

WOJCIECH ROSZKOWSKI

COMMUNIST CRIMES

A Legal and
Historical Study



COMMUNIST CRIMES

INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL REMEMBRANCE
COMMISSION FOR THE PROSECUTION OF CRIMES AGAINST THE POLISH NATION

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COMMUNIST CRIMES
A LEGAL AND HISTORICAL STUDY



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Legal and Political Background

Basic Point of Reference

Any consideration of what is a crime and what is not should start with considering the sources of law. Until fairly recently, the Euro-Atlantic civilization formally opposed the way life had been treated in other civilizations. Now things have changed and there is a never-ending debate on whether there is anything like the law of nature or we are condemned to the positive law created by humans. Very often, critics of the law of nature refer to some “universal human moral rules”, as if not understanding that they call the law of nature by another name. This only goes to show that we all need some moral foundation on which positive law would be elaborated. Those who question the Decalogue are usually at a loss when asked about “different” moral principles. “Eastern” values usually fail when confronted with brutal reality.

This is not a book on the philosophy of law but one thing must be stated as a methodological assumption of this work: there was a time and place when nations made an attempt to specify a certain code of behavior that should be a pattern in national and international life. This was the United Nations’ “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” (UNDHR). Work on the document started in 1946 when Canadian legal scholar John Peters Humphrey was appointed the declaration’s principal drafter. The document was elaborated in the UN Commission on Human Rights chaired by former US First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, with the participation of delegates from Australia, Belgium, Belorussian SSR, Chile, Republic of China, Egypt, France, India, Iran, Lebanon, Panama, Philippines, United Kingdom, United States, USSR, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.

On 10 December 1948, the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” was adopted by the UN General Assembly by a vote of 48 in favor, none against and eight abstentions from the USSR, Belorussian SSR, Ukrainian SSR, Yugoslavia, Poland, Union of South Africa, Czechoslovakia and Saudi Arabia. While the South African abstention was due to the prohibition of *Apartheid*, and the Saudi Arabian abstention to the right of changing religion and equal marriage rights, the Soviet Union and its satellites formally opposed the freedom of leaving one’s country. In fact, the whole declaration was against their common practice. From the point of view of this work, it is important to note that the UNDHR was initially accepted by such countries as China, Cuba and Ethiopia¹.

Since the UNDHR was adopted by the United Nations legal body, all UN members, even those that abstained from the vote, have been obliged to respect its stipulations. Although in the decades that followed the passing of the UNDHR there were many discussions concerning the interpretation of the document and the allegedly necessary amendments to make things simpler, this text will be the point of reference in our considerations.

In the UNDHR’s “Preamble”, we read: “Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world; Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people; Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law (...) Therefore the General Assembly proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to

¹ Cf. e.g., Mary Ann Glendon, *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Random House, 2002); Johannes Morsink, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Origins, Drafting, and Intent* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).

promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction”².

The subsequent articles of the UNDHR specify the right to life, liberty and security of person (Article 3), forbid slavery (Article 4) and subjection to torture or any cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Article 5), mention the right to recognition as a person before the law (Article 6) and equality before and protection by the law (Article 7), forbid arbitrary arrest, detention or exile (Article 9) and formulate basic principles of legal procedure: “Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense; No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed” (Article 11).

Further on, the UNDHR forbade interference with anybody’s privacy, family, home and correspondence, as well as attacks on his honor and reputation (Article 12), stressed the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state and the right to leave and return from and to his country (Article 13). Since later on objections were raised as to the term “his” and questions were asked whether women were humans, it must be added that “his” in this case means “his and/or hers”. The UNDHR stipulated everyone’s right to a nationality, forbade the deprivation of nationality and affirmed the right of a person to change nationality (Article 15). Article 16 of the UNDHR formulated the right of men and women to marry and to found a family with the free and full consent of the intending spouses. Article 17 secured the right to own property and association and forbade deprivation of property. Article 18 referred to the right of freedom of thought, conscience and religion as well the right to change religion or belief. Article 19 stressed

² Quote according to: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/> (6 IV 2014).

the right to freedom of opinion and expression and to seek and receive impartial information. In Article 20, the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association was formulated. Article 21 stated that “everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives”. Articles 22-24 included provisions regarding social security and the rights to choose employment, to equal pay for equal work, to just remuneration for work, to form trade unions, and to rest and leisure. In Article 26, the right of free elementary education was formulated and the parent’s right to choose education for their children. Interestingly, Article 29 mentioned the citizens’ duties to the community “in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible”³.

As we shall see, in their everyday practice, the communist countries violate most of these articles⁴.

Communist Crimes

The mission of the Estonian Unitas Foundation includes the following statement: “The 20th century witnessed communism as a source of historical injustice for millions across the world. The most horrid communist crimes that severely violated human rights occurred more than half a century ago, yet research of these oppressive incidents is still in its infancy”⁵. This conclusion is a sad confirmation of the reality of today. The purpose of this study is, therefore, to forward research and debate on this issue.

³ Ibidem.

⁴ Political scientist Rudolph Joseph Rummel from the University of Hawaii coined the term “democide”, defined as the murder of any person or people by a government, including genocide (the killing of people by a government because of their indelible group membership (race, ethnicity, religion, language), “politicide” (the murder of any person or people by a government because of their politics or for political purposes), and mass murder (the indiscriminate killing of any person or people by a government). Rudolph J. Rummel, *Death by Government* (Transaction Publishers, 1997), chapter two. Rummel’s definition includes the earlier definition of genocide, adds “politicide” as killing for political reasons but seems too wide in the third case as it actually excludes the death penalty as still provided by the criminal codes of many countries. The term “politicide” also was used by Manus I. Midlarsky from Rutgers University. Manus I. Midlarsky, *The Killing Trap: Genocide in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

⁵ <http://unitas.ee/home/> (25 II 2014).

“Communist crimes” is a legal term used in Polish criminal law and defined by the law of 18 December 1998⁶. It replaced the formerly used term “Stalinist crimes”, deemed too narrow. Article 2.1 of the Polish law defines “communist crimes” as criminal acts committed by functionaries of the communist apparatus between 17 September 1939—the date of the Soviet invasion of Poland—and 31 December 1989, which was adopted as the date of the fall of the communist system in Poland. The crimes defined further on refer to political repression or direct violation of human rights of an individual or a group of people, especially those formally named in the Polish criminal law of that time. The concept also refers to other illegal activities prohibited by the Polish criminal code of 1932, such as the falsification of documents aimed at bringing harm to people mentioned in these documents. Functionaries of the communist state were further defined as public officials, including government officials and leaders of the communist party. The latter stipulation was important since, until the amendment of the Polish constitution in 1975, the country’s communist party was not even mentioned as a decision-making institution but had actually served as such since the 1944 takeover of power. Since communist Poland was not a fully sovereign country, organizations mentioned in the Polish law as parts of the “communist apparatus” also include the Soviet NKVD, “Smersh” and KGB, as well as the East German Stasi. Communist crimes in Poland are primarily investigated by the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN)—a special research institution with prosecution powers created by the same law of 18 December 1998. Its Article 55 stipulates that those denying communist crimes may face a fine or imprisonment for a period of up to three years.

The term “communist crimes” does not introduce any new quality of crimes but refers to the terms recognized by national or international legislation, such as murder, genocide, crimes against humanity, crimes against peace and war crimes. The only new legal qualification of communist crimes in Poland is that they were committed by functionaries of the communist state. Those crimes that fall into the category of genocide, crimes against humanity, crimes against peace, and war crimes are not affected by the stat-

⁶ Dziennik Ustaw [Polish Law Register], 1998, No 155, Item 1016.

ute of limitations in Poland or by a former amnesty or abolition decrees by communist Poland. In the case of murder, the Polish statute of limitations began on 1 August 1990 and runs for 40 years.

The Polish legislators stressed that communist crimes were equal to Nazi crimes. While this comparison, while raising serious debate, seems justified from a historical point of view and will not be discussed in this study. It is often argued that mass murder and other crimes against humanity, crimes against peace and war crimes were committed not only by communists but also by other political forces. Such comparisons should not distract us from the fact that enormous crimes were committed in the name of communism and should be considered communist crimes. Other circumstances may be analyzed in separate studies but they will not be discussed here. Communist crimes will be considered in themselves.

The concept of communist crimes is not a Polish invention. It is also used by various national human rights agencies, such as the already-mentioned Estonian Unitas Foundation, the Swedish Institute for Information on the Crimes of Communism, the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes and the Office for the Documentation and Investigation of the Crimes of Communism, and the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes in Romania. It is noteworthy that most institutions protecting the memory of communist crimes were established in Eastern and Central Europe and only after several years of systemic transformation. This may be the result of the long-standing influence of post-communist political forces in these countries and the urgency of other current issues. West European countries, such as France, the United Kingdom or Spain, rarely engaged in these initiatives, either treating them as none of their business or facing problems with the local communists or their fellow travelers.

Recent initiatives to strengthen the memory of communist crimes deserve attention. The Unitas Foundation was founded by the former Estonian Prime Minister Mart Laar, Meelis Niinepuu and Damian von Stauffenberg in 2008. Although it refers to communist crimes, its main mission is “to build reconciliation within and between societies divided by totalitarianism”. 2008 was also the year of the founding of the Swedish Institute for Information on the Crimes of Communism, aimed at “spreading essential information

on the crimes of Communism and to promote vigilance against all totalitarian ideologies and antidemocratic movements”. Among its honorable members are the former Prime Minister of Sweden Carl Bildt, Mart Laar, former ambassador and EU Commissioner of Latvia Sandra Kalniete, Member of the European Parliament Gunnar Hökmark, and Professor Robert Conquest. The Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes was founded by the Czech government in 2007, while the Office for the Documentation and Investigation of the Crimes of Communism is part of the Czech police. The Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes in Romania was established by the Adrian Nastase government in 2004⁷.

There are also two international European initiatives aimed at remembering and educating people about communist crimes. The European Day of Remembrance for Victims of all totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, also known as Black Ribbon Day, was designated by the European Parliament on 2 April 2009⁸. The relevant resolution was co-sponsored by the European People’s Party, the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, the Greens-European Free Alliance, and the Union for Europe of the Nations. Black Ribbon Day was to be held on 23 August each year, commemorating the date of the ill-famed Ribbentrop-Molotov Treaty. The text of the resolution was a compromise referring also to “authoritarian” regimes, but “communist dictatorships” were mentioned many times. This is why the socialist and communist left of the European Parliament did not support it. For contemporary communist parties in Europe, remembering Communist crimes is almost blasphemy since they argue they did not rule and do not feel guilty. As we shall see further on, this is not as simple as contemporary Communists would like it to be.

The European Parliament resolution of 2 April 2009, called for the establishment of a Platform of European Memory and Conscience. After much

⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institute_for_Information_on_the_Crimes_of_Communist; http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institutul_de_Investigare_a_Crimelor_Comunistului_%C8%99i_Memoria_Exilului_Rom%C3%A2nesc; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unitas_Foundation (27 II 2014).

⁸ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2009-0213+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> (27 II 2014).

preparation, the Platform was founded in Prague on 14 October 2011. The signing ceremony was held under the auspices of Czech Prime Minister Petr Nečas, Polish Prime Minister and then-acting President of the European Council Donald Tusk, and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. The Platform's main goal is to "prevent intolerance, extremism, anti-democratic movements, and the recurrence of any totalitarian rule in the future"⁹. While the driving forces of the initiative were the Czech, Hungarian, and Polish institutions, the Platform also attracted as founding members various institutions from Bulgaria, Estonia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Sweden. The Canadian Black Ribbon Foundation also joined, along with the US Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation (VCMF).

The VCMF was established in 1993 thanks to the initiative of the National Captive Nations Committee, an anti-communist advocacy group formed by émigré politicians from the communist states of Eastern and Central Europe in 1959. The VCMF is chaired by Professor Lee Edwards and its honorary chairman is George W. Bush, the former US president. Among the VCMF's national advisory council members, one may find such outstanding figures as professors Robert Conquest and Rudolph Rummel, former US Senator Bob Dole, General William E. Odom, General John K. Singlaub, and Professor George Weigel. The international advisory council includes Sali Berisha from Albania, Vladimir Bukovsky from Russia, Emil Constantinescu from Romania, Árpád Göncz from Hungary, Mart Laar from Estonia, Vytautas Landsbergis from Lithuania, Guntis Ulmanis from Latvia, Lech Wałęsa from Poland, Armando Valladares from Cuba, and Harry Wu from China¹⁰.

⁹ Göran Lindblad, a former MP from Sweden and ex-chair of the Political Affairs Committee of the Council of Europe, was elected the Platform's president, while members of the Executive Board included Andreja Valič Zver of the Study Centre for National Reconciliation from Slovenia, Siegfried Reiprich of the Stiftung Sächsische Gedenkstätten from Germany, Paweł Ukielski of the Warsaw Rising Museum from Poland, and Zsolt Szilágyi, Head of Cabinet of László Tökés, Vice-President of the European Parliament. Neela Winkelmann of the Czech Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes was elected Managing Director of the Platform. <http://www.memoryandconscience.eu/2011/10/20/czech-prime-minister-petr-necas-the-years-of-totalitarianism-were-years-of-struggle-for-liberty/> (27 II 2014).

¹⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victims_of_Communism_Memorial_Foundation (27 II 2014).

Another definition problem concerning “communist crimes” is connected with the term “communist”. When the perpetrators call themselves communist, the matter is simple, but sometimes they call themselves something else. It should then be proved that their ideology stems from Marxism-Leninism. This is, for instance, the case of many African regimes or North Korea, whose official ideology is called *juche*, which is a specific Korean variation of Marxism-Leninism. But it is hard to deny that the first leader of North Korea, Kim Il Sung, was originally a Soviet-educated communist¹¹.

Finally, there is the problem of responsibility. Nobody should deny that collective responsibility is against civilized legal principles. Simply belonging to communist organizations should not result in persecution. We have here, though, an exception in the shape of some Nazi organizations, such as the SS, whose members were treated at Nuremberg as criminals, that is, as members of a criminal organization. So far, few have raised the question of the Cheka, GPU, NKVD and KGB being criminal organizations. But since they created a criminal environment for their activities, why not?

Generally speaking, only individuals should be held responsible for their deeds, including encouragement to crime. But what to do with the hierarchical organization of communist crimes? What about Stalin himself? Probably he did not kill anyone personally but only issued recommendations and instructions. What about the responsibility of those people who created the criminal environment for individual decisions, who ignored or denied the existence of civilized legal principles, or who gave execution orders but did not execute anyone personally? There is a legal term for this: “participation in joint criminal enterprise” or “indirect perpetration”¹², which refers to the top or mid-level management of criminal activity. This is not the place to

¹¹ Waldemar J. Dziak, *Kim Ir Sen. Dzieło i polityczne wizje* [Kim Il Sung. His Work and Political Visions] (Warszawa: ISP PAN, 2000), pp. 15-127.

¹² Shachar Eldar, “Indirect Co-Perpetration”, *Criminal Law and Philosophy*, March 2013; Neha Jain, “Individual Responsibility for Mass Atrocity: In Search of a Concept of Perpetration”, *American Journal of Comparative Law*, August 2013; Florian Jessberger, Julia Geneuss, *On the Application of a Theory of Indirect Perpetration*, in: Al Bashir (ed.), *German Doctrine at The Hague* (Oxford University Press, 2018); Stefano Manacorda, *Chantal Meloni, Indirect Perpetration versus Joint Criminal Enterprise* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

thoroughly examine these concepts but they should be taken into account while discussing communist crimes.

Genocide

The term “genocide” was coined by the Polish Jewish lawyer Raphael Lemkin in 1944 when he realized the scope of the German Nazi program of annihilation of European Jews. The word “genocide” was constructed from the Greek term *gēnos* (birth, race, stock, kind) and the Latin *cidium* (cutting, killing).

Lemkin is particularly worth remembering in the debates on genocide. Born under the Russian Tsar in Volhynia in 1900, he graduated from high school in what was by then Polish Białystok, and from the Law Department of the John Casimir University in Lviv (at the time Lwów in Poland, now in Ukraine). In 1927, he defended his doctoral thesis. From 1929 to 1934, Lemkin was an assistant public prosecutor in Brzeżany (now Berezhany in Ukraine) and public prosecutor in Warsaw. At the same time, he served as secretary of the Codification Committee of the Polish Republic, which prepared the Polish criminal law of 1932. He was a polyglot fluent in nine and able to read 14 languages. In 1933, Lemkin made a presentation at the Legal Council of the League of Nations conference on international criminal law in which he prophetically suggested two new legal definitions of the crimes of barbarism and vandalism¹³. He developed both ideas on the grounds of the

¹³ Lemkin proposed the following legislation: “Art. 1. Whoever, out of hatred towards a racial, religious or social collectivity or with view of its extermination, undertakes a punishable action against the life, the bodily integrity, liberty, dignity or economic existence of a person belonging to such a collectivity, is liable, for the offense of barbarism, to imprisonment for a period of ... unless punishment for the action is not envisaged in a more severe provision of the respective Code. Art. 2. Whoever, either out of hatred towards a racial, religious or social collectivity or with the goal of its extermination, destroys its cultural or artistic works, will be liable, for the crime of vandalism, to a penalty of ... unless his deed falls within a more severe provision of the given Code. Art. 3. Whoever knowingly causes a catastrophe in the international communication by ground, sea or air by destroying or removing the systems which ensure the regular operation of these communications, is liable to imprisonment for a period of ... Art. 4. Whoever knowingly causes an interruption in the international postal, telegraph or telephone communication

Turkish massacres of Armenians in 1915 and Assyrians in 1933. His project was not accepted but it became the stepping stone for his further work on the matter. In 1937, Lemkin went to the 4th Congress on Criminal Law in Paris, where he advocated defending peace through criminal law. In September 1939, Lemkin fought in the Polish army during the siege of Warsaw and was injured. Evading capture by the Germans, he escaped through Lithuania to Sweden. There, he lectured at the University of Stockholm, but in 1941 he went to the United States. Meanwhile, he lost most of his relatives in the Holocaust and his brother, his wife and two sons were captured by the Soviets and sent to the Gulag. From 1942, Lemkin lectured at the School of Military Government at the University of Virginia. Later, he became a special adviser on foreign affairs to the US War Department.

In 1944, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace published Lemkin's most important work, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, in which he analyzed the German rule in the occupied countries and also offered a definition of the new term "genocide"¹⁴. With a broad understanding of the term, Lemkin wrote: "Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups. Genocide is directed against the national group as an

by removing or by destroying the systems which ensure the regular operation of these communications, is liable to a penalty of ... Art. 5. Whoever knowingly spreads a human, animal or vegetable contagion is liable to a penalty of ... Art. 6. The instigator and the accomplice are subject to the same punishment as the author". Raphael Lemkin, "Acts Constituting a General (Transnational) Danger Considered as Offences Against the Law of Nations", <http://www.preventgenocide.org/lemkin/madrid1933-english.htm> (28 II 2014).

¹⁴ Ryszard Szawłowski, "Raphael Lemkin (1900-1959). The Polish Lawyer Who Created the Concept of "Genocide", *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs*, 2005, No 2, pp. 99-132.

entity, and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not in their individual capacity, but as members of the national group”¹⁵.

The defeat of Nazi Germany in World War Two and the desire of the Big Three to punish those guilty for triggering the war and the enormous barbarities involved, encouraged international public opinion to consider new legislation referring to wartime crimes.

The basic source of law concerning genocide was provided by the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide adopted by the UN General Assembly on 9 December 1948. After obtaining the requisite 20 ratifications required by Article 13, the convention entered into force on 12 January 1951. Article 2 of the convention defined genocide as “any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life, calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; [and] forcibly transferring children of the group to another group”. Article 3 of the convention provided for punishment of genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, direct and public incitement to commit genocide, attempt to commit genocide, and complicity in genocide¹⁶.

The irony of the postwar legislation concerning genocide was that it was supported by the Soviet Union, which was also guilty of triggering the war in 1939 by signing the Ribbentrop-Molotov Treaty and in which mass murder was a regular practice since the Bolshevik takeover in 1917. The first draft of the 1948 convention included “political” actions against people holding similar political opinions, but the Soviets disapproved of the idea, so it was dropped as a diplomatic compromise. Nevertheless, Soviet reservations concerning political motifs of genocide remain as a fingerprint of their fears.

¹⁵ Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, chapter IX, <http://www.preventgenocide.org/lemkin/AxisRule1944-1.htm#NewTerm> (28 II 2014).

¹⁶ Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, Paris, 9 December 1948, <http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html> (22 V 2012).

The convention was first signed by 18 countries. By the end of 1949, an additional 21 countries joined the convention, including the Soviet Union, which ratified the UN convention in May 1954¹⁷. By the end of 2013, 144 countries had acceded to the convention¹⁸. Ever since, the term “genocide” is a recognized term in international law, although in practice it has been rarely used in the execution of justice for political reasons.

War Crimes

International humanitarian law, or the law of armed conflict, regulates the conduct of armed conflicts. Its aim is to protect persons who are not or no longer participating in hostilities and to regulate the means and methods of warfare available to combatants. International humanitarian law stems from centuries of efforts to make armed conflict as humanitarian as possible and is currently based on four Geneva Conventions adopted and revised from 1864 to 1949 and two Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907.

The Geneva Conventions form the basis of the rules of conduct of war under international law. The First Geneva Convention refers to the conditions

¹⁷ Outstanding Lithuanian Christian Democratic leader and chairman of the émigré Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania, The Reverend Nykolas Krupavicius landed in New York on 4 May 1954. The next day, he read in the *New York Times* that the Soviet Union had ratified the UN Genocide Convention. He was shocked and soon he told the House of Representatives Select Committee on Communist Aggression that: “genocide is the work of Bolsheviks. All antigencidal movement was instigated or caused by the facts of Bolshevik rule. At this moment when the blood of martyrs had not yet dried on their bodies, when the Bolshevism still has in its throat undigested victimized nations, the Bolshevism dares to represent itself as a defender of nations”. Testimony of The Reverend Nykolas Krupavicius, *Hearings before the House of Representatives Select Committee on Communist Aggression* [further quoted as *HR SCOCA*], Vol. 4, p. 893-894.

¹⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_parties_to_the_Genocide_Convention (28 II 2014). Cf. also: Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Frank Chalk, Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies* (Yale University Press, 1990); Kurt Jonassohn, Karin Björnson, *Genocide and Gross Human Rights Violations* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1998); William A. Schabas, *Genocide in International Law: The Crimes of Crimes* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur* (Yale University Press, 2007); Martin Shaw, *What is Genocide?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

of the wounded and sick of armed forces in the field. The Second Geneva Convention refers to the condition of the wounded, sick, and shipwrecked members of armed forces at sea. The Third Geneva Convention is relative to the treatment of prisoners of war. It was adopted in 1929 and revised in 1949. The Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 refers to the protection of civilians in time of war. By 2013, these four Geneva Conventions had been ratified by 195 countries. The Soviet satellites of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania ratified them in 1954, communist China in 1956, North Korea in 1957, Vietnam in 1957, the Soviet Union in 1960, and Ethiopia in 1969¹⁹.

The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 were aimed at specifying certain issues concerning the laws of war. The conventions of 1899 referred to the pacific settlement of international disputes, to the law and customs of warfare on land and at sea²⁰. The Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions adopted in 1977, including the most pertinent, detailed and restrictive protections of international humanitarian law, still have not been ratified by some countries engaged in military operations, such as the United States, Israel, India, Pakistan, Iraq, Iran and others. But even many signatories have repeatedly violated the Geneva Conventions.

Serious violations of international humanitarian law are called “war crimes”. Examples of war crimes, specified in the mentioned conventions, include murder, the ill-treatment or deportation of civilian residents of an occupied territory to slave labor camps, murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war, killing of hostages, wanton destruction of cities, towns and villages and any devastation not justified by military necessity²¹.

The most comprehensive specification of war crimes was provided by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 17 July 1998. For the purpose of this study, it is worth quoting the relevant Article 8 of the statute, which defines war crimes as “[g]rave breaches of the Geneva Conven-

¹⁹ <http://www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/vwTreaties1949.xsp?redirect=0>; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_parties_to_the_Geneva_Conventions (3 III 2014).

²⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hague_Conventions_of_1899_and_1907 (3 III 2014).

²¹ Gary D. Solis, *The Law of Armed Conflict: International Humanitarian Law in War* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 301-303.

tions of 12 August 1949, namely, any of the following acts against persons or property protected under the provisions of the relevant Geneva Convention: (i) Willful killing; (ii) Torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments; (iii) Willfully causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or health; (iv) Extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly; (v) Compelling a prisoner of war or other protected person to serve in the forces of a hostile power; (vi) Willfully depriving a prisoner of war or other protected person of the rights of fair and regular trial; (vii) Unlawful deportation or transfer or unlawful confinement; (viii) Taking of hostages. (b) Other serious violations of the laws and customs applicable in international armed conflict, within the established framework of international law, namely, any of the following acts: (i) Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities; (ii) Intentionally directing attacks against civilian objects, that is, objects which are not military objectives; (iii) Intentionally directing attacks against personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles involved in a humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping mission in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as long as they are entitled to the protection given to civilians or civilian objects under the international law of armed conflict; (iv) Intentionally launching an attack in the knowledge that such attack will cause incidental loss of life or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects or widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment which would be clearly excessive in relation to the concrete and direct overall military advantage anticipated; (v) Attacking or bombarding, by whatever means, towns, villages, dwellings or buildings which are undefended and which are not military objectives; (vi) Killing or wounding a combatant who, having laid down his arms or having no longer means of defense, has surrendered at discretion; (vii) Making improper use of a flag of truce, of the flag or of the military insignia and uniform of the enemy or of the United Nations, as well as of the distinctive emblems of the Geneva Conventions, resulting in death or serious personal injury; (viii) The transfer, directly or indirectly, by the Occupying Power of parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, or the deportation or transfer of all or parts of the popula-

tion of the occupied territory within or outside this territory; (ix) Intentionally directing attacks against buildings dedicated to religion, education, art, science or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are collected, provided they are not military objectives; (x) Subjecting persons who are in the power of an adverse party to physical mutilation or to medical or scientific experiments of any kind which are neither justified by the medical, dental or hospital treatment of the person concerned nor carried out in his or her interest, and which cause death to or seriously endanger the health of such person or persons; (xi) Killing or wounding treacherously individuals belonging to the hostile nation or army; (xii) Declaring that no quarter will be given; (xiii) Destroying or seizing the enemy's property unless such destruction or seizure be imperatively demanded by the necessities of war; (xiv) Declaring abolished, suspended or inadmissible in a court of law the rights and actions of the nationals of the hostile party; (xv) Compelling the nationals of the hostile party to take part in the operations of war directed against their own country, even if they were in the belligerent's service before the commencement of the war; (xvi) Pillaging a town or place, even when taken by assault; (xvii) Employing poison or poisoned weapons; (xviii) Employing asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and all analogous liquids, materials or devices; (xix) Employing bullets which expand or flatten easily in the human body, such as bullets with a hard envelope which does not entirely cover the core or is pierced with incisions; (xx) Employing weapons, projectiles and material and methods of warfare which are of a nature to cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering or which are inherently indiscriminate in violation of the international law of armed conflict, provided that such weapons, projectiles and material and methods of warfare are the subject of a comprehensive prohibition and are included in an annex to this Statute, by an amendment in accordance with the relevant provisions set forth in articles 121 and 123; (xxi) Committing outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment; (xxii) Committing rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, as defined in article 7, paragraph 2 (f), enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence also constituting a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions; (xxiii) Utilizing the presence of a civilian or other protected per-

son to render certain points, areas or military forces immune from military operations; (xxiv) Intentionally directing attacks against buildings, material, medical units and transport, and personnel using the distinctive emblems of the Geneva Conventions in conformity with international law; (xxv) Intentionally using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare by depriving them of objects indispensable to their survival, including willfully impeding relief supplies as provided for under the Geneva Conventions; (xxvi) Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of fifteen years into the national armed forces or using them to participate actively in hostilities”²².

Crimes Against Peace

In discussing crimes against peace, one should refer to the Nuremberg Principles, a document created by the International Law Commission of the United Nations aimed at codifying legal principles underlying the Nuremberg Trials of Nazi party leaders following World War Two. The Nuremberg Principles also defined war crimes and crimes against humanity. Principle VI of this document reads as follows: “The crimes hereinafter set out are punishable as crimes under international law: (a) Crimes against peace: (i) Planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances; (ii) Participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the acts mentioned under”²³. Crimes against peace may therefore be identified with crimes of aggression.

The first international agreement to renounce aggression as means of resolving conflicts was the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 27 August 1928, signed by

²² Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 17 July 1998, <http://legal.un.org/icc/statute/rome.htm> (4 III 2014). Cf. also: Yôrām Dinstein, *The Conduct of Hostilities under the Law of International Armed Conflict* (Cambridge University Press, 2004); Robert Cryer, *An Introduction to International Criminal Law and Procedure* (Cambridge University Press, 2007); Gary D. Solis, *The Law of Armed Conflict: International Humanitarian Law in War* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

²³ Principles of International Law Recognized in the Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal and in the Judgment of the Tribunal, <http://www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/INTRO/390?OpenDocument> (4 III 2014).

France, Great Britain, and the United States, and later ratified by Afghanistan, Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, China, Cuba, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Romania, the Soviet Union, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, Siam, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey. Eight more states joined after that date (Persia, Greece, Honduras, Chile, Luxembourg, Danzig, Costa Rica and Venezuela). In total, the pact was ratified by 62 signatories. Article I of the pact reads: “The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another” and Article II reads: “The High Contracting Parties agree that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise among them, shall never be sought except by pacific means”²⁴.

This long-sighted and idealistic agreement was soon supplemented by two London Conventions for the Definition of Aggression, signed in London in July 1933. The first convention of this series was signed on 3 July 1933 by Czechoslovakia, Romania, the USSR, Turkey, and Yugoslavia and came into effect on 17 February 1934, when all of them except Turkey ratified it. The second was signed on 4 July 1933 by Afghanistan, Estonia, Latvia, Persia, Poland, Romania, the USSR, and Turkey, and was ratified by all of them by January 1934. As Lithuania refused to sign the convention with Poland, it signed a separate convention with the USSR on 5 July 1933, which came into effect on 16 April 1934, after both countries ratified it. The convention signed on 4 July 1933, defined aggression as follows: “(a) Declaration of war upon another state; (b) Invasion by its armed forces, with or without declaration of war, of the territory of another state; (c) Attack by its land, naval or air forces, with or without declaration of war, on the territory, vessels or aircraft of another state; (d) Naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another state; (e) Provision of support to armed bands formed on its territory which have invaded the territory of another state, or refusal, notwithstanding the

²⁴ Kellogg-Briand Pact, <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/imt/kbpact.htm> (4 III 2014).

request of the invaded state, to take, in its own territory, all the measures in its power to deprive those bands of all assistance or protection” (Article II). In Article III, the signatories added: “No political, military, economic or other consideration may serve as an excuse or justification of aggression referred to in Article II”²⁵.

After World War Two, crimes of aggression were defined by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 17 July 1998. Article 8 bis of the statute, adopted by the 2010 Kampala Review Conference, reads as follows: “1. For the purpose of this Statute, ‘crime of aggression’ means the planning, preparation, initiation or execution, by a person in a position effectively to exercise control over or to direct the political or military action of a State, of an act of aggression which, by its character, gravity and scale, constitutes a manifest violation of the Charter of the United Nations. 2. For the purpose of paragraph 1, ‘act of aggression’ means the use of armed force by a State against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of another State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations. Any of the following acts, regardless of a declaration of war, shall, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 3314 (XXIX) of 14 December 1974, qualify as an act of aggression: (a) The invasion or attack by the armed forces of a State of the territory of another State, or any military occupation, however temporary, resulting from such invasion or attack, or any annexation by the use of force of the territory of another State or part thereof; (b) Bombardment by the armed forces of a State against the territory of another State or the use of any weapons by a State against the territory of another State; (c) The blockade of the ports or coasts of a State by the armed forces of another State; (d) An attack by the armed forces of a State on the land, sea or air forces, or marine and air fleets of another State; (e) The use of armed forces of one State which are within the territory of another State with the agreement of the receiving State, in contravention of the conditions provided for in the agreement or any extension of their presence in such territory beyond the termination

²⁵ Convention for the Definition of Aggression, and Annex. Signed at London, July 4th, 1933 <http://www.worldlii.org/int/other/treaties/LNTSer/1934/102.html> (4 III 2014).

of the agreement; (f) The action of a State in allowing its territory, which it has placed at the disposal of another State, to be used by that other State for perpetrating an act of aggression against a third State; (g) The sending by or on behalf of a State of armed bands, groups, irregulars or mercenaries, which carry out acts of armed force against another State of such gravity as to amount to the acts listed above, or its substantial involvement therein”²⁶.

Crimes Against Humanity

This most general term has quite a long history. Perhaps the first to use it was the American Republican National Convention of 1860. In supporting Abraham Lincoln’s candidacy for president, it proclaimed the slave trade as a “crime against humanity”²⁷. In 1890, George Washington Williams, an African-American politician who travelled to the Belgian colony of Congo, used the phrase to describe the treatment of Africans by the Belgian administration of King Leopold II²⁸. In 1915, the term was used by the Allies—France, Great Britain and Russia—in their joint statement on the Armenian genocide²⁹. After World War One, an international war crimes commission

²⁶ Amendments to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court on the crime of aggression, http://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/asp_docs/Resolutions/RC-Res.6-ENG.pdf (4 II 2014). Cf. also: Ingrid Detter Delupis, *The Law of War* (Cambridge University Press, 2000); Lyal S. Sunga, *The Emerging System of International Criminal Law: Developments in Codification and Implementation* (The Hague-Boston: Kluwer Law International, 1997).

²⁷ *Proceedings of the Republican National Convention Held at Chicago, May 16, 17 and 18, 1860*, p. 81. Quoted according to: <https://archive.org/details/proceedingsofrep00repuiala> (1 III 2014).

²⁸ Cf. e.g., George Washington Williams’s Open Letter to King Leopold on the Congo, 1890, <http://www.blackpast.org/george-washington-williams-open-letter-king-leopold-congo-1890#sthash.zD8qAtn4.dpuf> (1 III 2014).

²⁹ “May 29, 1915 (...) For about a month the Kurd and Turkish populations of Armenia has [sic] been massacring Armenians with the connivance and often assistance of Ottoman authorities. Such massacres took place in middle April (new style) at Erzerum, Dertchun, Eguine, Akn, Bitlis, Mush, Sassun, Zeitun, and throughout Cilicia. Inhabitants of about one hundred villages near Van were all murdered. In that city Armenian quarter is besieged by Kurds. At the same time in Constantinople Ottoman Government ill-treats inoffensive Armenian population. In view of those new crimes of Turkey against humanity and civilization, the Allied governments announce publicly to the Sublime-Porte that they will hold personally responsible [for] these crimes all members of the Ottoman government

recommended creation of a tribunal to try “violations of the law of humanity”, but the US representative found the term imprecise, so the concept was dropped.

After World War Two, a special International Military Tribunal (IMT) was established to try Nazi leaders for their wartime crimes. It was held between 20 November 1945 and 1 October 1946. Drafters of the laws and procedures of the tribunal faced the problem of how to define these crimes. A traditional understanding of war crimes gave no grounds for evaluation of crimes committed by the German Nazi authorities on its own citizens, as was the case with the Holocaust. Therefore, Article 6 (c) of the IMT Charter introduced crimes against humanity, widely defined as “murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, before or during the war, or persecutions on political, racial or religious grounds in execution of or in connection with any crime within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, whether or not in violation of the domestic law of the country where perpetrated”³⁰.

Probably due to its inability to agree on the matter of political victims of state oppression—the Soviets being part of the tribunal—it found that it “cannot make a general declaration that the acts before 1939 were crimes against humanity within the meaning of the Charter, but from the beginning of the war in 1939, war crimes were committed on a vast scale, which were also crimes against humanity; and insofar as the inhumane acts charged in the Indictment, and committed after the beginning of the war, did not constitute war crimes, they were all committed in execution of, or in connection with, the aggressive war, and therefore constituted crimes against humanity”³¹.

The International Military Tribunal for the Far East was established to try Japanese war criminals for three types of crimes: crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. It was held between 3 May 1946 and 12 November 1948. Six defendants were sentenced to death for all three

and those of their agents who are implicated in such massacres”. http://www.armenian-genocide.org/Affirmation.160/current_category.7/affirmation_detail.html (1 III 2014).

³⁰ Charter of the International Military Tribunal, <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/imtconst.asp#art6> (1 III 2014).

³¹ Quoted according to: <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/judlawre.asp> (1 II 2014).

types of charges. They were: General Kenji Doihara, chief of intelligence in Manchukuo, Prime Minister Koki Hirota, War Minister General Seishiro Itagaki, Commander of the Burma Area Army General Heitaro Kimura, General Akira Muto, and General Hideki Tojo, commander of the Kwantung Army and Prime Minister of Japan. Moreover, General Iwane Matsui, commander of the Shanghai Expeditionary Force, was sentenced to death for war crime and crimes against humanity³². The charges of the crimes against humanity in this case were probably applied to suit the Chinese members of the tribunal, in view of the enormous Japanese crimes committed on Chinese civilians during the Japanese invasion of the continent.

During the Cold War, the principle of crimes against humanity had been a dead letter for decades, but it was revived in view of the horrible crimes committed during the war in the former Yugoslavia, during the Rwandan genocide, and during the civil war in Sierra Leone in the 1990s. Crimes against humanity were defined by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 17 July 1998, in connection with the proceedings of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) as “any of the following acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack: (a) murder; (b) extermination; (c) enslavement; (d) deportation or forcible transfer of population; (e) imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law; (f) torture; (g) rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity; (h) persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender as defined in paragraph 3, or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, in connection with any act referred to in this paragraph or any crime within the jurisdiction of the Court; (i) enforced disappearance of persons; (j) the crime of apartheid; (k) other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health”³³.

³² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Military_Tribunal_for_the_Far_East (1 III 2014).

³³ <http://www.icrc.org/ihl/WebART/585-07?OpenDocument> (1 III 2014).

Article 2 of the statute develops definitions of the specified acts. So an „attack directed against any civilian population” means a course of conduct involving the multiple commission of acts referred to in paragraph 1 against any civilian population, pursuant to or in furtherance of a state or organizational policy to commit such attack. „Extermination” includes the intentional infliction of conditions of life, *inter alia*, the deprivation of access to food and medicine, calculated to bring about the destruction of part of a population. “Enslavement” means the exercise of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over a person and includes the exercise of such power in the course of trafficking in persons, in particular women and children. “Deportation or forcible transfer of population” means forced displacement of the persons concerned by expulsion or other coercive acts from the area in which they are lawfully present, without grounds permitted under international law. “Torture” means the intentional infliction of severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, upon a person in the custody or under the control of the accused; except that torture shall not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to, lawful sanctions. “Forced pregnancy” means the unlawful confinement of a woman forcibly made pregnant, with the intent of affecting the ethnic composition of any population or carrying out other grave violations of international law. This definition shall not in any way be interpreted as affecting national laws relating to pregnancy. “Persecution” means the intentional and severe deprivation of fundamental rights contrary to international law by reason of the identity of the group or collectivity. “The crime of apartheid” means inhumane acts of a character similar to those referred to in paragraph 1, committed in the context of an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime. “Enforced disappearance of persons” means the arrest, detention or abduction of persons by, or with the authorization, support or acquiescence of, a state or a political organization, followed by a refusal to acknowledge that deprivation of freedom or to give information on the fate or whereabouts of those persons, with the intention of removing them from the protection

of the law for a prolonged period of time³⁴. This is so far the widest explanation of crimes against humanity. Among those accused by the ICTY of crimes against humanity were Radovan Karadžić and General Ratko Mladić.

Other cases of the application of charges of crimes against humanity were the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, established in November 1994, and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, established in January 2002. As of 2014, there were 95 individuals sentenced by the Rwandan tribunal and 22 individuals sentenced by the Sierra Leone tribunal. Some of them were responsible for crimes against humanity³⁵. The case of Khmer Rouge crimes should also be mentioned. In 1997, the new Cambodian government requested the UN Secretary General's assistance to establish a tribunal to try senior leaders of the Khmer Rouge regime. In June 2003, an international tribunal, called the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), was organized and began proceedings aimed at bringing to justice the most responsible members of the Khmer Rouge regime for their crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide, committed between April 1975 and January 1979. As of late 2014, only a few members of the Khmer Rouge leadership had been sentenced for crimes against humanity, including "Brother No 2" Nuon Chea and "Brother No 4" Khieu Samphan. Both pleaded not guilty but were sentenced to life imprisonment. Kaing Guek Eav, head of the regime government's internal security branch, was sentenced to 35 years imprisonment. Other cases are still underway or the defendants died in the meantime³⁶.

As we can see, the application of the idea of crimes against humanity in post-war history was very selective. There have been only a few cases in which defendants were accused and sentenced for these crimes. The Yugoslav defendants may be called communist, or rather post-communist, while the Khmer Rouge were undoubtedly communist, but otherwise no communist official has been sentenced for crimes against humanity.

³⁴ Ibidem.

³⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Criminal_Tribunal_for_Rwanda; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_Court_for_Sierra_Leone (1 II 2014).

³⁶ Maria Kruczkowska, "Czerwoni Khmerzy osądzeni" [Khmer Rouge Sentenced], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 8 August 2014; <http://www.eccc.gov.kh/en> (1 III 2014).

What Is the Problem?

The above-mentioned international law regulations are proof of long-lasting efforts by the international community to work out the principles and standards of conduct in the sphere of international and national politics. The fact that they were often violated by many countries does not change their value as fundamental and universal principles and as standards to which actual conduct should be compared.

In recent decades, international public opinion has come to understand genocide, war crimes, crimes against peace, and crimes against humanity as crimes committed in the name of racist or nationalist ideologies. This is because the only people accused and tried for these crimes by international tribunals have been German Nazis, Japanese imperialists, Balkan nationalists or African tribesmen advocating racial hatred. The people brought to justice were always those defeated, although one cannot deny that they deserved this fate.

The major problem, however, remains that mass murderers responsible for enormous crimes were also on the side of the winners. Not only have the winners never been tried, they are sometimes fondly remembered by those who were in need. In June 1941, Winston Churchill admitted he would have allied Great Britain with the devil in order to defeat the Third Reich³⁷. And so he did. In World War Two, one of the worst oppressive systems in history, the communist Soviet Union contributed to the victory over another oppressive system created by Adolf Hitler in Germany. Much of the credit for this victory has been given, and rightly so, to the Soviet Union. Gratitude for this contribution was an important reason why Western opinion-making circles were always more tolerant towards Soviet crimes and why they turned a deaf ear to the memories of the Soviet-German alliance of the years 1939-1941. Even during the Cold War there were many authorities in the West claiming the blame for the conflict should be put on both sides or even on the Western side.

³⁷ Literally he said: "If Hitler invaded Hell I would make at least a favourable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons". Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War. Volume Three. The Grand Alliance* (London: The Reprint Society, 1950), p. 299.

There was another reason why communist crimes were rarely acknowledged in the West: leftist ideology or at least certain types of leftist ideology. Intellectuals and politicians believing in mechanical progress and social engineering were often ready to accept the Soviet experiment without regard to its human cost. George Bernard Shaw, the Nobel Prize winner for literature in 1925, and the Oscar winner for his *Pygmalion* screenplay in 1938, is a good example of this deviation. His witty sayings are quoted all over again. Somehow one of his quotes is frequently forgotten. In his *Address to the Soviet People*, written in 1931, he said: “When you carry your experiment to its final triumph, and I know that you will, we in the West, who are still playing at Socialism, will have to follow your steps whether we like it or not”³⁸. This saying reflects the whole ignorance, ideological blindness, and fatalism of the man frequently called an “intellectual” and treated as an authority. Everyday inhabitants of the West, and the British in particular, should praise the Lord that Shaw’s prophecy has not come true. But Shaw never saw communism through. In one of his last interviews, in *Reynold’s News* of 6 August 1950, he replied to the question, “Are you a communist, Mr. Shaw?” by saying, “Yes, of course, I am (...) The future is to the country which carries communism farthest and fastest”³⁹. Shaw and people like him did not care for the fact that communism led to indescribable suffering and was responsible for crimes of the same nature as those committed by other totalitarian regimes. A presentation of these communist crimes is the purpose of this book.

Why is an almost absolute absence of communist crimes in public debate important? The problem is not only in the lack of accusations and sentences. Most of those responsible for communist crimes are dead. Formally speaking, many communist crimes were committed before relevant international law regulations were implemented or before respective communist countries ratified these regulations. The problem today is mostly in false standards of evaluation of the past, in false beliefs, in false forecasts of the future, and in moral indifference. The memory of communist crimes may prevent repeating similar crimes, either under the banners of communism or in other decorations.

³⁸ Quoted in the *Moscow Pravda* and reprinted in the *Daily Worker* on 29 July 1936.

³⁹ According to: R. Palme Dutt, *George Bernard Shaw. A Memoir (Labour Monthly Pamphlet, 1951, No 1)*, p. 14.

Ideological Roots

General Remarks

It all starts with the mystery of this world and of human existence. Although it may seem a long and not necessary road from the belief that “man makes himself”¹ to mass murder and other horrible crimes, there is a definite link between the rebellion of Adam and Eve against the Creator and the danger of people who ultimately tend to believe they may substitute God and impose their own rules on other people. The Judeo-Christian belief in one God, Creator of the Universe, although it did not prevent people from wars for goods or ideological purity, placed humans as subject to universal rules. Dethroning God in modern times was the first, although not necessary, step to self-deification of man. There are people who still seek an absent God in some universal moral principles and these people should not be bothered here. But in recent times humanity has had a lot of problems with people who advocated their own superiority over these principles. Apart from Nazism, communism was perhaps the worst experience of this kind.

Generally speaking, we face here the difference between people who know they believe and people who believe they know. The latter attitude is a temptation for all scholars, especially those who deal with human psychology and human society. They have frequently fallen victim to the idea that their theory could explain everything. They have frequently followed a road from cognitive criticism to ideology in which progress, justice, and human

¹ Gordon Childe, who used this term as the title of his book [Gordon V. Childe, *Man Makes Himself* (New York: New American Library, 1951)], probably did not think about this link, as he wrote about technology and the economy only.

well-being or happiness became ultimate reasons that some enlightened people were able to define and realize no matter what cost this operation might imply. Close to the end of this road was the assumption that the goal justifies the means. At the very end of this road was oppression, enslavement, torture and murder, all covered by lies. The end of this road was reached not only by communists, but communism is in question here.

The ideological ground for communism has been prepared directly or indirectly for most of the modern era. The ideas of progress and revolution, militant atheism, and historical determinism were primary components of Marxism and Bolshevism.

Idea of Progress

In ancient times, people sometimes believed that humanity was moving from the age of gold through the age of silver to bronze and iron. In other words, they were inclined to think that things were going from bad to worse. Medieval people were driven by many guidelines, including tradition, hierarchy, loyalty and trust in Providence. They may have noticed improvement or development but they would not think in terms of the world progressing in any particular direction other than its end and the Final Judgement. Medieval people killed or massacred other people out of greed and thirst of power or out of hostility to other people's beliefs but not for the sake of progress. Killing for the sake of progress was an invention of modern times².

The idea that the world was moving in a certain direction was not alien to many Renaissance writers, such as Niccolò Machiavelli or Erasmus of Rotterdam. But one of the first modern thinkers who alluded to the idea that the world progressed was perhaps Jean Bodin. In his *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* (Method for the Easy Comprehension of history, 1566) he suggested the division of universal history into three periods:

² Cf. e.g., the fundamental work by Robert Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1994), chapters 1-4. Nisbet argued that some elements close to the idea of progress may be found in Xenophanes, Plato, and Cicero. Ibidem, pp. 48-49.

the first in which southeastern peoples prevailed, the second in which the Mediterranean peoples were dominant, and the third in which the northern nations became the leaders of civilization. In his *Methodus*, Bodin came close to the idea of progress. In his *De la vicissitude ou variété des choses en l'univers* (On Changeability or Variety of Things in Universe, 1584), another French historian Loys Le Roy sketched humanity's advance from primitive rudeness to ordered society. According to John Bagnell Bury, at the end of the 16th century the idea of progress was "in the air"³.

At the turn of the 17th century, the British advocate and practitioner of the scientific method Francis Bacon developed the idea of augmentation of knowledge for the sake of utility and amelioration of human life. Bacon divided history into three periods: the eastern antiquity, the Greek and Roman period, and "modern history" up to his times. "That history might in fact be progressive, i.e., an onward and upward ascent—and not, as Aristotle had taught, merely cyclical or, as cultural pessimists from Hesiod to Spengler have supposed, a descending or retrograde movement, became for Bacon an article of secular faith which he propounded with evangelical force and a sense of mission"⁴. Moreover, Bacon's thinking contributed a lot to the idea that happiness on earth was an end to be pursued for its own sake. Just like other "utopias" created at the beginning of the 17th century, Bacon's *New Atlantis* was the embodiment of the spirit of progress.

Intellectuals of that time were more and more proud of scientific advances. Apart from Britain, where "progressive" thinking was popular at the age of the Civil War, the idea of progress took root in France, where the 18th century was called the "Age of Reason". Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle argued in favor of progress in arts and sciences. The epistemology of John Locke influenced the French Encyclopedists. Voltaire thought science and reason were driving forces of social progress. From Voltaire's idea of the superiority of human reason there was only one step to the theory of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who thought that human will is the ultimate source of law. His

³ John Bagnell Bury, *The Idea of Progress. An Inquiry into Its Origin and Growth* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1955), p. 43.

⁴ David Simpson, "Francis Bacon (1561-1626)", *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/bacon> (22 III 2014).

major work *Du contrat social ou Principes du droit politique* (Of The Social Contract, Or Principles of Political Right, 1762) outlined the foundation of a republican political order and became one of the most important theses in Western political philosophy. Rousseau weakened a general belief in natural law and encouraged people to undertake the job of sole lawmakers. Most supporters of the idea of progress failed to notice how risky this job would turn out to be, especially in the case of revolutionaries.

The most complete statement of progress was presented by a physiocratic economist and statesman Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot. His idea of progress covered not only the arts and sciences but the whole of culture—manner, morals, institutions, legal codes, economy, and society. His idea of universal history was not as rationalist as that of Voltaire. He believed that the progress of human race was not only guided by reason but also, and primarily, by passion and ambition. In opposition to Voltaire, Turgot considered Christianity a powerful and rather positive agent of civilization. Nevertheless Turgot divided history into a theological stage when physical phenomena were believed to be produced by gods, a metaphysical stage in which these phenomena were explained by abstract expressions such as essence, and the positive stage when hypotheses were formulated by mathematics and verified by experience⁵.

While Turgot did not live long enough to witness the French Revolution, his friend Nicolas de Condorcet, another key supporter of the idea of progress, had a chance to experience the brutality of this revolution that fed on a specific understanding of progress⁶. He was a supporter of Gironde. After its fall, he was called a traitor and a warrant was issued for his arrest. While in

⁵ Bury, *The Idea of Progress*, pp.154 ff.; Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress*, chapter 5; *The Life and Writings of Turgot: Comptroller-General of France, 1774–6* (London: Longman, Green and Co., 1895).

⁶ Condorcet's fate may be an ironic but sad commentary to the idea of progress implemented by force. On 25 March 1794, fearing arrest, Condorcet left his hideout and attempted to escape from Paris. Two days later, he was arrested and imprisoned in the Bourg-la-Reine. Two days after his arrest he was found dead in his cell. One of the theories is that his friend gave him a poison, which he eventually used. Others believe that he may have been murdered, perhaps because he was too popular to be executed. Jean Tulard, Jean-François Fayard, Alfred Fierro, *Histoire et dictionnaire de la Révolution française: 1789-1799* (Paris: R. Laffont, 1987), pp. 612 and 677.

hiding he wrote *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain* (Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Spirit), which was published posthumously in 1795. In this text, Condorcet presented the history of civilization as one of scientific progress, showed the connection between scientific progress and the development of human rights and justice, and outlined the features of a future rational society shaped by scientific knowledge. Condorcet preached on progress with a prophetic zeal and his attitude to Christianity was cold if not hostile. While Turgot did not believe in the necessity of violence, Condorcet was swept away by the revolutionary enthusiasm. Even in personal danger, he consoled himself with the idea of future victory of freedom, reason and social welfare as the results of inevitable progress. The revolutionary violence did not shake Condorcet's belief in the progress of the human spirit⁷.

Although the horrors of the French Revolution could have added a question mark to the slogans of human progress, the idea of progress became a paradigm in European thinking as well as the battle cry of the Founding Fathers of American democracy. The intellectual leaders of the American Revolution, such as Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine and John Adams, believed in the idea of progress that could organize a new political order to the benefit of the human condition. What is more, they were pretty successful in doing this.

In Europe, new strength was added to progressive thinking by social evolutionists such as Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, and Charles Darwin, as well as by philosophers such as Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. According to Bury, Hegel defined "Universal History as the description of the process by which Spirit or God comes to the consciousness of its own meaning. This freedom does not mean that Spirit could choose at any moment to develop in a different way; its actual development is necessary and is the embodiment of reason. Freedom consists in fully recognizing the fact"⁸. Hegel's idealistic synthesis revolutionized European thinking

⁷ Bury, *The Idea of Progress*, pp. 206 ff.; Jacob Salwyn Schapiro, *Condorcet and the Rise of Liberalism* (New York, Octagon Books, 1963).

⁸ Bury, *The Idea of Progress*, p. 254.

human condition is relatively new. One could trace the sources of revolutionary thinking among the leaders of late medieval peasant wars in Europe or in the political thinking of early modern times. The breakpoint was definitely the 18th century and its final chord of the French Revolution.

The mechanics of this revolution are worth remembering. When King Louis XVI convened the Estates-General in January 1789, his decision was supported not only by the Third Estate but also by most representatives of the nobility and clergy. They believed the Estates-General would deal with the constitutional reform of the state: separation of powers, periodical sessions of the legislature, responsibility of ministers, and legal guarantees of individual liberty. The driving force of these reforms was the Third Estate. Within it, more and more radical elements were gaining the upper hand.

The political atmosphere in France of the late 1780s was influenced by the intellectual unrest among French elites characterized by flourishing journalism, feverish libertarianism, Masonic concepts, anti-Catholic and anti-religious obsessions, sexual freedom and new concepts of social philosophy. Words were becoming a serious weapon and the cafés of Paris were turning into delivery rooms of the revolution. It was in this *milieu* that Louis-Sébastien Mercier was known for his futurist utopia *2240* and an extremely prolific writer of pornography Restif de la Bretonne was the first to use the term “communist”. It was here that the sexual perversions of Marquis Alphonse François de Sade were discussed. In 1787, a journalist and bookseller Nicholas Bonneville returned “illuminated” by the German Freemason Johann Joachim Bode and started preaching a faith combining esoteric symbolism with radical ideas of popular sovereignty and direct democracy. Sylvain Maréchal advocated agrarian socialism based on an atheist cult of Reason. Soon Bonneville’s Universal Confederation of the Friends of Truth (UCFT) started planning the establishment of a world literary republic. They thought themselves an intellectual and revolutionary elite. Guided by reason, they advocated irrational violence for the sake of emotional fiction. The core of the UCFT was the Social Circle of Bonneville based on a Masonic idea of the rule of the enlightened and Rousseau’s theory of the social contract. This was perhaps the first group that advocated a *grande communion sociale*

based on equality of all men and women and introduced by force under the leadership of a “more equal” elite¹⁰.

The first step of the revolution was taken, when on 17 June 1789, the Third Estate proclaimed itself the National Assembly. The opposition of the king and higher clergy as well as the growing radicalism of the Third Estate leaders led to the capture of the Bastille prison on 14 July¹¹. This event raised the popular enthusiasm for the revolution and added fuel to the radicalism of the Third Estate. The self-appointed National Assembly abolished all feudal privileges and proclaimed equality of all Frenchmen. Before giving France a new constitution, the Assembly drew up the “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen”. A suggestion that it should be accompanied by a declaration of duties was rejected. The Declaration was made “under the auspices of the Supreme Being” and included the guarantee of freedom of religion in a specific way: “No one shall be disquieted on account of his opinions, including his religious views, provided their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law”¹². It was for the first time made clear that the range of religious expression was subject to the will of popular legislators.

The anti-religious fervor of the radicals was gaining momentum. On 2 November 1789, the National Assembly confiscated all the property of the Catholic Church. In February 1790, monastic orders were abolished and on 12 July 1790, the Civil Constitution of the Clergy was passed, subordinating

¹⁰ James H. Billington, *Fire in the Minds of Men. Origins of the Revolutionary Faith* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2009), pp. 33-142. Bonneville wrote a poem in which he proclaimed that Man will become God thanks to a universal brotherhood of people (Billington, p. 120). One may wonder whether Bonneville read the Book of Genesis where Satan speaks to Eve: “God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (*Genesis*, 3,5).

¹¹ Ironically, about 1,000 stormed the walls of Bastille to release but seven prisoners—four forgers, one notorious murderer and two insane men. Simon Schama, *Citizens. A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (Penguin Books, 2004), p. 344.

¹² Article 10 of “Déclaration des Droits de l’Homme et du Citoyen de 1789”, <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/Droit-francais/Constitution/Declaration-des-Droits-de-l-Homme-et-du-Citoyen-de-1789> (29 III 2014). See the English text at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Declaration_of_the_Rights_of_Man_and_of_the_Citizen (29 III 2014).

the Catholic Church to the state in all respects¹³. Driven by a popular wave of anti-clericalism, in November the Assembly passed a decree stipulating that all the clergy should within a week take an oath to the Civil Constitution or else they would lose their offices and be persecuted as disturbers of public order. Most of the bishops and priests refused to take this oath, which created the first frontline of the revolution. Many Catholics, even those supporting the idea of a constitutional monarchy, now became opponents to the supremacy of the revolutionary state. While the Pope condemned the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, those of them who decided to take the oath joined the ranks of the revolutionaries. Meanwhile, the Assembly was producing lots of new laws changing the French feudal system. A new administrative system of 83 departments was introduced, local authorities were elected and workers were forbidden to form associations. The spirit of individualism was triumphant. On 13 September 1791, King Louis XVI took an oath to the new constitution but he was already a prisoner of the revolution. When the Assembly disbanded, France was aflame concerning the religious question.

In the new Legislative Assembly, the radicals were even stronger. They insisted on severe punishment of the nonjuring priests. Since an anti-French coalition was being created, in July 1792, the Assembly decreed that the “fatherland is in danger”. Louis XVI was accused of plotting with the enemies of France and imprisoned. The Assembly suspended the royal powers and decreed deportation of all nonjuring priests to Guyana. The Constitutional Assembly was dissolved and a new election produced a new legislature, the National Convention, composed mostly of radical Jacobins. This development and the Prussian invasion of Champagne led to a Paris mob staging the September 1792 massacre of priests and other opponents of the revolutionary laws¹⁴.

In September 1792, the National Convention announced the beginning of a “new era” of humanity. The revolutionary madness reached a new stage:

¹³ The English text may be found at: <http://history.hanover.edu/texts/civilcon.html> (29 III 2014).

¹⁴ “Massacre aux Carmes”, http://nouv1.evangelisation.free.fr/massacre_aux_carmes.htm (6 I 2012).

there was a beginning of a civil war in the countryside and also a growing conflict between the radical Jacobins and moderate Girondins. The former advocated centralization of power, limited property rights, state requisitioning and revolutionary terror, while the latter were for decentralization of power, economic freedom and the rule of law. In January 1793, King Louis XVI was sentenced to death and executed on the guillotine, a revolutionary invention provocatively called “our Holy Mother”¹⁵. This was too much for the conservative folk of the Vendée and its neighborhood. A massive insurrection started there against the revolutionary authorities. After the revolutionary army suffered several defeats, the National Convention leaned to the Jacobin side and resorted to extraordinary measures. The Committee of Public Safety and the revolutionary tribunals began a period of unlimited terror. While enemies of the revolution were massacred all over France, the Vendée rebellion expanded. More anti-religious laws were introduced. The Christian calendar was replaced by a secular one. All churches in Paris were closed and the Notre Dame Cathedral was turned into a Temple of Reason. The pagan cult of Nature or Fatherland was celebrated. Apart from thousands of priests, nuns and Girondins killed by the Jacobins, the revolutionary army suppressed the Vendée insurgency by means of mass murder among the civilian population. It is difficult to describe the barbarity of the killing orgies carried out by “infernal columns”, special brigades that tortured and murdered men, women and children alike in all the most barbaric ways¹⁶.

¹⁵ This invention by Joseph-Ignace Guillotin became a popular attraction for the revolutionary mob, an instrument of bloody offerings for the sake of “freedom, liberty and fraternity”. Billington, *Fire in the Minds of Men*, p. 47.

¹⁶ Reynald Secher {*Ludobójstwo francusko-francuskie* [The Franco-French Genocide] (Polish edition of: *La genocide franco-français la Vendée-Vengé*, Warszawa: Iskry, 2003)} quoted many reports by revolutionary army soldiers. “Young girls, all naked, were hanged on trees with their hands tied behind their backs. Earlier they were raped. (...) An unfortunate pregnant woman from Bois-Chapelet near La Maillon was ripped open alive. A man by the name Jean Lainé from La Croix-de-Baeuchêne was burnt alive in his bed since he could not move. A woman called Sanson from Pé-Bardou shared his fate but before this she was chopped to pieces (...) In La Pironnière and in other places babies were picked up from their cradles on bayonets and their quivering bodies were carried around (...) In Angers human skin was tanned and trousers were made of it”. Secher, pp. 151-153. One of the leaders of the revolution, Louis Saint-Just, reported in August 1793: “In Meudon they tan human skin. It has a better quality than that of a goat. Female skin is even softer but

By May 1794, the suppression of the Vandée had cost the lives of 117,000 men, women and children¹⁷. It was the first genocide in modern history.

Although the National Convention also produced laws that liberated peasantry from feudal obligations or created foundations for universal education, the revolution was fed by the belief that men are the creators of everything, even religion. On 7 May 1794, the Jacobin leader Maximilien de Robespierre made a speech in which he stressed the advantages of the Masonic cult of the Supreme Being for the state and claimed that the true priest of the Supreme Being was Nature. His understanding of Nature was closer to the law of the jungle than to the Judeo-Christian Decalogue¹⁸. When the foreign intervention was defeated, Robespierre announced a new danger to the revolution: corruption. The majority of the National Convention decided to topple its *Directoriat*. Soon Robespierre and his aides were executed. The revolution of 28 July 1794, led to the stabilization of the new republican order. The revolutionary communist ideas of François-Noël Babeuf, who founded the Conspiracy of the Equals and demanded mass killing of nobility and royalists, were suppressed. Babeuf himself was arrested and executed in 1797¹⁹. In September 1795, a new constitution was passed and the rule of terror was gradually limited. The revolution was centralized and institutionalized,

less durable". Secher, p. 154. After the suppression of the Vandée rebellion the "victorious" General François-Joseph Westermann reported: "Vandée is no more, Citizens of the Republic. It died under our free sabres along with its women and children. I have just buried it in the marshes and forests of Savenay. According to your orders, I smashed these children by the hoofs of our horses, I massacred these women who—at least these—will bear no more bandits. I have no fault in taking even one prisoner of war. I killed them all". Secher, p. 132. The English version of the book: Reynald Secher, *A French Genocide: The Vendée* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2003).

¹⁷ Jean Meyer, "Preface" to: Secher, *Ludobójstwo francusko-francuskie*, p. 15.

¹⁸ Quasi-religious mass events played an important role in shaping revolutionary imagination. Bastille became the symbol of the old regime. A statue of Nature was placed inside the Bastille's ruins. Public rituals replacing baptism and the Holy Communion were organized or a *Hymn to Nature* was sung in the Temple of Reason (former Cathedral of Notre Dame) appealing to the Trinity of Mother-Nature, Daughter-Freedom, and the Holy Spirit of Popular Sovereignty. Around 500,000 people took part in a celebration of the Supreme Being in Paris in June 1794. Billington, *Fire in the Minds of Men*, pp. 45-50.

¹⁹ Cf. Jan Kucharzewski, *The Origins of Modern Russia*, (New York: The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences, 1948), pp. 461-462; R.B. Rose, *Gracchus Babeuf: The First Revolutionary Communist* (Stanford University Press, 1978).

especially since pretty soon General Napoleon Bonaparte would start successful military campaigns expanding French rule far and wide.

The French Revolution was shaped by revolutionary ideas but it also influenced these ideas. Scotsman John Oswald advocated violence as a means of progress, and so did Jean-Paul Marat, Camille Desmoulins, Robespierre, Louis Saint-Just and most leaders of the revolution. Their goals were freedom, equality and popular sovereignty and most of them fell victim to the mechanism of violence they had launched.

The simple observation that revolution might kill its own advocates did not scare off new generations from preaching it. Various revolutionary ideas and plots flourished soon after the French Revolution. One of the first revolutionary organizations after the suppression of Babeuf's Conspiracy of the Equals was the Circle of Philadelphians in 1797. Soon, a young Charles Nodier developed a quasi-Masonic and occultist system of revolutionary fives. After Babeuf was executed, his ideas were developed by Filippo Buonarroti in Italy. He established the revolutionary network of the Adelphi, also based on occultist and Masonic principles. Typical for these organizations was the promotion of anti-Christian beliefs and sexual freedom. The conspiratorial nature of these revolutionaries inspired conservative governments to apply the same methods of counteracting the revolution. Even the champion of conservatism Joseph de Maistre showed fascination with the revolutionary methods of his adversaries²⁰.

Representatives of subsequent generations advocated various national and social revolutionary ideas all through the 19th century. This was the case of Russian Dekabrist, leaders of various Young European movements and champions of social liberation. For instance, the ideas of Buonarroti found a persistent advocate in Louis August Blanqui, who preached communism to be introduced by means of a revolutionary takeover of political power by a conspiratorial elite.

The first revolutionary government that ruled in Paris from March to May 1871 was definitely influenced by the ideas of Blanqui. His *Instruction pour une prise d'arme* (Instructions for an Armed Uprising, 1866) was a handbook

²⁰ Billington, *Fire in the Minds of Men*, pp. 123-142.

for revolution. The Blanquists provided many activists and leaders to the Paris Commune. The communal election of 26 March 1871, organized in the wake of the French defeat in the war against Prussia, produced a radical majority. In opposition to the government in Versailles, the Paris Commune passed several decrees on the separation of church and state, the takeover of abandoned factories by the workers, and other social laws. In April, the Commune arrested Archbishop of Paris Georges Darboy and several hundred others, taken as hostages to exchange for the imprisoned Blanqui. Since the government would not agree to this demand, the chief prosecutor of the Commune, Théophile Charles Gilles Ferré, decided to execute the archbishop. The Commune was suppressed by the regular French Army and most of its leaders were either executed or imprisoned. Debates over the fate of the Paris Commune largely influenced the revolutionary ideas of Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin²¹.

Militant Atheism

Atheism has a long history. It started as an intellectual reflection in ancient Indian or Greek philosophy. Leukippos, Demokritos, Epicurus and the Sophists were pioneers of European atheism. With the triumphant progress of Christianity, atheism was marginalized if not removed from European thought. In the Middle Ages, atheists were often persecuted by secular Christian rulers. The modern era brought a revival of philosophical atheism. In the 16th century, the word “atheism” reappeared in some intellectual circles in France and England. Atheism was considered in the context of Baruch Spinoza and Thomas Hobbes, but mostly during the Era of Enlightenment. Voltaire was more of an anti-Catholic deist, but a little earlier, former Catholic priest Jean Meslier probably became the first European author who openly advocated atheism in its radical form. His posthumously published *Testament* included an explicit profession of atheism as the only justified world

²¹ Ibidem, pp. 178-181 and 324 ff.; Alistair Horne, *The Fall of Paris. The Siege and the Commune 1870-71* (London, Macmillan, 1965).

outlook²². In 1758, Claude Adrien Helvétius published his philosophical work called *De l'esprit* (On Mind). His atheistic, utilitarian and egalitarian doctrine raised a lot of interest.

The first step towards official atheism was made during the French Revolution when the cult of the Supreme Being was decreed. Seemingly, it did not change much as compared with the Christian faith. But in fact, the difference was fundamental: in Christian orthodoxy, Jesus Christ was the historical incarnation of the Son of God, while the Supreme Being was a construct of human philosophy. Moreover, the adherents of faith in the Supreme Being were actively anti-Christian, persecuting those of the Catholic clergy who did not recognize the supremacy of the state in explaining what true religion was. The French Revolution was, therefore, the first modern case of religious persecution.

Militant atheism found its most active promoters in the circle of Young Hegelians who negated anything that restricted freedom and reason. They mounted a radical critique of the Prussian political system and of religion. In his work *Das Leben Jesu* (The Life of Jesus), David Strauss argued against both the supernatural elements in the Gospel and the idea of absolute truth in Christianity. Bruno Bauer moved further in trying to explain that the entire story of Jesus Christ was a myth. Ludwig Feuerbach not only advocated the non-existence of God but dealt with an alleged psychological profile of Christian believers. In his opinion, Christians idealized their weaknesses by imagining an omnipotent, omniscient and immortal God who represented the antithesis of human shortcomings. The paradox of human finiteness leading to imagination of infinity had no impact on his deep atheistic belief.

In 1845, Max Stirner, in occasionally connecting to the Young Hegelians but also criticizing them, published his work *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* (The Ego and Its Own). It is difficult to simply call Stirner an atheist since the emotion with which he attacked God shows that he struggled with a seriously treated enemy. On the one hand, Stirner argued that God is a product of madmen, but on the other hand, he criticized God for the features that

²² Jean Meslier, *Testament: Memoir of the Thoughts and Sentiments of Jean Meslier*. Translated by Michael Shreve (Prometheus Books, 2009).

he ascribed to him himself: “God cares only for what is his, busies himself only with himself, thinks only of himself, and has only himself before his eyes; woe to all that is not well pleasing to him. He serves no higher person, and satisfies only himself. His cause is a purely egoistic cause”²³. Since Stirner found God so bad that he could not exist, he replaced God with man. Instead of belief in God, he insisted on belief in man, and more literally, in himself. “Nothing is more to me than myself!” he concluded. For Stirner, God was a lie and everything was an illusion and hypocrisy except for himself. Faith and morality were for him a prison. Stirner’s purge of God seriously weakened his logic. He thought love was the only human thing in man and egoism was inhuman. Thence advocating extreme egoism, Stirner accepted to be inhuman. In fact, he was right: his obsessive repetition of that what counted was only “Me” (always with a capital “M”) led Stirner to believe that law depends on those who have the power. This led Stirner to a really horrible conclusion: “I am entitled by myself to murder if I myself do not forbid it to myself, if I myself do not fear murder as a ‘wrong’. I decide whether it is the right thing in me; there is no right outside me. If it is right for me, it is right”²⁴. This idea violates any criminal code in any country, but Stirner was treated as a serious philosopher.

Stirner’s final conclusions were even more devastating. Considering the identity of his “Me”, he concluded that “a man is ‘called’ to nothing, and has no ‘calling’, no ‘destiny’, as little as a plant or a beast has a ‘calling’ (...). It is very much the same to me whether God or the truth wins; first and foremost I want to win”. As the only “Me” that counted, Stirner wanted to win. One may ask where his remains are. It is not much for a winner. “I am owner of my might—he went on—and I am so when I know myself as unique. In the unique one the owner himself returns into his creative nothing, of which he is born. Every higher essence above me, be it God, be it man, weakens the feeling of my uniqueness, and pales only before the sun of this consciousness. If I concern myself for myself, the unique one, then

²³ Max Stirner, *The Ego and Its Own, I. Human Life*, quoted according to: <http://www.lsr-projekt.de/poly/enee.html#firsti> (7 IV 2014).

²⁴ Ibidem, *II. My Power*.

my concern rests on its transitory, mortal creator, who consumes himself, and I may say: All things are nothing to me”²⁵.

This kind of intellectual madness, being an extreme case of militant atheism, was soon repeated by Friedrich Nietzsche, who announced that *Gott ist tot* (God Is Dead) and that what really mattered was the “Will to Power”²⁶. As an intellectual weakness of an individual, these nihilist ideas could have been harmless but as a widely promoted ideology they became the justification of all kinds of inhuman crimes of communism and other totalitarian systems of the 20th century. In fact, most of the late 19th century socialists, anarchists and communists were strongly anti-religious. A synthesis of atheism and revolutionary faith was provided by Mikhail Bakunin in his *Revolutionary’s Catechism*²⁷.

The term “nihilist” was for the first time used by Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi in the early 19th century. But it became particularly popular in Russia thanks to Ivan Turgenev’s novel *Fathers and Sons*. Russian revolutionary Nihilism released its followers, most of them being Narodniks, from all moral constraints in their alleged service of the “people”. They thought the end justified all kind of means and they advocated propaganda of the deed, that is, terrorist attempts on the life of high officials. Lenin’s brother Alexander Ulyanov was one of the Narodniks sentenced to death and executed for his participation in the plot to kill Tsar Alexander II in 1881. The death of his brother had a strong impact on young Vladimir Ulyanov’s revolutionary

²⁵ Ibidem, II, 3. *My Self-Enjoyment*; III. *The Unique One*.

²⁶ See e.g., http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_is_dead (8 IV 2014).

²⁷ He wrote: “The revolutionary is a man offered as a sacrifice (...) He has broken all connection with the legal order and the whole civilized world, with all its laws and social principles, with the generally accepted customs and the morality of the present-day world (...) Whatever favors the triumph of revolution is moral to him; whatever is an obstacle to it – is immoral and criminal (...) All tender and sentimental feelings of kinship, friendship, love, gratitude, and even honor itself should be suppressed in him by the sole cold passion for the revolutionary cause. Only one pleasure, consolation, reward and satisfaction exists for him—merciless destruction (...) This whole vile society should be divided into several categories. The first category consists of people condemned to death immediately. The association should prepare a list of such condemned people according to the order of their comparative harmfulness”. In other words, a revolutionary should become a human beast without any scruples. Quote according to Kucharzewski, *The Origins of Modern Russian*, pp. 441-442.

ideas²⁸. The murky minds of Russian nihilist revolutionaries were perfectly presented by Fyodor Dostoyevsky in his novel *The Demons*.

Communist Utopias

People thought of an ideal society very long ago. The first communist utopias were rooted in belief in the Golden Age of humanity. Plato's state was based on the assumption that an ideal state organization should aim at the highest virtues and that all citizens should realize a common goal. They should take permanent positions and be governed by knowledge. This is why Plato thought the state should be ruled by philosophers. He also suggested liquidation of property. The idea that early Christianity professed communism is nonsense. Jesus Christ presented eternal happiness in the Heavenly Kingdom for those who would practice love to their neighbors, but he never encouraged construction of an earthly paradise, especially by force. Communist ideas, although not called this way, revived among the followers of Neoplatonism. The philosopher Plotinus made Emperor Galienus allow the establishment of a sort of commune called Platonopolis. Christian ascetic communes were voluntary and did not advocate their way of life as a pattern for the whole society. But in the Middle Ages, collectivism was promoted by the Bosnian Church, Cathars, Waldensians, Bulgarian Bogomils, Czech Hussites, the followers of Reverend John Wycliffe in England, as well as by Anabaptists and Thomas Münzer in Germany.

The first developed vision of communist society was presented by Thomas More in his *Utopia*, published first in Latin in 1516 and then translated into English in 1551. The Utopian state was based on a community of the whole society except for slaves and prisoners of war. All the others had an equal share in property, work, consumption and fun. Family life was maintained but the rural population was moved from time to time to town and the urban folks went to the countryside and back. All the output was to be distributed by the state. As a keen Catholic, More did not believe in commu-

²⁸ Cf. e.g., Adam B. Ulam, *The Bolsheviks* (Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 90-100; Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), chapter 4.

nism but speculated on the chances of an ideal society. Therefore, his *Utopia* bears marks of satire rather than of a positive political program.

Tommaso Campanella wrote his *La città del Sole* (City of the Sun) in 1602 in Italian. It was translated and published in Latin in 1623. Campanella described an ideal theocratic society in which goods, women and children were held in common. No wonder that Campanella, who was a Dominican Friar, had repeated problems with the Catholic Church²⁹. During the English Civil War, Gerrard Winstanley and his Diggers advocated collectivism. At the turn of the 18th century, Rev. Jean Meslier described a federation of local communities based on equality but had a problem with the moral foundations of his project since he leaned towards a materialistic understanding of social development. Other authors of utopias, such as Johann Valentin Andreae with his *Christianopolis*, Samuel Gott and his *Nova Solyma*, Samuel Hartlib (*Macaria*) and Francis Bacon, author of *New Atlantis*, struggled with the same problem: any invention of a perfect society was not perfect.

