

DENATIONALIZING TREACHERY:
THE UKRAINIAN INSURGENT ARMY IN LATE SOVIET DISCOURSE, 1945-1985

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of the Master of Arts in the Department of History.

Chapel Hill
2012

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ABSTRACT

TREVOR FITZSIMONS ERLACHER: “Denationalizing Treachery: The Ukrainian Insurgent Army in Late Soviet Discourse, 1945-1985”
(Under the direction of Donald J. Raleigh)

The time and place of the postwar struggle of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) against the Soviet regime in West Ukraine contradicted two foundational myths of late Soviet society: 1) the myth of the Great Patriotic War, and 2) the myth of the Friendship of the Peoples. This thesis examines how Soviet-Russian mass media dealt with these contradictions in the decades leading up to perestroika. The Soviet state attempted to excise the UPA’s postwar activities from collective memory through omission until the early 1980s, when it launched a propaganda campaign to expose and demonize the UPA. The new political circumstances of the ‘Second Cold War’ account for the timing of this campaign, but the well worn language and arguments it employed reflected the stagnation of the Party’s postwar ideology, which posited the unity and incorruptibility of the “new historical community of the Soviet people,” and accordingly denationalized the UPA’s “treachery.”

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Cheerfulness, the good conscience, the joyful deed, confidence in the future — all of them depend, in the case of the individual as of a nation, on the existence of a line dividing the bright and discernible from the unilluminable and dark; on one's own being just as able to forget at the right time as to remember at the right time; on the possession of a powerful instinct for sensing when it is necessary to feel historically and when unhistorically.

—Friedrich Nietzsche¹

The end of the Second World War did not herald the resumption of peace in West Ukraine, the region of modern-day Ukraine that had been a part of Poland from 1919 to 1939. A large and well entrenched insurgency of Ukrainian nationalist guerrillas carried on fighting against the return of Soviet power to the region for the remainder of the decade. The Soviet regime's protracted struggle against the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN)—a militant, far rightwing, underground Ukrainian political party founded in 1929 to fight for an independent, ethnically homogeneous Ukrainian nation-state—and its armed wing, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), soon acquired an exterminatory character.² After the Soviet authorities had militarily wiped out the UPA and its popular support structure in the late 1940s, they turned to the perhaps more difficult task of covering it up, striking it from the public record, and erasing it from collective memory. The death of Iosif Stalin in 1953 and the advent of Nikita

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," in *Untimely Meditations*, ed. Daniel Breazeale, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 63.

² On the OUN, see Alexander J Motyl, *The Turn to the Right: The Ideological Origins and Development of Ukrainian Nationalism, 1919-1929* (Boulder, CO: East European Quarterly, 1980); and David R. Marples, *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2007). On the UPA insurgency and its pacification, see John Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism, 1939-1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955); Jeffrey Burds, "Agentura: Soviet Informants' Networks in the Ukrainian Underground in Galicia, 1944-48," *East European Politics and Societies* 11 (December 1996): 89-130; Jeffrey Burds, "Gender and Policing in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944-1948," *Cahiers du Monde russe* 42 (April - December 2001): 279-319; Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 162-90.

Khrushchev's "Thaw" did not signal a retreat from this policy.³ Once it became apparent that the memory of the UPA could not be suppressed, Soviet propaganda blackened its reputation and vehemently dissociated it from the "new historical community of the Soviet people."

What motivated the Soviet *damnatio memoriae* of the UPA? Historian Amir Weiner's argument that the very existence of the anticommunist UPA contradicted the official Soviet myth of the Great Patriotic War provides a clear motive for the suppression of the UPA's history.⁴ The myth of the Great Patriotic War held that the experience of the Second World War produced a morally pure and monolithic "Soviet people." According to the war myth, those who had not fought against the Nazis or actively collaborated with them could not be a part of the new Soviet community. Despite post-Stalinist reforms and the 1955 amnesty decree of wartime collaborators,⁵ the Soviet party-state did not end or renegotiate its austere pursuit of justice against the living wartime members of the UPA and their families. Instead, the postwar Soviet polity branded the UPA as timelessly "irredeemable," and slated it for complete, existential obliteration. In this study, I use the subject of the OUN/UPA in Soviet mass media to apply Weiner's thesis to the late Soviet period, which falls outside of the scope of his study, to show why postwar Soviet texts practiced "excisionary memory" with respect to the Ukrainian nationalist insurgency, and what discursive techniques they employed. I trace how these techniques changed, and why.

In addressing these questions, my work is informed by historian Serhy Yekelchuk's monograph on Soviet version of Ukrainian history.⁶ Yekelchuk argues that, beginning in the

³ On the contrary, the Soviet bureaucracy's surveillance and censorship, while in other ways substantially more tolerant than it was during Stalin's reign, expanded and deepened during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, allowing the Communist Party to enhance its control over public discourse and closely manage the quantity, quality, and context of references to the OUN/UPA. See A. V. Blium, *Kak eto delalos' v Leningrade: Tsenzura v gody ottepli, zastoia i perestroiki, 1953-1991* (Sankt-Peterburg: Akademicheskii proekt, 2005).

⁴ Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 182-90.

⁵ Unlike similar amnesties in the West, the USSR's 1955 decree did not extend to those convicted of the "murder and torture of Soviet citizens," and this certainly included UPA veterans as a collective.

⁶ Serhy Yekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory: Russian-Ukrainian Relations in the Soviet Historical Imagination* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

1930s, Soviet authorities imposed a Russocentric, imperialist conception of Ukrainian history and identity on Soviet Ukraine. This discourse produced the “Friendship of the Peoples” myth, which held that centuries of historical progress bonded the nations of the Soviet Union together under the aegis of the “Great Russian people.” This myth served to legitimize the pre- and postrevolutionary union of Russia and Ukraine under the former’s hegemony, and forecasted their inevitable “drawing-together” and “fusion” into one nation. Despite the efforts of Party ideologues and censors, however, the creation of a “single, coherent community” of memory between Russians and Ukrainians remained unattainable.⁷ Yekelchik’s study of official attempts to forge this common history and identity focuses on the “Ukrainian” perspective, ends with the Stalinist period, and does not address the subject of the OUN/UPA in Soviet discourse. In examining the particularly contentious historical issue of the OUN/UPA from the “Russian” perspective, I use Yekelchik’s framework to shed light upon the official regulation of imagined Russian-Ukrainian relations in the postwar Soviet context.⁸ I show how Soviet discourse strived to maintain “Stalin’s empire of memory” after Stalin by omitting and, beginning in the late 1970s, calumniating the UPA.

My study is the first to systematically analyze references to the OUN/UPA in the discourse of Soviet-Russian mass media. It begins with the end of the Second World War in 1945 and ends roughly with the onset of M. S. Gorbachev’s reforms in 1985, when various forces conspired to undermine the mythological foundation of the multinational Soviet state. Unlike Weiner and Yekelchik, I largely rely upon public, state-sanctioned, Russophone sources that shaped and reflected the attitudes and beliefs of the “center” or “metropole” (i.e. Moscow and to a lesser extent, Kiev) as opposed to those of the “periphery” or “borderlands” (i.e. West Ukraine). In accordance with Yekelchik’s understanding of Russia’s relation to Ukraine in the post-Stalinist

⁷ Ibid., 153-161.

⁸ Historian Stephen Velychenko’s analysis of Soviet-Russian textbooks, articles, and monographs on the history of Soviet Ukraine notes this continuation of Russocentrism in the post-Stalinist period, but does not address references to the OUN/UPA either. Stephen Velychenko, *Shaping Identity in Eastern Europe and Russia: Soviet-Russian and Polish Accounts of Ukrainian History, 1914-1991* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).

Soviet context as essentially “imperial,” I use these terms to signify the “colonizer” (center) and the “colonized” (periphery). The perspectives and attitudes of the latter are important, interesting, and complicated, but are not investigated here. As a result, I have not engaged Ukrainian sources unless they were widely distributed to Russian audiences (as in the case of films and Russian-language books with large press runs). I have combed through the digital archives of *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* from 1945 to 1985 for references to the OUN/UPA, using these mass-circulation newspapers to ascertain the character of official attempts to shape popular opinion.⁹ I have also surveyed every published, Soviet-Russian source to my knowledge dealing with the OUN/UPA, all of which were issued between 1981 and 1985. I supplement these sources with analyses of three Soviet films dealing with the OUN/UPA, which were all produced in Ukraine and shown to Russian audiences, but met different fates.¹⁰ Although my source base is not comprehensive, I am nonetheless confident that my conclusions demonstrate the basic contours and development of postwar Soviet-Russian discourse on the OUN/UPA. Here it is important to distinguish between the OUN, which continued to exist and struggle against Soviet power throughout the Cold War, and the UPA, which officially disbanded in 1949 (with localized activity persisting into the mid-1950s). Between 1945 and the late 1970s, articles in *Izvestiia*, *Pravda*, and *Argumenty i*

⁹ I have done the same with Russian newspaper *Argumenty i fakty* (Arguments and Facts) and the main Soviet historical journal *Voprosy istorii* (Problems of History) available through the Universal Databases of “Russian Central Newspapers” and “Social Sciences & Humanities,” respectively. East View’s search engine has greatly expedited my research. <https://dlib-eastview-com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/>

¹⁰ The fact that they were produced in Ukraine as opposed to Russia indicates the greater interest of Ukrainians in the OUN/UPA and the unique political situation in Soviet Ukraine. During the late 1960s and 1970s, Moscow suspected many Ukrainian Party members and university students of “local nationalism,” (see footnotes 42 and 50, below). *Bagiarnye berega*, directed by Iaroslav Lupii, Odessa Film Studios, 1979; *Visokii Pereval*, directed by Aleksandr Denisenko, Dovzhenko Film Studios, 1981; and *Belaia ptitsa s chernoi otmetinoi*, directed by Yuri Il’enko, Dovzhenko Film Studios, 1971. I have identified these three films (the only ones of their kind, to my knowledge) using the lists and notations in M. Pavlova, *Sovetskie Khudozhestvennye Fil’mi: Annotirovannyi Katalog* (Moscow: Izd-vo Vserossiiskoi gazety “Niva Rossii,” 1995). It should also be noted that Czech film director Frantisek Vlácil made two films set in 1947 featuring UPA guerillas in supporting roles: *Shadows of a Hot Summer* (*Stiny horkeho leta*, 1977), and *The Little Shepherd Boy from the Valley* (*Pasacek z doliny*, 1983).

fakty,¹¹ and the journal *Voprosy istorii* mentioned “*banderovtsy*,”¹² “bourgeois Ukrainian nationalists,” “butchers,” “bandits,” “spies,” “criminals,” and “hitlerites,” but rarely, and only in passing, when referring to the wartime UPA.¹³ Soviet-Russian discourse made numerous references to the OUN concerning its activities abroad, but did not explicitly mention the UPA insurgency in *postwar* West Ukraine at all until the late 1970s and early 1980s.¹⁴

The “unmasking” or exposure (*oblichenie*)¹⁵ of the UPA in the late 1970s and early 1980s—like the thirty-year policy of omission it superseded—represented an attempt to reaffirm, not alter, the Soviet polity’s foundational postwar mythology. A “myth” is a “symbolic reconstruction of [a] community’s formation” that provides it with a “sense of its meaning and purpose.”¹⁶ By

¹¹ *Argumenty i fakty* was and is a less reputable news source than *Pravda* or *Izvestiia*, but it reached a wide readership, touched on issues relevant to this study, and conformed to the authorities’ expectations, making it another tool for managing collective memory of the UPA in the Soviet Union.

