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PECULIARITIES OF THE SOVIET UNDERGROUND AND PARTISAN MOVEMENT IN “GALICIA” DISTRICT (1941 – 1944)

Abstract. *The purpose* of the research is to determine the ethnic composition of the Soviet self-organized underground organizations and partisan detachments in “Galicia” district during the Nazi occupation and to clarify the participation of the Polish population in the underground organizations and partisan detachments. **The research methodology** is based on the principles of systematicity, scientificity, historicism and comprehensiveness. In the research, historical comparative, problem-chronological, retrospective methods, and the method of criticism of historical sources have been used. **The scientific novelty** consists in the fact that for the first time the author, based on a critical analysis of the Ukrainian historiography and information sources, has determined the role of the “Polish” factor in the formation and activity of underground and partisan organizations and groups in the region. In the **conclusions**, the author proceeds from the fact that the Soviet underground and partisan movement in the district “Galicia” was small and relatively weak. It is also quite debatable to apply to it such definitions as “partisan” or “resistance movement”. The reason for this is the lack of a critical mass of the local population in its ranks and a clear organization of efforts to resist the Nazi occupation authorities. The predominantly Ukrainian population of the region did not support such a movement.

Considering the above mentioned facts of the archival sources analysis and the results of previous research, we should determine a significant role of the “Polish” influence on the organization and activities of the Soviet underground and partisan cells in the district. This significant role was manifested both in the active participation of the Polish anti-Hitler underground of the pro-Soviet leftist orientation, and the local Polish ethnic population, which, not always willingly, but under the power of circumstances, began its cooperation with non-local organizers of local groups of underground partisan struggle – the Soviet soldiers and communists. An additional factor in such cooperation was the peak of the Ukrainian-Polish conflict in Western Ukrainian lands during World War II.

In every way the Soviet and pro-Soviet historiography tried to conceal the fact of a significant Polish influence on the above mentioned forms of struggle. The aim of such activity was to support the myth of “people’s Soviet avengers”, “nationwide struggle against fascism under the Soviet power leadership”, etc.

Key words: district “Galicia”, the Poles, the Soviet partisans, the Soviet underground, occupation.

ОСОБЛИВОСТІ РАДЯНСЬКОГО ПІДПІЛЬНОГО Й ПАРТИЗАНСЬКОГО РУХУ В ДИСТРИКТІ “ГАЛИЧИНА” (1941 – 1944)

Анотація. *Мета* роботи полягає у встановленні етнічного складу радянських самоорганізованих партизанських загонів та підпільних організацій дистрикту “Галичина” під час нацистської окупації та участі у них польського населення. **Методологічна база** дослідження ґрунтується на принципах системності, науковості, історизму та всебічності. Під час написання розвідки використані історико-порівняльний, проблемно-хронологічний, ретроспективний методи, а також метод змістовної критики історичних джерел. **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що автор вперше на основі критичного аналізу української історіографії та інформаційних джерел встановлює роль “польського” фактора у формуванні та функціонуванні підпільних та партизанських організацій і груп на теренах регіону. **У висновках** автор виходить з того, що радянський підпільний та партизанський рух у дистрикті “Галичина” був малочисельним та відносно слабким. Також є доволі дискусійним застосування до нього таких визначень як “партизанський” або ж “рух опору”. Причина цього – відсутність критичної маси місцевого населення у його лавах та чіткої організації зусиль щодо опору нацистській окупаційній владі. Українське населення, що переважало у регіоні, такий рух не підтримало, однак це не дає підстав залишати його поза увагою.

Зважаючи на аналіз архівних джерел та результатів попередніх досліджень, можемо стверджувати про вагомий роль “польського” впливу на організацію та діяльність радянського підпілля і партизанських осередків на території дистрикту. Це виявлялось як в активній участі польського антигітлерівського підпілля прорадянської лівої орієнтації, так і місцевого польського етнічного населення, яке не завжди охоче, але під владою обставин розпочало свою співпрацю із немісцевими організаторами локальних груп підпільно-партизанської боротьби – радянськими військовиками та комуністами. Додатковим фактором такої співпраці був пік українсько-польського конфлікту на західноукраїнських землях у роки Другої світової війни.

Радянська та прорадянська історіографія намагалася усіляко приховати факт вагомого польського впливу на зазначені форми боротьби. Метою такої діяльності була підтримка міфу про “народних радянських месників”, “всенародної боротьби проти фашизму під проводом радянської влади” тощо.

Ключові слова: дистрикт “Галичина”, поляки, радянські партизани, радянські підпільники, окупація.

Problem Statement. The aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine causes an urgent need to cover the events of World War II on the territory of our state in general and Western Ukrainian lands in particular. One of the varieties of that war is the partisan and underground struggle in the “Galicia” district, which was waged, among others, by the Soviet groups. Objective analysis of World War II events will lead to a more effective counteraction to the Russian technologies of using myths and stereotypes to manipulate the historical memory of the Ukrainian citizens, and will make it possible to resist the Russian aggression in its historical informational and psychological dimensions more actively.

Review of Recent Research and Publications. Given the small scale of the local Soviet partisan and underground movement in the territory of “Galicia” district, it is mentioned superficially by the leading Ukrainian researchers of the partisan movement during the German-Soviet war.

