East/West
Journal of Ukrainian Studies

Operational Groups of the NKGB and a Reconstruction of the Soviet Security Apparatus in Axis Occupied Ukraine, 1943–44

Oleksandr Melnyk

Cite this article

Article abstract

This article elucidates the reconstruction of the Soviet security apparatus during World War II in what today is western Ukraine. In late 1943 to early 1944, six operational groups of the People's Commissariat of State Security of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic headed to the Axis occupied territories with orders to re-establish contacts with Soviet secret agents and create a support infrastructure for the deployment of other operational groups, special purposes units, and individual agents, as well as to infiltrate organizations of Polish and Ukrainian nationalists. The essay examines Soviet special operations within the context of state efforts to project power into the Axis occupied territories. It sheds light on the objectives of Soviet security agencies and on the activities of individual units in the field.

Operational Groups of the NKGB and a Reconstruction of the Soviet Security Apparatus in Axis Occupied Ukraine, 1943–44[1]

Oleksandr Melnyk
Kherson, Ukraine

Abstract: This article elucidates the reconstruction of the Soviet security apparatus during World War II in what today is western Ukraine. In late 1943 to early 1944, six operational groups of the People's Commissariat of State Security of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic headed to the Axis occupied territories with orders to re-establish contacts with Soviet secret agents and create a support infrastructure for the deployment of other operational groups, special purposes units, and individual agents, as well as to infiltrate organizations of Polish and Ukrainian nationalists. The essay examines Soviet special operations within the context of state efforts to project power into the Axis occupied territories. It sheds light on the objectives of Soviet security agencies and on the activities of individual units in the field.

Keywords: World War II, security, nationalism, Soviet Union, Ukraine.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1990s the progressive opening of the archives of the former KGB (Committee for State Security) in various post-Soviet countries has brought considerable attention to Soviet security and intelligence agencies (Weiner and Rahi-Tamm; Viola). One important aspect of the history of Soviet special services, however, has received comparatively little attention in the historical literature: intelligence operations in the territories occupied by Nazi Germany and its allies (mainly Romania, Hungary, and Slovakia). Restrictions regarding access to the Soviet special services' archives objectively limit the number of such publications in the Russian Federation (Popov; Glebov; Vedeneev). In the "West," the dominant cultural discourses on diversity, minority groups, and human rights have conditioned historians to examine the history of the Axis occupation primarily within the context of

the history of the Third Reich and other Axis powers. The institutions of the Soviet state in the occupied territories are somewhat overshadowed by the problematics of the Holocaust, collaboration, indigenous nationalist movements, crimes against civilians by various fighting forces, and the politics of postwar retribution (Pohl; Dean; Berkhoff; Lower; Prusin; Snyder, *Bloodlands*; Bruder; Struve; Bartov; Rudling, "Rehearsal"; Rossolinski-Liebe; Kay et al.; Himka, *Ukrainian Nationalists*). By comparison, in Ukraine and other post-Communist and post-Soviet countries, the relative lack of interest in Soviet intelligence operations in the Axis occupied territories may be linked to a delayed declassification of archival documents and ambivalent attitudes toward Soviet power.[2] Simply put, prevalent political and cultural sensibilities steer discussions toward the subject of state repression and away from historical issues that can be perceived to boost Soviet legitimacy and sovereignty claims (Shapoval and Zolotar'ov; Kokin; Serhiichuk). Such gaps are compensated somewhat by the growing body of literature that describes security policies in territories controlled by the Soviet government, including the western borderlands in 1939–41 and in the aftermath of the Axis occupation (Gross; Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura*; Statiev; Viedienieiev and Bystrukhin; Danylenko and Kokin).

Political and institutional contexts of modern historiography aside, the current scholarship makes clear that through the intentions of the Soviet political leadership Soviet coercive actors were always present behind enemy lines, although their ability to exercise power and influence on behalf of the Soviet government varied according to the location and the time period (Armstrong; Kentii and Lozyts'kyi; Slepyan). Similarly, there is a broad awareness of the extensive involvement of Soviet special services in the creation of early structures of the partisan movement and Communist underground organizations (Popov). We also possess some useful Russian-language research on underground networks and on special purposes units of the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU), the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD), and the People's Commissariat for State Security (NKGB) in Axis occupied territories (Glebov; Vedeneev et al.).[3] On the downside, such studies have a limited scope, are devoid of references to

---

[2] The exception are recent publications by Viedienieiev (e.g., see his "Rozviduval'no-dyversiina ta kontrrozviduval'na diial'nist').

[3] Throughout its history, the Soviet security apparatus went through multiple reorganizations. The People's Commissariat of State Security came into existence in February 1941 as a result of the reorganization of the Main Administration of State Security of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (GUGB NKVD). It was dissolved and reincorporated into the NKVD in July 1941 only to re-appear on the historical scene in April 1943. In 1946, the NKGB was transformed into the Ministry of State Security (MGB), which became the State Security Committee (KGB) in 1954.

appropriate archival collections, and do not sufficiently engage with the mainstream historiography.

This article seeks to broaden such conversations by bringing into focus little known actors and materials related to the archives of the Security Service of Ukraine, which were declassified during the past decade. At its centre are six operational groups of the NKVD/NKGB of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (UkrSSR), which in late 1943 to early 1944 were attached to partisan formations of A. Saburov, A. Fedorov, I. Shitov, P. Vershyhora, V. Begma, and B. Shangin and, together with them, made their way to what today is western Ukraine and south-eastern Poland. Among other things, NKGB officers were to establish the fate of Soviet intelligence residents,[4] re-establish contacts with pre-war secret agents, and create new intelligence cells. They were also expected to infiltrate and survey German special services, collaborationist formations, Ukrainian and Polish nationalist organizations; conduct sabotage; and assassinate representatives of the Nazi occupation apparatus. Whereas partisan raids were meant to disrupt German and nationalist power structures, operational groups were meant to rebuild the institutional presence of the NKGB in the Axis occupied territories even before the restoration of formal structures of Soviet rule.

By documenting the activities of these units, several interconnected objectives will be accomplished. First, the essay will position Soviet intelligence operations within the broader strategic effort of the Soviet government to project hard power deep into the Axis occupied territories, with a view to destabilizing structures of German rule and countering the organizational activities of Ukrainian nationalists. Second, the essay will shed light on the sorry state of Soviet intelligence networks in western Ukraine in 1943–44 and highlight tensions between the designs of the Soviet security agencies and the realities confronted by security officers in the field. Third, it will elucidate peculiarities of the communication traffic between the leadership of the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR, operational groups, and territorial organs of state security and expose connections between Soviet external intelligence and internal security operations in the context of World War II. Finally, the essay will dissect the complicated relationships between partisan commanders and NKGB emissaries and make some observations about the evolving nature of Soviet sovereignty claims in the context of the Axis occupation. In the final analysis, the article argues that the operational groups made an important contribution to the reconstruction of the Soviet security apparatus, but their effectiveness should not be exaggerated in light of the difficult operational situation in western Ukraine, the death and

---

[4] "Intelligence resident" means the leader of the intelligence cell (Ukr. "резидент").

departure of many secret agents, the uneasy relationships with partisan commanders, and the general inefficiency of the Soviet state.

BACKGROUND

The operational groups of the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR did not originate in a vacuum. Data published by the Ukrainian researcher Oleksandr Skrypnyk indicate that by late 1941 the security agencies of the Ukrainian SSR alone created close to 370 intelligence cells (*rezidenturas*) (about 4,000 agents in total), with some 1,500 agents performing special assignments independently of active networks. Other studies show that multiple *rezidenturas* consisted not only of professional security officers but also of secret agents that had participated in campaigns of domestic surveillance during the 1920s and 1930s. One could argue that the Axis occupation of "Soviet territory" blurred the boundaries between external intelligence and internal security (Melnyk).

It is clear from current scholarship that in 1941–42, German security forces, their allies, and local collaborators delivered a powerful blow to the Soviet partisan movement and to the Communist underground networks. Soviet partisans were effectively consigned to the Briansk forests and to the adjacent districts of north-eastern Ukraine and eastern Belarus, with some units active near Leningrad and in Crimea (Armstrong 15–26; Anderson; Skorobohatov 237–39). Intelligence cells of the NKVD/NKGB proper suffered setbacks, too. It remains to be seen how many networks were destroyed by the German special services and how many Soviet security officers and secret agents fled to the relative safety of the Soviet controlled territories. There is little doubt that Soviet defeats, the hasty retreat of security operatives, the loss of contact with secret agents, and counter-intelligence measures by the special services of Nazi Germany and its allies disorganized the Soviet intelligence apparatus even in the relative proximity to the front lines in central and eastern Ukraine. The loss of contact with *rezidenturas* "Maksim" and "Mikhailov" in Kyiv, for example, would lead Soviet security agencies to make repeated efforts to inquire about the status of existing cells and to create new networks with the help of agents dispatched from the Soviet controlled territory (Melnyk).

The positions of Soviet special services in what today is western Ukraine, where Communist rule was established only in 1939, were even more tenuous. I would argue that the very choice to deploy mobile operational groups to Volhynia and Galicia was a testament to the fact that by 1943 the Soviet security/intelligence apparatus there had effectively collapsed. The departure of security officers and the liquidation of secret agents by the German special services and the Organization of Ukrainian

Nationalists aggravated difficulties of access from the Soviet controlled territory. The inhospitable political environment in the cities and the ascendance of armed nationalist groups in the rural areas complicated the task of the reconstruction of the Soviet security apparatus even further.

The situation was never static. The key factor in the evolution of Soviet intelligence operations in central and western Ukraine was the changing fortunes of the Soviet partisan movement in the course of the war. Karel Berkhoff and other scholars have argued that the radicalization of Nazi occupation policies, the integration of the partisan movement into the Soviet strategy of war, and the drastic deterioration of Germany's strategic position in the aftermath of the Battle of Stalingrad, created political and social preconditions for the growth and intensification of Soviet guerilla warfare (275–78). Far from sitting idle, the Soviet leadership took active steps to centralize disjointed partisan formations and expand the area of their operations by means of long-distance partisan raids (Veshigora and Zebolov 15–27). Soviet security agencies continued their efforts to build intelligence structures with the help of agents dispatched behind enemy lines. According to Pavel Sudoplatov, the former head of the 4th department of the NKVD/NKGB of the USSR, by the end of the war, the total number of intelligence networks, operational groups, and special purposes units of the NKGB throughout the Axis occupied territories exceeded 2,000 (15,000 agents) (153).

