

Introduction

On the first of January 2014 several gatherings in memory of Stepan Bandera took place in Ukraine. A report by *Interfax Ukraine*, a Ukrainian news agency, about the rally in Ukraine's capital Kiev that day mentioned the following:

'A torchlight procession on the occasion of the 105th birth anniversary of Leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) Stepan Bandera is taking place in the center of Kyiv. A column of more than a thousand people took off from the Kozatsky Hotel along Mykhailivska Street to Mykhailivska Square, and came out to Volodymyrska Street almost blocking the traffic.'

According to the news item, the column was headed by the leader of the political party Svoboda Oleh Tiahnybok, members of the Svoboda faction, two priests, and a girl in national Ukrainian costume, who was holding a portrait of Bandera. Many of the participants were carrying banners with nationalist inscriptions such as: 'Ukraine Above All', 'Let's Recognize OUN, Recognize Stepan Bandera as a Hero of Ukraine', flags of the Svoboda party, red-and-black flags referring to the OUN and burning torches. Furthermore, they were chanting: 'Glory to Ukraine - Glory to Heroes!', a greeting and slogan used by Ukrainian nationalists since 1940.¹

A similar event occurred in Lviv, a city in the west of Ukraine, where - according to *Interfax Ukraine* - about a thousand people came together near a monument of Bandera. During the gathering, member of Parliament of the Svoboda faction Iryna Farion held a speech in which she said 'people of such fortitude and ideas [referring to Bandera] are born once in a hundred or even half a thousand years... They do not pay attention to what others say about them, they are obsessed with a great idea.' Furthermore, Farion argued that Bandera had brought the idea of a united Ukrainian state to life.²

These recent events make us wonder who Stepan Bandera was and why he is admired remembered the way he is. The increased attention for Bandera in academia makes it interesting to research what he has achieved in his life and in what way this is still important for the Ukrainian nation nowadays. Stepan Bandera was born on the first of January in 1909 in Staryi Uhryniv in the region of Galicia, nowadays western Ukraine.³ Bandera was a Ukrainian political activist and is known as one of the leaders of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). This organization is a

¹ *Interfax Ukraine*, 'Torchlight procession to honor Bandera taking place in Kyiv', 01-01-2014 <http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/184697.html> (22-10-2014)

² *Interfax Ukraine*, 'Lviv hosts rally to mark 105th anniversary of Ukrainian nationalist leader Bandera', 01-01-2014 <http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/184696.html> (22-10-2014)

³ Volodymyr Yaniv, 'Stepan Bandera', *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CB%5CA%5CBanderaStepan.htm> (06-11-2014)

nationalist and independent movement which was founded in 1929. According to its website, the OUN still exists and is registered as an NGO in Kiev.⁴ During his life, Bandera committed himself to the Ukrainian nation and establishment of a Ukrainian state. For instance, he became chief propaganda of the OUN in 1931 and head of the national executive in West-Ukraine in 1934. Due to his revolutionary activities and his involvement in the assassination of the Polish Minister of Internal Affairs, he was imprisoned by the Polish in 1934. He was released or did escape when the Second World War started. However, he was imprisoned again, this time by the Germans, after the proclamation of a Ukrainian state in June 1941. After his release from the German concentration camp in 1944, he continued his nationalist activities abroad, mainly in Munich, until he was killed there in 1959 by a KGB agent.

In the available literature as well as by residents and politicians in Ukraine, Poland and Russia, Bandera is referred to both as a terrorist, a criminal against humanity and a Nazi collaborator as to the opposite, namely a martyr, a national hero and a resistance leader. In January 2010, former Ukrainian president Yushchenko tried to declare Bandera as 'Hero of Ukraine', while in March 2014, the Russian president Putin referred to Bandera as 'Hitler's accomplice during World War II'.⁵ Furthermore, Bandera's name is often linked to crimes committed by other Ukrainian nationalists during the Second World War in both Ukraine and Poland. These crimes included ethnic cleansings in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia between 1943 and 1944. For instance Polish survivors of these cleansings refer in their stories to 'Bandera men' or 'Bandera gangs'. Furthermore, the term 'Banderites', first used during the Second World War to describe supporters or members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), is nowadays frequently used by for instance the Kremlin to mark activists of the Ukrainian nationalist movements. According to the German political scientist and historian Andreas Umland there was during the Euromaidan revolution in 2013/2014 - unlike the previous ones in 1990 and 2004 - a much more prominent presence of 'slogans, symbols and followers implicitly or explicitly heroizing Bandera's wartime Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.'⁶

This short overview already points out how many different opinions and stories consists over Bandera. Furthermore, according to the French researcher Delphine Bechtel: 'Bandera is today more an empty icon that can be alternatively seen in negative or positive lights, than a name associated

⁴ Kyiv City Organization of the OUN, <http://kmoun.info/> (11-11-2014)

⁵ Matt Ford, 'Good News From Ukraine: Everyone Still Hates Hitler', *The Atlantic*, 20-03-2014 <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/03/good-news-from-ukraine-everyone-still-hates-hitler/284489/> (04-08-2015)

⁶ Andreas Umland, 'How spread of Banderite slogans and symbols undermines Ukrainian nation-building', *Kyiv Post*, 28 December 2013 <http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/how-spread-of-banderite-slogans-and-symbols-undermines-ukrainian-nation-building-334389.html> (07-11-2014)

with a real person and real deeds.⁷ This underlines Bandera's name is frequently linked to mythical events and actions committed by others. This thesis attempts to compare the historical facts known about Bandera with the myth created around his personality. Furthermore, Bandera's symbolic role in the process of state and nation building in Ukraine will be discussed. Finally, the different stories and myths of Bandera in both the Soviet Union as well as in nowadays Ukraine and Russia will be compared with each other. This will result in answering the following research question: How are the myths around Stepan Bandera used in the state building process of Ukraine, how are these myths given meaning, by whom and with what purpose?

Myths are as old as humanity. During Antiquity, the days of Homer, the word myth referred to a holy, narrated story of a nation on its origin and religion. Furthermore, mythology was regarded as the study and interpretation of these stories that often deal with life and death, afterlife, good and evil, Gods and heroes with superpower. According to the British political scientist Cosmina Tanasoiu, the study of myths has been imported into political studies through the work of anthropologists such as Émile Durkheim and scholars of religious study such as Mircea Eliade.⁸ Tanasoiu states that there is a broad consensus within the academic field that myths are invented and can be seen as beliefs. She however aims myths can also be based on facts. Furthermore, myths can be used as a tool for understanding a community or a nation.⁹

The German-American political philosopher Eric Voegelin was of opinion that 'myth is the adequate and exact instrument of expression for articulating and communicating our insights into the meaning of the process of reality as a whole'. According to his research: 'Firstly, the myth does not claim to be a definitive account—it is a 'likely story' that accords with the present state of our knowledge about reality and human nature —and so does not violate our awareness of the limitations of human perspective. And secondly, the myth tells a story that makes sense of our experiences of purpose and struggle, risk and failure, desire and achievement'.¹⁰ The theories by Tanasoiu and Voegelin will be used when describing and comparing the different stories and myths known about Bandera.

This thesis does not seek to engage in the complex academic discourse on nationalism and its nature too deeply. It will therefore be sufficient to the theories by the British-Czech philosopher

⁷ Delphine Bechtel, 'Review of Rossoliski-Liebe, Grzegorz, Stepan Bandera: The Life and Afterlife of a Ukrainian Nationalist. Fascism, Genocide, and Cult', *H-Soz-u-Kult, H-Net Reviews*, April 2015, found on: <https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=44096> (03-09-2015)

⁸ Cosmina Tanasoiu, 'Post-Communist Political Symbolism: New myths - same old stores? An analysis of Romanian Political Mythology', *Romanian Journal of Political Science*, Vol.5, No.1 (2005) 114.

⁹ Tanasoiu, 'Post-Communist Political Symbolism: New myths - same old stories?', 115.

¹⁰ Glenn Arthur Hughes, 'Mystery and myth in the philosophy of Eric Voegelin', Department of Philosophy Boston College Graduate School (December 1989) 199-200; published on: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/303663530/fulltextPDF?accountid=12045> (03-09-2015)

Ernest Gellner, which seem most applicable to this research. According to Gellner: 'Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent. Nationalism as a sentiment, or as a movement, can best be defined in terms of this principle. Nationalist sentiment is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfillment. A nationalist movement is one actuated by a sentiment of this kind.'¹¹

The current Ukrainian state was established after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. The process of nation building is based on several fundamental components, namely historiography, identity, language and national discourse. Differences on the field of cultural, linguistic, ethnic and historical fields have made the Ukrainian nation-building complex. Especially seeing the distance between the two major ethnic groups in Ukraine, namely Ukrainians and Russians. This can also be seen within the academic field, where according to the Chinese researcher Allen Xiao especially the history and identity issues have been heavily debated.¹² Furthermore, the Canadian researcher Taras Kuzio refers to four different schools of thought which have dominated the Ukrainian national discourse, namely Ukrainophile, Eastern Slavic, Sovietophile and Russophile. These schools differ on the narration of the history of Ukraine. They refer to different myths about Kyiv Rus (the beginning of the Russian state) and also differ on the field of Ukrainian nationalism.¹³

Furthermore, three groups can be distinguished in the debate between academics concerning the more recent events, the Second World War and the role of Bandera, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in this. The first group consists of former members of the OUN, family members or people in otherwise related to the OUN, who describe the stories around OUN and Bandera in a rather positive light. Examples are known in which the organizations OUN and also UPA are glorified, while the amount of victims of the Holodomor famine and the role of the Nazi army in the pogroms against the Jews are exaggerated.¹⁴ The second group consists out of Russian or pro-Russian researchers. They for example have tried to exaggerate the role of Bandera in the terrors of the Second World War and refer to him as a terrorist, the 'anti-Bandera' camp. The last group is made up of critical researchers and writers who have tried to compare the different sources available with each other in order to create a balanced overview.

The debate among historians, other researchers and Ukrainians themselves is well reflected

¹¹ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism. Second Edition* (New York 2008) 1.

¹² Allen Xiao, 'National Discourse in Contemporary Ukraine: Soviet Legacy Reshaped or Reincarnated'; published on: http://www.academia.edu/2517886/National_Discourse_in_Contemporary_Ukraine (03-09-2015)

¹³ Taras Kuzio, 'National Identity and History Writing in Ukraine', *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (September 2006) 407-427.

