The Polish state must honor the memory of the victims and recognize the events of 1943–45 as an act of genocide because this is the only adequate way to show respect to the victims.

The position of the Polish liberal intelligentsia, church, and government was more moderate. They advocated for mutual reconciliation and avoided words like "genocide" or "cleansing," preferring to use the term "conflict." The first public statements on the official assessment of events in Volhynia occurred in Warsaw at a meeting of Ukrainian and Polish MPs dedicated to issues of cooperation between the two legislative bodies that took place on

19 They raised a wide range of objections: the biased selection of facts chosen to suit the interpretation of the tragedy as an act of genocide, the absence of analysis of sources (among which the memories of eyewitnesses played the main role), dubious calculations, a narrow documentary base, the absence of any evidence of similar actions of the Polish side, etc.

March 10–11, 2003. The Poles told their Ukrainian colleagues about the discussions in their country and proposed a joint statement that would include a "balanced" assessment of the events that occurred six decades before.[20] At the same time, negotiations began for Polish President Aleksander Kwaśniewski's visit to one of the Ukrainian burial sites for victims of the events in Volhynia. On March 19, the foreign ministers of Poland (Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz) and Ukraine (Anatoliy Zlenko) exchanged statements asserting that the sixtieth anniversary of events in Volhynia should serve as the basis for the historic reconciliation of the two peoples. The Polish minister called the anniversary "a reckoning with the truth" for the peoples of Poland and Ukraine.[21]

Between April and May 2003, the presidential administrations of Poland and Ukraine discussed a mutual commemorative action in one of the villages of West Ukraine, which was scheduled for July 11.[22] The negotiations were not easy for President Kwaśniewski: he faced intense pressure from right-wing organizations at home that demanded an uncompromising position on the "genocide of Poles in Volhynia." Commenting on his own position, he declared that "we should be as resolute as possible and as sensitive as necessary."[23] Kwaśniewski already had some background in dealing with the controversial past. In April 2002 he showed his resoluteness when he expressed sympathy to the Polish Ukrainian victims of Operation Vistula. However, it should be noted that his statement was made in the context of the condemnation of crimes of the communist regime, which meant that the current Polish state was not responsible for this action. In early April 2003, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine sent its version of the joint declaration to the Polish Sejm "for approval," according to Volodymyr Lytvyn, the speaker of the Verkhovna Rada.[24] The contents of the document became the object of heated debates in both parliaments.

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20 "Polski ta ukrayinski parlamentari hotuyut spilnu zayavu pro volynsku trahediyu," *ForUm*, March 12, 2003, http://ukr.for-ua.com/news/2003/03/12/142601.html.

21 "Richnytsya podiy na Volyni stane 'ispytom istyny' dlya Ukrayiny i Polshchi," *Obozrevatel*, March 19, 2003, http://www.obozrevatel.com.ua/ukr.

22 July 11, the commemorative date of the victims of the action undertaken by the UPA and OUN in Volhynia in 1943 (the so-called bloody Sunday). According to the Polish narrative, ninety-nine Polish villages in Volhynia were simultaneously attacked by UPA and OUN units that day, and the attack was followed by large-scale massacres of civilians.

23 B. Bachynskyi, "V ochikuvanni porozuminnya," *Postup*, April 11, 2003, http://postup.brama.com/11/04/2003.

24 Yuliya Lishchenko, "Pravda ne mozhe buty odnobokoyu," *Lvivska hazeta,* April 15, 2003.

The pro-Kuchma majority of the Verkhovna Rada, which was not very interested in the topic, was ready to accept a "reconciliatory" formula, whereas national democrats and nationalists played the role of historical hawks. The right wing of the Our Ukraine faction, including representatives of nationalist parties, insisted that the Polish position was lopsided and based on anti-Ukrainian prejudice. Another faction of Our Ukraine headed by Viktor Yushchenko was inclined to accept the reconciliatory wording. Thirty-three MPs in the Verkhovna Rada (from the factions supporting Leonid Kuchma) published an address "to the Poles and Ukrainians" coupling the rhetoric of reconciliation with an appeal reinforcing the "necessity to contain and neutralize political extremism and xenophobia in the domestic policy of Ukraine." The parliamentarians condemned the actions that led to the mass deaths of Polish civilians in Volhynia and called on the Polish government to "unambiguously condemn the actions that caused the mass deaths of Ukrainian civilians."[25] Of course the communists in parliament used their traditional phrasing and condemned "the crimes of the OUN–UPA."

In the meantime, the modification of the text of the joint declaration became a genuine political scandal. In May 2003, a special delegation of the Polish Sejm visited Kyiv. The bilateral approval of the text by the Polish parliamentary delegation and the Verkhovna Rada working group was scheduled for May 29. However, it did not happen, and representatives of both bodies refused to comment on the issue. According to *Deutsche Welle*, the Polish delegation insisted on qualifying the actions of the UPA as ethnic cleansing. The Ukrainian side allegedly disagreed because such a formula would supposedly allow the families of Poles who died in Volhynia in 1943–44 to file lawsuits against Ukraine with the International Court of Justice in The Hague. Not having obtained the desired outcome, the Polish delegation went back home to consult the Sejm.[26]

The text of the joint declaration was modified in June 2003, with all unacceptable formulas having been removed, but the public reading scheduled for July 10 was again jeopardized due to the intransigent position of far-

25 "Vidkrytyi lyst narodnykh deputativ Ukrayiny z nahody 60-ricchya trahichnykh podii na Volyni," *Holos Ukrayiny,* May 29, 2003, 3.

26 "Ukrayina i Polshcha poky shcho ne pomyrylysya," *Hlavred*, May 30, 2003, http://www.glavred.info.

right members of the Sejm.[27] However, at this point, the domestic policy factor became important. The presidents of both countries aspired to the role of peacemaker in the conflict, and for this reason, everything went smoothly on the presidential level; Aleksander Kwaśniewski and Leonid Kuchma planned a personal meeting in the village of Pavlivka in Volhynia (a major part of the village's prewar Polish population was exterminated by the UPA on July 11–12, 1943). The text of the joint declaration of the Polish Sejm and Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada was approved one day before the meeting of the two presidents. However, it was not approved by some right-wing Polish MPs (for instance, the PiS, the League of Polish Families, the Polish People's Party), some opposition MPs in Ukraine (the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, certain Our Ukraine MPs, especially those belonging to right-wing and nationalist parties),[28] and by left-wing MPs. The communists declared that "neither Ukrainian nor Polish people are implicated in the tragedy."[29] The Ukrainian right-wing parliamentarian Stepan Khmara called the text of the declaration "humiliating for Ukrainians," "distorted in favor of the Poles," and "not corresponding to the historical truth."[30]

At the commemorative ceremony that took place in the village of Pavlivka on July 11, the presidents of Ukraine and Poland made a joint declaration "On Reconciliation on the Anniversary of the Tragic Events in Volhynia," both reading the text aloud in the official languages of their countries.[31] The declaration condemned the murders of Poles and Ukrainians, contained a plea for the public moral condemnation of the "perpetrators of crimes committed against the Ukrainian and the Polish people," and expressed hope that in the future, young generations of Ukrainians and Poles will fully reconcile with each other, "completely disengaging themselves from the warped judgments of the tragic past."[32] In fact, the heads of the two states delineated the boundaries of official discourse: the rejection of mutual accusations; the

27 "Kompromisne neporozuminnya," *Postup*, June 27, 2003.

28 "Volyn–prodovzhennya temy," *Nashe slovo*, July 20, 2003.

29 "Vystrazhdanyi kompromis: Parlamenty Ukrayiny ta Polshchi skhvalyly tekst spilnoyi zayavy pro trahichni podiyi na Volyni," *Lvivska hazeta*, July 11, 2003.

30 O. Shylko, "Verkhovna Rada Ukrayiny ukhvalyla tekst spilnoyi zayavy shchodo Volynskoyi trahediyi," *Ukrayinsko-polskyi internet-zhurnal*, July 10, 2003, http://www.ukraine-poland.com/u/news/news.php?id=1395.

31 V. Zamyatin, "Pershyi den vzayemnoho proshchennya," *Den'*, July 11, 2003.

32 Spilna zayava Prezydenta Ukrayiny i Prezydenta Respubliky Polshcha, "Pro prymyrennya–v 60-tu richnytsyu trahichnykh podii na Volyni," *Postup*, July 16, 2003.

joint condemnation of criminal *actions* but not organizations, countries, or peoples; and a fixation on the future and not on the past when building relationships between peoples and countries. However, the official discourse only partly coincided with one of the discursive forms adopted by the broader society in both countries.

Debates between historians and public intellectuals on reconciliation and the depoliticization of the conflict soon moved from the arena of politics into the realm of ethics and morality (in the case of intellectuals) or to the purely professional sphere (in the case of historians). The reconciliatory position came at a price.

Intellectuals in both countries found themselves under tremendous pressure from the public, who was primed by the actions and statements of ultrapatriotic forces. The rhetoric (and, consequently, what was called historical memory) was dominated by the image of the Polish victim and the Ukrainian nationalist murderer, with the powerful emotional appeal "not to forget, not to forgive." In many Polish Catholic churches, one could see commemorative plaques and markers to the "victims of the crimes of the OUN–UPA" (installed at the behest of the associations of natives of the *Kresy*). Opponents of reconciliation urged putting aside "political correctness" and the "pseudo-equalization" of victims from both sides. Books by Edward Prus and Wiktor Poliszczuk on the UPA and OUN, both of which were full of accusatory rhetoric and discordant facts, were printed in a much greater volume than research monographs containing a more balanced and multifaceted picture of Ukrainian–Polish relations in the interwar period.

At the same time, the Jedwabne debate played a role, making it easier for a part of Polish society to comprehend opinions that transcended the framework of traditional ethnonational history; this was shown by the statements and actions of important figures such as Jacek Kuroń and Adam Michnik. In his February 2003 letter to Miroslav Marinović, a participant of the Ukrainian dissident movement of the 1980s and a well-known public intellectual, Kuroń remarked that the "rhythm of anniversaries" takes events out of their historical context and substantially distorts the picture of Polish–Ukrainian relations. He emphasized that the Poles had for centuries been the stronger and more dominant power responsible for Polonizing the Ukrainian elite and at least twice during the twentieth century had obstructed Ukrainian independence. "The thought that Gospel truths do not concern the relations between

the peoples is not Christian and contradicts the spirit of the Gospel. This is why," he told Marinović, "I speak to you not only on my behalf—and I say: forgive us."[33] This plea for reconciliation seems to have been the most radical one issued: the majority of those in Ukraine who supported the idea of mutual reconciliation insisted on joint penance. An open letter of thirty-nine Ukrainian intellectuals rejected the principle of collective responsibility: "We are convinced," said the letter, "that the principle of collective responsibility of the whole society for the actions of its members does not have any underlying legitimation, whether partisan or universal."[34]

It should be taken into account that these were not the prevailing moods either in Poland or Ukraine (speaking specifically about the western regions of the latter country, where this particular topic was important). Even some intellectuals who were by no means inclined to produce their "own truth" over Volhynia vigorously defended their position. Ukrainian academic Jaroslav Isayevych (1936–2010), despite being a liberal-minded person, condemned the one-sided coverage of Volhynian events in Poland, asserting that mass murders of Ukrainians also took place in Volhynia. He believed that the Polish side was too aggressive in squeezing Ukrainians for penance.[35] Yaroslav Dashkevych (1926–2010), a Lviv-based historian from the older generation who, back in 1994, suggested the unconditional condemnation of Ukrainian terror against Polish civilians in 1943–44, declared in May 2003 that Poland was turning from a strategic partner into an enemy.[36] One more perspective, quite often heard, was articulated in a speech made by the Lviv Regional Organization of the Union of Officers of Ukraine to their Polish colleagues: it suggested following the advice of Pope John Paul II who called on Poles to "forget mutual grievances and stereotypes" and take all measures to ensure that nothing of the kind happens again. Discerning black from white in the pages of history was to be left to professional historians.[37]

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33 "Z lysta Jaceka Kuronia do Myroslava Marynovycha," *Nezalezhnyj kul'turolohichnyj chasopys "Ji"*, no. 28 (2003): 2.

34 "Vidkrytyi lyst z pryvodu 60 richnytsi zbroinoho ukrayinsko–polskoho konfliktu na Volyni," *Nezalezhnyi kultorolohichnyi chasopys "Yi"* no. 28 (2003): 3, www.ji.lviv.ua/n28/texts/kuron.htm.

35 Jaroslav Isayevych, "Kholms'ko-Volyns'ka trahediya, ii peredumovy, perebih, naslidky," in *Volyn i Kholmshchyna 1938–1947": polsko-ukrayinske protystoyannya ta yoho vidlunnya; Doslidzhennya, dokumenty, spohady*, ed. Jaroslav Isayevych (Lviv: Instytut ukrainoznavstva im. I. Kripiakevycha, 2003), 7.

36 D. Svidnyk, "Tretii front na Volyni," *Postup*, May 13, 2003.

37 Zvernennya, "Lvivskoyi oblasnoyi orhanizatsiyi Spilky ofitseriv Ukrayiny do korpusu ofitseriv kadru i zapasu Viiska Polskoho z pryvodu trahichnykh podii na Volyni 1943 roku," *Lvivska hazeta*, May 21, 2003.

When open public discussion of the "Volhynian tragedy" began and as the topic moved to the arena of national-level politics, Ukrainian and Polish historians already had their own history of examining "thorny issues." This was the title of a series of conferences and publications that began in 1997 at the initiative of the World Association of Home Army Soldiers, the Polish magazine *Karta*, and the Union of Ukrainians of Poland.[38] The debates were focused on the period from 1939 to 1947 as well as the preceding period of the Second Polish Republic. It soon became obvious that the factual side of the issue was not divisive. Controversial issues primarily included interpretations, causes of conflict, and terminology. While the Polish side mostly referred to "extermination," "ethnic cleansing," and even "genocide" when speaking about the events in Volhynia, the majority of Ukrainian historians preferred more neutral terms such as "Ukrainian–Polish conflict," "Volhynian tragedy" or, to quote the most radical term used, "Volhynian massacre."

A consensus on the causes of the events in Volhynia proved hard to reach. While some Polish historians who worked within the framework of analytical history did not see the ideology of the OUN as the principal cause of the tragedy and recognized the responsibility of the Polish government for anti-Ukrainian repression in the 1930s, they still insisted that it did not justify the murder of Polish civilians. Ukrainian historians maintained that the actions of the OUN and UPA should not be judged without taking into account the anti-Ukrainian policy of the Polish government during the interwar period and the actions of the Home Army and the Polish police toward Ukrainians during the Nazi occupation; such statements were perceived by Polish historians as justifications of the actions of Ukrainian nationalists.

In 2003, the Union of Ukrainians of Poland stopped financing the working group because of the serious disagreement over the assessment of one more "thorny issue," the Vistula Operation of 1947. The thirteenth workshop held in Lviv in June 2008 proved to be the last. Ten volumes of published materials perfectly illustrate how one stops looking for truth when looking for "one's own truth." The thorny issues proved to be impossible to resolve collectively. Speaking of individual works, those authored by Grzegorz Motyka

38 Full title: "Ukrayina–Polshcha: vazhki pytannya: Ukrayinsko-polski stosunky v 1939–1947 rr."

on the Polish side and Ihor Ilyushyn on the Ukrainian side seem to be the most balanced and free of exonerative-accusative rhetoric.[39]

In 2003, the preliminary conclusions of the debate on Volhynia were on the table. The top political leadership, liberal intelligentsia, and some historians from both countries managed to come to an agreement that commemoration is a road toward reconciliation and mutual forgiveness. Representatives of the political elite, historians, public figures, and journalists who defended one-sided positions based on national interest and/or the ethnocentric version of the past retained the formula "vengeance is mine, I shall repay," thus, opening the door to endless actions and counteractions that followed the pattern of the use and abuse of history. The debate of 2003 to some extent contributed to reconciliation, at least for those who wished to reconcile. On the one hand, it made known the part of society that was ready to discuss contentious historical issues in order to reach mutual understanding. On the other hand, the tone of the debates became much more moderate, and the voice of reason was not drowned out by political hysterics.

The following data shows that the broader population in both states was not very aware of the debate over Volhynia. In 2003, according to research conducted by the Razumkov Center, 48.9 percent of Ukrainian respondents knew nothing about the tragedy of Volhynia, and 28.4 percent "had heard something" about it.[40] According to data from the Polish Center for Research on Public Opinion collected in 2008 (five years after the fiery debates described above), 39 percent of respondents "had heard something" about the events in Volhynia in 1943, 20 percent had "heard a lot about them," and 41 percent knew nothing about them.[41] In 2013, when Ukrainian–Polish relations were once again damaged by the seventieth anniversary of "Volhynia-43," polling performed by the same institution indicated that 41 percent of Polish respondents had "heard something" about the events, 31 percent knew nothing about the tragedy, and 28 percent had "heard a lot" about it.[42] In 2018, when Ukrainian–Polish rela-

39 Grzegorz Motyka, *Od rzezi wołyńskiej do akcji Wisła* (Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie 2011); and Ihor Illyushyn, *Volynska trahediya 1943–1944 rr* (Kyiv: Instytut istoriii Ukrainy, 2003).

40 Ya. Antonyuk, "Vplyv 'Volynskoyi trahediyi' na formuvannya etnichnykh stereotypiv ukrayintsya ta polyaka," *Krayeznavstvo,* no. 3 (2013): 49.

41 Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, "Komunikat z badań *Wołyń1943*," 2008, S. 1, July 2008, http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2008/K_110_08.PDF.

42 Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, "Komunikat z badan *Trudna pamięć: Wołyń 1943*," 2013, S. 5, July 2013, http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2013/K_093_13.PDF.

tions in the field of historical memory deteriorated, the percentage of those well-informed about the event was 37 percent, of those who "heard something" was 44 percent, and those who "heard nothing" diminished to 19 percent.[43]

At the time when debates over Volhynia were raging, the continuation of the conflict over the "Cemetery of Eaglets" and the positions taken by different sides produced a tempest in a teacup, especially since the story in Ukraine was highly localized. However, some progress was achieved. The Polish side agreed to remove the controversial word from the inscription over the main tombstone. Both sides spoke of a common memory, and the idea was embodied by the following memorial plaque: "Here lie Ukrainian and Polish soldiers, dead in the war of 1918–1919," with an arrow near the word "Ukrainian" pointing to the tombs of the Ukrainian Galician Army, and another arrow near the word "Polish," pointing at the Polish tombs.

In June 2005, the presidents of Ukraine and Poland, Viktor Yushchenko and Aleksander Kwaśniewski, unveiled the memorial as the unity of two memories; participants in the ceremony placed wreaths first on the tombs of the Ukrainian soldiers, and then on those of the Polish soldiers. This, however, did not signify the end of the discussion. Oleh Tyahnybok, the leader of Svoboda, called the unveiling of the memorial "a national disgrace."[44] The same year, a commission appointed by the Lviv city council pointed out that one of the central elements of the memorial was not a cross but a stylized depiction of a (Polish) *szczerbiec* sword.[45] Several inscriptions were also questioned. In 2015, some citizens of Lviv looked with apprehension on the two lions with shields installed at the entrance to the memorial, suspecting a hidden Polish national agenda.[46] The local press said that a scandal was brewing, but there were no visible signs of conflict.

In 2017, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced its plans to print a new international passport. A new design envisaged illustrations on

43 Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, "Komunikat z badań Nr 84/2018 *Wołyń 1943—pamięć przywracana*," June 2018, 5.

44 Oleh Tyahnybok, "Natsional'nahan'ba, June 26, 2005," http://lviv.proua.com/news/2005/06/25/162340.html.

45 The Szczerbiec Sword, also known as the Notched Sword, was said to have been chipped by a Polish king who used it to hit the Golden Gate of Kyiv.

46 "U L'vovi nazrivaie skandal. Polshcha vstanovyla na tsvintari orliat skul'ptury leviv," May 18, 2005, http://vgolos.com.ua/news/u_lvovi_nazrivaie_skandal_polshcha_vstanovyla_na_tsvyntari_orlyat_skulptury_leviv_foto_201916.html.

the pages devoted to the most important events in Polish history. One of the pages contained the image of the chapel from the Eaglets Cemetery. This immediately provoked an anxious response from the Ukrainian state, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a protest.[47] As a result, the design of the page was changed.

The story was not over, however. Some unidentified persons erected two copies of the statues of lions at the entrance to the cemetery in 2015.[48] In October 2018, the Lviv Oblast Council, under pressure from Svoboda, issued an order to remove the statues. This decision inevitably provoked a negative reaction from the Polish side.[49]

In the meantime, despite government declarations and mutual apologies between intellectuals in both countries, in 2003, the "problem of Volhynia–43" remained topical for at least two reasons. On the one hand, groups for which "Volhynia–43" was a part of their communicative memory felt unsatisfied, and on the other hand, the issue did not lose its attractiveness for mnemonic warriors interested in its mobilizing capacity.