A developed communist utopia was presented in the mid-18th century by Étienne-Gabriel Morelly in his *Code of Nature*. According to Morelly, the equality of men stemmed from nature. He thought people were good as long as they co-owned land and social evil started with the emergence of individual property. Morelly's ideal society was based on three principles: one, that private property should be eliminated with the exception of personal belongings of everyday use; two, that everybody should work for the common good and the distribution of goods would rely on the state authorities; and three, that citizens would be provided for by the community and not vice versa³⁰.

The first political leader whose ambition was to implement communist ideas was François-Noël Babeuf during the French Revolution. He advocated the nationalization of property, equality without private ownership and a universal obligation to work for all citizens. The National Assembly should, in his opinion, take care of maintaining the communist system. Illusory

²⁹ *The City of the Sun* by Tommaso Campanella, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2816/2816-h/2816-h.htm> (24 III 2014).

³⁰ Morelly, *Code of Nature* (1755), <http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/morelly.html> (7 IV 2014).

democracy should be maintained along with terror against enemies of the system. Thus, the revolutionary elite would turn into an institutionalized minority dictatorship.

In the early 19th century, practical patterns of communist communities were created by Robert Owen, who established the New Harmony settlement in Indiana, Charles Fourier, who organized his *phalanstères*, and Étienne Cabet, who wrote the novel *Voyage et aventures de lord William Carisdall en Icarie* (Travel and Adventures of Lord William Carisdall in Icaria) in 1840. Cabet's Ikarian movement tried to colonize Texas and later established a commune at Nauvoo, Illinois³¹. These experiments usually failed. Their engineers followed an idealized form of existing co-ownership in European agriculture, such as the old German *Mark*, the Swiss *Allmende*, the Russian *obshchina*, the Balkan *zadruga*, or the Chinese *Tsing-t sien*. The first theoretical criticism of these attempts was authored by Thomas R. Malthus in his *Essays on Population* (1817).

There has always been a lot of moral argument in favor of attempts to improve the human condition and to eliminate injustice, either in earlier or in capitalist societies. The fate of all these utopias show how difficult it was not only to formulate good recipes but even to formulate a diagnosis of what the disease really was. The materialistic and revolutionary road adopted by 20th century communism was not only based on a mostly false diagnosis but offered remedies that turned out to be worse than the disease.

Marxism

From the beginning of his career, Karl Marx wanted complete revolutionary transformation of the world for the sake of the “realization of philosophy”. The idea of revolution is present in almost everything Marx wrote and in the *Communist Manifesto* in particular. Therefore, the whole Marxist

³¹ A letter by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels to Étienne Cabet dated 5 April 1848, was found. They wrote: “We do not doubt for one instant that we shall shortly be able to give you favourable news of the progress of the communist movement in Germany”. *Letters of Marx and Engels 1848*, http://marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/letters/48_04_05.htm (8 IV 2014).

tradition has a strong revolutionary element. There is a constant debate going on as to how much of original Marxism has been realized in communist countries. It is Marxists who now usually try to prove that true Marxist orthodoxy is something different from the reality of the communist world. Yet, there was much more of Marxian ideas in it than generally accepted. The problem is that the practical effects of the Marxist revolution proved to be far from anything that had been expected.

The Marxist theory had three main sources: Georg Hegel's dialectics, Ludwig Feuerbach's materialism, and David Ricardo's economic theory of value. The Marxian materialist concept of history was based on Hegel's idealist theory of self-realization of the Spirit of the World (*Weltgeist*). Marx tried to translate Hegel's concept of history into the materialist language of Feuerbach. Thus, the Marxian concept of history did not mean a process in which God becomes fully God but a process in which man becomes fully human. For Marx, history was the process of human growth from primitive beginnings to future communism. In his opinion, this growth process took place in the course of the changing ways of material production. It proceeded through a series of epochs marked by a division of societies into antagonist classes, transitions from one epoch to another having a revolutionary character³².

It was the later revolutionaries, starting with Vladimir Lenin, who used Marxism as an ideological tool of political revolution. Marx recognized the existence of societies on a national scale, but the fundamental unit of society was, in his opinion, the human species at a given stage of its historical development. Each such stage represented a social epoch dominated by a particular "social formation". He distinguished five formations: primitive society, slavery, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism. In some of Marx's works, an Asiatic social formation may be found, which is much more difficult to adjust to his general theory of history. In Marx's view, at each stage of development, the class structure of society was determined by the "mode of production" (*Produktionsweise*). By the "mode of production", Marx meant the

³² Karl Marx, *The Class Struggles in France 1848-1850* (International Publishers, New York, n.d.), p. 120.

prevailing state of technology, or “means of production” (*Produktionsmittel*), which changed gradually, and the social relations of production (*Produktionsverhältnisse*), mainly including the property of the “means of production”, which changed in a revolutionary way. Social revolutions were, in his mind, changes in the “mode of production”. Ultimately, Marx held that every “mode of production” was subject to the changing state of technology. Therefore, the social revolution was to Marx a result of the conflict between the productive powers and the social relations of production. A social revolution originated in technological change, but actually took place in a socio-political movement of producers as a social class. For Marx, revolutions were the locomotives of history, but class struggles were locomotives of revolution.

The highest stage of the historic development of society would start, in Marx’s view, with the proletarian revolution against bourgeoisie. The overthrow of the bourgeois state and establishment of a dictatorship of proletariat should be followed by the forcible seizure and “socialization” of means of production, though the essential change would be in the “mode of production”, including not only social relations but also the state of technology. Since the class struggle was, according to Marx, rooted in the division of labor, he thought that “the enslaving subordination of man to the division of labor” would disappear at the communist stage of socialism³³. Marx and his friend Friedrich Engels were concerned with the expected new mode of production. But they considered it mainly in social and not economic terms, as they believed communism would mean the end of the division of labor and thus the end of the economy. They assumed that the emancipation of the productive potential of workers from the yoke of the capitalist wage labor system would bring about such an abundance of goods that human needs would be satisfied. Thus, socialism, or its higher, communist stage, would mean “humanity’s leap from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom”³⁴.

³³ Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program*, in: Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Selected Works* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1951), Vol. 2, pp. 23-24.

³⁴ Friedrich Engels, *Anty-Duehring* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1947), pp. 420-421.

There are many ideas in Marx's and Engels' writings that lay at the foundation of future Marxist revolutionary practice. The materialist understanding of "Praxis" led to a neglect of all human activities not directly "productive". Marxist dialectics mixed up relations between causes and effects, between theory and practice. In fact, it was rather the Marxist theory that shaped the practice of "socialism" than vice-versa. Thus, the basic dependence of social relations on technology was reversed in practice. It was never clear why the proletariat was expected to play the Promethean role in the liberation of man and why the world, which had developed thanks to "class struggles", would go on without them at the communist stage. There was a very dangerous idea in the original Marxian thought, that the law, a part of social "superstructure", was an instrument in the hands of the ruling class. Finally, the Marxian doctrine claimed to be a general theory of everything, but in fact was a form of materialist reductionism, an atheistic belief assuming that by means of improvement of the material world man can reach the earthly Kingdom of God—Communism. Marxian historical materialism was in fact a philosophical determinism.

Marxist ideology was continued in various ways. Usually, the Promethean element was developed along with the idea that a new organization of production would naturally change the society. Although the West European Marxists believed in the role of a conscious workers' movement in achieving the goals of revolution, they worked on the creation of material and social conditions for such a revolution and generally supported the idea of a gradual takeover of power by the workers' parties by parliamentary means. In other words, they respected the natural development of conditions for the new "mode of production" and avoided the determinist conclusions that could be drawn from Marxian theory. It took the Russians to develop a different interpretation of Marxism. Although the revolutionary interpretation was advocated by some German or Jewish leaders, such as Karl Liebknecht, Julian Marchlewski, and Rosa Luxembourg, the major role was played by Vladimir Lenin. Noteworthy, on the eve of World War One, the Marxist revolutionaries were a minority among the workers' leaders.

Bolshevism

Soviet communism or Bolshevism was a combination of Marxism and Russian political tradition³⁵. The Russian tradition was characterized by a unique despotism that resulted from the sense of helplessness of the society in the face of power. There was also a long tradition of “caesaropapism”, a system in which the state authority used the church in an instrumental manner. Most Russian social thinkers agreed that to change the faulty system it took an enlightened ruler or a well-organized plot aimed at overthrowing a bad ruler. The natural social conditions for change were usually underestimated. This kind of an interpretation of socialist thought was typical for Alexander Hertsen, Nicholas Chernyshevsky and Pyotr Tkachev.

The man who brought this kind of “conspiracy theory of history” to an extreme was Vladimir Lenin. He thought the proletariat did not have to wait for “objective” conditions of socialism. Backward Russia did not have, in his opinion, to go through earlier stages of capitalist development. On the contrary, he developed a theory that socialist revolution should break out in the “weakest part of the capitalist system”. He turned the idea of

³⁵ “Marxism was adapted to Russian conditions and was Russified. The messianic idea of Marxism which was connected with the mission of the proletariat was combined and identified with the Russian messianic idea”. Nikolay Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea* (London: G. Bles, 1947), p. 249. Elsewhere, Berdyaev wrote: “Russian Communism is difficult to understand on account of its twofold nature: on the one hand it is international and a world phenomenon, on the other hand it is national and Russian”. Further on, he added: “Bolshevism is much more traditional Russian than is commonly supposed. It agreed with the distinctive character of the Russian historical process”. Nikolay Berdyaev, *The Origin of Russian Communism* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1948), p. 7 and 107. Cf. also, a deep analysis of the anthropology of Communist power by Jadwiga Staniszkis. In her opinion, both the illiterate communist henchmen and sophisticated intellectuals shared the same two concepts: first, of a historically conscious revolutionary elite versus the irrelevance of “unconscious” social reality and, second, of an internal ideological logic legitimizing the means justifying the end. Both ideas were not only Russian but also rooted in the German philosophical tradition. Jadwiga Staniszkis, “Antropologia władzy jako pomost łączący historię idei z ‘antropologią bezpieczeństwa’” [Anthropology of Power as the Bridge between Intellectual History and the “Anthropology of the Security”], in: Jarosław Syrynk, Agnieszka Klarman, Mariusz Mazur, Eugeniusz Kłosek (eds.), *W stronę antropologii “bezpieki”* [Toward the Anthropology of the Security] (Wrocław: IPN, 2014), pp. 19-28.

a social revolution into a theory of political revolution in which the elite of the proletariat—the party—would seize power to impose a new system of collective ownership. He also advocated violence as the only means to uproot “capitalism” and to establish “socialism”. Soon after the Bolshevik Revolution, he said: “We must not depict socialism as if socialists will bring it to us on a plate all nicely dressed. That will never happen. Not a single problem of the class struggle has ever been solved in history except by violence. When violence is exercised by the working people, by the mass of exploited against the exploiters—then we are for it!”³⁶ With revolutionary vigor, he exclaimed: “No mercy for these enemies of the people, the enemies of socialism, the enemies of the working people! War to death against the rich and their hangers-on, the bourgeois intellectuals; war on the rogues, the idlers and the rowdies!”³⁷

Before World War One, Lenin changed his Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social-Democracy into a disciplined group of „professional revolutionaries”, organized according to his principle of „democratic centralism”, a system in which decisions flew from above and in which factions were banned. This doctrine was in fact all centralism and no democracy. Likewise, Lenin claimed that the „dictatorship of the proletariat” was a higher stage of democracy. Adoption of completely contradictory terms was one of the first examples of splitting up human minds, later so successfully practiced by Stalin. The Russian philosopher Lev Shestov was right when writing in 1920 that Bolshevism was an “un-enlightened despotism” based on the power of naked force and false promises³⁸.

The Bolshevik revolution in Russia proved successful mainly because it adopted a populist program. The most popular slogans of 1917—peace without annexation and land for the peasants—were used by the Bolshevik party against all other, *nota bene* prevailing, political forces in the country.

³⁶ Vladimir Lenin, “Report on the Activities of the Council of People’s Commissars” (24 January 1918), *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 459-61.

³⁷ Vladimir Lenin, “How to Organize Competition?” (27 December 1917), *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 411 and 414.

³⁸ Lew Szestow, “Czym jest bolszewizm?” [What Is Bolshevism?], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 6-7 November 1999.

The Constituent Assembly was dissolved by force, because from the beginning the Bolsheviks were a revolutionary minority. It was only when the Bolsheviks seized power that they began to introduce elements of a socialist program. But due to the civil war and the horrible deterioration of the labor morale, this program was introduced by means of terror. The early Soviet system was a mixture of war statism, adopted according to the German patterns of World War One, revolutionary terror, and deception of the peasants, who thought the expropriated estates were parceled among them on the property principle, but in fact all the land in Russia was nationalized. Workers in nationalized factories did not work any better than before. Moreover, they developed an idea that each of them had his own share in the nationalized industrial property, so he could take it home. Terror was now being used to introduce a minimum of order³⁹. The first decree introducing forced labor for the “enemies of revolution” was issued in January 1918. The Cheka was created even earlier: in November 1917.

Soviet terror reached its limits in 1921, when foreign intervention was suppressed by the Bolsheviks while the horrible economic situation made peasants rise in the Tambov region (*Antonovshchina*) and workers and sailors in Kronstadt. New victims were to be sacrificed for the sake of the revolution. The policy of War Communism proved ineffective, so the short-lived New Economic Policy (NEP) was practiced as long as the struggle for succession after Lenin lasted. The criminal nature of the communist system took final shape when Joseph Stalin emerged as the sole ruler of Soviet Russia, the idea of the forced transformation of society and economy was continued with even more savage force. What Stalin introduced to the theory of Marxism was his idea of a constant “aggravation of the class

³⁹ Lenin said: “We can’t expect to get anywhere unless we resort to terrorism: speculators must be shot on the spot. Moreover, bandits must be dealt with just as resolutely: they must be shot on the spot”. As quoted in “Meeting of the Presidium of the Petrograd Soviet With Delegates From the Food Supply Organizations”, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, p. 501. Elsewhere he wrote: “Dictatorship is rule based directly upon force and unrestricted by any laws. The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is rule won and maintained by the use of violence by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, rule that is unrestricted by any laws”. Vladimir Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, p. 11.

struggle”, which meant that with the progress of “socialist building” the enemies of socialism were more and more dangerous⁴⁰. The permanent revolution was to safeguard the absolute obedience of the ruling bureaucracy to the individual authority of Stalin himself. It stimulated spontaneous actions to strengthen his domination by means of unprecedented terror and deceitful propaganda. Besides this, Stalin launched a theory of “socialism in one country”, which was to explain Russia’s isolation from the outside world and application of the most brutal methods of exploitation of the society⁴¹.

By the time Stalin assumed absolute power at the end of the 1920s, the general pattern of the Communist Party organization and its relation to the state apparatus had taken shape. Both structures were overlapping and many functions were being doubled, but it only strengthened the domination of the central party and police organs (Party Congress, Central Committee, Politburo, Secretariat, and the Cheka, GPU or NKVD) and the authority of Stalin on top of them. Given the extreme centralization of the party structure and its absolute domination over the government, Stalin was able to control the whole political apparatus, not only with the help of the police, but also his own, private secretariat. To make sure of his total control of the political apparatus, Stalin developed the Lenin’s ultimate idea of periodic purges of membership. But while Lenin advocated clearing the party of “careerists” and “opportunists”, Stalin introduced the principle of periodical physical liquidation of those whom he found not convenient enough. The purges were undertaken by the police apparatus, which also was systematically purged.

⁴⁰ This theory stemmed from Lenin’s idea of “aggravation of the class struggle” expressed by him in March 1919: “The main thing that Socialists fail to understand—which constitutes their shortsightedness in matters of theory, their subservience to bourgeois prejudices, and their political betrayal of the proletariat—is that in capitalist society, whenever there is any serious aggravation of the class struggle intrinsic to that society, there can be no alternative but the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat”. Vladimir Lenin, *Thesis and Report on Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, § 12 Address to the Comintern, 4 March 1919.

⁴¹ Cf. e.g., Richard Pipes, *Communism. A History* (New York: Modern Library, 2001), pp. 66 ff.; Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin. Parallel Lives* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), pp. 461 ff.; Robert Conquest, *Stalin. The Breaker of Nations* (New York: Viking, 1991); Robert Service, *Stalin. A Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

As a result of the purges of the late 1930s, almost all old Bolshevik cadres were exterminated along with millions of common Soviet people. The Great Purge accompanied an unprecedented accumulation of capital through slave labor during collectivization and industrialization of the 1930s. Moreover, by arranging systematic purges of communist fanatics from all over the world, the Stalinist leadership of the Soviet Communist Party succeeded in creating a strictly steerable international center of the communist movement in Moscow, known as the Third International, or Comintern, whose aim was to carry the revolution abroad.

For several years after World War One, the Bolshevik leadership expected a revolution to start in Germany that could be supported and joined by the Russian Bolsheviks. The Entente wanted to prevent it. Equally important were the Entente's efforts to regain at least some of the credits granted to Russia during the war. The Bolsheviks refused to pay them back, leading the victorious allies, and France in particular, to seek the overthrow of the Bolshevik regime and reinstatement of White Russia in order to get the badly needed money back. Moreover, Bolshevik Russia gave up some territories of the Tsarist empire, and it was obvious that it would want them back one day, whether for revolutionary or imperialist reasons.

Stalin's totalitarian grip over the Soviet Communist Party and the international communist movement made it possible for him to start a complicated global game in which the Soviet Union always presented itself as the defender of peace and freedom, although its ultimate goal was a universal revolution stimulated by the "fatherland of the proletariat"—Russia. Therefore, the heirs of Bolshevism, the communists all over the world, were expected to believe that fighting against fascism in Spain was helping the cause of the world revolution as much as the Ribbentrop-Molotov Treaty of 23 August 1939, which contributed to the outbreak of World War Two and the Third Reich's attack on Russia in 1941⁴².

⁴² Kevin McDermott, Jeremy Agnew, *The Comintern. A History of International Communism from Lenin to Stalin* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Kevin McDermott, "Rethinking the Comintern: Soviet historiography, 1987-1991", *Labour History Review*, Winter 1992, Vol. 57, No 3, pp. 37–58.

Thanks to its victory in World War Two, the Soviet Union became the second largest political power in the world and a formidable rival of the United States in the struggle for world domination. The USSR created a network of satellite and Sovietized countries in Eastern and Central Europe as well as sponsored the expansion of communism in the world. The expulsion of the Yugoslav communists from the Soviet-controlled communist movement in 1948 and the victory of the communist revolution in China in 1949 began a competition of various brands of communism. Nevertheless, despite some local diversity, the core of the communist system remained the same everywhere: monopoly of power and property, as well as the rule of terror and propaganda. When Stalin died in March 1953, the communist empire, still mostly controlled by Moscow, was already a superpower disposing of nuclear weapons and able to destabilize whole countries, especially those economically less advanced. The communist system was based on the rule of a new class of professional party apparatus (*nomenklatura*), political police and army, and on the information monopoly of the state. The new class lacked security due to periodical rotation of personnel through physical liquidation. The post-1953 crisis in the Soviet Union produced stabilization of *nomenklatura* rule according to new principles. At the 20th Congress of the Soviet Party in February 1956, its new leader, Nikita Khrushchev, unmasked Stalinism, rejecting the mechanism of permanent revolution. Under his successor, Leonid Brezhnev, the Soviet system enjoyed even more stability, but at the cost of making personal gains, a chief motif of the ruling *nomenklatura*. This led to unprecedented corruption and economic stagnation.

Meanwhile, communist China was increasingly independent from the Soviet Union. This led to a serious conflict between the USSR and the Chinese People's Republic in the 1960s. Compared with the Soviet Union, Chinese communism was more of a peasant ideology and resulted from the overwhelming dream of the Chinese to restore the country's unity and imperial status. Nevertheless, Chinese communism developed along similar lines. Mao Zedong was the Chinese Lenin and Stalin in one. The Chinese Great Leap Forward was a repetition of the Soviet industrialization of the 1930s, although it was less successful. The Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976 was a Chinese version of the Soviet Great Purge. Nevertheless, when Mao died

in 1976, the Chinese party leadership was taken over by pragmatics who implemented successful economic reforms⁴³.

While under Mikhail Gorbachev Soviet communism tried to change the political system without reforming its economy, the Chinese reformed their economy without changing the political system. The failure of Soviet communism and the success of Chinese communism are a matter of much analysis and debate. The striking difference may be the result of various cultural traditions, the quality of leadership, different foreign strategies and other factors. One way or another, while the Soviet Union decayed and the Russian Federation developed a new system of state capitalism with some features of mental communism, the Chinese system, with its semi-private ownership and monopoly of communist political power, is still basically communist. In other Asian countries, such as North Korea or Vietnam, communism proved to be as persistent as it is in Cuba. Elsewhere, it evolved into post-communism, with a market economy and liberal democracy strongly influenced by old communist cadres, just as was the case with most Eastern and Central European countries. Generally speaking, it seems that the communist system proved to be more persistent in sovereign countries than in Soviet satellites. In any case, the problems of post-communism are a different story.

Conclusions

Communist ideology proved to be an effective and persistent tool in changing the world's political, social and cultural landscape in the 20th century. Its appeal resulted from a number of evasive impressions. First of all, communist ideologists frequently used vague or contradictory terms, preferring to argue what was not communism. Some of the basic assumptions of communist ideology are mythical. For instance, the slogan that communism

⁴³ On the history of Chinese communism, see e.g.: John King Fairbank, *The Great Chinese Revolution, 1800-1985* (New York: Perennial Library, 1987); Harrison E. Salisbury, *The Chinese Emperors. China in the Era of Mao and Deng* (New York: Avon Books, 1992). On various aspects of post-1945 world communism, see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Communism> (15 IV 2014).

is the ultimate system in which everyone would get what he or she needs and provide as much as he or she would be able to is nonsense. Human needs tend to grow while the human willingness to deliver, not necessarily so. Supply would never catch up with demand. The idea that nationalization would mean “socialization” of the “means of production” is also not realistic. Communist “rationalism” made people believe that the progress of human “scientific” abilities is without limits. But Lenin once said that “man’s consciousness not only reflects the objective world, but creates it”⁴⁴. Communist ideology mixed up “objectivism” with “subjectivism”. The Gnostic dualism of absolute evil (private property and exploitation of the working class) and absolute good (socialized property and classless society) violated principles of “scientific” thinking that the communist always referred to. The materialistic understanding of history and the moral nature of ultimate goals stood in sharp opposition. The conviction that it is possible to materialize a historical necessity was metaphysical while the communist always rejected metaphysics. Generally speaking, the idea that man could establish paradise on earth by means of violence is absurd.

All these doubtful premises and contradictory arguments were explained by “dialectics”. In practice, “dialectics” served the purpose of proving that the communists were always right, that “capitalist” exploitation was absolute evil and that terror was welcome as a means of approaching future happiness. “Dialectics” was also a perfect instrument to resolve what communism was and what it was not depending on current requirements. It was a perfect tool to intimidate people who could not believe that black is white and white is black.

Under these circumstances, it sufficed to state that communism may only be achieved by a revolutionary clique acting in the name of the necessary and “progressive” historical process and that dictatorship became the goal in itself. Idealistic goals were located behind the horizon while the reality was ultimately called “real socialism”. The inability to realize the contradictory promises of communism had to lead to the accumulation of social,

⁴⁴ “Conspectus of Hegel’s Science of Logic—Book III : Subjective Logic or the Doctrine of the Notion (December 1914)”, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38.

economic and cultural deformations. Communism degraded natural social networks, liquidated the altruistic motifs of human behavior and deformed basic means of communication by linguistic manipulation (“newspeak”). The unique combination of terror and enthusiasm as well as censorship and propaganda made millions of people believe that, despite the horrors and injustice they experienced, they contributed to a righteous work.

The original sin of communism and its major outcome was moral relativism. Former Yugoslav communist Milovan Djilas pointed to the relationship between dialectic materialism and moral relativism: “What is conscience? Does it exist at all? There was no place for conscience in his [Stalin’s–WR] philosophy and even less in his deeds. Ultimately a man is an effect of productive forces”⁴⁵. In communist terms, law was the will of the ruling class, so material truth in legal proceedings has never been important. This is why any decision on what is a crime and what is not must be based on the objective treatment of moral and legal foundations. This is why the international community coined certain legal terms to measure the behavior of the rulers in this world and this is how we can refer communist behavior to these terms.

⁴⁵ Milovan Djilas, *Rozmowy ze Stalinem* [Conversations with Stalin] (Paryż: Instytut Literacki, 1962), p. 82.

Early Communist Aggressions

Declarations and Reality

The communist system established in Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution of November 1917 was just another incarnation of the old Russian tradition of expansion. From the beginning of the Great Duchy of Muscovy, the Russian state aimed at expanding its territory through aggressive wars and territorial conquests. From the 16th to the 19th century the conquest of Novgorod, Belorussia and Ukraine, Poland and the Balticum, Siberia, Turkestan, Tartar Crimea, the Caucasus and Bessarabia were stages of this expansion. When the Tsarist empire collapsed at the end of World War One, many of the enslaved nations tried to free themselves from the Russian yoke, while the Bolsheviks, animated by the idea of world revolution, a new version of Russian imperialism, attempted to bring them back under their control. The result was a number of aggressive wars that Bolshevik Russia fought against its neighbors. At that time crimes of aggression had not yet been defined in international law. What counts here is that by their expansionist policies they violated their own declarations, which were legal acts creating certain obligations. At least this is the logic of the civilized world.

On 15 November 1917, the new Bolshevik government issued the Declaration of the Rights of the People of Russia in which they offered support for the following principles: “1. The equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia; 2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, even to the point of separation and the formation of an independent state; 3. The abolition of any and all national and national-religious privileges and disabilities; 4. The free development of national minorities and ethnographic

groups inhabiting the territory of Russia”. The declaration was signed by Lenin and Stalin¹. Almost immediately, Stalin interpreted the self-determination principle according to Bolshevik ideology: “It is necessary to limit the principle of free self-determination of nations by granting it to the toilers and refusing it to the bourgeoisie. The principle of self-determination should be a means of fighting for socialism”².

Apologists of the Bolshevik policy of expansion have presented various arguments trying to minimize the contradiction of Bolshevik declarations and deeds. The fact is that on 11 November 1918, when Germany signed the armistice with the victorious Entente, the Red Army was ordered to march westwards in order not only to restore the frontiers of Tsarist Russia but also to carry the revolution to the countries that wanted to remain independent. This was in accordance with the revolutionary ideology of the Bolsheviks. In 1916, Lenin wrote: “Disarmament is the ideal of socialism. There will be no wars in socialist society; consequently, disarmament will be achieved. But whoever expects that socialism will be achieved *without* a social revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a socialist. Dictatorship is state power based directly on *violence*”³. In November 1917, he went on by saying: “We shall not allow ourselves to be entangled by treaties”⁴.

The coat of arms of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics founded in 1922 was a hammer and sickle placed against the background of the globe, a symbol of world revolution. “The chief aim of Soviet policy is expansion; expansion performed by violence, and aiming to transform neighbor states into Soviet colonies, and free nations into colonial nations”. This opinion of the Polish ambassador to Moscow in 1936-1939, Waclaw Grzybowski⁵, is jus-

¹ “Declaration of the Rights of the People of Russia”, of 15 November 1917, quoted according to: <http://www.marxists.org/history/ussr/government/1917/11/02.htm> (14 II 2014).

² Quote according to: Richard Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union* (Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 109.

³ Vladimir Lenin, “The “Disarmament Slogan” (October 1916), *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 94-104.

⁴ Vladimir Lenin, “Concluding Speech Following the Discussion On the Report of Peace (8 November 1917)”, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26.

⁵ Testimony of Ambassador Waclaw Grzybowski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 953.

tified by Marxist-Leninist theory and practice. Since the Bolsheviks thought themselves depositaries of the only right explanation of human history and believed Marxist historical materialism explained the historical necessity, they jumped to the conclusion that it was their duty to spread communist revolution all over the world⁶.

The following examples show when and how the Bolshevik regime committed crimes against peace, usually referring to the alleged necessity of a world revolution. In individual cases, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish aggression from revolution. In several cases, internal revolution was facilitated by aggression from the outside. Cases in which the outside “help” was marginal for the victory of the communist revolution or did not take place at all will be discussed separately when communist revolutionary practices are presented.

Idel-Ural

One of the first Bolshevik aggressions violating the Declaration of the Rights of the People of Russia was directed against the peoples living in vast areas situated between the Volga River and the Ural Mountains, that is, some 9 million Turko-Tartars and Ugro-Finns. On 5 May 1917, about 800 delegates representing Maris, Chuvashes, Udmurts, Mordvins, Komis, Komi-Permyaks, Kalmyks and Tatars held a general meeting in Kazan to create an independent Idel-Ural Republic, Idel-Ural meaning in the Tartar language the Volga-Ural region. The main idea was a loose federation of small nations where all would be free to strengthen their own cultural heritage. At first, the Muslim Bashkirs declined to participate, but later in 1917 they and the Volga Germans joined the League of Idel-Ural. Its constitution was drafted by the Tartar leader Sadri Maksudi Arsal. On 12 December 1917, a National

⁶ There are numerous works by Vladimir Lenin in which he advocated world revolution as a historical necessity and the ultimate duty of communists. There is also much literature explaining his reasons and plans. Cf. e.g., Stanley W. Page, *Lenin and World Revolution* (New York: New York University Press, 1959); Tony Cliff, *Lenin: The Bolsheviks and World Revolution* (Pluto Press, 1979); Piero Melograni, *Lenin and the Myth of World Revolution: Ideology and Reasons of State 1917-1920* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1990).

Assembly of this area proclaimed an independent Republic of Idel-Ural and Maksudi Arsal became its president⁷.

By April 1918, Idel-Ural was conquered by the Red Army and the Bolshevik authorities divided this territory into six autonomous republics and regions. Maksudi Arsal emigrated to Finland where he continued the struggle for Idel-Ural independence. In July, the republic was restored by the Czechoslovak Legion but invaded by the Red Army again at the end of 1918. In 1919, Maksudi Arsal delivered a diplomatic note with the demands of the Muslims of European Russia to the Versailles Peace Conference, but to no avail. The next two years witnessed continuous anti-Bolshevik revolts of the Idel-Ural population. They were smashed by the Red Army in 1921, but a clandestine movement for the restoration of Idel-Ural continued until the late 1920s. Several thousand Idel-Ural supporters were executed and sent to the Gulag. Soon, the Bolsheviks closed Tartar private schools and the Muslim and other clergy were deprived of social and political rights. Increased taxation and political persecution destroyed the mosques. By 1937, there was no mosque or imam present. The famous Tartar religious woman Muhlisla Abstay Bubi from Ufa died in prison in 1937. Collectivization of agriculture in the early 1930s completed the destruction of national life of the Muslim and Orthodox population of Idel-Ural⁸. Deprivation of the non-Russian peoples of Idel-Ural of the right of their cultural and national development by mass executions, deportations, and other administrative measures was a direct violation of

⁷ Testimony of Hamid Rashid, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 247. Cf. also: Almaz Miftahov, *From Russia to Turkey: An Intellectual Biography of Sadri Maksudi Arsal (1878-1957)*, MA Thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, September 2003.

⁸ Testimony of Hamid Rashid, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 246. From the village Murapl, 27 out of 465 families were deported, and from the village Juzei, 19 out of 143 families. "My uncle—Rashid reported—in 1937 was 57 years old and he was in charge of the distribution of bread, 800 grams per day to the workers. He was asked 'Why so little bread?' He answered that 'the Government's order is I cannot give more'. For this, the NKVD 3-man court accused my uncle of saying that he told the workers it was your Government's order (...) not to distribute more bread and he was sentenced to 10 years' deportation, slave labor, about 100 kilometers south of Arkhangelsk", *ibidem*, p. 246. Cf. also, a unique book by a Komi émigré author, Ignati Mosšeg, *Moskwa dawna i dzisiejsza a narody podbite północno-wschodniej Europy* [Old and Contemporary Moscow and the Subjugated Nations of North-Eastern Europe] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Wschodniego, 1931).

the Declaration of the Rights of the People of Russia and fit the later-defined category of crimes against humanity.

Crimea

In 1917, the Bolshevik influence in the Crimean Peninsula was limited to the Sebastopol naval base and a few factories in Feodosia and Simferopol. The most powerful ethnic group were the Tartars, who founded their National Party (*Milli Firka*) in July 1917. On 26 November 1917, the Crimean Tartars convened the Tartar Constituent Assembly (*Kurultai*) in Bakhchisarai. A Crimean constitution was adopted, introducing civil equality, secular principles and abolishing inequality of Muslim women and privileges of Tartar nobility. The Assembly produced a National Directory with Chelibidzhan Chelibiev as Chairman and Dzhafer Seidamet as Minister of Foreign Affairs and of War. It was *de facto* the Tartar government of Crimea. The Sebastopol Bolshevik Executive Committee managed to win over a part of the non-Tartar inhabitants of the peninsula, spreading propaganda against a “Tartar dictatorship”. The *Kurultai* approached the Bolsheviks with an offer of participation in the All-Crimean government. The Bolshevik condition that the *Kurultai* recognize the revolutionary government in Petrograd was rejected. In January 1918, the *Kurultai* signed an agreement with the Ukrainian Central Rada promising not to allow troops hostile to the Rada to move across Crimea. Nevertheless, the Red troops defeated the Tartar self-defense force and seized Simferopol. Chelibiev was captured and killed. When the Central Powers gained control of Ukraine in the spring of 1918, the Bolshevik authorities in Crimea collapsed. In May 1918, a new provisional Crimean government under Austrian auspices was formed under General Maciej Sulikiewicz, a Polish-Lithuanian Tartar. When the Central Powers withdrew their troops from the Crimean Peninsula in November 1918, a White Russian government was installed. In April 1919, the Bolsheviks troops overthrew this government, but in June 1919 they had to evacuate the peninsula in view of an offensive of White Russian troops under General Anton Denikin, who was hostile to the Tartars. Driven underground, the Tartar leaders from the *Milli Firka* established contacts with the Bolsheviks. When the Bolsheviks

finally overwhelmed the White troops in the fall of 1920, the *Milli Firka* was pronounced a counterrevolutionary and illegal organization. Some of the Tartar leaders were executed. For instance, Sulkiewicz had moved to Azerbaijan where he helped develop the Azeri army, but after the Bolshevik conquest he was caught and murdered by the Bolsheviks⁹.

The Caucasian States

From ancient times, the Transcaucasian area was a borderland between competing empires: the Hittites and Assyrians, the Roman Empire and Parthia, the Byzantine Empire and Persia, the Arabs and Tartars. In the 19th century, Transcaucasia was incorporated into the Russian Empire. At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, the three major nations of the region—the Georgians, Armenians, and Azeris—developed national and social movements that dominated the political arena. In Armenia, it was the Nationalist Revolutionary Dashnaksutyun, in Azerbaijan it was the Musawat (“Equality”) movement, and in Georgia, it was the local Social Democrats (Mensheviks). The 1905 revolution added a lot of vigor to these organizations.

During World War One, the Turkish authorities purged a hundred thousand Armenians from their homeland. As a result, most of them died on the way or were killed in an unprecedented genocide. With the collapse of the Tsarist regime in early 1917, the Russian administration in Transcaucasia suffered a serious blow. On 22 March 1917, the provisional government established the Transcaucasian Committee (*Ozakom*), but it failed to maintain stability. After the Bolshevik Revolution, the Armenian Dashnaks, the Georgian Mensheviks and the Azeri Musawat leaders declared independence from Bolshevik Russia. They thought in terms of the Transcaucasian Federation being a part of democratic Russia. After the Bolshevik Revolution, on 28 November 1917 the Transcaucasian Commissariat was established under the leadership of the Georgian Menshevik Evgeni Gegechkori. In February 1918, the Transcaucasian Assembly was convened. Nevertheless, there were

⁹ Richard Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union*, pp. 79-81 and 184-190.

serious differences between the Armenians, who counted on the destruction of Turkey and insisted on the continuation of war, and the Azeris, who sympathized with Turkey for ethnic and religious reasons. Meanwhile, Turkey continued their offensive into Armenia. In April 1918, Russian and Armenian workers established in Baku a commune that declared loyalty to Bolshevik Russia. In June 1918, it was toppled by the Musawat, Dashnaks, Mensheviks, and Social Revolutionaries and the intervening British troops. The top 26 Baku Bolshevik commissars were shot¹⁰.

The Northern Caucasian peoples also had the ambition to detach themselves from Russia. On 21 December 1917, Ingushetia, Chechnya, and Dagestan declared independence from Russia and formed the Mountainous Republic of Northern Caucasus (MRNC) which was recognized by Western powers. Its capital was Temir Khan Shura in Dagestan and its government was headed by Tapa Chermoyev, a Chechen statesman. He was followed by the second prime minister, Vassan Girey Dzhabagiev, an Ingush, who authored the MRNC constitution¹¹.

Facing discrepancies between the Transcaucasian nations, the Turkish pressure on Armenia, and the revolutionary chaos in Russia, on 26 May 1918, the Georgians decided to proclaim the independence of Georgia. The first Georgian government was formed by a Menshevik, Noi Ramashvili. Two days later, the Musawat declared the independence of Azerbaijan. After the liquidation of the Baku Commune, the Azeri government headed by the Musawat leader Fath Ali Khan Khoysky moved from Gandja to Baku. On the same day, 28 May 1918, Armenia also declared independence. Its first government was headed by Hovhannes Kachaznoui.

¹⁰ Christopher J. Walker, *Armenia. The Survival of a Nation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), pp. 197-240; Tadeusz Swietochowski, "National Consciousness and Political Orientation in Azerbaijan, 1905-1920", in: R.G. Suny (ed.), *Transcaucasia. Nationalism and Social Change* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983), pp. 209-222; Richard G. Hovannisian, "Caucasian Armenia between Imperial and Soviet Rule. The Interlude of National Independence", *ibidem*, pp. 259-262; David M. Lang, *A Modern history of Georgia* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962), pp. 192-208.

¹¹ <http://vainah.info/biblioteka/izvestnye-vaynahi/item/730-vassan-gireydzhabagiev?tmpl=component&print=1> (20 III 2014).

The Georgians and the Azeris chose the Central Powers. The Georgian government signed a trade agreement with Germany and a peace treaty with Turkey. The Turks took Alexandropol (Gyumri) and were heading towards Yerevan. The Armenian army resisted and on 4 June 1918, the Kachaznoui government signed the Treaty of Batumi, giving up a big part of the Armenian-populated area to Turkey. When in October 1918, the Central Powers were about to sign the armistice on the western front, the situation changed. Both Georgia and Azerbaijan started a more independent course, while the victorious Entente still counted on reconstruction of White Russia and was not eager to recognize the independence of the Transcaucasian republics.

In the summer of 1919, the White army of General Anton Denikin crushed the MRNC and massacred its dwellers. Denikin would not accept the independence of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan either. Georgia and Azerbaijan signed a treaty of mutual assistance, while Armenia declined participation because of a territorial dispute with Azerbaijan over Karabakh. The Transcaucasian leaders counted on the Paris Peace Conference and on US President Woodrow Wilson in particular. On 10 August 1920, the Treaty of Sevres was signed with Turkey, which recognized Armenia and its control of Erzerum, Van, and Trebizond. The defeat of the Denikin army by the Bolsheviks facilitated the recognition of Azerbaijan by Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan. The recognition of Georgia came even later since it was opposed by France and Great Britain. Finally, on 26 January 1921, Georgia received the recognition of all Entente countries¹².

The Bolshevik invasion of the Caucasus started in the spring of 1920¹³. After the Red Army took the MRNC in early April 1920, it moved against

¹² Lang, *A Modern history of Georgia*, pp. 209-231; *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Georgia. Special Report No. 6 of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression* (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1955), pp. 4-6; Walker, *Armenia*, pp. 243-392; Tadeusz Swietochowski, *Russian Azerbaijan, 1905-1920: The Shaping of National Identity in a Muslim Community* (Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 129-182.

¹³ On 17 March 1920, Vladimir Lenin sent the following telegraph to the Revolutionary Military Council on the Caucasus Front: "We absolutely must take Baku. Direct all your efforts to this end, but it is necessary to remain strictly diplomatic in your statements and to ensure to a maximum extent a solid preparation for the local Soviet power. Same applies to Georgia, although in this case I advise you to be even more careful". Quoted according to: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Army_invasion_of_Azerbaijan (20 III 2014).

Azerbaijan. Speaker of the Azeri Parliament Ali Mardan Bey Topchibashev was sent an ultimatum to hand over power within 12 hours, and then on 28 April 1920, the Baku "Revolutionary Committee" asked the Red Army for help and the 11th Bolshevik army, including 30,000 soldiers, invaded the country. Soon after the conquest, the new Bolshevik authorities began a ruthless persecution of national elites: political activists, the military, clergy, and *intelligentsia*¹⁴. In May 1920, a number of anti-Bolshevik revolts started, the most important of them being that in the vicinity of Ganja, where the Azeri 3rd Cavalry Regiment attacked the Bolsheviks, but ultimately the Azeri resistance was broken and hideous atrocities followed. Thousands of men, women and children alike were slaughtered. Ganja was renamed Kirovabad. Several political leaders of independent Azerbaijan were murdered, such as Khan Khoysky and Prime Minister Nasib Bey Yusifbeyli (Usubbekov). The number of murdered Azeris during the first stage of Sovietization was estimated at 48,000. Grassroots resistance continued but was gradually destroyed. The final conquest was followed by a new wave of persecution and by Russification of the Azerbaijan SSR. There were mass deportations to Siberia. After the murder of Sergey Kirov in 1934, more than 3,000 other Azeris were executed by the NKVD. During the collectivization of agriculture, thousands more Azeris were killed and deported to Siberia¹⁵.

The Turks rejected the agreement with Armenia and joined hands with the Bolsheviks¹⁶. On 1 May 1920, a Bolshevik rebellion in Armenia was put

¹⁴ One of those executed by the Bolsheviks on 15 July 1920 was the former head of the Crimean Tartar republic and Azeri Chief of Staff General Maciej Sulkiwicz, born among Polish Tartars. Led out for execution, he told his cellmates: "I am glad I die an officer of a Muslim army. Farewell!" Arslan-Bej (L. Kryczyński), "Generał Maciej Sulkiwicz (1865-1920)" [General Maciej Sulkiwicz, 1865-1920], *Rocznik Tatarski*, 1932, Vol. 1, p. 255.

¹⁵ Testimony of Zahid Khan Khoysky, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 226-227; "Azerbaijan", a statement by Zahid Khan Khoysky, *ibidem*, p. 231; Tadeusz Świętochowski, *Azerbejdżan i Rosja* [Azerbaijan and Russia], (Warszawa: ISP PAN, 1998), p. 123; Wojciech Materski, *Gruzja* [Georgia] (Warszawa: "Trio", 2000), pp. 94-95; Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union*, pp. 195-208.

¹⁶ The cooperation of Ittihadist Turks and Bolsheviks, based on a common understanding of the British "imperialist" enemy and common hatred for "nationalist" Armenia, has been widely documented. In early 1920, a high-ranking Turkish delegation contacted the Soviet government in Baku. Later on, military operations of both sides were coordinated. The confessions of Kutchuk Talaat, Nayim Jevad, Azmi Bey and General Kazim Karabekir at the Ankara trials proved the close cooperation between Turkey and the Soviets in overthrow-

down by the national government. The Bolsheviks worked hand in hand with the Turkish commander, General Kazim Karabekir, who attacked from the south, taking the city of Alexandropol. Simultaneously, the Red Army entered from the north, issuing an ultimatum on 29 November 1920. Therefore, the Armenian government signed the peace treaty of 2 December in which Armenia was granted the status of independent state and its territorial integrity would be respected. In addition, the Bolsheviks agreed not to persecute the ruling Dashnak party leadership and officers of the Armenian army who fought against the Bolsheviks. However, almost immediately after signing the treaty, the Bolsheviks took Armenia by force. General Dro Kanayan, who was commander-in-chief of the Armenian army, was allowed to stay free until early January 1921 when he was told to go to Moscow. During conversations with Stalin, General Dro protested the conditions created in Armenia by the Red Army. As Dro's acquaintance from the pre-1914 years, Stalin promised to change things and to re-establish democracy in Armenia, but of course he did nothing¹⁷.

After Armenia was captured by the Red Army, the Bolsheviks started the outright persecution of all nationally conscious elements, the *intelligentsia*, clergymen, and political elites. About 1,200 Armenian officers were forced to march through the Caucasian Mountains to Baku and later on to Kazan. There, the survivors were subject to a brainwashing operation and those who failed to comply and join the Red Army were sent to concentration camps or exile in Siberia¹⁸. This can be defined as a war crime. From February to August 1921, the Armenian insurgency freed the country from the Bolsheviks and the new government headed by Simon Vratzian appealed

ing the independent republic of Armenia. *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Armenia. Special Report No. 5 of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression* (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1955), pp. 8-9.

¹⁷ General Dro Kanayan was put into exile in Moscow and not allowed to move beyond a radius of 100 kilometers from the Soviet capital. In 1924, he was allowed to emigrate to the west and died in Boston in 1956. Walker, *Armenia*, pp. 303-318, 388-389; Testimony of General Dro Kanayan, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, pp. 169-172; Testimony of former Armenian Minister of Justice Ruben Darbinian, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, pp. 161-163.

¹⁸ Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia. Vol. II: From Versailles to London* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), pp. 521 ff.; Testimony of General Dro Kanayan, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, pp. 172-173.

to the free world for help to maintain an Armenia free from Bolshevik rule, but the country was then retaken by the Red Army and the persecution of all patriotic elements continued¹⁹.

After the conquest of Azerbaijan and Armenia, the Bolsheviks attacked Georgia. In order to lull the Georgians, on 7 May 1920, Soviet Russia recognized the independence of Georgia and concluded the Georgian-Bolshevik non-aggression pact. In return, the Georgian government of Noi Zhordania allowed the Bolshevik party to act freely in the country. A Bolshevik attempt to grab power in Tbilisi in May 1920 failed, but in February 1921, the Bolsheviks raised up arms in Shulaveri. When the Georgian army moved to crush the rebellion, Lenin accepted the plan of Stalin and Sergo Ordzhonikidze—both Bolsheviks of Georgian descent—to use the Red Army in an all-out invasion of the country on the pretext of aiding the uprising. Despite brave efforts to defend their country, the 40,000-strong Georgian army under General Giorgi Kvinitadze was defeated and the Red Army captured Tbilisi on 25 February 1921²⁰.

Almost immediately after the Red Army captured Tbilisi, Georgian workers went on strike and mass protests of the Bolshevik occupation turned into a number of local rebellions. One of the most famous commanders of the guerilla operations in Georgia during the 1924 rebellion was Colonel

¹⁹ *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Armenia*, pp. 14-15.

²⁰ Wojciech Materski, *Georgia Rediviva. Republika Gruzjińska w stosunkach międzynarodowych 1918-1921* [Georgia Rediviva. The Georgian Republic in International Relations, 1918-1921] (Warszawa: ISP PAN, 1994), pp. 171-226; *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Georgia*, pp. 7-10; Lang, *A Modern history of Georgia*, pp. 226-244; Constantin Kandelaki, *The Georgian Question before the Free World. Acts-Documents-Evidence* (Paris, 1953), pp. 18 ff. When the Red Army entered Tbilisi on 25 February 1921, an eyewitness, Alexander Tzomaia, was surprised to see “that although they were extremely well armed, they gave the impression of being a sort of bandits rather than regular army. They were dirty, unshaven, unkempt, and they behaved just like bandits would behave. The first thing they did, they started to loot the town. Tbilisi escaped the ravages of the Russian revolution and was about the only town untouched by the revolution of that time. There were good shops, plenty of stuff in them, such as food and clothing (...) After all the shops were looted they started on private houses. For instance, they came into our house and looted it of absolutely everything they could carry away with them. Also there were many cases, of course, as is common among the Communists, of women being molested”. Testimony of Alexander Tzomaia, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 191.

Kakutsa Cholokashvili. After subsequent waves of national insurrection were put down, the Bolsheviks started mass persecution. From 7,000 to 10,000 Georgians were executed and about 20,000 were sent to Siberia²¹.

The Bolshevik invasions of the Caucasian republics were aggression in the light of the Declaration of the Rights of the People of Russia proclaimed by the Soviets. These invasions were also crimes against peace followed by mass murder and other crimes against humanity committed by the Bolsheviks on the Caucasian nations. The Soviet-Georgian treaty of 7 May 1920 was probably the first international treaty that Soviet Russia broke.

Turkestan

The Central Asian movement for independence started in 1916 when Russian Muslims protested conscription. Soon the Muslim rebels in Central Asia began to be called *basmachi*. In Russian, this term definitely had a pejorative meaning. Russia's Western allies viewed the movement equally unfavorably as potential enemies due to the Pan-Turkist and Pan-Islamist ideology of their leaders. Since Bolshevism in Central Asia was mostly supported by the local Russians, the Tsarist and Soviet rule was usually perceived by the *basmachi* in the same way.

After the February 1917 Revolution, local Muslims formed the *Shura-I Islam* (Islamic Council) that sought a federal, democratic state. More fundamentalist Muslim scholars established the *Ulema Jemeyti* (Board of Learned Men) advocating Sharia law. From the former Russian Turkestan emerged two regions that strove for independence: the autonomous regions of Kokand and Alash Orda. An independent Republic of Turkestan was proclaimed in 1920. It

²¹ *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Georgia*, pp. 13-17. On 2 June 1989, under strong public pressure, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Georgian SSR established a special commission for the investigation of legal aspects of the 1921 events. The commission came to the conclusion that "the [Soviet Russian] deployment of troops in Georgia and seizure of its territory was, from a legal point of view, a military interference, intervention, and occupation with the aim of overthrowing the existing political order." At a special session of the Georgian Supreme Soviet on 26 May 1990, the Sovietization of Georgia was officially denounced as "an occupation and effective annexation of Georgia by Soviet Russia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Army_invasion_of_Georgia (20 III 2014).

included both regions. Since the Russian-dominated Tashkent Soviet rejected Muslim participation, both Muslim organizations joined hands and formed a government under Sharia law. The armed forces of the Kokand government were reinforced by the absorption of armed raiders under Irgash Bey. Nevertheless, the Red Army conquered the Kokand area, staging a *pogrom* in which about 14,000 people were killed. This massacre, along with the execution of peasants unwilling to accept Bolshevik rule, strengthened the resistance of the Muslim rebels. Irgash Bey declared himself the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Army and the *basmachi* rebellion started again. In the Khiva Khanate, the *basmachi* leader Junaid Khan overthrew the pro-Bolshevik faction.

The movement developed into a major uprising in the Ferghana Valley, where Bolshevik nationalization policies and economic collapse resulted in famine and drove many people to join the *basmachi*. In 1918, they controlled most of the area except for Tashkent. The major weakness of the movement was the rivalry between various Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Turkmen leaders, but in March 1919, Madamin Bey secured formal leadership of the movement. In the winter of 1919 to 1920, the *basmachi* forces suffered defeats and Madamin Bey defected to the Bolshevik side. Red Army campaigns, Bolshevik concessions regarding economic policies, famine relief, and liberalization of religious practices led to the decline of popular support for the *basmachi*. In January 1920, the Red Army captured Khiva and, in August of the same year, the Emir of Bukhara was deposed by the Bolsheviks. The *basmachi* rebellion moved to the steppes of Kazakhstan as well as to the Tajik and Turkmen lands.

In November 1921, the former Turkish Minister of War, General Ismail Enver, arrived in Bukhara to assist the Bolsheviks. Instead of doing so, he took command of the *basmachi* rebellion, revitalizing the movement. His call for *jihād* attracted much support and he was able to form an army of 16,000 men. By early 1922, his army controlled a considerable part of the Bukhara area with Samarkand and Dushanbe. Since the Red Army was now partly released from the Western front, the Bolsheviks could strengthen their position in Central Asia. As they temporarily accepted the Koranic schools and eased economic policies, the Bolsheviks attracted volunteer militias of some Muslim peasants. In June, the Red Army defeated the *basmachi* troops

at Kafrun. Soon, General Enver was killed. His successor, Selim Pasha, fought on but was defeated and escaped to Afghanistan in 1923. The next year, the *basmachis* forces shrank to about 6,000 men. They were mostly operating in the Ferghana Valley but the popular support for the rebels was dying out. The *basmachis* resistance was broken by the execution of its leaders, mass arrests and deportations to concentration camps. Finally, the country was divided into five Soviet republics—Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan. Their territories were ravaged and their population frustrated by years of warfare so that from then on the surviving fighters could only conduct guerilla operations from their mountainous hideouts. The last strongholds of the *basmachis* were destroyed in Kyrgyzstan in 1934. As late as 1937, the Soviet NKVD discovered stocks of machine guns prepared for another anti-Soviet uprising²².

From the mid-1920s, the already victorious Bolsheviks had started an ideological campaign in Turkestan, arresting most of the educated people, including writers, teachers and artists, while from 1929 the collectivization campaign deprived most of the inhabitants of landed property and thousands of people were sent to concentration camps. As a result of collectivization and the massive requisition of food stocks, about 2 million people starved to death in the Central Asian Soviet republics of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan²³. Although the subjugation of Turkestan by the Red Army was the result of long-term warfare, the initiation

²² Richard Lorenz, "Economic Bases of the Basmachi Movement in the Ferghana Valley," in: Andreas Kappeler, Gerhard Simon, Edward Allworth (eds.), *Muslim Communities Reemerge: Historical Perspectives on Nationality, Politics, and Opposition in the Former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), pp. 277 ff.; Testimony of Rusi Nasar, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, pp. 236-239; H.B. Paksoy, "The Basmachi Movement from within: an Account of Zeki Velidi Togan", *Nationalities Papers*, June 1995, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 373-399; Martha B. Olcott, "The Basmachi or Freeman's Revolt in Turkestan, 1918-24", *Soviet Studies*, 1981, Vol. 33, No. 3; Michael Rywkin, *Moscow's Muslim Challenge: Soviet Central Asia*, (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, Inc, 1990); Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union*, pp. 174-184, 221-242.

²³ An eyewitness remembered: "When I was a university student in the city of Tashkent, I saw with my own eyes in the years 1932 many people dying of starvation by the roadside on the road leading to the city of Tashkent". Testimony of Maksui Bek, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 244.

of the Bolshevik offensive in the region may be called a crime against peace and the Red Army and Soviet authorities committed numerous crimes against humanity while dealing with the population of Turkestan.

Balticum and Belorussia

The February 1917 Revolution made possible home rule in Estonia and Latvia. Political parties were allowed to function without any limitations. In Estonia, the Estonian National Union was founded in June 1917 under Konstantin Päts. Social Democrats and the Estonian Peasant Union also gained massive support. In Latvia, the most influential force was the Latvian Agrarian Union of Kārlis Ulmanis and the Social Democrats. In Lithuania, the major political parties included the Christian Democrats, Social Democrats, and liberal Democrats who created the Lithuanian Peasant Union in 1905. A Socialist Revolutionary faction called the Lithuanian Socialist Populist Democratic Party was founded in Russia in 1917. While the Peasant Union had a clear idea of individual peasant property, the Populists desired cooperative or collective farming. Just like in Estonia and Latvia, most Lithuanian parties favored expropriation of large German and Polish estates²⁴.

After the February 1917 Revolution, the provisional government nominated Jaan Poska as Commissioner for Estonia. On 12 April 1917, Estonian autonomy was decreed. The Estonian National Council was set up and took over local rule from the Baltic Diets of the German Barons. A Provincial Council for Livonia chose Ulmanis as the Livonian Commissioner. The Letgalian Congress of Rural Communities elected the Reverend Jāzeps Rancāns as the High Commissioner for Letgalia. The Couronian refugees in Tartu chose a similar Council for Courland with Jānis Čakste as the High Commissioner. On

²⁴ Hellmuth Weiss, "Bauernparteien in Estland", in: Heinz Gollwitzer (ed.), *Europäische Bauernparteien im 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart-New York: Gustav Fischer Verlag, 1977), pp. 208-213; Juergen von Hehn, "Die politische Bedeutung des Bauerntums in der unabhängigen Republik Lettland 1918-1940", *ibidem*, pp. 223-229; Thomas Remeikis, "Lithuanian Political Parties and the Agrarian Sector of Society in the Twentieth Century", *ibidem*, pp. 242, 249-253; Simas Suziedelis (ed.), *Encyclopedia Lituanica* (Boston: EL, 1970-78), Vol. 5, pp. 248-249; Vol. 6, pp. 69-71.

5 July 1917, the Russian provisional government promised self-government for Courland and Livonia. On 30 July, the Latvian National Political Conference in Riga agreed to self-determination of Latvia as an autonomous unit composed of Courland, Livonia and Letgalia within the Russian democratic republic, but the country was torn into two parts by the front line. The Estonian and Latvian troops suffered heavy losses but belonged to the most reliable sections of the Russian army, while the German Barons hoped for the advance of the German army²⁵.

The Russian self-determination program and the US entry into the war changed the German plans for the Balticum. On 18 September 1917, the German authorities allowed the establishment of the Lithuanian National Council (Tarybe) under Antanas Smetona. On 11 December 1917, the Tarybe issued the Lithuanian declaration of independence, which, however, provided for the military and economic subordination of Lithuania to Germany. On 16 February 1918, the Tarybe went further, proclaiming sovereignty without these limitations. All links with other nations, meaning not only Russia and Germany but also Poland, were broken and Wilno (Vilnius) was named the capital of Lithuania. The Poles, who numerically prevailed in the Wilno area, refused to participate in an action they saw as an attempt to tear off Lithuania from Poland. On 16 November 1917, the first Latvian National Assembly gathered at Valka and turned into the Latvian National Council, a provisional authority of united Latvia²⁶.

After the Bolshevik Revolution, the Estonian and Latvian self-governments faced the growing challenge of the Soviets. The Bolshevik Executive Committee under Jaan Anvelt claimed to be the legal government of Estonia. Despite the presence of many Russian soldiers and attempts to intro-

²⁵ Władysław Wielhorski, *Polska a Litwa. Stosunki wzajemne w biegu dziejów* [Poland and Lithuania. Mutual Relations in the Course of History] (London: The Polish Research Centre, 1947), pp. 259-263; Alfred E. Senn, *The Emergence of Modern Lithuania* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), pp. 18-27; Constantine R. Jurgela, *History of the Lithuanian Nation* (New York: Lithuanian Cultural Institute, 1948), pp. 503-504; Alfreds Bilmanis, *A History of Latvia* (Princeton University Press, 1951), pp. 278-282; John H. Jackson, *Estonia* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1941), pp. 125-129.

²⁶ Jean Meuvret, *Histoire des pays baltiques* (Paris, 1934), pp. 170-175; Senn, *The Emergence of Modern Lithuania*, pp. 28-34; Bilmanis, *A History of Latvia*, pp. 290-292.

duce the Decree on Land, the Bolsheviks lost the election to the Constituent Assembly in Estonia. Yet, in early 1918 they were *de facto* ruling the country by martial law. The Estonian National Council, which acted semi-officially in the revolutionary chaos, proclaimed that the Estonian army would fight for independence and that all landless peasants would receive land²⁷. It was a decisive move, attracting Estonian peasantry to the idea of independence. The Second Congress of Estonian Soldiers openly voted for the creation of independent Estonia. Following the Bolshevik decree of 28 January 1918 outlawing all Baltic Germans, the Estonian Germans urged German troops to occupy Estonia and Livonia.

During the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, the German army moved eastward, taking Tallinn on 25 February 1918. Between the escape of the Bolsheviks and the advance of the Germans, on 24 February the Estonian Council proclaimed the full independence of Estonia and formed a provisional government under Pääts. Nevertheless, the approaching Germans came with colonization plans. When the Brest-Litovsk Treaty of 3 March 1918 gave them a free hand in the region, they installed a German administration based on the old Noble Diets. Estonian and Latvian national authorities were purged. On 12 April 1918, a Baltic Landesrat was established in Riga. It appealed to the German emperor to take Estonia and Livonia under his “eternal protection”. On 22 September, the emperor recognized the independence of a new Baltic state combining Estonia and Latvia with the Landesrat as its supreme authority. A special Baltic German Force was created. In Lithuania, there were hardly any German landlords, so Berlin decided to install a German-controlled monarchy under the Duke of Württemberg²⁸.

The revolution in Berlin and the armistice of 11 November 1918 changed the situation again. The armistice agreement demanded that German troops remain on the eastern front until the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian governments had organized the defense against the Bolsheviks. The latter, see-

²⁷ Emil Vesterinen, *Agricultural Conditions in Estonia* (Helsinki, 1922), p. 59.

²⁸ Reinhard Wittram, *Baltische Geschichte* (Muenchen, 1954), pp. 252-253; Alexander von Tobien, *Die livländische Ritterschaft* (Riga, 1925), Vol. 1, pp. 74-75; (Berlin, 1930), Vol. 2, pp. 257-266; Jurgela, *History of the Lithuanian Nation*, pp. 508-511; Senn, *The Emergence of Modern Lithuania*, pp. 36-37; Bilmanis, *A History of Latvia*, pp. 300-304.

ing the defeat of Germany, denounced the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and started a westward drive to seize power in the Balticum. While the first declaration of Estonian independence had been made between the Bolshevik retreat and the German advance, the second proclamation of independence issued by the re-emerged Estonian provisional government on 11 November, was made between the German retreat and the Bolshevik advance.

Early in December 1918, the Red Army captured Narva and were twenty miles east of Tallinn. This time, however, they met strong resistance from the rapidly created Estonian army. Meanwhile, on 11 November, the Lithuanian government of Augustinas Voldemaras took over power in Wilno (Vilnius). Since at that time the city's populace spoke mostly Polish, a clash with the resurrecting Poland was inevitable. On 17 November, an independent Latvia was proclaimed in Riga, with Čakste as its president and Ulmanis as prime minister. Still, the position of the three Baltic states was still not too secure. The Bolsheviks advanced from the east. The Baltic Barons still counted on the remaining German troops. In the Wilno (Vilnius) region, the Polish self-defense units organized not only against the advancing Bolsheviks but also to take over the area from the Lithuanians²⁹. The fate of the Baltic states largely depended on the outcome of the Polish-Soviet War.

The Belorussian national elites that developed at the beginning of the 20th century were also rooted in the peasant tradition of the land. Few of the dominating Polish landowners or *intelligentsia* thought themselves Belorussian. In towns, Jewish people were predominant. After the February 1917 Revolution, a congress of many Belorussian organizations was held in Minsk and created the Belorussian National Committee. In July 1917, it turned into the Central Council (Rada) of Belorussian Organizations and Parties. Following the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, organizations that opposed the Bolsheviks met in Minsk and formed the First All-Belorussian Congress. In mid-December 1917, it announced the formation of the Belorussian National Republic (BNR) and named the Congress its legislature. The Bolsheviks tried to seize power in Minsk by breaking the Congress' proceedings and arresting

²⁹ Jackson, *Estonia*, pp. 134-136; Wielhorski, *Polska a Litwa*, pp. 283-289; Bilmanis, *A History of Latvia*, pp. 306-307.

some of its members. For a while, the Bolsheviks were in control of the city but had to withdraw under the pressure of the progressing German troops. Working within the German Mitteleuropa plan of an anti-Bolshevik *cordon sanitaire*, the Congress resumed proceedings and created the BNR government. After including a wider representation of Jews and Poles and other nationalities, on 25 March 1918, the executive committee of the Congress issued a constitutional decree and proclaimed the independence of Belorussia under German patronage. When on 11 November 1918, the armistice was signed on the Western front, the German troops began to withdraw and the Red Army moved in. Since the Belorussian army was too weak, on 10 December the Bolsheviks captured Minsk. On 1 January 1919, they created the Belorussian Socialist Soviet Republic³⁰. Even after the Polish victory over the Bolsheviks and the division of the territory inhabited by Belorussians by the Soviets and Poland, there were attempts to oppose the Bolshevik rule in eastern Belorussia. The Sluck insurrection was put down by the Red Army in November 1920³¹.

Offensive operations by the Red Army against the emerging Estonian, Latvian and Belorussian states were not only a violation of the Declaration of the Rights of the People of Russia, they fit the later-defined category of a crime against peace and the Bolshevik atrocities committed during these operations qualify as war crimes³².

The new Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Belorussian governments enjoyed the support of the Entente, but crucial for their survival was the attitude of their peasant populations and the outcome of the Polish-Soviet War. The land reforms introduced in the Baltic states helped stabilize national rule in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania while the fate of Belorussia was resolved over the heads of the Belorussians.

³⁰ Testimony of Nicholas Scors, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 206-208; Nicholas P. Vakar, *Belorussia. The Making of a Nation* (Harvard University Press, 1956), pp. 98-120; *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Byelorussia. Special Report No. 9 of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression* (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1955), pp. 6 ff.

³¹ Testimony of Nicholas Scors, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 209.

³² In the 1950s, the US House of Representatives Select Committee on Communist Aggressions defined them in this manner.

The Polish-Soviet War

There is a quite popular opinion that in 1920 Poland attacked Russia³³. This is simply not true. First, Russia had held a big part of Polish territories for more than a century, so any independent Polish state would have to detach some pre-1914 Russian territories. On the other hand, there was no Polish plan to recover all territories lost in the partitions at the end of the 18th Century. While the Soviets had no particular limitations on their plans in the west, the Poles followed one of two major plans. Józef Piłsudski and his followers advocated a wider federation of Poland, Lithuania, Belorussia and Ukraine in which Poland would play a central role. The National Democrats would have rather seen a more limited territory in the east but supported the assimilation of the Lithuanian, Belorussian and Ukrainian minorities.

Guided by their idea of spreading revolution, the moment Germany signed the armistice in the west on 11 November 1918, the newly created Red Army started a western drive. The ideology behind this offensive was class-like and nationalist at the same time. The Bolsheviks announced the liberation of natives from “foreign”, that is, German and Polish landlords. On 5 December 1918, the Red Army invaded Latvian territory. In mid-December, the Wilno (Vilnius) Soviet of Workers’ Deputies was established in a city short of the working class and dominated by the Polish-speaking population. The Polish self-defense forces of the Wilno (Vilnius) area was defeated and retreated to Grodno. On 5 January 1919, the Red Army took Wilno (Vilnius) and the Lithuanian Council of People’s Commissars was established. On 27 February

³³ Cf. e.g.: R.R. Palmer, Joel Cotton, *A History of the Modern World since 1815* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), p. 710-711. Though a communist revisionist, Eric Hobsbawm distorted history in a typical communist manner: “There seemed to be a chance that the Red Army, victorious in the Civil War, and now sweeping towards Warsaw, would spread the revolution westward by armed force, as the by-product of a brief Russo-Polish War, provoked by the territorial ambitions of Poland. Restored to statehood after a century-and-a-half of non-existence, Poland now demanded its eighteenth-century frontiers”. Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes* (London: Michael Joseph, 1995), p. 70. This is simply not true. At the Paris Peace Conference, Poland demanded frontier far west of the 1772 frontiers. Moreover, when the Red Army attacked Poland in late 1918, the Russian Civil War was just starting.

1919, the Bolshevik authorities in Wilno (Vilnius) and Minsk joined hands and created the Lithuanian-Belorussian Socialist Soviet Republic. The Bolshevik rule was based on “revolutionary justice”, meaning expropriation and attainder of the “propertied classes”. “Revolutionary tribunals” (*revtribunaly*) started to produce death sentences. In Latvia alone, the Bolshevik occupation between December 1918 and May 1919 cost the lives about 3,600 victims executed through the *revtribunaly*. Massive plunder and spontaneous acts of cruelty were repeated. The most frequent victims were Polish landowners, clergy, and *intelligentsia*. Beat the *poljskiye pany* (Polish landlords) was the catchphrase of the day³⁴.

In mid-February 1919, the improvised Polish units began a counter-offensive on the Lithuanian-Belorussian front. The Polish army was swelling with new recruits and volunteers. On 19 April 1919, Wilno (Vilnius) was recaptured by the Poles. Polish Head of State and Commander-in-Chief Józef Piłsudski issued a manifesto “To the Inhabitants of the Former Grand Duchy of Lithuania” offering nationalities of the region free self-determination of the form of government³⁵. The Bolshevik government angrily reacted to the Polish capture of Wilno (Vilnius), expelling the official Polish envoy to Petrograd Aleksander Więckowski and imprisoning another Polish delegate, Józef Dangel. All through 1919, the Polish army strengthened its position on the eastern front. At the end of September 1919, the Polish-Soviet front ran from

³⁴ *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Latvia. Special Report No. 12 of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression* (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 3. For instance, in Młynów a Bolshevik gang tortured and murdered the estate owner, Julia Chodkiewicz, and her daughter, Zofia. Polish freedom fighters, such as the Minsk commander of the Polish Military Organization, Mateusz Stefanowski, and the leader of the Nieśwież self-defense forces, Mieczysław Wołnisty, were shot by “revolutionary tribunals”. Walerian Meysztowicz, *Gawędy o czasach i ludziach* [Tales of Times and People] (London: Polska Fundacja Kulturalna, 1983), p. 100. There is rich Polish literature on the Bolshevik terror of 1917-21. Cf. e.g.: Maria Dunin-Kozicka, *Burza od wschodu* [Storm from the East] (Kraków, 1925); Elżbieta Dorożyńska, *Na ostatniej placówce* [At the Last Outpost] (Warszawa, 1925); Zofia Kossak, *Pożoga* [The Ravage] (Warszawa, 1935); Edward Woyńskiłowicz, *Wspomnienia* [Memoirs] 1847-1928 (Wilno, 1931).

³⁵ *Powstanie II Rzeczypospolitej. Wybór dokumentów 1866-1925* [Emergence of the Polish Second Republic. Selected Documents 1866-1925] (Warszawa: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1981), pp. 490-491.

Polotsk in the north through Borysov and Zaslav to the Zbrucz (Zbruch) River in the south. By that time, 600,000 Poles were under arms³⁶.

During the Paris peace conference in early 1919, the Allies had created a special commission under Jules Cambon to define how far east the Poles could move with respect to the Entente's plans to restore White Russia. When the Kiev Ukrainian troops were defeated by the Bolsheviks, the Allies realized that the Polish army was the only force capable of resisting the Bolsheviks. On 25 June 1919, the Supreme Council of the Entente authorized the Polish government to create civilian power in East Galicia up to the Zbrucz. The Entente's attitude to Poland's territorial plans was ambivalent. As long as the Bolsheviks prevailed on the civil war front in Russia, the Entente supported the Polish claims. But at the end of 1919, when the days of the Bolshevik power seemed numbered, they were increasingly reluctant to recognize the Polish plans, still counting on the restoration of White Russia, its former ally and debtor.

In September 1919, Polish Prime Minister Ignacy Paderewski failed to extract from the Allies a more consistent standpoint. Piłsudski sent one of his generals to General Anton Denikin but he supported the idea of one, indivisible Russia within the 1914 frontiers, so the talks deadlocked. Piłsudski declined to support the White Russians, seeing that their plans were a threat not only to the Polish territorial plans but also to Poland's independence. In December 1919, negotiations with the Bolsheviks failed. Poland demanded a Bolshevik cease-fire with the Kiev Ukrainian army of Semen Petlura and a demarcation line along the Berezina-Zbrucz line, while the Bolsheviks simply played for time. On 21 November 1919, the Supreme Council of the Allies approved of the Polish mandate to manage East Galicia for 25 years. But, seeing a chance that Denikin would capture Moscow, on 8 December 1919, they declared that the Polish administration should extend only west of the Bug-Kuźnica-Pinsk line, which soon gained the name of the Curzon Line. This was no ethnic border but more or less the western frontier of Russia after the third partition of Poland in 1795.

³⁶ S.G.K., "Utworzenie wojska polskiego" [Creation of the Polish Army], *Przegląd Współczesny*, 1922, No 2, pp. 113-115.

In the first months of 1920, the front stabilized on the rivers Berezina and Horyn in Belorussia. The attitude of Belorussian peasants living in these areas to the Polish army was rather passive while the Volhynian Ukrainians showed some degree of hostility. In January 1920, the Polish corps under General Edward Rydz-Śmigły took Dyneburg (Daugavpils) and handed the neighborhood to the Latvians. Meanwhile, the Bolsheviki captured Kiev and pushed the Petlura forces farther west to the Zbrucz River line. In March and early April 1920, an exchange of correspondence between the Soviet Comissar for Foreign Affairs Grigori Chicherin and his Polish counterpart Stanisław Patek failed even to settle the place of the negotiations³⁷. Meanwhile, the Bolsheviki gathered a huge force of some 700,000 Red Army soldiers on the Berezina River and were preparing another massive offensive against Poland. On 10 March 1920, the top Soviet command gave orders to the commander of the western front, Mikhail Tukhachevsky³⁸. After the Bolshevik plans were intercepted by Polish intelligence, the Soviet attack was preceded by a joint Polish-Ukrainian action in the south. On 21 April 1920, Piłsudski and Petlura signed a treaty that determined the Polish-Ukrainian frontier on the Zbrucz River and stipulated cooperation against the Red Army³⁹. On 25 April, a Polish-Ukrainian offensive crossed the Zbrucz and quickly moved into Ukraine. On 7 May, Kiev was captured by the Poles and Ukrainians. A Ukrainian government under Isaak Mazepa was established. Nevertheless, the action gained little support from the Ukrainian peasants, who expected the return of Polish landlords.

The Bolshevik troops withdrew from Ukraine but concentrated in Belorussia. On 4 July 1920, Tukhachevsky issued his order of the day, calling: "To the West! Over the corpse of White Poland lies the road to worldwide conflagration!"⁴⁰ The Soviet offensive soon brought the Red Army to the gates of Warsaw. The Soviet propaganda presented the conflict in class terms, claiming that the Red Army was fighting for the liberation of Polish peasants

³⁷ *Powstanie II Rzeczypospolitej*, pp. 545-547.

³⁸ Norman Davies, *God's Playground* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), Vol. 2, p. 396.

³⁹ *Powstanie II Rzeczypospolitej*, pp. 550-551.

⁴⁰ Józef Piłsudski, *Pisma, mowy, rozkazy* [Writings, Speeches, Orders] (Warszawa: 1931), Vol. 7, p. 270 ff.; Davies, *God's Playground*, Vol. 2, p. 396.

and workers from the yoke of the “bourgeoisie”. In view of the advance of the Bolshevik troops, some Belorussian, Ukrainian, and even Polish peasants started spontaneously dividing up estates. This was not exactly what the Bolsheviks wanted. The Polish Provisional Revolutionary Committee (Russian abbreviation: *Polrevkom*), installed by the Bolsheviks in Białystok at the end of July 1920, proclaimed a Polish Socialist Soviet Republic and intended to nationalize expropriated estates according to the principles of the Bolshevik Decree on Land. On 15 July 1920, the Polish Sejm passed a land reform law. Thus, the Bolshevik propaganda fell on deaf ears⁴¹.

In the face of the advance of the Red Army, in July 1920, a Polish coalition government was formed under the peasant leader Wincenty Witos. The Socialist Ignacy Daszyński became Deputy Prime Minister. This was meant to show the socialist world that Poland was ruled by a government of workers and peasants and that the Polish-Soviet war was not a “class war” but a national one. On 30 July 1920, the Witos government issued a manifesto in which part of it read: “It is up to you, brother peasants, whether Poland remains a free people’s country (...) or whether it becomes a Muscovite slave”⁴².

By early August 1920, the Bolshevik troops were at the gates of Warsaw. An Allied diplomatic initiative failed to produce a compromise and armistice. The conditions of the Bolshevik peace proposals offered to Poland in early August 1920 were very characteristic. They were in fact equal to total capitulation. Poland had to limit its army to 50,000 men, including 10,000 officers, with military equipment for no more than this number of soldiers. The surplus arms would be taken over by the Bolsheviks and the manufacture of arms and war material in Poland would be prohibited. Poland was to remain under Red Army occupation for five years. This would be enough to Sovietize the country⁴³. The Poles decided to fight to the end. The Bat-

⁴¹ Dziennik Ustaw [Polish Law Register], 1920, No. 70, Item 462; *Tymczasowy Komitet Rewolucyjny Polski* [Polish Provisional Revolutionary Committee] (Warsaw, 1955), pp. 80-89; Walentyna Najdus, *Lewica polska w Kraju Rad 1918-1920* [The Polish Left in the Soviet Land, 1918-1920] (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1971), p. 304.

⁴² Wincenty Witos, *Moje wspomnienia* [My Memoirs] (Paris: Instytut Literacki, 1964), Vol. 2, pp. 278-279.