¹⁴ John Paul Himka, 'Interventions: Challenging the Myths of Twentieth-Century Ukrainian History.' in: Alexei Miller and Maria Lipman (ed.), *The Convolutions of Historical Politics* (Budapest and New York 2012) 214.

in the difficulties the German-Polish historian Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe faced whilst writing his recently published book *Stepan Bandera. The life and afterlife of a Ukrainian nationalist. Facism Genocide and Cult*. He received fierce reactions and accusations when he started researching the life and afterlife of Bandera in a more detailed and advanced way than had ever done before. Furthermore, he received threats from the political party Svoboda when he was scheduled to give lectures in Kiev on the initiative of the German Embassy. The party organized a demonstration in front of the Embassy, where they carried banners calling Rossoliński-Liebe a 'Nazi' and 'provocateur'. The other institutions where Rossoliński-Liebe was supposed to provide lectures also received threats, which forced him to cancel the rest of the talks. Furthermore, he was forced to go into hiding and to leave the country.¹⁵ Additionally, the way of teaching Ukrainian history and especially Bandera's role in this history changed over the years. According to research conducted by Karina Korostelina, a Ukrainian social psychologist who focuses on social identity and identity-based conflicts, Ukrainian history textbooks were rewritten after the fall of the Soviet Union, after the Orange Revolution in 2004 and after the election of the Yanukovych's government in 2010.¹⁶

For this research, academic sources as well as reports by journalists have been used. The following academic sources have provided theoretical background information and historical facts about Bandera. For an overview of Ukrainian history the following books have been used: *Grensland. Een geschiedenis van Oekraïne* by Marc Jansen, *A History of Ukraine. The land and its peoples* by Paul Robert Magocsi and *Ukraine. A History* by Orest Subtelny. Beside the recently published book about Stepan Bandera by Rossoliński-Liebe, the master's thesis 'Unraveling the banner: A biographical study of Stepan Bandera' by Paul Stepan Pirie, written at the University of Alberta in Canada, has been used to gain more knowledge of Bandera's life. The same applies for the article 'Stepan Bandera: The Resurrection of a Ukrainian National Hero' by David R. Marples, published in the journal *Europe-Asia Studies*. Furthermore, researches into both Soviet as well as Ukrainian schoolbooks have been used, namely the PhD thesis *Nation-Building in Post-Soviet Ukraine Educational policy and the response of the Russian-speaking population* by Jan Germeen Janmaat, published at the University of Amsterdam, and the article 'Constructing nation: national narratives of history teachers in Ukraine' by the previously mentioned Karina Korostelina.

The journalistic sources have been used for a different purpose, namely to gain information about the role of Bandera's legacy and his reputation in especially the more recent years. Special

¹⁵ Ruth Wodak, FW: a Hamburg student threatened by Ukrainian nationalists in Kyiv - petition project <http://listserv.linguistlist.org/pipermail/critics-l/2012-March/000879.html> & Per Anders Rudling and Jared McBride, 'Ukrainian Academic Freedom and Democracy Under Siege', *The Algermeiner*, 01-03-2012 <http://www.algemeiner.com/2012/03/01/ukrainian-academic-freedom-and-democracy-under-siege/#> (03-09-2015)

¹⁶ Karina Korostelina, 'Constructing nation: national narratives of history teachers in Ukraine', *National Identities*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (2013) 404.

attention will be paid to Yushchenko's attempt to reward Bandera with the Hero of Ukraine award, Bandera's symbolic role during the Euromaidan protests and the usage of his cult and myth in the current crisis in Ukraine. Journalistic articles from both Russia and Ukraine as well as from the United Kingdom, United States, Canada and the Netherlands have been used. The following databases have been used to find this material: Factiva, Lexis Nexus, ProQuest Historical Newspapers and The Current Digest of the Russian Press. Other articles have been found through Google and Google Scholar on the search words: 'Bandera', 'Stepan Bandera', 'OUN'.

The structure of this thesis will be the following. In the first chapter, Stepan Bandera will be further introduced. Attention will be paid to who he was and what he has achieved in his life. This chapter will be mainly based on the previously mentioned historical sources. The second chapter will highlight the mythification of Bandera during the Soviet Union until its demise and in independent Ukraine. After these two general chapters, two specific events will be highlighted in the next chapters. The third chapter will pay attention to President Yushchenko's attempt to reward Bandera with the Hero of Ukraine award and the reactions from within Ukraine, Russia and the rest of the world. The fourth and final chapter will discuss Bandera's symbolic role during the Euromaidan protests and in the current crisis in Ukraine.

Chapter 1 Introducing Stepan Bandera

In this first chapter Stepan Bandera will be further introduced. Firstly, attention will be paid to his youth in Western Ukraine during the First World War. Afterwards, his involvement in the Ukrainian nationalist organizations and the OUN (later OUN-B) under his leadership will be discussed. Finally, attention will be paid to his life after the Second World War and his assassination in 1959.

Bandera's youth

As already mentioned before, Stepan Bandera was born on the first of January 1909 in the village Staryi Uhryniv, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was the second child and oldest son in a family of seven children and his father Andrii Bandera was a Greek Catholic priest.¹⁷ When Bandera was just five years old, the First World War broke out between the Central Powers (Germany, Austria and Turkey) and the Entente Powers or Allies (France, Great-Britain and Russia). During this war two Ukrainian Republics were established by Ukrainian nationalistic groups. The first one, the Ukrainian People's Republic, was founded in Kiev on the 23rd of June 1917. The establishment of the Western Ukrainian People's Republic followed on the 18th of October 1918 in Lviv. In this republic Bandera's father Andrii served as a parliamentarian. Andrii Bandera also served as a chaplain in its army, the Ukrainian Galician Army.¹⁸ In January 1919, the Ukrainian People's Republic and the West Ukrainian People's Republic were shortly united into one Ukrainian state. According to the Canadian historian Pirie, Bandera later on wrote in his autobiography called *Moi zhyttiepysni dani* that 'the celebrations surrounding the unification of the Western and Eastern Ukrainian Republics made a particularly strong impression on him as a young boy, capturing his imagination, and crystallizing his feelings of patriotism'.¹⁹

Stepan Bandera grew up in a wartime environment, the battlegrounds eventually reached to his village. Furthermore, he was confronted with strong Ukrainian nationalism, mainly through the activities of his father and the stories about Ukrainian nationalists Andrii told his children. Bandera's mother died when he was still a young boy from either tuberculosis or cancer. According to *The Ukrainian Weekly* (an English-language newspaper of the Ukrainian diaspora in the United States and North America), Bandera already prepared himself for leadership in the Ukrainian liberation struggle when he was just ten years old. Based on the Stepan Bandera Museum-Memorial Complex in Staryi Uhryniv, the newspaper described Bandera overheard at home a story of the torture of the Ukrainian

¹⁷ David R. Marples, 'Stepan Bandera: The Resurrection of a Ukrainian National Hero', *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 4 (June 2006) 557.

¹⁸ Marples, 'Stepan Bandera: The Resurrection of a Ukrainian National Hero', 557.

¹⁹ P.S. Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', Unpublished MA thesis (Alberta, Department of History, University of Alberta) (1993) 17. (Bandera's autobiography was only published after his death, the edition Pirie used dates from 1978.)

political activist Olha Basarab. In response to this, he took needles and pushed these under his fingernails. When his father heard him screaming and rushed to his room, Bandera apparently said: 'Listening to all these discussions, whether at home or among the villagers, I understood that this struggle for Ukraine is brutal and difficult. I simply wanted to be sure and convinced that I could survive it all.'²⁰ Rossoliński-Liebe also mentions that Bandera 'as teenager had slid pins under his nails in order to harden himself for future torture by Polish prosecutors, in response to the story of Basarab'.²¹ According to the *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, Basarab was indeed arrested and tortured by the Polish police, but this only happened in 1924 when Bandera was already 15 and was, according to Rossoliński-Liebe, no longer living with his father, but with his grandfather.²² Therefore it is likely that, even though Bandera probably did harm himself, this story is later edited perhaps to make it more convincing.

Both the Ukrainian People's Republic as the West Ukrainian People's Republic only enjoyed a short existence until they were thrown over and annexed by the neighboring Soviet Union and Second Polish Republic. The area where Bandera lived became part of the Second Polish Republic wherefore the classes at the Ukrainian Gymnasium in Stryi, which he started to attend after the war, had to be taught in Polish. Some of the teachers however continued to add patriotic Ukrainian elements to their lessons and Bandera also became more involved in Ukrainian nationalism through his membership of the scouting group Plast, the sporting association Sokol and the organization the Upperclassmen of the Ukrainian Gymnasias.²³ Within these organizations Bandera met several seniors who further explained the thought of Ukrainian nationalism to him and encouraged him to join the Union of Ukrainian Nationalist Youth, the youth wing of the Ukrainian Military Organization (UVO).²⁴ The UVO was a Ukrainian resistance and sabotage movement created by former members of a military unit, Sich Riflemen, which operated during the First World War in Ukraine.²⁵ The UVO started operating from August 1920 and continued the armed struggle for an independent Ukrainian state. According to Rossoliński-Liebe, the UVO was mainly a terrorist and spy organization.²⁶ Although, the American political scientist Armstrong aims the UVO was more a military protective group, which was

²⁰ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 18-1-2009 http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/2009/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_2009-03.pdf (This story is also mentioned by Rossoliński-Liebe, but not by either Pirie or Marples.)

²¹ Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera. The life and afterlife of a Ukrainian nationalist. Facism, genocide, and cult.* (Stuttgart 2014) 95.

²² Encyclopedia of Ukraine, 'Basarab, Olha', *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, vol. 1 (1984) <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CB%5CA%5CBasarabOlha.htm> (25-0-2015) & Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 91.

²³ Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 18.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, 10.

²⁵ Paul Robert Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine. The land and its peoples* (Toronto 2010) 630.

²⁶ Rossoliński-Liebe, Grzegorz, 'Debating, Obfuscating and Disciplining the Holocaust: Post-Soviet Historical Discourses on the OUN-UPA and Other Nationalist Movements', *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Dec. 2012) 201.

harshly treated by the Poles and therefore reacted with violence.²⁷ The members of the UVO regarded the Poles and Soviets as 'illegitimate occupiers of Ukraine' who needed to be defeated.

Soon Bandera became an active member of the Union of Ukrainian Nationalist Youth. In 1927 Bandera graduated and applied for the Ukrainian Economic Academy in Pödebrady near Prague. Due to his nationalist activities, the Polish authorities refused to provide him with the required foreign passport. Therefore, he registered himself at the Lviv Higher Polytechnical School in 1928, started living in Dubliany and followed classes in agronomy and engineering.²⁸ However, his main focus in college lied on Ukrainian nationalism. For this purpose, he had also joined the UVO. According to Pirie, Bandera wrote in his autobiography: 'I spent most of my energy during my student years in revolutionary national-liberation activities. These activities increasingly captivated me, pushing aside any plans, and even any thoughts of ever finishing my studies.'²⁹ It's almost needless to say that Bandera never graduated.