¹² *Banderovtsy* translates as “banderites.” It was the common Soviet epithet for OUN and UPA members. It comes from the name of Stepan Bandera, a prominent OUN leader. “*Banderovshchina*” is the Soviet term for the ideology of and support for the Bandera faction of the OUN (the OUN-B).

¹³ This is not to suggest that UPA fighters were under no circumstances any of these things. In a number of cases, they were. The majority of the Soviet and Western historiography on the OUN/UPA revolves around the complicated and contentious matter of wartime collaboration and criminality, which is beyond the scope of this paper. For obvious reasons, both Soviet and Ukrainian nationalist historical accounts of the OUN/UPA must be approached critically. This study is chiefly concerned with the former, but it should be noted that nationalist historians—such as present-day OUN(z) members Taras Hunczak and Peter J. Pitichnyj—who argue that the OUN/UPA leadership never made an official policy of ethnic cleansing and did not bear a clear political and ideological affinity to Nazism have been compelled, not unlike Soviet scholars, to rely on omissions and obfuscations. John-Paul Himka, “War Criminality: A Blank Spot in the Collective Memory of the Ukrainian Diaspora.” *Spaces of Identity*, 5 no. 1 (2005): 9–24. Wiktor Poliszczuk, Christina Eljasz, and Lester Korneluk, *Bitter Truth: The Criminality of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA): The Testimony of a Ukrainian* (Toronto: Nakl. autora, 1999); Per Anders Rudling, “Historical Representation of the Wartime Accounts of the Activities of the OUN-UPA (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists—Ukrainian Insurgent Army),” *East European Jewish Affairs* 36, no. 2 (2006): 163-189.

¹⁴ The full name of the UPA (*Ukrainskaia povstancheskaia armiiia*) goes virtually unmentioned in the mainstream Soviet press and in Soviet historical writing. Indeed, the acronym itself finds more use in reference to a faction in the Angolan Civil War. A. M. Khazanov, “Angola: Bor’ba za nezavisimost’,” *Voprosy istorii* 5 (August 1978): 115-29.

¹⁵ *Oblichenie* was a traditional Russian Orthodox and, later, Bolshevik practice of public revelation and accusation, intended to subject individual sinners to the collective judgment of the assembled people. Oleg Kharkhordin, *The Collective and the Individual in Russia: A Study of Practices* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 212-38.

¹⁶ A myth, which need not be empirically verified, comes to explain and eventually define reality for its believers, who need only to *appear* to believe the myth for the myth to retain its community-defining power. Graeme Gill, *Symbols and Legitimacy in Soviet Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 3-4.

“postwar mythology” I mean the Soviet myths of the “Friendship of the Peoples” and the “Great Patriotic War.”¹⁷ After victory in the Second World War and the death of Stalin in 1953, these two interlocked myths ascended to prominence in Soviet culture.¹⁸ In combination, they explained the fusing of Soviet nationalities into the spiritually undifferentiated whole of the “Soviet people.”¹⁹ These myths defined who the postwar Soviet community included and excluded, and cast the relationship between the two as a struggle between good and evil. They formed major components of the overarching metanarrative of Marxism-Leninism, which infused Soviet discourse with its peculiar language, values, and principles. The complete philosophy of history of Soviet ideology provided the “Soviet people” with an account of its past victimhood under the knout of capitalism and fascism, its ongoing struggle against “Western imperialism,” and the inevitability of its future triumph—the attainment of the classless, stateless, and nationless utopia of communism at the end of history. For all of its grandiose sweep, however, the postwar Soviet mythos could not satisfactorily account for the recalcitrant presence of the UPA *among* the “Soviet people” *after* the war had been won.

The Ukrainian Insurgent Army and Postwar Soviet Mythology

For decades after the pacification of West Ukraine, the OUN/UPA remained a taboo subject in the Soviet Union’s public discourse. The fact that a loosely organized faction of far rightwing, Russophobic nationalists had managed to hold out and fight, with negligible external support, for years after West Ukraine’s “liberation” remained an acute, politically sensitive

¹⁷ My understanding of these two myths in particular is chiefly informed, respectively, by: Lowell Tillett, *The Great Friendship: Soviet Historians on the Non-Russian Nationalities* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969); and Weiner, *Making Sense of War*. I use the terms “mythology,” “mythos,” and “metanarrative” interchangeably.

¹⁸ Graeme Gill has posited a total of six Soviet myths (prominent or unimportant at different points in Soviet history), including the myth of the October Revolution, the myth of the construction of socialism, the myth of the leadership, the war myth, and the myths of external and internal opposition to the Party. I have not followed his taxonomy, but have found his overall conceptual framework useful. Gill, *Symbols and Legitimacy*, 4-5.

¹⁹ Though, as we shall see, the Soviet mythos attributed a leading role to the “Great Russian” nation. Gill, *Symbols and Legitimacy*, 154.

embarrassment for the Soviet regime. The tenacity of the OUN/UPA's resistance in the forests and villages of West Ukraine—a region that the Soviet regime was especially keen to represent as loyal, prosperous, and secure—indicated that many locals resented Soviet power and supported the nationalist partisans.²⁰ These historical realities put the phenomenon of Ukrainian nationalism at complete variance with the reformulated metanarrative of postwar Soviet discourse.

A full, public reckoning of the UPA as a third wartime combatant in its opposition to both Nazism and Communism would have contradicted the strictly dualistic myth of the Great Patriotic War, which understood the war as the cleansing baptism-by-fire of the future, socialist society. This understanding of history and progress left no room for moral grayness, forgiveness, or compromise in the construction of the new postwar order. The defenders of the October Revolution, which the war myth identified with the guiltless and monolithic “Soviet People,” could not be accused of or charged with the sin of “collaboration.” “In other words,” Weiner writes, “blame for the initial humiliating defeats and atrocities against segments of one’s own society was shifted to an alien element.”²¹ If individual Ukrainians had participated in the vile business of the fascist invaders, they had done so because they were not, after all, Soviets *or* Ukrainians. Instead, they were the “eternal enemies whom the war and occupation helped to uncover.”²² They were not of the people, but *against* the people, “antipeople” (*antinarodnye*). They were not patriotic Ukrainians, but foreign impostors. In the immediate postwar years, Soviet propaganda obsessively conflated Ukrainian nationalism with Nazism, demanding that

²⁰ The drive to purge West Ukrainian memory of nationalist tropes and martyrs coincided with the destruction of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church—a bastion of traditional West Ukrainian culture—which the Soviet regime accused of supporting the nationalist underground. Bohdan Rostyslav Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State, 1939-1950* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1996).

²¹ Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 135.

²² *Ibid.*, 136-37.

justice be unmercifully meted out against its adherents.²³ The OUN/UPA had stood on the wrong side of history; ipso facto the Party pronounced its annihilation inevitable and irreversible.

A full, public reckoning of the UPA's support in broad swaths of West Ukrainian society would have similarly contradicted the Friendship of the Peoples myth, which made an exemplar of the particularly close, peaceful, and sacred bond between the "fraternal" Russian and Ukrainian nations.²⁴ Antebellum Soviet ideology had asserted that hatreds among the nations in the "darkness" of the former Russian Empire vanished in the "light" of socialism after October 1917. According to the Marxist-Leninist theory of history, socialism heralded the "drawing-together" and eventual dissolution of the world's nationalities under communism. Throughout the 1930s, the Party allowed Soviet historians to acknowledge the enmity between Ukrainians and Russians prior to 1917, but only on the condition that they presented the conquest of Ukraine and other non-Russian countries by the tsars as an essentially progressive "lesser of two evils."²⁵

The Second World War marked a major turning point in the development of Soviet nationalities policy. The Party rehabilitated the ideas of Ukrainian historians previously condemned as "bourgeois nationalist" or even "fascist," and placed them in the service of whipping up patriotic fervor among the newly christened "Great Ukrainian nation" to aid in the defeat of Nazism.²⁶ After victory, however, Soviet historians aggressively reverted to a Russocentric, imperialist narrative that condemned the previously exalted non-Russian national heroes and independence struggles as "treacherous" and "reactionary." Thereafter, the authorities

²³ Eventually, official Soviet discourse's demonization of the OUN/UPA as "Hitlerites" would expand to include every conceivable external enemy of Soviet power, no matter how tenuous the allegation. *Ibid.*, 162-90.

²⁴ Tillett, *The Great Friendship*, 26-34. On Pokrovskii, see George M. Enteen, *The Soviet Scholar-Bureaucrat: M. N. Pokrovskii and the Society of Marxist Historians* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978), 6.

²⁵ Originally, under the leadership of historian M. N. Pokrovskii, the Soviet historical profession condemned Russian colonialism as an "absolute evil," and the non-Russians who fought against it as sympathetic freedom fighters. In the early 1930s, however, Pokrovskii's school came under attack, and the Party adopted a new interpretation of the history of Russian-Ukrainian relations. At this time, the regime purged dozens of ostensibly "bourgeois nationalist" Ukrainian historians. James E. Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation: National Communism in Soviet Ukraine, 1918-1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983).

²⁶ Tillett, *The Great Friendship*, 58-85.

expected Soviet histories to emphasize Ukraine's junior status vis-à-vis Russia—the “elder brother” in the Soviet “family of nations.”²⁷ Thus the new leadership branded heroic figures in the Ukrainian nationalist mythos as “traitors” who had resisted the rule of Moscow or Saint Petersburg.²⁸ As the “lesser of two evils” became an “absolute good,” the new, officially sanctioned version of history extended the purported lack of national hostility among the peoples of the Soviet Union and the progressiveness of Russian colonialism into the most distant periods of the prerevolutionary era.²⁹ But if the prerevolutionary legacies of non-Russian, anti-imperial figures could not be read into the myth of Friendship of the Peoples, then so much the worse for the UPA, whose war against Russian domination had occurred *after* the Revolution's triumphant victory in the Great Patriotic War and *within* the territory of the Soviet Union's purportedly internationalist utopia.