In 2008, some Polish politicians made another attempt to pass a resolution on "genocide" in Volhynia through the Sejm and insert accusatory rhetoric into memorial events, but the reaction of Polish society to these acts was relatively weak (if we speak about the majority of citizens) or quite negative (in the case of the active liberal minority).[50] There was no Ukrainian–Polish dialogue as there was in 2003; the commemoration was a domestic Polish event, with the actions of right-wing provocateurs

47 "MZS vruchylo notu protestu poslu Peklo cherez tsvintar Orliat u novomu pasporti Pol'shchi," Zik.ua, August 7, 2017, last accessed December 20, 2020, https://zik.ua/news/2017/08/07/mzs_vruchylo_notu_protestu_poslu_pieklo_cherez_tsvyntar_orlyat_u_novomu_1146249.

48 Jaroslav Ivanochko, "Na tsvintari orliat u L'vovi vstanovyly istorychni fihury leviv," Zaxid.net, December 18, 2015, https://zaxid.net/na_tsvintari_orlyat_u_lvovi_vstanovili_istorichni_skulpturi_leviv_n1376848; and Lyubko Petrenko "Tsvintarnyj detektyv mista Leva," Zaxid.net, December 29, 2015, https://zaxid.net/tsvintarniy_detektiv_mista_leva_n1378004.

49 Nazariy Tuziak, "Zajava L'vivs'koi oblrady pro demontazh leviv z tsvintaria orliat vyklykala skandal u Pol'shchi," Zaxid.net, October 26, 2018, https://zaxid.net/zayava_lvivskoyi_oblradi_pro_demontazh_leviv_z_tsvintarya_orlyat_viklikala_skandal_u_polshhi_n1468541.

50 A committee was created in Poland on the occasion of the "sixty-fifth anniversary of the genocide perpetrated by the OUN–UPA against the Polish population in the eastern lands," spearheaded by Jarosław Kalinowski, leader of the Polish People's Party. The committee demanded an official condemnation of the OUN and UPA as criminal organizations, the introduction of a special course in schools dedicated to the crimes of the OUN and UPA, and the closure of the Ukrainian newspaper *Nashe slovo*.

counteracted by the liberal intelligentsia.[51] At the time, Ukraine was commemorating the seventy-fifth anniversary of the famine of 1932–33, and all ideological resources in the country were directed toward this campaign; by this point, Ukraine had already formalized the famine (Holodomor) as genocide on the legislative level. Poland supported the efforts of Ukraine to recognize the Holodomor as a genocide of Ukrainians at the international level through a resolution passed in the Sejm in 2006 (a similar resolution was passed by the senate in 2018).

"Volhynia–43" was not the only topic that generated discussions on "historic reconciliation." In 2006, Viktor Yushchenko and his Polish counterpart Lech Kaczyński unveiled a memorial in the village of Pavlokoma (eastern Poland) where, in the spring of 1945, a unit of the Home Army killed over three hundred Ukrainian residents (according to historians, it was a retaliatory action for the murder of eleven Poles). The inauguration of the monument was accompanied by now-commonplace appeals for reconciliation. At the same time, the inscription on the monument did not mention the nationality of victims or perpetrators, while a memorial cross to nine Polish victims of Ukrainian nationalists was situated nearby which specified that the dead were Polish and the perpetrators of their murder were Ukrainian nationalists.[52] The attendees did not hear the expected formula "We forgive and ask for forgiveness"; instead Lech Kaczyński replaced it with a line from the Pater Noster.[53] However obvious the desire for mutual understanding and reconciliation became at the top state level, the mood of at least part of Ukrainian society was summed up very well by the title of an article in the newspaper *Ukrayina moloda*: "To Forgive But Not to Forget."[54]

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51 Suffice to mention, for example, the attempt of the committee to erect a monument in Warsaw to the victims of the events of 1943 depicting the bodies of tortured dead children. A scandal ensued, and it was found that the photo proposed as the basis for the monument was taken in the 1920s and portrays the murder of children by a mad mother. For more details on the 2008 Polish and Ukrainian debates on Volhynia, see N. Polyanska, "65-ta richnytsya ukrayinsko-polskoho zbroinoho konfliktu na Volyni v informatsiynomu prostori," *Istorychni studiyi Volynskoho natsionalnoho universytetu im. Lesi Ukrayinky* 2 (2008): 108–12.

52 Eugene Teize, "Pavlokoma: Vady natsionalnoho prymyrennya," May 17, 2006, *Deutsche Welle* (Ukrainian edition) http://www.dw.com/uk/павлокома-вади-національного-примирення/a-2476257.

53 Uchast' prezydentiv Ukrainy ta Polshchi v urochystostiakh u Pavlokomi pokazala svitovi, shcho nema v istorii takoho zla, jake ne mozhna podolaty, last accessed September 22, 2016, http://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-politycs/356552.

54 Marina Tkachuk, "Pavlokoma: Probachyty, ale ne zabuty," *Ukrayina moloda*, May 16, 2006, http://www.umoloda.kiev.ua/number/672/158/24426/.

The erection of new memorial sites in both Poland and Ukraine in honor of the victims of a fratricidal war was expected to continue.[55] In February 2009, the two presidents unveiled a monument to the Polish citizens of Huta Pieniacka (Lviv region) who had been killed by Ukrainian nationalists. The presidents exchanged standard platitudes on the utility of historical truth and the need for reconciliation. Viktor Yushchenko said that Ukrainians and Poles were provoked to kill each other by the National Socialist and Stalinist regimes.[56]

These symbolic acts defined the official line of historical politics, at least formally. However, in terms of domestic politics, both sides took actions that made the prospects for a productive dialogue somewhat difficult. In 2007, Viktor Yushchenko conferred the status of Hero of Ukraine on Roman Shukhevych, the leader of the UPA and, according to general opinion in Poland—shared by some Ukrainian historians—the individual responsible for the actions of the UPA in Volhynia in 1943. In 2009, the Polish Sejm adopted a resolution, "On the Tragic Fate of Poles in the Eastern Territories," that mentioned "ethnic cleansing with signs of genocide." In the winter of 2010, just before the end of his presidential term, Yushchenko conferred the title of Hero of Ukraine on Stepan Bandera, the leader of the OUN-B. At the same time, he published a decree praising the participants of the "national liberation struggle," including the OUN and UPA.

In 2013, the next "round" anniversary of the Volhynian tragedy provoked a new outburst of political angst. The sequence of events—discussions, statements by politicians, utterances of public opinion leaders, parliamentary initiatives—created a sense of déjà vu. The debate repeated itself endlessly.[57] The Polish side, represented by the same political forces as before, became active once again. This time, the Sejm appointed a special MP group dedicated to the "affairs of the *Kresy*, the natives of the *Kresy*, and the heritage of the eastern lands." The strategy was again concentrated on official recognition of the

55 A similar remembrance ceremony was planned in 2011 for Polish and Ukrainian victims in the villages of Sahryń (Poland) and Ostrovky (Volhynia). The event did not take place. In 2013, President Bronisław Komorowski honored the memory of the victims of the Volhynian tragedy in Lutsk (officially, the president came for a public prayer). President Viktor Yanukovych did not join his counterpart, "for objective reasons."

56 Miroslav Novosad, "Yushchenko i Kachynskyi poprosyly probachennya," *Gazeta*, March 2, 2009, http://gazeta.ua/articles/politics-newspaper/_uschenko-i-kachinskij-poprosili-probachennya/284329.

57 See the special issue of *Yi* magazine: http://www.ji.lviv.ua/n74texts/74-zmist.htm.

1943 tragedy as an act of genocide. Once again, liberals in both countries opposed the escalation of the dispute.

In late June 2013, the Polish Senate adopted a statement that described the events in Volhynia in 1943 as "ethnic cleansing with signs of genocide."[58] This was some kind of compromise with the right-wing opposition, which insisted on the unequivocal use of the word "genocide." The Senate also rejected the right-wingers' suggestion that the government establish an official commemoration date, the Day of Martyrdom of the Poles (July 11).[59]

In Ukraine, almost 150 members of the Ukrainian parliament (mainly representing the Party of Regions and the Communist Party) expressed their concern about the debate in Poland and their desire to contribute to the search for historical truth. To do this, they addressed the speaker of the Polish Sejm in an open letter arguing that the events in Volhynia in 1943–44 should be described as genocide. The necessity of such a decision was explained by, among other things, the growth of xenophobic, antisemitic, and neo-Nazi attitudes in Ukraine.[60] Yet this somewhat unusual move elicited no response.[61] The Polish Sejm adopted a resolution that repeated the Senate formula. The fact that Ukraine was close to signing an EU Association Agreement was taken into account by the Polish leadership, both the president and the ruling parties. However, when compared with 2003, there was an evident cooling on the issue of reconciliation, in fact, the idea of releasing a combined statement by leading Catholic and Greek Catholic clerics had just expired.

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58 The compromise formula "signs of genocide" was already used by the Sejm in September 2009 when the resolution on Katyn was adopted.

59 "Senat zamierza upamiętnić ofiary zbrodni wołyńskiej, jako ofiary ludobójstwa," *Rzeczpospolita*, June 2013, last accessed December 20, 2020, http://www.rp.pl/artykul/1016343-Senat-zamierza-upamietnic-ofiary-zbrodni-wolynskiej--jako-ofiary-ludobojstwa.html.

60 Evgeny Gavrilov, "Deputaty ot Partii regionov i KPU poprosili polskiy seym priznat Volynskuyu tragediyu genotsidom polyakov," Zn.ua July 5, 2013, http://zn.ua/POLITICS/deputaty-ot-partii-regionov-i-kpu-poprosili-polskiy-seym-priznat-volynskuyu-tragediyu-genocidom-polyakov-125190_.html.

61 Of course, representatives of the Party of Regions used the topic of "Volhynia-43" only to discredit their political opponents, sometimes grotesquely copying "Western" practices. For instance, in July 2013, Vadym Kolesnichenko, a Party of Regions MP, declared plans to create a "center of identifying Nazi criminals" (in the context of debates on Volhynia); together with other members of the party, he proposed establishing the honorific "Righteous Ukrainian" for Ukrainians who saved Poles during the Volhynia tragedy. See "Kolesnichenko reshil zanyatsa rozyskov "natsistskikh prestupnikov": Politik prodolzhayet ekspluatirovat Volynskuyu tragediyu," *Livy Bereg*, July 9, 2013, http://lb.ua/news/2013/07/09/211526_kolesnichenko_reshil_zanyatsya.html.

Subsequent events around the topic of "Volhynia–43" resulted from the interaction of domestic and international policy issues. The Revolution of Dignity, followed by the Russian annexation of Crimea and the war in eastern Ukraine greatly strengthened the positions of the right and far-right forces in the country, the very same groups that took the most active part in both violent protests and armed action. Despite their failure in both the presidential (2014, 2019) and parliamentary (2014, 2019) elections, the political right played a prominent role in "field politics," organizing para-military groups, voluntary battalions, and eagerly taking part in the "Leninfall." The "new" regime headed by Poroshenko intensified historical politics, using its mobilization potential to unite all those active in the war with Russia and to distract the public from its failures to reform the economy and resolve social conflicts. The prestige of the nationalist narrative in the public sphere reached unprecedented heights.

The main government institution responsible for the development and implementation of historical politics was now headed by Volodymyr Viatrovych, who proposed considering the Volhynian tragedy part of the Polish-Ukrainian war, effectively relativizing the question of OUN and UPA responsibility for the extermination of Polish civilians.[62] He was also known for his encomiastic works on the history of the UPA and his strong ties with OUN-B institutions in North America.

State politics aimed at the more intensive promotion of the nationalist memory narrative could not foster the dialogue and reconciliation endorsed by some intellectuals and politicians in previous years. The established voting procedure for the memory laws appeared as a blatant insult to the Poles. On the morning of April 9, 2015, Polish president Bronisław Komorowski delivered an emotional speech in the Verkhovna Rada expressing his hope that Ukrainians and Poles would not clash in discussions about past conflicts and their consequences.[63] Ukrainian MPs met his speech with enthusiastic applause. In the afternoon, that same audience passed the law that obliged Ukrainian and foreign citizens to praise those who fought for the liberation of Ukraine, among them the OUN and UPA.

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62 Volodymyr Viatrovych, *Druha polsko-ukrayinska viyna 1942–1947 rokiv* (Kyiv: Vydavnychyi dim Kyievo-Mohylians'ka academia, 2012).

63 "Istorychnyj vystup prezydenta Pol'shchi Komorows'koho u VR. Povnyj tekst," *Evropeyskaya Pravda*, April 9, 2015, https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/articles/2015/04/9/7032765/.

The politics of decommunization, which was received with the understanding and full-throated support of the Poles, was followed by the massive expansion of the nationalist memory narrative. The renaming of Moscow Avenue (Moskovski Prospekt) in Kyiv to Bandera Avenue occurred on July 7, 2016, at the instigation of right-wing deputies on the eve of Petro Poroshenko's visit to Warsaw (where he genuflected at the memorial to the victims of the Volhynian massacre) and in the midst of a new round of debates about the Volhynian tragedy in the Polish Sejm.[64]

All these potentially divisive actions went together with the rhetoric of reconciliation. In December 2014, President Petro Poroshenko, speaking to the Polish Sejm, mentioned the complicated shared past of Poland and Ukraine and again repeated the magic formula, "We forgive and ask for forgiveness." In June 2016, Ukrainian public figures, former presidents, and leading clerics wrote an open letter to the Poles that reiterated this position: "We ask for forgiveness and forgive."[65]

However, this time the context was different. After the triumph of the Law and Justice Party in the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2015, Poland decisively turned toward affirmative historical politics aimed at "strengthening patriotism."[66] This meant the reinforcement of ethnic nationalism and ethnocentrism in historical politics. The PiS, allied with the radical nationalists and populists (Kukiz'15), again suggested making July 11 the Remembrance Day of the Victims of the Genocide of Poles. According to the PiS, Polish victims had not been sufficiently honored; in particular, their massacre by Ukrainian nationalists was not yet recognized by its rightful name—genocide.[67] Michał Dworczyk, an MP representing the PiS, read a letter by two hundred Polish parliamentarians during a live broadcast on the Ukrainian television channel Espresso TV. The letter contained

64 "Moskovskyi prospect v Kyyevi stav prospektom Bandery," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, July 7, 2016, http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2016/07/7/7114019/.

65 "Ukrayintsi znovu prosyat proshchennya za Volyn," *Istorichna Pravda*, June 3, 2016, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2016/06/3/149102/.

66 For more details, see K. Shtol, S. Shtakh, and M. Sariush-Volskaya, "K voprosu o dominirovanii natsionalisticheskogo narrativa v Polshe, perevod," *Uroki Istorii*, August 3, 2016, last accessed 20 December, 2020, http://urokiistorii.ru/node/53367.

67 "19 lipca Sejm uchwałą odda cześć ofiarom rzezi wołyńskiej. Zbrodnia dokonana przez ukraińskich nacjonalistów 'nie została upamiętniona w należyty sposób,'" wPolityce, July 6, 2016, http://wpolityce.pl/historia/299667-19-lipca-sejm-uchwala-odda-czesc-ofiarom-rzezi-wolynskiej-zbrodnia-dokonana-przez-ukrainskich-nacjonalistow-nie-zostala-upamietniona-w-nalezyty-sposob.

reproaches to the Ukrainian leadership for the glorification of organizations and persons with a "specific reputation" (meaning the OUN-B and UPA). The Polish MPs said that the resolution on the memorial day of Polish victims of genocide being prepared in the Polish Sejm was not directed against Ukraine and Ukrainians.[68] On July 7, 2016—the same day Moscow Avenue in Kyiv was renamed Bandera Avenue—the Polish Senate voted 60 to 23 to recommend the Sejm adopt a resolution containing the term "genocide."[69] Meanwhile, retired politicians in Poland including Lech Wałęsa, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, and Bronisław Komorowski (still believed to be influential figures) published an open letter asking for forgiveness for the past harm done by Poles to the Ukrainians.[70]

On July 22, 2016, the Polish parliament almost unanimously adopted a resolution that proclaimed July 11 the Remembrance Day of the Victims of Genocide Perpetrated by Ukrainian Nationalists against Polish Citizens in the Eastern Lands of the Second Polish Republic in 1943–1945 (442 MPs voted in favor, ten MPs abstained, no one voted against the resolution).[71] The OUN, UPA, the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS (1st Galician), and other formations that collaborated with the Nazis were named as responsible for the murders of one hundred thousand Poles (and citizens of other nationalities as well). The resolution paid homage to those Ukrainians who saved Poles. According to the Sejm's resolution, only the complete historical truth would lead to reconciliation and mutual forgiveness. The "complete historical truth," apparently, meant defining the mass murders of Poles in Volhynia as genocide.[72]

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68 "Polskiye deputaty napravili pismo k ukrainskim kollegam po povodu istoricheskogo primireniya," *Day Kyiv* June 20, 2016, http://day.kyiv.ua/ru/news/200616-polskie-deputaty-napravili-otkrytoe-pismo-ukrainskim-kollegam-po-povodu-istoricheskogo.

69 *Senat upamiętnił ofiary rzezi wołyńskiej,* July 7, 2016, Dzieje.pl, http://dzieje.pl/aktualnosci/senat-upamietnil-ofiary-rzezi-wolynskiej.

70 "Polyaky prosyat v ukrayintsiv vybachennya za istorychni kryvdy," *Istorichna Pravda*, July 4, 2016, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2016/07/4/149125/.

71 Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, "Uchwała Sejmu w sprawie oddania hołdu ofiarom ludobójstwa dokonanego przez nacjonalistów ukraińskich na obywatelach II RP w latach 1943–1945," July 22, 2016, http://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm8.nsf/komunikat.xsp?documentId=2D76E3019FA691C3C1257FF800303676.

72 In previous years, the Polish parliament had already approved documents that mentioned the word "genocide." In 2005, it condemned the 1915 genocide of Armenians, and in 2006, it expressed sympathy for Ukrainians, recognizing the Holodomor as genocide. In August 2012, the Sejm recognized the "Polish operation" of the NKVD in 1937–1938 as genocide. In October 2014, it condemned the genocide of Christians, Kurds, and Yazidis carried out by the Islamic State.

The reaction of the Ukrainian side in this conflict was easy to predict. President Petro Poroshenko expressed his regret. The International Relations Committee of the Verkhovna Rada condemned the "one-sided action" of the Polish legislators as "anti-Ukrainian," "politically unbalanced and juridically incorrect."[73] Borys Tarasyuk, head of the parliamentary group on interparliamentary relations between Ukraine and Poland, stepped down, proclaiming that the Sejm's decision was anti-Ukrainian. Volodymyr Viatrovych, the director of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, called the Sejm's decision a natural result of anti-Ukrainian hysteria in Poland.[74] Piotr Tyma, the head of the Union of Ukrainians of Poland, indicated that the supporters of reconciliation only addressed the topic of Volhynia on major anniversaries, while the supporters of the confrontational genocidal narrative never stopped promoting it. He also pointed to an obvious (in his opinion) imbalance in the actions of the Polish side: the absence of any genuine attempts to discuss the mass murders of Ukrainians by units of the Home Army and other Polish military formations.[75] Discussion about this issue flared up in the Ukrainian mass media. Nationalists and national democrats argued for symmetry when discussing both massacres. Liberals suggested condemning the actions of the Polish Sejm but urged avoiding confrontation. Everybody agreed that the conflict would be expedient for Russia, where the Communist Party of the Russian Federation registered a statement in the Duma expressing solidarity with the Polish Sejm.[76]

The MPs from the Petro Poroshenko Bloc in the Verkhovna Rada swiftly registered a resolution honoring the memory of the Ukrainian victims of

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73 Verkhovna Rada Ukraina, "Zayava Komitetu Verkhovnoyi Rady u zakordonnykh spravakh u zv'yazku z ukhvalennyam Senatom I Seimom Respubliky Polshcha postanov vid 7 i lypnya 22, 2016 roku shchodo Volynskoyi trahediyi," July 22, 2016, http://rada.gov.ua/news/Novyny/133552.html.

74 See "Poroshenko vyslovyv zhal shchodo rishennya seimu Polshchi," Zaxid.net, July 22, 2016, http://zaxid.net/news/showNews.do?poroshenko_visloviv_zhal_shhodo_rishennya_seymu_polshhi&objectId=13984.43; "Tarasyuk na znak protest vidmovyvsya ocholyuvaty hrupu u zv'yazkakh z Polshcheyu," Radio Svoboda, July 22, 2016, http://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news/27873821.html; and Volodymyr V'yatrovych, "Ne istorychne rishennya, a istorychne neporozuminnya," *Istorichna Pravda*, July 22, 2016, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/columns/2016/07/22/149157/.