⁴³ Cf. Testimony of Ambassador Waclaw Grzybowski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 952.

tle of Warsaw of 12-15 August 1920 held the Soviet offensive while Polish troops counterattacked from the Wieprz River line south of the city⁴⁴. On 18 August, Tukhachevski found his armies sliced through the rear and encircled from the east. Although Germany was theoretically neutral, some of the dispersed Bolshevik troops crossed the East Prussian border and were not interned but let through to Russia. Within a month, a second decisive battle was won by the Poles at the Niemen River and the Bolshevik troops were pushed back to the starting line of their July campaign.

The Polish victory prevented the Bolsheviks from joining hands with the German revolutionaries, and from a European revolution. The Battle of Warsaw in August 1920 was once called “the eighteenth decisive battle of the world”⁴⁵. If lost by the Poles, the fate of the Baltic states and probably the whole of Europe would have been different. Since the Polish army won, independent Poland was saved along with the Versailles system. The Polish-Soviet armistice was signed in October 1920 and the peace treaty signed in Riga on 18 March 1921 determined the Polish-Soviet frontier. By the Riga Treaty, Poland received territories inhabited by the Belorussians and Ukrainians, but Poles accounted for about 40 percent of the population of Polesia, Volhynia, and East Galicia. Wilno (Vilnius), also claimed

⁴⁴ Polish writer Kornel Makuszyński reflected over the dead body of a Red Army soldier: “Maybe he was born somewhere in the Perm Gubernya and perished on the way from Nasielsk to Pułtusk. He died horrified just as horrified he marched to this distant country of which he may not have heard at all—poor fool—for what and for whose cause. He would be deadly surprised to hear that he and thousands like him perished so that in this rather lousy little town a Bolshevik commissar could put his proclamation on a leaning lantern pole, for two days only”. Kornel Makuszyński, *Radosne i smutne* [The Joyous and the Sad] (Warszawa, no date), p. 87.

⁴⁵ Edgar Vincent d’Abernon, *The Eighteenth Decisive Battle of the World* (London, 1931). He wrote: “The Battle of Tours saved our ancestors from the Yoke of the Koran; it is probable that the battle of Warsaw saved Central and parts of Western Europe from a more subversive danger—the fanatical tyranny of the Soviets”, *ibidem*, pp. 8-9. Cf. also, M.K. Dziewanowski, *Poland in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 80-82; Norman Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star. The Polish-Soviet war, 1919-20* (London: Macdonald and Co., 1972); Grzegorz Nowik, *Zanim złamano “Enigmę”. Polski radiowywiad podczas wojny z bolszewicką Rosją 1918-1920* [Before ‘Enigma’ Was Broken. The Polish Radio Intelligence Turing the War with Bolshevik Russia, 1918-1920] (Warszawa: „Rytm”, 2004); *The Year 1920. The War between Poland and Bolshevik Russia* (Warsaw: “Karta” Center, 2005).

by the Lithuanians, was incorporated into Poland at the end of 1920, and formally in 1922.

There can be little doubt as to the nature of the Soviet offensive against Poland. Although there had been no earlier agreements between Poland and Bolshevik Russia, it was aggression violating the Declaration of the Rights of the People of Russia. It fit the later-defined category of a crime against peace, while Bolshevik atrocities committed during the offensive against Poland qualify as war crimes⁴⁶. Even after the termination of Polish-Soviet hostilities, the Soviet Union cherished aggressive plans against Poland. At the 3rd Congress of the Polish Communist Party in 1925, Comintern representative Dmitry Manuilsky said: "The central role of modern Poland consists in being a barrier preventing the penetration of Communist ideas to the West. For this reason, now the whole international proletariat must have the task of crushing the capitalist and bourgeois Poland and to transform her into a Soviet Poland"⁴⁷.

Ukraine

The February Revolution caused a strong upsurge of national feelings in Ukraine. In April 1917, the Ukrainian Central Council (Rada) was established, headed by Volodymyr Vynnychenko. In May 1917, the Rada delegation demanded in Petrograd autonomy for Ukraine and recognition of its

⁴⁶ The treatment of POWs by both sides left much to be desired. The Bolsheviks, who did not recognize the international status of POWs, usually murdered captured Polish officers and sent rank-and-file soldiers to concentration camps, while the Poles frequently killed Bolshevik commissars and sent officers and soldiers to POW camps. In 1990, while preparing to accept the Soviet guilt for the Katyn Forest Massacre of 1940, Mikhail Gorbachev ordered elaboration of a legend of the 1920 mass murder of Soviet POWs by Poles. It was a total hoax since the fate of Soviet POWs in interwar Poland was well documented: some died of cholera, others returned to the Soviet Union and the rest stayed in Poland or elsewhere in the West. Cf. Zbigniew Karpus, *Jeńcy i internowani rosyjscy i ukraińscy na terenie Polski w latach 1918-1924* [Russian and Ukrainian POWs in Poland in the Years 1918-1924] (Toruń, 1997). In October 2014, the Polish Foreign Ministry published extensive documents concerning International Red Cross reports from Polish POW camps of that time where none of the Russian lies were confirmed. At the same time, the fate of Polish POWs in Soviet Russia has never been fully explained.

⁴⁷ Quote according to the testimony of Irena Born, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 982.

provisional government by Russia. Despite the rejection of this demand by the Russian provisional government, on 23 June 1917, the independence of Ukraine was proclaimed in Kiev. In January 1918, the Ukrainian National Republic (UNR) was recognized by the Central Powers. On 17 December 1917, Lenin officially recognized the UNR⁴⁸. With as little consistency as in other cases, at the same time Bolshevik troops started an offensive toward Kiev. Some of the Bolsheviks from Ukraine, either Ukrainian or Russian, supported this offensive as allies of the Red Army. In February 1918, the Red Army captured Kiev and massacred the defenders of the city as well as many civilians⁴⁹.

Since the Central Powers forced the Bolsheviks to sign the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Kiev was liberated on 1 March 1918, and the Central Rada resumed its duties as the highest authority in the country. In April, Professor Mykola Hrushevsky was elected the UNR's president. Although the UNR was recognized by the Central Powers, they supported the more conservative and submissive Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky, who toppled the Rada's government. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian countryside was ravaged by armed peasant groups who staged pogroms of Polish landlords and Jews. After the Central Powers signed the armistice in the west, Skoropadsky stepped down and the UNR government returned to Kiev, creating a Directorate under Vynnychenko. On 1 November 1918, the Western Ukrainian National Republic (WUNR) was proclaimed in Lwów (Lviv), a mostly Polish-speaking city. Since Lwów (Lviv) was taken by the Polish insurgents, the Ukrainian

⁴⁸ He said literally: "We, the Soviet of People's Commissars, recognize the Ukrainian National Republic and its right to separate from Russia or to make an agreement with the Russian Republic for federative or other similar mutual relations between them". Quote according to: *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Ukraine. Special Report No. 4 of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression* (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 8.

⁴⁹ An eyewitness remembered: "It was the usual custom of the Bolsheviks not to take prisoners of war. All who were taken were shot on the spot (...) At least 5,000 people had been executed within a period of three days". Ibidem, p. 9. Polish writer Kormel Makuszyński wrote: "Every man met in the street who moved like a military [man] was shot without trial (...) In the beautiful garden of the former imperial palace (...) those condemned to death were forced to dig graves for themselves and then were pushed down by bullets". Makuszyński, *Radosne i smutne*, pp. 36-37.

Galician government, supported by the Ukrainian majority surrounding the city, continued armed struggle against the Polish army that came from the west. Although the union of both Ukrainian republics was proclaimed on 22 January 1919, they were increasingly pressed by the Polish army from the west and the Red Army from the east. The Bolsheviks had already formed a Ukrainian Soviet government that threatened death to anyone obeying the UNR government. In February 1919, the Red Army took Kiev again and Bolshevik atrocities were repeated⁵⁰. Given the ambivalent attitude of the Entente toward Ukraine, which counted on the reconstruction of White Russia and supported General Anton Denikin, who operated in this area, the Bolsheviks pushed the UNR authorities close to the Zbrucz River where they met the Polish army.

The agreement signed by Piłsudski and the commander of the Ukrainian Kiev forces Semen Petlura on 21 April 1920, allowed for another anti-Bolshevik offensive. On 7 May, Kiev was captured by the Poles and Ukrainians. Nevertheless, during the massive Red Army offensive on Poland, on 11 June the Polish and Ukrainian troops withdrew from Kiev, and central Ukraine was overwhelmed by the Bolsheviks. The Polish-Soviet Treaty of Riga of March 1921 established the frontier between the Ukrainian SSR and Poland, which incorporated Western Ukraine (or Eastern Galicia in the Polish tradition) into Poland⁵¹.

The collapse of an independent Ukrainian state after World War One was a result of many factors. Perhaps the most important was the weakness of both Ukrainian armies in the face of the Red Army in the east and the Polish army in the west. This weakness was related to the multi-national nature of Ukrainian society and the social turmoil in Ukraine that started after the February Revolution. In any case, communist power was established in

⁵⁰ A Ukrainian communist, Volodymyr Zatonsky, noted: "In Kiev they almost killed Skrypnyk and myself. I was very close to execution but was saved by an accident. In my pocket I had a mandate signed by Lenin which saved me from execution, while Skrypnyk was recognized by someone and thus was saved (...) Everybody who had any relation with the Central Rada was shot on the street". Quoted after the statement of Professor Roman Smal-Stocki, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 926.

⁵¹ Davies, *God's Playground*, Vol. 2, pp. 396-399; Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine. A History* (University of Toronto Press, The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1994).

central and eastern Ukraine against the will of the majority of Ukrainians as a result of subsequent Red Army offensives in 1918, 1919 and 1920. This was, as the US House of Representatives Select Committee rightly concluded, another case of communist aggression.

Civil War in Spain

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Kremlin officially followed a foreign policy labelled “Socialism in One Country”, as if no longer willing to export revolution abroad⁵². Nevertheless, having noticed a chance of turning the Spanish Republican government into a tool of the communist revolution, the Soviet leadership began to actively support the Republic and to intervene in the internal political struggles within the Republican camp. The Soviet decision to openly support the Republican side was accelerated by the beginning of the General Francisco Franco operation and by the German support for him⁵³. On 21 August 1936, the Soviet government appointed Marcel Rosenberg its ambassador to Spain. In late September, the Soviet diplomatic missions to the Republic were completed with the appointment of Vladimir Antonov-Ovseyenko as consul general to Catalonia. On 23 August 1936, the Soviet government joined the international Non-Intervention Committee and Ivan Maysky, the Soviet representative in this London-seated organization, became a keen critic of the German and Italian intervention. Despite this, direct Soviet intervention was given Stalin’s go-ahead in mid-September 1936.

Officially, there were 537 Soviet “volunteers” who served on the Republican side. In practice, there could have been at least three times as many and one should also add about 1,000 Soviet pilots and about 35,000 combatants of the International Brigades, encouraged to fight for the Republic by the

⁵² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socialism_in_One_Country (15 IV 2014).

⁵³ As to the Spanish Civil War, Eric Hobsbawm was misleading again: “The rebellion of the Spanish general against the Popular Front government in July 1936 immediately released social revolution in large regions of Spain”. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes*, p. 76. In fact, it was contrary: the “rebellion of Spanish generals” was a result of the revolution spread by the radicals in the name of the Popular Front.

Comintern. The German military attaché estimated the overall Soviet and Comintern aid at 242 aircraft, 703 pieces of artillery, 731 tanks, 1,386 trucks, 300 armored cars, 15,000 heavy machine guns, 500,000 rifles, 30,000 sub-machine guns, 4 million artillery shells, 1 billion machine gun cartridges, over 69,000 tons of war material and over 29,000 tons of other ammunition⁵⁴. All this was a serious contribution to the Republican war effort. The outright Soviet military intervention in the Spanish Civil War may be treated as a crime of aggression, while numerous Soviet commanders and advisors contributed to war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the Stalinists during the war, to say nothing of the transfer of about 500 tons of gold deposited by the Republican government in the USSR and treated by the Soviets as the price for their aid.

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact

In his speech to the 18th Party Congress in Moscow on 10 March 1939, Stalin warned the European powers against disregarding the Soviet interests in the European struggle. His vague statement could mean both that the Soviet Union could come to an agreement with the West European powers to stop Hitler, or it could ally itself with Germany to participate in the division of East Central Europe. Soon, both the Western powers and Germany began to negotiate with Russia. The key to European peace was in the hands of Stalin.

On 2 May 1939, Maxim Litvinov was replaced as the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs by Vyacheslav Molotov, which initiated a new course in the Soviet diplomacy. In late May, two series of negotiations started. The official negotiations were started with France and Great Britain, while unofficially Soviet envoys talked with the Germans. It was for Stalin to choose which side would be more attractive. The Franco-British-Soviet negotiations dragged on. Apart from demanding passage through Poland and Romania, the Soviets expressed their interest in the Baltic states. In fact, they demanded the

⁵⁴ Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Harper, 1961), pp. 637, 643 and 984; Steven J. Zaloga, "Soviet Tank Operations in the Spanish Civil War", http://bobrowen.com/nymas/soviet_tank_operations_in_the_sp.htm (15 IV 2014).

right to “help” all the countries situated between Russia and Germany, arguing that only the passage of Soviet troops through these countries would make it possible for Russia to effectively help them against Germany. The Western powers would not easily agree to such a solution given the fresh memory of Munich. The countries involved, and Poland in particular, vigorously opposed the idea of the passage of Soviet troops, fearing they would never leave. On 24 July 1939, a political agreement was reached between France, Great Britain, and Soviet Russia specifying countries whose frontiers were to be guaranteed by the three sides but also pending the conclusion of an additional military agreement⁵⁵. The agreement was meant by Stalin to encourage Germany to give more in the alternate negotiations. Meanwhile, from late May, German negotiators took up the Soviet offer to hold secret talks.

On 26 July, the outlines of the future division of East Central Europe were drawn for the first time in a small Berlin restaurant. The military negotiations between France, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union started on 12 August. The Soviet side raised the question of the passage of Soviet troops again, this time demanding also this right in the case of “indirect” aggression against Poland or Romania. Moreover, the Soviet side demanded the right to establish military bases in the Baltic states. As the Western negotiators did not want to agree to these conditions against the will of the countries concerned, the negotiations deadlocked again. On 22 August, the head of the French military mission in Moscow told the Soviets that France would agree to the passage, but this time the Soviets insisted on the formal approval of Poland and Romania. The reason was simple: the Kremlin in the

⁵⁵ Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin. Parallel Lives* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), pp. 564-612; Anna M. Cienciala, *Poland and the Western Powers, 1938-1939* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 177-250; Jan Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland, 1919-1945* (Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 1985), pp. 265 ff. Eric Hobsbawm does not seem to know the essence of the 1939 developments. He blames the Western “appeasers” for not being able “to negotiate seriously for an alliance with the USSR” (what about the Moscow talks?) He ignores the role of Stalin. He even does not care for consistency in his remarks: “Neville Chamberlain’s government was still prepared to do a deal with Hitler, as Hitler calculated he would. Hitler miscalculated, and the Western states declared war”. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes*, p. 155.

meantime had agreed to sign a pact with Germany⁵⁶. Stalin was well aware this meant war but he explained in his message to the Soviet Politburo on 19 August 1939 that war was necessary and that peace would prevent communist expansion into Europe⁵⁷.

On 23 August 1939, the German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop arrived in Moscow to sign along with Vyacheslav Molotov the “non-aggression” pact between Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany. The pact came as a surprise to the European public, which knew of the recent ideological hostility between both countries. Both partners guaranteed each other neutrality if one of them was attacked by a third party. But the real nature of the pact was different. The world was to learn about it only in 1945, when the German copy of the pact, along with a secret additional protocol, was captured by the western allies in Germany. The secret protocol stated that “in the event of a territorial and political rearrangement” in East Central Europe, the sphere of German interests would include Poland west of the Narew-Vistula-San line, and Lithuania, while the Soviet sphere of interest would include Poland east of the said line, Estonia, Latvia, and Bessarabia⁵⁸.

⁵⁶ Georg von Rauch, *A History of Soviet Russia* (New York: F.A. Praeger, 1957), p. 275 ff.

⁵⁷ This speech was quoted by *Die Welt* on 16 July 1996.

⁵⁸ This is the text of the secret additional protocol: “Article I. In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement in the areas belonging to the Baltic States (Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), the northern boundary of Lithuania shall represent the boundary of the spheres of influence of Germany and U.S.S.R. In this connection the interest of Lithuania in the Vilna area is recognized by each party. Article II. In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement of the areas belonging to the Polish state, the spheres of influence of Germany and the U.S.S.R. shall be bounded approximately by the line of the rivers Narew, Vistula and San. The question of whether the interests of both parties make desirable the maintenance of an independent Polish States and how such a state should be bounded can only be definitely determined in the course of further political developments. In any event both Governments will resolve this question by means of a friendly agreement. Article III. With regard to Southeastern Europe attention is called by the Soviet side to its interest in Bessarabia. The German side declares its complete political disinterestedness in these areas. Article IV. This protocol shall be treated by both parties as strictly secret”. Quoted according to: “Modern History Sourcebook”, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1939pact.html> (15 IV 2014). The true nature of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was known to the Americans since the US ambassador to Moscow, Laurence Steinhardt, cabled the news to Washington on 24 August 1939. Bogdan Grzeloński, “Depesza Steinhardta” [The Steinhardt Cable], *Polityka*, 21 August 1999.

A secret conspiracy against European peace, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was a turning point in European history. It gave Germany a free hand in dealing with Poland. On 1 September 1939, German troops invaded Poland⁵⁹.

While Germany was aiming at a war of aggression and the Western powers tried to prevent war, the key to Hitler's decisions was in the hands of Stalin. In choosing a pact with Hitler, he chose war. Thus, he was co-responsible for the most terrible war in human history that cost the lives of millions of people. Later Soviet explanations that the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact helped the Soviets prepare for the war against the Third Reich are absurd. Would it not have been better for these preparations if Poland still separated the USSR from the Third Reich? Stalin's objectives were different. He planned to grab huge territories of Eastern Europe with the assistance of German armies and with as little of his own effort as possible. And soon he did.

The Soviet Invasion of Poland

In early September 1939, the Polish Ambassador to Moscow Waclaw Grzybowski met Commissar Molotov twice. Each time, Molotov seemed neutral or even friendly, while Soviet radio encouraged the Polish army to fight against the Germans. The purpose of this propaganda was definitely to get most of the Polish army away from the Soviet frontier. On 17 September 1939 at 2:00 a.m., Grzybowski was called on the telephone to come to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. When he arrived there about 3:00 a.m., Assistant Undersecretary Vladimir Potiomkin handed him a note explaining why Soviet troops had crossed the Polish frontier. Although Grzybowski refused to accept the note, it was sent to the Polish embassy by mail. Meanwhile, the Red Army invaded Poland and Grzybowski got out of the Soviet Union thanks only to the intervention of German Ambassador Friedrich von Schulenberg(!)⁶⁰.

⁵⁹ Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin. Parallel Lives*, pp. 613-631; Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland, 1919-1945*, pp. 365-372; M.K. Dziewanowski, *Poland in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 103-106; Cienciala, *Poland and the Western Powers*, pp. 245-250; Richard M. Watt, *Poland and Its Fate 1918-1939* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982).

⁶⁰ The note read: "The Polish-German war has revealed the international bankruptcy of the Polish state. During the course of ten days' hostilities Poland has lost all her industrial

Although the state of the Polish army in the war against Germany was already dramatic, the Soviet invasion made any further Polish resistance impossible. Against about 25 Polish division-size units there were now about 75 German ones and about 40 Soviet ones. While the last of the Polish army were still fighting, on 28 September 1939, Ribbentrop and Molotov met for the second time to sign the German-Soviet Treaty of Frontiers and Friendship. The Soviet-German frontier was settled with some changes in relation to the agreement of 23 August: the Polish territory between the rivers Bug and Vistula was incorporated into the German sphere of interest, while Lithuania was included into the Soviet sphere of interest. In early October 1939, the last centers of Polish resistance were put down⁶¹.

By invading Poland on 17 September 1939, the Soviet Union violated four binding international agreements: the Polish-Soviet Treaty of Riga of 18 March 1921, the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 27 August 1928, the London Convention on the Definition of Aggression of 3 July 1933, and the Polish-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 5 May 1934 binding until 1945. This was a clear example of a Soviet crime against peace.

areas and cultural centers. Warsaw no longer exists as the capital of Poland. The Polish Government has disintegrated and no longer shows any sign of life. Therefore the Agreements concluded between the USSR and Poland have ceased to operate. Left to her own devices and bereft of leadership Poland has become a suitable field for all manner of hazards and surprises which may constitute a threat to the USSR. For these reasons the Soviet Government, which hitherto has preserved neutrality, cannot any longer observe a neutral attitude towards these facts. The Soviet Government further cannot view with indifference the fact that the kindred Ukrainian and White Russian people, who live on Polish territory and who are at the mercy of fate, are left defenseless. In these circumstances the Soviet Government has directed the High Command of the Red Army to send the troops across the frontier and to take under their protection the life and property of the population of Western Ukraine and Western White Russia. At the same time the Soviet Government proposes to take all measures to extricate the Polish people from the unfortunate war into which they were dragged by their unwise leaders, and to enable them to live a peaceful life". Quoted according to the testimony of Ambassador Waclaw Grzybowski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, pp. 956-957.

⁶¹ "The Soviet Union today sent troops across the frontier to stab Poland in the back", wrote *The Times* on 18 September 1939; Norman Davies, *Europe. A History* (Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 1001-1002; Lynne Olson, Stanley Cloud, *For Your Freedom and Ours* (Arrow Books, 2003), pp. 56-73.

The Winter War

As an autonomic part of the Russian Empire, Finland went through a stormy time during the Russian revolutions. After the proclamation of the Declaration of the Rights of the People of Russia, on 6 December 1917, the Finnish parliament declared the independence of Finland, and on 22 December the Finnish independence was recognized by the Bolshevik government. Even so, the Bolsheviks raised arms and fought for the Soviet-like government from January to May 1918. They lost, leaving some 37,000 people dead, mostly in prisoner camps ravaged by influenza and other diseases. All through the interwar years Finnish politics were dominated by moderate peasant and socialist parties. Relations with the Soviet Union were based on the Treaty of Tartu signed on 14 October 1920. On 21 January 1932, both countries signed a non-aggression pact, extended for the subsequent 10 years on 17 April 1934⁶².

After the *Anschluss* of Austria by Hitler in March 1938, the Soviets started a diplomatic offensive against Finland. On 14 April 1938, Moscow informed the Finnish government that it feared Finland would become a victim of German aggression. In August, the Soviet diplomats urged the Finns that in the event of German aggression they seek Soviet aid. The Finnish government rejected these suggestions. In March 1939, Moscow proposed that some islands in the Gulf of Finland, neutralized according to the 1920 treaty, would be leased to the Soviet Union as observation posts. When Helsinki declined, it was suggested that these islands should be ceded to the USSR in exchange for territory in East Karelia. The British-French-Soviet talks in Moscow, started in March 1939, were seized upon by the Soviets as an opportunity to demand from the Western negotiators consent for the Soviets to aid the Baltic states in the event of an attack on them. These talks failed to prevent the German-Soviet rapprochement that took the shape of the ill-famed Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939. The secret protocol signed at the same time placed Finland in the Soviet sphere of interest.

⁶² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Finland (16 IV 2014). Text of the 1932 treaty: <http://www.histdoc.net/history/nonagen1.html> (16 IV 2014). Text of the 1934 treaty: <http://www.histdoc.net/history/nonagen2.html> (16 IV 2014).

The German and Soviet invasions of Poland and partition of this country prepared the way for Moscow to act against the Baltic states. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania received “offers they could not refuse” and Finland’s turn came on 5 October 1939, when Molotov requested Finnish Foreign Minister Elias Erkko come to Moscow to “discuss certain concrete questions”. Since the Finnish government realized what was happening to the other Baltic states, it declined to react to the invitation for some time, but ultimately decided to send to Moscow Juho Paasikivi, the Finnish envoy to Stockholm who had signed the Tartu Treaty in 1920. On 12 October 1939, he learned that the Soviets demanded conclusion of a mutual assistance treaty, the lease of the Hanko Cape at the mouth of the Gulf of Finland for a naval base for 5,000 soldiers and territorial exchange of 2,761 square kilometers of developed land for 5,529 square kilometers of undeveloped land. Unprepared for such an agreement, Paasikivi returned to Helsinki. Talks were resumed on 23 October to no effect. Angry, Molotov even asked: “Is it your intention to provoke a conflict?” Paasikivi replied: “We want no such a thing but you seem to”. On 31 October, the Finnish-Soviet talks were continued but also to no avail. Molotov concluded: “We civilians can see no further in the matter; now it is the turn of the military to have their say”. Throughout November, matters seemed to calm down but on 23 November the Soviets provoked a shoot-out at the village of Mainila, following which Molotov accused the Finns of “harboring deep hostility towards the USSR”. On 28 November, Moscow rejected the 1934 non-aggression pact. A conciliatory note from Helsinki was also rejected. On 30 November, the Soviets started an all-out attack on Finland by land, sea and air⁶³.

Although the Finns were perfectly prepared for war, it seemed impossible that a country of less than 4 million people would resist a military attack by a big power with a population of 180 million. There was an attempt to cover the open Soviet aggression by an unprecedented propaganda campaign. When the Finnish government expressed alarm about the unprovoked aggression and air attacks on Helsinki, Moscow replied that the reports

⁶³ Richard W. Condon, *The Winter War. Russia against Finland* (London: Ballantine Books, 1972), pp. 11-21; Jukka Nevakivi, *The Appeal That Was Never Made. The Allies, Scandinavia and the Finnish Winter War, 1939-1940* (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1976), Chapter one.

were false and that the Soviet planes were dropping bread to the starving masses of the Finnish capital. Moscow refused to participate in League of Nations proceedings concerning the aggression against Finland, explaining that the USSR was not in a state of war but had established peaceful relations with the Democratic Republic of Finland whose government had signed with the Soviet Union a pact of mutual assistance and friendship. This “government”, headed by communist Otto Kuusinen, was established by the Soviets in the border hamlet of Terijoki, which was taken by the Red Army on the first day fighting⁶⁴.

The outright Soviet aggression against Finland ended in a draw. Due to faulty preparation and command, the overwhelming Soviet armies were stopped by a relatively small Finnish army under the supreme command of Marshall Carl Gustav Mannerheim, thanks to their much higher determination and better preparation for fighting in extreme winter conditions. Also, the extremely high morale of the whole of Finnish society must be stressed. The Soviets failed to conquer Finland. In the peace treaty finally signed in Moscow on 12 March 1940, Finland ceded a portion of Karelia with the second largest city of Viipuri, as well as the northernmost region of Petsamo with access to the Arctic Ocean, but maintained sovereignty. The relinquished area represented 11 percent of Finnish territory and 30 percent of the country’s economic assets. About 422,000 Karelians were evacuated and lost their homes. The human costs of the war were much worse for the Soviets, though. While the Finnish casualties are estimated at 68,500, including 25,000 killed and 43,500 wounded, the Soviet armies lost about 200,000 killed and an unknown number wounded. Also, half of the 3,200 Soviet tanks involved were destroyed along with 900 planes⁶⁵. Nevertheless, one must remember that the 68,500 Finnish victims of the war were victims of the Soviets’ crime of aggression, to say nothing of the Soviet victims.

⁶⁴ Condon, *The Winter War*, pp. 25-37.

⁶⁵ Nevakivi, *The Appeal That Was Never Made*, chapter seven; Condon, *The Winter War*, pp. 153-154; Väinö Tanner, *The Winter War: Finland against Russia 1939–1940* (California: Stanford University Press, 1957). According to Soviet sources, the Red Army had about 1 million casualties. Cf. R.J. Rummel, *Lethal Politics. Soviet Genocide and Mass Murder since 1917* (Transaction Publishers, 1997), p. 128.

Further “Territorial and Political Rearrangements”

During the German and Soviet aggression against Poland in September 1939, the governments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania remained passive. The Lithuanian and Latvian authorities interned Polish soldiers who crossed their respective frontiers. When the Polish submarine *Orzeł* sought shelter in the port of Tallinn, the Estonian authorities formally interned the vessel and its crew, but the submarine managed to escape. The Kremlin accused the Estonian government of sheltering ships belonging to “hostile nations” and helping *Orzeł* get out of Tallinn. In an act of outright hostility, Soviet destroyers blockaded part of the Estonian coast and shot at an Estonian plane flying over Estonian territory.

According to the German-Soviet Treaty of Frontiers and Friendship of 28 September 1939, all the Baltic states were placed in the Soviet sphere of interest. Now the Soviet pressure on Tallinn, Riga and Kaunas increased. The Soviet government invited leaders of the three countries to Moscow. The first to face a Soviet ultimatum was Estonia. On 28 September, a new Estonian-Soviet Mutual Assistance Treaty was signed in Moscow by Molotov and Estonian Foreign Minister Karl Selter, allowing for 25,000 Soviet soldiers to station in special bases in Paldiski, Paide, Valga and on the islands of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa⁶⁶. Threatened with the use of force, Latvian Foreign Minister Vilhelms Munters also signed a similar Latvian-Soviet treaty on 5 October 1939. Under it, 30,000 Soviet soldiers were moved into Liepāja, Priekule, Ezere, Vainode and Auce⁶⁷. During the talks with the Lithuanian del-

⁶⁶ Foreign Minister Karl Selter described these talks before the US House of Representatives Select Committee. Moscow insisted on its claim that Estonia had not kept its neutrality by allowing the Polish submarine *Orzeł* to escape from Tallinn. As legally the Soviet Union was not at war with Poland, the Kremlin did not have the right to demand Estonian neutrality. Stalin and Molotov assured Selter the USSR would stay within the framework of the treaty and respect Estonia’s sovereignty. “The word of a Bolshevik is sacred”, they said. Selter quoted in this context what Lenin said at the 11th party conference in 1922: “The world revolution can’t be done without promises. That is, notwithstanding whether we will fulfill these promises or not. Who doesn’t understand that doesn’t understand how to make a revolution”. Testimony of Karl Selter, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, pp. 1430-1433. This was confirmed by the testimony of August Rei, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, pp. 1436.

⁶⁷ *Latvian-Soviet Relations. Documents* (Washington D.C, 1944), pp. 200-201.

egation in early October 1939, Stalin told them openly that on 28 September Ribbentrop had agreed to place Lithuania in the Soviet sphere of influence, so on 10 October a similar mutual assistance treaty was signed between Lithuania and the Soviet Union. The Soviets handed over to Lithuania the Wilno (Vilnius) area, demanded by Lithuania and captured by the USSR as a result of aggression against Poland. In return, the Lithuanian government had to agree to allow a 30,000-man Soviet garrison into Radviliškis and to make extraterritorial the railway line through the Lithuanian territory to the Latvian port of Liepāja⁶⁸.

After the 1939 treaties, the situation of the Baltic states changed but little. There was a change of Estonian and Lithuanian governments but the three states were formally sovereign. The Soviets were now busy dealing with Finland. In December 1939, the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian foreign ministers even consulted a joint stance on the expulsion of the Soviet Union from the League of Nations for its invasion of Finland. The three ministers abstained from vote. In late 1939, there was some anxiety in the three states over the repatriation of Baltic Germans to the Third Reich. On 29 March 1940, Molotov told the Soviet Supreme Council that the treaties with the Baltic states strengthened the position of the Soviet Union and the three Baltic states. But already in 1939 the General Staff of the Red Army published a map with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania marked as Soviet republics⁶⁹.

There seems to be a connection between Hitler's conquests in the west in the spring of 1940 and the Soviet decision to finally incorporate the Baltic states. As always, it started with small steps. On 25 May 1940, the Soviet authorities accused the Lithuanian side of the inability to protect Soviet soldiers, since two of them had vanished. They soon reemerged after a three-day drunken party, but the accusation remained. Three days later, the *Moscow Pravda* criticized the "political climate" in Estonia. Soon, the Lithuanian Prime Minister Antanas Merkys was called to Moscow to explain other "anti-Soviet" incidents. Molotov cursed and threatened Merkys, attack-

⁶⁸ Testimony of General Stasys Raštikis, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 1, p. 380; *Vneshnaya politika SSSR. Sbornik dokumentov* (Moskva, 1946), Vol. 4, pp. 456-457.

⁶⁹ Testimony of Karl Selter, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1433.

ing various Lithuanian ministers. On 9 June, the Soviets organized another provocation against Latvia. The Soviet cruiser *Marat* aimed its guns at the presidential palace in Riga. On 15 June, the Soviets shot down a passenger plane flying from Tallinn to Helsinki.

One day earlier, late on 14 June, Molotov sent the Lithuanian government an ultimatum accusing Lithuania of violation of the mutual assistance treaty, demanding the removal of certain ministers and the formation of a government that would be “friendly” to the Soviet Union. Without waiting for the Lithuanian reply, at dawn on 15 June, a massive Soviet armed force moved into Lithuania. Special Soviet envoy Vladimir Dekanozov came to Kaunas to supervise the political takeover. President Antanas Smetona left Lithuania for East Prussia. On 17 June, acting President Merkys was forced to appoint a new cabinet under leftist journalist Justas Paleckis. Soon thereafter, Merkys was arrested and deported to Russia with a number of high-ranking Lithuanian officials. Next, the Soviets appointed Paleckis as president and the government was taken over by Vincas Kreve-Mickievičius, an advocate of compromise. Since he had no say in state affairs, then controlled by the Minister of Interior Mečislovas Gedvilas and his deputy, Antanas Sniečkus, head of the Lithuanian Communist Party, Kreve-Mickievičius soon stepped down⁷⁰.

At the same time, some Soviet soldiers attacked a Latvian frontier post, killing Latvian guards. On 16 June 1940, the Soviet government sent a note to Riga accusing the Latvian government of a serious violation of the mutual assistance treaty because of the existence of an Estonian-Latvian military agreement. The Soviets demanded the establishment of a new “friendly” government. The news reached Daugavpils, where a song festival was being held. President Kārlis Ulmanis spoke to the crowd on the radio and the national hymn “God Bless Latvia” (*Dievs, svētī Latviju*) was sung by the crowd as if people felt it was the last opportunity. The next morning, a massive group of Soviet troops rolled into Latvia and special envoy Andrey Vishinsky came to Riga to supervise the political action. He forced Ulmanis to appoint

⁷⁰ Albert N. Tarulis, *Soviet Policy Toward the Baltic States* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1959), pp. 173 ff.; Testimony of General Stasys Raštikis, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 1, pp. 384-403.

a new cabinet under a leftist liberal professor, August Kirchenšteins, who was promised that Latvian independence would be preserved⁷¹.

Also, on 16 June 1940, the Soviet government submitted to Estonian envoy to Moscow August Rei an ultimatum similar to the Latvian one. The next day, about 80,000 Soviet soldiers entered Estonia and two days later, special Soviet envoy Andrey Zhdanov came to Tallinn to supervise the action. President Konstantin Päts was told by Zhdanov to sign the formation of a new cabinet under Johannes Vares, a leftist poet totally controlled by the Soviet secret services. Soon after, he signed the decree “along the dotted line” as Zhdanov had demanded, and then Päts was arrested⁷².

For a while it might have seemed that what was left of the independence of the Baltic states would be maintained. But in early July 1940, the new Soviet-sponsored authorities of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania announced elections to new parliaments. During the election campaign, the new authorities and the Soviet security agents terrorized the native population, arresting and deporting to Russia thousands of politicians, social activists and celebrities. All organizations independent of the Soviets were banned. There was to be only one list of candidates approved by the Soviets. The so-called “elections” to new National Assemblies were carried out on 14 and 15 July 1940. The “elections” were a farce but they produced new legislatures that on 21 July together asked the Soviet Supreme Council to be accepted into the Soviet Union. On 3 August 1940, the Lithuanian SSR was created, two days later, the Latvian SSR, and on 6 August 1940, the Estonian SSR⁷³.

⁷¹ *Latvian-Soviet Relations*, pp. 202-203; *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Latvia*, pp. 6-7. At first, the Soviets wanted to give the impression that things would change only a little. When Vishinsky was making his speech to a crowd of Russians and criminals advocating “friendship” between “independent Latvia” and the Soviet Union, someone from the crowd shouted “Long live Soviet Latvia in the Soviet Union”. Vishinsky, who had a slower scenario in mind, was mad and barked “go to hell, rabble!” Testimony of Alfreds Berzins, Latvian Minister of Public Affairs from 1934 to 1940, *HR SCOCA*, Vol.1, pp. 57-77.

⁷² Mati Laur, Tõnis Lukas, Ain Mäsalu, Ago Pajur, Tõnu Tannberg, *History of Estonia* (Tallinn: Avita, 2000), pp. 262-263; Testimony of August Rei, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1437.

⁷³ August Rei, *Have the Baltic States Voluntarily Renounced Their Freedom?* (No place, 1944), p. 19; Romuald J. Misiunas, Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States. Years of Dependence 1940-1980* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 15-73; J. A. Swettenham, *The Tragedy of the Baltic States* (New York 1954).

The Soviet invasion of the three Baltic states and their incorporation into the USSR were definitely criminal acts of aggression.

Bessarabia and Bukovina

A part of the medieval Principality of Moldavia, Bessarabia, was administered by Turkey until 1812 when it was absorbed by Russia. In 1918, most of its Romanian-speaking population voted to unite with the rest of Romania. At the same time, Romania incorporated formerly Austro-Hungarian Bukovina with its mixed Ukrainian, Gypsy, Romanian, Jewish, Hungarian and even Polish population.

After the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia and Poland, Romania remained the last French ally in Eastern Europe, helpless in the face of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939. The Soviet troops from the Odessa Military District massed on the Romanian border in May and early June 1940. The Soviets had two alternative plans: one was prepared for the eventuality of Romanian resistance, the other for a smooth entry. On 26 June 1940, Molotov presented the Romanian ambassador in Moscow, Gheorghe Davidescu, an ultimatum demanding the removal of Romanian military and civilian administration from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. The note explicitly pointed to the restored Soviet military strength and the alleged necessity to solve problems “inherited from the past” in mutual relations. While the numerical domination of Ukrainians in northern Bukovina was stressed as an argument, the Romanian majority in Bessarabia was ignored. Two days later, willing to avoid a military conflict, the Romanian government decided to withdraw from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. On 30 June, the Red Army moved in. Numerous acts of brutality and murder occurred and much of the population fled, taking refuge on the Romanian side of the new frontier⁷⁴. On 2 August 1940, the Soviets established the Moldavian SSR, while Northern Bukovina was incorporated into the Ukrainian SSR. Invas-

⁷⁴ Statement of Anton Crihan, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 128-129; Marcel Mitrasca, *Moldova: A Romanian Province under Russian Rule*, (New York: Agora, 2002); http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_occupation_of_Bessarabia_and_Northern_Bukovina (16 IV 2014).

ing Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina in June 1940, the Soviet leadership committed another crime against peace.

The Soviet invasions of Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Romanian Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina closed the cycle of communist aggression that started in 1917 and continued until the breakdown of the German-Soviet cooperation in the years 1939-1941. In Western minds, the “sitting war” in Western Europe before the Battle of Britain usually overshadowed what was going on in Eastern Europe at that time. Even the BBC televised commentary on the 60th anniversary of the end of World War Two in Europe in 2005 included a bizarre statement that by means of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact the Soviet Union avoided engagement in the war. Were not the Soviet invasions of Poland, the Baltic states and Romania war operations? Were they not crimes against peace?

The Communist Revolution Goes Worldwide

The Soviet “Liberation” of East Central Europe

Despite the seeming reaffirmation of the principle of self-determination by the Big Three, at the end of World War Two, the future of East Central Europe was shaped not by principles but by force. Stalin told a Yugoslav communist: “This war is not as in the past; whoever occupies a territory also imposes on it his own social system. Everyone imposes his own system as far as his army can reach. It cannot be otherwise. If now there is not a Communist government in Paris, this is only because Russia has no an army which can reach Paris”¹. By saying this, Stalin meant that without Soviet aggression communism would not be implanted anywhere. Post-1945 history showed that he was partly wrong. There were cases when a communist revolution won with little Soviet military help or where a social revolution adopted communist ideology afterwards. So, in cases such as Yugoslavia or Albania it is impossible to talk about aggression from abroad as a decisive factor of the communist revolution. Other cases of this kind will also not be mentioned here².

Nevertheless, the role of the Soviet Union in orchestrating communist takeovers in East Central Europe was paramount. After the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943, the reins of Soviet control over the communist parties

¹ Milovan Đilas, *Rozmowy ze Stalinem* [Conversations with Stalin] (Paryż: Instytut Literacki, 1962), p. 87.

² When US Ambassador Averell Harriman told Stalin in 1945 that it had to be gratifying to be in Berlin after all the struggle, Stalin replied: “Czar Alexander got to Paris”. Stephen D. Kertesz, *Between Russia and the West* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p. 164.

of the region appeared to have loosened. Between 1943 and 1945, communist parties extended their influence by adopting methods suitable for local conditions. Although from 1945 to 1947 Stalin maintained the fiction of no official center of the world communist movement, he nevertheless issued directives calling for the consolidation of communist power in East Central Europe through the Department of International Information of the Soviet party's Central Committee in which the Comintern apparatus was hidden³. With the onset of the Cold War, the reins of Soviet control of the East Central European communist parties were shortened again. In September 1947, Stalin decided to reconstruct an official center: the Information Bureau of Communist Parties (Cominform) which soon imposed a pattern for communist regimes in East Central Europe.

This general scenario faced differentiated local conditions in various East European countries. The strength of communist parties and the relations of various nations with Russia had been different. Communist takeovers in East Central Europe after World War Two followed three models. First, in the case of the Baltic states and some interwar Polish, Czechoslovak, and Romanian territories seized by Stalin, the Soviet Union employed an incorporation model. With this method, Soviet policies ruthlessly aimed for the rapid standardization of the affected localities with the rest of the Soviet state. Second, the Soviet Union exported the communist revolution to East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, which became Soviet satellites. Third, in Albania and Yugoslavia, local communists managed to seize power without major support from the Soviet armies.

During the second type of political takeover, the communist parties frequently applied similar, although variously timed, tactics. First, they allied themselves with other parties opposing the prewar or wartime regimes. Second, having overthrown these regimes, the communists gradually emasculated their non-communist partners in the coalition. Third, they eliminated the elites of the old regime and subsequently also their recent partners. Such

³ Sergey Kudryashev, *The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party and Eastern Europe, 1944-1953. New Documents* (University of Leeds, 1992), pp. 9-11.

“salami tactics” or stages characterized the communists’ march to power. It was typical for the Soviets to define the “stages” of communist takeover. The term “at the current stage” was very frequently used in official propaganda. Political, economic and ideological objectives of communism apparently expanded at each new “stage”.

The political takeover in East Central Europe, perhaps with the exception of Yugoslavia and Albania, by small groups of local communists would not be possible without the military strength of the Soviet army. In the communist propaganda, the term “liberation” played a crucial role. In many cases, it was hard to deny that the horrors of the Nazi occupation or the burden of Nazi-satellite governments were removed by the Soviet victory. The quality of this “liberation”, however, left much to be desired as it was accompanied by massive plunder, murder and rape by the Soviet soldiers⁴. On the other hand, those opposing the Soviet “liberators” were presented in the communist propaganda as “fascists”. This dichotomy of good “liberators” and bad “fascists” was instrumental in the takeover process.

⁴ The mentality of Soviet “liberators” can be best illustrated by a conversation between Hungarian Unitarian Bishop Alexander St. Ivanyi and Soviet General Chernikov who asked the bishop: “Aren’t Hungarians and Russians friends now?” The bishop’s obvious answer was “yes”. “Well,” said Chernikov, “if the Hungarians had bread and water and the Red Army soldiers had nothing to eat and drink, wouldn’t you offer your bread and water to the Red Army soldiers?” Again, the answer was “yes”. “Then,” Chernikov went on, “you Hungarians have women and the Red Army has no women; therefore, it is your duty to offer your women to the Red Army soldiers”. Testimony of Bishop Alexander St. Ivanyi, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 3, p. 248. Those who believe that the “liberation” of Romania was a peaceful Soviet operation should read the contemporary Soviet war communiqués, which were full of reports of “great victories”, “heavy fighting” and “capture” of subsequent Romanian towns and villages. In fact, there were none of these events but the Soviets themselves were proud of capturing and looting the country, which became defenseless as the Romanian army was sent to the west to beat the German troops. “The Red soldiers were a constant threat to the people. One of the favorite sports of the ‘brave allies’ was to shoot through the windows into the houses. I saw with my own eyes two such houses in Predeal village. A woman with a child in her arms was killed just as she was turning on the light. I have been told about incidents in which the Reds, after breaking into a house and tying up the husband, assaulted the wife and daughter and on many occasions killed them afterwards. The husband was arrested afterwards by the Red Army because he offended the Red Army by denouncing either to the Russian headquarters or to the police what happened to his family”. Statement of Raoul Gheorghiu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 119.

The Balticum

After less than three years of Nazi occupation, in early 1944, Soviet troops entered the Narva region in Estonia. Vilnius (Wilno) was “liberated” in mid-July, Tallinn in late September and Riga in mid-October 1944. The Soviet armies, however, were not welcomed as liberators, because the Baltic peoples immediately experienced plunder, rape and executions. Desperate civilians followed the retreating German army and the Baltic auxiliary units. Altogether, about 60,000 Estonians, 65,000 Latvians, and 80,000 Lithuanians escaped to Sweden and Germany. Many thousands of Latvian “boat people” drowned during their escape by sea. The Soviets managed to capture and deport about 60,000 of the escapees to the east⁵.

After the restoration of Soviet power, special commissions examined the past of all citizens and decided whom to deport and whom to leave alone. Those deported were labeled “war criminals” and “enemies of the people”. Altogether, between 1944 and 1946, the Soviet authorities captured and deported about 100,000 Estonians, 105,000 Latvians and 85,000 Lithuanians. Moreover, about 180,000 Poles were resettled from the Lithuanian SSR to Poland⁶. With the return of the Soviet army and the NKVD, the communist parties of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were restored. Lacking native communists and mistrusting anyone who lived through the Nazi occupation, the Soviets imported most of the party, police and administration from Russia. In 1946, Estonians and Latvians accounted for only 50 percent of Communist Party members, while Lithuanians made up only 35 percent⁷. Only the first secretaries were Russified natives: Nikolai Karotamm in Estonia, Janis Kalnbērziņš in Latvia and Antanas Sniečkus in

⁵ *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Latvia*, p. 24.

⁶ *Britannica Book of the Year*, 1950, pp. 260, 402, and 419. In September 1944, NKVD General Sergey Kruglov called a top-secret operational meeting in Panevezys. “Enough of this sentimental approach . . .,” he said, “. . . of this sentimentality”. He ordered the total destruction of the Lithuanian resistance by means of collective responsibility. Testimony of Lieutenant Colonel Grigori Stepanovich Burlitski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1370.

⁷ Misiunas, Taagepera, *The Baltic States. Years of Dependence 1940-1980*, pp. 75-77.

Lithuania⁸. These “natives” enjoyed the help of Russian second secretaries, ministers of interior and special envoys, such as Secretary of the Soviet party Mikhail Suslov in Lithuania. The influx of Russians began to change the ethnic composition of the Baltic states.

Fearing deportation, thousands of Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians fled to the forests and joined guerilla detachments to continue a hopeless struggle against the Soviet power. In Estonia and Latvia, solid armed resistance against the Soviets continued until 1949. The strongest resistance, however, came from Lithuanian partisans, who fought on until the early 1950s. When in ultimate danger, the Lithuanian guerillas would detonate grenades in front of their faces so that nobody could recognize them and then harm their families⁹. In 1949, another wave of deportations, connected with collectivization of agriculture, decisively weakened the guerilla resistance¹⁰. In the years 1950-1951, the operation was carried out by two NKVD divisions: the 2nd Special Task Division of General Vetrov and the 4th Special Task Division of General Piashov¹¹. The restoration of Soviet power in the Baltic states by military force was a crime of aggression accompanied by numerous crimes against humanity.

Poland

When in early 1944 the Soviet armies entered the pre-war Polish-Soviet frontier, they were coming as an ally of the Polish allies but not as a Polish one. After the Soviets broke relations with the Polish government-in-exile using the German discovery of the Katyn graves as a pretext, any agree-

⁸ The personality of Sniečkus may be well characterized by the fact that when he invited his mother to return from Germany in 1947 she refused, fearing for her life. Simas Suziedelis (ed.), *Encyclopedia Lituanica* (Boston, Mass.: EL, 1976), Vol. 5, pp. 242-243.

⁹ Testimony of Lieutenant Colonel Grigori Stepanovich Burlitski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1374.

¹⁰ Mart Laar, *War in The Woods* (Washington, DC: Howells House, 1992); Heinrihs Strods, “Resistance in Latvia”, in: *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations, 1940-1991* (Riga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), pp. 286-298; Juozas L. Daumantas, *Fighters for Freedom* (New York: Manyland Books, December 1975).

¹¹ Testimony of Lieutenant Colonel Grigori Stepanovich Burlitski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1371-1373.

ment between the London government-in-exile and the Kremlin proved impossible, because Stalin wanted to move the eastern frontier of Poland to the Bug River and to keep the territories Russia had acquired according to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. At the Teheran Conference (28 November–1 December 1943), the Western allies agreed with Stalin to the new frontiers of the Polish state according to the Soviet wishes. The Polish government-in-exile was not informed of the agreement. The Russians made use of the desire of the Poles in Russia to find a way out, and allowed the creation of another Polish army, this time under the command of Soviet officers. When the Soviet armies were about to cross the Bug River in July 1944, a Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN) was founded in Moscow and allowed to come to Lublin on the condition that it sign a frontier agreement recognizing the permanent incorporation into the USSR of the eastern parts of pre-war Poland.

The plan of the Polish government-in-exile and its underground Home Army in occupied Poland was to stage a mass uprising against the Germans as soon as they withdrew. This plan (“Tempest”) took place in the eastern territories of pre-war Poland. In July 1944, Home Army troops took part in the liberation of Wilno (Vilnius) and Lwów (Lviv), but their command and civilian authorities were arrested by the NKVD and deported to Russia. On 22 July 1944, the Soviet-sponsored PKWN issued a manifesto claiming to be the only “legal” authority in the Polish territories liberated from the Germans. Moscow radio called on the people of Warsaw to take up arms¹². The Germans began to withdraw from the eastern outskirts of Warsaw. To remain passive would have meant to accept Russian control of Poland. Instead, on 1 August 1944, the Home Army started the uprising against the Germans in Warsaw. The Soviets halted their offensive and watched the defeat of the insurrection from the opposite bank of the Vistula¹³. The assistance of the

¹² Testimony of General Tadeusz Bor-Komorowski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1117; Testimony of Irena Born, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 989.

¹³ This brief statement by the commander-in-chief of the Home Army, General Tadeusz Bór-Komorowski, before the House of Representatives Select Committee on Communist Aggression, explained the frontline situation of July and August 1944: “The Russian summer offensive in 1944 brought their armies in late July to the river Vistula and in the region of Warsaw less than 10 miles from the city. The German armies of the eastern front

western allies was also insignificant, since they had accepted the Soviet monopoly on action on the eastern front. After 63 days of street fighting, the Warsaw Rising was drowned in blood by the Germans¹⁴.

The Soviet decision to halt cost thousands of Polish lives during the Warsaw Rising and is hard to define. Stopping the Red Army at the gates of Warsaw resulted not only in Polish losses but also in the deaths of thousands more Soviet soldiers in later fighting to finish off the Third Reich. What kind of war crime is it when you not only do not help your ally (or an ally of your allies) but also at the cost of so many lives on your side for the sake of a remote imperial interest? And what kind of crime is it to call General Bór-Komorowski and other Polish Home Army commanders who fought against the Nazis “war criminals”, which the Soviet Tass Agency did?¹⁵ Can the Soviet push through Poland be called “liberation”? It is true that the Red Army removed the Nazi occupation. But the story of the War-

were completely defeated, being not able to resist the overwhelming Russian preponderance. It was obvious that Warsaw would have become an area of Soviet-German fighting, and, in these circumstances, an attack by the Home Army inside the city would quickly decide the fate of the Germans in the Polish capital. Although diplomatic relations with Russia have not been re-established, the Home Army could not stand idle in the face of the German retreat and the Soviet advance. The guiding thought of this final encounter was: (a) to show the world the undaunted attitude against the Germans and the will to fight until the end; (b) to express and to prove the nation’s striving toward full and complete independence and to manifest that in Polish lands the will of the Polish nation has the decisive voice, that the Polish nation lives, fights, and always resists violence. The Soviet propaganda called insistently on the citizens of Warsaw to rise (up). On July 29, Moscow broadcast an appeal to Warsaw which was repeated the following day by the Moscow radio station known as Kosciuszko (...) Moscow, having up to now rejected all attempts of the Home Army to establish liaison, was now calling for open sortie, and promising the imminent liberation of Warsaw. Soviet planes dropped also leaflets over the city and its environs calling the people for a general rising against the Germans and promising an early liberation by the Red Army. Warsaw took up arms to fight for her freedom on August 1 after the Soviet units had driven a deep wedge into the German bridgehead, disorganizing the German defense and while the bridges over the Vistula south of Warsaw were in the hands of the Red Army. As soon as the rising began, the Red Army stopped its advance”. Testimony of General Tedeusz Bór-Komorowski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1121.

¹⁴ Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland*, pp. 473-534; Olson, Cloud, *For Your Freedom and Ours*, pp. 305-353; *The Secret History of World War II. The Ultra-Secret Wartime Letters and Cables of Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill* (New York: Berkley Books, 1986), pp.194-198; Tadeusz Bór-Komorowski, *The Secret Army* (New York: Macmillan Co Ltd., 1951).

¹⁵ Testimony of General Tadeusz Bór-Komorowski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1123.

saw Rising can be compared to the British and American behavior during the Battle for Paris in 1944. When the French Forces of the Interior raised arms on 19 August 1944, they were helped by the 2nd French Division and the 4th US Infantry Division, and five days later Paris was free of the Germans. Compared to the Battle for Paris, the Soviet treatment of the Warsaw Rising looks very much like a war crime.

Warsaw's ruins were finally taken by the Red Army and the auxiliary Polish troops on 17 January 1945. On 31 December 1944, the PKWN was transformed into a provisional government. Having gained allied recognition of the new Polish frontiers, Stalin now started the creation of new authorities for Poland. During the Yalta Conference of February 1945, the new Polish frontiers were officially announced by the Big Three. It was also agreed that the new Polish government of "National Unity" would include some "democratic leaders" from Poland and from exile, but the proportion was not fixed. This opened the door for Stalin to force his solution on Poland. In March 1945, the Soviets treacherously arrested sixteen political leaders of the Polish underground¹⁶. It was symbolic for the Poland that would emerge from World War Two that the compromise on the formation of the Provisional Government of National Unity (TRJN), as planned at Yalta, was announced in Moscow on 21 June 1945, and that on the same day a special Soviet tribunal announced the verdict in the trial of the sixteen leaders of the Polish wartime underground, including Deputy Prime Minister of the London government-in-exile Jan Stanisław Jankowski, while the London government was still recognized by the Western allies¹⁷.

Poland, a country that was first to resist German aggression in 1939, emerged from the cataclysm not only devastated and depopulated, its territory moved a few hundred miles to the west, but also subordinated to the Soviet Union, one of its wartime oppressors. For Poland, this was a real "defeat in victory"¹⁸.

¹⁶ Testimony of Kazimierz Bagiński, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 804-809.

¹⁷ Wojciech Roszkowski, *The Shadow of Yalta*, (Warsaw: Warsaw Rising Museum, 2005), pp. 63-87; Olson, Cloud, *For Your Freedom and Ours*, pp. 364 ff.; Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland*, pp. 581-624.

¹⁸ Jan Ciechanowski, *Defeat in Victory* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1948).

According to the Yalta provisions, the TRJN was to include some members of the London government-in-exile. It took four months before the Western allies finally accepted Stalin's vision of the government, including only five people from London. One of them was Stanisław Mikołajczyk, prime minister in the years 1943-44. Mikołajczyk returned to Poland as deputy premier of a TRJN headed by an obscure communist puppet. Mikołajczyk re-established the pre-war agrarian party under the new name the Polish Peasant Party (PSL). Also, the Christian Democratic Labor Party (SP) was allowed to function but its pre-war leadership had to share power with a handful of communist puppets. The Home National Council (KRN), a quasi-parliament appointed by the communists, absorbed the new PSL and SP deputies. It was chaired by Bolesław Bierut, a mysterious character, working for Soviet intelligence and concealing his membership of the top communist authorities. Nevertheless, the communists had at their disposal the majority of seats in the KRN and passed new totalitarian laws. At the same time, state administration was taken over by the communists from the Polish Workers Party (PPR) and its crypto-communist allies. The major reason behind the rapid growth of the new administration was terror by the communist-controlled security apparatus, created and supported by numerous Soviet intelligence officers and NKVD troops¹⁹. This was by all means a crime of aggression in many forms²⁰.

¹⁹ The crucial role in the establishment of the new Communist Ministry of Public Security was played by Deputy Head of the NKVD General Ivan Serov, NKVD General Nikolay Selivanovsky, NKGB General Vladimir Yakovlev and Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky, who stopped the Soviet troops at the gates of Warsaw in the fall of 1944. At each level of the Soviet command in Poland, the most important officers were those of the NKVD, GRU or Smersh. For the first two years after "liberation", the Polish armed underground was suppressed not only by the Polish communist forces but also by the 64th NKVD Division and regular troops of the Soviet Army stationed in Poland. Edward Jan Nalepa, *Oficerowie Armii Radzieckiej w Wojsku Polskim 1943-1968* [Officers of the Soviet Army in the Polish Armed Forces, 1943-1968] (Warszawa: "Bellona", 1995), pp. 11-108; Władysław Tkaczew, *Powstanie i działalność organów Informacji Wojska Polskiego w latach 1943-1948* [Formation and Activity of the Organs of Information in the Polish Army in the Years 1943-1948] (Warszawa: "Bellona", 1994), pp. 9-78; Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, *Between Nazis and Soviets. Occupation Politics in Poland, 1939-1947* (Lexington Books, 2004), pp. 279-283; Andrzej Paczkowski, "Dzieci Feliksa Edmundowicza" [Children of Felix Edmundovich], *Rzeczpospolita*, 27-28 January 1996.

²⁰ See *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Poland. Special Report No. 1 of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression* (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1955).

In preparing themselves to control elections, the Soviet-advised PPR organized a popular referendum in June 1946. The Poles were only allowed to express their feelings as to the maintenance of the Senate, the new western frontier, land reform and nationalization of industry. Key questions, such as those referring to the political system, dependence on the USSR and the new eastern frontier were not addressed. Desperate fighting was continued by various former Home Army units. The amnesty granted by the new rulers in mid-1945 was not even observed by themselves. Underground soldiers and officers were frequently arrested or forced back into hiding. During the election campaign, the communist security apparatus terrorized PSL candidates. Many of them were killed or arrested. When the election was finally held on 17 January 1947, the communist administration was strong enough to falsify the results and proclaim victory²¹.

Mikołajczyk and his followers accused the communists of irregularities but were helpless. Since the Cold War was already underway, Mikołajczyk's appeals to the Western governments were counterproductive. Fearing arrest and execution, Mikołajczyk fled abroad in September 1947, which was followed by a massive purge of the PSL. In 1948, the Polish Socialist Party was purged of all remaining independent members and in December of that same year the remains of the PPS were merged into the PPR-controlled Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR). The new constitution proclaiming a "people's democracy" was adopted on 22 July 1952. By that time, Stalinist rule in Poland was in full swing²².

The conclusion of the communist takeover of Poland cannot be otherwise: it was the result of Soviet aggression on a country that was a loyal partner in the anti-Germany coalition from its beginning. It is hard to disagree with Waclaw Grzybowski, the Polish ambassador to Moscow in 1936-

²¹ According to the official results, the communist-controlled Democratic Bloc gained 80 percent of the vote, the PSL 10 percent, the SP 5 percent, and other groups loyal to the Communists gained the remaining 5 percent. According to independent estimates, the PSL candidates won about 75 percent of all votes. *Gazeta Ludowa*, January 20, 1947; Stanisław Mikołajczyk, *The Rape of Poland* (New York, 1948), p. 216.

²² Dziewanowski, *Poland in the 20th Century*, pp. 145 ff.; Nicholas Bethell, *Gomułka. His Poland and His Communism* (Pelican Books, 1972), pp. 104-159; Davies, *God's Playground*, Vol. 2, pp. 539 ff.

1939, who argued that “the study of Soviet politics belongs not to history but to criminology”²³.

Czechoslovakia

The Sovietization of Czechoslovakia was a complicated process in which an important role was played by the Czechoslovak Communist Party, the strongest in the region, but mostly by the advance and “liberation” of the country by the Soviet army. When Soviet troops were approaching pre-war Czechoslovak territory, on 28 April 1944, a national uprising broke out against the Germans in Slovakia. The insurgents were badly organized and equipped and generally undisciplined. The uprising was inspired by the Soviets, who then failed to save it, thus allowing the Germans to kill thousands of Slovak patriots²⁴. When the Soviets finally occupied the eastern part of pre-war Czechoslovakia, they organized their style of a referendum, which resulted in the incorporation of Subcarpathian Ruthenia into the Ukrainian SRR. By the end of World War Two, the Czechoslovak government-in-exile maintained good relations with Moscow. This is why it could return to Czechoslovakia the moment the country was overtaken by the Soviet Army. In March 1945, President Edvard Beneš left London and arrived—via Moscow—at Košice in Slovakia, establishing a provisional coalition government under a crypto-communist socialist, Zdeněk Fierlinger²⁵. The Košice program included an alliance with the USSR, deportation of the German minority, nationalization of key industries and radical land reform, though it promised to maintain democracy. When the war was over, on 16 May 1945, the Košice government

²³ Testimony of Ambassador Waclaw Grzybowski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 960.

²⁴ Testimony of Dr. Joseph Mikus, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, pp. 154-166; Joseph Mikus, *Slovakia. A Political History 1918-1950* (Milwaukee: The Marquette University Press, 1963), pp. 138-149; Anton Spiesz, Dusan Caplovic, *Illustrated Slovak History* (Wauconda, Ill.: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2006), pp. 227-230.

²⁵ On Fierlinger’s contacts with the communists: Testimony of Vilem Bernard, his former secretary, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, pp. 1040-1041. There are hints that Soviet “Agent 19” could have been Beneš himself. Nigel West, “Venona: the Greatest Secret of the Cold War”, http://www.nationalobserver.net/1999_spring_br1.htm (17 IV 2014).

moved to Prague²⁶. Theoretically it meant restoration of the Czechoslovak parliamentary democracy.

Beneš and the government moved to Prague. Fierlinger's cabinet was based on a coalition of five Communist Party members, three National Socialists, three Czech Catholic Populists, and one Social Democrat. The Communists controlled the key Ministry of Interior, as well as the Ministries of Information, Agriculture, Education and Social Welfare. On account of their true or alleged collaboration with the Germans, the influential Agrarian Party was outlawed in Bohemia along with the Catholic People's Party of the wartime president of the Slovak Republic, The Reverend Josef Tiso, who was tried, sentenced to death and hanged in 1946 for Nazi collaboration. According to a special presidential decree of 15 May 1945, all the Communists' Czech and Slovak political adversaries could be accused of wartime collaboration with the Nazis and sent to concentration camps for "re-education"²⁷.

In the free elections of 26 May 1946, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia won as much as 38 percent of the vote, the National Socialists of Beneš 18 percent, the Christian Democrats 16 percent, the Slovak Democrats 14 percent, and the Social Democrats 13 percent. In the Czech areas, the Communist Party gained almost 41 percent while in Slovakia only 30 percent. Together with the Social Democrats, some of whom cooperated with the Communist Party, the Marxist bloc gained 51 percent of mandates²⁸. The new government was formed by the Communist leader Klement Gottwald.

²⁶ Victor S. Mamatey and Radomír Luža (eds.), *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918-1948* (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1973); Vojtech Mastny, *The Czechs under Nazi Rule. The failure of national resistance, 1939-1942* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1971); Edvard Beneš, *Memoirs. From Munich to New War and New Victory* (London, 1954).

²⁷ "The law on punishing those who collaborated with the Nazi occupation became to the [Communist – WR] Nosek's police a means of terror against the political opponents of communists. A worker who during the war was granted awards and advantages for extraordinary zeal in producing Hitler's war material sat in a judge's chair over the factory owner who had to furnish the material. Nosek's police held in prison thousands of people without putting them before the tribunal in a lawful manner. These people were sometimes set free without knowing why they were deprived of liberty for half a year and what they were suspected of". Testimony of Jaroslav Stransky, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1030 and 1039.

²⁸ *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Czechoslovakia. Special Report No 8 of the House of Representatives Select Committee on Communist Aggression* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 19.

For about two years after the war, the Czech and Slovak Communists strengthened their position in the police apparatus and in trade unions and pretended to be patriotic and evolutionary reformers. In June 1946, the Slovak National Council lost its authority to enact laws without the consent of the parliament in Prague. Then, the turn of the Slovak Democratic Party (SDP) came. From September to December 1947, about 2,000 Slovaks were arrested on charges of alleged conspiracy against democracy, including three SDP leaders. At the same time, the USSR increasingly and openly interfered in Czechoslovak policy. In July 1947, Czechoslovakia wanted to accede to the Marshall Plan, but a Soviet veto made the Prague government comply. Given the Soviet assistance, the Czech and Slovak Communists dominated the police apparatus and especially its national security branch, which turned into a special Communist Party paramilitary force.

In mid-February 1948, the majority of the coalition cabinet demanded Communist Interior Minister Václav Nosek stop the purge of his apparatus of non-Communists. When he ignored the demand, on 20 February the non-Communist ministers refused to attend a government meeting, hoping they had the majority to overthrow what would be the Communist minority. However, since some Social Democrats remained in the cabinet, the Gottwald faction maintained the majority. The Communists organized mass street demonstrations and their Workers' Militia occupied the main streets and squares in Prague. On 25 February, President Beneš yielded to the pressure, dismissing twelve non-Communist ministers. Gottwald immediately replaced them with his people. The coup was supervised by a special Soviet envoy, Valeryan Zorin, the deputy foreign minister of the USSR, who had threatened the use of Soviet troops. Soon, all the non-Communist newspapers were closed, along with many independent social and cultural societies. The Social Democratic fellow travelers of the Communists purged the party and merged its remains with the Communist Party in May 1948. The new constitution of 9 May 1948 installed "people's democracy". The parliamentary election that followed was a farce: there was one list of candidates appointed by the Communists²⁹.

²⁹ Josef Korbela, *The Communist Subversion of Czechoslovakia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), pp. 212-223; Karel Kaplan, *The Short March. The Communist Takeover in Czechoslovakia 1945-1948* (London: C. Hurst and Co. Ltd., 1987).

Czechoslovak democracy collapsed with one blow. The Czechoslovak Communists seemed capable of taking over on their own, but the threat of direct Soviet military intervention also played a major role. Whether the Soviet pressure could be called a crime of aggression is an open question. But without it, the Czechoslovak Communists would probably not have had a chance to rid the country of its democracy.

Hungary

In the face of the Soviet offensive, on 15 October 1944, Regent Miklós Horthy declared his intent to sign an armistice with the USSR. While most of the Hungarian army was at the front, on 17 October, German troops occupied Budapest and brought Ferenc Szálasi's extremist Arrow Cross to power. Budapest became a stronghold, conquered by the Red Army on 13 February 1945. The Red Army consciously destroyed Budapest after they had captured the city³⁰. Meanwhile, on 22 December 1944, a provisional government was established in Debrecen consisting of a coalition of the Independence Front under General Béla Miklós, who had surrendered to the Red Army. The Miklós government signed an armistice with the Allies on 20 January 1945, agreeing to withdraw Hungarian troops within the Trianon frontiers and to pay reparations to the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. A special Russian-dominated Allied Control Commission was to supervise the new Hungarian authorities. Meanwhile the Soviets were committing mass atrocities against Hungarian civilians. The position of Hungary at the moment the Soviet army entered the country was dramatic³¹.

The armistice that the Miklós government signed on 20 January 1945 provided the Soviet troops with the freedom to maneuver on Hungarian territory without any control by the Hungarian government. Moscow also decided that the whole cost of the Soviet occupation of Hungary would be covered from the Hungarian budget, which almost doubled the costs of the

³⁰ Testimony of Dr. Geza Teleki, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 3, p. 269.

³¹ Ignác Romsics, *Hungary in the Twentieth Century* (Budapest: Korvina, 1999), pp. 204-216; Michael Karolyi, *Faith without Illusion* (London: Jonathan Cape, no date), pp. 289-314; Admiral Nicholas Horthy, *Memoirs* (New York: Robert Speller & Sons, no date), pp. 171-253.

war reparations imposed on Hungary as a result of the armistice. These reparations accounted for about 18 percent of the Hungarian national income of 1947. By virtue of the Potsdam Declaration, the Soviets established an economic concern including enterprises in the “defeated” countries under the control of the Soviet Directorate of Foreign Property. The Hungarian-Soviet mixed enterprises controlled much of the mining and machine industry, as well as Danube shipping and air traffic³².

The Communists’ representation in the Miklós government was rather small. The Communist Party of Hungary was very weak and its popularity was not helped by the Soviet requisitioning and atrocities. In the free election of 4 November 1945, the Smallholder Party won 60 percent of the mandates, the Social Democratic Party 17 percent, the Communists 17 percent, and the National Peasant Party 6 percent³³. The Smallholders could form their own government, but under pressure from the Soviet chairman of the Allied Control Commission, Marshal Kliment Voroshilov, they agreed to maintain a coalition that included Communist Deputy Premier Mátyás Rákosi and Minister of Interior László Rajk. On 31 January 1946, Hungary was proclaimed a republic. The Smallholder leader, Zoltán Tildy, became president of the republic and another Smallholder, Ferenc Nagy, formed a new cabinet³⁴.

The Communist-controlled police constantly discovered alleged plots against democracy, extending accusations to the Smallholders. When the western allies signed the peace treaty with Hungary on 10 February 1947, the Communists felt free to increase the pressure. The executive secretary of the Smallholders, Béla Kovacs, was arrested by the Soviet NKVD. In May 1947,

³² László Borhi, “Hungary in the Soviet Empire 1945-1956”, http://www.kre.hu/english/erasmus/ip/Borhi_Laszlo.pdf (17 IV 2014). As to the decision-making in mixed Soviet-Hungarian companies, Hungarians had a joke. In a Soviet-Hungarian river navigation company, the Hungarians could navigate the river crossways and the Soviets lengthwise. Testimony of Nicholas Nyaradi, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 3, p. 227.

³³ Imre Kovacs (ed.), *Facts About Hungary. The Fight for Freedom* (New York: The Hungarian Committee, 1966), p. 56.

³⁴ Nevertheless, the true ruler of Hungary was Voroshilov. In a conversation with Bishop Alexander St. Ivanyi, Voroshilov asked him whether he thought it impossible to have an exchange of population through which the Hungarian nation would be settled in Asiatic Russia. When St. Ivanyi protested, referring to the Yalta conference, Voroshilov barked: “In Hungary, I am Yalta”. Testimony of Bishop Alexander St. Ivanyi, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 3, p. 250.

when premier Nagy was on holiday in Switzerland, the Soviets announced that Kovacs' interrogation had incriminated Nagy in a conspiracy against the republic. Rákosi told Nagy that he "could not secure the safety" of Nagy's family. On 29 May 1947, Nagy resigned in exchange for the release of his wife and five-year-old son and emigrated to the United States³⁵.

In the parliamentary elections of 31 August 1947, the Communists managed to gain 24 percent of the mandates while the other parties split the remainder. President Tildy complied and brought most of the Smallholders into a Communist-controlled "democratic" coalition. His own party gained 16 percent, the Social Democrats got 15 percent, and the National Peasants 8 percent. The coalition gained the parliamentary majority of about 66 percent. The strongest opposition party—the Christian Democratic Populists—was announced to have received 15 percent and the conservative Independence Party 13 percent³⁶. In November 1947, the Independence Party was dissolved and the Communists' control of the Social Democrats grew, helped by its leader Árpád Szakasits, who purged the party of all independent leaders. On 12 June 1948, the rump Social Democrats merged with the Communists into the Hungarian Workers' Party. Arrests of opposition leaders were in full swing, including independent Smallholders, Christian Populists, Social Democrats, and Independence Party members. In July 1948, Tildy was forced to give up his presidency to Szakasits. The third election of 15 May 1949 was already entirely manipulated by the Communists. A single government list was proclaimed to have received 96 percent of the vote. The new, Communist-dominated assembly passed a "people's democratic" constitution on 20 August 1949. The process of take-over was completed and the Hungarian Workers' Party under Rákosi was the sole ruler of Hungary³⁷.

A typical example of communist "salami tactics", Hungary was Sovietized predominantly by military occupation. Although one must bear in mind that during World War Two Hungarian troops fought against the Soviet Union,

³⁵ Statement by Ferenc Nagy, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 3, pp. 103-104.

³⁶ Kovacs (ed.), *Facts About Hungary*, p. 61.

³⁷ Testimony of Bela Kovrig, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 6, p. 109 ff.; *Magyarország Történeti Kronológiája* [Chronology of Hungarian History] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1983), Vol. 4, p. 1049.

the nature of the Soviet operations in Hungary must be treated as a crime of aggression.

Romania

The Soviet armies approached Romanian territory in mid-1944. After a series of secret talks with the Allies, young King Michael decided to lead a coup aimed at changing loyalties³⁸. On 23 August 1944, he had the military dictator Ion Antonescu arrested. An armistice was announced with the Soviet Union and on 26 August, the new Romanian government of General Constantin Sănătescu declared war on Germany and Hungary. The Soviet armies entered Romania, which had been practically liberated from the Germans by the Romanian army. Nevertheless, between 23 August and 12 September 1944, when the armistice convention between Romania and the Soviet Union was signed in Moscow, the Soviet troops considered Romania, which had ceased fighting and received the Red Army as allies, as still at war. The purpose of this delay was to claim war booty of Romanian goods and to take as many prisoners of war as possible. About 130,000 Romanian soldiers were taken prisoners of war by the Soviet army. The remaining Romanian troops fought alongside the Soviet army in Hungary and Slovakia, suffering about 150,000 casualties³⁹. Since in May 1944 the British and

³⁸ Negotiating conditions of Romania's accession to the Allies, on 3 April 1944, Molotov reassured Bucharest that the Soviet Union would not interfere in Romania's internal affairs, saying: "The Soviet government declares that it does not pursue the aim of acquiring any part of Romanian territory or of changing in whatever manner the existing social order in Romania. It equally declares that the entry of Soviet troops into Romania is solely the consequence of military necessities and of the continuation of resistance of the enemy troops". The American and British governments welcomed and endorsed this declaration. Quoted according to the "Highlights of Romanian History in Relation to the International Communist Conspiracy" by Mihail Farcasanu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 85. Cf. also Testimony of Constanine Visoianu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 843-844.

³⁹ King Michael remembered what happened after 23 August 1944: "I broadcast to the Romanian people telling them what had happened and at the same time telling them to lay down their arms against the allies and turn around. And these same orders were sent by my general staff to our troops at the front. So, when they got this order they laid down their guns and turned around to the next front. In the meantime, the Russians came and swept up about 100,000 to 200,000 men—so-called prisoners of war—who did not even fire one shot to protect them-

American governments had accepted predominant Soviet interest in Romania, the Allied Control Commission installed in Bucharest was dominated by the Soviets⁴⁰.

After the coup of August 1944, the Sănătescu government restored the 1923 constitution and re-legalized political parties. The four parties that supported the coup—the National Peasants of Iuliu Maniu, the Liberals of Dinu Bratianu, the Social Democrats of Titel Petrescu, and the Communist Party—came to the forefront. Those Communist leaders who survived the war in Romania, such as Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu, joined the government while those who came from Russia (Ana Pauker, Emil Bodnaraș and Vasile Luca) organized the party apparatus, which at that time was very limited and was frequently fed by the former nationalist Iron Guardists, who wanted to avoid responsibility for their crimes. The Soviets wanted to have a Communist minister of interior and delayed transferring the administration of northern Transylvania to Romania as an instrument of pressure.

King Michael replaced Sănătescu with General Nicolae Rădescu, but this did not help the king strengthen his position. In October 1944, the Communists formed a narrower coalition called the National Democratic Front (NDF) along with the Social Democrats and the Communist-controlled Ploughmen's Front of Petru Groza. From January 1945, the NDF vigorously agitated against “war criminals”, for land reform and for the “democratization” of the army. It also claimed to be the only force capable of persuading the USSR to transfer northern Transylvania to Romania. While the army was fighting at the front, the Communist undersecretary of interior and his “patriotic militia” organized violent street demonstrations and strikes.

