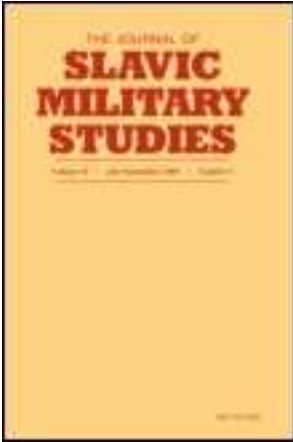


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'They Defended Ukraine': The 14. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS (Galizische Nr. 1) Revisited

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‘They Defended Ukraine’: The 14. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS (Galizische Nr. 1) Revisited

PER ANDERS RUDLING

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In recent years there has been an increased interest in the legacy of the Fourteenth Grenadier Division of the Waffen-SS, known as the Waffen-SS Galizien, a Ukrainian volunteer formation formed in 1943. In Ukrainian ultra-nationalist mythology the unit is depicted as freedom fighters who fought for an independent Ukraine, its collaboration with Nazi Germany dismissed as “Soviet propaganda.” There is a widening gulf between the myth and the picture that emerges from the archival materials. This article revisits the history of the unit, with a particular focus on aspects of its history which the myth makers omit or deny: its ideological foundations, its allegiance to Adolf Hitler, and the involvement of units associated with the division in atrocities against civilians in 1944.

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Per Anders Rudling is a post-doctoral research fellow at the Department of History, Lund University, Sweden. His research interest includes identity, memory, and nationalist myth making in the Polish-Belarusian-Ukrainian borderlands. His recent articles include ‘The OUN, the UPA, and the Holocaust: A Study in the Manufacturing of Historical Myths,’ *Carl Back Papers* (2011); ‘Multiculturalism, Memory, and Ritualization: Ukrainian Nationalist Monuments in Edmonton, Alberta,’ *Nationalities Papers* (2011); ‘The Khatyn Massacre in Belorussia: A Historical Controversy Revisited,’ *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* (2012); ‘Warfare or War Criminality?’ *Ab Imperio* (2012). He is currently working on a monograph on Ukrainian long-distance nationalism during the Cold War.

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INTRODUCTION: MEMORY AND POLITICS

In recent years there has been a modest renaissance in interest in the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS (1st Ukrainian), or *14. Waffen Grenadier Division der SS (ukrainische Nr. 1)*. The third president of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko (2005–2010) embarked on an ambitious campaign of nationalist myth making. He designated the far-right Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), its leader Stepan Bandera, its armed wing, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), and its commander Roman Shukhevych official ‘heroes of Ukraine.’ While Yushchenko did not explicitly mention the Ukrainian *Waffen*-SS veterans, he also designated as heroes of Ukraine ‘other military formations, parties, and organizations and movements, dedicated to the establishment of Ukrainian state independence,’ which some have interpreted as an indirect recognition.¹

Some circles within the Ukrainian diaspora and the far right have been irritated that Yushchenko did not go far enough. A veteran diaspora historian recently took Yushchenko to task for his failure to rehabilitate and include Ukrainian units in the service of Nazi Germany in his myth making efforts.² The historian, who is also an activist in the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, believes that the *Waffen*-SS veterans deserve ‘no less respect’ than the soldiers of the Red Army.³ On Remembrance Day 2010, Paul Grod, President of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, in the name of 1.2 million Ukrainian-Canadians, paid tribute to the veterans of the *Waffen*-SS *Galizien*, and remembered its fallen ‘who perished fighting for the freedom of their ancestral Ukrainian homeland.’⁴ When the president of the Canadian society of veterans of the *Waffen*-SS *Galizien* passed away earlier that year, the UCC claimed ‘he will be remembered as a hero of Ukraine who fought for her independence.’⁵ In 2011, the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies

¹ Viktor Yushchenko, ‘Ukaz prezidenta Ukrainy no. 75/2010 Pro vshanuvannia uchsnyliv borot’by za nezalezhnist’ Ukrainy u XX stolitti’ *Ofitsiine predstavnytstvo Prezidenta Ukrainy*, 28 January 2010, <http://www.president.gov.ua/documents/10379.html> (accessed 26 December 2011).

² ‘What Yushchenko can be reproached with is not having brought into the project the Ukrainian veterans of the Waffen SS Division Halychyna and other units of the armed forces of the Axis powers.’ Roman Serbyn, ‘Erroneous Methods in J.-P. Himka’s Challenge to ‘Ukrainian Myths,’ 7 August 2011, *Current Politics in Ukraine Blog: Opinion and analysis on current events in Ukraine*, Stasiuk Program, CIUS, University of Alberta, ed. David R. Marples. <http://ukraineanalysis.wordpress.com/> (accessed 1 October 2011).

³ Roman Serbyn, ‘Fotohrafiia divizii “Halychyna”—pam’iatka ukrains’koho patriotyzmu,’ in Bohdan Matsiv (ed.), *Ukrains’ka diviziia ‘Halychyna’: Istoriiia u svitlynakh vid zasnuvannia u 1943 r. do zvil’nennia z polonu 1949 r.*, L’viv: ZUKTs 2009), p. 234. <http://www.voiakudg.com/> (accessed 8 July 2011).

⁴ ‘Ukrainian Community Honors Veterans on Remembrance Day,’ UCC Press Release, 11 November 2010. Web. 13, 2 April 2011. On the cult of the *Waffen*-SS *Galizien* in Canada, see Per Anders Rudling, ‘Multiculturalism, Memory, and Ritualization: Ukrainian Nationalist Monuments in Edmonton, Alberta,’ *Nationalities Paper* 39(5) (September 2011), pp. 733–768.

⁵ Paul Grod, ‘UCC Expresses Condolences for Loss of Lew Babij,’ Press release, Ukrainian Canadian Congress, 12 January 2010.

at the University of Alberta, funded primarily by donations from diaspora donors, instituted three new endowments in the names of leading *Waffen-SS* veterans.⁶

While Yushchenko's successor Viktor Yanukovych has revoked the hero status of Bandera and Shukhevych and largely put an end to the state cult of the ultra-nationalists, in Western Ukraine, apologetics for the *Waffen-SS Galizien* is entering the mainstream. On April 28, 2011, the 68th anniversary of the establishment of *Waffen-SS Galizien*, neo-fascist 'autonomous nationalists,' together with the far-right *Svoboda* Party, which dominates the L'viv city government organized a march through the city. Led by *Svoboda* ideologue Iurii Mykhal'chyshyn of the L'viv city council, the nearly 700 participants (2,000 according to the organizers), carrying banners with neo-Nazi symbols marched down the streets of L'viv, shouting slogans like 'Halychyna—division of heroes!,' and 'One race, one nation, one Fatherland!'⁷ *Svoboda*, which dominates the L'viv city council, decorated the city with billboards with the symbol of the unit, accompanied by the texts 'the treasure of the nation' and 'they defended Ukraine.' (Figures 1 and 2).

In October 2011, L'viv saw the appearance of a taxi company, named after *Waffen-SS Galizien*. The uniformed cab driver greets his customers with the OUN salute '*Slava Ukrainy! Heroiam Slava! SS Galizien greets you! Please have a seat,*' and plays nationalist music in the cab during the ride. The entrepreneur explains that 'To most people in L'viv, *SS Galizien* are

⁶ The endowments were instituted in the honor of former *Waffen-SS Untersturmführer* Roman Kolisnyk (b. 1923), the editor of the journal of the Ukrainian *Waffen-SS* veterans *Visti Kombantanta*; Levko Babij (1927–2010), the late Canadian president of the veterans association of the division and *Waffen-SS* volunteer Edward Brodacky (1926–2007). The CIUS described their benefactors in the following way: 'Roman Kolisnyk belongs to a generation of Ukrainian emigrants who, faced with the horrors of war and communist terror, had no choice other than to fight back and then leave their homeland.' Mykola Soroka, 'Roman Kolisnyk's New Fund and Bequest,' CIUS Press Release, 9 May 2011 [http://www.ualberta.ca/CIUS/announce/media/Media%202011/2011-05-09%20Roman%20Kolisnyk%20new%20fund%20\(eng\).pdf](http://www.ualberta.ca/CIUS/announce/media/Media%202011/2011-05-09%20Roman%20Kolisnyk%20new%20fund%20(eng).pdf) (accessed 20 July 2011). The Levko and Marika Babij Memorial Endowment Fund 'supports programs and grants related to the study of twentieth-century Ukrainian history, especially Ukraine in World War II. . . . In 1944 [Babij] joined the Galicia Division, later the 1st Ukrainian Division of the Ukrainian National Army. . . . He was Canadian national president of the Brotherhood of Veterans of the 1st UD UNA from 1986 to his death in 2010.' About Brodacky we learn that 'In 1944 he joined the Ukrainian "Galicia" Division, the bulk of which surrendered to the British army at the end of World War II.' Bohdan Klid, Mykola Soroka and Myroslav Yurkevich (eds.) 'Focus on CIUS Donors: Roman Kolisnyk new fund and bequest,' 'The Levko and Marika Babij Memorial Endowment Fund,' 'Edward Brodacky 1926–2007,' *CIUS Newsletter 2011*, Edmonton: The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, 2011, pp. 26–28. The University of Alberta now administers four endowments in the honor of *Waffen-SS* volunteers.

⁷ 'U L'vovi proishov marsh molodi na chest' dyvizii "Halychyna,"' *Zaxid.net*, April 2011 <http://zaxid.net/newsua/2011/4/28/210035/> (accessed 1 May 2011); 'Marsh Velychi Dukhu 2011,' *Autonomnyi opir*, 29 April 2011, <http://opir.info/2011/04/29/marsh-velychi-duhu-natsionalnoi-virnosti-ta-lytsarskoji-chestimarsh-dyviziji-halychyna/#more-7480> (accessed 31 December 2011).



FIGURE 1 “The pride of the nation. The Ukrainian division Halychyna. They defended Ukraine,” posters by the *Svoboda* Party put up across Lviv, April 2009. (Courtesy of Lucyna Kulińska) (color figure available online).

heroes, who fought for Ukrainian independence—in the way they found acceptable.⁸ Similar views are being voiced from the highest echelons of the Greek Catholic Church. In December 2011, Cardinal Lubomyr Huzar, who headed of the Ukrainian Catholic Church from 2001 to 2011, denied that *Waffen-SS Galizien* had served Nazi Germany but rather, he alleged, had fought for Ukrainian independence. The unit, the Cardinal claimed, ‘went through the war in German uniforms, but did not fight for Germany, but for their own rights . . . these were people who utilized the situation to fight for their independence. . . . I think, they behaved correctly. . . . It was not the case, as some people today claim, that they served the Hitlerites.’⁹

⁸ ‘U L’vovi z’iavilos’ taksi SS “Halychyna.” Video,’ *Ukrains’ka Pravda Zhyttia*, 12 October 2011 <http://life.pravda.com.ua/society/2011/10/12/87447/> (19 October 2011).

⁹ Oleksandr Solonets’, ‘Liubomyr Huzar: zhyva rozmova,’ *Narod.ua*, 21 December 2011, <http://narodua.com/ljudyna/ljubomyr-huzar-zhyva-rozmova.html> (accessed 26 December 2011).



FIGURE 2 “March of the Greatness of the Spirit” (*Marsh Velychi Dukhu*), celebrating the 68th anniversary of the establishment of *Waffen-SS* Galizien, Lviv, April 28, 2011. Mykhal’chyshyn, front, extreme left. (Courtesy of Lucyna Kulińska) (color figure available online).

A POLARIZED HISTORIOGRAPHY

Across Europe, *Waffen-SS* veterans presented their organization as a pan-European, anti-Communist force, defending Western civilization from Bolshevik hordes, essentially independent of the *Allgemeine SS*, on which they blamed the crimes of the Nazis.¹⁰ The German *Waffen-SS* veterans’ association, the *Hilfsgemeinschaft auf Gegenseitigkeit der Angehörigen der ehemaligen Waffen-SS* (HIAG), presented itself as ‘apolitical.’ Emphasizing camaraderie, honor, and the ‘holy’ duty to follow orders, the veterans presented themselves as ‘the vanguard of European unification,’ and their comrades as having fallen ‘for Germany and Europe.’¹¹ They claimed to have fought for a united Europe, ‘which we, in our Divisions, envisioned during the defensive struggle against the onslaught from the East. In this struggle, our divisions fought exemplarily.’¹² The German *Waffen-SS* veterans presented themselves as any other veterans’ association, but also

¹⁰ See Felix M. Steiner, *Die Armee der Geächteten*, Göttingen: Plesse Verlag, 1963, and Idem., *Die Freiwilligen der Waffen-SS: Idee u. Opfergang*, Preuss. Oldendorf: Schütz, 1973.

¹¹ Karsten Wilke, ‘Geistige Regeneration der Schutzstaffel in der frühen Bundesrepublik?: Die ‘Hilfsgemeinschaft auf Gegenseitigkeit der Angehörigen der ehemaligen Waffen-SS’ (HIAG),’ in Jan Erik Schulte (ed.), *Die SS, Himmler und die Wevelsburg*, Paderborn, Munich, Vienna, Zurich: Ferdinand Schöningh 2009, p. 445.

¹² ‘wie es uns bei seiner Verteidigung gegen den Ansturm aus dem Osten vorschwebte und wie es bei seiner Verteidigung gerade in unseren Divisionen vorbildlich vertreten war.’ Wilke, ‘Geistige Regeneration der Schutzstaffel,’ p. 445, citing Otto Kumm, ‘Schafft klare Sicht,’ in *Der Ausweg*, (Juli 1951), p. 1.

as ‘second class citizens’ in the Federal Republic, a community of victims, tied together by their common suffering during and after the war. They regarded themselves as martyrs of allied despotism and justice of the victors.¹³ The legendary *Waffen*-SS officer Felix Steiner called his organization *Die Armee der Geächteten*, the Army of the Scorned.¹⁴ Referring to their community as *Bruder schweigen*, the silent brotherhood, German and Swedish *Waffen*-SS veterans generally kept their past secret, other than what they shared with fellow veterans and closed circles of neo-Nazi admirers.¹⁵

The narrative of the Ukrainian *Waffen*-SS volunteers follows the same pattern as that of their German comrades. *Major 1. General-Stab-Offizier* Wolf-Dietrich Heike claimed that ‘The [SS Division *Galizien*] took to the sword in good faith and for a just cause, that is the freedom and independence of their country. They wielded it cleanly and flawlessly.’¹⁶ Volodymyr Kubijovyč, head of the Ukrainian Central Committee in Krakow, insisted that the organizers of the unit had ‘exclusively Ukrainian interests’ in mind.¹⁷ Wasyl Veryha, a member of the unit, claimed that ‘all Ukrainians’ sympathized with the Germans in 1941. Young Ukrainians, Veryha maintained, supported the unit because it was Ukrainian. The SS designation, he insisted, was assigned ‘against the will of the Ukrainians,’ and was only a formal title that had nothing to do with Nazi ideology.¹⁸ Like other *Waffen*-SS veterans, the veterans of *Waffen*-SS *Galizien* insist that their version of history is true to the facts and not falsified.¹⁹

Nationalist émigrés have raised two generations in ritualistic celebration of the ‘Heroes of Brody.’ Children and adolescents, dressed in the brown shirts and black ties of the SUM, the OUN(b) youth section, or the blue

¹³ Wilke, ‘Geistige Regeneration der Schutzstaffel,’ pp. 436, 437, 443.