The previously mentioned self-torture Bandera applied to himself during his childhood continued, according to research by Rossoliński-Liebe, during his student years. Based on information shared by his former roommates in college, Bandera scorched his fingers on an oil lamp and crushed them between a door and a doorframe. Furthermore, he also beat his bare back with a belt with the aim of preparing himself for possible interrogations.³⁰

Trials of Warsaw and Lviv

While Bandera attended school and the Lviv Higher Polytechnical School, several new Ukrainian nationalist organizations, including the UVO he joined, had formed themselves both within Ukraine as well as abroad. These groups started to unite themselves from 1927 and two exploratory meetings in Berlin (1927) and Prague (1928) resulted in the First Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists in 1929 in Vienna. During this congress, thirty representatives from the several organizations met and together they founded the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). Yevhen Konovalts, a military commander and leader of the UVO, was appointed as head of the organization. The main aim of the OUN was the creation of an independent Ukrainian state and in order to achieve this, the organization started 'a campaign of political terror against the Polish state and its representatives'.³¹ Unfortunately, there are no reliable figures of the amount of members of the OUN in its early days, but seeing the different organizations which merged into it, it can be estimated around a few

²⁷ John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism 1939-1945* (New York 1955) 21.

²⁸ Marples, 'Stepan Bandera: The Resurrection of a Ukrainian National Hero', 558.

²⁹ Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 20.

³⁰ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 95. (I have not been able to find any other sources that confirm this information)

³¹ Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine. A History* (Toronto 2000) 444.

thousand.

From its beginning, Bandera was directly involved in the organization. He started with conducting general organization work, but soon moved to the propaganda department and gained control over the underground publication network. Eventually, he was entrusted with the leadership of the OUN in Western Ukraine, the homeland executive referred to as ZUZ. According to the Canadian historian David Marples, his main task was 'to distribute leaflets and literature both abroad and within Polish territory'.³² Where the older nationalists mainly worked from abroad, the young Bandera conducted the more risky work within the country itself. He was therefore several times arrested for 'nationalistic activities', such as spreading propaganda leaflets, and spent in total several months in prison.³³

Under Bandera's leadership the OUN in Western-Ukraine started a campaign of terror against 'the enemies of the Ukrainian state', whereby representatives of the Polish and Soviet state apparatus were targeted, but also other Ukrainians who were accused of being 'collaborators'.³⁴ According to the Canadian historian Orest Subtelny: 'Besides hundreds of acts of sabotage and dozens of 'expropriations' of government funds, OUN members staged over sixty actual or attempted assassinations.'³⁵ Under these attacks were the assassination of Aleksei Mailov, an attaché of the Soviet Union, in 1933, the murder of the Polish Minister of Internal Affairs Bronislaw Pieracki in June 1934 and a few weeks after the killing of Ivan Babii, a Ukrainian pedagogue.³⁶ Babii, who was also the director of a Ukrainian gymnasium in Lviv, was a more moderate Ukrainian nationalist and prevented his students from distributing nationalist leaflets.³⁷

After the murder of Pieracki, which was carried out by a young member of the OUN, the Polish police arrested in a crackdown several OUN members including Bandera, who was put in detention and tried twice. The first trial started on the 18th of November 1935 in Warsaw and concerned the assassination of Pieracki. During this trial Bandera misbehaved in court. He refused to answer any questions of the court in Polish and 'disrupted the proceedings, shouted remarks aloud to the courtroom and to his comrades'.³⁸ Bandera denied all involvement in the murder, but was nevertheless sentenced to death, which was later changed into life imprisonment. The second trial, which took place on the 25th of May 1936 in Lviv, handled the case of the existence of the OUN national executive. Bandera's attitude during this trial was the contrary, he took the hearing as an

³² Marples, 'Stepan Bandera: The Resurrection of a Ukrainian National Hero', 559.

³³ Rossoliński-Liebe, 94 & Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 26.

³⁴ Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 34.

³⁵ Subtelny, *Ukraine. A History*, 445.

³⁶ Ibidem.

³⁷ Myroslav Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism: Politics, Ideology, and Literature, 1929-1956* (New Haven and London 2015) 30.

³⁸ Pirie, 37-38.

opportunity to expound the OUN's program, its tactics and its aims. For instance, he argued: 'I would like to say that we members of the OUN are not terrorists. [...] The OUN values the lives of its members, values them dearly, but our ideal, in our understanding, is so great that when we speak of its realization, then we would be willing to sacrifice not one, nor even hundreds, but perhaps millions of people to it.'³⁹ Bandera received life imprisonment again and was locked up in a Polish prison.

Both trials led to increasing interest in the Ukrainian question all over the world. Furthermore, both lawsuits served as propaganda, not only for the OUN but also for Bandera who presented himself as a 'nationalist martyr'. The trials were also subject of songs produced within the Ukrainian folk culture. According to Rossoliński-Liebe, one of these songs included: 'Nineteen thirty five is passing, We went through it, When the verdict was announced, In the court in Warsaw. Where twelve Ukrainians, Great heroes, Who wanted to attain Freedom for Ukraine. [...] The first hero is Bandera.'⁴⁰

Proclamation of the Ukrainian state

OUN members several times unsuccessfully tried to liberate Bandera, but he only regained his freedom with the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939. According to Pirie, other OUN members eventually managed to free Bandera. Other sources claim Bandera was freed by the Nazi's (as described by the Dutch historian Berkhoff), freed by the Polish (as said by the American historian Snyder) or escaped himself with the help of other Ukrainian prisoners (according to Rossoliński-Liebe).⁴¹ Furthermore, stories can be found which claim that after his liberation by the Germans, Bandera even started working for the Abwehr, the German military intelligence service.⁴²

In the meantime, the leader of the OUN, Konovalts, had been killed by a Soviet agent in Rotterdam in 1938. In a reaction the Second Grand Assembly of the OUN, which was held in Rome on the 27th of August 1939, elected the more moderate politician Andrii Melnyk officially as his successor.⁴³ Within the first ten years of its existence the amount of members of the OUN had much increased. According to the Dutch historian Jansen, the number of members on the eve of the Second World War can be estimated around twenty thousand, mainly young people. Furthermore,

³⁹ Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 40.

⁴⁰ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 161.

⁴¹ Karel C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of despair. Life and death in Ukraine under Nazi rule* (Cambridge, London and London 2004) 10 & Pirie, 45 & Timothy Snyder, 'The causes of Ukrainian-Polish ethnic cleansing 1943', *Past & Present*, No. 179 (May, 2003) 205 & Rossoliński-Liebe, 166.

⁴² *Der Spiegel*, 'Sowjet-Union/Bandera Immer Angst', 28-10-1959 <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-42623068.html> (21-01-2015)

⁴³ Myroslav Yurkevich, 'Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists', *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, Vol. 3 (1993) <http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5C0%5CR%5COrganizationofUkrainianNationalists.htm> (20-01-2015)

the organization had many more sympathizers.⁴⁴ Rossoliński-Liebe mentions in his research a membership between eight and twenty thousand.⁴⁵

The elected Melnyk failed to gain the support of the younger more radical members of the OUN, who demanded a change in orientation of the OUN policy. These young members did see a better suitable leader in their colleague Bandera, who they started to support after his release. Furthermore, Bandera organized a conference in February 1940 where the attendees rejected all the decisions of the meeting in Rome in 1939.⁴⁶ The two groups failed to come to an agreement. The division led to a split in the OUN and resulted in the creation of the OUN-M (Melnyk) and the OUN-B (Bandera). From this moment onwards, members of the OUN-M were referred to as 'melnykites', while members of the OUN-B were referred to as 'banderites'. Although the parties were separated, they still had many similarities. According to the Swedish-American historian Per Anders Rudling: 'Both wings were totalitarian; they were as anti-Soviet, anti-communist, antidemocratic, and anti-Semitic as they were pro-fascist.'⁴⁷

The OUN-B adopted a fascist party symbol whereby they raised their right arm while they shouted 'Glory to Ukraine!' with as response 'Glory to the heroes!'. This slogan is still used by Ukrainian nationalists nowadays and was also heard during the Euromaidan protests in 2013-2014. A red and black flag, symbolizing blood and earth, was introduced as emblem. Furthermore, Bandera became referred to as 'providnyk' (the Ukrainian equivalent of Führer) by other members of the OUN and he was celebrated as 'the leader of the Ukrainian nation'.⁴⁸

Soon after the outbreak of the Second World War, the OUN-B leadership sought cooperation with the German authorities. The OUN-B hoped for Germany's support in the creation of a Ukrainian state and succeeded in establishing contacts with the lower ranks of the Nazi apparatus, the Abwehr and the Wehrmacht. This cooperation resulted in the creation of two military units named Roland and Nachtigal in the spring of 1941. These units have, according to Rossoliński-Liebe, also been referred to as 'Stepan Bandera battalion'.⁴⁹ Beside these battalions, other Ukrainian militant groups were formed in which recruitments had to swear an oath to Stepan Bandera and independent Ukraine.⁵⁰

At the 22nd of June 1941, Hitler declared war against the Soviet Union and the Nazi army, including the Ukrainian battalions, entered the territory of Ukraine in the end of June 1941. On the

⁴⁴ Marc Jansen, *Grensland. Een geschiedenis van Oekraïne* (Amsterdam 2014) 119.

⁴⁵ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 72.

⁴⁶ Subtelny, *Ukraine. A History*, 460.

⁴⁷ Per Anders Rudling, 'Multiculturalism, memory, and ritualization: Ukrainian nationalist monuments in Edmonton, Alberta', *Nationalities Papers*, 39:5 (2011) 735.

⁴⁸ Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, 'The "Ukrainian national revolution" of 1941: Discourse and practice of a fascist movement', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian history*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Winter 2011) 89.

⁴⁹ Rossoliński-Liebe, 'The 'Ukrainian National Revolution' of 1941', 97

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, 103.