In independent Ukraine the first significant research, which concerns this issue, is the monograph by A. Chaikovskiy “Unknown War: (Partisan Movement in Ukraine in 1941 – 1944 in the Language of Documents, through the Eyes of a Historian)” (Chaikovskiy, 1994). One chapter of the monograph focuses on the Western Ukrainian lands. The author justifies the “late appearance” of the Soviet partisan movement there by “serious miscalculations and political clumsiness of the Soviet government”, which brought the Stalinist totalitarian

regime. At the same time, the author does not cite any facts of the Polish influence or the Polish-Ukrainian cooperation in the activities of the Soviet partisans.

In Volume 12 "Ukraine in World War II and the Great Patriotic War" (Koval, 1999) of the 15-volume edition of "Ukraine through the Ages" by M. Koval there is analyzed, among other things, the underground partisan "second front". The author, it seems to us, is the first Ukrainian scholar to come to the conclusion about the nature of the pro-Soviet resistance movement unfolding in Ukraine. He attributes the driving force of the partisan movement not to the "guiding role of the bolshevik party", but to the Red Army soldiers who remained in the territory occupied by the Wehrmacht and continued the struggle using partisan methods. The author also counts among the active participants military escapees from the German captivity (almost half of the Soviet army fell into escapees during the first period of the war) and civilians escapees from forced labour. Later, in more favourable circumstances, members of the former communist party joined the underground in the occupied territories. These theses of the author, which were almost revolutionary at the time, for the first time allowed us to look at the problem of the Soviet resistance movement in a different way. At the same time, nowadays, M. Koval's research on the partisan movement is rather superficial and does not contain any ethno-political context.

The first comprehensive historiographical study of the resistance movement in Ukraine was the research by of M. Slobodianiuk "The Anti-Fascist Resistance Movement in Ukraine during World War II in Domestic Historiography" (Slobodianiuk, 2018). In addition to analyzing the studies on the anti-fascist resistance movement by domestic authors, the author analyzed the resistance movement as a phenomenon and comprehensively presented his own vision of the anti-fascist resistance movement in Ukraine.

A. Kentii made a significant contribution to the development of research on the Soviet partisan movement in Ukraine. In particular, his research with A. Gogun under the title "... To Create Unbearable Conditions for the Enemy and all his Accomplices...". Red Partisans of Ukraine in 1941 – 1944: Little-studied Pages of History. Documents and Materials" (Gogun, & Kentii, 2006) highlights unexplored and mostly negative, and during the Soviet period – actually prohibited facts about the partisan movement. In cooperation with V. Lozytskyi, A. Kentii published the study entitled "War without Mercy and Compassion: the Partisan Movement in the Wehrmacht Rear in Ukraine (1941 – 1944)" (Kentii, & Lozytskyi, 2005b). Later, the popular study of the above-mentioned historians "Soviet Partisans in 1941 – 1944: Light and Shadows" was published (Kentii, & Lozytskyi, 2005a). The study focuses on the organization and struggle of the Soviet resistance movement on the territory of Ukraine, emphasizing its ideological function.

In his research D. Viedenieiev points out that in the Soviet times, the past of partisanship became perhaps the most idealized, the "varnished" page of the war. In particular, a complete taboo was imposed on certain aspects of the partisan underground movement (miscalculations in the organization of partisanship, the problem of partisan relations with the local population and the Ukrainian anti-communist insurgent movement, manifestations of betrayal, an exaggerated representation of the ruling party and special services role in the organization of partisanship, statistical additions in determining the number of partisans and their combat results) (Viedenieiev, 2011, p. 214).

The image and status of the Soviet "people's avengers" formed (largely by the bolshevik propaganda) de facto secured a position for them that was often interpreted as permissiveness and impunity for any actions. One of the little-studied areas is elucidated by V. Ginda and

O. Lysenko in the recent publication of the domestic historiography of the Soviet partisan and underground movement (Ginda, & Lysenko, 2024).

However, the above mentioned studies omit the issues of the Soviet underground partisan struggle in “Galicia” district mostly, given its weakness, providing only superficial remarks concerning the Polish-Soviet cooperation in the ranks of pro-Soviet partisans and the underground.

V. Starka is almost the only researcher of the resistance movement in Galicia during the Nazi occupation in the context of the issues under research. In the mid-2000s, V. Starka published a number of studies on the issues of interaction and relations between national partisan movements in the region (Starka, 2003; Starka, 2004; Starka, 2012).

To some extent the issues of the Polish-Soviet cooperation within the pro-Soviet underground are also covered in the studies by V. Hulay. Thus, his publication “Communication Mechanisms and Scale of Propaganda Influence of Soviet Partisans and Underground on Lviv Region Population during the Years of the Nazi Occupation” (2014) contains some facts of the “Polish” influence on the emergence and changes in the organizational structure of the Soviet underground and partisan movement in Lviv region in 1941 – 1944, which require further verification based on archival materials and historiography. In particular, the broader context of the armed confrontation in Galicia, with the participation of the Soviet underground fighters and partisans, is elucidated in the article published in the thorough publication “Eastern European Historical Bulletin” (Hulay, & Maksymets, 2021).

The confrontation between supporters of the Ukrainian nationalist and Soviet-communist ideologies in Zhytomyr region is highlighted in the research by I. Kovalchuk. The research is significant for involving a wide base of archival documents (Kovalchuk, 2020).