The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in the Soviet Press and Film, 1945-1970s

Pravda and *Izvestiia* did not cover the UPA insurgency in West Ukraine while it was happening in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The subject of the OUN, however, appears twice in connection with Soviet efforts to secure the return of refugees to the USSR. Two articles published in 1946 accused the OUN or “Ukrainian-German fascists” of fleeing abroad to escape

²⁷ This new program applied to any centuries-old episodes in Ukraine's past that challenged the official Soviet narrative of the progressiveness of imperial Russia's expansion into the region, above all Bohdan Khmelnytsky's 1654 alliance with Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, the tercentenary of which was then approaching.

²⁸ Two of the most common targets were Hetman Ivan Mazepa—the Ukrainian Cossack who had sided with Sweden in exchange for the promise of Ukrainian independence against Peter I in the Great Northern War—and Symon Petliura—a prominent Ukrainian nationalist political and military leader during the independence struggle of the late 1910s and early 1920s.

²⁹ Yekelchuk, *Stalin's Empire of Memory*, 3-12, 50; Tillet, *The Great Friendship*, 7; and Velychenko, *Shaping Identity*, 135-89. The final version of the Friendship of the Peoples myth included the belief in a primordial East Slavic oneness extending back to the early Middle Ages. Soviet historians thus posited the existence of a sixth-century “East Slavic political union,” situated in the province of Volhynia and comprised of the tribal ancestors of the modern Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Great Russian nations. Alexander Vucinich, “The First Russian State,” in Cyril E. Black, ed. *Rewriting Russian History: Soviet Interpretations of Russia's Past* (New York: Vintage Books), 123-40.

justice and slandering the Soviet Union in the refugee camps.³⁰ Since Soviet discourse identified Ukrainian nationalism with Nazism, the latter's rout implied the former's as well.³¹ These articles simply ignored the fact that tens of thousands of Ukrainian nationalists were still in West Ukraine, bitterly struggling against Soviet authorities. The representation of the OUN as an exclusively foreign problem that corrupted former Soviet citizens with the aid of "imperialist" governments became the standard interpretation thereafter.

After the pacification of the UPA in the early 1950s, discussions of the OUN in the press typically cropped up in the context of Soviet proselytization among the Ukrainian diaspora. A 1954 press conference in Kiev for repatriating Ukrainian emigre Iosif Krutii established an *oblichenie*-like ritual for this purpose. At the press conference, Krutii opened the public confession of his sordid past among Ukrainian nationalist circles abroad with a disclaimer:

On May 9, in the emigrant, anti-Soviet newspaper 'The Ukrainian Independent,' which is published in West Germany, an essay has appeared about my alleged 'kidnapping.' It is trying, in advance, to impress the idea upon its readers that any possible speeches of mine should be regarded as fiction. This assertion is utterly false, as, indeed, is everyone who writes in this rag, published with American money. No one 'kidnapped' me, but I want to tell the reasons for my break with the Ukrainian nationalists in the present article.³²

Krutii indicts the OUN, claiming to have been a longtime member and supporter of various "Ukrainian nationalist circles." He had never joined the OUN, but had witnessed its evils firsthand. After trotting out the obligatory accusations of wartime collaboration with Nazism, Krutii discussed the insidious, anti-Soviet activities of Ukrainian nationalists abroad. He condemned Stepan Bandera, Andriy Melnyk, and Taras Borovets³³ as traitors who had sold

³⁰ "Pervaia sessiia General'noi Asamblei organizatsii Obedinennykh natsii: Vystuplenie M. Bazhana na zasedanii Komiteta No. 3," *Izvestiia* [Moscow], February 2, 1946, and "O mezhdunarodnoi organizatsii po delam bezhentsev: Rech' A. Ia. Vyshinskogo na zasedanii 3-go komiteta General'noi Asamblei 6 noiabria 1946 g.," *Pravda* [Moscow], November 8, 1946.

³¹ Following this line, an 1948 historical article depicted the OUN in interwar Poland as a subversive, Nazi-led operation. M. Boguslavskii, "Politicheskaia bor'ba v Pol'she v sviazi s nastupleniem fashistkikh agressorov na Chekhoslovakiuu," *Voprosy istorii* 5 (May 1948): 20-39.

³² I. Krutii, "O prichinakh moego razryva s ukrainskimi natsionalistami," *Pravda* [Moscow], May 19, 1954.

³³ Stepan Bandera was the wartime leader of the OUN faction, called the OUN-B, that created the UPA; Andriy Melnyk, the leader of the OUN-"M" faction that opposed Bandera's. Taras Borovets was military commander of the original Ukrainian People's Revolutionary Army (formerly known as the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, but not to be confused with UPA), which existed from 1941 and fought German, Polish, Soviet, and OUN-B formations.

themselves into the service of the imperialist West's spy and propaganda bodies for personal enrichment. Krutii coupled every charge against the nationalists with the assertion that the blameless Ukrainian nation had nothing to do with such traitors:

In reality, the Ukrainian people do not show any kind of support for the Ukrainian nationalists . . . My many-year experience with the Ukrainian emigration gives me the right to say that the Ukrainian people never supported the banditry of the Ukrainian nationalists. All the talk about the 'resistance movement' in the Ukraine is a deception behind which the leaders of the Ukrainian nationalists hide their dirty work against the Ukrainian people, trying to involve ordinary emigrant-Ukrainians in this adventurism.³⁴

Everything about the "OUNites" (*ounovtsy*), apart from their titular nationality, was foreign to the people of Soviet Ukraine. Krutii boiled down the OUN leadership's motives to pure greed, accusing them of accepting bribes (invariably denominated in U.S. currency) in exchange for anti-Soviet intelligence gathering, "ideological subversion," and drug smuggling. He then cited the cultural and economic advances that Soviet rule had brought to Ukraine, whose people never desired to "turn their motherland into a colony of American and other capitalists."³⁵

The postwar Soviet mythos determined the details of Krutii's salvation. According to the article, he had decided to return to the motherland on Victory Day. As we have seen, the Great Patriotic War separated the chosen from the damned.³⁶ If there was any day to become a born-again Soviet citizen, it was the ninth of May. *Pravda* presented Krutii's autobiographical confession as evidence of the regime's magnanimity and leniency to those who had strayed from the herd. Krutii's tale of conversion concludes with the peculiar claim that he had made his decision to return to the Soviet fold only after having learned that Alexander Trushnovich—a leading figure in the National Alliance of Russian Solidarists (NTS)³⁷—had defected from the West. "The voluntary transfer to the German Democratic Republic of NTS leader Trushnovich

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 82-126.

³⁷ NTS was a far rightwing, anticommunist organization comprised of White émigrés with which Soviet propaganda frequently associated the OUN. Despite its use of the Trident of St. Volodymyr, the NTS radically opposed Ukraine's severance from Russia in accordance with its neoimperialist, Russophile ideology.

put an end to all of my vacillations,” Krutii declared. “I finally broke with the Ukrainian nationalists and moved to the side of the socialist camp. I want to devote the rest of my life to work for the good of my people.” The light of Soviet socialism had wrested Krutii from the clutches of the darkness. Yet, the KGB had kidnapped Trushnovich the preceding April as a part of their ongoing secret operations against the NTS.³⁸ As an alleged sympathizer of Ukrainian nationalism, the notion that Krutii would have been swayed by the example of the anti-Ukrainian nationalist Trushnovich’s “voluntary transfer” is dubious, not least of all because Trushnovich’s “transfer” had not been “voluntary.” It is also unlikely that the Soviet state would have granted Krutii the amnesty implied by the article had he ever been a fully fledged member of the irredeemable OUN.

A year later, in 1955, as the Soviet Union fashioned a new, post-Stalinist image and welcomed back its former citizens through the “Committee for Return to the Motherland,” the press made it clear that such invitations did not apply to the “banderites.” One article, published in *Izvestiia*, accused the OUN of exploiting, deceiving, and corrupting otherwise innocent or salvageable Ukrainian emigrants. The piece reassured the latter: “To all who declare their wish to return to the motherland and do this with an open heart, breaking with their emigrant past, there is nothing to fear. The motherland will accept them and arrange a future life for them.”³⁹ Instead of offering associates of the OUN new lives, the regime busied itself with ending their old ones: Bogdan Stashinsky, a KGB operative, assassinated Lev Rebet⁴⁰ and Stepan Bandera in 1957

³⁸ Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 361.

³⁹ The article bemoans the OUN’s cowardly refusal to publish the names of its members, no doubt because this would have aided in the Soviet authorities’ separating the wheat from the chaff. “Press-konferentsiia ‘komiteta za vozvrashenie na rodinu’ v Berline,” *Izvestiia* [Moscow], April 17, 1955. Other articles complained about the OUN’s terrorizing of Ukrainian emigrants who wished to repatriate to the “motherland,” and anti-Soviet propagandizing. “K voprosu o repatriatsii Sovetskikh grazhdan iz FRG,” *Izvestiia* [Moscow], May 18, 1956.

⁴⁰ Second in command under Iaroslav Stetsko in the “Ukrainian government” proclaimed by the OUN(B) June 30, 1941. Served briefly as prime minister after Stetsko’s arrest by the Nazis. He remained active in the OUN(B) abroad after the war.

and 1959, respectively.⁴¹ The KGB's level of commitment to executing leading Ukrainian nationalists who had fled to the West reflected the Soviet polity's understanding of itself as the champion of a higher standard of justice, particularly with regard to alleged war criminals and traitors.⁴² A 1960 article in *Pravda*—"L'vov Accuses: Oberlender Must Answer for his Crimes"—underscored the aspect of the Great Patriotic War myth which, in contrast to the prevailing attitude in Western countries, regarded collaboration as utterly unforgivable.⁴³ "Criminals have short memory," the article declares, "but L'vov remembers!" In the "name of L'vov and of the entire Soviet people," the authors demand that Theodore Oberlender be brought to justice for his time at the head of the ethnically Ukrainian Wehrmacht battalion, "Nachtigall." In the capitalist West, the article asserts, justice is hypocritical and incomplete. The "imperialists" had granted amnesty to Nazi war criminals like Oberlender, and they had pardoned the Nazis' "bourgeois-Ukrainian nationalist" henchmen along with them. Such leniency was impossible in the postwar Soviet mythos.

Following the formula of Krutii's case, *Izvestiia* ran a piece entitled "Lost Illusions," which covered a press conference in Kiev concerning yet another Ukrainian nationalist's confession and "voluntary" return to the motherland. This time, however, the article made no insinuations about the amnesty and redemptive penance of the accused. The readers of the newspaper were to believe that Dzhugalo Kazimir, a member of the OUN since the Great Patriotic War, had freely thrown himself at the mercy of the Soviet state and given up the names of numerous OUN agents in the service of the Bundesnachrichtendienst (a West German intelligence agency) and the CIA. Kazimir's carefully worded statement again made a clear

⁴¹ Stashinsky used a specially designed cyanide spray-gun to make the murders look like heart attacks. The ploy worked until he defected to the West with his East German wife and confessed to the assassinations in 1961. Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield*, 361-62.

