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**“THE LIBERATORS”. THE RED ARMY SOLDIERS’ AND THE SOVIET ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYEES’ IMAGE THROUGH THE PRISM OF REPORTING DOCUMENTS OF THE OUN UNDERGROUND (1944 – 1945)**

**Abstract.** *The purpose of the research is to reconstruct the Red Army soldier’s and the Soviet administration employee’s image in the western Ukrainian regions, in 1944 – 1945, recorded in the reporting documents of the Ukrainian nationalist underground. The methodology of the research is based on the principles of historicism, systematicity, scientificity, as well as the use of general scientific (analysis, synthesis, generalization) and special historical (historical typological and historical systemic) methods. The Conclusions.* Taking everything into consideration, it should be emphasized that the OUN underground reporting documentation of 1944 – 1945 provided quite rich material for the reconstruction of the image of the Soviet soldiers and administrators, who returned to the western region during the last years of World War II. First of all, it should be mentioned that the image of the Red Army soldier was quite colourful and controversial. The reporters always made a clear division

concerning the front lines and the rear units. The front lines soldiers, as a rule, had better weapons and uniforms, but for the most part (except in Lviv) there was a shortage of food, which made them loot. The front lines soldiers were also characterized as fairly brave warriors with clear traits of fatalism (“careless attitude to death”) and war fatigue (the desire to end hostilities as soon as possible and return home). It should be emphasized that the level of discipline, appearance, moral degradation, demotivation, and behavior of the units and subdivisions of the “Second Front Echelon” terrified the local population, who was the main informants of the OUN reports. Due to this, the Red Army soldier appeared in the reports of the underground, mostly as a ragged, always hungry and drunk robber and rapist, who, apparently, was, in general, correlating with the general state of the affairs. Their nationality and criticism of the Bolshevik government were of great importance to the formation of the underground’s opinion of the Red Army. According to the OUN documents, which demonstrated a sympathetic attitude towards the Ukrainian soldiers and other “nationalists” and depicted a cooler attitude towards the Russian and the Jewish origin Red Army soldiers. The Ukrainian soldiers were seen as potential allies in the struggle against Bolshevism, the Russian and the Jewish soldiers were considered to be the mainstay of the regime. However, it is important to note that the role of “support” of the Soviet power was given to the Russians increasingly rather than the Jews, as it was still believed in the OUN in 1939 – 1941. At the same time, the image of the Soviet administration in the OUN reports was less differentiated. It was mostly negative. The authorities were characterized as uneducated and primitive people without critical thinking, densely indoctrinated by the official ideology, prone to abuse, corruption and profit, hated by the rest of society.

**Key words:** the Red Army, the Soviet administration, the OUN underground, reporting documents, front line.

## “ВИЗВОЛИТЕЛІ”. ОБРАЗ БІЙЦІВ ЧЕРВОНОЇ АРМІЇ ТА СЛУЖБОВЦІВ РАДЯНСЬКОЇ АДМІНІСТРАЦІЇ КРИЗЬ ПРИЗМУ ЗВІТНИХ ДОКУМЕНТІВ ПІДПІЛЛЯ ОУН (1944 – 1945)

**Анотація.** Метою дослідження є реконструкція образу вояка Червоної армії та службовця радянської адміністрації в 1944 – 1945 рр. на території західноукраїнських областей, зафіксованого у звітній документації українського націоналістичного підпілля. **Методологія дослідження** базується на принципах історизму, системності, науковості, а також на використанні загальнонаукових (аналіз, синтез, узагальнення) і спеціально-історичних (історико-типологічний та історико-системний) методів. **Висновки.** Узагальнюючи все написане вище, необхідно підкреслити, що звітна документація підпілля ОУН за 1944 – 1945 рр. дає доволі багатий матеріал для реконструкції образу радянських вояків та адміністраторів, які повернулися в західноукраїнський регіон в останні роки Другої світової війни. Насамперед варто відзначити, що образ воїна-червоноармійця був доволі строкатим і суперечливим. Звітодавці завжди чітко ділили передові фронтові частини й тиллові підрозділи. Перші, як правило, мали краще озброєння й обмундировання, але здебільшого (за винятком Львова) відчували брак харчів, що штовхало їх на грабунки. Вони також характеризувались як доволі відважні воїни з чіткими рисами фаталізму (“легковажне ставлення до смерті”) і втоми від війни (бажання якнайшвидше завершити бойові дії та повернутися додому). Щодо частин та підрозділів “другого фронтового ешелону”, то рівень їхньої дисципліни, зовнішній вигляд, моральна деградація, демотивованість та поведінка викликали жах і відразу в місцевого населення, котре було головним інформатором авторів оунівських звітів. За рахунок цього червоноармієць у звітах підпілля постає здебільшого, як обдертий, завжди голодний і п’яний грабіжник та гвалтівник, що, очевидно, в основному відповідало загальному стану справ. Велике значення для формування opinii підпільників щодо червоноармійців була їхня національність і критика в бік більшовицької влади. У документах ОУН помітне прихильне ставлення до солдатів-українців та інших “нацменів”, більш прохолодне – до службовців Червоної армії російського та єврейського походження. Перших розглядали як потенційних союзників у справі боротьби проти більшовизму, останніх вважали основною опорою режиму. Хоча важливо зауважити, що роль “опори” радянської влади щоразу більше відводилася росіянам, а не євреям, як це ще вважалося в середовищі ОУН у 1939 – 1941 рр. Водночас образ радянської адміністрації