¹⁴ Steiner, *Die Armee der Geächteten*. The legends surrounding Steiner omitted the massacres that the *Waffen*-SS *Wiking* Division that he commanded perpetrated in Zolochiv in 1 July 1941.

¹⁵ Bosse Schön and Thorolf Hillblad, *Berlins sista timmar: En svensk SS-soldats berättelse om slutstriden*, Stockholm: Pocketförlaget, 2010, 12; Bosse Schön, *Hitlers svenska soldater*, Avesta, Sweden: Pocky, 2005, pp.9, 154–156, 285–288.

¹⁶ Wolf-Dietrich Heike, *Sie wollten die Freiheit: die Geschichte der Ukrainischen Division, 1943–1945*, Dorheim: Podzun, 1973, p. 244.

¹⁷ Volodymyr Kubiiiovych [Kubijovyč], ‘Pochatky ukrains’koi Dyvizii “Halychyna”,’ in Vasyl’ Ivanyshyn (ed.), *Brody: Zbirnyk statei i narysiv za redaktsieiu Oleha Lysiaka, dopovnene*, Drohobych-L’viv: ‘Vidrozhennia,’ 2003, p. 12.

¹⁸ David Marples, ‘Beyond the Pale?: Conceptions and Reflections in Contemporary Ukraine about the Division Galizien,’ *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 33–34 (2008–2009), p. 341, and idem, *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine*, Budapest: Central European University Press, 2007, p. 186, citing Vasyl Veryha, ‘Im prysvichuvala velyka ideia . . . Dyviziiia ‘Halychyna,’ iak the bulo,’ *Literarurna Ukraina*, 25 June 1992.

¹⁹ Mykhailo Slaboshpyts’kyi and Valerii Stetsenko (eds.) ‘Slovo vid uporiadnykiv,’ in idem., *Ukrains’ka dyviziiia ‘Halychyna’: Istoryko-publitsychnyi zbirnyk* (Kyiv-Toronto: TOV ‘Nehotsiant-Plius’ and Bratsvo kolysnykh voiakiv 1-oi UD UNA, UVKR, redaktsiia hazety ‘Visti z Ukrainy,’ 1994, p. 7.

uniforms of the *Plast*, were made to march in formation, decorate graves of the fallen heroes, perform militaristic and folkloristic hymns, and recite pledges of allegiance in front of nationalist memorials.²⁰ Many came to internalize the *Waffen-SS* veterans' narrative. In the leading Canadian OUN(b) organ *Homin Ukrainy* Lubomyr Luciuk and Myroslav Yurkevych wrote in 1983 how

Membership in the Division has never been regarded by its veterans as a cause for shame. Veterans living in Canada, the United States; and Western Europe belong to a public organization, the Brotherhood of Veterans of the 1st Ukrainian Division of the Ukrainian National Army . . . [A] wealth of documentary evidence . . . shows that the Division cannot be linked with crimes against humanity.²¹

Admirers of the unit categorically deny the unit's dedication to fascist ideology and the National Socialist cause, presenting it instead as having fought for 'freedom,' even Ukrainian independence. Typically, they object to the term 'SS' and decry the 'lack of objectivity' on the subject in contemporary Ukraine, complaining that allegations of collaboration are false.²² Some apologists claim that the *Waffen-SS* men 'had no choice' but to join the *Waffen-SS* because 'the UPA could not take everyone.'²³ Others deny the volunteers' oath to Hitler. Kost Bondarenko claims the volunteers took an oath of allegiance to Ukraine, which, supposedly 'later saved the division's soldiers and officers from retribution: they were found not guilty of war crimes after the conflict.'²⁴ Volodymyr V'iatrovych, who Yushchenko appointed head of the former KGB archives and tasked with the instrumentalization of Ukrainian history has dismissed charges that the *Waffen-SS Galizien* were Nazi collaborators as 'Soviet propaganda.'²⁵

²⁰ Rudling, 'Multiculturalism, Memory, and Ritualization'; Rossoliński-Liebe, 'Celebrating Fascism and war Criminality in Edmonton: The Political Myth and Cult of Stephen Bandera in Multicultural Canada,' *Kakanien Revisited*, 29 December (2010).

²¹ Lubomyr Luciuk and Myroslav Yurkevych, 'Ukrainian Division "Galicia" defended,' *Ukrainian Echo* July 4, 1983, vol. VII, No. 4(65): 3. See also Lubomyr Luciuk, 'Ukraine's Wartime Unit Never Linked to War Crimes (Ukrainian Division Galicia),' *Ukrainian Review* 35(2) (Summer 1987) pp. 29–31.

²² Oleksandr Melnyk, Review of Michael James Melnyk, *To Battle: The Formation and History of the 14th Galician Waffen-SS Division*. Solihull, UK: Helion & Co., 2002; *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 30(2) (Winter 2005) pp. 108; Marples, 'Beyond the Pale?,' p. 346, citing Ivan Haivanovych, "Ne nazyvaite "SS"!," *Ukraina moloda*, 30 January 2001.

²³ Marples, 'Beyond the Pale?,' p. 343, citing Iaroslav Iakymovych, 'Z zhertvom stihom ikh zvytiah,' *Za vilnu Ukrainu*, 21 August 1993.

²⁴ Marples, 'Beyond the Pale?,' p. 348, citing Kost Bondarenko, 'Istoriia, iakoi ne znaiemo: Chy ne khochemo znaty?,' *Dzerkalo tyzbnia*, 29 March – 5 April 2002.

²⁵ 'If you look at the Second World War with Soviet eyes it is clear that the Galician Division singlehandedly appears as collaborators and traitors . . . But such views are outdated and . . . over the past 20 years historians have done enough to deconstruct such stereotypes as Soviet propaganda.'

In the literature, one can distinguish between the more simple nationalist propaganda and more ambitious post-Soviet attempts at scholarship on the history of *Waffen-SS Galizien*. Nevertheless, the line between scholarship and far-right activism is often blurred. For instance, the most detailed Ukrainian study of the unit, Andrii Bolianovs'kyi's *Dyviziia 'Halychyna': Istoriiia* uncritically relies partly on secondary sources by American Holocaust deniers.²⁶ The most extensive English-language account of the unit, Michael James Melnyk's *To Battle*, is written by an insider of the veteran community, and provides helpful references to a wealth of primary sources. While Melnyk does not suppress or deny the difficult issues, the narrative is nationalistic, and the book is proudly dedicated to the memory of the author's father, a *Waffen-SS* veteran.²⁷

Many of the post-Soviet apologetics have been articulated as polemics against Soviet propagandistic representations.²⁸ Another body of literature consists of rather shrill, accounts by Polish expellees from the *Kresy Wschodnie*, the former Polish borderlands transferred to the USSR in 1945.²⁹ Similarly, the accounts by Nazi-hunters like Sol Littman, the former Canadian director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center and B'nai Brith's League for Human Rights, are also partly written in form of polemics.³⁰ The most extensive assessment of *Waffen-SS Galizien* was prepared for the Commission of Inquiry on Nazi War Criminals in Canada (the Deschênes Commission) in 1986. However, it is now a quarter century old and written before Soviet archives were made available. Moreover, only parts of this study are public

'Istoriya Volodymyr V'iatrovych pro ukrains'ku diviziiu SS Halychyna,' *BBC Ukrainian multimedia*, 13 June 2011. http://www.bbc.co.uk/ukrainian/multimedia/2011/06/110613_vyatrovych_galychyna_video.shtml (accessed 21 June 2011).

²⁶ Andrii Bolianovs'kyi, *Dyviziia 'Halychyna': Istoriiia* (L'viv: A. Bolianovs'kyi, 2000, p. 230, citing Richard Landwehr, *Fighting for Freedom: The Ukrainian Volunteer Division of the Waffen-SS*, Silver Spring, MD: Bibliophile Legion Books, Inc., 1985. The same problem appears in Andrii Bolianovs'kyi *Ukrain'ski viis'kovi formuvannia v zbroinykh sylakh Nimechchyny (1939–1945)*, L'viv: L'vivs'kyi natsional'nyi universitet im. Ivana Franka and Kanads'kyi Insytut Ukrains'kykh Studii Al'berts'koho universitetu, 2003, pp. 10, 14, 152. Bolianovs'kyi relies on *The Journal for Historical Review* and Richard Landwehr, who is closely associated with American Holocaust deniers. On the Institute for Historical Review, see Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory. With a New Preface by the Author*, New York: Plume, 1994, pp. 137–156.

²⁷ See the review by Oleksandr Melnyk, p. 110.

²⁸ In the 1980s, Soviet Ukrainian publishers presented a number of highly tendentious pamphlets on the *Waffen-SS Galizien*. As the archives were closed, and their claims were unverifiable, scholars tended to dismiss them as unreliable. For an example of Soviet Ukrainian literature on the unit, meant for foreign consumption see Oleksiy Kartunov, *Enemies of Peace and Democracy*, Uzhhorod: Karpaty, 1985; Valerii Styrkul, *The SS Werewolves*, L'viv: Kamenyar Publishers, 1982; idem., *We Accuse: Documentary Sketch*, Kyiv: Dnipro Publishers, 1984.

²⁹ See, for instance, Edward Prus, *SS-Galizien: patrioci czy zbrodniarze?*, Wrocław: Wydaw. 'Nortom,' 2001.

³⁰ Sol Littman, *Pure Soldiers or Sinister Legion: The Ukrainian 14th Waffen-SS Division*, Montreal, New York, London: Black Rose Books, 2003. For a recent, critical journalistic account of the Division, see Christopher Hale, *Hitler's Foreign Executioners: Europe's Dirty Secret*, Stroud, UK: The History Press, 2011, pp. 293–318.

and available to researchers. For instance, the important report by Alti Rodal, the Deschênes' Commission's Director of Historical Research, titled 'Nazi War Criminals in Canada: The Historical and Policy Setting from the 1940s to the Present,' meant to accompany the Commission's main report, was not released at the time.

There is, however, a small but increasing body of scholarly studies. Among the recent academic studies in the English language can be mentioned the works of Frank Golczewski, Olesya Khromeychuk, and David Marples.³¹ The body of serious scholarly literature on the topic is thus limited, polarized, and the research still at an early stage.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In February 1942 Andrii Mel'nyk, leader of the more conservative wing of the OUN, wrote that 'In the German military we see those who under the banner of Adolf Hitler threw the Bolsheviks out of Ukraine.'³² In 1943, his OUN(m) strongly supported the establishment of a Ukrainian SS unit. Support also came from the Ukrainian People's Republic government-in-exile. The Ukrainian Central Committee and the Greek Catholic Church ran an extensive recruitment campaign. In 1943–44 the OUN(b) and its armed wing, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) carried out a brutal campaign of mass murder of the Polish, Jewish, and other minorities in Volhynia and Galicia which claimed up to 100,000 lives and horrified contemporary observers.³³ Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi was greatly concerned by the political violence of the OUN(b), which he referred to as 'unserious

³¹ Frank Golczewski, 'Shades of Grey: Reflections on Jewish-Ukrainian and German-Ukrainian Relations in Galicia,' in Ray Brandon and Wendy Lower (eds.), *The Shoah in Ukraine: History, Testimony, Memorialization*, Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2008, pp. 114–155; Marples, 'Beyond the Pale?'; idem, *Heroes and Villains*, pp. 183–193; Olesya Khromeychuk, 'Memory and Narrative of the Ukrainian Waffen SS: "War Criminals" or "Freedom Fighters,"' paper presented at the Association for the Study of Nationalities Convention, Columbia University, April 16, 2011. Ray Brandon is currently writing a Ph.D. dissertation on Dmytro Paliiv, a fascist activist and ranking officer in the unit.

³² Andrii Mel'nyk, 'Ukrainsi!' OUN(m) leaflet, dated January 1942, TsDAVOV Ukrainy, f. 46200, op. 3, spr. 378, l. 50. The OUN(m) was passionately anti-Semitic, particularly in 1941–42, which a reading of the OUN(m) organ *Ukrains'ke slovo* makes very clear. For some representative articles from the fall of 1941, see V. Veryha et al. (eds.), *Dokumenty i materialy z istorii Organizatsii Ukrains'kykh Nationalistiv, tom 10, cb. 2, Hazeta 'Ukrains'ke slovo' 1941 roku*, Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo imeni Oleny Telihy, 2004, pp. 53–209.

³³ Grzegorz Motyka, *Ukraińska partyzantka 1942–1960: Działność Organizacji Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów i Ukraińskiej Powstańczej Armii*, Warsaw: RYTM, 2006, p. 411. The total numbers of documented Polish OUN-UPA victims reach 91,200, 43,987 of whom are known by name. Ewa Siemaszko, Stan badań nad ludobójstwem dokonanym na ludności polskiej przez Organizację Nacjonalistów Ukraińskich i Ukraińską Powstańczą Armię, in Bogusław Paż (ed.), *Prawda Historyczna a Prawda Polityczna w badaniach naukowych: Przykład ludobójstwa na Kresach południowo-wschodniej Polski w latach 1939–1946*. Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis 3300, Wrocław: Wydawnictwo uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2011, p. 333.

people' and 'snot-nosed kids' (*smarkachi*).³⁴ Keeping young Galicians out of the UPA appears to have been one of the reasons why Sheptyts'kyi endorsed the *Waffen-SS Galizien*.³⁵ During the first month of recruitment over 80,000 Ukrainians volunteered for duty: 30,000 were rejected on the grounds of questionable political reliability, and 20,000 for failing to meet the physical requirements. Ultimately, 13,000–14,000 were accepted.³⁶ Many volunteers were recruited from collaborationist formations.³⁷

The *Waffen-SS*, the armed wing of the SS, was an elite formation. It eventually expanded to 38 Divisions under the command of Heinrich Himmler. By the end of the war, non-Germans constituted 60 percent of its men. The initially strict 'racial' criteria for membership were relaxed as Germany's military fortunes waned. A thwarted attempt to recruit Ukrainians into a *Waffen-SS* unit in October–November 1941 had put heavy emphasis on the 'racial' quality of the recruits. In April 1943, no 'racial' commission was established, but the Governor of the *Distrikt Galizien*, *SS-Obergruppenführer* Otto Wächter decided that *Waffen-SS Galizien* would accept volunteers from four of the five racial categories recognized by Nazi Germany.³⁸

The organizers of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* emphasized the importance of the unit for Hitler's New Europe and a Nazi victory: 'All call-ups to Ukrainians for the Division have been geared towards their planned deployment, not for Ukraine or Ukrainian culture, but rather as the contribution of the Ukrainian ethnic group in the battle to defend against Bolshevism and for a new

³⁴ John-Paul Himka, 'Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky and the Holocaust,' 6., Forthcoming, *Polin* 26, citing Mieczysław Adamczyk, Janusz Gmitruk, and Adam Koseski, eds., *Ziemia Wschodnie. Raporty Biura Wschodniego Delegatury Rządu na Kraj 1943–1944.*, Warsaw, Pułtusk: Muzeum Historii Polskiego Ruchu Ludowego, Wyższa Szkoła Humanistyczna im. Aleksandra Gieysztor, 2005, p. 45.

³⁵ '[Sheptyts'kyi] was particularly concerned about how Ukrainians were being drawn into the destruction process. He came to the conclusion in the summer of 1942 that the Nazis were even worse than then Bolsheviks. He was still able to cooperate with them when it was a matter of the lesser evil (a *Waffen-SS* division as opposed to unrestrained bands of nationalist youth). He was deeply appalled by murder and feared mightily for the salvation of the flock under his care.' Himka, 'Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky and the Holocaust,' p. 24.

