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Incorporation of Andriy Melnyk's OUN into the Kharkiv Environment (1941–1943)

Summary: Today, studying the spread of OUN activities, particularly those of the OUN(m), in Eastern Ukraine during the German-Soviet War is particularly relevant. This paper aims to highlight the work of the OUN(m) in Kharkiv during the Nazi occupation. Analysing the available sources and publications, it can be stated that during the German-Soviet war, the OUN(m) took the opportunity to spread their ideology in the Eastern Ukrainian lands, creating their cells among the local population. The primary tasks of the OUN(m), who arrived in Kharkiv with the Germans as part of a Sonderkommando or propaganda groups, were to infiltrate the local administration, police, and cultural and educational institutions; propagate nationalist ideas about creating an independent Ukrainian state; and organise local cells. To do this, they used both legal and illegal methods. Bohdan Konyk, Yakiv Kravchuk, and Petro Sahaidachnyi were particularly prominent in Kharkiv. The peak of OUN(m) activity in the city was October–December 1941. This was due to their proximity to the Germans and the ability to conduct their work legally. During the Nazi Occupation, the ideological views of the OUN(m) in Kharkiv were transformed to adapt to a more moderate Eastern Ukrainian version of nationalism. Nevertheless, their ideas became known to the wider Kharkiv community, influencing the vision of Ukraine's future among local nationalists.

Keywords: World War II, Ukrainian nationalism, Kharkiv, OUN(m), ideology

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Studying the political history of Ukraine and the struggle for the creation of an independent state is impossible without taking into account the spread of ideologies by various political organisations. Today, it is especially relevant to analyse the spread of the worldview conducted by members of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), in particular supporters of Andriy Melnyk (OUN(m)) in Eastern Ukraine, specifically in Kharkiv during the Nazi occupation in 1941–1943.

The process of introducing nationalist ideology and politics in the east of the country is interesting because it begins with the massive rejection of the OUN state-building theory by the population. Today, this concept has many supporters who are even ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of nationalist beliefs about Ukraine's future.

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the activities of the OUN(m) in Kharkiv during the Nazi Occupation. The publication's scientific novelty lies in its comprehensive study of the main directions of the OUN(m)'s propaganda work in Kharkiv, based on the identified range of documentary sources and scholarly publications.

The publication combines textual analysis with general scientific, special historical, and sociological research methods. This approach enables one to determine how Melnyk's group tried to use the opportunities of their stay in Kharkiv to establish and spread their ideology.

The current state of research on the topic shows that both domestic and international scholars have only briefly examined this subject. It should be emphasised that a neutral study of the history of the OUN became feasible only after the formation of an independent Ukrainian state. One of the earliest Ukrainian historians to explore this issue was Mykhailo Koval. Among Kharkiv historians who investigated the city's life during the Nazi Occupation, the most notable are the works of Olena Diakova, Vladyslav Pronenko, Yurii Radchenko, and Anatolii Skorobohatov. These scholars explore various aspects of the OUN's activities in Kharkiv. Of the works addressing the city's history during World War II, Anatolii Skorobohatov's book *Kharkiv during the German Occupation (1941–1943)* is particularly comprehensive. The author, for the first time, examined issues such as the functioning of German and civilian administrations, the activities of political organisations from 1941 to 1943, and the daily life of Kharkiv residents under occupation.

Of great importance for understanding the new concept of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists in Ukrainian historiography is the professional opinion of the working group of historians at the Government Commission for the Study of the OUN and UPA, and the universal two-volume publication *Ukraine in the Second World War: A View from the 21st Century*¹ was written under the auspices of the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine by leading national historians in the field of World War II.

1 Smolii V.A. et al. (ed.), 2011, 1–2; S.V. Kul'chyts'kyy (ed.), 2005, 53.

Ivan Patryliak's publications provide general information about the OUN's activities in Ukraine. Although his work is devoted to the OUN Bandera wing, the scholar also addresses the OUN(m)'s actions, comparing their policies and ideology. Pavlo Hai-Nyzhnyk, Heorhiy Kasianov, Oleksandr Pahiri, and others' studies are also crucial for assessing the activities of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists.²

The works of diaspora scholars Vasyl Veriga and Lev Shankovskiyi are essential for understanding the activities of the Melnyk faction. Written by historians who were also direct participants in those events, their publications are, on the one hand, memoirs, and on the other hand, have all the hallmarks of scientific treatises.

