

# The Politics of World War II in Contemporary Ukraine

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*This study examines the role of political factors in attitudes toward World War II in contemporary Ukraine. The research question is which factors determine public views of the principal warring sides and their leaders in Ukraine. The analysis of the 2012 Kyiv International Institute of Sociology survey shows that regional values, political party preferences, ethnicity, language, and age have significant effects on views of the Red Army and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) during the war and attitudes toward the wartime activities of Joseph Stalin and Roman Shukhevych. Public perceptions of the German Army and Adolf Hitler in Ukraine do not vary much across regions, political parties, and ethnic, language, age, and sex groups.*

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES CONCERNING THE POLITICS OF WORLD WAR II IN UKRAINE

World War II was the most violent conflict in all of human history and specifically in the history of Ukraine. Approximately seven million residents

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of Ukraine perished during the war from 1939 to 1945.<sup>1</sup> Many Ukrainians served in different formations, such as the Red (Soviet) Army, the *Wehrmacht* (German Army), the Polish Army, and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). In independent Ukraine, particularly since the 'Orange Revolution' of 2004, World War II has become a major political battleground. There are significant divisions concerning policies, views, definitions, and commemoration of this conflict in contemporary Ukraine.<sup>2</sup>

This article is one of the first academic studies examining national attitudes toward World War II in post-Soviet Ukraine. This study analyzes the role of political factors in the perceptions of this conflict in contemporary Ukraine. The research question under examination is which factors affect public attitudes toward the principal warring parties active in Ukraine during World War II and the wartime activity of the leaders of the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and the UPA.

The first hypothesis is that regional factors, such as distinct regional political values or cultures, are major determinants of public attitudes in Ukraine concerning World War II. Political values or culture refers to the shared fundamental norms and orientations of people. These values, norms, and orientations are transferred from one generation to another by means of political socialization via family, religion, educational institutions, the mass media, and other agents of socialization. Political values change gradually over long periods of time, in contrast to political attitudes, which are much more volatile.<sup>3</sup>

Different political values or cultures emerged in regions of Ukraine as a result of distinct regional historical experiences before World War II and, to a lesser extent, during the war. These values were transferred from one generation to another, and they became major determinants of electoral behavior and foreign policy attitudes in Ukraine after it became independent in 1991. Nationalist political values evolved in Western Ukrainian regions, which experienced Polish, Czechoslovak, and Romanian rule between World War I and World War II and came under Soviet rule as result of World War II. In addition, Galicia, Bukovyna, and Transcarpathia were ruled by the Austro-Hungarian Empire before World War I. In contrast, pro-Soviet and pro-Russian political values developed in other Ukrainian regions that experienced long periods of Russian and Soviet rule. However, there are

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques Vallin, France Mesle, Serguei Adamets, and Serhii Pyrozhkov, 'A New Estimate of Ukrainian Population Losses during the Crises of the 1930s and 1940s,' *Population Studies* 56 (2002), pp. 249–264.

<sup>2</sup> Ivan Katchanovski, 'The Politics of Soviet and Nazi Genocides in Orange Ukraine,' *Europe-Asia Studies* 62 (2010) pp.973–97; David R. Marples, *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine*, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2007); Oxana Shevel, 'The Politics of Memory in a Divided Society: A Comparison of Post-Franco Spain and Post-Soviet Ukraine,' *Slavic Review* 70 (2011) pp. 137–164.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1965).

also significant value differences within these groups of regions, specifically within Western Ukraine among Galicia, Volhynia, Transcarpathia, and Bukovyna.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, there were significant regional differences in historical experiences during World War II in Ukraine, specifically among regions of Western Ukraine, such as Galicia, Volhynia, Bukovyna, and Transcarpathia, and in the East and the South. Personal experiences of the war are likely to be transmitted by people who lived during that period to their children and grandchildren through family socialization. The regional differences during the war involved variations in the occupation regimes of Nazi Germany and its Romanian and Hungarian allies and differing levels of activity of the Red Army, Soviet partisans, and the UPA. Galicia and Volhynia were incorporated into Soviet Ukraine as a result of a military takeover by the Red Army in 1939 under provisions of the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop pact between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. In 1940, Bukovyna came under Soviet control in a similar way. The German occupation of most Western regions lasted from the start of the German invasion in the summer of 1941 until 1944, and this occupation was longer compared to the occupation of the geographically Eastern regions.<sup>5</sup>

At least 5 million of the residents of Ukraine served in the Red Army, including its top echelon, during World War II.<sup>6</sup> Western Ukrainians were, on average, drafted into or volunteered for the Soviet military later than residents of most other Ukrainian regions, because the Soviet forces in Western Ukraine were either defeated or retreated soon after the German attack in 1941 without being able to implement a large-scale mobilization there. Similarly, Soviet partisans, whose maximum number in Ukraine reached about 50,000 people in the end of 1943, were less active and numerous in Western Ukraine, especially Galicia, Transcarpathia, and Bukovyna, than in the Center and to a lesser extent in the East and the South.<sup>7</sup> The majority of Soviet partisans who were active in Volhynia and Galicia were sent there as part of raiding units from Central Ukraine.

In contrast, the UPA was active primarily in Western Ukraine. It was created by the Stepan Bandera faction of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN-B) in Volhynia in the spring of 1943, and later, it extended its operations to Galicia and Bukovyna and neighboring regions in the

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<sup>4</sup> Sarah Birch, *Elections and Democratization in Ukraine* (New York: St. Martin Press, 2000); Ivan Katchanovski, *Cleft Countries: Regional Political Divisions and Cultures in Post-Soviet Ukraine and Moldova* (Stuttgart: Ibidem Verlag, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> See Karel C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> Ivan Mukovsky and Oleksandr Lysenko, *Zvytiaba i zbertovnist': Ukraintsi na frontakh druboi svitovoi viiny* (Kyiv: Knyha pamiaty Ukrainy, 1997) pp. 401.

<sup>7</sup> Anatolii Kentii and Volodymyr Lozyskii, *Viina bez poshchady i myloserdia* (Kyiv: Geneza, 2005) p. 179.

Center. An estimate, based on information reported by the UPA commanders concerning the strength of their units, puts the maximal membership of the UPA in the beginning of 1944 at about 20,000–23,000 with the majority being from Galicia.<sup>8</sup> This estimate includes members of its Security Service, which also acted as the security service of the OUN-B.

Similarly, the SS ‘Galicia’ Division was formed in 1943 under German command from Ukrainians of this region. Galician Ukrainians formed the backbone of such smaller German military formations as the Nachtigall Battalion and the Roland Battalion. These two battalions were disbanded soon after they entered Ukraine, along with other advancing German forces in 1941. Many of their members continued their service in the 201st Schutzmannschaft Battalion until the end of 1942 and then joined the UPA in 1943. In contrast, residents of the Central, Eastern, and Southern Ukraine, were much more likely to serve under German command in the Vlasov Army and other smaller collaborationist formations that were recruited, primarily, from Soviet POWs. At least a significant proportion of them joined these formations to escape POW camps in which majority of the prisoners perished as a result of the Nazis’ genocidal policies. In contrast, the SS ‘Galicia’ Division, the Nachtigall Battalion, and the Roland Battalion were recruited from volunteers.