75 Piotr Tyma, "Polacy I ukraincy: krok przed przepascia?" *Magazin TVN24*, July 2016, http://www.tvn24.pl/magazyn-tvn24/polacy-i-ukraincy-krok-przed-przepascia,49,1113.

76 "U Derzhdumi RF rozglyanut pytannya pro vyznannya Volynskoyi trahediyi henotsydom," ZN.ua July 29, 2016, http://dt.ua/POLITICS/u-derzhdumi-rf-rozglyanut-pitannya-pro-viznannya-volinskoyi-tragediyi-genocidom-214931_.html.

Polish genocide.[77] Its wording was nearly identical to the rhetoric of the Sejm, exemplified by the phrase that the truth "should form the basis of harmony and forgiveness between the Polish and Ukrainian peoples."[78] A commemorative date was proposed as the Remembrance Day of the Genocide Perpetrated by the Polish State against Ukrainians in 1919–1951.[79] Stanisław Karczewski, speaker of the Polish Senate, told the Polish mass media that the adoption of such a resolution may complicate the dialogue between Poland and Ukraine.[80] The resolution was never adopted.

On August 30, 2016, a group of "well-known Ukrainians" published an appeal to the Ukrainian parliament.[81] The authors accused Polish MPs of a "breach of earlier agreements" (substantiating this claim with reconciliatory declarations from past years); the deliberate distortion of the "historical truth"; and of using politically irresponsible and juridically incorrect formulas. They suggested that the Verkhovna Rada should adopt countermeasures officially establishing three commemorative dates. The first was September 23, the "Day of Polish Repression of the Autochthonous Population of Galicia," commemorating the so-called pacification of Ukrainians that began in 1930 and included numerous repressive acts against Ukrainians and their institutions in response to OUN terrorist attacks. The second was December 25, the "Day of the Genocidal Extermination of the Autochthonous Ukrainian Population by the Polish Underground in the Centuries-Old Ukrainian Land." "It was on this day in 1942," said the letter, "that the Polish chauvinists began murdering the Ukrainian population en masse, dancing on the corpses of the martyrs" (this date was devoted to the *Armia Krajowa*'s offensive, which caused civilian casualties among the Ukrainian population). The third commemoration day was April 28, the "Remembrance

77 Proekt postanovy "Pro vshanuvannya pam'yati zhertv henotsydu, vchynennoho Polskoyu derzhavoyu shchodo ukrayintsiv u 1919–1951 rokakh," August 3, 2016, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=59866.

78 Ibid.

79 March 24 was suggested as the commemoration day because of a large 1923 rally that took place in Lviv on that day, which was held in protest of the decision of the Allied Conference of Ambassadors to recognize Polish sovereignty over Eastern Galicia.

80 "Spiker Senatu Polshchi zasterihaie Ukrainu vid ukhvalennia postanovy pro henotsyd," *Deutsche Welle* (Ukrainianedition), August 8, 2016, http://www.dw.com/uk/спікер-сенату-польщі-застерігає-україну-від-ухвалення-постанови-про-геноцид//a-19448310?maca=ukr-rss-ukrnet-ukr-all-3816-xml.

81 The authors included President Leonid Kravchuk, a number of played out "national democrat" politicians, and several professional historians.

Day of Ukrainian Victims of Deportations by the Polish State" (devoted to Operation Vistula in 1947).[82]

Instrumentalizing the past to poison the present seemed to peak in Ukraine and Poland in the summer of 2016. At a certain point, both sides of the process came to their senses, especially as they recognized that their conflict about the past could benefit a third party, Russia. On October 20, 2016, the Verkhovna Rada and the Polish Sejm adopted a mutual declaration of memory and solidarity that was also supported by the Lithuanian Sejm. The declaration articulated the need for "impartial historical research" and the "containment of the forces that lead to arguments in our states." The declaration pointed at the common enemy, Russia, and at the necessity of reaching consensus when confronting the latter.[83]

Nevertheless, aggressive comments were soon heard on both sides yet again. In December 2016, Witold Waszczykowski, the Polish minister of foreign affairs, urged the Ukrainian side to undertake mutually constructive actions in the sphere of historical memory, citing the example of Yad Vashem and Polish-German reconciliation. In particular, he hinted that the national glorification of the UPA (its anniversary was approaching) might obstruct the route toward mutual understanding.[84] In January 2017, the western regions of Ukraine started to prepare for the celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. In February, the UINP declared the start of the "national information campaign for the commemoration of the UPA."[85] This news provoked a nervous reaction on the Polish side. Jarosław Kaczyński, speaking to *Gazeta Polska* about his meeting with Petro Poroshenko, said that he told the Ukrainian president directly that there is no chance to get into Europe with Bandera.

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82 "Zvernennya u zv'yazku z porushennyam parlamentom Respubliky Polshcha domovlenostei shchodo spilnoyi otsinky polsko-ukrayinskoho protystoyannya u 1943–1945 rokakh, fotokopiya dokumenta," *Evropeyskaya Pravda*, August 31, 2016, http://www.eurointegration.com.ua/news/2016/08/31/7053988/.

83 "Rada pryinyala spilnu z Polshcheyu deklaratsiyu pam'yati ta solidarnosti," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, October 20, 2016, http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2016/10/20/7124263/.

84 Serwis Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, "Wywiad ministra spraw zagranicznych Witolda Waszczykowskiego dla tygodnika 'Wprost,'" December 27, 2016, , last accessed December 20, 2020, http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/wiadomosci/wywiad_ministra_spraw_zagranicznych_witolda_waszczykowskiego_dla_tygodnika__wprost_.

85 "UINP 8 liutoho startuie national'na informatsiina kampaniia v pamiat' pro UPA," February 2, 2017, http://www.memory.gov.ua/news/8-lyutogo-startue-natsionalna-informatsiina-kampaniya-v-pamyat-pro-upa.

The choice was simple: either integrate with the West and break with the UPA tradition, or remain with the East and everything that such a choice entails.[86] In another interview, Kaczyński told the readers of the weekly *Do Rzeczy* that Ukraine was creating a cult of people who perpetrated genocide against Poles, surpassing Germans in their cruelty.

In 2017–18, the conflict spread to a new domain. The memory war mutated into the war over graves. Polish authorities began to remove the memorial plates and monuments dedicated to UPA soldiers that were erected without formal permission. According to official statements, about forty such locations lacked legal status. The Ukrainian side responded with its own figures: according to data from the UINP, no less than one hundred Polish sites of memory in Ukraine had not received official permission. After the dismantling of the memorial to UPA soldiers in Hrushovychy in April 2017, the UINP suspended issuing permits for Polish exhumations in Ukraine.

By the end of 2017, the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs Pavlo Klimkin regretted the excessive politicization of Ukrainian–Polish relations and lamented the Polish position: according to him, Ukrainians had apologized for acts of vandalism while Poles had not.[87] Polish President Andrzej Duda, in turn, exclaimed that he did not object to the erection of Ukrainian monuments at grave sites in Poland, but he insisted that this should be done only after the exhumation and identification of the remains (Polish authorities claimed that UPA soldiers had never been buried in the tomb at Hrushovychy, for instance).[88] At a meeting in Kharkiv on December 13, 2017, the presidents of both countries exchanged standard statements about the need to come to a mutual understanding on the problems of the past and promised to revive the work of the intergovernmental commission created for this purpose (in fact, the commission did not work either).[89]

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86 "Kaczyński do Ukraińców: 'Z Banderą do Europy nie wejdziecie.' I wieszczy kolejny 'pucz,'" *Wiadomości Gazeta*, February 8, 2017, http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/7,114871,21345537,kaczynski-o-wejsciu-ukrainy-do-ue-z-bandera-do-europy-nie.html.

87 "Klimkin: ne chuv, shchob Pol'shcha zasudzhuvala vandalism proty ukrajins'kykh pamiatnykiv," accessed December 16, 2018, https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/news/2017/12/1/7074477/.

88 "Duda: vidnovliuvaty ukrains'ki pamiatnyky treba, ale za pevnykh umov," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, December 1, 2017, https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2017/12/13/7165409/.

89 "Poroshenko i Duda v Kharkovi domovylysia pro 'istorychnu rozriadku," Novinarnya, December 13, 2017, https://novynarnia.com/2017/12/13/poroshenko-i-duda-v-harkovi-domovilisya-pro-istorichnu-rozryadku/.

In winter 2018, the struggle for the "'true past" in Poland and Ukraine resumed. The Sejm approved changes to the Law on the Institute of National Memory proposed two years earlier. Apart from other dubious regulations that provoked an international scandal (which were, in fact, aimed at Holocaust revisionism), the law contained mentions of "Ukrainian nationalists" whose crimes against the Polish people matched the crimes of Nazis and communists. Article 55 prohibited the public denial of these crimes and introduced criminal penalties for it, a fine or imprisonment for up to three years.[90] In Poland, the amendments were predictably protested by the liberals and the opposition. In Ukraine, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs routinely expressed concern. The same feeling was publicly shared by President Poroshenko. The Ukrainian parliament asked the Polish president to veto the law. There was some irony in this situation: the Polish law declared "Ukrainian nationalists" (i.e., the OUN and UPA) criminals and prohibited any public expressions of an alternative point of view, whereas the Ukrainian law from April 2015 declared them national heroes and required everyone, regardless of nationality, to honor them, prohibiting any form of public vilification of them.

In July 2018, the Ukrainian and Polish presidents broke the tradition of common statements on the anniversary of Volhynia-43. Duda visited the Ukrainian village Olyk to honor the memory of Poles killed there in 1943. Poroshenko stopped at the memorial of Sahryń, where Ukrainian villagers were massacred by Polish partisan forces in 1944. The Polish president called the events of 1943 "ethnic cleansing" and habitually appealed to "historical truth." The Ukrainian president called for the same truth and mentioned that the conflict "between Ukrainian and Polish peoples is useful to a third party—'Muscovy'—against which these people fought together in the past."[91] Poroshenko expressed hope that the Poles would cancel the new regulations on historical memory. In January 2019, the Polish Constitutional Tribunal stipulated that formulations like "Ukrainian nationalists" or "Eastern Little Poland" (*Malopolska Wschodnia*) could not be used as legal terms and, there-

90 Ustawa z dnia stycznia 26, 2018 r. o zmianie ustawy o Instytucie Pamięci Narodowej—Komisji Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, ustawy o grobach i cmentarzach wojennych, ustawy o muzeach oraz ustawy o odpowiedzialności podmiotów zbiorowych za czyny zabronione pod groźbą kary, January 26, 2018, http://orka.sejm.gov.pl/opinie8.nsf/nazwa/771_u/$file/771_u.pdf.

91 "Poroshenk: Vid superechky pol's'koho ta ukrains'koho narodiv vyhraje lyshe tretiy," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, July 8, 2018, https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2018/07/8/7185669/.

fore, did not comply with the constitution. The Tribunal compelled lawmakers to introduce correct formulations.[92]

Some signs of normalization became visible after the presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine in the spring and summer of 2019. During his visit to Warsaw on August 31–September 1, 2019, the newly elected president Volodymyr Zelensky promised to lift the ban on exhumations of Polish victims of violence that took place in the 1940s. The Polish and Ukrainian presidents agreed to create a bilateral commission on historical issues. At the end of September 2019, Ukraine officially cancelled the ban, and Poland restarted their exhumations in Lviv oblast.[93] At his meeting with the Polish ambassador in Ukraine, Bartosz Cichocki, in January 2020, the new director of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, Anton Drobovych, expressed hope that Poland would undertake concrete steps to restore Ukrainian sites of memory that had been destroyed in previous years.[94]

The story about the past in Ukrainian–Polish relations is very instructive in many respects, especially in regard to the conflict potential of historical politics. Regardless of the political orientation of the individuals and parties at the helm, the ruling elites of both countries consider friendly and cooperative relations with their neighbor to be a top priority. Poland and Ukraine managed to find mutually acceptable solutions in almost every sphere, including economic, political, and cultural relations. There is only one exception, the sphere of historical memory. Many years of efforts made by high-ranking political leaders, public intellectuals, and civic leaders to effect reconciliation lack efficiency and seem condemned to a kind of Hegelian *Schlecht-Unendliche*. The primary and most basic reason probably lies in the rivalry between two exclusivist ethnocentric versions of the national/nationalist memory narrative, and, to make matters worse, of their radical variants. In effect, the Polish-Ukrainian memory war was a battle between Siamese twins.

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92 "Decyzja Trybunału Konstytucyjnego ws. nowelizacji ustawy o IPN," *Onet Wiadomości*, January 17, 2019, https://wiadomosci.onet.pl/kraj/decyzja-trybunalu-konstytucyjnego-ws-nowelizacji-ustawy-o-ipn/kr7zg5k.

93 "Ukraina przekazała Polsce zgodę na wznowienie ekshumacji," *Polskie Radio*, September 27, 2019, https://www.polskieradio.pl/399/7977/Artykul/2374043.

94 "Holova UINP ta posol Polshchi obhovoryly napriamky spivpratsi," *Istorichna Pravda*, January 10, 2020, https://www.istpravda.com.ua/short/2020/01/10/156858/.

The memory warriors from both sides belonged to the same side of the political spectrum: *Kresy* organizations, veteran organizations, populists and conservative right parties in Poland, and right-wing movements and right-conservative and populist political parties in Ukraine. The aggravation of the conflict coincided with the rise of these agents of historical politics to power. In Poland, those who support the revival of ethnocentric Polish identity based on an exclusivist national narrative achieved representation both in parliament and the presidency while their ideological twins in Ukraine controlled the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory and several other key agencies.[95] Svoboda, which lost its position on the party lists in the parliament in 2014 and managed to secure just one MP in 2019, gained more importance at the local level. For instance, Svoboda was behind the decisions of local councils to rename streets after Bandera in central Ukraine and to display the OUN flag together with the national flag in public places on certain commemorative dates, an action which definitely did not invest in normalization of Polish-Ukrainian relations.[96]

It is normal that memory warriors in both countries present their debates over the past as a clash between Ukrainians and Poles or even an international conflict between the Ukrainian and Polish states. Both parties are interested in speaking on behalf of the whole nation. In Poland, these claims were better justified despite the fact that opposition to this kind of politics was still strong. In Ukraine, the right-wing and right-conservative political and ideological faction which claims nation-wide representation in the politics of history is much narrower. In reality, those in Ukraine who politically benefit from the conflict represent a relatively small fraction of the political spectrum who have situationally reached power and influence by taking over some of the institutions mentioned above.[97] Both sides deployed negation-

95 For instance, the leader of the OUN (Mel'nyk faction), Bohdan Chervak, held the position of deputy head of the State Committee of Television and Radio Broadcasting.

96 See, in more detail, Georgiy Kasianov, "Tolkovanija OUN I UPA v publishnom diskurse Ukrainy 1990-x–2000-x: ot reabilitatsii k apologii," *Forum noveishei vostochnoyevropeiskoi istorii I kul'tury* no. 1–2 (2018), http://www1.ku-eichstaett.de/ZIMOS/forum/inhaltruss29.html.

97 For instance, Svoboda failed to enter parliament by party list in the 2014 election. Likewise, candidates from nationalist parties in the presidential election that same year got 0.9 percent and 1.3 percent of the votes. The same happened in the 2019 presidential elections: the single candidate from different nationalist parties got 1.62 percent of the votes. In parliamentary elections during the same year, the Svoboda party managed to obtain one seat in the parliament.

ism to challenge the claims of their rivals.[98] Accordingly, "much ado about nothing" has become paramount, and the problems of the past are used to construct a gloomy present.

Ukraine–Russia: "Fraternal Rivalry"

While in Poland different interpretations of the past were among the few topics that tarnished its otherwise conciliatory relations with Ukraine, in the case of Russian–Ukrainian relations, the number of complex and fraught issues was much larger. The "fraternal rivalry" often escalated into open conflict, with the two countries repeatedly balancing on the edge of open political and even military confrontation.[99] Russia frequently voiced claims to Ukrainian territory. Only three days had elapsed after the Ukrainian parliament's declaration of independence when Pavel Voshchanov, the press secretary of Russian President Boris Yeltsin, declared that Russia recognized the sovereignty of republics of the USSR but reserved the right to raise the issue of border revisions. In the case of Ukraine, this meant Donbass and Crimea.

The representation of Crimea and Sevastopol as Russian territory was often verbalized by top politicians (Vladimir Zhirinovsky, Yury Luzhkov) and by the supreme legislative body of Russia. In 1993, Ukraine and Russia were on the verge of armed conflict over the partition of the Black Sea Fleet. In 1994–95, Russia openly supported separatism in Crimea. In 2003 (the year of Russia in Ukraine[100]), Russia provoked a territorial conflict over the "Tuzla Spit" ("Tuzla Island" on the Ukrainian side of the conflict).

Trade and economic relations were dominated by incessant conflicts over the price of gas and Ukrainian debt (Ukraine was permanently in debt to Russia because of payments for energy). In the 2000s, specifically after the Orange Revolution, Ukraine and Russia went through a series of trade wars,

98 The term used by the Polish political scientist Lukasz Adamski to depict the position of Ukrainian memory warriors on the Volhynian massacre. See Lukasz Adamski, "Ukrainian 'Volhynian Negationism': Reflections on the 2016 Polish–Ukrainian Memory Conflict," *Journal of Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society* 3, no. 2 (2017): 1–39.

99 The title of a book by the journalist Anatol Lieven, *Ukraine and Russia: A Fraternal Rivalry* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1999).

100 The Year of Russia in Ukraine is a case of cultural diplomacy. During the year, official public events devoted to the promotion of the culture, science, and history of the neighboring country take place in the partner country.

the most famous of which were the two "gas wars" (in 2006 and 2009) that transcended the framework of bilateral relations. In the 2000s, the center of gravity in Russia–Ukraine relations moved into the sphere of geopolitics: the Ukrainian government, having preached so-called multipolar politics for a long time, slowly drifted toward the "West" while, at the same time, top Russian leadership made increasing efforts to integrate Ukraine into the "Eurasian" space, which was dominated by Russia both economically and politically.

The annexation of Crimea in March 2014 and Russian military, technical, and political support for separatists in Donbass—leading to the creation of the satellite "statelets" of the People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk—was the peak of this "brotherly rivalry." In January 2015, the Verkhovna Rada officially labelled Russia an aggressor state.

The standard framework used to explain Ukrainian–Russian relations holds that Russian political elites aspire to revive the great-power status of Russia both in the region delineated by the borders of the former Soviet Union and in the wider world. Ukrainian political elites seek self-assertion through an independent state, and the Ukrainian national project, in this sense, contradicts the aforementioned ambitions of Russia, notably when Ukraine not only declares its affiliation with Europe but makes decisive steps "westward."

The thesis that Russia is unable to be a great power without Ukraine as a satellite became commonplace. Not surprisingly, a kind of ontological anxiety about Ukraine is visible in the political, geopolitical, and cultural thinking of the Russian ruling class and its political and cultural elites. Russian elites have real problems with the recognition of Ukraine as the Other because they consider Ukrainians to be part of the greater Russian nation or, at least, a part of a common and historically determined cultural and political space. The Ukrainian aspiration for cultural distinctiveness and their self-assertion as the Other, i.e., separate from the Russian world, breeds cognitive dissonance, exasperation, and non-acceptance in Russia, especially when these assertions are accompanied by Ukraine's move toward another cultural and civilizational space (the "West"). Self-determination for Ukraine is often perceived as a bad joke of history and a big mistake. In the most radical version of this stance, the thesis of the unnaturalness and artificiality of Ukrainian statehood is advanced by top Russian leaders.

In Ukraine, on the other hand, Russia's reaction to Ukraine's desire for separation and self-assertion outside the common cultural and political

space is simply considered a manifestation of nostalgia for an imperial past or the innate evilness of Russian elites. It further strengthens post-colonial discourse and contributes to the persistence of the antiquarian national/nationalist memory narrative. Russian elites build their worldview on the idea of statehood as the backbone of the nation. In this formulation, Ukraine has been a "natural" part of the Russian empire. Ukraine and Russia are constituent parts of one singular historical body, and the separation of one part disfigures and cripples the whole entity.

Ukrainian claims of cultural separation and independence are traditionally presented as the manifestation of successive intrigues by external forces (Polish, Austrian, and German) operating since the end of the eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century. However, plots by the United States, the European Union, or, more generally, the "West" have replaced Russia's old enemies.[101]

Finally, major contradictions in the interpretation of the common past are important. For Russian political and cultural elites, the imperial and Soviet past has been important for their historical legitimation.[102] For Ukrainian elites, the central tenet in the historical justification of the Ukrainian nation and state has been liberation from the imperial and Soviet past, which was alien and imposed by external forces. At the same time, as with their relations with Poland, conflicts were provoked by similarities. Both countries were preoccupied with the past. Both had problems producing a single unifying historical narrative that successfully challenged local narratives. Both used the idea of a common past to explain present-day problems and defend contemporary goals.