Provoked by the Communists' activities, on 24 February 1945, Premier Rădescu made an intemperate radio speech denouncing the Communist leaders, some of whom were Jews, Magyars, and Ukrainians, as foreign agents

selves because they had received the order not to”. Testimony of King Michael of Romania, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1023.

⁴⁰ Churchill, *The Second World War*, Vol. 6, p. 198; *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Rumania. Special Report No 11 of the House of Representative Select Committee on Communist Aggression* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955), pp. 5-8.

and “venal beasts”. During the demonstration against the Rădescu government in Bucharest on 24 February 1945, the Communist militia and the Soviet soldiers shot at demonstrators in order to blame the government⁴¹. On 27 February, the Soviet troops occupied the country’s army headquarters, while a special Soviet envoy, Andrey Vyshinsky, flew into Bucharest. “We consider General Rădescu to be a fascist and his government likewise a fascist one or at least a supporter of fascists,” stated Vyshinsky. “I have the impression that neither Your Majesty nor the people around you understand the gravity of the situation (...) If the government is not immediately changed we can no longer answer for the free existence of the Romanian people”⁴². When King Michael answered that he had to consult the chiefs of the political parties, Vyshinsky banged his fist on the king’s desk and barked: “I want Your Majesty’s reply right now”. Then he left, slamming the door so hard that the plaster around it cracked⁴³. The royal palace was surrounded by Soviet tanks and troops, and so were all the public buildings. King Michael decided to force Rădescu to step down but then Vyshinsky returned, demanding the nomination of Petru Groza as the new head of the cabinet. The Groza government was immediately recognized by the Western powers. Stalin awarded Romania northern Transylvania, which gave the Communists some credit with the populace while the land reform passed on 20 March 1945 attracted peasants. After the Communists refused to extend the government coalition and provoked another shooting at a street demonstration, this time celebrat-

⁴¹ Crucial evidence was provided by Mihail Farcasanu: “That very evening, the Prime Minister ordered an autopsy of the murdered men. I was in his office at the Ministry of Interior when the report was brought in. The bullets extracted from the corpses were all of Russian make and caliber. Neither the Romanian Army nor the police had any Russian ammunition, but the Soviet-armed communist militia did have it”. Testimony of Mihail Farcasanu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 71.

⁴² Testimony of Constantine Visoianu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 847. Later, Vyshinsky denied ever having submitted such an ultimatum to King Michael. He said: “Where do you get these fairy tales from anyway? I would like to find out what the primary source are. Let us look at the witness: put him in the chair right in front of me and let him say to my face that I submitted an ultimatum to the Romanian king”. Testifying before the Select Committee, Visoianu said: “I happen to be the witness requested by Mr. Vishinsky”. *Ibidem*, p. 857. King Michael confirmed Visoianu’s version. Testimony of King Michael of Romania, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1008-1009.

⁴³ Testimony of Constanine Visoianu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 847-848.

ing the king's birthday on 8 November 1945, King Michael withdrew from public life and refused to sign state documents.

The Moscow Big Three conference of foreign ministers in December 1945 decided to support free elections in Romania. They were held as late as 19 November 1946. By that time, the Communists had already terrorized the population through mass arrests and political trials, managed to bring the administration under their control, and stood ready to manipulate the results. The NDF was announced to have gained 348 mandates (84 percent). The Hungarian Popular Union, which cooperated with the Front, was given 29 mandates (7 percent), while the opposition National Peasants and Liberals, respectively, were given 32 (8 percent) and three (1 percent) mandates. Both the latter parties refused to take their seats to protest the election irregularities. According to the opposition estimates, the National Peasants of Iuliu Maniu actually gained about 70 percent of the vote⁴⁴.

After the Western allies signed the peace treaty with Romania on 10 February 1947, Groza purged his government of non-Communists. In October 1947, two peasant leaders, Maniu and Ion Michalache were tried and sentenced to life imprisonment, and on 30 December 1947, King Michael was forced to abdicate⁴⁵. The Sovietization of Romania was completed in early 1948 when the Ploughmen's Front absorbed the opportunist survivors of the National Peasants into the National Popular Party. The Communist-controlled government bloc was now a monolithic organization that included the malleable Hungarian Popular Union. In the election of March 1948, the

⁴⁴ Robert W. Seton-Watson, *A History of the Roumanians* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1963), p. 208; R.R. Betts (ed.), *Central and South East Europe 1945-1948* (London: Royal Institute of Foreign Affairs, 1950), p. 11.

⁴⁵ On 30 December 1947, King Michael received a call from Bucharest saying Prime Minister Groza wished to see him. "We went down to Bucharest," remembered King Michael, "and he came with Gheorghiu-Dej. They came together and with a charming smile on his face Groza said: 'Now is the time to arrange an amiable divorce'. Naturally we did not know what he meant. We asked: 'What is all this?' To put a long matter short, he produced the Act of Abdication and said: 'This is the only thing that is left to be done and in the interest of the country'. Then, of course, with nice gentle hints that there would be bloodshed, that the whole country would be ruined, my personal safety, and Groza actually hinted that they had a file 10 inches thick—he made a sign like that—on me". Testimony of King Michael of Romania, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1010.

NDF gained 405 of 414 mandates while the remaining nine mandates were given to formally independent deputies⁴⁶. On 13 April 1948, a new constitution introduced “people’s democracy” in Romania. The Communists were in full control of the country.

The Communist takeover of Romania was constantly assisted by Soviet troops. For instance, when the Romanian army tried to intervene to stop the Communist rebellion in Constanța, Soviet soldiers surrounded the barracks of the Romanian garrisons and ordered that nobody should leave the premises while also pointing a machine gun at the Romanian troops⁴⁷. When the Soviets returned to Bessarabia in late summer of 1944 they restored the Moldavian SSR and resumed arrests and deportations. Moreover, they arranged another method of extermination of the natives: starvation⁴⁸. The Soviet operation in Romania cannot be called as other than a crime of aggression⁴⁹.

Bulgaria

As the Red Army approached the Danube in mid-1944, the Bulgarian government tried to negotiate peace terms with the Eastern allies but they refused to talk without Soviet participation. On 5 September 1944, the USSR declared war on Bulgaria. The advancing Soviet troops were welcomed without hardly any resistance. A change of the Bulgarian government came too late and proved to be of no importance since on 9 September 1944, a pro-Soviet coalition known as the Fatherland Front, including the Communists, Agrarian Union of Georgi “Gemeto” Dimitrov, Social Democrats and pro-Russian military, took over power in Sofia. The new government under

⁴⁶ Seton-Watson, *A History of the Roumanians*, p. 211. King Michael commented on the Romanian election briefly: “90 percent of one went in and 90 percent of the other came out”. Testimony of King Michael of Romania, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1020.

⁴⁷ Testimony of Mihail Farcasanu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 68.

⁴⁸ Statement of Anton Crihan, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 128-129.

⁴⁹ King Michael of Romania said: “If somebody was to walk into your house and kick you out and take possession of your house, and you were then to go back and start discussing with him what right he had, instead of just kicking him out and then dealing with him, that would be the sort of thing”. Testimony of King Michael of Romania, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1022.

Kimon Georgiev sent some 200,000 soldiers to fight under the Soviet command against Germany⁵⁰.

Immediately after the coup of 9 September 1944, the new government's ministry of interior, headed by Communist member Anton Yugov, organized new militia and political police and started mass trials and executions of real and alleged "war criminals". More than one hundred old regime figures, including the three regents, were arrested, soon after sentenced to death and then executed on 2 February 1945. The purge then descended to town mayors and local officials. By March 1945, the number of sentences carried out was 2,138 executed, 1,940 sentenced to 20 years and 1,689 of 10 to 15 years⁵¹. Up to the early 1950s, the number of exterminated "enemies" of the people, including peasants opposing collectivization, was estimated at between 20,000 and 100,000⁵². The Agrarians and Social Democrats tried to stop the slaughter, but they were soon split. Soviet Deputy Chairman of the Allied Control Commission General Sergey Biryuzov forced "Gemeto" Dimitrov to give up leadership of the Agrarian Union to Nikola Petkov, but since the latter was no more cooperative he was also ousted by a Communist-inspired coup within the Agrarian Union in May 1945. The same happened in the Social Democratic Party of Kosta Lulchev. Both leaders and their followers left the Fatherland Front.

On 8 November 1945, the former Comintern head Georgi Dimitrov returned from Moscow and took leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party. The election held on 18 November 1945 was boycotted by the Agrarians and Social Democrats, who accused the Communists of mass terror and falsification of results. The Communists claimed to have gained 88 percent of the vote. Petkov and Lulchev were genuine radicals, believers in Bulgarian-Russian friendship, and had wide support in the country. Under Western pressure, the Soviets agreed to bring them back into the Fatherland Front. Overestimating the

⁵⁰ Stephan Groueff, *Crown of Thorns. The Reign of King Boris III of Bulgaria, 1918-1943* (Lanham, Md, 1987); Marshall Lee Miller, *Bulgaria during the Second World War* (Stanford University Press 1975).

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, p. 212.

⁵² Reginald Robert Betts, *Central and South East Europe, 1945-1948* (London–New York: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1950), p. 30.

Western support, the opposition leaders demanded cancellation of the election and the surrender by the Communists of the ministries of interior and justice.

Meanwhile, the Communists continued their drive to power. On 8 September 1946, a manipulated plebiscite abolished the monarchy and established a republic. The young Tsar Simeon left the country. On 27 October 1946, the new election to the Constituent Assembly gave the Communists 277 mandates (60 percent) while the other Front groups gained 87 mandates (19 percent), and the opposition Agrarians and Social Democrats 101 mandates (21 percent). The opposition representation was not related to its actual popularity. On 10 February 1947, the Western allies deprived themselves of the only leverage for the defense of democracy in Bulgaria by signing a peace treaty. Immediately thereafter, the opposition parties were purged. Petkov was arrested, tried on alleged charges of criminal conspiracy against the government, and sentenced to death. The Western allies protested the verdict but it was carried out on 23 September 1947. On 4 December 1947, a new constitution was adopted providing for a “people’s democracy” in Bulgaria. In November 1947, the trial of Lulchev was aimed at terrorizing the independent Social Democrats. On 11 August 1948, their survivors fused with the Communists. The remaining independent groups were soon silenced by further arrests. The takeover was completed: the Fatherland Front was now a monolithic, Communist-controlled organization⁵³.

Whether the Soviet operations in Bulgaria can be called a crime of aggression is an open question. The leading role in the Communist Party’s takeover seems to have been played by local communists and pro-Russian officers, but without the Soviet military operations they could not have maintained power.

East Germany

The Soviet invasion of German territory at the end of World War Two must be treated differently. There are some hints about the Soviet prepa-

⁵³ Marshal Lee Miller, *Bulgaria during the Second World War* (Stanford University Press, 1975), pp. 212-219; J.F. Brown, *Bulgaria under Communist Rule* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), Chapter one.

ration for an aggressive war against Germany in 1941, but they remain in the sphere of hypotheses. Since it was the Third Reich that started the war against the Soviet Union in June 1941, the military operations against Germany, be it by the Soviet army or by Western allies, cannot be considered aggression but response. Therefore, the Soviet behavior in German territory, though frequently violating civilized rules of war conduct, may only be treated in terms of war crimes and not as crimes against peace. The same refers to the German Democratic Republic. Although it was established as a result of the Soviet victory in the war against Germany, by no means was it the fruit of aggression but rather of the defeat of the Third Reich in the war it had started.

North Korea

Korea had remained under Japanese occupation since 1910. As promised at Yalta, the Soviet Union was to enter the war against Japan three months after the termination of hostilities in Europe. On 9 August 1945, a massive offensive by the Far Eastern command of the Soviet army started into Manchuria and North Korea. Ten days after Soviet troops began moving in, several Soviet amphibious landings were conducted in North Korea and the Sakhalin and Kuril Islands. The Soviet ambition to take the whole of the Korean peninsula was cut short by the landing of American troops at Incheon on 8 September. The two armies met at the 38th parallel, dividing the country in two. The establishment of communist rule on the occupied territory was a Soviet decision that determined the fate of Koreans living north of the 38th parallel for generations.

In February 1946, the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea was established, headed by Kim Il-sung, a figure whose early career and even identity are questioned but who must have been a Soviet trainee⁵⁴. Under Soviet guidance, the Committee introduced sweeping land reform and nationalized industry. When talks about unification of Korea failed due to the

⁵⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kim_Il-sung (17 IV 2014); Waldemar J. Dziak, *Kim Ir Sen. Dzieło i polityczne wizje* [Kim Il-sung. His Works and Political Visions] (Warszawa: ISP PAN, 2000), pp. 15-68.

Soviets' plans for "socialism" in the country and when the local communist administration in North Korea was strong enough, most of the Soviet troops were withdrawn. On 9 September 1948, the emergence of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was announced, four months after the Republic of Korea was proclaimed in the south.

By 1950, intensively trained and equipped by the Soviets, the North Korean army was already much stronger than its South Korean counterpart. Even in 1948 the Korean communists had stimulated anti-government riots in the south. They also were encouraged to plan an invasion of the south when in January 1950 US Secretary of State Dean Acheson excluded Taiwan and Korea from the Western defense zone of the United States. During his talks in Moscow in February 1950, Kim received Stalin's full support, who made his generals plan the southward offensive and forced Mao Zedong, who had just captured Beijing and proclaimed the People's Republic of China, to cooperate in the operation. It was to be an offensive with North Korean troops, but in case of difficulties the communist Chinese army would help with the support of Soviet aircraft. The decision to start the offensive was made by Stalin on 14 May 1950. The go-ahead signed by Stalin under the nickname "Filipov" was handed to Kim and Mao by Andrey Vyshinsky⁵⁵.

In preparing for the war of aggression, the Kremlin and all Communist Parties in the world launched an unprecedented propaganda peace campaign. The Cominform appeal dated 9 June 1950 called for the "extension and strengthening of the peace movement". Already by 15 March 1950 the Soviet-sponsored World Peace Council had approved the special Stockholm Appeal, demanding "the outlawing of atomic weapons as instruments of intimidation and mass murder of peoples"⁵⁶.

⁵⁵ *American Foreign Policy 1950-1955. Basic Documents* (Washington D.C., 1957), Vol. 2, p. 2451; Chen Jian, "The Sino-Soviet Alliance and China's Entry into the Korean War", *Cold War International History Project Working Paper*, No. 1, pp. 13-20 Cf. also, "The Cold War in Asia", *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, No 6-7, pp 3-227.

⁵⁶ Until August 1950, about 273 million signatures were collected under this document, including 235 million in communist countries where the refusal to sign meant trouble. But it was signed by numerous Western intellectual authorities, such as Jorge Amado, Louis Aragon, Marc Chagall, Maurice Chevalier, Thomas Mann, Pablo Neruda, Yves Montand,

With the Stockholm Appeal signed, on 25 June 1950 the North Korean army crossed the 38th parallel and began a massive offensive against the Republic of Korea. The North Korean army had two-to-one superiority in the number of soldiers, six-to-one in aircraft, and seven-to-one in tanks and automatic weapons⁵⁷. On 27 June 1950, a UN Security Council demanded a stop to the aggression and the withdrawal of the North Korean troops and a recommendation for UN member countries to help implement the resolution. As a sign of protest against the presence of the Kuomintang delegation in the Security Council, the Soviets did not take part in the vote, so the decision was unanimous. President Harry Truman decided to send US troops, while Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Turkey, Canada, Colombia, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand and Philippines followed suit. On 7 July, the UN Security Council decided to send international troops under the UN banner and US command. While the North Korean army had almost reached the southernmost part of the Korean peninsula, on 15 September 1950, UN troops landed near Incheon and started a victorious counteroffensive, pushing the North Koreans almost to the Jalu River. Almost the whole of Korea was free from the communist army. Although there were about 5,000 Soviet pilots fighting on the communist side and the bulk of the UN forces were American, neither Moscow nor Washington declared war against the other. After some hesitation, on 8 October, Mao decided to send an army of “volunteers” to help the communist cause. Eleven days later, 400,000 Chinese soldiers attacked the UN troops, pushing them south. All through 1951, heavy fighting went on near Seoul, in the middle of the Korean peninsula, and the frontline moved only a little over the next two years. On 27 July 1953, an armistice was signed, meaning the restoration of the frontier along the 38th parallel. The war cost the lives of 415,000 South Korean soldiers, 34,000 Americans and about 1.5 million

Simone Signoret and Pablo Picasso. *For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy*, 9 and 19 June 1950; *Facts on File*, 1950, 185B, 259N.

⁵⁷ Katherine Weathersby, “Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War 1945-50”, *Cold War International History Project Working Paper*, No. 8, p. 25; Harrison E. Salisbury, *The New Emperors. China in the Era of Mao and Deng* (New York: Avon Books, 1992), pp.106 ff.

North Koreans and Chinese⁵⁸. This was the human cost of the communist crime of aggression committed by Stalin, Mao and Kim. The territorial gains of the communist side was none.

Red China Invades Tibet

The communist revolution in China was a native phenomenon. During the revolution, war crimes were committed on both sides of the conflict, namely by the communists and the Kuomintang. The Chinese communist revolution succeeded because it combined two major factors: a social revolution and the fulfillment of the Chinese dream of unity and elimination of Western domination. Even earlier, the new communist dynasty had formulated its territorial goals. In a speech to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference on 24 September 1949, the commander-in-chief of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), Marshal Zhu De, said that the communists "demanded the waging of the revolutionary war to the very end and the liberation of all the territory of China, including Formosa, the Pescadores, Hainan Island and Tibet"⁵⁹.

While Formosa (Taiwan), the Pescadores and Hainan had belonged to the Chinese Empire for a long time, the question of Tibet was more complicated and the Tibetans claimed independence⁶⁰. In the years 1913-1949, during the civil war and World War Two, Tibet was *de facto* ruled by an independent

⁵⁸ Max Hastings, *The Korean War* (London: Pan Books, 1987), pp. 395-408.

⁵⁹ Tsering Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snow. A History of Modern Tibet since 1947* (Penguin Compass Books, 1999), p. 9.

⁶⁰ Since the 18th century, the imperial government of China maintained representatives in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa, called the *Amban*. The Chinese claim that the *Amban* was a sort of a Chinese governor, while the Tibetans argue that he was rather an ambassador and that the Chinese administration never reached to this remote and scarcely populated country elevated very high amongst mountains and eternal snows. With the fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1911, the Chinese representative was expelled. In 1913, the 13th Dalai Lama (Thubten Gyatso) proclaimed that the relationship between the Chinese emperor and Tibet had not been based on the subordination of one to the other. "We are a small, religious and independent nation", he stated. "Proclamation Issued by His Holiness the Dalai Lama XIII (1913)", <http://www.tibetjustice.org/materials/tibet/tibet1.html> (18 IV 2014). Cf. also: Robert Ford, *Wind Between The Worlds: The Extraordinary First-Person Account of a Westerner's Life in Tibet as an Official of the Dalai Lama* (David McKay Co., Inc.,

ruler. When the 13th Dalai Lama died in 1933, it took some time to find his successor and incarnation in the person of Tenzin Gyatso, who became the 14th Dalai Lama. Since he was still not of age, the 3rd Taktra Rinpoche ruled in his name as regent. At that time, Tibet was almost closed to foreigners, maintained neutrality and was unwilling to accept either British or Chinese envoys. A Kuomintang representative stayed in Lhasa for some time but he was expelled in July 1949.

During the gradual progress of the Chinese communist revolution, in the years 1945-1949, the Tibetan government (*Kashag*) made efforts to attract international attention to Tibet's independence. Of particular importance were the British and the emerging independent India. It was increasingly clear for the Tibetan regent and government that the Chinese communists intended to "liberate" Tibet. This is why the Tibetan authorities feverishly sought international support. They gained some arms supplies from India but the plan to extend the Tibetan army from 13,000 to 100,000 was far from reality. Equally futile were the Tibetan attempts to be accepted into the United Nations. Both the USSR and the Kuomintang representation objected to membership.

Expecting increased communist pressure after the proclamation of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the *Kashag* wrote to Chairman Mao in November 1949 presenting Tibet as an independent, religious country, never taken over by any foreign country, and asking Mao to respect Tibet's sovereignty. The letter was never answered. In January 1950, Radio Lhasa rejected the communists' claim that Tibet was a part of China. On 7 March 1950, a Tibetan delegation arrived in Kalimpong to start negotiations with the PRC representatives but the talks were delayed by the debate over the location. On 16 September 1950, the Chinese ambassador to India met with the Tibetan delegation in Delhi. He told them to study Articles 50-53 of the Communist Party's "Common Program", which included a three-point proposal: 1 – Tibet must be regarded as part of China; 2 – China will be responsible for Tibet's defense; 3 – all trade and international relations

1957); Michael C. Van Walt Van Praag, *The Status of Tibet: History, Rights and Prospects in International Law* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1987).

with foreign countries will be handled by the PRC. This sounded like an ultimatum. The Tibetans offered the establishment of a Chinese–Tibetan relationship on the preceptor and patron principle, but this was too little for the Chinese communists⁶¹.

On 7 October 1950, while the world was busy reacting to the North Korean invasion of the south, 40,000 Chinese PLA soldiers crossed the Tibetan border in five places, capturing Chamdo, the capital of Kham, the easternmost region of Tibet. The plan was engineered by the top three Communist Party officials of the South-West Military Region: Liu Bocheng, He Long and Deng Xiaoping. On 21 October, the *Kashag* decided to send a delegation to Beijing with an offer to accept the first of the three points if the status of the Dalai Lama would be guaranteed but a rejection of the two last points, but this offer was ignored. The Chinese were ready to march on Lhasa but preferred to continue applying political pressure. Using a conflict between the *Kashag* and the second-in-rank Panchen Lama, who declared loyalty to the Chinese, Beijing lured the Tibetan government into believing that a negotiated settlement could be reached and “peaceful liberation” was possible⁶². This was an unprecedented “peaceful” crime of aggression.

The PLA pressure forced regent Taktra Rinpoche resign and the 14th Dalai Lama took over full power in Tibet. Nevertheless, his position was helpless. He could not count on any foreign support and despite the physical difficulties of conquering Tibet, the superiority of the PLA was overwhelming. The 14th Dalai Lama decided to give up. On 23 May 1951, the Seventeen-Point Agreement was signed between the PRC leadership and the Tibetan government. The agreement welcomed the return of Tibet to the “great PRC family of nations” but promised local autonomy, reconciliation of the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama, freedom of religious belief and obliged the Tibetan authorities to carry out social reforms. To “secure” these gains, the

⁶¹ Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snow*, p. 31.

⁶² Prime Minister Zhou Enlai announced that “the PLA is determined to march westward to liberate the Tibetan people and defend the frontiers of China. We are willing to undertake peaceful negotiations to bring about this step which is necessary for the security of our Motherland. The patriots of Tibet have expressed and welcomed this and we hope that the local authorities in Tibet will not hesitate to bring about a peaceful solution to the question”. *Ibidem*, p. 45.

PLA entered Lhasa and took over strategic frontier points⁶³. In the years to come, the Tibetans were to learn what communist “liberation” was aimed at—turning Tibetan society upside down.

Soviet Tanks in Hungary in 1956

The communist leadership of Hungary opposed the de-Stalinization that started at the 20th Congress of the Soviet party in February 1956. This resistance was, however, challenged by the economic failure and by an emerging alliance of rehabilitated communists and intellectuals who looked for a more human version of communism. The reformist movements soon spilled into the public sphere. The leading force in this process was the Petőfi Circle, a discussion forum established by the Federation of the Working Youth. Though Matyas Rákosi was removed from the party leadership on Moscow’s orders in July 1956, he was succeeded by another Stalinist, Ernő Gerő. This was a most unfortunate choice, since it provoked the rise of the reformist wave, also due in part to the influence of the liberalization in Poland. While in Poland, Władysław Gomułka succeeded in avoiding a clash of two major party factions and a possible Soviet intervention, students and intellectuals in Budapest more and more vigorously demanded the reinstatement of former reformist Prime Minister Imre Nagy to the government and a purge of officials responsible for Stalinist crimes. The Gerő leadership tried to stop the liberalization, seeking the support of the secret police. The mass reformist movement and the party leadership were doomed to clash.

On 23 October 1956, a demonstration in front of the Budapest radio studios was met with gunfire from AVH secret police units. The crowd responded with violence. Some of the guns got into people’s hands and the security agents were lynched, while the police and army unsuccessfully tried to put the rebellion down. More and more soldiers joined the workers and students. Seeing the decay of communist power, the Soviet representatives in Buda-

⁶³ Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme, *A Great Turn in Tibetan History* (Beijing: New Star Publishers, 1991), pp. 8-9; Pierre-Antoine Donnet, *Tybet—życie czy zagłada?* [Tibet—Life or Extermination?] (Warszawa: Agade, 1999), pp. 30-31; Van Walt Van Praag, *The Status of Tibet*, pp. 339 ff.

pest were panicked⁶⁴. On 24 October, five Soviet divisions, called by Geró, tried to save the compromised party clique⁶⁵. To appease the insurgents, on 25 October, the party leadership was taken over by Janos Kádár, while Imre Nagy formed a new government. At first, the Soviets seemed to believe that the Nagy-Kadar team would restore control of the situation. Revolutionary councils sprang up all over the country pressing the Nagy government for far-reaching reforms, including parliamentary democracy, de-collectivization, free trade unions, cultural and religious freedom and the neutrality of Hungary. On 30 October, the Soviet Union issued a conciliatory declaration on the “foundations of friendly relations with socialist countries”, but the next day Marshall Ivan Konev, the supreme commander of the Warsaw Pact forces, received an order to put down the Hungarian revolution. This was also connected with a complicated game that the Soviets were playing during the Suez Crisis. Threatening France and Great Britain with the use of nuclear weapons, Moscow wanted to detach world attention from Hungary. Once this happened, the Kremlin decided to crush the Hungarian revolution⁶⁶.

At the same time, willing to restore order by means of winning the support of the insurgents, on 1 November, Nagy decided to proclaim Hungary’s neutrality and withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. He reconstructed the multiparty system that existed formally after 1945 and included non-Communist Party politicians into the coalition government. He also repudiated Geró’s request for Soviet intervention. The Communist Party collapsed. Some of its officials supported Nagy, others joined the ranks of the revolution. Kádár

⁶⁴ It was then that Anastas Mikoyan and Mikhail Suslov reported: “One of the most serious mistakes of the Hungarian comrades was the fact that, before 12 midnight last night, they did not permit anyone to shoot at the participants in the riots”. Johanna Granville, *In the Line: the Soviet Crackdown on Hungary, 1956-1957* (Moskva: Rossiya molodoya, 1995), p. 13. They were wrong: it was the AVH functionaries who started to shoot and provoked the rising.

⁶⁵ The Soviet troops were initially not prepared to face the urban guerilla-like fighters in Budapest. “The Soviet tanks, having no clear targets, mostly fired wildly at anything that moved and any building where they suspected insurgents might be hiding (...) The bulk of those who took up arms to fight the Soviet tanks were young workers and apprentices, many still in their teens”. Romsics, *Hungary In the Twentieth Century*, p. 306.

⁶⁶ Csaba Békés, “The 1956 Revolution and World Politics”, *The Hungarian Quarterly*, Vol. 36, Summer 1995, pp. 109-121.

was persuaded by the Soviets to leave Hungary. On 4 November, the Soviet forces launched the mass operation *Whirlwind* against the insurgents in Budapest. At the same time, a broadcast from the Soviet Union announced the formation of a new “revolutionary, worker-peasant government” under Kádár and its call for Soviet intervention.

While the Soviet troops fought against the insurgents, workers in Budapest started a general strike. The new regime offered reconciliation and reforms but was not trusted, since at the same time thousands of captured freedom fighters were executed or deported to Russia. Over 200,000 Hungarians fled through Austria to the West. Nagy and the military commander of the uprising in Budapest, Pál Maléter, were kidnapped by the MVD, an action supervised by the Soviet ambassador to Budapest Yuri Andropov. Later, in June 1958, Nagy and his aides were executed. The party membership fell from the pre-revolutionary level of some 860,000 to about 40,000. By December 1956, however, the resistance of workers was broken and the revolution was finally suppressed at the costs of tens of thousands of lives⁶⁷.

The Soviet suppression of the Hungarian revolt was definitely a crime against peace. Those responsible for the massacre of the Hungarian uprising were special Politburo envoys Anastas Mikoyan and Mikhail Suslov, Soviet Ambassador Yuri Andropov, and the head of the KGB, Ivan Serov.

Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968

The political “thaw” in Czechoslovakia started in January 1968 with the takeover of the Czechoslovak Communist Party by Alexander Dubček. Though he spent 16 years in the Soviet Union and was a party *apparatchik*, he believed in the necessity of reforms. His elevation seemed to be reassuring to the Kremlin, especially since the Czechoslovak presidency was taken over by General Ludvik Svoboda, who had fought in both world wars at the side of Russia and had facilitated the communist coup in February 1948. The

⁶⁷ Romsics, *Hungary In the Twentieth Century*, pp. 301-312; Ferenc A. Vali, *Rift and Revolt in Hungary* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961); Paul E. Zinner, *Revolution in Hungary* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962); Tibor Meray, *Thirteen Days That Shook the Kremlin. Imre Nagy and the Hungarian Revolution* (London, 1959).

objectives of the new Czechoslovak leadership included a revitalization of the economic and political system by the Communist Party, which, they thought, was possible by earning the public's confidence in the reforms. These would include emancipation of government functions and liberalization of party control of public institutions. At the same time, the Dubček leadership realized they had to keep the movement within the framework of then-current Soviet permissibility. Therefore, the goal, which Dubček once described as "socialism with a human face", was to be achieved through the controlled self-containment of the party monopoly. The movement started as an avalanche of personal changes. Old Stalinists were replaced with reform-oriented officials, even in the police and army apparatus. Censorship was largely limited in March and formally abolished in late June 1968. Officials, such as the "popular tribune", Josef Smrkovský, mixed with the masses and openly discussed even the most painful questions. The amnesty of 9 May was followed by the rehabilitation law of 25 June. Those who had been repressed, or their families, now had a legal foundation for retrials. None of these policies, however, exceeded the limits of "socialist legality". The Dubček leadership objected to any mention of de-collectivization, restoration of private ownership, multi-party democracy or leaving the Warsaw Pact.

Moscow expressed its first reservations in April 1968, claiming that the well-intentioned Dubček might be led astray by "anti-party elements". The Soviet fears were stoked by the communist rulers in neighboring East Germany and Poland, which were currently at the stage of orthodox reaction. For them, just like for Moscow, the very fact that the Czechoslovak leadership was trying to attract real popular support for the limited reform was blasphemy to Marxism-Leninism. The Kremlin was really alarmed by the "Two Thousand Words" statement of Czechoslovak intellectuals on 27 June. It was an indictment of two decades of party dictatorship, a clear endorsement of all the Dubček policies, and a warning against external pressures. The growing external criticism of Prague Spring in Moscow, Warsaw and Berlin only raised the temperature of massive support for the reforms among the Czechs and Slovaks. On 2 July, Brezhnev warned that the USSR would not "remain indifferent to the fate of socialism in another country". The Moscow *Pravda* compared the situation in Czechoslovakia to that in Hungary in 1956.

On 15 July, the Warsaw Pact members, except for Romania, demanded that Czechoslovakia restore censorship and reverse the institutional liberalization. Prague rejected these demands but offered talks.

The room for maneuver was shrinking for the Prague reformers. While Dubček was increasingly pressed by the Soviets and other communist rulers, his own associates warned him that the nation and the party would not retreat. Therefore, the Soviet–Czechoslovak negotiations held from 29 July to 1 August proved a failure. On 10 August, a draft of a new party statute was published before the planned extraordinary party congress scheduled for 9 September. It required a secret ballot in the election of party officials and allowed minority factions to keep their positions, which was clear apostasy from the Leninist concept of “democratic centralism”. The Soviets decided to strike, hoping to gain the support of the still-existing conservative part of the party leadership.

On 21 August 1968, the armies of the Soviet Union, Poland, East Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria invaded Czechoslovakia. Dubček and other members of the liberal leadership were arrested. President Svoboda refused to approve the puppet government installed by the invading armies. The extraordinary party congress met secretly in a Prague factory, but was considered “illegal” by the occupying forces⁶⁸. When Svoboda went to Moscow, he demanded the release and participation of Dubček and his aides in the Soviet–Czechoslovak talks. On 25 August, Dubček was allowed to retain his position on the condition that he denounce the extraordinary party congress and accept the “temporary” stationing of Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia, otherwise “his life would not be guaranteed”. On their return to Prague, Svoboda and Dubček

⁶⁸ The Czechs and Slovaks did not take up arms against the Warsaw Pact troops. Not able to resist them by force, they rather attacked them by passive resistance and political humor. The walls of Czech and Slovak towns were covered in graffiti such as: “Russian circus in town. Don’t feed the animals”, “Ivan! Come home! Boris is going steady with Natasha”, “Wreckers of the world, unite!”, “The bigger the tank the smaller the brain”, “Ivan, how many times are you going to liberate us?”, “With brothers like you, we beg Mother Russia to practice contraception”, “We have been deepening our friendship for 20 years, now at last we have hit the bottom” or “What is the most neutral nation in the world – Czechoslovakia, because we cannot interfere in our own affairs”. Alan Levy, *So Many Heroes* (Sagaponack, N.J.: Second Chance Press, Inc., 1972), pp. 236-237.

went public with the results of the Moscow talks, but their message was received with ambivalence. On 16 October 1968, the Soviet–Czechoslovak agreement was signed, allowing for the military occupation of Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops.

While the invasion was met with widespread passive civil resistance and while Dubček remained the party's First Secretary, the results of the Moscow talks meant the end of the "Prague Spring". With the help of the most conservative party leaders, such as Alois Indra and Vasil Biľak, who called the five armies for intervention, and given the support for some more moderate careerists, such as Gustáv Husák, the invasion troops restored censorship, brought mass media under their control, and gradually silenced the reformers. Semi-measures of defense applied by Dubček and Svoboda, accompanied by various oppressive measures, led to "normalization", that is, the restoration of the totalitarian regime. But already on 17 April 1969, Dubček had to give up his post to Husák, who also took over the position of the president of the republic from Svoboda in 1975⁶⁹.

The Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 qualifies as a crime of aggression committed by the Kremlin leaders and their satellite aides.

The Soviets and Cubans in Africa

After the decomposition of the British, French and Belgian colonial empires, Africa became a battlefield between the economic interests of Western powers and Soviet revolutionary imperialism. Decolonization was welcomed by the USSR as part of the worldwide, progressive "social and national revolution". The Soviet leadership did not sit on their hands but actively supported new African countries, exporting ideology, revolution-

⁶⁹ Cf. e.g., Z.A.B. Zeman, *Prague Spring* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1969); Vladimir V. Kusin, *The Intellectual Origins of the Prague Spring. The Development of Reformist Ideas in Czechoslovakia 1958-1967* (Cambridge University Press 1971); Alexander Dubček, *Czechoslovakia's Blueprint for Freedom* (Washington D.C.; Acropolis, 1968); Galia Golan, *Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia. The Dubček Era 1968-1969* (Cambridge University Press, 1973); Colin Chapman, *August 21st. The Rape of Czechoslovakia* (New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1968); Mark Kramer, "New Sources on the 1968 Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia", *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, No. 2.

ary expertise, arms and direct military support, whether Soviet, Cuban or even East German origin. Already in the 1960s many new African countries, such as Ghana or Guinea, were Soviet allies implementing their own vision of national “socialism”. In the 1970s, the decay of the Portuguese colonial empire and the Ethiopian revolution provided another chance for communist penetration of Africa. African communist regimes were the result of local revolutions whose leaders adopted the Marxist-Leninist pattern of rule but did not keep power without Soviet and Cuban military aid. The range and importance of Soviet and Cuban aid varied from country to country and so did Moscow’s and Havana’s responsibility for the crimes against peace and other communist crimes in these countries. Rather indirect influence was exercised by the Soviet bloc on Marxist-Leninist revolutions in Congo Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea and Dahomey, later called Benin, a little more direct in Somalia, and directly in Angola, Mozambique and Ethiopia.

In all these three latter cases the Soviet Union supplied great quantities of arms and Cuba sent thousands of combat troops. For instance, it is estimated that by the end of 1975 there were about 25,000 Cuban soldiers fighting for the sake of the Marxist People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and, when it seized power, to maintain its rule. In Mozambique, thousands of Cuban soldiers supported the struggle for power of the Marxist Front for Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO). When the FRELIMO government took over, the Cubans were participating in combating rival forces. While the communist revolution in Ethiopia could be considered a native process, it was supported not only by 1,700 Soviet advisors but also by at least 2,000 Cuban officers and soldiers⁷⁰.

The civil wars in Angola, the neighboring Namibia and Mozambique brought about a disastrous humanitarian cost. In Angola, about 4.3 million people were displaced—about one third of the entire population. A hundred thousand people perished in the fighting, a further 100,000 remained cripples, and famine, lack of health service and mass diseases brought life expectancy down to 40 years of age. By 1995, the Mozambican civil war

⁷⁰ Clive Foss, “Cuba’s African Adventure”, *History Today*, Vol. 60, No. 3, March 2010; Pamela S. Falk, “Cuba in Africa”, *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1987.

had caused about one million deaths and displaced over 5 million refugees out of a total population of about 15 million. The number of victims of the FRELIMO dictatorial rule was estimated at about 118,000⁷¹.

The Soviet and Cuban intervention in the power struggle of many African countries is difficult to define and categorize. This intervention can hardly be called outright aggression by the Soviet or Cuban state against an independent country but by instigating conflicts or supporting despotic Marxist regimes the USSR and communist Cuba committed crimes against peace. The range of these crimes should be further examined in detail.

Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan seems a clearer case of a crime against peace. Under King Mohammad Zahir Shah, Afghanistan was a neutral state. When the king visited Italy in July 1973, his cousin, General Mohammad Daoud Khan, led a military coup, dethroning Zahir Shah and proclaiming Afghanistan a republic. General Daoud favored systemic reforms in a very backward country. He also looked for support for those reforms from the Soviet Union and sent many young officers and administrators there for training. As a result, the multi-ethnic Afghan army suffered from growing internal tensions instigated by the illegal People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA).

On 28 April 1978, the PDPA and the Soviet-trained officers toppled and killed Daoud and his family. This was called the Saur Revolution according to the Persian name of the month. A Revolutionary Council led by PDPA leader Nur Muhammad Taraki took over power in Kabul. All other parties were outlawed and Taraki brought Afghanistan under Soviet patronage. The Saur Revolution ignited a popular rebellion of Islamist fighters (*mujahideen*). In the ruling PDPA were two competing factions: a moderate Khalq of Taraki and a radical group called Parcham loyal to Prime Minister Hafizullah Amin. The Khalq leadership wanted gradual change while the Parcham opted for

⁷¹ Lydia Polgreen, "Angolans Come Home to 'Negative Peace'", *The New York Times*, 30 July 2003; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mozambican_Civil_War#FRELIMO; <http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/SOD.TAB14.1C.GIF> (24 IV 2014).

more radical steps, which antagonized the Muslim clergy and traditional segments of Afghan society. In March 1979, Taraki asked the Soviets for military intervention in order to combat the *mujahideen* and to strengthen his position in the government. The Kremlin hesitated to increase its involvement in Afghanistan. In September 1979, Taraki went to Cuba and on his way back landed in Moscow, where Leonid Brezhnev advised him to get rid of Amin, who provoked the Muslim insurgency and sought closer contacts with China. Taraki failed to remove Amin. When he landed in Kabul, he was assassinated by Amin's people. The Parcham faction took over and the power in Kabul began slipping out of the hands of the Kremlin⁷².

According to a project prepared by KGB head Yuri Andropov, Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko and Minister of Defense Dmitri Ustinov, the Soviet Politburo made the decision to invade Afghanistan⁷³. On the night of 25-26 December 1979, about 100,000 Soviet soldiers started a military operation aimed at restoring full Soviet control of Afghanistan. A special KGB and GRU detachment took the presidential palace in Kabul. Amin was killed and a new ruling group was introduced under Babrak Karmal. It was announced that the formal invitation for the intervention was to be signed by Karmal, but it turned out that he arrived in Kabul a few days after the invasion and had signed his request on Soviet territory⁷⁴.

⁷² *Britannica Book of the Year 1980*, pp. 111 and 126. Protocols of Soviet Politburo considerations and Taraki's negotiations in Moscow may be found in *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, No. 4, pp. 69-75.

⁷³ This decision was recorded on a scrap of paper and read: "Concerning the situation in 'A': 1. Ratify evaluations and measures set forth by Andropov Y.V., Ustinov D.F. and Gromyko A.A. Authorize them to introduce amendments of non-essential character in the course of the execution of these measures. Questions requiring the decision of the CC should be expeditiously introduced to the Politburo. The execution of all these measures should be entrusted to comr[ades] Andropov Yu.V., Ustinov D.F. and Gromyko A.A." *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, No. 4, p. 76.

⁷⁴ John Barron, *KGB Today* (New York: Berkley Books, 1983), p. 3; Raymond L. Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation. American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1985), pp. 950 ff.; Mark Galeotti, *The Age of Anxiety. Security and Politics in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia* (London, New York: Longman, 1995.), pp. 56-57; Thomas Taylor Hammond, *Red Flag over Afghanistan. The Communist Coup, the Soviet Invasion and the Consequences* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1984).

The Soviet decision proved to be fatal from all points of view. During nine years of aggressive operations, the Soviets failed to bring Afghanistan under the control of communists even while inflicting huge human and material losses. Estimates of Afghan casualties vary from 850,000 to 1.5 million victims. The war left about 4 million wounded, crippled or otherwise disabled. About 40 percent of the population was dislocated. The number of refugees in 1988 was about 3.2 million in Pakistan and about 2.3 million in Iran. When the Soviet army was leaving Afghanistan in 1989, the Soviet Union was collapsing under the heavy burden of the military expenditure and mismanagement⁷⁵. In October 1989, speaking before the Supreme Soviet, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze acknowledged that the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan had violated the norms of international relations and human behavior⁷⁶. It was a crime against peace that resulted in a disaster for two or three generations of the Afghan people and for the world as well. Indirectly, it caused the rise of Muslim jihadism and worldwide terrorism.

* * *

Communist military aggression was part of the strategy of the Soviet leadership to export the revolution worldwide. The Soviet empire collapsed but there are new communist or post-communist challenges to world peace. Red China invaded Tibet and nobody can guarantee that Beijing will not resort to the use of force in the future. North Korea remains a constant threat. The post-communist Russia of Vladimir Putin tried to invade Georgia in 2008 and incorporated Crimea by military force in 2014. Early warning signals must be constantly monitored and reacted to, otherwise the aggressive communist/post-communist mentality may cause very serious problems.

⁷⁵ E. MacFarquhar, "After the Soviets Go", *US News and World Report*, 13 February 1989, pp. 32-36; *The Europa World Year Book 1990*, Vol. 1, p. 280.

⁷⁶ *Mitrokhin Archive*, Vol. 2, p. 477.

From Theory to Practice

Transformation of Societies

Many Western communists claim that their beliefs, never implemented in practice in their respective countries, have not harmed anyone. They argue that theirs are normal, democratic parties acting under the rule of law and their kind of communism would be different from the Soviet, Chinese or any other practical communist system. This is just another illusion of propaganda. First of all, when looking back at the tradition of these parties, we usually find they actively support Moscow or Beijing based on the acceptance of Soviet or Chinese communism and all their worst practices. Second, as we saw in Chapter Two, there is a strong link between communist theory and practice.

So far, communists have never seized power democratically. The first stage always was revolution, either home-grown or imported from abroad. After seizure of power, the communist rape of the society was made possible by a number of conditions and implemented to various degrees. First was the closing of borders. Nobody was permitted to leave the country except as an official with the blessing of the communist system. Second, the party-state government introduced control over residence and employment. By introducing an almost complete monopoly on economic activity, the government could voluntarily change the economic conditions of the populace. Third, despite verbal declarations about freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and freedom to meet, the citizens of the communist party-state faced a state monopoly on information while their speech and meetings were thoroughly controlled. This pertained in particular to artists,

scholars, and other public authorities who could make a living only if loyal to the party-state. Fourth, a new generation was brought up in the spirit of total obedience to the party-state. This was done in a perfectly controlled system of education and youth organizations. Fifth, religion was officially limited and its practitioners persecuted.

The transformation of the society was achieved by breaking basic civilized legal rules: by collective responsibility, torture, deportations, slave labor, mass murder and starvation. Instead of a utopia, an inhuman reality was formed in which old names received a new, usually reverse meaning. “Democracy” meant dictatorship of the party elite, “science” meant ideological myths, “progress” meant determination, “freedom” meant enslavement¹ and so on. The Soviet constitutions presented an unreal world in which people had all kinds of rights while in practice they were deprived of all of them. Within this system of deceit, the crucial role was played by a practice that should be called institutionalized lawlessness². The formal law was expressed in terms so vague that anybody could be punished for anything and the actual persecution was frequently based on a lack of evidence or even a formal sentence.

Although the Bolsheviks rejected “bourgeois” law, the Soviet legal system was deeply rooted in the old Russian tradition. The Western philosophy of law was almost absent before the 1864 reform of Alexander II. But even after the reform, the supremacy of law and equality before the law were just vague concepts. The Tsar was not bound by the law and the state administration had practically superior authority over the legal rules. Marxism-Leninism viewed law as a “superstructure” morphing with the change of social formations. After 1917, the Bolshevik authorities formally repealed earlier Russian

¹ Such as in the popular Soviet song *Ja drugoy takoy strany nie znayu gde tak volno dyshyt chelovek* (“I don’t know a country in this world where a man breathes so freely”).

² Chapter X of the 1936 constitution, “Fundamental Rights and Duties of Soviet Citizens”: <http://www.departments.bucknell.edu/russian/const/36cons04.html#chap10> (26 IV 2014). Cf. also: Kazimierz Zamorski, Stanisław Starzewski (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość sowiecka* [Soviet Justice] (Warszawa: Alfa, 1994), 275 pp.; Rudolph J. Rummel, *Lethal Politics. Soviet Genocide and Mass Murder since 1917* (Transaction Publishers, 1990); William Elliott Butler, *Soviet Law* (Stoneham, Massachusetts: Butterworths Legal Publishers, 1988); Peter H. Solomon jr, *Soviet Criminal Justice under Stalin* (Cambridge University Press, 1996).

legislation and established their own legal system based on Marxism-Leninism. This system abolished Western concepts of the rule of law, the civil liberties, the protection of law and other principles, such as *nullum crimen sine lege* (no crime without a law) or *neminem captivabimus nisi iure victum* (nobody should be imprisoned without a sentence). In the Soviet system, crime was not determined as a violation of law but as an action against the state, which embodied the highest rationale of social progress³.

The whole Soviet system of oppression was based on Article 58 of the criminal code. It referred to “crimes against the state” and included 14 sections, each allowing for free interpretation of what the interest of the state was. In fact, the security organs of the Soviet state could arrest anyone claiming he or she acted against this interest⁴. Chief of the Ukrainian Cheka Martin Latsis made this clear: “Do not look in the file of incriminating evidence to see whether or not the accused rose up against the Soviets with arms or words. Ask him instead to which class he belongs, what is his background, his education, his profession. These are the questions that will determine the fate of the accused”⁵.

Some Soviet legal scholars argued that repression may be applied in the absence of guilt. The purpose of public trial was in fact not to prove crime or guilt but to provide a forum for political agitation and instruction of citizens. Material truth did not matter and interrogation was the basic method of preparation of a trial. Physically and mentally tortured defendants could agree to sign any confession and logical argument did not apply⁶.

³ Cf. e.g., F.J.M. Feldbrugge, *The Emancipation of Soviet Law* (Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1992), pp. 39-41; Piers Bierne (ed.), *Revolution in Law. Contributions to the Development of Soviet Legal Theory, 1917-1938* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1990), pp. 50 ff.; *Encyclopedia of Soviet Law* (Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1985).

⁴ For details, see: Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1956* (Collins/Fontana, 1974), Vol. 1, pp. 60 ff.

⁵ Richard Pipes, *Russia Under the Bolshevik Regime* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), pp. 401-403.

⁶ A Latvian officer, Roberts Gabris, was told that “you can commit a serious crime just by thinking in the wrong way”. He replied: “If one commits a crime in thought, then punish him in thought!” This argument had a devastating effect: “The major slowly got up, leaned across his desk and suddenly swung his fist striking me right in the teeth”. Roberts Gabris, *Norilsk-Baltic Katyn*, (Apgāds Liuesma, 1990), p. 90.

The Reign of Terror

The first communist revolution of 1917, orchestrated by the Bolshevik minority, would not have survived without its own reign of terror. After the Bolsheviks lost the election to the Constituent Assembly in early 1918, they immediately opened a Pandora's box of terror. More than that, they created the ideological justification for terror repeated by adherents of communism ever since. In March 1918, Lenin received the following account of Cheka activities: "In this organization, corrupt with crime, violence and lawlessness, dominated by scoundrels and criminals, people armed to the teeth kill everybody whom they do not like". Lenin responded willingly: "it is necessary to stimulate the momentum of terror (...) and make it massive". He also added an emotional note: "beat the enemy's pate to death". Even during the New Economic Policy, in 1922, Lenin insisted on show trials and intensification of repression, demanding that his instructions should not be copied and known to "enemies". Equally personal was the attitude of Stalin and his accomplices. In the years 1937-38, Stalin personally signed 44,000 death sentences⁷.

⁷ Michał Heller, *Świat obozów koncentracyjnych a literatura sowiecka* [The World of Concentration Camps and the Soviet Literature] (Paryż, 1974), p. 169; Stéphane Courtois et al., *Czarna księga komunizmu* [The Black Book of Communism] (Warszawa: Prószyński i S-ka, 1999) pp. 111, 83, 130 and 184. There is generally a problem with numbers of victims in this book. Wherever I quote a specific figure for a particular case it is usually based on a specific source, as in this case. But all overall estimates in this book need to be treated with caution because in various sources they usually vary widely. The most impressive work on the subject by Rudolph J. Rummel, *Statistics of Democide. Genocide and Mass Murder since 1900* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 1997) clearly shows how difficult it is to arrive at least at rough estimates of the scale of the communist crimes. His scrupulous calculations are based on such a variety of sources that they seem the best we have. But there is no certainty that his averages are closer to reality than figures quoted by a single author. For instance, his conclusion that Poland should be placed among the "megamurderers" (p. 139) is totally groundless. First, line 24 of his table 7.1., on which he bases this conclusion, shows something else. Second, he does not comment on the difference between the German estimates (1 million to 2 million victims) and Polish ones (556,000). Third, "democide" blurs the question of the perpetrators. In the Polish case, it was not "Poland" but three categories of perpetrators: the Soviet army and NKVD that occupied Poland at the end of World War Two, the new communist authorities, and Polish civilians who sometimes lynched the escaping Germans. Fourth, the expulsion of Germans from the new Polish territory was

In practice, communist rule has always been based on terror. Between March and August 1919, the political department in the Commissariat of Internal Affairs in the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic (HSR) was headed by Otto Korvin, who directed the secret police, which were organized along the pattern of the Bolshevik Cheka. He cooperated with groups of “Lenin’s Boys” (*Lenin fiúk*) of József Cserny, mostly criminals released from prisons at the beginning of the revolution who plundered the civilian population and kidnapped people to force information and for ransom. Korvin was responsible for a wave of the Red Terror, including unlawful arrests of “people’s enemies”, torture during investigations and executions carried out by his security apparatus. Although the Social Democrats of the HSR criticized these methods, Hungarian communists such as Béla Kun, Tibor Szamuely, Mátyás Rákosi and György Lukács, supported the terror⁸.

Decades later, communist celebrity historian Eric Hobsbawm wrote: “If a revolutionary party did not seize power when the moment and the masses called for it, how did it differ from a non-revolutionary one?”⁹ Further on, he explained the Red Terror by asking: “Who could afford to consider the possible long-term consequences for the revolution of decisions which had to be taken *now*, or else there would be an end to the revolution and no further consequences to consider? One by one the necessary steps were taken”¹⁰. Once these steps were taken, they never ended. In plain language, these

a decision of the Big Three in Potsdam and not of any Polish or even Polish communist authority. Another example of Rummel’s inaccuracy is his estimate of the victims of Chinese communists in his *Death by Government* (Transaction Publishers, 2008). His overall estimate of 35,236,000 victims (p. 100) seems very precise but his figure for the years of “retrenchment” (10,729,000 for the years 1959-63) definitely leaves out those who starved during the Great Leap Forward, a number that can be estimated at around 35 million (see footnote 92 of this chapter). Although valuable as a point of reference, all of Rummel’s estimates should be treated with the same caution as single estimates.

⁸ Rudolf L. Tökes, *Béla Kun and the Hungarian Soviet Republic* (New York: FA. Praeger Publishers, 1967), pp. 158-160 and 179-180. After the fall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, Korvin did not manage to escape. Arrested in August 1919, he was sentenced to death and executed.

⁹ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes. The Short Twentieth History, 1914-1991* (London: Michael Joseph, 1995), p. 63.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 64.

steps meant a reign of terror: mass murder, physical and mental torture and the destruction of millions of lives of those who survived.

Violation of Civilized Legal Rules

Since communism aimed at a revolutionary change of human society, all considerations of communist crimes must start with the consequences of the implementation of communist philosophy of law. It was in fact the communist legal system that created unlimited opportunities for criminal decisions. The “class” logic of Soviet law as well as indiscriminate administrative decisions created a reality that should be called the “rule of the jungle”.

Communist party-states openly declared that their aim was to eliminate “exploiting classes”. This is why it was obvious for the communists to outlaw certain groups of society¹¹. For instance, in January 1918, the Mohyliv Soviet resolved to outlaw all members of the Union of Landowners, mostly Poles, since “bourgeois Poland declared a holy war against the Russian revolution”¹². In fact, this resolution referred to all soldiers of the Polish Corps detached from the Russian army after the February Revolution as if they acted as an army of “bourgeois Poland”, which was still non-existent. This principle lay at the foundation of the whole system of persecution of the “enemies of the people”: whoever opposed the communist system in any way could be accused of supporting these outlawed classes. This was the policy started by Lenin himself who said in January 1918 that the aim of the Bolsheviks was to “purge the Russian land of all kinds of harmful insects”¹³.

Expropriation of the “exploiting classes” was not enough for the communists. Former owners, rarely large-scale businessmen but usually petty merchants and craftsmen, were deprived of basic rights. A *New York Times* report

¹¹ For instance, the Polish communist constitution of 1952 stipulated in its Article 3 that the Polish People’s Republic “limits, squeezes out and liquidates social classes living on the exploitation of workers and peasants”. *Konstytucja Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej* [The Constitution of the Polish People’s Republic] (Warszawa, 1964).

¹² Władysław Glinka, *Pamiętnik wielkiej wojny* [Diary of the Great War] (Warszawa, 1928), Vol. 3, p. 218.

¹³ Vladimir Lenin, *Sobrannyye sochineniya* (Collected Works), Vol. 35, p. 68, quoted according to Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, Vol. 1, p. 27.

of 2 July 1949 precisely described their situation in Romania: “In Bucharest alone almost 200,000 former ‘bourgeois’ elements and functionaries of the pre-communist regimes are reaching the end of their tether. They are being expelled from their homes and, since they have been declared ineligible for bread-ration tickets, have had to exist by selling personal possessions and furniture to buy food on the black market. Although technically they are eligible for the lowest categories of work, in reality this does not work because of the complex biographical data they must fill out before receiving such jobs. When communist officials review such applications they generally find plenty of material in them providing reasons to refuse them”¹⁴.

In certain cases, the range of allies of the world bourgeoisie could take a more formal shape. After the incorporation of Lithuania into the USSR in 1940, the “anti-Soviet” and “socially alien element” was specified by newly appointed Commissar for the Interior Alexandras Guzevičius in his instructions of 28 November 1940:

(a) All former members of anti-Soviet parties, organizations and groups: Trotskyists, rightists, essers (socialist revolutionaries), Mensheviks, social democrats, anarchists and the like;

(b) All former members of national chauvinistic anti-Soviet parties, organizations and groups: nationalists, Young Lithuania, Voldemarists, populists, Christian Democrats, members of nationalist terrorist organizations (‘Iron Wolf’), active members of student fraternities, active members of the Riflemen’s Association, Catholic terrorist organization ‘White Horse’;

(c) Former gendarmes, policemen, former employees of political and criminal police and of the prisons;

(d) Former officers of the czar, Petlura and other armies;

¹⁴ “Highlights of Romanian History in Relation to the International Communist Conspiracy” by Mihail Farcasanu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 97. Farcasanu commented: “Never was a larger margin given to the arbitrary and tyrannical power of a dictatorial government. The *bon plaisir*, the *letters de cachet*, etc., of the so much decried absolute kings of France had never attained such a systematic and thorough infringement of human freedoms and rights as this omnipotent and omnipresent discretionary power. Never had feudalism abolished with one blow all guarantees and all rights of human beings as this provision for the establishing of the absolute power of the Communist Party does”. Ibidem, p. 90.

(e) Former officers and members of military courts of the armies of Lithuania and Poland;

(f) Former polit(ical) bandits and volunteers of the white and other armies;

(g) Persons expelled from the communist party and Komsomol for anti-party offences;

(h) All deserters, polit(ical) emigrants, re-emigrants, repatriates and contrabandits;

(i) All citizens of foreign countries, representatives of foreign firms, employees of offices of foreign countries, former citizens of foreign countries, former employees of legations, firms, concessions and stock companies of foreign countries;

(j) Persons having personal contacts and maintaining correspondence abroad, with foreign legations and consulates, Esperantists and philatelists;

(k) Former employees of the departments of ministries (from referents up);

(l) Former workers of the Red Cross and Polish refugees;

(m) Religionists (priests, pastors), sectants and active religionists of religious communities;

(n) Former noblemen, estate owners, merchants, bankers, commercialists (who availed themselves of hired labor), shop owners, owners of hotels and restaurants”¹⁵.

This procedure of group accusations qualifies as the foundation of all crimes of genocide.

In many cases, people were first deported to remote camps and only then submitted to farcical “trials”. For instance, after 1940, Latvian officers were first put in the Riga prison and then transported by trains and barges to the ill-famed Norilsk camp beyond the Arctic Circle. There they were divided into three categories. The first consisted of all those who had fought against the Red Army from 1918 to 1920. The second included those who had participated in courts martial. The third included those who had worked in Latvian

¹⁵ *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 3, p. 471.

intelligence or counter-intelligence. Officers from these three groups were to receive capital punishment. All others were simply sentenced to 10 or more years of forced labor¹⁶. This was a violation of the principle *neminem captivabimus nisi iure victum*. By common saying, the Soviets applied the principle “find me a man and I will find him an article of the criminal code”.

The Soviet justice totally ignored the principle *nullum crimen sine lege*. A Latvian woman was arrested in 1940 and sent to a camp near Krasnoyarsk. Later she was exiled for life in Siberia. In 1956, she was freed and allowed to return to Riga. Neither in 1940 nor in 1956 was she told the reason for her imprisonment. She suspected that the reason was to make room for a Russian officer who had been assigned her apartment in 1940¹⁷.

The Chinese communist laws were even more flamboyant. In the document called “One Hundred Principles of Destruction of the Old and Establishment of the New”, the leaders of the Cultural Revolution wrote: “Stormy waves of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution attack powerful influence of bourgeoisie, smash bourgeois ideas, old culture and old habits (...) We want to raise high the red standard of Mao Zedong, to open fire at four old elements, to destroy capitalism, revisionism, bourgeois ideas and all other concepts contrary to the thought of Mao (...) 1. All committees should be responsible for placing boards with Mao quotations in all streets (...) 5. Each citizen should always bear a collection of Mao quotes, constantly study them and act according to them (...) 24. All owners of shops and real estate who live by exploitation and suck the blood of the working people are ordered: you sons-of-bitches have to immediately turn your property to the state (...) 28. It is necessary to stop sales of such products as perfume or creams (...) 33. Public baths will no longer serve bourgeois rabble, their feet and backs will be no longer massaged (...) 36. Children should be taught revolutionary songs. Folk songs about cats and dogs will not return (...) 43. It is forbidden to keep grasshoppers, fish tanks, cats and dogs at home. There is no place for such bourgeois habits in China (...) 44. Accounts of rich men, bad elements, rightists, counter-revolutionaries, rich peasants, etc. will be

¹⁶ Gabris, *Norilsk*, p. 76.

¹⁷ Eugene E. Williams, *Gulag to Independence. Personal Accounts of Gulag Survivors* (Decatur, Michigan: Johnson Graphics, 1992), pp. 98-101.

blocked (...) 45. Bourgeois sons-of-bitches may not visit public places, such as parks, etc. If they spend time on leisure riding on buses, their monthly tickets will be confiscated (...) 55. Bourgeois rabble! You have to immediately return to the state all the money that you took before liberation (...) 65. The system of “heads of family” is abolished. The youth have the right to criticize parents and older members of family (...) 67. Representatives of bad social categories do not have the right to sporting exercise in public (...) 85. It is forbidden to produce a lot of soft chairs and sofas”¹⁸. This kind of instruction could be used to persecute anyone anytime. And this is what happened during the Cultural Revolution.

Typical for the Soviet lawlessness were absurd accusations. Many of the arrested non-Soviet citizens were accused of “treason toward the Fatherland”, that is “activities against the Union of the SSR’s”, for instance “for harming the military power of the Union of SSR”, “state independence or territorial integrity”, “sabotage, divulging the military, desertion or flight abroad”, that is, crimes punishable by “the supreme penalty—death by shooting and confiscation of the entire property”. This was the wording of Article 58-1 A of the Soviet criminal code¹⁹. The Soviet “judiciary” apparently felt entitled to treat the outside world as part of their “Fatherland”. For instance, workers of the Wilno (Vilnius) branch of Bank Polski, including its Vice Director Henryk Nowak, were arrested and deported “from the territory of Western Belorussia” eastward in October 1939 for “squandering state property”. Which state this property had belonged to was not specified: after their arrest, they had no chance to squander the Polish bank property grabbed by the Soviets, while the Soviets were not entitled to try a case concerning Polish state property²⁰. Prisoners were often accused of committing “sins against the Soviet power”, which were to be established during cruel interrogations. “Court” verdicts were frequently made without hearing the case. A Polish doctor was sentenced in Moscow to eight years

¹⁸ Quote in Polish periodical *Karta*, 1992, No. 7, pp. 79-83.

¹⁹ Testimony of General Stasys Rastikis, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 1, p. 389. On applications of Article 58: Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, Vol. 1, pp. 60-92.

²⁰ Narkomindel note to the Polish embassy in Kuybyshev of 7 October 1942. Archiwum Akt Nowych (Archive of Recent Records) in Warsaw, Bank Polski, File 721.

by default for being an “enemy of the people” and a *sotsialno opasnyi element* (socially dangerous element)²¹.

Since until the end of World War Two the Soviet Union had not ratified international conventions on the treatment of prisoners of war, masses of soldiers captured by the Soviet armies—Poles in 1939 and Germans, Poles, Hungarians, Romanians and other nationalities after 1944—were usually treated as other “enemies of the people”.

Collective family responsibility was another communist violation of modern human standards. When General Stasys Raštikis, the Lithuanian chief of staff, went into hiding in 1941, the Soviets arrested his wife and three daughters. The oldest of them was 11 years old, the second 4 years old and the third 12 months old. The daughters were deported to Siberia separately without their mother²². The niece of Bishop Kung Pinmei of Shanghai, Maria Kung Chu, arrested in September 1958, spent 21 years in communist prisons²³.

A legal obligation to work was also a principle invented by the Bolsheviks. This principle was introduced by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee (VTsIK) by the “labor code” of 10 December 1918. All citizens of the Bolshevik republic between 16 and 50 years of age were obliged to work, with the exception of those sick or disabled and pregnant women. A standard day’s work was eight hours, but in case of an emergency or danger to the new system, the duration of a day’s work could be extended²⁴. In December 1919, Leon Trotsky announced in *Pravda* that human beings are lazy by nature and should be “initiated to zealous work through economic pressure and education” in the shape of forced labor. As a result, anyone who could not prove employment could be persecuted. During the war, under communism absenteeism was treated as desertion from the battlefield²⁵.

²¹ Testimony of K.F. Zamorski, Starzewski (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość sowiecka*, pp. 259-260 and 300.

²² Testimony of General Stasys Rastikis, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 1, p. 387.

²³ Robert Royal, *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century. A Comprehensive World History* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2000), pp. 334-337.

²⁴ *Legal Record of the Russian Soviet Republic*, 10 December 1918, No. 87-88, Item 905.

²⁵ *Pravda*, 17 December 1919. Cf. also: *Rosja sowiecka pod względem społecznym i gospodarczym* [Soviet Russia from the Social and Economic Point of View] (Warszawa: IGS), 1922, Vol. 1, pp. 4 ff.

Murder

Simple murder was formally prohibited by Soviet law, but when committed for political reasons, it went unpunished. As a continuation of their revolutionary experience, the communist rulers used to treat murder as a means of resolving political issues. Symbolically, the founding murder of the Soviet system was the assassination of Tsar Nicholas II and his family. On 17 July 1918, the royal family, held by the Bolsheviks under house arrest at Ipatiev House in Yekaterinburg, was awakened around 2:00 am and led down to the basement on the pretext that anti-Bolshevik forces were approaching the city. Tsar Nicholas was accompanied by his wife, Alexandra, their children, 23-year-old Olga, 21-year-old Tatiana, 19-year-old Maria, 17-year-old Anastasia and 14-year-old Alexei, as well as three of their servants, the Tsar's personal physician, Evgeni Botkin, his wife's maid, Anna Demidova, and the family chef, Ivan Kharitonov. A firing squad of seven soldiers was already there under the command of a Bolshevik officer, Yakov Yurovsky. The latter announced that they had been condemned to death by the Ural Soviet. The Tsar managed to ask, "What? What?" and was shot through the head. The other victims were also murdered in cold blood. The Tsar's daughters survived the first hail of bullets, so they stabbed them to death with bayonets. There was no legal procedure, no defense, only execution—by all means a political murder²⁶.

The need to kill a political figure, even a brother-in-arms of the revolution, was obvious for the Bolshevik leaders²⁷. Most frequently, this kind of

²⁶ Vladimir Abarinov, "Z grobu do grobu" [From Grave to Grave], *Sovershenno Sekretno*, October 2007, in: *Forum*, 21-27 January 2008, pp. 54-57. Leon Trotsky argued that the Tsar's family was murdered on orders from Lenin. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shooting_of_the_Romanov_family (9 IV 2014). Cf. also: Victor Alexandrov, *The End of the Romanovs* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967); Robert K. Massie, *Nicholas and Alexandra—The Fall of the Romanov Dynasty* (New York: Modern Library, 2012).

²⁷ The very devilish disposition of the Soviet Bolsheviks may be illustrated by an episode quoted by Jörg Baberowski. Facing the death penalty, one of the leading Bolsheviks, Yuri Piatakov, wrote to Stalin: "I am a good communist. I will prove it to you and I will shoot my wife". Nevertheless, Piatakov was executed. "Tajemnice wielkiego terror" [Mysteries of the Great Terror], Jörg Baberowski interviewed by Piotr Zychowicz, *Do Rzeczy*, 17-23 March 2014, p. 67.

murder was based on court farce. It is useless to describe the evolution of Soviet law concerning capital punishment. Killing for political reasons was a Soviet standard. After the death of Lenin, Soviet Russia was ruled by the *troika* of Joseph Stalin, Grigory Zinoviev and Lev Kamenev, who marginalized Trotsky in the internal party power struggle. Seeing the growing role of Stalin, Kamenev and Zinoviev wanted to restore Trotsky but Stalin allied himself with Nikolai Bukharin and Prime Minister Alexei Rykov and defeated Trotsky, forcing him out of the Soviet Union in 1929. Both Kamenev and Zinoviev were ousted from the communist party. In 1934, Leningrad party boss Sergei Kirov was assassinated, probably on Stalin's order. Kamenev and Zinoviev were accused of being morally complicit and sentenced to long-term imprisonment. In August 1936, they were brought to Moscow and a show trial staged in which they agreed to confess to having led a terrorist network aimed at killing Stalin himself. The Military Collegium of the Supreme Soviet Court was presided over by Vasily Ulrikh and the prosecution was led by Andrey Vyshinsky. The defendants' confessions came as a surprise to the public but they had been offered the life and safety of themselves and their families. After the trial, though, they were all shot²⁸.

In the 1930s, Stalin was getting rid of all his potential rivals and so in January 1937 another show trial was staged. This time, the 17 defendants included Karl Radek, Yuri Piatakov, Grigory Sokolnikov and others. They were also accused of plotting to undermine the Soviet regime according to the Stalinist theory of an "ever-intensifying class struggle", meaning that with the growing strength of the "socialist" system the "class enemy" was more and more vicious in reaching the highest echelons of power. Under torture, the defendants also confessed to having been traitors. In July 1937, Stalin and his aides forced the military tribunal to sentence to death Mikhail Tukhachevsky and a number of the highest commanders of the Red Army. In March 1938, another show trial was organized in Moscow. This time, the defendants were Bukharin, Rykov, former NKVD head Genrikh Yagoda and 18 others. None of them survived. The man who prepared the trial, Nikolai Yezhov, Yagoda's successor as head of the NKVD, soon followed them. In

²⁸ Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: A Reassessment* (Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 91.

April 1939, he was arrested and sentenced to death in a secret trial in February 1940. The “bloody dwarf”, as he was called because of his height and cruelty, was soon executed²⁹.

The murder of opponents was widespread during the Spanish Civil War. While the tragic fate of poet Federico Garcia Lorca, a keen supporter of the Republic, murdered by the counterrevolutionaries, is well known, the names of outstanding writers and scholars such as José Maria Albinana y Sanz, Rafael Alcotera Martinez, Rufino Blanco y Sanchez, Luis Urbano Lanaspá and Jesus Requejo San Roman, killed by the leftist Republicans, are almost forgotten.

Murder was also a method for resolving “class conflict” in invaded territories. For instance, after the Soviets occupied eastern Poland, on 20 September 1939, Red Army soldiers killed landowner Michał Krasieński at the crossroads between Chrystowicze and Lisówka near Grodno and did not allow his body to be buried for a week. Other Polish landowners, Antoni Jundziłł and Antoni Wołkowski were also killed and the latter’s wife was buried alive³⁰. The “revolutionary justice” of the Red Army soldiers also allowed for the murder of General Józef Olszyna-Wilczyński, commander-in-chief of the Grodno Military District of the Polish Army, shot in the presence of his wife. This war crime took place near Sopoćkinie on 22 September 1939³¹. The mass murder in September 1939 of surrendering Polish soldiers by the Soviets was not unique. There was, for instance, the case of soldiers from the

²⁹ On hearing the verdict, Yezhov collapsed, so the guards removed him from the room. When his appeal for clemency was declined, he became hysterical and wept. This time, he was dragged out of the room, struggling with the guards and screaming. He was shot later that night in an execution chamber that had been built according to his own specifications. Marc Jansen and Nikita Petrov, *Stalin's Loyal Executioner: People's Commissar Nikolai Ezhov, 1895-1940* (Hoover Institution Press, 2002), pp. 188-189. Ironically, Yezhov's family claimed he had been a victim of Stalinist repression. Wiktor Bajer, “Jeżow nie został oczyszczony” [Yezhov Was Not Cleared], *Życie*, 5 June 1998.

³⁰ Bronisław Kuśnierz, *Stalin and the Poles* (London, 1949), p. 45.

³¹ Leon Mitkiewicz, *Wspomnienia kowieńskie 1938-1939* [The Kowno {Kaunas} Memoirs, 1938-1939] (Londyn, 1963), p. 264. “I will never forget the look of the pale face of this woman—wrote a witness about the General’s wife—in whose eyes the horror was frozen of the tragic experience”. Karol Liszewski, *Wojna polsko-sowiecka 1939* [The Polish-Soviet War of 1939] (Londyn: Polska Fundacja Kulturalna, 1986), p. 87.

135th Infantry Regiment on the Bug River bank on 1 October 1939³². Being a landowner or defending one's country against communist aggression was a sufficient reason to be simply killed.

Though by 1939 the power struggle in the Kremlin was long resolved, Stalin did not allow anyone to feel safe. His long reach finally touched Trotsky who had emigrated far away to Mexico. In May 1940, Trotsky survived the first attempt on his life by Soviet agent Iosif Grigulevich, the famous Mexican painter David Alfaro Siqueiros and Comintern agent Vittorio Vidale. By the way, Siqueiros was never tried for this attempt and remained an international celebrity. A second attempt on 20 August 1940, this time by undercover NKVD agent Ramón Mercader, was successful: Trotsky was killed with a mountaineer's ice axe³³. In Trotsky's case, there was even no show trial but pure murder.

When allowed by a higher Soviet authority, murder would remain unpunished under any circumstances. This was particularly frequent in Eastern Europe at the end of World War Two and during the Sovietization of the satellite countries. Nobody could feel safe, from the bottom to the top of society. For instance, in late 1944, Red Army soldiers murdered 26 civilians of Gyömrő and drunken Soviet tank crewmen ran over and killed future Prime Minister Ferenc Nagy's mother³⁴. Political trials in the Sovietized satellites after World War Two were as farcical as in the Soviet Union and often ended with capital punishment. This was the case of the leader of the Bulgarian Peasant Party Nikola Petkov, who was sentenced to death and executed in September 1947³⁵. Witold Pilecki, a Polish Home Army (AK) officer who had become a voluntary prisoner at the Nazi German Auschwitz concentration

³² J. Abramski, R. Żywiecki, *Katyń* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Polskie, 1979), p. 5. Similar murders took place in Wilno (Vilnius), Grodno (Hrodna), near Augustów, Świsłoczek (Svislach), Oszmiana (Ašmena) and Mołodeczno (Maladziečna). *Zbrodnia katyńska w świetle dokumentów* [The Katyn Crime in the Light of Documents] (Londyn, 1975), pp. 10-11.

³³ Dmitri Volkogonov, *Trotsky: The Eternal Revolutionary* (Free Press, 1996), p. 466; Christopher Andrew, Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield. The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), pp. 86-88.

³⁴ Nagy, *The Struggle Behind the Iron Curtain*, pp. 116-119 and 141.

³⁵ [Jerzy] [Jackowicz] "Petkov Nikola", in: Wojciech Roszkowski, Jan Kofman (eds.), *Biographical Dictionary of Central and Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century* (M.E. Sharpe, 2008), pp. 770-771.

camp with the aim to set up an underground resistance network and to report atrocities committed by the Germans, was executed by the communists in March 1948³⁶. Milada Horáková, who had spent four years in a German prison during World War Two, was one of the top leaders of the Czechoslovak National Socialist Party and president of the Council of Czechoslovak Women in the years 1945-1948. Arrested in September 1949, she was the main defendant in May and June 1950 of the first show trial in Czechoslovakia, staged by Soviet advisers. Along with three other defendants, she was sentenced to death. Despite numerous protests (e.g., of Albert Einstein), she was executed on 27 June 1950³⁷. Executions such as these, even if based on a fake trial, were simple murders.

Murder seemed the best solution for the Kremlin in many cases. One of the most intriguing was the attempt on the life of Pope John Paul II on 13 May 1981. It is now almost certain that Ali Ağça was part of a Soviet plot in which an important role was played by the Bulgarian communist services³⁸.

³⁶ In April 1943, Pilecki escaped from Auschwitz in order to prepare a report about the situation in the camp for the intelligence department of the AK High Command. He later fought in the Warsaw Rising as an AK fighter. Taken prisoner after the collapse of the rising, he was held in the officer POW camps at Lamsdorf and Murnau. At the end of 1945, Pilecki returned to Poland. On 5 May 1947, he was arrested by the communist State Security Office on charges of collecting intelligence for General Władysław Anders who had stayed in the West. Prime Minister Józef Cyrankiewicz, who was familiar with Pilecki's wartime activities, refused to intervene. Sentenced to death on 15 March 1948, Pilecki was executed soon afterwards. W[o]jciech R[oszkowski], "Pilecki Witold", in: Wojciech Roszkowski, Jan Kofman (eds.), *Biographical Dictionary*, p. 781; Michael Foot, *Six Faces of Courage* (London, 1978).

³⁷ *Československý Biografický Slovník* [Czechoslovak Biographical Dictionary] (Praha: Academia, 1992), p. 228; Zora Dvořáková, Jiří Doležal, *O Miladě Horákové a Milada Horáková o sobě* [About Milada Horakova and Milada Horakova about Herself] (Praha 2001).