German scholars' interpretations of the OUN's activities, particularly those of the Melnyk faction (e.g., Hans Friedrich Gunther, Kai Struve), are also interesting, as they present a German perspective on developing Ukrainian-German relations during World War II.³

The source material on the topic is extensive. This article includes criminal cases of collaborators, denunciations left in the occupied territory by Soviet agents, etc.⁴

Kharkiv is located in north-east Ukraine. It is a relatively young city, just over 370 years old. The opening of a university and a technological institute in 1805 and 1885 attracted entrepreneurs and businesspeople to the city. In Soviet times, it was one of the major industrial, scientific, and cultural centres and transportation hubs of the Soviet Union. From 1919 to 1934, it was the capital of Soviet Ukraine. During industrialisation, the status of the capital city led to the construction of many new enterprises and the reconstruction of old ones. Industry giants such as tractors, aircraft, turbines, machine tools, and many other plants emerged here. The reorganisation of higher education separated certain institutes from the university: law and medicine. The Institute of Technology was divided into five independent institutes: Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, and Aviation. In 1940, there were 1200 industrial enterprises in the city. Many writers came to Kharkiv as the capital. Many of them created new Ukrainian literature. On the eve of the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union, there were 46 research institutes and 36 higher education institutions in Kharkiv, 41 colleges, and 138 schools. There were also 14 theatres, 60 clubs, 304 libraries, and 9 museums. The rapid growth of industrial enterprises, a transport hub, and scientific and educational institutes led to significant demographic growth in the city and, thus, the construction of a large number of residential areas. Among them are the socialist

2 Hay-Nyzhnyk P. 2015, 71–79; Kasianov H. 2003, 63; Kasianov H. 1999, 351; Pahiria O. 2013, 4–9; Pahiria O., Ivanchenko V. (eds) 2011, 1161.

3 Gunter F. 2008, 301; Struve K. 2015, 739.

4 CSAPUO. Fond 1, opis 23, sprava 90, 58 ark. SSASSU. U 32 t., sprava 99615, t. 4, 217 ark.; U 4 t., fond 5, sprava 67452, vol. 1–4; sprava 036316; Fond 6, sprava 75962; Sprava 035617. SAKR. Fond R-6452, opis 1, sprava 5346, 190 ark.

'cities' of 'Novyi Pobut' (now called KhTZ district), Krasnyi Zhovten, Krasnyi Promin, and others. The housing stock of Kharkiv amounted to about 4 million square metres.⁵ However, such significant achievements occurred in parallel with repressions against all population segments. Collectivisation in the countryside led to the famine of 1932–1933. Thousands of peasants moved to cities, primarily to Kharkiv, to escape from starvation.

The Nazi attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, led to dramatic changes in the lives of the citizens of this state. All social and personal life was subordinated to new realities. Thousands of Kharkiv residents were mobilised to the front. Their places in the factories were taken by pensioners, women, and teenagers.

Realising Kharkiv's importance as an industrial centre, the German command tried to capture it as soon as possible, while the Soviet government tried to prevent this.

The front line was advancing quickly enough into the Kharkiv region. Within three months, it reached the border of the region. At the end of September 1941, the situation on the southern flank of the German-Soviet front became more complicated. Nazi troops, with superior strength and equipment, captured the left bank of the Dnipro River. The Nazis determined two directions of attack on the Kharkiv region — from the west and the south-west. The defence of Kharkiv from the west was carried out by the troops of the 40th, 21st, and 38th Armies of the Southwestern Front, which had been exhausted by the fighting in the Kyiv direction in August.

The German command created a powerful strike group (9 divisions) to capture the city, which was four times larger than the Soviet troops in manpower and equipment. The Nazis hoped to crush the defenders and capture the city with a single blow. In the second half of October, fighting broke out on the outskirts of Kharkiv. The city was defended by units of the 38th Army, troops of the Kharkiv garrison, an NKVD brigade, and Kharkiv militia. However, the forces were unequal — on 25 October 1941, the Germans completely captured the city.