The second research hypothesis is that political party preferences in contemporary Ukraine are a significant determinant of attitudes toward World War II. Parties of different political orientations express varying approaches toward key issues of Ukrainian history, including this war. Supporters of nationalist parties, such as Svoboda and Our Ukraine, are likely to embrace different views concerning the war, compared to supporters of pro-Communist or pro-Russian parties, such as the Communist Party and the Party of Regions. For example, Viktor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine from 2005 to 2010 and a leader of the Our Ukraine Bloc, which included his party and other nationalist parties, promoted as a centerpiece of his policy commemoration of the UPA as fighters for the Ukrainian independence and national heroes. For instance, Yushchenko awarded the Hero of Ukraine title to Roman Shukhevych, the supreme commander of the UPA. He and his bloc advocated reconciliation between veterans of the Soviet Army and the UPA.

Svoboda, a radical nationalist party, which won regional elections in Galicia in 2010 and won 10.5 percent of the national vote in the 2012 parliamentary elections, promoted similar policies, not only concerning the UPA but also concerning the SS ‘Galicia’ Division and the Nachtigall Battalion. This party, which was originally called the Social-National Party, combined

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<sup>8</sup> It is calculated from documents seized from Dmytro Klyachivsky, the UPA-North commander concerning the strength of the UPA-North and the UPA-South, and testimony of Oleksandr Lutsy concerning the strength of the UPA-West, which was under his command. See *Litopys UPA*, vol. 14 (Kyiv: Litopys UPA, 2010) 71–79; *Litopys UPA*, vol. 9 (Kyiv: Litopys UPA, 2007) 341.

radical nationalism with elements of neo-Nazi ideology. Svoboda called for removal of war monuments to Soviet soldiers, and it blocked, with help of violence, public celebrations of Victory Day in Lviv since 2011.

The Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc (BYuT), which was a key member of the Orange coalitions and presented itself as a democratic pro-Western party, advanced a populist ideology and did not emphasize its stance on such historical memory issues as World War II. However, after the loss in the 2010 presidential elections, Tymoshenko's Fatherland party and its leaders, including Yulia Tymoshenko, started also to adopt a nationalist rhetoric, and they publicly used a greeting that was used by the OUN-B and the UPA during the war.<sup>9</sup> The greeting 'Slava Ukraini' (Glory to Ukraine) and a fascist-style hand salute were modeled by the OUN on a basis of similar greetings and salutes by other fascist and semi-fascist parties in Germany (the National Socialist German Workers Party led by Adolf Hitler), Italy (the National Fascist Party led by Benito Mussolini), and Croatia (Ustasha led by Ante Pavelic).<sup>10</sup> The Fatherland Party, which was led by Arseni Yatseniuk after Tymoshenko's imprisonment, formed an electoral alliance with Svoboda.

In contrast, the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU) not only opposed the commemoration of the UPA and supported exclusive commemoration on the state level of the Red Army and Soviet partisans, but it also advocated official use of the Red Flag as the Soviet victory flag over Nazi Germany. In addition, Communist Party organizations promoted commemoration of Joseph Stalin. For example, a monument to Stalin was erected on the grounds of the regional committee of the CPU in Zaporizhzhia.

Victor Yanukovich and the government led by his Party of Regions abandoned official commemoration of the UPA on the national level after he became President of Ukraine in 2010. However, the Yanukovich policy has allowed a great deal of local autonomy to pursue differing policies of historical memory. For instance, a court in the Donetsk Region in Eastern Ukraine in 2010 ruled that Yushchenko's presidential decree awarding the Hero of Ukraine title to Shukhevych was illegal because he was not a citizen of Ukraine and was not eligible for such an award. In contrast, Shukhevych and other UPA and OUN leaders continue to be commemorated on the local level in Western Ukraine, especially Galicia and Volhynia.

The third hypothesis is that ethnicity and language significantly affect attitudes in Ukraine toward World War II. Ukrainian nationalists, both during the war and in independent Ukraine, have presented the UPA, the SS 'Galicia'

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<sup>9</sup> Personal observations.

<sup>10</sup> The OUN officially adopted these greeting and salute during their second congress in Rome in the end of August 1939, while the OUN-B reconfirmed their official use in a slightly modified form during their congress in German-occupied Krakow in April 1941. Fond 13, Sprava 376, Vol. 4, HAD SBU; Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe, 'The "Ukrainian National Revolution" of 1941: Discourse and Practice of a Fascist Movement.' *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 12 (2011) pp. 83–114.

Division, the Nachtigall Battalion, and the Roland Battalion as Ukrainian formations that fought for the independence of Ukraine, even though they acted under German command. Ethnic Ukrainians and Ukrainian speakers constituted the absolute majority of members of these German military formations and the UPA.

For example, ethnic Ukrainians comprised 98 percent of the UPA members in the UPA district 'Bohun' in the beginning of 1944. There were also 1 percent Russians, 1 percent other minorities, and no Jews.<sup>11</sup> In contrast, the proportion of Ukrainians and Ukrainian speakers in the Red Army and among the Soviet partisans in Ukraine was smaller, and they included a significant proportion of ethnic Russians and Russian speakers. For example, 57 percent of Soviets partisans in Ukraine were ethnic Ukrainians, 25 percent Russians, 8 percent Belarusians, 4 percent Poles, and 2 percent Jews.<sup>12</sup>

The fourth hypothesis is that age is an important factor in World War II attitudes in Ukraine. Members of the younger generation, who have been socialized in the educational system and mass media of independent Ukraine, are likely to differ significantly in their views concerning the war, compared to older generations, who were socialized during the Soviet period.

## DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This article starts by examining previous studies and major controversies concerning World War II in Ukraine. This section provides an essential background for analyzing results of a survey concerning contemporary attitudes towards major forces active in Ukraine during the war and their main leaders.

This study analyses data from a national survey that was commissioned by the author and that was conducted in Ukraine by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) in February 2012. The 2012 face-to-face KIIS survey of 1,031 respondents was based on a representative national sample of adult residents of Ukraine. It included a question concerning support for major formations active in Ukraine during World War II: the Soviet Army, the German Army, the UPA, and Soviet partisans. Other formations in which Ukrainians served during the war, such as the Polish Army, Hungarian Army, and the Vlasov Army, because their involvement in the war in Ukraine, were much more limited in time and scope.

Another set of questions measured attitudes toward the wartime activities of Stalin (the leader of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Communist Party and the supreme commander of the Soviet military forces), Shukhevych (the

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<sup>11</sup> Ivan Patryliak, 'Evedentsiini kartky' UPA iak statystychne dzherelo.' In *Ukrainskyi vyzvolnyi rukh* 6 (Lviv: Center for the Studies of the Liberation Movement, 2006) pp. 110–147.

<sup>12</sup> A. Gogun, *Stalinskie komandos. Ukrainskie partizanskie formirovaniia, 1941–1944*, 2nd edition. (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2012) p. 329.

supreme commander of the UPA, a leader of the OUN-B, and a deputy commander of the Nachtigall Battalion and the 201st Schutzmannschaft Battalion), and Hitler (the leader of Germany and the Nazi Party and the supreme commander of the German military forces). The survey also included questions about political preferences, namely the intention to vote for political parties, and socio-demographic questions, such as ethnicity, language, age, sex, education, place of residence, and region of residence.