The first open discussion, rather ideological than historiographical, took place in 1993, at a conference dedicated to the sixtieth anniversary of the famine of 1932–33 in Ukraine.[103] The conference took place when Ukrainian–

101 The most representative collection of such clichés is a journalistic propaganda film with the telling title, *Project Ukraine*, filmed in 2014 for the Rossiya–1 TV channel, available online as a YouTube video, accessed December 24, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjZ741QCMEM&ab_channel=Россия24.

102 Of course, the period of the late 1980s–90s, when the Soviet past was also condemned and negated in Russia, should not be confused with the 2000s, when it became the object of "normalization."

103 *Holodomor 1932–1933 rr. v Ukrayini: prychyny i naslidky; Mizhnarodna naukova konferentsiya. Kyiv, 9–10 veresnia, 1993 r.: Materialy* (Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy, 1995), 199. The texts of the speeches and reports published in the collection were edited before publication.

Russian relations were strained. In July, a resolution of the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation declared Sevastopol to be Russian territory. In October, Russia claimed ownership over Ukraine's gas transportation system as payment for its enormous gas debt. The conflict over the partition of the Black Sea Fleet was raging. In this context, the discussion of the famine often evolved into blaming Russia, or "Moscow," for their perpetration of the famine. Russian historians who tried to defend the idea that the famine took place in all the grain-producing regions of the USSR found themselves in the role of "defenders" of the Stalinist regime. This episode essentially started the discussion among Ukrainian and Russian politicians and historians over the famine of 1932–33 that would evolve into a memory war in the 2000s.

The 1990s was a period of attenuated contact between Ukrainian and Russian historians. In Ukraine, the standard ethnocentric master narrative was emerging, while in Russia, interest in the Ukrainian past was minimal; moreover, politicians in the Russian federal center were barely interested in their own past. However, by the early 2000s, Russia experienced a revival of interest not only in its own history but also that of its neighbors, and Russian academics and specialists showed renewed interest specifically in the history of Ukraine.[104] Projects on Ukrainian history received financial support in universities, research centers, and institutes, and in 2002, a large international conference took place in Chernihiv under the title "Ukraine–Russia: A Dialogue of Historiographies" with the participation of historians from Russia, Ukraine, and the Ukrainian diaspora.[105]

The reestablishment of contact increased the interest of both sides in each other and, at the same time, provoked the first politically charged conflicts over history. At a session of the Russian-Ukrainian Intergovernmental Commission (the subcommission on cooperation in the sphere of humanities) that took place at the end of May 2002, representatives of Russia proposed establishing a Russian-Ukrainian working group to analyze how textbooks covered the history of Russia and Ukraine. This meant creating a joint commission of historians in the mold of the Ukrainian-Polish, German-

104 For more details see, Georgiy Kasianov, Valeriy Smoliy, and Oleksiy Tolochko, *Ukrayina v rosiiskomu istorychnomu dyskursi: problem doslidzhennya ta interpretatsiyi* (Kyiv: NAN Ukrayiny, Instytut istoriyi Ukrayiny, 2013), 18–28.

105 Vladyslav F. Verstyuk, et al., eds., *Ukrayina-Rosiya: dialoh istoriohrafii: Materialy mizhnarodnoi, naukovoi konferentsii* (Kyiv, Chernihiv: RVK "Desnyanska pravda," 2007).

Polish, German-French, and similar commissions. In June 2002, at a Russian-Ukrainian conference called "Russia and Ukraine in the European Cultural Space" held by the Institute of World History of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, the Russian side again raised the issue of Ukrainian and Russian textbooks, in particular the presentation of the countries' "common past." A Russian-Ukrainian memorandum was signed, stating, among other things, the need to continue exchanges on the content of history textbooks in Russia and Ukraine. Alexander Chubaryan, the director of the Institute of World History, informed the press:

> There was no intention to create a common textbook. We discussed the best way to interpret several controversial issues in Ukrainian and Russian history in textbooks published both in Ukraine and in Russia. In this sense, we considered it useful to continue the exchange of ideas we had started and, possibly, to create (as with other countries) a working group that would continue to research this issue, notably to exchange ideas on textbooks that have already been published as well as on those in preparation. We did not consider producing any common publications.[106]

Irrespective of intentions, the opposition in Ukraine (national democrats and nationalists) interpreted and used the proposal to establish a Ukrainian-Russian commission of historians as evidence of Leonid Kuchma's pro-Russianness. As a result, a routine initiative created a big stir in Ukraine. The parliamentary elections of 2002 had just finished, and parties opposed to Kuchma scored results that made the government very uneasy: two opposition blocs, Our Ukraine and the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc, acquired an unprecedented one-third of seats in the parliament. Echoes of the mass 2001 political campaign "Ukraine without Kuchma" remained in the public consciousness while a new campaign, "Rise up, Ukraine!" was in preparation. In this context, the "harmonization" of textbooks with Russia was used by the opposition to prove that Kuchma was following a pro-Russian course and, thus, discredit him. The title of the article on the establishment of the

106 Natalya Ivanova-Gladilshchikova and Yanina Sokolovskaya, "Vokrug rossiysko-ukrainskikh uchebnikov razrazilsya skandal," *Izvestiya*, June 27, 2002, quoted in Maidan Forums, accessed December 20, 2020, http://maidan.org.ua/arch/hist/1025257954.html.

historians' commission was: "A Scandal Erupts around Russian-Ukrainian Textbooks."[107]

The youth branch of the almost extinct People's Movement of Ukraine organized a protest vigil in front of the offices of the Cabinet of Ministers. An opposition website *Maidan* published an "Open letter of Ukrainian Historians, Intelligentsia, and Community Leaders on the Threat of the Political Revision of Ukrainian history," addressed to the president, the speaker, and the head of government. Several hundred Ukrainian citizens, ranging from secondary school students to professional historians and from artists to former dissidents signed the letter. The signatories believed that "harmonization" was a "violation of the rights of Ukrainian historians to hold independent academic interpretations, which was synonymous with the reestablishment of Russian political censorship of Ukrainian history textbooks."[108] The authors expressed their indignation with "Russian political pressure on the Ukrainians' interpretation of their own history" and demanded the dissolution of the Russian-Ukrainian working group.[109] The letter mentioned topics that made the Russian side unhappy: the famine of 1932–33 and the events of 1917–20. Indeed, in both cases, certain textbooks included interpretations and conclusions of these events that negatively assessed the role of Russia. On the Russian side, Chubaryan listed those issues in Ukrainian history that were sensitive for Russians: Kievan Rus'; the evaluation of various Ukrainian statesmen, especially those from the seventeenth century; the process of reunifying Ukraine with Russia; the short-lived Ukrainian Rada of 1918; and, finally, the Ukrainian national movement during World War II.[110]

In November 2002, the website *Maidan* declared plans to create a public Committee of Defense of Ukrainian History to be headed by the Lviv-based historian Yaroslav Dashkevych. This committee was never established, but neither did the intergovernmental commission on textbooks get off the ground. Instead a Ukrainian-Russian commission of historians emerged, organized by two academic institutions, the Russian Academy of Sciences'

107 Ibid.

108 "Vidkrytyi lyst ukrayinskykh istorykiv, intelihentsiyi ta predstavnykiv hromadskosti z pryvodu zahrozy politychnoho perehlyadu ukrayinskoyi istoriyi," Maidan Forums, November 6, 2002, http://maidanua.org/arch/hist/1023814416.html.

109 Ibid.

110 D. Sokolov-Mitrich, "Rossiyskiye i ukrainskiye uchenyye delyat istoriyu," *Izvestiya*, June 20, 2002.

Institute of World History and the Institute of History of Ukraine in the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, under the leadership of the two directors of these institutes, Alexander Chubaryan and Valeriy Smoliy, respectively.

This episode marked the first case of open confrontation between Russia and Ukraine over the past. For the first time, the public took part in the Ukrainian government's dialogue with Russia on historical politics. The improvisation of the two countries' politicians is also interesting because it produced a precursory outline of the main controversial topics that would soon become the focus of memory wars between the two countries:

1. Ownership of Kievan Rus' (mainly discussed by historians, rarely capturing the public's attention);
2. Interpretations of past conflicts: the Battle of Konotop (1659), the Baturin Massacre (1708), the Battle of Poltava (1709), the Battle of Kruty (January 1918), and the war between Soviet Russia and the Ukrainian People's Republic (1918);
3. The Great Famine of 1932–33 (Holodomor) in the Ukrainian SSR;
4. The Ukrainian nationalist movement during World War II (the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army)
5. Controversial historical figures, the most striking of which are Ivan Mazepa, Stepan Bandera, and Roman Shukhevych.

The first public confrontation over these issues took place in 2003, officially "the year of Russia in Ukraine," when the first attempt to attain recognition of the famine of 1932–33 as an act of genocide against Ukrainians was made at the state level. Recommendations from parliamentary hearings on March 6, 2003, contained a directive calling on the government, "to raise the question of the recognition of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 as a genocide of the Ukrainian people in the UN, in accordance with established procedures."[111] Despite the efforts of Ukrainian diplomats who advocated for the adoption of a separate decision (resolution) on the famine of 1932–33 in Ukraine, they

111 "Rekomendatsiyi parlamentskykh slukhan shchodo vshanuvannya pam'yati zhertv holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv," March 6, 2003, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/607-15#Text.

only managed to agree on a joint statement, which was lower in terms of its official status, although even the publication of this document could be considered a success. Further, the text of the statement contained the term "Holodomor," which was the first step toward its internationalization. The statement analyzed by the UN Human Rights Committee on November 7, 2003 did not contain the term "genocide" because the Ukrainian side was content with the mention of the Holodomor.[112] According to Ukrainian politicians, Russia was the main opponent of the use of the term "genocide" in the text of the statement and the main initiator of lowering the status of the document (there was no open public debate).

In 2004, mass electoral protests in Ukraine provoked by abuses during the presidential campaign led to the Orange Revolution, the accession of Viktor Yushchenko to power with the support of the West, and the defeat of Moscow-supported Viktor Yanukovych. Yushchenko declared accession to the European Union a national strategic goal, abandoning the policy of maneuvering between Russia and the "West." Somewhat paradoxically, the "move to Europe" went hand in hand with the escalation of historical politics that promoted the national/nationalist memory narrative. In the meantime, Russian political leadership activated its efforts to consolidate society on the basis of a common historical myth (the Great Patriotic War and victory, for example). This central myth presupposed the build-up of a generally positive image of the Soviet era—so long as the excesses of Stalin's rule were condemned.

In Ukraine, the development of the national/nationalist memory narrative, however, fundamentally entailed a negative assessment of the Soviet period. Consequently, Russian ruling elites' representation of the era as a joyous age of "common history" inevitably led to conflicts. Under the considerable influence of the Ukrainian diaspora in North America, Yushchenko chose to evaluate the whole Soviet period through the lens of the famine of

112 Joint statement by the delegations of Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Egypt, Georgia, Guatemala, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Nauru, Pakistan, Qatar, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States of America on the 70th anniversary of the Great famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine (Holodomor), United Nations General Assembly, Fifty-eighth session, Third Committee, Agenda item 117 (b): Human rights questions: human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Doc. A/C.3/58/9, November 7, 2003, http://www.memory.gov.ua/sites/default/files/userupload/spilna_zayavka_obiednanih_naciy.pdf..

1932–33 and sought international recognition of this event as an act of genocide against Ukrainians.[113]

The Russian government perceived the Ukrainian leadership's efforts to internationalize the Holodomor (with an emphasis on the famine as genocide version) as an attempt to gain specific international status as the nation that suffered the most during the Soviet era. (It is worth recalling that the mid-2000s also marked the beginning of Russia's conflicts with EU newcomers who promoted their own image as victims of Soviet totalitarianism). Of course, internationalization was also an attempt to oppose the "common historical legacy," which was perceived as a step toward Ukraine's further separation from its eastern neighbor. Finally, in Putin's eyes, Ukraine was engaging in a campaign to discredit Russia as the successor state to the USSR. This last point was the most painful because it occurred exactly at the moment when the Russian government was attempting to revive the image of Russia as a world leader, and, at the same time, create a positive image of Russia in the West. Russian officials and politicians at all levels were especially exasperated by statements from Ukrainian politicians (mainly national democrats and right-wingers) about the specific historical guilt of Russia toward Ukraine, with demands for apologies and, in some cases, material compensation for losses inflicted by the Soviet Union.[114] Another source of frustration was the

113 International events to promote the idea of Holodomor as genocide were carried out under the clear influence and with the active participation of the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC). In the circular letter of the UWC's International Holodomor Coordinating Committee, the section dedicated to the tasks of the Committee started with the item: "Use the Holodomor issue to politicize and Ukrainize the society in the diaspora and in Ukraine." See "Mizhnarodnyi koordinatsiinyi komitet dlya planuvannya vidznachennya 75-littya Holodomoru v Ukrayini 1932–33 rr." Ukrainian World Congress Newsletter, 2007–1, 3.

114 Let us quote the most eloquent examples of such rhetoric. Speaking at the parliamentary session dedicated to the memory of the victims of the famine of 1932–1933, Ivan Drach, a well-known Ukrainian poet from the Sixties generation and member of Our Ukraine, said the following: "If we speak in earnest about all this, about this terrible event of the past century that broke the spine of the Ukrainian nation so much that it still cannot rebound, we should first of all speak about one state—about Russia. It has always sent here waves, from Peter's associate Menshikov to Muraviev, who shot our students under Kruty and shelled Hrushevsky's house. If we do not understand all this, if we conceal it and hide it in papers, we won't understand anything. . . . And we must know that this is the 349th year of Russia in Ukraine, not the first one—this is the anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 [applause]. It is a no-brainer that a state, before the start of the year of its culture [in Ukraine], should apologize, should do penance for everything that happened during the centuries because such were the relations between the Ukrainian and Russian people." See Parliamentary hearings on honoring the memory of the victims of the Holodomor of 1932–1933, February 12, 2003, http://lib.rada.gov.ua/static/LIBRARY/povni_text/parlament_sluhan/golodomor.html. Yaroslav Kendzor, a member of the Verkhovna Rada and a former participant of the dissident movement of the 1960s and 1970s, coauthor of one of the draft laws criminalizing the de-

negative ethnic stereotypes and anti-Russian themes not only in statements by politicians, but also in supposedly scholarly research, school textbooks and manuals, and in various visual representations about the Holodomor.[115]

Because such statements were frequently voiced by Yushchenko's supporters specifically, their content was ascribed to the president himself. Despite his evident personal preoccupation with the problem of the Holodomor, Yushchenko did not create much space for such accusations during his presidential term. When speaking to the Russian media on November 24, 2006, Yushchenko directly stated that Ukraine did not blame Russia for the famine of 1932–33.[116] During his visit to Austria on July 8, 2008, Yushchenko reiterated this point, again emphasizing that Ukraine did not blame Russia for the tragedy of 1932–33.[117] Speaking during the general debate of the sixty-third session of the UN General Assembly on September 24, 2008, he declared that the desire of Ukraine to honor the memory of the victims of the famine of 1932–33 "is not directed against any people or state."[118] However, he never publicly commented on or condemned any of the aforementioned statements by representatives of his own political force and allies.[119]

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nial of the Holodomor as genocide, member of the presidential faction in parliament, said in August 2008 that the "Ukrainian government insists that the legal successor of the USSR, the Russian Federation, assume moral and material responsibility for this terrible act of human blight. Our neighbor should be taught civilized relations." See www.for-ua.com, accessed August 5, 2009.

115 For instance, a tenth-grade textbook contained the following passage in the section dedicated to collectivization and the famine of 1932–33: "The smell of decaying corpses in the emptied Ukrainian houses had not yet dispersed when trains were sent with settlers from other republics of the USSR, mostly from Russia." See Fedir Turchenko, *H. Novitnya Istoriya Ukrayiny* (10 vols.), Part 1 (Kyiv: Heneza, 2002), 282. The comments to a photo exposition on the wall of St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery near a memorial sign to the victims of the Holodomor contain direct mentions of *Ukrainian* villages becoming empty after the famine of 1932–33 and filled by settlers from Russia. Finally, the 2005 journalistic documentary film *Holodomor: Ukraine, the Twentieth Century: Technology of Genocide*, which is used in secondary schools, contains a number of statements that can be characterized as Russophobic.

116 "V. Yushchenko, Strany, vinovnoy v golodomore, ne sushchestvuyet," *RBC*, November 24, 2006, http://pda.top.rbc.ru/daythemes/2006/11/24/20061124205658.shtml.

117 "Yushchenko ne schitayet Rossiyu vinovnoy v Golodomore," July 8, 2008, Forua.com, http://for-ua.com/ukraine/2008/07/08/150200.html.

118 Speech of the president of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko, at the general debate of the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly, September 24, 2008, www.president.gov.ua.

119 An interesting example is the reaction of Yushchenko's entourage to a passage from the interview given by Valentyn Nalyvaichenko, the head of the SBU, to the Russian newspaper *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* on June 15, 2009, where he remarked: "As for a third party, whether Russia or any other state—we do not have any grievances. The crime was perpetrated on Ukrainian territory; its executors and organizers will be officially authenticated but we know from the declassified documents that these were representatives of the Ukrainian government, of the Ukrainian Communist Party, and of the punitive bodies that ex-

In his decree on Remembrance Day of Victims of the Holodomors and Political Repression announced in October 2006, Yushchenko instructed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to "activate work on recognition by the international community of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine as a genocide of the Ukrainian people and one of the greatest tragedies in the history of mankind."[120]

In early November 2006, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov told the Ukrainian media that there were two grave problems in Russia–Ukraine relations: the status of the Russian language and the Holodomor.[121] Three weeks later, the parliament of Ukraine adopted the law that qualified the Holodomor as a genocide of the Ukrainian people (it was voted through by pro-Yushchenko MPs and the socialists who joined with them on the issue).

A proper memory war broke out in 2007 that transcended the limits of bilateral conflict. International recognition of the Holodomor as an act of genocide was the focal point of this conflict.[122] The Ukrainian Ministry of

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isted back then in the territory of Ukraine." See T. Ivchenko, "FSB pokinet Krym ranshe, chem Chernomorskiy flot," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, June 15, 2009. Volodymyr Vasylenko, the representative of Ukraine to the UN Human Rights Council, commented as follows: the Ukrainian government only carried out orders from Moscow; all responsibility lies with the "Stalinist regime," and if Putin and Medvedev self-identify with the latter, it is "their problem." See Piotr Kościński and Tatiana Serwetnyk, "Spór o wielki głód," *Rzeczpospolita*, June 17, 2009, www.rp.pl/artykul/321092.html. Comments in the Russian press, naturally, boiled down to the statement "Ukrainians are to blame for the Holodomor."

120 "Ukaz prezydenta Ukrainy 'Pro vidznachennia Dnia pamiati zhertv holodomoriv ta politychnykh represij,'" November 22, 2005, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1644/2005#Text.

121 "Lavrov: u Ukrainy i Rossii dve problemy—Golodomor i yazyk," *Podrobnosti*, November 8, 2006, http://podrobnosti.ua/365437-lavrov-u-ukrainy-i-rossii-dve-problemy-golodomor-i-jazyki.html.

122 Debates on the arena of foreign relations were amplified by a domestic campaign. In early April 2008, the lower house of the Russian State Duma delivered a statement which, on the one hand, condemned the disregard of the Soviet regime for human life and, on the other hand, stated the absence of evidence that the famine of 1932–33 was an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people. See "Russian lawmakers reject Ukraine's view on Stalin-era famine," *RIA Novosti*, April 2, 2008, last accessed December 20, 2020, www.en.rian.ru/world/20080402/102830217.html. Curiously, a short article by Alexander Solzhenitsyn, "To Drive a Wedge between Brotherly Peoples?" became popular in the Russian press and websites at the same time. The article, published in *Izvestiya* on April 2, 2008, qualified the efforts of the Ukrainian government to recognize the Holodomor as genocide as "a propaganda shriek" that was born in "musty chauvinist minds, full of spite against the 'Moskals'" who had "ascended to the top government circles of today's Ukraine." Russian TV aired Aleksei Denisov's film *Holodomor–33: Unlearned Lessons*, which mainly emphasized the anti-Russian meaning of the *Holodomor* mythology. All of the Russian mass media essentially supported the official position of the government, qualifying the famine of 1932–33 as an all-Union tragedy with special emphasis on the immorality of Kyiv's efforts to defend the Ukrainian "genocidal" version of the tragedy because doing so "drives" a wedge between brotherly peoples." Professional historians defended the same position.