The Soviet government attached great importance to the liberation of the Kharkiv region. Moreover, the liberation of Kharkiv, the first capital of Soviet Ukraine, was of strategic, economic, and political significance. No wonder 10 military operations were carried out to liberate the region: Hraki (18–22 November 1941); Bulatselivka (26 November – 13 December 1941); Barvenkovo–Lozivska (18–31 January 1942); Battle of Kharkiv (12–29 May 1942); Voronezh–Kharkiv Strategic Offensive (13 January – 3 March 1943); Operation Skachok (29 January – 6 February 1943); Kharkiv Defensive Offensive (4–25 March 1943); Izium–Barvinkove Offensive (17–27 July 1943); Belgorod–Kharkiv Strategic Offensive Operation (3–23 August 1943); and Donbas Offensive (13–22 August 1943). The intense battles are evidenced by the fact that seven

5 Siroshstan M.A. et al. (eds), 1967, 115–123.

settlements of the region were liberated from the invaders four times, 30 settlements three times, and 115 settlements — including Kharkiv — twice.⁶

Today, it is possible to state that the German occupation regime was ambiguous. The Germans pursued a 'carrot and stick' policy in the occupied lands. Public executions, raids, and searches on the streets became commonplace. There was no water, no electricity, and no heating. Often on the streets, one could see not only those executed, but also local residents who died of hunger or cold.

At the same time, the Nazis pursued a pro-Ukrainian policy in Ukraine, proclaiming Ukrainian as the state language alongside German. They allowed the resumption of the activities of public organisations and supported the Ukrainisation of all spheres of life, including the publication of the Ukrainian-language press, teaching Ukrainian in educational institutions, etc.

Along with the Germans, teams of OUN(m) and Banderites — natives of Western Ukraine — came to the city legally and illegally. Officially organised by the Germans, the Sonderkommando consisted of Western Ukrainian nationalists, including OUN(m).

There were three groups of nationalists in German-occupied Kharkiv: local, OUN(b), and OUN(m). In the early days, the local nationalists — who are more appropriately called nationally conscious because they were not as radical as the Banderites and even the more moderate OUN(m) — formed the Public Committee headed by Volodymyr Dolenko.⁷

It should be noted that shortly before the attack on the Soviet Union, the German command on the territory under its control mobilised pro-Ukrainian people into paramilitary units, the Abwehr Sonderkommando, to liberate the people of the USSR from Bolshevism.⁸ These were auxiliary units of the Wehrmacht, which included Ukrainians who had important ideological professions: priests, translators, librarians, and representatives of other service professions. Their task was to help the Germans establish power in the captured settlements. Sonderkommando-202, under the command of German Major Hans Ferbeck, was sent to Kharkiv.⁹

Even before the war, some representatives of the OUN(m) made unofficial contact with the German command, reaching certain agreements under which the OUN(m) was subordinate to the Germans in their propaganda and ideological activities. At the same time, in the summer of 1941, before the outbreak of hostilities between Germany

6 Dyakova O. 2013, 99.

7 Volodymyr Dolenko was a Ukrainian politician and public figure who expressed his pro-Ukrainian views from the beginning of the twentieth century. He fought for the supremacy of the Ukrainian language and culture in Kharkiv during the National Democratic Revolution of 1917–1921, and was arrested twice in Soviet times for his national views. For this, he earned respect among Kharkiv nationalists, and therefore, during the Nazi occupation, he was essentially a “gray cardinal” in resolving many personnel and political issues with the German authorities.

8 Struve K. 2015, 65; SSASSU. U 4 t. Fond 5, sprava 67452, t. 1, ark. 4.

9 SSASSU. U 4 t. Fond 5, sprava 67452, t. 1, ark. 42.

and the Soviet Union, the OUN(m) began forming its marching groups to establish centres throughout Ukraine. It is known that the OUN(m) sent three groups to Soviet Ukraine: southern, middle, and northern. The middle group was formed west of the San River and was led by Oleh Kandyba-Olzhych. It first reached Kyiv, then, after being captured by the Germans, moved to Poltava and Kharkiv. Kharkiv was the main goal and final destination of the movement. Among its members, the most notable are Dr. Oliynyk, Kindrat Poluvedko (who, incidentally, was an NKVD agent), as well as journalists Petro Sahaidachnyi and Bohdan Konyk (Onufrienko), and Archpriest Yakov Kravchuk — the latter two being agents of the Abwehr.