## PREVIOUS STUDIES AND MAJOR CONTROVERSIES CONCERNING WORLD WAR II IN UKRAINE

Previous studies of World War II in Ukraine have been primarily conducted by historians. These studies have shown that Ukraine was one of the principal battlefields of the war.<sup>13</sup> Large numbers of Ukrainians were fighting for different parties during World War II, primarily for the Soviet Union, and to a much lesser extent Nazi Germany, Poland, and the UPA. Researchers have also examined debates among historians concerning World War II in Ukraine, particularly the activity of the UPA and the OUN during the war and their coverage in the mass media and school textbooks.<sup>14</sup>

The number of academic studies that have analyzed attitudes concerning World War II in contemporary Ukraine is limited. A few previous survey-based academic studies have mostly examined public opinion concerning Nazi genocidal policies in Ukraine and concerning Stalin and Stepan Bandera.<sup>15</sup> Non-academic polls, generally, have presented overall attitudes toward specific aspects of World War II, such as views of Victory Day or perceptions of such leaders or commanders as Stalin, Hitler, and Shukhevych, without explicitly analyzing which factors are main determinants of these attitudes.<sup>16</sup> Some polls indicated that a significant proportion of Western Ukrainians regarded residents of the geographic East and South as Stalinists, while significant percentages of people in the East and South perceived residents of Western Ukraine as fascists.<sup>17</sup>

The Soviet Ukrainian and nationalist Ukrainian historical memory policies and public discourses concerning the place and the role of Ukrainians

<sup>13</sup> See, for instance, Berkhoff; Norman Davies, *No Simple Victory: World War II in Europe, 1939–1945* (New York: Penguin, 2006); Mukovsky and Lysenko; Subtelny.

<sup>14</sup> David Marples, 'Anti-Soviet Partisans and Ukrainian Memory,' *East European Politics & Societies* 24 (2010) pp. 26–43; Marples, *Heroes*; Rodgers.

<sup>15</sup> Katchanovski, Politics; Serhi Makeev 'Sotsialno-kulturna spetsyfika rehioniv Ukrainy,' In *Rehionalna Ukraina* (Kyiv: Heoprynt, 2003).

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, *65 let velikoi pobedy. Vtoraia mirovaia voina glazami ukraintsev* (Kyiv: Research & Branding Group, 2010).

<sup>17</sup> See Oleksandr Feldman, 'Rehional'na tolerantnist: l'vivski podii daly rezul'tat?' *Ukrainska pravda*, 19 July 2011.

during World War II differed in many key aspects, and they were politicized to various degrees. In the Soviet Union, academic studies and historical memory policies emphasized the leadership role of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union during the war, which was called the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945. They portrayed mass popular resistance to the Nazi rule by Soviet partisans and the communist underground, the multi-ethnic character of the Soviet military, and the Red Army as the liberator of Ukraine. However, the size of the Soviet partisan movement and the communist underground in Ukraine was inflated during the Soviet times, as was the size of German military losses from their activities. Ukrainians were presented as making important contributions in all of these aspects, but the leading role of Russians was underlined. The Soviet perspective presented the incorporation of Western Ukraine in 1939 into the Soviet Union as a unification that was supported by Ukrainians. The OUN was portrayed as an organization of “bourgeois nationalists” that did not have the support of the working class and peasants and that collaborated with Nazi Germany during the war. Soviet studies claimed that the UPA was created with German help.<sup>18</sup>

A cult of Stalin as a great Soviet and Communist Party leader and military commander who won the war was instituted after the end of World War II. The Stalin cult was replaced by a de-Stalinization campaign initiated by Nikita Khrushchev in 1956. The de-Stalinization policy was reversed to a limited extent during the Leonid Brezhnev era, but Mikhail Gorbachev pursued a new de-Stalinization campaign. In independent Ukraine, especially after the ‘Orange Revolution,’ Stalin was mainly presented as responsible for the artificial famine in the beginning of the 1930s that killed approximately 3 million people in Soviet Ukraine.<sup>19</sup>

The Soviet academic and public discourse concerning the war was heavily politicized and censored, and some historical facts and data were falsified to reflect the party line and official ideology. The Soviet studies and memory policies omitted or minimized military defeats, mass desertions, and the mass surrender of millions of Soviet soldiers and commanders in the first part of the Soviet-German war, in particular in Ukraine, for instance, during the Kyiv operation in 1941. Soviet studies and public discourse did not acknowledge the existence of the Soviet-Nazi pact, which enabled the Soviet Union to incorporate most of Western Ukraine. War crimes were covered up that had been committed on the orders of the Soviet leadership, in particular by Stalin and by the Soviet secret police during World War II in Ukraine, such as the mass murder of prisoners in Western Ukrainian cities and towns following the German invasion in June 1941 and the mass killing of Polish POW

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<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Volodymyr Zamlynsky, *Tavrovani prezysrtstvom narodu* (Kyiv: Polityvydav Ukrainy, 1974).

<sup>19</sup> Vallin, Mesle, Adamets, and Pyrozhkov.



officers and policemen in the Kharkiv Region of Eastern Ukraine during the Katyn operation in 1940.

After the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Communist Party of Ukraine and other pro-communist or pro-Soviet organizations and scholars to various degrees continued to present key aspects of the Soviet perspective on World War II. They often repeat Soviet claims about a leading role of the Nachtigall battalion commanded by Shukhevych in the mass killings during a pogrom in Lviv in the beginning of July 1941 about creation of the UPA by the German military intelligence (Abwehr).<sup>20</sup> However, this perspective, which was imposed by the Soviet state on the entire society, lost its Soviet-era status as the official and dominant doctrine in academic research, the national education system, and the mass media after Ukraine became independent in 1991.

Ukrainian nationalist viewpoints on World War II became dominant in the Ukrainian diaspora in the West, specifically in the United States, the UK, and Canada, after the war. A large number of leaders and members of the OUN-B, the OUN-M, the UPA, and other nationalist organizations that collaborated to various degrees with Nazi Germany got refuge in the Western countries. The same applies to a large number of commanders and servicemen of military and police formations, such as the SS "Galicia" Division, the 31 SMdS battalion, the Nachtigall Battalion, and the 201st Schutzmannschaft Battalion, that were formed with involvement of the OUN-M and the OUN-B for service under German command during the war. Their veterans promoted their ideological perspective on the war, while denying or ignoring the involvement of these organizations and formations in mass murder.<sup>21</sup>

Many key elements of this perspective were adopted and promoted by President Yushchenko and nationalist parties in Ukraine. The nationalist historical memory perspective presents the UPA, the SS 'Galicia' Division and other military formations organized by the OUN-B and the OUN-M in the German Army as fighters for Ukrainian independence. The UPA is portrayed as a Ukrainian military force that was created in Volhynia in October 1942, enjoyed popular support, and was active not only in Western Ukraine but also in many Central, Southern, and Eastern regions of Ukraine. The UPA is presented not only as anti-Soviet but also as an anti-Nazi military force that liberated significant parts of Western Ukraine from German control during

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<sup>20</sup> See A. Voitsekhovskiy, Zh. Dygas, and H. Tkachenko, *Bez prava na rehabilitatsiyu*, 2nd edition. (Kyiv: Kyiv Historical Society, 2006). However, there is evidence that individual members of the battalion participated in the Lviv pogrom, and that the Nachtigall Battalion carried out mass executions of Jews near Vinnytsia in summer of 1941 (See John-Paul Himka, 'The Lviv Pogrom of 1941: The Germans, Ukrainian Nationalists, and the Carnival Crowd,' *Canadian Slavonic Papers/Revue canadienne des slavistes* LIII (2011) pp. 209–243.