³⁸ Claire Sterling, *The Time of the Assassins* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1984); Paul B. Henze, *The Plot to Kill the Pope* (New York: Scribner, 1983); Jean-Louis Bruguière, *Ce que je n'ai pas pu dire* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 2009); Marek Skwara, Andrzej Grajewski, *Agça nie był sam* [Agça Was Not Alone] (Katowice: Instytut Gość Media, 2015); Andrzej Grajewski, "Co wiedział Żiwkow?" [What Did Zhivkov Know?], *Gość Niedzielny*, 23 November 2014, pp. 49-51. In Ağça's testimonies there are hints of his encounter with Soviet intelligence in Iran. In November 1979, the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Soviet party issued an instruction concerning "all possible" methods to be used against the Pope, including those "exceeding disinformation and discreditation". "Sowieckie archiwa na wpół otwarte" [Soviet Archives Are Half Open. Piotr Giller interview with Mark Kramer],

Human life did not matter much to Chinese communists either. One of the most blood-curdling quotes came from Chairman Mao Zedong, who said during the 1957 communist summit in Moscow: “Can one foresee the number of human lives that a future war may take? It may be one third of the 2 billion inhabitants of the world, that is, a mere 900 million people (...) Should half of mankind be destroyed, the other half would survive, and what is more, imperialism would be wiped out completely and there would be only socialism in the world”³⁹. In 1966, Mao wrote to his wife: “After the chaos the world reaches peace again, seven or eight years after that the chaos needs to happen again”⁴⁰. In other words, a murderous revolution should be started every seven or eight years, according to Mao. During the Cultural Revolution, Red Guard activists were instigated to kill and torture whomever they desired. “In the fall of 1966—remembers a witness of the Chinese Cultural Revolution—I was on a train on a revolutionary linkup and I saw some other Red Guards accuse an old lady. She was very old and very frail. The Red Guards accused her of being a capitalist. Then they started beating her. They beat her to death. At the next train stop they just put her body on the platform and told someone at the station that she was a capitalist. Then they got back on the train to continue their revolutionary linkup”⁴¹. This kind of attitude toward human life is also at the root of the widely practiced use of the death penalty in contemporary China, a sentence frequently given even for embezzlement or other economic crimes.

Defenders of communism frequently admit that the revolution indeed brought a lot of suffering and mistakes but argue that the killings could be justified by the wonderful idea of “social justice”. First, it is very doubtful whether “social justice” can really be implemented through a violation of regular justice. Second, was the idea behind the Cheka’s activities really wonderful? An answer could probably be given by Professor Grigori Mairanovsky,

Rzeczpospolita, 13 May 2008. The case was never fully explored as it would probably mean accusations against the top Soviet leaders, with all its international implications.

³⁹ Quoted after: Dick Wilson, *Anatomy of China* (New York: Mentor Book, 1969), p. 221.

⁴⁰ Quoted after: “Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party”, *The Epoch Times Special Edition* (New York: The Epoch Times International, Inc., 1999), p. 16.

⁴¹ Anne F. Thurston, *Enemies of the People. The Ordeal of Intellectuals in China’s Great Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 134.

head of a special toxicological section of the Soviet Interior Ministry who murdered “enemies of the people” selected by the authorities by means of sophisticated poisons whose effects were closer to heart attacks or other natural causes. Can the defenders of communism claim that “social justice” justified the death of Greek-Catholic Bishop Fedor Romzha, who was killed in this manner?⁴²

Was the GDR practice of shooting at escapees trying to break through the fences separating GDR from West Germany a defense of “social justice”? About 200 people were killed on the relevant order. Nobody, including the head of the GDR communists Erich Honecker or his Minister of Security Erich Mielke were tried for these murders. The East German Stasi functionaries even murdered dissidents by excessive doses of X-rays⁴³. The Bulgarian security services used a special device hidden in an umbrella to poison dissident writer Georgi Markov in London on 7 September 1978⁴⁴. Was this murder also committed in the name of “social justice”?

The communist leaders of the Cuban revolution were also cold-blooded murderers. Raul Castro is personally responsible for 551 executions and Che Guevara for 216 murders. According to a witness, “Che never tried to conceal his cruelty. Just the opposite: the more he was asked for clemency, the more he showed relentlessness”⁴⁵. Those people who wear Che T-shirts should really study the life and deeds of their hero.

The mentality of communist leaders was sometimes very close to that of common criminals. Since there were too few communists to rule Romania after 1945, they frequently recruited new administrators from the ranks of criminals. For instance, there was a factory in Bucharest whose com-

⁴² Paweł Sudopłatow, *Wspomnienia niewygodnego świadka* [Special Tasks. The Memoirs of an Unwanted Witness—a Soviet Spymaster] (Warszawa: Dom Wydawniczy Bellona, 1999), p. 238; Antoni Zambrowski, “Burzliwe życie sowieckiego doktora Mengele” [The Stormy Life of the Soviet Doctor Mengele], *Gazeta Polska*, 4 July 2007.

⁴³ Uwe Müller, Grit Hartmann, “Proces norymberski przeciwko komunistom?” [A Nuremberg Trial of Communists?], *Do Rzeczy*, 15-21 July 2013, pp. 64-67; Przemysław Konopka, “Mordowali rentgenem” [They Murdered with X-rays], *Życie*, 21 May 1999.

⁴⁴ Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (Basic Books, 1999), pp. 388-389.

⁴⁵ Axel Gylden, “Ciemna strona ikony” [The Dark Side of an Icon], *L'Express*, 27 September 2007, after: *Forum*, 8-14 October 2007, p. 53.

mittee was run by an individual who had been sentenced for murder⁴⁶. In jails, it was even worse, since many functionaries of prisons were released criminals. This was the case of Aiud prison, where the communists put Sile Constantinescu—a pathological murderer who had killed his mother and father—in as director⁴⁷. Another murderer was appointed the head of the police in Iași⁴⁸. Also, police stations were extremely dangerous places, since arrested men were usually tortured and women raped⁴⁹. Schoolgirls arrested on St. Michael Day during the celebration of King Michael's Nameday in 1945 were raped and infected with syphilis⁵⁰. What do these have in common with social justice?

Torture

Imprisonment itself was torture. In the cellars of Vologda prison, Gustaw Herling-Grudziński met peasant prisoners who “did not distinguish day from night, did not remember the season of the year, did not know how long they were in prison and whether they would leave it. Dreaming on their fur coats—with their clothes and shoes on, unwashed—they were talking in delirium about their families, houses and animals”⁵¹. A Polish journalist remembered: “In the Baranowicze (Baranovichi) prison, inmates pissed on my face as I lay 20 centimeters from the so-called *parasha*, a wooden, stinking vessel for physiological needs, just as in the Leningrad prison where on the other side I bordered the former prime minister of Estonia and some Soviet colonel from the Finnish war, but where the lack of room and lice were no better”⁵².

⁴⁶ Testimony of Gheorghe Popescu Botosani, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 115.

⁴⁷ Statement of Raoul Gheorghiu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 120.

⁴⁸ Testimony of Constanine Visoianu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 852.

⁴⁹ Testimony of Gheorghe Popescu Botosani, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 116.

⁵⁰ Testimony of Raoul Gheorghiu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 117; Testimony of King Michael of Romania, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1007.

⁵¹ Gustaw Herling-Grudziński, *Inny świat*, p. 31.

⁵² Zamorski, Starzewski (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość sowiecka*, p. 226. Cf. also: Anne Applebaum, *Gulag. A History* (New York: Doubleday, 2003), chapters 7 and 8.

Interrogation was another form of torture. Alexander Solzhenitsyn described at least 31 methods for breaking a prisoner⁵³. They were psychologically harassed and ultimately cruelly beaten to force confessions. A Polish officer remembered seeing a Ukrainian inmate, Mihail Shevchuk, beaten during interrogation: “His whole body, his nape and back, arms, thighs and even heels were smashed every inch, covered with big green and dark violet stains, a result of the plethora of muscles. An examination of his abdomen showed a sever contusion of his liver, obviously a result of jumping on his belly”. Notified by other prisoners, the guard only laughed and answered: *nichevo svolochi nye budyet* (he’ll be all right, the scoundrel)⁵⁴. Nevertheless, Shevchuk soon died in terrible pain. In November 1946, activists of the Romanian National Peasant Party were terrorized by arrest and torture. Emil Onaca, chief of the NPP delegation in Ceanul Mare, was arrested and badly beaten by communist policemen. The chief of the local police, Augustin Albou, struck his face with a pistol and, cursing him, said: “We are going to kill all ‘reactionaries’ and show you what you get for your American and British sympathies”⁵⁵.

Another method of torture was fake execution. In 1941, Lithuanian Canon Antanas Petraitis, pastor of the Erzvilkas parish, was inhumanly tortured and then NKVD henchmen pretended to execute him⁵⁶. The Soviet interro-

⁵³ These methods included sleeplessness, persuasion, fury, humiliation, intimidation, confusion, lies, playing on affections, starvation, punishment cells and various form of physical abuse. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, Vol. 1, pp. 93-143. Cf. also: Zamorski, Starzewski (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość sowiecka*, pp. 255-278.

⁵⁴ Zamorski, Starzewski (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość sowiecka*, p. 242.

⁵⁵ Written statement of Emil Onaca, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 125.

⁵⁶ “I was certain that they were going to shoot me—remembered Petraitis—so I made the cross sign; I crossed myself, and then they laughed and they said: ‘Here’s a fool. Do you think that you would chase away the bullets by making a cross sign?’ I said nothing; I just crossed my arms and he fired. But he missed. Whether he shot above me or where I don’t know. So the other man who did not shoot laughed: ‘Ha, the fool. The people’s enemy, his hands shook’, meaning the soldier who shot. ‘Give me that gun,’ he said, ‘I will hit him here. That is how he is to be shot’, indicating the point between the eyes, and he raised his left arm and placed his arm with the pistol on that and aimed at me and he fired, and he missed. Then the first one laughed: ‘Why didn’t you hit the target? Why did your hand shake?’ So one of them said: ‘Here is the devil. He is very lucky. Let him live a little longer’. Testimony of Canon Antanas Petraitis, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 1, p. 413.

gators used family feelings against the prisoners. A Polish prisoner of the communists in 1939-1941 remembered how he had been told what would have happened to his wife and daughter. He also underwent the *konveyer*—uninterrupted interrogation by many officers: “the interrogation lasted about 80 hours without food or rest. Every 12 hours the officers changed and the interrogation became harsher”. Another Polish prisoner remembered he was allowed to hear the screams of his tortured wife. Interrogated women were not only beaten and harassed but also raped. “In cases when a married couple was arrested, they were tortured in the presence of the spouse”⁵⁷.

Apart from physical torture during their brutal interrogations, Hungarian AVH officers administered drugs to prisoners in order to make them comply. Actedron and morphine were used, which washed away distinctions between reality and reason, between guilt and innocence⁵⁸. Primate of Hungary Cardinal József Mindszenty was doped during his trial⁵⁹.

Transportation to Soviet camps also represented a form of torture. Squeezed into railroad cattle cars, starving, thirsty, freezing, frequently sick, and their physiological needs not respected, prisoners travelled for weeks under appalling conditions. Some people were dying, others robbed by thieves, babies were born and died on the way while the destination remained unclear or perhaps worse, filled with unlimited suffering⁶⁰.

Life and death in the Soviet camps was torture. An American Gulag survivor, John Noble, remembered: “My life in Vorkuta was the closest thing possible to a living death. It was a grueling combination of slow but con-

⁵⁷ Zamorski, Starzewski (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość sowiecka*, pp. 260 and 263.

⁵⁸ Testimony of Robert Gabor, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 3, p. 207.

⁵⁹ Testimony of Rev. Joseph Vecsey, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1275.

⁶⁰ “Dusk was coming—remembered a Polish woman—my companions were slowly falling asleep (...) Outside there was severe frost and inside it was hot and steamy. I sweated all over as if by water condensed on a bathroom wall. I lost my train of thought and suddenly I felt a warm liquid pouring on my face and eyes and mouth. I screamed. One of the women from the upper room could not stand it (...) My legs, longing for a stretch, kick the face of a neighbor. Wet from sweat, urine and tears, I fell asleep late (...) A dirty morning brought a similar day. I was losing the count of days and hours. I was losing myself in unlimited Russia. I had a feeling it was huge, unmeasured as the bottom of hell”. Zamorski, Starzewski (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość sowiecka*, p. 331. Cf. also, Applebaum, *Gulag*, chapter 9.

tinuous starvation, exhausting work, killing cold, and abject monotony that destroyed many a healthier man than I. There was no wasted time in Vorkuta. I went to work producing coal for the Reds the day I got there. My job was to push a two-ton car full of slate by hand. I worked on the surface that first year in the worst Vorkuta winter in a decade. After morning mess, I lined up in excruciating thirty-five-below-zero cold. My job was a mile and a half away from the camp. Fifty of us, covered by 10 guards and two police dogs, made the trip every morning through a 40-foot wide corridor. About 20 guard towers were alternately spaced on either side of the corridor”⁶¹. “When I want to describe the Soviet camp—remembered Herling-Grudziński—I must descend to the lowest circles of inferno and not to seek people where, from the bottom of the Lethe waters, I see the glare of the dead and maybe even still living companions, twisted by grimaces of haunted animals and whispering with their lips turned blue from hunger and suffering: ‘tell the whole truth of who we were, say what we were led to’”⁶².

During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the idea behind the “struggle sessions” was not necessarily to kill but to torture and humiliate the “enemies of the people”. From one account: “You Xiaoli was standing, precariously balanced, on a stool. Her body was bent over from the waist into a right angle, and her arms, elbows stiff and straight, were behind her back, one hand grasping the other at the wrist. It was the position known as ‘doing the airplane’. Around her neck was a heavy chain, and attached to the chain was a blackboard (...) On both sides of the blackboard were chalked her name and the myriad crimes she was alleged to have committed (...) After doing the airplane for several hours, listening to the endless taunts and jeers and

⁶¹ <http://gulaghhistory.org/exhibits/days-and-lives/prisoners/20> (26 IV 2014). John Noble was born in Detroit, Michigan, in 1923, but his father had been born in Germany. In the 1930s the family returned to Germany and operated a camera factory in Dresden. After the Soviets entered eastern Germany, Noble and his father were arrested to keep them from protesting the factory takeover. Although he was never charged with any crime, Noble was imprisoned in the Gulag system until the end of 1954 and spent the last four years at Vorkuta.

⁶² Herling-Grudziński, *Inny świat*, p. 140. There were very rare cases of escapes from distant camps. One of the successful runaways was Polish forester Henryk Cybulski, who got through from beyond the Arctic Circle to his home in Volhynia in eight weeks. Henryk Cybulski, *Czerwone noce* [Red Nights] (Warszawa, 1974).

the repeated chants calling for her downfall, the chair on which You Xiaoli had been balancing was suddenly kicked from under her and she tumbled from the stool, hitting the table and onto the ground. Blood flowed from her nose and from her mouth and from her neck where the chain had dug into the flesh. As the fascinated, gawking audience looked on, You Xiaoli lost consciousness and was still”⁶³. Zhao Shuli, one of China’s leading novelists, died as a result of similar treatment. They were only two of millions of Chinese who were tortured and perished during the Cultural Revolution.

Another form of torture invented by the Soviet communists consisted of placing politically “dangerous” people in psychiatric wards. For many Soviet psychiatrists, “sluggish schizophrenia” was a logical explanation for political disobedience and criticism of the Soviet system. Verdicts on whether someone was a “sluggish schizophrenic” were passed by top Soviet authorities to psychiatrists such as Danil Lunts, Andrei Snezhnevsky, Geogorgi Morozov and Marat Vartanian from the ill-famed Serbsky Central Research Institute for Forensic Psychiatry.

Several African dictators with communist affiliations also have been responsible for massive crimes against humanity. For instance, Siad Barre’s regime in Somalia was characterized by oppressive dictatorial rule, including allegations of persecution, jailing and torture of political opponents and dissidents. It had one of the worst human rights records in Africa. Summary killings, arbitrary arrest, torture, rape and psychological intimidation were an everyday practice. The torture methods used by Barre’s National Security Service (NSS) included beatings while tied in a contorted position, electric shock, rape of women prisoners, simulated executions and death threats. In September 1970, the Somalian government introduced a law granting the NSS the power to arrest and detain indefinitely those who expressed criticism of the government without ever being brought to trial⁶⁴.

⁶³ Anne F. Thurston, *Enemies of the People. The Ordeal of the Intellectuals in China’s Great Cultural Revolution* (Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. xiii-xiv.

⁶⁴ *Somalia: A Government at War with its Own People* (New York: Africa Watch Committee, 1990), p. 9; *Amnesty International: Torture in the Eighties* (Bristol, England: Pitman Press, 1984), p. 127; Helen Metz, “Siad Barre’s Repressive Measures”, *Somalia: A Country Study* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1992).

Mass Murder

While an individual murder was a political measure, mass execution was a communist method for solving both political and social problems. Communist mass murder started after the suppression of the rebellions in Kronstadt and Tambov in 1921. Tens of thousands of executions followed⁶⁵. In the early 1930s, hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens disappeared without a trace, victims of secret mass executions by the NKVD. The horrible reality of the NKVD killing grounds began to leak out during World War Two. At the beginning of 1943, German occupation authorities in Ukraine uncovered mass graves in Vinnitsa. In May 1943, a German commission was established to examine them. Out of about 10,000 bodies discovered, the commission was able to identify 679 corpses⁶⁶. The Vinnitsa graves were discovered on 27 hectares of NKVD grounds at Pidlisna Street. In fact, the graves were a group of 95 pits containing 9,439 bodies in total. Victims had been shot from close range in the back of their head with a small-caliber pistol in the NKVD garage. Most of the victims were Ukrainians but some were also Poles, Jews and others. The executions were carried out from 1938 to 1941. Soon after, the NKVD killing ground was converted into a playground, including an amusement park⁶⁷.

Another secret Soviet NKVD killing site was situated in Butovo near Moscow. It is estimated that about 20,000 people were killed there from August 1937 to October 1938. The Butovo victims were peasants and factory workers, czarist generals, Russian Orthodox hierarchs, German communists and

⁶⁵ Donald Rayfield, *Stalin and His Hangmen. The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him* (Random House, 2004), p. 85.

⁶⁶ "I believe—reported a witness—the first man who convinced the Germans on Vinnitsa that it might be of interest to investigate this orchard more closely was Professor Dr. Doroshenko. He was a court physician and this Dr. Doroshenko got permission from the town commissar, the German town commissar, to make the first diggings". Testimony of Zenon Pelenskyj, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, pp. 3-7. Quote from p. 3.

⁶⁷ Testimony of Petro Pavlovych, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, pp. 84-95. The inhuman attitude of the communist henchmen to their victims may be illustrated by the case of Golden Hill near Chelabinsk where the corpses of those executed were thrown into an old mine drift along with rubble. "Polacy wśród ofiar Złotej Góry" [Poles among the Victims of the Golden Hill], *Życie Warszawy*, 18 September 1989.

thousands of other “enemies of the people”⁶⁸. In 1997, another NKVD killing ground was discovered in the Sandarmokh Forest near Medvezhyegorsk in Karelia where at least 9,000 prisoners from the Solovetsky Islands were murdered in 1937. Among those buried there were famous Ukrainian writers and poets Mykola Kulish and Mykola Zerov, theater director Les Kurbas, 141 Finnish-Americans and 127 Finnish-Canadians who emigrated to the USSR in the 1930s and were killed by the NKVD⁶⁹.

The Kurapaty killing ground near Minsk was even more secret. It was discovered by Belorussian opposition investigators Zianon Pazniak and Yauhen Shmyhalov and described in 1988. Although the exploration of the Kurapaty killing ground is still underway, it is estimated that in the years 1937-1941, the NKVD buried there 100,000 to 250,000 victims from the Minsk area. Most of the Kurapaty victims were local Belorussians and Poles from the Dzherzhynski Polish Autonomous District in the Belorussian SRR, killed in the years 1937-1938⁷⁰. Who could have believed that the hundreds of people killed in Minsk and buried in Kurapaty, whose names we now know, were all Polish spies? Among those killed were a Jewish seamstress, Zofia Arano-wicz, a bookkeeper in a Minsk cake factory, Stefan Baranowski, a tobacco factory worker from Minsk, Kazimierz Ginc, a carpenter from the village of Krzywoszyn, Konstanty Gotowczyc, a shoe factory sorter from Minsk, Józef Kondratowicz, a stove fitter, Jan Kowalewski, and a road construction worker, Karol Szpilewski.⁷¹ It is thought that the Kurapaty graves may also contain bodies of the missing Polish POWs captured by the Soviets in 1939.

Bikywnia was a suburb of Kiev where the NKVD disposed thousands of executed “enemies of the people” in the 1930s and early 1940s. The discovery of the location of the Bikywnia mass graves was made possible thanks to the

⁶⁸ “Former Killing Ground Becomes Shrine to Stalin’s Victims”, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/08/world/europe/08butovo.html?_r=3& (10 V 2014).

⁶⁹ John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr, *In Denial: Historians, Communism, and Espionage* (Encounter Books, 2003), p. 117; <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandarmokh> (21 V 2014).

⁷⁰ Zianon Pazniak, Yauhen Shmyhalou, Mikola Kryvaltsevich, Aleg Iou, *Kurapaty* (Minsk: Tekhnalohiya, 1994), p. 180; Zdzisław Julian Winnicki, *Szkice kojdanowskie* [Koydanov Sketches] (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo GAJT, 2005), pp. 77-78.

⁷¹ Jewgenij Gorelik, *Kurapaty. Polski ślad* [Kurapaty. The Polish Track] (Warszawa: “Rytm”, 1996), pp. 199-277.

research of Polish émigré historians researching Nazi German archives after World War Two. Thousands of Ukrainians and Poles from the Markhlevski Polish Autonomous District were buried there in the 1930s. It is considered that the Bikyvnia graves may also contain the bodies of 3,435 missing Polish officers captured by the Red Army in 1939 and killed in 1940. Artifacts belonging to Lieutenant Colonel Bronisław Szczyrański and Professor Ludwik Dworzak from Lwów (Lviv) were found there, giving a trace of the Polish 1939 POWs. In Soviet times, the story of the Bikyvnia graves was raised by, among others, Ukrainian poet Vasyl Symonenko, who was arrested, beaten up by the secret police and died in 1963. The overall number of bodies buried there is estimated at 30,000 to 225,000⁷². NKVD killing grounds and graves such as these have been found or suspected in many other places close to big towns in Belorussia and Ukraine.

One of the clearest examples of the “national class enemies” ordered killed by Stalin and his comrades was found in the infamous “top secret” note by NKVD Chief Lavrentiy Beria to Joseph Stalin dated 5 March 1940, in which Beria recommended shooting without trial 25,700 “Polish officers, clerks, landlords, policemen, intelligence agents, military police, immigrant settlers, and prison guards”. The decision was approved by Stalin, Kliment Voroshilov, Vyacheslav Molotov, and Anastas Mikoyan, while the names of Lazar Kaganovich and Mikhail Kalinin were added in different handwriting as voting for the decision⁷³. Noteworthy, this was the same Kalinin whose name is still proudly born by the Russian city of Kaliningrad that was once Königsberg.

According to Soviet documents released after 1990, the number of victims of the 5 March 1940 decision includes 21,857 Polish internees, 4,421 of which came from the Kozelsk camp, 3,820 from the Starobelsk camp, 6,311 from the Ostashkov camp and 7,305 from prisons in Belorussia and Ukraine. The decision to kill the Polish internees was carried out under the supervision of NKVD Major General Pyotr Soprunenko. In April and May 1940, the Kozelsk

⁷² <http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bykownia> (21 V 2014). The Polish site is more complete than the English version.

⁷³ *Katyn. Documents of Genocide* (Warsaw: Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences, 1993), pp. 18-25.

victims were killed and buried at the Katyn Forest, the Starobelsk victims were killed in the NKVD prison in Kharkiv and buried in Piatykhatky, and the Ostashkov victims were killed in the NKVD prison of Kalinin (Tver) and buried in Mednoye. The remaining victims were killed and buried in unknown places, probably in Bykivnia and Kuropaty. Altogether, during the April and May 1940 massacres, the Soviets murdered almost half of the Polish officer corps, including 14 generals, 281 colonels and lieutenant colonels, and 2,080 majors and captains. In the best known of these, the Katyn Forest massacre, the Soviets murdered Generals Bronisław Bohatyrewicz, Henryk Minkiewicz and Mieczysław Smorawiński, Admiral Ksawery Czernicki, Chief Orthodox Chaplain of the Polish Army Symon Fedoronko, Chief Rabbi of the Polish Army Baruch Steinberg, and a single woman, Jadwiga Lewandowska, who was daughter to General Józef Dowbór-Muśnicki. The only witness of the Katyn massacre, Stanisław Swianiewicz, survived to tell his story⁷⁴. Katyn was supervised by the head of the Smolensk NKVD, Yemelian Kupryanov. The Kharkiv massacre was supervised by NKVD Major Pyotr Safonov, and the Kalinin massacre by local NKVD head Dmitri Tokarev. One of the Kalinin executioners was Major Vasily Blokhin, a henchman who probably personally killed a record number of victims and later retired as a Soviet general⁷⁵.

Another mass murder took place at Fântâna Albă on 1 April 1941. After the incorporation of Romanian Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina and Budjak

⁷⁴ Stanisław Swianiewicz, *W cieniu Katynia* [In the Shadow of Katyn] (Paryż: Instytut Literacki, 1976), pp. 106-110.

⁷⁵ Although the last Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev allowed the release of materials concerning the Katyn Forest massacre, there was no official explanation of the crime or a full rehabilitation of the victims. The authorities of the Russian Federation closed the investigation and denied access to the relevant materials. Karol Karski, Maria Szonert-Binienda (eds.), *Katyn. State-Sponsored Extermination* (Cleveland, Ohio: Libra Institute, Inc., 2013). Cf. also (monumental - WR): *The Katyn Forest Massacre. Hearings before the Select Committee to Conduct an Investigation of the Facts, Evidence and Circumstances of the Katyn Forest Massacre* (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1952), Vols. 1-5, as well as: Joseph Mackiewicz, *The Katyn Wood Murders* (London: Holis & Carter, 1951); Janusz K. Zawodny, *Death in the Forest: the Story of the Katyn Forest Massacre* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1962); Tadeusz Wittlin, *Time Stopped at 6:30* (New York: The Bobbs Merrill Co., 1965); Louis Fitzgibbon, *Katyn* (London: Tom Stacey Ltd., 1971); Allen Paul, *Katyń: Stalin's Massacre and the Seeds of Polish Resurrection* (Annapolis, Md., Naval Institute Press, 1996); http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katyn_massacre (6 V 2014).

to the USSR in 1940, many local Romanians wanted to get to the neighboring parts of Romania. In the spring of 1941, there were rumors that the Soviets would allow border crossing to Romania. On 1 April 1941, a group of about 2,000 people from the villages of Pătrăuții-de-Sus, Pătrăuții-de-Jos, Cupca, Corcești and Suceveni, carrying religious symbols and a white flag walked toward the Soviet-Romanian frontier. At the border in a locality called Fântâna Albă they were warned by the Soviet guards to stop but they somehow ignored the warning and the guards began to shoot. About 200 people were killed immediately and many more wounded. Those who escaped the massacre were later caught, dragged to a mass grave and killed with shovels. Many wounded were taken to the Hlyboka NKVD prison where they were tortured and killed, either there or at the local Jewish cemetery. The number massacred is not exactly known. According to some estimates, it could have been about 2,000 people. A further 200,000 people were deported from Bessarabia⁷⁶.

The beginning of the German-Soviet war in June 1941 marked the beginning of a new wave of mass murder of Soviet prisoners. In the years 1940-1941, about 34,000 Lithuanian citizens became victims of the Soviet terror, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The German offensive of June 1941 brought no relief but further mass murder. One clear-cut case included 76 prisoners held in the NKGB Telšiai prison. As German troops were advancing and the prison was prepared for evacuation, these prisoners were still being interrogated and asked whether they would admit being guilty of counterrevolutionary activities. Then, they were all transported to the nearby Rainiai Forest, cruelly tortured and killed. The operation was supervised by the head of the local NKGB commissariat, Petras Roslanas⁷⁷. A similar crime was committed on 26 June 1940, against about 400 prisoners from the NKVD prison in Pravieniškis⁷⁸. There were also documented reports of June 1941

⁷⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F%C3%A2nt%C3%A2na_Al%C4%83_masa%C4%83re (26 IV 2014) and sources quoted there; Rummel, *Lethal Politics*, p. 133.

⁷⁷ *Forgotten Soviet War Crime. Rainiai in Lithuania, 24-25th June, 1941* (Vilnius, 2007); Rummel, *Lethal Politics*, p. 132. After 1991, Roslanas escaped to Russia and was only tried *in absentia*.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

Soviet mass murders in the prisons of Kaunas, Sargenai, Leboiniskiai and many others⁷⁹. After the Third Reich attacked the USSR, Lithuanian Canon Antanas Petraitis was moved to Minsk and then forced to march with other prisoners eastwards. The group consisted of Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Russians, and Ukrainians. During the march of about 90 miles, the NKVD guards killed those who could not make it: men and women, some even pregnant, and children alike. At one point, a military truck came up to a crowd of people lying on the road. The driver stopped asking the guards to let him through. The NKVD commander ordered the driver to go ahead and he drove over the people in the road, killing dozens. Those then wounded were shot to death and the survivors forced to march on⁸⁰. The dogs that accompanied the NKVD guards would not attack the unfortunate victims though urged on and even kicked by the guards. The NKVD finally arranged an execution site in Cherven Forest, from which only a few managed to escape to tell the story.

Similar massacres took place in all prisons that the Soviets evacuated in June 1941, for instance, in Riga, Kandalaksha and even the small town of

⁷⁹ In the Telšiai NKVD prison Juozas Senkus, investigating the matter on behalf of the Lithuanian authorities in late June and July 1941, discovered a special chamber of torture and murder: “The walls and the ceiling were separated with special wood material, each 5 inches apart. The boards were painted black which had many bullet holes and blood stains. In the cement ground was a sort of channel for the flowing away of liquid, but still on June 24 this channel was red from blood (...) There was a big iron piece and a special water pipe in the ceiling. Special instruments for pulling off skin. Two large iron rings and they were fastened to the ceiling on a special iron chain; and weaving looms and a first-aid box. Besides that, several iron pieces with burnt ends”. Some of the Kaunas prisoners “had wounded heads and other parts of their bodies. Two of them had eyes pulled out, one had a nose pulled off, other had their hands broken and the faces were injured (...) there were traces of hair pulled out (...) Among the murdered there was a lady and her son of seven or eight years old (...) Some of the bodies were covered with stones and medical examination proved that they were put under these stones while still alive”. Testimony of Juozas Senkus, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1049-1053. Quote from p. 1051 and 1053.

⁸⁰ “He aimed the pistol at the mother. The child understood there was something wrong and he yelled ‘Mother!’ and he hugged his mother. Two shots were fired. The mother fell and the child was still hugging her. The child fell on top of the mother. So he came up and lifted the child by the collar and he fired two shots into the back of his head and he tossed he child on top of the mother and left them there”. Testimony of Canon Antanas Petraitis, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 1, p. 417-420. The quote comes from p. 417.

Kuresan on the Estonia island of Osel⁸¹. About 4,000 prisoners, mostly Poles, were murdered in the Berezwezc (Berezvechcha) prison. Before they were killed, they were cruelly tortured—eyes gouged out, ears cut and ropes tied around their necks. The NKVD officers set fire to the Berdyczów (Berdychiv) prison and the survivors were shot down⁸².

After the Soviets withdrew from Lviv in June 1941, they left heaps of dead bodies of prisoners murdered by the NKVD⁸³. In the Lviv Brygidky prison, the NKVD shot most of its 13,000 prisoners. Some of the Lviv prisoners were forced to march east. After two months, they reached Moscow, but of the 800 who started only 248 survived. Dantean scenes were recorded during a similar march of Wilejka prisoners to Borisov. After shooting many of the inmates, about 1,400 people were driven to march on with hardly any food or drink under attacking German aircraft. Those unable to go on were murdered by the NKVD guards. Similar scenes took place during a “death march” of prisoners from Minsk. Among the 20,000 inmates there was a 12-year-old girl from Nieśwież, arrested for “counter-revolution and espionage”. One of the Minsk groups was murdered down to a man before reaching Ihumen. From another group of 700 people, only 37 survived. Polish Lieutenant Colonel Janusz Prawdzic-Szlaski survived to tell the story⁸⁴.

There are countless records of Soviet atrocities during the “liberation” of East Central Europe. For instance, on 27 January 1945, after heavy fighting, Red Army troops captured Przyszowice near Gliwice in Upper Silesia, resulting in casualties and the loss of tanks. When the Germans withdrew,

⁸¹ Testimony of August Rei, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, pp. 1439.

⁸² *Zbrodnia katyńska w świetle dokumentów* [The Katyn Crime in the Light of Documents] (Londyn, 1975), pp. 220-224.

⁸³ Edmund Chański saw bodies at Lackiego Prison in Lviv: “The corpses were a terrifying sight. There were a few women corpses, too, some of them were tied with barbed wire, others had their mouths gashed, their eyes gouged out and nails wedged in their heads. I always remember the body of a priest with hands pierced after the way of the hands of the Savior (...) I should think there was a few thousand bodies”. Testimony of Edmund Chański, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 980.

⁸⁴ *Zbrodnia katyńska w świetle dokumentów*, pp. 211-217; Testimony of Bohdan Kolzanivsky, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 113; Zamorski, Starzewski (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość sowiecka*, pp. 323-326.

the Soviet soldiers took revenge on the civilians, murdering 63 people, mostly Poles⁸⁵. The Soviet soldiers committed mass atrocities when entering Hungary. The country had few friends in the West and was practically defenseless in the face of the Soviet troops, who plundered, murdered, and raped. The *malinkaya robota* (small job) performed by the Soviets meant mass deportations of tens of thousands of Hungarians to the east but also mass murder⁸⁶. The Red Army also devastated Romania, looting, killing and wantonly destroying property⁸⁷. During their intervention in Afghanistan in 1979-1988, Soviet troops and their local puppets killed hundreds of thousands of villagers and destroyed the lives of those who survived. The Soviets used “scorched earth” and “migratory genocide” tactics, burning crops and bombing villages in rebel provinces, forcing the local population to move to Soviet-controlled areas. The result was about 1.5 million victims⁸⁸. In 2007, a few thousand human remains were found in the ruins of a former Soviet military base near Kabul⁸⁹.

Like the history of Soviet communism, the history of the Chinese Communist Party “is written with blood and lies”⁹⁰. While the inhumane scenes of the Japanese murdering the Chinese in Nanjing in 1937 are popular in China, the mass murder of the “enemies of the people” by the Communist Party have drowned in oblivion. Up to the final capture of Beijing in 1949, the Chinese communists killed about 3.5 million people in the territories they controlled. The number of peasants killed during the “land reform” campaign was about one million while the operation against “counterrevolutionaries”, mostly Kuomintang officials and other opponents of the communist regime, cost the lives of at least 712,000 people. During the first 10 years

⁸⁵ “Przyszwowice we krwi” [Przyszwowice in Blood], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 8-9 October 2005.

⁸⁶ Ferenc Nagy, *The Struggle Behind the Iron Curtain* (New York 1948), pp. 63 ff. and 141; Testimony of Mary Ludon, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 6, p. 207.

⁸⁷ “The spectacle was not that of an army but of savage bandits ravaging the countryside, shooting livestock, even cows, setting fire to farmhouses, stealing cars by stopping them on the roads and throwing the drivers into the ditches, and so forth”. Testimony of Mihail Farcasanu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 62.

⁸⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass_killings_under_Communist_regimes (25 V 2014).

⁸⁹ “Masowe groby Afgańczyków” [Mass Graves of the Afghans], *Dziennik*, 7-8 July 2007.

⁹⁰ “Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party”, p. 16.

of communist rule, about 15.9 million Chinese were imprisoned, placed in concentration camps, killed or starved to death⁹¹.

In April 1958, Mao Zedong stated that the Chinese nation looked like a blank sheet of paper on which a new history should be written. He ordered the start of the “Great Leap Forward”. This program included the radical transformation of the countryside through the establishment of people’s communes and a dramatic increase of heavy industrial output in the most primitive of conditions. Neither of the ambitious goals could be fulfilled. Grain output from the communes decreased while household iron production led to the destruction of whatever metal tools the peasants possessed. A dramatic decline in the food supply led to mass hunger. The estimates of the cost of this famine range from 18 million to 45 million victims, the most probable figure being around 40 million. The hardest-hit provinces were Anhui, Henan, Shandong, Gansu and Sichuan⁹². The famine caused by the Great Leap Forward was probably the worst man-made disaster in history. There were also many cases of cannibalism. The writer Sha Qing depicted the following scene: “One day, the daughter was driven out of her house by her father. When she came back, she could not find her brother, but saw white oil floating in the cauldron and a pile of bones next to the stove. Several days later, the father added more water to the pot and called his daughter to come closer. The girl was frightened and pleaded with her father from outside the door: ‘Daddy, please don’t eat me. I can collect firewood and cook food for you. If you eat me, nobody else will do this for you’”⁹³.

⁹¹ Rummel, *Death by Government*, pp. 96 and 100; Steven W. Mosher, *China Misperceived: American Illusions and Chinese Reality* (Basic Books, 1992), pp. 72-73; Rudolph J. Rummel, *China’s Bloody Century: Genocide and Mass Murder since 1900* (Transaction Publishers, 2007), p. 223. “Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party”, p. 16, quotes an official Chinese source claiming 2.7 million victims and assumes the actual figure was at least twice higher.

⁹² Salisbury, *The New Emperors*, p. 166; Dennis Tao Yang, “China’s Agricultural Crisis and Famine of 1959–1961: A Survey and Comparison to Soviet Famines”, Palgrave MacMillan *Comparative Economic Studies*, 2008, Vol. 50, pp. 1-29; Frank Dikötter, *Mao’s Great Famine: The History of China’s Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958-62* (Walker & Company, 2010), p. xii and 333; “Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party”, p. 16.

⁹³ *Ibidem*.

The question of whether the central authorities realized what they were doing is rather simple. They knew. In a secret meeting in Shanghai in 1959, Mao said: “When there is not enough to eat, people starve to death. It is better to let half of the people die so that the other half can eat their fill”⁹⁴. Although this cold-blooded mass murder happened in the middle of the 20th century, few images illustrating the damage and misery of the starving Chinese population were preserved. Instead, we see the smiling portraits of Mao or his Minister of Agriculture Tan Zhenlin⁹⁵. Human life meant nothing to the Chinese communists. In the years 1964-1996, about 190,000 people died as a result of the nuclear tests in the dry lakebed of Lop Nur in Xinjiang and about 1.5 million were irradiated⁹⁶.

Since Mao’s strategy during the Great Leap Forward failed altogether, causing unprecedented disaster, he wanted to get rid of the witnesses of his failure, especially those who criticized him, such as Marshal Peng Dehuai. Mao launched the Cultural Revolution, aimed at overthrowing the existing communist bureaucracy. *Business Week* called the Cultural Revolution “one of the worst outbursts of human cruelty in the 20th century”⁹⁷. Mao leaned on his wife Jiang Qing, his own personal secretary Chen Boda, the security head Kang Sheng, trade union leader Wang Hongwen and chief of propaganda from Shanghai, Zhang Chunqiao. The Cultural Revolution leaders triggered a mass revolt against the *nomenklatura*. In November 1965, the signal was given in a pasquinade by Yao Wenyuan against a theater play that alluded to the fall of Marshal Peng Dehuai. On 16 May 1966, a Central Committee circular was announced encouraging a struggle against “bourgeois” influence and revi-

⁹⁴ Dikötter’s quote from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass_killings_under_Communist_regimes (22 V 2014).

⁹⁵ The Chinese party’s Central Committee probably broke the world record in lying, stating that: “Inasmuch as tremendous development has been achieved over the past three years, and as the output of major products has greatly exceeded the levels originally scheduled for 1961 and 1962, the last two years of the Second Five-Year Plan, the scope of capital construction in 1961 should be readjusted and a policy of consolidating, filling out and raising standards should be adopted on the basis of the victories already won”. Wilson, *Anatomy of China*, p. 162.

⁹⁶ Bartłomiej Niedziński, “Chińskie ofiary atomu podnoszą głowy” [Chinese Victims of Nuclear Tests Raise Their Heads], *Dziennik*, 20 April 2009.

⁹⁷ Quoted from the cover of Thurston, *Enemies of the People*.

sionism in the party. Hundreds of thousands of students and young workers created Red Guard detachments (*hongweibing*), wandering around the country, demonstrating their fanatic loyalty to Chairman Mao, reciting quotes from his “red book” and attacking anyone they named an “enemy”. In August 1966, the party’s Central Committee adopted the already quoted horrendous resolution entitled “One Hundred Principles of the Destruction of the Old and Establishment of the New”. This resolution added fuel to the Red Guard fire. The *hongweibing* organized “struggle sessions”, parading “enemies of the people” in ridiculous dresses, torturing, humiliating and frequently killing them⁹⁸. Cases of cannibalism by the Red Guards were recorded in Guangxi province⁹⁹.

Most of the Red Guard madness lasted for about two years. The whole country was ravaged by gangs attacking other gangs and claiming to be more revolutionary. As the local administration became entirely paralyzed, in 1968, Mao ordered the army to restore order, but it was not before the early 1970s that the Cultural Revolution finally died out. As a result of this cleansing of personnel, about three-fourths of Central Committee members were purged, including the Chairman of the Chinese People’s Republic, Liu Shaoqi, and the party’s general secretary, Deng Xiaoping. While Liu died under horrible circumstances, Deng survived to change the course of Chinese politics after Mao’s death. The real number of those who were persecuted or died during the Cultural Revolution may never be known, since

⁹⁸ Fairbank, *The Great Chinese Revolution*, pp. 316-341; Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* (New York: Random House, 1994), chapters 59-70; Salisbury, *The New Emperors*, pp. 265 ff.; Thurston, *Enemies of the People*, passim. A teenage girl, Ye Tingxing, remembered her grandfather, who had been a well-to-do peasant. He was deprived of his land, house and livestock in order to “cut his capitalist tail”. When he tried to stop the *hongweibing* destroying the grave of his mother and children, he was so badly beaten that he soon died. Ye Tingxing, *My Name is Number 4: a True Story from the Cultural Revolution*, (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2008).

⁹⁹ N.D. Kristoff, “Współcześni kanibale” [Contemporary Cannibals], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 11 January 1993. The story of the Guangxi cannibalism was described by writer Zheng Yi. Similar horrifying scenes of cannibalism took place in the Wuxuan county, Jianxi province. “Human bodies were cooked in many different ways including boiling, steaming, stir-frying, baking, frying and barbecuing (...) People drank liquor and wine and played games while eating human bodies. During the peak of this movement, even the cafeteria of the highest government organization, Wuxuan County Revolutionary Committee, offered human dishes”. “Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party”, p. 17.

many deaths went unreported or were covered up by the police. There are various estimates of this number, ranging from 36 million to 100 million persecuted and from 1.5 million to 3 million killed¹⁰⁰. These were the victims of another mass murder, directed by Mao and some of the top Chinese Communist Party leadership.

While the Chinese communists ended the most horrible atrocities of the Cultural Revolution, in April 1975, their allies in Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge, captured Phnom Penh and established one of the bloodiest regimes in history. It was based on the expropriation and liquidation of all former owners, destruction of urban communities, introduction of collective property managed by the anonymous leadership of the communist party, called the *Angka*. A Khmer Rouge commander, Ta Mok, personally supervised the execution of 100,000 people, whole families and villages. It was only in 1976 that the name of the supreme leader of the Khmer Rouge, Pol Pot, was announced. The populace was divided into three categories: “full citizens”, “candidates” and the “rest”. The latter group was deprived of any rights and excluded from social life¹⁰¹. The Khmer Rouge policies of forced relocation of the population from urban centers to the countryside, mass executions, use of forced labor and starvation led to the deaths of an estimated 25 percent of the total population. About 20,000 mass graves were discovered. In their killing frenzy, there were some exceptional moments: Khmer Rouge guards smashed small children’s heads against what was called the Chankiri Tree in Choeung Ek. Altogether, between 1.5 million and 1.7 million people were exterminated. Only their faces survived in mugshots taken by photographer Nhem En at the infamous Tuol Sleng prison¹⁰².

¹⁰⁰ Daniel Chirot, *Modern Tyrants: the Power and Prevalence of Evil in Our Age* (Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 198; Jung Chang, Jon Halliday, *Mao: The Unknown Story* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2005), p. 569. But R.J. Rummel (*Death by Government*, p. 102) and “Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party”, p. 16, quote a much higher estimate of 7,730,000 people who died during the Cultural Revolution of unnatural causes.

¹⁰¹ The atmosphere of the Khmer Rouge terror may be illustrated by a speech by an Angka functionary during a village meeting in which he said the new system did not need teachers, engineers or doctors. Even those wearing spectacles were suspected of being “capitalists”. H.S. Ngor, R. Warner, “Journey to Freedom”, *Reader’s Digest*, 1989, No. 3, p. 218.

¹⁰² Michael Vickery, *Cambodia, 1975-1982* (Allen and Unwin, 1984), pp. 117-118; Marek Sliwinski, *Le génocide Khmer Rouge. Une analyse démographique*, (Paris: Editions L’Harmattan,

Mass executions were also the communists' practice in North Korea and Vietnam. According to Rudolph Rummel, extermination through forced labor, mass execution and starvation were responsible for more than one million deaths in North Korea between 1948 and 1987. Pierre Rigoulot estimated the overall number of people killed in North Korea at 1.5 million, including about 100,000 victims of mass executions. In the two decades that followed, these figures dramatically increased by mass famine, the result of North Korean policies. The actual figure is probably much higher¹⁰³. During the collectivization of North Vietnamese agriculture in the early 1950s, the communist party exterminated from 50,000 to 170,000 "class enemies" in the countryside. Estimates for the whole period of communist rule in Vietnam, including after unification, are much higher and reach from 200,000 to 900,000 victims¹⁰⁴.

Having seized complete control of the communist regime in Ethiopia, in November 1977, Mengistu Haile Mariam launched a four-month campaign during which about 10,000 Ethiopian civilians were killed. The families of the victims were often forced to pay for the bullets used to kill their relatives. Colonel Atnafu Abate, the last major military challenger to Mengistu, and 60 top officers were also murdered. Some 300,000 Ethiopians, many only 12 years old, were conscripted into the communist militia. The new Ethiopian army was 12 times larger than that under Emperor Selassie. During the 1984-1985 famine, the Mengistu regime consistently continued Soviet-sponsored persecution of Ethiopian civilians. The Soviets supplied arms

1995), pp. 26, 132 and 146; Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), p. 458; Stanisław Grzymalski, "Kwiaty dla zbrodniarzy" [Flowers for the Criminals], *Rzeczpospolita*, 30 December 1998; "Ein mörderisches Erbe", *Die Zeit Dossier*, 16 March 2006; Seth Mydans, "The Khmer Man Who Took Pictures of the Doomed", *New York Times* for *Rzeczpospolita*, 3 November 2007. In 2009, a shocking documentary film was released entitled "Enemies of the People", by Rob Lemkin and Thet Sambath. Among the Khmer Rouge victims were Thet Sambath's parents and brother. One of the interviewed figures in the film was Nuon Chea, Pol Pot's deputy, called Brother Number Two. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enemies_of_the_People_%28film%29 (23 V 2014).

¹⁰³ Rudolph J. Rummel, "Statistics Of North Korean Democide: Estimates, Calculations, And Sources", *Statistics of Democide* (Transaction, 1997); Rigoulot in: *Black Book of Communism*, p. 564.

¹⁰⁴ Steven Rosefielde, *Red Holocaust* (London, New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 110; *Black Book of Communism*, pp. 568-569.

and not food, which they were lacking themselves. Mengistu's communist regime used famine to destroy social and religious communities that might have threatened his rule. His "villagization" program uprooted over 5 million Ethiopian peasants, sending them to collectives. According to *Medecins sans Frontieres*, the French medical group which operated in Ethiopia before being expelled in December 1985, Mengistu's resettlement program resulted in the immediate death of some 100,000 Ethiopians from maltreatment and disease. Of about 1 million Ethiopians estimated to have died in the 1984-1985 famine, some three-quarters are thought to have starved because of Mengistu's resettlement and forced labor policies. Most of the victims were kept in transit prisons prior to resettlement, where they were denied food, and then transported in unsanitary closed trucks, which caused cholera and other diseases. Mengistu's genocide continued until the end of his rule, even in 1988, when the peasants of Korem in Tigre resisted resettlement and the communist militia opened fire, killing at least 20 people¹⁰⁵.

Forced Labor

The Bolsheviks introduced forced labor almost immediately after the revolution, first as a tool of repression against the "bourgeoisie" and soon also against other people who did not show an eagerness to work in the proletarian state. That followed with the whole Gulag system aimed at terrorizing the population but also at the exploitation of slave manpower¹⁰⁶. The first forced labor camps were established in Muroma, Arzamas and Svizhaysk in August 1918. The VTsIK resolution of February 1919 gave the Cheka the

¹⁰⁵ Christopher Andrew, Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive*, Vol. 2 (Allen Lane-Penguin Books, 2005), pp. 456-459; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Terror_%28Ethiopia%29; http://www.ethiopians.com/qey_shibir.htm (9 IV 2014). One resettlement victim, Amete Gebremedhin, after she had objected to being taken away from her husband and children, heard from the laughing soldiers: "What do you care about your children? You will find new ones". "Ethiopia Said to Kill 20 Refusing Resettlement", *The Washington Post*, 12 February 1988, p. A29.

¹⁰⁶ For a history of the Gulag, see: Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, Vol. 1, chapter two; Heller, *Świat obozów koncentracyjnych*, p. 19; Herling-Grudziński, *Inny świat*, p. 74; Applebaum, *Gulag*, Part One.

right to put people in concentration camps¹⁰⁷. The range of estimates of slave labor in the Soviet Union is a matter of various estimates. The most probable show the growth of the Gulag population from 900,000 in 1927 to 10.4 million in 1939 and about 15 million in 1953. Later, the number of inmates was reduced to about 4 million in the 1960s and 1970s¹⁰⁸.

When the traditional methods of stimulating labor efficiency in Vorkuta—beating and cutting down food rations—failed and when the *zeks* became apathetic worn-outs, a system of collective responsibility was introduced: prisoners were fed according to the average output per brigade¹⁰⁹. Food rations were strictly correlated with labor standards and the latter were calculated per brigade, so that the *zeks* forced each other to work more. The timber felling standards were so high that even the most efficient lumberjacks from Finland considered them too high even for well-fed and skilled workers. Fulfilling these standards without *tufta*, that is, a swindle of some kind, was very rare. Gustaw Herling-Grudziński did not remember anyone who would survive at felling for more than two years¹¹⁰.

Apart from NKVD control, a parallel organization functioned in the Gulag, namely one run by criminal prisoners. The core of the criminal world in the camps consisted of bandits (*urki* or *blatnye*) who never worked but terrorized, cheated and stole everything from other inmates with the silent consent of the guards. Another group of criminals (*suki*) grabbed some administrative functions. The Gulag camps were a battlefield between the *blatnye* and *suki*. Regular political prisoners were caught in the crossfire, suffering on all sides. A popular game of the camp criminals was gambling for objects belonging to a third person. Its additional attraction lay in the fact that the

¹⁰⁷ Heller, *Świat obozów koncentracyjnych*, p. 57.

¹⁰⁸ Stephen Rosefielde, "An Assessment of the Sources and Uses of Gulag Forced Labour", *Soviet Studies*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 1, p. 65; Robert Conquest, *Kolyma: The Arctic Death Camps* (New York: The Viking Press, 1978), pp. 215-216; Rummel, *Lethal Politics*, p. 135. These figures have recently been reduced by the Russians. Applebaum, *Gulag*, pp. 525 ff.; Stanisław Ciesielski, *Gulag. Radzieckie obozy koncentracyjne 1918-1953* [Gulag. The Soviet Concentration Camps, 1918-1953] (Warszawa: IPN, 2010), but the official Soviet data may be misleading.

¹⁰⁹ Edward Buca, *Vorkuta* (London: Constable, 1976), p. 110.

¹¹⁰ Herling-Grudziński, *Inny świat*, p. 48. Cf. also Zamorski, Starzewski (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość sowiecka*, pp. 356 and 366.

loser had to enforce this contract on the third person's belonging. In the late 1930s, with a lack of more valuable things, the criminals even gambled for the third person's life¹¹¹.

The living condition of the prisoners were differentiated with regard to the climatic condition, the kind of work they were forced to perform, the position in the camp hierarchy and pure luck.

Yuri Lavrynenko spent three years (1936-1939) building a town in the Taimyr Peninsula on the Arctic Ocean. "We were supposed to build a city, but the cemetery was growing faster than the city. We lived in tents in this tundra camp on the Arctic Ocean. The tundra does not furnish sufficient building materials to be able to construct buildings other than tents (...) We mined nickel, copper, and platinum (...) The original group was 10,000 people and during the course of one year at least 1,000 of them were executed in that camp. Most of them were Ukrainians"¹¹².

Other camps were no better. Statistics compiled since the 1960s indicate that only 5 percent of all inmates of the Vetlag near Kirov survived. "Vetlag was a veritable deathtrap. The men were underfed and beaten when they couldn't do the work (...) The men were considered expendable and as such were expected to wear out. As soon as a man began to show signs of wearing out, such as becoming sick or injured, he was given less food and care and the commandant made plans to replace him as soon as possible"¹¹³.

Perhaps the worst of all the Soviet camps were those situated in the Kolyma River basin. From among the 10,000 Poles who were sent there in 1940, only 583 were released alive in 1941 and only the last group of

¹¹¹ Heller, *Świat obozów koncentracyjnych*, p. 283; Herling-Grudziński, *Inny świat*, pp. 29-30; Zamorski, Starzewski (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość sowiecka*, pp. 335-336 and 370.

¹¹² Testimony of Yuri Lavrynenko, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8 p. 118.

¹¹³ Williams, *Gulag to Independence*, p. 105. The attitude of the guards toward the life of inmates was totally inhuman. In 1941, a Lithuanian doctor, Mykolas Devenis, saw in one of the northern camps a group of about 80 prisoners, invalids without arms, legs, with frozen noses and ears, apparently unable to work. Instead of being taken to a hospital, they were transported farther north, to the Arctic Ocean. Later on, one of the guards explained to Devenis the reason: "Don't you know the Russian constitution? Everybody who eats is supposed to work. Who don't work don't eat. They are invalids, they are unable to work. Why should we feed them? We just took them to the ocean and dumped them into the ocean". Statement of Dr Mykolas Devenis, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 1, p. 153.

171 people managed to get to the Polish Army recruitment center¹¹⁴. The death rate of the Poles was close to the average. Robert Conquest estimated the overall number of prisoners arriving at Kolyma in the years 1932-1953 at 3.5 million and the number of dead at about 3 million¹¹⁵.

The forced labor system was also developed in Soviet satellite countries after World War Two. In Poland, it was not as developed as in other satellites, but still there were numerous prisons and labor camps, such those in Hrubieszów, Iława, Jaworzno, Kobierzyn, Krzesimów, Milowice, Mysłówice, Poniatów, Potulice, Rokitnica and the Ruda Śląska coal mines and Siemianowice and Świętochłowice mines, Wilków and Zielona Góra¹¹⁶. After 1948, the Czechoslovak forced labor system was very extensive and included prisons and labor camps in Barbora, where uranium ore was mined, Blansko, Brno, České Budějovice, in the Devín quarries, in the Elias uranium mine, Handlová, Hodonín, Horní Voderady, Jablonne, Jihlava, Kamenna, Kladno, Ležnice, Marianka, Mořina, Nedvědice, in Nikolai uranium mine, Nováky, near Ostrava, in Ostrov and other Jachymov uranium mines, Prešov, Rosice, Rynholec, Sadov, Semtin, Slaný, Třinec, Trutnov, Ústí nad Labem, Znojmo and many other places. In Hungary, prisoners were forced to work in numerous deportee villages, prisons and concentration camps, such as those situated in Budaörs, Cegléd, Debrecen, Edelény, Hortobágy-Elep, Jászfényszaru, Kunmadaras, Nagyhalász, Parad, Pécs, Szeged, Szolnok, Tarcal, Vac, Várpalota, Veszprém, Záhony and other places¹¹⁷. The Romanian slave labor system was organized in several political prisons and concentration camps, such as those situated in Aiud, Anina, Baneasa, Bicaz, Borcea, Brăila, Capul

¹¹⁴ Władysław Anders, *Bez ostatniego rozdziału* [Without the Last Chapter] (Londyn: Gryf Publishers Ltd., 1959), p. 77. The English edition is entitled *An Army in Exile: the Story of the Second Polish Corps* (London : Macmillan, 1949).

¹¹⁵ Conquest, *Kolyma. The Arctic Death Camps*, p. 227; Sylwester Mora [Kazimierz Zamorski], *Kolyma, Gold and Forced Labor in the USSR* (Washington, Foundation for Foreign Affairs, 1949); Varlam Shalamov, *Kolyma Tales* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1980).

¹¹⁶ Carlton, *Forced Labor in People's Democracies*, pp. 223-225. The largest Polish camp was in Jaworzno, where there were more than 14,000 prisoners in 1947 and 2,500 in 1949. Later, the camp was liquidated. Zygmunt Woźniczka, *Represje na Górnym Śląsku po 1945 roku* [Upper Silesian Repressions, after 1945], (Katowice: Śląsk, 2010), pp. 248-249; Andrzej Fedorowicz, "Wzorowy polski łagier" [A Pattern Polish Camp], *Polityka*, 2014, No. 2.

¹¹⁷ Carlton, *Forced Labor in People's Democracies*, pp. 97-110 and 133-140.

Midia, Caracal Slobozia¹¹⁸, Caransebes, Cernavoda, Cluj, Comarla, Craiova, Domnesti, Focsani, Galati, Husi, Ialomita, Lugoj, Margineni, Miercurea Ciuc, Navodari, Ocnele Mari, Ocnele Sibiului, Pitesti, Ploiești, Poarta Alba, Ramnicul Valcii, Rosiorii de Vede, Sighetul Marmatiei, Suceava, Tașaul, Timișoara, Vacaresti, Vlahita, Vales Larga and other places¹¹⁹. Bulgarian prisoners were forced to work in prisons and camps located in Asenitza, Balchik, Bela Voda, Belene, Bobov Dol, Bogdanov Dol, Bulgarovo, Cherno More, Dolno Kamartzi, Glavenitza, Isperih, Kardzali, Kurtovo Konare, Kutziyan, Makarensko, Nova Cherna, Poblentz, Rossitza, Ruse, Sliven, Stalin, Tutrakan, Zelevo and other places¹²⁰. In the late 1950s, the system of forced labor in satellite countries was reduced.

One of the worst communist concentration camps was situated on Goli otok, an island along the Croatian coast. After the Stalin-Tito split, in 1949 the whole island was turned into a high-security and top-secret labor camp where political prisoners were kept until 1956. These included mainly adherents of the Stalinist Cominform but also some anti-communists from Yugoslavia. The number of Goli otok victims is estimated at about 4,000 but many survivors remembered death as the lesser evil. While in the Stalinist and Nazi camps there was a distinction between the henchmen and the victims, on Goli otok the prisoners were forced to torment themselves. Guards not only killed people but allowed the inmates to harass and kill each other. One of the survivors remembered: “The system of violence triumphed down

¹¹⁸ Due to the conditions in this place it was called “liquidation camp”. “People looked like people from underground caverns. They were not shaved, and had almost no clothing on them, and were very dirty looking (...) This was in 1945, during the summertime. People used to live outside of the barracks because they were so infected and so full of insects that they could not stay inside (...) There was no hygienic nor medical care at all. They gave us twice a day a bowl of so-called vegetable soup and usually they used to give us a loaf of corn meal cold and a few times a week they would give us bread which was not fresh (...) Once in a while the Communist guards took women out of the camp under the pretext that they had to be investigated. Women came back later, crying, and badly beaten, telling us they were raping many of them. Many of the women who were pregnant died and the babies, too”. Testimony of Barbu Niculescu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 102.

¹¹⁹ “Highlights of Romanian History in Relation to the International Communist Conspiracy” by Mihail Farcasanu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 98; Carlton, *Forced Labor in People’s Democracies*, pp. 173-178.

¹²⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 200-206.

to the bottom of hell. In order to gain privilege, you had to accept two things—violence and humiliation (...) In order to survive, nothing else was left but to brutally attack other inmates (...) Who did not beat others had no chance”¹²¹.

Although the Soviet camp administration derisively referred to “re-education” as the purpose of imprisonment, the Gulag was mainly aimed at the ruthless exploitation of manpower and use of torture. The notion of “re-education through labor” was also developed by the Chinese communists. The first “re-education” camps (*laojiao*) were Zengcheng in Guangdong Province, established in 1950, Liuzhou in Guangxi (1951), Fangqiang in Jiangsu (1951), and the Sanshui camp for women in Guangdong (1955). The more recent ones were opened in Ngari in Tibet (2004) and Anshun in Guizhou (2003). Altogether, there have been about 310 “re-education” camps in communist China¹²². Another, more severe form of incarceration was introduced—the *laogai*, or “reform through labor”—is similar to the Soviet concentration camps. Inmates of the *laogai* were and still are subjected to back-breaking labor under the most hostile conditions, while executions and suicides were commonplace. The conditions in the Chinese camps, and especially the food rations, changed from bad to worse in the 1950s and through the Great Famine of 1959-1961 and later slowly improved. This is why death from starvation took the heaviest toll in the 1950s and early 1960s while later on the death rate slowly decreased. Still, however, starvation, various pests and diseases as well as accidents are still the major causes of death. The number of *laogai* victims so far has been estimated at anything between 15 million and 27 million people¹²³.

The Chinese *laogai* system still exists. At present, the average day’s work begins at 5:30 a.m. At 6:00 a.m., gruel and cornbread is distributed. Work starts at 7:00 a.m. At lunchtime, vegetable soup with cornbread is given out

¹²¹ Božidar Jezernik, *Naga wyspa*, [The Naked Island] (Wołowiec: Wydawnictwo Czarne, 2013), p. 127. Cf. also: Venko Markovski, *Goli Otok – Island of Death* (East European Monographs, Columbia University Press, 1984).

¹²² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_re-education_through_labor_camps_in_China (20 V 2014).

¹²³ Chang, Halliday, *Mao: The Unknown Story*, p. 338; *The Black Book of Communism*, p. 464; Rummel, *China’s Bloody Century*, pp. 214-214.

and work is resumed until 6:30 p.m. when the prisoners return to the barracks. After a dinner consisting of corn gruel, at 7:30 p.m. a two-hour study period is organized aimed at brainwashing and at 10:00 p.m. everybody goes to bed. Filling of labor quotas is essential to the life of the prisoners. Food rations may be increased or cut if the quotas are overshoot or undershot, but the effort to overshoot the quotas is usually not worth the award¹²⁴. A large portion of China's export products are manufactured in *laogai* camps. It is one of the major factors that make Chinese exports so unbelievably cheap. The human cost of this success is the high death rate and mass suffering. It is a system where the word "justice" is out of place.

After the communist army of North Vietnam seized Saigon on 30 April 1975, hundreds of thousands of South Vietnamese were imprisoned in "re-education" camps aimed at teaching them "the ways of the new government" in the communist pattern. Just like most of the inmates of the earlier North Vietnamese labor camps, the prisoners were never tried, judged or convicted of any crime. Moreover, their imprisonment was in direct violation of Article 11 of the 1973 Paris agreement. Apart from political brainwashing, they were forced to write confessions and self-accusations. Much emphasis was placed on "productive labor", mostly hard physical work, sometimes very dangerous. For instance, camp inmates were used to sweep mine fields. The work was done in hot, tropical weather without sufficient food and drink and medical care. Prisoners who missed their work quotas were shackled and placed in solitary confinement. Starvation, malnutrition and various diseases were another form of torture. There were five levels of "re-education" camps, from short-term ones to permanent incarceration, the highest rate of death being recorded in the latter. The most famous inmate of the Vietnamese "re-education" camps was the Coadjutor Archbishop of Saigon, Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan, appointed in April 1975. He never took on his duties, as six days later the communist army of North Vietnam seized Saigon and he was arrested. He spent 13 years in the Phu Khanh and Giang Xa "re-education" camps, including nine years in total solitary con-

¹²⁴ Harry Wu, *Laogai—The Chinese Gulag* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc., 1992); Harry Wu, "The Other Gulag", *National Review*, 4 May 1999; Howard W. French, "Survivors' Stories from China", *New York Times*, 25 August 2009.

finement. He lacked food, drink and medical care and sometimes was given contaminated food¹²⁵.

The North Korean slave labor system is similar, but probably even harsher. One of the largest and most horrible concentration camps in North Korea is the Hoeryong camp in North Hamgyong province, close to the Chinese border. Officially called Kwan-liso No. 22, it is completely isolated from the outside world and prisoners are held there in lifelong detention. It was founded around 1965 and expanded in the 1980s and 1990s. Recently, the Hoeryong camp covered an area of some 225 square kilometers. There were around 50,000 prisoners there. On the grounds of the “association principle” (*yeonjwaje*), they are frequently imprisoned with their families, including small children and the elderly, and they are detained until they die¹²⁶. The Kaechon camp, officially called Kwan-liso Camp No. 14, is in Pyeongan-namdo province. There are about 15,000 prisoners kept there. Close by is another camp in Pukchang (Kwan-liso No. 18). In Kaechon, a young Shin Dong-hyok, born in the camp, watched how his mother and brother were executed. In Pukchang, Kim Hye-sook witnessed every year more than 100 public executions, with prisoners being tortured and then shot or hanged as a deterrent to the other prisoners¹²⁷. In their report published in Febru-

¹²⁵ Pope Benedict XVI wrote: “The late Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan, a prisoner for thirteen years, nine of them spent in solitary confinement, has left us a precious little book: *Prayers of Hope*. During thirteen years in jail, in a situation of seemingly utter hopelessness, the fact that he could listen and speak to God became for him an increasing power of hope, which enabled him, after his release, to become for people all over the world a witness to hope—to that great hope which does not wane even in the nights of solitude”. Benedict XVI, *Spe salvi*, 33. Cf. also: Andre Nguyen Van Chau, *The Miracle of Hope. Political Prisoner, Prophet of Peace. Life of Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan* (Boston, MA: Pauline Books & Media, 2003), chapter 21.

¹²⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoeryong_concentration_camp (25 V 2014). According to a former guard, Ahn Myong-chol, the prisoners were walking skeletons, dwarfs and cripples in rags. About one third of them had various body deformities resulting from mistreatment. The very low food rations made about 1,500 die every year, but the inmate population remained constant, meaning about the same number of new arrivals. <http://monthly.chosun.com/client/dataroom/databoardread.asp?idx=9&Page=5&table=dataroom> (25 V 2014).

¹²⁷ Cheo Sang-hun, “Born and Raised in the North Korean Gulag”, *New York Times*, 9 July 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/09/world/asia/09iht-korea.4.6569853.html?page-wanted=2&r=2> (25 V 2014); Kim Hye-sook: “I saw prisoners turned to honeycomb by

ary 2014, UN investigators stated that the North Korean security chiefs and even leader Kim Jong-un should face international justice for ordering systematic murder, torture and starvation. Referral of the case to the International Criminal Court seems unlikely due to China's veto of such a move in the UN Security Council¹²⁸.

Displacement

Amongst the numerous methods used to ruin a person's life, the communists also used displacement. Chapter Seven will show how mass deportation of whole ethnic groups was common practice in the Soviet Union. Families of those imprisoned or executed were transported to remote regions of the USSR and their families divided, not knowing each other's fate. People who died or were killed were buried in unmarked graves, so news about the death of a relative rarely returned¹²⁹. Those deported could only take with them some necessities, so deportation also meant expropriation. "Villagization" campaigns in China, Vietnam, the Khmer Rouge's Cambodia and in Ethiopia had similar effects: people were deprived of their assets and families were destroyed.

Another method of displacement consisted of the forced recruitment to the Soviet military of men in occupied territories, which is a war crime. For instance, in 1940, a whole cohort of high school graduates, including a large number of Poles from Eastern Galicia, incorporated into the Ukrain-

the bullets", *The Independent*, 13 July 2011, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/profiles/kim-hyesook-i-saw-prisoners-turned-to-honeycomb-by-the-bullets-2312507.html> (25 V 2014).

¹²⁸ <http://www.comunistcrimes.org/en/News-Events/Latest-News/1008/north-korean-crimes-against-humanity-should-be-referred-to-icc-according-to-un-report> (27 II 2014); John Sweeney, *North Korea Undercover. Inside the World's Most Secret State* (Bantam Press, 2013).

¹²⁹ Irena Matisone was born in Pudino near Tomsk in Siberia in 1949. Her parents, Laimonis and Marga Matisone, survived the deportation and returned to Riga. After years, she managed to find out that her grandfather Karlis died in the Norilsk camp. Another grandfather died in 1941 and so did both of her great-grandparents. "Ironically and unnecessarily, all of them have been found innocent and rehabilitated by the Soviets". Williams, *Gulag to Independence*, p. 173.

ian SRR, were drafted into the Red Army. In 1941, another cohort of young males was forced into the Red Army¹³⁰.

The unique case of the imposition of martial law in Poland on 13 December 1981 should also be taken into account. It was the only time when a communist power was saved by the direct military occupation of a country by armed forces. Although the Soviet troops were present in Poland, they remained generally passive and the whole operation was carried out by the Polish army. Martial law in Poland was imposed by a military junta composed of the highest-ranking military authorities in violation of the then-binding law. Several dozen people were killed in clashes with riot police. Thousands of Solidarity leaders were arrested and “interned” without trial in an act of collective responsibility and hundreds of thousands were forced to emigrate. The leaders of the coup, General Wojciech Jaruzelski and his aides, were never held responsible for their operation, which they first explained as an attempt to prevent a civil war and later as a “lesser evil” to prevent a full Soviet invasion. Although serious doubts were raised about the Soviet threat at that time, the fact remains that the imposition of martial law was in violation of UNDHR and other international agreements¹³¹.

Body Count

According to the most widely cited estimate, the overall number of victims in the Soviet Union (including the years 1918-1922) would be 61,911,000¹³². According to Scott Manning’s “Communist Body Count”, the number of vic-

¹³⁰ Jan Zamojski, *Miejsca postoju* [Stopovers] (Warszawa, 1972), pp. 49 and 194.

¹³¹ Leopold Labedz (ed.), *Poland under Jaruzelski. A Comprehensive Sourcebook on Poland during and after Martial Law* (New York: Scribner, 1984); George Sanford, *Military Rule in Poland. The Rebuilding of Communist Power, 1981-1983* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1986); Andrzej Paczkowski, *Droga do “mniejszego zła”* [The Road to “Lesser Evil”] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2002); Wojciech Roszkowski, *Najnowsza historia Polski 1980-1989* [The Modern History of Poland, 1980-1989] (Warszawa: “Świat Książki”, 2011).

¹³² Rummel, *Lethal Politics*, p. 1. I. Kurganow, “Trzy liczby” [Three Figures], *Posev*, 1977, No. 4, quoted after *Obóz*, 1981, No. 1, pp. 1-4, made a specific calculation arriving at 66,700,000 victims, excluding war casualties. Cf. also: Steven Rosefielde, “Documented Homicides and Excess Deaths: New Insights into the Scale of Killing in the USSR During the 1930s”, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 1997, No. 3, pp. 321-331.

tims in communist China would be 73,237,000; in North Korea, 3,163,000; in Khmer Rouge Cambodia, 2,627,000 (probably an overestimate); in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, 1,750,000; in Vietnam, 1,670,000; in the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 1,343,000; in communist Yugoslavia, 1,072,000; in the People's Republic of Mozambique, 700,000; in communist Romania, 435,000; in communist Bulgaria, 222,000; in the People's Republic of Angola, 125,000; in the Mongolian People's Republic, 100,000; in communist Albania, 100,000; in communist Cuba, 73,000; in the German Democratic Republic, 70,000; in communist Czechoslovakia, 65,000; in communist Laos, 56,000; in communist Hungary, 27,000; in communist Poland, 22,000; and, in the People's Republic of Yemen, about 1,000¹³³. Manning's estimate corresponds with estimates by some authors but it also largely differs from other estimates. This only shows that we are still unable to precisely measure the range of communist atrocities and that further research is needed.

Ruined Lives

Historians dealing with communism frequently stop at specifying the huge numbers of casualties produced by communist systems all over the world, but this kind of body count is not all there is. When the scale of communist crimes is considered, one must also take into account the untold number of survivors whose lives were shattered, their families broken or orphaned, and their physical and mental health devastated.

¹³³ Scott Manning, "Communist Body Count", <http://www.scottmanning.com/content/communist-body-count/> (26 IV 2014); Cf. also: Rosefielde, *Red Holocaust*. Rudolph J. Rummel's estimates in his *Statistics of Genocide* are different. He agrees to 61,911,000 Soviet victims but estimates the Chinese communist victims at 35,236,000 people (Rummel, *Death by Government*, p. 100; an estimate lacking about 25 million more Great Leap Forward victims), the Khmer Rouge victims at 3,151,000 people (p. 56), the Vietnamese communist victims at 1,904,000 people (p. 130), the Yugoslav Communist victims at 1,072,000 people (p. 176, as Manning), and the North Korean victims at 1,063,000 people (including war casualties, p. 186). His estimates of the number of victims for Albania was from 100,000 to 150,000, for Angola, 320,000, for Bulgaria, 222,000, for Czechoslovakia, 197,000, for Ethiopia, 2 million (including civil war victims), for Mongolia, 100,000, for Mozambique, 900,000 (including civil war victims), for Romania, 435,000 (similar to Manning) (Rummel, *Statistics of Genocide*, pp. 215-266).

Jan Pospíšil was legal adviser to Czechoslovak Minister of Justice Jaroslav Stránský. In January 1949, he was arrested and accused of espionage and high treason on false grounds. He was sentenced to 20 years by the infamous judge Vojtěch Rudý. Thus, he became a *mukl*¹³⁴, which was the Czech equivalent to a *zek*. Apart from other prisons and camps, Pospíšil served four years in the infamous prison camp Jachymov. When released in 1959, his red blood cell count was 3.3 million per microliter instead of the average 5 million¹³⁵. He survived, but his health was ruined.

In the spring of 1949, 21-year-old Julie Hrušková was arrested for assisting an illegal border crossing. She remembered: “I experienced one really rough questioning when they banged my head against a table, dragged me across the room, hammered me against a closet and used whatever they could get hold of. I tried not to fall down. A phone call saved me in the end. They had to get ready for new arrests quickly. A guard took me to Orlí [a prison in Brno – WR], where they put me in solitary confinement. In the early hours of the morning I realized I was bleeding. I reported to the doctor, but the secret police officers had no time to take me to the hospital like the doctor ordered them to do. I was pregnant with my American soldier. I was in my third month and I miscarried”¹³⁶.

The fate of women in the camps was generally terrible. Criminals (such as the *blatnye*) frequently selected some for their orgies and raped them among the cackling crowd of their own¹³⁷. To make their lives at least a little bit easier, many women gave up and became common property while the *zeks* treated them as whores. The camp society was not forgiving¹³⁸. “Russian women in the camps—remembered a Polish priest—were totally debased. They usually prostituted without scruples. The administration and

¹³⁴ The term *mukl* came from the abbreviation of *muž určený k likvidaci* (A man on death row). This label used to be applied to all political prisoners. Tomáš Bouška, Klára Pinerov (eds.), *Czechoslovak Political Prisoners*, (No editor, no date), p. 145, footnote 9.

¹³⁵ “Interview with Mr Jan Pospíšil”, (in:) Bouška, Pinerov (eds.), *Czechoslovak Political Prisoners*, p. 141-150.

¹³⁶ “Interview with Mrs Julie Hrušková”, (in:) Bouška, Pinerov (eds.), *Czechoslovak Political Prisoners*, p. 48.

¹³⁷ Buca, *Vorkuta*, pp. 142-143. Cf. also: Applebaum, *Gulag*, chapter 15.

¹³⁸ Herling-Grudziński, *Inny świat*, pp. 142-143.

its *pridurki* preyed upon them in the first place”¹³⁹. How could these women live after release?