A little later, the OUN(b) also started its activities. However, it was unable to achieve significant success in the city due to its illegal status, small size, insignificant support from the local population, and high competition with the previously mentioned organisations. The Centre group, organised in Przemyśl, was headed here and was supposed to go through Lviv–Ternopil–Proskuriv–Vynnytsia–Fastiv–Kyiv–Poltava to Kharkiv.

It should also be noted that although the Germans considered the OUN members to be their allies, they were still wary of them, seeing them as future opponents and fighters for Ukrainian independence. After the proclamation of the restoration of Ukraine on 30 June 1941, the Germans began to persecute the Bandera followers, and after a demonstration in the town of Bazar, Zhytomyr region, on 21 November, in memory of the participants in the Second Winter Campaign of the UPR army killed by the Bolsheviks, the persecution of Melnyk's followers began.

Despite the repressions, the Germans treated the OUN(m) leniently for some time in Kharkiv. The latter used this to spread their ideas legally and illegally. First, they tried to create their own powerful leadership in Kharkiv by recruiting local nationally conscious Ukrainians. B. Konyk and Y. Kravchuk were most concerned with this issue. At first, they simply put people on lists. But later B. Konyk, with the help of local activists, founded an initiative group to recruit new members to the OUN(m). In December 1941, it was decided to hold a solemn oath of allegiance to the OUN. Thus, one was held every Sunday at the Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian Drama Theatre. The event was held according to a certain ritual. Candidates were lined up in two rows in the theatre lobby. The speakers were Kindrat Poluvedko and Bohdan Konyk, and Archpriest Yakiv Kravchuk, dressed in a cassock with a cross and a prayer book in his hands, gave a nationalistic sermon. Afterwards, in a separate room, he read out the oath and let the recruits kiss the cross. Many nationally conscious Kharkiv residents joined the OUN(m) at that time. Among them were Deputy Mayor Mykola Slipchenko, Secretary of the Public Committee Serhii Cherniaiev, Head of the Propaganda Department Volodymyr Kryvenko, Head of the Regional Land Office Mykhailo Vetukhiv, and others.¹⁰

10 Skorobohatov A. 1996, 83.

However, it is known that Kharkiv residents refused to join the OUN(m). One of these people was an influential nationalist and historian, Dmytro Solovey.¹¹

At first, joining the OUN(m) was a condition for being appointed to a position in the city government or district mayors' offices or to obtain a military rank in the police. However, this process was short-lived: in early 1942, membership in the OUN(m) ceased, as it no longer made sense due to the strengthening of the positions of Dolenko's group and the departure of Melnyk's people to the West due to the loss of positions in the face of Nazi repression.

The relations between the Dolenko group and the OUN Melnyk faction at the beginning of the occupation were ambiguous, but they can be defined as more positive than negative. At that time, they tried to mutually solve urgent administrative issues and promote the rise of the Ukrainian language and culture.

The next day after the occupation, a two-stage administration was formed in the city: the military commandant's office (German) and the city council (made up of local civilians and nationalists from the Sonderkommando). As is known, the first chairman was Oleksiy Kramarenko, a professor at the Institute of Technology. His deputy was Mykola Slipchenko (a person close to Volodymyr Dolenko), and his secretary was the already mentioned Kindrat Poluvedko (a member of the Melnyk group).¹²

The nationalists who arrived from the West had a stereotype that Kharkiv was a pro-Russian city and were afraid of people with such views coming to power. B. Konyk was even indignant: "...due to the unpreparedness of Ukrainians, the city administration was seized by 'Moscovites' — Kramarenko and company, who should be expelled from the city administration."¹³ Dolenko's group shared the same opinion. Indeed, the employees of the city and district administrations had different views. And at first they had to put up with it, but gradually Kharkiv nationalists began to strengthen their positions, to eliminate unwanted people, often slandering them to the punitive German authorities.

Nevertheless, in the city government, especially at first, the OUN(m) not only worked but also zealously implemented their policies. They were in charge of the departments of religion (Yakiv Kravchuk), labour (Mykola Kononenko), and propaganda (Volodymyr Kryvenko, whose deputy before his arrest was Maria Neduzha). Even after the Melnyk activists left Kharkiv, some Kharkiv residents supported their ideas.