<sup>21</sup> See Mykola Lebed, *UPA*, 2nd edition (New York: Suchasnist, 1987); Mykhailo Karkots-Vovk, *Vid Voronizha do Ukrain's'koho legionu samooborony*, 22nd edition (Rivne: Kaligraf, 2002).

the war and which included many Jews and representatives of other nations in its ranks.<sup>22</sup>

The UPA's strength and popularity, the extent of the participation of Jews and other minorities, and the magnitude of its anti-Nazi activity are significantly inflated, while its involvement in the mass murder of Poles during its ethnic cleansing campaign in Volhynia is minimized or justified as a retaliation for discriminatory policies of the Polish government before the war. Similarly, collaboration of the OUN-B and the UPA with Nazi Germany and the involvement of the OUN-B and militia organized by the OUN-B in anti-Jewish pogroms and Nazi-led mass executions of Jews, Poles, and those deemed as Soviet and Communist activists in Lviv and many other locations, primarily in Western Ukraine, is often denied or deliberately ignored.<sup>23</sup> The same concerns the involvement of the police formations, which formed the basis of the UPA in 1943, in Nazi-led genocide of Jews, Ukrainians, Poles, Russians, and Belarusians.<sup>24</sup>

The OUN and its two factions after the split collaborated with the German security and intelligence agencies and the German military in creation of military and police formations, intelligence-gathering, and sabotage and diversions prior and during the invasions and occupation of Poland and Soviet Ukraine from the 1930s until the end of the summer or fall of 1941. This organizational collaboration was suspended by the German side which did not accept plans of the OUN-B and the OUN-M to create a quasi-independent Ukrainian satellite state allied with Nazi Germany. Since the end of 1943, the UPA and the OUN-B leaders conducted secret negotiations that resulted in tactical collaboration of the UPA and the Bandera faction of the OUN with Abwehr, I-C, and the Wehrmacht, and the Hungarian military, against the Red Army and partisans. It involved, in particular, secret agreements by the UPA not to attack the Axis forces, collect and supply of intelligence by the UPA, training of radio-operators, and supply of weapons to the UPA.<sup>25</sup>

There is also evidence of the OUN collaboration with Nazi Germany against the United States in the beginning of World War II. For example, archival documents show that the U.S. Secret Service, the FBI, the State Department, a special intelligence unit created by U.S. President Franklin

<sup>22</sup> See, for instance, Volodymyr Kosyk, *Ukraina i Nimechchyna u Drubii svitovii viini*. (Lviv: Naukove tovarystvo im. T. Shevchenka u Lvovi, 1993); *Ukrains'ka povstans'ka armii: Istoriia neskorenykh*. (Lviv: Center for the Studies of the Liberation Movement, 2008).

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> Himka; Per A. Rudling, 'The OUN, the UPA and the Holocaust: A Study in the Manufacturing of Historical Myths,' *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies 2107* (Pittsburgh, PA: University Center for Russian and East European Studies, 2011).

<sup>25</sup> *Litopys Ukrains'koi Povstans'koi Armii*. Vol. 27 (Toronto: Litopys UPA, 1997) pp. 180–236; Fond 13, Sprava 372, Vol. 001, 034, 035, 057, HDA SBU, Kyiv; *OUN 241–243, 317, 426–427; Ukrainskie natsionalisticheskie organizatsii v gody Vtoroi mirovoi voyny. Dokumenty*. Vol. 1, 2. (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2012).

Delano Roosevelt, and other agencies investigated in 1940–1942 an involvement of OUN and specifically, OUN-B, members, leaders, and sympathizers in a Nazi-led plot to assassinate President Roosevelt. They indicate that Christian Zinsser, an agent of German security services who worked under cover of a German press attaché in Buenos Aires in Argentina, recruited in 1940 Hryhori Matseiko with a mission to kill President Roosevelt. Matseiko was a leading OUN terrorist who assassinated the minister of internal affairs of Poland on the order of Stepan Bandera in 1934. The American, British, and Soviet intelligence services reported involvement of the OUN, in particular, Matseiko, in assisting role in the assassination of the King of Yugoslavia and the Foreign Minister in France in 1934.<sup>26</sup>

The policemen and other ex-Nazi collaborators constituted the majority of the UPA members at least until the beginning of 1944, and a significant proportion afterwards.<sup>27</sup> The analysis of biographies of 69 top UPA commanders shows that at least 72 percent of them collaborated with Nazi Germany and its allies. They served in the Schutzmannschaft Battalion 201, and other police and quasi-police formations (49 percent), intelligence, military, and security schools in Germany and Nazi-occupied Poland (29 percent), in the Nachtigall and Roland Battalions and Bergbauern-Hilfe (the Sushko Legion) (16 percent), local and regional administration (16 percent), the SS Galicia Division (1 percent).<sup>28</sup> In addition, at least 28 percent of the top UPA commanders, including Roman Shukhevych, Dmytro Kliachkivsky, and Vasyl Kuk, collaborated with the German intelligence and security agencies, primarily, the Abwehr, and to a lesser extent, the I-C and SiPo and SD in the beginning or in the end of the war.<sup>29</sup> For example, there is evidence that Shukhevych, in addition to serving in summer 1941 as a deputy commander of the Nachtigall Battalion that was organized by Abwehr, attended a SiPo and SD (Gestapo) School in Zakopane soon after the German occupation of Poland and oversaw intelligence gathering by the OUN-B in Ukraine on Gestapo requests shortly before the German invasion of the Soviet Union.<sup>30</sup>

The UPA was engaged in anti-German activity primarily since its creation by the OUN-B in Volhynia in spring 1943 and until the end of 1943. However, this activity did not involve large-scale attacks against the Wehrmacht and military formations of German allies, such as Hungary and Romania. The

<sup>26</sup> Henry Field Papers, Box 52, Folder '1964,' Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York; Department of State Confidential Decimal File, Case 800.20211/Matzejko. National Archives, College Park, Maryland; Pavel Sudoplatov, *Spetsoperatsii. Lubianka i Kreml 1930–1950 gody* (Moscow: OLMA-Press, 1998/2003) p. 26.

<sup>27</sup> Ivan Katchanovski, 'OUN(b) ta natsystycki masovi vbyvstva litom 1941 roku na istorychnii Volyni.' *Ukraina moderna* 20 (2012).

<sup>28</sup> Calculated from Petro Sodol, *Ukrainska povstancha armiiia, 1943–49*. Vol. 1. (New York: Proloh, 1994) with use of other sources, such as archival documents, historical publications, and memoirs.

<sup>29</sup> See, for instance, *Litopys Ukrains'koi* 180–236; *OUN* 241–243, 317, 426–427; *Ukrainskie*.