у звітних документах ОУН є мені диференційованим. Він здебільшого негативний. Носії влади характеризуються як малоосвічені й примітивні особи без критичного мислення, густо індоктриновані офіційною ідеологією, схильні до зловживань, корупції і наживи, зненавиджені рештою суспільства.

**Ключові слова:** Червона армія, радянська адміністрація, підпілля ОУН, звітна документація, лінія фронту.

Among the gigantic array of sources left by members of the Organization of the Ukrainian Nationalists underground in the 1940s and 1950s, reports and information on the situation on the front lines in 1944 and at the beginning of 1945 occupy a special place. Much attention in this body of documents is paid to the state of supply, appearance, weapons, attitudes and behaviour of the Red and First Front echelons, as well as the Soviet administrators and specialists, who returned to the western region after crossing the front line to the West. Owing to the availability of a sufficient number of documents originating from different regions and chronologically covering the period from January 1944 to April 1945, researchers can verify the information for its authenticity. Hence, it gives an adequate idea of the image of the Red Army soldier and Soviet administrators, which took root in the OUN underground and the inhabitants of the Ukrainian villages and towns, who were their informants.

Owing to analyzed sources, which made it clear that in the vast majority of cases, the Soviet soldier appeared in the reports of the nationalist underground as a poorly dressed, hungry, unmotivated, drunk, prone to robbery and rape character, who was enrolled into the army by force. Only the Ukrainian soldiers and the representatives of other non-Russian peoples of the USSR, who criticized the Stalinist regime and expressed sympathy for the Ukrainian Liberation Movement, were enjoyed some sympathy by the reporters. In some cases, the OUN documents stated that the Red Army fought bravely and had good weapons and proper discipline, but their generalized image in the eyes of the Ukrainian nationalists was more criminal and tragic than heroic.

It should be mentioned that the characteristic features of the Soviet administrators and law enforcement officers, who followed the front line in the OUN’s reporting documentation looked even less attractive. They were described as primitive, uncultured people, who combined in their behaviour the pursuit of personal gain and the mechanical subordination of the will of the “party and government”.

It should be emphasized that the vision of a Soviet soldier or administrator, formed in the reporting documents of the OUN (B) underground in 1944 – 1945 was “fresh” and was not transformed through the prism of memories and subsequent experiences or rethinking, as was the case, for example, with former Russian White Guards in exile in the 1920s and 1930s (Kuzina, 2021) *Образ спивробітныка VNK-ODPU-NKVS u rosijskomu emigrantskomu dyskursi 1920 – 1930-kh rr.*

**The Problem Statement.** The German-Soviet front, which at the end of 1943 stabilized for some time in the west from the Ukrainian capital, in January of 1944 began to move rapidly to the West and South. Due to the predominant forces of the Red Army, the Wehrmacht retreated to Volyn and Galicia (Halychyna), being able to stop the rapid advance of the Soviet troops only at the end of winter and at the beginning of spring of 1944, stabilized the front from Kovel in the north to Kolomyia and in the south. After six months of “frontal stagnation”, the Red Army resumed its offensive operations in Ukraine in July of 1944, expelling the Germans and their Hungarian allies from the Ukrainian lands for the next four months. The Soviet army and government returned to the positions lost in the summer of 1941, but this time the army

and administration occupied areas with an extensive network of the Ukrainian nationalist underground and an active, centralized insurgent movement, which extended far beyond the former underground lands of Volyn and Galicia (Halychyna). As a result, the Kremlin faced entirely new military and political realities in the region. At the same time, the Ukrainian Liberation Movement also ran into the modified Red Army in 1944 and a different state apparatus from the realities of 1939 – 1941. The OUN underground and the UPA command paid special attention to thorough and objective fixation in the reporting documentation of the underground real state of the Red Army and the administrative apparatus of the Bolsheviks as they were convinced that the Soviet government could collapse under the pressure of internal contradictions, revolutionary crises, ethnic hatred, dissatisfaction of the population and the army with the socio-economic and political situation in the country at the final stage of World War II. Owing to the above-mentioned information, the historians got a unique chance to see the “liberators” of 1944, with all their advantages and disadvantages, through the eyes of the underground. Owing to the analysis of dozens of information reports, special reports, surveys of peasants, it became possible to verify the information and make the most correct image of the Red Army and Stalin’s administration, who returned to Ukraine after several years of the Nazi occupation. Attitudes and behavior, clothing and weapons, food and supplies, discipline and punishment – these and other aspects covered in the reporting documents of the OUN underground, give the opportunity to see an incredible relief, vivid image of the Soviet front and rear units, civilian commanders and the NKVD officers, to feel society of that time, to be imbued with its problems and concerns, to get rid of many stereotypical views on the life of the Ukrainian society during the last years of World War II and during the first postwar years.