The preparation, conduct of agitation and propaganda by the Soviet underground groups and partisan detachments in Lviv region was analyzed in the authored publication (Shchehlov, 2025).

A review of the latest Western historiography on the problems of organization and effectiveness of the partisan movement in Ukraine in 1941 – 1942 was carried out in the research by L. Prylutska (Prylutska, 2025). In it, the author highlights the critical attitude of historians towards the Soviet myths about the Soviet partisans and the lack of mass support for the movement by the local population.

The Russian Federation's use of historical memory of World War II, including the Soviet partisan movement, to legitimize its own dominance in the post-Soviet space is analyzed in the article by O. Lysenko and T. Pastushenko (Lysenko, & Pastushenko, 2025).

In general, we observe the loss of the Ukrainian historians' interest in the issues of the Soviet partisan movement in Western Ukrainian lands. Although, such studies could be useful in modern realities, partially explaining the aggressive subversive and propaganda actions of the Russian Federation in the occupied territories and the rear of the Ukrainian state.

The purpose of the research is to determine the ethnic composition of the Soviet self-organized underground organizations and partisan detachments in “Galicia” district during the Nazi occupation and to clarify the participation of the Polish population in the underground organizations and partisan detachments.

Research Results. First of all, speaking about the Soviet partisan movement in “Galicia” district, it is worth mentioning its spontaneity. We agree to the statements of I. Kapas, who emphasizes that in parallel with the organization of a centralized structure of leadership of the Soviet partisan movement, a spontaneous resistance movement developed “unauthorized” in

the occupied territories, which was caused by both voluntary factors (primarily the patriotism of that part of the citizens who were distinguished by an active socio-political position and could not accept the inhumane policy of the enemy) and forced ones (danger to one's own life, emanating from the Nazi occupation authorities; fear of the bolsheviks' return and concerns about further possible repressions against a particular citizen or his family for staying in the occupied territory) (Kapas, 2016, p. 126).

Regarding the ethnic origin of the participants in the Soviet underground, we should partially agree with V. Starka's remarks that a significant part of the participants in the Soviet partisan underground formations were ethnic Ukrainians in the western regions of Ukraine. However, they were united primarily by a sense of belonging to the USSR. Awareness of themselves as "Soviet people", and only then as the Ukrainians. Representatives of this movement considered Ukraine as nothing other than a component of the Soviet Union. It is also important to remember that representatives of the Polish national and pro-communist underground were active in the western regions of Ukraine. For the former, the term "Polish National Underground" should be used, for the latter, the "Pro-Soviet Polish Resistance Movement" (Starka, 2003, p. 289).

In our opinion, it is necessary to do the research on the ethnic composition of the Soviet self-organized underground organizations and partisan detachments, since the formations controlled by the Ukrainian Headquarters of the partisan movement began entering the district's territory by raiding only in the summer of 1943 and were quickly defeated by the German occupation forces, fighting their way mainly into Volyn and especially Polissia. From the end of June 1941, these territories were part of the general districts "Volyn-Podillia" (the centre was in Lutsk) and "Zhytomyr" (the centre was in Zhytomyr) of the Reich Commissariat "Ukraine".

However, the Soviet political and military leadership persistently sought to establish geographical affiliation to Eastern Galicia, at least in the name of these formations, a striking example of which is the foundation and combat path of the M. S. Khrushchev Ternopil partisan unit under the command of Ivan Shytov (Ukraina partyzanska, 2001, pp. 69–70). During the period of January 27–30, 1944, the attempts of this partisan unit to break through to the south of Volyn and reach Ternopil region due to the concentration of enemy troops were unsuccessful. The units of this formation continued to interact in Polissia with the units of Army 13 until reaching the Soviet rear (Ukraina partyzanska, 2001, pp. 69–70).

In general, we can agree with D. Chobit that "in Ukraine the Soviet partisan movement did not do harm to the Nazis as much as the local population, creating unbearable living conditions for them. Sabotage, terror, and deliberate provocations caused repressions by the occupiers. Constant looting of peasants by partisans and punitive actions by the German troops generated fear, anger, and uncertainty" (Chobit, 2019, p. 127), especially in the "Galicia" district.

No matter how the Soviet historians tried to hide the dominant Polish nature of the Soviet underground in Lviv as the administrative centre of the "Galicia" district, however, a critical analysis of their publications gives reason to state the opposite. Thus, as a result of meetings in Lviv in May of 1942 between the representative of the Central Committee of the Polish Workers' Party (PWP) S. Ziaia and his colleagues with the Lviv communists, the agreement was reached that "the Lviv underground will act as an autonomous combat-ready underground partisan organization until it establishes contact (looking ahead, such a connection was established in March of 1944 with the partisan unit "Death to Fascism" under the leadership

of Mykola Naumov – a note by *A. Shchekhov*), with the centre, and the Central Committee of the Polish People's Party will provide it with all kinds of assistance. Former members of the Communist Party of Poland (CPP) will participate in the fight against fascism in the Lviv organization as members of the Polish People's Party" (*Borotba trudiashchykh*, 1984, p. 93).