<sup>30</sup> Berkhoff, pp. 289, 298; Vladyslav Nakonechny, *Volyn - Kryvave pole viiny*. (Ternopil: Pidruchnyky i posibnyky, 2006) 53.

analysis of German, Polish, OUN-UPA and Soviet sources concerning specific UPA clashes indicates that the overall losses inflicted by the UPA on the Axis forces were minimal, and that these losses, most likely, totaled several hundred men killed, primarily, members of police formations, including formations created from Poles and Soviet POWs.<sup>31</sup>

Three percent of the top UPA commanders were killed by German forces, their Axis allies, or local Ukrainian and Polish auxiliary police. Most of them were killed in a single ambush on May 13, 1943, or while crossing the German-Soviet frontline in 1944. In comparison, 55 percent of the top UPA commanders, including Shukhevych, died fighting security and military forces of the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and East Germany.<sup>32</sup>

The nationalist perspective ignores or denies involvement of the SS 'Galicia' Division in the mass murder. For example, Galician regiments, before majority of their members formally joined the SS 'Galicia' Division and minority joined the UPA in 1944, massacred close to 1,000 Poles in Huta Peniatska with assistance of an UPA unit, and they participated in other massacres of Polish civilians.<sup>33</sup> The 31 SMdS battalion, or the Ukrainian Legion of Self-Defense, which was organized by local leaders of the Melnyk faction of the OUN (OUN-M) and SiPo and SD in Volhynia in the end of 1943 on the basis of OUN-M units, created to a large extent from the local police, had a similar record before it was mostly incorporated into the SS 'Galicia' Division in March 1945.<sup>34</sup> Significant numbers of its commanders and members were incorporated into the UPA before they enlisted in the 31 SMdS battalion or joined the UPA while serving in this formation. The 31st battalion units and detachments, which comprised most or significant parts of its servicemen, are implicated by different sources in numerous mass killings, often conducted under a pretext of anti-partisan actions. They included mass executions and other similar massacres of Ukrainians and Jews in Pidhaitsi and Ustyluh and Poles in Edwardopole, Korchunke, Ameryka, Smoligow, Laskow, Chlaniow, and Wladyslawin, and participation in the suppression of the Warsaw uprising in 1944.<sup>35</sup> For example, analysis of eyewitness testimonies, interviews

<sup>31</sup> The German losses inflicted by the UPA are greatly inflated in many previous studies that put the number of Germans casualties in thousands or tens of thousands (See, for instance, Oleksandr Denyshchuk, *Borot'ba UPA proty nimets'kykh okupantiv*, Vols. 1 and 2. (Rivne: PPDM, 2008). However, these estimates lack reliability and validity, because they rely on OUN and UPA sources that are not corroborated by other sources, such as German documents, and give implausible ratios of German vs. UPA losses that differ by an order of magnitude, and reverse ratios of killed to wounded.

<sup>32</sup> Calculated from Sodol with use of other sources.

<sup>33</sup> Per Anders Rudling, "They Defended Ukraine": The 14. Waffen-Grenadier-Division der SS (Galizische Nr. 1) Revisited,' *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 25 (2012) pp. 329–368.

<sup>34</sup> Oleh Klymenko and Serhii Tkachov. *Ukrainci v politstii v Reikhskomisariati 1941–44 rr. (Pivdenna Volyn)* (Kharkiv: Ranok, 2012) pp. 193–201, 236–259.

<sup>35</sup> See Klymenko and Tkachov; Sol Littman, *Pure Soldiers or Sinister Legion: The Ukrainian 14th Waffen-SS Division* (Montreal: Black Rose, 2003) pp. 53–58; Marcin Majewski, 'Przyczynek do wojennych dziejów Ukrainskiego Legionu Samoobrony (1943–1945),' *Pamiec i Spraawiedliwosc* 2 (2005) pp. 295–327;

with local residents, archival documents, and the fact of an urgent redeployment of this unit from the Kremenets area to the village of Pidhaisi near Lutsk a day before a massacre there, indicates its likely involvement in killing of 20 Ukrainian residents of Pidhaisi, half of whom were children, on December 3, 1943. The same sources indicate that its units executed close to 200 Lutsk prisoners and Jews in Pidhaisi in January 1944.

The nationalist narrative has downplayed the participation of Ukrainians in the Red Army, compared to the German military and police formations, such as the SS Galicia Division, and in Soviet partisans, compared to the UPA. It emphasizes lack of military effectiveness of the Soviet Army and partisans, their earlier collaboration with Nazi Germany, and their responsibility for provoking Nazi mass executions of Ukrainians, for example, in Kortelisy. However, the data cited in this article indicate that more Ukrainians served in the Soviet military and partisans formations for a much longer period of the war compared to those in the German formations and the UPA. Similarly, anti-Nazi activity and casualties inflicted on the German Army, its allies, and local police were much more significant compared to the UPA. For example, an estimate based on incomplete German reports of its losses and self-reported losses sustained by the partisan units indicates that the Soviet partisans in Ukraine killed about 15,000–25,000 Axis soldiers, policemen, and local collaborators, while, as noted, the losses inflicted by the UPA constituted about several hundred.<sup>36</sup> In contrast to the UPA, former policemen and other Nazi-collaborators comprised a small minority of among Soviet partisans in Ukraine (7 percent) and, especially, their commanders. However, the partisan units were subordinated to the NKVD, and a significant proportion of partisan commanders in Ukraine previously served in the NKVD.<sup>37</sup>

The nationalist perspective has presented the Red Army and partisans as lacking popular support during the war in Ukraine, in contrast to the UPA. It characterized Ukrainian soldiers as mobilized into the Soviet Army by force and fighting under the threat of executions by the NKVD. Mass surrender or capture by German forces of Red Army soldiers in Ukraine in 1941 and 1942 has been treated as evidence of their anti-Soviet outlook.<sup>38</sup> The nationalist perspective emphasizes Soviet war crimes, such as mass executions of prisoners in Western Ukraine in 1941. It portrays Stalin and Hitler as allies who started World War II in 1939 by attacking Poland, which resulted in the forced incorporation of Western Ukraine by the Soviet Union. In contrast, the

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SMdS-Batl. 31, Targowisko, den 12.10.1944. I am grateful to Dr. Stephen Ankier for supplying a copy of the last document.

<sup>36</sup> Estimated from data cited in Gogun.

<sup>37</sup> See Gogun, pp. 329–333.

<sup>38</sup> See, for instance, V. Hrynevych, 'Suspil'no-politychni nastroi naselennia Ukrainy v roky Druhoi svitovoi viiny: istoriohrafichni notatky.' In *Problemy istorii Ukrainy: fakty, sudzbennia, posbuky*, 16 (Kyiv: Institute of History of Ukraine, 2007) pp. 405–434.

Nazi-led mass murder of Jews, Ukrainians, Russians, Poles, and its genocidal nature have been often downplayed or ignored.

Like their Soviet counterparts, nationalist politicians and historians have often employed falsified historical sources or selectively use sources. Examples of such falsifications include October 14, 1942, as the date of the UPA's creation, the killing of German General Lutze by an UPA unit, an order by Zhukov to expel Ukrainians to Siberia in the end of the war, the German invasion of the Soviet Union as a preventive war to stop a Soviet attack, and misrepresentation of mostly Jewish victims of Nazi-led executions, whose remains were uncovered in 2011–2012 in Volodymyr-Volynskyi as Polish victims of Soviet executions.<sup>39</sup> Many indications of collaboration of the OUN and the UPA with Nazi Germany have been either omitted in the published versions of the documents, or such documents remain unpublished or unreported.

Western academic studies on Ukraine and Ukrainians during World War II have presented a more diverse perspective. However, with some exceptions, these studies did not offer a comprehensive analysis of Ukraine during the war, the German occupation, and Nazi-led mass murder in Ukraine, but dealt with Ukraine as part of the analysis of German-Soviet war, the Holocaust, and collaboration.<sup>40</sup> Many of them, especially during the Cold War, offered a distorted view of certain important aspects of this conflict in Ukraine. For example, they often explicitly or implicitly equated Ukrainians with the OUN and the UPA and the SS 'Galicia' Division, Nazi collaborators or 'bystanders.' Many studies have presented public greetings of the advancing German Army in 1941 as evidence of the pro-German and anti-Soviet attitudes of Ukrainians, even though their representativeness to the entire population of Ukraine cannot be established with great certainty. They have argued that these attitudes changed only as a result of the Nazi occupation policy.