**The Analysis of Recent Research Works and Publications.** Despite the extremely representative source base, the Red Army and the administration image issue in the representation of the OUN underground did not yet become the subject of a separate scientific study. Despite the fact that almost all scholars, who studied the history of the Ukrainian Liberation Movement, the struggle of the Soviet government against it or the formation of the Soviet administration in the western region, in one way or another tried to elucidate our topic (Kyrychuk, 2000; Kyrychuk, 2003; Rusnachenko, 2002; Kentij, 1999; Patryljak, 2012; Patryljak, 2020; Lesjkiv, 2008; Ilynykyi, 2016; Stasjuk, 2020; Stasjuk, 2018). The source base of the study is represented by dozens of published and unpublished reports of the OUN underground on the behaviour and condition of the Red Army soldiers and commanders and the establishment of the Soviet administration after crossing the front line.

**The Main Material Statement.** The failure of the Wehrmacht’s latest large-scale attempt to turn the tide on the Eastern Front in its favour in Kursk region marked the gradual but relentless return of the Red Army to Ukraine. On August 11, 1943, Germany began preparations for the creation of a strategic defensive line in Eastern Europe – the “Eastern Wall” (Ghrycjuk, Lysenko, Pyljavecj & Sydorov, 2015, p. 77). In September of 1943 the main leadership of the Bandera OUN distributed a leaflet, which was called “The frontline passes through our lands” as it was cognizant of the fact that the large-scale frontline was to take the entire territory of Ukraine by the storm (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 258). The above-mentioned document, with the dangers of calling for the best possible protection of one’s own life and property from destruction, revealed the methods of terror used by the Nazis and Bolsheviks against civilians. It was clear from the text of the leaflet that the OUN leaders had a well-established idea of the behaviour of the “Soviets” and cultivated their savage image based on historical experience and known facts. The authors of the document

put emphasis on the following: “It should be noted that the Bolsheviks, retreating from Ukraine in 1941, took with them everything they could (...) what they could not take, they destroyed (...) In addition to severe material destruction, the Bolsheviks caused massive destruction of people (...) Left-bank Ukraine is a desert today, because those who were lucky enough to escape from the Germans fell into the hands of hungry, ferocious Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks, passing by, are trying to mobilize part of the population for war, and some part for hard work in the eastern regions of the USSR, many are accused of “treason” and shot on the spot” (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 258).

A few months after the above-mentioned leaflet emerged, the expected threat of a “Bolshevik flood” overcame an important Dnieper barrier (Lysenko & Pyliavets, 2019), reached areas where the Ukrainian nationalist underground had the highest density of its organizational network and the UPA units seized the main forests arrays. In the “Outline of the Review of Events, Life and Struggle under the Soviet Occupation from January of 1944 to July of 1944”, the unknown author depicted the chronology and dynamics of the main events accurately: “After some stagnation of frontline action on the Dnieper line, the Bolsheviks broke through the German defenses on Kyiv – Kremenchuk section and advanced rapidly, capturing Rivne, Zdolbuniv, and Dubno in the middle of January. In fact, the “eastern” front became the “northern” front; the frontline passed through: Dubno, Kremenets, Proskuriv, Vinnytsia, Mykolayiv, the Crimea. Within a month, the Bolsheviks moved a little bit forward (...). It was not until the end of February of 1944 that the Bolsheviks conquered Kremenets, made a breakthrough on Proskuriv – Ternopil section, and in the first half of March of 1944 occupied the southeastern regions of Galicia as far as the Dniester. The second breakthrough was from Vinnytsia in the direction of Mohylev, and then to the west on the Romanian side surrounded by 7 German divisions, which made their way west as far as Buchach. In the middle of April, the front line ran from Yas, through the Dniester, Strypa, Zalizka, Brody, Lutsk, Kovel, and the front was established on this line until the middle of July of 1944 – at the request of leading cadres and the entire population” (Vovk & Kokin, 2006, pp. 445–446). The first underground reporting documents began to appear, depicting a long-lasting image of the Red Army and the Soviet administration, namely during the period from March to July of 1944. It should be mentioned that quite often the first major sources of information on the pages of underground reports were the stories of runaway peasants, who crossed the front line “on the German side”, telling about their short experience of living in the Soviet reality. The first impressions of the Red Army were extremely colorful, ranging from extremely negative to moderately positive or neutral. Local residents and the OUN underground members were struck by the strange (compared to the Wehrmacht) appearance of the Red Army soldiers, their weapons and age. In particular, in a report from the territory of Rivne region dated February 1, 1944, the reporter wrote the following: “Weapons are different. The reconnaissance groups are armed, to a lesser extent, with rapid-fire rifles and finky (*finky – Shpahin’s submachine gun was called in the OUN underground*) and submachine guns and, of course, krisy (*rifles – the author*). They also have grenades. All other armies are not well armed, what a person can get. Most of them are ordinary Soviet rats. (...) All kinds of people serve in the army, from 14-year-olds to 50-year-olds. (...) The national composition of the army is different. The majority are the Russians. There are also many Ukrainians. The intelligence units are dominated by very young Russians and, to a lesser extent, the Ukrainians. The Red Army men are dressed in overcoats, kufaika, cotton pants and, in small quantities, in sheepskin coats. Having whatever put on their feet: valianky, boots, high boots are very few. The Red Army soldiers are fed badly. They are asked to eat in the houses. To the question