30th of June these units marched into Lviv. On the same evening, Yaroslav Stetsko proclaimed the Ukrainian state on behalf of the absent Bandera without, according to Subnelty, first consulting the Germans.⁵¹ However, Pirie claims Bandera did try to get in touch with the German political authorities. He even sent a letter to the Reich Chancellery in Berlin, but never received any response.⁵² Bandera himself had not been able to travel to Lviv because, according to Rossoliński-Liebe, he was 'confined' by the Germans.⁵³

The proclamation of the Ukrainian state included the following:

*'By the will of the Ukrainian people, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists under the direction of Stepan Bandera proclaims the renewal of the Ukrainian State, for which a whole generation of the best sons of the Ukraine spilled its blood. [...] In the western lands of Ukraine a Ukrainian Government is created which is subordinate to the Ukrainian National Government that will be formed in the capital of Ukraine – Kiev. The Ukrainian national-revolutionary army, which is being created on Ukrainian soil, will continue to fight against the Muscovite occupation for a Sovereign All-Ukrainian State and a new, just order in the whole world.'*⁵⁴

Only a small group of people was present during the proclamation, but since a group of supporters of Bandera managed to gain access to the local radio station's building, the proclamation was later also broadcasted on the radio whereby many other citizens were reached.⁵⁵ The text of this proclamation circulates nowadays in different versions, according to some sources, for instance the Swedish-American historian Rudling, the version above is the edited one.⁵⁶ The 'original version' included the following intention: 'the Ukrainian state would closely cooperate with the National Socialist Great Germany that under the leadership of Adolf Hitler is creating a new order in Europe and the world and helping the Ukrainian nation liberate itself from Muscovite occupation.'⁵⁷ Furthermore, this 'original version' included salutes addressed to Adolf Hitler, where the edited version only mentions salutes to the OUN and Stepan Bandera. In reaction to the proclamation, and in order to welcome the Germans, the OUN-B had instructed towns to erect triumphal arches and decorate them with both German and Ukrainian flags, portraits of both Bandera and Hitler and banners with 'Glory to our leader Stepan Bandera'.⁵⁸ Even though Bandera was not physically present during the proclamation and at the celebrations afterwards, his spirit definitely was. The news of the proclamation spread

⁵¹ Subnelty, *Ukraine. A History*, 463.

⁵² Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 52.

⁵³ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 198.

⁵⁴ John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism 1939-1945* (New York 1955) 79.

⁵⁵ Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism 1939-1945*, 80.

⁵⁶ Per Anders Rudling, 'The OUN, the UPA and the Holocaust: A study in the manufacturing of historical myths', *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian & East European Studies*, Number 2107 (November 2011) 9 & 22.

⁵⁷ Rossoliński-Liebe, 'The 'Ukrainian National Revolution' of 1941', 96.

⁵⁸ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 221. (None of this is mentioned by Pirie or Marples)

slowly and for instance only reached the Ukrainian diaspora in The United States in August.⁵⁹

On the same day the Nazi armies entered Lviv, the pogroms against the Jewish population started. The Soviet soldiers, who had fled the city when the news of the arriving Nazi army reached them, had killed almost everyone who was imprisoned, including many Ukrainian nationalists. The Germans quickly accused the Jewish population of Lviv of these murders and therefore several massive pogroms against the Jewish population were organized. Sources differ whether members of the OUN-B participated in these pogroms. For instance according to the American-Canadian historian John Paul Himka: 'the OUN co-operated in these anti-Jewish actions to curry favour with the Germans, hoping for recognition of a Ukrainian state.'⁶⁰ Researchers as Rossoliński-Liebe, Hale and Rudling also pay close attention to the role of the OUN members in the pogroms while, strangely enough, they are not even mentioned by Armstrong, Pirie or the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* (which does however mention several Ukrainians saved Jews during WO II). These pogroms will not be discussed in further detail, but they were and still are a very controversial topic within the field of Ukrainian history and history writing. Bandera himself is often accused of involvement in these pogroms and researchers debate to what extent he can be seen as responsible. Overall, it remains unknown whether Bandera ordered or approved these ethnic cleansings since he never mentioned anything about them in his own writings. However, it is also very unlikely he did not know this occurred.

The proclamation by Stetsko was not received well by the Germans. In contrast to the cooperation the OUN-B hoped for, the Germans dispersed the government and Stetsko was arrested. Bandera, who was still in Krakow, was there questioned by the German authorities. In these sessions, he took the full responsibility for the act. After Bandera was placed under house arrest, he was further questioned by the German authorities and was transferred to Berlin. He was repeatedly asked to revoke the act, which he refused, and eventually moved to the Gestapo prison in Berlin and later the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. According to Pirie, the OUN members in Ukraine started to spread leaflets demanding Bandera's release and even organized petition campaigns in order to convince the German authorities to free Bandera.⁶¹ This is underlined by *The Institute of World Politics* which refers to a Gestapo report from the 18th of August 1941. According to this report: 'The OUN in Lvov sells war-loan stamps and releases pamphlets demanding Bandera's return. From Lvov, posters are released declaring that a 'free and independent Ukraine' must be created

⁵⁹ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 25-9-1941 http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1941/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1941-33.pdf (01-10-2015)

⁶⁰ John Paul Himka, 'The Lviv Pogrom of 1941: The Germans, Ukrainian Nationalists, and the Carnival Crowd', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, Vol. LIII (June-September-December 2011) 209.

⁶¹ Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 75.

according to the motto “Ukraine for the Ukrainians, under the leadership of the OUN.”⁶²

From this moment onwards, Bandera's role in the ranks of the Ukrainian nationalists became a more symbolic one. Bandera himself had less and less influence in what happened within the organization and which actions were carried out. He was no longer physically present in Ukraine, but his name and his legacy were and these were often linked to events or used as a motive. Overall, the mythification of Bandera increased.

Sources differ greatly about Bandera's time in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. According to Rudling and Rossoliński-Liebe, Bandera was placed in a special barrack for high profile political prisoners and treated quite decently.⁶³ Furthermore, Rossoliński-Liebe describes Bandera's wife frequently visited him and the OUN-B used her as messenger. However, according to Pirie Bandera refused to have these special privileges, wished to be treated just as the other Ukrainian nationalists imprisoned and was completely cut off from his party.⁶⁴ The OUN-B spread a message of Bandera in which they portrayed him as a sufferer and martyr. Rossoliński-Liebe managed to get his hands on two leaflets from the Second World War spread by the organization. The first one, dated from 1942, claimed that Bandera 'suffers for our idea in the cellar rooms of prisons'. A leaflet from 1943 said: 'Stepan Bandera - the best son of Ukraine and the fighter for its liberty, has been tortured by the Germans for two years in a prison'.⁶⁵

Whilst Bandera was imprisoned, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) was formed under the leadership of the Ukrainian politician Roman Shukhevych in the end of 1942. According to many researchers, Bandera was involved in the creation of the UPA and from its beginning members of the UPA have been referred to as 'Banderites' or 'Banderivists' by the Soviet authorities. Even though Bandera was imprisoned during the time the UPA was established, he did at least play a symbolic role in its creating. According to the American political scientist Yuri Zhukov: 'The role of Stepan Bandera's charismatic leadership, although not the decisive factor in attracting popular support, was nevertheless instrumental in maintaining unity of effort and strategic guidance. Within and outside the OUN-UPA, Bandera was a figure of almost mythical stature – as the visionary behind the 'revolutionary' OUN-B movement, the architect of the group's organizational structure and author of

⁶² Robert Bland, 'Divide and Conquer: The KGB disinformation campaign against Ukrainians and Jews', *Ukrainian Quarterly* (Fall 2004) found on: http://www.iwp.edu/news_publications/detail/divide-and-conquer-the-kgb-disinformation-campaign-against-ukrainians-and-jews (16-10-2015)

⁶³ Per Anders Rudling, 'The OUN, the UPA and the Holocaust: A study in the manufacturing of historical myths', 10.

⁶⁴ Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 61-62.

⁶⁵ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 286.

much OUN propaganda, and in his role as supreme leader.⁶⁶ Furthermore, Bandera already had made plans for the creation of a partisan army before he was imprisoned. The UPA was involved in several military actions against the Red Army, but also against Polish civilians, Jews and Ukrainians. The best known of these are the massacres of Poles in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia in 1943 and 1944, which its peak between July and August 1943. Since Bandera was not physically present during the actions by the UPA, I won't further describe their activities in detail.

During the Second World War, several stories concerning Bandera were spread in the Ukrainian media. For instance on the 3rd of December 1943, *The Ukrainian Weekly* reported, based on information received from Stockholm, that Bandera had died in a German concentration camp.⁶⁷ In the following week, the newspaper even claimed Bandera was released after his arrest by the Nazis, had made his way to Kiev to establish a Ukrainian government there, was arrested again and finally died in the concentration camp.⁶⁸

In the meantime, the war continued in both Ukraine and the rest of the world. The Soviets were joined by the Allied Powers in their fight against the German Nazi armies and it seemed they were almost defeated. According to several sources, the Germans were desperately looking for allies wherefore they decided to release Bandera. In exchange Bandera had to organize Ukrainian military units who could be used against the Red Army. According to Pirie, Bandera started the negotiations after he was promised that the other imprisoned nationalists were going to be released as well.⁶⁹ Bandera was asked to convince his political supporters to continue fighting against the Soviet Union, which he, according to Rossoliński-Liebe, did through a courier.⁷⁰ In the beginning of February 1945, Bandera was re-elected as leader of the entire OUN. However, the leadership in Ukraine decided that 'Bandera should not return to Ukraine but stay abroad, where he could, as a former prisoner in a Nazi concentration camp and a symbol of Ukrainian nationalism, make propaganda for the national cause.'⁷¹ After his release, Bandera discovered the loss of his two brothers, who had both died in concentration camp Auschwitz.⁷² Unfortunately, no reaction of Bandera on this tragic news can be found. However, it is likely he reacted with both sadness and anger and it only strengthened his nationalist aims.

⁶⁶ Yuri Zhukov, 'Examining the Authoritarian Model of Counterinsurgency: The Soviet Campaign Against the Ukrainian Insurgent Army', *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 18:3 (2007) 445.

⁶⁷ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 3-12-1943 http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1943/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1943-47.pdf (01-10-2015)

⁶⁸ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 10-12-1943 http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1943/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1943-48.pdf (01-10-2015)

⁶⁹ Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 64-65.

⁷⁰ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 287.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, 288.

⁷² Pirie, 62.

Bandera's death

As mentioned before, *The Ukrainian Weekly* published several times about Bandera during the war and continued doing so after the war. On the 22nd of September 1945, the newspaper published a letter sent in by four young Ukrainians in which they wrote: 'Our people began to band themselves and sabotage the Germans by destroying railways, bridges, etc. In time there appeared the Ukrainian Revolutionary Army. It operated in the forests for the benefit of neither the Bolsheviks nor the Germans, but under the leadership of the son of Ukraine, Stephen Bandera, it fought for an Independent Ukraine. Now that the war is over the Bolsheviks have thrown all their strength to shatter this army.' In this letter, which falsely described Bandera as leader of the Ukrainian Revolutionary Army, Bandera is presented as a heroic figure.

A year later, *The Ukrainian Weekly* published several correspondents from both Poland and Czechoslovakia had reported about 'Ukrainian Benderovci' [sic] (whereby likely Banderovci are meant) 'name for one Bender, a prewar Ukrainian leader who fought for the Nazis'. The newspaper responds on this with: 'Evidently the News correspondent has in mind Bandera, a Ukrainian nationalist leader who, it is worth noting, did not fight for the Nazis but from the summer of 1941 to near war's end spent his time in a German concentration camp, together with other Ukrainian nationalist leaders.'⁷³ In contrast to earlier reports, the newspaper now claimed Bandera was not in Ukraine during the war, but imprisoned.