³⁶ Howard Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry: The Truth about Nazi War Criminals in Canada, 1946–1956*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000, p. 132; Golczewski, 'Shades of Grey,' 136. The OUN(b) was initially negatively disposed to the unit, but that soon changed. Until October 30 1943, there had been 70 desertions from the unit. At that point, Roman Shukhevych issued orders that OUN members who had volunteered for the Division could only leave as a result of a direct order of the OUN(b) commander. Michael James Melnyk, *To Battle: The Formation and History of the 14th Galician Waffen-SS Division*, Solihull, UK: Helion & Company, 2002, pp. 19 and 347, citing Minutes of the Military Board, 30 October 1943, ABFC and Lev Shankovskij, 'UPA and the Division "Halychyna,"' *America*, Philadelphia, (12–16 July 1954).

³⁷ *Schutzmannschaften*, the local collaborating police under Nazi occupation, was instrumental in the mass murder of Ukrainian Jewry. On *Waffen-SS Galizien* officers with a background in Nachtigall, Roland, the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen, the Ukrainian Galician Army and the Army of the Ukrainian People's Republic, see Bolianovs'kyi, *Dyvizia 'Halychyna'*, pp. 61, 75, 77–81, 89–93.

³⁸ Bolianovs'kyi, *Dyvizia 'Halychyna'*, pp. 28, 56–57. On the SS 'racial experts' assessment on the racial characteristics of the Galician Ukrainians, see. '14. Galizische SS-Freiw. Div. An alle deutschen Führer der Division!' Instructions issued from the Division Staff Quarter, 1 February 1944, TsDAVOV Ukrainy, f. 4620, op. 3, spr. 378, ll. 12–17.

Europe.³⁹ The volunteers were taught that they were part of a chosen elite, which was fighting a primitive, racialized enemy, a 'deadly danger, which threatens us from the Asiatic steppes' and that they were defending the 'traditions of Galician Ukrainianhood in the struggle for the common culture of all people of the honorable and beautiful part of the world, which we call Europe. To get accepted into the *Waffen-SS Galizien* is a great honor.'⁴⁰

The idea to establish a Galizian SS division originated with Wächter, who proposed this to Himmler on 1 March 1943.⁴¹ In organizing *Waffen-SS Galizien*, Wächter worked closely with Volodymyr Kubijovyč, an enthusiastic proponent of ethnic cleansing. In April 1941 he requested that Hans Frank set up an ethnically pure Ukrainian enclave in the General government, free from Jews and Poles.⁴² Kubijovyč benefited from Aryanization of Jewish property and published anti-Semitic materials in the collaborationist press.⁴³ He asked Governor General Hans Frank to have Aryanized money go to Ukrainians, as it had ended up in Jewish hands, he argued, 'only through ruthless breach of law on the part of the Jews and their exploitation of members of the Ukrainian people.'⁴⁴ On 2 May 1943 Kubijovyč declared himself ready to take up arms for the *Waffen-SS*.⁴⁵ On 28 April 1943, the day of the proclamation of the formation, he stated:

Today, for Ukrainians in Galicia, is a very historic day, because today's Act of State one of the most coveted wishes of the Ukrainian people is realized—to fight against Bolshevism with weapons in our hands. . . . This wish was the result of the deeper conviction, that it is our duty not to stay neutral in the great fight for building the new European order, and

³⁹ Letter to Himmler, 5 August 1943, 'Betr. SS Schützendivision Galizien, BA-KO NS 19\1785', a letter incorrectly attributed to Wächter, but likely written by one of his close associates, cited in M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, p. 53.

⁴⁰ 'Vkazivki dlia okhotnykiv SS Strilets'koi Dyvizii Halychyna,' and 'Merkblatt für Freiwillige der SS-Schützen-Division Galizien,' TsDAVOV Ukrainy, f. 4620, op. 3, spr. 378, l. 31, 32.

⁴¹ Basil Dmytryshyn, 'The Nazis and the SS Volunteer Division "Galicia," *American Slavic and East European Review* 15(1) (1 February 1956) pp. 3–6. Wächter had been in charge of the ghettoization and expulsion of the Jews of Krakow. In the fall of 1941 he was a leading proponent of 'total Jewish extermination' by gassing. Robin O'Neil, *Belzec: Prototype for the Final Solution. Hitler's Answer to the Jewish Question*, chapter 5. E-book, <http://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/belzec1/bel050.html> (accessed 30 July 2011).

⁴² Jan T. Gross, *Polish Society under German Occupation: The General government, 1939–1944*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979, pp. 186, 190.

⁴³ John-Paul Himka, 'Ethnicity and the Reporting of Mass Murder: *Krakivus'ki visti*. The NKVD Murders of 1941, and the Vinnytsia Exhumation,' paper presented at the University of Alberta Holocaust workshop, 14 Jan. 2005, 19, citing Volodymyr Kubijovyč, 'Pered maiestatom neprovynnoi krovy,' *Krakivus'ki visti*, 8 Jul. 1941.

⁴⁴ Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, 'Celebrating Fascism and War Criminality in Edmonton: The Political Myth and Cult of Stepan Bandera in Multicultural Canada,' *Kakanien Revisited*, 29 December (2010), p. 7.

⁴⁵ 'I, Dr. Kubijovyč, Volodymyr, . . . Declare, that I am ready, as a military volunteer, to join the ranks of the *Waffen-SS* Division Galizien and to take part in its military activities. I know, that on the basis of this declaration I oblige myself to perform every minute quickly the orders of to the *Waffen SS* Galizien.' TsDAVOV Ukrainy, f. 4620, op. 3, spr. 378, l. 18 (in German) and l. 19 (in Ukrainian).

what we can do for the victory of the new Europe. On these principles we have based our active role in cooperating with the German government. We did everything that was possible. I have mentioned the voluntary departure of hundreds of thousands of workers to Germany. Their conscious contribution of quotas, the collection of winter clothing for the German armed forces, their large donations of money for military purposes show their readiness . . . We realize the great meaning of this greatest decision for our people. Therefore, we want to ensure that it will be the best. The formation of the Galician-Ukrainian division within the framework of the SS, is for us not only a distinction, but our responsibility that we will continue to [support] and maintain this active decision, in cooperation with the German state organizations, until the victorious end of the war. I ask you, governor, to accept our assurances that we will fulfill our responsibilities. This historic day was made possible by the conditions to create a worthy opportunity for the Ukrainians of Galicia, to fight arm in arm with the heroic German soldiers of the Army and the *Waffen-SS* against Bolshevism, your and our deadly enemy. We thank you from our heart. Of course we ought to thank the Great *Führer* of the united Europe for recognizing our participation in the war, that he approved your initiative and agreed to the creation of the Galicia division.⁴⁶

The establishment of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* on 18 July 1943 saw much jubilation. Kost' Pankivs'ky joined Governor Wächter and Alfred Bisanz, liaison for Ukrainian questions in the General government, in addressing the local SS leadership, the Ukrainian SS volunteers and enthusiastic young men in the blue uniforms of the nationalist scouting organization *Plast*, which provided many of the volunteers to become officers in the division.⁴⁷ (Figure 3)

The 'Jewish question' played a central role in the *Weltanschauung* of the *Waffen-SS*. In a speech to the officers of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* on 16 May 1944 *Reichsführer-SS* Heinrich Himmler bragged to the officers of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* about how the 'loss' of the Jews had changed Galicia to the better:

[T]he designation Galician has been chosen according to the name of your beautiful homeland, of which you can be truly proud. Your homeland has become even more beautiful—and I can safely say this—since

⁴⁶ M. J. Melnyk. *To Battle*, 27, citing *Krakivs'ki Visti*, 1 May 1943, No. 89; Vol'f-Ditrikh Haike, *Ukrains'ka Dyviziiia 'Halychyna': Istoriia formuvannia i boiovykh dii u 1943–45 rokakh, z predmovoitu Volodymyra Kubijovycha, Zapysky naukovohto tovarystva im. Shevchenka*, tom. 188, Toronto, Paris, Munich: Bratsva kol. Voiakiv 1-oi Ukrains'koi Dyvizii UNA, 1970, pp. 225–227.

⁴⁷ Kubijovyč was scheduled to address the *Waffen-SS* volunteers, but was replaced by Pankivs'kyi. M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, pp. 44, 50, 346; 'Vid'izd na vyshkil,' *L'viuski visti: Shchodennyk dlia dystryktu Halychyny*, 169 (539)(29 July 1943) p. 1.



FIGURE 3 Parade before the university building in Lviv, July 18, 1943. In the center, under the coat of arms, Governor Otto Wächter. To his right, in dark suit and glasses, Volodymyr Kubijovyč. First row, Alfred Bisanz, in dark suit and raised right arm, and the members of the military board.

it lost, through our intervention, those inhabitants who often sullied the name of Galicia, namely the Jews.⁴⁸

Regarding the Polish minority, Himmler joked that he would be quite popular, was he to give the Division free hands to exterminate them. Seen in light of the Huta Pieniacka massacre, more of which below, it indicates that punishing crimes committed against this group would not subsequently have very high priority.

The third thing I demand of you is obedience. There is something I want to tell you. Obedience starts the moment you receive an order to do something you find unpleasant. I know if I ordered the Division to exterminate the Poles in this area or that area, I would be a very popular man. But if I tell you or give you the order that the Division is to follow this or that route to the front in full battle order, and fight against the Russians, than that is what will be done. For the *Führer* will manage to handle

⁴⁸ Heinrich Himmler, 'Rede des Reichsführers-SS am 16.5.44 vor dem Führerkorps der 14. Galizischen SS-Freiw. Division,' and 'Promova Raikhsfirera Hainrikha Himmlera do starshyn Dyvizii,' 14. SS-Dobr. Dyv. 'Halychyna,' Informatsyvna sluzhba, VI, Postii, dnia 17.5.44, TsDAVOV Ukrainy, f. 4620, op. 3, spr. 378, ll. 1–9, copy. The original is located in the BA-KO, R 52 III/3c. A sound recording of the first part of Himmler's speech, 'Promova H. Himmlera do dobrovol'tsiv SS Halychyna' is available on *YouTube*, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTuFEGbQua8> (accessed 25 January 2011).

the Poles, they who have ill-treated you the same way as they have ill-treated our fellow Germans in Poland. You do nothing before the order is given.⁴⁹

As an integral part of their training, the Ukrainian volunteers received two hours of education in National Socialist *Weltanschauung* every week.⁵⁰ The units were trained in facilities linked to concentration camps.⁵¹ In his memoirs, Vasyl' Weryha reminisces about his training as an NCO 'at the administrative-management *Verwaltungsschule* in Dachau, near Munich. 140 of us went there, among them former officers of various ranks in the Austrian and Ukrainian armies, in order to go through a re-education for officers.'⁵² Weryha recalls how the inmates of the Dachau concentration camp were forced to remove their hats for the Ukrainian SS recruits.⁵³ Like the *Verwaltungsschule* in Dachau, both the Heidelager and Hradischko training grounds were constructed as adjacent to forced labor camps. The *Waffen-SS Galizien* occasionally interfered in the running of the Heidelager camp. It would not have been unusual for *Waffen-SS* recruits to have helped with guarding or being trained in prisoner escort in the camps.⁵⁴

At the end of August 1943 the Ukrainian *Waffen-SS* recruits received tattoos indicating their blood groups under their left arm.⁵⁵ On August 29, after the completion of the military and ideological training, the recruits were sworn in at the Heidelager, in the presence of SS-*Obergruppenführer* Wächter and representatives of the Ukrainian Central Committee. The

⁴⁹ Ibid. According to the *Waffen-SS* veterans Julian Temnyk and Bohdan Pidhayny's own account, published in the 1960s and 1980s, *Waffen-Obersturmführer* Julian Temnyk expressed dissatisfaction with Himmler's remarks. According to an affidavit, dated 1 August 1989, Temnyk had said that 'Let it be permissible in your presence, Herr *Reichsführer*, for me to state that we Ukrainians are not preparing to slaughter the Poles, and that is not why we voluntarily enlisted into the Division Galicia.' M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, 111, fn. 129, 130. There is no contemporary record of a rebuttal from Temnyk. Given the strictly hierarchical organization of the SS, it is highly unlikely that Himmler would have been corrected, in public, by a Ukrainian of much lower rank.

⁵⁰ M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, 57, citing Nachrichtendienst für die Leiter der Abteilung VI, II. Schulung oder Erziehung, p. 5, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archive (USHMMA), RG 48.004m, Reel 5, SS-Ausbildungsbattalion z.b.V., Karton 3, File II, 1943, II.

⁵¹ M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, p. 95.

⁵² Vasyl' Weryha, *Pid krylamy vyzvol'nykh dum: Spomyny pidkborunzhobu dyvizii 'Halychyna'*, Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo imeni Oleny Telihy, 2007, p. 26. On the training of officers in Dachau, see Bolianov'skyi, *Dyvizia 'Halychyna'*, pp. 134, 145.

⁵³ Weryha, *Pid krylamy*, 27. There was a network of camps at Dachau, known as the Kaufering concentration camps. Hannah Arendt writes that Eichmann in 1933 attended an SS camp in Dachau 'which had nothing to do with the concentration camp there.' Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. Revised and Enlarged Edition, New York: Penguin Books, 1994, p. 34. While Weryha's 2007 reminiscences do not specify the details of which of the subsidiary camps the training took place, they demonstrate that, at the very least, he was aware of the concentration camp system and the nature of the National Socialist system.

⁵⁴ Margolian, *Unauthorized entry*, pp. 134, 297.

⁵⁵ The tattoo was unique to the *Waffen-SS* and the Fallschirmjäger (Parachutists) to assist with blood transfusion in case they were wounded in combat. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, p. 57.

ceremony started with a field service, led by the unit's military chaplain, Dr. Vasyl' Laba,⁵⁶ accompanied by a choir. Thereafter the SS recruits took a solemn oath:

'I swear before God this holy oath, that in the battle against Bolshevism, I will give absolute obedience to the commander in chief of the German Armed Forces Adolf Hitler, and as a brave soldier I will always be prepared to lay down my life for this oath.'⁵⁷

The oath to Hitler was obligatory until the last month of the Division's existence.⁵⁸ There is no overt indication that the unit in any way was dedicated to Ukrainian statehood, let alone independence. The volunteers committed themselves to a German victory, the New European Order, and to Adolf Hitler personally.

ATROCITIES

The division was led by German officers who had been directly involved in the perpetration of the Holocaust and atrocities against Belarusian and Ukrainian civilians. The commander from 20 October 1943 until the end of the war was SS-*Oberführer* Fritz Freitag. A fanatical National Socialist, Freitag had made his career through the police establishment. At the initial phases of the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Freitag had served within the command staff of *Reichsführer*-SS to which he reported directly. He had commanded the 1st SS Motorized Infantry brigade, which operated separately or alongside the *Einsatzgruppen*, a unit involved in ruthless subjugation of

⁵⁶ Vasyl' Laba (1887–1976) served in the *Waffen*-SS Division *Galizien* 1943–45, with the rank of *Sturmabführer*, or major. He served as vicar at the Edmonton eparchy from 1950 and became honorary member of the Ukrainian War Veterans Association in Edmonton. O. S. Rubl'ov, 'LABA Vasyl' *Istoriia Ukrainy*, Instytut Istorii Ukrainy, http://www.history.org.ua/?l=EHU&verbvar=Laba_V&abcvar=15&bbcvar=1 (accessed 20 June 2011); Mykhailo Bairak, *Ukrains'ka Strilets'ka Hromada v Edmontoni*, Edmonton: Ukrainian War Veterans' Association- Edmonton Branch, 1978, p. 10.