In this context, one should not overlook the political impact of the evolving strategic context, the fluidity of the power relations on the ground, and the fragmentation of sovereignty in the Axis occupied territories (Kalyvas 12). From the very start of the occupation, various institutions of the Third Reich and allied powers (Hungary, Romania, Italy, Slovakia), along with local nationalists and collaborationist forces, participated in security provisions in Ukraine (Tessin and Kannapin 595; Dean 60–77; Bartov 160). The Bandera faction of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, for example, infiltrated administrative structures and the auxiliary police as part of its state-building strategy and became a de facto power in many rural communities in Galicia and Volhynia in the summer of 1941. This group largely retained its status until the start of the nationalist insurrection and the formation of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in the spring-summer of 1943 (Patryliak 229–35; Himka, *Ukrainian Nationalists* 305–58). Armed groups of Taras Bul'ba-Borovets' were active in parts of central and western Ukraine (Dz'obak; Motyka 105–07, 128–29; Radchenko).

Importantly, in the spaces of fragmented sovereignty, the boundaries between armed formations were at times porous, as indicated by collaboration with the Germans on the part of former Communists, partisans, and even Soviet security officers. On the other hand, thousands of former policemen, members of Schutzmannschaft battalions, and nationalist

insurgents defected to partisan formations (Burds, "Turncoats"; Ermolov 176, 211; Slepyan 217–23). From the perspective of Soviet officials, such fluidity of identities and power relations on the ground created opportunities to infiltrate collaborationist and nationalist forces. But it also rendered partisan formations themselves vulnerable to subversion by hostile actors.

The political and security context in Ukraine became particularly complicated from late 1942 to early 1943 and onward, when, under the influence of Soviet political leadership, partisan forces under the command of A. Saburov, S. Kovpak, A. Fedorov, and M. Naumov, to name a few, relocated from the Briansk forests to the Ukrainian-Belarusian Polissia. From there, as part of a co-ordinated strategy to destabilize German rear areas, they began to make systematic inroads into the neighbouring districts of central Ukraine, Volhynia, and even Galicia ("Operativnyi plan"). Soviet partisans also conducted raids in what today is western Belarus and northwestern Russia, with some units attempting to cross into Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia (Vershigora and Zebolov 40, 71). It was not long before irregular fighters established effective control over many territorial communities (the phenomenon of partisan *krai*) or turned them into spaces of contested sovereignty. The periodic shifts of power in various localities exacted significant tolls on political activists of various persuasions and on politically unaffiliated non-combatants (Shepherd 108–28; Slepyan 65–81; Shepherd and Pattinson 3; Gogun and Kentii 122–24, 133–34). In 1944–45, with the Red Army pushing German and allied forces beyond what would soon become the internationally recognized borders of the USSR, the Soviet leadership extended partisan raids and operations of Soviet special services to Transcarpathia, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania (Lozyts'kyi et al. 19–20).

At the core of the Soviet strategy was a systematic effort to project hard power deep into the Axis occupied territory, to destabilize the Axis administrative apparatus, and to neutralize the political influence of local nationalists. The Soviet leadership feared that local nationalists could pose a political challenge to Soviet rule in the event of a German retreat ("Stenogramma vystupleniia P. Vershigory" 15). The well-armed partisan bands—some numbering more than a thousand fighters—attacked weaker enemy garrisons, assassinated German officials, collaborators, and members of nationalist underground organizations, and created new partisan units (some containing local Soviet loyalists). Partisan bands also fostered the disintegration of collaborationist formations and conducted sabotage on communications and at industrial installations, undermining the occupiers' ability to govern and to utilize the resources of the occupied territories.

The consequences of the growing power of the Soviet state in the Axis occupied territories in 1942–43 included the German efforts to increase the

number and numerical strength of vassal and collaborationist armed formations and the intensification of anti-partisan warfare, complete with the destruction of many villages and the massacres of their residents (Adamushko; Butko and Lysenko; Kirillova et al.). In addition, in what today is western Ukraine, partisan raids increased the insecurity of nationalist activists and sped up the creation of armed formations of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. The destabilization of German power structures and the consolidation of Ukrainian nationalist forces thus contributed to the escalation of the Ukrainian-Polish conflict. The cumulative results of these power dynamics were the ethnic cleansing of Poles in Volhynia and Galicia and the reciprocal mass killings of Ukrainians, particularly in parts of south-eastern Poland, where Polish forces were numerically stronger (Snyder, *The Reconstruction* 154–201; Il'iushyn 51–55; Motyka 298–413). By bringing into focus the security/intelligence component of the Soviet bid for power in the spaces of contested sovereignty, this article makes a case for the necessity of continued research into the history of partisan raids as a strategic tool of Soviet power. Similarly warranting of attention are features of guerilla warfare in various regions and complicated relationships between partisan forces and Soviet security agencies in the process of re-establishing structures of Soviet rule in Ukraine during the Axis occupation.

THE ORIGINS OF THE OPERATIONAL GROUPS

In early 1943 at the temporary headquarters of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR in Kalach, Voronezh region, a number of mid-ranking officers who would soon lead intelligence teams into the Axis occupied territories were assembled. Among those present were V. Khrapko (future commander of the operational group "Za Rodinu"), N. Onishchuk (operational group "Druzhba"), G. Burlachenko (operational group "Razgrom"), V. Khondoshko (operational group "Unitarians"), P. Formanchuk (operational group "Volhynians"), and I. Ponomarev (operational group "Udar"). The history of these units prior to their deployment is scarce. Based on the available evidence, one can conclude that they were pioneers, representing a slice of a larger phenomenon. From October 1943 until the end of the war in 1945, the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR alone dispatched at least 53 operational groups, sabotage-intelligence teams, and special purposes units (780 individuals) to the German occupied parts of Ukraine, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania. Some of these forces grew considerably by incorporating former prisoners of war and local residents ("Spravka po arkhivnym materialam" 4). In the future, researchers might be able to examine more comprehensively the documentation of some of these entities at the Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine (HDA SBU) to obtain

information about the scope, the successes, and the failures of Soviet intelligence operations during the later stages of World War II.

Newly declassified documents suggest that discussions about sending operational groups of the NKGB to the raiding partisan formations began in late 1942 to early 1943, when the partisan forces of A. Saburov and S. Kovpak began to make inroads into the Ukrainian Polissia. The actual training started only in February-March 1943 (Reshetov). Following the selection of agents and radio operators, the intelligence teams, each consisting of 4–6 members, underwent preparations (parachute jumps, training in the use of explosives, encryption methods) at the training facilities near Kalach. During the summer of 1943, the team leaders travelled to Moscow where they received briefings by functionaries of the 4th department of the NKGB and by partisan commanders. The situations in the occupied territories, the objectives of partisan raids, and the tasks of the operational groups were discussed in the context of expanding the Soviet partisan movement to the regions of "western Ukraine." Among the topics covered were the activities of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). Already at this point Soviet security officials perceived the OUN to be the principal anti-Soviet force and a potential political challenger in the Axis occupied territories (Priimak).

The available operational plans indicate that the tasks of specific intelligence teams varied, but the focus was on the reconstruction of the Soviet security/intelligence apparatus in the Axis occupied territories and the surveillance of nationalist organizations. Specific assignments included establishing the fate of leaders of Soviet intelligence cells and restoring contacts with secret agents in the Kyiv, Zhytomyr, Rivne, Volyn, Lviv, Stanislav, and Drohobych regions; the creation of new intelligence networks; and the gathering of information about major collaborationist formations, nationalist organizations, and activities of German intelligence and counter-intelligence agencies. Sabotage and assassinations of representatives of the occupation apparatus, counter-intelligence work within partisan units, and the compilation of lists of "anti-Soviet elements" were also discussed.

Although not all assignments were fulfilled in practice, the operational plans make the priorities of Soviet security agencies clear. The fact that the NKGB leadership had lost contact with secret agents in much of central and western Ukraine and was not aware of the status of the *rezidenturas* created in 1941, illustrates the extent of systemic collapse against the backdrop of indigenous political challenges to Soviet rule and gives a sense of the impending difficulties for NKGB officers in the field. Ultimately, the decision to deploy intelligence teams under the protection of large partisan formations was dictated by the physical distances separating western Ukraine from the Soviet controlled territory and the opportunities offered by partisan raids. In equal measure, the NKGB leadership took into

consideration the strenuous security regime that made movement of individual agents through the German occupied territory challenging. Further difficulties included establishing legal residence in the cities and the activities of the OUN, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, and the armed formations of Taras Bul'ba-Borovets'. The latter were a concern even to commanders of large partisan forces and were a considerable threat to smaller partisan units and sabotage groups parachuted behind enemy lines ("Stenogramma besedy s Geroem" 17).

Importantly, the operational groups tasked with recruiting new agents and surveillance of Ukrainian and Polish nationalist organizations did not just complement the concurrent activities of territorial organs of state security in the Soviet controlled territories. In effect, they acted as their advance guard. The tasks of these teams were not limited to re-establishing contacts with Soviet secret agents, moving agents and operational groups of the NKGB to their points of destination, and creating new intelligence networks in the areas where the Soviet government faced significant political challenges. Upon the re-establishment of Soviet power, the officers were expected to transfer the newly recruited agents, the lists of "anti-Soviet elements," and captured enemy archives to the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR and the regional offices of state security, which would immediately put them to "operational-chekist use." The same was true of the documents recovered by Soviet archivists in the Soviet controlled territories (Gudzenko). Finally, the members of intelligence teams, some of whom had served in the Soviet security apparatus during the years of the "Great terror," carried out liquidations of suspected opponents of Soviet power behind enemy lines and participated in internal security operations following the restoration of Soviet power (Korokhov 66). Similar processes were at work in partisan formations. Having fought Germans, their allies, collaborators, and Ukrainian nationalists in the Axis occupied territories, many partisan units, notably the 1st partisan division of Kovpak/Vershyhora, would later participate in Soviet counter-insurgency against the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) (Khrushchev). The (re-) construction of the NKGB apparatus in the Axis occupied areas began months before the restoration of formal structures of Soviet power and cannot be understood outside the larger context of Soviet security policies.