The Polish People's Party was created underground in Warsaw on January 5, 1942, when representatives of the Union of Liberation Struggle, the "Proletary" group, the "Society of Friends of the USSR" and the "Hammer and Sickle" group decided to establish it, electing a temporary leadership headed by the "troika": M. Nowotko, P. Finder and B. Molojec (*Malinovskii, Pavlovich, Poteranskii, Pshegonskii. & Vilyush*, 1968, p. 93).

The external influence on the initial organization of the Soviet underground and partisan movement in Nazi-occupied Eastern Galicia is unambiguously indicated by the authors of that period, for example, separately highlighting the fact that "in the spring of 1942, a group of Polish communists under the leadership of Antoni Chmielewski ("Colonel Dyar") landed by parachute in the Lviv area. The other group was led by the paratrooper Zbigniew Hollianek, a former soldier of the Polish army. Both commanders joined the underground struggle and died in this struggle. Chmielewski – in Warsaw, Hollianek – in Lviv" (*Brechak*, 1974, p. 81).

As it is known, the largest Soviet underground organization was "The People's Guard" Lviv region. After the end of the hostilities and the establishment of the Soviet Union (the authenticity of participation in the partisan movement was verified by special commissions), it was recognized as the Ivan Franko Lviv Regional Underground Organization by the Lviv Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. "The People's Guard" began its activities in the autumn of 1942 – the first underground group was established in Lviv by the communists and Komsomol members who did not have time to evacuate before the German occupation of the region (including those who worked underground during the times of the Polish rule in the region – until 1939) and members of the Polish Workers' Party. Then, the leadership centre of the underground organization was established – the regional command. The network included previously disparate groups – combat detachments and sabotage groups operating in the districts of the region. These regional groups were headed by regional commandants. The city of Lviv was divided into four districts. The group of the Zaliznychny district included 12 underground fighters (according to other archival data – 13), the Chervonoarmiysky district – 31 (22), the Stalinsky district – 28 (31), the Shevchenkivsky district – 22 (Central State Archive of Public Organizations and Ucrainica, f. 1, d. 22, c. 151, pp. 1–2; State Archive of Lviv Region, f. 183, d. 2, c. 2, p. 152).

Returning to the establishment of the organization, it is worth noting that in June–July of 1942, a member of the Polish People's Party Wisenberg "Yanka" and other Polish communists arrived in Lviv. Together with them, local activists were involved in the work on creating the organization: Seleshchuk, Chaihin, Khinchinsky, Leschinsky, Navloka, Haievsky and the others. Other underground organizers – Zhukovsky and Genek (the former members of the CPSU) – left for Warsaw during the terror of the Jewish population in the city, but on their instructions, the aforementioned "Ziaia" was sent from Warsaw to organize the activity, and he was familiar with former Lviv communists. "Ziaia" organized the delivery of literature and instructions for underground activity from Warsaw from the Polish People's Party. By the way, the Polish People's Party press included more than 165 titles, more than 50 "military" publications, the main ones being the central organs of the party – "Trybuna Wolności" and the armed forces – "Gwardzista", and later – "Armia Ludowa" (*Parsadanova*, 1973, p. 172). The use of publications by the Soviet underground in Lviv region will be discussed

later. The newspaper "Gwardzista" was of an instructional and informational nature and promoted armed actions against the occupiers, while at the same time containing information from the partisan front of the struggle systematically (Malinovskii, Pavlovich, Poteranskii, Pshegoniskii, & Vilyush, 1968, p. 195).

Thus, the disparate groups of the Polish and Ukrainian Communist Party members managed to unite into one organization and elect a leadership centre of Lviv underground members (Leschinsky, Mateishyn, Berezin, Perchynsky). According to archival data, the organization was initially called "The Polish People's Party Organization" – as the name of the party, and only later "People's Guard". In late 1943 and early 1944, the organization was given the name "Partisan Movement of Western Regions of Ukraine". The newspaper "Partisan" became its printed organ (SALR, f. 183, d. 1, c. 3, pp. 50–51).

Returning to the "Polish" participation in the Soviet underground partisan movement, it is worth recalling that in 1943, on the instructions of the Polish People's Party, Kurylovych Ivan Prokofievych arrived in Lviv under the pseudonym "Ryszard" with the aim of leading the partisan movement in the city, including recruiting and joining the units. According to the testimony of the head of the sabotage activities Vovk, "Ryszard" was also connected with General Naumov and the headquarters of the partisan movement subordinate to him (SALR, f. 183, d. 1, c. 3, pp. 33, 51).

But it is worth noting that only in the summer of 1943, due to unexpectedly strong resistance of the UPA, S. Kovpak's unit entered the territory of Galicia for a short period of time, and the rest of the partisan formations were not even able to break through to the borders of this German district (Kentii, & Lozytskyi, 2005a, pp. 3–16).

Therefore, it is worth talking specifically about the Polish left-wing political nature of the underground movement in Lviv region in the absence of relevant contacts with formations directly subordinate to the Ukrainian Headquarters of the partisan movement.

In particular, a significant role in the organizational strengthening of the Soviet underground in Lviv was played by one of the leaders of the Polish People's Party, "Franek," who came to Warsaw from Moscow and from whom the leaders of "The People's Guard of the Avengers" received instructions, literature, and funds for their activities (Hulai, 2014, p. 109).