⁴² For more on the KGB's understanding of and activities against Ukrainian nationalist groups within the USSR throughout the 1960s and 1970s, see Cold War International History Project (CWIHP), "The Mitrokhin Archive," Folders 16, 34, 48, 57, 70, and 92. <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/digital-archive> [accessed, November 27, 2011]

⁴³ V. Kuznetsov and A. Bogma, "L'vov obviniaet: Oberlender dolzhen otvetit' za svoi prestupleniia," *Pravda* [Moscow], April 7, 1960.

distinction between the OUN leadership, which acted in the name only of greed, and the poor Ukrainian emigrants who had been duped into supporting them. “With full responsibility and knowledge of the issues, I can state that the leaders of the OUN in their dark deeds were concerned only with gathering money from drugged Ukrainian emigrants to build their own personal wealth.”⁴⁴ The newspapers did not report on the trial that followed Kazimir’s return, but he expressed his utmost confidence in the superior justice offered by Soviet society. “Whatever awaits me here [in Soviet Ukraine], I do not regret the decision [to return]. It is better to answer before a Soviet court than to enjoy the notorious ‘freedom’ of the western world.” “Dzhugalo’s statement,” the article concludes, “has again shown the hideous face of the Ukrainian nationalist rump, situated in the service of imperialist intelligence.” In contrast to Krutii’s story, Kazimir’s was about indictment and punishment, not forgiveness and salvation, which were out of the question thanks to his past involvement in the OUN.

Soviet discourse understood the OUN as a wartime extension of Nazism and a cancerous “fifth column” of eternal class enemies, conceptually segregating it from the blameless “Great Ukrainian people.” Since the OUN/UPA’s nationality could not be denied outright, however, Soviet literature emphasized its purportedly “bourgeois” social origins. One of the very few mentions of the UPA between 1953 and 1985 on the pages of the main Soviet professional historical journal, *Voprosy istorii* (Problems of History), conceded that the Nazis had “found some social support” on the territory of the Soviet Union, but only among “the exploiting classes of the western regions of Ukraine and Belarus who had been offended by Soviet power.”⁴⁵ The difficulty of stripping the OUN/UPA of its Ukrainian ethnicity in order to preserve, untarnished, the innocence of the Ukrainian people as a whole necessitated the tedious repetition of the full,

⁴⁴ A. Kozlov, “Utrachenie iluzii: Ukrainskoe natsionalisticheskoe okhvosťe na sluzhbe inostrannykh razvedok,” *Izvestiia* [Moscow], April 20, 1966. The same day, *Pravda* published an article (“Ukrainskoe natsionalisticheskoe okhvosťe na sluzhbe inostrannykh razvedok”) on the same subject, making the same points and drawing the same conclusions.

⁴⁵ Latvian, Estonian, and Lithuanian nationalists were similarly condemned. However, the ongoing resistance of these groups and the UPA *after 1945* are passed over in silence. “Sovetskie organy gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti v gody Velikoi otechestvennoi voiny,” *Voprosy istorii* 5 (May 1965): 20-39.

politically correct epithet: “Ukrainian *bourgeois* nationalist.”⁴⁶ In theory (and only in theory), the regime roundly absolved the Ukrainian peasantry and industrial proletariat of any culpability vis-à-vis the OUN/UPA. Thus, where the black mark of collaboration with Nazism did not suffice in the ostracization of the OUN/UPA from the Ukrainian people, Soviet propaganda introduced an inalienable class enmity as a supplementary charge.

Soviet visual arts carried the excommunication of the UPA into the 1970s, during which two films appeared addressing the UPA’s activities in West Ukraine after the Nazi occupation. The first, *The White Bird with the Black Mark* (*Belaia ptitsa s chernoï otmetinoi*), premiered in 1971 at the Moscow International Film Festival, where it won first prize.⁴⁷ It depicts a Hutsul family of musicians on the Ukrainian border with Romania. There are three sons, two of whom join the Red Army while one joins the “bandits.” The film never refers to the latter as “UPA,” “banderites,” or even “nationalists,” but the Soviet audience understood them as such.⁴⁸ *The White Bird with the Black Mark* depicts the Uniate clergy and the “bandits” as mentally disturbed antisocials, draped in black garb, cloistered away in caves or monasteries, and divorced from the productive, communal life of the village. The nationalist son of the family murders his own brother and another Red Army soldier (whose newlywed wife he had stolen during the war). In the end, the village responds to the accusation of the third, Communist brother, and collectively executes the film’s traitor.

Prima facie, the film should have met the contemporary requirements of anti-OUN/UPA Soviet propaganda, but shortly after *The White Bird with the Black Mark* premiered, Soviet authorities pulled it from the shelves and banned it from further circulation. Their overarching discursive strategy toward the memory of the OUN/UPA warranted this censorship of the film, which was at variance with the Soviet polity’s postwar mythology. *The White Bird with the Black*

⁴⁶ This was in contrast, as we shall see, with the Soviet use of the term “Zionism,” which required no explicit class designation.

⁴⁷ *Belaia ptitsa s chernoï otmetinoi*, directed by Yuri Illenko, Dovzhenko kinostudiia, 1971; and A. Karaganov, “Pravda zhizni narodnoi,” *Pravda* [Moscow], August 3, 1971.

⁴⁸ As evidenced by the references to the “UPA” in the review of the 1971 International Film Festival. Ibid.

Mark depicts the UPA as acting independently of the Nazis, recruiting among the Ukrainian peasantry within Communist families. The film's colors, symbolism, and plot make the darkness, irredeemability, and evil of "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" clear, but it excessively humanizes its chief villain as the black sheep in a good family rather than an unmasked impostor. On the screen and in print, depictions of the UPA doing anything other than harming innocent Soviet citizens under the command of German fascists were de facto prohibited, but *The White Bird with the Black Mark* shows young UPA members in love, dancing to Hutsul folk music. Scenes like these came dangerously close to romanticizing the UPA *in conjunction* with Ukrainian-Hutsul culture, belying the dictum of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism's alienness to the Ukrainian people. Ultimately, the "black mark" of the OUN/UPA shined altogether too brightly in director Yuri Illenko's retelling.⁴⁹

Premiering in 1980, a second feature, *Crimson Shores (Bagrianye berega)*⁵⁰ was not banned from viewing in the Soviet Union because it represented the official version of the UPA's history with moral and aesthetic clarity. *Crimson Shores* takes place in a West Ukrainian village after the war. At the film's outset, the victorious *frontoviki*—Red Army soldiers who had served on the front of the Second World War—happily return home to build a new life. The hero of the film, a Red Army engineer, leads the village in the reconstruction of a bridge that had been destroyed during the war. The bridge represents "proletarian internationalism," the mythic bond between Russia and West Ukraine, and the rapid material progress of socialist reconstruction.

⁴⁹ The timing of the *The White Bird with the Black Mark*'s premier and suppression coincides with a crackdown on vestiges of "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" carried over from the 1965-66 wave of arrests, assassinations, committals of dissidents to insane asylums, and trials against the "Sixties Group" of Ukrainian writers. Under Brezhnev, between 1971 and 1972, Ukrainian cultural activists and dissidents again came under fire. At the same time, Petro Shelest—first secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, strong advocate of Ukrainian cultural development, and opponent of Russification and economic centralization in Moscow—was accused of "local nationalism" and removed from power in May 1972. Paul Magosci, *A History of Ukraine: The Land and Its Peoples* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 708-13. For a detailed account of Soviet crackdown on Ukrainian dissent in the 1970s, see Ludmilla Alexeyeva, *Soviet Dissent: Contemporary Movements for National, Religious, and Human Rights* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1985).

⁵⁰ *Bagrianye berega*, directed by Iaroslav Lupii, Odesskaia kinostudiia, 1979; and V. Sukov, "Geroicheskaia kinoletopis'," *Izvestiia* [Moscow], April 4, 1980.

Having built the bridge, however, the village loses it to the arson of UPA bandits the following night.

In contrast to *The White Bird with the Black Mark*, the “bandits” in *Crimson Shores* are a trio of petty saboteurs with no redeeming or humanizing characteristics and no sympathizers among people in the village. Several marks distinguish the impostors from among the population before they are discovered: unlike the *frontoviki*, the bandits are few, dressed in black, and make a conspicuous point of using the customary Ukrainian greeting, “*den’ dobrii*,” in response to the Russian “*zdravstvuite*” offered by the film’s patriotic Soviet protagonist. The village rebuilds the bridge and the bandits burn it down once again, but this time they attempt to murder the hero’s father in the process. The father survives and bears witness against the bandits, whom the authorities gun down. In the end, cornered by the film’s hero, the leader of the bandits falls to his death off of the demolished bridge, a victim of his own “antipeople” crimes and beliefs. *Crimson Shores*’s decidedly pedestrian symbolism and plot conveyed a much clearer message than *The White Bird with the Black Mark*: the Great Patriotic War had exposed the UPA as unforgivable tormenters of the Soviet people, but the virtuous Red Army would avenge them and destroy the nationalist outsiders once and for all.

Soviet newspapers and films from the 1950s through the 1970s relegated the bulk of the UPA’s history in West Ukraine to society’s collective subconsciousness. The few aspects of the UPA upon which Soviet discourse deigned to throw light implicated foreign powers and “enemy classes” only as culprits.⁵¹ In cinema, UPA members appeared as shadowy figures, hidden away in murky forests and pitch-black caves. The Soviet press presented the “Ukrainian people” at home and in the diaspora as united in solidarity with the Russian nation against the OUN/UPA. In sum, the sources surveyed here employed a common set of terms and symbols, and pursued four aims: 1) to distinguish the essentially innocent if misguided Ukrainian émigré community as

⁵¹ Near the end of this period, however, Soviet historians approached the subject by publishing a source collection that highlighted the UPA’s service in Western intelligence agencies immediately after the war. A. I. Chugunova, *Pogranichnie voiska SSSR, 1945-1950: Sbornik dokumentov i materialov* (Moscow: Izdatel’stvo “Nauka,” 1975). See its review in *Pravda*: K. Simonov, “Srazu posle voiny,” *Pravda* [Moscow], November 3, 1975.

a whole from the unforgivable OUN leadership; 2) to treat the presence of the OUN in foreign spy networks as a continuation of the “antipeople” activities it began during its collaboration with the Nazis; 3) to reduce the motivations of Ukrainian nationalists to the basest greed for material wealth; and 4) to attribute ultimate blame for the OUN/UPA’s treachery to non-Ukrainian and non-Soviet powers.

“We Have No Right to Forget!”