The situation on the ground in 1943 was very fluid, and the operational plans were frequently modified in accordance with changes at the fronts, the unpredictable movements of partisan formations under pressure from German counter-insurgency forces, and knowledge regarding developments and opportunities in the Axis occupied territory. For example, in the spring of 1943, Captain V. Khondoshko's group was preparing to be parachuted near Poltava, where the team leader had worked before the war. The group was expected to form the nucleus of an intelligence network that would

establish contacts with and co-ordinate the activities of local partisan units and Communist underground organizations. To this end, in March 1943, the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR recruited several agents, all natives of the Poltava region. Although the reason is unclear (it might have been the stalling of the Soviet offensive near Belgorod and Kharkiv), the initial plan was scrapped, and the officer had to look for other team members (Khondoshko, *Unitartsy* 41). A plan to move the "Unitarians" group to Podillia with the partisan formation of S. Kovpak during the summer of 1943 was also abandoned because in June 1943, Kovpak's forces had been re-routed to the Carpathian Mountains ("Plan meropriiatii po delu 'Unitartsy'"). Months later, the "Unitarians" found themselves with the partisan brigade of Ivan Shitov, that was then on the raid in the Rivne region. Similarly, the operational group of Khrapko did not go to Volhynia with the partisan formation of A. Fedorov, as was initially planned, but was attached to the forces of A. Saburov further to the east in the Ukrainian-Belarusian Polissia. The operational group of N. Onishchuk, which was supposed to re-establish contact with secret agents and expand intelligence operations in Kyiv, ended up with the partisans of S. Kovpak/P. Vershyhora on the raid in Galicia and the Polish districts of the Generalgouvernement (General Governorate for the occupied Polish Region, established after the invasion of Poland by Nazi Germany) (Reshetov).

The deployment of operational groups began in September 1943 and proceeded incrementally, signaling both the novelty of the experience and the different status of these forces. Of the six units, the most successful was the group "Za Rodinu," under the command of captain of state security Viktor Khrapko ("Orel"), who was the head of the 2nd section of the 4th department of the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR. If one were to imagine operational groups as a constellation of social networks, "Za Rodinu" stood at the very centre. Its experiences are key to understanding not only the peculiarities of deployment of other operational groups, but also the broader challenges of the reconstruction of the Soviet security apparatus in central and western Ukraine. As a connecting element in the chain, Khrapko and his people were to maintain contact with the NKGB of the UkrSSR and also with the partisan units and operational groups of the NKGB in the field, to whom they provided logistical support on their way to the points of destination. Specific preparatory measures included the procurement of safe houses, the recruitment of guides, and negotiating with partisan commanders about the possibility of accommodating and protecting operational groups.

On 20 September 1943, Khrapko's group was dropped to the base of the partisan brigade of A. Saburov in the Lelchitsy district (now in the Gomel region, Belarus). In addition to fulfilling intelligence and counter-intelligence assignments near Ovruch, Olevsk, Mazyr, and Ielsk, Khrapko's team started to lay the groundwork for the eventual transfer of other operational groups, special purposes units of the NKGB of the UkrSSR, and multiple secret agents

to the occupied territories. By late 1943, Khrapko helped to move the following to the occupied territories: the operational groups "Razgrom," "Volhynians," "Unitarians," "Druzhba," and "Udar"; the special purposes unit "Zadnestrovtsy" ("Men from across the Dnistro River"); the intelligence-sabotage group of "Zaitsev"; and multiple secret agents. These agents were supposed to settle in Vinnytsia, Rivne, Lviv, Stanislav, and parts of Volhynia, and to infiltrate collaborationist formations of the so-called Russian Liberation Army (ROA) and the UPA (Savchenko, "O rabote"). Moving through Khrapko and his people in the opposite direction were prisoners of war, whom operatives in the field considered valuable, and documents that were captured by the partisans in the occupied territories (Sorin).

It is important to understand that leaders of the operational groups discussed in this article reported to the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR and did not deal directly with the central apparatus of the NKGB in Moscow. The communications proceeded via radio transmissions, through captain Khrapko and designated couriers, and by means of the creation of secret caches of documents in areas that were expected to fall under Soviet rule. Periodically, team leaders would submit written reports, which the NKGB leadership would use to formulate assignments for intelligence teams in the field. Other operational groups, special purposes units, and intelligence networks, however, reported directly to Moscow. The information about them is limited and their total number in central and western Ukraine at that time is unknown. References to such forces (e.g., the special purposes units of D. Medvedev, V. Karasev, and N. Prokopiuk) surface in the materials of the HDA SBU, but the dossiers of these units are most likely located in the Federal Security Service (FSB) archives in Moscow.

In December 1943, Saburov and Khrapko travelled to Kyiv. The leader of the operational group delivered a general report to the People's Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, S. Savchenko, and received new assignments. In January 1944, the operatives of "Za Rodinu" joined Saburov in a dangerous raid to the Rivne region and the Lutsk-Kovel area. The partisans, independently and together with the advancing units of the Red Army, captured several district centres (Vysotsk, Manevychi) and had multiple engagements with German security forces, the UPA, and the armed groups of T. Bul'ba-Borovets' (Cherniak).

The operational group "Druzhba," commanded by N. Onishchuk ("Baglii"), was dropped at the base of the "Chernihiv partisan brigade" of M. Taranushchenko in the Belarusian Polissia on the same day as Khrapko's group. Its area of responsibility lay somewhat to the east. In addition to the task of re-establishing contacts with NKGB agents in Kyiv, the operatives of "Druzhba" were expected to recruit new agents and to infiltrate the German intelligence school in Pushcha Vodytsia, a task that mirrored an assignment of "Za Rodinu" ("Zadanie rukovoditeliu opergruppy NKGB USSR 'Druzhba'"

3–6). But Taranushchenko already had orders from the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement to reunite with the Red Army and was not much help. Equally non-committal was Ivan Khytrychenko, whose forces maneuvered nearby and moved in and out of the western part of the Kyiv region. Unable to reach the destination, Onishchuk and his people returned to Soviet-controlled Chernihiv on 9 October 1943 and were redeployed, together with the "Unitarians" and "Udar" operational groups, to the occupied territories only in December 1943.

"Za Rodinu" and "Druzhba" were followed by other units. Several weeks later, on 7 October 1943, the operational groups "Razgrom" and "Volhynians" under the commands of G. Burlachenko ("Petrov") and P. Formanchuk ("Petrich"), respectively, were dropped to the airfield of the partisan formation of Saburov. With the help of Khrapko, the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR placed both groups with the partisan formation of V. Begma, which in late October 1943 started its dangerous raid to the Vysotsk-Dubrovytsia area in the Rivne region, some 150 km to the west (Shchukin; Burlachenko 77). To get to their destinations the partisans and NKGB operatives had to cross the heavily guarded railway lines Mazyr-Ovruch and Sarny-Lunynets, and territory controlled by armed bands of T. Bul'ba-Borovets'. Ultimately, "Razgrom" stayed with Begma in the Rivne region; "Volhynians," under the protection of one of the units, moved further west to their final destination—the "Chernihiv-Volhynian partisan formation" of Aleksei Fedorov, then tasked with paralyzing the movements of German transports on the railway lines near Kovel in the Volyn region (Kartashov).

"Razgrom" was assigned to re-establish contacts with secret agents in Rivne and Lviv, to infiltrate Ukrainian nationalist organizations and formations of the UPA, to organize sabotage on railways and at industrial installations, and to acquire Ukrainian nationalist literature and specimens of German documents authorizing residence and movement in the occupied territories. The "Volhynians" were supposed to re-establish contacts with pre-war agents in Volhynia and infiltrate political organizations and armed formations of Ukrainian nationalists ("Zadanie rukovoditeliu opergruppy NKGB USSR 'Volyntsy'"). In addition, Burlachenko and Formanchuk were to assist Khrapko with the creation of an infrastructure for the transfer of Soviet secret agents to the occupied territories, specifically by recruiting guides and procuring safe houses that could be used by NKGB personnel on their way to western Ukraine.

By late 1943, the operational groups of the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR had fanned across the land from the western part of the Kyiv region and the adjacent districts of the Belarusian Polissia all the way to western Volhynia (a distance of more than 300 km). Moreover, moving with mobile partisan forces, some of the groups were expected to extend their activities all the way to Lviv in eastern Galicia. More operational groups, special purposes

units, and individual agents were on the way through the human and material infrastructure that Khrapko, Burlachenko, and Formanchuk were busily assembling in the fall of 1943. Part of this second wave consisted of the "Unitarians," the "Druzhba," and the "Udar" operational groups.

In late December 1943, the above-mentioned units travelled from Soviet-controlled Kyiv to the partisan base in Ovruch; from there they moved to their designated partisan units. Druzhba was attached to the 1st partisan division, formerly led by S. Kovpak and now under the command of Petro Vershyhora, and participated in the raid from the Zhytomyr region to Volhynia and onward to Galicia and Polish parts of the Generalgouvernement (January-July 1944). The "Unitarians" headed to the partisan brigade of I. Shitov in the Rivne region (January-February 1944). In March 1944, with the front lines moving west, the group redeployed to Galicia and on to the Lublin district of the Generalgouvernement, together with the same partisan formation, now under the command of D. Nikolaichik and B. Shangin. The group stayed in Poland until July 1944. The history of the "Udar" operational group was the least eventful. It was supposed to join the partisan formation of L. Ivanov on the raid in the Ternopil and Stanislav regions, but it moved too slowly through the unfamiliar terrain. Ponomarev ("Platonov") and his people failed to reach the destination before the Red Army overran the area in January 1944. "Udar" was disbanded upon reuniting with Soviet forces.

Now that we have a better idea of the objectives and the geography of Soviet special operations, let us examine the activities of individual units within the context of the political history of Ukraine during World War II.