One of the most moving memoirs about the *laogai* is by Zhang Xianling, who recorded days of misery, hunger and mental deprivation. The extreme cruelty of the guards, who usually addressed the prisoners as “dog shit”, the humiliation, brainwashing, physical exhaustion and starvation reduced the prisoners to animal-like machines with few human feelings¹⁴⁰. The same was remembered by survivors of North Korean camps. Kang Chol-hwan was imprisoned in Yadok camp as boy of just 9 years old, along with his parents and 7-year-old sister. His family were detained as re-emigrants from Japan. Even though he managed to escape, his memory still haunts him¹⁴¹.

Whoever was affected by the Soviet machinery of organized crime could not live as they had before. A Polish woman arrested in 1939 and released in 1941 at the age of 20, reflected: “Somewhere, a brigadier from Kamieniec Podolski (Kamyanets Podilsky) cursed the Soviet system because of his deported compatriots, while his daughter, a schoolgirl of the Soviet *desatiletka*, belonged to the Komsomol repeating official Bolshevik slogans (...) A strange world, delightful and horrible, where the word ‘freedom’ is the biggest lie, where the word ‘equality’ is condemned everywhere and where the word ‘brotherhood’ does not exist at all. When sometimes I read about the *kolkhoz* life in a Soviet newspaper, while I see my own *kolkhoz*, I know that behind each letter there is a shadow of a terrible disgusting lie. And I would like to scream to my last breath to those who believe false words, I would like to show them the truth of the life there. But this may be understood only by those who were there, who performed the thoughtless and tragic function of a whipped animal”¹⁴². On leaving a camp, another Polish prisoner was approached by his Russian companion in misery who had to

¹³⁹ Quote: Zamorski, Starzewski (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość sowiecka*, p. 368. Cf. also pp. 393-394 and 404.

¹⁴⁰ Zhang Xiangliang, *Grass Soup* (Boston: D.R. Godine, 1995).

¹⁴¹ Kang Chol-hwan, *Usta pełne kamieni* [Mouth Full of Stones] (Warszawa: Świat Książki, 2005), original: *Les Aquariums de Pyongyang* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 2000). He witnessed cruel executions of prisoners. Stones were put in their mouth to keep them from shouting. Ibidem, pp. 140-141.

¹⁴² Zamorski, Starzewski (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość sowiecka*, pp. 318-319.

stay and who told him: “When you leave Russia for freedom, tell the Western people how we are suffering here. Let them come here in the name of their justice and recognize equal humans in us”¹⁴³. All victims of communism call for this kind of recognition.

While the victims of Nazi genocide were defined generally by race or ethnicity, it is hard to define the victims of communism. Formally speaking, communist ideology defined the enemy as a “class enemy”, but in practice most of the victims of communism were not propertied classes. In the communists’ own words, they should be defined as “enemies of the people”. Of course, this term lacks precision since who was an “enemy of the people” was defined on political grounds. Sometimes, the most vigorous executioner could become an “enemy of the people” if he or she fell from grace. But of the victims, two specific groups of “enemies of the people” can be distinguished: the religious and the national.

¹⁴³ Ibidem, p. 375.

Communism against Religion

Marxist-Leninist Attitude to Religion

The communist perception of religion stemmed from the militant atheism of Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin. Some analysts of Marxian thought claim that the founder of “scientific socialism” fought God for the sake of Man. Others are of the opinion that Marx’s atheism was his primary reason¹. Indeed, it may seem that Marx’s hatred of religion was his basic *credo*: “Religion is namely self-knowledge and self-consciousness of a man who has not yet discovered himself or who has already lost himself (...) Religion is a sigh of an oppressed creation (...) It is the opium of the masses”². Marx scorned Christianity for spreading a “slave’s mentality” and for the demobilization of personality in the class struggle³.

Followers of Marx developed various interpretations of his thought. Usually they were equally determined to fight religion. This referred especially to those who chose a radical interpretation of Marx’s theory of social revolution. Lenin continued the most anti-religious version of Marxism. In his article “Socialism and Religion”, published in 1905, he called religion a “spiritual booze” and treated church organizations as instruments of human enslave-

¹ Marcel Neusch, *U źródeł współczesnego ateizmu* [At the Source of Contemporary Atheism] (Paris: Editions du Dialogue, 1980), pp. 75-84.

² Karl Marx, *Przyczynek do krytyki heglowskiej filozofii prawa* [Contribution to the Criticism of Hegel’s Philosophy of Law], (in:) *Wybrane pisma filozoficzne 1844-1846* [Selected Philosophical Writings] (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1949), p. 13.

³ Neusch, *U źródeł*, p. 97.

ment⁴. No wonder he considered religion “an enemy which must be fought against”⁵. And that is exactly what he and the Bolsheviks did when they took over power in Russia. From the very beginning of Bolshevik Russia, church organizations and believers were one of the main targets of Soviet oppression. Formally, the church and state were only separated, but in practice the Soviet state was employed to destroy religious life. Oppression of religion and Christianity in particular was also a constant practice everywhere the communists seized power⁶.

The official position of the Russian Communist Party was expressed in Article 13 of its statute: “As far as religion is concerned, the RCP will not be satisfied by the decreed separation of Church and State (...) The Party aims at the complete destruction of links between the exploiting classes and (...) religious propaganda, while assisting the actual liberation of the working masses from religious prejudices and organizing the broadest possible education-enlightening and anti-religious propaganda”⁷. Bolshevik Commissar Anatoli Lunacharsky explained openly: “We hate Christianity and Christians; even the best of them must be looked upon as our worst enemies. They preach the love of our neighbors and mercy which is contrary to our principles. Christian love is an obstacle to the development of the revolution. Down with the love of our neighbors; what we want is hatred. We must learn to hate, and it is only then that we shall conquer the world”⁸.

⁴ Leszek Kołakowski, *Główne nurty marksizmu* [Main Currents of Marxism] (Londyn: “Aneks”, 1988), pp. 734 ff.

⁵ Neusch, *U źródle*, p. 101.

⁶ According to Nikolay Berdyaev, “Communists profess militant atheism and they are compelled to carry on an anti-religious propaganda. Communism in actual fact is the foe of every form of religion and especially of Christianity, not as a social system but itself a religion. It wants to be a religion itself, to take the place of Christianity (...) No scientific, purely intellectual theory can be intolerant and fanatical, and communism is exclusive as a religious faith”. Nikolay Berdyaev, *The Origin of Russian Communism* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1948), pp. 7 and 158.

⁷ Quoted according to: Dimitry V. Pospelovsky, *A History of Soviet Atheism in Theory, and Practice, and the Believer*, Vol 1: *A History of Marxist-Leninist Atheism and Soviet Anti-Religious Policies* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1987), p. 28.

⁸ *Congressional Record*, Vol. 77, pp. 1539 and 1540, according to the statement of Professor Roman Smal-Stocki, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 943.

Perhaps the best illustration of the practical attitude of the communist system to the religious was the case described by Valentin Moroz who met a camp inmate, a thief turned Jehovah's Witness. From "socially friendly element" he instantly was changed into a "hostile element". Asking the reason for the increased harassment he received a simple answer from the camp guards: "you should better steal"⁹.

Soviet practices

The hostility of the Bolsheviks towards religion was manifested from the very beginning of their rule. Already at the end of 1917 a Bolshevik horde had murdered the archimandrite of the Spasov monastery. When the Red Army captured Kiev in January 1918, the Bolsheviks burst into the Pechersk Lavra and killed several hundred monks. Kiev Metropolitan Volodymir was murdered separately at the end of that same month¹⁰. In June 1918, the Cheka murdered Bishop of Tobolsk Hermogen¹¹. In August 1919, the Bolsheviks killed four Orthodox nuns from Diveyevo. Having shot the nuns, the head of the operation read out the "death sentence" claiming the murdered nuns were "witches"¹². Cases such as these were quite common. Since most citizens of the Soviet state were Orthodox, the main target of the Bolshevik regime was directed against the Russian Orthodox Church. Other Christian churches were not treated better. Extermination of Christian churches was

⁹ Iwan Koszeliwec (ed.), *Ukraina 1956-1968* [Ukraine, 1956-1968] (Warszawa: "Słowo", no date), pp. 239-240.

¹⁰ James and Marti Hefley, *Wiara i krew* [original version: *By Their Blood. Christian Martyrs from the Twentieth century and Beyond*] (Kraków: Wydawnictwo M, 2004), pp. 274 and 276; http://orthodoxwiki.org/Vladimir_%28Bogoyavlensky%29_of_Kiev_and_Gallich; <http://ocafs.oca.org/FeastSaintsLife.asp?FSID=100311> (16 XII 2011).

¹¹ He was arrested in April 1918 after leading a procession in the streets of Tobolsk. Brought to Yekaterinburg, he was boarded onto a ship on the Tura river. A heavy stone was tied to his neck and he was drowned. <http://www.orthodox.net/russiannm/hermogenes-bishop-and-hieromartyr-of-tobolsk-and-those-with-him.html> (16 XII 2011); Hefley, *Wiara i krew*, pp. 276-277.

¹² Hieromonk Damascene (Orlov), *Mucheniki, Ispovedniki i Podvizhniki Blagochestiya Rossijskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi XX Stoletiya* (Tver: "Bulat", 1992); <http://www.orthodox.net/russian-nm/eudocia-nun-martyr-of-diveyevo-and-those-with-her.html> (18 XII 2011).

a planned action initially engineered by the 6th Sector of the OGPU led by Yevgeny Tuchkov.

Although in 1921 and 1922 the Orthodox hierarchy offered material aid to the starving population in southern Russia, they were accused of maintaining extraordinary wealth for themselves¹³. In August 1922, Petrograd Metropolitan Venyamin was shot after a show trial. Hundreds of churches and monasteries were destroyed or changed into warehouses, museums of atheism or concentration camps. The worst case was perhaps the Solovetsky monastery. After a massacre of the monks, it was turned into a concentration camp for the clergy in the early 1920s. Eight metropolitans, 20 archbishops and 47 bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church died on Solovetsky Islands¹⁴.

The Bolshevik attitude toward the Roman Catholic Church was particularly hostile since this church was connected to the “capitalist” Holy See in Rome. Meeting a Catholic delegation in November 1922, the head of the Supreme Revolutionary Tribunal Ozolin told them that new Russia “can spit (*mozhet naplevat*) on the Pope”¹⁵. In early March 1923, the Soviet authorities arrested Bishop Jan Cieplak, the Apostolic Administrator of the Roman Catholic diocese of Mohilev, the most extensive in the world, as well as 13 other priests. During the show trial held in Moscow between 21 and 25 March 1923, chief prosecutor Nikolai Krylenko accused them of “counter-revolutionary activities” and of “opposing the separation of the church and state”. He referred to Article 65 of the Bolshevik constitution, which claimed

¹³ In March 1922, Lenin wrote to Molotov: “It is now and only now when people eat people in the starving villages and hundreds if not thousands of corpses are scattered on the roads, that we can (and thus we must) confiscate the church property with the most crazy and ruthless energy (...) By this means we shall acquire a fund of several hundred million roubles (...) No other moment, except for the helpless hunger, will allow us to win over the compassion of peasant masses (...) It is now that we must deliver a firm and merciless battle against the Black Hundred clergy and suppress its resistance with the cruelty that they will not forget in decades”. Quote after: the Rev Tadeusz Pikus, *Rosja w objęciach ateizmu* [Russia in the Embrace of Atheism] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Archidiecezji Warszawskiej, 1997), p. 58.

¹⁴ Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, Vol. 1, pp. 342 ff.

¹⁵ Archiwum Akt Nowych (Archive of Recent Records) in Warsaw, Ambasada RP w Moskwie, File 70, p. 463.

that monks and priests were “enemies deprived of civil and political rights”. Bishop Cieplak and Prelate Konstanty Budkiewicz were sentenced to death and other priests to three to 10 years in prison. Bishop Cieplak was soon deported from Russia, while on 31 March 1923, four GPU officers entered Budkiewicz’s cell in Lubyanka and one of the officers, named Zlatkin, shot the priest in the head¹⁶.

In April and May 1923, the Soviets sponsored a so-called All-Russian Council of the Orthodox Church, which changed the canonical rules of ordination and clerical marriage and dethroned Patriarch Tikhon, stripping him of his episcopacy, priesthood and monastic status. Tikhon refused to recognize these decisions but he died in April 1925. Tikhon’s successor, Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsy, was soon arrested, as was another successor, Metropolitan Sergius of Moscow. Upon his release in March 1927, Sergius decided to seek a compromise aimed at stopping the campaign of terror against the church. On 29 July 1927, he issued a declaration in which he professed absolute loyalty to the Soviet Union and to its atheist government. This declaration was not recognized by a group of bishops and clergy, declaring the followers of Sergius schismatic and continuing a Russian “Catacomb Church”, which was gradually destroyed by the Soviet authorities. The declaration by Sergius did not stop the persecution of the Orthodox Church. The most symbolic gesture of Soviet power toward religion was the blowing-up of the huge Church of Christ the Saviour in Moscow in the early 1930s. In Ukraine, the Bolsheviks destroyed the Medieval golden-domed Mikhailivsky Monastery, the Military Cathedral of St. Michael, and the St. Michael Monastery in Kiev. The Pecherska Lavra was turned into an anti-religious museum¹⁷. The most prominent functionary of the Soviet party and state machinery com-

¹⁶ Rev. Jan Urban, “Mord moskiewski a obowiązek cywilizowanego świata” [The Moscow Murder and the Duty of the Civilized World], *Przegląd Powszechny*, 1923, Vol. 158, pp. 80-86; Rev. Roman Dzwonkowski, *Kościół katolicki w ZSRR 1917-1939. Zarys historii* [The Catholic Church in the USSR, 1917-1939. Outline History] (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 1997); Archiwum Akt Nowych (Archive of Recent Records) in Warsaw, Ambasada RP w Moskwie, File 70, pp. 476-484; Francis MacCullagh, *The Bolshevik Persecution of Christianity* (London: E.P. Dutton and Company, 1924). Francis McCullagh was the *New York Herald* correspondent in Moscow at that time.

¹⁷ Statement by Archbishop Mstyslav Skrypnyk, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 252.

bating religion was Yemelyan Yaroslavsky, editor-in-chief of the periodical *Bezbozhnik* (The Godless) from 1922 and the chairman of the League of Militant Atheists from 1925¹⁸.

The list of Orthodox martyrs in Soviet Union is extremely long. It includes for instance Mother Marya Lilyanova, a semi-paralyzed nun from Gatchina, who was arrested, thrown on a truck and brought to prison where she died in April 1930, Mothers Anna Abrikosova, Ihumenya Eva Pavlova and a lay woman, Kira Obolenskaya, who was executed in December 1937. The mass closure of churches started in 1928 and by 1939 hardly any of them were functioning. During the Great Purge, the Orthodox clergy was massacred. In 1937, about 136,900 Orthodox clerics were arrested and 85,300 of them shot dead, in 1938 there were 28,300 clerics arrested and 21,500 shot, in 1939 about 1,500 arrested and 900 shot, and in 1940 about 5,100 clerics were arrested and 1,100 murdered. Altogether, during the Great Purge 171,800 clergy were arrested and 108,800 killed¹⁹. Other examples include in October 1937 when the Soviets killed Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsy, in November 1937, Leningrad Metropolitan Joseph, who opposed the conciliatory line of Patriarch Sergius, and in December of the same year, Father Pavel Florensky, one of the most outstanding Russian theologians and scholars. Thousands of Russian Orthodox martyrs from the Bolshevik times were recently recognized as “neo-martyrs” of Russia.

The Soviets destroyed the entire autocephalous Ukrainian Orthodox church. Symbolic also was the fate of the two subsequent heads of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Archbishop of Kiev Vasyl Lypkivsky and his

¹⁸ B. Pares, “Yaroslavsky on Religion in Russia”, *Slavonic and East European Review*, 1937/38, Vol. 16, pp. 341-355. The *Bezbozhnik* ridiculed all religious belief as a sign of backwardness and superstition. It reported closing churches and on alleged abuses by the clergy. It mainly attacked Christianity and Judaism. Priests and rabbis were presented as agents of capitalism and counterrevolution. An “anti-alcoholic” issue of 1929 presented Jesus as a moonshiner. Although Yaroslavsky had Jewish roots, his periodical criticized the Passover as encouraging excessive drinking while the Prophet Elijah was accused of “getting drunk as a swine”. Writer Mikhail Bulgakov called the periodical “boundless blasphemy” and a “crime beyond measure”. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bezbozhnik_%28magazine%29 (27 V 2014); Daniel Peris, *Storming the Heavens: The Soviet League of the Militant Godless* (Cornell University Press, 1998).

¹⁹ http://www.goldentime.ru/nbk_22.htm (10 V 2014).

successor Mykola Boretsky, who were arrested and perished in the Gulag. Lypkivsky, who advocated the independence of Ukraine, was executed in November 1937 and Boretsky died in the Leningrad psychiatric hospital in 1936. Most of the independent Ukrainian Orthodox hierarchy followed them to the camps and graves while the survivors joined the Russian Orthodox Church²⁰.

The Byelorussian Greek Catholic church was also destroyed by the Soviets. In early 1922, Metropolitan of Minsk Melchisedek began to organize an independent Belorussian Greek Catholic metropolis. On 23 July 1922, a convention of Belorussian clergy and laymen announced its establishment. In September 1925, Melchisedek was called to Moscow and arrested. After he reconciled with Patriarch Sergius, he was released, but unrepentant bishops of the church were soon arrested. Bishop Johan of Mazyr died in a concentration camp in 1927, with Bishop Nikolay of Slutsk in 1931 and Bishop of Bobruysk Filaret in 1939 following. Many of their followers were imprisoned, shot or sent to the Gulag. By 1937, most of the Belorussian Orthodox clergy were liquidated, the churches destroyed, locked or turned into secular buildings and services stopped. In 1936, the Soviet authorities blew up the Orthodox Assumption Cathedral in Vitebsk, which was built in 1743 by Italian architect Józef Fontana. The Holy Trinity Church in Vitebsk was turned into a warehouse²¹. The Soviets blew up the Cathedral and Railroad churches in Minsk and converted many Minsk churches, such as St. Ekaterina and Staroshovka churches, into communist clubs. The Minsk monastery was used as a fire station. In 1930, the Bolsheviks destroyed the St. Boriso-Gleb monastery in Polatsk with its frescoes from the 1220s and built a stable for cows there. They also blew up St. Joseph Cathedral in Mohilev to make room for an NKVD building²².

Armenian Katholikos Khoren Muradbekian was elected the head of the Armenian Apostolic Church in 1932. It was an extremely difficult time for the Armenian Church with churches closed and priests arrested, shot or exiled.

²⁰ "Metropolit Vasil Lypkivsky. Widrodzhenya Tserkvi v Ukraini", *Dobra Knizhka* (Toronto), 1959, p. 174 ff.; *Russian Oppression in the Ukraine* (London, 1962), pp. 117-118.

²¹ Testimony of Nicholas Scors, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 212.

²² Testimony of Rev. Nikolay Lapitski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, pp. 218-219.

It was under these circumstances that 65-year old Katholikos Khoren suddenly died on 6 April 1938. It was publicly announced that he had died of heart attack but murder was suspected²³.

On 2 July 1937, Stalin ordered the Politburo to re-arrest formerly released “enemies of the people”, including the clergy. The head of the NKVD, Nikolai Yezhov, immediately started to implement this instruction. Apart from the Orthodox clergy, hundreds of Roman Catholic priests who had served prison or camp terms were executed. These included the Rev. Antoni Czerwiński, Bishop Alexander Frison, a laywoman Kamila Kruszelnicka, Polish priests Piotr Baranowski, Józef Dziemian, Antoni Dziemieszkiewicz, Stefan Erojan, Antoni Jarmołowicz, Bolesław Jurewicz, Józef Karpiński, Józef Kowalski, Jan Łukasz, Józef Łukianin and Albin Szaciłło, as well as German priests Adam Bellendir, Peter Paul, Franz Rau, Peter Riedel, Andreas Schoenberger, Peter Weigel and Michael Wolf, who were all shot on the Solovetsky Islands in November 1937, as well as the Rev. Franciszek Budrys, who was shot in Ufa in December 1937.

Among the Catholic priests murdered by the Soviets after the incorporation of eastern Poland in 1939 were the Belorussian Rev. Fabyan Abrantovich, eight Dominican Fathers from Czortków (Chortkiv) shot on 2 July 1941, and Rev. Stanisław Szulmiński, who died in the Ukhta camp in November 1941. The Apostolic Administrator of Tallinn, Archbishop Eduard Profittlich, was murdered in February 1942. After the Red Army entered East Prussia in early 1945, Soviet soldiers shot to death many priests, including the Revs. Władysław Świtalski and Gerhard Witt. They also raped and murdered most of the nuns whom they captured, such as Sister Marianna Witkowska and the St. Catherine Sisters from Lidzbark Warmiński. When the Soviets established their rule in western Ukraine, they massacred the Greek Catholic hierarchy there. Father Vitaly Bayrak was so badly beaten that he died in Drohobycz (Drohobych) prison²⁴.

Soviet anti-religious policies were moderated in the mid-1950s but in 1958 Nikita Khrushchev started a new wave of persecution. One may conclude

²³ <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=20961438> (21 III 2014).

²⁴ Robert Royal, *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century. A Comprehensive World History* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2000), pp. 43-64.

that under Soviet rule the lives of Orthodox or Catholic clergy was always in danger. The same referred to lay believers, especially those who tried to maintain the minimum collective worship.

Spanish Civil War

Stalinist and Trotskyist communists largely contributed to the Golgotha of Spanish clergy in the 1930s. Already during the attempted anarcho-synicalist revolution in Asturias in 1934 the Communists played an important role in the eruption of anti-Catholic fury. The Oviedo Cathedral was bombed, the Episcopal palace was burnt down along with the seminary building. Revolutionary tribunals sentenced to death and executed 34 priests and monks. Some of the clergy and young clerics, such as Amadeo Andrés, Angel Cuartas Cristóbal, Jesus Prieto López and others, were lynched and shot in the streets²⁵.

In the first half of 1936, the anarchy of the Spanish Republic took unprecedented dimensions. Revolutionaries dressed as democrats advocated class hatred. In February, a Socialist member of the Cortes Generales stated that “a revolutionary fire must explode to be seen worldwide and the country must be drowned in blood”. The leader of the Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party, Francisco Largo Caballero, promised the introduction of a dictatorship of the proletariat in the Bolshevik style. On 13 July 1936, communists dragged the leader of the Monarchists, José Calvo Sotelo, out of his home and shot him. Seventeen Catholic priests, monks and nuns had already been killed in the six days before General Francisco Franco started his counter-revolutionary operation²⁶.

During the Civil War in Spain, anti-Catholic hatred broke loose. The overall number of priests and religious murdered by the Republican forces, not

²⁵ Vicente Cárcel Orti, *Mrok nad ołtarzem. Prześladowania Kościoła w Hiszpanii w latach 1931-1939* [Darkness over the Altar. Persecution of the Spanish Church, 1931-1939] (Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy “Pax”, 2003), pp. 80-90; <http://newsaints.faithweb.com/martyrs/MSPC33.htm>; http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_19991121_bertran-compagni_en.html (22 II 2012).

²⁶ Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, *Zagrabiona pamięć: wojna w Hiszpanii 1936-39* [Stolen Memory: The Spanish War, 1936-39] (Warszawa: Biblioteka Frondy, 1997), p. 37.

only anarchists but also Stalinist and Trotskyist communists, was estimated at 6,832, including 13 bishops of Sigüenza, Lérída, Cuenca, Barbastro, Segorbe, Jaén, Tarragona, Ciudad Real, Almería, Guadix, Barcelona, Teruel and the apostolic administrator of Orihuela. The religious males murdered included 259 Claretians, 226 Franciscans, 204 Piarists, 176 Brothers of Mary, 165 Christian Brothers, 155 Augustinians, 132 Dominicans and 114 Jesuits. Female orders were less affected but murders of nuns were even more shocking since they could have had nothing to do with the political struggle. Nevertheless, 30 Daughters of Charity, 26 Carmelites of Charity, 26 Adoratrices and 20 Capuchines were cruelly murdered²⁷.

The red communist and black anarchist barbarians staged blasphemous shows and incited murder of the religious. One of their papers argued that “there is no way out for the clergy: they must be killed one and all”. Communist leader Andrés Nin concluded in August 1936: “The problem of the church has been solved by reaching to its roots: we have crushed the priests, churches and the cult”²⁸. Each of the thousands of martyrs of the Spanish revolutionaries would have a story to tell²⁹.

In Soviet-Incorporated areas

The first stage of the destruction of the Baltic Christian churches started when the Soviets incorporated Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in July 1940, and terminated with the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. The

²⁷ Royal, *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 108-109.

²⁸ Quotes according to: Cárceles Orti, *Mrok nad oltarzem*, pp. 92-94. Nin himself was soon murdered by members of another communist faction.

²⁹ For instance, three sisters, María del Carmen, María Rosa and María Magdalena Fradera y Ferragutcasas from Riudarenes near Girona, entered the Franciscan Convent of Missionaries (FCIM). In view of the growing wave of persecution, in July 1936 they were told to leave the convent and to go home in secular dresses. In September, the local communist militia disclosed their status and dragged them out to the Hostalet's forest near Lloret de Mar. Since they were attractive young women, the henchmen tried to rape them. When the sisters resisted, they were cruelly tortured and finally shot to death. <http://www.santiebeati.it/dettaglio/94959>; <http://hagiopedia.blogspot.com/2013/09/beatas-maria-del-carmen-maria-rosa-y.html>; <http://newsaints.faithweb.com/martyrs/MSPC23.htm>; http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatas_Fradera_y_Ferragutcasas; <http://www.preguntasantoral.es/tag/carme-fradera/> (18 XI 2013).

Soviets removed religious instruction from schools and abolished ministry in prisons, hospitals, and in the army³⁰. All church property was nationalized. Among the many Roman Catholic priests cruelly murdered by the Soviets in June and July 1941 were the administrator of the Pusne parish, the Rev. Valentinas Balčius, the Kursenai parish pastor, the Rev. Vaclovas Dambrauskas, the parish pastor of Merkinė, the Rev. Andrius Juknevičius, the parish pastor of Maletai, the Rev. Matas Lajauskas, the parish pastor of Vieksniai, the Rev. Jonas Navickis, the chaplain at Joniskis College, the Rev. Povilas Racevičius, the retired Rev. Benediktas Šveikauskas, the parish pastor of Vepriai, the Rev. Balys Vegele, and the parish pastor of Skoruliai, the Rev. Pranas Vitkevičius. Three other priests, the parish pastor of Lankeliskiai, the Rev. Vaclovas Balsys, the vicar of the same parish, the Rev. Jonas Petrika, and the head of Vilkaviskis Seminary, the Rev. Justinas Dabrila, were tortured to death with bayonets and crosses branded on their foreheads and chests³¹. Special NKVD circulars instructed on surveillance of churches and monasteries³². Crosses were removed from public sight. Even the word “God” was ordered to be written with a small “g”³³.

³⁰ On 25 April 1941, the Soviet Lithuanian authorities prohibited the Catholic clergy teaching religion to children. Priests were to be gathered by local executive committees in all townships in order to submit written statements to this extent: “I, the undersigned ... was informed that I have been strictly forbidden and have no right to teach religion to children of school age, either in the schools or in my home or any place in general. Thus, I have no right whatever to talk to them on religious matters. At the same time, I have been informed I will be held responsible for failure to comply with this warning, whereto I affix my signature”. *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 1, p. 234.

³¹ According to Juozas Prunksis, *Fifteen “Liquidated” Priests in Lithuania* (Chicago, Ill., 1943).

³² Various kinds of physical abuse against practicing Catholics included, for instance, a scene described by the Rev. Nykolas Krupavičius. During the First Communion celebration in a church in Kalvarija at the end of July or early August 1940, a group of Bolsheviks forced their way into the church under the command of NKVD officer Žemaitaitis. “They began pushing, shoving children around, tearing off the veils off the girl’s heads and they seized the candles and tossed them to the floor. They pulled the girls by the hair and pushed the children from the church. Grown up persons inside the church, the relatives and friends, got embroiled in it and there was a fight inside the church. The Bolsheviks were thrown out of the church by the people. In consequence of that incident, one little girl died and more than a dozen landed in hospitals”. Testimony of Rev. Nykolas Krupavičius, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 890-891.

³³ Bohdan Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane* [Tried by Fire] (Rzym: Papieski Instytut Studiów Kościelnych, 1982), Vol. 1, pp. 103-106; Testimony of Rev. Edvardas Stukelis, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 1, p. 252-253.

The Soviets returned to the three republics to complete the destruction of religion in 1944. It was one of their main objectives. According to what a Soviet official said to a Lithuanian bishop in 1941: “With all its power and all its experience, Moscow will combat religion everywhere”³⁴. Roman Catholics, who accounted for about 85 percent of the Lithuanians and Poles living in Lithuania, faced the most dramatic challenge in their history. Religion was again being removed from public life. Religious instruction in schools was abolished, while religious organizations and publications were banned. Atheist propaganda became omnipresent in schools and in media, which promoted a “scientific outlook”. In 1945, all seminaries were closed except the one in Kaunas. In 1946, all religious orders were liquidated and their property nationalized. Monks and nuns could either leave the orders or be imprisoned and deported. Sometimes they were absorbed by the diocesan organization, but monastic life was liquidated.

Arrests among the Lithuanian clergy increased in the years 1946-47. While the total number of priests in Lithuania was about 1,450, in 1949, the number of those arrested exceeded 350, and by 1954, it more than doubled, reaching 740³⁵. In 1946, the ordinary Bishop of Telsiai, Vincas Borisevičius, was imprisoned, and in early 1947, he was sentenced to death and shot. Since they refused to condemn the anti-Soviet guerillas, two other hierarchs were arrested: the ordinary Bishop of Kaišiadorys Teofilis Matulionis and the auxiliary Bishop of Telšiai Pranciškus Ramanauskas. The communist press published a forged appeal by Archbishop Mečislovas Reinys, the apostolic administrator of Vilnius, to guerillas to give up arms in exchange for personal security. When the archbishop publicly denied having signed the letter, he was arrested, sentenced to 25 years, and deported to Russia. He died in Vladimir prison in 1953. In late 1947, the only Lithuanian prelate still in office was the ordinary Bishop of Panevėžys, Kazimiras Paltarokas.

Deprived of their diocesan leadership, the rank-and-file clergy were decimated by arrests and terrorized. The communist authorities encouraged

³⁴ Testimony of Bishop Bryzgis, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 1, p. 237.

³⁵ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, p. 166; Romuald J. Misiunas, Rein Taagepera, *The Baltic States. Years of Dependence 1940-1980* (Berkeley-Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), p. 120; Royal, *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 243-254.

them to create a national church separate from the Vatican. Nevertheless, only a few priests joined the Communist-sponsored organization. In the early 1950s, the Lithuanian Roman Catholic church seemed doomed. About 300,000 Lithuanians, that is, more than 10 percent of the nation, were deported to camps in Russia while only one third of the priests were still active³⁶. When Stalin died in March 1953, a “thaw” began that led to the “amnesty” of 1955 and the return of hundreds of Catholic clergy and thousands of believers to Lithuania. Although legal limitations on religious practices were not lifted, the bulk of Lithuanian Catholics fought to preserve their faith until the collapse of the communist system.

Persecution of the small Latvian Catholic church was equally ruthless as that of the Lithuanian church. Latvia’s Roman Catholic Metropolitan Anatolijs Springovics managed to maintain his post, but in May 1949, communist authorities arrested his auxiliary Bishop, Kazimirs Dulbinskis, who received a long-term sentence in the Gulag³⁷.

By 1945, both Estonian and Latvian societies were more secular than that of Lithuania. Therefore, Protestant churches were more easily subordinated. The Lutheran Archbishop of Latvia, Teodors Gruenbergs left the country at the end of the war, appointing Dean Karlis Irbe to succeed him. Nevertheless, Irbe was soon deported by the Soviets to Siberia. Also, the Lutheran Archbishop of Estonia, Johann Kopp, left before the advance of the Soviets and his two newly appointed successors, Anton Eilart and August Pähn, refused to support the new regime and were arrested and deported. For years, Estonian Lutherans lacked a leader until Jaan Kiivit accepted the role³⁸. Baltic Orthodox churches were attached to the Moscow Patriarchate in 1946, which ended whatever independence they had had earlier. The destruction of organized religion was not enough for the Soviet power. The anti-religious campaign was intensified with the aim to terrorize believers. For instance, in July 1948, Riga radio broadcast an appeal to members of the communist

³⁶ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 166 and 174.

³⁷ Misiunas, Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, p. 121.

³⁸ *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Estonia*, HR SCOCA, Special Report No 3 (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 31; Misiunas, Taagepera, *The Baltic States*, p. 121.

party and youth organization to destroy “religious prejudices” and to fight preachers and defenders of religion. The atmosphere of anti-religious terror continued even after Stalin died in March 1953. A slight relaxation of it came in 1956, but the oppression continued until 1989³⁹.

The brief Soviet control of Western Ukraine in 1939-41 was too short to eliminate the independent Greek Catholic (Uniate) church, which was the national church of the Ukrainians in the formerly Austrian and Polish part of Ukraine. Soon after, the eastern front rolled through Western Ukraine in 1944 and it could have seemed the anti-religious policies of the Soviets would be liberalized. The reason was simple: the Soviets had to deal with the lay Poles and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) first. The Metropolitan of Lviv, Andrey Sheptytsky, died in November 1944 and was succeeded by his coadjutor, Bishop Yosyf Slipy. The new metropolitan made a gesture of goodwill, presenting the Soviet authorities 100,000 rubles, but the gift was received coldly and a minor official demanded the Church’s cooperation in the struggle against the UPA. This demand, as well as a call to give up allegiance to the Holy See, was rejected by Slipy⁴⁰.

In April 1945, Metropolitan Slipy was arrested along with most of the Greek Catholic bishops of Western Ukraine. They were taken to Kiev, where Slipy was tried secretly and sentenced to eight years in forced labor camps. He spent these years in the northern camps. In 1953, he was sentenced again to exile and in 1957 he received another eight-year sentence in prison for carrying on with his duties. The ordinary Bishop of Stanisławów (Ivano-frankivsk), Hrihory Khomyshyn, was tortured to death in the Kiev prison. The auxiliary Bishop of Lviv, Nikita Budka, died in exile in Karaganda in 1949. Before his arrest in 1945, Slipy consecrated Alexander Khira an underground bishop of the Greek Catholic church, but the latter was also arrested in Feb-

³⁹ *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Latvia*, HR SCOCA, Special Report No 12 (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1954), p. 20.

⁴⁰ *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Ukraine*, HR SCOCA, Special Report No 4 (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 32; Jaroslav Pelikan, *Confessor between East and West. A Portrait of Ukrainian Cardinal Josif Slipyj* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Publ., 1990).

ruary 1949 and sentenced to 25 years in the camps⁴¹. At the same time, the new Patriarch of the All Russian Orthodox church, Alexey, closely collaborating with the Soviet power, launched a vigorous political campaign terrorizing Ukrainian Greek Catholics⁴².

These arrests were followed by intensification of the Soviet campaign against Greek Catholicism. Three renegade priests, headed by the Rev. Havrylo Kostelnyk, formed a group aimed at a reunion with the Moscow Orthodoxy. When several hundred priests loyal to the Pope gathered in Lviv to protest these activities, they were arrested. Some were shot and the rest deported to labor camps. On 8-19 March 1946, the renegade group called a meeting in Lviv to break definitively with Rome. The Brest Union was declared null and void, while the whole church organization was forced to join the Russian Orthodox Church. About 1,100 out of 2,300 Greek Catholic priests decided to join the Russian Orthodox Church. Those hundreds who protested were arrested, while about 200 of the Greek Catholic clergy continued underground ministry. The Greek Catholic diocese of Przemyśl stayed within the postwar Polish territory but the Polish communist authorities arrested the Przemyśl ordinary bishop, Yosafat Kotsylovsky, and his auxiliary bishop, Hrihory Lakota, and handed them over to the Soviets in early 1946. They were then sentenced to long-term imprisonment in camps and died in 1947 and 1950, respectively⁴³.

After September 1939, when the Red Army occupied the Polish part of the Belorussian-speaking territory, the Soviets destroyed the Roman and Greek Catholic and Orthodox religious life there. They deported and killed many priests and monks. The Soviet regime introduced personnel changes in the eparchy of Western Belorussia. They removed Archbishop Feodosiy from Wilno (Vilnius) and Alexander from Pinsk and established Nikolay Yarushvich and Sergey Voskresenskiy instead. After the Soviets withdrew in 1941,

⁴¹ *Martirologia ukrainskikh tserkov u chetyryoch tomakh* [Martyrology of Ukrainian Churches in Four Volumes] (Toronto, 1985), Vol. 2, pp. 102-103, 107; Testimony of Rev. Volodymyr Pylypec, *Hearings before the SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 255.

⁴² Hansjakob Stehle, *Tajna dyplomacja Watykanu* [The Secret Vatican Diplomacy] (Warszawa: Real Press, 1993), p. 201.

⁴³ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 190-194; Bohdan R. Bociurkiv, *The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and the Soviet State, 1939-1950* (Edmonton, 1996).

the only two priests from the Minsk diocese, the Revs. Johan Bruyakin and Vasili Verzbalych, who survived prosecution, returned to Minsk⁴⁴.

After World War Two, the Roman Catholic church hierarchy in the formerly Polish Eastern Borderland, that is, Western Byelorussia and Western Ukraine, was liquidated. Since the Roman Catholic hierarchy and clergy was mostly Polish, it was treated just like the rest of the Poles in this area, that is, like enemies to be destroyed. Hundreds of Polish priests were imprisoned and deported to Russia along with tens of thousands of lay Catholics. The Archbishop of Lwów (Lviv), Eugeniusz Baziak, was forced to leave the city and resided in Lubaczów on the Polish side of the border, and never allowed to visit his archdiocese, just like Archbishop Romuald Jałbrzykowski of Wilno (Vilnius), who resided in Polish Białystok. The 80-year-old Bishop of Łuck (Lutsk), Adolf Szelążek, was arrested and died in the Kiev prison in August 1945. The Roman Catholic Church survived underground with just a few priests still at large⁴⁵.

The formerly Czechoslovak Subcarpathian Ukraine was incorporated into Soviet Ukraine and its Greek Catholic Church suffered the same fate. The Bishop of Uzhhorod, Teodor Romzha, opposed liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church. He courageously spoke up, naming all the wrongdoings of the communist power and appealing to believers to be ready for martyrdom. The Soviets decided to break the bishop in another manner. In October 1947, he was badly wounded in an accident provoked by the NKVD and poisoned in hospital by a special group of Soviet security⁴⁶. In March 1946, his diocese was given a Russian Orthodox bishop. Many Greek Catholics in Subcarpathian Ukraine went underground.

⁴⁴ The Soviets tortured to death many priests, for instance, the Rev. A. Kuts and his family in Shilovichy near Zhirovichy, the Rev. Kamiński in Levshov near Svisloch, the Rev. Borowski from Lashy near Hrodno, and the Rev. Samkowicz from Pruzhana. In Zievla near Volkovysk, the Bolsheviks shot to death 14 priests and rabbis. Testimony of Rev. Nikolay Lapitski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 217.

⁴⁵ Krzysztof Renik, *Podpolnicy* [The Underground People] (Warszawa: Oficyna Przeglądu Powszechnego, 1991); *Za wschodnią granicą 1917-1993* [Beyond the Eastern Frontier] (Warszawa: Wspólnota Polska & Apostolicum, 1995); Marek Koprowski, *Kresy we krwi* [Eastern Borderlands in Blood] (Warszawa: Fronda, 2011).

⁴⁶ *Martirologia ukraińskich tserkov*, Vol. 2, p. 106; Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 202-204; W[o]jciech R[oszkowski]. "Romzha Fedor", (in:) *Biographical Dictionary of Central and Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century* (New York: M.E.Sharpe, 2008), pp. 859-860.

Poland

The first wave of communist repression against Polish Home Army soldiers, their chaplains, and Roman Catholic priests who supported the cause of Polish independence within prewar frontiers, was started in the Eastern Borderlands in 1944. When they crossed the Bug River, the frontier of the new Poland, the Soviets and the Polish communists eased their anti-religious policies. Their main task was to consolidate political power, so they were unwilling to open a religious front, especially since Roman Catholics comprised about 95 percent of the population of the new Poland and the church organization was big, solid and deeply rooted in society. In 1946, the Polish Episcopate included two cardinals, three archbishops, 13 ordinary bishops, 13 auxiliary bishops, and five apostolic administrators, 8,800 diocesan clergy and 1,500 monks and nuns⁴⁷.

Although in 1945 they denounced the 1925 concordat, before 1947 the communists tried to avoid conflicts with the Catholic hierarchy. Nevertheless, they arrested some rank-and-file priests for cooperation with the post-war underground. At the same time, they tried to win the question of the ecclesiastic administration in the Western and Northern Territories, gained by Poland after World War Two, against the Roman Catholic church in Poland. In August 1945, the Primate of Poland, Archbishop of Gniezno and Poznań August Hlond, brought from Rome special papal authority to nominate five temporary apostolic administrators for the dioceses whose German bishops were still alive. It was a considerable concession from the Vatican in view of its principle that living bishops cannot be removed from their dioceses. Nevertheless, the communists demanded the entire reorganization of the Western dioceses while the German bishops were still living and presented the Vatican's decision as hostile to Polish interests. The Polish hierarchy was also accused of acting against these interests⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, p. 40.

⁴⁸ Jerzy Pietrzak, *Pełnia prymasostwa. Ostatnie lata prymasa Polski kardynała Augusta Hlonda 1945-1948* [The Fullness of Primacy. Last Years of the Primate of Poland Cardinal August Hlond, 1945-1948] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2009), Vols. 1-2, passim; Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 32-33.

After the forged election of January 1947, the communists removed all political opposition and intensified their struggle with the church. Attacks against the church hierarchy were increasingly open and violent, especially after the foundation of the Cominform in Szklarska Poręba in September 1947. Communist-controlled media published all kinds of slander, from accusations of alleged collaboration of priests with the Nazis during the war to revelations concerning sexual deviations of priests. Atheist propaganda was mainly directed toward the younger generation. The Archbishop of Cracow, Adam Sapieha, avoided a simple counterattack while Primate Hlond presented a prophetic vision of the future: “Even if the darkness of the night falls upon European culture, in Poland (...) the miracle of Resurrection will not disappear”⁴⁹.

In the spring of 1948, the anti-Catholic campaign was given a new stimulus through the Pope’s pastoral letter to the German bishops in which the Supreme Pontiff mentioned the “unjust” purge of 12 million Germans from the Western and Northern territories of new Poland. The Pope exaggerated the number of Germans resettled after the war and failed to mention the whole series of events that had led to the tragic end of war: the German invasion of Poland in 1939 and the Nazi genocide in Poland. He also called the only territorial compensation for Poland “unjust”. The papal letter was painful for most Poles, so the communists launched a violent offensive calling the Pope an “enemy of Poland” and ally of Hitler and the “American imperialists”. The Polish church was pushed into an awkward situation. Primate Hlond stressed the Polish roots in the new Western and Northern territories and strongly emphasized their Polish future⁵⁰. In October 1948, Hlond died and was succeeded by the 48-year-old Bishop of Lublin, Stefan Wyszyński, who in mid-November was appointed the new Archbishop of Gniezno and Poznań and the Primate of Poland.

Primate Wyszyński proved to be very effective in opposing the communist offensive. He was an expert in Marxist theory and practice and had diplomatic skills. His succession coincided with a new wave of anti-religio-

⁴⁹ “List noworoczny Prymasa Polski” [The New Year’s Letter of the Primate of Poland], *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 1948, No 1.

⁵⁰ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 57-58.

us policies that followed the absorption of the Socialists into the United Polish Workers Party (PZPR) in December 1948. When the Pope condemned communism in July 1949, the Warsaw government responded with massive anti-church propaganda. In September 1949, church hospitals were nationalized. In January 1950, the church charity organization “Caritas” was taken over and put under state control. The communists organized a movement of “patriotic priests” who would be more loyal to the government than to the church hierarchy. To some extent, they were helped by a tiny group of political Catholics, former fascists, called “PAX” whose leader, Bolesław Piasecki, had far-reaching ambitions of co-ruling Poland. In March 1950, church landed estates were confiscated.

Despite these attacks, Primate Wyszyński decided to adopt a cautious strategy of softening the communist offensive. On 14 April 1950, the Episcopate and the government signed an agreement in which the church took a critical position towards the already destroyed underground and endorsed the government peace propaganda. The communist government allowed religion to be taught in schools and chaplains to work in hospitals, the armed forces and prisons⁵¹. At first the agreement seemed another Catholic concession to be used by the communists against the church. In June 1950, the government accused four orders—the Jesuits, Salvatorians, Bernardines, and Michaelites—of underground activities. Some members of each group were arrested⁵². In January 1951, the communist government liquidated the “temporary administration” in the new Western and Northern territories by arresting the five administrators and appointing “chapter vicars”. Primate Wyszyński’s answer was another risky compromise. To avoid a schism, he gave the vicars his blessing, which saved them from Vatican excommunication and helped them find their way in difficult times.

In April 1951, Primate Wyszyński went to Rome. He faced some criticism for his concessions but managed to explain his point of view and to bring back papal nominations of apostolic administrators as titular bishops. Still,

⁵¹ Kard. Stefan Wyszyński, *Zapiski więzienne* [Notes from Prison] (Paris Editions du Dialogue, 1982), pp. 20-21; Andrzej Micewski, *Kardynał Wyszyński. Prymas i mąż stanu* [Cardinal Wyszyński. Primate and Statesman] (Paris: Editions du Dialogue, 1982), pp. 70-75.

⁵² *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 447.

it was too little for the government. Communist leader Bolesław Bierut insisted that they were ordinary bishops. Wyszyński toured the new territories, explaining the position of the Polish Episcopate and weakening the effectiveness of the communist propaganda. In July 1951, even the Moscow edition of *Pravda* attacked Wyszyński for “undermining Polish interests”⁵³. Despite the church’s concessions, the communists were still attacking. When Primate Wyszyński was elevated to Cardinal in November 1952, the government refused to let him out of the country and “interned” Archbishop Eugeniusz Baziak, who administered the Cracow archdiocese after the death of Cardinal Sapieha. The Cracow Metropolis was vacant. In January 1953, some priests of the Cracow *curia* were tried for “spying” for America. The main defendant, the Rev. Józef Lelito, was sentenced to death. After seven months on death row, his sentence was changed to life imprisonment⁵⁴.

Having failed to gain Wyszyński’s consent to the nomination of Polish bishops in new territories, in February 1953 the government issued a decree usurping for itself the right to appoint and dismiss church hierarchs. The death of Stalin in early March 1953 did not ease the communist policies. In view of church protests of the February decree, communist media launched an attack on the Episcopate and forced clergy to swear loyalty to the “People’s Poland”. Given the rising offensive against the hierarchy, the church was also eroded from beneath, since some of the harassed clergy decided to join the “patriotic priests” sponsored by the authorities. In March 1953, the last Catholic weekly, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, was taken over by the pro-government “PAX”. In May 1953, the Episcopate gathered in Cracow and decided to retreat no more. In the *Non possumus* memorandum sent to the government, the Polish bishops specified all the communist violations of the 1950 agreement, pointed to the hostility of the system toward religion and rejected

⁵³ Andrzej Micewski, *Współrzędzić czy nie kłamać, PAX i “Znak” w Polsce 1945-1976* [To Co-Rule or Not to Lie. PAX and “Znak” in Poland, 1945-1976] (Paris: Editions du Dialogue, 1978), pp. 45-48.

⁵⁴ During this time, the sentence was supported by some young communist intellectuals, such as Sławomir Mrożek and later Nobel Prize winner Wisława Szymborska. The Rev. Lelito was released in broken health in 1956. Jerzy Myszor (ed.), *Leksykon duchowieństwa represjonowanego w PRL w latach 1945-1989* [Dictionary of the Clergy Repressed in People’s Poland in the Years 1945-1989] (Warszawa: Verbinum, 2003), Vol. 2, pp. 161-163.

the government's claims to rule the church. In his Corpus Christi sermon of 1953, Primate Wyszyński said: "When Ceasar sits on the altar, we say briefly, no"⁵⁵. A new communist offensive followed: the Ordinary Bishop of Kielce, Czesław Kaczmarek, was sentenced to 12 years in prison. On 26 September 1953, the communist police arrested Primate Wyszyński, but instead of preparing a show trial the authorities placed him under house arrest.

Although the Polish Episcopate reacted softly, the unity of the church was generally saved and the morale of the Catholic community remained hardly affected. As a result of the stubborn resistance of the believers and the clergy, and the sophisticated policy of the Episcopate, the Roman Catholic Church survived the worst years and even managed to revive. In August 1956, about one million believers gathered in Częstochowa to repeat the 17th century oath to the Holy Virgin Mary, also called the Queen of Poland. The crowd sang "Oh, Lord, bring back our freedom and our Fatherland". Primate Wyszyński was released in October 1956 and triumphantly returned to Warsaw⁵⁶.

The short-lived relaxation of the state-church relations in the years 1956-1959 based on a new agreement between both sides ended with the communist-renewed anti-church campaign that started in 1960. The communists tried to make use of the letter from the Polish Episcopate to the German bishops of late 1965 in which the Polish Episcopate "forgave and asked forgiveness". A huge anti-church propaganda was launched against the bishops who "had no right to forgive" and "nothing to ask forgiveness for". During the celebrations of the Millenium of Polish Christianity in 1966, the communist authorities organized rival celebrations of 1,000 years of the Polish statehood. Since the Episcopate was a strong supporter of the Polish national tradition and human rights, the communist authorities always placed the clergy among their enemies. From the 1960s, there was a special Department IV of the Ministry of Interior aimed at combating the church and religion. Priests were also

⁵⁵ "Zakończona próba. List Episkopatu z 8 maja 1953" [The Ended Attempt. The Episcopate's Letter of 8 May 1953], *Kultura*, 1954, No 5, pp. 94-98; Micewski, *Współtrządzić*, pp. 54-57; *Prymas Tysiąclecia* [The Primate of the Millenium] (Paris: Editions du Dialogue, 1982), pp. 74-94.

⁵⁶ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 123-144.

victims of the most spectacular political killings, such as that of the Rev. Jerzy Popiełuszko in 1984 and other priests at the end of the 1980s. Nevertheless, despite constant pressure and harassment, the Polish church survived as a strong and consolidated organization. It was even able to win some local battles, such as that fought by the Archbishop of Cracow Karol Wojtyła for the Nowa Huta church⁵⁷. On 16 October 1978, Wojtyła's election as Pope John Paul II started a new era in which the Polish Pope and the Polish church largely contributed to the demise of communism in the Soviet satellites⁵⁸.

The Greek Catholic church in post-war Poland was formally liquidated in the late 1940s, even more that the Ukrainian believers were persecuted for their sympathies to the Nationalist UPA insurgency, but it survived under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church. Before World War Two, the Orthodox Church in Poland was autocephalous while most Orthodox believers were Belorussians living in Poland. After the arrest of Metropolitan Dyonisy Valedynsky, in June 1948 the Polish Orthodox Church transferred allegiance from Constantinople to Moscow. The temporary leadership of Archbishop Timothy Szretter was changed in June 1951 when Patriarch Alexey nominated Archbishop Makary Oksiyuk as the new Metropolitan for Poland. Neither the Orthodox nor the Protestants were particularly oppressed by the communists.

East Germany

The communist policies towards religion in the Soviet occupation zone were unique. East Germany had mostly been a Protestant country⁵⁹. The German Evangelical Church (EKD) had a loose federative structure. In the

⁵⁷ Grzegorz Ekiert, *The State against Society. Political Crises and Their Aftermath in East Central Europe* (Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 235-236; Ewa K. Czackowska, Tomasz Wiścicki, *Ksiądz Jerzy Popiełuszko* [Reverend Jerzy Popiełuszko] (Warszawa: Świat Książki, 2004).

⁵⁸ George Weigel, *Witness of Hope. The Biography of Pope John Paul II* (Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1999), Ch. 5 ff. Cf. also: Malachi Martin, *The Keys of This Blood* (Touchstone, 1991), Part 3.

⁵⁹ In 1950, about 85 percent of East Germans were formally Protestant and 15 percent Roman Catholics. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_in_East_Germany (31 V 2014).

Third Reich, it was generally open to cooperation with the Nazi authorities. Therefore, post-war repentance was necessary. On 11 October 1945, the provisional council of the EKD met in Stuttgart to make a significant confession of guilt. A new EKD organization structure was passed in July 1948, when Bishop Otto Dibelius became the chairman of its council. Apart from the EKD, there were two minor Protestant church organizations. In the years 1945-1949, the Soviet occupation authorities far from oppressed Protestant believers and their church organization. Communes and their superiors were even encouraged to help with de-Nazification. In return, many of the Protestant clergy remained neutral towards the German communist authorities organized under the aegis of the Soviet occupation authorities. In the Darmstadt proclamation of 1947, the EKD adopted an amicable standpoint declaring loyalty to the new communist state. This standpoint was largely due to the authority of the Swiss theologian Karl Barth, who met Wilhelm Pieck, Otto Grotewohl and Walter Ulbricht and concluded that Christians can coexist with any state structure⁶⁰.

In May 1948, Protestant bishops of the Soviet zone sent a letter to Marshall Vassily Sokolovsky specifying principles of coexistence. They argued the church should not be a part of the state apparatus but should be free to express its attitude towards administrative policies. This was definitely not what the communists wanted. During the blockade of Berlin, in January 1949 the Socialist Party of German Unity (SED) held a conference proclaiming a new ideological line and construction of a “party of a new kind”. At the same time, a more cooperative Bishop Martin Niemoeller was elected EKD chairman, substituting Dibelius.

The German Democratic Republic was proclaimed along with its constitution on 7 October 1949. The EKD in both German states maintained an all-national structure appointing special plenipotentiaries at both governments. At the beginning, this position of the Protestant church was appreciated by the communist authorities, since the Soviet plans included unification of Germany at the cost of its neutralization. In April 1950, the East

⁶⁰ Janusz Ruzkowski, *Kościół ewangelicki w NRD* [The Evangelical Church in the GDR] (Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, 1995), p. 31.

German police raided the homes of some ministers, confiscating copies of their sermons criticizing communist policies, but it was not before Stalin's plans of German neutrality received a serious blow in 1952 that anti-religious policies were started by the SED government. In June 1952, the communist authorities prevented a traditional church gathering in Lübbenau and soon began a campaign against associations of the Protestant Youth (JG). In April 1953, the JG was proclaimed illegal. More than 70 ministers were arrested. On 10 June 1953, an agreement was reached with the government that led to the release of all arrested ministers, but the Berlin Rising later that month destroyed the weak foundation of compromise. The repression that followed the collapse of the rising included continued oppression of the JG, limitation and then elimination of religious instruction in schools and introduction of a secular "consecration of youngsters"⁶¹. The whole system of propaganda and education was based on the assumption that Christianity and Marxism are an "antagonistic contradiction". The years and decades that followed brought a gradual erosion of Christianity in the GDR. Only the most loyal Protestant ministers were allowed to work, such as the father of Angela Merkel, herself a loyal citizen of the GDR⁶².

Czechoslovakia

Immediately after World War Two, the Czech Roman Catholics were in a better situation than the Slovak ones. The generally brave behavior of Czech priests during the war attracted popular sympathy. The caution of the Vatican, which avoided the nomination of a new Archbishop of Prague during the Nazi occupation, and the appointment of Josef Beran, a wartime Dachau inmate, to this position in 1946, were additional signs widely approved by Czech society. Although the Czech church lacked clergy and vocations, Beran managed to increase spiritual involvement among the Czechs. Celebrations of the St. Vojtech and St. Venceslas anniversaries in 1947 attracted masses. The Catholic Czechoslovak People's Party, led by the Rev. Jan Šrámek, was

⁶¹ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 432; Ruszkowski, *Kościół ewangelicki w NRD*, pp. 36-46.

⁶² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Merkel (4 XII 2014) and the literature quoted there.

one of the major parliamentary factions. This new dynamism of the Czech Catholic Church faced an increasing communist counteroffensive with passive approval of the Socialists. Schools were nationalized in 1945, religious instruction was limited and a new law on censorship reduced the range of Catholic publications. In September 1947, the communists arrested several priests on charges of alleged participation in a plot against the president of the republic, but a strong reaction from Archbishop Beran made the communist minister of interior, Václav Nosek, withdraw the charges⁶³.

The situation of the Slovak Roman Catholic church was different. During the war, many Catholic priests supported the pro-German government led by the Rev. Josef Tiso. His collaboration policies were particularly clear in the case of his anti-Jewish measures. Pressed by zealous anti-Semites and Nazi allies, Tiso's government passed a Jewish Code in September 1941 that in fact outlawed Slovak Jews. The Slovak bishops met in Nitra on 7 October 1941 and drafted a memorandum in which they criticized the code and asked for its "revision in conformance with Catholic doctrine". The Vatican supported the position of Bishop Karol Kmetko, who was the *spiritus movens* of the memorandum, appointing him the Archbishop of Nitra *ad personam* in May 1944⁶⁴.

When the Soviet armies occupied Czechoslovakia, numerous atrocities were committed against the Slovak Catholic clergy and believers while the new coalition government in Prague started a purge of Slovak nationalists, including many among the clergy. In May 1945, the new leaders of Czechoslovakia, including not only communists but also Protestants and socialist atheists, attacked the Slovak hierarchy and arrested the auxiliary Bishop of Spis, Ján Vojtaššák, the auxiliary Bishop of Trnava Michal Buzalka, and about 170 priests on charges of true or alleged collaboration with the Nazis. The loyalty of the Slovak hierarchy to the Czechoslovak state was questioned. In 1945, the Slovak communist authorities abolished the Organization of Catholic Women and its membership of 100,000, the Organization of Catholic Men (30,000) and the Association of Catholic Youth (50,000). Slovak priests

⁶³ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 220-223.

⁶⁴ Joseph A. Mikus, *Slovakia. A Political History 1918-1950* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1963), p. 128.

intercepted a secret communist instruction concerning the destruction of the Catholic Church. It included subsequent stages. First, the Slovak Catholic bishops were to be separated from the Holy See. Second, the bishops would be discredited in the eyes of the priests. Third, the Catholic laymen were to be separated from priests⁶⁵. When schools were nationalized and religious instruction limited, Archbishop Kmetko launched a plea in favor of independent education. Several hundred thousand signatures were gathered, but the action was found illegal by the Prague government. In August 1945, Slovak bishops issued a pastoral letter declaring loyalty to the Czechoslovak state but demanding respect for religious freedom⁶⁶.

The trial of Tiso in late 1945 was in fact a trial of the whole wartime Slovak state. Archbishop Kmetko, who testified, could not avoid the fact that in late 1944, when the Germans withdrew, burning down villages and killing Slovaks, Tiso did not step down even though pressed by Slovak bishops. All Kmetko could do was to ask the court for mercy for Tiso. The death sentence on Tiso led to a wave of protests among Slovak Catholics. Tiso's execution in April 1947 had multi-dimensional consequences. It raised anti-Czech and anti-communist feelings among the Slovaks. These feelings produced a good excuse for further anti-Catholic steps in Slovakia. In September 1947, when Minister Nosek discovered an alleged plot against the republic, many Czech priests and Catholic activists were released, but their Slovak colleagues stayed in prisons.

The communist coup of February 1948 ended democracy in Czechoslovakia. Immediately afterwards, the communist government closed three Catholic newspapers and declared the Czech church hierarchy had supported the coup. Archbishop Beran protested. The new land reform deprived the church of some 400,000 acres of land. In September 1948, the Rev. Šramek was arrested along a former minister, the Rev. František Hala. Šramek died in a prison hospital in 1956. His party's deputy chairman, the communist puppet the Rev. Josef Plojhar, subordinated the party to the communists. Never-

⁶⁵ Testimony of Rev. Anton Botek, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, pp. 1345-1349.

⁶⁶ Testimony of Rev. Stefan Nahalka, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1353; Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 226-230; Kurt Glaser, *Czecho-Slovakia. A Critical History* (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers Ltd., 1961), pp. 167-168; Mikus, *Slovakia*, pp. 192-193.

theless, he was too compromised to lead a secessionist Catholic Church⁶⁷. In late 1948, the communists felt free to destroy the Catholic Church. Catholic organizations of Slovak women and Czech youth were banned while Catholic Action was paralyzed. The church was forbidden to accept donations. In early June 1949, the government announced that all future appointments of priests would be invalid unless published in the regime's official press. On 10 June 1949, pro-regime priests and laymen established Catholic Action. Archbishop Beran courageously criticized the communists' steps and ordered a church boycott of all regime-sponsored organizations and publications. In its wake, more than 100 priests were arrested⁶⁸. The Czechoslovak regime banned dissemination of pastoral letters and prohibited unauthorized meetings of church officials.

On 18 June 1949, Archbishop Beran spoke publicly for the last time in Strahov Abbey. He warned the believers that they should not believe forged declarations disseminated in his name by the communists and announced he would "never accept an agreement violating the rights of the bishops and of the church"⁶⁹. The day after his Strahov sermon, the head of the Czechoslovak church was "interned" by the communists without a trial. Secret police tried to prevent the dissemination of Beran's pastoral letter in parishes and arrested priests who had read it to their congregations. In July 1949, the Pope excommunicated all Catholics willingly cooperating with the communists, which increased their fury against the church⁷⁰.

The wave of repression was rising. In January 1950, after the death of the ordinary Bishop of Banská Bystrica, Andrej Škrábik, the government refused to accept his successor and appointed the Rev. Jan Dechet as special administrator. Dechet accepted the post and was then excommunicated by the Vatican. Also, in January 1950 the Czechoslovak government took over Roman Catholic Church records of births, deaths and marriages. In March 1950, the Vatican representative in Prague, Msgr. Ottavio de Liva, was expelled.

⁶⁷ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 231-240.

⁶⁸ Testimony of Rev. Anton Botek, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, pp. 1342 ff; *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 383.

⁶⁹ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, p. 245.

⁷⁰ *The Times*, 19 May 1969.

led for “subversive anti-state activity”. In April 1950, 10 more Czechoslovak priests were convicted and sentenced to long-term imprisonment for alleged “treason” and “espionage” for the Vatican. On the night of 14 April 1950, the police closed all monasteries and a week later all convents. In August 1950, all Catholic seminaries were brought under the strict control of the government. In 1950, about 1,000 Roman Catholic priests remained in prisons. In December 1950, nine priests were given sentences from 10 years to life imprisonment for alleged “espionage” for the Vatican and the United States⁷¹.

By the end of 1951, the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Czechoslovakia was crushed. Only a few bishops were still at large. In late 1950, the Auxiliary Bishop of Olomouc Stanislav Zela was sentenced to 25 years imprisonment. In January 1951, the 81-year-old ordinary Bishop Vojtaššak and Bishop Buzalka received similar sentences. Bishops Karel Skoupý of Brno and Josef Hlouch of České Budějovice were sentenced to 20 years in prison. The auxiliary bishop of Olomouc, František Tomašek, was arrested in 1951 and sent to a concentration camp. In 1951, the number of clergy arrested exceeded 3,000. About 70 percent of Czechoslovak parishes had no priest. Later, the number of those imprisoned even increased. In 1954, the Archbishop of Olomouc Josef Matocha was “interned” without trial while the Bishop of Litoměřice, Stepan Trochta, received a 25-year sentence. Many of the thousands of political prisoners who filled Czechoslovak concentration camps in the early 1950s were Catholic priests and laymen⁷².

About 300,000 believers in eastern Slovakia belonged to the Greek Catholic Church. The communist authorities prepared for the liquidation of this church but waited until the Slovak Roman Catholic hierarchy was crushed. On 27 April 1950, the Greek Catholic Church was forced into the Russian Orthodox Church. About 10 percent of Greek Catholics supported the idea

⁷¹ Glaser, *Czecho-Slovakia. A Critical History*, p. 170; *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, pp. 426, 429, 457 and 486.

⁷² Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 260-270. Among the many Czech and Slovak martyrs of communism, one should remember Father Dominik Trčka, who died in prison in 1959, the Rev. Jan Bula, framed into a political plot and executed in 1952, Sister Zdenka Schelingová, who died in 1955, and many others. <http://www.trcka.nfo.sk/ezivot.htm>; [226](http://www.ustrcr.cz/en/jan-bula-en; A[ndrzej] Gr[ajewski], “Schelingova Zdenka Cecilia”, (in:) <i>Biographical Dictionary of Central and Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century</i>, p. 889.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

while the resistance of the rest was gradually crushed by arrests. In late April, the Czechoslovak police arrested the Greek Catholic Bishop of Prešov, Pavel Gojdic, and his auxiliary bishop, Vasil Hopko. Gojdic was sentenced to life imprisonment and died in Leopoldovo prison in July 1960⁷³. In the early 1950s, an underground church developed both among Roman and Greek Catholics, led by bishops consecrated clandestinely. The oppression of the Czechoslovak churches continued without major changes until 1968.

Hungary

Hungary was treated by the Soviets as a defeated nation, so when the Soviet armies swept through the country at the end of World War Two, hundreds of thousands of Hungarians experienced plunder, rape and murder. One of the first Catholic martyrs of communism at the end of World War Two was the Bishop of Győr, Vilmos Apor, who was killed by a group of Soviet Army soldiers in April 1945 when he tried to prevent the rape of a group of Hungarian women. The Hungarian Roman Catholic Church was also dealt a heavy blow when the Archbishop of Esztergom and the Primate of Hungary, Jusztinian Seregy, died in March 1945⁷⁴.

The land reform introduced in 1945 expropriated more than a million acres of church property. The Hungarian Episcopate blessed the work of those who gained land but criticized the abuse of human rights during the implementation of the reform. On 6 October 1945, a newly appointed Archbishop of Esztergom, Jozsef Mindszenty, entered office. He was a courageous man but a radical conservative. In his first announcement, he warned of the coming oppression, saying: "We are sitting on the rivers of Babylon, bound to sing foreign tunes to the sound of our harps"⁷⁵.

In the free elections of November 1945, the Smallholders Party received 57 percent of the mandates so the communists wanted to deal with them

⁷³ *Martirologia ukrainskikh tserkov*, Vol. 2, pp. 104-105; Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 256-258; Glaser, *Czecho-Slovakia. A Critical History*, p. 172.

⁷⁴ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 281-285; Testimony of Rev. Istvan Kerner, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 5, p. 307; Testimony of Bela Kovrig, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 6, p. 105.

⁷⁵ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, p. 292.

first. Despite minor conflicts, the first year after the elections was relatively quiet for the church⁷⁶. The change started in May 1947, when the communists removed the Smallholder Premier Ferenc Nagy and forced the Speaker of the Parliament, the Rev. Bela Varga of the Smallholders Party, to leave the country. In the election of August 1947, the opposition was divided and the communists emerged strengthened. In March 1948, the new government liquidated the Catholic charity organization “Caritas”. When the communist authorities nationalized all schools, in June 1948 Cardinal Mindszenty issued a pastoral letter condemning this step aimed at strengthening atheist upbringing of children. As a result, the communists arrested hundreds of priests and nuns who opposed nationalization of schools⁷⁷.

In the fall of 1948, police harassment of the head of Catholic Action, the Rev. Zsigmond Mikalovics, made him leave the country, which gave pretext for the arrest of his aides on charges of alleged anti-state activity. The communists tried to break the unity of the Episcopate by organizing letters of protest against the “reactionary” policies of Mindszenty. On 20 December 1948, Mindszenty signed a short note declaring any future confession of guilt invalid and untrue. A week later, Mindszenty was arrested and underwent interrogation in which he was tortured and doped. During the trial, he appeared broken and semi-conscious, condemning himself, the church and the Vatican. On 8 February 1949, he was sentenced to life imprisonment for alleged treason. Six other co-defendants received sentences from three years to life imprisonment. Mindszenty’s behavior during the trial was a shock. Some believers felt abandoned and disillusioned, others realized the devilish might of the system and were terrorized into obedience⁷⁸.

⁷⁶ Bela Kovrig, *Communism in Hungary from Kun to Kadar* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1979), p. 218.

⁷⁷ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 333. Soviet troops still present in Hungary committed various atrocities against the clergy and lay Catholics. For instance, in Pócspetri, the Rev. Janos Asztalos tried to defend a group of people harassed by Soviet soldiers but was murdered by the troops. Processions protesting the nationalization of church schools were attacked by Soviet troops. Testimony of Rev. Istvan Kerner, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 5, pp. 308-309.

⁷⁸ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 304-305; *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 365. The court that sentenced Cardinal Mindszenty was presided by Dr. Vilmos Olti, who as a member of the Arrow Cross Party had served as a judge under Nazi rule. <http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=3136> (5 V 2014).

Following the trial, in April 1949 the communists organized a “peace movement” of the Catholic clergy. One of the supporters of this idea, the Rev. Ferenc Varga, realized that he had become an instrument of a hostile power and tried to escape abroad. He was captured, imprisoned and died. The Committee of Catholic Clergy for Peace was nevertheless founded in August 1950 under the leadership of renegade priest Miklós Beresztóczy. The Hungarian hierarchy was broken by repression. In December 1949, the still free bishops permitted Catholic priests to take oaths of allegiance to the Hungarian “people’s republic”. From December 1949 to July 1950, all monasteries or convents except eight were liquidated and the nuns and monks interned in special places of confinement⁷⁹.

On 30 August 1950, the Roman Catholic hierarchy reached agreement with the communist government. The church promised to accept state legislation in exchange for “complete freedom of religion”, including religious instruction in some schools and financial support from the government⁸⁰. This conciliatory attitude of the Hungarian hierarchy failed to appease the communists. On 28 June 1951, Archbishop of Kalocsa József Grósz, the successor of Mindszenty as the head of the Hungarian church, was sentenced to 16 years in prison for alleged conspiracy against the regime. In July 1950, the Auxiliary Bishop of Esztergom, Zoltán Meszlényi, was arrested and placed in the Kistarca concentration camp, where he was tortured and died in January 1953. The still free bishops felt helpless. On 21 July 1951, they met in Budapest, distanced themselves from Grósz and took an oath of allegiance to the Hungarian “people’s republic”. The enslavement of the Catholic Church was sealed with the nomination of renegade canon Beresztóczy as the general vicar of the Esztergom archdiocese⁸¹. Attempts to organize an underground church were crushed. In 1952, its leader, the Rev. György Bula-nyi, was sentenced to life imprisonment. The Hungarian revolution of 1956

⁷⁹ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 307-310.

⁸⁰ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 461; Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 310-312.

⁸¹ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 3, pp. 528 and 533; http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/hungarian_bishop_who_defied_stalinist_persecution_beatified/ (31 V 2014); Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 314-315.

marked a short-lived relaxation of communist policies. Archbishop Grósz was released and in late October 1956 Cardinal Mindszenty reappeared for four days before Soviet tanks crushed the rising. Mindszenty sought shelter in the US Embassy in Budapest. The communist regime reinstalled by János Kádár generally continued the oppression of organized Catholicism.

The Hungarian Protestants were dealt with less severely. The head of the Calvinist church, Bishop László Ravasz, was blackmailed and pressed to cooperate with the communists by President Zoltan Tildy, also a Calvinist minister, and by Karl Barth, who came to Hungary to naïvely support the idea of a Marxist-Christian dialogue. In July 1948, Ravasz resigned and was replaced by Pastor László Bereczky, a communist puppet. The Lutherans were more resistant, so the communists arrested their leader, Bishop Lajos Ordass, in the fall of 1948. In February 1949, the Hungarian government appointed a more cooperative Pastor László Dezsery to head the Lutheran church. Both major Protestant churches were thus subordinated to the state and their freedom of action limited⁸².

Romania

Being dependent on the state, the Romanian Orthodox Church was highly vulnerable to financial and political pressure. The communists forced Orthodox priests, who were paid by the government, to join “democratic associations” and to oppose “reactionaries”. In May 1948, the Rev. Justinian Marina, a parish priest from Râmnicu Vâlcea, was appointed by the communist regime “patriarch” of the Romanian Orthodox church to replace the ageing Patriarch Nikodim. Marina pledged loyalty to the government and went to Moscow to seal his allegiance to the All Russian Patriarch Alexey. In the summer of 1947, the Romanian Orthodox hierarchy was stimulated by Alexey to launch an anti-Catholic campaign⁸³.

In 1945, the number of Romanian Greek Catholics was estimated at 1,320,000. Liquidation of the Romanian Greek Catholic church was prece-

⁸² R.H. Markham, “Communists Crush Christian Churches”, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 5, pp. 66 ff; *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 441.

⁸³ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 346-349.

ded by massive propaganda and many acts of terror, including the murder of the Rev. Hyeronimus Sussman by the secret police. In May 1948, the Orthodox campaign against the Greek Catholics increased. The Orthodox hierarchy appealed to the Greek Catholic clergy to reject links with the Vatican. The appeal was signed by the Orthodox Metropolitan of Sibiu, Nicolae Balan, and by Patriarch Justinian. After Justinian's return from Moscow, in July 1948 the Romanian communist government abrogated the concordat of 1927 and announced the liquidation of the Romanian Greek Catholic church. On 3 and 4 August 1948, two decrees were announced that nationalized all schools, expropriated church property and made religious organizations subject to official approval by the parliament. Both the Greek and Roman Catholic Episcopates replied together, announcing non-compliance. Seven out of 10 Greek Catholic bishops were removed from their positions⁸⁴.

At the end of September 1948, all Uniate priests received an act of return to the Orthodoxy to sign. About 22 percent of them decided to do so. Most of those who protested, including the Bishop of Cluj, Iuliu Hossu, were arrested. On 3 October 1948, a congress held in Cluj officially liquidated the Union. The Romanian "reunification" of the Greek Catholics with the Orthodox was also forced upon the lay believers. The non-submissive Uniate bishops and clergy were arrested. These included, for instance, the Bishop of Iassy, Anton Durcovici, who was tortured and starved to death in Sighet prison in December 1951, the Apostolic Administrators of Făgăraș and Alba Iulia, Bishop Valeriu Frențiu, who also died in Sighet prison in July 1952, and Bishop Ioan Suciu, who died in the same prison in June 1953, the Auxiliary Bishop of Făgăraș and Alba Iulia, Tit Liviu Chinezu, who died in Sighet prison in January 1955, and the Bishop of Maramureș, Alexandru Rusu, who spent 15 years in prison until he died in 1963⁸⁵. Those who bravely continued underground ministry were gradually imprisoned as well.

⁸⁴ No doubt, Marina fully earned the "Star of the Republic" first class order for his "patriotic activity" and his services to the communist regime. Robert L. Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Times*, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1974), p. 554; Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 350-354.

⁸⁵ Cf. their respective entries in the *Biographical Dictionary of Central and Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 150, 229-230, 266, 871 and 987-988.

According to a decree of 1949, the communist government subordinated all cults to state authorities⁸⁶.

Roman Catholics, usually Hungarians and Germans, were treated with equal ruthlessness. In July 1948, the government passed a law on supervision of all denominations. Hundreds of priests who opposed communist control were thrown into prison. In June 1949, the communists forced all nuns and monks to gather in three “concentration monasteries” and all orders were abolished. The Archbishop of Alba Iulia, Aaron Marton, tried to negotiate with the authorities but also organized mass religious celebrations attracting the support of believers. In July 1949, he was arrested. Seeing the imprisonment of all the bishops, the Papal Nuncio, Msgr. Gerald Patrick O’Hara, consecrated four new bishops, but they were all arrested within more than a year. One of them, the apostolic administrator of Bucharest, Josef Schubert, was tortured and sentenced to life imprisonment as a “Vatican spy”. In the early 1960s, he was released but forced to make a living in a remote collective farm. In July 1950, O’Hara was expelled from Romania. The prelate was linked by the authorities to a treason case in which two Romanians were sentenced to death and five others to long-term imprisonment. On 17 September 1951, one of the arrested, the 76-year-old Bishop of Timișoara, Augustin Pacha, was sentenced to 18 years in prison for allegedly belonging to a “pro-American spy ring”. He spent three years working at the construction of the Danube-Black Sea Canal and died soon after release in 1954. Eight codefendants were given terms from seven years to life imprisonment. During the short-lived “thaw” in 1955 and 1956, some of the Roman Catholic bishops, including Marton, were released, but the Greek Catholic church was never allowed to recover. Romanian Protestants were mainly Hungarian Calvinists whose organization was hardly affected by the communist terror, since their hierarchy generally cooperated with the regime⁸⁷. The leading exception was

⁸⁶ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 350, Vol. 3, pp. 548-549; *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Romania*, HR SCOCA, Special Report No 11 (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1955), pp. 16-17.

⁸⁷ Royal, *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 255-269; Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Times*, pp. 560-563, 565; Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 360-366; Stehle, *Tajna dyplomacja Watykanu*, pp. 214-219. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Satu Mare and Oradea, János Scheffler, died in prison in December 1952, and the Roman Catholic Arch-

Pastor László Tőkés of the Reformed Church who vigorously opposed the regime and became a symbol of the 1989 events that led to the collapse of the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu.