⁵⁷ M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, 68, 57, citing Kdo. Amt d. Waffen-SS: Org.Tgb. Nr. 982/43 g Kdos. V. 30.7.1943 *Aufstellung der SS-Freiw. Division 'Galizien.'*

⁵⁸ Alti Rodal, unpublished study, 'Nazi War Criminals in Canada: The Historical and Policy Setting from the 1940s to the Present,' prepared for the Commission of Inquiry on Nazi War Criminals in Canada (the Deschênes Commission) in 1986: Chapter XII, Part 3, p. 8. Accessible at Library and Archives Canada, RG33, 1986, 'Rodal Report.' In February 1945, the SS planned to change the wording of the oath, 'without changing its ideals' to the following wording:

'I swear before God this holy oath, that in battle against Bolshevism, for the liberation of my Ukrainian people, my Ukrainian homeland [*Heimat*], the commander in chief of the German Armed Forces and all fighters of the young European peoples against Bolshevism, Adolf Hitler, unconditional obedience and as a brave soldier I will always be prepared to lay down my life for this oath.' The wording of the oath was never changed. 'Betr. General Shandruk,' *Der Chef des SS-Hauptamtes* to Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler, 6 February 1945, Bundesarchiv Lichtenfelde, NS 19/544 pp. 87, 89. Thanks to Ray Brandon for this reference.

the local populations and mass murder of Jews. In a typical entry dated 24 August 1941, Freitag diligently reported '114 prisoners taken, 283 Jews shot, and a haul of captured booty amounting to only 2 guns, 3 heavy and 6 light machine-guns.'⁵⁹ Among the commanding officers of *Waffen-SS Galizien* was also the Ukrainian-born Volksdeutsche SS-*Hauptsturmführer* Heinrich Wiens, who had served with *Einsatzgruppen* D, which carried out the annihilation of Jews, communists, and partisans in occupied eastern Ukraine. Wiens personally took part in mass executions.⁶⁰ Another officer of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* was SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Franz Magall, who had been involved in atrocities in Belarus at the beginning of the war.⁶¹ The *Waffen-SS Galizien* worked alongside one of the most brutal counter-insurgency units of Nazi Germany, the dreaded SS-*Sonderbattalion* Dirlewanger, a unit which included rapists, murderers, and the criminally insane, which carried out brutal anti-partisan activities in Belarus and Poland, and the no less brutal suppression of the Warsaw uprising in 1944.⁶² *Waffen-SS Galizien* and Dirlewanger transferred officers between their units: Magall had served in the SS-*Sonderbattalion* Dirlewanger before he was appointed the chief supply officer of *Waffen-SS Galizien* on 2 March, 1944.⁶³

Waffen-SS Galizien had ten officers and NCOs from *Nachtigall*, and four from *Roland*.⁶⁴ Three held positions of command at the battalion

⁵⁹ M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, p. 64, citing 'Brigadefechtsstand, den 29.8.1941, Tätigkeitsbericht für die Zeit vom 24.8.1941/12.00 Uhr-29.8.1941/12.00 Uhr,' in *Unsere Ehre Heisst Treue, Kriegstagebuch des Kommandostabes Reichsführer-SS-Kav.-Brigade und von Sonderkommandos der SS*, Vienna, Frankfurt, Zürich: Europa, 1965, pp. 122–123.

⁶⁰ Wiens served in *Sonderkommando* 10a as a translator from June 1941. A few weeks after the German invasion of the Soviet Union he was appointed *Teilkommandoführer*, leading a group of ten men in mass executions. In the spring of 1942 Wiens was transferred to *Einsatzkommando* 12 in the Stalino (today Donetsk) area, where he personally carried out mass executions. M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, pp. 106–107, fn. 353.

⁶¹ M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, p. 66, citing *Unsere Ehre Heisst Treue*, (Bericht über den Verlauf der Pripjet-Aktion', 12 August 1941, pp. 227–230; Ruth-Bettina Birn, 'Zweierlei Wirklichkeit: Fallspiele zur Partisanbekämpfung im Osten, in Bernd Wegner (ed.), *Zwei Wege nach Moskau: vom Hitler-Stalin-Pakt bis zum "Unternehmen Barbarossa"*, Munich: Piper, 1991, p. 275. M. J. Melnyk writes that 'One punitive sweep conducted in these swamps between 27 July and 11 August 1941, ultimately accounted for the death of 6,526 "bandits" and "plunderers", i.e., assumed partisans or those who had assisted them. In his report on this action Magill noted that: "Driving women and children into swamps was not as successful as it should have been, since the swamps were not deep enough for them to sink. At a depth of one meter, most cases reached solid ground (probably sand) so drowning was not possible.'" M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, pp. 112–113, citing HW 16/101, CX/MSS/Q.48, 21/3/44, PRO.

⁶² This cooperation took place following the transfer of the unit to Slovakia, where they fought rebels together with the 18th SS Volunteer Panzer Grenadier Division Horst Wessel, SS-*Sturmbrigade* Dirlewanger SS, the Vlasov detachment and other SS and SD formations until 5 February 1945. Bolianovs'kyi, *Dyviziiia 'Halychyna'*, 274; Philip W. Blood, *Hitler's Bandit Hunters: The SS and the Nazi Occupation of Europe*, Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2008, p. 270. Christian Ingrao, *The SS Dirlewanger Brigade: The History of the Dark Hunters*, trans. Phoebe Green, New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2011; French L. MacLean, *The Cruel Hunters: SS-Sonderkommando Dirlewanger, Hitler's Most Notorious Anti-Partisan Unit*, Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishers, 1998.

⁶³ M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, p. 67.

⁶⁴ Bolianovs'kyi, *Dyviziiia 'Halychyna'*, p. 61.



FIGURE 4 <http://forum.ck.ua/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=151201> Evhen Pobihushchyi, same date, Lviv.

level, two of them with a background in *Schutzmannschaft* Battalion 201—former *Waffen-SS Hauptsturmführer* Mikhailo Bryhidyr, and *Waffen-SS Sturmbannführer* Evhen Pobihushchyi, ‘a passionate soldier,’ according to his course commanders.⁶⁵ Evhen Pobihushchyi became military liaison to the central OUN leadership (*Provid*). (Figure 4)⁶⁶ Involved in brutal anti-partisan operations in Belarus in 1942, *Schutzmannschaft* Battalion 201 had carried out indiscriminate and disproportionate violence against civilians.⁶⁷ Its previous incarnation, the *Nachtigall* battalion, took part in mass shootings of Jews in the summer of 1941.⁶⁸ The men of the dissolved *Schutzmannschaft* Battalion 204 and 206, approximately 250 German-speaking men, were attached to the fifth *Wachmannmanschaft* Battalion of the *Waffen-SS Galizien*. *Schutzmannschaft* Battalion 204 had been providing guards for the concentration camp Pustków. Both *Schutzmannschaft*

⁶⁵ B. Matsiv, (ed.), *Ukrains'ka Dyvizia 'Halychyna'*, 16; M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, pp. 65–66, 347, citing NA A3343-SSO-384A.

⁶⁶ ‘Dopovidna zastupnyka nachal'nyka uprvlinnia 2-N Ministerstva derzhavnoi bezpeki URSR polkovnyka Shorbalki ministerovi MDB URSR Mykoli Koval'chuku shchoda spivpratsi ounitysi z rozvidkamy zakhidnykh derzhav’, December 1951. Volodymyr Serhiichuk (ed.), *Stepan Bandera u dokumentakh radians'kykh orbaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky (1939–1959)*, tom III, Kyiv: PP Serhiichuk M. I. 2009, pp. 146, 148.

⁶⁷ Per Anders Rudling, “Szkolenie w mordowaniu: Schutzmannschaft Battalion 201 i Hauptmann Roman Szuchewycz na Białorusi 1942 roku,” in Bogusław Paż (ed.), *Prawda historyczna a prawda polityczna w badaniach naukowych: Przykład ludobójstwa na kresach południowej-wschodniej Polski w latach 1939–1946*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2011, 191–212. Other soldiers of *Schutzmannschaft* battalion 201 were reorganized into *Schutzmannschaft* battalion 57, which likewise were involved in the burning villages and killing civilians in Belarus in 1943. HDA SBU f. 5, Delo 65509, tom 5, ll. 239, 296, 345, 348, 353, 357, 374, 384, 386.

⁶⁸ See the account of *Nachtigall* soldier Viktor Khar'kiv (Khmara). TsDAVO Ukrainy, f. 3833, op. 1, spr. 57, ark. 17.

battalions 204 and 206, writes Howard Margolian, 'appear to have seen prior service in Ukrainian irregular formations that were known to have perpetrated atrocities against Jews and communists during the early days of German occupation.'⁶⁹

Himmler had ordered the establishment of five *'Polizei-Schützen-Regimenten'* to be armed and supplied by the central bureau of the *Waffen-SS (SS-Führungshauptamt)* in coordination with the HSSPf of Ukraine and the *Ordnungspolizei (Orpo)*, which, 'for psychological and political reasons will be designated *Galizisches SS-Freiwilligen Regimenten* with the numbers 4–8.'⁷⁰ HSSPf stands for the SS and Police Leader, and answered only to Heinrich Himmler and Adolf Hitler.

These units consisted of people who had volunteered for the *Waffen-SS Galizien*, but had not made the first cut; they were integrated into the unit at a later date. The fourth and fifth regiments, which stood under the control of the Orpo, were deployed for security duties.⁷¹ *Galizische SS-Freiwilligen-Regiment 4*, with its 1,264 men was commanded by the *Schutzpolizei* major Siegfried Binz, transferred from Belarus, where he had commanded the Police Battalion 307, a unit involved in indiscriminate terror. His units had taken part in the brutal anti-partisan operations 'Hamburg,' 'Altona,' 'Franz,' 'Erntefest I,' 'Erntefest II,' 'Hornung' and 'Föhn.'⁷²

THE HUTA PIENIACKA MASSACRE

During the OUN-UPA campaign of mass murder of the Polish minority in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia, the Polish village of Huta Pieniacka became a refuge for Polish and Jewish survivors from surrounding villages. Desperately seeking allies, Huta Pieniacka cooperated with pro-Soviet partisans in the region. A Polish village in Eastern Galicia, sheltering Jews, and an outpost for pro-Soviet partisans caught the attention of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* as well as the UPA.

The most serious atrocity attributed to the unit, the Huta Pieniacka massacre, was committed, according to Ukrainian and Polish

⁶⁹ Golczewski, 'Shades of Grey,' p. 140, citing Stanisław Zabierowski, *Pustków Hitlerowskie obozy wyniszczenia w Służbie Poligomu*, Rzeszów: RSW 'Prasa-Książka-Ruch,' 1981, p. 34; Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, pp. 133–134.

⁷⁰ Bolianovs'kyi, *Dyviziiia 'Halychyna'*, pp. 217–218; M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, pp. 61–62, citing Himmler's circular to all officers: *Der Reichsführer-SS* Tgb. Nr. 35\88\43g *Feld-kommandostelle* 24 June 1943. Himmler File Documents (HFD), Imperial War Museum, London, H/10/37.

⁷¹ Ihor Iliushyn, 'Boiivi dii OUN i UPA na antypols'komu fronti,' in Stanislav Kul'chys'tkyi et al (eds.), *Orbanizatsiia ukrains'kykh natsionalistiv i Ukrain's'ka postans'ka armii: Istorychni narysy*, Kyiv: Naukova Dumka, 2005, p. 284. M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, p. 63.

⁷² J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, p. 62, citing *Der SS- und Polizeiführer in Weissruthenien*, Minsk, den 30. März 1943, 00061 and *den Reichsführer SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei im Reichskommissariat des Innern, Betr. Versorgungsweise Beförderung des Majors d. Sch.* Siegfried Binz, geb. Am 12.3.1898 in Ostseebad Binz a/Rügen, *Kommandeur des I./23, Heimatstandort*: Recklinghausen. Bezug:O-Kdo. II P. I (1a) 37/43 vom 13.3.43.

government commissions, by the fourth regiment under the command of *Sturmbannführer* Binz.⁷³ A 2003 investigation by the Polish Institute of National Remembrance into the massacre concluded that:

the crime was committed by the 4th battalion of the 14th division on February 28. On that day, early in the morning, soldiers of this division, dressed in white, masking outfits, surrounded the village. The village was cross-fired by artillery. SS-men of the 14th Division of the SS "Galizien" entered the village, shooting the civilians rounded up at a church. The civilians, mostly women and children, were divided and locked in barns that were set on fire. Those who tried to run away were killed. Witnesses interrogated by the prosecutors of the Head Commission described the morbid details of the act. The crime was committed against women, children, and newborn babies.⁷⁴

In 2005, the Institute of History at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences arrived at the same conclusion—that the 4th SS Police regiment indeed killed the civilian inhabitants in Huta Pieniacka.

The SS detachment's attack on the village was the result of the denunciation to the Ukrainian police by the population in Pidhirtsiv, which informed the Germans that the Poles of Huta Pieniacka were hiding Jews, supported Bolshevik partisans, stored weapons and so on. The Ukrainian SS men arrived in the village to conduct an inspection. When they began robbing the population, speaking Ukrainian to each other the Poles took them for bandits in disguise, and began defending themselves. Then, a Ukrainian squadron of the SS arrived in the village from Pidhirtsiv. After having encircled the village, it began to murder people.⁷⁵

There is an emerging consensus among historians on the participation of units, linked to *Waffen-SS Galizien* in the 'pacification' of Huta Pieniacka. The disagreements are mostly concerned with the scale of the massacre. Agreeing on the involvement of *Waffen-SS Galizien*-affiliated soldiers and on the number of farmsteads burned down—172, the Ukrainian and Polish

⁷³ Bolianovs'kyi, *Dyvizia 'Halychyna'*, 218, citing TsDAVOV Ukrainy, f. 3971, op. 1, spr. 7, ark. 43.

⁷⁴ 'Investigation into the Crime Committed at the Village of Huta Pieniacka,' published 18 November 2003. The Institute of National Remembrance. Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation, http://ipn.gov.pl/portal/en/19/188/Investigation_into_the_Crime_committed_at_the_Village_of_Huta_Pieniacka.html (accessed 4 April 2011). On Huta Pieniacka, see also Howard Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry: The Truth about Nazi War Criminals in Canada, 1946–1956*, Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2000, p. 134; 'Śledztwo ws. mordu w Hucie Pieniackiej,' *Wirtualna Polska*, 28 February 2009, <http://wiadomosci.wp.pl/kat,1342,title,Śledztwo-ws-mordu-w-Hucie-Pieniackiej,wid,10895470,wiadomosc.html> (accessed 13 August 2010).