The elderly members of the Politburo gathered for the Twenty-sixth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from February 23 to March 3, 1981. Leonid Brezhnev presided over the congregation, delivering lengthy speeches to the assembled Soviet elite. The preceding months had brought a series of disturbing developments. The birth and expansion of the Solidarity trade union in Poland threatened the Party with a populist, Catholic, anti-Soviet social movement that brazenly supported Ukraine’s national independence from Moscow.⁵² Brezhnev argued that what was happening in Poland represented a classic case of “imperialist ideological subversion” exploiting internal mistakes that the regime had made by letting its guard down. Ronald Reagan, a figure greatly maligned in official Soviet circles at the time, had won the U.S. presidential election and assumed office. Brezhnev claimed that Reagan (like his predecessor, Jimmy Carter) was exacerbating relations between the two powers with bellicose rhetoric and an anti-Communist attitude. Alertness against an evermore determined and clever enemy was the order of the day. “Our class enemies take lessons from their defeats,” the congress’s resolutions warned. “Their actions against the countries of socialism are more refined and insidious.”⁵³

After the Twenty-sixth Party Congress, the quantity and quality of Soviet materials dealing with the OUN/UPA greatly increased as state publishing houses distributed volumes

⁵² Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations*, 218-31.

⁵³ Quoted in V. P. Cherednichenko, *Anatomiia predatel'stva: Ukrainskii burzhuaiznyi natsionalizm orudie antisovetskoi politiki imperializma* (Kiev: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1983), 6.

devoted to the subject in large press runs.⁵⁴ Incriminating materials culled from the KGB's archives were publicized to further demonize the Ukrainian nationalists. The regime also communicated its anti-OUN/UPA message to the non-Soviet world.⁵⁵ This new publishing activity reflected the regime's heightened anxieties about "imperialist" efforts to exploit national separatist sentiments within the Soviet sphere of influence.⁵⁶

Following Brezhnev's death in 1982, the Communist Party's propaganda machine intensified the campaign against "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" under the direction of Yuri Andropov.⁵⁷ Andropov exerted a significant influence upon Soviet politics and discourse during his time as General Secretary between 1982 and 1984. His previous career makes the redoubling of antinationalist propaganda that occurred on his watch unsurprising. The character and content of the regime's obloquies against the OUN/UPA matched Andropov's dread of national dissent. He had served as the ambassador to Hungary in 1956, where, according to his colleagues, he

⁵⁴ Anywhere from 2,600 to 100,000 copies. For example: V. P. Beliaev, *Ia obviniaiu!* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1984); I. I. Migovich, *Prestupnyi a'lians: O soiuzie uniatskoï tserkvi i ukrainskogo burzhuaznogo natsionalizma* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1985); and Cherednichenko, *Anatomiia predateľ'stva*.

⁵⁵ Soviet publications aimed at discrediting the OUN/UPA in the eyes of English-speaking, Western audiences included: K. E. Dmyruk, *Without a Homeland*, trans. Vadim Kastelli, (Kiev: Dnipro Publishers, 1984); Olexiy Kartunov, *Enemies of Peace and Democracy* (Uzhgorod: Karpaty Publishers, 1985); I. I., Kondufor, and N. V. Nemyaty, *History Teaches a Lesson: Captured War Documents Expose the Atrocities of the German-Fascist Invaders and their Henchmen in Ukraine's Temporarily Occupied Territory During the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945*, trans. Vadim Piatkovsky (Kiev: Politvidav Ukraini Publishers, 1986); Yevhen Sheremt, *Afraid of Justice: Who and Why?* (Kiev: Dnipro Publishers, 1983); and, Andriy Sidiak, *The Bankrupts* (Lviv: Kamenyar Publishers, 1984).

⁵⁶ In a telephone conversation with Polish Communist leader Stanislaw Kania, Brezhnev expressed his concerns that the "counterrevolutionary" situation in Poland could spill over into other parts of East Europe with Solidarity's appeals to nationalist, anti-Soviet sentiments. CWIHP, "Transcript of Brezhnev's Phone Conversation with Kania, September 15, 1981," SAPMDB, ZPA, J IV 2/202-550. Brezhnev followed this up with a message to Kania's successor, Wojciech Jaruzelski, urging him to take action against Solidarity. CWIHP, "CPSU CC Politburo Protocol (extract) and Text of Oral Message from Brezhnev to Jaruzelski," November 21, 1981.

⁵⁷ In an annual report on behalf of the KGB, its chairman Yuri Andropov noted the uncovering and destruction of more than thirty hostile nationalist groups in Ukraine, the Baltic republics, and elsewhere in the USSR, as well as the arrest and expulsion of more than seventy Solidarity agitators. He also reports the KGB's heightened vigilance against "ideological subversion" carried out by NATO countries, especially in Poland. CWIHP, "KGB Annual Report for 1981 (Excerpts)," April 13, 1982, Archive of the President of the Russian f. 81, o. 3, d. 2556, no. 289-ob.

developed a phobia of antistate mass movements.⁵⁸ As chairman of the KGB, Andropov played a prominent role in the crushing of the Prague Spring and the suppression of Solidarity. Andropov resigned from his post as head of the KGB in May 1982, shortly after succeeding the “unofficial chief ideologue of the Party,” Mikhail Suslov, as Second Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Andropov’s professional obsession with foreign conspiracies aimed at undermining the Soviet Union’s multinational unity from within using “ideological subversion” is readily evident in his activities, speeches, and writings.⁵⁹

The behavior of President Ronald Reagan (in office 1981-1989) seemed to validate these fears. In particular, the friendliness of the Reagan administration with émigré Ukrainian nationalist organizations strained Soviet-US relations. Soviet propaganda seized upon the evident closeness of the OUN to the American leadership as further proof of the great, *antin narodnyi* conspiracy afoot. Soviet journalists seldom missed an opportunity to call attention to the West’s own self-incriminations:

In the U.S., a book has been published by the brothers Scott and John Lee Anderson, *Inside the League*, which narrates the activities of the so-called ‘World Anti-Communist League,’ in which former banderites—members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists—actively participate. The banderites were taken prisoner by the British and the Americans after the war and used for anti-Soviet activities, and the OUN formed their “representation” on U.S. territory with funds of the American government, the book says. The connection of the OUNites with U.S. government circles is drawn. ‘The White House nationalists find the closest ally in Ronald Reagan,’ write the brothers Anderson. For example, three years ago, one of the leaders of the OUN, Iaroslav Stetsko, was welcomed at the White House and photographed ‘in memory,’ with the U.S. President.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ According to KGB defector V. Mitrokhin (a tendentious source), it was the opinion of Andropov’s comrades in the KGB that the man suffered from the “Hungarian syndrome.” Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield*, 5-6.

⁵⁹ Like the propaganda produced under his secretaryship, Zionist conspiracies, the Friendship of the Peoples, and Soviet patriotism are definite motifs in Andropov’s oeuvre. See, for example, Y. V. Andropov, “The Friendship of Soviet Nations -- The Inexhaustible Source of Our Victories,” and “Ideological Subversion -- The Poisoned Weapon of Imperialism,” in *Speeches and Writings* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1983), 110-23, 190-98.

⁶⁰ “Mneniia i nabliudeniia,” *Argumenty i fakty* [Moscow], June 10, 1986.

Reagan's 1982 "Crusade for Freedom" speech⁶¹ and cooperation with figures like Stetsko alarmed official Soviet circles that the U.S. and the OUN would take advantage of the instability caused by Solidarity to intensify "ideological subversion" within the USSR.

In the Ukrainian diaspora, the World Congress of Free Ukrainians (WCFU) continued efforts begun at its founding in 1967 to unite organizations such as the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, the Ukrainian Canadian Committee and dozens of others under a single umbrella. Deep ideological rifts in the Ukrainian community stemming from conflicts among the rival factions of the OUN ultimately made this impossible, but the 1978 Third World Congress of Free Ukrainians in New York City, brought enough attention to their collective indictment of the Soviet Union for human rights abuses and colonial Russification to provoke a Soviet response. Soviet statements insisted the WCFU was nothing more than a nuisance—a mere handful of neo-Nazis and anti-Semites—but the energy they devoted to discrediting the congress suggested, on the contrary, that they took it rather seriously.⁶²

The government broadcasted warnings about the insidious activities of the OUN among the Soviet people while nonchalantly boasting about the incorruptibility of Soviet citizens. One story, widely publicized by the press, concerned a CIA-backed attempt by the OUN and the ABN to recruit Mikhailo Kukhtiak, a doctor from the West Ukrainian city of Ivano-Frankivsk. Kukhtiak's brief, amateur career as a double-agent in the OUN made the man an overnight exemplar of the patriotic Soviet citizen. The official story began when OUN-affiliated family members of Kukhtiak visited him from Canada and expressed great interest in the "negative aspects" of Soviet society in Ukraine and "unrecognized geniuses" (i.e. dissident voices).

⁶¹ The speech, delivered to the British House of Commons on June 8, condemned the suppression of the Solidarity movement and Soviet actions in Afghanistan, arguing that these and other factors indicated a weakening of the USSR. Reagan insisted upon the peaceful intentions of the West, but adopted an aggressive and righteous tone leaving no doubts about his opposition to Soviet "totalitarianism." <http://www.hbci.com/~tgort/crusade.htm> [accessed November 27, 2011]

⁶² See, for example, Edward Kotlyarchuk, *Congress of the Puppets* (Kiev: Dnipro Publishers, 1982); and Oleksander Lyashchuk, *Sowers of Hatred and Hostility* (Kiev: Dnipro Publishers, 1986). A good overview of the Ukrainian diaspora, the WCFU, and its relation to the Soviet polity can be found in Vic Satzewich, *The Ukrainian Diaspora* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 140-65.

Kukhtiak's passive, "yes-man" attitude toward their advances mistakenly convinced the OUN leadership abroad that he had become one of their adherents. Having realized that the OUN was attempting to draw him into anti-Soviet activities, Kukhtiak, like a good citizen, reported the situation to the appropriate authorities, which decided to use him to infiltrate the OUN/ABN and gather compromising information about them. Kukhtiak became Iaroslav Stetsko's "man in Ukraine," a contact for smugglers of American money and "slandorous literature" into the USSR. After Kukhtiak had finished his duty, the state arranged a press conference for him to relate his experiences and enjoy a spot in the sun for his stolid rebuke of these "hostile, anti-Soviet schemes." Soviet coverage of the story alleged that the OUN/ABN aimed to "exploit the situation in Poland" and corrupt Ukrainian youth with the "infection of nationalism." The pamphlets and articles that conveyed Kukhtiak's story pointedly defined the OUN's original sin as wartime collaboration. What one had done during the war continued to determine one's virtuousness.⁶³

Originally, the postwar Soviet mythos regarded wartime guilt as hereditary, but beginning in the 1980s the claim entered the discourse that Communist countries would magnanimously absolve younger, OUN-affiliated Ukrainians *who had not participated in the war* of the sins of their fathers. The Soviet metanarrative did not, however, erase the black mark against the "bourgeois nationalist" fathers (and mothers) who had resisted the sovietization of West Ukraine. An invocation of war crimes invariably accompanied any reference to the OUN in Soviet discourse. The coverage of Kukhtiak's press conference, for instance, accused the OUN of participation in the perpetration of the massacre at Babi Yar⁶⁴ (quietly omitting the fact that the Nazis had also killed more than six hundred OUN members there). When it came to indignation about the abortion of justice that the Western world's general amnesty for OUN/UPA

⁶³ This was at least the case in a Soviet pamphlet targeting foreign, English-speakers. The Polish authorities allegedly pardoned and deported "Irene Zelena," a young spy, courier to Zionist circles, and smuggler of "subversive" materials who had been uncovered thanks to Kukhtiak's testimony. They reasoned that she had been corrupted by her war-criminal father, and did not know any better since she had been raised so far from the light of Communism. Sidiyak, *The Bankrupts*, 8-12.