In the early days, the propaganda department of KhMU was supervised not only by a representative of the German commandant's office but also by Bohdan Konyk. Therefore, the employees of this department pursued not only a pro-German and anti-Soviet policy, but also a pro-Ukrainian one. Over time, the department turned into

11 Dyakova O. 2012, 166–169; SSASSU. Sprava 035617, 140 ark. 20–21.

12 Gunter F. 2008, 137.

13 SSASSU. Sprava 035617, 140 ark. 17.

a legal centre of the OUN(m), which did not suit the German command, and therefore, the department was liquidated.¹⁴

In December 1941, Bohdan Konyk began forming the Ukrainian police. Soon, its first units were located in premises on Eparchialna Street (now Alchevskikh Street) and Korolenko Lane. The police were organised by district, and by the summer of 1942, there were 21 police officers in Kharkiv. They were not subordinated to the district mayors but directly to the city police headquarters, which was initially located at 4 Korolenko Street (now Mykolaivska Street), and from January 1942 at 100 Sumska Street (in the Gestapo building). Among the police commanders were many immigrants from Western Ukraine, and the rank and file were recruited from prisoners of war and local youth. In 1941 and early 1942, Melnyk residents even organised several marches of the Ukrainian police with an orchestra and the performance of nationalist songs, including the anthem “Ukraine Has Not Yet Died”, through the streets of Kharkiv.¹⁵

From the end of October 1941, the process of forming public organisations began in Kharkiv. They became a place of consolidation, primarily for nationally conscious Ukrainians, a ‘mediator’ between ordinary Kharkiv residents and the Nazi occupation authorities, and defenders of the interests of some city residents (primarily the like-minded and repressed). As noted above, in November 1941, the Kharkiv Public Committee (KHPC) was established and headed by Volodymyr Dolenko. It was the most influential public semi-legal unification of the city.

In his report of 8 March 1943, to the NKVD, agent Sorbonin (priest Vasyl Potienko¹⁶) noted the process of creating the KHK, as heard in a conversation with Volodymyr Dolenko. Volodymyr Andriyovych said that the idea of creating a semi-legal or even legal committee belonged to OUN members Bohdan Konyk and Yakiv Kravchuk. In their view, the committee “would lead the Ukrainian public and seek to implement measures aimed at a complete and early national revival and the transition of the leading role in the life of the city and the country to Ukrainians.”¹⁷ Melnyk residents even tried to influence the selection of members of the KHK. However, local nationalists opposed the imposition of someone else’s, i.e., Melnyk’s, vision of the organisation’s structure and goals. Nevertheless, in October–December 1941, Bohdan Konyk and Yakiv Kravchuk attended meetings of the KHPC and explained the ideology of the OUN(m). To a certain extent, they convinced Kharkiv residents of the need to work together for the good of Ukraine, and in December Serhiy Cherniayev was appointed liaison with the OUN(m) Kyiv centre.¹⁸ When relations between the Dolenko group and Melnyk

¹⁴ Skorobohatov A. 2004, 145.

¹⁵ Skorobohatov A. 2004, 61; Skorobohatov A. 1996, 87.

¹⁶ Interestingly, in 1943, V. Potienko emigrated to the West with the Germans and died in Berlin on April 12, 1945.

¹⁷ SSASSU. U 32 t. Sprava 99615, t. 4, ark. 113zv.

¹⁸ Dyakova O. 2020, 214.

residents deteriorated, the latter held their own meetings at the apartments of the aforementioned Serhiy Cherniayev or the Neduzhykh family.¹⁹

Over time, the KHPC became the most influential organisation, because without its members' patronage and the head's consent, it was impossible to take a more or less prestigious position in Kharkiv.

In December 1941, Prosvita resumed its work (in 1922, the Soviet government closed this organisation as a 'bourgeois' one). History professor Vasyl Dubrovskyi headed it. The organisation existed legally for some time and conducted cultural, educational, commercial, and charitable activities, which made it possible to openly promote Ukrainian ideology, manage the spread of the Ukrainian language and culture, and provide financial assistance to like-minded people and locals who were offended by the Soviet government. The organisation consisted of 90 members.²⁰

The Union of Ukrainian Women, the Union of Ukrainian Youth, the Society of Ukrainian Merchants, and the House of National Culture were also officially established. All these organisations were subordinated to Prosvita.