⁷⁵ Iliushyn, 'Boivi dii OUN i UPA na antypols'komu fronti,' pp. 283–284, citing Archiwum Akt Nowych, Warsaw, Sygn. 202/II/73. – K. 89.

commissions disagree on the number of victims. The Ukrainian commission states that nearly 500 people were killed, and that nearly 50 people managed to save their lives.⁷⁶ The Polish Institute for National Memory gives a much higher number—700 to 1,500 people, including in this count about 1,000 Huta Pieniacka residents, plus people from surrounding villages who had sought refuge in the village.⁷⁷ Even Volodymyr V'iatrovych, claiming '700 to 1,200 Polish victims,' cites documents from the archives of Mykola Lebed, the leader of the OUN(b) security services (SB OUN) that 'On 24 February 1944 the Ukrainian SS-men wiped out the entire village Huta Pieniacka, that center of Polish banditry. All males were shot, the women decimated.'⁷⁸

The sources concur that there were two attacks on the village. The first one, on February 23 failed and two Ukrainian soldiers were killed. A second assault on the village followed on February 28, in which 8 to 12 Ukrainians were wounded, one of whom fatally. The village was then brutally 'pacified,' its residents murdered and the village burned in its entirety. The eyewitness Zvi Weigler links the massacre to the sheltering of Jews.⁷⁹

At six o'clock in the morning Germans and Ukrainian SS men arrive. The Jews, who at that hour were at the edge of the forest, saw them coming but did not move. They apparently did not believe that the soldiers

⁷⁶ Ilyushyn, 'Boiv dii OUN i UPA na antypol'skomu fronti,' p. 284.

⁷⁷ Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu w Krakowie, Referat 'Zbrodnia w Hucie Pieniackiej w świetle ustaleń śledztwa Oddziałowej Komisji Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu w Krakowie,' Krakow. 25 Nov 2010, p. 5.

⁷⁸ Volodymyr V'iatrovych, *Druba pol'sko-ukrains'ka viina 1942-1947*, Kyiv: Vydavnychiy dim 'Kyevo-Mohylians'ka akademiia' and Tsentri doslidzhen' vyzvol'noho rukhu, 2011, p. 168, citing Arkiv Tsentru doslidzhen' vyzvol'noho rukhu (henceforth ATsDVR), F. 9, T. 6, Od. zb. 4, Ark. 43-89. The Center for the Study of the Liberation Movement in L'viv is an OUN(b) front organization, the propaganda materials of which need to be treated with great caution. V'iatrovych has downplayed the OUN(b)'s anti-Semitism, dismissed OUN participation in the Holocaust as Soviet propaganda, even defended the killing of civilians. See Taras Kurylo and John-Paul Himka [Ivan Khymka], 'Tak OUN stavlyasia do ievreiv? Rozdumy nad knyzhkoiu Volodymyra V'iatrovycha *Stavlennia OUN do ievreiv: formuvannia pozytyi na tli katastrofy*,' *Ukraina Moderna* 13 (2008) pp. 252-265 and Per Anders Rudling, *The OUN, the UPA, and the Holocaust: A Study in the Manufacturing of Historical Myths*. The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies 2107., Pittsburgh: University Center for Russian and East European Studies, 2011) pp. 28-31.

⁷⁹ Zvi Weigler, 'Two Polish Villages Razed for Extending Help to Jews and Partisans,' *Yad vaShem Bulletin*, 1 (1957) 19-20. Also, see the deposition made by Feivel Auerbach, a Jew from Sasów, shortly after the war. 'There were 30 of us [Jews] in the forest. We hid in Huta Werchobuska and Huta Pieniacka. The Polish inhabitants of those villages helped us. The peasants were very poor and were themselves hungry but they shared with us their last bits of food. We stayed there from July 1943 until March 1944. Thanks to them we are still alive. When there were manhunts, the village reeve warned us. Once 500 Germans encircled the forest, but since they were afraid of entering deep into the forest they set their dogs on us. We were saved because our Polish friends warned us of the impending danger. Because of a denunciation [by the Ukrainian police] all of the villagers of Huta Pieniacka and Huta Werchobuska were killed. Some of them were burned alive in a barn. The village was burned to the ground.' Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, no. 301/1200, cited in Mark Paul, *A Tangled Web: Polish-Jewish Relations in Wartime Northeastern Poland*, Part III., Toronto: PEFINA Press, 2009, http://www.glaukopis.pl/pdf/czytelnia/Tangled_Web_3.pdf (accessed 12 June 2011), p. 34, n. 41

were coming to literally murder them. The Germans and Ukrainians surrounded the village, began to fire into it with machine guns and to throw hand grenades. Only a few of the farmers succeeded in escaping to the forest. The Jews stood at a distance of a kilometer or so and saw everything. After firing and throwing hand grenades from the outskirts, the murderers went into the village, assembled all the farmers together with their families and locked them up in the barns. They even locked the cattle in the stables. Then they set fire to the entire village. From a distance we heard the cries and the shrieks as well as the lowing of the cows. The German bandits stood guard to make sure that no living thing, human or animal, would escape from the burning buildings. The village burned all day and only at night did the murderers leave.⁸⁰

Contemporary Polish sources reported that Huta Pieniacka was burned as a result of the presence of pro-Soviet partisans who were trying to convince the population to join them. The partisans apparently also carried out raids in the area, stealing horses, livestock, and food from the local population, which the population in the surrounding area came to blame on the residents of Huta Pieniacka. The Polish underground reported to the government-in-exile that 'In the fighting with our detachments and the murdering of Poles, the detachment Haliczyna [*Galizien*], stationed in the Zborów area near Pidkamin on February 27 burned the Polish village of Huta Piemowska (sic) and murdered about one hundred people, refugees who were hiding there.'⁸¹

The Polish exile government in London ordered the local Poles not to have any contacts with pro-Soviet partisans, other than as a reserve, and to regard the Ukrainian SS the same way as the Germans.⁸² A report sent by the underground Armia Krajowa to the Polish government in exile offers a similar description of the massacre, clearly designating Ukrainian SS men as the perpetrators.

On February 27, 44 [sic] at 5.00 AM the 14th Division of the Ukrainian SS surrounded the village Huta Pieniacka from three sides, shooting at the houses from a distance, then set some buildings on fire and then entered the village, plundering all the belongings of the inhabitants. The people were gathered in the church or shot in the houses. Those gathered in the church—men, women and children—were taken outside in groups, children killed in front of their parents. Some men and women were shot in the cemetery, others were gathered in barns, where they were shot. The village was completely burned down. The only people who

⁸⁰ Weigler, *Two Polish Villages Razed*, pp. 19–20.

⁸¹ 'Wprowadzam numeracje tyg. Meldunku sytuac,' No. 515/1, 23 March 1944 sent to the Polish government-in-exile in London, p. 1. 1944. A copy of this report can be found in the Huta Pieniacka Case files at the Cracow Regional Office of the Polish Main Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish Nation. Huta Piemowska is a misprint. No such village existed.

⁸² 'Wprowadzam numeracje tyg. Meldunku sytuac,' No. 515/1, 23 March 1944, p. 2.

saved themselves were those who on finding out about the approaching Ukrainian SS, managed to hide in the forests (only men) or those who pretended to be dead or managed to hide in potato holes in the basements. Right now it is difficult to establish how many survived as they spread themselves around the area. Many of the injured with burned arms and legs were being treated—impossible to say how many—by people from surrounding villages who took them to their homes after the SS division left.” This was reported by Uta WSK from Huta Pieniacka who survived, badly burned. The action of the SS was to be in revenge for the killing of 4 SS men on February 23. “About 60 men entered the village in the evening and began to plunder the houses. Since they wore German uniforms and spoke Ukrainian, they were taken for a disguised group of criminals. Thus the local defense action started, killing two for sure, and wounding several others. Seeing that the Ukrainian SS came to the area, it is possible that such cases may repeat themselves in every Polish village.”⁸³

Testimonies by UPA men and survivors, gathered by the Soviet *agentura* tells a similar story as that of the Polish underground:

On 28 February 1944 around five and six in the morning Ukrainian nationalists together with troops from the division “SS-Galizien” surrounded the Polish village of Huta Pieniacka in the Ponikoveckii raion of the L’viv oblast, opening fire upon the village. After they entered the village, they gathered all of the residents of said village on the square in front of the church, forced them into groups by beating them, led the groups into the barns, locked the barns, then poured gasoline and burned the barns with the people inside. Anyone trying to escape was shot and thrown into the fire. In this way, more than 700 Polish people were shot and burned, and 120 houses with adjoining structures were also burned. Livestock, bread and other property were taken away by the bandits.

The Huta Pieniacka resident Franko Iosifivich Kobelianskii explained that “early in the morning on 28 February 1944, two rockets were fired upon our village, thereafter our village came under fire. After the shooting, our village was surrounded from all sides by Germans and civilians, emerging from the forest, all of whom were armed with machine guns and rifles. They entered the village and began to gather the entire village population on the square in front of the church. After gathering the men, women, old people and children, the Germans and the civilians drove them into groups of 20–30, chased them into barns, closed the buildings and burned the buildings together with the people inside. Those who

⁸³ Antoni B. Szcześniak and Wiesław Z. Szota, *Droga do nikąd: działalność organizacji ukraińskich nacjonalistów i jej likwidacja w Polsce*, Warsaw: Wyd-wo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej 1973, p. 127. A copy of this report can be found in the Huta Pieniacka Case files at the Cracow Regional Office of the Polish Main Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish Nation.

tried to run were killed. In this way 600–700 people were killed and burned, all livestock was taken away, as was footwear and clothes.”

The Huta Pieniacka resident explains: ‘On 28 February 1944 our village came under fire, and soon after the shooting ended the SS’ troops and Germans arrived, including many men in civilian clothes on horse carts. The SS men were Ukrainians, they entered all the houses and gathered all the old people, children and youth on the square in front of the church, chased part of the people into the church, and thereafter some sort of Kommandant of the SS men—he spoke Ukrainian—took the old people and the children and in groups sent them into the barn, locked them up and burned the people together with the barn.

I was in the church and was afraid to leave, and an SS man called me out of the church. They gathered us in groups, there were children, old people and women among us, and about 40–50 people marched us into one of the barns, and in it people screamed with inhuman voices—at this point we realized, that they will burn us alive. The people began to run, and the SS men opened fire on them with machine guns. I fell between two rocks and remained alive. Then they gathered us who were still alive and forced us back into the barn, closed the doors and put it on fire. When the barn was burning I broke two planks and ran out of the fire, into the forest. The rest were all burned alive.⁸⁴

The Huta Pieniacka operation also included UPA men, who wanted to ‘settle the scores with the population, since they were helping the Red Partisans.’ They were given rifles and 15 bullets each, and helped in the extermination of the villagers.

The participants from the UPA bands, who at that time had arrived in the village . . . together with the commander of the Volhynian band also surrounded the village and did that, what the Germans did, that is burned houses and various buildings, and drove the residents into the Roman Catholic Church. Those who tried to hide were shot on the spot, and shots were fired at those running. After that, as the ring that encircled the village was dissolved and the operation came to an end, the residents were being convoyed to the barn and the houses, locked up, and burned. There were four or five barns, filled with the residents of Huta Pieniacka, about 700–750 people, all of whom were burned. The above mentioned

⁸⁴ “Vypiska iz ag[enturnogo] dela No. 40, ‘Zveri,’ arkh. No. 2387, str. 26, 50, 55, 56, 112, HDA SBU, f. 26, op. 2, spr. 2, ark. 208–211, printed in *Pol’shcha ta Ukraina u tridtsiatykh-sorokovykh rokakh XX stolittia. Nevidomi dokumenty z arkhiviv spetsial’nykh sluzhb. Tom 4. Poliaki i ukraintsi mizh dvoma totalitarnymy systemamy 1942–1945. Chastyna druga.*, Warsaw and Kyiv: Derzhavnyi arkhiv Sluzhbi bezpeky Ukrainy, Arkhiv Ministerstva vnutrennykh sprav i administratsii Respubliki Pol’shcha. Institut natsional’noi pam’iati—Komisia z peresliduvannia zlochyniv proty pols’koho narodu. Instytut politychnykh i ethnonatsional’nykh doslidzhen’ Natsional’noi akademii nauk Ukrainy, 2005, pp. 976–981.

pogrom continued from eight in the morning until two or three in the afternoon.⁸⁵

In the interest of accuracy I have chosen to include the original quotations cited above. This is important, as the Ukrainian *Waffen-SS* veterans and their admirers deny the unit's involvement in the massacre. Evhen Pobihushchyi claims Huta Pieniacka burned down as a result of fighting.

[T]he Poles met the advancing group in Huta Pieniacka with machine gun fire and stubbornly defended the village. The Catholic Church and various buildings were burned, but neither our soldiers, nor the Germans burned people alive in the houses, nor did they carry out mass shootings. Of course the civilians suffered losses. This was inevitable.⁸⁶

Taras Hunchak denies the involvement of *Waffen-SS Galizien* troops in the Huta Pieniacka massacre, blaming an unknown unit.

That operation of the fourth regiment has, to some extent become a dispute, because Polish authors incorrectly attribute the destruction of Huta Pieniacka and the losses of Polish patriots to the Ukrainian sub-detachment which captured the village, and not the German special detachment, which in reality conducted this war crime.⁸⁷

Evhen Pobihushchyi does not provide any sources for his claim. Taras Hunchak, Andrii Bolianovs'kyi, and Roman Kolisnyk, editor of the Ukrainian *Waffen-SS* veterans' journal *Visti Kombatanta*, all rely on one single source, a report from the military board member Mykhailo Khronoviat, who had travelled from L'viv to spend time with the regiment, which at the time was training near Zolochiv.⁸⁸ Whereas the report's record of the massacre is largely consistent with other testimonies, it differs from all other accounts in that it places the blame for the massacre on an unspecified German *Schutzpolizei* unit.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ "Vypiska iz aglenturnogo] dela No. 40, 'Zveri,' in *Pol'shcha ta Ukraina, Tom 4*, pp. 976–981. The *Waffen-SS Galizien*'s cooperation with the UPA at the time of the Huta Pieniacka massacre is also confirmed by the 'Protokol Viis'kovoi uprav 7 bereznia 1944 r.' and 'Khronika Dyvizii "Halychyna" z 25 liutnia 1944 r. – Mykh. Ostroverkhyy TsDAVOV Ukrainy, f. 3971, op. 1, Spr. 7, ark. 43.

⁸⁶ Evhen Pobihushchyi-Ren, *Mozaika moikh spomyniv*, Ivano-Frankivs'k: Vydavnytstvo 'Lileia NV,' 2002, pp. 134–135.

⁸⁷ Taras Hunchak, *U mundryakb voroba*, Brody: Prosvita, 2005, p. 154.

⁸⁸ Bolianovs'kyi, *Dyvizia 'Halychyna*,' p. 218; Taras Hunczak, *On the Horns of a Dilemma: The Story of the Ukrainian Division Halychyna*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000, p. 72.

⁸⁹ M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, pp. 102–103, citing Gal. SS Freiw. Regt. 4, O.U., den 3.3.1944, Regiments Tagesbefehl No. 10. AA and 'Minutes of the Military Board,' op. cit., 7 March 1944, pp. 91–92.