Many Western studies have emphasized the collaboration of Ukrainians with Nazi Germany, especially in the Holocaust. The often characterized the local militia and police as 'Ukrainian' even though these formations were in many cases organized and de facto controlled by the OUN-B and the OUN-M. Similarly, perpetrators of anti-Jewish pogroms in Western Ukraine in the beginning of the German occupation were often described as 'Ukrainians,' even though many of these pogroms, such as in Lviv, were spearheaded by militia organized by the OUN-B. Nazi-led executions, which coincided with or followed these pogroms, for instance in Lviv, Ternopil, Kremianets, Zolochiv, and Zboriv, and which were carried out with assistance of the

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<sup>39</sup> See Katchanovski, OUN(b). Similarly, a medieval mass burial near the Pschenychnyky in the Ivano-Frankivsk Region was misrepresented by the media and local politicians as a NKVD execution site dating to the beginning of World War II.

<sup>40</sup> Berkhoff.

OUN-organized militia or by the militia itself on German orders, were often described as pogroms or parts of the pogroms.<sup>41</sup>

In contrast, the much more numerous participation of Ukrainians in the war against Nazi Germany and the crucial contribution of Ukrainians to the defeat of Nazi Germany have been ignored or minimized, even though the overall number of Ukrainians who fought during the war in the Soviet Army and partisans, exceeded the number of their counterparts who served in the German military and police formations. The Soviet Union and Red Army soldiers and commanders, including Ukrainians, have often been referred to as 'Russia' and 'Russians,' even in many academic studies published in the West after the break-up of the Soviet Union. The Western portrayals of Stalin have often treated him as a Russian and have minimized or ignored his communist ideology and his Georgian origin.<sup>42</sup>

The majority of Western studies, especially during the Cold War, have overlooked the genocidal nature of the war and of Nazi occupational polices under Hitler's leadership with regard to Ukrainians, Russians, Belarusians, and Poles. The mass murder of several million Ukrainian civilians and POWs as a result of the Nazis' genocidal polices, which involved mass executions and mass death as result of artificial starvation and the creation of other unlivable conditions by means of burning entire villages or infectious diseases, has often been ignored or attributed to the war or to both Nazi and Soviet policies.<sup>43</sup> Until the appearance of relatively recent studies, the Wehrmacht was generally presented as having no direct role in the mass murder of Jews and Ukrainian and Russian civilians and POWs.<sup>44</sup>

In contrast, war crimes committed by the Red Army, including the rapes of a large number of women during its occupation of Germany at the end of the war, have received much greater publicity in many Western countries. However, estimates indicating that the rapes involved a very large proportion of Soviet soldiers and German women are unreliable and involve large margins of error because they are derived from the interpolation of data from two hospitals in Berlin to the entire Germany. The studies of the mass rape in

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<sup>41</sup> See Himka; Lower Wendy, 'Pogroms, Mob Violence and Genocide in Western Ukraine, Summer 1941: Varied Histories, Explanations and Comparisons.' *Journal of Genocide Research* 13 (2011) pp. 217–246.

<sup>42</sup> See Chris Bellamy, *Absolute War: Soviet Russia in the Second World War* (New York: Knopf, 2007); Richard Overy, *Russia's War* (New York: Penguin 1998).

<sup>43</sup> For example, Snyder acknowledges genocidal Nazi plans towards the people of the Soviet Union, including Ukrainians. But he argues that these plans were not implemented and dismisses demographic estimates of the Soviet civilian losses during the war as not reliable, while accepting similar demographic estimates of Ukrainian losses during the Soviet famine in 1933 and the Polish victims of the UPA (Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin*. (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

<sup>44</sup> Hannes Heer and Klaus Naumann (eds.), *War of Extermination: The German Military in World War II, 1941–1944* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000); Ronald Smelser and Edward J. Davies, II, *The Myth of the Eastern Front: The Nazi-Soviet War in American Popular Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Germany by Red Army soldiers have typically ignored that Ukrainians in the final stages of the war on the Eastern front, including in occupied Germany, comprised a significant proportion and, in some armies, a majority of Soviet soldiers.<sup>45</sup>

The Western perspective has typically presented the Soviet Union as becoming an ally of Nazi Germany as a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact and as jointly occupying and dividing Poland in 1939. However, the Soviet alliance with Nazi Germany was mostly tactical and opportunistic, in contrast to German strategic and ideological allies, such as Italy, Japan, Hungary, Romania, and other Axis powers. The Soviet-German cooperation was mainly confined in the beginning of the war to the division of the control over a number of East Central European states, such as Poland, and the takeover by the Soviet Union of Western Ukraine, Western Belarus, the Baltic States, and Bessarabia.

In Western countries, the role of the Eastern Front, and specifically of Ukraine, as the main battlefield of World War II has often been diminished in favor of the Western front and the war of the Western allies with Japan. The main contribution of the Red Army to the defeat of Nazi Germany has been minimized in favor of the US and British contributions and the Lend-Lease assistance provided by the United States to the Soviet Union. For example, German military losses on the Eastern Front constituted more than three-quarters of its total military losses during the war.<sup>46</sup> However, a 1994 Gallup poll showed that only 9 percent of Britons, 11 percent of Americans, 21 percent of Germans, and 25 percent of French respondents believed that the Soviet Union contributed most to the defeat of Nazi Germany.<sup>47</sup>

## SURVEY RESULTS

The 2012 KIIS Survey shows that the absolute majority of the residents of Ukraine, given a choice of the various forces active in Ukraine during World War II, support most the Soviet Army (75 percent). In addition, 4 percent favor the Soviet partisans. The UPA is a choice of 8 percent of the respondents. In contrast, only 1 percent support the German Army most. The relative majorities (41 percent each) of adult Ukrainians have negative views of both Stalin and Shukhevych during the war. However, a much greater percentage (32 percent) hold very positive or mostly positive views of the wartime activities of Stalin compared to Shukhevych (14 percent). The absolute majority (91 percent) of the respondents regard Hitler's actions during

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<sup>45</sup> See Antony Beevor, *The Fall of Berlin 1945* (New York: Viking, 2002).

<sup>46</sup> Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996) p. 1013.

<sup>47</sup> Gallup Poll, June 2, 1994, The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research.



**TABLE 1** Attitudes Towards Activity of Joseph Stalin, Adolf Hitler, and Roman Shukhevych During World War II, 2012 KIIS Survey, Percent

	Joseph Stalin	Roman Shukhevych	Adolf Hitler
Very positive	9	7	0
Mostly positive	23	7	1
Neutral	18	13	3
Mostly negative	19	11	6
Very negative	22	30	85
Don't know the person	1	21	1
Don't know/not sure	8	12	3
Total, percent	100	100	100
N	1030	1031	1031

the war negatively, while only 1 percent express a positive opinion of the leader of Nazi Germany (see [Table 1](#)).

Regional differences in contemporary attitudes in Ukraine toward the Red Army and the UPA during World War II and the wartime activities of Stalin and Shukhevych outweigh all other factors, including political party preference, ethnicity, language, and age. Galicia has the lowest level of support for the Soviet Army (23 percent) and the highest level of support for the UPA (45 percent). Surprisingly, the relative or absolute majorities of people in other regions of historically Western Ukraine (Volhynia, Bukovyna, and Transcarpathia), given a choice, express their preference for the Soviet Army. The UPA is favored by 24 percent of the respondents in Volhynia, even though the UPA was first established in this region by the OUN-B in the spring of 1943. Kyiv City and other regions in the geographic Center, South, and the East express stronger backing for the Soviet Army (81–89 percent) and a lower level of the support for the UPA (1–4 percent), compared to the Western regions.