Bulgaria

Before World War Two, about 85 percent of Bulgarians were Orthodox while those Roman Catholic or Protestant amounted to less than two percent of the population. Although the autocephalous Bulgarian Orthodox Church was a spiritual foundation of the Bulgarian pre-war regime, within the first two years after World War Two, the new communist-controlled government followed a relatively moderate policy toward the church and its members. Nevertheless, at the end of 1947, when the communists gained almost total political control of the country, they began to eliminate their opponents among the Orthodox bishops and clergy. The head of the Bulgarian church, Exarch Stefan, was forced to resign and was “interned” in a remote monastery. The strongly anti-communist Archbishop Boris was simply murdered in front of his church. Exarch Stefan was succeeded by a government appointee, Mikhail. The regime confiscated church property, took over church schools, closed all seminaries except one in Plovdiv, and began to censor religious publications. The Ministry of Health took over all church welfare and charity organizations. The communist government’s activities were supported by a union of Orthodox priests founded in October 1948 under the strict control of the security apparatus. As a dubious award, in 1951 the Bulgarian Exarchate were elevated to a Patriarchate and two years later Metropolitan Kiryl of Plovdiv became the new Patriarch⁸⁸. Having penetrated the church organization, the communist authorities were then able to gradually reduce its influence.

bishop of Bucharest, Alexandru Cisar, died under house arrest in January 1954. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandru_Cisar; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J%C3%A1nos_Scheffler (31 V 2014).

⁸⁸ Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Times*, pp. 554-555; J.F. Brown, *Bulgaria under Communist Rule* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), pp. 16-17.

Other churches were marginal in Bulgaria but they were eliminated with equal consistency. In February 1948, 15 Bulgarian Protestant clergymen were arrested on charges of “espionage” and “black market dealings”. A month later four of them received life sentences and nine others were sentenced to terms varying from six to 15 years in prison. In September 1952, some 40 Bulgarian Catholics were sentenced to long-term imprisonment. This group included 28 priests, that is, one-fourth of the whole Catholic clergy in the country. Bishop Evgeni Bosilkov was sentenced to death and executed along with three monks in November 1952⁸⁹.

Albania

Before World War Two, Albania was a multi-religious country. About 70 percent of Albanians were Muslims, about 20 percent belonged to the autocephalous Eastern Orthodox Church and about 10 percent to the Roman Catholic Church⁹⁰. Albanian communists were one of the first to establish full political control after World War Two. Already by 1945 the communist government had started an anti-Catholic campaign, claiming Roman Catholics were agents of the Vatican and other “centers of imperialism”. Official press stated that “Fascists in clerical clothes should be shot in the head”. A number of priests of foreign nationality were expelled from Albania while native priests were brought to trial. Most members of the hierarchy were imprisoned and some were executed. These included, for instance, the Bishop of Sappa, Gjergj Volaj, who was shot in February 1947, the Bishop of Lezhë, Father Frano Gjini, shot in March 1948, and the Archbishop of Durres, Vinçenc Prennushi, who was tried and died in prison in March 1949. In May 1945, the Apostolic Nuncio, Msgr. Leone Nigris, was denounced as an agent who fomented anti-communist propaganda. He was arrested and expelled from the country. The destruction of Albanian Roman Catholicism was completed in June 1951 when a few of the still free Catholic clergy met in Scutari under

⁸⁹ A[ndrzej] Gr[ajewski], “Bosilkov Evgeni”, (in:) *Biographical Dictionary of Central and Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century*, p. 110; *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 370; Vol. 3, p. 632; Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Times*, pp. 564-565.

⁹⁰ Stavro Skendi, *Albania* (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1956), pp. 287-291.

Bishop Bernardin Shllaku and severed links with the Holy See. According to Albanian émigré sources, in 1953 only 10 out of 93 Roman Catholic priests remained free, while 24 were murdered, 25 imprisoned, 10 died or disappeared, and three escaped abroad⁹¹.

To become a Catholic priest in Albania in the 1950s and 1960s was a heroic decision. Most of the clergy had already been killed or imprisoned. The barbarity of the anti-religious persecution surpassed anything else. The Jesuit Gjona Karma was buried alive and the Franciscan Frano Kiri was attached to a dead body to die. When a Chinese-style Cultural Revolution was announced in 1966, the Franciscan monastery in Shkoder was burnt down and four monks killed. In 1967, Albania was announced as the first entirely atheistic country in the world. By 1971, only four Catholic priests were alive and at large. One of them was the Rev. Hilë Gjergji Beltoja, ordained in 1961 and executed in 1974, and the other, Bishop Ernest Çoba, who was arrested in 1976 and died in prison⁹².

The Albanian Orthodox church was dealt with in 1949 when the Archbishop of Tirana, Kristofor Kissi, was deposed for “fascist activities” and “interned” until he died in 1958. His successor, Bishop Paissi Vodica, accepted allegiance to the Moscow Patriarchate. In November 1949, a law was passed obliging the religious communities’ and their leaders’ loyalty to the “people’s power”. After the “internment” of prelates of dubious loyalty, such as Bishop Agathangjel of Berat and Bishop Irenei of Korçë and Gjorokaster, all the remaining Orthodox clergy became strictly subordinated to the atheist state and silenced⁹³. The same referred to the Muslim clergy and communities.

⁹¹ *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Albania*, HR SCOCA, Special Report No 13 (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1954), p. 19; Skendi, *Albania*, p. 298; Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Times*, pp. 563-564.

⁹² Hefley, *Wiara i krew*, p. 324; Lulash Dajçi, “Bishop Ernest Coba: Father of the Poor. The 10th Anniversary of Martyrdom”, *Albanian Catholic Bulletin* 1989; <http://www.kishakatolikeshkoder.com/zyra%20per%20martiret%20eng/Fr.Mikel%20%20Beltoja%20eng.htm>; <http://newsaints.faiweb.com/martyrs/East3.htm> (7 XII 2011).

⁹³ Royal, *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 231-242; Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Times*, p. 556; Skendi, *Albania*, pp. 295-296.

Yugoslavia

The divisions and conflicts between various branches of Christianity were probably nowhere in the region as dramatic as in Yugoslavia. The experience of World War Two even deepened the hatred between the Orthodox Serbs and Montenegrins and the Roman Catholic Croats and Slovenes. The communist guerillas, who captured power in Yugoslavia at the end of the war, had a relatively easy task of playing various religious groups against each other with the ultimate objective of atheization.

The Serbian Orthodox Church stood for the Serbian inter-war nationalism, while some of the Orthodox priests supported the wartime collaborationist government of General Milan Nedich or the Chetnik guerillas of Colonel Drazha Mikhailovich. The Serbian Patriarch, Gavrilo, was interned in Germany during the war, so he could return to Yugoslavia to establish relations with the Tito regime. When Gavrilo died in 1950, his successor, Patriarch Vikentiye, continued this policy. A conflict arose in the early 1950s over government-sponsored "priest associations", which were not recognized by the hierarchy but, given the strong support of the government, had grown in numbers⁹⁴.

During World War Two, the Catholic Church in occupied Slovenia, but especially in "independent" fascist Croatia, was in a particularly sensitive situation. The Ustasha regime of Ante Pavelić was supported by some of the Catholic clergy. The Archbishop of Zagreb, Alojzije Stepinac, was careful to avoid a head-on clash with the Ustashas, but he criticized their atrocities against the Jews and Serbs. The Ustashas were disappointed by his position and openly criticized him. In October 1943, Stepinac was even placed under house arrest. Nevertheless, the Ustasha crimes fueled anti-Croat and anti-Catholic feelings among the Serbs.

When the communists took over in Yugoslavia in late 1944, the Croat Catholic clergy was persecuted in large numbers for their real or alleged collaboration with the Ustasha regime. In May 1946, the Vatican sources estimated that about 240 Roman Catholic priests had been killed in Yugo-

⁹⁴ Wolff, *The Balkans in Our Times*, pp. 551-552.

slavia within the previous two years. Among those killed was the Roman Catholic Bishop of Dubrovnik, Josip Carević. The Greek Catholic Bishop of Krizevci, Janko Simrak, was sentenced to death but died in hospital. The scale of this massacre indicates communist-planned action⁹⁵. In May 1945, the communists arrested Stepinac but soon released him. On 20 September, he issued a pastoral letter criticizing the communist doctrine of hatred. Two months later, he was physically assaulted by functionaries of the regime. In August 1945, the communists tried in absentia the Bishop of Ljubljana, Gregor Rožman, and sentenced him to 18 years in prison. In 1946, several priests, tortured in prison, confessed that Stepinac had collaborated with the Ustasas. In September 1946, he was sentenced to 16 years of hard labor. In December 1951, he was released and placed under house arrest in his native village of Krašič⁹⁶.

Due to mass arrests, the number of clergy diminished drastically. In April 1948, the Bishop of Mostar, Piotr Cule, was sentenced to 11 years. Four other Yugoslav bishops were imprisoned. The most infamous place of confinement of the clergy was the Stara Gradisca camp. The expulsion of Yugoslavia from Cominform in June 1948 hardly changed the anti-religious policies of the regime. Expecting relaxation, in April 1950 the Archbishop of Belgrade, Josip Ujčić, sent the authorities a memorandum specifying various forms of this oppression, but to no avail. Seminaries were closed along with many monasteries. In 1951, the communist authorities resorted themselves to a new method of terror: “unknown perpetrators” physically assaulted bishops, priests and nuns. For instance, the Bishop of Maribor, Maximilijan Držečnik, and the Apostolic Administrator of Šibenik, Bishop Ciril Banić, fell victim to severe beating. In January 1952, the Apostolic Administrator of Ljubljana, Bishop Anton Vovk was soaked with gas and burnt. Only immediate aid saved his life⁹⁷. Although religious instruction was removed from

⁹⁵ Martin Ebon, *World Communism Today* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1948), pp. 124-125; Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 371-372.

⁹⁶ *Current Biography*, 1953, p. 588-590; A. H. O'Brien, *Archbishop Stepinac. The Man and His case* (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Bookshop, 1947); *World Communist Movement. Selective Chronology*, Vol. 3 (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 584.

⁹⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anton_Vovk (30 V 2014). Among many Yugoslav martyrs of this time, one should mention the Slovene Sister Antonija Premrov, whose body was

schools, in January 1952 the Yugoslav government announced that churches were free to teach religion unless they conducted “anti-state propaganda”, but the appointment of Stepinac as Cardinal in November 1952 added to the anti-Catholic fury of the government⁹⁸.

In January 1953, Tito reached a preliminary agreement with seven Roman Catholic bishops on relations between the church and state. From his Krašić exile, Stepinac announced that the church would not enter into an agreement with the communist government without the approval of the Holy See. On 22 May 1953, the Yugoslav parliament passed a law on “religious freedom”, which provided that Yugoslavs were free to practice religion but that church activities must be limited to religious worship. The law maintained the elimination of religious instruction in schools and “social security” for priests, similar to that for workers. Physical assaults on Catholic clergy stopped as if according to an order. Later on, anti-religious measures were not lifted but the situation of the Catholics ceased to deteriorate⁹⁹.

Red China

Christianity in China was persecuted for almost the whole 20th century. After the horrible massacres during the Boxer Rising, in 1911 the Nationalist revolution started and then turned into a communist revolution in 1927. For the next 22 years, in some areas Christians could live more or less normally while elsewhere they were subject to cruel persecution by the communists. By 1948, the number of native Chinese priests (2,676) was close to that of foreign missionaries (3,015)¹⁰⁰.

found two and a half years after she was kidnapped by a gang of communists in 1949. <http://newsaints.faithweb.com/martyrs/East6.htm> (18 XII 2011); http://www.zaveza.si/index.php/revija-zaveza/92-zaveza-t-04/#index.xml-body.1_div.1_div.6 (27 I 2012).

⁹⁸ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 386-396.

⁹⁹ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 3, pp. 658 and 704; Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 388-389.

¹⁰⁰ Royal, *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*, p. 332. During the civil war, the communists murdered a number of Catholic priests, monks and lay religious. For instance, in 1947 they captured the Yang-Kia Pi'ing Cistercian Monastery, located about 75 miles from Beijing, drove out at least 18 monks, tortured and then killed them through a “death march”. Among the victims were French Fathers Stephen Maury, Guillaume Camourien

After the communists won in 1949, the anti-Christian persecution became an organized operation. All Christian churches were treated as “reactionary” and “capitalist” while the Catholics were additionally persecuted as “agents” of a foreign state, meaning the Vatican. For instance, in December 1950, the Chinese communists placed the Apostolic Vicar of Kaying, Bishop Francis Xavier Ford, under house arrest. Being an American, he was accused of spying. This was already after the Chinese army joined the communist aggression in Korea and any American was treated as an enemy. In January 1951, Bishop Ford was paraded in the streets on a string, beaten and humiliated in public. As a result of torture, he died in prison in Guangzhou in February 1952. Bishop Leon de Smedt of Chongli Xiwanxi died in November 1951 and Archbishop Cyrill Jarre of Jinan died in prison in March 1952¹⁰¹. Thousands of Catholic martyrs of that time still wait to be named and remembered.

In 1957, the communist authorities allowed the Catholic Church to function but only under the control of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association. The Holy See did not recognize this structure as it was subject to the total control of the atheist state. The Catholic Church structures became divided: those acting officially were gradually curbed while others went underground. Any church activity loyal to the Holy See was severely persecuted. For instance, Bishop Fan Xueyuan of Baoding was arrested in 1958 and spent 11 years in a labor camp. After release, he was kept under house arrest and imprisoned again in 1978. Afterwards, he was released and imprisoned several times until 1990, when he disappeared. In April 1992, his family found his dead body in a plastic bag¹⁰². At that time, most of the hierarchs of the Chinese underground church were in prisons, labor camps or under house arrest. This was, among others, the fate of Bishops Su Zhimin and An Shu-

and Maurus Bougon, the Dutch Aelred Drost, Canadian Alphonse L'Heureux and Chinese Adrianus Wang, Seraphinus Shi, Michaelus X, Chrysostomus Chang, Sister Maria Chang, Antonius Fan, Hyeronimus Li and others. Ibidem, pp. 325-326; <http://veritaseslibertas.blogspot.com/2010/10/33-martyrs-of-yang-kia-ping.html> (5 VI 2014).

¹⁰¹ Eva K. Betz, *To Far Places: The Story of Francis X. Ford* (Hawthorn Books, 1953); John F. Donovan, *The Pagoda and the Cross: The Life of Bishop Ford of Maryknoll* (New York: Scribner, 1967); Royal, *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*, p. 332.

¹⁰² <http://www.nytimes.com/1992/04/25/obituaries/peter-joseph-fan-84-a-bishop-imprisoned-by-china-for-beliefs.html> (16 XII 2011).

xin from the Baoding diocese in Hebei province, where the underground church was particularly strong, as well as Bishop Fan Zhongliang of Shanghai, Bishop Han Dingxiang of Yongnian, Bishop Jia Zhiguo of Zhengding, Bishop Jiang Mingyuan of Zhaoxian, Bishop Li Side of Tianjin, Bishop Liu Gaundong of Xining, Bishop Wang Milu of Tianshui, Bishop Shi Enxiang of Yixian, Bishop Xie Shiguang of Mingdong, Bishop Yang Shudao of Fuzhou and Bishop Zeng Jongmu of Yujiang. The Chinese communist state constantly terrorized and intimidated Catholics. For instance, in May 1999, a group of communist functionaries burst into a private home in Beijing where the Rev. Yan Weiping was celebrating Holy Mass and led him away. His mutilated body was found in a Beijing street the same evening¹⁰³.

Symbolic for the oppression of the Catholic Church in communist China was the fate of Bishop Kung Pinmei of Shanghai who spent 30 years in prisons and labor camps. He was arrested for the first time in 1955. In 1979, he was secretly appointed Cardinal *in pectore* by Pope John Paul II. After his release in 1986, Bishop Kung was placed under house arrest until 1988, when he was allowed to go to Rome and met with the Pope. Due to his ailing health, he was allowed to remain at large until he died in 2000 at the age of 99¹⁰⁴. Although the underground Chinese church is still alive and growing, its official persecution continues.

Vietnam

The persecution of Christians in Vietnam has a long history. After the relatively quiet decades of French rule in Indochina, the persecution started again after World War Two with the outbreak of the communist revolution, first in North Vietnam and then during the communist warfare in South Vietnam. The Vietnamese communist revolution was not only against French colonial

¹⁰³ Hefley, *Wiara i krew*, p. 101; *US Congressional Record. Proceedings and Debates of the 106th Congress, Second Session*, 145/13 and 146/1; M.A. Thiessen, "A Tale of Two Bishops", <http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=4268>; Michael Sheridan, "China Crushes the Church", <http://www.cardinalkungfoundation.org/press/990711nyt.html> (12 V 2012).

¹⁰⁴ Paul Philip Mariani, *Church Militant Bishop Kung and Catholic Resistance in Communist Shanghai* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2011).

rule but also Christianity. It had long been perceived as a foreign doctrine but a new anti-Christian element was added: Marxism-Leninism. Western influence was combated by Western ideology. In 1945, there were about 1.6 million Catholics in Vietnam, including about 480,000 in the communist-controlled areas. In view of the communist persecution, most of them fled to the south and many of those who stayed were killed. One of the martyrs of communism in North Vietnam was Father Marcel Nguyen Tan Van, a Redemptorist who was arrested in 1955 and died in the Yen Binh concentration camp¹⁰⁵. South Vietnamese Premier Ngo Dinh Diem was a Catholic, so he welcomed Catholic refugees from the north and who strengthened his power. Diem's dictatorial rule ended with his assassination in 1963, when the Viet Cong intensified the communist revolution in South Vietnam.

When the communists finally captured Saigon in 1975 and unified the country under their rule, hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese Catholics who had failed to escape were made subject to "re-education" through slave labor and brainwashing. Symbolic of the fate of Vietnamese Catholics after 1975 was the story of Archbishop Nguyen Van Thuan of Saigon, who spent 13 years in "re-education" camps, including nine years in solitary confinement¹⁰⁶. The names and stories of thousands of others still wait to be disclosed. Various forms of persecution and restrictions on Catholicism are still in force in Vietnam, especially when the Catholic doctrine on human dignity and rights is expressed in public.

North Korea

Although Korean authorities had earlier and frequently staged massive persecution of Christians, the Japanese occupation brought a relative relaxation of these actions. The entry of the Red Army into Korea in the summer

¹⁰⁵ Royal, *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 355-364; Marie-Michel, *Love Cannot Die: A Life of Marcel Van* (Montpellier: Librairie Artheme Fayard, 1990).

¹⁰⁶ Andre Nguyen Van Chau, *Cud nadziei* (Katowice: Księgarnia Św. Jacka, 2005), pp. 225-288. The English version of the book is available as *The Miracle of Hope. Political Prisoner, Prophet of Peace. Life of Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan* (Boston, MA: Pauline Books & Media, 2003).

of 1945 started a new tragedy for Korean Christians. The Soviets and their Korean allies started liquidating church structures and exterminating Christian priests and laymen. For instance, in 1945, Red Army soldiers shot to death three German Catholic monks: Witmar Farrenkopf, Servatius Ludwig and Engelmar Zellner from the Yanki diocese. Its bishop, Theodor Breher, was arrested and later deported. When the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was created in 1948, a new wave of persecution started. All Christians were labeled "enemies No. 37" and made subject to liquidation. In 1949, the communist authorities took over the Tokwon Abbey and arrested all the monks. Soon, Bishop Hong Yong-ho of Pyongyang was arrested and disappeared.

After the North Korean army invaded the south of the peninsula in June 1950 and UN troops counterattacked, the Korean Christians of the south were also affected by communist persecution. During the retreat to the Yalu river in late 1950, the communists arranged infernal "death marches" of Christian prisoners, during which most of them died or were shot to death. The long list of communist martyrs killed by the North Korean communists include German Archbishop Bonifatius Sauer, German Benedictine Father Paschalis Fangauer, American Father James Maginn, French Fathers Julien and Antoine Gombert, Irish Columban Father Anthony Collier¹⁰⁷, killed in June 1950, another Irish Columban, Patrick Reilly, German Benedictine Sister Eva Schütz, killed in August 1950, American Columban Patrick Brennan and German Benedictine Sister Fruktuosa Gerstmeier, killed in September 1950, two Korean sisters, Lucia Park and Agneta Chang, murdered in October 1950, Bishop Patrick Byrne, killed in November 1950, and Irish Columban Father

¹⁰⁷ The death of Collier is well known because his houseboy Gabriel Kim survived. In late June 1950, Father Collier and Kim walked to the Chunchon post office when they were apprehended by North Korean troops. The communist soldiers tied them together and ordered them to march toward the river. Without warning, machine gun fire killed Collier. Kim was wounded so badly that the communist soldiers assumed he was dead, too, but 36 hours later, Kim managed to find help and tell his story. Royal, *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*, p. 344. One of the survivors of the Korean "death marches", the Australian Columban Philip Crosbie, wrote in into his memoirs: Philip Crosbie, *Pencilling Prisoner* (Melbourne, Hawthorn Press, 1954); Philip Crosbie, *March till They Die* (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1956).

Francis Canavan, who died in December 1950. Anglican priests Timothy Cho Yong-ho, Charles Hunt, Michael Lee Won-chang, Albert W. Lee and Mose Yun Tal-yong as well as Anglican Sister Mary Clare were some of the Protestant victims martyred by the Korean communists¹⁰⁸.

After the armistice was signed in 1953, Christian churches in the north were practically non-existent. Father Lee Chae-cheol remained in hiding in caves near Cheong-jin with a number of Christian refugees. They were caught and killed. Father Francis Yu Chae-ok was buried alive on the seashore near Haeju. Sisters Angela Kim Jeong-ja and Marianna Kim Jeong-suk were hacheted to death. Even in the 1970s some North Korean Catholics were murdered, either in North Korea or in China, such as Father Joseph Kim Son-yong in 1972¹⁰⁹.

Ethiopia

The communist revolution in Ethiopia also led to massive persecution of Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity. The new Marxist government nationalized church property, including landed estates, and demolished many churches. The decisive blow was dealt when the head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Abune Tewophilos, was arrested in May 1976. For many years, it was not clear what happened to him but the communist authorities installed a successor. It was not before the communist dictator Mengystu Haile Mariam was toppled in 1991 that it was disclosed that Tewophilos was secretly killed along with 33 other victims by strangulation¹¹⁰.

Non-Christian Religions

The anti-religious policies of communist regimes also affected non-Christian religions. These policies were most aggressive against Buddhism. An interesting case was the People's Republic of Tannu Tuva, accepted by

¹⁰⁸ Ibidem, pp. 339-354; <http://newsaints.faithweb.com/martyrs/Korea5.htm> (5 VI 2014).

¹⁰⁹ Catholic Bishops Conference of Korea, *Korean Witnesses to the Faith* (Seoul, 1999), passim.

¹¹⁰ Dr. Dirshaye Menberu, "Patriarch Tewofilos (Meliktu Welde Mariam) 1910 to 1979", <http://www.dacb.org/stories/ethiopia/tewoflos2.html> (25 XII 2011);

Moscow as a separate satellite under local Bolshevik Donduk Kuular in 1921. A former Buddhist lama, Kuular tolerated Buddhism and established close links with another Soviet satellite, the Mongolian People's Republic. Stalin found Kuular to be too independent and had him removed from power in 1929. Fated to be another Soviet political murder victim, Kuular was arrested and executed in 1932. Five Tuvan graduates of the communist University of the Toilers of the East were sent as extraordinary commissars to Tannu Tuva. One of them, 32-year-old Salchak Toka, became head of the Tuvan People's Revolutionary Party and carried out a massive purge of the Tuvan administration. Moreover, he launched an all-out attack on the Buddhist priesthood. Out of 25 monasteries and about 4,000 lamas in 1929, only one monastery and 15 lamas remained in the 1930s¹¹¹. In October 1944, Tannu Tuva was absorbed into the USSR as the Tuvan Autonomous Soviet Republic.

What happened to the rest of the Tuvan lamas may be imagined against the background of the treatment of the lamas by the Mongolian communists. When the last Khagan of Mongolia Bogdo Khaan died in 1924, the search for his successor and another reincarnation was prohibited by the Great Khural of the Mongolian People's Republic in November 1926. With the rise of Khorloogiin Choibalsan to power in the late 1920s, massive purges started among political opponents and wide circles of Mongolian society, including Buddhist monks. As Minister of Agriculture, Choibalsan launched a program of expropriation of monasteries and collectivization of herds. Massacres of the Buddhist lamas began. When Choibalsan became Minister of Interior in 1936, he started his own "Great Purge" in which his *troikas* approved and carried out the execution of over 17,000 Buddhist lamas. The surviving monks were forced to violate their vows and to laicize¹¹². Chubsugul is for the Mongolians what Katyn is for the Poles: a communist mass killing ground. In 1991, the

¹¹¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuvan_People%27s_Republic; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donduk_Kuular; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salchak_Toka (14 III 2014); Robert A. Rupen, "The Absorption of Tuva", (in:) Thomas T. Hammond (ed.), *The Anatomy of Communist Takeovers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), pp. 151-152.

¹¹² "Choibalsan Chorloin", (in:) *Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History*, Vol. 7, pp. 71-73; Shagdariin Sandag, Harry H. Kendall, *Poisoned Arrows: The Stalin-Choibalsan Mongolian Massacres, 1921-1941* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000); G.S. Murphy, *Soviet Mongolia. A Study of the Oldest Political Satellite* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).

graves of thousands of lamas were discovered at this small lake close to the town of Moron¹¹³. In 2003, a mass grave was unearthed in the Mongolian capital of Ulan Bator that included 348 skulls with bullet holes in the back. The bodies were found with remains of yellow and red garments and were believed to have belonged to Mongolian monks executed in the 1930s¹¹⁴. As a result, communist Mongolia had almost entirely erased Buddhism from the society. In the 1970s, Larry W. Moses concluded that “religion (...) is no longer a social factor in the Mongolian People’s Republic”¹¹⁵.

The Chinese communists have always treated Tibetan Buddhism, the backbone of Tibetan culture, as a “reactionary” religion that reinforced the backward structure of Tibetan society. Although the Tibetan lamas, who were feudal masters of their lay subjects, were also guilty of murdering Catholic missionaries, such as Swiss Father Maurice Tornay¹¹⁶, after the Chinese communists occupied Tibet in 1950 and suppressed the Tibetan Rising in 1959, the lamas were massacred.

Since the national identity of the Tibetan is largely based on the authority of the Buddhist hierarchy with the Dalai Lama at its top, the Chinese communists made every possible effort to discredit the Dalai Lama and to stir up conflict in the Buddhist hierarchy. In 1959, the 14th Dalai Lama (Tenzin Gyatso) escaped to India and the second most important leader, the 10th Panchen Lama (Choekyi Gyaltsen), called on Tibetans to support the Chinese. Nevertheless, in 1964, the Panchen Lama was arrested and spent 13 years in inhumane conditions in Qincheng Prison. Meanwhile, during the Cultural Revolution, Tibetan lamas were tortured and killed in

¹¹³ This has not stopped former Mongolian communists from taking over even this role after the collapse of the communist system. In 1993, Polish journalist Piotr Bikont met an old Mongolian woman who came to the temple of Gandan because she could not pray in her hometown, not because the local authorities would prevent her from it but because the former first secretary of the party and undertaken the duties of the main local lama. Piotr Bikont, “20 tysięcy kilometrów koleją transsyberyjską” [20 Thousand Kilometers on the Trans-Siberian Railway], *Magazyn Gazety Wyborczej*, 25 June 1993, p. 15.

¹¹⁴ “Mass grave uncovered in Mongolia”, <http://www.rte.ie/news/2003/0612/39247-mongolia/> (14 III 2014).

¹¹⁵ Larry W. Moses, *The Political Role of Mongol Buddhism* (Bloomington, Ind.: Asian Studies Research Institute, Indiana University, 1977), pp. 2-3.

¹¹⁶ Royal, *The Catholic Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*, pp. 326-329.

large numbers. Buddhist temples were destroyed along with scriptures and other religious artifacts. After his release, the 10th Panchen Lama was actively visible until 1989, when he died after having given a critical speech denouncing the Chinese treatment of Tibetan Buddhists. The 14th Dalai Lama, who established a Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamsala, India, became a worldwide authority and ambassador of the Tibetan cause. For decades, he tried to win Tibetan autonomy and respect for Buddhism in Chinese-controlled Tibet, but to no avail. In May 2006, the communist party boss of the Tibet Autonomous Region, Zhang Qingli, confirmed a “life and death struggle” against the Dalai Lama and his “clique”. He also described the Tibetan leader as the “biggest obstacle hindering Tibetan Buddhism from establishing normal order”. By the “normal order” he obviously meant total subordination of Tibetan Buddhism to the Communist Party. In March 2007, Zhang Qingli claimed that the Chinese Communist Party is the “real Buddha” for Tibetans¹¹⁷.

Although the communist government of China attempts to maintain the appearance that it tolerates Buddhism, the reality is quite different. Monasteries that once housed thousands of lamas were reduced to a few hundred and their main responsibility is no longer religious study but tending to the premises and tourists. It is also difficult to obtain a complete religious education in Tibet. After more than 50 years in exile, the 14th Dalai Lama still inspires loyalty among his people, both at home and abroad. Gedun Choekyi Nyima, recognized by the Dalai Lama as the 11th reincarnation of the Panchen Lama in 1995 at the age of six, was abducted by the Chinese authorities and his fate remained unknown for years. Meanwhile the Chinese produced an alternative 11th Panchen Lama (Gyaincain Norbu), born of Communist Party members and brought up in Beijing. The fate of the 10th Panchen Lama and the escape from Tibet of the 17th Karmapa (Ugyen Trinley Dorje), the Abbot of the Kumbum Monastery and head of the Karma Kargyu school of Tibetan Buddhism, in 2000, show how difficult it is for

¹¹⁷ *The Communist Party as Living Buddha. The Crisis Facing Tibetan Religion under Chinese Control* (Washington, D.C.: International Campaign for Tibet, no date), pp. 4 and 5.

true Tibetan Buddhists to follow a pragmatic line in view of the Chinese communist persecution¹¹⁸.

The persecution of Buddhism by the Khmer Rouge was even more ruthless. When they took control of Cambodia in 1975, the number of Buddhist monks was estimated at 65,000 to 80,000. As a result of Khmer Rouge policies, in 1980 only about 3,000 of them were still alive. Almost every monk and religious scholar had been either murdered or driven into exile and nearly all Buddhist temples and libraries were either totally or partly destroyed¹¹⁹.

The communist persecution of Judaism was more complicated. Since the February 1917 Revolution, Russian Jews were free from the discrimination they had suffered under Tsarist rule. Meanwhile, many Jews turned atheist and joined leftist movements, such as the Social Democratic Mensheviks and Bolsheviks. The liberation of the Jewish people in Russia attracted masses of young Jews to the revolution. Though the majority of Russian Jews were still Judaist believers, in the Bolshevik leadership they had very strong representation, with Leon Trotsky, Karol Radek, Lev Kamenev, Aleksei Rykov and Grigoriy Zinovev being the best known. Since Bolshevism was initially an internationalist creed, the problem arose to what extent they were still Jews and not communists. After the Bolshevik revolution, the new authorities, including their members of Jewish descent, did not recognize the Jewish people as a nationality and opposed the Jewish religion as “reactionary”. The purpose of special Jewish commissariats and

¹¹⁸ Ibidem, pp. 9 ff; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tenzin_Gyatso; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gyaincain_Norbu; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Choekyi_Gyaltzen (25 VI 2014). The old Tibetan culture is dying. In recent years, the Tibetan capital of Lhasa has grown into a large city with modern Chinese quarters. Buddhist monks are careful how they walk on its streets in traditional robes and you can see frequent police patrols in the old city of Lhasa who check the ID cards of all traditionally dressed people. The city is strictly monitored and all materials connected with the Dalai Lama are confiscated. Robert Stefanicki, “Nowy wspaniały Tybet” [The New Brave Tibet], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 26 June 2014.

¹¹⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhism_in_Cambodia#Khmer_Rouge_Era (25 VI 2014); Pierre-Antoine Donnet, *Tybet – życie czy zagłada* [Tibet – Life or Death?] (Warszawa: Agade, 1999), pp. 36-41, 86-114 and 190-205 [The English version of the book was published as *Tibet: Survival in Question* (Delhi: Oxford University Press; London: Zed Books, 1994)]; Ian Harris, *Cambodian Buddhism* (University of Hawaii Press, 2005).

Jewish party sections (*Yevseksya*) was to eliminate the Jewish tradition and establish the “dictatorship of the proletariat” on the “Jewish street”. What initially looked like a blessing for Orthodox or Zionist Jews became a curse for them. Step by step, the Bolsheviks liquidated organized forms of Jewish communities. Hundreds of synagogues were forcibly closed. While in 1917 there were 6,059 synagogues in Russia, in 1928 only 261 of them were still open¹²⁰. The use of Yiddish was limited and thousands of Orthodox and Zionist leaders were imprisoned as “reactionary”. Religious schools were outlawed and private religious instruction was forbidden. It became difficult or even impossible to celebrate Jewish holidays. When some of the Bolshevik leaders with Jewish roots, such as Trotsky and others in Russia, Rudolf Slánský in Czechoslovakia or Laszlo Rajk in Hungary, fell victim to Stalinist persecution, it was an operation hard to define. On the one hand, these victims claimed to have been communists and not Jews, on the other hand, sometimes they were persecuted as hidden “reactionary” agents of the Jewish tradition¹²¹.

Persecution of Muslims by the communists was similar to that of religious Jews. The Soviet authorities closed most mosques. While in 1917 there were 24,582 Muslim houses of worship, in 1928 only 2,293 were still open¹²². The Bolsheviks also limited the social influence of Muslim clergy and used mass repression. Also, the Tatarstan famine of 1921-1922 and deportations of Crimean Tartar, Chechens, Ingush, Balkar, Karachay and Meskhetian Turk Muslims can be qualified as ethnic rather than religious genocide. The anti-Turkish policies of the Bulgarian communist regime in the 1970s and 1980s had a religious component but they were mostly for ethnic reasons. More religious was persecution of Muslim Chams by the Vietnamese communists and the Cambodian Khmer Rouge, as well as anti-Albanian policies of the

¹²⁰ M. Odintsov, “Khozhdenye po mukam”, *Nauka i religia*, 1990, No 5, quote after: Rev. Tadeusz Pikus, *Rosja w objęciach ateizmu* [Russia in the Embrace of Atheism] (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Archidiecezji Warszawskiej, 1997), p. 61.

¹²¹ *Treatment of the Jews under Communism*, HR SCOCA, Special Report No 2 (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1954), pp. 1-15.

¹²² Odintsov, “Khozhdenye po mukam”, quote after: Pikus, *Rosja w objęciach ateizmu*, p. 61.

communist regime of Slobodan Milošević in Serbia. Persecution of Uyghur Muslims by the Chinese communist regime has a strong religious component, but the ethnic and political reasons are also present¹²³.

Conclusions

All the cases of religious persecution described above qualify as violations of Article 18 of the UNDHR, Article 2 of the UN Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and are crimes against humanity according to Paragraph (h) of the ICC Rome Statute of 1998.

The general goal of communist regimes was to eliminate religion where possible and to reduce its influence where the latter was initially impossible. It seems that the general rule was subordination of the Orthodox churches to the Moscow Patriarchate, liquidation of the Uniate church and its absorption by the Russian Orthodoxy, erosion of the Protestant churches, whose loose structure made them defenseless in view of the centralized apparatus of oppression and detachment of the Roman Catholics from the Vatican. Then, further steps were taken leading to privatization of worship and atheization. Buddhism, Judaism and Islam were also eliminated wherever it was possible. The communist authorities moved along these lines as quickly as they could and the only thing that could moderate oppression was organized and reasonable resistance, which was nevertheless dramatically difficult.

The timing of these scenarios was differentiated. It started in the Soviet Union immediately after the 1917 revolution. The destruction of religious life in satellite countries came later, first in Mongolia and then elsewhere after World War Two. The elimination of organized religion was achieved in the late 1940s in Albania and the Baltic republics. In Lithuania, the Roman Catholic Church revived after 1956, but in Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Estonia, and Latvia, atheization was almost triumphant. Everywhere, the Greek Catholic church was outlawed, local Orthodox churches subordinated to Moscow and Protestants brought under control¹²⁴. By

¹²³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Muslims#China (5 VI 2014).

¹²⁴ Cywiński, *Ogniem próbowane*, Vol. 2, pp. 241-242.

that time, according to Vatican sources, about 600 priests were imprisoned in Romania, 500 in Poland, 450 in Hungary, 200 in Czechoslovakia, 200 in Yugoslavia, 1,000 in the Baltic states, and 30 in Bulgaria. Later, these figures increased and sometimes even doubled. On 11-12 February 1949, a special Cominform meeting was held in Karlovy Vary to seal the initial “successes” and to plan further action. The conference was aimed at discussing methods of struggle against religion and was headed by the Soviet Andrey Vyshinsky¹²⁵.

The death of Stalin in March 1953 marked the beginning of a new period in which the anti-religious offensive lost some of its momentum. Only in Poland did the Roman Catholic church revive. A temporary improvement was noted in Lithuania and Hungary in 1956, but generally the oppression of Christian churches was continued until 1989. Communist China, Vietnam and North Korea have been continuing to persecute religion until recent times.

The monstrosity of the communist oppression of religion and the range of Christian sufferings under communism are still difficult to comprehend, especially by atheist intellectuals who frequently minimize or even ignore the ruthlessness of the contemporary struggles against religion. Lenin, Stalin and the communist parties departed from the original Marxian thought in many ways. At one point, they were direct heirs of Marx: they inherited Marxian hatred for religion. Therefore, Marxism is in a way responsible for ideological abetment to the oppression of Christians and other religious people. In recent times, the anti-religious vigor has other sources, but this is a different story.

¹²⁵ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 387.

Communism against Nationality

Internationalism versus Ethnicity

Communism has always claimed to be an internationalist ideology. Nevertheless, when communist leaders faced resistance to their revolutionary activities among certain nationalities or ethnic communities, they treated them as “class enemies”. It is irrelevant here how nationality or ethnicity are defined. The problem was that sometimes, whole nationalities or ethnic communities were treated as “enemies of the people”. For instance, when the Soviets attacked emerging Poland in late 1918 they practically made little difference between the Polish peasants, workers or *intelligentsia* who fought in the Polish army. To the Bolshevik’s eyes, all were “Polish landlords” (*polskiye pany*). Another case, a little later, “in the year 1933 (...) merely the persistent use of the Ukrainian language was sufficient reason to be classified as a *bourgeois nationalist*”¹.

Another term applied by the communists that had a nationality context was “fascists”. The hunt of fascists introduced into peace treaties that the Allies concluded with the defeated nations after World War Two became in communist practice an excuse to hunt adversaries based on nationality. Sometimes, real fascists, such as the Romanian Iron Guard, had nothing to fear if they actively joined the communist operations. Otherwise, they would be treated as an enemy on the same level as anyone who opposed the communist regime, be it socialists, agrarians, Christian democrats or any-

¹ Testimony of Yuriy Lavrynenko, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 117.

body else. In fact, all members of a certain nationality who were not eager to become communists and strove for national independence were labeled “fascist”. It is curious that some Western authors have uncritically adopted the communist understanding of “fascism”².

The communist attitude to national identity is highly complicated. It is really difficult to explain all the twists and turns in the various nationality policies based on communist ideology. For tactical reasons, communists sometimes promised national liberation and helped develop national culture only to later crack down on the nationality’s representatives. Sometimes, they advocated something communist in its essence but national in form. At a later stage of communist practice, a specific brand of nationalism was even developed as an important component of communist ideology. For instance, the case of the “partisan” ideology of Mieczysław Moczar in Poland, the Romanian nationalism of Nicolae Ceaușescu, the Bulgarian communist treatment of the Turks, or Slobodan Milošević’s attitude toward the Albanians. But even Soviet communism used the Russian language and culture as a unifying factor of the Soviet empire while Chinese or Vietnamese communism has always been strongly nationalist.

Nevertheless, there were many cases in which communist leaders openly persecuted cultures and whole communities based on nationality if it served their interest. These cases will be discussed here.

² One of them was Walter Lacquer, *Fascism: Past, Present, Future* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). George Orwell wrote: “The word ‘fascism’ is almost entirely meaningless. In conversation, of course, it is used even more wildly than in print. I have heard it applied to farmers, shopkeepers, Social Credit, corporal punishment, fox-hunting, bull-fighting, the 1922 Committee, the 1941 Committee, Kipling, Gandhi, Chiang Kai-Shek, homosexuality, Priestley’s broadcasts, Youth Hostels, astrology, women, dogs and I do not know what else ... Except for the relatively small number of fascist sympathizers, almost any English person would accept ‘bully’ as a synonym for ‘fascist’. That is about as near to a definition as this much-abused word has come”. George Orwell, “What Is Fascism?”, *Tribune*, 1944. Quote according to: http://orwell.ru/library/articles/As_I_Please/english/efasc (6 IX 2014).

Early Soviet Practice

Various non-Russian people of the Russian Soviet republic (*inorodtsy*) had been subject to extermination for centuries³. When the Bolsheviks grabbed power in 1917, they apparently supported the aspirations of people of non-Russian nationality. But since these aspirations were different from the goals of the Bolsheviks, their authorities were increasingly hostile to them. The Bolshevik nationality policies were as equally double-faced as other policies of their regime: verbally advocating national liberation, it actually smothered the emancipation of non-Russians. It frequently used Russians or even some of the non-Russians from one region to quell the aspirations for freedom of other non-Russians.

A typical mechanism was recorded in the Bashkir region soon after the Bolshevik Revolution. The Orenburg Executive Committee (*Ispolkom*), composed mostly of Russian colonists, realized that materialization of the expectations of the Bashkirs would end their exploitation by the colonists. The Orenburg *Ispolkom* then arrested members of the Bashkir Council (*Soviet*). Only a few of them managed to escape from prison while most of them were executed. In the Lake Baikal area, the same mechanism was used against the Buryats, whose revolutionary organs were suppressed by the Bolsheviks. In the Batay-Harganat commune, a whole village was erased and its population, including women and small children, were murdered⁴. The Kalmyks also expected a better future under the new regime, but, according to a 1919 report, “their situation not only failed to improve but got much worse and it is hard to describe what is going on in the Kalmyk and Astrakhan steppes”⁵.

The great Russian hunger of the early 1920s was caused by many years of Russian warfare, but non-Russians suffered more than Russians due to the

³ There is a unique study of this matter by Komi émigré author Ignati Mösšeg, *Moskwa dawna i dzisiejsza a narody podbite Północno-Wschodniej Europy* [Moscow of Old and New Times and the Subjugated Nations of North-Eastern Europe] (Warszawa: Instytut Wschodni, 1931), pp. 1-60.

⁴ Ibidem, pp. 63-66.

⁵ *Zhizn Natsionalnostey*, 1919, No 13, quoted by Mösšeg, p. 71.

conscious food redistribution policies of the Bolshevik regime. As a result of all these factors, the population of non-Russians decreased much more dramatically than of the Russians. While in 1897 the number of Russians was estimated at 54.5 million, in 1926 it was 78.0 million. While the number of Tartars and Kirghiz grew slightly, the number of Komis, Yakuts, Buryats, Kalmyks and Bashkirs decreased over these 30 years. In the case of the Kalmyks, the decrease was 31 percent, and for the Bashkirs, 34 percent⁶. Bolshevik extermination through murder and hunger contributed to a significant part of this decrease.

The Bolshevik attitude towards the most numerous Slavonic nations—the Belorussians and Ukrainians—was more complicated. Initially, the Bolsheviks tried to attract them to the revolution by promoting a certain, secular brand of their national culture. Bolshevik concessions in the sphere of national culture in Belorussia and Ukraine lasted from 1921 until 1929. Even some of the non-Bolshevik cultural celebrities were allowed to remain active on the condition that they stayed loyal to the regime. Then, some prominent men of culture and social life began to be persecuted⁷. But the second and most important stage of extermination of the Belorussian and Ukrainian nations started in 1930 with collectivization of agriculture.

Defenders of communism, mostly of Russian nationality, frequently claim that the Soviet crimes also affected the Russians. The relationship between the Soviet and the Russian identity is very complicated and would require a separate study. The claim that Russians were also victims of communism

⁶ Mösšeg, p. 145.

⁷ This trend may be illustrated by the career of Yazep Adamovich, a Belorussian Bolshevik who was the commissar of interior and later president of the Council of People's Commissars of the Belorussian SSR. He was responsible for the persecution of opponents of Bolshevism but also guided the policy of Beloruthenization of public life. As the turn of 1927 saw the gradual abandonment of this policy, he was removed from his position. Transferred to work in the Soviet central administration, in 1932 he was sent to Kamchatka, where he organized a fishery. On the wave of persecutions of national elites of the Soviet republics, he was accused of Belorussian nationalism and of supporting the kulaks at the time when he was head of the administration in Belorussia. According to official information, he committed suicide. E[ugeniusz] M[ironowicz], "Adamavich Yazep", (in:) Roszkowski, Kofman (eds.), *Biographical Dictionary of Central and Easter Europe in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 8-9.

may be true but this does not change the communist responsibility for crimes against other nations.

Ukrainians

Starvation was a method of Bolshevik rule from the beginning. Already in the early 1920s, when famine struck the Bolshevik state as a result of civil war and communist war policies, the Bolsheviks maneuvered so that food supplies went to their centers of power and not to areas “unsafe” from their point of view. This is why the Great Famine of 1921 was particularly harsh in Ukraine and the lower Volga area. Rough estimates made by Western experts calculated the number of victims in this region at 1.5 million people. During the 1921 famine in Ukraine, many cases of cannibalism were recorded⁸.

Moscow employed famine as a political weapon again in the early 1930s. This time it was entirely artificial. The harvests of 1932 were not bad, but the Soviet authorities requisitioned all the available food from the peasants and allowed them to starve to death. The reason for this inhumane policy was the desire of the Soviet leadership to destroy the resistance of Ukrainian peasants to collectivization and to kill the spirit of freedom that was still present among the Ukrainian masses. Another reason was to destroy the process of Ukrainian national rebirth, which started in the 1920s, even under local communists.

While the party and government of the Ukrainian SSR realized that a decrease in the rate of collectivization was necessary and that the unrealistic plans for delivery of grain quotas were dangerous to the life and health of the whole Ukrainian population, Moscow ordered the convening of the Third Ukrainian Party Conference. It was held from 6 to 8 July 1932, under the supervision of Vyacheslav Molotov and Lazar Kaganovich, who came from Moscow. At the end, Molotov warned: “We will not tolerate any deviations or variations in the matter of fulfilling of obligations accepted by the party

⁸ Statement of Fedir P. Pihido, based on H. Fischer, *The Famine in Soviet Russia* (New York, 1927), *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 34.

and the Soviet government”⁹. On 14 July, the Ukrainian Economic Council resolved to decrease the plan of delivery of meat quotas. Moscow replied with the law of 7 August 1932, on “the protection of Socialist property” and “defense of Socialist rights”. On 24 January 1933, the Central Committee of the Soviet party declared a total lack of confidence in the whole structure of the Ukrainian Communist Party. It appointed Pavlo Postyshev as its new First Secretary and organized a massive purge of all non-complying party members. Postyshev imported 15,000 “thoroughly trained and tested Bolsheviks” to supervise the execution of the horrible central plans by requisition of all grain and meat available in the Ukrainian countryside. Mass famine became inevitable on an infernal scale¹⁰. One of the witnesses testified that his village “had at one time more than 3,000 houses, now many of the farmhouses were empty and all the inhabitants perished to the last man. The yards

⁹ Quote according to: Statement of Fedir P. Pihido, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 37. The speech was published by Moscow *Pravda* on 14 July 1932. Cf. also testimony of Yuriy Lavrynenko, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 115.

¹⁰ Mark B. Tauger, “The 1932 Harvest and the Famine of 1933”, *Slavic Review*, Spring 1991, No 1, pp. 70-89. In his home village of Stayki, Fedir P. Pihido “saw people who were swollen, people who were totally exhausted, people whose skin had dried up from which there was evidence of hunger and exhaustion. I saw how corpses were gathered up in the villages and transported to the cemetery. They were dumped into a deep pit just like a pile of wood”. Testimony of Fedir P. Pihido, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 32. Platon Derevianko remembered: “I tried to struggle to feed myself and my family as best as I could. We exchanged all our personal property for food and then we ate weeds. I, myself, ate the leaves of birch trees (...) I was at the village hall, the wife—the widow—of Litvenko was brought in by the village authorities who also carried a kettle in which was the salted body of a child. Many onlookers gathered to have a look and the woman and the kettle were taken to the regional headquarters”. Testimony of Platon Derevianko, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 51. According to the testimony of Professor Nikola Prochik, there were many cases of cannibalism: “While I was at the Donbas area, I came across many villages where at one time of the year there were 3,000 people. When I came during the time of the starvation, there were only 30 to 40 people left (...) After they ate the cats, they ate the dogs. And after they had run out of cats and dogs and mice and any other animals to eat, they started to eat people themselves who died of starvation. It got to be so bad that while many of us villagers would walk along the road, we would see many people who died along the road. And it was not uncommon to see somebody walk up to one of these dead people and cut off an arm or leg and put it in a sack and take it home so that they would have something to eat. And the famine got so bad that in the town of Polianetska an 8-year-old girl went to visit her grandmother, and her grandmother, insane from this hunger, butchered and ate this girl”. Testimony of Prof. Nicholas Prochik, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, pp. 362-363.

were covered with high weeds and in the village, there was not one dog, not even a cow. There were three collective farms in the village and on every collective there was an individual to whom was delegated the responsibility of gathering the corpses and trucking them off to the cemetery. He had a special quota of corpses to be fulfilled, that is, he had to gather a certain quota of corpses daily or else he would not receive his daily food ration”¹¹.

The range and the scale of the Ukrainian *Holodomor*, this mass communist crime, is really appalling. There are many estimates of the number of its victims. Probably the most accurate was given by Fedir P. Pihido, a Ukrainian construction worker who travelled widely in Ukraine in the years 1932-1933, and later testified before a US House of Representatives Select Committee. He claimed that forced famine in Ukraine cost the lives of 6 to 7 million people¹². The Great Purge brought a new wave of massacres of Ukrainians who were murdered in the hundreds of thousands, in Bykivnya, Vinnytsa and other NKVD killing grounds.

During the forced famine and the Great Purge of the 1930s, according to some estimates 80 percent of the Ukrainian *intelligentsia* were murdered, including about 200 out of 240 writers¹³. This massacre included some of the most prominent Ukrainian cultural personalities, such as religious activist Volodymyr Chekhivskyi, who died in far east camps, poet Mykola Khvylovy who committed suicide in 1933, writer Anton Krushelnytskyi, who died in a camp while his two sons were shot, theater director Les Kurbas, playwright Mykola Kulish, geographer Stepan Rudnytskyi, and philosopher Volodymyr Yurynets, all of them shot in 1937.

Belorussians

At the beginning of forced collectivization of agriculture, about one million Belorussian peasants were deported to Russia and Siberia. The second stage of the extermination of Belorussians came in 1936-1938 with the Great

¹¹ Testimony of Mr. H., *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 48.

¹² Testimony of Fedir P. Pihido, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 32. The estimate of 6 million victims was given by Yuriy Lavrynenko. Cf. his testimony, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 116.

¹³ Testimony of Yuriy Lavrynenko, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 116.

Purge. The Belorussian public prosecutor Kiselov ordered the execution of about 50,000 people within the boundaries of the Belorussian SSR¹⁴. During the Great Purge, the NKVD launched a mass operation of extermination, killing tens of thousands of Belorussians at the Kurapaty killing ground, among others. The operation was based on NKVD Order No 00447 of 31 July 1937, which set upper quotas of those to be eliminated per territory and category. The quota for the Belorussian SSR was 12,000 anti-Soviet elements, of whom 2,000 were to be executed. But in fact, this quota was exceeded, and during the whole Great Purge at least 17,772 people were killed in the Belorussian SSR. This figure does not include those Belorussians who earlier had been arrested and later killed in the Gulag. The people responsible for the implementation of NKVD Order No 00447 in the Belorussian SSR were its People's Commissars of Internal Affairs, B.D. Berman and A.A. Nasedkin, both of whom perished afterwards¹⁵.

There can be little doubt as to the purpose of this operation. It was aimed at breaking the backbone of the Belorussian national revival that had started in the Belorussian SSR in the 1920s, even while under Bolshevik rule. For Stalin and his aides, the ultimate goal was the destruction of national sentiment and the creation of an "internationalist" Soviet man. This is why most of the Belorussian leading intellectuals were murdered at that time, including historians Uladzimir Bieniashkevich and Mitrafan Dounar-Zapolski, poet Ihnat Dvarchanin, writers Uladzimir Halubok and Maksim Haretski, educator Yazep Haurylik, economist Arkadz Smolicz, philosopher and historian Aleksandr Tsvikevich and writer Zhmitser Zhylunovich.

Poles

Another Soviet genocide operation based on purely national criterion was against Poles living in the USSR. There were various estimates as to the number of Poles who lived on the Soviet side of the Polish-Soviet frontier

¹⁴ Testimony of Mikola Abamtschik, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 56.

¹⁵ Alexandra Goujon, "Case Study. Kurapaty (1937-1941): NKVD Mass Killings in Soviet Belarus", <http://www.massviolence.org/Kurapaty-1937-1941-NKVD-Mass-Killings-in-Soviet-Belarus> (26 IX 2014).

established by the Peace Treaty of Riga in 1921. Since it was often dangerous to confess Polish nationality, the official Soviet figures were probably underestimated and the real figure must have been around 1.5 million people, living mostly in the Belorussian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR¹⁶. The Soviet authorities established two autonomous districts for Poles living in two republics: the Markhlevski Memorial District in eastern Volhynia in the Ukrainian SSR, created in 1925, and the Dzherzhynski Memorial District near Minsk in the Belorussian SSR, created in 1932. Initially, both districts enjoyed some autonomy. There were Polish language schools and Polish language publications available, although filled with intense Soviet propaganda. Both districts, inhabited mostly by Polish petty nobles and peasants, belonged to the regions that strongly resisted collectivization. This is why in 1935, on the eve of the Great Purge, both districts were disbanded and its leaders executed.

In 1937, the massive “Polish Operation” was started based on NKVD Order No 00485 of 7 August 1937. It was directed against “Polish spies”, but interpreted by the NKVD as relating to “absolutely all Poles”. Executions and deportations of Poles from the Ukrainian SSR started in the fall of 1937 and from the Belorussian SSR in the spring of 1938. According to an eyewitness, the whole operation was carried out according to the same pattern: an NKVD detachment would surround a village and divide the population. Men were usually shot nearby, women with small kids were usually deported to Kazakhstan, and children above 10 years of age were placed in orphanages (*dyetdomy*)¹⁷. The official number of Polish victims executed was 111,091 people¹⁸, but the statistical evidence is blurred. While the Soviet census of 1926 recorded 782,000 Poles, the 1939 census recorded only 626,000 Poles. A more precise number would be very difficult to present, but Mikołaj Iwanow, a unique

¹⁶ Dariusz Piotr Kucharski, *Ludobójstwo na Polakach w Sowietach w okresie międzywojennym (1921-1939)* [Genocide Related to the Poles in the Interwar Period, 1921-1939] (Krzeszowice: „Ostoja”, 2010), pp. 9-10. Cf. also: Mikołaj Iwanow, *Pierwszy naród ukarany. Polacy w Związku Radzieckim, 1921-1939* [The First Punished Nation. Poles in the USSR, 1921-1939] (Warszawa-Wrocław: PWN, 1991), chapters I-VI.

¹⁷ Testimony of Jan Sinicki from Środa Śląska, quoted by: Iwanow, *Pierwszy naród ukarany*, p. 372.

¹⁸ Robert Gellately, Ben Kiernan, *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 396.

expert in this matter, estimates that the Polish community in the USSR lost about 30 percent of their number, which would be about 500,000 people¹⁹.

After they occupied half of the Polish pre-1939 territory, in late 1939 the Soviet authorities started a conscious policy of de-Polonization of the incorporated areas. The first step was the capture and imprisonment of Polish soldiers and officers at the end of the September-October campaign. The Soviet authorities had not recognized the Geneva conventions on treatment of POWs, so about 240,000 Polish military were taken over by the NKVD. About 40,000 soldiers of Ukrainian and Belorussian nationality were released, about 43,000 soldiers born in the German-occupied territory were handed over to the Germans, while the rest were distributed to prisons, labor camps and three special officer camps in Kozelsk, Starobelsk and Ostashkov. The latter group of officers were murdered in the spring of 1940. Individual arrests of prominent figures continued all through the fall and winter, including prime ministers Leon Kozłowski, Aleksander Prystor and Leopold Skulski, ministers Jan Piłsudski and Eustachy Sapieha, social and political leaders such as Janusz Radziwiłł, Stanisław Głąbiński, Mariusz Zaruski, and Jan Kwapiński, writers such as Teodor Parnicki, and poets such as Władysław Broniewski. The arrested Polish officials were usually accused of serving “capitalist” Poland, which was a crime of “counterrevolution” according to Article 58 of the Soviet code²⁰.

In February 1940, the NKVD organized the first wave of mass deportations of mainly Polish dwellers on the occupied territory. It included about 220,000 people. The second wave followed in April 1940, and included 320,000 people. In July 1940, when the Soviets occupied the Baltic republics, Poles from these countries, mainly from Lithuania and southern Latvia, were also deported to the east. The fourth wave of deportation took place in June 1941, and included more than 300,000 people. Other victims of Soviet anti-Polish policies included young men conscripted into the Red Army. According to the so-called General Anders collection of materials gathered by the Polish survivors in the Soviet Union in 1941-1942, in the years 1939-1941, the over-

¹⁹ Iwanow, *Pierwszy naród ukarany*, p. 377.

²⁰ Liszewski [Szawłowski], *Wojna polsko-sowiecka 1939*, pp. 182 ff.

all number of Poles displaced by the Soviets was estimated at 1,692,000²¹. According to a rough estimate of the death rate, the number of victims in this group could have been about 650,000. The majority of the deportees were Poles, so the whole operation was definitely aimed at de-Polonization of the captured areas²². Verification of these estimates is very difficult since the Soviet evidence is only partially available.

After the Red Army returned to the Polish pre-1939 territory in early 1944, the deportation of Poles referred mainly to Home Army soldiers who took up arms against the Germans during *Operation Tempest* (*Burza*). Although these soldiers were theoretically Soviet allies and local Red Army commands cooperated with them during the seizure of Lwów (Lviv) and Wilno (Vilnius), soon they were ordered to join the Soviet-sponsored Polish Army or were interned and transported eastward. This was the fate of about 50,000 Home Army soldiers east of the Bug River. Most of the survivors returned in 1947²³. Otherwise, there was no large-scale operation of deportations from Poland. Nevertheless, the Soviets played an active role in the implementation of the communist system in Poland by military means. As long as the Red Army moved through Poland towards Germany, the Soviet command was the supreme power in Poland, but even after the end of the war, the Soviet army stationed in Poland and NKVD detachments there suppressed the pro-independence guerrillas, committing act of genocide. For instance, this was the case of the Augustów roundup in July 1945, when about 600 Poles from northeastern Poland were captured by the Soviets and Polish com-

²¹ Testimony of Adam Treszka, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1059.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 1060. J. Abramski, R. Żywiecki, *Katyń* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Polskie, 1979), pp. 1-3, quote different figures: 231,000 Polish soldiers and officers deported in 1939, 215,000 civilian officials of the Polish state, landowners and “capitalists” deported in the years 1939-1941, and 1,070,000 Poles deported additionally in four waves in the years 1939-1941. Stanisław Mikołajczyk, *The Pattern of Soviet Domination* (London 1948), p. 15, estimated the entire population of deported Polish citizens at 1,500,000, while Stanisław Swianiewicz (*W cieniu Katynia*, p. 215), at 1,200,000. Cf. also: Z.S. Siemaszko, “The Mass Deportations of the Polish Population to the USSR 1940-1941”, (in:) Keith Sword (ed.), *The Soviet Takeover of the Polish Eastern Provinces, 1939-1941* (London: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 228-230. Recently, these figures were reduced on the grounds of Soviet evidence but it is likely to be inaccurate.

²³ Wojciech Roszkowski, *Najnowsza historia Polski* [The Recent History of Poland] (Warszawa: Świat Książki, 2011), Vol. 2, p. 195.

munist security officers and disappeared. Most probably they were killed somewhere in the south of Kaliningrad Oblast²⁴.

Another case of deportation of Poles was more complex, as it referred to the deportation of 172,342 people from Upper Silesia. Since the population of this area was mixed, it is not clear what part of these deportees were Silesian Poles and how many of the deportees were Silesian Germans or Germans from other areas. While the Soviets preferred to treat the whole population of the ethnically mixed areas as defeated Germans, quite a considerable part of them were ethnic Poles. The drama of the Silesian Poles was that they had suffered various forms of oppression under the German rule and in 1945 they faced new oppression at Soviet hands²⁵.

Baltic Nations

After the Soviet invasion of June 1940, numerous arrests of Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian political leaders were aimed at the liquidation of the political opposition before the farcical elections that led to the creation of Soviet-controlled parliaments and incorporation of the three republics into the USSR. Those arrested included such prominent personalities as prime ministers Antanas Merkys and Augustinas Voldemaras, Foreign Minister Juozas Urbšys from Lithuania, President Karlis Ulmanis, General Jānis Balodis and Prime Minister Hugo Celmiņš from Latvia, President Konstantin Päts, prime ministers Kaarel Eenpalu, Jaan Tõnisson, Jaan Teemant and General Johan Laidoner from Estonia.

After the three republics were transformed into the Estonian SSR, Latvian SSR and Lithuanian SSR in August 1940, the NKVD organized several waves of arrests of thousands of citizens. For instance, in Latvia, 506 people were arrested in October 1940, about 300 in November, 236 in December, 268 in

²⁴ One of these Polish communists was later Minister of Interior Mirosław Milewski. <http://www.doomedsoldiers.com/augustow-roundup.html> (5 XII 2014).

²⁵ Sebastian Rosenbaum, Dariusz Węgrzyn (eds.), *Wywózka. Deportacja mieszkańców Górnego Śląska do obozów pracy w Związku Sowieckim w 1945 roku* [Banishment. Deportation of the Upper Silesian Population to Forced Labor Camps in the Soviet Union in 1945] (Katowice: IPN, 2014), p. 112; Józef Krzyk, "Śląscy niewolnicy Stalina" [Stalin's Silesian Slaves], *Gazeta Wyborcza Ale Historia*, 24 February 2014.

January 1941, 290 in February, 281 in March, 285 in April and 272 in May 1941²⁶. In May 1941, a special deportation operation was launched. The Soviet Commissar for State Security, Vsevolod Merkulov, submitted to the Soviet party's Central Committee and government a draft resolution that read:

"In view of the fact that in the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian SSRs reside a considerable number of former members of various counterrevolutionary nationalist parties, former police officers, gendarmes, landlords, factory-owners, high-ranking civil servants of the former Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonia state apparatus and other persons who engage in destructive anti-Soviet activities and are used by foreign intelligence services for spying purposes, the Central Committee of the All-Union CP(b) and the USSR Council of People's Commissars has decided the following: 1. To allow the People's Commissariats of State Security and People's Commissariats of the Interior of the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian SSRs to subject the following categories of population to confiscation of their property, arrest and incarceration in camps for a term of five to eight years and, after the serving their term in camps, to settlement in remote areas of the USSR for a period of 20 years"²⁷. Then followed the specification of the said categories, including members of "counterrevolutionary"—non-Communist—parties, former Home Guards, gendarmes, police and prison personnel, landlords, factory-owners and civil servants, army officers and other "criminal elements". The whole operation was carried out on 14 June 1941, due to the "Plan of Measures to Transfer, Settle and Employ the Special Contingents of Deportees from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Moldavia" prepared by Gulag Chairman Victor Nasedkin and signed by the USSR People's Commissar of the Interior, Lavrenti Beria. Altogether, during the whole period of 1940-1941, the number of arrested and deported Lithuanians is estimated at 35,000, Latvians at 36,000 and Estonians at 50,000²⁸. Most of them perished in the Gulag.

²⁶ Rudīte Viksne, "Soviet Repression against Residents of Latvia in 1940-1941: Typical Trends", in: *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia under Soviet and Nazi Occupations 1940-1991* (Rīga: Institute of the History of Latvia, 2005), p. 59.

²⁷ Quoted after Jānis Riekstiņš, "The 14 June 1941 Deportation in Latvia", *ibidem*, p. 65.

²⁸ *Encyclopedia Lituanica*, Vol. 2, pp. 56-58; *Latvian-Soviet Relations. Documents* (Washington, 1944), p. 232; A. Torma, V. Raud, *Estonia 1918-1952* (London, 1952), p. 23.

When, after about four years of German occupation, the Red Army returned to the Baltic republics in 1944, “the Soviet rulers had to deal with a society whose majority was unfriendly at best, hostile at worst. They had to crack down to break the society’s will to resist Sovietization”²⁹. The passive resistance was overwhelming and thousands of Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians joined anti-Soviet guerillas. Despite thousands arrested and killed, the Soviet authorities had a lot of problems with suppression of the guerillas. This is why they prepared a decisive blow in the shape of collectivization of agriculture. The operation was prepared in a systematic manner. In May 1947, the Kremlin decided to collectivize the Baltic farms, with the details worked out by the heads of the Gulag, Sergey Kruglov, and the MVD, Victor Abakumov. In the summer of 1948, Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian peasants were prohibited to leave their place of residence. The deportation started on 20 March 1949. Within a few days about 60,000 Estonians, 50,000 Latvians and 140,000 Lithuanians were forced onto trucks, loaded into cattle cars and driven away to Siberia and Kazakhstan. The deportations continued until May 1949. As a result of these inhumane Soviet operations in 1940-1950, the number of Lithuanians living in Lithuania decreased from 2,084,000 to 1,645,000, the number of Latvians in Latvia fell from 1,496,000 to 1,222,000, and the number of Estonians in Estonia dropped from 998,000 to 684,000³⁰. One can be sure that had these policies continued, all three nations would have disappeared. Fortunately, after Stalin’s death in 1953 the extermination of the Baltic nations stopped.

North Caucasian Peoples

During the summer and fall campaign of 1942, the German army took the northern slopes of the Caucasus. The local population, composed of small highlander nations still remembering their struggles for independence after the Bolshevik revolution as well as the later Soviet atrocities, were tempted to welcome the invaders. Some of the Karachays, Balkars, Ossetians, Che-

²⁹ Heinrihs Strods, “Sovietization of Latvia 1944-1991”, (in:) *The Hidden and Forbidden History of Latvia*, p. 217.

³⁰ *Britannica Book of the Year 1951*, pp. 260, 412 and 479.

chens and Ingush, whose territories were occupied by the Germans, and even inhabitants of Dagestan and Kalmykia, living further east, helped the German army against the Soviets. Although the majority of the North Caucasian adult male population served in the Red Army, when the Germans retreated the Soviet authorities treated the people of these nations as “hostile” and organized their mass deportation.

The Soviet Karachay-Cherkess Oblast was created in the Northern Caucasus on 12 January 1922, most of its population being the Karachays, speaking a Turkic language written in Cyrillic. Since during the Nazi German occupation of 1942-1943 some Karachays had helped the invaders in order to get rid of the Soviet power, in late 1943 Stalin held the entire Karachay population collectively responsible. On 2 November 1943, about 70,000 Karachays, including 54 percent of the children, 28 percent of the women and just 18 percent of the men, were rounded up by NKVD troops, put on trucks and transported to the east in railway cattle cars. After a long journey without enough food and drink, they ultimately stopped in Kazakhstan or Uzbekistan. It is estimated that about 43,000 of the deportees, including 22,000 children, died because of the harsh conditions. Meanwhile, the Karachay-Cherkess territory was divided between Stavropol Kray and Georgian SSR³¹. By virtue of the decision of the Soviet authorities of 9 January 1957, the Karachays were “rehabilitated” and allowed to return home.

Kalmykia is a region situated west of the Volga River delta adjacent to the Caspian Sea and Kalmyks, descendants of the Mongol Oirats, are the only Buddhist people living in geographical Europe. Under the Soviet rule, there was a Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Republic, established in 1935, but the Kalmyks were forced to abandon their nomadic life and the native monks and nuns were persecuted. Therefore, when the Third Reich came close to the area in 1942, some Kalmyks volunteered for the Kalmykian Voluntary Cavalry Corps to help the Germans. Although the Kalmyks suffered extreme losses during the Nazi German occupation—about 20,000 people were executed—Stalin decided that all the Kalmyks were guilty of acting against

³¹ “The 69th Anniversary of the Karachay Deportation”, *The Caucasus Forum*, <http://www.caucasusforum.org/69th-anniversary-of-karachay-deportation/>; http://arayigit.ucoz.com/news/deportation_of_karachay_people/2010-11-10-2 (11 VI 2014).

the Red Army. On 23 December 1943, the Soviets ordered the deportation of the entire Kalmyk population of about 200,000 people to various places in Central Asia and Siberia. Even the names of towns and villages were changed and Russians were settled there. The whole operation took place in an evening. No one was given advance notice to assemble their belongings, including warm clothes, so the desperate people were not prepared for the harsh conditions they were to face. A Russian witness noted: "What made upon me a particular impression was the passiveness of the Kalmyks. They accepted their fate with utter resignation, in complete silence"³². The Kalmyks were transported eastward in trucks and railway cattle cars. Food and drink was not provided in sufficient quantities, so that many children and elderly people died on the way. Since they were dispersed to various locations, their family and social life was ruined. It was not before 9 January 1957 that Nikita Khrushchev allowed them to return. Nevertheless, they had to start their life anew since their homes, jobs and land were occupied by the new settlers. Only about half of the initial number of those deported survived to return³³.

Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan were the backbone of the Mountainous Republic of Northern Caucasus that declared independence from Russia and was recognized by many countries after World War One. After the Red Army conquered this area in 1920, the Soviet authorities organized two autonomous republics: the Chechen-Ingush ASSR and Dagestan ASSR. In 1940-1944, a small group of pro-independence Chechen fighters under Khasan Israilov continued their struggle against the Soviet authorities, expecting German aid. Although some 50,000 Chechens and 12,000 Ingush were fighting in the Red Army against the Third Reich³⁴, after the German retreat the Soviets arranged a mass deportation of the whole Chechen and Ingush population to Kazakhstan and Siberia. On 23 February 1944, NKVD troops

³² Testimony of Lieutenant Colonel Grigori Stepanovich Burlitski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1368.

³³ Nikolai F. Bugai, "The Deportation of Peoples in the Soviet Union", *Nova Publishers*, 1996, pp. 57-70; Otto J. Pohl, *Ethnic Cleansing in the USSR, 1937-1949*, (Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999), pp. 61-71; http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country_profiles/4580467.stm (8 IX 2014).

³⁴ Abukhadzhi Idrisov, Khanpasha Nuradilov and Movlid Visaitov were even named heroes of the USSR.

dressed in Red Army uniforms surrounded Chechen and Ingush villages and towns and loaded 496,460 people into American Studebaker cars, freshly supplied through Iran as part of the Lend-Lease operation. Those who could not or would not move were shot. The whole operation was planned by NKVD commander Bogdan Kabulov and supervised by the notorious Ivan Serov. During the transportation and forced settlement, the deportees were treated in the cruelest way. The overall death toll of this operation is estimated at about 30 percent of the whole Chechen and Ingush population³⁵.

The Balkars speak the same Turkic language as the Karachay and have lived in the Soviet Kabardino-Balkar autonomous republic created in 1936. During the German offensive of 1942, many Balkars helped the invaders by arranging an anti-Soviet insurgency. This is why after the withdrawal of the German army from the Caucasus, the Soviets decided to crush this small nation. On 8 March 1944, the Soviet authorities ordered the deportation of the entire Balkar population. NKVD troops loaded 37,700 Balkars—men, women and children—onto 14 trains and sent them to the east. Due to the harsh conditions during transport and forced settlement in Kazakhstan and Siberia, about 40 percent of the deported Balkars died. The survivors of this operation returned home only in 1957-1959³⁶.

³⁵ The Chechens and Ingush were initially told that they were about to start intensive military training. Under the leadership of local party leaders, most of the population was gathered in columns with placards and slogans praising the Soviet power in urban and village squares. Orchestras were playing, speeches were made and the demonstrators waved their flags. Then the newly arrived commanders read out the decision of the Soviet party and government. The official statement started with an all-out accusation of the Chechens and Ingush of collaboration with the German authorities during the short-lived German occupation of the area. This was followed by the decision to “transfer” all the Chechen and Ingush population from the republic. The place of destination was not specified. A warning was issued that any sign of resistance would be treated as resistance to the government and severely punished. Taken by surprise and stupefied, the Chechens and Ingush did not protest and were led from the squares to the “collection fields” and transfer stations along the rows of armed soldiers. “In one day, the Chechen-Ingush Republic disappeared”. Testimony of Lieutenant Colonel Grigori Stepanovich Burlitski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1360-1366. Quote from p. 1366. See also: <http://www.massviolence.org/The-Massive-Deportation-of-the-Chechen-People-How-and-why?cs=print> (9 IX 2014);

³⁶ <http://caucasus.8k.com/tension.htm>; “8 March—the Deportation day of the Balkar people”, <http://qirim.kiev.ua/en/our-news/530-8-march-the-diportation-day-of-the-balkar-people> (8 IX 2014).

Under the Russian law on “Rehabilitation of Exiled Peoples” of 26 April 1991, repression against the Kalmyks and other peoples were qualified as an act of genocide. The same verdict was passed by the European Parliament on 26 February 2004³⁷.

Crimean Tartars

Crimean Tartars are not only descendants of the Mongol invaders of the 13th century but also of ancient peoples of this area: Scythians, Khazars, Pechenegs and Cumans. Therefore, they may be treated as natives of Crimea. After the Bolshevik Revolution, the Crimean Tartars attempted to organize independent statehood but it was finally crushed by the Red Army in 1920. During the Great Famine of 1920-1921, around 12,000 Tartars starved to death and the collectivization campaign of the early 1930s cost the lives of thousands more. During the Great Purge, many Tartar statesmen and intellectuals, such as Veli Ibraimov and Bekir Coban-Zade, were imprisoned and killed. By 1939, the Tartar population of Crimea was a mere half the pre-1914 level. Nevertheless, the Tartars accounted for 60 to 70 percent of the population in the southern parts of Crimea³⁸.

Although the Crimean Tartars were probably the least ready to collaborate with the German invaders of 1942-1943, in early 1944, Stalin and his aides decided to get rid of the whole Crimean Tartar community. The deportation started on 18 May 1944, and lasted for two days. The operation, called *Sürgün* by the Tartars, was organized by more than 32,000 NKVD troops. The deportees—men, women and children—were given half an hour to gather personal belongings. Afterwards, they were loaded into cattle cars and carried away. Out of about 238,500 people, 151,136 were transported to the Uzbek SSR, 8,597 to the Mari ASSR, 4,286 to the Kazakh SSR, and the rest to

³⁷ http://www.cyclopaedia.de/wiki/Kalmyk_Deportations_of_1944; <http://www.kavkazcenter.com/eng/content/2004/02/26/2469.shtml> (9 IX 2014). Cf. also: Alexander M. Nekrich, *The Punished Peoples: the Deportation and Fate of Soviet Minorities at the End of the Second World War* (New York: Norton, 1978).

³⁸ James B. Minahan, *One Europe, Many Nations. A Historical Dictionary of European National Groups* (Greenwood Press, 2000), p. 189.

various places in the Russian Federal SSR. All the Tartar soldiers of the Red Army were demobilized and sent to concentration camps. According to estimates by Crimean Tartar activists, between May 1944 and the end of 1946, almost 110,000 Tartar deportees, or about 46 percent of them, died due to starvation and disease³⁹.

Although a 1967 Soviet decree removed the charges of Nazi collaboration, no reparations for lost lives and confiscated property were paid and the Crimean Tartars were not allowed to return *en masse* to Crimea until *perestroika* in the mid-1980s. Crimean Tartar activists rightly call for the recognition of the *Sürgün* as genocide. A moving film, *Haytarma*, illustrating the tragic exile of the Crimean Tartars, was produced in 2013. While the Crimean Tartars could sigh with relief under the Ukrainian rule of 1991-2014, with the Russian capture of Crimea in early 2014, their nightmares returned.