of what exactly they are fighting for, what drives them forward, they answer: “Hatred of the Germans and terrible discipline”... (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 214). In fact, the same features of the Red Army soldiers were recorded in a report from the southern part of Volyn for the last decade of February of 1944. The author of the document pointed out the high age requirement of mobilized Ukrainians from the eastern regions – “even 50 years” (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 216), the inconsistency of their uniforms with the idea of a regular army (“the soldiers often dressed in their own clothes or have only a military overcoat” (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 216)), poor training of mobilized (“the recruits are trained for only two weeks and driven to the front”) (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 216).

On March 10, 1944, the OUN underground interviewed a group of peasants, who lived on the German side of the front near Berestechko but went to work near Dubno traditionally, where they were caught in frontline fighting, forcing them to live on the Soviet side for two weeks. The Red Army had negative impressions on the “migrant workers”: “They no longer saw partisan, but the army that is no different from each other. They have no commanders, only officers. The national composition is mainly the Moscals and the Caucasians. There are very few Ukrainians. There are the Jews, but not on the frontline, but behind it. The attitude of officers to the soldiers is under scrutiny. The soldiers’ provision is very poor, they walk ragged, barefoot, dirty, suffering from lice. They rob the population no worse than partisans, but still rob less. Armed with finky, empis (*apparently a pro-German submachine gun (Maschinen Pistole) MR-38 or MR - 40 – the author*) and rapid fire, but most of the krisy (crossbows). Weapons are different: the Soviet, the German, the Hungarian. Laces were fastened around the krisy (crosses) or finky instead of belts. Discipline seems to still exist, but the schedule is already visible. The soldiers scatter weapons and ammunition. This is often done on purpose, trampling it in the snow (...) There is strong desertion in the army. Entire units arbitrarily go behind and roam the villages, looking for food (...) The Red Army already has enough war. If the Germans could hold out longer, the Soviet army could scatter, judging by the mood of the Red Army. They say: “Drive the German behind the Buh, and let them there command as they want” (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 218).

The underground soldiers from Brody also noted the variety of appearance of the Red Army, their poor weapons, fatigue from the war (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 239) and peasants from the outskirts of Ternopil, who were returned under the control of the German troops at the end of March of 1944. The residents interviewed by an underground reporter noted that there were many Ukrainians among the Red Army mobilized from neighbouring regions (near Dubno and Shepetivka). They are resolutely against the Bolsheviks and the relationship between them and the commanders – the NKVD is extremely hostile (...) they are driven by force to the front” (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 259). “It should be also noted that the above-mentioned report divided military units very clearly into those led by the communist fanatics and ordinary officers indifferent to the Bolshevik ideology: “Units led by the Komsomol members and political instructors are more brutal in their behaviour. Instead, the parts in which they do not exist, behave more tolerantly (...) Cases of robberies happen, although they are legally forbidden to rob” (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 259). The underground reporter from Zboriv region depicted a similar portrait of the Red Army soldier in March of 1944 (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 229). At the same time, the reporter provided quite interesting information about the penal battalions, which were apparently located on this section of the front: “all the advanced units are people, who were sentenced to death by the Soviet authorities, then pardoned and sent to the front lines to

justify themselves. These divisions receive a strict order never to retreat. It is not allowed to take them on vacation until this department is distinguished by a heroic deed at the front... Then such a department is transferred to a normal state. Of course, very few or none of such units survive" (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 259).

In addition, interesting information about the state of the Soviet troops, the mood of the Red Army and the level of their material support was provided by the underground worker "Kalyna" in the "report" from the outskirts of Brody in the second half of March – at the beginning of May of 1944. According to the document, which showed the traditional ambiguous image of the Red Army soldiers, who were mobilized by force with the help of the "political hands" from "all nationalities" aged 16 to 60, imbued with anti-war sentiments and morally depressed by the low level of their military training and weapons, which doomed them to the role of the "cannon fodder". On the front line, they are held back by the fear of death "from their own comrades" in the case of retreat, flight or desertion. "The most striking thing is that the Red Army soldiers are ragged and hungry. Their first step in the newly acquired terrain (village) is the looting attacks. They rob the population of what they can get by their hands, leaving nothing behind, and they search hard for food..." (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 242).