At the end of the Second World War, Ukraine was once again incorporated in the Soviet Union. The struggle for an independent Ukrainian state however continued. Both the OUN and the UPA still conducted actions and the underground fights pursued. The Ukrainian nationalists kept believing that, probably with the help of the allied powers Great Britain and the United States, a Ukrainian state could still be established. Furthermore, the end of the war and the release of several Ukrainian nationalists led to another split within the OUN-B leadership. According to Rudling: 'The break was due to differences in tactics and politics.'⁷⁴ Bandera became the leader of the Foreign Formations of OUN, referred to as the ZCh OUN. Overall, the internal conflicts and the splits within the organization only weakened its position.

Within the first years after the war, (former) members of the OUN and UPA started with

⁷³ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 02-02-1946 http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1946/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1946-05.pdf & *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 18-05-1946 http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1946/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1946-20.pdf (01-10-2015)

⁷⁴ Per Anders Rudling, 'Historical representation of the wartime accounts of the activities of the OUN–UPA (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists—Ukrainian Insurgent Army)', *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (December 2006) 173.

writing and publishing about the organizations. In these writings, they tried to falsify documents published by the organization for instance links to collaboration with Nazi Germany were removed. According to Rudling, the nationalists groups 'attempted to rewrite history in a way that would make them more respectable in Western European and North American eyes.'⁷⁵ Furthermore, the same people denied in their publications the anti-Semitic views of the OUN and any involvement of the Ukrainian nationalists in war crimes.⁷⁶

Sources differ whether Bandera ever returned to Ukraine. According to Marples and Pirie he never did, but – as mentioned before - *The Ukrainian Weekly* claimed in some articles he did. According to these reports, Bandera returned to Ukraine in 1943. Furthermore, *The Ukrainian Weekly* dated from the 7th of November 1959 published: 'On his release from this [the concentration camp], he returned to Ukraine and continued his work of liberation'.⁷⁷ However, according to the Ukrainian-American historian Motyl, Bandera 'never set foot in today's Ukraine after 1934.'⁷⁸ All the consulted sources do agree that Bandera eventually continued living in exile in Germany under different fake names. Bandera often received death threats from the Soviets, wherefore he and his family were forced to move frequently and also to live separately. Bandera himself often hid for days or weeks, was constantly protected by fellow nationalists and wore disguises.

Overall, it should be mentioned that Bandera never regained the influence he had in events in Ukraine as before the war. From his workplace in Munich, Bandera did establish a network of people who were willing to travel to Ukraine as a spy or secret agent in order to contact members of the Ukrainian underground. However, since the Polish closely monitored this it hardly succeeded. Marples describes Bandera's life in exile the following: 'Thus cut off from the explosive events that took place in his name, he was reduced until his shocking death to the unhappy life of an exile and the fractious disputes that such a life entails.'⁷⁹

As mentioned before Bandera received several death threats, but it did not stop there. The KGB several times issued orders to either kidnap or assassinate Bandera, but none of these actions succeeded until the 15th of October 1959. On this day, Stepan Bandera was killed by the Soviet agent Bohdan Stashynsky in the staircase of his house in Munich. Stashynsky was not unknown with the OUN and UPA, since he had already killed Mykola Lebed, the leader of the OUN-B during the war, in 1957. First, the cause of Bandera's death remained a mystery, but autopsy resulted in the statement

⁷⁵ Rudling, 'Historical representation of the wartime accounts of the activities of the OUN-UPA', 174.

⁷⁶ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 107.

⁷⁷ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 07-11-1959 http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1959/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1959-42.pdf

⁷⁸ Alexander J. Motyl, 'Ukraine, Europe, and Bandera', *Cicero Foundation Great Debate Paper*, no. 10/05 March 2010, 2.

⁷⁹ Marples, 'Stepan Bandera: The Resurrection of a Ukrainian National Hero', 565.

he had died as a result of contamination with potassium cyanide, a poison gas. Either someone sprayed this in his face, Bandera had eaten something which contained cyanide or he had taken the poison himself to commit suicide. While the Ukrainian nationalists quickly accused the Soviets of his death, the Soviet press reacted with the statement that the German minister Teodor Oberlander had ordered the murder of Stepan Bandera, since Bandera knew too much about his role in the pogroms in Lviv in 1941. All the conspiracy theories were disproved when Bandera's real killer, Bohdan Stashynsky, handed himself in in 1961.

According to Rossoliński-Liebe, Bandera's sudden death was quickly turned into 'one of greatest catastrophes in Ukrainian history' by his supporters.⁸⁰ Newspapers controlled by (former) OUN-B members published about Bandera's death and his achievements for weeks. In these articles they presented Bandera as a true hero and martyr, who fought for an independent Ukrainian state. For instance, *The Ukrainian Weekly* of the 24th October 1959 opened with on the first page in capital letters: 'Stepan Bandera, leader of organization of Ukrainian Nationalist (OUN), dies from cyanide poisoning in Munich at the age of 50. - His associates charge he was a victim of Moscow-directed murder plot. - Ukrainians the world over shocked by sudden death of patriot and freedom fighter.' Additionally, the article claimed: 'The death of Stepan Bandera constitutes a great blow for all Ukrainians, regardless of their political feelings and affiliations. The name of Stepan Bandera will be written forever in the modern history of Ukraine, and he will remain an outstanding Ukrainian patriot and leader.'⁸¹ According to the edition of the following week: 'For most of his life Stepan Bandera was an angry, fanatic outlast, dedicated to a lost cause. His cause was Ukrainian independence and so hard did Bandera struggle for it that Soviet propaganda refers to all members of the Ukrainian underground as 'Banderovtsy'.⁸²

Other newspapers distributed in the Ukrainian diaspora also published about Bandera, such as *Shliakh peremohy* (based in Munich), *Homin Ukraïny* (based in Toronto) and *Ukrains'ka dumka* (based in London). They printed long reports about Bandera's life as a fighter for the Ukrainian state and the deep sadness that was felt within the Ukrainian community after his death.⁸³ All these newspapers quickly blamed the Soviet Union for Bandera's death. Several foreign newspapers also paid attention to the death of Bandera. For instance, *The Guardian* published about the 'former leader of the Ukrainian nationalist movement' who either got killed or committed suicide.⁸⁴ *The New*

⁸⁰ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 407.

⁸¹ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 24-10-1959 http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1959/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1959-39.pdf (22-09-2015)

⁸² *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 31-10-1959 http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1959/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1959-40.pdf (22-09-2015)

⁸³ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 407-408.

⁸⁴ Our own Correspondent, 'Ukrainian exile's death either murder or suicide', *The Guardian*, Oct 20, 1959, found on: ProQuest Historical Newspapers. (22-09-2015)

York Times published: 'cyanide poison killed Stepan Bandera, anti-Communist guerilla chief from the Ukraine. The mystery that surrounded his life continued in death.'⁸⁵ The OUN reacted with the following statement on the 15th of October: 'Comrades, Nationalists! At this tragic moment when cruel death has deprived us for ever of Stepan Bandera, great son of the Ukrainian people and for many years our illustrious leader, we appeal to you to cherish in your sorrow-stricken hearts the belief in the victory of our sacred cause, to remain unshaken in your loyalty to the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and, more determined than ever, to continue the fight. [...] The enemy cannot destroy Stepan Bandera's farsighted policy or the vast experience gained in OUN cadres under his leadership. His ideals will continue to guide in the future our fight for freedom. Unity, steadfastness, determination and untiring effort — these must be our answer to the treacherous and murderous plots by which the enemy tries to intimidate and paralyze the leading spirits of the largest of enslaved peoples. Long live the memory of our heroes!'⁸⁶ Dmytro Dontsov, a Ukrainian nationalist writer and an inspirer for both Bandera and the OUN party, said after Bandera's death: 'ever since the war his name became a symbol (even in the eyes of his enemies) of the struggle for life and death with rapacious conquerors'.⁸⁷

According to the Ukrainian writer Danylo Chaykovsky, after Bandera's death a 'two-months mourning' was proclaimed.⁸⁸ Furthermore, gatherings all over the world took place from the United States to Belgium. The diaspora Ukrainians who were not able to attend Bandera's funeral in Munich on the 20th of October organized commemorations in their hometowns. For instance, according to *The Ukrainian Weekly*, special requiem masses were organized in Ukrainian communities all over the United States.⁸⁹

This chapter gave a short overview of Stepan Bandera's life, the first reactions on his death and the start of the mythologisation. Bandera grew up in Western Ukraine during the First World War. His father was involved in several Ukrainian nationalist organizations. Bandera himself was also dedicated to the Ukrainian nationalist cause from a very young age. He had joined several nationalistic youth organizations before he became an active member of the OUN. He was soon appointed as head of the OUN in Western-Ukraine. To the other nationalists he was more radical, as is proven by for instance the attacks he ordered on 'enemies of the Ukrainian state' including fellow Ukrainians. After the murder of the Polish Minister of Internal Affairs, Bronislaw Pieracki, and the

⁸⁵ 'Ukraine Exile Chief a victim of poison', *The New York Times*, Oct 20, 1959, found on: ProQuest Historical Newspapers (22-09-2015)

⁸⁶ Information about the assassination of Bandera <http://www.uaweb.org/murders/r05.html> (16-09-2015)

⁸⁷ Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 77.

⁸⁸ Danylo Chaykovsky, 'Stepan Bandera, his life and struggle', found on: <http://www.uaweb.org/murders/r04.html> (30-09-2015)

⁸⁹ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 31-10-1959 http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1959/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1959-40.pdf (30-09-2015)

subsequently followed trials, Bandera was imprisoned by the Poles. He would only regain his freedom at the outbreak of the Second World War. After a cooperation with the lower ranks of the Nazi apparatus and the formation of Ukrainian battalion, the Ukrainian state was proclaimed on June 1941 by a OUN-member, Stetsko. The Germans refused to recognize this state. Consequently, Bandera and his fellow nationalists were arrested. Hereafter, Bandera was imprisoned in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in Berlin until 1944. After he regained his freedom, he most likely never returned to Ukraine and played a more symbolic role in the OUN, although he tried to stay involved in nationalist matters. His death in Munich in 1959 was received by great grief and gatherings all over the world.