The NKGB in the Spaces of a Fragmented Sovereignty

Captain Khrapko's group began its work in the Zhytomyr region of Ukraine in late September 1943. At the outset, aside from supporting the deployment of other operational groups, the officers of "Za Rodinu" were to direct their attention to the Schutzmannschaft battalions (which NKGB documents describe with the help of the German propaganda moniker as "the Russian Liberation Army") and re-establish contact with secret agents of the NKGB in Kyiv, Korosten, Korostyshev, and Ruzhyn. "Za Rodinu" officers were expected to study partisan social circles with a view to utilizing them as sources of intelligence. They were also expected to co-ordinate the gathering of information about German intelligence schools near Kyiv and to conduct sabotage on the German communications and organize the assassinations of representatives of the occupation apparatus.

The experiences of "Za Rodinu" and other operational groups serve as a reminder of the complexity of the Axis "occupation regime" and the extent of

regional sovereignty fragmentation. The early attention to the Russian Liberation Army (ROA) stemmed directly from the NKGB leadership and was probably connected with the peculiarities of the German counter-insurgency in the Ukrainian-Belarusian Polissia in 1943. We know that the perpetual shortages of German security personnel caused the occupiers to rely increasingly on various collaborationist formations, consisting in large part of former prisoners of war (Hoffmann 21–27). At the time, such formations performed security duties and conducted anti-partisan operations in what today is Belarus, as well as in the Kyiv and Zhytomyr regions, where the partisans of Kovpak, Saburov, and Khytrychenko, among others, had set their bases in late 1942 to early 1943 and where the Khrapko group was active in the fall of 1943. The 114th and the 118th (Ukrainian) battalions of Schutzmannschaft were among the units that had operated in that area earlier in the year (Lishevskii 41). Subsequently, the 118th battalion participated in anti-partisan operations in the territory of contemporary Belarus and might have played a central role in the destruction of the Belarusian village Khatyn in March 1943 (Rudling, "The Khatyn' Massacre" 36–42).

It will take micro-historical and local history studies to determine which German, Hungarian, Slovak, and collaborationist units confronted Saburov's partisans and the intelligence team of Khrapko in the vicinity of Ovruch, Mazyr, and Ielsk in the fall of 1943. One will also need to establish the precise components of the strategy of counter-insurgents, which included not only military operations, but also executions of suspected partisan sympathizers, destruction of villages, and attempts to infiltrate partisan formations. It is certain that the Soviet leadership attached considerable importance to surveillance, demoralization, and disintegration (*razlozhenie*) of collaborationist forces, and Soviet security officers played an important part in this process (Tsarevskaia-Diakina 1: 582–84). In this, the Soviet side was quite successful. For example, Saburov and his lieutenants caused defections of hundreds of policemen and Schutzmänner, and of some Slovak soldiers under the command of the future Hero of the Soviet Union, Jan Naliepka (1912–43) ("Stenogramma-informatsiia" 2; *Radians'ka Ukraina. Kinozhurnal*).

Mobility of the partisan units and the extensive fragmentation of sovereignty in the Axis occupied territories meant that the Soviet partisans faced different adversaries in different localities. Already during the raid in the Rivne region in January 1944, Khrapko had discovered that there were no large collaborationist formations in the area. Instead, the partisans confronted sizeable bands of the UPA-North, which consisted largely of former policemen and defectors from the Schutzmannschaft battalions (Snyder, *The Reconstruction* 154–78). The emphasis correspondingly shifted toward the struggle against underground structures of the OUN and the UPA.

Other partisan units and operational groups encountered German, Hungarian, Slovak, multinational Schutzmannschaft, and UPA forces. Armed groups of Bul'ba-Borovets' (UNRA); Polish and Czech self-defence groups; Waffen-SS division "Galizien"; and, further west in the Polish districts of the Generalgouvernement, armed formations of Armija Krajowa and "Peasant battalions" were also encountered by partisan units. Because various fighting forces did not have the capacity to overwhelm the adversaries, their encounters often presented a complicated pattern of intermittent conflict, bargaining, and, occasionally, co-operation (Khondoshko, *Unitartsy* 99, 105–09).

The materials of the operational groups reveal the scope of Soviet intelligence operations and the challenges the NKGB officers faced during partisan raids in the politically inhospitable environment. For one thing, officers found it difficult to cultivate relationships with the local population and to recruit new agents when the partisans constantly changed locations. Moreover, many communities in the sector Dubrovytsia-Sarny-Volodymyrets-Kolky-Manevychi were under the influence of the UPA-North and the underground structures of the Bandera faction of the OUN, which had systematically targeted partisan sympathizers and killed many Soviet loyalists in different parts of Galicia and Volhynia in 1941 (Katchanovski). Khrapko noted that many locals avoided conversations and were otherwise reluctant to co-operate—a pattern that Soviet security officers would also observe after the re-establishment of Soviet power in other parts of western Ukraine (Khrapko 53–56; Kapranov).

The reticence exhibited by local residents was not necessarily indicative of pervasive anti-Soviet attitudes, though these were widespread in western Ukraine. However, such experiences could point to the significant social control exercised by the OUN and its armed formations. Several scholars have demonstrated that, once the power of the Soviet state increased and its opponents' structures of social control weakened, committed nationalist fighters and politically uninvolved parts of the population exhibited greater willingness to shift their allegiances (Burds, *Sovetskaia agentura* 271–84; Statiev 233–37).

Such difficulties notwithstanding, by February 1944, operatives of "Za Rodinu" worked with no less than 152 agents—90 of them recruited by members of the group—in various locations. The officers re-established contact with more than 60 secret agents who had worked in the area before the war. Among the newly recruited agents were active participants of the OUN underground and 12 men who Khrapko and his subordinates would send to the UPA after securing their allegiances. "Za Rodinu" also had more than 100 agents inside Saburov's brigade (roughly 5% of the total roster as of February 1944), including 45 recruited by members of the group (Khrapko 60).

Why such attention to counter-intelligence work within partisan units? There is evidence that the special services of Nazi Germany and the OUN tried to penetrate Soviet partisan formations. Subversive activities by enemy forces are mentioned in the documents of the operational groups and partisan units, in the instructions that the Communist Party leadership transmitted to officers in the field, and in the special reports submitted to the Communist Party leadership (Savchenko, "Dokladnaia zapiska"). Yet, the extensive recruitment of agents from partisan ranks by the NKGB was more than an effort to secure partisan formations from infiltration by hostile actors. It was also an attempt to establish control over partisans, many of whom were former residents of Axis occupied territories. Quite a few, including some prominent commanders like Ivan Khytrychenko, had served in collaborationist and nationalist formations and were perceived as potentially disloyal. The arrival of NKGB officers would generate hostility on the part of some partisan warlords.

Other accomplishments of "Za Rodinu" included obtaining intelligence on a broad array of issues, such as negotiations between the UPA command and the German military, the capture of security service archives of the OUNb in Tsuman, and identification of the locations of several UPA bases. Khrapko also discovered that surveillance of Polish organizations was impossible because most survivors of UPA massacres fled to Rivne, Lutsk and the Generalgouvernement, and there were virtually no Poles in the Ukrainian villages (57). The absence of German identification documents and the strenuous security regime in the occupied territories made it difficult to place agents in the cities. For the time being, the operations of Soviet intelligence agencies in Volhynia were largely limited to the Ukrainian countryside (Khrapko 60).

The "Razgrom" group, which operated further to the west in the Rivne region that was under the influence of Ukrainian nationalists, was a lot less successful in fulfilling its assignments. Dependent on the partisans of Begma for its security, the group moved to the Rivne region from the Belarusian Polissia only on 28 October 1943. Moreover, the situation in the sparsely populated forests near Vysotsk, while conducive to the security of partisan units, made the gathering of intelligence regarding Ukrainian nationalists difficult due to the scarcity of relevant sources. Many members of the OUN underground from the area had joined the UPA, whose units were concentrated on the right bank of the Horyn river, in the southern part of the Rivne region. The gathering of intelligence here was more than modest in comparison with the results of Khrapko's group. By February 1944, when the operational group was disbanded, it had acquired a mere 16 agents, a reflection of the ultimate failure of the partisans of Begma to penetrate nationalist strongholds on the right bank of the Horyn river. Only one pre-war agent of the NKGB was located in Sarny. In his report to the NKGB of the

Ukrainian SSR, Burlachenko indicated that the agents left behind in Rivne had departed from the area and their locations were unknown (82).

Although more research is necessary, the challenges encountered by the NKGB in Volhynia make clear the great difficulties of re-building the Soviet intelligence networks in the geographical settings where Soviet partisans could not establish military preponderance. Thus the failure to locate agents in the areas of partisan operations was a result of prior German and OUN security policies, based on efforts to eliminate former Communists, NKVD officers, and Soviet loyalists. Among the documents of the operational group "Volhynians," for example, one finds a remarkable testimony of the Soviet secret agent with the alias "Pavel," who in the summer 1941 resided in Lviv and later in the year fled to Kharkiv. While in Lviv, "Pavel" observed not only anti-Jewish pogroms perpetrated by nationalist militias, but also the lynching of people accused by relatives of victims of NKVD massacres of being Soviet loyalists and secret agents of Soviet security agencies. "Pavel" thought that "easterners" like himself who had arrived in Galicia in 1939–41 were particularly targeted ("Doklad agenta 'Pavla'" 50). The documents of "Razgrom" mention that the security service of the OUNb in Volodymyrets identified and liquidated "Grom," a secret agent of the NKGB ("Sumirovannaia razvedyvatel'naia svodka" 98). The killings of Communists and Soviet loyalists also feature in the memoir of the leader of the operational group "Unitarians" (Khondoshko, *Unitartsy* 86–88). Such facts might not be surprising, but they are relevant in the context of ongoing historiographical discussions about the dynamics of ethnic and political violence on the western periphery of the Soviet Union during the summer of 1941.

It is noteworthy that multiple pre-war agents of Soviet security agencies found themselves in the partisan units. This corroborates the premise of the official conception of the partisan raids as instruments for projecting hard power. Indeed, by pulling into their orbit Soviet sympathizers and members of social groups targeted by Nazis and their allies for total or partial annihilation, the partisan raids had the effect of mobilizing supporters and, in the long term, increased the potential for resistance activities in the Axis occupied territories. Communists, former prisoners of war, Jews, potential forced labourers, survivors of German counter-insurgency, and even pre-war agents of the Soviet security service joined partisan formations in the course of the raids (on NKGB agents in the partisan units, see Khondoshko, *Unitartsy* 58–59, 87).