⁶⁴ Babi Yar is a ravine in Kiev, where the Nazis carried out series of massacres from 1941 to 1943. Between 100,000 and 150,000 Jews, Romani, Ukrainian nationalists and others were murdered at the site.

“collaborators” represented, Soviet propaganda singled out Stetsko (said to be living off of U.S. “taxpayer money” provided to him by the Reagan administration) for special invective: “Stetsko lives quietly in Germany. Why does he go unpunished as a war criminal? Because the Western intelligence services, and especially the CIA, can rely upon no one else in their ‘crusade’ against Communism, because only traitors of Stetsko’s type are prepared to defile their own people for the silver pieces of a Judas.”⁶⁵ For all of its sensationalism, Soviet propaganda portrayed Stetsko and the rest of the OUN/ABN leadership as irrelevant anachronisms with delusions of grandeur, completely incapable of doing real harm to the invincible Soviet people. Despite the danger that these foreign enemies allegedly posed, the Soviet discourse of the early 1980s ridiculed their “subversive activities” as the farcical repetition of the wartime tragedy to which they had contributed.⁶⁶

But while the Soviet metanarrative emphasized the weakness of the aging population of UPA veterans in the face of the united, ever vigilant Soviet people, it did not acknowledge their humanity. The KGB’s heavy censorship of *The High Pass (Visokii Pereval)*, a 1981 film by Ukrainian director Aleksander Denisenko, underscored the regime’s unwillingness to tolerate a rapprochement between the Soviet and Ukrainian nationalist mythologies.⁶⁷ *The High Pass* tells the story of a Communist woman returning home from the front in the Great Patriotic War only to find that her husband and children have joined the “banderites.” According to an interview with his son (a contemporary Ukrainian author) Denisenko had originally intended the film to present both UPA supporters and Communist officials as everyday people with their own tragedies, dreams, and values. Censors found Denisenko’s vision unacceptable. The KGB forced the

⁶⁵ This same article accused Stetsko of preposterously lobbying Reagan to initiate the nuclear destruction of Soviet Ukraine. L. Kolosov and V. Kotenko, “Odnazhdy v avguste...” *Izvestiia* [Moscow], November 22-24, 1983. A number of Soviet works insisted upon the inadequacy of postwar justice for OUN members in the West as compared to the Soviet Union: See A. Soldatov, “V mire kapitala. Pravosudie po-amerkanski,” *Izvestiia* [Moscow], May 21, 1988; and L. Korneshov, “Vysshei meroi spravedlivosti!” *Izvestiia* [Moscow], February 24, 1983.

⁶⁶ A. Prokhorov, “Organy gosbezopasnosti SSSR i PNR zavershili operatsii protiv podryvnogo tsentra. Oni proshchalis’,” *Argumenty i fakty* [Moscow], no. 38, September 17, 1988.

⁶⁷ *Visokii Pereval*, directed by Aleksandr Denisenko, Dovzhenko Film Studios, 1981. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7V0MIMZUf4&feature=related> [Accessed November 21, 2011].

deletion of a battle scene depicting the UPA as a large military force, comprised of common Ukrainians, engaged in open combat with Soviet soldiers. This scene and others that contradicted the Soviet metanarrative by depicting the UPA as a popular movement among Ukrainians independent from Nazism never saw the light of day. Instead, the final version of *The High Pass* offered the customary portrayal of OUNites as a paltry gang of one-dimensional villains. The KGB blocked Denisenko's attempt to modify the Soviet war myth with the introduction of a third, distinctly Ukrainian force.⁶⁸ The postwar Soviet mythos could not accommodate memories of the UPA as anything other than irredeemable Nazi collaborators.

The original version of Denisenko's film had committed the sin of preserving the "Ukrainianness" and humanity of the UPA. The version that ultimately premiered before Soviet audiences at the Fifteenth All-Union Film Festival in Tallinn (1982) was guilty of no such heresies. Reviews of *The High Pass* couched their discussions of the film's meaning and merit in terms drawn directly from the postwar Soviet metanarrative.

Such is the priceless wealth and friendship of our peoples, cemented by blood in the struggle against the enemies of the socialist fatherland, and then in the labor for the building of a mighty socialist power, revealed to us on the screen of the All-Union Film Festival. . . . [*The High Pass*] is about the struggle against nationalism, against the banderites, who were on the direct path to the betrayal of the people.⁶⁹

The fate of Denisenko's film demonstrated that only a denationalized UPA would be tolerated in the Soviet metanarrative. If the UPA could not be exported, then it could not be consumed either.

Late Soviet propaganda carried out the denationalization of the OUN/UPA in synch with the externalization and de-Sovietization of other groups, especially Jews. According to the logic of postwar Soviet antisemitism, nature trumped nurture. Jewishness *eo ipso* called one's political reliability into question. The accepted if unspoken belief that Jews, unlike Ukrainians and other

⁶⁸ Denisenko's son even attributes his father's premature death to the anguish caused by the fate of his moral and artistic vision at the hands of the KGB censors. Ekaterina Konstantinova, "Vtoroia reka: Pisatel' Aleksandr Denisenko: 'I banderovets, i kommunist -- zhivet v kazhdom ukraintse,'" *Zerkalo nedeli*, no. 41, November 1, 2008, http://zn.ua/CULTURE/vtoraya_reka_pisatel_aleksandr_denisenko_i_banderovets_i_kommunist_zhivet_v_kazhdom_ukraintse_-55308.html [Accessed 11/7/2011].

⁶⁹ G. Gukasov and V. Novikov, "Shirokii ekran festivalia," *Izvestiia* [Moscow], April 15, 1982.

Slavs, did not constitute a fully fledged Soviet nationality, had not served bravely during the Great Patriotic War, and possessed no legitimate claims to unique, collective suffering at the hands of the Nazi invaders continued to influence official Soviet attitudes in the 1980s. Jews also provided a convenient scapegoat for the postwar Communist world's chronic social and economic problems. They could be assimilated (i.e. "de-Judaicized") into the "Soviet people," in which case they still risked discrimination, or they could join nations inherently at odds with the Soviet Union (e.g. Israel or the USA), but in either case their underlying nature was suspect, *alien*.⁷⁰ They embodied, in other words, the very qualities that Soviet ideologues hoped to impute to the OUN/UPA.

One monograph in particular, *Anticommunist Alliance: A Critique of the Ideological and Sociopolitical Doctrines of International Zionism and Ukrainian Bourgeois Nationalism*, attempted to extend this opprobrium against Jews to the OUN/UPA.⁷¹ *Anticommunist Alliance* equates and polemicizes the "antihuman" political ideologies and tactics of "international Zionism" and "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism." In fealty to the dictums of Leninism, the book pays lip service to the "class-enemy character" of Zionism, but the phrase "bourgeois Zionism" never became the endlessly repeated formula in Bolshevik argot that the phrase "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" did. Instead, following Soviet convention, *Anticommunist Alliance* repetitively refers to Zionism as an "international" phenomenon (*mezhdunarodnii sionizm*), because Zionism's allegedly bourgeois character was unimportant compared to its racial and cultural content, which postwar Soviet discourse had no qualms about defaming. The opposite was the case with regard to Ukrainian nationalism, which Soviet propaganda attacked only on the basis of social and economic terms in order to reaffirm the idea that OUN/UPA bore no relation to the pure Ukrainian ethnos, of which only the "toiling classes" could rightfully claim to be a part. Writing at this time, Soviet historian I. I. Rimarenko spins the alliance between "Ukrainian

⁷⁰ Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 199-235, and Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 339-77.

⁷¹ I. I. Rimarenko, *Antikommunisticheskie al'iansy: Kritika ideologicheskikh i sotsial'no-politicheskikh doktrin mezhdunarodnogo sionizma i ukrainskogo burzhuaznogo natsionalizma* (Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1981).

bourgeois nationalism” and “international Zionism” as a wedding between two “*antinational*” extremes—“a synthesis of chauvinism and cosmopolitanism.”⁷² Whereas the “proletarian internationalist” position occupied the ideal middle ground, the OUN/UPA and its Zionist coconspirators flanked the Friendship of the Peoples from the left and the right: the former, by harboring an excess of “ethnic particularism”; the latter, with its “cosmopolitan” lack thereof.

Deflecting potential accusations of racism, *Anticommunist Alliance* accuses both “Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists” and “international Zionists” of the basest contempt for and disloyalty to the nations of which they illegitimately claim to be a part. “Under the ‘alliance’ of international Zionism and Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism it is understood, moreover, that their commonality in the service of the imperialist bourgeoisie betrays the interest of ‘their own’ peoples.” Rimarenko’s use of quotation marks here signifies his rejection of the notion that “international Zionists” and “Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists” belonged to *any* nation, or that they had anything but hatred for *all* nations. Antisemitism, Rimarenko alleges, is the real basis of the working relationship between the two groups, both of which harbor “antipeople,” and “antinational” views.⁷³ Rimarenko’s charge of misanthropic collusion with (and even “subservience to”) Zionism became a common refrain in a number of subsequent Soviet exposés of the OUN/UPA.⁷⁴ Soviet discourse cast “international Zionism” as an occult, external foe and conjoined the OUN/UPA with it so that the latter could be attacked without antagonizing ethnic Ukrainians or offending their national feelings. This “Judaicization” of the OUN/UPA served to

⁷² “Cosmopolitanism,” in contrast to “internationalism,” had decidedly negative connotations, particularly after the advent of *zhdanovshchina* in the later 1940s. *Ibid.*, 4.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 42-58, 143-54. The whole notion that stereotypically unpleasant Jewish-Ukrainian relations would allow for this kind of coalition building, especially among the more nationalistic elements in both diasporas, may strike the reader as unlikely, but it is not entirely absurd. Prominent Zionist hero Ze’ev Jabotinsky advocated Ukraine’s national independence, for example. See Izraïl’ Kleïner, *From Nationalism to Universalism: Vladimir (Ze’ev) Jabotinsky and the Ukrainian Question* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2000).