The image of the Red Army robber was formed clearly on the basis of the reports written by the underground in Stanislaviv region. For instance, in a report of March and the beginning of April of 1944, the author highlighted that the Soviet soldiers "Robbed terribly, especially food and clothing. The looted clothes are exchanged for food. They drink horilka in abundance. There are often cases of robbing ordinary people. They hunt specifically for watches" (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 235). Due to poor provision, fatigue from continuous fighting, low chances of survival, weak discipline, the Soviet soldiers were pushed to alcoholism and looting of civilians, which could be recorded on the entire front line from Polissia to the Carpathians. Although it was not only these crimes that the "liberators" "distinguished" in Western Ukraine during the period of the front activities. The OUN underground informant from Pidhayechchynna provided new details concerning the morale of the Red Army soldiers, who established themselves along the Strypa River in April of 1944. In particular, the underground informant gave the facts of robbery of churches by soldiers and rape of women (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 241): "The Bolsheviks also rape women, saying that they have permission from their commanders. Girls even die of such rape" (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 241). Based on the above-mentioned small passage, we can infer that it was a mass phenomenon, and, apparently, gang rape, which resulted in the deaths of the victims. For example, the report from Radekhiv region of March-April of 1944 also recorded the brutal treatment of women by the Red Army soldiers and the "rape of women", which was "on the agenda" (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 243). As for the permissions from the command on sexual violence, it most likely meant "unofficial approval" or "turning a blind eye" to the facts of rape. Obviously, everything depended on the level of discipline and behaviour of the individual unit commander. For instance, the OUN reporter described the events of May-June of 1944 in northern Ternopil and southern Rivne regions, and said that there had been raped a 60-year-old woman, who "complained to the commander and pointed at the soldier, who had raped her. The commander shot him on the spot" (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 251). It is difficult to say which factor provoked such a sharp reaction from the commander – either his personal disapproval of violence against the civilians, the woman's age or desire to maintain discipline, but it was obvious that the method worked

because, according to the same report, the mass violence against women, looting of houses and churches stopped during the period of “stabilization” of the front in this area (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 251).

The above-mentioned reviews of the Soviet troops relate to the countryside, however, the most detailed and colourful characteristics of the Red Army and the Soviet administration could be found in the reports of the OUN underground from the Galician capital Lviv. The author of at least one of these documents (July 1944) (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, pp. 41–45) was identified – Bohdana-Maria Svitlyk, the writer, the head of Lviv city women’s leadership of the OUN, wrote under the pseudonym “Dmytrenko” (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 45). This brave young woman, with her inherent literary flair, described Lviv during the Red Army’s entry, the course of the fighting in the city, the behaviour of the Polish underground, the impression of the new masters of the situation – the Bolsheviks. The description of the battles for the big city resembled the report of a skilled journalist, who recorded the greatest details, including the mood of the soldiers on the front line, the number of bombings and the caliber of weapons used. “At least on Friday, 27.VII.44, we were still dealing with things the old-fashioned way, – wrote Bohdana-Maria Svitlyk to the leadership of the underground – the Bolsheviks were already approaching from the green rohachaka (horn) and on Saturday the street fights broke out on Zelena street, Tarnavskoho street, Yatska street, Kokhanovskoho street. Single tracks reached Fredry street, Batoroho street, Lozynskyi street, Pelchynska street. On Saturday the Citadel was taken by the offensive from Pelchynska street. On Saturday and Sunday were the days of heavy street fighting on Batory street, Pilsudski street, Zelena street, in which several tanks and several soldiers were destroyed on both sides. It is characteristic that the Germans retreated three times on this section and each time they were turned over by the field gendarmerie. On Sunday afternoon, the Bolsheviks seized Akademichna street and began to move to the market, Halytska and Mariinska squares were the scene of heavy fighting again. The place of German defense were Brayer street, Krasyskyi street, Krakivska street, Zhovkivska street, Theodore Square, where the Germans stayed longer, securing a lapel, where the fighting went for almost every town in particular, as a result of which this area was severely destroyed. During the fighting, the Germans were blaze to the population, there is no record of any abuse or violence. When it comes to the characteristics of Lviv battles, they were only a miniature of what we used to think of the street battles, or those from 1939 – 41. Bombing is rare, no more than 10 – 15 bombs of the smallest caliber are dropped at a time, firefighting is also rare and light caliber, shooting in lazy street battles is minimal. There were almost no clusters of tanks and military units. During the Bolshevik offensive in Lviv, there were very few German troops at all. (All barracks were emptied before the fighting). The columns of the advancing Bolsheviks were also not very numerous, but went mostly along the main streets. Compared to what we had hoped for, the intensity of the fighting was very low. The Germans did not show any desire to fight, and when they defended, only with the thought of a lapel” (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 42).