On February 28, a second action (*Einsatz*) in Huta Pieniacka. (During the first *Einsatz*, two soldiers were killed . . . Cap. M. Khronoviat talks about an action (*vyprava*) against Huta Pieniacka, in which he participated in German uniform. They started from Koniushkiv and arrived in Zharkiv at 2 AM on 28 February 1944. Zharkiv is the last village before Huta Pieniacka. Our attack began early, at 6 AM: the front unit had 40 people. The soldiers moved ahead, and fought well. After one hour of fighting they entered the village and stayed there until 11. As we retreated from the village, we brought out the two killed soldiers—[killed] on February 23—who were naked and butchered. The *Mazury* [the Poles] of Huta Pieniacka are infamous: they humiliated Ukrainians, they were killing our peasants, and torn the jaw off one of our priests. The entire population fled to the [Roman Catholic] church. The village was set on fire. Every house was a storehouse of ammunition—there was a terrible noise as the grenades exploded. By the way, Jews were also hiding in the village. . . . There Cap. Khronoviat visited the sixth company, located in Pidkamin'. Here our soldiers under the regiment of our SS officers could finally have a chance to have a rest. They could finally stay in their houses, since before the arrival there of our SS men, via Huta Pieniacka—which, after the retreat of our SS a special German unit had completely pacified so that only the church remained. . . . Detailed information about the first of our SS's presence on February 23 and 24 in the village of Huta Pieniacka, in which the Poles were fortified. In this battle Oleksa Bobak, Roman Andriichuk, and Yurko Hanusiak were killed. The first battalion of the 4th regiment took part in the battle. . . . 8 to 12 of our SS were injured. The village of Huta Pieniacka and Pieniaki were burned and pacified, depopulated. This operation was carried out by a special German unit, and not our volunteers. Remarking on this battle: our men entered Huta Pieniacka on the 23 of February and came under fire which killed two of our soldiers and we started to retreat from the village. And the Poles were attacking. At that moment the Poles came under fire from the flank. It is assumed that this fire came from Ukrainian partisans.⁹⁰

This claim is implausible—not only is it based upon a single source, but on a biased one at that, since the Military Board representative had little interest in portraying the dark side of a police operation implicating those who were meant to formally join a 'military' division. Furthermore, this claim is contradicted by a report of the Ukrainian Aid Committee, subordinated to Volodymyr Kubijovyč's Ukrainian Central Committee in Krakow. It states, unambiguously, that the 'pacification' of the village was conducted

⁹⁰ 'Protokol Viis'kovoï uprav 7 bereznia 1944 r.' and 'Khronika Dyvizii "Halychyna" z 25 liutnia 1944 r.- Mykh. Ostroverkhyy TsDAVOV Ukrainy, f. 3971, op. 1, Spr. 7, ark. 43, also reprinted in Roman Kolisnyk, '4-i halyts'kyi dobrovol'chyi polk i Huta Pieniats'ka' 19 October 2008; *Visti Kombatanata*2, (2008), <http://komb-a-ingwar.blogspot.com/search/label/2008%20N%202> (accessed 17 June 2011).

by soldiers affiliated with *Waffen-SS Galizien* in retaliation for the death of two of their comrades at the outskirts of the village.

On 29 February 1944 [sic] units of the SS-Division *Galizien* were searching the forests in the vicinity of the Polish village Huta Pieniacka, a favorite ground of Bolshevik parachutists. As the SS advance guard approached the village, they unexpectedly came under heavy rifle fire, killing two SS men and seriously wounded a third one. In response the SS unit encircled the village and conducted a pacification.⁹¹

OTHER ATROCITIES IN EASTERN GALICIA

The same report mentions another *Aktionen*. In retaliation for the killing of 15 Ukrainians in the village of Zhukiv in the Zolochiv district by Polish partisans, on 4 March 1944, 'an armed detachment of the German gendarmerie and parts of SS men from the Division *Galizien* from Zolochiv conducted a pacification' of the Polish village of Vitsyn', allegedly a partisan base.⁹² It appears to have been part of a series of assaults on Polish villages. Father Waclaw Sztelnicki reported on a joint attack on the Dominican Monastery on March 4:

The attacks on Polish villages grew more frequent and more intense the closer the Red Army approached. . . . On Sunday, 4 March 1944, a combined UPA and SS Volunteer Division rounded up some 2,000 people who were hiding in the Dominican Monastery in the Podkamien parish of Brody. Fr. Stanislaw Fialkowski and three Dominican priests were murdered. Altogether they killed 600 people in the villages of Palikrowy, Malinska, and Czernicy.⁹³

In the massacre of Poles who had sought shelter in the Podkamien monastery, the 4th Police Regiment of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* cooperated

⁹¹ The Michael Chomiak collection in the Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA), Edmonton, accession no. 85.191, folder 59, sheet 358. The item 'Pacification of the village Huta Pieniacka in Brody area' is listed as item 55/3. This report lists a number of other massacres in Galicia, Pidliashshia, and Kholmshchyna, committed between 25 February and 7 March 1944. It is accompanied by a 3 March protocol from the board of directors of the Ukrainian Central Committee, listing 18 names, the first of which being Dr. Pankivs'kyi. See also Oleksandr Melnyk, review of Michael James Melnyk. p. 109.

⁹² 'On the night of February 3, armed people attacked a hamlet of Zhukiv in the Skazhenyts administrative district of the Zolochiv area, burned eight Ukrainian farmsteads and killed about 15 Ukrainians. The aggressors departed in the direction of the Polish village of Vitsyn'. The following day a heavily armed (*syl'nyi*) detachment of German gendarmerie and parts of the SS men of the Division *Galizien* from Zolochiv conducted a pacification of the above-mentioned Polish village.' The Michael Chomiak collection, PAA, accession no. 85.191, folder 59, sheet 358, item 56/3.

⁹³ Fr. Waclaw Sztelnicki, *Zapomniany lwowski bohater ks. Stanislaw Frankl; z przedmowa Ignacego Tokarczuka*, Rome: n.p. 1983, p. 132; Tadeusz Piotrowski, *Poland's Holocaust: Ethnic Strife, Collaboration with Occupying Forces and Genocide in the Second Republic, 1918-1947*, Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1998, p. 230.

with a UPA unit led by Maks Skurups'kyi, nom-du-guerre 'Maks.'⁹⁴ Grzegorz Motyka writes that about 100 Poles were murdered in the monastery, in addition to the people killed in the village,⁹⁵ Ihor Iliushyn how soldiers of *Waffen-SS Galizien* murdered over 250 Poles in the local Dominican monastery.

A part of the Ukrainian detachment climbed over the walls and began to murder those who had not managed to escape, other detachments spread out over the village and went to the houses of the Poles, demanding *Ausweise* (identity cards). People with Polish nationality marked in their *Ausweis* were killed. As those who managed to escape the assault could testify, those who could demonstrate they were not Poles were spared.⁹⁶

Also the 12 March 1944 destruction of the nearby Polish village of Palikrowy (Ukr: Palykorovy) was carried out by the 4th Police Regiment of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* in cooperation with UPA detachments.⁹⁷ According to Ukrainian sources, 385 Poles were executed.⁹⁸

Evidence of the destruction of other Polish villages is found in the Mykola Lebed Papers, which Volodymyr V"iatrovych cites to the effect that the Germans repeatedly used *Waffen-SS Galizien* in punitive operations against the Polish minority in Galicia.

On 4 March (6 or March), 1944 the Ukrainian SS-men destroyed the Polish colony Zavone, a fortified headquarter of Polish-Bolshevik bands. In the *Aktion* about 300 people were killed, and the village burned down. In the village many weapons and ammunition were found.⁹⁹

V"iatrovych also cites Polish reports from April 1944 on how soldiers of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* burned the village of Iasenysia Pol'ska in the Polish district of Kamionka Strumiłowa (Ukr. Kam"ianka Strumylova),¹⁰⁰ and how,

⁹⁴ Grzegorz Motyka, *Ukraińska partyzantka 1942–1960: Działalność Organizacji Ukraińskich Nacjonalistów i Ukraińskiej Powstańczej Armii*, Warsaw: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, Oficyna Wydawnicza RYTM, Warszawa 2006, pp. 385–386; Grzegorz Motyka, 'Niemcy a UPA,' *Karta* 23, (1997) pp. 62–63.

⁹⁵ Motyka, *Ukraińska partyzantka*, 385.

⁹⁶ Ihor Iljuszyn, *UPA i AK: konflikt w Zachodniej Ukrainie (1939–1945)*, Warsaw: Związek Ukraińców w Polsce, 2009, pp. 162–163, citing Archiwum Akt Nowych AAN, sygn. 202/II/73. Zespół akt Delegatury Rządu RP na Kraj. Departament Spraw Wewnętrznych. Biuro Wschodnie. Raport o tragedii w Podkamieniu z marca 1944, k. 75–77.

⁹⁷ Motyka, *Ukraińska partyzantka*, 385.

⁹⁸ P. T. Tron'ko et al. (eds.). *Istoriia gorodov i sel Ukrainskoi SSR (L'vovskaia oblast')*, Kyiv: Institut istorii Akademii Nauk USSR, Gl. red. Ukr. Sov. Entsikl. AN USSR, 1978), pp. 192–193.

⁹⁹ V"iatrovych, *Druha pol'sko-ukrains'ka viina*, 165, citing ATsDVR, f. 9, t. 6, Od. Zb. 4, Ark. 43.

¹⁰⁰ V"iatrovych, *Druha pol'sko-ukrains'ka viina*, 165, citing *Ziemie Wschodnie: Meldunki tygodniowe Sekcji Wschodniej Departamentu Informacji i Prasy Delegatury Rządu RP na Kraj. Kwiecień-lipiec 1944*, Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza 'Aspra-JR,' 2006, p. 27.

In Eastern Galicia [*Malopolska Wschodnia*] the arrival of the SS division raises the dangerous prospect of a new wave of murders. The attitude of the division does not leave any doubts about that. There the locals see the possibility of rescue in the quick Soviet advance.¹⁰¹

During the second half of April 1944, units linked to *Waffen-SS Galizien* burned the Polish village Budki Nieznanowskie in the district Kamionka Strumiłowa (Ukr. Kam'ianka Strumylova) and the village Pawłów in the Radziechowsk district.¹⁰² Grzegorz Motyka describes how on 7 April 1944, a subdivision of *Waffen-SS Galizien* 'or deserters from the unit' murdered 22 persons in the village of Chatki in the Podhajce [Ukr: Pidhaitsy] district.¹⁰³

Reports to the Higher SS and Police Leadership indicate involvement of the 5th Regiment of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* division in violent 'pacification' operations. On 13 April 1944, it captured six partisans in the village of Zabuce. 'Thirty-five partisans and partisan helpers shot while fleeing or offering violent resistance. In 16 houses hand-grenades exploded and incendiary ammunition was used. Village 80 percent razed [by fire].'¹⁰⁴ On 17 May 1944, Armia Krajowa reported to the Polish exile government in London that 'units of the SS Halychyna Division appeared recently in the county of Hrubieszow where they stepped up terrorist attacks on the civilian population. Six Polish villages were burned down.'¹⁰⁵

In addition to the issue of the burning of villages, the unit's involvement in anti-Jewish actions remains an open question. Dieter Pohl, in his detailed study on the Holocaust in Galicia, concludes that there is a 'high probability' that soldiers from the *Waffen-SS Galizien* took part in the round-up of Jews in Brody in February 1944.¹⁰⁶

ROUTING AT BRODY, COUNTERINSURGENCY ACTIVITIES IN SLOVAKIA AND SLOVENIA

The 16–22 July 1944 battle of Brody was a defining moment in the division's history, and the unit's most significant military engagement. In battle with

¹⁰¹ V'iatrovych, *Druha pol'sko-ukains'ka viina*, 165, citing M. Syvits'kyi, *Istoriia pol'sko-ukrains'kykh konfliktiv u 3 t.*, T. 2, Kyiv, 2005, p. 238.

¹⁰² Iljuszyn, *UPA i AK*, p. 158.

¹⁰³ Motyka, *Ukrainska partyzantka*, p. 386.

¹⁰⁴ M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, p. 104, citing Fernschreiben, + kdr LbL nr 298/5/1530, an den höheren SS- und pol. Führer ost—Führungsstab. roem. Eins a—Crocow, Betr. roem. eins a Banden Meldung. geheim. AA.

¹⁰⁵ Halina Czarnocka, *Armia Krajowa w Dokumentach 1939–1945, T. 3: kwiecień 1943–1944*, Volume 3, London: Studium Polski Podziemnej, 1976, p. 447.

¹⁰⁶ Dieter Pohl, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung in Ostgalizien 1941–1944: Organisation und Durchführung eines staatlichen Massenverbrechens*, Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1997, p. 365.

the Red Army, the unit was routed and suffered heavy losses.¹⁰⁷ Of the 11,000 soldiers deployed at Brody, 7,400 were listed as 'missing in action.' The 3,000 soldiers who were able to be re-deployed, were joined by other volunteers and reorganized in Neuhammer, Silesia.

The battle of Brody took place roughly halfway through the unit's two-year existence, less than 11 months after the volunteers had been sworn in. The division continued its existence for another ten months until its surrender on 10 May 1945. From August 1944 the unit was stationed in Slovakia, where it was involved in counter-insurgency operations. It took part in the crushing of the Slovak National Uprising in concert with some of the most brutal SS counterinsurgency units, such as the 18th SS Volunteer Panzer Grenadier Division Horst Wessel, the SS-*Sturmbrigade* Dirlewanger, the Vlasov detachment and other SS and SD formations until 5 February 1945.¹⁰⁸ The Slovak National Uprising was a broad, anti-fascist insurgency, aimed at the Germans and its powerless clericofascist puppet regime.¹⁰⁹

Unfortunately, the documentation of the unit's activities in Slovakia is sketchy and inconclusive. Howard Margolian finds that 'In view of the brutality with which the Germans suppressed the Slovak National Uprising in the autumn of 1944, it is possible that elements of the division were implicated in crimes against civilians during its tour of duty in Slovakia,'¹¹⁰ yet, '[o]nly fragments of the contemporary documentation on the 14th SS's operations in Slovakia survived the war. What little is known about the division's assistance in the suppression of the Slovak National Uprising comes from postwar trials held before the National Tribune and various people's courts.'¹¹¹ Only in the past few years has the role of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* in the crushing of the Slovak uprising been subject to serious inquiry.¹¹² Jan Stanislav, the Director of the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica finds that 'the 14th SS Division Galizien with its delegated units' took part in pacification operations during the Slovak uprising.

¹⁰⁷ The perhaps most detailed and well-researched account of the battle of Brody is M. J. Melnyk's *To Battle!* and Bolianov's'kyi, *Dyviziiia 'Halychyna': istoriia*, pp. 224–254.

¹⁰⁸ Bolianov's'kyi, *Dyviziiia 'Halychyna*, p. 274.

¹⁰⁹ Barbara Lášticová and Andrej Findor, 'Politics of Memory and Identity: How (not) to Study Museum Exhibitions,' p. 3. Paper presented at World War II and the (Re)Creation of Historical Memory in Contemporary Ukraine. An international conference, 23–26 September 2009, Kyiv, Ukraine.

¹¹⁰ Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, p. 134.

¹¹¹ Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, p. 297.

¹¹² Karol Fremal, '14. Waffen-Grenadier Division der SS (Galizien Nr. 1) v historickej spisbe o slovenskom hnutí odporu v rokoch druhej svetovej vojny,' in Michal Šmigel and Peter Mičko (eds.), *Slovenská republika 1939–1945 očami mladých historikov*. Zv. 4., Banská Bystrica Katedra histórie FHV UMB a Ústav vedy a výskumu UMB, 2005, pp. 388–399; Michal Šmigel, '14. Divízia SS 'Galizien' na Slovensku (1944–1945) bojová protipartizánska činnosť a represálie,' in Peter Sokolovič (ed.), *Slovenská republika 1939–1945 očami mladých historikov*. Zv. 7. *Perezekúcie na Slovensku v rokoch 1938–1945*, Bratislava: Ústav pamäti národa 2008, pp. 212–233.