The ideological leadership of "The People's Guard" was headed by the political department. Archival materials indicate that it disseminated ideas that contradicted the beliefs of the Ukrainian and Polish nationalists (SALR, f. 183, d. 1, c. 3, p. 80). The goal of "The People's Guard" was to "assist the Red Army, to wage the struggle with all available means against the German-fascist invaders and Ukrainian-German and Polish nationalists for the restoration of Soviet power" (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 151, p. 152). The areas of the organization's partisan activities were Lviv, Zolochiv, Horodok, Vynnyky, Rava-Ruska, Kamianka-Buzka, Buzk and other districts of the region (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 415, pp. 118–124).

In turn, A. Kozytskyi claims that during the German occupation of 1941–1944, there was no bolshevik underground in Lviv. This fact denied one of the fundamental Soviet mythologies of World War II about the "organizing and directing" role of the All-Union Communist Party (bolsheviks) in the fight against Nazism. The city was home to Ukrainian and Polish underground structures, and quite separately, a small group of Polish socialists and communists who used the name "People's Guard of the Avengers", and from August of 1943, the "Partisan Council of the Western Regions of Ukraine", mainly the Poles and Polonized Jews, a few Russians and Ukrainians, but none of them knew how to write Ukrainian correctly (Kozytskyi, 2021, p. 272).

To some extent, we can find confirmation of A. Kozytskyi's statement expressed above in the Soviet publications, that "underground newspapers and leaflets published in Polish were edited by Yanina Ber, Karol Kuryliuk, Jakub Slyvka, Andrzej Weber, Stanislav Ziaia, in Ukrainian – by a journalist Kuzma Pelekhaty, Mykola Berezin, a former member of the CPSU Stepan Makivka, and the others" (Brechak, 1974, p. 87).

For ideological reasons, the Soviet historiography focuses on the influence of local Polish People's Party activists. The role of party leaders from Warsaw in the organizational formation of the communist underground in Lviv and its surroundings is mentioned much less. This is due to the actual state of affairs, when the city was primarily Polish in terms of national composition and politically represented the Polish party – the Polish People's Party (Variahina, & Vakulenko, 1979, pp. 28–31).

On June 15, 1943, in the telegram, the secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish People's Party, P. Finder, wrote to the head of the Comintern Executive Committee, H. Dymytrov, as if boasting, unambiguously indicating the Polish nature of the Soviet underground in Lviv: "A year ago, comrades from Lviv turned to us with a request to organize work for them. Considering that they have no connection with the CP(b)U and that at the same time various reactionary Ukrainian and Polish organizations are beginning to become more active there, we provided them with assistance in people, materials, and money, declaring that before they establish contact with the CP(b)U, we will organize the struggle of the Ukrainian and Polish masses against the Hitlerite invaders, for the restoration of free Soviet Ukraine" (Brechak, 1974, p. 83).

On March 7, 1944, in Huta Brodivska, one of the leaders of the operational headquarters of the partisan movement of the western regions of Ukraine, established in 1943, Ivan Kurylovych (an operational pseudonym "Ryszard") met with the commander of the Soviet partisan unit "Death to Fascism", General M. Naumov. On the same day, he informed the Central Committee of the CP(b)U and the Ukrainian People's Revolutionary Committee by radiogram about establishing contact with the Military Council of the organization "Partisan Movement of the Western Regions of Ukraine" ("People's Guard"). Mykola Darmohray was sent to Lviv as General Naumov's personal representative, and on March 11 he took part in a meeting of the Military Council (Brechak, 1974, p. 164).

However, in the last decade of April 1944, the Gestapo arrested about 50 members of "The Partisan Council of the Western Regions of Ukraine", after which the organization ceased to exist. During the post-war period, the surviving Lviv communists were convinced that they had been exposed by Leon Lapinskyi "Voroniak" (a member of the OUN Security Service – a note by A. Kozytskyi). Working in the underground structures of "The People's Guard", "Voroniak" gathered information about the network of conspiratorial, active Lviv communists. At the appropriate moment, L. Lapinskyi scheduled several meetings at these apartments, at the same time giving information about them to the Germans. As a result, within a few days, almost all members of the communist underground in Lviv fell into the hands of the Gestapo (Kozytskyi, 2021, p. 273).

Among those who escaped arrest there was also the aforementioned I. Kurylovych "Ryszard", who within a few months became the head of the reconnaissance group of the reconnaissance department of the Ukrainian Front 1, which on June 17, 1944 was thrown into the German rear near Lviv and operated until July 27, 1944 (Bulavin, 2017, p. 62).

After conducting an investigation, the Gestapo admitted that the propaganda activities of "The Partisan Council of Western Regions of Ukraine" did not cause any particular harm,

so the majority of the detained communists were not shot, but sent to concentration camps. Many of them survived the war (Kozytskyi, 2021, p. 273).

"The People's Guard" established the publication of printed agitation and propaganda products. The Inform Bureau's reports were received via radio. They were printed, translated into Ukrainian and Polish, reproduced using a glass plate printer, and distributed among the population and German soldiers. The newspapers "Borotba" (in Ukrainian), "Holos Svobody" (in Polish), "Novyny Dnia" (in Ukrainian and Polish) and leaflets were published, copies of which were distributed in Lviv and the region. In August 1943, the organization founded the publication of the newspaper "Partyzan" (the latter substituted the newspapers "Borotba" and "Holos Svobody", published in Polish and Ukrainian), which contained a column "Partizan Movements of the Western Regions of Ukraine". The newspaper "Partyzan" was published twice a month with a circulation of 1,200 copies (SALR, f. P-3, d. 1, c. 78, pp. 159–161).