The mass killings perpetrated by Germans and Ukrainian nationalists and the siphoning of Soviet loyalists by partisan forces, and later by Soviet military boards, resulted in a precipitous decline of Soviet supporters in many towns and villages. When Soviet power was re-established in western Ukraine in 1944, Communist officials learned that in many communities

there were hardly any Soviet activists left, whereas the number of secret agents/informers of militia and NKGB in the entire Volyn region (a population of close to 800,000 people), even in November 1944, did not exceed a couple of hundred (Profatilov 31).

The "Razgrom" performance improved somewhat in the second half of December 1943, when Begma's forces moved south and started to seek engagements with smaller formations of the military district "Zahrava" of the UPA-North (Koval'chuk). By the end of December 1943, Begma's men had killed dozens of nationalist militants and had taken 16 prisoners of war, according to Burlachenko. More than 40 members of the OUN underground and nationalist sympathizers were arrested by members of the operational group. Needless to say, these people became primary sources of intelligence about the activities of Ukrainian nationalists in the area ("Sumirovannaia razvedyvatel'naia svodka" 84). In mid-January 1944, the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement ordered Begma to proceed further west and south in support of the Red Army operations in the vicinity of Rivne. During this period, the operational group gathered military intelligence, while partisans attempted to capture district centres such as Volodymyrets and Tsuman. They repeatedly clashed with German security forces and Ukrainian nationalist formations that were waiting for the front lines to pass in order to start insurgency operations in the territory controlled by the Soviet government.

Within such a volatile context, perhaps the most significant accomplishment of "Razgrom" was a compilation of lists of more than 900 members of the OUN, the UPA, the armed formations of Bul'ba-Borovets', and other "anti-Soviet elements." These lists were handed to the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR along with lists of newly recruited agents (Burlachenko 82). Finally, it is worth mentioning that upon the return to the Soviet controlled territories, Burlachenko submitted to the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR proposals regarding the organization of counter-insurgency operations. Specifically, the leader of "Razgrom" proposed to convert partisan units with the experience of fighting the UPA into security forces entrusted with the liquidation of nationalist bands ("Sumirovannaia razvedyvatel'naia svodka" 98). We do not know if Burlachenko's proposals were taken seriously by the leadership of Soviet security agencies, but many partisan formations ended up performing such tasks in the aftermath of the re-establishment of Soviet power (Khrushchev).

The operational group "Volhynians" separated from Begma only in late October 1943 and reached the base of the "Chernihiv-Volhynian formation" of A. Fedorov in the Liubeshiv district of the Volyn region on 7 November 1943. Like "Razgrom," they found few opportunities for intelligence work during the raid in the northern part of the Rivne region. Similar to other operational groups, the "Volhynians" fell far behind "Za Rodinu" in terms of

the number of agents they recruited and utilized in the occupied territories. The primary reason was the UPA. But in contrast to the partisans of Begma, who effectively controlled many rural communities in the northern part of the Rivne region but could not penetrate southern districts, the partisans of Fedorov, in the absence of natural boundaries like the Horyn river, clashed with nationalist forces throughout the area of their operations. Consequently, "Volhynians" could not travel to remote villages without sizeable partisan forces providing protection, which greatly limited their operational outreach. In January 1944, Formanchuk even requested that the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR create an armed formation akin to the special purposes units of D. Medvedev, N. Prokopiuk, and V. Karasev that would always be at his disposal ("Letter" 121). While in Volhynia, the operational group recruited some 30 agents and established 2 *rezidenturas*. But not all agents were equally willing to fulfill their assignments. Whereas some proved instrumental in exposing OUN cells, at least one agent was liquidated because of his reluctance to co-operate. This suggests that NKGB officers employed a great deal of coercion, even threats of death, in their daily interactions with newly recruited agents. One should not exaggerate the effectiveness of the transfers of agents to the territorial organs of state security and the efficiency of the Soviet state apparatus in general. The documents of "Unitarians," for example, make clear that Soviet security agencies were hampered by the fact that many of the newly recruited agents succumbed to political violence during the Nazi occupation, were mobilized by the Red Army (apparently without consultations with the NKGB), or could not be located by the territorial organs of state security upon the re-establishment of Soviet power.

The materials of the "Volhynians" and other operational groups also contain information concerning the sensitive subject of extra-judicial executions in the Axis occupied territories. While historiography has paid a lot of attention to the Holocaust, German counter-insurgency, and political violence perpetrated by Ukrainian and Polish nationalist forces, the political killings committed by Soviet partisans and special forces have not been subjects of systematic research, some notable exceptions aside. Yet, the number of such killings must have been substantial. "Volhynians" alone, for example, liquidated at least 25 suspected nationalists, collaborators, and alleged agents of German security services (Formanchuk, "Dokladnaia zapiska" 53ob; Oreshkin 234). The corresponding figures for "Za Rodinu" and "Druzhba" stand at 31 and 28, respectively, ("Spravka po arkhivnym materialam" 8; "Spravka o prodelannoi rabote"). There are no precise figures for "Razgrom" and "Unitarians," but it is likely that they engaged in violence of this kind.

Political killings were not confined to Soviet special forces—many partisan units assassinated political opponents from the start of the

occupation, and certainly in 1942 and 1943 (Cerovic; Gogun and Kentii 122–24). The novelty of NKGB operational groups lay in the close intertwinement of political killings with intelligence work and the reconstruction of the Soviet security apparatus in the Axis occupied territories—all against a backdrop of the broader assault on the potential loci of anti-Soviet resistance in the territory controlled by the Soviet government. Indeed, by late 1943 to early 1944, with the operational groups of the NKGB deployed in Volhynia and Galicia, territorial organs of state security conducted surveillance and mass arrests of Ukrainian nationalists throughout Ukraine ("Skhemy vskrytykh ounovskikh organizatsii").

One should not overlook the potential influence of NKGB operations on UPA activities and the OUNb security service, which targeted Soviet loyalists, former prisoners of war, Jews, and suspected agents of Soviet power during the Axis occupation and in its aftermath (Viedienieiev and Bystrukhin 76–117; Himka, *Ukrainian Nationalists* 359–440). The projection of hard power through Soviet partisan formations—complete with political warfare, assassinations of political opponents, and recruitment of secret agents by operational groups of the NKGB—place such killings into a broader historical context and call for appropriate micro-histories to establish the local contexts and the dynamics of political violence in various localities.

The intelligence reports that Petr Formanchuk transmitted to the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR were in line with the general assignments and concerned activities of Ukrainian and Polish political groups and armed formations. But Formanchuk pursued the Polish vector more purposefully compared to other operational groups. In December 1943, for example, several partisans of Fedorov's brigade and some fighters of the allied Polish "People's Guard" (Armija Ludowa) were sent to the Generalgouvernement. The group returned on 20 January 1944, with 125 Polish partisans, who would supply information about the situation across the Buh River and form what Formanchuk perceived to be a pool of potential agents to be sent to the Polish armed formations ("Letter" 121).

If the story above seems trivial, it nonetheless illustrates the communication traffic between the intelligence teams and the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR and the manner in which the leadership of Soviet security agencies obtained intelligence and formulated assignments to agents in the field. Not long after Formanchuk submitted his report, all operational groups received orders to "take energetic measures to trace the anti-Soviet activities of Polish nationalists" ("Spetsial'noe soobshchenie").[5] Until then, it seems the Polish line was rather peripheral to Soviet intelligence work in Volhynia;

---

[5] Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

the numerical weakness of the Poles in the aftermath of the UPA mass killings in 1943 was likely an important factor.

This situation would change in the spring of 1944, when multiple partisan formations, special purposes units of the NKGB, and the "Unitarians" and "Druzhba" operational groups, among others, made their way across the Buh River. But the "Volhynians" were not among them. Upon reuniting with Soviet forces in February 1944, the "Volhynians" were transformed into a special purposes unit, consisting of NKGB officers and battle-hardened former partisans from Saburov, Kovpak, Fedorov, and Naumov brigades. Several months later, the unit headed to Transcarpathia with orders to gather intelligence and to conduct sabotage on communications. The "Volhynians" thus became the first unit to infiltrate the territory, which was then a part of Hungary.[6]

THE SECOND WAVE

The operational groups "Druzhba," "Unitarians," and "Udar" travelled to their destinations in December 1943 by land, through the partisan base in the Ovruch, Zhytomyr region. Ovruch at the time was a remarkable place. Captured by units of the Red Army and the partisans of Saburov in November 1943, the front-line town was immediately converted into a veritable gateway through which various organs of the Soviet state provided partisans with supplies and through which numerous partisan formations, special purposes units, operational groups of the NKGB, and individual agents infiltrated the Axis occupied territory. In the process, many received assistance not only from the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR, but also from the operational group of Khrapko, which, as previously noted, acted as an advance guard of the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR.

"Udar" failed to reach the partisan formation of L. Ivanov and was disbanded when it was overtaken by Red Army units. The operational group "Druzhba" of N. Onishchuk was attached to the 1st partisan division of P. Vershyhora and, in January 1944, moved through Volhynia to Galicia and on to the Polish districts of the Generalgouvernement, exiting to the Soviet controlled territories near Brest in July 1944. The raid proceeded under extremely difficult conditions, particularly in the Ukrainian parts of Galicia, which caused the commander of the division later to compare this region, then under a considerable influence of Ukrainian nationalists, to Nazi Germany (Vershigora, "Letter" 151).

---

[6] The peculiarities of the "Volhynians" deployment in the Carpathian Mountains in May-July 1944 is an interesting subject in its own right, but it lies outside the scope of this article.