It should be mentioned that the first units of the Red Army that entered Lviv had a favourable impression on the reporter surprisingly: “When it comes to the Bolshevik victors, who entered Lviv by attacking small units, at first glance, they made a very good impression. Armed all with the American submachine guns, the ‘kresy’ (firearm) were almost invisible. Also, the appearance of soldiers, healthy, well-off Ukrainians or Moskals, compared to 1939 is much better. Against the population were treated favourably, or indifferently favourably” (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 42).

Hence, it is quite difficult to state whether the above-mentioned record was made due to the fact that the Red Army’s first line of attack did not meet the established stereotypes of the Galicians concerning the Red Army, whether the command really decided to send the city’s best manned and armed assault units for predicted street fighting (in the spring of 1943, 15 engineering and assault brigades were deployed in the Red Army, which were used for urban battles primarily, had good training, the best equipment and uniforms). We should put emphasis on the fact that, in any case, the level of discipline and security of the first front units was quite high, as soon the behavior and appearance of the second echelon of the advancing troops were somewhat different: “In the first cultural departments, which treated the population well immediately, they themselves almost did not plunder private property in any case, except for some of the bases or crypts, began to flow in an endless river more and more. When, as described above, the first units are armed and *vyvinuvani* (*that is, provided, equipped – the author*) famously, the next are presented under that review even worse and worse. It is said that this phenomenon should not be explained by the lack of weapons, but that careful command gives weapons to *zhovnirs* (the Polish soldiers) before the front, just before the possibility of battle. It’s like equipped cars. First cargo tanks, later primitive cars in small numbers, and then an endless roll of carts, often of local Galician origin, and all the endless number of *zhovnirs*, who go and then go on feet without end. When it comes to comparisons with the Germans, we can say that the Germans had almost no *zhovnirs*, but had cars, and it is disgusting. The whole first week of the Bolsheviks’ stay in Lviv was an endless movement of their units to the west, which did not stop day or night. Between the army you can see many women, not assigned to separate formations, but together with men. They do the police service, Ardis-Telegraph, Communications and the alike.

The army itself has a very friendly impression. The army does not rob, does not commit any violence or abuse, it helps the population gladly. The army chat with the population.

There were cases when *zhovnirs* presented looted property to the population during the stretching of some bases in Lviv. Among the soldiers one could notice something if the consequences of our propaganda, hostility to the Jews, homesickness, awareness of the Poles, sentiment towards the Ukrainians. In general, there is an element to all these signs, which in its mentality can be a good ground for our propaganda.

Simultaneously with the army there is a propaganda department with a car and a map of the fronts, flyers, literature, radium, etc. The content of this is well known” (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 43).

Taking everything into consideration, the author of the document maintained a favourable attitude towards the Red Army generally, apparently captive to the belief that the OUN was underground that by agitation and propaganda it would be possible to raise the Red Army to revolt or revolution against the Bolshevik government. In addition, the OUN members tried to spot the confirmation of their own ideas concerning public sentiment and revolutionary prospects on an all-Union scale owing to every dissatisfaction of the soldiers, their statements and behaviour. It should be mentioned that what exactly was not a “fruit of imagination”, was often mentioned domestic anti-Semitism, inherent in the “liberators” of which were mentioned by almost all OUN publishers. The author of the report confirmed the claims concerning the dominance of anti-Semitic views among soldiers and officers of the front units, adding her own observations and stories of other witnesses: “Right after the final retreat of the Germans on the night of July of 28, the first Jews began to emerge timidly. They were nervous, completely exhausted, unbelievably thin, sick types for the most part for a long

time unable to lead a normal life. The population looked at them with unfriendly fear, hoping for a new privilege and new denunciations. However, in private conversations and individual explanations, the RA appears to be completely anti-Semitic. The fact: A convoy of prisoners killed a Jew, who struck a German prisoner in the face, relying on the Jewish tolerance. A Red Army soldier killed a Jew in Levandivka, who mentioned the return of money from a man, who was hiding him” (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 44).

It should be mentioned that being completely immersed in the stereotype of the privileged position of the Jews in the USSR, the OUN members often tried to compare the attitude of the Soviet government towards local Jews in 1939 and 1944 (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, pp. 244, 247, 248, 252, 255), however, the issue was covered clearly in the report from Lviv of July of 1944. In particular, the leader of the OUN women’s network in the Galician capital depicted vividly the first mass rally held by the Soviet authorities after the city was free from the German troops, putting emphasis on an important detail – the intolerance of the “other Soviets” towards the victims of the Nazi genocide: “Finally on Sunday 30.VII. the population of Lviv was about to thank for the new liberation, and the new government was to speak in its own praise. According to the ancient custom, the demonstration of the whole population was prepared and it was proclaimed that Galicia is an inseparable part of Soviet Ukraine, and Poland is created only after Sianky. Kauev spoke outside the party, the commander of the Galician Front (*apparently Marshal Ivan Konev, who commanded the troops of the First Ukrainian Front, which took Lviv – the author*), Barvinskyi (*apparently – a composer and pianist Vasyl Barvinskyi – the author*) from the Ukrainians, a Pole, a colonel, congratulated on the new union country from the Poles, assured us of our salvation. They all saw the Ukrainian nationalists as the sworn enemies of the Ukrainian people. Characteristically, in contrast to 1939, no representative of the Jews spoke, and in general, not a word was mentioned about the Jewish issue. If we add to this that, in addition to the registration of 1 000 Jews, no aid action is held for them, their martyrdom is not glorified, and no documents are collected on anti-Jewish actions, it turns out that the attitude of the Bolsheviks towards the Jews has changed somewhat.