The Soviet historiography does not deny the influence of the Polish left-wing press on the Soviet underground in Lviv, writing that "the newspapers "Trybuna Wolności" (the organ of the Polish Workers' Party) and "Gwardzista" (the organ of the People's Guard) played a certain role in the development of the anti-fascist movement and had some influence on the formation of the "People's Guard of the Western Regions of Ukraine". Following Bulletins No. 1 and 2, which contained materials about the 25th anniversary of the October Revolution, in December 1942 the first issue of the newspaper "Głos Wolności" was published in a larger circulation, and special leaflets began to be issued (Variagina, & Vakulenko, 1979, p. 40).

In August 1943, the renamed organization "Partisan Council of Western Regions of Ukraine" began publishing the newspaper "Partyzan" in Ukrainian and Polish and the leaflets "News of the Day" in Ukrainian and Polish (SALR, f. P-3, d. 1, c. 78, pp. 160–161).

The newspapers "Partyzan" and "Borotba" were actually militant leaflets that included calls to fight against the fascist occupiers and the Ukrainian underground movement. It also published information about the successful actions of the Red Army and promoted the living conditions in the settlements liberated by it, as well as the measures taken by the Soviet government and the party. Reports and orders of J. Stalin were distributed (SALR, f. 183, d. 1, c. 3, p. 34).

During the post-war period, the communist authorities retroactively began to rename "The People's Guard of the Avengers" into the "Ivan Franko People's Guard" and to obscure its predominantly Polish nature. Bolshevik propagandists were tasked with covering the history of this group as if it had been international in composition and exclusively communist in its political nature from the moment of its formation. The Communist party historians began to write that the "Ivan Franko People's Guard" allegedly included not only the Poles, but also numerous Russians, Ukrainians, and representatives of other nations. The underground members were given a false history of their combat activities, which became more and more epic year by year (Kozytskyi, 2021, p. 274).

In addition to "The People's Guard", other small underground partisan groups operated in Lviv region. In Busk and Kamianko-Buzky districts, there was a partisan group called "Patriots of the Slavs". In fact, it was established with the help of members of the aforementioned "The People's Guard". In December 1942, the underground members of "The Guard" established contact with the junior lieutenant of the Navy V. Popov. The latter was seriously wounded in Novorossiysk area, on September 8, 1942, where he was captured by the Germans and transported to Lviv. Owing to the "guardsmen", 15 Red Army soldiers, led by Popov, escaped from the German military hospital. Contacting representatives of "The People's Guard",

Popov organized a partisan group in Kamianko-Buzky district, which included the Red Army soldiers who escaped from the German captivity and civilians who managed to escape from forced labour. It is noteworthy that the majority of members and the so-called “skeletons” of the group were non-local residents: Makarov V. P. (Kursk region), Hrishin V. I. (Gorky city), Yuriev V. I. (Novorossiysk city), Klepikov P. S. (Voronezh region), Liubicheva M. E. (Krasnodar region). All were escapees from captivity. The group was headed by V. Popov, and the chief of staff was Tadeusz Majewski (a Pole by nationality). It consisted of three departments, 10 people each. One of the departments consisted of the Poles. On December 25, 1944, V. Popov's partisan group joined the partisan detachment “Death to Fascism” of the partisan unit under the leadership of Naumov (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 415, pp. 118–124).

Archival materials contain data on the number of partisans – 32 people. It is also possible to trace the national composition. As of March 25, 1944, it included 25 people: 7 Russians, 2 non-local Ukrainians, 1 Tatar, 1 Azerbaijani and 14 Poles of a local origin (SALR, f. 183, d. 1, c. 118, pp. 19–20). In other words, the partisan group increased exclusively at the expense of the Poles, led by the aforementioned Majewski (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 415, p. 120). It is known that the group lost 8 partisans. Among them were the Poles Surma Józef and Supczynski Władysław. Also, after the disbandment of the partisan group, 9 people were mobilized for the Polish army specifically (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 415, p. 123).

Another group of underground fighters consisting of 6 people was organized in November 1941 by a military doctor, bolshevik P. Kundius after his escape from the Soviet prisoner of war camp in the village of Sasiv (Zolochiv district, Lviv region). At the beginning of its activities, the group was engaged in assisting in the transportation of Soviet soldiers and civilians who had escaped from captivity to the territory controlled by the USSR. In May 1942, the group consisted of 21 partisans. The duties of the chief of staff were performed by H. Stanovsky (a native of Pervomaisk, Mykolaiv region, an escapee from the German captivity). The detachment carried out sabotage actions in the area near Zolochiv, mostly on the railway (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 415, p. 92).

According to the Soviet publications, in January 1943, P. Kundius's detachment numbered 23 people, and in November of the same year, it numbered 204 fighters. Almost ninety percent of the detachment's personnel were the Poles. However, based on statistical data, which may have been influenced by the party historians, we cannot help but notice such a sharp increase in numbers, which primarily can be explained by the echoes in the “Galicia” district of the escalation of the Ukrainian-Polish conflict in Volyn, the escape of some Poles to the border regions of Galicia, and a gradual aggravation of this confrontation on Galician territory (Brechak, 1974, p. 113).