The society's main goal was to unite Kharkiv residents based on Ukrainian culture and awaken their national Ukrainian consciousness. For this purpose, lectures on historical topics were held, preparatory courses for young people to enter universities were offered, religious holidays were celebrated, concerts were organised, and solemn meetings were held in honour of national writers and heroes (Taras Shevchenko, Ivan Franko, Symon Petliura, Yevhen Konovalets, Andriy Melnyk, and others). OUN members were also invited to these meetings.²¹

Speaking to Kharkiv residents, the OUN(m) explained the OUN programme and its political concepts. It should be noted that their plans were devoid of radical Russophobia, because at that time, Russophobia was not a prevalent sentiment among the majority of the population of Eastern Ukraine. Therefore, the emissaries blamed the tsarist and Soviet governments for all the misfortunes of Ukraine, while at the same time praising the Ukrainian people.

In the first half of the twentieth century, religion played an essential role in the lives of Kharkiv residents, as it did for most Ukrainians. OUN(m) emissary Father Yakiv (Kravchuk) was the first to initiate the restoration of church life in Kharkiv to promote the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (hereinafter referred to as the UAOC, autocephalists). First, it was his duty as part of the work of Sonderkommando-202: "I, as a priest who shared the views of Ukrainian nationalists, agreed to this work and was appointed head of the church department of the German Sonderkommando,"

19 Skorobohatov A. 1996, 83.

20 SAKR. Fond R-2982, opis 2, sprava 5, 78 ark. 22–23.

21 Skorobohatov A. 2004, 195–196.

he said during an interrogation by the KGB of the Ukrainian SSR on 1 October 1948.²² Secondly, Yakiv Kravchuk simultaneously fulfilled the blessing of the UAOC bishop, Father Hilarion (Ivan Ohienko). During a personal meeting, “Hilarion explained to me that German troops were occupying the territory of Ukraine and that this created the possibility of creating an ‘independent’ Ukrainian state,” Yakiv Kravchuk testified during this interrogation.²³ Thirdly, he, like other autocephalists, was not satisfied with the significant influence of the local Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. He believed that he had to “create a Ukrainian independent Orthodox Church, independent of the Russian Patriarchate, on the territory of Soviet Ukraine occupied by the Germans.”²⁴

On the orders of the Sonderkommando commander Hans Ferbeck, Father Yakiv (Kravchuk) identified the presence of believers, appointed priests and other church ministers, and finally organised church parishes and initially managed their work through the religious department of the Kharkiv City Council (KhCC).²⁵ However, in parallel, religious departments with similar functions were also established at the KHPC and Prosvita Society. And in November–December 1941, Metropolitan Theophilus (Buldovskyi) and representatives of KhCC and Prosvita formed the Kharkiv Diocesan Administration of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (hereinafter referred to as the UAOC), headed by Metropolitan Theophilus (Buldovskyi). The KhCC began operating in January 1942. By the way, Theophilus Buldovskyi was registered with the religious department of KhCC not only as a clergyman, but also as ‘Metropolitan of All Ukraine’.²⁶

Thus, in Kharkiv, Yakiv Kravchuk, as a member of the church department of Sonderkommando-202, gradually lost sole supervision over the city's religious life between November 1941 and January 1942. But, left unemployed, he nevertheless openly continued to conduct pro-Ukrainian and pro-German propaganda among the UAOC faithful.

The first church to be opened in the city was the Three Saints Church (known in the city as Holberg's). Before the service in this church, Kravchuk ordered Metropolitan Theophilus to commemorate Vasyl Lypkivskyi and the German authorities as ‘Metropolitan of All Ukraine’. Theophilus did not like this, but he complied with this demand to avoid conflict during the service. But then he declared that he refused to continue to hold services under such conditions.²⁷ The requirement to conduct ser-