In the Smerycany area and in Nizna Boca/Maluzina it specifically attacked the civilian population. In Smerycany, the Wittenmeyer unit from the Division burned the village down using artillery and mortar fire. The civilian population was driven out of the village and 80 percent of the 120 houses were burned down. Four people died. During the raid on Nizna Boca, five people died. These are just the most telling examples of when this unit struck.¹¹³

Jan Korček at the Slovak Military Historical Institute in Bratislava lists in detail nine separate incidents in which the *Waffen-SS Galizien* took part in atrocities against the Slovak population.¹¹⁴ The *Waffen-SS Galizien* veterans' own claims that they got along well with the local Slovak population are clearly contradicted in the German correspondence, which state that 'much is currently being said amongst the Slovak population about the Ukrainian soldiers now stationed in Slovakia. It can be taken from these discussions that these soldiers are generally not much liked.'¹¹⁵ German documentation shows that the local Slovak population feared and hated the Ukrainian *Waffen-SS* men, noting that the population 'complains about other foreign units based in the Eastern part of Slovakia, in particular those of Ukrainian nationality'¹¹⁶ and that 'No Slovak has any confidence whatsoever in these Ukrainians.'¹¹⁷

Expelled from Slovakia, the division continued fighting anti-Nazi partisans in Slovenia from January 1945 until the end of the war.¹¹⁸ Around this time, *Waffen-SS Galizien* was joined by a number of former auxiliary police formations, including the bulk of the *Schutzmannschaft* Battalion 31, also known as the Volhynian Legion.¹¹⁹ According to University of Ottawa political scientist Ivan Katchanovski, this battalion

under its various names is implicated by different sources in mass executions of Ukrainians, Jews, and Poles in the Volyn Region and in Poland under a pretext of anti-partisan actions. For example, analysis of eyewitness testimonies, interviews with local residents, archival documents, and the fact of an urgent redeployment of this unit from the Kremenets area

¹¹³ Julian Hendy, 'SS in Britain, Nizna Boca,' October 2001. p. 4, citing interview with Dr. Jan Stanislav, Director of the Museum of the Slovak National Uprising, Banská Bystrica, 4 December 1998.

¹¹⁴ Julian Hendy, 'SS in Britain, Submission to the Independent Television Commission,' Yorkshire Television, April 2000, p. 12.

¹¹⁵ Veryha, *Pid krylamy*, 136. For the German reports, see BA- R 70, SL Nr. 170, p. 46, Chief of Einsatzgruppe H, Neusohl 14.12.1944, cited by Hendy, 'SS in Britain, Nizna Boca,' p. 11.

¹¹⁶ BA- R 70 SL Nr 175, pp. 3–9, Einsatzkommando of the SIPO und SD, SD Report Presov 01.11.1944, cited in Hendy, 'SS in Britain, Nizna Boca,' p. 11.

¹¹⁷ BA- R 70 SL Nr 170- p. 24, Handwritten report (Sipo und SD) Sillein (=Zilina) 28.10.1944, in Hendy, 'SS in Britain, Nizna Boca,' p. 11.

¹¹⁸ O. Melnyk, Review of M. J. Melnyk, p. 109.

¹¹⁹ Bolianovskyyi, *Ukrains'kyi viiskovi forumvannia*, pp. 266, 301.

to the village of Pidhaitsi near Lutsk a day before a massacre there, indicate its likely involvement in the mass murder of 20 Ukrainian residents of Pidhaitsi, half of whom were children, under a pretext of a retaliation for the killing of a German soldier. The same sources show that this unit was responsible for an execution of more than 100 prisoners from the Lutsk prison on the old ground of the Pidhaitsi School in the vicinity of Lutsk in January of 1944.¹²⁰

WAFFEN-SS GALIZIEN OR UKRAINIAN NATIONAL ARMY?

As Nazi Germany was collapsing, Alfred Rosenberg, in the name of the German government recognized Pavlo Shandruk as head of the Ukrainian National Committee on 12 March 1945. Three days later Andrii Livits'kyi recognized Shandruk's forces, under the name the Ukrainian National Army, as the armed forces of the Ukrainian People's Republic in exile. On paper, during its last days of existence the *Waffen-SS Galizien* formally stood under the command of the successors of Petliura's army.¹²¹ Whereas the *Waffen-SS Galizien* was reorganized as the First Division of the Ukrainian National Army on 25 April, the soldiers and even NCOs only learned about this from the division's newspaper *Do Boiu!/Zum Kampf!*, during the very last days of the war.¹²² On 28 April 1945, nine days before the surrender of the division to the British and Americans in Austria,¹²³ the division's journal *Do Boiu!/Zum Kampf!* still carried the SS symbol, the *Siegrunen*, and the subtitle *Ukrains'kyi voiats'kyi chasopys Hren. Dyvizii zbroy SS* [Ukrainian military journal of the Grenadier Division of the *Waffen-SS*] in its letterhead. It carried a large tribute to *SS-Brigadenführer* Fritz Freitag on his 51st birthday and an article about the struggle of the German capital and enthusiastic accounts about how 'the forces of Bandera' and the UPA fought the Judeocommunist intruders (*zhydo-bol'shevyts'kykh nainzykiiv*)¹²⁴ (Figure 5). Under the headline 'Jewish punitive expeditions' we read how

¹²⁰ Ivan Katchanovski, 'The OUN, the UPA, and the Nazi-led Genocide in Ukraine' Paper presented at the 15th Annual World Conference of the Association for the Study of Nationalities at Columbia University, New York, 15–17 April 2010, pp. 27–28.

¹²¹ Aleksandr Gogun, *Mezhdū Gitlerom i Stalinom: Ukrainskie povstantsy*, St. Petersburg: Neva, 2004, Chapter 1, 'Usloviia vzniknoveniia i funktsionirovaniia UPA. Problema ukrainskogo kollaboratsionizma,' http://lib.oun-upa.org.ua/gogun/dis_r01.html (accessed 25 May 2011).

¹²² Veryha, *Pid krylamy vyzvol'nykh dum*, p. 160.

¹²³ Grzegorz Motyka, 'Słowiańscy wojownicy Hitlera,' *Tygodnyk 'Wprost*,' Nr. 946 (14 stycznia 2001) <http://www.wprost.pl/ar/?O=8971&C=57> (accessed 4 April 2011).

¹²⁴ 'Z Ukrainy: Vyzvol'na borot'ba,' *Do Boiu! 'Zum Kampf!': Ukrains'kyi voiats'kyi chasopys Ukrains'kyi voiats'kyi chasopys Hren. Dyvizii zbroy SS*, 28 April 1945, Year 1, volume 2, p. 2. Bandera had been released from German captivity in October 1944, following which he resumed his collaboration with Nazi Germany. Rossoliński-Liebe, 'Celebrating Fascism,' 3, citing FSB (Federal'na Sluzhna Bezopasnosti), Moscow, N-19092/T. 100, l. 233 (Stepan Bandera's prison card).



FIGURE 5 From the front page of *Do Boiu! / zum Kampf!*: *Ukrains'kyi voiat's'kyi chasopys Hren. Dyvizii zbroi SS* for April 28, 1945. Note the Siegrunen, the symbol of the SS, in the letterhead.

In Ukraine, punitive expeditions are carried out by regiments, consisting exclusively of Jews. The purpose of these regiments is to punish residents of Ukrainian cities and villages for their desire to take part in mass shootings of Jews. The Jews do their best to plunder to bring the Ukrainian population into extreme poverty and death by starvation.¹²⁵

The division faithfully served Adolf Hitler, the unit's journal dispersed anti-Semitic propaganda until the very last days of the war. After its surrender to British and US forces on May 10, the members of the division were interned at a camp in Rimini, Italy.

WAFFEN-SS GALIZIEN VETERANS IN CANADA

The Ukrainian Canadian Committee conducted an aggressive campaign to admit the *Waffen-SS Galizien* veterans into Canada. 'Aware that Ottawa's main objection to the division was the apparently voluntary character of its recruitment, those lobbying on its behalf changed their tactics. Henceforth, no effort would be spared in advancing the claim that the rank and file of the 14th SS had been "forcibly conscripted,"'¹²⁶ Howard Margolian writes. Other *Waffen-SS* veterans were admitted by claiming that they had been civilians. The Central Ukrainian Relief Agency, headed by Gordon Panchuk,

¹²⁵ 'Z Ukrainy: Zhydivs'ki karni ekspedytsii,' *Do Boiu! 'Zum Kampf!': Ukrains'kyi voiat's'kyi chasopys Hren. Dyvizii zbroi SS*, 28 April 1945, Year 1, volume 2, p. 2. John-Paul Himka notes that the ultimate source of the claim of Jewish liquidation commandos is most likely a speech held by Joseph Goebbels in the Berlin Sportpalast on 18 February 1943.

¹²⁶ Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, p. 140.

a Canadian flight lieutenant stationed in London led the efforts to bring the Ukrainian *Waffen-SS* men to Canada. 'If applications are made now without any mention of the fact that they were previously confined as PWs' [Panchuk] advised a representative of the Ukrainian-Canadian lobby, 'no questions are asked.'¹²⁷ 'There is no way of determining how many former members of the 14th SS evaded detection in this manner,' writes Howard Margolian.¹²⁸ In the end, between 1,200 and 2,000 of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* veterans immigrated to Canada.¹²⁹

Whereas the re-naming and re-organization of the division was a cosmetic change in the last days of the war, it is heavily emphasized in the memory and myth-making of the veterans and their admirers. In Canada the veterans, organized as 'The Brotherhood of former soldiers of the 1st Div. of the Ukrainian National Army' (*Bratstvo kol. voiakiv 1-oi Ukrains'koi Dyvizii UNA*) became a constituent member of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, a lobby group, claiming to speak on behalf of over 1.2 million Canadians of Ukrainian descent.

The Canadian Jewish Congress strongly objected to the admission of veterans of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* to Canada. The issue was surrounded by political controversy, particularly given Canada's reluctance to provide Jewish refugees with a sanctuary during the Holocaust.¹³⁰ The Canadian authorities relied on the background screening of the veterans carried out by the British. While the British officials tasked with the screening of the background of the division estimated that it would take months to screen the *Waffen-SS Galizien* veterans, they were given less than a month to complete this task. The result was that only a fraction of the 8,272 men interned at Rimini were examined.

Haldane Porter, who investigated the *Waffen-SS Galizien* veterans for the Special Refugee Commission of the British government was deeply skeptical about the historical account of the division, which, he noted had been put together 'entirely by the Ukrainians themselves.'¹³¹ Alti Rodal, the Deschênes' Commission's Director of Historical Research, who studied the screening process in detail, found that 'Because of the large number of persons involved, the British officials in 1947 decided that individual screening was impossible and that only a cross-section would be questioned.'¹³² She found that the security screening by the British authorities, following the surrender of the unit, was incomplete.

¹²⁷ Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, p. 141.

¹²⁸ Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, p. 141.

¹²⁹ Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, p. 132.

¹³⁰ Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, pp. 144–145. On the Canadian immigration policy towards Jews, see Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None Is too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933–1948*, Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys, 1982.

¹³¹ Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, pp. 136–137.

¹³² Alti Rodal, 'The Ukrainian "Halychyna"' (Galizien) *Waffen-SS Division*, Chapter XII, part 3, p. 12.

Assurances from the British Foreign Office in 1950 notwithstanding, screening of the group by British officials was at best sketchy . . . [The Canadian] government . . . withdrew from further screening as soon as it was regarded politic to do so—in keeping with overall government policy that minimized the importance of security screening for Nazi collaborators.¹³³

After having relied on the inadequate British screening the Canadian authorities soon cancelled their own screening of the former SS men.

[T]here was little substance and little motivation in Canadian security screening procedures for Nazi collaborators in the early 1950s. By June 1953, Immigration Branch issued instructions to cancel the January 1951 Directive regarding the processing of Ukrainians in the U.K. because it was ‘obsolete.’ Presumably, this entailed cancellation of any security checks on persons in this category.¹³⁴

When the Deschênes Commission revisited this episode in 1986, again, only a small fraction of the veterans of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* had their background checked:

The BDC checks undertaken by the RCMP and the Deschênes Commission were limited to the 218 officers of the Division named by Wiesenthal, and, indeed, association with police and other SS formations in the 1940 to 1943 period has been established for only 12 of these officers. Other than for these officers, no checks have been made on Division members admitted to Canada. Even from this limited sample, it is clear that there was continuity between the 1941–1943 Ukrainian police/military formations and the Division.¹³⁵

Based on Deschênes Commission case files, Rodal established that a number of those alleged to have served with various police units, which may have been linked to atrocities, later became members of the *Waffen-SS Galizien*:

Also, a number trained for police work in 1940 or served in the Auxiliary Police or other police and SS formations from 1941 to 1943—two (subjects Q and S) trained in the SS and Police School in Zakopane in 1940; one (subject B) transferred in late 1942 from Nachtigall to engage in police work until November 1943; another (subject X) held the rank of *Hauptmann* with the Auxiliary Police in Kiev from July 1941 to June 1943; one (subject Z) also served within the Police from July 1941 to

¹³³ Rodal, ‘The Ukrainian,’ p. 26.

¹³⁴ Rodal, ‘The Ukrainian,’ p. 25.

¹³⁵ Rodal, ‘The Ukrainian,’ p. 10.

June 1943 (both subjects X and Z attained the rank of *Hauptsturmführer* in the Division); one (subject R) served with the *Hilfspolizei*; another (subject C) served as District Adjutant of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police in Kolomya in 1941.¹³⁶

Rodal concludes that 'At least some persons who served with the Nazi-sponsored Ukrainian police/militia units that participated in killing actions in 1941–1943 would have found their way into the ranks of the Division possibly before, and more likely after the Battle of Brody.'¹³⁷ The Canadian government, however, decided not to make Rodal's report public. It was only released, in a highly censored version, in August 1987, in response to several Access to Information requests. In the 1990s, some other sections were released. Rodal's report concurs with Haldane Porter's report regarding the inadequacy of British screening of the Division members:

The men may be all or in part lying and even their names may be false. No attempt at cross-examination was made except where some obscurity or glaring discrepancy was revealed during the course of the interrogation, the work in fact which the screeners have done has largely consisted of taking down through an interpreter the men's answers to a limited number of set questions.¹³⁸

THE VETERANS DURING THE COLD WAR

The outlooks of former SS men of the division developed in different directions. Many remained unreformed totalitarians, who hoped for a new 1941, some even training soldiers for a World War III.¹³⁹ Pobihushchyi continued his fascist political activities for the rest of his long life.¹⁴⁰ As regional leader of the OUN(b) in Baden-Württemberg and military advisor of the central OUN(b) *Provid*, he organized a military training camp in the forests outside Regensburg in August–September 1948 where about 40 OUN NCOs

¹³⁶ Rodal, 'The Ukrainian,' p. 9.

¹³⁷ Rodal, 'The Ukrainian,' p. 33.