We also find allegations that P. Kundius's detachment maintained contact with the Polish anti-fascist organizations operating under the leadership of the Polish People's Party (V boiakh za Lvovshchinu, 1965, p. 212). What is obvious, regardless of the origin of the commander P. Kundius, that is the Polish organized nature of this partisan detachment and, characteristically, and the very fact is mentioned in the book “In the Battles for Lviv Region” (V boiakh za Lvovshchinu, 1965). There are no specific mentions about the “leading role” of “The People's Guard” and “The Council of the Partisan Movement of the Western Regions of Ukraine”. Such statements appeared in the future Soviet historiography.

Thus, in the study by I. Berchak we find an ideologically motivated statement, so to speak, that “although the detachment under the command of P. Kundius was formed and acted independently, from time to time it received both instructions and assistance from

Brody cell of "The People's Guard". It was from there that 7,000 zlotys were sent, and from there the People's Guard newspapers and leaflets were sent to the detachment, and from there they were advised: "not to divide into Polish and Russian partisans, but to act together" (Brechak, 1974, pp. 115–116).

Another reference to the Soviet-era publication: "A characteristic feature of this detachment, compared to many others that fought the invaders in the western part of Ukraine, was that it consisted of nine-tenths of fighters of the Polish nationality" (Brechak, 1974, p. 23).

In November 1942, the Polish self-defense group led by S. I. Kaliciński joined the detachment. P. Kundius appointed S. I. Kalitsynsky the chief of the detachment's armament. The report on the detachment's activities also mentions other Polish groups: "there were also the Polish self-defense groups with the nationalistic orientation. They had to agree to unite with P. Kundius, because they were convinced that separate actions would lead to heavy losses. All Polish groups were commanded by Lypa Mieczysław. After the unification, Lypa took up the position of assistant to the detachment commander and commander of all Polish groups". Thus, the above-mentioned number of 204 people was observed (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 415, pp. 97–114).

The detachment consisted of one military group in the number of four platoons with three squads in each. Command functions were performed by the Poles mostly: "a deputy commander and head of the Polish self-defense groups – Mieczysław Lypa ("Whirlwind"), his assistant – Michał Horvath, a chief of the detachment staff – Stanowski, an assistant chief of staff – Józef Hawryliuk, a chief of supply – Stanisław Kaliciński, the platoon commanders and their deputies – Józef Kszak, Otmar Stokas, Tomasz Lenczuk, Jan Klak, Józef Mor, Tadeusz Friedel, Jan Żuczkowski, Józef Krupa" (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 415, p. 106; Brechak, 1974, p. 114).

The detachment's actions were actively assisted by the Polish local population of the villages of Guta-Peniatska, Guta-Verhobużka (the villages were destroyed and not rebuilt), Guta-Oleska (nowadays – Hutyshche), Kręgi, etc. The local residents were influenced by a clergyman, Kazimierz Wałkow, a Polish priest. While in these and other villages of Olesko district, he "organized" activity there – he campaigned to help the partisan detachment, worked as a liaison. Information is preserved about the most active residents in terms of helping the partisans: Zieliński Franek (Guta-Verhobużka), Biletski Franek – he hid and provided medical care to the sick and wounded, Brojanovski Florian (Guta-Oleska, starosta) issued fictitious documents to partisans and escapees from the German captivity, etc. (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 415, pp. 110–111).

After the detachment was disbanded on July 27, 1944, 63 people were sent to the fighter battalions of Zolochovsky, Pomoriński, Krasniński and Olesky districts, the rest of its members were mobilized into the Red Army (53 people) and 57 people were enrolled in the Soviet apparatus (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 415, pp. 110–111).

The Zolochiv underground sabotage detachment did not produce agitation and propaganda materials. It maintained rare contacts with representatives of the "People's Guard" in the town of Brody. The "Guardsmen" handed them agitation and propaganda materials – "Partyzan", "Borotba", "Novyny Dnia", leaflets, etc., and gave instructions and directives to the detachment. According to the conclusion of the Ukrainian Headquarters of the Partisan Movement, the detachment was not sufficiently combat-ready and inactive, in particular in agitation and propaganda activity. Despite the presence of communists and

komsomol members in its composition, the party and komsomol work was not carried out, and not everyone read the publications of the “People’s Guard” (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 415, p. 114).

It is worth noting the small underground organization “Liberation of Fatherland” led by Dorozhko and Holovchenko, which operated in Permyshliansky and Hlyniansky districts of Lviv region. It is difficult to reliably identify individuals of the Polish origin among the members of the underground organization. However, given that the underground members were members of the former party activists, “scattered” one by one or several people in the villages of the districts, it is reasonable to assume that there were few ethnic Poles. These include, perhaps, Kazimierz Matiasz (the village of Turkotyn), who made propaganda issues on a typewriter with the Polish script, and Zygismund Liavr (the village of Zhydovychi), who died in January 1944 in the town of Hlyniany in a shootout with the German police (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 416, pp. 43–45).