Regional differences in support for Soviet partisans are much smaller. It is noteworthy that it is lowest (0 percent) in regions where they did not operate, such as Bukovyna, Transcarpathia, and Kyiv City. In contrast, differences in preferences for the Soviet partisans between other regions of Western Ukraine (5 percent in Galicia and 4 percent in Volhynia) and the South and the East (8 percent and 6 percent, respectively) are within statistical margin of error. The regional variation in backing for the German Army is not significant. The Wehrmacht is supported by 0 percent–1 percent of the respondents in all regions. ([Table 2](#)).

The 2012 KIIS Survey shows that the activities of Stalin during World War II are much less popular in Galicia (9 percent), Kyiv City (16 percent), and Volhynia (17 percent) than in the geographic East (40 percent) and the South (47 percent). Conversely, the Soviet leader is viewed much more negatively in Galicia (74 percent), Volhynia (66 percent), and Kyiv City (55 percent) than in the East (30 percent) and the South (32 percent).

**TABLE 2** Regional Attitudes Towards Major Forces and Leaders During World War II, 2012 KIIS Survey, Percent

	Galicia	Volhynia	Bukovyna	Transcarpathia	Kyiv City	Center	South	East
Soviet Army	23	31	74	70	89	81	81	89
Soviet partisans	5	4	0	0	0	3	8	6
UPA	45	24	11	9	2	4	1	2
German Army	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
None	11	16	16	17	5	5	4	1
Don't know/not sure	16	24	0	4	4	7	7	3
Total, percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Joseph Stalin</i>								
Positive	9	17	29	33	16	27	47	40
Neutral	8	15	33	33	14	20	12	21
Negative	74	66	38	21	55	41	32	30
Don't know the person	1	0	0	13	4	1	0	2
Don't know/not sure	9	2	0	0	11	11	10	7
Total, percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Adolf Hitler</i>								
Positive	1	4	0	4	0	0	1	1
Neutral	1	2	19	0	4	5	1	4
Negative	90	89	81	96	93	90	92	92
Don't know the person	2	0	0	0	4	1	2	2
Don't know/not sure	7	4	0	0	0	3	5	2
Total, percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Roman Shukhevych</i>								
Positive	70	26	5	13	15	10	1	3
Neutral	8	19	57	35	31	15	8	9
Negative	6	21	19	4	26	36	59	57
Don't know the person	9	15	14	39	7	25	23	23
Don't know/not sure	8	19	5	9	22	14	10	9
Total, percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	106	47	21	23	55	292	145	342

The attitudes toward Shukhevych have the opposite regional patterns. He is favored by the absolute majority of the respondents in Galicia (70 percent), compared to a small minority in the South and the East (1 percent and 3 percent, respectively). The wartime activities of the UPA leader are supported by minorities of people in all other regions. His support ranges from 5 percent in Bukovyna to 26 percent in Volhynia. However, negative views of Shukhevych in the Western Ukrainian regions are much less common compared to the rest of Ukraine. The wartime record of Hitler is viewed negatively by the overwhelming majorities of residents of all regions,

including Bukovyna (81 percent), Volhynia (89 percent), Galicia (90 percent), the Center (90 percent), Kyiv City (93 percent), the South (92 percent), the East (92 percent), and Transcarpathia (96 percent). (See [Table 2](#)).

As expected, there are significant differences in attitudes toward major World War II belligerents in Ukraine among the supporters of different political parties ([Table 3](#)). Potential Svoboda voters are much more likely to side with the UPA (42 percent), compared to the Communist Party and Party of Regions backers (0 percent and 1 percent, respectively). It is striking, however, that half (50 percent) of likely Svoboda voters and majorities of likely voters for UDAR, led by Vitali Klitschko (Klychko) (63 percent), *Front zmin*, led by Arseni Yatseniuk (64 percent), and the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc (BYuT) (71 percent) prefer the Red Army over the UPA during the war. Two-thirds (68 percent) of supporters of other nationalist and ex-Orange parties, including Our Ukraine, led by ex-President Yushchenko, and two parties that emerged from *Rukh*, favor the Soviet Army.

However, the number of the respondents who declared their intention to vote for these parties is too small to examine the views of followers of each of these parties separately. The Red Army has the highest support among potential voters for the Party of Regions (90 percent), the Communist Party (89 percent), and other ex-communist parties (94 percent).<sup>48</sup> Conversely, the UPA is preferred choice of 1 percent of the Party of Regions voters, 0 percent of the Communist voters, and 6 percent of other ex-Communist parties. The preference for Soviet partisans among backers of major political parties differs much less compared to the UPA support ([Table 3](#)).

Similarly, Shukhevych is backed by the majority of potential Svoboda voters (57 percent). His support among other nationalist and ex-Orange parties (23–28 percent) is much higher than among Party of Regions (5 percent) and Communist Party (2 percent) voters, but his activities during World War II are embraced by only a minority of the followers of the BYuT (23 percent) and of other major parties of this part of the political spectrum. Conversely, Stalin's wartime activities have much greater support among the respondents who intend to vote for the Communist Party (72 percent), the Party of Regions (42 percent), and Strong Ukraine (45 percent), compared to backers of Svoboda (18 percent), BYuT (20 percent), *Front zmin* (23 percent), UDAR (26 percent), and other nationalist and ex-Orange factions (21 percent) ([Table 3](#)).

There are no significant variations in the levels of support for the Wehrmacht and Hitler among the backers of different political parties. Between 0 and 2 percent of potential voters of all major political parties favored the German Army and Hitler. In both cases, this includes supporters

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<sup>48</sup> The Progressive Socialist Party and the Socialist Party.

**TABLE 3** Attitudes Towards Major Forces and Leaders During World War II by Political Party Preference, 2012 KIIS Survey, Percent

	Svoboda	Other nationalist parties	<i>Front zmin</i>	UDAR	BYuT	Party of Regions	Strong Ukraine	Communist Party	Other ex-communist parties	Other parties
Soviet Army	50	68	64	63	71	90	70	89	94	84
Soviet partisans	4	7	4	12	5	3	15	8	0	0
UPA	42	16	14	5	13	1	15	0	6	7
German Army	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0
None	0	7	9	10	6	3	0	0	0	10
Don't know/not sure	4	3	10	10	5	3	0	2	0	0
Total, percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Joseph Stalin</i>										
Positive	18	21	23	26	20	42	45	72	41	12
Neutral	11	27	17	24	21	16	17	5	12	46
Negative	68	52	54	36	53	34	29	18	47	39
Don't know/not sure	4	0	6	14	6	0	0	5	0	3
Total, percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Adolf Hitler</i>										
Positive	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Neutral	7	3	0	0	5	4	2	5	0	15
Negative	93	94	98	95	91	91	95	92	94	76
Don't know/not sure	0	3	1	5	3	4	2	3	6	9
Total, percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Roman Shukhevych</i>										
Positive	57	28	34	17	23	5	5	2	6	9
Neutral	11	28	19	26	15	8	17	5	12	24
Negative	11	28	26	19	31	58	54	65	65	42
Don't know/not sure	22	15	21	38	32	30	25	28	18	24
Total, percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	28	32	80	42	137	160	41	63	17	33

**TABLE 4** Attitudes Towards Major Forces and Leaders During World War II by Ethnicity, 2012 KIIS Survey, Percent

	Ukrainians	Russians	Other
Soviet Army	71	91	73
Soviet partisans	5	4	4
UPA	10	1	6
German Army	1	0	0
None	6	0	10
Don't know/not sure	8	3	7
Total, percent	100	100	100
<i>Joseph Stalin</i>			
Positive	28	46	40
Neutral	19	16	19
Negative	43	32	36
Don't know/not sure	11	6	4
Total, percent	100	100	100
<i>Adolf Hitler</i>			
Positive	1	2	6
Neutral	4	3	4
Negative	91	93	90
Don't know/not sure	5	2	0
Total, percent	100	100	100
<i>Roman Shukhevych</i>			
Positive	16	5	6
Neutral	15	8	15
Negative	35	60	50
Don't know/not sure	34	27	29
Total, percent	100	100	100
N	791	216	24

of Svoboda, who are much more likely to favor not only the Red Army over the German Army (50 percent vs. 0 percent), but also Stalin over Hitler (18 percent vs. 0 percent) (see [Table 3](#)).