¹³⁸ D. Haldane Porter, 'Refugee Screening Commission Report on Ukrainians in Surrendered Enemy Personnel (sep) Camp No. 374 Italy,' 21 February 1947, Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Citizenship and Immigration Branch, RG 26, vol. 147, file 3-43-1 (copy). Also cited in Yuri Boshyk, *Ukraine during World War II: History and Its Aftermath*, Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta, 1986, p. 237.

¹³⁹ Lubomyr Luciuk, *Searching for Place: Ukrainian Displaced Persons, Canada, and the Migration of Memory*, Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2001, pp. 218, 233, 261.

¹⁴⁰ See, for instance 'Fiftieth Anniversary of Rumanian Legionary Movement' *ABN Correspondence: Bulletin of the Antibolshevik Bloc of Nations* XXVIII(4) (July–August 1977) p. 44.

were educated.¹⁴¹ The OUN(b) maintained contact with Francisco Franco and negotiated for an arrangement to accept former UPA and *Waffen-SS Galizien* soldiers into Spanish military academies.¹⁴² A center of former *Waffen SS-Galizien* veterans in London sought to establish a military dictatorship in Ukraine.¹⁴³ Others professed themselves to be democrats after 1945, making careers in politics and academia. In contact with majority society the veterans generally omitted their background in the *Waffen-SS*. Within their community, however, it was regarded as merit. Among the more prominent alumni were Volodymyr Kubijovyč, who after the war came to edit the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*,¹⁴⁴ (Figure 6). University of Alberta chancellor Petro Savaryn,¹⁴⁵ philologist Oleksa Horbatsch at the University of Frankfurt,¹⁴⁶ Wasyl Veryha, chronicler of the Division, co-editor of the veteran's journal *Visti Kombantanta* and director of the Slavic collection at

¹⁴¹ Briefing by Deputy Director of the MGB of the Ukrainian SSR, Col. Shorubalka to Ukrainian SSR minister of State Security Nikolai Koval'chuk, 1 November 1951. HDA SBU, f. 13, Spr. 372, t. 43, ark. 19, 22.

¹⁴² 'Protokol doprosa Matvienko, Mirona Vasil'evicha' 14–15 July 1951, HDA SBU, f. 6, spr. 56232, ark. 96.

¹⁴³ 'Protokol doprosa arestovannogo KUKA Vasiliia Stepanovicha,' 28 May 1954, HDA SBU, f. 6, Spr. 51895 fp., t. 1, Ark. 71.

¹⁴⁴ Kubijovyč's *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* was published by The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta, which also administers the Volodymyr and Daria Kubijovyč Memorial Endowment Fund, established in 1 November 1986. Its current value stands at CAD 436,748. Klid, Soroka, and Yurkevych, *CIUS Newsletter 2011*, p. 32.

¹⁴⁵ The case of one of the more high-profile veterans, University of Alberta chancellor Peter Savaryn is illustrative. Carefully using euphemistic terms, the pro-nationalist Ukrainian press in Canada presented Savaryn's background as a merit. In his Ukrainian-language memoirs, Savaryn expresses pride in his SS past—which was unknown to most of his colleagues at the University of Alberta, and omitted from his biography in the English-language *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*. 'Savaryn, Petro,' in Danylo Husar Struk (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Ukraine, Vol. IV, Pb-Sr*, Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1993, pp. 540–541. On Savaryn's *Waffen-SS* past, see Bairak, *Ukrains'ka strilets'ka bromada*, pp. 184–185; Marko Levyts'kyi, 'Savaryn vybranyi holovoiv SKVU' *Ukrains'ki visti*, 7 Dec 1983, p. 3; Petro Savaryn, *Z soboiu vzialy Ukrainu: Vid Ternopillia do Al'berty*, Kyiv: KVITs, 2007, pp. 252–253, 275, 336; Bolianov's'kyi, *Dyviziia 'Halychyna'*, p. 385.

¹⁴⁶ A 2004 Festschrift for the 80th birthday of linguist Anna-Halja Horbatsch presents her husband Oleksa's *Waffen-SS* past in the following terms: 'The war begins, and O. Horbatsch, risking his life, crosses the front and goes west to return to his native L'viv area. On the way he ends up in fascist captivity. He works for a while as translator in a POW camp. Later he manages to again get to the University of L'viv. . . . In the final two war years he serves in the Ukrainian Division [sic]. In 1945 O. Horbatsch finds himself in the American zone of occupation in Germany, again in a POW camp, this time already in an American [one].' Valerii Mokienko, 'Das sprachwissenschaftliche Werk Oleksa Horbatschs,' *Greifswalder Ukrainische Hefte*1(1): *Die Ukraine in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart. Aufsätze zu Geschichte, Sprache und Literatur*, Greifswald: Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald, Lehrstuhl für Ukrainistik, 2004, p. 12. On Horbatsch in the *Waffen-SS*, see M. J. Melnyk, *To Battle*, pp. 335–336; Bolianov's'kyi, *Dyviziia 'Halychyna'*, p. 133; Bolianov's'kyi, *Ukrains'ki viiskovi formyrovannia*, pp. 165, 512; Mykola Mushynka, 'Ioho biohrafia v ioho naukovykh pratsiakh: Do 75-rychcha dnia narodzhennia Prof. Oleksi Horbacha z Nimechchyny,' *Druzhno Vpered: Shchomisiachnyi kul'turno-bromads'kyi iliustrovanyi zburial, vydae Sotuz rymiv-ukraintsiv Slovachchyny* 3 (September 1993), pp. 12–14.

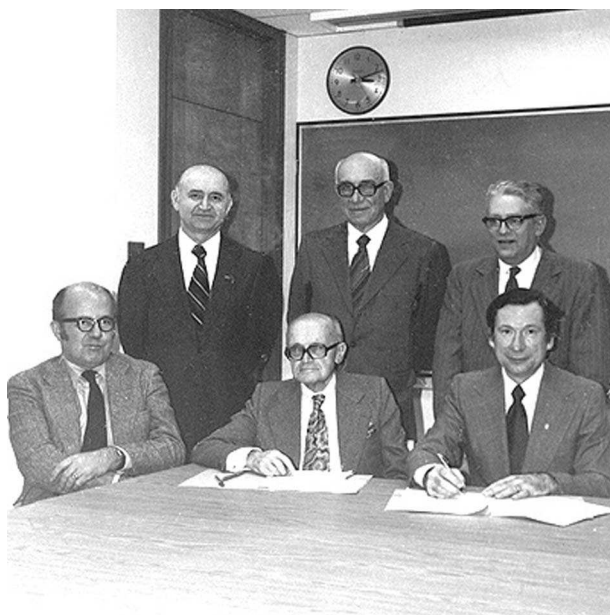


FIGURE 6 Volodymyr Kubijovyč (center, sitting) and Manoly Lupul (right) sign a contract between the Shevchenko Scientific Society and the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta on the collaboration on the Encyclopedia of Ukraine, December 1976. Standing, from left to right: Petro Savaryn, Antanas Figol, and Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky, sitting: George S. N. Luckyj, Volodymyr Kubijovyč, Manoly Lupul. Bohdan Klid and Myroslav Yurkevych (eds.), *KIUS: 30 rokov uspikbiv 1976–2006* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, 2006), 1.

the University of Toronto Library,¹⁴⁷ and Roman Drazhn'ovs'kyi, rector of the Ukrainian Free University in Munich.¹⁴⁸ Horbatsch and Veryha remained active in the Ukrainian *Waffen*-SS veterans' association through the rest of their lives.¹⁴⁹

The *Waffen*-SS was designated a criminal organization at the Nuremberg Trial, something which has complicated nationalist myth making around the unit.¹⁵⁰ While the international tribunal ruled the organization criminal, the war criminality of its members needs to be assessed on an individual basis. After the war, the *Waffen*-SS veterans denied all association with Nazi

¹⁴⁷ Husar Struk (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, Vol. IV, p. 590; Bolianovs'kyi, *Dyviziia 'Halychyna*,' p. 385.

¹⁴⁸ Bolianovs'kyi, *Dyviziia 'Halychyna*,' p. 386; Mykola Shafoval and Roman Iaremko (eds.), *Universitas Libera Ucrainensis 1921–2006*, Munich: Ukrains'kyi Vil'nyi Universytet, 2006, pp. 101–103.

¹⁴⁹ B. Matsiv (ed.) *Ukrains'ka Dyviziia 'Halychyna*,' p. 254.

¹⁵⁰ *Der Prozess gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vor dem Internationalen Militärgerichtshof. Nürnberg 14. November 1945 – 1. Oktober 1946. Amtlicher Text Verhandlungsniederschriften*. Nürnberg 1947. Fotomechanischer Nachdruck in 23 Bänden, Frechen: Komet, 2001) Bd. 1, pp. 189–414. This paper follows the definition of war crimes based upon the Principles of International Law Recognized in the

Germany and responsibility for its crimes. Interviewed by the CBC Radio in 1987, Veryha insisted,

I have never felt to be a Nazi. I never believed in Nazism, and . . . I have never been a fascist. I feel that I am and I always was a Ukrainian patriot. And that's what I am. And if you would ask me another question, if I would do the same thing all over, I would . . .

Q: That SS tattoo, do you still bear it on your body? Where was it imprinted on your body?

A: I . . . I believe it was on the left arm. Under left arm, yes.

Q: Under the left armpit?

A: Under left armpit, yes. But, uh . . . I am really not sure. I did not look for it, you know, for a number of years, so I am not sure if I do have it. (chuckles)

Q: When did you become aware of its meaning to the allies?

A: Well, it was in the prisoner of war camp there were some who were saying, you know, the people who are having it, you know, they will be persecuted. That those are criminals, or something, you know. That was the first time. But I never, ever paid any attention to it, because it is nothing else than, you know, that it indicates, you know, what kind of blood group you had, just in case you're wounded."¹⁵¹

Like many other of the *Waffen*-SS-men-turned-activists-and-scholars, Veryha was a complex figure. Interviewing Veryha shortly before his death about his memories of the Holocaust, John-Paul Himka describes him as 'exceptionally knowledgeable, intelligent and honest.'¹⁵² Veryha recalled, in gruesome detail a joint 1941 *Aktion* in Tovste, Galicia, in which Germans, assisted by

Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal and in the Judgment of the Tribunal, 1950. Principle VI reads: 'The crimes hereinafter set out are punishable as crimes under international law:

[. . .] (b) War crimes: Violations of the laws or customs of war include, but are not limited to murder, ill-treatment or deportation to slave-labor or for any other purpose of civilian population of or in occupied territory, murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war, of persons on the seas, killing of hostages, plunder of public or private property, wanton destruction of cities, towns, or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity.' <http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/FULL/390?OpenDocument> (accessed 15 May 2011)

¹⁵¹ Paul Corvallo, 'The Deschênes Commission,' *Sunday Morning, CBC Radio, CBC Digital Archives*, 18 January 1987. http://archives.cbc.ca/war_conflict/war_crimes/clips/9265/ (accessed 9 July 2011).

¹⁵² John-Paul Himka, *Ukrainians, Jews and the Holocaust: Divergent Memories*, Saskatoon: Heritage Press, Prairie Centre for the Study of Ukrainian Heritage, University of Saskatchewan, 2009, p. 12.

Ukrainian policemen, carried out a mass murder of thousands of Jews.¹⁵³ Neither personal experiences of the extermination of the Jews, nor insight into the conditions of the Dachau concentration camp prevented Veryha from joining the ranks of the *Waffen-SS* and pledging his life to Adolf Hitler.

Some defenders of the division argue that it was justified because it was defending Ukraine against the Red Army; by joining the unit many conscious Ukrainians were able to escape from Bolshevik clutches. Typically, apologetics for the unit point at Soviet crimes in 1944 as a reason for joining the unit, insisting its members had no choice but to join. Certainly, there is no denial that the Red Army committed serious human right violations in 1944, as they re-conquered Western Ukraine and moved into Polish and German lands. Yet, one could also look at it from the other side: what was going on in the way of German atrocities in the period during which the unit was defending the Third Reich? During this period Nazi Germany was killing off the Jews immediately to the west of the front. As the Red Army halted only a few hundred kilometers from Łódź in the second half of 1944 the gassing of Jews continued unabated in Auschwitz, less than a hundred kilometers away. Nazi Germany was killing most of the remainder of the 90,000 Jews in Łódź, liquidating the ghetto on 23 June 1944, and asphyxiating over 7,000 of them in the following three weeks in the briefly re-opened Chełmno gassing facility. Sixty-seven thousand Jews of Łódź were deported to Auschwitz in August 1944, where most were gassed upon arrival.¹⁵⁴

CONCLUSION

Following the opening of Soviet archives, the release of previously classified sections of the Deschênes Commission and the findings of Polish and Ukrainian historical commissions, the prospects for critical research are today better than they have ever been. The access to a wealth of new materials, the emergence of new, critical scholarship in Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Britain, and Canada have increased our knowledge of the history of the unit, but has barely had an impact on the narrative retained by the diaspora and the Ukrainian far right. On the contrary, the efforts to legitimize the unit have been stepped up over the past five years. The Ukrainian Canadian Congress saluting the unit's veterans on Remembrance Day and the introduction of new endowments in the honor of former members of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* at the University of Alberta are indicative of such efforts, as are the commercialized nostalgia and neo-fascist parades in L'viv and other Western Ukrainian cities today. The nostalgia is accompanied by an apologetic narrative, selective at best, based partly upon denial and omission.

¹⁵³ Himka, *Ukrainians, Jews and the Holocaust*, pp. 12–24.

¹⁵⁴ Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, New York: Basic Books, 2010, pp. 310–311.



FIGURE 7 Bi-lingual Svoboda Billboard on the site of the Polish village Huta Pieniacka, burned down together with over 700 of its residents by the Fourth Police Regiment of the *Waffen-SS Galizien* and a detachment of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army on February 29, 1944. Svoboda categorically denies the conclusions of the Polish and Ukrainian historical commissions. (Courtesy of Lucyna Kulińska) (color figure available online).

On the site of the Huta Pieniacka massacre, the ultra-nationalist Svoboda party has put up a large, bilingual billboard, denying Ukrainian involvement in the massacre. This phenomenon is, of course, not unique to Galicia (Figure 7). We recognize the narrative from other parts of East and Central Europe: to local patriotic *Waffen-SS* admirers, the perpetrators were always someone else, *their Waffen-SS* units clean.¹⁵⁵

While there has been an increase in the interest of the unit, research into the unit is still at an early stage. We are only beginning to understand the dynamics of local collaboration in the occupied Soviet Union. Historians need to work through the newly available sources, but also to engage themselves with the instrumentalization of the unit's past. While not claiming to provide a full and complete account of the unit's history, this essay sets out some of the problems associated with the partial rehabilitation of the unit. Issues such as the unit's institutionalized racism and anti-Semitism, its commitment to Adolf Hitler and the victory of Nazi Germany, and the involvement of officers, soldiers, and affiliated police regiments in atrocities call for more research and further inquiry into the unit's past. The problem it raises are not only historical, but also political and ethical.

¹⁵⁵ Heidemarie Uhl, 'Of Heroes and Victims: World War II in Austrian Memory,' *Austrian History Yearbook* 42 (2011) pp. 185–200; Maria Bucur, *Heroes and Victims: Remembering War in Twentieth-Century Romania*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009, p. 220; John-Paul Himka and Joanna Michlic, *Bringing the Dark Past to Light: The Reception of the Holocaust in Postcommunist Europe*, University of Nebraska Press, forthcoming).