⁷⁴ For example: Cherednichenko, *Anatomiia predatel'stva*, 240; M. I. Slobodian, *Proletarskiï internatsionalizm--faktor sotsial'nogo razvitiia: Na materialakh zapadnykh oblastei Ukrainskoï SSR* (Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1981), 93-95; Migovich, *Prestupnyi al'ians*; Kravchenko, *V maskakh i bez masok*, 7, 10, 62; and, Dmytruk, *Without a Homeland*, 61-66.

corroborate the mutually contradictory traits of nationlessness and treachery that Soviet propaganda simultaneously attributed to it.

Late Soviet discourse regarded religion and nationalism as two sides of the same “reactionary” coin. Referring to a “Jewish journal” in Odessa called *Rassvet* (The Dawn), Rimarenko writes: “Anticommunism and anti-Sovietism form the political basis of the ‘alliance’ of Zionism and Judaism, [and] of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism and religion. . . . *The Dawn* has uncovered the essence of Zionism as a reaction to the dissemination of the idea of scientific Communism.”⁷⁵ The postwar Soviet metanarrative conflated the OUN with the Ukrainian Catholic Uniate Church in the same way that it conflated Zionism with Judaism. Other Soviet texts⁷⁶ maintained that the OUNites possessed the same “reactionary worldview” and “socio-psychological aspect” as the “clericalism” of the Uniate Church. One widely circulated piece of Soviet propaganda, *Criminal Alliance: On the Union of the Uniate Church and Ukrainian Bourgeois Nationalism*, argues that the Uniates and the OUN shared the most backward *antinauchnost*,⁷⁷ and therefore opposed the liberation of the Ukrainian nation and the unity of the Soviet people.⁷⁸ Postwar Soviet propaganda thus implicated the Uniate Church in the “pro-fascist banditry” of the UPA during and after the war.⁷⁹ There were historical motives for this libelous assessment of the Uniate clergy. In the course of pacifying the West Ukrainian and West Belarusian borderlands, the Stalinist authorities had brutally disbanded and “reunified” the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church with the Russian Orthodox Church. Historically and discursively, the excision of the UPA went hand-in-hand with the destruction of the Uniate

⁷⁵ Rimarenko, *Anticommunist Alliance*, 80.

⁷⁶ K. E. Dmytruk, *Uniatskie krestonostsy: Vchera i segodnia* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1988); and Beliaev, *Ia obviniaiu!*

⁷⁷ *Antinauchnost* translates roughly as “anti-science-mindedness.” Soviet writers used the term pejoratively to refer to the “reactionary ideologies” of nationalisms and religions.

⁷⁸ Migovich, *Prestupnyi al'ians*. Also see the book's review in the Soviet press: Loginov, “V zerkale istorii. Chernyi put' klerikal'nogo natsionalizma,” *Argumenty i fakty* [Moscow], July 8, 1986;

⁷⁹ Some, though by no means all, Uniate priests did ally themselves with the UPA's cause. See Anton Shekhovstov, “By Cross and Sword: ‘Clerical Fascism’ in Interwar Western Ukraine,” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (June 2007): 271-85.

Church.⁸⁰ In the Soviet mindset, the Uniates and the “banderites” were fellow travelers under the “black banner” of “international reaction,” beholden to Rome and Washington, the implacable enemies of all working people and of Soviet Ukrainians in particular. In this way, the postwar Soviet metanarrative equated the Uniate Church and the OUN/UPA as pernicious manifestations of “antiscientific irrationalism” while adamantly de-Ukrainizing both through association with malevolent foreign plots.

The title of one Soviet book—*Counterrevolution for Export: Ukrainian Bourgeois Nationalism in the Arsenal of Modern Anticommunism*—unwittingly projected the Soviet metanarrative’s own treatment of the OUN/UPA onto the West.⁸¹ It was the Soviet Union, after all, which had “exported” its homegrown “counterrevolution” of “Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism” to the outside world—not the other way around. Nevertheless, the book’s author, Soviet historian and specialist on Ukrainian nationalism V. P. Cherednichenko, argues that the imperialist West produced and exported “Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism” to the USSR through espionage and ideological subversion:

The facts set forth in this book, are a testimony that the so-called ‘third force,’ which the Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists try to present themselves as, does not exist abroad. The foreign camp of bourgeois-nationalist counterrevolution is by no means a ‘national-liberation movement.’ They present themselves as the faithful servants of the most extreme reaction, henchmen of anticommunism, of antisovietism, obediently acting exclusively in the interests of imperialism. At the back of the Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists stands the special services, the ideology and propaganda centers of imperialism, striving to slow down the positive processes in international life, to excite the arms race and revive the atmosphere of the ‘Cold War.’ And this too is an illustration of the fact that bourgeois nationalists are the executors of a foreign will, of the instructions and precepts of foreigners.⁸²

Under the influence of the strict dualism of the Soviet metanarrative, Cherednichenko rejects the OUN/UPA’s claim to the status of a “third force”—a force opposed to both Communism *and* Nazism. Soviet discourse denied agency and autonomy to the OUN/UPA, to which it attributed the traits of whatever anti-Soviet power happened to be most salient at the time. By casting the

⁸⁰ Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State*, 238-41.

⁸¹ V. P. Cherednichenko, *Kontrrevoliutsiia na eksport: Ukrainskii burzhuaiznyi natsionalizm v arsenale sovremennogo antikommunizma* (Kiev: Izdatel’stvo politicheskoi literatury Ukrainy, 1985).

⁸² *Ibid.*, 160.

OUN/UPA as mindless saboteurs and killers at the beck and call of foreign masters, Soviet propaganda further dehumanized them. This helped to absolve the Soviet system and the Ukrainian nation of responsibility for the OUN/UPA. It was a truism of the Soviet mythos that every genuine Soviet Ukrainian was a free, conscientious, and morally pure human being. Soviet discourse's attempt to demonstrate that unfree, unconscientious, and morally corrupted "antipeople" comprised the OUN/UPA was, therefore, another aspect of its denationalization of them. Soviet Ukraine had given birth to no monsters, but the "imperialist" Ahriman had deformed the raw material of merely potential Soviet Ukrainians, filling so many empty vessels with the depravities of anticommunism. Fortunately, concludes Cherednichenko, the eternally united members of the Soviet people suffered from no such defects:

The subversive attempts of the organizers and executors of psychological war . . . [are] opposed by the invincible oneness of the Soviet people, its monolithic cohesion around the Communist Party, the friendship of the peoples, the patriotism and internationalism of Soviet people, [and] their highest political vigilance, uncompromisingness toward the enemy's views, [and] ability to give a worthy rebuke to the ideological subversion of the class enemy.⁸³

The mythic Soviet community, sealed in blood through the redemptive carnage of the Great Patriotic War, could never be compromised by outsiders such as the OUN/UPA, because this would have entailed an impossible circumvention of the "laws of historical development" enshrined in the Soviet metanarrative. But if the Soviet community were to resist the evil temptations of "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism," then it had "no right to forget" the things that supposedly made the OUN/UPA so execrable in the first place.

Once it had been acknowledged that the aberration of the OUN/UPA in the Soviet mythos could not be excised through forgetting, the Soviet strategy shifted toward excision through remembering, but continued to employ the same rhetorical devices and didactic tropes in a stepped-up anti-OUN/UPA campaign in the 1980s, of which *Anticommunist Alliance*, *Criminal Alliance*, and *Counterrevolution for Export* are three representative examples. The scope of the Soviet polity's officially sanctioned coverage of the OUN/UPA expanded substantially, but the

⁸³ Ibid., 163.

framework of the Soviet Union's postwar foundational mythology continued to narrowly define acceptable content for works on this subject. The basic strategy of denationalizing the OUN/UPA by "exporting" it to foreign entities went unchanged, but the tactics used to execute it were multiplied. In addition to the well worn accusations of collaboration with Nazi Germany and spying for the imperialist West, Soviet propaganda placed the OUN/UPA on the vanguard of an even larger anti-Communist conspiracy, which implicated Catholics, Polish nationalists, Trotskyites, U.S. leaders, and Zionists, among others, in the "antipeople" activities of the OUN/UPA. The association of the OUN/UPA with "Zionism" and "clericalism" reflected two major components of postwar Soviet political culture and ideology: antisemitism and anti-religiosity, respectively. Amalgamating "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" with the "opiate of the masses" enabled Soviet authors to attribute the barbarity and darkness of religious *antinauchnost*' to the OUN/UPA. Amalgamating "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" with "international Zionism" enabled Soviet authors to attribute the purported alienness, rootlessness, criminality, and deceptiveness of Israel and the Jews to the OUN/UPA. Soviet propaganda placed both of these alleged "alliances" under the umbrella of "imperialism," ascribing a central role in the whole scheme to the USA, which menacingly touted its nuclear weapons. The Soviet public was exposed to works averring the OUN/UPA's synonymity, in essence, with "fascism," "imperialism," "Zionism," and "clericalism." The same texts typically portrayed everyday Soviet Ukrainians as well informed, upstanding citizens whose vigilance, patriotism, and knowledge empowered them to identify the dangerous foreign agents in their midst and report them to the appropriate authorities. The honest, educated, and firmly rooted Soviet Ukrainian's incorruptibility continued to encapsulate the obverse of the "masked," irrational, and derelict "banderite's" irredeemability. In accordance with the new orientation, Ukrainian-Russian author and publicist V. P. Beliaev⁸⁴ declared the collective remembering of the OUN/UPA's crimes as a solemn duty to the future: "Let the facts of history remind the people of those bourgeois

⁸⁴ Beliaev's trilogy *The Old Fortress (Staraia krepost')* won the Stalin Award in 1952. He became a Soviet authority on the OUN/UPA in the late 1970s and early 1980s, drawing on alleged autobiographical experience of the insurgency for inspiration.

nationalists and Uniates, about whom we have no right to forget! In the name of peace in our land! In the name of justice and happiness!”⁸⁵ After this volte-face, the Soviet citizenry had an obligation to know the UPA’s history, even if its politically or mythologically inconvenient details continued to be concealed from them.

Conclusion

Soviet society’s ablation of the Ukrainian nationalist insurgency was not merely physical, but discursive as well. The dearth of published texts dealing with the OUN and the UPA during the postwar period is particularly evident in the central, Russophone press. The moratorium on publications treating the UPA as a major episode in the Soviet Socialist Ukrainian Republic’s history began to change only in the late 1970s and early 1980s. At this time, Soviet journalists, propagandists, and historians produced and published dozens of books, pamphlets, films, and articles dealing with the UPA, its origins in the OUN, its invariably foreign supporters and masters, its nihilistic ideology, and its pernicious postwar activities and defunct legacy. Nevertheless, the writers and filmmakers who addressed the subject of the OUN/UPA in the early 1980s did so in accordance with the Party’s strict directives and controls, which prohibited their work from breaching the parameters of the Soviet polity’s calcified postwar mythology. Despite the novelty and danger of the subject of the OUN/UPA in late Soviet discourse, the language, arguments, and symbols used to address it faithfully toed the Party line.