Concluding, it can be argued there have been several controversial issues in Bandera's life. These controversies have led to a debate between academics and are used nowadays in the 'Bandera myth', both in a positive and a negative way. The first one is the formation of the UPA under the leadership of the OUN-B and their actions. Bandera was never directly involved in this organization, which was under the leadership of Shukhevych. However, the Soviets have been referring to members of the UPA as 'Banderites' or 'Banderivtsi' from the beginning. Another debate is focused on Bandera's imprisonment in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, his treatment and the question whether he ever returned to Ukraine or not. Furthermore, this chapter made clear the myth of Bandera is constructed on several building blocks. These building blocks are the trial in 1935 in Warsaw and Bandera's behavior in court, the akt of the Ukrainian statehood in 1941 and his death in 1959. The next chapters will further describe the mythologisation of Stepan Bandera during the Soviet Union and in independent Ukraine.

Chapter 2 **Bandera in Soviet Ukraine and independent Ukraine**

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the creating of the myth of Bandera already started during his life, especially during his imprisonment by the Germans in the Second World War. However, the myth creating process continued after his death. This resulted in the creating of 'two myths'. The first one was fairly negative, it pictured Bandera as a bandit and a traitor and was mainly used by the Soviets powers. The other myth, created by the Ukrainian nationalists themselves, was rather positive. Within the second myth, Bandera was pictured as a hero who struggled for Ukrainian independence.

This chapter will focus on these two myths, as well as other stories around Bandera during the Soviet Union and, after its demise in 1991, the independent Ukrainian state. Firstly, attention will be paid to the creation of the myth of Bandera during the Soviet Union and the reaction of the OUN of this. Afterwards, his symbolic role in the first years of the independent Ukrainian state will be discussed. Finally, attention will be paid to the way in which Bandera is commemorated in articles and books published in this time period, including school books used for history classes, and in museums that were opened in the United Kingdom and Western Ukraine.

Myth making around Bandera during the Soviet Union

The Soviet propaganda mainly focused on undoing Bandera of the fame he had acquired amongst Ukrainian citizens, because of his behavior during the trials in Warsaw and Lviv and the proclamation of the Ukrainian state in 1941. Another purpose of the propaganda was to discredit the myth which had been created of Bandera by his followers and admirers. However, the Soviet propaganda attack on Bandera acquired the opposite result, as the cult and myth of Bandera were strengthened. Unfortunately, little has been published on the Soviet propaganda on Bandera in English whereby the following paragraphs are based on a small number of academic sources. However, this information is complemented with newspaper fragments found on the Current Digest of the Russian Press.

According to Pirie, Bandera was portrayed in the Soviet propaganda as a 'visitor of the Germans' whereby it appeared the Germans and Bandera were in a good relationship and worked closely together. Bandera's later imprisonment by the same Germans is not even mentioned in the propaganda Pirie researched. Furthermore, according to Pirie Bandera was described as 'the very incarnation of evil'.⁹⁰ Additionally, Rossoliński-Liebe mentions that from 1944 and 1945 onwards the OUN and its members were portrayed by the Soviets as 'Ukrainian-German nationalists' and 'traitors to the Ukrainian people and as henchmen of the Nazis'.⁹¹ The propaganda the Soviets spread also contained stories of former Ukrainian nationalists. In several stories, these men explained the

⁹⁰ Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 73.

⁹¹ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 365 & 366.

horrible deeds they committed on the orders of the OUN and their regret. Furthermore, these nationalists told in their stories that Bandera worked for the Gestapo and referred to themselves as 'Banderites'.⁹² For instance, in June 1954 the *Pravda* (the official newspaper of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) published a story by the 'Ukrainian political émigré' Josip Krutij, who admitted he had worked for the Ukrainian nationalists and claimed: 'Shortly before World War II such "political" leaders as Eugene Konovalts, Stepan Bandera and Andrei Melnyk became servants of the Hitlerite intelligence service, on whose orders they organized espionage and terrorism in the Ukraine and Poland'.⁹³ According to Rossoliński-Liebe: 'In the early Soviet discourse, Bandera, as the main symbol of "the Ukrainian-German nationalist", also became a traitor and deceiver.' In the propaganda Bandera was described as a close associate of the Germans, someone who was not struggling for Ukraine's independence, but working for German profit.⁹⁴

The Soviet propaganda continued after the Second World War had ended. It focused more on the putative alliance between the Ukrainian nationalists and the western powers. For instance, cartoons were distributed under Ukrainian citizens in which Bandera was pictured with western leaders such as Winston Churchill and Harry Truman.⁹⁵ Furthermore, the Soviet authorities continued to use the term 'Banderites' to describe members of the OUN, members of the UPA and other Ukrainian nationalists. According to Rossoliński-Liebe, this term was used in 'every publication' on Ukrainian nationalism. Remarkably enough the term 'Banderites' (*Banderivets*) appeared much more often in the propaganda than in stories about Stepan Bandera himself. Overall, most of the Soviet publications were not devoted to Stepan Bandera, but to the 'Banderites' behind him.⁹⁶ This propaganda focused on the putative collaboration with the Nazi's and the murders committed by the UPA of both innocent Ukrainians and Red Army. This is underlined by Marples, who describes the Soviet authorities continued to associate Bandera with the UPA and referring to this army as 'Banderites', 'traitors to the Motherland' and 'agents of Anglo-American imperialists'.⁹⁷

Furthermore, on behalf of the Soviet authorities several books and articles were published in which Bandera was described as a traitor. These books and articles were not based on archival research or any other source material, but mainly on the views and requirements of the Soviet government. According to the *Ukrainian Canadian Research & Documentation Centre*, which

⁹² Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 368.

⁹³ *Pravda*, On the reasons for my break with the Ukrainian Nationalists - Statement by Josip Krutij, Ukrainian Political Emigre who crossed over into German Democratic Republic, 19-05-1954, found on: The Current Digest of the Russian Press (24-11-2015)

⁹⁴ Rossoliński-Liebe, 378.

⁹⁵ *Ibidem*, 388.

⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, 403.

⁹⁷ Marples, 'Stepan Bandera: The Resurrection of a Ukrainian National Hero', 563.

researches Ukrainian history and culture, Bandera became an 'extremely controversial personality in Ukraine' due to the Soviet propaganda. According to the Centre, the Soviet propaganda machine pictured Bandera as a 'fascist and extreme nationalist who was a traitor to the Ukrainian people'. Therefore, the word 'Banderovets' was, next to the previously mentioned 'Banderites', used to describe traitors and fascists.⁹⁸ The *Ukrainian Canadian Research & Documentation Centre* describes the Soviet propaganda as 'a campaign of lies and disinformation'. According to the Centre, Bandera was the symbol of the Ukrainian struggle for independence and still symbolizes the 'Ukrainian struggle against imperialism – Soviet, German and Polish'.⁹⁹

Bandera as national hero

As a reaction on the Soviet propaganda, the OUN started to expend the Bandera myth that had already been established during his life. The OUN wanted to demonstrate that Bandera was a great national hero, a symbol of the nationalist struggle. By doing this, the OUN members wanted to state that they, as successors of Bandera, were the legitimate defenders of the nationalist cause.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, a fund called the 'Stepan Bandera Liberation Struggle Fund' was created. This fund helped financing the publication of several books on Bandera, the OUN and the Second World War. These books pictured the 'OUN version' of the Ukrainian national struggle. They paid attention to the 'good side' of the OUN and Bandera himself. In addition, the events right before and during the Second World War were placed in a positive daylight. These books pictured the OUN as a resistance army, which fought against both the Nazi's and Communists. Additionally, stories were spread that the Jewish population was protected by the OUN-B and many Jews even joined the organization. Furthermore, official documents of the OUN which dated from around the Second World War were edited, reprinted and redistributed. Therefore, it is possible that different versions circulate of important leaflets and documents, as we have seen with the proclamation of statehood in 1941 from which the parts mentioning Hitler and Germany were later removed. Overall, Bandera was remembered by the OUN members in an idealized and heroic way. These memories were contrary to the way in which for example Polish and Jewish citizens of Ukraine remembered Bandera.

The first published biography of Bandera is *Stepan Bandera. Symvol revoliutsiinoï bezkompromisovosty*, which can be translated as *Stepan Bandera: symbol of revolutionary uncompromisingness*. It was written by the former OUN and UPA member Petro Mirchuk and

⁹⁸ The word 'Banderites' or the Russian 'Banderivets' appears most often in the researched material. It is possible the word 'Banderovets' is based on a spelling mistake or mispronunciation, but it is also often used on the Russian and Ukrainian internet.

⁹⁹ *The Ukrainian Canadian Research & Documentation Centre*, 'Between Hitler and Stalin. Ukraine in World War II, the Untold Story, Stepan Bandera' http://www.ucrdc.org/HI-STEPAN_BANDERA.html (29-09-2015)

¹⁰⁰ Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 76.

published in 1961. According to Pirie, Mirchuks book begins with the following sentence:

*'For Christians, the 'Lives of the Saints' were and are sources of strength, which inspire and strengthen faith', 'great, Ukrainian nationalist-revolutionaries should, in a similar fashion, serve as models for young nationalist', 'With this goal I give the Ukrainian reader a short biography of one of the greatest Ukrainian nationalist-revolutionaries - the leader of the OUN, Stepan Bandera.'*¹⁰¹

Judged by this introduction, Mirchuk describes Bandera in a very positive and admiring way.

According to Marples, the book fits in 'the standard interpretation from the perspective of his [Bandera's] followers'.¹⁰² According to Rossoliński-Liebe, Mirchuks' work did provide some useful information, but also introduced false facts such as the democratic values of the OUN and the extreme torture of OUN members in Polish prisons. Furthermore, in his book Mirchuk does not mention anything about the collaboration of the OUN-B with Nazi Germany.¹⁰³ Overall, this book can be seen as a sort of adoration of Bandera and not as an objective biography.

Another book, *Russian Oppression in Ukraine. Reports and Documents*, was published and circulated by the so called *Ukrainian Information Service* in London in 1962. In this book, Bandera is referred to as one of the 'outstanding leaders of the Ukrainian national liberation struggle'. One of the authors of the book, OUN member Yaroslav Stetsko, writes in his contribution: 'The assassination of Pieracki and the trials in Warsaw were headline news in the world press and drew attention to the Ukrainian problem. Stepan Bandera's courageous and undaunted attitude during the Warsaw mock-trial also played an important part in this respect.'¹⁰⁴ Overall, the book can be seen as promotion material for Bandera and the Ukrainian nationalists, while at the same time it is an attack on the Russian oppression. Beside these books, also many poems have been published about the OUN, the struggle for Ukrainian independence and Bandera himself. According to Pirie, many of these poems explain that 'Bandera is the symbol of the nation - he is the banner, or flag, under which nationalists rally in the struggle for statehood.' This is presumably linked to the fact that Bandera is the Spanish word for banner or flag.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 78.

¹⁰² Marples, 'Stepan Bandera: The Resurrection of a Ukrainian National Hero', 557.

¹⁰³ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 443-444.

¹⁰⁴ Ukrainian Publishers LTD, *Russian Oppression in Ukraine. Reports and Documents* (London 1962) 231.