We also find an episodic mention of a small partisan detachment commanded by Bolesław Gidzik (“Cybulski”, “Chorny”), formed in the autumn of 1943 in Brody region. The majority of this detachment personnel were the Poles. In the spirit of the party propaganda, the patronage of this detachment and the local underground, led by Brody locksmith I. Burachko, was carried out by one of its leaders, I. Kurylovych (“Ryszard Sliwinski”), on behalf of the Military Council of the “People’s Guard” (Brechak, 1974, p. 161).

It is also worth critically analyzing the approaches to ideological constructions about the “switching to the side of the “People’s Guard” of the pro-London Polish underground members, who had lost faith in their leaders and sought to join the active struggle against the occupiers”, in particular the mention about the Polish “Home Army” detachment (AK) led by Captain Tadeusz Bomba, which operated in the western regions of Lviv region, and later in Poland, in Rzeszów region (Brechak, 1974, p. 167).

In February 1944, in the north-eastern territories of Lviv region – in the village of Palykorovy near the town of Pidkamin, there was established the Soviet partisan local detachment “mainly consisted of the Polish population”, numbering 40 people named after Chkalov, raiding from Zhytomyr region, under the command of B. Korenevsky. In a newly formed detachment Zhombra became the commander, and Kostenko – the commissar (Brechak, 1974, p. 161).

In Ternopil region one of the few centres of the Soviet underground there were the villages of Nastasiv and Veselivka in Mykulynetsky district, where in 1940 the Ukrainian immigrants from Lemko region were resettled and one of the first collective farms in the region was established (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 571, pp. 4–5).

On June 1, 1943, in Stanislaviv region, members of the Soviet underground organization under the leadership of I. Holubtsov, the former first secretary of Zabolotiv district committee of the komsomol, killed M. Volansky, the parish priest of the village of Ilintsi, for calling on local residents to go to work in Germany and join the “Galicia” division (CSAPOU, f. 1, d. 22, c. 538, p. 18). From the information carefully selected by the party members, it is difficult to determine the national composition of the participants of this Soviet underground organization.

There is even less information about Dolyna partisan detachment led by Eustachius Babi, which, according to modern Ukrainian historians, operated from August 1941 till July 1944, when the combat group was defeated by the enemy, and the underground group operated until the liberation of the region by the Red Army units (Ukraina partyzanska, 2001, p. 177).

In Ivano-Frankivsk region, the authorities carried out a large-scale falsification concerning the participants of the Soviet partisan movement. According to the relevant information, between 1960 and 1973, the number of Soviet partisans in the region was just a zero. However, in 1975, the number of partisans "increased" to 1,043 people (Lozytskyi, 2011, p. 166).

Through the prism of regional history, it is worth looking at the neighbouring Stryi district, which was previously part of Drohobych region of the Ukrainian SSR. According to the researcher L. Savytska, during the years of "the war, in Ukraine the communist partisan and underground movement became more active, and its activity also spread in Stryi district. This movement was relatively local and small in number. There is no sufficient source base that would testify to the activities of the movement, all data are based mainly on the memories of its participants" (Savytska, w. y.).

In Drohobych region, the People's Guards detachment "Orlyk" – led by Józef Ważynski (65 people) – operated side by side with the Soviet parachute landing in the summer of 1944. As for the "Orlyk" detachment, it was formed back in October 1942 in the village of Chernykhiv. It operated in Boryslav and Sambir area. Initially it numbered 28 people. Its first commander was the Soviet soldier (surname unknown), who died in the battle (Brechak, 1974, p. 167).

Summing up the research, it is important to emphasize the manipulative and propaganda context of the increase in the number of Soviet partisans in the western regions of Ukraine, when, for example, in Lviv region (since May 1959, the neighbouring Drohobych region was included in its composition – a note by *A. Shcheglov*), from 1960 till 1975 the number of registered partisans increased from 3483 people to 6781, primarily due to the so-called raids of the Soviet units and formations in the spring-summer of 1944 on the territory of the region (Lozytskyi, 2011, p. 166), a critical analysis of which should be done in a separate source study.

Conclusions.

1. The Soviet underground and partisan movement in the district "Galicia" was small and relatively weak. It is also quite debatable to apply such definitions to it as "partisan" or "resistance movement". The reason for this is the lack of a critical mass of the local population in its ranks and a clear organization of efforts to resist the Nazi occupation authorities. The majority of the Ukrainian population of the region did not support such a movement. However, this fact does not give reason to omit it in the research focus.

2. Considering the above mentioned facts of the archival sources analysis and the results of previous research, we should determine a significant role of the "Polish" influence on the organization and activities of the Soviet underground and partisan cells in the district. This significant role was manifested both in the active participation of the Polish anti-Hitler underground of the pro-Soviet leftist orientation, and the local Polish ethnic population, which, not always willingly, but under the power of circumstances, began its cooperation with non-local organizers of local groups of underground partisan struggle – the Soviet soldiers and communists. An additional factor in such cooperation was the peak of the Ukrainian-Polish conflict in Western Ukrainian lands during World War II.

3. In every way the Soviet and pro-Soviet historiography tried to conceal the fact of a significant Polish influence on the above mentioned forms of struggle. The aim of such activity was to support the myth of "people's Soviet avengers", "nationwide struggle against fascism under the Soviet power leadership", etc.

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