Changes in the programmatic content of officially sanctioned Soviet scholarship typically reflected the impact of political developments at higher levels of the party-state. Thus the fact that Soviet historians, filmmakers, and publicists began to openly grapple with the UPA when

⁸⁵ Vladimir Beliaev, as quoted in V. Razumnechich, “Ne vprave zabyt’: Zametki o tvorchestve Vladimira Beliaeva,” *Pravda* [Moscow], October 18, 1983.

they did likely reflected new signals “from above.”⁸⁶ Concurrent events seem to bear this hypothesis out. The early 1980s witnessed a reintensification of Cold War rhetoric and heightened anxieties among the Soviet elite about the security of the Eastern Bloc nations and, by extension, the territorial integrity of the USSR. Opponents of Soviet power in Poland (particularly those associated with Solidarity) and the USA supported nascent Ukrainian aspirations to full independence.⁸⁷ It is no surprise, therefore, that the Party responded to these affronts with a renewed assault on the “fifth column” of “Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism.” However, this hypothesis explains only the timing of the new publishing activity. Attributing the genesis of the anti-OUN/UPA propaganda campaign to the orders of the Party elite—even if this is essentially correct—pays insufficient attention to the language used in these texts, which both prefigured and constituted the campaign itself. They were not simply pursuing and presenting the “truth,” but ritualistically repeating received truths, which, in turn, defined the boundaries of the conceivable and the expressible.⁸⁸ Ultimately, the Soviet metanarrative permitted only incriminating memories about the OUN/UPA (of which there was no shortage to be found or fabricated) and carefully concealed the rest from the Russian public lest anything come to light that blatantly contradicted its chiliastic vision of history.

The question remains: Why did the OUN/UPA make such a sudden and dramatic (re) appearance in Soviet discourse in the early 1980s? Weiner attributes the propaganda campaign to

⁸⁶ On political control over Soviet historical research, see George M. Enteen, Tatiana Gorn, and C. A. Kern-Simirenko *Soviet Historians and the Study of Russian Imperialism* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1979); L. A. Sidorova, *Ottepel' v istoricheskoi nauke: Sovetskaiia istoriografiia pervogo poslestalinskogo desiatiletiia* (Moscow: Pamiatniki istoricheskoi mysli, 1997); and, Alter L. Litvin, and John L. H. Keep, *Writing History in Twentieth-Century Russia: A View from Within* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

⁸⁷ See, for example, Timothy Snyder, *Sketches from a Secret War: A Polish Artist's Mission to Liberate Soviet Ukraine* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

⁸⁸ In other words, they did not pray to the idols of Soviet civilization because they believed in them, but believed in them because they prayed to them. Bearing in mind historian Gareth Stedman-Jones's point that “we cannot decode political language to reach a primal and material expression of interest since it is the discursive structure of political language which conceives and defines interest in the first place,” these texts and their authors' reasons for creating them are perhaps better understood as products of the all-encompassing mythology endemic to late Soviet culture. Gareth Stedman-Jones, quoted in Igal Halfin, *From Darkness to Light: Class, Consciousness, and Salvation in Revolutionary Russia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000), 11.

“persistent initiatives in western Ukraine to rehabilitate the OUN and UPA,”⁸⁹ but this is only part of the story. The stewards of the Soviet mythos had begun to sense the crisis facing them. The party-state had failed to deliver on its ambitious promises of social and economic progress. The danger of non-Communist apostasy among the Soviet citizenry had begun to rise. Resurgent nationalisms among Russians and non-Russians chipped away at the Friendship of the Peoples myth.⁹⁰ Soviet nations began developing their own, nationally exclusive myths of victimization and/or triumph in the Second World War (a privilege that the Soviet mythos had emphatically denied to the Jews). All of this was occurring despite the Party’s efforts, intensified under Brezhnev, to hasten the “drawing-together” and ultimate “fusion” of the Soviet nationalities into a single Soviet nation, with a single history, language, and consciousness.⁹¹ In sum, “Stalin’s empire of memory” was disintegrating. The anti-OUN/UPA propaganda campaign may thus have been a final act of desperation—an attempt to provide an empirical basis for the myths of the postwar Soviet metanarrative.⁹²

Political motives for the exposure of the OUN/UPA abounded in the decade preceding *perestroika*, but the poverty of late Soviet discourse left it incapable of adapting to the new circumstances and revising the increasingly untenable Friendship of the Peoples myth. Instead, the discourse sought to counteract the centrifugal pull of national identity politics by reasserting

⁸⁹ Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 189.

⁹⁰ Ronald Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).

⁹¹ Thus, for example, during the mid 1970s the USSR Academy of Sciences formed a special “Scientific Council” to facilitate research in support of future solutions to “Nationality Problems.” A full summary of this council’s program can be found in, M. N. Guboglo, “Istoricheskaia nauka v SSSR. V seksii obshchestvennykh nauk Prezidiuma AN SSSR. V nauchnom sovete po natsional’nym problemam,” *Voprosy istorii* 4 (April 1976): 148-50.

⁹² Myths, however, are matters of faith by definition. Thus, when the priests of a myth condescend to provide evidence for their myth’s truths, they demonstrate their insecurities about the faithfulness of the myth’s adherents and expose their mandate to explain the mysteries of existence to rational scrutiny. In hindsight, the “priests” of the Soviet mythos, whether they sensed the tipping point’s approach or not, had every reason to feel anxious about the future viability of their worldview in the rapidly changing Soviet polity. By the end of the decade, Gorbachev’s reforms had decisively and irreversibly undermined the secular religion of the Soviet party-state. The war myth outlived the Soviet Union. The Friendship of the Peoples myth, by contrast, did not survive the collapse of the USSR, though it may be more accurate to say that the Soviet Union did not survive the collapse of the Friendship of the Peoples myth. For a broader account of the implosion of the Soviet metanarrative, see Gill, *Symbols and Legitimacy*, 213-262.

old tropes. Soviet propaganda's reliance upon an evermore irrelevant mythology of international solidarity in the face of external opposition led it to employ the *ad hoc*, "no true Scotsman" argument described throughout this essay. UPA veterans were "no true Ukrainians" because Ukrainians, by definition, were loyal to the Soviet state and their Russian brethren. It was vital to the integrity of the Union that both Ukrainians and Russians believe this. Among Soviet Ukrainians, the UPA posed a posthumous threat to the Soviet order as an alternative, antithetical mythology. Seemingly resigned to the fact that Soviet Ukrainians would continue to remember the UPA's postwar insurgency despite its failed policy of silence on the subject, the authorities decided to intervene in the remembering process with arguments and evidence designed to distance "real" Ukrainians from the purportedly anti-Ukrainian OUN/UPA. By similarly reassuring Russians that the UPA did not sprout from genuinely Ukrainian blood and soil, Soviet discourse may have been attempting to prevent them from adopting divisive, Ukrainophobic attitudes, or taking inspiration from the OUN's brand of mystical, voluntarist nationalism to form Russian-nationalist factions of their own.⁹³ On both counts, Soviet efforts ultimately proved too little, too late.

The presence of "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" in postwar Soviet society rendered the health of the body politic and its legitimating mythology dubious. Late Soviet authors dealt with this predicament by programmatically reaffirming the postwar Soviet mythos in their polemics against the OUN/UPA. This necessitated the denationalization of the UPA and its

⁹³ Such concerns would not have been entirely unfounded. A genre of neo-imperialist historical writing in post-Soviet Russia displays continuities with many of the arguments employed by the Soviet authors discussed above, including the notion that the OUN/UPA was artificially injected into Ukraine by international conspirators. However, the writers of this ilk display a number of tendencies decidedly at variance with Soviet ideology. They deny the existence of the Ukrainian nation altogether, and insist that "holy, indivisible Rus" includes both Ukraine and Belarus and ought to be considered ethnically "Russian" and religiously "Orthodox." These authors believe that Soviet Communism, far from cementing the bond between "Great Russians" (i.e. Russians) and "South Russians" (i.e. Ukrainians), egregiously undermined it with a godless, antinational state and ideology. See, for example: Aleksandr Karevin, *Rus' nerusskaia: Kak rozhdalas' "ridna mova"* (Moscow: Imperskaia traditsiia, 2006); S. N. Shchegolev, *Istoriia "ukrainskogo" separatizma* (Moscow: Imperskaia traditsiia, 2004); and Leonid Sokolov, *Ostorozhno--"Ukrainstvo!"* (Moscow: FondIV, 2009). The intellectual antecedents of this strand of post-Soviet Russian hostility toward Ukraine and Ukrainian nationalism strategically situated themselves throughout late Soviet politics, and may well have caused concern among Soviet officials that a clandestine, OUN-like party might take root among Russians. N. Mitrokhin, *Russkaia partiia: Dvizhenie russkikh natsionalistov v SSSR: 1953-1985 gody* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2003).

“treachery” in accordance with the ideological impossibility of national antagonisms and popular anti-Communist sentiment in postwar Soviet society. Insofar as one can be a traitor only to one’s own country or people, however, the denationalization of treachery entailed a contradiction, which Soviet propaganda mitigated by ridiculing and belittling the significance and extent of the OUN/UPA, and claiming that it did not represent the Ukrainian people. Soviet works asserted that only small bands of petty criminals, opportunists, misanthropes, and the mentally ill comprised the UPA’s ranks and leadership, but the official treatment of “*banderovshchina*” as a grave, subversive threat requiring the utmost vigilance of the Soviet people to combat was at variance with this position as well.

Official Soviet discourse vigorously denied the OUN/UPA’s autochthony in West Ukraine, attributing all of the problems attending it to alien elements abroad.⁹⁴ Communist writers averred, moreover, that there was nothing distinctively Ukrainian about the OUN/UPA’s ideology, aims, and methods, which they instead attributed to a cabal of non-Ukrainian puppet masters. All the malevolent bedfellows imputed to the OUN/UPA in Soviet discourse were “foreign” (that is, non-Soviet and non-Ukrainian) and “reactionary” (that is, non-Communist).⁹⁵ In short, when an upstanding Soviet Ukrainian citizen became an OUN/UPA sympathizer, he became his own antithesis—a traitor to the nation of which he had never truly been a part.

⁹⁴ They did this even as thousands of pleas for the rehabilitation of convicted OUN/UPA members and sympathizers flooded into the party-state from the Soviet Ukrainian citizenry. So long as the Soviet Union existed, the regime rebuked such requests. Weiner, *Making Sense of War*, 189-90.

⁹⁵ Non-Communist, that is, with the possible exception of the “Trotskyites.” Kravchenko, *V maskakh i bez masok*, 78.

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