Volga Germans

The German settlement in the lower Volga area goes back to the end of the 18th century when it was encouraged by Catherine the Great. Under the Soviet power, a Volga German Autonomous SSR was established in 1924. According to the 1939 census, the population in this republic was 606,352 people, including 366,685 Germans, or 60.5 percent⁴⁰. After the German invasion of the USSR, on 28 August 1941 Stalin issued a decree banishing the Volga German Autonomous SSR, fearing the Volga German would act as a “fifth column”. The republic was formally extinguished on 7 September 1941. The whole German population of the republic was deported to Kazakhstan and Siberia and most of the males were sent to forced labor camps. About 30 percent of the Volga Germans did not survive the deportation⁴¹. The

³⁹ Aurélie Campana, “Sürgün: The Crimean Tatars’ deportation and exile”. *Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence*, http://www.massviolence.org/Surgun-The-Crimean-Tatars-deportation-and-exile?artpage=1#outil_sommaire_0; Postanova pro deportacyu tatar i peretvorennya Krimu na oblast. Dokumenti, <http://www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2012/05/17/85887> (10 IX 2014).

⁴⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volga_German_Autonomous_Soviet_Socialist_Republic (30 IX 2014).

⁴¹ Robert Conquest, *The Nation Killers* (London: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 59-61.

compact German settlement in the Volga region has never been reconstructed. The fate of the Volga Germans is a different story from the deportation of Germans from Kaliningrad Oblast or the northern and western territories gained by Poland after 1945. One can argue that the latter German deportees paid the price for the German invasion of Poland in 1939 and the USSR in 1941, but the Volga Germans never even had a chance to support or oppose Hitler but were exterminated for being Germans only.

Deportations from Romania and Bessarabia

After the Soviet incorporation of Romanian Bessarabia, a Moldavian SSR was established on 2 August 1940. The same procedure of arrest and deportation as in the Baltic states was applied to the Romanians living there. A major deportation operation was carried out by mid-June 1941. When the Third Reich attacked the USSR, the Romanian administration in Bessarabia was restored and the population losses could be evaluated. According to a witness, “after I returned to Bessarabia toward the end of 1941, it was verified that the number of people arrested and deported or liquidated was more than 200,000 from all classes, governmental and private employees, teachers, clergymen, businessmen, farmers, workers, etc.”⁴² Recent assessments reduce this number to about 90,000⁴³. Most of the Bessarabian Romanians were deported to the Arkhangelsk area, to the Ural Mountains and Uzbekistan.

⁴² “Many of the people we knew had disappeared after the Russian occupation of 1940. Many had vanished forever without any trace left; others were later reported as dead or having been seen as completely degraded human beings, beggars and demented in the towns of the Ural or in places beyond, in Asiatic Russia. The deportation conditions were of such ruthlessness that death was an absolute certainty after a short period of time (...) Entire families were taken from their homes, then separated and sent, the children in one direction, the father in the other. Old women were thrown into prisons where they died for the crime of being teachers or wives of Romanian patriots. Unspeakable tragedies were thus happening to the Bessarabian people, uprooted from their ancestral land and forcibly led to disintegration and death to the steppes of the Soviets, to Siberia and Uzbekistan”. Statement of Anton Crihan, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 128-129.

⁴³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moldavian_Soviet_Socialist_Republic (30 IX 2014).

In the summer of 1944, the Red Army returned to Bessarabia and the Moldavian SSR was restored. Many Romanians fled to Romania and those who stayed and expressed disappointment were soon arrested and deported. Moreover, during the winter of 1945-1946, an epidemic of typhus developed in Bessarabia. To transform this plague into a means of extermination, “the Russians created so-called centers of quarantine, where they were sending the population from villages under the pretext that they had been contaminated, even if only one single case of the malady was present. Through this method, the people of many regions were sent to death, as the conditions in these centers were appalling”. During the terrible famine of the years 1946-1947, the Soviet administration let the population starve without any official help. Many cases of cannibalism were recorded during this famine⁴⁴. The number of victims of the famine and plague is estimated at between 115,000 and 300,000 people⁴⁵.

In January 1945, the Soviets also deported thousands of Romanian Saxons, the Germanic natives of Transylvania. “All men between 18 and 45 and women between 17 and 35 of the German minority have been, since 5 January 1945, taken from their homes in the middle of the night by the MVD, herded into cattle cars and deported to the coal mines of the Soviet Union. These deportations were accompanied by scenes of desperation and suicide”⁴⁶. It is estimated that about 75,000 Transylvanian Saxons were deported to the USSR, accounting for about 15 percent of their total number. Most of the men were imprisoned in 85 various labor camps of Ukraine and the Ural Mountains. About 5,100 Saxons were transported to Frankfurt an der Oder in the Soviet occupation zone in Germany. More than 3,000 Saxons died while in the USSR, most of them being males. When freed in the early 1950s, a quarter of the Transylvanian Saxons were sent to the GDR⁴⁷.

⁴⁴ Statement of Anton Crihan, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 129.

⁴⁵ Charles King, *The Moldovans: Romania, Russia, and the Politics of Culture* (Hoover Institution Press, 2000), p. 54.

⁴⁶ Testimony of Mihail Farcasanu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 76. Cf. also the statement by Raoul Gheorghiu, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 10, p. 119-120.

⁴⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deportation_of_Germans_from_Romania_after_World_War_II (30 IX 2014).

Further atrocities were committed by the Soviets against the Romanians in Bessarabia during the collectivization campaign in 1949 and 1950. In two days, on 6 and 7 July 1949, about 11,300 Romanian peasant families had their land expropriated and were deported to Kazakhstan and Siberia within *Operation South*, supervised by Moldavian Minister of State Security I.L. Mordovets. The overall number of deportees may be assessed at about 50,000⁴⁸.

Hungarians

Probably the least known is the story of Hungarians taken “prisoners of war” at the end of World War Two. Since the USSR had not recognized the Geneva convention on the treatment of POWs, these people were in fact regular prisoners. The first wave of arrests and deportation took place at the time the Red Army was entering Hungarian territory in late 1944. According to scattered information, the number of these deportees can be estimated at several dozen thousand. For instance, after the occupation of Kolozsvár, the Red Army carried away about 5,000 civilians. In October 1944, the Soviets abducted 300 civilians from Hajdúböszörmény, and in November 1944, they drove about 2,000 men and women from Nyíregyháza and 300 people from Hajdúnánás. Almost the whole adult population of the town of Tarpa in eastern Hungary was deported to Russia⁴⁹.

The greatest number of civilians were arrested and deported from Budapest. The Soviet commander of the 2nd Ukrainian Front, Marshal Rodion Malinowski, reported having captured in the city 138,000 POWs. Since their actual number was no more than 40,000, he ordered the capture of some 100,000 civilians to fill the gap. The second wave of deportations took place in the spring of 1945 when about 10 special “collecting camps” were organized in Baja, Debrecen, Gödöllő, Jászberény, Székesfehérvár, Vác, Kecskemét, Cegléd,

⁴⁸ Mihail Gribincea, *Agricultural Collectivization in Moldavia: Basarabia during Stalinism, 1944-1950* (Boulder Colo.: East European Monographs, 1996).

⁴⁹ Statement by Ferenc Nagy, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 3, p. 103; Tamás Stark, “‘Malenki Robot’ – Hungarian Forced Labourers in the Soviet Union (1944–1955)”, *Minorities History*, http://www.epa.hu/00400/00463/00007/pdf/155_stark.pdf (30 IX 2014), pp. 155-158.

Szeged, Gyula and other places. According to Soviet sources, in October 1945 there were 526,000 Hungarian prisoners in the USSR. This number should be raised by close to 100,000 prisoners who had been captured but died earlier. This would make the overall estimate at the level of about 600,000, including Hungarians deported from Transylvania. The Hungarian deportees were put in some 200 various camps, mostly in Central Russia, Ukraine, Belorussia, the Ural Mountains and Siberia. Pressed by the Hungarian government of Ferenc Nagy, the Soviet government announced the release of prisoners in August 1945, but organized returns started only in June 1946. Stalin prolonged the operation until the May 1947 election to improve the image of the Communist Party, which proclaimed itself the “liberator of the POWs”. The number of returned prisoners recorded between June 1946 and December 1948 was 202,000. More than 100,000 returned later, so the overall number of victims may be estimated at about 300,000 Hungarian prisoners⁵⁰.

* * *

In all the cases described above, the criterion of the nationality of the Soviet victims seems obvious. Apart from the exploitation of manpower, the purpose of the Soviet criminals was either the destruction of a particular nationality, as in the cases of the small Caucasian nations, or the decapitation of bigger nations, with the ultimate goal of their transformation into “Soviet folk”. The elimination of national leaders and cultural elite, as well as the expropriation of both urban and rural proprietors, were aimed at making these nations a loose mass of steerable objects. This way or another, the Soviet policies against the national integrity and identity were crimes against humanity.

⁵⁰ Ibidem, pp. 155-167.

Western Perspectives

The Rise of Communism in the West

One of the most tragic paradoxes of 20th century Western civilization is that communism was and still is quite widely accepted in democratic countries as a justified theory or even practice¹. Before World War One, Western adherents of communism cherished various illusions as to its applicability as a remedy for various Western problems. While socialist ideology was more deeply rooted in the Western intellectual tradition of the 19th and 20th centuries and some socialist ideas, for instance, the increased role of the state in the more equal distribution of goods, became a part of Western welfare society, communism advocated violent revolution. Nevertheless, it was and still is an attractive idea among some Western people.

The main reason for this may have been that Marxism was initially a Western theory. Another reason was World War One. Western communists, as few as they had been before 1914, believed that the barbarity of war was a product of the bourgeoisie and that a new world that would emerge from revolution would eliminate these atrocities. After World War One, many Western communists still cherished this illusion since they were far away from the reality of the Bolshevik Revolution. In 1921, a Polish-German communist, Julian Marchlewski wrote to his daughter: “Is it not so that the deepest meaning of the Russian Revolution consists in terminating the period of barbarity which future historians will date between the Thirty Years War

¹ Interestingly, *The Black Book of Communism* does not cover Western communism at all. See Courtois et al., *Czarna księga komunizmu*.

and 1917 (despite such inventions as the steam engine, telegraph and X-rays) and in shaping up new conditions of the East-West feedback?"² If this letter had been written by a Western communist, one could justify this message as ignorance, but Marchlewski was a soldier in the Bolshevik Revolution and knew very well what kind of a "new civilization" it was bringing.

The actual influence of communist ideology in the West is hard to measure. Firstly, this influence was changing and, second, apart from Communist Party membership, this influence was increased by some cultural celebrities and by mass media. In 1926, membership of communist parties numbered 5,500 in Austria, 900 in Belgium, 93,200 in Czechoslovakia, 800 in Denmark, 83,300 in France, 150,000 in Germany, 30,000 in Italy, 1,600 in the Netherlands, 7,000 in Norway, 12,000 in Poland, 1,500 in Romania, 10,000 in Sweden, 5,700 in the United Kingdom and 17,400 in the United States³. All the communist parties were subordinated to the Communist International (Comintern) in Moscow and were ready to play the role of the revolutionary "fifth column" in Western societies.

The communist influence in the West grew during the Great Depression, intensifying the confrontation between communism and Nazism. The purge of Stalin's main rival, Leon Trotsky, and the creation of the Fourth International did not change much. Although some Western communists supported Trotsky, most supported the USSR and Stalin. The bloody struggle between Stalinists and Trotskyites within the Spanish Republic was, in fact, a minor scandal in the communist family. The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939, and especially the second German-Soviet agreement "on frontiers and friendship" signed on 28 September 1939, came as a bigger shock to Western communists. Some of them abandoned the earlier illusions but others stayed loyal to the Soviet "Fatherland of the Proletariat" and to Comintern. On 7 November 1939, Comintern's Executive Committee commemorated the 22nd anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, calling the German-Soviet

² Julian Marchlewski's letter to his daughter from Tokyo, 29 December 1921. Quote from: Zofia Marchlewska, *Piórem i pędzłem. Wspomnienia i listy* [With a Pen and a Paintbrush. Memoirs and Letters] (Warsaw: Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza, 1967), pp. 150-151.

³ Jan Tomicki, *Dzieje II Międzynarodówki* [History of the Second International] (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1975), pp. 360-363.

agreement an example of cooperation among “socialist” countries against French and British “imperialists”. The years 1939 to 1941, when Stalin and Hitler worked hand in hand, was the peak of Trotsky’s influence. This is perhaps why Stalin ordered Trotsky’s murder in August 1940. Nevertheless, most loyal Stalinists, such as Maurice Thorez in France or Palmiro Togliatti in Italy actively supported German-Soviet cooperation and tried to paralyze the military determination of France and Italy⁴.

The German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 reassured Western communists they were right, especially when the USSR became part of the Big Three coalition.

“The Struggle for Peace”

At the end of World War Two, Western communists stood firmly at the side of the Soviet Union, even more so since Stalin’s victory in the war pushed the world revolution forward⁵. In many countries, such as France, Greece or Italy, communist parties emerged from the war as important or leading forces of opposition to wartime regimes or German occupation. Everywhere

⁴ Georgi Dimitrov, “Vayna a rabochyi klass kapitalisticheskikh stran” [The War and the Working Class of Capitalist Countries], *Komunisticheskiy Internatsional*, 1939, No 8-9, pp. 23-26. Most Western historians simply ignore the scope and meaning of the German-Soviet cooperation in the years 1939-1941 or present a version close to the Soviet one. Cf. e.g.: Carter V. Findley, John Alexander M. Rothney, *Twentieth Century World* (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990); Edward H. Carr, *German-Soviet Relations between the Two World Wars, 1919–1939* (New York, NY: Arno Press, 1979). One of the few who noticed the problem was Winston Churchill, who wrote: “The fundamental antagonisms between the Soviet Government and Nazi Germany did not prevent the Kremlin actively aiding by supplies and facilities the development of Hitler’s power. Communists in France and any that existed in Britain denounced the ‘Imperialist-Capitalist’ war, and did what they could to hamper work in the munition factories”. They certainly exercised a depressing and subversive influence within the French Army, already wearied by inaction”. Winston Churchill, *The Second World War. The Gathering Storm* (London: The Reprint Society, 1952), p. 441.

⁵ It is noteworthy how the Soviets styled the order of appearance of subsequent communist leaders. In the official publication of speeches made during the 19th Congress of the Soviet party, communist leaders of the various countries were quoted in the following order: Poland, China, France, Italy, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Japan, Hungary the United Kingdom, North Korea, Bulgaria, Romania, Finland, India, Albania, Mongolia and Vietnam. There was definitely a clue in this order. *For Lasting Peace*, 17 October 1952.

the communist parties fed on post-war pauperization. Outside of Europe, communists were often champions of the struggle against Japanese occupation, European colonial rule, or American economic domination.

In the first years after World War Two, the communist tide was growing all over the world. While the communists presented themselves everywhere as defenders of the oppressed, organizing strikes and armed revolts, they constantly repeated they were struggling for peace. This contradictory mixture of violence and “peaceful” propaganda, prepared by the Kremlin, was repeated like a mantra⁶. The communist-controlled World Peace Council was the symbol of this policy. According to a joke, popular behind the Iron Curtain, the communist “struggle for peace” was the most dangerous development, since nobody could survive it.

On 26 April 1945, American and Soviet troops met at Torgau on the Elbe. At the Soviets’ request, the Americans withdrew westward from Bohemia and from the Elbe line. If the American command believed, as President Franklin D. Roosevelt did, that an American favor would be followed by Soviet concessions⁷, they were wrong. Stalin perceived the compliant disposition of the Western Allies as a sign of weakness and consistently enlarged the Soviet empire. Apart from the areas of Eastern and Central Europe, which the Red Army captured at the end of the war, the Soviets supported communist guerillas in Greece, demanded some parts of Turkish territory, continued a complicated game in Germany, supported a Kurdish People’s Republic seceding from Iran, occupied North Korea, and tried to win over Japan against

⁶ The whole hypocrisy of this policy was revealed in January 1950 when the Communist Party of Japan under Sanzo Nosaka apologized to Cominform for advocating a “peaceful revolution”. *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, pp. 412-413. In March 1950, the East German minister of propaganda, Gerhard Eisler, publicly predicted that the communist police and youth squads would “conquer” Berlin. *Facts on File*, 1950, 83A. Nevertheless, in December 1950, half a year after the communist invasion of South Korea, the CPUSA National Convention declared intensification of “measures aimed at rallying the people in the struggle for peace”. *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 484. At the same time, Togliatti urged Italians to overthrow the government at the time and “impose their desire for peace upon everyone”. *Ibidem*, p. 486.

⁷ William C. Bullitt, “How We Won the War and Lost the Peace”, *Time*, 30 August 1948; Edward R. Stettinius, *Roosevelt and the Russians. The Yalta Conference* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1949), pp. 295-310.

the United States. In China, the Soviets played a double game. On the one hand, they supported the communist guerilla warfare, but on the other hand, they wanted to prolong the civil war, expecting communist China to become a rival in the communist movement.

It was not until January 1946 that the new US president, Harry Truman, realized that unless the Soviets faced strong resistance, a world war would be inevitable. In March 1946, Winston Churchill made a speech in Fulton, Missouri, supporting a new policy line of containment. The US government reacted to the communist offensive by a diplomatic and economic counteroffensive in the shape of the Marshall Plan and by founding NATO. This Cold War reached a new stage when communists all over the world assailed the new Alliance and launched a powerful “peace campaign” as a smoke shield for a hot war started by the communist invasion of South Korea in June 1950⁸. In mid-July 1950, Winston Churchill compared the communist threat to the Nazi menace of 1940⁹.

As communist parties were growing strong everywhere, the Soviets supported their advances wherever they could. Although in 1943 the Comintern was formally dissolved, its whole apparatus was moved to the Department of International Relations of the Soviet Communist Party. In September 1947, a new central headquarters of the communist movement was established under the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform). In early 1949, communist party memberships numbered 30,000 in Argentina, 150,000 in Austria, 100,000 in Belgium, 200,000 in Brazil, 15,000 in Colombia, 50,000

⁸ David Holloway, *The Soviet Union and the Arms Race* (Yale University Press, 1983), p. 159; John Lukacs, *A New History of the Cold War* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1966), pp. 35 ff; Fraser J. Harbutt, *The Iron Curtain. Churchill, America and the Origins of the Cold War* (Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 3-80; Vojtech Mastny, *Russia's Road to the Cold War* (Columbia University Press, 1979). On 26 June 1950, a day after the communist attack on South Korea, the New York communist *Daily Worker* published the headline “Rightist Attack Repelled in Korea”. *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 446. This was an echo of Cominform propaganda presenting the attack of the “hordes” of Syngman Rhee. *For Lasting Peace*, 30 June 1950. All communist leaders soon repeated these lies. On 21 July 1950, the national secretary of the CPUSA, Gus Hall, told a Madison Square Garden audience that “common sense and all known facts prove that it was the Washington puppet—not the free Koreans—who committed an unprovoked act of aggression”. *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 454.

⁹ *Facts on File*, 1950, 228G.

in Cuba, 60,000 in Denmark, 55,000 in Finland, 1 million in France, 450,000 in West Germany, 2,283,000 in Italy, 36,000 in Mexico, 55,000 in the Netherlands, 33,000 in Norway, 60,000 in Sweden, 50,000 in the United Kingdom and 74,000 in the United States¹⁰.

Through the more consistent reaction of the US government and its European allies as well as the progress of post-war reconstruction, the communist tide began to subside in the early 1950s, but communist parties remained a permanent, though differentiated, phenomenon in the political life of most non-communist countries. In 1953, communist party membership was estimated at 40,000 in Argentina, 60,000 in Austria, 35,000 in Belgium, 60,000 in Brazil, 5,000 in Colombia, 30,000 in Cuba, 50,000 in Finland, 450,000 in France, 130,000 in West Germany, 1,700,000 in Italy, 80,000 in Japan, 5,000 in Mexico, 33,000 in the Netherlands, 7,500 in Norway, 30,000 in Sweden, 34,000 in the United Kingdom, and a few thousand in the United States. In 16 countries of Western Europe, communist parties still numbered about 3 million members but polled about 13 million votes¹¹. Some British analysts called these people the “fifth column in the Cold War”¹².

In Italy, the communists dominated the largest trade union, the Italian General Confederation of Labor (CGIL)¹³. In November 1947, the CPI launched a series of strikes and riots aimed at overthrowing the Christian Democratic government of Alcide de Gasperi. As a result, 22 people were killed and more than 150 wounded. In December 1947, a People’s Democratic Front was formed in which the communists joined hands with the Socialists. The communists’ leader, Palmiro Togliatti, urged the party members to be prepared for

¹⁰ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 377. In December 1949, American communist Alexander Bittelman praised Stalin on his 70th birthday and concluded: the CPUSA, “the vanguard of the American working class and people, has additional and special tasks. These are: to intensify greatly their efforts to master the theory of Marxism-Leninism, the teachings of Stalin; to unfold more skillfully and effectively their struggle for the masses, the policy of the united people’s front against fascism and war, for peace and democracy”. *Ibidem*, p. 406.

¹¹ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 3, pp. 752-754.

¹² *The Times*, 17 November 1953.

¹³ About 57 percent of delegates representing 6 million CGIL members were members of the Communist Party of Italy (CPI). Martin Ebon, *World Communism Today* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1948), pp. 236-237.

armed action. In the parliamentary election of April 1948, the communist tide was stopped: the Christian Democrats won 48 percent of the vote, but the People's Democratic Front, led by the communists, still won 32 percent¹⁴. When Italy was about to join NATO, on 26 February 1949 Togliatti expressed the view that if the Soviet army "pursued on our soil an aggressor, Italians would have an evident duty to aid in the most efficient way the Soviet Army in order to give the aggressor the lesson he deserves"¹⁵.

In the French election of November 1946, the French Communist Party (FCP) gained 22 percent of the vote. With about 819,000 party members, the communists gained 5,489,000 votes and 173 seats (31 percent) in the parliament, becoming the largest faction. Maurice Thorez demanded the premiership but a Socialist government under Leon Blum was formed with Thorez as vice premier. Fearing too close relations between the FCP and Moscow, in May 1947 new Prime Minister Paul Ramadier removed communist ministers from his cabinet, which resulted in a wave of strikes and a split in the trade union movement. The communists dominated the strongest trade union center, the General Confederation of Labor (CGT). On 22 February 1949, Thorez expressed a similar view as Togliatti had a few days earlier about the attitude of French communists towards the Soviet army¹⁶.

The Communist Party of Finland (CPF) was smaller than other Scandinavian parties but it was closer to a violent takeover. In 1947, the CPF numbered about 40,000 members. In November 1947, CPF member and Minister of Interior Yrjo Leino learned of a Soviet plan for a violent putsch to be carried out in Helsinki. In late February 1948, the Finnish government received a Soviet note demanding a mutual aid treaty on Soviet conditions. When in March 1948 the communists organized mass riots and intensified their revolutionary propaganda, Leino informed the commander-in-chief of the Finnish army, General Aarne Sihvo, about the takeover plan and the army

¹⁴ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, pp. 308, 317 and 329.

¹⁵ *Facts on File*, 1949, 62J.

¹⁶ Mario Einaudi, Jean-Marie Domenach, Aldo Garosci, *Communism in Western Europe* (Cornell University Press, 1951), p. 239; *Facts on File*, 1949, 62F. Similar statements were soon made by many communist leaders, including William Z. Foster from the CPUSA and Lawrence Louis Starkey of the Communist Party of Australia. *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, pp. 385.

cracked down on the plotters, preventing a revolution in the Czechoslovak pattern. President Juho Paasikivi agreed to replace Leino with another communist as interior minister but the CPF called off a general strike. In the parliamentary election of July 1948, the party dropped from first to third, winning 19 percent of the mandates¹⁷. Later, it remained an important factor in Finnish politics but it accepted the status quo.

After World War Two, the Communist Party of Greece (CPG) launched a massive insurgency. Although the number of insurgents was about 14,000, in 1946 the CPG numbered 250,000 members. When in June 1947 the communist guerilla leader, Markos Vafiades, ordered party members to start an urban uprising, more than 10,000 CPG members were arrested. The Greek army, with American support, in the spring and summer of 1948 succeeded in crushing the communist rebel forces¹⁸.

The British Communist Party (BCP) was relatively less numerous, but a member of its Central Committee, Arthur Lewis Horner, was secretary general of the influential National Union of Mine Workers. In February 1949, the head of the BCP, Harry Pollitt, announced that in case of war against the Soviet Union his party would organize strikes and “councils of actions”¹⁹.

In the West German election of 1947, the Communist Party gained 9.5 percent of the vote, but in the election of August 1949 only 5.7 percent²⁰. In the election of September 1953, the West German Communist Party suffered even a more evident defeat. Among other European communist parties, there were significant ones in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. Spanish and Portuguese communists mostly acted in exile since their parties were outlawed at home.

American communists were not as strong as those in some European countries but they organized a spy ring that passed to the Soviets some crucial secrets concerning the American nuclear program. In late December

¹⁷ Ebon, *World Communism Today*, pp. 43-44; B. Matti, “Finland”, (in:) William Griffith (ed.), *Communism in Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1966), pp. 380-386; *Facts on File*, 1948, 219P, 220A.

¹⁸ Ebon, *World Communism Today*, pp. 148-149.

¹⁹ *Facts on File*, 1949, 70J.

²⁰ *Facts on File*, 1949, 265B-F.

1947, Henry Wallace announced his candidacy in the presidential election on behalf of the Progressive Party, and the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA) declared its support for Wallace²¹. After the US administration launched the Marshall Plan, in February 1948 the leader of the CPUSA, William Z. Foster, called it “a cold-blooded scheme of American monopolists to establish their ruthless domination over harassed world humanity”²². After the establishment of NATO, Foster made a statement similar to those of Togliatti, Thorez and Pollitt. The FBI and the Committee on Un-American Activities managed to disclose and to bring to justice several spies gathering information on atomic weapons research and connected with the CPUSA, such as Harry Gold, David Greenglass, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg. In February 1950, Wallace openly criticized Soviet policies, disappointing his communist supporters. In early 1950s, Senator Joseph McCarthy completed the elimination of communist agents from American public life but many fellow travelers remained active²³.

In Asia, the Communist Party in Japan posed a great threat to the Americans. About half of Japanese organized labor was under various kinds of communist control. It was obvious that the Japanese communists were backed by the Soviet Union. Many Japanese prisoners of war released by the Soviets had been indoctrinated²⁴. Nevertheless, when taking over power from

²¹ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 279.

²² *Political Affairs*, 1948, No 2, p. 99, quoted after: *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 319. During the New York trial of 11 communist leaders in April 1949, William O. Nowell, an African-American party member in the 1930s testified that plans for the establishment of a black communist state extending from Virginia to the mouth of the Mississippi had been approved by the CPUSA and the Comintern at that time. *Facts on File*, 1949, 133A. Communist plans to divide the United States into small states were confirmed by Polish communist spy Gustaw Bolkowiak-Alef. *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 380.

²³ When Stalin died in March 1953, American communist activist Elizabeth Gurley Flynn wrote: “Joseph Stalin, communist leader, was the best loved man on earth of our time. Millions upon millions, the majority of the world’s population, mourn his sudden loss (...) The plain people of the earth, the weary and heavily laden, the hungry, the poverty-stricken, the oppressed, the exploited, the segregated—those denied freedom and happiness—grieve for the passing of this heroic son of the people, who gave his entire life to their emancipation”. *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 3, pp. 688-689; *New York Times*, 25 February 1950.

²⁴ Roger Swearingen, Paul Langer, *Red Flag in Japan: International Communism in Action, 1919-1951* (Harvard University Press, 1952), p. 160.

the Americans, the Japanese authorities managed to curb the communist infiltration. The communist victory in China and the communist invasion of South Korea strongly discouraged the Japanese from support for communism. Indian communists, numbering 60,000 in 1947, violently attacked the evolutionary line of Javaharlal Nehru and Mohamed Ali Jinnah, advocating an anti-colonial revolution. They failed, but in 1950 and 1951 they launched a series of terrorist attacks in which hundreds of people were killed²⁵. In the spring of 1948, communist revolts broke out in Burma, Malaya and Indonesia. In April 1948, following the assassination of General U Aung San and other Burmese leaders, the Burmese government launched a successful land and air offensive against communist rebels. Nevertheless, the communist guerillas continued and an alternative communist government was installed in Prome for some time. After 1945, the anti-Japanese Filipino guerrillas, called Hukbalahap, strongly penetrated by the communists, turned their arms against the pro-American government. Thousands of people were killed in the civil war. In November 1952, a communist plot was discovered by Thai police, so the parliament of Thailand outlawed the Communist Party. In Iran, the communist setback in the Persian part of Azerbaijan and among the Persian Kurds caused a serious crisis in the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party. It went underground and its members attempted to kill the Shah in December 1949. In March 1950, martial law was introduced, aimed at curbing the communist insurgency²⁶.

In Latin America, the Mexican dictatorship prevented a major growth of the Communist Party but in Cuba it was increasingly influential. In 1948, it numbered 200,000 and controlled the Cuban Confederation of Labor²⁷. Later, the party was outlawed by the pro-American regime of Fulgencio Batista and strongly persecuted. In March 1948, communists in Costa Rica raised arms to challenge the result of the presidential election, so their party, the Vanguardia Popular, was outlawed in July 1948. In 1952, its leaders reappeared under the new name Independent Progressive Party, but it too was outlawed in July 1953. That same year, an American intervention prevented Guatemala

²⁵ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 469; Ebon, *World Communism Today*, p. 402.

²⁶ *World Communist Movement*, Vol. 2, p. 405, Vol. 3, p. 649.

²⁷ Ebon, *World Communism Today*, pp. 297-298.

la from turning into a communist bridgehead in Central America. In March 1946, the head of the Communist Party of Brazil, Luis Carlos Prestes, stated that his followers “would form guerillas to fight their own government, if Brazil should become involved in an imperialist war against Russia”. Brazilian communists polled 800,000 votes in the January 1947 election²⁸. In Rio de Janeiro, they were the strongest party. Since the Electoral Tribunal found the party’s program “contrary to the democratic regime”, it was outlawed in May 1947. In April 1948, the Brazilian Communist Party engineered an explosion at the Villa Militar ammunition depots near Rio de Janeiro, after which the police cracked down on the communist leaders. The party went underground and had an 18,000-man guerilla army in the country’s south-central jungles²⁹. Communist influence also reached Bolivia, British Guyana, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Uruguay. In April 1948, communists attempted an insurrection during the Ninth Conference of American States in Bogota. In 1950, the Bolivian government outlawed the Communist Party for plotting to overthrow the constitutional power and revealed fantastic plans by the Brazilian communist leader Prestes to establish a 10-state South American Soviet Union³⁰.

Divisions

By 1956, the world communist movement had exhausted its momentum in non-communist countries. Communist parties were still important in France and particularly in Italy but elsewhere they were marginalized. The communist “struggle for peace” continued, but mostly in Asia and Latin America. Moreover, the world communist movement was increasingly divided.

The first big dispute between Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito and Stalin was only a minor problem. Most communist parties supported Stalin.

²⁸ Ibidem, pp. 321-322. Brazilian communists would not wait for such a war. The chief of Brazilian police stated in 1946 that “the evidence we have available proves, in my opinion without a doubt, the double character and existence of the Communist Party: on the one hand, it is ostensibly legal; on the other hand, it is devoted to systematic preparation for civil war”. Ibidem.

²⁹ *Facts on File*, 1952, 23F.

³⁰ *Facts on File*, 1950, 111F.

A real split came from the result of the victory of the communist revolution in China. The first shock that started the Chinese-Soviet split came with the 20th Congress of the Soviet Party in February 1956 and with the “secret speech” that Nikita Khrushchev made during the congress denouncing some of Stalin’s crimes. This speech opened the space for internal disputes in the communist movement. The Chinese leadership strongly opposed Khrushchev’s criticism of Stalin. A few months later, the Soviet invasion of Hungary further weakened the belief in Soviet communism in the West.

After several months of preparations, the Sino-Soviet difference in the assessment of Stalin was reduced and the Moscow communist summit of November 1957 adopted a resolution that proclaimed a “world class struggle” between socialism and capitalism and the socialist side would implement a “revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat”. It was not clear how the 65 communist parties represented in Moscow, including the Chinese party, imagined doing it while “struggling for peace”, but the unity of the communist movement seemed to be preserved.

Very soon, however, the Sino-Soviet conflict burst out anew. In May 1958, the Chinese leadership proclaimed the Great Leap Forward—their own version of accelerated industrialization—and in September of 1958, they announced a program of “people’s communes”. In terms of ideology, the Chinese party seemed eager to take leadership of the communist movement. The Soviet reaction was embarrassment and jealousy. The Kremlin stated that the Soviet Union was on the way to communism while Red China was marching towards socialism. Beijing was ready to accelerate the global confrontation while the Soviets had a more long-sighted plan. When the Chinese communists began to provoke the United States by bombing two islands between Taiwan and the continent, the Soviets remained calm. The Kremlin also openly supported India in its 1959 conflict with China. The Albanian communists, who clearly opposed de-Stalinization, received all-out support from Beijing. During the congress of Romanian communists in June 1960, Khrushchev condemned the “adventurism” and disintegrating actions of the Chinese leadership. This is why the next world communist summit in November 1960 could only have resulted in an open split. While the Soviets criticized Chinese radicalism and demanded unity, Deng Xiaoping,

who represented the Chinese party, attacked Khrushchev and the Soviet line and announced a different strategy³¹.

From 1960, the Sino-Soviet conflict was aggravated. Even the disaster of the Great Leap Forward did not ease the Chinese revolutionary vigor. In 1969, there was even an immediate danger of a Soviet-Chinese war in the Far East. By this time, the world communist movement was largely divided. Apart from the East European satellites, the most pro-Soviet line was followed by communist parties in France (450,000 members), Austria and the UK, while the Italian party of 1.6 million members was a little more independent. Several parties, such as those in Scandinavian countries or India, split into pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese factions. The June 1969 communist summit in Moscow was attended by only 75 out of 88 parties. Among those absent were the Chinese, Japanese and the Indonesians, whose party was destroyed after the failed coup of 1965³².

The New Left that emerged during the tumultuous events of 1968 was usually more radical than the existing communist parties and frequently preferred Maoism to Soviet orthodoxy. Apart from promoting “sex, drugs and rock and roll”, they worshipped the images of Mao Zedong and “Che” Guevara. Revolutionary groups such as the Red Brigades in Italy or Red Army Faction in West Germany were ready to use terrorist methods against “capitalist” regimes. Although the New Left rarely used the term “communist”, its followers favored living in communes, so deep inside they were communists. What made West European and American youth of the 1960s protest the establishment is a complex issue. It was a cultural revolution fed by frustration among jobless university graduates and a mood of anarchy born out of welfare and boredom. Anti-American pacifism expressed in protests of the war in Vietnam coexisted pretty well with support for Chinese-style

³¹ Donald Zagoria, *The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1961* (Princeton University Press, 1962), pp. 160 ff.; Edward Crankshaw, *The New Cold War: Moscow vs. Peking* (Penguin Books, 1963), pp. 83-121.

³² *Partie komunistyczne i robotnicze świata* [Communist and Workers' Parties of the World] (Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza 1978), passim.

violence³³. In the words of former followers of the New Left, Peter Collier and David Horowitz, it was a really “destructive generation”³⁴.

In the 1970s, a new phenomenon emerged in the communist movement: Eurocommunism. Since over time some communist parties had become integral parts of the political establishment of Western democracies, their revolutionary programs had been gradually softened and they began to advocate parliamentary methods of gaining power. This was the case of the Italian communist party, which came close to winning elections in the 1970s. Also, Spanish and Portuguese communists, who gained wide support during the transformation from dictatorship to democracy, seemed to have given up revolution. Eurocommunists frequently supported the democratic opposition in the Soviet satellite countries but misinterpreted the Polish Solidarity movement as only a workers’ and not a pro-independence movement.

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 frustrated the hopes of millions of communists all over the world. Although the idea of communism in practice is now completely discredited, communists have not disappeared. Like in the old good days of Soviet power, they pretend to be adherents of “democratic principles”. Even today, some political parties in the European Parliament call themselves communists.

Several important West European politicians have a communist past. The head of the European Union Commission in 2004-2014, José Manuel Barroso, was a Maoist in his youth. The German Foreign Minister in the years 1998-2005, Joschka Fischer, was, along with another leader of the Greens, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, a member of the extreme radical leftist Revolutionary Struggle (*Revolutionärer Kampf*), advocating Maoist communism in the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1980s, Catherine Ashton was vice chair and treasurer of the

³³ Cf. e.g.: Peter Schneider, “Długi marsz do szaleństwa” [A Long March to Madness], *Die Weltwoche*, 1 March 2007, after: *Forum*, 7-13 May 2007; David Caute, *Communism and the French Intellectuals* (Macmillan, 1964); Alain Touraine, *Le Mouvement de mai ou le communisme utopique* (Paris: Editions de Seuil, 1968); D.L. Hanley (ed.), *May '68: Coming of Age* (Macmillan, 1989); Robert C. Meade, *Red Brigades* (Macmillan, 1989); Stefan Aust, *Baader-Meinhof: The Inside Story of the RAF* (Oxford University Press, 2009).

³⁴ Peter Collier, David Horowitz, *Destructive Generation* (Free Press Paperbacks, 1996).

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, which closely cooperated with the British Communist Party. President of Italy Giorgio Napolitano belonged to the Italian Communist Party (CPI) between 1945 and 1991. Even if they abandoned their communist views, they do not feel that to be a troublesome skeleton in their cupboard in the West. They probably have no plans for a violent revolution, but as representatives of the widely understood New Left, they often advocate ideas that undermine European stability.

Many cultural celebrities also belonged to or sympathized with communist parties. After World War Two, Curzio Malaparte joined the CPI. On 26 January 1947, Pier Paolo Pasolini, still not a member of the CPI, wrote a declaration for the front page of the newspaper *Libertà*: “We think that currently only communism is able to provide a new culture”³⁵. The outstanding Italian composer Luigi Nono sympathized with communism³⁶. Film director Luchino Visconti joined the CPI after World War Two. Publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, among the wealthiest families in Italy, was not only a CPI member, but in 1970, fearing a right-wing coup, he founded the militant Partisan Action Groups (Gruppi di Azione Partigiana, GAP). An Austrian playwright, Arnolt Bronnen, praised Hitler before World War Two and communism after the war. Austrian architect Margarete “Grete” Schütte-Lihotzky shared the communist views of another Austrian, journalist and writer Ruth von Mayenburg. An Austrian-British photographer, Edith Tudor Hart, spied for the Soviet Union. The 1998 Nobel Prize winner for literature, Portuguese José Saramago, had been a communist. The 2004 Nobel Prize winner for literature, Elfriede Jelinek, was a member of the Communist Party of Austria from 1974 to 1991. Historian Eric Hobsbawm was a long-time member of the German and British Communist Parties³⁷. The famous Gabriel Garcia Marquez, the literary genius from Colombia, once reflected on Stalin’s temperament: “It’s a man of quiet disposition, a good fella with a sense of humor (...) Nothing struck me so as his delicate palms”. Marquez admired Fidel Castro

³⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pier_Paolo_Pasolini (16 IV 2014).

³⁶ <http://biography.yourdictionary.com/luigi-nono> (16 IV 2014).

³⁷ No wonder Hobsbawm ignored the Soviet contribution to the outbreak of World War Two in 1939 and overestimated the Soviet war successes which were largely dependent on Western material aid. Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes*, pp. 7 ff.

even after Castro rejected his emotional appeals to save the life of his good friend Col. Antonio de la Guardia. Castro ordered de la Guardia shot, and Garcia accepted it³⁸.

Fellow Travelers

Many Western authorities, not even those calling themselves communist, have frequently repeated and still repeat monstrous banalities concerning the communist system, one that wanted to make people happy by force, produced indescribable suffering and heaps of dead bodies, and that destroyed itself out of its priority of naked and cruel force, represented in government, economic policies, and international relations.

The former French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin said not long ago that “communism never raised a hand against freedom”³⁹. Has he ever heard of the NKVD? In the late 1930s, the heads of the NKVD *Dalstroy* concern that ran the Siberian Gulag, Karp Pavlov and Nikolai Garanin, shot 40,000 prisoners who were accused of “sabotage” and other fabricated crimes. Garanin used to order those who “refused” to go to work to line up in a row. They were mostly sick or dying and could hardly stand. Furious, Garanin went down the row and shot people while marching. Two guards followed him, loading guns for him⁴⁰. Were they champions of freedom?

Authorities such as Jospin praise or justify communism despite huge amount of literature describing and analyzing the system wherever it was in place. Western communists frequently claim they would implement communism if they could. Nobody knows how. After all, Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot studied at the Sorbonne. The fact is that the only communism we can judge is not the virtual but real communism, as practiced. And those who praised communism as such to some extent bear the responsibility of its crimes. It does not really matter whether they were party members, fellow

³⁸ Maciej Stasiński, “Geniusz nadworny” [Court Genius], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 19-21 April 2014.

³⁹ Courtois et al., *Czarna księga komunizmu*, p. 9.

⁴⁰ Roj Miedwediew, *Pod osąd historii*, (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Bellona, 1990), Vol. I, pp. 500-501. [English edition: Roy Medvedev, *Let History Judge* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972)].

travelers or ignorant “useful idiots”. Evidence on communist crimes is easy to find in a number of books in English⁴¹. Unfortunately, they are not a top priority for students of 20th century history. Teachers often prefer a smoother or even apologetic version of Soviet history⁴².

Dariusz Tołczyk, a Polish-American professor of Slavic Studies at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va., rightly started his story of the Western perception of the Gulag by presenting the early mastery of Tsarina Catherine in creating a make-believe reality of Russia for her Western admirers, such as Voltaire⁴³. It was relatively easy for her since Russia was a far-away, exotic country that hardly anyone from the West could really explore. But the mechanism of fellow travelers, or in extreme cases, “useful idiots” who propagate a cause they do not know, goes back to the late 18th century when this mechanism was politically utilized by Russia to justify the partitions of Poland and Lithuania in the eyes of Western politicians. All through the 19th century, most Western politicians and journalists imagined Russia as a mysterious giant and a welcomed ally, a place where things were different from the West but which was ready to reform any time a new Tsar entered the throne.

⁴¹ From the immense literature concerning the essence of the communist system, let us quote but a few: Georg von Rauch, *A History of Soviet Russia* (New York: F.A. Praeger Publishers, 1959); Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago* (Fontana/Collins, 1974), 3 vols.; Leszek Kołakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism* (Oxford University Press, 1976), 3 vols.; Mikhail Geller, *Utopia in Power. The History of the Soviet Union from 1917 to the Present* (London: Hutchinson, 1986); Franz-Anton Kadell, *Die Katyn Lüge. Geschichte einer Manipulation. Fakten, Dokumente und Zeugen* (München: F.A. Herbig, 1991); Richard Pipes, *A Concise History of the Russian Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996); Dariusz Tołczyk, *See No Evil* (Yale University Press, 1999); Anne Applebaum, *Gulag. A History* (New York: Doubleday, 2003); Ludmila Stern, *Western Intellectuals and the Soviet Union, 1920-40* (Routledge, 2007); Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010); Allen Paul, *Katyn. Stalin's Massacre and the Triumph of Truth* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010); Michael David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to the Soviet Union, 1921-1941* (Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁴² Cf., e.g., the Franco-German high school textbook: Daniel Henri, Guillaume Le Quintrec and Peter Geiss (eds.), *Histoire/Geschichte. Europa und die Welt vom Wiener Kongress bis 1945* (Vol. I); Guillaume Le Quintrec and Peter Geiss (eds.), *Histoire/Geschichte. Europa und die Welt seit 1945*, Vol. II, (Nathan and Klett, 2008).

⁴³ Dariusz Tołczyk, *Gulag w oczach Zachodu* [The Gulag in Western Eyes] (Warszawa: Prószyński i S-ka, 2009), pp. 27-36.

On the other hand, Poland was usually reduced to the role of a troublemaker. The Polish opinion was not dangerous for Russia. After 1795, Poland-Lithuania was dismembered, its elites deported and dispersed, and the Polish ambitions to regain independence were presented as Jacobin and threatening European peace. What was more important for Russia was Western public opinion. This is why the moment Marquis Alphonse de Custine published his *La Russie en 1839*, a Russian propaganda campaign started in the West aimed at delegitimizing de Custine.

A new stage in Western illusions came with the Bolshevik Revolution. While the Bolsheviks tortured and murdered hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians and organized concentration camps to use forced labor – a practice not unknown to Western diplomats who reported to their capitals about the Bolshevik atrocities – the Western fellow travelers were increasingly charmed by the new Soviet regime. The incredible barbarity of the Bolsheviks was not only in deeds but also in words. Some of the worst Cheka henchmen used to grab the pen and write about their achievements. Tołczyk quoted Cheka poet Alexandr Eyduk, who wrote:

“There is no greater joy nor a more beautiful tune
Than the crunch of a broken life and broken bones.
This is why our eyes faint
And passion fills our breasts.
On your verdict I want to write
One firm sentence: ‘At the wall! Execute!’”⁴⁴

The long row of fellow travelers who helped the Bolsheviks distort the image of their system started with John Reed and his wife Louise Bryant. Reed witnessed the revolution and was fascinated by the Bolshevik terror, leaving a book that proved this fascination: *Ten Days that Shook the World*. He wholeheartedly supported the new regime and was a co-founder of the CPUSA. Lincoln Steffens was a New York reporter, fascinated by the Mexican revolution, who began to prefer revolution to reform. He came to Bolshevik Russia in 1919 at the climax of the war over communism, when mass terror affected rank-and-file workers, and returned with the famous phrase, “I have

⁴⁴ Ibidem, p. 63.

been to the future and it works"⁴⁵. His wife Ella Winter was also fascinated by the new Bolshevik morality, publishing a book on "Red virtues"⁴⁶.

There were also two other early witnesses of the Bolshevik Revolution: French officers Jacques Sadoul and André Marty. Sadoul's *Notes sur la révolution bolchévique* is full of enthusiasm for the Bolsheviks. The introduction to this book was written by Henri Barbusse, who joined the French Communist Party in 1923. At that time, Barbusse was treated as a moral authority for his disgust of World War One atrocities. He was somehow more tolerant of the Soviet atrocities. Was he really ignorant of them when he moved to Moscow for some time in 1918 and returned to Russia in 1923? It is a strange case of a pacifist who accepted mass murder.

The term "useful idiots" may seem offensive in relation to people who believed in the revolution. One can only reflect on the mentality of people who believe that peace and social harmony can be introduced by terror. A more tragicomic faith was presented by Pierre Pascal. He saw in the Bolshevik Revolution a sort of religious awakening from the "nightmare" of materialist capitalism. In his diary, Pascal wrote on 26 December 1917, that the Bolshevik Revolution was materializing Christian principles in the Russian spirit. Pascal denied the Red Terror, suggestions of which made him laugh, "considering the sweetness and cheerfulness of this terrible Extraordinary Commission [Cheka] accused of applying terror"⁴⁷. Although Pascal later changed his mind, the damage remained.

The same refers to a large degree to William Bullitt, an American diplomat sent to Russia for the first time in 1919. Upon his return home, he stated that the Red Terror was over and that "executions happen very rarely"⁴⁸. Soon, Bullitt married Louise Bryant, the widow of John Reed, and became a free agent of Soviet influence. He worked hard to establish official relations between the United States and the USSR, and when it happened in 1933, he

⁴⁵ Lincoln Steffens *Letters*, (Westport Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1974), Vol. 2, p. 759.

⁴⁶ Ella Winter, *Red Virtue: Human Relationships in the New Russia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1933).

⁴⁷ Pierre Pascal, *En Roussie Rouge* (Petrograd 1920), p. 6. Quoted after Tołczyk, *Gulaż w oczach Zachodu*, p. 68. Translation from Polish by the author.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*.

was sent to Moscow as the first US ambassador to the Soviet Union. After that, he had more time and opportunity to understand the Soviet reality and ultimately became an eloquent critic of the Soviet system.

Perhaps the most disgusting feature of some of the Soviet fellow travelers was their open praise of violence. It is not like they did not know about Soviet monstrosities: they accepted them and praised them. Divorced from Bullitt, Louise Bryant mostly lived in the French Riviera, from where she commented: “it was the duty of Dzerzhinsky to get rid of the prisoners quickly and in a humanitarian way. He performed this severe duty rapidly and efficiently, for which even the convicts must have been grateful, as there is nothing worse as an executioner whose hands tremble and his heart is full of doubts”⁴⁹. These remarks by Bryant resemble the pattern of wartime Nazis who only cared about the efficiency of their death factories.

Louise Bryant is not as popular as Louis Aragon, one of the bestselling French poets. Aragon, a consistent admirer of the Soviet Union, shared with Bryant similar feelings. He openly praised the infamous GPU. Elsewhere, he wrote: “Fire at the learned bears of Social Democracy; Fire, fire, I hear death approaching and throws on Garchery; Fire, I tell you, under the leadership of the Communist Party”⁵⁰. Famous Bertold Brecht touched on the same note: “Roll in garbage, on friendly terms with a murderer, but change the world”⁵¹. What has been left of this change? Not much good, but rolling in garbage remains the heritage of some leading leftist artists of the 20th century.

Apart from ideological seduction or intellectual pride, there was another motivation of fellow travelers: personal interest. No matter how contrary it may sound, some Western businesspeople expressed admiration for the Soviet system out of greed. At a time when Soviet leaders expropriated private owners’ property and outlawed the *bourgeoisie*, businessmen such as Washington Vanderlip or Armand Hammer treated Soviet leaders as allies in the competition for lucrative contracts, since the Bolsheviks would elimi-

⁴⁹ Louise Bryant, *Mirrors of Moscow* (New York: 1937), p. 48-49. Quoted after Tołczyk, *Guiąg w oczach Zachodu*, p. 69. Translation from Polish by the author.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 70.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, p. 71.

nate their rivals⁵². Business success in Soviet Russia for people like Hammer attracted the attention of others who wanted to follow suit, so perhaps there is only a slight exaggeration in Richard Pipes' statement that no other group favored cooperation with Soviet Russia with more determination than European and American business circles⁵³.

A specific role in creating a warm atmosphere around Soviet crimes was played by media. Western correspondents in the USSR could not in fact do their job without the consent of the Soviet authorities, but they willingly entered this game, publishing fantastic stories about the Soviet reality. Whether they believed in their own lies is not important. What is, is that they that they distorted the image of the system in the eyes of Western public opinion on an unprecedented scale. One of the most shameful examples of this betrayal of journalist duties was Walter Duranty, the long-time Moscow correspondent for the *New York Times*. When you look through the annals of this newspaper from the 1930s, you cannot believe your own eyes how sweet the image of Soviet Russia is that appears in Duranty's reports. What is more, in 1932 Duranty won a Pulitzer Prize.

There were, of course, exceptions. Already in the 1920s and 1930s, the *London Times* had published a lot of objective articles while Bertrand Russell, Karel Čapek, Georg Brandes and Maurice Maeterlinck expressed skepticism of the Soviet system. There was also a narrow stream of testimony from Soviet survivors, who told the world the true story of life under that system. Tołczyk must be given credit for remembering the names of Andrey Kalpashnikov, Sozerko Malsagov, Yuri Bezsonov, Ivan Solonevich, and others who published their stories before World War Two⁵⁴. The fact that these names are now lar-

⁵² Armand Hammer was one of the richest and most influential supporters of communism in the West. Son of Julius Hammer, one of the founders of the CPUSA, he remained on friendly terms with Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev, and was a go-between of US business and the administration and the Kremlin. His Occidental Petroleum was at some time the 46th largest world company. "Śmierć czerwonego miliardera" [Death of a Red Billionaire], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 12 December 1990.

⁵³ Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime*, p. 215.

⁵⁴ Andrei Kalpashnikov, *Prisoner of Trotsky* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1920); S.A. Malsagoff, *An Island Hell: A Soviet Prison in the Far North* (London: A. M. Philpot, Ltd., 1926); J.D. Bessonov, *Mes 26 prisons et mon evasion de Solovki* (Paris: Payot, 1926), also translated into English in London 1929; Tatiana Tchernavin, *Escape from the Soviets* (New York: E. P. Dutton & co.,

gely forgotten tells its own story. This loss to near oblivion was mostly due to the influence of leftist propaganda supported by renowned writers such as Upton Sinclair or Romain Rolland, who relativized Soviet crimes.

Western debates on the credibility of reports from Soviet Russia continued in the 1930s. An active role in this debate was played by the Soviet propaganda apparatus, which promoted Maxim Gorky's lies and published a collective volume on the construction of the White Sea Canal without mentioning the death of tens of thousands of slave laborers who perished during the project. In 1935, this volume was published in the United States and raised new praise and new doubts⁵⁵. Characteristic of this debate was that true reports were usually published in small circulation press while those that praised the Soviets enjoyed wider distribution. This was the case of an American propaganda movie, *Soviet Russia Today*, released in the 1930s.

The Great Depression and the 1933 Nazi takeover in Germany added more political fuel to the fire of this debate. Many opponents of Nazism were particularly sensitive to Soviet propaganda. Renowned British poet Sir Stephen Spender claimed: "I am a communist because I am a Liberal"⁵⁶. Ernest Hemingway added: "People with anti-communist views are either fools or scoundrels"⁵⁷. For numerous Western "intellectuals", anti-fascism implied support for communism. This was the case for Alfred Kazin, Ignazio Silone, André Malreaux, André Gide, Anatol France, Gerhard Hauptmann, John Dos Passos, Aldous Huxley, Egon Erwin Kisch, John Strachey, Lion Feuchtwanger,

Inc., 1934.); Vladimir Tchernavin, *I Speak for the Silent Prisoners of the Soviets* (Boston, New York: Hale, Cushman & Flint, 1935); George Kitchin, *Prisoner of the OGPU* (London, New York [etc.]: Longmans, Green and co., 1935); Ivan Solonevich, *The Soviet Paradise Lost* (New York: The Paisley Press, Inc.; London: Williams & Norgate Ltd., 1938)

⁵⁵ *Belomor: An Account of the Construction of the New Canal between the White Sea and the Baltic Sea* (New York: H. Smith and R. Haas, 1935).

⁵⁶ Stephen Spender, *Forward from Liberalism* (London: V. Gollancz, 1937), p. 202. Quoted after Tołczyk, *Gulag w oczach Zachodu*, p. 128. On French leftist authors praising communism out of anti-fascism, see: Herbert R. Lottman, *La rive gauche*, Polish translation as *Lewy brzeg* (Warszawa: PIW, 1997).

⁵⁷ Tołczyk, *Gulag w oczach Zachodu*, p. 128. Translation from Polish by the author.

Lillian Hellman, George Bernard Shaw⁵⁸, Pablo Picasso, Paul Eluard, Theodore Dreiser, James T. Farrell, and many others. When George Orwell wrote his famous report on the Civil War in Spain denouncing Soviet-inspired massacres inside of the Republican camp, British media moguls Victor Gollancz, Kingsley Martin, and Raymond Mortimer refused to publish it. The pro-Soviet campaign was supported by Western citizens living in Russia, such as English writer Alexander Wicksteed, American journalist Anne Louise Strong and an American Methodist pastor, Julius Hecker, who lectured on Soviet religious tolerance even as Stalin ordered the shooting of Catholic priests who survived 1937's purges. The final point in Hecker's career came on 28 April 1938, when he was shot himself⁵⁹.

The ignorance and political zeal of misinformed artists was one thing, but the "expertise" of scholars was another. There have been many works published by renowned authorities such as British historian Beatrice Webb, lawyer Dennis Nowell Pritt, and political scientist Harold Lasky. The latter claimed to have not noticed any significant difference between the Soviet and British legal procedures⁶⁰. To convince those in doubt, the Soviet government invited many Western authorities to see the Soviet reality for themselves. Special tours were arranged under the strict control of official guides who made sure the visitors would report what the Soviet government wanted. But even without a profound knowledge of Russian, a smart visitor could sort out what was really happening. French Prime Minister Eduard Herriot

⁵⁸ In July 1931, Shaw and three British aristocrats were received by Stalin. Shaw believed Stalin was an "educated, sincere and witty man, allowing to discuss any topic with a disarming smile but without malice or credulity". When Lady Astor asked when the Soviets would stop shooting people, Stalin calmly responded: "When peace comes we will stop". Relating the meeting to a crowd of journalists in "Hotel Metropol", Shaw concluded: "Stalin has a wonderful black moustache". Michael Holroyd, "Fellow Traveller", *The Sunday Times*, 15 IX 1991. In December 1937, Shaw wrote: "Russia is an example to all the world of the enormous superiority of socialism to capitalism, economically, socially and politically". R. Palme Dutt, "George Bernard Shaw. A Memoir by R. Palme Dutt", *The Labour Monthly Pamphlet*, 1951 Series, No 1, p.12.

⁵⁹ Gary Dorrien, *Social Ethics in the Making. Interpreting an American Tradition* (Malden, Ma: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2008), p. 129; Tołczyk, *Gulag w oczach Zachodu*, p. 132.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 136.

recorded a “flourishing garden” in starving Ukraine⁶¹. But upon his return home, the British journalist Malcolm Muggeridge exposed the true nature of the Soviet system and various methods of stupefying Western public opinion⁶². André Gide revised his pro-Soviet stance in his famous book *Retour de l’U.R.S.S.*, published in 1936.

The Moscow show trials of the 1930s and the Great Purge in which hundreds of communist leaders from many European countries who had gathered in the USSR were killed, were other challenges to Soviet propaganda in the West. But the most persistent supporters of the Soviets, such as Gollancz, Malreaux, George Bernard Shaw, Irwin Shaw, Dreiser or US ambassador to Moscow Joseph Davies, still praised Soviet justice.

The anti-fascist supporters of the Soviet Union should have been shocked by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 23 August 1939 and the joint action of the Third Reich and the Soviet Union against Poland in September 1939. Most of them, especially in France, were not. Although Gollancz, Lasky and Strachey changed their tune, they soon continued their wishful thinking,

⁶¹ Herriot’s visit to the Ukraine was preceded by extraordinary preparations. “Before the arrival of Herriot, all the inhabitants living on the street were ordered to put a fresh coat of paint on the front of their houses. On the day of Herriot’s arrival, all the stores on this street were filled with bread with strict orders that only the actual residents of the Stalin Prospect could purchase this bread. Further instructions were that people could go into the stores only singly and not in groups. All entrances to and exits from the street were blocked off by the police (...) About 8 to 10 meters from the Stalin Prospect, I saw a woman lying under a tree and lying alongside her was her infant child (...) She said that she had come from the village and brought the child along with her to give it away to a children’s institution because in the village there was nothing to eat. On the next day when I was going by this very same street to work, the woman was lying dead under this tree but the child was no longer here. The body of this woman was lying under this tree for three days. Those who were entrusted with the task of gathering up the bodies did not fulfill their task very efficiently (...) Many people pressed forward into Kharkov in search of food and the Kharkov authorities took all measures and did not allow these people into the city. All railroad stations and main routes were blocked off by the police. Those people who did succeed in getting into the city of Kharkov were rounded up by the police, put into trucks and taken for a distance of 15 miles outside the town and dumped by the roadside. They were exhausted and weakened; they could not get back to the city and died by the road, most of them. All this was with reference to the arrival of Mr. Herriot”. Testimony of Mr. H., *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 46. Cf. also Testimony of Yuri Lavrynenko, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 8, p. 118.

⁶² Malcolm Muggeridge, *Winter in Moscow* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1934).

dreaming of attracting the Soviets as a British ally. Between September 1939 and June 1941, all attempts of British diplomacy to detach the USSR from the Third Reich proved in vain. The right time came with the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. Then, the pro-Soviet line received official blessings and the Soviet Union became a British and American ally. In the United States, it was even brought under the control of the federal Office of War Information (OWI). Already in December 1941, the memories of former ambassador Davies were published as *Mission to Moscow*, and in 1943, a film version of the book—Michael Curtiz’s movie under the same title—was released. It was an unbelievable piece of Soviet-like propaganda presenting the Soviet Union as almost a paradise and Stalin as a wise and decent man. The movie was even shown in Moscow cinemas without any censorship.

The wartime pro-Soviet atmosphere was particularly disastrous for the Poles, whose country was dismembered by Hitler and Stalin in 1939, following which hundreds of thousands of Poles were deported to the Gulag and forced to resettle deep inside Russia. Poland, an ally of Great Britain from 1939 and a partner in the anti-German wartime coalition ever since, was to pay the price for the Big Three’s cooperation. Soviet responsibility for the Katyn massacre of 1940—the British and American government had enough evidence that was the case—and the fate of the Warsaw Rising of August 1944, when the Polish Home Army attacked the Germans while the Red Army stood still and watched the insurrection die, were treated in London and Washington as Stalin wanted. In June 1945, 16 top Polish officials connected with the London government-in-exile, still recognized by Great Britain and the United States, were tried and sentenced in the presence of Western representatives. London and Washington winked at the sentence without emotion, even though the Polish politicians were accused, among other things, of espionage for Great Britain⁶³.

The degree to which the American government deceived itself regarding Soviet Russia may be illustrated by the famous trip of then-US Vice President Henry Wallace, who visited the Kolyma death camps in May 1944. In Maga-

⁶³ Andrzej Chmielarz, Andrzej Krzysztof Kunert, Eugeniusz Piontek, *Proces moskiewski przywódców Polskiego Państwa Podziemnego—The Moscow Trial of the Leaders of the Polish Underground State* (Warszawa, 2000).

dan, Wallace and the head of these camps, Ivan Nikishov, together watched the movie *Polar Star*, another pro-Soviet propaganda piece produced by Elliott Roosevelt. The Soviet hosts looked amused by the way the Americans showed the happy life of Soviet citizens. More amusement was offered to the Soviet murderers two year later when Wallace published his moving report about the joyous life at Kolyma⁶⁴. Wallace later apologized for his lies, but Owen Lattimore, head of the OWI Pacific Operations, his companion during the Kolyma trip and author of another scandalous report, never admitted he had been wrong⁶⁵.

Western admirers of the Soviet Union continued through World War Two and were still active during the Cold War. Of course, the center of pro-Soviet gravity was always the local communist party, but many advocates of the Soviet Union were not party members, rather “useful idiots”. They raised their voices at all occasions when the Soviet reality was dramatically exposed to Western public opinion. This was seen after the defection of Victor Kravchenko when Joseph Davies and Harry Hopkins advocated deportation back to the USSR. Luckily, Kravchenko was kept in hiding and stayed in the West, where he published a wide report on Soviet life and death. The publication of his book, *I Chose Freedom*, raised a huge campaign against him, especially violent in France, where *Les Lettres Françaises* alarmed French public opinion in a strictly pro-Soviet and anti-American way and led to lawsuits against the editors. The trial was disastrous for the prosecution, but many “useful idiots” still slandered Kravchenko’s book.

Renowned Swiss Protestant theologian Karl Barth, who came to Hungary in April 1948 to advise Hungarian Protestants, thought Stalin was an exponent of an ideology entirely contrary to Christianity, so it would be unlikely for Christians to be led into temptation by the Stalinist doctrine.

⁶⁴ Henry A. Wallace, *Soviet Asia Mission* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1946).

⁶⁵ In a report unanimously adopted by the US Senate McCarran Committee, Lattimore was classified as a “conscious articulate instrument of the Soviet conspiracy”. During the investigation, Lattimore said he did not feel his duty to “snoop on his hosts”. US Senate, 82nd Congress, 2nd Session, Committee on the Judiciary, Institute of Pacific Relations, Report No. 2050, p. 224. Since in the 1960s Lattimore was professor of Chinese Studies at the University of Leeds, one can only wonder whether he allowed his students to “snoop” into literature to find out about facts.

Barth considered Western materialism a worse threat to Christianity than communism. His naïve conclusion was that Christians should stay neutral in the East-West confrontation. He did not take into consideration the simple fact that the communists simply wanted to crush Christians⁶⁶.

Pro-Soviet activities continued in the Western world of intellectuals into the 1960s and 1970s. One can quote here the complicated fate of the outstanding report on the Gulag, *Inny świat* [A World Apart], written by Gustaw Herling-Grudziński or Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*, both either withheld from publication for years or strongly criticized by "progressive" forces all over the world. The *Gulag Archipelago* was like a stone thrown into water that left only slight wrinkles on the surface of the general acceptance of communism as a legitimate system and ideology. "Political correctness" would rather dictate complaints about American, not Soviet imperialism. Characteristic also was the resistance of the pro-Soviet circles to psychiatric abuses in the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s. Admirers of the Soviet Union in the West even continued after the collapse and division of the Soviet empire. When the *Black Book of Communism* was published in France in 1998, a rival book, *Black Book of Capitalism*, was immediately released to counterbalance the negative impression. Does this mean everything will stay as it was before?⁶⁷

The Great Deception

According to Friedrich Engels, socialism, or its higher communist stage, would have meant "humanity's leap from the realm of necessity to the

⁶⁶ George N. Shuster, "Religion behind the Iron Curtain", submitted to *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 5, p. 69. The head of Hungarian communists, Mátyás Rákosi, made this clear: "As our foothold among the rural population gradually strengthened, we were able to intensify our struggle against this obstacle [i.e., religion – WR]. First of all, we broke up the unified Catholic and Protestant front of church reaction. By taking advantage of certain democratic possibilities in the Calvinist and Lutheran churches, we were able to mobilize the parishioners who sympathized with us at their request in 1948, in the spirit of mutual compliance and understanding". Quoted according to *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 3, p. 74-75.

⁶⁷ An interesting reflection on this topic was supplied by George Walden's interview of Robert Conquest, "History on His Side", *The Daily Telegraph. Books*, 29 October 2005.

realm of freedom”⁶⁸. In practice, it was totally the reverse. Achieving a high degree of synthesis, Michael Novak wrote: “Communism set out to destroy the human soul (...) it destroyed enterprise, investment, innovation, even the ability to distinguish between profit and loss. It wounded the habits of honesty and trust, self-reliance and fidelity to one’s word. More deeply still, it dulled the most distinctive human mark: the soul’s primordial endowment of creativity, its sense of personal responsibility, its knowledge of itself as a *subject*”⁶⁹.

Western people who frequently use the term “revolution” with emotional zeal in all possible contexts should reflect on what they have in common with the communist reality. It was Nadezhda Mandelshtam who noted that a crucial role in communist practice was played by the word “revolution”, which nobody wanted to give up and which justified all crimes⁷⁰. Another witness of Soviet practice, Andrey Siniavsky, wrote: “With the liquidation of prisons forever in mind, we have built a lot of new prisons. In order to ban state frontiers, we have erected Chinese Walls all around our country. To make work joyful, we have introduced forced labor. In order not to spill a drop of blood in the happy future, we have killed, and killed, and killed”⁷¹.

With few exceptions, people from the West have never fled to a communist country, but there have been lots of people who tried to escape from communism to the West. Western people who visited communist countries were either fooled by the communist authorities or could see the difference. People from communist countries who managed to see the West were often shocked. In the mid-1950s, Congressman Kersten asked Lt. Col. Grigori Burlitski, a Soviet defector who testified to the House of Representatives Select Committee on Communist Aggression, what impressed him most when he arrived in the West. Burlitski answered: “The human treatment of a human being”⁷².

⁶⁸ Friedrich Engels, *Anty-Duehring* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1947), pp. 420-421.

⁶⁹ Michael Novak, “The Godlessness that Failed”, *First Things*, June/July 2000, p. 35.

⁷⁰ Nadezhda Mandelshtam, *Vospominanya* [Memoirs] (New York, 1970), p. 133.

⁷¹ A. Terc (Andrey Siniavsky), *Fantasticheski mir Abrama Tertsya* [The Fantastic World of Abram Terts] (Paris, 1967), p. 411. Translation by the author.

⁷² Testimony of Lt. Col. Grigori Stepanovich Burlitski, *HR SCOCA*, Vol. 4, p. 1381.

Outstanding minds should have a particular sensitivity to the complexity of this world and to reality in particular. They should not project their emotions, fears, complexes or ambitions on their presentations. But many famous minds who distinguished themselves in some areas, talked nonsense in others. Western intellectual history has been tainted by this kind of nonsense from a multitude of celebrities—famous actors, playwrights, authors of fiction, pop stars, painters, politicians and journalists—mistakenly called “intellectuals”.

The false perception of communism by numerous and outstanding Western personalities may be called the Great Deception. It is noteworthy how many and how prominent are the authors who praised communism and how strongly their false statements were in shaping public opinion. There were a number of reasons the Great Deception was so promoted. First of all, it was the result of masterful Soviet propaganda. Some of its Western spokesmen were leftists who hated conservative values or nationalism in its worst interwar manifestation and were ready to accept as an ally the Soviets in their struggle against these enemies at any price. Others were vain people who thought their basic influence in the arts or media was not enough to shape the world and became self-taught politicians and advocated a false image of the Soviets. For many spokesmen of the Great Deception, influenced by social Darwinism, life was an arena of constant struggle in which all means justified the end⁷³.

The climax of the Great Deception came during World War Two when the USSR became an ally of Great Britain and the United States, and any criticism of Stalin and the Soviet system was silenced by British and American media. In defeated and divided wartime France, the rightists and nationalists frequently collaborated with Nazis, while the Soviet-allied left soon forgot its collaboration in 1939-1941 and emerged from the war as innocent Hitler-busters. In time and with subsequent revelations of the Cold War era—the death of Stalin, Khrushchev’s 1956 speech, the Hungarian revolution of 1956, the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and Polish Solidarity—and the

⁷³ Cf. e.g., Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1995), p. 211 ff.; Paul Johnson, *Intellectuals* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), *passim*.

collapse of the Soviet Union, the ranks of spokesmen of the Great Deception have gradually shrunk. Some apologized for their lies, but most did not. Nowadays, their compromising statements are falling into oblivion. Referring to these landmark names of their tradition, representatives of the New Left minimize the damage they did or apply the principle of historically and politically changing moral standards. This is why publications that present the disgrace of these authors are not popular. But healthy plants do not grow on rotten roots.

To a large degree, we are what we know about history and the truth about history, at least at the level of minimum approximation, is not beyond cognition. This thesis is now being openly questioned. If we accept the idea that there are as many truths as people, we fall into the trap of total relativism. In the world of postmodernist history, everything boils down to the language that we use. According to the *bon mot* of Roland Barthes, “it is language that speaks, not the author”⁷⁴. But if the meaning of words is relative, there is no universal language and there is no universal truth. More than that, there is no universal world, either. In the words of T.S. Eliot: “I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch. How should I use them for your closer contact?”⁷⁵ While postmodernists cut contact, the author of the present work suggests to continue contact with others and with reality.

Even if we cannot reconstruct the whole truth about the past, there are critical methods of distinguishing stories that are closer or farther away from past reality. First, our ambition should be to precisely specify the issue. Second, we should explore a representative body of evidence. Third, we should carefully measure and compare the importance of historical phenomena. Fourth, we should not draw conclusion of a *pars pro toto* nature. Fifth, we should specify criteria of assessment of historical evidence. Sixth, we should take into account various dimensions of historical reality and various points of view and carefully judge which are relevant and which are not. Seventh, we should use logical reasoning. Only then can we pass any judgment on historical developments.

⁷⁴ Quoted according to: John Zerzan, “The Catastrophe of Postmodernism”, <http://www.primitivism.com/postmodernism.htm> (29 January 2014), p. 2.

⁷⁵ T.S. Eliot, “Gerontion”, (in:) T.S. Eliot, *Selected poems* (Harcourt Inc., 1934), p. 33.

History has seen all kinds of false interpretations, distorted sources, lies and counter-lies. The problem with 20th century totalitarianisms is that in large societies, deception reached unprecedented levels. Millions of people were influenced by false or distorted information delivered by dishonest authorities and lived in deep misunderstanding of the reality of other nations. With some access to information, people knew there were other social and political realities, but since they were in fact so distant and so different, people were ready to accept statements that living conditions in countries with a bad reputation were much worse than you could imagine but that in preferable countries, life was similar to theirs. Thence, the American public opinion in the 1940s could not have thought that people in the Soviet Union could be deprived of even the most basic rights and goods. And vice versa, a Soviet citizen could not have imagined that the life of an average American can be so different from his or hers. The distance between the unknown reality and the propaganda image was too big to comprehend. Under these conditions, ideological manipulators could make people believe that black was white and white was black.

The Great Deception was not only morally disgusting. It also had far-reaching political consequences. The Soviet mastery in deceiving Western public opinion, supported by so many “useful idiots”, contributed to the growth of the Soviet superpower based on the principle that if the Soviet Union could not catch up with the West, it should make the West wait. On the one hand, you had the ever-growing economic efforts of the free world to overcome communism and, on the other, you had lies that were much cheaper.

To some extent, obliviousness may be natural. People want to live happy lives. But to say that they must do so brings us close to callousness and moral indifference. To be fully human we are obliged to remember the suffering of others. In the case of wars, memory usually embraces the victims of both sides. In the case of totalitarian crimes, things are different. Here, the case was the cold-blooded murder of millions of innocent human beings and ruined lives of many millions more. There is no reason to treat Soviet victims with less empathy than Nazi victims.

The debate on communist crimes is not easy. The best known 20th century totalitarian systems—Nazism and communism—were unlike earlier

forms of political despotism. Their advocates argued that their cause was right and that the horrible means they used, though usually hidden from the outside world, would justify the end. As Marquis de Custine prophesied already in the 19th century: “Despotism is never so fearful as when it claims to do good, since it can then excuse its most repulsive acts by their intentions, and there are no longer any limits to the evil it adopts as remedy. Open crime can triumph for no more than a day; false virtues are what eternally mislead the spirit of the people”⁷⁶. Unfortunately, these words are timely even today.

Generally speaking, turning one’s face away from reality, a phenomenon first recorded by French psychologist Émile Coué, is a pathological reaction. Practiced by political leaders and shared by wider circles of the public, it may lead to new forms of totalitarianism.

⁷⁶ Astolphe, Marquis de Custine, *Letters from Russia* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 230.

List of Abbreviations

- AK – Armia Krajowa (Home Army, Poland)
- AVH – Államvédelmi Hatóság (The State Protection Authority, Hungary)
- BCP – The British Communist Party
- BNR – Belorussian National Republic
- CGIL – Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (Italian General Confederation of Labor, Italy)
- CGT – Confédération générale du travail (General Confederation of Labor, France)
- Cheka – Vserossiyskaya chrezvychaynaya komissiya po bor'bye s kontrrevolyutsiyei i sabotazhem (The All-Russian Emergency Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage, USSR)
- CPF – The Communist Party of Finland
- CPG – The Communist Party of Greece
- CPI – The Communist Party of Italy
- CPUSA – The Communist Party USA
- ECCC – Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia
- EKD – Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (German Evangelical Church, East Germany)
- FCP – French Communist Party
- FRELIMO – Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (Front for Liberation of Mozambique)
- GDR – German Democratic Republic
- GPU – Gosudarstvennoye politicheskoye upravlenie (State Political Directorate, USSR)
- GRU – Glavnoye razvedyvatel'noye upravlenie (Main Intelligence Directorate, USSR)
- HR SCOCA – Hearings before the House of Representatives Select Committee on Communist Aggression
- HSR – Hungarian Soviet Republic
- ICTY – International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

IMT	– International Military Tribunal
IPN	– Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (The Institute of National Remembrance, Poland)
JG	– Protestant Youth (East Germany)
KGB	– Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti (Committee for State Security, USSR)
KRN	– Krajowa Rada Narodowa (Home National Council, Poland)
MPLA	– Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola)
MRNC	– Mountainous Republic of Northern Caucasus
NDF	– National Democratic Front
NEP	– New Economic Policy
NKVD	– Narodnyi Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del (The People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs, USSR)
NPP	– National Peasant Party (Romania)
NSS	– National Security Service (Somalia)
OWI	– Office of War Information
PDPA	– People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PKWN	– Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego (Polish Committee of National Liberation, Poland)
PLA	– People’s Liberation Army
PPR	– Polska Partia Robotnicza (Polish Workers Party, Poland)
PRC	– People’s Republic of China
PSL	– Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (Polish Peasant Party, Poland)
PZPR	– Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza (Polish United Workers’ Party, Poland)
SDP	– Slovak Democratic Party
SED	– Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (Socialist Party of German Unity, East Germany)
SP	– Stronnictwo Pracy (Christian Democratic Labor Party, Poland)
SSR	– Soviet Socialist Republic
TRJN	– Tymczasowy Rząd Jedności Narodowej (Provisional Government of National Unity, Poland)
UCFT	– Universal Confederation of the Friends of Truth
UN	– United Nations
UNDHR	– Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNR	– Ukrainian National Republic
UPA	– Ukrainian Insurgent Army
USSR	– The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VCMF	– US Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation
WUNR	– Western Ukrainian National Republic

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