Foreign Affairs worked assiduously to achieve recognition of the Holodomor as genocide through resolutions aimed at both individual countries and international organizations. Their Russian counterpart worked no less tirelessly to block those efforts. As a result of these efforts, Ukrainian diplomats gained recognition of the Holodomor as genocide from the national legislative bodies of fourteen countries (some had recognized it years earlier, in the 1990s), but no international organization went this far, largely because of Russian pushback.

In March 2007, Yushchenko created the Coordination Council on Preparations for Commemoration on the Occasion of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine, which he presided over himself. The new body included Volodymyr Ohryzko, the acting minister of foreign affairs; Volodymyr Vasylenko, the representative of Ukraine in the UN Human Rights Council; and four representatives of the Ukrainian World Congress (UWC) including Stefan Romaniw, an Australian citizen and head of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (Bandera faction), who also chaired the International Holodomor Coordinating Committee established by the UWC[123].

At the very first session of the Coordination Council, Yushchenko declared: "I see our goal as the worldwide recognition of the Holodomor as genocide. First of all, the question is whether to seek the adoption of relevant resolutions or decisions by the UN, the European Parliament, the European Union, and the OSCE."[124] In his decree "About the Measures on the Occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine" issued on March 28, 2007, Yushchenko called on state bodies to "carry out additional events on recognition by the international community, in particular by the General Assembly of the United Nations and the European Parliament, of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine as a genocide of the Ukrainian people."[125]

In August 2007, Volodymyr Ohryzko sent a letter to the heads of the foreign diplomatic missions of Ukraine, proposing that they work with the

123 The activities of the UWC's International Holodomor Coordinating Committee can be followed by reading its circular letters: http://www.ukrainianworldcongress.org/Holodomor/Komitet_ua.html.

124 L. Kurinna, "Ukrayina pam'yataye, svit vyznaye, *Pro Holodomor 1932–1933 rr. maye znaty kozhen*," *Zakon & Biznes*, March 24–30, 2007.

125 "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrainy 'Pro zakhody u zviazku z 75-my rokovynamy Holodomoru v Ukraini,'" March 28, 2007, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/250/2007#Text.

International Holodomor Coordinating Committee (IHCC) of the UWC to carry out an international publicity and a lobbying campaign to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Holodomor. He envisaged establishing working contacts with representatives of the UWC and engaging with the Ukrainian communities of receiving countries on a recurring basis.[126] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs created a special working group that specialized in activities aimed at the international recognition of the Holodomor. The secretariat of the president also began to cooperate with the diaspora: the UWC IHCC maintained constant contact with Ivan Vasyunyk, the deputy head of the secretariat of the president; and the diaspora organization joined forces with the foundation "Ukraine-3000," which was established by First Lady Kateryna Yushchenko.

Responding to the initiatives of the Ukrainian delegation, the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly of UNESCO (193 member countries) unanimously adopted the resolution "Remembrance of Victims of the Holodomor in Ukraine" on November 1, 2007. Ukrainian efforts to include the term "genocide" into the resolution were unsuccessful; the first version did not include this term and only mentioned the Great Famine (Holodomor) in Ukraine.[127] Subsequent discussions on amendments, in which the Russian delegation participated, ended in a compromise, the main essence of which was the removal of the term "genocide."

While the resolution was titled "Remembrance of Victims of the Holodomor in Ukraine" and addressed specifically to one country, it also expressed sympathy with the victims of famine in Russia, Kazakhstan, and other regions of the former USSR.[128] Curiously, although representatives of the Russian Federation were part of the working group that prepared the final text of the resolution, Russia was not among the forty-five states that supported the document. Two other important decisions were made at the conference concerning UNESCO's participation in the implementation of

126 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, "To the heads of foreign diplomatic establishments of Ukraine," Letter no. 200/21/100-1769 of September 4, 2007. Author's personal archive.

127 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Item 14.3 of the provisional agenda. 34 C/50, October 8, 2007. Remembrance of victims of the Great famine (Holodomor) in Ukraine, October 8, 2007, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001538/153838e.pdf.

128 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Report of the PRX Commission, 47, October 26, 2007, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000160852.

a special UN program on Holocaust education and its role in the struggle against all forms of Holocaust denial.[129]

On November 17, a group of hooligans from the Eurasian Alliance of Youth vandalized the display dedicated to the famine of 1932–33 in the Ukrainian House on Arbat Street in Moscow.[130] The Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs delivered a statement on the incident, which elicited a response from the press and propaganda department of its Russian counterpart that included all the standard diatribes against the Ukrainian authorities concerning the internationalization of the Holodomor. "Proclaiming the tragic events of those days an 'act of genocide' against the Ukrainian people is a lopsided distortion of history for contemporary political goals," said the Russian document; it continued by arguing that such initiatives (by Ukraine) insult the memory of people of other nationalities who died because of the 1932–33 famine in the former Soviet Union. Increasingly, the conflict with Russia over the famine became the focal point for certain groups in Ukrainian politics.[131] Deputy Foreign Minister Ohryzko declared that these statements did not correspond to reality and revealed the lack of basic historical knowledge on the part of the Russians.[132]

On November 24, Ukraine received support from its diplomatic allies. A session of the Baltic Assembly adopted of the statement, "In Remembrance of the Victims of Genocide and Political Repression in Ukraine in 1932–33." On November 30, a statement dedicated to the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932–33 was published during a session of the Council of Ministers of the OSCE in Madrid; it was a joint statement proposed by Ukraine that notably did not contain the word "genocide."[133] The Russian

129 Recall that a special resolution of the UN General Assembly on November 1, 2005, established the International Remembrance Day of Holocaust Victims (January 27), and condemned all forms of Holocaust denial.

130 The members of this organization became notorious after another provocation: according to the electronic media, they vandalized the coat of arms of Ukraine at Mount Hoverla in the Carpathians.

131 "MID RF priznaniye Golodomora genotsidom yavlyayetsa iskazheniyem istorii," November 19, 2007, www.newsru.ua, last accessed on October 20, 2016.

132 "MID Ukrainy: polemika po povodu Golodomora s RF absolyutno netaktichna," November 20, 2007, www.newsru.ua.

133 Statement by the delegation of Ukraine, also on behalf of Germany, the United States of America, Andorra, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, Spain, Estonia, The Former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, France, Georgia, The United Kingdom, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Iceland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Moldova, Norway, Poland, The

delegation did not sign this statement, electing to make its own instead; it stated that millions of citizens of many different nationalities were victims of the famine, and it would be unjust to talk of the annihilation of only ethnic Ukrainians.[134]

Already in early November, Joseph Daul, the leader of the European People's Party-European Democrats Group (EPP-ED) in the European Parliament declared that he would, in the name of his entire group, raise the question about the recognition of the Holodomor as "an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people."[135] (The main lobbyists for this law were probably parliamentarians from the Baltic countries because Ukraine is not a member of the European Parliament). Daul mentioned the figure of ten million dead and declared that the *Holodomor* was already recognized as genocide by twenty-six countries.

On October 23, 2008, discussion on the issue was brought to a close. The resolution of the European Parliament on the "commemoration of the Holodomor, the Ukrainian artificial famine (1932–1933)" qualified the event as a "crime against humanity."[136] The text of the resolution contained a reference to the Ukrainian Law of 2006 (qualifying the famine as genocide) and the 1948 UN Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

During the preparations of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (PA OSCE) in April 2008, Ukraine proposed a draft of a document that, in addition to all the standard commemorative rhetoric on honoring the memory of the victims, labeled the famine a genocide. Representatives of the Russian Federation readily opposed this conceptualization. In August, the PA OCSE promulgated a resolution that expressed sympathy for the tragedy of Ukrainians in 1932–33 and offered support for the efforts of Ukraine to raise aware-

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Holy See, Slovakia, Sweden, and The Czech Republic, 90, November 30, 2007, https://old.uinp.gov.ua/sites/default/files/userupload/obsie.pdf.

134 Ibid., 92.

135 "1932/1933 famine in Ukraine: EPP-ED Group asks the Council to recognize the Holodomor as a genocide against the Ukrainian people," November 14, 2007, http://president.epped.eu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=183&Itemid=14.

136 European Parliament, "Commemoration of the Holodomor, the artificial famine in Ukraine (1932–1933)," October 23, 2008, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P6-TA-2008-0523&language=EN.

ness of the famine. The organization urged parliaments all over the world to take measures to recognize the Holodomor. A Russian-language digital media outlet responded to this resolution with the title, "Did They Lose the Holodomor case?"[137]

The same battle took place in 2007–2008 at the United Nations. In May 2007, Yuriy Sergeyev, the permanent representative of Ukraine to the UN, gave a speech during the informal thematic debates of the sixty-first session of the UN General Assembly, urging it to respond to the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Great Famine (Holodomor) of 1932–33 "by adopting a relevant document." His suggestion did not include a desired status for the document, but he remarked that Ukraine did not accuse any particular country for the famine, blaming only the totalitarian regime.[138] In October 2007, Petro Dotsenko, the Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Ministry's representative to the UN, declared that Ukraine would seek formal recognition of the Holodomor as genocide against the Ukrainian people.[139] This initiative coincided with the sixtieth anniversary of the UN Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the seventy-fifth anniversary of the famine of 1932–33.

In March 2008, Valery Loshchinin, Russia's permanent representative to the UN office in Geneva, urged the UN not to raise the issue of recognition of the Holodomor as genocide. Historical truth, in his words, was different. Millions of people from different ethnic groups had been victims of the tragic events during those years, he said—Russians, Ukrainians, Kazakhs, Tatars, Bashkirs.[140] In July of that year, the Ukrainian delegation suggested adding the Holodomor issue to the agenda of the Sixty-third session of the UN General Assembly, but the final decision was postponed due to the opposition of the Russian delegation. At the September 19, 2008 session of the UN Human Rights Committee, the Russian representative said

137 "Proigrali Golodomor?," October 24, 2008, www.for-ua.com.

138 "Remarks by the Permanent Representative of Ukraine, H.E. Mr. Yuriy Sergeyev at the third informal thematic debate of the 61st UNGA session on Civilization and the Challenge for Peace) obstacles and opportunities (May 10–11, 2007)," published online by the League of Ukrainian Canadian Women (website), May 27, 2007, http://women.lucorg.com/news.php/news/2441/.

139 "Ukrayina prosyt OON vyznaty Holodomor henotsydom," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, October 19, 2007, https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2007/10/19/3305338/.

140 "Rossiya prizvala OON ne schitat Golodomor genotsidom," *Lenta.ru*, March 11, 2008, https://lenta.ru/news/2008/03/10/golodomor/.

that the Ukrainian side's attempt to monopolize the tragic history of the famine, which was experienced by many peoples in the USSR, was wrong and morally injurious.[141]

On September 22, 2008, the Ukrainian delegation withdrew the issue from the agenda, "taking into consideration that it is being addressed in other global forums," or, according to the Russian side, because of a total lack of support from other national delegations.[142] Meanwhile, Viktor Yushchenko declared that a variant of the resolution that was acceptable to Ukraine had more supporters than opponents. When speaking about the general political situation in the world at the general debates of the sixty-third session two days later, Yushchenko ended his speech with a reminder of the famine of 1932–33, remarking that "it had a genocidal character" and floating the figure of ten million victims, but he also mentioned other peoples that suffered and invited the UN to honor "every national tragedy."

The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs published a statement saying that the resolution "Truth About the Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine" was withdrawn by the Ukrainian delegation because of the lack of support from other countries. The ministry emphasized that this withdrawal was the only correct decision as the statement used formulas that could hardly be considered balanced or diplomatic. It stated:

> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia emphasizes once again that the attempts of the Ukrainian leadership to entrench the interpretation of the events of 1932–1933 in the territory of the former USSR as a genocide of the Ukrainian people at the global level are politicized and aim to sow discord between the brotherly peoples of Russia and Ukraine. We consider as sacrilege Kyiv's political speculations based on the memory of millions of victims of the tragedy that struck the peoples of the former Soviet Union.[143]

The Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented its own version of the events:

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141 "Moskva vvazhaye 'shkidlyvymy' sproby Ukrainy hovoryty pro Holodomor," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, September 19, 2008, https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2008/09/19/3563070/.

142 "MZS hlyboko oburyvsya, shcho Rosiya znevazhlyvo posmiyalas z yikh dobroty," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, September 25, 2008, https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2008/09/25/3568450/.

143 Quoted in: "Rossiya prazdnuyet proval idei Ukrainy po Golodomoru v OON," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, September 24, 2008, https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2008/09/24/3567317/.

> The Russian Federation, using its leverage as a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council and employing the methods of open pressure and blackmail, tries to deprive this UN member state of the right to bring a matter of importance for this state before the UN, the most representative global organization. . . . Such actions contradict the letter and the spirit of the United Nations Charter and the procedural rules of the General Assembly. The uncooperative position of the Russian Federation contradicts the approach of the global community to the assessment of the nature of the Holodomor.[144]

In December 2008, a new attempt by the Ukrainian delegation to bring the matter of the famine before the UN General Assembly failed once more because of the resistance of Russian diplomats.[145] A political contributor to the news agency *RIA Novosti* commented, "out of desperation, Ukrainian representatives to the UN began to collect signatures for at least a declaration on the issue, but lost to Moscow once again, with a vote of 160 to 30."[146]

Top Russian leadership found support for its efforts to block the internationalization of the Holodomor as genocide issue not only inside Russia but also from outside.[147] For instance, the attitude of most influential European countries toward the campaign for the international recognition of the Holodomor was quite detached. An attempt to achieve such a resolution in France ended in failure (it should be noted that France experienced internal uneasiness because of its recent recognition of the genocide of Armenians during World War I and attempts to criminalize its denial). The attempts of representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora to make the state bodies and parliament of the United Kingdom accept formulas that included an unambiguous mention of genocide were politely but categorically dismissed. Germany all but ignored the timid advances of Ukrainian diplomacy on this

144 "MID obvinyayet Rossiyu v prepyatstvovanii rassmotreniya Golodomora v OON," *Ukrayinska Pravda*, October 24, 2008, www.pravda.com.ua/news/2008/10/24/83412.htm.

145 "The UN again refused to include the Ukrainian famine in its session agenda," *RIA Novosti*, December 19, 2008, www.en.rian.ru.

146 Piotr Romanov, "Strasti po golodomoru," *RIA Novosti*, December 19, 2008, www.rian.ru/society/20081219/157635179.html.

147 In 1995, the Russian State Duma established Remembrance Day of the Victims of the Genocide of Armenians (April 24). In 2015, participating in the remembrance events in Yerevan, Vladimir Putin qualified the events of 1915 as "genocide." In November 2015, the Russian State Duma registered a draft law calling for the introduction of criminal charges for the denial of the genocide of Armenians.

issue. Israel did not show any inclination to support Yushchenko's advances. Nor did postcommunist countries show any unity. In Slovakia, a declaration recognizing the famine of 1932–33 as genocide failed to pass in parliament. Other new members of the European Union, Bulgaria and Romania, also ignored Yushchenko's appeal to the parliaments of the world.

The Ukrainian–Russian confrontation over the internationalization of the Holodomor reached its climax when Russian President Dmitry Medvedev refused to attend the official commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the famine of 1932–33 in Kyiv. The Russian president not only refused but transmitted a statement to President Yushchenko. It provided a compendium of all the standard mantras of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the all-Union (vsesoyuznyj) character of the tragedy and the corresponding hard rhetoric, using words like "cynical and amoral" to assert the argument that the Ukrainian government sows discord among fraternal peoples. The most interesting passages of the "message" mention Ukraine's attempts to enter the "preparatory class of NATO" at the same time that it was seeking to internationalize the Holodomor; it also included President Medvedev's comical attempts to teach Yushchenko "real" history.[148] The two presidents (or rather their counselors) demonstrated the same level of competence in addressing the problems of history.

Similar rhetoric also dominated verbal jousts over other controversial topics of the Russian-Ukrainian "common past." The struggle against "expressions of anti-Russianism" and "nationalism" in Ukraine, specifically concerning the revision of the past, became the central topic of the Russian mass media, state institutions, and a number of non-governmental organizations in 2007–2009. The topic of "nationalism in Ukraine" within the context of collaboration with the Nazis became especially popular in the Russian media. The equation "Ukrainian Nationalism = Nazism" that had appeared in Soviet propaganda as early as the 1940s was given new lease on life. In 2004, Donetsk billboards depicted Ukrainian presidential candidate Viktor Yushchenko in Nazi uniform. In Ukraine, the topic was actively exploited by the communists and the Party of Regions in their political struggle against the so-called "orange power," a political coalition that included the

148 President of Russia (official site), "Poslaniye Prezidentu Ukrainy V. A. Yushchenko," November 20, 2008, http://www.kremlin.ru/text/greets/2008/11/209176.shtml#.

Svoboda party, whose ideological premises presupposed following the radical Ukrainian nationalist program exemplified by the OUN-B.

The general tone of discussions on television since 2007 went as follows: Ukraine was a part of the common Russian territory that became separate as a result of unfavorable circumstances. When Yushchenko and the "orange politicians" came to power due to "Western" interference, Ukraine turned into a hotbed of nationalism that harmed Ukrainians themselves, especially Russian speakers, and Russians cannot remain oblivious to this problem. This clichéd narrative sometimes created real peculiarities. For example, news coverage of the Lviv café *Kryyivka*, which was decorated like a "Banderite" forest bunker inside to attract tourists, received the following coverage on the channel TVTsentr: "A new provocation in a longer chain of *offensive acts against Russian and Soviet historical values* [emphasis added].[149] In West Ukraine, a Nazi café has been opened right in the city center. Russian speakers are not allowed in, and Nazi portraits adorn the walls of the venue." In TVTsentr's interpretation, Nazis included not only Shukhevych and Bandera (the latter "distinguished himself by his peculiar ferocity in the years of the civil war," according to the coverage) but Petliura as well. The coverage included material on the "forced Ukrainization" of the media space and the presentation of the "correct" approach to historical memory (nurturing the memory of the Soviet past).[150] This news coverage can be considered a digest of negative media stereotypes about Ukraine and Ukrainians cultivated by the Russian TV channels.

As in the case of the Holodomor, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs became the main belligerent in the memory war. On December 14, 2007, it delivered a statement on "anti-Russian manifestations in Ukraine." The list of problems included: renaming the streets in Lviv, anti-Russian statements at the unveiling of the monument to the victims of the Holodomor in Zaporizhzhia, acts of vandalism against monuments dedicated to Soviet soldiers in the western regions of Ukraine and a bust of Pushkin in Lviv, and the intentional burning down of the Russian cultural center in Lviv. In

149 http://www.kryjivka.com.ua/ is the website of the café (currently unavailable). Its exotic design—an underground forest bunker—made it popular among tourists. Of course, it could also be interpreted as propaganda for the nationalist underground movements.

150 The coverage is available online: TVTsentr, "Moskali pro kryivku," October 4, 2009, YoutTube video, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxkyqvdGeSw.

practical terms, the statement contained a record of all "anti-Russian activities" for ten years, which reinforced the narrative about the "blatant nationalist, anti-Russian, and Russophobic moods and manifestations in Ukraine.[151] In fact, these are attempts to use the controversial periods of our common history for momentary political gains, and they accommodate questionable ideological orientations." The statement mentioned "certain political forces in Ukraine that deliberately abet such actions and in so doing, exacerbate Russian-Ukrainian relations" and expressed hope that "not only the Ukrainian authorities, but the intelligentsia, veterans, and young people would also weigh in. It is high time to respond to such nationalist vagaries in kind."[152]

The appeal to the "intelligentsia, veterans, and young people" did not fall on deaf ears. In June 2008, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs came out with a longer statement called a "comment" which used the "defense of rights of compatriots" as a pretext for its assertions. It was a response to an address by Oleksandr Volkov, the prefect of the Russian community of the Ivano-Frankivsk region. Volkov, a citizen of Ukraine, who was in a position (according to the comment) to "build up polite and respectful relations with the authorities," had submitted an address to the president—not the Ukrainian president, but to Dmitry Medvedev. In his address, he spoke about the honors bestowed on the veterans of the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS (1st Galician) in the local musical and dramatic theater at the end of May.

In the comment from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the event in Ivano-Frankivsk was branded a "sacrilegious act" of Ukrainian radical nationalist organizations, and an insult to the Russian citizens of Ivano-Frankivsk "who paid with their blood for the liberation of Ukraine from

151 Lermontov and Pushkin Streets were renamed in honor of Dzhokhar Dudayev and General Chuprynka, respectively, in 1996. The doors of the Russian cultural center were set on fire in May 2001, and the organization calling itself "Galician Wolves" claimed responsibility. The group did not reveal itself in any way either before or after the incident. The report about the allegedly anti-Russian and antisemitic words of the chairman of the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists at the unveiling of the monument to the victims of the Holodomor in November 2007 was found to be false: according to the Prosecutor's Office, he was not present at the ceremony. The bust of Alexander Pushkin, placed on the façade of the Russian cultural center in Lviv, really was attacked by vandals in 2005 and 2007.