22 SSASSU. U 4 t., fond 5, sprava 67452, t. 1, ark. 41.

23 SSASSU. U 4 t., fond 5, sprava 67452, t. 1, ark. 40.

24 SSASSU. U 4 t., fond 5, sprava 67452, t. 1, ark. 41.

25 SSASSU. U 4 t., fond 5, sprava 67452, t. 1, ark. 40, 95, 115.

26 CSAPUO. Fond 1, opis 23, sprava 90, ark. 58.

27 CSAPUO. Fond 1, opis 23, sprava 90, ark. 12.

vices exclusively in Ukrainian caused dissatisfaction among many believers and clergy who were used to listening to and saying prayers in Old Slavonic, not Ukrainian.²⁸

Another area of OUN propaganda was to instil in Kharkiv residents respect for holidays and figures whom nationalists considered national heroes. These events included the memory of those who died at Kruty.²⁹ On 1 February 1942, the Church of the Intercession Monastery commemorated “the memory of 300 young knights-officers and Cossacks of the Ukrainian army who heroically fell in an unforgettable battle near Kruty, blocking the Moscow hordes’ path to Ukraine.”³⁰ On this occasion, Metropolitan Theophilus held a memorial service. After the memorial service, Yakiv Kravchuk held another prayer service for the victims of Kruty in the premises of Pros-vita.³¹ In addition to these commemorations, there were celebrations of the births or deaths of Taras Shevchenko, Mykola Lysenko, Ivan Franko, Symon Petliura, Yevhen Konovalets, and other prominent Ukrainian personalities.

Initially, the Gestapo conducted its line of propaganda independently or through Yakov Kravchuk, but later it began to use the services of Metropolitan Theophilus (Buldovskyi). This change in vector was due to several reasons. First, the Gestapo, the local commandant’s office, and a part of the local intelligentsia were irritated by the persistent Ukrainisation of the church life of the city by nationalists. Second, they, like Theophilus Buldovskyi, were not satisfied with the use of the church by the OUN(m) for political propaganda.

Establishing the daily newspaper “Nova Ukraina” was important for ideological work among the population. Initially, Petro Sahaidachnyi, who arrived from the West, was appointed editor-in-chief. In April 1942, he was replaced by Vsevolod Tsarnnyk from Kharkiv.

28 SSASSU. Fond 6, sprava 75962, 53, ark. 19zv.

29 The Battle of Kruty took place on 16 or 17 January (according to the new style, 29 or 30 January), 1918, near the Kruty railway station, which is now located in the Kruty village community of the Nizhyn district of Chernihiv region. There was a clash between the army of the Ukrainian People’s Republic (UPR), consisting of the 1st Ukrainian Junior School named after Bohdan Khmelnytsky, student kurens, and “Smertia” from the local Free Cossacks, and the Bolshevik troops of the Red Cossacks, created from residents of Eastern Ukraine, as well as Red Guards from Moscow, Petrograd, and sailors of the Baltic Fleet. The Bolsheviks won this battle. According to the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance, 520 Ukrainian soldiers, young men, and students took part in the battle, armed with up to 16 machine guns and one cannon on a railroad platform. In comparison, the Bolshevik troops consisted of 4,800 soldiers who were well armed and had artillery. In the evening, Ukrainian troops retreated. 27 students and gymnasium students who were in the reserve were captured and shot during the retreat. In March 1918, when the UPR was restored after the signing of the Treaty of Brest and with the help of the German armed forces, the young men were solemnly buried at Askold’s Grave in Kyiv. For Ukrainian nationalists, the deaths of the young men near Kruty in January 1918 became a symbol of patriotism and selflessness in the struggle for Ukrainian independence. Every year, commemorative events are held in memory of their sacrifice. This was the case during the years of Nazi occupation. This day has been celebrated at the state level since 2003.

30 *Ob’java*.... 1942.

31 SSASSU. U 32 t. sprava 99615, t. 4, ark. 144zv.

The newspaper was particularly critical of the Soviet government, aggressively xenophobic (primarily against Jews, and less so towards Russians), and published articles of a nationalist (pro-Ukrainian), pro-German (Nazi) nature.