"Druzhba" operatives, too, found it difficult to fulfill their assignments, insofar as partisans constantly changed their locations to avoid German security forces and armed bands of Ukrainian nationalists. Onishchuk estimated that in the course of the raid, the partisans covered close to 2,000 kilometers. The constant movement and the difficulty of cultivating relationships with the local population were cited among the challenges by leaders of other operational groups, including the relatively successful ones, like "Za Rodinu." But Onishchuk's predicament might have been unique in that he had not been given the list of secret agents ahead of time. He was supposed to obtain this information through the radio upon providing the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR with the itinerary of the operational group on any given day. Unfortunately for intelligence operatives in the field, the secrecy surrounding the movement of the partisan forces in the hostile political environment resulted in significant lags. It is likely that the difficulties this created for the operational groups were due to additional security measures embraced by partisan commanders and to the difficult relationship between the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR and commanding officers in the 1st partisan division.

"Druzhba" operatives typically learned the daily itinerary one hour before the departure. Consequently, by the time the NKGB of the UkrSSR supplied the information about the agents, the partisans were 40–50 kilometers away from the area in question. By April 1944, Onishchuk realized the futility of the endeavour and petitioned the NKGB leadership to transfer his group to a less mobile formation. In practice, the "Druzhba" operational group ended up servicing the 1st partisan division, the difficult relationship with its leadership notwithstanding (Onishchuk 50–51). From the perspective of the original assignments, the operational results were rather modest ("Spravka o prodelannoi rabote").

The "Unitarians" of V. Khondoshko were distinct from other operational groups. The unit performed not one but two tours of duty—in the Rivne region (January-February 1944) and in the Lublin district of the Generalgouvernement (March-July 1944). Their track record encompassed not only the recruitment of several dozen agents and the infiltration of the OUN, the UPA, and the Polish Armija Krajowa, but also the creation of a valuable *rezidentura* in Lviv. The latter was a non-trivial accomplishment that brought government decorations to members of the operational group. More remarkably, after the war the aging V. Khondoshko composed a memoir. Its publication was denied by the KGB of the Ukrainian SSR, but it is now accessible to historians. Khondoshko's recollections serve as a useful addendum to the historical materials of the NKGB operational groups and provide a glimpse into the internal politics of Soviet security agencies and the relations between partisan commanders and NKGB officers in the field.

From Khondoshko's memoir we learn that the "Unitarians" arrived at the camp of Shitov's brigade in January 1944 and immediately discovered that they were not particularly welcome. The group was soon sent to a battalion some 15 kilometers from the main camp, where they had few opportunities to interact with commanding officers. Neither was Shitov in a hurry to familiarize Khondoshko with operational matters at his headquarters. It appears that Khondoshko was deliberately misled into believing that intelligence officers of the brigade engaged primarily in military reconnaissance and did not maintain networks of secret agents (Khondoshko, *Unitartsy*). However, the actual documents of the partisan formation suggest otherwise (Shitov et al. 18).

We now know that negative attitudes toward organs of state security were rampant among partisan warlords. The Communist official V. Begma and the career security officer A. Saburov—who maintained good working relationships with Khrapko and Burlachenko—might have been not altogether typical. Moreover, some commanders, like Sydir Kovpak, had considerable power, prestige, and direct access to the Soviet leadership. Kovpak's wilfulness was legendary and his conflicts with the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement and Soviet security agencies are a matter of historical record (Gogun and Kentii 234–51). Similar attitudes were displayed by his subordinates. Kovpak's successor, P. Vershyhora, for example, told Onishchuk directly that he did not like the NKGB and the militia and "advised" the operatives to work well under his command. The power play by Petro Kul'baka, the commander of a unit in Vershyhora's division, was hardly more refined. The future Hero of the Soviet Union blamed security agencies for the failures of the Soviet partisan movement in his native Sumy region in 1941 (Onishchuk 50).

Ivan Shitov, the gritty veteran of the partisan struggle, did not have Kovpak's stature and was more circumspect in his relations with NKGB emissaries, but, given the presence of a significant number of Red Army stragglers and former collaborators among the commanding officers and partisans of his brigade, he too had his misgivings. It should therefore come as no surprise that Khondoshko felt vulnerable in the presence of partisans. He worried that he would be dominated by Shitov and his lieutenants. Indeed, when Khondoshko approached Shitov about the organization of counter-intelligence within the units, the partisan commander cut him short rather unceremoniously: "We don't need *ezhovshchina* here" (Khondoshko, *Unitartsy* 63). On another occasion, Shitov offered to transfer the "Unitarians" to the NKGB-affiliated partisan formation of colonel Medvedev (Khondoshko, "Otchet" 102).

Relations between members of the operational group and rank-and-file partisans were not ideal either, for different reasons. The "Unitarians" did not have the necessary standing in the eyes of seasoned fighters. It was not

unusual, for example, for partisans to make fun of NKGB agents. The humorous moniker "children of Captain Grant," referenced not only the novel of Jules Verne, but also Khondoshko's military rank and the apparent youth of female radio operators. Trust was slow to develop also because the NKGB leadership had ordered members of the operational group not to inform rank-and-file partisans about their institutional affiliation. As a result, early on, even radio transmissions to the NKGB headquarters had to be disguised as training sessions (Khondoshko, *Unitartsy* 58–59).

Exercising power and influence on behalf of the Soviet government was a tricky business, and the fragmentation of sovereignty in the Axis occupied territories was further complicated by the fact that it was not always obvious who was the real representative of Soviet power. In some places the partisans not only struggled against Axis, collaborationist, and nationalist forces but also competed with other partisan formations for the control of the territory and for supplies from the center ("Stenogramma besedy s Ushakovym V." 10; Bazhan et al. 335). Military might, prestige, and high-powered connections of individual warlords clearly mattered in the encounters with emissaries of the Soviet special services.

Neither was the leadership of Soviet security agencies oblivious to partisan attitudes. It was not mere coincidence that members of the operational groups were instructed to not reveal their NKGB affiliations to rank-and-file fighters. In this context, experiences of the operational groups "Druzhba" and "Unitarians" indicate the importance of a thorough investigation of the internal culture of different partisan formations and the dynamics of their relations with the local population, former collaborators, Ukrainian and Polish nationalists, and other partisan commanders, and with various organs of the Soviet state (above all its security and intelligence agencies). It is not insignificant that the social status of partisan commanders varied, which was a reflection not so much of their institutional background, but of the size and effectiveness of their forces and the power of social networks, with which they became affiliated during the war. The ones with the most power, prestige, and access to resources were the ones who had a direct connection to Stalin, or at least to the political leadership of their respective republics (Chernobaev et al. 383; Lozyts'kyi 80–82). It will take specialized studies to determine how such power discrepancies affected relations between various "representatives of Soviet power" in the field.

The rising power of the Soviet state in the aftermath of the Battle of Stalingrad made it only a matter of time before Soviet special services started to assert their authority among the partisans, recruiting many fighters as secret agents and selectively targeting former collaborators and Ukrainian nationalists in the Soviet controlled territories. When the "Unitarians" arrived at the base of Shitov's brigade, Shitov's deputy and several partisans from his entourage were summoned to Kyiv, where, being

former policemen, they were arrested (Khondoshko, *Unitartsy* 55). In January 1944, the same fate befell Ivan Khytrychenko, a former Communist Party official and Nazi collaborator, who in 1943 headed one of the largest partisan forces in the Kyiv region. After the partisan units were disbanded upon re-uniting with Soviet forces, rank-and-file fighters were typically drafted by the military. Unless evidence of serious crimes surfaced at a later time, these fighters could expect inconvenient episodes in their biographies to fade into the background.

CONCLUSION

Operational groups of the NKGB of the UkrSSR occupy a particular place in the history of the Soviet security service and the political history of Ukraine during World War II. The creation of these units over the course of 1943 must be seen as a response to changes in the strategic situation and as a reflection of a systematic effort by the Soviet security leadership to re-establish an institutional presence in central and western Ukraine. Acting under the protection of raiding partisan formations, which themselves served as a tool of Soviet power in the Axis occupied territories, NKGB operatives tried to determine the fate of leaders of Soviet intelligence cells and reconnect with secret agents with whom contact had been lost in 1941. They recruited new agents and tried to infiltrate Ukrainian and Polish nationalist organizations. In this manner, the officers prepared conditions for the transfer of other operational groups, special purposes units, and secret agents of the NKGB to the occupied territories. The operational groups "Za Rodinu," "Razgrom," "Volhynians," "Druzhba," "Unitarians," and "Udar" served as a matrix for a broader range of operational groups and special purposes units, which would follow in their footsteps. In 1943–45 the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR alone deployed at least 53 units of this kind in central and western Ukraine, as well as in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania. Similar developments were in progress in what today is Belarus and the Baltics. Future researchers may be able to examine the documentation of the Soviet intelligence operations in various locations during the later stages of the war. This study has made the first attempt to venture into this poorly explored terrain.

    This article has also tried to elucidate the tensions between the operational designs of the NKGB leadership and the chaotic conditions on the ground that posed challenges to operatives in the field and prevented the fulfillments of their assignments. Among the factors complicating the activities of operational groups and the gathering of intelligence in the occupied territories were German counter-insurgency operations, the constant movement under the conditions of partisan raids, various

nationalist groupings, and the over-reliance on large partisan formations for security in spaces of contested sovereignty. The difficulty of penetrating Ukrainian nationalist strongholds in the south of the Rivne region and the complicated security situation in Galicia, for example, reduced the efficiency of the operational groups "Razgrom," "Volhynians," and "Druzhba." "Za Rodinu," which operated in the Ukrainian-Belarusian Polissia, and the "Unitarians" who spent most of the time in the Lublin district of the Generalgouvernement, both experienced more favourable operational situations. Within these larger contexts, the experiences of different operational groups were also influenced by the individual agency of officers in the field, by the distinct institutional cultures of different partisan forces, by inter-group dynamics, and by different territorial communities insofar as these related to the history of the Axis occupation, the Ukrainian nationalist movement, Soviet partisan warfare, and Soviet intelligence operations. Future historians can enrich such contexts by tapping into the rich archival collections in Ukraine and in other post-Soviet and post-Communist countries.

Works Cited

Adamushko, Vladimir, et al., editors. *Khatyn'. Tragediia i pamiat': Dokumenty i materialy*. NARB, 2009.

Anderson, Truman. "Incident at Baranivka: German Reprisals and the Soviet Partisan Movement in Ukraine, October–December 1941." *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 71, no. 2, 1999, pp. 585–623. DOI: 10.1086/235290.