152 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Zayavleniye MID Rossii v svyazi s antirossiyskimi proyavleniyami na Ukraine, December 14, 2007, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/sps/8B02FF594F151D36C32573B1004930DC.

the German Fascist invaders." The statement expressed the utmost astonishment at the reaction of local "official structures" that virtually supported the celebration of "former SS-men responsible for the executions of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians, Russians, Belarusians, and people of other nationalities." This was followed by an array of grievances against the official historical politics in Ukraine: bestowing of the title of Hero of Ukraine on Roman Shukhevych, a "captain in the SS armies"; wars with monuments commemorating "our common history, tombs of Soviet warrior-liberators;" the intention to equalize "Nazi criminals and militants of the OUN-UPA" with veterans of the Great Patriotic War; and the initiatives of "Ukrainian nationalists and their sponsors" aimed at abrogating the celebration of Victory Day over "Fascist Germany." "We hope," said the document, "that the official authorities of Ukraine, professing their adherence to democratic European values, realize the harmfulness of the glorification of SS members and put an end to attempts to revise the results of World War II."[153] The statement also contained an appeal to international organizations like the UN and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. It was at this point that the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs began its longstanding promotion of a resolution directed against those who "collaborated with the Nazis." Such a UN resolution was first presented in November 2008, approved in December 2012, and finally adopted in 2015.[154]

Political euphemisms such as "official authorities of Ukraine" or "official structures" were now dropped; the main source of rancor and exasperation was named instead. "On the official website of the President of Ukraine, there are a growing number of decrees hammering into the heads of Ukrainian citizens a radically revised list of 'symbolic dates' from the history of Ukraine." A list of such decrees followed: the decree "On Additional Measures for the Recognition of the Ukrainian Liberation Movement of the Twentieth Century" listed the Ukrainian Military Organization (one of the founders of the OUN), the Carpathian Sich (military formations in Carpatho-Ukraine activated by the OUN), the OUN, the UPA, and the

153 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Kommentariy departamenta informatsii i pechati MID Rossii v svyazi s obrashcheniyem starosty Russkoy obshchiny Ivano-Frankovskoy oblasti (Ukraina) A. N. Volkova k Prezidentu Rossii D. A. Medvedevu 23 iyunia, 2008 g., June 23, 2008, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/newsline/75EABB35DB1CACB1C325747100594B1A.

154 Text of the draft resolution against the glorification of Nazism as approved by the UN General Assembly on December 20, 2012 as United Nations A/67/455, General Assembly, New York, December 4, 2012, 3–10.

Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council (also created by the OUN). The list was summed up in the following way:

> It is astonishing that no decree has been published to seek protection for J. Demjanjuk, who is now in the Federal Republic of Germany awaiting his sentence on the charge of exterminating Jews in Hitler's concentration camp. After all, the Lviv Oblast Council is officially interceding on behalf of this military criminal.[155]

> If there are things that Russophobes prefer not to remember, they include the common fight of the peoples of the USSR against Hitlerism, the Ukrainian fronts in the Soviet Army that paved the way for the victory, and the partisan movement in Ukrainian territory occupied by the fascists. It is not just the "tilting" of today's politics into history, it is an insult to memory of millions of dead and their descendants, including citizens of present-day Ukraine.[156]

The commemoration of events and dates related to earlier events in Ukrainian history was also contextualized as "anti-Russian and nationalist manifestations."

In March 2008, Viktor Yushchenko published a decree on the celebration of the 350th anniversary of the Battle of Konotop (1659), which mentioned "the victory of the army led by Hetman Ivan Vyhovsky" but did not mention those who lost the battle because the presidential administration decided to

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155 In August 2009, the Lviv City Council approached Viktor Yushchenko with a request to come out in favor of Ivan Demjanjuk. In the 1980s, Demjanjuk's trial was a kind of test case in the search for Nazi criminals having perpetrated crimes against humanity. Demjanjuk was accused of having participated in the extermination of Jews when working as a guard at the Treblinka extermination camp. In 1988, Demjanjuk, deported from the US, was sentenced to death in Israel. However, in 1993, the Supreme Court of Israel annulled this verdict because of evidence that he had been confused with another person. In 1998, his American citizenship was restored. However, in 2001, he was again accused of crimes against humanity in the camps of Sobibor, Majdanek, and Flossenburg. In 2009, he was extradited to Germany and sentenced to five years in prison in 2011. Demjanjuk appealed the case but did not live to see the result, dying at the age of 92. Per German federal law, the sentence was annulled. In 2019, Netflix released a mini documentary series about Demjanjuk, *The Devil Next Door* (dir.: Yossi Bloch and Daniel Sivan).

156 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Kommentariy departamenta informatsii i pechati MID Rossii k publikatsii ukaza V. A. Yushchenko "O dopolnitelnykh merakh po priznaniyu ukrainskogo osvoboditelnogo dvizheniya XX veka," November 25, 2009, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/newsline/55E758ACEF53576FC3257679002E1937.

be "politically correct." The goal of these memorial events was defined as the "restoration of historical truth and national memory, the dissemination of full and objective information about the events of the middle of the seventeenth century in Ukraine," and, of course, "support for a public initiative." The decree outlined a vast and pretty standard range of events that included issuing a commemorative stamp and coin.[157]

However, the public, supported by the president, opted for different rhetoric. The Battle of Konotop was represented as a victory of the Ukrainian army over the Russians in a Ukrainian–Russian war.[158] Another article, published by an academic historian, depicted the events of 1658–59 as "the war of Cossack Ukraine" against "Tsarist Russia."[159] Of course, Russia did not overlook this "nuance" which practically became a stereotype.

The Department of Information and Press in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs countered this rhetoric two months later. This time, it was a comment responding to an "inquiry from the Russian press." The comment said the following:

> It is puzzling and regrettable to observe that some forces in Ukraine today analyze Russian-Ukrainian history only through the lens of really complicated, and sometimes controversial events and figures that are only remarkable due to the fact that they somehow were directed against Moscow, against Russia, against Russians. In the name of this goal, they eulogize names and actions that one would be uncomfortable with in another situation. This includes a bloody battle caused by the treason of yet another hetman [i.e., Ivan Vyhovsky].
>
> All that remains in this situation is faith in the wisdom of the Ukrainian people who would not allow themselves to be forced into an artificial and unnatural confrontation with Russia. History games, especially when nationalism-based, have never led to anything good.[160]

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157 "Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrayiny 'Pro vidznachennya 350-ricchya peremohy viiska pid provodom hetmana Ivana Vyhovskoho u Konotopskii bytvi,'" March 11, 2008, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/207/2008#Text.

158 Andriy Bulvinskyi, " Pered Konotopom," *Ukrayina moloda*, no. 122 (July 9, 2009), http://www.umoloda.kiev.ua/number/1443/196/50755/.

159 Yu. Badakh, "Peredumovy, perebih podii ta naslidky moskovsko-ukrayinskoyi viiny 1657–1659 rokiv," *Voyenna Istoriya* 45, no. 3 (2009): 1, http://warhistory.ukrlife.org/3_09_5.html.

160 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Kommentariy departamenta informatsii i pe-

A new confrontation came a year later, caused by preparations for a common celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Poltava. However, in October 2007, Yushchenko signed a decree dedicated less to the anniversary of the battle than to the activities of Hetman Ivan Mazepa who broke with Peter the Great and allied with Charles XII against Russia.[161] The Russian side, meanwhile, was preparing for the collective celebration of the tricentennial of the "victory of Russian arms." In Russia, the date of the Battle of Poltava was included on the list of seventeen official Days of Military Honor.

The difference in approaches was so evident that on the eve of Yushchenko's visit to Moscow in February 2008, which was supposed to be focused on issues related to the delivery of Russian gas to Ukraine, the assistant to the Russian president said that "several serious 'pain points' have recently made themselves felt." One of the most sensitive issues was the Ukrainian government's desire to create a "national version" of history, to "use legislative instruments to confirm a lopsided, essentially anti-Russian interpretation of historical events common to both countries."[162] The importance of the problem was highlighted by the fact that issues of "common history" were discussed during the meeting alongside questions about NATO membership, European integration, and the delimitation of the Straits of Kerch. In his memoirs, Viktor Yushchenko affirms that he explained his position on historical issues to Vladimir Putin and proposed a number of initiatives directed at reconciliation. For instance, he says he suggested commemorating not just the Battle of Poltava but also the "Baturin Massacre" of 1708. He also proposed transferring Mazepa's archive to Ukraine. According to Yushchenko, Putin never responded.[163] Speaking at a press conference after the conclusion of negotiations, Vladimir Putin said, "we discussed the topic of interpretive approaches to the common history of our states and peoples in detail. I am convinced that any speculation on historical subjects used to

chati MID Rossii v svyazi s voprosov rossiyskikh SMI o planakh prazdnovaniya ya Ukraine 350-letiya Konotopskoy bitvy," June 10, 2008, http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/newsline/0DD0502FE86B5073C3257464003276A1.

161 Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrayiny "Pro vidznachennya 300-yi richnytsi podii, pov'yazanykh z voyenno-politychnym vystupov hetmana Ukrayiny Ivana Mazepy ta ukladennya ukrayinsko-shvedskoho soyuzu," October 9, 2007, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/955/2007.

162 "Putin i Yushchenko proveli peregovory i reshili gazovyy vopros," Newsru.com, February 12, 2008, https://www.newsru.com/russia/12feb2008/meet2.html.

163 Viktor Yushchenko, *Nederzhavni tayemnytsi. Notatky na berehakh pam'yati* (Kharkiv: Folio, 2014), 484–86.

serve political goals are unacceptable and cause great damage to Russian–Ukrainian relations."[164]

In March 2009, the 370th anniversary of Ivan Mazepa's birth was made a state holiday in Ukraine. Viktor Yushchenko instituted a state award, the "Cross of Ivan Mazepa." Poltava was preparing to install an ostentatious monument to the hetman. One of the central streets of Kyiv took Mazepa's name. On May 15, 2009, the Department of Information and Press in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs delivered a statement on this commemoration.[165] The statement discussed the "attempt to rehabilitate hetman Mazepa," in particular the street name change in Kyiv, the introduction of a new state award, and the erection of monuments in Kyiv and Poltava.[166] The State Duma of Russia also got in on the action. "The names of Peter the Great, of soldiers and generals, "young birds in Peter's nest," names of victorious regiments, and the heroism of Cossacks and inhabitants of Poltava will not be forgotten," said the statement. "Nor will the treason of Ivan Mazepa—whose very name became denominative and who was anathematized by the Russian Orthodox Church—be forgotten. It cannot be surprising that there are people in the leadership of Ukraine who perceive treason as a model to emulate, and who deny themselves and their own people the historical right to be considered descendants of the victors of the Battle of Poltava."[167] The most expressive, and outlandish comments on the plans to erect monuments to Ivan Mazepa and Charles XII in Poltava were made by Viktor Chernomyrdin, the ambassador of Russia in Ukraine: "Just imagine that we put a monument to Hitler in Stalingrad today. How would it look?"[168] Articles that ran in the Russian press took a similar tone as evidenced by the titles of their publications.[169]

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164 "Putin i Yushchenko proveli peregovory i reshili gazovyy vopros," Newsru.com, February 12, 2008, https://www.newsru.com/russia/12feb2008/meet2.html.

165 The text of this statement could not be found on the official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. The quotes that follow are from the mass media.

166 "MID RF uveren, chto Mazepa raskolet ukrainskoye obshchestvo," Forua.com, May 15, 2009, www.forua.com/ukraine/2009/05/15/145305.html; "Mazepa on/off," Interfax, May 15, 2009, http://www.interfax.ru/russia/79849; and "Rossiya ukazala Ukraine kak byt s Mazepoy i yazykom," *Gazeta*, May 15, 2009, http://gazeta.ua/ru/articles/politics/_rossiya-ukazala-ukraine-kak-byt-s-mazepoj-i-yazykom/292549.

167 Zayavleniye Gosudarstvennoy Dumy, "V svyazi s 300-letiem pobedy russkoy armii v Poltavskoy bitve," July 8, 2009, http://www.edinaya-odessa.org/news/n_ukr/7671-gosduma-rossii-prinjala-zajavlenie-v-svjazi-s-300.html.

168 "Ukraina i Rossiya stolknulis pod Poltavoy," *Kommersant*, March 26, 2008, http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/871344/print.

169 Igor Shishkin, "Poltavskiy yubiley i falsifikatsiya istorii," *KM online*, July 15, 2009, section "Infor-

Non-governmental organizations also took part in the battle over the "correct" interpretation of the past.[170] In September 2009, a conference, "Transnistria and the Northern War: Past and Present" was organized by the Foundation of Modern History,[171] the Transnistrian branch of the Institute of CIS countries,[172] and the University of Tiraspol. The orientation of the event can be judged by the report to the Ukrainian authorities approved by the participants of the conference. It ran as follows: "The research community of historians addresses the leadership of Ukraine, girded with authority, calling it to abandon the pernicious course directed at the deterioration of traditional fraternal relations between the Russian and Ukrainian people, the falsification of our common history, and the subjugation of the historical past to the short-term interests of the ever-changing political situation."[173] The titles of the conference papers spoke for themselves: "The Victory of Poltava and the Establishment of the new Great Power, Russia," "Battle of Poltava—Heroes and Traitors," "Anathematizing Mazepa," "Mazepa as Interpreted by Pushkin," "Peter the Great as an Outstanding Military Leader," and "A Criticism of Falsifications and the Distorted Perception of the Historical Events Surrounding the Battle of Poltava."[174] It should be noted that a year before, the very same organizations had held a conference called "Political

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mation Wars"; http://www.km.ru/news/poltavskij_yubilej_i_falsifikacz, A. Marchukov, "Poltavskaya bitva, vek XXI (ukrainskiy kontekst)," *RIA Novosti*, June 29, 2009, http://ria.ru/poltava_analysis/20090629/175759601.html; "Borba ukrainskoho i russkogo naroda protiv predateley i okkupantov: ot Poltavy do Velikoy Otechestvennoy," video, *RIA Novosti*, June 25, 2009, http://ria.ru/press_video/20090625/175498365.html. Over fifty texts on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of Battle of Poltava were placed on the RIA Novosti website. The tone of information oscillated between neutral and explicit propaganda.

170 The term "non-governmental organizations" (or public organizations) should deceive no one. NGOs loyal to the government were funded by the government and essentially defended the official ideological line.

171 Konferentsiya "Pridnestroviye i Severnaia vojna: Istoriya i sovremennost'," September 11, 2009, https://rms.ucoz.ru/news/konferencija_pridnestrove_i_severnaja_vojna_istorija_i_sovremennost/2009-09-11-779. The foundation was established in July 2008 as a "nonprofit organization." The supervisory council of the foundation was chaired by Sergey Naryshkin, the chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation.

172 A "non-governmental organization" that counts among its founders three ministries (including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), two federal agencies (immigration and border guard), the government of the city of Moscow, Moscow State University, and the institutes of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

173 Vladimir Sandutsa, "V Tiraspole Ukrainu prizvali otkazatsa ot falsifikatsii istorii," *RIA Novosti*, September 19, 2009, http://ria.ru/society/20090919/185690991.html.

174 "Pridnestrovyye i Severnaya voyna: istoriya i sovremennost," September 11, 2009, last accessed December 20, 2020, https://rms.ucoz.ru/news/konferencija_pridnestrove_i_severnaja_vojna_istorija_i_sovremennost/2009-09-11-779.0

Falsification of History as a Hurdle on the Way to the Democratization of International Relations in the Post-Soviet Space."[175]

While in the case of the Holodomor and the glorification of the OUN and UPA, the divergence of two opinions was born out of the conflict between the Soviet and the national/nationalist models of collective/historical memory, in the case of the Battle of Poltava and the glorification of Ivan Mazepa, the issue arose from an older tradition. Since the era of Peter the Great, Mazepa was considered a traitor in Russia. He was already anathematized in the eighteenth century, and Yushchenko's attempts to discuss the revocation of anathema with the hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church were not met with sympathy. The fact that Mazepa was celebrated in Ukraine as a national hero and independence fighter only made matters worse. In Ukraine, meanwhile, Russian assertions of a "correct" interpretation and evaluation of history were seen as an example of the traditional encroachment of Russia on Ukrainian sovereignty and Russia's refusal to recognize the sovereignty of the Ukrainian nation and to respect Ukrainian history. In Russia itself, the liberal intelligentsia criticized Russia's attempts to "reeducate" Ukrainians: "We blame Ukrainians for 'politicizing the history,' but we do the same thing ourselves with ill-concealed glee."[176]

Both the official Ukrainian interpretations of the "common" past and popular works on history (and even academic texts) actually contained postcolonial motives, which implied the negative characterization of Russia as the Other.[177] The nationalization of history in line with the ethnonational canon assumed such an approach on its own, and the "struggle for the independence of Ukraine" represented in the framework of such a canon inevi-

175 See the conference proceedings published in *Politicheskaya falsifikatsiya istorii kak baryer na puti demokraticheskogo reformirovaniya mezhdunarodnykh otnosheniy na postsovetskom prostranstve* (Tiraspol: TsSPI "Perspektiva," 2009). Among various materials of the conference, an article by Dmytro Tabachnyk, MP of the Verkhovna Rada, which was different in type and in quality, stands out: "Those Who Sell Ukraine: A Continuity of Judas from Mazepa to Yushchenko."

176 "No topic in Russian TV news provokes yawning and nausea as successfully and invariably as endless hysterical stories about the Ukrainian authorities rehabilitating 'heroes of the OUN.'" Stanislav Minin, "Menyayu Banderu na Banderasa!," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, July 2, 2009, http://www.ng.ru/columnist/2009-07-02/100_bandera.html.

177 For more details on this historiographic tradition on the imperial past, see Georgiy Kasianov, "Piknik na obochine: osmysleniye imperskogo proshlogo v sovremennoy ukrainskoy istoriografii," in *Novaya imperskaya istoriya postsovetskogo prostranstva*, ed. I. V. Gerasimov, et al. (Kazan: Ab Imperio, 2004), 81–108.

tably led to xenophobic connotations and metaphors. This trend was represented as an orgy of nationalism.

It should be noted that, according to sociological data, a positive attitude toward Russians prevailed in Ukrainian society in general even in the midst of these memory wars. Various opinion polls held between 2006 and 2009 stated that 71 percent to 88 percent of Ukrainian respondents had a good opinion of Russians, while 7 percent to 15 percent had a poor opinion.[178] In Russia during the same period, positive attitudes toward Ukrainians deteriorated and negative sentiments proliferated: in 2006, almost 70 percent thought well of Ukrainians, while those with a poor opinion amounted to slightly over 20 percent; in 2009, these figures equaled 29 percent and 62 percent, respectively.[179]

In the winter of 2010, the Russian government used one more occasion to share its views on historical politics in Ukraine. When Stepan Bandera was posthumously given the title of "Hero of Ukraine," Prime Minister Vladimir Putin commented that the "orange authorities" spit in the face of their sponsors (he evidently meant the United States and European Union).[180]

The theme of "Ukrainian nationalism" was used in the context of the memory war even during the relative improvement of Russian-Ukrainian relations after the accession of Viktor Yanukovych and the Party of Regions to power. Yanukovych deescalated tension between the two countries somewhat, both through his acts in the "real sector" of politics (the Kharkiv Agreements on the Russian Black Sea Fleet and the adoption of a new law on language) and in the symbolic sphere. Besides the active promotion of the Soviet nostalgic narrative in the collective/historical memory space, Yanukovych made an important concession to Russia: when speaking at a session of the Parliament Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg on April 27, 2010, he declared that "to recognize the Holodomor as a fact of genocide against one or another ethnic group would be erroneous and

178 Vitaliy Chervonenko, "Ukraintsy vs rossiyane: revolyutsiya ili evolyutsiya otnosheniy?" *BBC Ukraine*, February 18, 2016, http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/ukraine_in_russian/2016/01/160118_ru_s_ukraine_russia_atitude_change.

179 Ibid. See also the tables published by Levada Center, "'Analiticheskiy tsentr Yuriya Levady' Otnoshenie k Ukraine," accessed December 24, 2020, http://www.levada.ru/indikatory/otnoshenie-k-stranam/.

180 "Putin nazval plevkov v litso obyavleniye Bandery geroyem," *Gazeta*, February 15, 2010, http://gazeta.ua/ru/articles/life/_putin-nazval-quotplevkom-v-licoquot-ob-yavlenie-bandery-geroem/327384?mobile=true.

unjust."[181] The statement was made just one day before the examination of a report on the famine of 1932–33 and the approval of a relevant resolution, on account of which Ukrainian participants in the session continued their rearguard action against their Russian opponents, defending the use of the term "genocide." A few weeks later (May 2010), Dmitry Medvedev made an official visit to Kyiv and laid wreathes at the Holodomor Victims Memorial together with Viktor Yanukovych.