Of course, we could not learn anything about the most interesting thing for us – the attitude of the Bolsheviks towards the Ukrainians – because the assurances that the Bolsheviks fled in vain, the Bolsheviks will not persecute any of the Ukrainians (Khrushchev’s words) – we heard in 1939 and, therefore, carries no weight” (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 44).

Apart from a description of the Red Army, their moods and the first propaganda steps of the government, B.-M. Svitlyk focused on the creation of a new system of governance in the region – security agencies, management to mobilize the population for work, structures for military mobilization, civil administration, financial structures in her report (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, pp. 44–45). The reporter was taken aback by the speed and clarity with which the Bolsheviks mastered the situation, which she explained by copying the German models of government, large-scale aid from the Western Allies and the morale of military victories that the Bolsheviks, in spite of all the obvious shortcomings inside (the “narrowness of the regime”), the low state of civilization, but not material weapons of arms (*equipment – the author*) pass the modern culmination of their expansivity (*expansivity – the author*). They copied their current strategy and internal organization very well (example: covering the whole almost complicated (*complex – the author*) organizational apparatus of Lviv in a few days) from the Germans, and being the last on the battlefield in the east, they adapted it in their campaign. At the same time, they have an easy time, because the Germans do not put up

any resistance at all (at least during Lviv campaign from Brody, Zolochiv to Lviv). In these easy-successes, however, lies an equally important factual and moral danger, in the event of a meeting with strong resistance at some point. Then we can just notice all these ailments that we all notice" (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 45).

Thorough reports to make the collective image of the "liberator" were also given by the reports of the OUN underground from Lviv for October (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, pp. 46–50) and December (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, pp. 51–52) 1944 and April 1945 (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, pp. 53–54). Looking more closely at the restored Soviet power and the military units stationed in the city, the OUN members became more and more critical in their impressions of what they saw. They were taken aback by the Ukrainians from the east, who spoke only Russian, but hated the Bolshevik government and had vivid memories of the Ukrainian revolution of 1917 – 1921 (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, pp. 51–52), shocked by the low level of critical thinking of the Soviet administrators and specialists arriving in the Galician capital: "The environment of gray Soviet mannequins is divided into those who do not think at all, for whom Stalin thinks "party and government" and those who think a little. These include non-partisans and those who have been under German occupation for at least one day. The latter feel the care of the former in the face of the NKGB and the NKVD, especially those who remained in the western regions" (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 54). At that time, the phrase "Homo Sovieticus" was not introduced into scientific and everyday use yet, but the way of thinking concerning this category of people, outlined in later Western Sovietology, was fully consistent with those features (for more details on the formation of the term "Homo Sovieticus", see: Yurii Kahanov Vision of a "New Soviet man" in European and American historiography of the second half of the XXth century), which was noticed by nationalists in 1944.

Although the behavior of civilians and the military in Lviv was the most surprising: "When we observe the influx of new "liberators" to our city, we notice, first of all, a large influx of civilian authorities and women. They come in the following "portions": 500 female teachers, 1 000 female government officials, etc. Also, every married man, regardless of his position, tries to get his wife here with "children". In addition, there is a lot of police of all kinds, but fewer stationed troops, that is, the troops that would be in the city; the old Polish and then German barracks are mostly empty, and the army is stationed in private houses, and especially around the city, where they are in very respectable numbers. Except for the well-known things, it is more and more striking concerning the attitude towards the RA, the barbaric mixing of healthy soldiers with the disabled, who with their well-deformed movements try to equal the pace of healthy comrades with their well-deformed movements. In general, the mass phenomenon of the most distorted young people in military uniforms most likely testifies to the quality of medical care, which has already been characterized many times" (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 40).

The OUN underground paid great attention to the mood of the army, in particular, to the manifestations of dissatisfaction with the command, the contradictions between the frontliners and the rear, fatigue from the war, and etc. Hence, in the October of 1944 report it was informed that "Another process is embedded in the mentality of the military: the split between the frontliners and the garrison. This conflict, which can be seen in every army, has deep causes on the Soviet ground. First of all, a frontliner is a Ukrainian, a nationalist and only rarely a Moskal. The Soviet frontliner is mostly a zhovnir at greatest risk, as in other armies, and almost literally cannon fodder (the Bolshevik strategy in this direction is

known), when to this is added the poor zhovnir's provision and a direct meeting with the local population, then all these circumstances create the types of desperate people, who are a "pan-brother" with death, who increasingly has the opportunity to develop an independent worldview and a corresponding assessment of the Bolshevik truth. Against this background, a certain conflict is already emerging. When such frontliner comes to the city, his whole grief is sprinkled on the "regulators" of the movement (women's police), which the frontliners at best completely ignore, and mostly verbally give vent to all their anger. There were even cases of injuries or running over. There are threats from them that after the war they will have to reckon with those from the backyard. In general, the army wants to go home and is feverishly looking for the cause of such a long war (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 40).