Armstrong, John, editor. *Soviet Partisans in WWII*. Wisconsin UP, 1964.

Bartov, Omer. *Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz*. Simon and Schuster, 2018.

Bazhan, Ol'ga, et al., editors. *Partizanskaia voina na Ukraine. Dnevniki komandirov partizanskikh otriadov i soedinenii. 1941–1944*. Tsentrpoligraf, 2010.

Berkhoff, Karel. *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule*. The Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 2004.

Bruder, Franziska. *"Den ukrainischen Staat erkämpfen oder sterben!": Die Organisation Ukrainischer Nationalisten (OUN), 1929–1948*. Metropol Verlag, 2007.

Burds, Jeffrey. *Sovetskaia agentura. Ocherki istorii SSSR v poslevoennye gody (1944–1948)*. Sovremennaia istoriia, 2006.

—. "'Turncoats, Traitors and Provocateurs': Communist Collaborators, the German Occupation, and Stalin's NKVD, 1941–1943." *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 32, no. 3, 2017, pp. 606–38. DOI: 10.1177/0888325417742468

Butko, Serhii, and Oleksandr Lysenko, editors. *Spaleni sela i selyshcha Chernihivshchyny v 1941–1943 rr. Zlochyny proty tsyvil'noho naselennia. Zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv*. Vydavnytstvo "Desna Polihraf," 2013.

Cerovic, Masha. "'Au chien, une mort de chien:' Les partisans face aux 'traîtres à la Patrie.'" *Cahiers du monde russe*, vol. 49, nos. 2–3, 2008, pp. 239–62. DOI: 10.4000/monderusse.9128

Chernobaev, A., et al., editors. *Na prieme u Stalina. Tetradi (zhurnaly) zapisei lits, priniatykh I. V. Stalinym (1924–1953 gg.)*. Novyi khronograf, 2008.

Danylenko, Vasyl', and Serhii Kokin, editors. *Radians'ki orhany derzhavnoi bezpeky u 1939–1941 r. Dokumenty HDA SB Ukrainy*. Kyievo-Mohylians'ka akademiia, 2009.

Dean, Martin. *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941–1944*. Palgrave MacMillan, 2019.

Dz'obak, Volodymyr. *Taras Bul'ba-Borovets' ta ioho viis'kovi pidrozdily v ukrains'komu rusi oporu (1941–1944rr.).* Instytut istoriï Ukraïny NANU, 2002.

Ermolov, Igor'. *Russkoe gosudarstvo v nemetskom tylu. Istoriia Lokotskogo samoupravleniia. 1941–1943.* Tsentrpoligraf, 2009.

Glebov, Veniamin. *Voina bez pravil. Predannyi rezident.* Eksmo, 2005.

Gogun, Aleksandr, and Anatolii Kentii. *"...Sozdavat' nevynosimye usloviia dlia vraga i vsekh ego posobnikov...": Krasnye partizany Ukrainy, 1941–1944. Maloizuchennye stranitsy istorii. Dokumenty i materialy*. Ukrainskii izdatel'skii soiuz, 2006.

Gross, Jan T. *Revolution from Abroad: The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia*. Princeton UP, 1988.

Himka, John-Paul. *Ukrainian Nationalists and the Holocaust: OUN and UPA's Participation in the Destruction of Ukrainian Jewry, 1941–1944*. Ibidem Verlag, 2021.

Hoffmann, Joachim. *Die Ostlegionen 1941–1943. Turkotataren, Kaukasier und Wolgafinne im deutschen Heer.* Verlag Rombach, 1986.

Il'iushyn, Ihor. *Volyns'ka trahediia 1943–1944 rr.* Instytut istoriï Ukraïny NANU, 2004.

Kalyvas, Stathis. *The Logic of Violence in the Civil War*. Cambridge UP, 2006.

Kapranov, Dmitrii. Interview by S. Smoliakov. *Ia pomniu*, 19 May 2014, https://iremember.ru/memoirs/nkvd-i-smersh/kapranov-dmitriy-fedorovich. Accessed 5 Jan. 2022.

Katchanovski, Ivan. "OUNb ta natsysts'ki masovi vbyvstva vlitku 1941 roku na istorychnii Volyni." *Ukraina Moderna*, vol. 20, 2013, pp. 215–44.

Kay, Alex J., et al., editors. *Nazi Policy on the Eastern Front, 1941: Total War, Genocide and Radicalization*. Rochester UP, 2012.

Kentii, Anatolii, and Volodymyr Lozyts'kyi. *Viina bez poshchady i myloserdia: Partyzans'kyi front u tylu Vermakhtu v Ukraini (1941–1944)*. Heneza, 2005.

Kirillova, Natal'ia, et al., editors. *Sozhzhennye derevni Rossii, 1941–1944: Dokumenty i materialy*. Istoricheskaia pamiat', 2017.

Kokin, Serhii, editor. *Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptyts'kyi u dokumentakh radians'kykh orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky, 1939–1944 rr*. Ukrains'ka vydavnycha spilka, 2005.

Koval'chuk, Volodymyr. *Litopys UPA, nova seriia.* Vol. 11: *Merezha OUN(b) i zapillia UPA na terytorii VO "Zahrava," "Turiv," "Bohun" (serpen' 1942–hruden' 1943 rr.). Dokumenty*. Litopys UPA, 2007.

Lower, Wendy. *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine*. North Carolina UP, 2005.

Lozyts'kyi, Volodymyr. *Politbiuro TsK Kompartii Ukrainy: Istoriia, osoby, stosunky, 1918–1991*. Heneza, 2005.

Lozyts'kyi, Volodymyr, et al., editors. *Ukraïna partyzans'ka. 1941–1945 rr. Partyzans'ki formuvannia ta orhany kerivnytstva nymy: Naukovo-dovidkove vydannia*. Parlaments'ke vydavnytstvo, 2001.

Mel'nik, Aleksandr (Oleksandr Melnyk). "Rezidentura 'Maksim': Sovetskaia razvedyvatel'naia deiatel'nost' v okkupirovannom Kieve. Istoriia i pamiat'. Chast' 1." *Historians.in.ua*, 5 Sept. 2020, http://www.historians.in.ua/index.php/en/istoriya-i-pamyat-vazhki-pitannya/2791-aleksandr-melnik-rezidentura-maksim-sovetskaya-razvedyvatelnaya-deyatelnost-v-okkupirovannom-kieve-istoriya-i-pamyat-chast-1. Accessed 26 Jan. 2022.

—. "Rezidentura 'Maksim': Sovetskaia razvedyvatel'naia deiatel'nost' v okkupirovannom Kieve. Istoriia i pamiat'. Chast' 2." *Historians.in.ua*, 20 Oct. 2020, http://www.historians.in.ua/index.php/en/istoriya-i-pamyat-vazhki-pitannya/2803-aleksandr-melnik-rezidentura-maksim-sovetskaya-razvedyvatelnaya-deyatelnost-v-okkupirovannom-kieve-istoriya-i-pamyat-chast-2. Accessed 26 Jan. 2022.

Motyka, Grzegorz. *Ukraińska partyzantka 1942–1960: działalność Organizacji Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów i Ukraińskiej Powstańczej Armii.* RYTM, 2006.

Patryliak, Ivan. *Viis'kova diial'nist' OUNb u 1940–1942 rokakh*. Instytut istoriï Ukraïny NANU, 2002.

Pohl, Dieter. *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944*. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1997.

Popov, Aleksei. *NKVD i partizanskoe dvizhenie. Fakty i dokumenty*. Olma-Press, 2003.

Prusin, Alexander. "'Fascist Criminals to the Gallows!': The Holocaust and Soviet War Crimes Trials, December 1945–February 1946." *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol. 17, no. 1, 2003, pp. 1–30. DOI: 10.1093/hgs/17.1.1

Radchenko, Yuri. "The Biography of the OUN(m) Activist Oleksa Babii in the Light of His 'Memoirs on Escaping the Execution' (1942)." *Journal of Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Societies*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2020, pp. 237–76.

Rossolinski-Liebe, Grzegorz. *Stepan Bandera: The Life and Afterlife of a Ukrainian Nationalist, Fascism, Genocide and Cult*. Ibidem-Verlag, 2014.

Rudling, Per Anders. "The Khatyn' Massacre in Belorussia: A Historical Controversy Revisited." *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol. 26, no. 1, 2012, pp. 29–58. DOI: 10.1093/hgs/dcs011

—. "Rehearsal for Volhynia: Schutzmannschaft Batallion 201 and Hauptmann Roman Shukhevych in Occupied Belorussia, 1942." *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 20, no. 10, 2019, pp. 1–36. DOI: 10.1177/0888325419844817

Serhiichuk, Volodymyr, editor. *Likvidatsiia UGKTs (1939–1946). Dokumenty radians'kykh orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky.* PP Serhiichuk, 2006. 2 vols.

Shapoval, Iurii, and Vadym Zolotar'ov. *Vsevolod Balyts'kyi: osoba, chas, otochennia*. Stylos, 2002.

Shepherd, Ben. *The War in the Wild East: The German Army and Soviet Partisans*. Harvard UP, 2004.

Shepherd, Ben, and Juliette Pattinson, editors. *War in a Twilight World: Partisan and Anti-Partisan Warfare in Eastern Europe, 1939–1945*. Palgrave MacMillan, 2010.

Skorobohatov, Anatolii. *Kharkiv u chasy nimets'koi okupatsii (1941–1943)*. Prapor, 2004.

Skrypnyk, Oleksandr. "Na taiemnomu fronti Druhoi Svitovoi." *Sluzhba zovnishn'oi rozvidky Ukrainy,* 4 May 2014, https://szru.gov.ua/history/stories/na-taiemnomu-fronti-druhoi-svitovoi. Accessed 26 Jan. 2022.

Slepyan, Kenneth. *Stalin's Guerillas: Soviet Partisans in WWII.* Kansas UP, 2006.

Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin*. Random House, 2011.

—. *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus*. Yale UP, 2003.

Statiev, Alexander. *The Soviet Counter-Insurgency in the Western Borderlands*. Cambridge UP, 2010.

Struve, Kai. *Deutsche Herrschaft, ukrainischer Nationalismus, antijüdische Gewalt: Der Sommer 1941 in der Westukraine.* De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2015.