Not long before these events, in March 2010, Yanukovych publicly promised to "make a decision" concerning Yushchenko's conferral of the title of Hero of Ukraine on Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukhevych. Soon after Victory Day, Yanukovych made a decision, but not the one everybody expected. On May 14, 2010, while speaking at a session of the Public Council on Humanities under the President of Ukraine, he declared the need to achieve mutual understanding on historical figures that raise controversy in society and suggested a "gradual approach and sensitivity" in resolving such issues.[182] It was not very difficult to enact a gradual and sensitive approach: Donetsk courts had already canceled Yushchenko's decrees in April.

It was during this time that intrigue arose around the creation of a common Ukrainian-Russian book for history teachers (the October 27, 2010 decision of the Subcommittee on Cooperation in Humanities between Ukraine and Russia of the Russia-Ukraine Intergovernmental Commission). Because of the opaque statements of officials and the incompetency of journalists, the book was immediately dubbed a "common textbook," triggering a strange discussion in which opposition members demoralized by their defeat during the presidential election, nationalists, and journalists reiterated affirmations that Russia would dictate to Ukraine how to write history, thus reenacting scenes from 2003. As for historians themselves, they reacted with caution, though several respectable Ukrainian historians joined the working group that prepared the piece.[183] In February 2011, Alexey Vlasov, director general of the Information and Analytics Center of Lomonosov Moscow State University and a member of the working group, said that the text in prepara-

181 "Yanukovych skazav deputatam PASE, shcho Holodomor–ne henotsyd," *Unian*, April 27, 2010, http://eunews.unian.net/ukr/detail/193461.

182 "Yanukovich nazval 'naibolshiy destruktiv' v Ukraine," *Unian*, May 13, 2010, www.unian.net/rus/news/news-376684.html.

183 Oleksandr Udod, "Spilnoho pidruchnyka buty ne mozhe," *Den'*, December 30, 2010.

tion was not a textbook, emphasizing that "neither colleagues from Kyiv nor colleagues from Moscow are ready to write a common textbook."[184]

By the same token, Hennadiy Boryak, deputy director of the Institute of History of Ukraine, categorically denied the idea of a "common textbook," saying, "historians of both countries clearly realized that in a situation where two national historiographies exist with their own visions of history, their own tools, approaches, assessments, collections of historical sources used by researchers, and so on, the creation of a common textbook would mean destroying the heritage of national academic history heritage from the past quarter century or, at the very least, ignoring it."[185] He also described plans to prepare a reference book dedicated to complex issues in Russia and Ukraine's common history, that would contain all the various interpretations of controversial points. Chubaryan, the director of the Institute of World History of the Russian Academy of Sciences, declared that all previous attempts by various countries to create common textbooks "failed spectacularly" and confirmed that the text to be prepared would be a manual for history teachers.[186]

Despite all these affirmations, public discourse never dropped the topic of a "common textbook."[187] Some professional historians contributed to the ideological component of the topic, their basic argument being quite understandable: a common textbook would entail the loss of sovereignty of Ukrainian history and subjugate it to the "Kremlin framework" of history.[188]

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184 "Istoriki Ukrainy i Rossii napisali shkolnoye posobiye i khotyat proverit vse uchebniki istorii," *Uroki* Istorii, September 15, 2012, https://urokiistorii.ru/article/51516.

185 Ihor Syundyukov, "Tupykovyi shlyakh: Hennadiy Boryak: 'problema spilnoho ukrayinskoho-rosiiskoho pidruchnyka vzhe vidiishla u mynule,'" *Den'*, November 9, 2010, www.day.kiev.ua/uk/article/panorama-dnya/tupikoviy-shlyah.

186 "Avtor spilnoho pidruchnyka Aleksandr Chubar'yan: 'Ukrayina v SRSR–tse ne tilky represiyi,'" *Istorichna Pravda*, November 23, 2010, http://www.istpravda.com.ua/digest/2010/11/23/5593/.

187 I personally had to give no less than a dozen explanations to journalists of various newspapers and electronic media from both Ukraine and Russia, stating that it is not a "common textbook" but a limited-edition experimental publication.

188 The titles of the articles speak for themselves: Igor Girich, "Sovmestnoye rossiysko-ukrainskoye posobiye oznachayet: Ukraina–eto Rossiya," *Zerkalo nedeli*, November 5, 2010, http://gazeta.zn.ua/SOCIETY/sovmestnoe_rossiysko-ukrainskoe_posobie_oznachaet_ukraina__eto_rossiya.html; Kyrylo Halushko, "Polityka zabuttya: 'Synkhronizatsiya' istoriyi z Rosiyeyu: zgvaltuvannya za vlasnym bazhannyam," *Ukrayinskyi tyzhden*, November 12, 2010, www.tyzhden.ua/publication/7370; Fedir Turchenko and Halyna Turchenko, "'Obshchaya istoriya': nauka chy polityka?" *Naukovi pratsi istorychnoho fakultetu Zaporizkoho natsionalho universytetu* 28 (Zaporizhzhya: ZNU, 2010), available at http://www.ipiend.gov.ua/img/monograph/file/culture_of_histrorical_memory_site_163.pdf.

Curiously, by this time, historians of both countries already had experience cooperating with each other. The efforts of the Ukrainian-Russian commission of historians created in 2002 resulted in the synchronous publication of a history of Ukraine in Russian prepared by Ukrainian historians and a history of Russia in the Ukrainian language prepared by Russian scholars.[189] A series of working meetings and conferences conducted during the preparation of the publication confirmed divergences on almost all the problematic historical points listed when the commission was established. Despite this fact, discussions between the researchers were calm and both sides were given the chance to set forth a version of the controversial topic they considered acceptable. The capacity to discuss such topics relatively dispassionately and academically was also demonstrated at the level of individual discussion.[190]

In September 2012, the ministers of education of Ukraine (Dmytro Tabachnyk) and Russia (Dmitry Livanov) announced a reader for history teachers called *Ukraine and Russia at the Crossroads of History*. Once again, the media called it either a textbook or a manual. The text offered a set of "non-controversial" topics, from the culture of Ancient Rus' to the history of everyday life in the second half of the 1950s. Tabachnyk declared that even "the most attentive and malevolent critic reading these modules would be unable to find one page of text that does not make a Ukrainian a patriot of Ukraine and a Russian a patriot of Russia."[191] Alexander Chubaryan called the publication of the teaching aid "a breakthrough" and said that topics were being chosen for a next edition, and Livanov gave notice of plans to create a Russian-Ukrainian commission for expertise in history textbooks.[192]

Critics who feared an ideological dictate from Moscow were still discontented when they received a "politically correct" product "without Mazepa and the UPA." One of the articles written about the reader was titled: "The Common History of Ukraine and Russia was Reduced to Folklore, Nobles,

189 O. O. Chubaryan, ed., *Narysy istoriyi Rosii* (Kyiv: Nika Tsentr, 2007); and Valeriy A. Smoliy, ed., *Istoriya Ukrainy: nauchno-populyarnyye ocherki* (Moscow: NAN Ukrainy–Institut Istorii Ukrainy, 2008).

190 See Georgiy Kasianov and Alexei Miller, *Rossiya–Ukraina: kak pishetsa istoriya. Dialogi, Lektsii, Statyi* (Moscow: RGGU, 2011).

191 "Ukrayina i Rosiya zavershyly sozdanie uchebnika po istorii," *Ukranews*, September 27, 2012, https://ukranews.com/news/161121-ukrayna-y-rossyya-zavershyly-sozdanye-uchebnyka-po-ystoryy.

192 "Istoriki Ukrainy i Rossii napisali shkolnoye posobiye."

the *Szlachta*, Khrushchev-era Houses, and Cinema."[193] One of the authors of the newspaper *Den'* asked, "even if it is a reader and not a textbook, how safe is it for Ukrainian education and research?"[194]

By this time, the Russian president already had his own vision of "common history" (in these circumstances, the term became quite odd) that he had expounded on at the NATO summit in Bucharest on April 4, 2008. The main points of his speech that specifically concerned Ukraine can be distilled to the following: 1) Ukraine received lands from other countries: Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and "huge territory" in the east and south from Russia; 2) "Crimea was simply given to Ukraine following a decision of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU [in 1954]. Not even normal state procedures for the transfer of this territory were followed;" 3) Ukraine is a "complicated state formation," and if "NATO challenges" and "other problems" are brought in, they might bring this "state formation" to the brink of collapse; and 4) "17 million Russians live in Ukraine. Who can tell us that we do not have any interests there? The south, the south of Ukraine is completely . . . there are only Russians there."[195]

It is not hard to see that all these topics were further developed between 2014 and 2015. It started with Crimea. In his so-called "Crimean speech" in the Russian State Duma on March 18, 2014, Vladimir Putin essentially gave a lecture on the history of Crimea and Russia, laying out his own version of events past and present. Calling the Russians the most riven nation in the world (after the breakdown of the USSR), he declared that Crimea was given to Ukraine in 1991 as a "sack of potatoes," which constituted a "blatant historical injustice." Putin called the 1954 Crimean decision illegal, a "closed-door deal." This speech was a preface to the signing of an agreement that attached the annexed Crimea to Russia.

In August, Putin again addressed the topic of Crimea. At the 2014 Seliger National Youth Forum he said that the incorporation of Crimea into Russia

193 "Spil'nu istoriiu Ukrainy i Rosii zvely do fol'kloru, dvorian, shliakhty, ta khrushchovok i kino," *Ukrainskyi Tyzhden*, October 1, 2012, http://tyzhden.ua/News/61245.

194 I. Kapsamun, "'Spilnyi pidruchnyk': ochevydna zahroza i neochevydna koryst," *Den'*, October 11, 2012.

195 "Vystupleniye Vladimira Putina na samite NATO, Bucharest 4 aprelia 2008 goda," *Unian*, April 4, 2008, http://www.unian.net/politics/110868-vyistuplenie-vladimira-putina-na-sammite-nato-buharest-4-aprelya-2008-goda.html.

restored "historical justice."[196] On the anniversary of the annexation, which was called "reunification," the president of Russia sang the Russian national anthem at a concert on Red Square and told the audience that Crimea was not simply a strategically important territory but a place where millions of their compatriots lived, a place that was the cradle of Russian spirituality and statehood.[197] A year later, he reiterated the thesis that millions of Russians had been waiting for years for the restoration of historical justice, for the reunification of Crimea and Sevastopol with Russia.

These history exercises were not limited to Crimea. Already in his "Crimean speech" on March 18, 2014, Putin mentioned that after the Revolution, the Bolsheviks transferred "large territories of the historical South of Russia into the Ukrainian Republic. It was done without taking into account the ethnic composition of the region, and today it is contemporary southeastern Ukraine." In just one sentence, the "historical South of Russia" turned into "contemporary southeastern Ukraine." Soon the passage about the "historical South" morphed into the idea of "Novorossiya"[198] Less than one month later, the so-called Russian Spring spread in Donbass, with armed takeovers of administrative buildings, government facilities, and law-enforcement buildings—in some cases carried out by well-organized and well-equipped professionals known as "little green men," some of whom came from Crimea—and rallies and demonstrations by the local population mixed with Russian "tourists" who held signs with slogans like "Come, Putin!" and "Ukraine is Rus!"

On April 7, 2014, the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) was proclaimed. Ten days later, the Russian president, speaking on the *Direct Line with Vladimir Putin* television show, used the term *Novorossiya* for the first time to refer to lands that included Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson, Odessa, and Mykolaiv.[199] He again declared that these territories were

196 "Putin nazval anneksi; Kryma vosstanovleniem istori\eskoj spravedlivosti," *Unian*, August 29, 2014, http://www.unian.net/politics/956925-putin-nazval-anneksiyu-kryima-vosstanovleniem-istoricheskoy-spravedlivosti.html.

197 "Putin vystupil s rechyu na kontserte v chest godovshchiny prisoyedineniya Kryma," *Interfax*, March 18, 2015, http://www.interfax.ru/russia/430798.

198 Novorossiya (New Russia)—the historical name of the southern regions of the Russian Empire from the nineteenth to the beginning of the twentieth century.

199 President of Russia (official website), "Priamaya liniya s Vladimirom Putinym," April 17, 2014, http://www.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20796.

given to Ukraine by the Bolsheviks and expressed concern for the rights of Russian-speaking citizens in these lands. Speaking about his readiness to help them defend their rights, Putin reminded viewers that the Federation Council gave him the power to use military force in Ukraine.

On April 24, 2014, the Luhansk People's Republic (LNR) was proclaimed. At the beginning of May, the DNR and LNR conducted referendums on independence according to the pattern set by the Crimean referendum. A month later, on May 24, 2014, the leadership of the DNR and LNR announced a federation under the name *Novorossiya* and even chose its parliament, headed by Oleg Tsaryov, the deputy chairman of the Party of Regions who had chosen Moscow as his permanent residence. On the same day, the congress in Donetsk, which created the "People's Front of Novorossiya," was attended by delegates from Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Odessa, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, Kharkiv, and Kherson; only Dnipropetrovsk did not fit into the political geography of the region proposed by Putin.

The recognition of Novorossiya by historians and public figures with Russian government connections can be deduced from the interventions at the roundtable "The History and Culture of Novorossiya," organized by the Russian Historical Society. In his remarks opening the conference, Valery Fadeyev, the head editor of *Expert* magazine, said that the "name *Novorossiya* has become known to many people only recently, but its history is already 250 years old." In his opinion, without looking into the history of the region, it was impossible to understand "the deep reasons for the present unwillingness of the inhabitants of southeast Ukraine to live in Ukraine."[200] Vitaly Tretyakov, the dean of the Higher School of Television at Moscow State University, declared that Ukraine was an artificial state formation where in the southeast, a Ukrainian minority imposed its will on the Russian majority. As for Vladimir Pligin, the chairman of the State Duma Committee on Constitutional Legislation and State-Building, he declared the need to create a psychological portrait of a citizen of Novorossiya in order to start imagining the optimal form for the government structure of the region.

200 Rossiyskoye istoricheskoye obshchestvo, "Sostoyalsya kruglyy stol 'Istoriya i kultura Novorossii' v Tsaritsyno," August 14, 2014, http://rushistory.org/sobytiya/kruglyj-stol-istoriya-i-kultura-novorossii-v-tsaritsyno.html.

Yury Petrov, director of the Institute of Russian History in the Russian Academy of Sciences, announced plans to create a "large work" on the history of Novorossiya by the end of 2015. In his interview with the BBC, he also said that this work would serve as the foundation for a history textbook "for the teachers in the region." He described his plans as stemming from "purely academic interest," while at the same time substantiating their topicality because of the war in the region. Petrov also explained to the BBC that "*Novorossiya* objectively exists as a historical and cultural phenomenon."[201]

It was to this "objectively existing phenomenon" that historian Aleksandr Shubin dedicated his *History of Novorossiya*, which was written in barely a month and embraced the history of the region—according to his own expression—"from Targitai to Borodai" (or from the Scythians—whose legendary forefather was Targitaus—to September 2014).[202] Shubin was one of the few Russian historians who openly condemned the annexation of Crimea in 2014. Ukrainian historians recognized both the achievements and plans of their colleagues and the underlying political reasons for the revival of the term *Novorossiya*. Shubin's book was heavily criticized less for its content than for the context of its publication.[203] The *Novorossiya* project itself was attacked by Fedir and Halyna Turchenko as "the last manifestation of Russian imperialism."[204]

However, historical arguments and counterarguments over *Novorossiya* soon lost their relevance. The project failed to attract mass support along the lines of referendums held in Crimea, Luhansk, and Donetsk. This failure was confirmed with a botched attempt to repeat the Donbass scenario with the seizure of administrative buildings in Kharkiv in 2014 and the declaration of the Kharkov People's Republic, which was crushed by force with the support of pro-Ukrainian activists and because of the tragic events on May 2, 2014 in Odessa.[205] After the signing of the Minsk Agreements in 2015, the Russian government focused on maintaining the DNR and LNR as auton-

201 "Institut istorii RAN vozrozhdayet ponyatiye 'Novorossiya,'" *BBC News*, July 16, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/russian/russia/2014/07/140716_russia_ukraine_history_paper.shtml?print=1.

202 Aleksandr Shubin, *Istoriya Novorossii* (Moscow: OLMA Media Grupp, 2014).

203 "Ukrayinskyi naukovets vidreahuvala na vydannya v RF 'Istoriyi Novorosiyi,'" February 26, 2015, http://www.5.ua/suspilstvo/ukrainskyi-naukovets-vidreahuvala-na-vydannia-v-rf-istorii-novorosii-71517.html.

204 Fedir Turchenko and Halyna Turchenko, *Proyekt Novorossiya: 1764–2017; Yubiley na krovi* (Zaporozhye: ZNU 2014), 136.

205 Street clashes between pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian demonstrators in Odessa caused over 50 deaths.

omous territories inside of Ukraine that were under Russian control. There was no need for Novorossiya anymore. In May 2015, Oleg Tsaryov said that the activity of *Novorossiya*'s ruling bodies was "placed on hold."[206]

In January 2018, the Verkhovna Rada again officially labelled Russia an aggressor state and recognized the self-proclaimed republics in Donbass as occupied territories. It was only after the presidential and parliamentary elections in the spring and summer of 2019 that the prospect of restoring negotiations between leaders in Ukraine and Russia emerged. The leaders of Germany and France backed the restoration of talks between Ukraine and Russia within the framework of the "Normandy format," and the leaders of the four countries met in Paris on December 9, 2019; this meeting was considered a sign of a "thaw" in Ukrainian–Russian relations. However, the thaw did not actually mark any change in attitudes toward the past. On December 19, 2019, speaking at a big press conference in Moscow, Putin mentioned that some "native Russian lands that never had any relevance to Ukraine" were transferred to Ukraine in the Soviet period.[207] In June 2020, he again mentioned "a huge amount of Russian lands, traditional Russian historical territories" were received by the former Soviet republics.[208]

The topics and subjects described here certainly do not cover the whole story of the use (and abuse) of history in Ukrainian–Russian relations. However, they do allow us to get an idea of how historical politics at the intergovernmental level translates rivalries between national projects and national identities into international relations. The Russian–Ukrainian conflict over the past can be seen as a conflict between the Soviet nostalgic (with elements of imperial nostalgic) and Ukrainian national/nationalist memory narratives. It is also a conflict between inclusivist and exclusivist models of memory. The development of this conflict led to the revival of the idea of the unnaturalness of Ukrainian statehood in the rhetoric of the Russian ruling class, whereas in Ukraine, it led to the ethnicization of the Soviet and imperial nostalgic narratives, which began to be identified exclusively with ethnic Russians (or Russian language speakers).

206 Vladymir Dergachev and Dmitry Kirillov, "Proyekt "Novorossiya" zakryt," *Gazeta*, May 19, 2015, https://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2015/05/19_a_6694441.shtml.

207 President of Russia (official website), "Bol'shaya press-konferentsiya Vladimira Putina," December 19, 2019, http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/62366.

208 "Putin porassuzhdal o 'podarkakh russkogo naroda' respublikam SSSR," Lenta.ru, June 21, 2020, https://lenta.ru/news/2020/06/21/podarki/

As the experience of the twentieth century shows, such a conflict is often almost inevitable between neighbors who share a common past. The conflict arises both from the aspiration to separate "our" and "their" past and/or from the desire to revive it as a *common* past. Russian–Ukrainian debates over history translated into the political sphere demonstrate, once again, the conflict-generating potential of historical politics. The war over the past can easily become the ideological basis for a real war. As it turned out, mobilization on the "historical front" was quickly transformed into military mobilization.

Conclusions

Historical politics deals with identity. This statement is hardly new, but it should be said, nevertheless. The goal of historical politics is to establish a certain form of "collective" identity and impose it on society; its agents generally use existing discursive forms, modifying them to suit their interests as they relate to the accession to or maintenance of power and the preservation of the loyalty of those subject to this power. Historical politics was born together with the era of nationalism; it is an integral part of the process of modern society formation and can be considered a kind of mass politics related to the shaping of new or reshaping of old forms of political and cultural loyalty of large social groups.

For a long time, the state had a monopoly on historical politics. Over the last several decades, this monopoly has been broken by the information, communication, and digital revolutions and by the development of civil society. An increasingly important role has been played by non-governmental organizations, media, and even individuals supposedly speaking on their own behalf, but in reality, broadcasting the interests and aspirations of social, cultural, religious, and other groups. Despite these changes, governments or intergovernmental institutions still continue to dominate historical politics: their intellectual, material, and organizational resources cannot be challenged.

This overview of historical politics in Ukraine and in the surrounding area, in a post-Soviet, postcommunist, European, or even global context proves that this politics has two modes of operation. The first can be described as the routine mode, and the second might be labelled the crisis mode. Usually, they coexist in space and in time. Periods in the development of historical politics can be differentiated by the degree of prevalence of one or the other modes at any given moment.