¹⁰⁵ Pirie, 81-82.

Commemorating Bandera

As has already been discussed in the previous chapter, the death of Stepan Bandera led to commemorations all over the world. According to *The Ukrainian Weekly*, from 1960 onwards gatherings were organized on a yearly basis to commemorate 'this outstanding fighter for the freedom of Ukraine'.¹⁰⁶ Regularly these gatherings were combined with protests against the Soviet Union, for instance in front of embassies of the Soviet Union. During these gatherings Soviet flags were burned. Furthermore, Bandera's grave in Munich quickly became a popular pilgrimage site for Ukrainians all over the world.¹⁰⁷

The gatherings were mainly organized in the Ukrainian diaspora in for example the United States and Canada.¹⁰⁸ The Ukrainian diaspora had already been created in the beginning of the twentieth century, but were extended with Ukrainians who left Ukraine after the Second World War. This included Ukrainians who had already admired Bandera during the trials in Warsaw and Lviv, who saw him as the true leader of the Ukrainian state or were former members of the UPA.¹⁰⁹ During the commemorations symbolic coffins were placed in the middle of the room which were decorated with flowers. Poems were recited, speeches were delivered, sometimes by people who had known Bandera personally, and the present (children) choirs sang Ukrainian songs. Since Western Ukraine was still part of the Soviet Union, public commemorations within Ukraine were not possible until the end of the Soviet Union. According to *Der Tagesspiegel*, it was not even allowed to mention Bandera's name under the communist regime.¹¹⁰

Special years in the commemorations were the 'round-numbers years', such as 1969, 1979, 1984 and 1989. The Ukrainian press paid repeatedly attention to the gatherings organized in these years. For instance, on the 14th of October 1979, *The Ukrainian Weekly* published: 'Men like Bandera need no identification because they have carved out their identity on the struggle of the Ukrainian people for their place under the sun. In Ukraine's modern history the names of Petliura, Konovalets, Chuprynka and Bandera represent an ongoing revolutionary struggle which they and many others have elucidated by making the supreme sacrifice on the altar of freedom.' Furthermore, the newspaper outlined: 'Bandera's imprint on that movement [OUN] is best reflected in the fact that until this very day any sign of Ukrainian renaissance is immediately labeled by Moscow as being "banderite." But for us Bandera stands for total commitment to the most sacred of our causes. His

¹⁰⁶ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 'One Year Ago...', 15-10-1960, 1
http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1960/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1960-41.pdf (30-09-2015)

¹⁰⁷ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 417.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibidem*, 416.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, 407.

¹¹⁰ Von Knut Krohn, 'Der KGB-Giftmord von München', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 27-09-2009
<http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/international/erinnerung-der-kgb-giftmord-von-muenchen/1606706.html>
(12-11-2015)

and his predecessors' legacies continue to be our credo and our mission until its ultimate fruition, in paying tribute to his memory on the twentieth anniversary of his death ours is the duty of reaffirm our' faith in those ideals for which he died. We think Bandera would have wanted it thus.¹¹¹ Within this article, Bandera is pictured as a hero who struggled for the important cause of Ukrainian independence and eventually even died for this cause. According to Rossoliński-Liebe, on the 13th of October 1979 a memorial service took place in Munich, at which several nationalists held speeches and saluted. Furthermore, on several locations all over the world young nationalists burned Soviet flags and sang the Ukrainian anthem.¹¹² The description of this commemoration shows the close connection Ukrainians observed between the good deeds of Bandera and the depravity of the Soviet Union.

Another special year followed in 1984, when twenty-five years had passed since Bandera's death. On the 11th of November, *The Ukrainian Weekly* described Bandera as 'inarguably one of the most important figures among Ukrainian emigres.' The article described several events in Bandera's life, for instance: 'On June 30, members of the OUN headed by Mr. Bandera organized a gathering of citizens in Lviv, proclaimed the re-establishment of the Ukrainian state and announced that Mr. Bandera had appointed Yaroslav Stetsko as the head of the provisional government'. Nowhere in this text it is specially mentioned Bandera was not present during this proclamation. Thus it seems Bandera was present, perhaps the newspaper did this on purpose to make the event look more special. According to the article, Bandera symbolized to many of his followers in the West and in Ukraine 'the ongoing revolutionary struggle in Ukraine against Soviet occupation'.¹¹³ This sentence shows how Bandera is used and seen as example for other Ukrainian nationalists.

Bandera in independent Ukraine

The glasnost and perestroika period, introduced by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985, led to several changes in the Soviet society including more freedom of information and organization. It paved the way for the rebirth of nationalism in Ukraine. Due to the attempts of several Ukrainian organizations to re-examine the Ukrainian history and especially the period of the Second World War, Bandera's cult started to re-emerge. This led to a complex situation, as the citizens of Ukraine were exposed to two propaganda narratives at the same time. The first one was the Soviet one, which continued to picture Bandera, the OUN and UPA as fascists and saw glorifying Bandera as equal to glorifying Hitler. In the other propaganda narrative, Bandera became an anticommunist icon symbolizing freedom and

¹¹¹ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 'Relevant legacy', 14-10-1979, 6
http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1979/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1979-41.pdf (13-10-2015)

¹¹² Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 428.

¹¹³ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 'Twenty-five years ago: assassination of Stepan Bandera', 11-11-1984, 3 & 12
http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1984/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1984-46.pdf (13-10-2015)

independence.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, the freedom under Gorbachev led to the establishment of new organizations and political parties. One of these was the Union of Independent Ukrainian Youth, named after the Union of Ukrainian Nationalist Youth from the 1930's, which took Bandera as their hero. The youth that joined this and other similar organizations was still willing to fight for the ideas and ideals of Bandera. According to Pirie, this was both a sign of simply following the example of their parents as well as a sign of rebellion against the Soviet powers.¹¹⁵ Another new political party was People's Movement of Ukraine, better known under the Ukrainian name Rukh (The Movement). It was founded in September 1989 and is registered as political party in early 1990. Rukh is a center-right political party and has its roots in the Ukrainian dissidents for instance from Canada, including many nationalists. The party organized mass demonstrations and was the driving force for the referendum on Ukrainian independence.¹¹⁶

The signals of the revival of the Bandera cult were confirmed with the commemorations that were held in 1989 in several Western-Ukrainian towns and the reveal of the first statue dedicated to Bandera on the 14th of October 1990 in his birthplace Stryi Uhryniv. According to Pirie, from this moment on articles about Bandera by fellow Ukrainian nationalists and members of the OUN, who had first 'invented' the Bandera myth, started to be published in Ukrainian newspapers. This process is confirmed by Marples, according to him: 'Several contemporary Ukrainian newspapers have helped to revive the myth of Bandera and make him well known to a new generation in Ukraine.'¹¹⁷ Furthermore, several of the new Ukrainian political parties and organizations claimed they were 'direct heirs' to the OUN-B and followed Bandera's footsteps. This includes the far-right political party Svoboda. Svoboda, previously named Social-National Party of Ukraine, was founded in 1991 and is registered as political party in 1995. The party name can be translated as Freedom. According to its official website, it was 'formed with the unification of the activists of nationalistic community organizations' and its ideology stems from the book *Two Revolutions* written by OUN member Yaroslav Stetsko.¹¹⁸ The close attention for Bandera in Ukraine soon led to the demolition of the statue in Stryi Uhryniv, presumably by anti-Bandera vandals. Hereafter the statue was rebuilt, but within a short period of time it was again destroyed.¹¹⁹

Some months later activities were organized in Western Ukraine for the anniversary of Bandera's death. According to V. Drozd, correspondent for the Russian newspaper *Pravda*: 'For three days now, activities have been conducted in Ternopol, Ivano-Frankovsk and Lvov Provinces to mark

¹¹⁴ Pirie, 'Unraveling the Banner: A Biographical Study of Stepan Bandera', 89.

¹¹⁵ Ibidem, 93.

¹¹⁶ Jansen, *Grensland. Een geschiedenis van Oekraïne*, 163-165. & Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine. The land and its peoples*, 719.

¹¹⁷ Marples, 'Stepan Bandera: The Resurrection of a Ukrainian National Hero', 564.

¹¹⁸ Svoboda, History of "Svoboda" party <http://en.svoboda.org.ua/about/history/> (24-12-2015)

¹¹⁹ Pirie, 92.

the anniversary of the death of S. Bandera: prayer services, well-organized pilgrimages to his birthplace and to where a monument to him has been unveiled, processions and rallies.’ Furthermore, he wrote the activities were combined with gatherings of former members of the OUN-UPA, which ‘is remembered for having left in its wake thousands of graves, orphans and unfortunate people’. Drozd described his aversion against the popularity of Bandera and the attraction of OUN-UPA fighters to young people.¹²⁰ With the fall of the Soviet Union, journalists from all over the world were able to and started to travel to Ukraine, for instance the Dutch journalist Hubert Smeets who visited the country in March 1991. During this visit, he interviewed a former member of the OUN-UPA and concluded that thirty years after his death, Bandera was again extremely popular in western Ukraine, especially amongst youth. He saw how clips with Bandera’s portrait were sold on the streets of Lviv, found brochures and ballades written about him and heard about plans to open a museum dedicated to Bandera.¹²¹

On the 24th of August 1991, the act of declaration of independence of Ukraine was adopted by the Ukrainian parliament. In December 1991, after the recognition of Russia, the country became an independent state. Leonid Kravchuk became the first president of Ukraine. Under him, but also under his successor Leonid Kuchma, a revival of writing Ukrainian history started. The Soviet archives, which had long been inaccessible, were reopened and therefore material that had been hidden for decades became available. Furthermore, new institutions were established by the government and funds assigned to research the Ukrainian history in detail. This process also served another purpose, as the newly Ukrainian state was searching for its own history in order to create both a strong state as well as a national Ukrainian identity. As a result, new research was conducted by historians both from Ukraine and as well as from the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada and the United States. According to the Swedish researcher Yuliya Yurchuk: ‘Discussions of the history of the OUN and UPA became perhaps the first time when Ukrainians had to face history where they are not presented only as victims, but also as perpetrators.’¹²² According to research by Rossoliński-Liebe, within the first years after independence several biographies about Stepan Bandera and his achievements were written by former OUN-B members. For instance, in 1996 *Stepan Bandera – Symbol of the Nation* by Petro Duzhyi was published. This book was nevertheless not based on any new research, but more an extended version of Bandera’s own writings published in his

¹²⁰ V. Drozd, ‘What is happening in Lvov’, *Pravda*, 17-10-1991, found on: The Current Digest of the Russian Press (30-10-2015)

¹²¹ Hubert Smeets, ‘In de Oekraïne; Het hart van Europa’, *NRC Handelsblad*, 16-03-1991 .