During 1942, a wave of arrests of local and visiting people swept through Kharkiv, leading to the departure of Ukrainian nationalists from the city, including the OUN(m). By March of this year, the prominent emissaries of the OUN(m) who had arrived from the West had left the city. A small group of local OUN(m) remained in Kharkiv, led by Mykola Kononenko, head of the Labour Department of the KhCC. Its size is difficult to determine because it is known that five of them were shot by the Germans (including Mykola Kononenko), and 16 people emigrated with the Germans in 1943.³²

In parallel with the repressions, they began to 'cleanse' the KhCC and district burgomasters of Kramarenkiv and Melnyk residents.³³ The reasons for this were the active outflow of OUN(m) members and the growing influence of local nationalists. The German occupation authorities gradually began to give preference to Dolenko's group in the city's administration because they understood the mentality of Kharkiv residents and were better aware of their needs and capabilities. Thanks to the Nazis, Volodymyr Dolenko managed to 'place' his trusted people in key positions in the Kharkiv City Council, district mayors' offices, and enterprises to control and operate more effectively by attracting new members to his cell, promoting his own ideology, controlling religious and educational institutions, etc. And since then, the effective functioning of the OUN has depended on the attitude of the KHPC members towards a particular person. One of the most crucial moments in this development was the appointment of Oleksandr Semenenko from Dolenko's group to the post of mayor of Kharkiv in April 1942.

Despite their departure, the ties between Kharkiv nationalists and the OUN did not break. This is evidenced by the visits of some of them to Kharkiv. For example, in the summer of 1942, Ukrainian writer and OUN(m) supporter Ulas Samchuk visited the city, and Oleksa Babiy brought nationalist literature here.³⁴

Kharkiv residents also travelled to the West. For example, in June 1942, Petro Syrotenko toured Kyiv–Poltava–Rivne, which lasted almost a month. There, he established contacts with representatives of the OUN and studied their experience.³⁵

Bohdan Konyk and Yakiv Kravchuk left a special imprint on the historical memory of Kharkiv residents. B. Konyk was known for his propaganda talents. The historian Vasyl Veriga considered him a "good propagandist" who could "influence and

32 Skorobohatov A. 2004, 187; Radchenko Yu. 2023. Part 2.

33 SSASSU. U 32 t. Sprava 99615, t. 4, ark. 76.

34 Radchenko Yu. 2023. Part. 4.

35 SAKR. Fond R-6452, opis 1, sprava 5346, ark. 23–24.

convince his environment” and “had a remarkable gift for appealing to people in general, and to the younger generation in particular.”³⁶ Kharkiv nationalists saw him as a prominent nationalist, also because “he had the support of the Germans and the opportunity to work legally and openly for the benefit of Ukraine.”³⁷ Y. Kravchuk, however, was not respected in the city because he was considered “an adventurer, a dark, suspicious person.”³⁸

Thus, it can be stated that during the German-Soviet war, the OUN(m) took advantage of the opportunity to spread their ideology in the eastern Ukrainian lands. The main goals of the OUN(m), who came to Kharkiv with the Germans in *Sonderkommando* or marching groups, were to infiltrate their people into the local administration, police, cultural and educational institutions; spread nationalist ideas about creating an independent Ukrainian state; and organise local cells. To do this, they used both legal and illegal methods. In Kharkiv, Bohdan Konyk, Yakiv Kravchuk, and Petro Sahaidachnyi were the most prominent. The peak OUN(m) activities in Kharkiv occurred in October–December 1941. This was due to their proximity to the Germans and the ability to conduct their work legally. However, their overall contribution to the ideological palette of the city was quite insignificant. This was due to three interrelated reasons: the lack of mass support for the OUN(m) ideology among the local population, the Nazi repression of the OUN in January–July 1942, and competition for key administrative positions with the Dolenko people.

The ideological views of the OUN(m) in Kharkiv were transformed during the occupation period, adapting to a more moderate version of Eastern Ukrainian nationalism. However, they became known to a wider audience of Kharkiv residents, and this influenced the local nationalists’ future vision of Ukraine. It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which the views of the OUN(m) were disseminated in Kharkiv at that time. This is because in 1942–1943 most Ukrainian nationalists emigrated with the Germans to the West, and the Soviet punitive authorities repressed those who remained for collaborating with the occupiers. After returning from prison camps, these individuals led a closed lifestyle, being especially careful not to disclose what they did in Nazi Kharkiv and where they spent several years after its liberation from the Nazis.

36 Veryha V. 1991, 149, 150.

37 Skorobohatov A. 2004, 182.

38 SSASSU. Sprava 036316, ark. 80.

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