Sudoplatov, Pavel. *Razvedka i Kreml'.* TOO "Geia," 1996.

Tessin, Georg, and Norbert Kannapin, editors. *Waffen-SS und Ordnungspolizei im Kriegseinsatz 1939–1945.* Biblio Verlag, 2000.

Tsarevskaia-Diakina, Tat'iana, editor. *Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii v gody Vtoroi mirovoi voiny.* Vol. 1: *1939–1943*; Vol. 2: *1944–1945*, RGASPI, 2012.

Vedeneev, Dmitrii, et al. *Razvedka Sudoplatova. Zafrontovaia diversionnaia rabota NKVD-NKGB v 1941–1945 gg*. TD Algoritm, 2015.

Vershigora, Petr, and Vladimir Zebolov. *Partizanskie reidy (iz istorii partizanskogo dvizheniia v gody Velikoi otechestvennoi voiny Sovetskogo Soiuza 1941–1945).* Izdatel'stvo "Shtiintsa" Akademii nauk Moldavskoi SSR, 1962.

Viedienieiev, Dmytro. "Rozviduval'no-dyversiina ta kontrrozviduval'na diial'nist' orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky za liniieiu frontu v 1941–1945rr. ("Za dokumentamy NKVS-NKDB Ukraïns'koï SRSR." *Z arkhiviv VUChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, no. 2, 2014, pp. 291–352.

Viedienieiev, Dmytro, and Hennadii Bystrukhin. *Dvobii bez kompromisiv: protyborstvo spetspidrozdiliv OUN ta radians'kykh syl spetsoperatsii. 1945–1980-ti roky*. K.I.S. 2007.

Viola, Lynne. *Stalinist Perpetrators on Trial: Scenes from the Great Terror in Soviet Ukraine*. Oxford UP, 2017.

Weiner, Amir, and Aigi Rahi-Tamm. "Getting to Know You: The Soviet Surveillance System, 1939–1957." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, vol. 13, no. 1, Winter 2012, pp. 5–45. DOI: 10.1353/kri.2012.0011

Archival Materials

Burlachenko, Grigorii. "Doklad o prodelannoi rabote v tylu protivnika operativnoi gruppoi NKGB USSR 'Razgrom' s 7.10.43 po 4.2.1944 goda." 4 Feb. 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F. 60, spr. 28479, t. 1, ark. 76–83.

Cherniak. "Spravka." 18 Jan. 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28461, t.4, ark.92, 95.

"Doklad agenta 'Pavla' o polozhenii vo L'vove." 29 June 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28442, t.2, ark.48-56ob.

Formanchuk, Petr. "Dokladnaia zapiska o prodelannoi rabote opergruppy NKGB USSR, deistvuiushchei pri partizanskom soedinenii general-maiora, dvazhdy Geroia Sovetskogo Soiuza tov. Fedorova." 19 Jan. 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F. 60, spr.28442, t.25, ark.53–56ob.

—. Letter to People's Commissar of State Security of the Ukrainian SSR, S. Savchenko. 20 Jan. 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F. 60, spr.28442, t.25, ark.121–121ob.

Gudzenko, Panteleimon. Report to Head of the Administration of State Archives of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR M. Shkliarov. 20 April 1942. Central States Archives of the Higher Organs of Government [TsDAVOVUV], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.14, op.1, spr.2355, ark.60–62.

Kartashov, Aleksandr. "Spravka." 12 Nov. 1943. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28442, t.28, ark.15.

Khondoshko, Vasilii. "Otchet o prodelannoi rabote opergruppoi 'Unitartsy' v tylu protivnika s 2.1.1944 po 6.8.1944 g." 25 Aug. 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28443, t.20, ark.102–110b.

—. *Unitartsy*. Unpublished manuscript. 1978. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F. 60, spr. 28443, t. 13a. ark. 1–268ob.

Khrapko, Viktor. "Otchet o rabote opergruppy 'Za Rodinu' s 1-go ianvaria po 1-e marta 1944 goda." No date. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28461, t.1, ark.51–60.

Khrushchev, Nikita. "O polozhenii v Rovenskoi i Volynskoi oblastiakh U[kr]SSR." March 1944. Report to J. Stalin. Central State Archives of Civic Organizations of Ukraine [TsDAHOU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.1, op.23, spr.703, ark.18.

Korokhov, Nikolai. "Dokladnaia zapiska." 22 May 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28442, t.6, ark. 62–69.

Lishevskii, S., et al. "Otchet ob organizatsii i boevykh deistviiakh soedineniia partizanskikh otriadov Kievskoi oblasti imeni t. Khrushcheva N.S. 1942–1944 g." 1944. Central State Archives of Civic Organizations of Ukraine [TsDAHOU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.77, op.1, spr.1, ark.3–278.

Onishchuk, Nikolai. "Doklad o prodelannoi rabote v tylu protivnika operativnoi gruppy NKGB USSR 'Druzhba' s 1 ianvaria po 20 iiulia 1944 goda." 28 Aug. 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28478, t.1, ark.49–55.

"Operativnyi plan boevykh deistvii partisan Ukrainy v vesenne-letnii period 1943g." 1943. Central State Archives of Civic Organizations of Ukraine [TsDAHOU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.1, op.19, spr.7, ark.124–38.

Oreshkin. "Spravka na operativno-chekistskuiu gruppu 'Volyntsy.'" 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28442, t.25, ark.234–234ob.

"Plan meropriiatii po delu 'Unitartsy.'" 2 Aug. 1943. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28443, t.20, ark.11–11ob.

Priimak. "Spravka." 2 Aug. 1943. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28461, t.1, ark.35.

Profatilov, Il'ia. "Politicheskaia informatsiia o sostoianii Volynskoi oblasti i rabote Volynskogo obkoma KP(b)U 15 noiabria 1944 g." 18 Nov. 1944. Russian State Archive of Social and Political History [RGASPI], Moscow, Russian Federation. F.17, op.88, d.352, ll.1–42.

Radians'ka Ukraina. Kinozhurnal. No. 53, 1963. Central State Archives of Film, Photo and Phono Documents of Ukraine [TsDAKFFDU], Kyiv, Ukraine. Arch.2706.

Reshetov, Nikolai. "Spravka." 19 Nov. 1942 Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28461, t.2, ark.17.

Savchenko, Sergei. "Dokladnaia zapiska 'O predateliakh i nemetskikh agentakh, vnedrennykh v partizanskie formirovaniia." 23 Nov. 1943. Central State Archives of Civic Organizations of Ukraine [TsDAHOU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.1, op.23, spr.524, ark.177–190.

—. Letter to "Petrich" [Formanchuk]. 12 Feb. 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28442, t.26, ark.50–50ob.

—. "O rabote v tylu protivnika operativno-chekistskoi gruppy 4 Upravleniia NKGB U[kr]SSR 'Za Rodinu.'" 9 Jan. 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28461, t.3, ark.27–29.

Shchukin. "Spravka." 8 Oct. 1943. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28479, t.1, ark.33.

Shitov, Ivan et al. "Otchet o boevoi deiatel'nosti i partiino-politicheskoi rabote soedineniia za period s fevralia 1943g. po fevral' 1944g. i prilozheniia k nemu," 21 Mar. 1944. Central State Archives of Civic Organizations of Ukraine [TsDAHOU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.105, op.1, spr.1, ark.1–86.

"Skhemy vskrytykh ounovskikh organizatsii na territorii vostochnykh oblastei." 1945. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.2, op.1, spr.260, ark.1–279.

Sorin. "Spravka." 27 Dec. 1943. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28461, t.5, ark.39.

"Spetsial'noe soobshchenie." Dec. 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28442, t.25, ark.84–86.

"Spravka o prodelannoi rabote v tylu protivnika operativnoi gruppoi NKGB USSR 'Druzhba' s 1 ianvaria po 20 iiulia 1944 g." Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28478, t.1, ark.118.

"Spravka po arkhivnym materialam 10 otdela KGB U[kr]SSR na spetsial'nye formirovaniia organov gosbezopasnosti Ukrainskoi SSR, deistvovavshie v tylu nemetsko-fashistskikh voisk v period Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny 1941–1945 gg." 1987. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.13, op.1, spr.507, ark.1–21.

"Stenogramma besedy s Geroem Sovetskogo Soiuza komandirom soedineniia imeni Beriia Grabchakom A.M." 21 May 1947. Central State Archives of Civic Organizations of Ukraine [TsDAHOU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.166, op.2, spr.337, ark.1–19.

"Stenogramma besedy s Ushakovym V." Central State Archives of Civic Organizations of Ukraine [TsDAHOU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.166, op.3, spr.87, ark.2–19.

"Stenogramma-informatsiia tov. Borisova I.S." 27 March 1943. Central State Archives of Civic Organizations of Ukraine [TsDAHOU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.166, op.2, spr.29, ark.1–27.

"Stenogramma vystupleniia P. Vershigory na ob''edinennom sobranii aktiva veteranov voiny." 20 Oct. 1962. Central State Archive-Museum of Literature and Arts of Ukraine [TsDAMLMU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.349, op.1, spr.200, ark. 1–17.

"Sumirovannaia razvedyvatel'naia svodka o deiatel'nosti ukrainskogo i pol'skogo natsionalisticheskogo podpol'ia v Rovenskoi i Volynskoi oblastiakh (Po agenturnym dannym, sobrannym operativnoi gruppoi NKGB USSR 'Razgrom')." Feb. 1944. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28479, t.1, ark.84–103.

Vershigora, Petr. Letter to Joseph Stalin. 4 March 1944. Central State Archives of Civic Organizations of Ukraine [TsDAHOU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.1, op.22, spr.2, ark.151.

"Zadanie rukovoditeliu opergruppy NKGB USSR 'Druzhba.'" 9 Aug. 1943. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28478, t.1, ark.2–7ob.

"Zadanie rukovoditeliu opergruppy NKGB USSR 'Volyntsy' 'Petrichu.'" 9 Aug. 1943. Sectoral State Archive of the Security Services of Ukraine [HDA SBU], Kyiv, Ukraine. F.60, spr.28442, t.26, ark.1–5ob.