The routine mode includes certain everyday practices related to the formation, espousal, and diffusion/imposition of standard collective forms of

identity, which can include, among other things, national identity. The creation of national memory spaces; the formation of a common memory narrative through curricula in history, literature, geography; "inventing tradition"—all this can be classified as routine forms of historical politics. Virtually all European states, both preexisting ones and those that emerged during the era of the establishment and development of historical politics, formed certain iconic forms of historical (cultural) memory, embedding it within the national identity of state-forming nations. European practices from the second half of the twentieth century also demonstrate attempts at establishing a supranational or transnational identity: the path from the common market to a common European identity presupposed the establishment of a common historical memory. In both cases, a project, strategy, plan, and a strategic goal was formulated and promoted.

The crisis variant arises from a quite spontaneous reaction to unexpected challenges. It is the result of the course of action explained by Alexei Miller as an "escalation of historical politics," a mobilization reaction that is fast and not always well-considered. The crisis method of conducting historical politics usually arises from a crisis of identity and an attempt to respond to this crisis, or as a consequence (or a method to overcome the consequences) of a more local crisis situation, like a regime change.

Both variants existed in the period and region described here. In the late 1980s, the routine mode of the communist/Soviet period switched to the crisis mode because of the downfall of the communist system. In the 1990s, it was replaced by the routine mode with the restoration of a standard "Eastern European" national narrative, and it again mutated into the crisis mode after the enlargement of NATO and the extension of the European Union. Unified Europe, attempting to create a pan-European memory space, also acquired a pan-European identity crisis largely caused by the conflict between the efforts of supranational structures to impose this "common" European identity and the revival of ethnic nationalism fueled by populism. Judging by the dynamics of the events of 2005–20, we still live in a period dominated by the crisis mode of conducting historical politics. It is fueled by new factors: the migration crisis, the war in eastern Ukraine, the growing animosity between the "West" and Russia, and the crisis of the European Union. It is not hard to see that the forms of historical politics that consistently operate in the routine mode go into over-

drive in the crisis mode. The first twenty years of the twenty-first century in Ukraine witnessed four attempts to align school history curricula with the changing political situation.

Some basic elements of Ukrainian historical politics fit into the general European pattern, like the growing influence of civil society. Ideologically and, to some degree, geographically, Ukraine falls into the realm of the "Eastern European" type of historical politics, which are marked by the excessive attention of elites to issues of the past, the presence of strong elements of ethnic nationalism, populism in ideas and practices, a morbid sensitivity to the grievances and tragedies of the past, the blame game against neighbors, cultural complexes, and by a mix of nativism, isolationism, and a desire to borrow and repeat perceived "European practices." Ukrainian historical politics also shares some elements with the practices and cultural patterns of the post-Soviet space, like post-colonial syndrome and the reproduction of behavioral models and practices typical of the Soviet period.

Finally, the case of Ukraine is really distinctive because of the complexity of its historical memory and politics. Ukraine is characterized by the exceptional sensitivity of social reaction to events in the sphere of historical politics, by a high level of spontaneity and conflict in said politics, by the existence of strong regional differences in the perception and representations of the past, and by the simultaneous existence of conflicting or competing memory narratives, the boundaries of which sometimes coincide with the borders of historical regions or certain ethnic groups. Another specificity of Ukraine is a lack of strategic understanding and vision among various interest groups that use historical politics to fulfil their tactical goals. Moreover, the rejection of what was done by one's predecessors is a hallmark of Ukrainian politics.

As already mentioned, the Ukrainian ruling class, that is, the cultural and political elites of Ukraine, did not have a well-considered strategy for forming national identity or, consequently, a cohesive strategy of historical politics. The actions in this sphere were sometimes a response to unforeseen challenges, and sometimes they were defined by the "course of things," by the logic of the situation. The rise of a Ukrainian national identity in the second half of the 1980s was a byproduct of the policies of the central government, which were themselves marked by *glasnost* and *perestroika*. The implementation of the standard national project in the 1990s following the

model and design of the nineteenth century was dictated by the logic of state building and by the existence of a certain template dubbed "national revival." The intensification of historical politics in the middle of the 2000s was a response to both internal and external challenges, problematic modernization and memory wars, respectively. The festival of historical politics in Ukraine between 2014 and 2019 was a reaction to the internal social crisis and to external factors: territorial losses and hybrid warfare.

The main tendency of historical politics in Ukraine between the late 1980s and 2000s was the restoration, expansion, and promotion of the national/nationalist narrative of history and memory, coupled with the marginalization and removal of the Soviet nostalgic narrative (and in some cases, the Russian imperial nostalgic narrative). Their relatively peaceful coexistence during the 1990s transformed into active confrontation in the middle of the 2000s and has reached the phase of physical removal of the places of memory of the Soviet nostalgic and Russian imperial nostalgic narratives.

The dominance of the national/nationalist memory narrative and the elimination of its rivals in 2014–19 are likely to lead to the exacerbation of its own internal problems, in particular those related to an emphasis on the exclusivist model of memory. In fact, the national/nationalist narrative initially emerged as an exclusivist model (late nineteenth–early twentieth century). It was revived practically intact at the end of the 1980s and 1990s and gained new steam in 2005–10 and 2015–19. It absorbed certain elements of the Soviet nostalgic narrative and expanded them by absorbing milestones, names, and phenomena of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. It became the basis of the historical politics of the state. However, its semantic architecture, its means and forms of expression and representation, have remained unchanged since the era when the Ukrainian state was nothing but a project, and Ukrainians had to prove their status of belonging to a "historical" nation. In other words, a hundred-year-old project was being implemented at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

At the turn of the twentieth century, such a narrative mobilized the elites to accomplish a modern project, building a nation and its state. At the turn of the twenty-first century, it mutated into a conservative project that supported an archaic form of national identity that looked to the past, and the responsibility for this shift lies with the institutes and "mnemonic warriors" that promote this very iteration of the project. One of the possi-

ble reasons is the fact that the "modern project" in Ukraine was allegedly implemented by an "alien force."

The modernization that turned Ukraine into an industrial and urbanized society took place during the Soviet era under the aegis of a state that recognized nationalism as a political principle only usable as a means to wage a national liberation struggle that was always subordinated to the class struggle—the elimination of class exploitation and eventually of classes themselves. Nationalism was perceived as an artifice of the bourgeoisie, concocted to distract the toiling masses from class struggle. The Soviet ideology of modernization rested on the Marxist idea of liberation of a human from his or her class and national chains. The achievement of cultural homogeneity, which was a necessary condition of modernization and a leap into industrial society, demanded the unification and standardization of the cultural space, especially in the linguistic sphere. Russian became the standard language, functioning as the lingua franca of the Soviet Union. It was the language of science, high culture, technology, politics, and social mobility, and also the language of domination and coercion. National languages (and, therefore, national cultures and cultural elites—excluding Russian) were marginalized, and their development slowed down. Research, education, industrial technologies, media, information technologies—in short, every dimension of industrial society—existed in the Russian language sphere. The overwhelming majority of world-class achievements of elite and mass culture were to be found in the same space, with the rare exceptions only confirming the general rule. Intellectual, cultural, and political elites of national republics, including the Ukrainian SSR, could cultivate a national language, ethnography, and traditions of everyday life, but only within limits that did not suggest social or political mobilization. Any violation of these limits was forbidden and repressed by the state as a manifestation of "nationalism."

In this situation, the main carrier of high culture, the national intelligentsia, found itself in a kind of a cultural ghetto (sometimes out of necessity, sometimes willingly) where development stopped at the level of the "national revival" of the second half of the nineteenth century or, in the best possible case scenario, the game-changing 1920s ("the Executed Renaissance"). It is quite telling that the Sixtiers appealed to these very periods in their fight for the rights of Ukrainian culture and language, first during the Khrushchev

Thaw of the second half of the 1950s to the beginning of the 1960s and then in the second half of the 1980s.

The situation radically changed in the second half of the 1980s to the beginning of the 1990s, but the window of opportunity depended less on the quickly collapsing ideological framework of the regime than on the cultural background of many of those who found themselves in the role of nation- and state-builders.[1] This cultural background suggested a return to the project of the early twentieth century, but in a radically different context, as Ukraine had moved from an agrarian to an industrial economy and had political borders, mass literacy, a developed system of education, and a political and cultural elite. All these had to be "nationalized." This process of nationalizing the past, understood as a revival and the domination of the national master narrative in historiography—the creation and affirmation of the national narrative of historical memory—was not bereft of serious internal contradictions, which were dangerous for the process itself. During its first ascending phase (the end of the 1980s to the 1990s) its purpose was not only to create its own version of the past but to reject and erase the Soviet master narrative of Ukrainian history.

Carriers and promoters of the national narrative thought about and represented the whole "Ukrainian project" (partly consisting of a reconsideration and rewriting of history) as a modernization alternative to the communist/Soviet project that had outlived itself. The appeal to the past was part of both the renewal of the present and plans for the future. Participants in the process called it "national revival." However, the very use of a term that emerged between the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries and references to the experiences denoted by this term were fraught with danger that was imperceptible to the champions of the archaization of discourse and the minds of those who dreamed of the "revival of the Ukrainian nation." Narodnik-style discourses that sounded fine in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries sometimes looked like an attempt to replace automobiles with a horse-drawn carriage.

Somewhat paradoxically, these practices repeated the actions of the Soviet period that essentially cultivated elements of the populist tradition

1 The ideologically motivated part of Ukrainian society. Those who used the creation of a new state for the intense initial accumulation of wealth only addressed "questions of history" much later, when it matched their pragmatic goals.

in its national policy: ethnographism, enlightenment messianism, and the pathos of struggle for social liberation. One can recall the key figures of the populist pantheon adapted by Soviet authorities, Taras Shevchenko, Lesya Ukrainka, and Ivan Franko, who all successfully returned to the national/nationalist narrative of the past from the wax museum of the Soviet era or the Cossack myth that flourished under Soviet rule. Quite remarkably, the "new" national historical myth and memory narrative was largely just an extended and restructured version of the Ukrainian Soviet memory narrative. The main alteration that took place was a semantic shift from social to national meanings and the expansion of the narrative to include previously banned topics, facts, and figures.

Of course, the main promoters of the national/nationalist memory narrative usually deny any link with the Soviet period and search for direct links to the pre-Soviet times. This is why they use the following semantic sequence:

national revival → recovery of historical truth →
recovery of historical memory → restoration of historical justice.

The goal of all this is the recovery of the link with the pre-Soviet era and the denial of the Soviet past. This denial, based on exceptional attention to the tragedies and losses of the Soviet period, has virtually turned into a denial of the whole Soviet past and, by association, the modernity brought by the Soviet experience. As is the case everywhere in "Eastern Europe," the Soviet period for many Ukrainians is not recognized as "their own" history and is rejected by the national/nationalist memory narrative (with the exception of several "nationalized" Soviet-made key figures and events). The cultivation of antiquated forms of historical memory in the process of inventing tradition began to strongly contradict the reality that other narratives existed, the fact of the modernization of the Ukrainian language and culture, and the existence of a multicultural experience.

This situation made not only those who found themselves outside the exclusivist model of historical memory unhappy but also angered some of the carriers of the national/nationalist narrative who were cognizant of the need to modernize it. As a result, discussions about the possibilities and limitations of the national/nationalist narrative emerged within its own framework: recall the debates on school textbooks described earlier in this book

or the reaction of a part of society that was, in general, quite supportive of national history, to the extremes of decommunization.

Suggestions are made to "decapsulate" the national narrative of history and memory, to include other ethnic groups and nations, to represent the Ukrainian past as a space for the interaction of cultures, civilizations, ethnic groups, and nations.[2] These suggestions do not transcend the borders of academic historiography, and they do not lead to any noticeable discussions.[3]

By saying that the Soviet period became the time of Ukraine's transition from an agrarian to a modern industrial society, I do not intend to say that the Soviet, Soviet nostalgic, or the related Russian imperial nostalgic narratives in their contemporary shape should somehow be associated with a modernization perspective. Their carriers and promoters also appeal to the past in order to preserve the status quo rather than to move ahead.

Mnemonic warriors and promoters of these narratives in the Ukrainian field of historical politics also do not fix any long-term strategic objectives, their interest being mostly driven by short-term tasks. Their goal setting is defined by current challenges that obscure the strategic goal. They cannot see the forest for the trees, and this forest takes the appearance of a strip on the horizon that one might try to reach either by walking through a field of wheat under an azure sky or walking on black soil covered in snowball trees, dragging a bust of Lenin or a statue of Bandera. The task may be referred to in broad terms such as the "revival of the Ukrainian nation" or the "restoration of the Slavic brotherhood," but behind these rhetorical forms there is no

2 See, for instance, Andreas Kappeler, "From an Ethno-national to a Multiethnic to a Transnational Ukrainian History," in *A Laboratory of Transnational History: Ukraine and Recent Ukrainian Historiography*, ed. Georgiy Kasianov and Philipp Ther (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2009), 51–80; Philipp Ther, "The Transnational Paradigm of Historiography and its Potential for Ukrainian History," *A Laboratory of Transnational History*, 81–116; and Paul Robert Magócsi, *A History of Ukraine: The Land and Its Peoples*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010). See also articles by Mark von Hagen, Andrea Graziosi, George Liber, Hiroaki Kuromiya, Steven Seegel, Mayhill Fowler, and Georgiy Kasianov and Oleksiy Tolochko in *The Future of the Past: New Perspectives on Ukrainian History*, ed. Serhii Plokhy (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

3 Here it is appropriate to recall the previously mentioned foundational article by Mark von Hagen, published in 1995, that has only sent a few ripples across the lake of Ukrainian studies in the United States. The collection of articles dedicated to the critical analysis of the national narrative and attempts to offer alternatives, published in 2009 together with Philipp Ther, did not even reach Ukrainian readers because a prominent Ukrainian publishing house, for unknown reasons, stopped translation negotiations. The attempt of the author of this book, together with Oleksiy Tolochko, to propose a debate on the limitations of the national narrative in 2012, which was supported by the *Ukrainian Historical Journal*, elicited some answers but did not result in any further substantial action.

strategy and no perspective. Contemporary mnemonic warriors and interest groups behind them see as their main goal capturing resources and using them as soon as possible to further both public and personal goals, the two being, quite often, intermingled.

The same can be said about external actors when it comes to Ukrainian historical politics. The highest ranking Russian political class and a segment of Russian cultural elites have a certain general image centered on keeping Ukraine in the Russian sphere of influence as a part of a "common" cultural and political space in which Ukraine is not perceived as an independent subject. However, the representatives of these elites did not create any strategy on the "Ukrainian front" of historical politics, unless one counts as a strategy a somewhat loose idea of the "Russian world," the implementation of which shifted from a policy of "soft power" to annexation, hybrid warfare, and *Novorossiya* that quickly went extinct. Such a vision, ignoring thirty years of the existence of Ukraine as a politically and culturally sovereign state, dictates the choice of erroneous tactics.

Moreover, this vision and the actions it generates provokes the rejection of Russia as a neighbor even by those who previously were inclined toward dialogue and cooperation. Indirectly, it strengthens anti-Russian moods and cements the position of the bearers of the exclusivist model of historical memory. In the opinion of the carriers of the national/nationalist narrative, the imperial and Soviet nostalgic narratives are increasingly associated with Russia and, therefore, with the Russian and Russian-speaking population of Ukraine. The situation after the annexation of Crimea and the hybrid war in Donbass aggravates the confrontation between these narratives and their carriers.

The confrontation of the national/nationalist and Soviet nostalgic memory narratives, represented here as a main theme of historical politics since the late 1980s, makes one wonder about the reasons for such an acute conflict. Observing public discussions and, recently, discussions on social media networks and at political actions and events, one cannot escape the impression that both parties are remarkably similar both in the manifestation of their feelings and intentions and in the means of their expression, so much so that their conflict sometimes looks like a fight between conjoined twins, which is traumatic for both. The carriers of the national/nationalist narrative and their counterparts from the camp of the Soviet nostalgic narrative

are similarly intolerant, vindictive, and aggressive. It has already been suggested that both narratives profess the exclusivist model of memory, and some features of nationalism and communism as worldviews (or, to be more precise, civil religions) may be regarded as similar. Two of these features are the rejection of the principle of pluralism and the promotion of antagonistic approaches to the past.[4] The conflict between these two is instrumentalized by politicians, but its excesses cannot be associated only with this unsavory aspect of historical politics.

It can be assumed that both parties turn to historical politics to seek answers to the same questions: for instance, to explain and interpret current social and economic problems. Both look for their causes in the past. For the "Banderites," the Soviet heritage is the root of all ills not only in the past but in the present as well. For the "Sovki," the cause of misery is precisely the rejection of the Soviet heritage. Vexation, unhappiness, fear, and uncertainty are easily compensated for by references to the past and the perception of this past. To make it worse, the mnemonic warriors of both narratives started down their path in the mono-ideological Soviet era, during which pluralism was not accepted, or during the first years of independence in Ukraine, when social collapse pushed people to seek support in "hard" ideologies, which are not very compatible with the acceptance of pluralism as something natural.

As mentioned above, this work attempted to provide a detailed study of historical politics in Ukraine from the 1980s to the 2010s. However, even though the length of this book grew by one-third during the writing process, I was still unable to address many important topics. For instance, I wrote almost nothing about the role of the church in historical politics, and this topic deserves serious attention because, unlike state institutions, the church in Ukraine consistently enjoys high levels of confidence from the population. A longstanding discussion about "two or twenty-two Ukraines" is still topical. At the regional level, one can observe the influence of traditional actors as well as those who generally stay under the radar of researchers of historical politics, like industries and businesses. Industrial giants and business structures in the southeast often sponsored headline-making actions in the sphere of historical politics, while in western and central Ukraine,

4 See a discussion on the antagonistic versus agonistic approach to the past in an interview with Stefan Berger, "Stephan Beger: Agonistic Memory is Open-endedly Dialogic in a Bakthinian Sense," *Istoricheskaya Ekspertiza*, https://istorex.ru/Novaya_stranitsa_56.

local initiatives were sponsored by medium-sized businesses. Of course, the regional approach potentially provides a much more nuanced image of the mechanisms of historical politics and of the alchemy of its influence on the attitudes of its target groups. This aspect has already received attention by the Ukrainian researchers Oleksandr Hrytsenko and Oleksandra Haidai, who were mentioned earlier, and this theme became the object of a years-long international project *Ukraine of the Regions*, a sociological and cultural study supported by the government of Switzerland.

I paid minimal attention here to analyzing the discourses of narratives of memory and representations of the past. My previous experience in this sphere (analysis of the discourses on the *Holodomor*)[5] showed that, as a rule, historians who profess affirmative and didactical history are not very interested in such subjects, and when an analysis of this kind is offered, they do not notice it nor do they really understand it. This is regrettable because such an analysis might yield some understanding of the strengths and weaknesses, influence or helplessness of one or another memory narrative.

The manner of speech of the agents of historical politics, their ways of expressing themselves, are generally cringeworthy. This is a language of slogans and screams, and sometimes prayers and shamanic incantations; this is a language of captions wherever they are to be found—on walls, banners, or the on pages of legislative acts. This discourse opposes critical thinking, reasoning, analysis, and skepticism. It galvanizes people into actions that can result in the commemoration of pogrom victims or in a new pogrom or cultivate the feeling of pride in one's tribe or a desire to slaughter people of other tribes or fellow tribe members with the "wrong" understanding of the past. The discourse of historical politics is nauseatingly primitive and can lead to so many absurdities that one cannot help but think about the banality of evil as well as the evil of banality.

Of course, almost all of the topics raised in this book could be the subjects of more detailed, systematic, and multi-perspective analyses. For instance, every actor engaged in historical politics listed in these pages deserves a separate biography. The same can be said of the multiple focal points of historical politics discussed in this book (Volhynia in 1943, the Holodomor, and

5 See Georgiy Kasianov, *Rozryta mohyla: Holod 1932—1933 rokiv u politytsi, pam'jati ta istorii (1980-ti–2000-ni)* (Kharkiv: Folio, 2019), 215–82.

the OUN and UPA), and the well-known figures and stories that remained unexplored (for instance, the experience of Ukrainian statehood in 1918–20). Some of these stories have already become the subject of separate studies on historical politics, and others are still waiting to be written.

So, this book is not about answering questions and solving problems, it is about asking questions and planning future intellectual journeys.

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On the cover: Ilya Repin, *Reply of the Zaporozhian Cossacks* (1891)
Cover design by Sebastian Stachowski

ISBN 978-963-386-380-0 90000 >
9 789633 863800

Central European University Press
Budapest – New York
Sales and information: *ceupress@press.ceu.edu*
Website: *http://www.ceupress.com*