The analysis of the 2012 KIIS Survey data shows significant differences in war-related attitudes by ethnicity, language, and age. However, their magnitude is much smaller than the magnitude of the regional and political party differences. For example, 71 percent of ethnic Ukrainians, compared to 91 percent of ethnic Russians, support most the Red Army during World War II in Ukraine. Conversely, 10 percent of ethnic Ukrainians and 1 percent of Russians side with the UPA (see [Table 4](#)). Similarly, 17 percent of Ukrainian speakers, compared to 1 percent of Russian speakers, express preference for the UPA during the war. The Soviet Army is favored most by 89 percent of Russian speakers and 60 percent of Ukrainian-speakers. The differences in preferences for Soviet partisans among major ethnic and language groups of the respondents are not significant. For example, 5 percent of ethnic Ukrainians, 4 percent ethnic Russians, and 4 percent other ethnic minorities favor most the activity of the partisans during World War II in Ukraine.

A greater percentage of ethnic Russians (46 percent) and other ethnic minorities (40 percent), compared to their ethnic Ukrainian counterparts (28 percent), hold very positive or mostly positive views of Stalin's activities during the war. Sixteen percent of ethnic Ukrainians, compared to 5 percent of ethnic Russians and 6 percent of other minorities express favorable opinions concerning the wartime record of Shukhevych. Similarly, Ukrainian-speakers are less likely than their Russian-speaking counterparts to hold positive views of Stalin (22 percent and 40 percent, respectively), but more likely to regard favorably activity of the UPA supreme commander during World War II in spite of his service as a deputy commander of the Nachtigall Battalion and the 201st Schutzmannschaft Battalion (25 percent and 3 percent, respectively).

The Soviet Army has less support among the youngest generation of respondents, but it remains the primary choice among all age groups. The absolute majorities of the respondents, ranging from 63 percent of the 18–29 years old to 85 percent of the respondents 70 years old and older, favor most the Red Army during the war. The preference for Soviet partisans differs slightly by age. Six percent of the youngest generation, compared to 0 percent of the oldest respondents support them most. The 18- to 29 year-olds express slightly greater support for the UPA (14 percent) compared to the older generations (6–8 percent). The youngest group of respondents is much less favorably disposed toward the actions of Stalin than the oldest generation (20 percent and 46 percent, respectively). The youngest age group has slightly more positive views of Shukhevych (20 percent) compared to older generations (10–13 percent). The 18–29 years old are disposed much less negatively towards him compared to the other age groups.

Views of the German Army and of Hitler's activities do not differ significantly among all major ethnic, linguistic, and age groups (see [Tables 4](#) and [5](#)). The overwhelmingly negative attitudes towards the German Army and Hitler prevail among all these groups of the respondents. For example, 91 percent of ethnic Ukrainians, 93 percent of ethnic Russians, and 90 percent of other ethnic minorities express a negative opinion of Hitler's wartime activity.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis of the 2012 KIIS Survey provides representative data concerning contemporary attitudes in Ukraine toward the principal sides in World War II on its territory and toward the wartime activities of the Soviet, German, and UPA leadership. It shows that a number of political factors affect these attitudes. Regional political cultures have the most sizable effects. The Soviet Army has much less public support and the UPA has much more support in Galicia, and to a lesser extent Volhynia, Bukovyna and Transcarpathia, than

**TABLE 5** Attitudes Towards Major Forces and Political Leaders During World War II by Age, 2012 KIIS Survey, Percent

	18–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60–69	70 and older
Soviet Army	63	71	81	79	81	85
Soviet partisans	6	7	3	5	4	0
UPA	14	6	6	6	6	8
German Army	1	1	1	0	0	0
None	7	5	5	3	3	5
Don't know/not sure	10	11	4	6	5	3
Total, percent	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Joseph Stalin</i>						
Positive	20	26	34	29	43	46
Neutral	26	19	19	17	11	12
Negative	42	43	37	46	40	36
Don't know the person	2	1	2	0	0	1
Don't know/not sure	10	11	8	8	7	5
Total, percent	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Adolf Hitler</i>						
Positive	2	1	2	0	1	0
Neutral	5	4	4	2	1	3
Negative	85	91	92	95	94	92
Don't know the person	2	3	0	1	1	2
Don't know/not sure	5	2	2	2	3	3
Total, percent	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Roman Shukhevych</i>						
Positive	19	10	13	12	10	13
Neutral	18	16	15	11	11	5
Negative	26	42	39	49	48	52
Don't know the person	24	20	23	18	17	21
Don't know/not sure	13	13	11	10	14	9
Total, percent	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	229	180	198	143	150	130

in the East, the South, Kyiv City, and the Center. There are similar significant regional differences concerning the views of the wartime activities of Joseph Stalin and Roman Shukhevych. However, in addition to the relatively opposite views concerning these leaders expressed in Galicia, concerning the case of Stalin, and concerning Volhynia versus the South and the East, there are also significant differences among historical regions of Western Ukraine. The survey data challenge common perceptions of all of Western Ukraine as a bastion of pro-UPA views.

This study shows that political party preferences affect public attitudes in Ukraine toward World War II. Potential voters for Svoboda and the Communist Party express opposite views of the Red Army, the UPA, and Shukhevych. With the exceptions of perceptions of Stalin, the opinions of Party of Regions voters are close to those of Communist Party voters on these questions. While nationalist and ex-Orange party voters significantly differ from Communist Party voters, majorities of backers of all major parties

and even roughly half of potential Svoboda voters, given a choice, express the greatest support for the Red Army. This surprising finding indicates that voters do not necessarily share positions concerning World War II and specifically the UPA that are expressed by the parties for whom they intend to cast their ballots.

The study finds significant differences between Ukrainians and Russians, Ukrainian speakers and Russian speakers, and the youngest generation compared to the oldest generation in their views of the Soviet Army, the UPA, and Stalin and Shukhevych. However, the magnitude of the differences is much smaller than in the case of regions. This study implies that regional divisions concerning World War II are likely to persist in the future because they are rooted to a large extent in distinct regional political values and because the younger generation, socialized in independent Ukraine, does not hold radically different views compared to the older generations, socialized in the Soviet Union.

Attitudes toward the German Army and Adolf Hitler are the exceptions. Overwhelmingly negative views in Ukraine of the Wehrmacht and of Hitler's activities during World War II are shared by the residents of all regions, supporters of all major parties, the main ethnic and linguistic groups, and all generations in contemporary Ukraine.