The situation of the Soviet women (both in the army and in civilian life), disenfranchisement and disrespectful attitude of the Soviet authorities to the motherhood, which provoked terrible social consequences, made a very negative impression on the Ukrainian underground activists in Lviv: "Even more, men are fed up with military "sapohy" (boots) designed for women in the army, the barbaric demands and men are very dissatisfied with their uniforms. However, there are rumors that all women will soon be removed from active service, with the exception of the Red Cross, but this is not very likely. The order was supposed to be in connection with the custody of a mother and a child, about whom much is being written now, but it is enough to look at a 30-year-old woman, who looks 40 years old, in the addition, suffering from a chronic disease and hears through the wall the cry of a 3-year-old child, whose mother has to go to work all day – to appreciate all these declarations about a happy childhood and women's rights (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 40).

The Ukrainian nationalists were somewhat flabbergasted by the Soviet government's solution to the issue of orphanhood caused by the Red Army's heavy fighting losses: "In order to curb the scourge of homeless children, the regime has come up with the amazing idea of enlisting children killed in the war ... into the army. The children aged 8 – 14 in military uniforms and with weapons are seen. These are the youngest volunteers. How the mentality of children is affected by their militarization, let the fact that in one movie during the performance such a "soldiers" cut off the shoulders of a Lviv "batiaryk", causing bloody wounds. After all, it seems that such an upbringing is not entirely accidental, taking into account that the "hero" of the Soviet Union is a soldier, who murdered 917 enemies, an official stamp with a photo and the inscription: Hero of the Soviet Union – destroyed 917 enemies of the people. Along the same lines are film performances for schools, which show the scariest faces for children 1 – 2 classes. This tendency is shown by newspaper articles, feuilletons and short stories, which similarly describe all sorts of deaths inflicted by soldiers on the Germans or anyone else" (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 40).

The image of the Red Army and the Soviet administrators is complemented by reports of the OUN underground from Stanislaviv, where 12 000 Red Army troops were stationed in October of 1944 and the NKVD and the NKGB apparatus was fully staffed (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 95). The reporter from this city noticed the high level of desertion among the ordinary soldiers, contradictions and conflicts between the Red Army and the state security officers, who persecuted fugitives from the army and carried out violent mobilizations of civilians (SSA SSU, f. 13, c. 376, vol. 74, p. 95).

**The Conclusions.** Taking everything into consideration, it should be emphasized that the OUN underground reporting documentation of 1944 – 1945 provided quite a rich material for the reconstruction of the Soviet soldiers and administrators image, who returned to the western

region during the last years of World War II. First of all, it should be mentioned that the image of the Red Army soldier was quite colourful and controversial. The reporters always made a clear division concerning the front lines and the rear units. The front lines, as a rule, had better weapons and uniforms, but for the most part (except in Lviv) there was a shortage of food, which made them loot. The front lines were also characterized as fairly brave warriors with clear traits of fatalism (“careless attitude to death”) and war fatigue (the desire to end hostilities as soon as possible and return home). It should be emphasized that the level of discipline, appearance, moral degradation, demotivation, and behaviour of the units and subdivisions of the “Second Front Echelon” terrified the local population, who were the main informants of the OUN reports. Due to this, the Red Army soldier appeared in the underground reports, mostly as a ragged, always a hungry and drunk robber and rapist, who, apparently, was, in general, correlating with the general state of the affairs. Their nationality and criticism of the Bolshevik government were of great importance for the formation of the underground’s opinion of the Red Army. According to the OUN documents, which demonstrated a sympathetic attitude towards the Ukrainian soldiers and other “nationalists” and depicted a cooler attitude towards the Russian and the Jewish origin Red Army soldiers. The Ukrainian soldiers were seen as potential allies in the struggle against Bolshevism, the Russian and the Jewish soldiers were considered to be the mainstay of the regime. However, it is important to note that the role of “support” of the Soviet power was given to the Russians increasingly rather than the Jews, as it was still believed in the OUN in 1939 – 1941. At the same time, the image of the Soviet administration in the OUN reports was less differentiated. It was mostly negative. The authorities were characterized as uneducated and primitive people without critical thinking, densely indoctrinated by the official ideology, prone to abuse, corruption and profit, hated by the rest of society.

Focusing on the further prospects of research on the topic, it should be mentioned that the analyzed corpus of the OUN underground reporting documents contains a large amount of information about the German and the Hungarian troops, the Polish underground, the psychological state of the Ukrainian citizenship, prices and social security, economic problems, etc. it is possible to use them in the future to create a holistic picture of military and political events and everyday life in Ukraine during the war.

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