¹²² Yuliya Yurchuk, *Reordering of Meaningful Worlds. Memory of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in Post-Soviet Ukraine* (Stockholm 2014) 27.

autobiography.¹²³ Overall, the biographies, just as those published in the 1960's, mostly focused on glorifying Bandera and less on actual historical facts of his life.

History schoolbooks

Both in the Soviet Union as well as in the current Ukrainian and Russian state history books, used for the education of school children, have often been rewritten. Especially topics such as the Second World War have been controversial, let alone the role of Bandera in the war. Several researchers have compared Soviet, Ukrainian and Russian schoolbooks with each other and discovered differences in how they describe these events.¹²⁴

For his PhD research at the University of Amsterdam titled *Nation-Building in Post-Soviet Ukraine Educational policy and the response of the Russian-speaking population* the Dutch researcher Jan Germe Janmaat studied the history of Ukraine pictured in several history books. Some of these were used for the education of school children during the Soviet Union, others were used in independent Ukraine. According to his research, the Soviet textbook *Istoriia Ukrainskoi SSR* (History of the Ukrainian SSR) written by V.H. Sarbei, and V.E. Spyt'skyi, published in 1987 and used for Grades 9-10, pays 'remarkably little attention' to the OUN and Stepan Bandera. The writers only briefly mentions that 'German forces relied on Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists', but apart from that both the OUN and Bandera are not further mentioned. Janmaat compared this book with the Ukrainian text book *Noveishaia istoriia Ukrainy: Chast' pervaia* (Contemporary history of Ukraine: Part One) written by F.H. Turchenko, published in 1994 and used for Grade 10.¹²⁵ According to Janmaat, this history book shows a completely different picture. The book presents Bandera as a 'real Ukrainian freedom fighter for whose organization the values of democracy and equality for all nationalities have been of high priority'.¹²⁶ When these books are compared to each other, the Soviet textbook pictures the OUN as a 'nationalist organization that collaborated with the Nazi's', while the Ukrainian book more or less rehabilitated the OUN and presents it as 'an underground group that combatted the Germans quite effectively and which stood up for democratic values and the ideal of an independent Ukrainian state'.¹²⁷

For her article 'The Ukrainian history textbook: Introducing children to the "Ukrainian nation"', the American researcher Nancy Popson studied the book *Opovidannia z Istoriji Ukrayiny*

¹²³ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 471-472.

¹²⁴ The cited academics researched Ukrainian school books for the 9th, 10th and 11th grade. The Ukrainian education system is organized in five levels, namely: preschool, primary, secondary, higher and postgraduate education. The 9th grade is part of the secondary school level and students are aged 14/15. The 10th and 11th grade are the last 'profile years' of middle school, the higher education. The students are aged 15-17.

¹²⁵ J.G. Janmaat, *Nation-building in post-Soviet Ukraine : educational policy and the response of the Russian-speaking population* (Amsterdam 2000) 98-99.

¹²⁶ Janmaat, 203.

¹²⁷ Ibidem, 101.

(Stories of the History of Ukraine) by Viktor Mysan, which had been used for the fifth-grade elementary Ukrainian history course since 1995. In this book she read that 'nationalist heroes Petlura and Bandera are singled out for praise' and 'Bandera and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) are characterized as fighters against the Stalin regime.'¹²⁸ According to Popson, the textbook ends with 'four things that remain to be developed in Ukraine', of which the third is 'the rehabilitation of Ukraine's true history, of its fight for independence, and of the great deeds of such heroes as Mazepa, Hrushevsky, Petlura, Bandera, and the young fighters at Krut.'¹²⁹

The Finish researcher Lina Klymenko compared two history books used for the 11th grade for her article 'Making Sense of World War II: How Russian and Ukrainian Textbooks Foster National Identities'. These books were the Ukrainian *Istoriya Ukrayiny* (History of Ukraine) by Turchenko et al., published in Kiev in 2011 and the Russian *Istoriya Rossii: 20th-nachalo 21st Veka* (History of Russia: the 20th century and early 21th century) by Levandovskii et al., published in Moscow in 2011. The Ukrainian textbook describes the OUN as a successful widespread movement supported by people all over Ukraine from different layers of society. The Russian textbook describes the OUN as an extremist organization under the leadership of Bandera and labels it as a Nazi occupational force.¹³⁰ For another research, focused on Ukrainian schoolbooks, Klymenko studied the textbook *Novitnia Istorii Ukrainy, 1939–pochatok XXI st.* (Ukraine's recent history, 1939 - beginning of the twentieth century) by F. Turchenko, P. Panchenko and S. Tymchenko, published in Kiev in 2006. This textbook describes the Bandera lead OUN as 'a serious threat to the German authorities' and states that Bandera, after his release, refused to cooperate with the Germans.¹³¹

Additionally, a book called *Education material on Stepan Bandera* can be found in a Ukrainian web store. This book, which was published in 2009, claims it is 'material that best describe Stepan Bandera and his family's life, very useful for history teachers and their educational sessions.'¹³² According to the description on the book cover, it reveals biographic material of Bandera and his family and pays attention to the Ukrainian nationalist movement and the role Bandera played for his home nation.¹³³

These articles and the text books show how different the ways of teaching history were in

¹²⁸ Nancy Popson, 'The Ukrainian history textbook: Introducing children to the "Ukrainian nation"', *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (2001) 333.

¹²⁹ Popson, 'The Ukrainian history textbook: Introducing children to the "Ukrainian nation"', 340.

¹³⁰ Lina Klymenko, 'Making Sense of World War II: How Russian and Ukrainian Textbooks Foster National Identities', *Centre for EU-Russia Studies* (January 2013) 15-16.

¹³¹ Lina Klymenko, 'World War II in Ukrainian school history textbooks: mapping the discourse of the past', *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, Vol. 44, No. 5 (2014) 756-777.

¹³² Yevshan, 'Children's Corner - Teacher's Materials' <https://www.yevshan.com/main.asp?pid=29301> (22-10-2015)

¹³³ Yevshan, 'Description of the book 'Education material on Stepan Bandera'' <https://www.yevshan.com/PreviewImgSongList.asp?iid=B-BH099.JPEG> (22-10-2015)

the Soviet Union and in the current Ukrainian and Russian state. Soviet Schoolchildren learned either almost nothing or only negative aspects of Bandera and the OUN. These books however did focus on the collaboration of the OUN with the Germans. The Russian schoolbooks published after the fall of the Soviet Union continued with this historiography. On the other hand, Ukrainian schoolchildren were more likely to be taught about the heroic deeds Bandera committed for the independence of the Ukrainian state.

Museums, Streets and Memorials

Three years after his death, the first museum about Bandera was opened in Nottingham, Great-Britain, on the 20th of October 1962. The museum, which is called the Stepan Bandera Museum of the Ukrainian Liberation Struggle, was created by Ukrainians who had moved to the United Kingdom after the First and Second World War. The museum was firstly located in the local building of Ukrainian nationalists, but was moved to London in 1978, where it re-opened in 1979. In this way the museum would be more accessible for foreigners. However, according to the information available all the exhibited material in the museum is in Ukrainian, which creates the impression it does not seem very accessible for foreigners who do not understand the Ukrainian language.¹³⁴ Furthermore, it is quite hard to find any information in English about the museum on the internet apart from a small section on the website focused on the archival material of the OUN. This is underlined by Rossoliński-Liebe, according to him: 'The museum was not established to educate visitors about Bandera's life, or Ukrainian genocidal nationalism. It was created to eulogize and sacralize the Providnyk and the 'tragic' but 'heroic' struggle of his generation'.¹³⁵ Furthermore, according to Rossoliński-Liebe, the wish of the founders of the museum was to save the personal belongings of Bandera for future generations.¹³⁶ This material seemed safer in the United Kingdom than in Germany and the Soviet Union, because of the sensitivity of the material and the tensions of the Cold War. Overall, the museum focuses on both protecting Bandera's personal belongs as on honoring Bandera himself.

Next to the museum dedicated to Stepan Bandera in the United Kingdom, in total five museums have been opened in Ukraine. These museums are all located in places connected with phases in Bandera's life, such as his youth or student years.¹³⁷ The first museum dedicated to Stepan Bandera in Ukraine was opened in the first days of Ukraine's independence. This museum is located

¹³⁴ *Archive OUN*, 'Museum of the liberation struggle im. Stepana Bandera in London', <http://www.ounuis.info/museum.html> (14-10-2015)

¹³⁵ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 442.

¹³⁶ *Ibidem*, 438.

¹³⁷ Andre Liebich & Oksana Myshlovskaa, 'Bandera: memorialization and commemoration', *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, Vol. 42, No. 5 (2014) 753.

in Volia Zaderevatska in the house where the Bandera family lived between 1933 and 1936. Bandera himself never lived in this house since he was a student at the Lviv Higher Polytechnical School in this period of time. He was either living in Dubliany or was imprisoned in Polish prisons. Within the museum items, belongings to the Bandera family are displayed such as a table and a closet. Furthermore, information boards explain Bandera's life, his youth and his activities within the OUN as well as his death.¹³⁸ Another museum about Bandera was opened in 1999 in Dubliany, the location of the Lviv National Agrarian University, which Bandera attended during his student years. The museum is located in one of the buildings of the university and contains literary works, photographs and information about Ukrainian nationalism. Overall, it describes the student years of Bandera during which he spent a lot of time on nationalist activities.¹³⁹

In the following year, the Stepan Bandera Historic-Memorial Museum in Staryi Uhryniv was opened on the 30th of December. This museum can be seen as the 'main Bandera museum'. The museum was firstly, in the 1990's, located in a small building next to the old family home of the Bandera family. After its renovation the museum moved to the old run-down family home.¹⁴⁰ The museum pays attention to both the state construction process in the beginning of the 20th century as well as Bandera's youth, his life and his activity in the OUN. According to the description on *Karpaty.info* as well as according to information by the museum itself, the exposition shows unique materials. The museum exhibits items that belonged to the family such as icons, certificates and documents on the name of Stefan Popel (one of Bandera's fake identities) and documents from Bandera's activity in the OUN.¹⁴¹ According to the museum's website, it often hosts conferences and gatherings about the OUN-UPA and Bandera.¹⁴² Furthermore, next to the museum the 'new' statue of Bandera can be found as well as the granite plate where the first Bandera statues were located before they were destroyed.¹⁴³

Another museum, the Regional Liberation Struggle Museum after Stepan Bandera, is located in Ivano-Frankivsk. Not much information can be found about this museum, but what is known is that it pays attention to the struggle for Ukrainian independence in history and in the twentieth

¹³⁸ *Karpaty.info*, 'Stepan Bandera Museum' <http://www.karpaty.info/en/uk/lv/st/volya-zaderevatska/museums/bandera/> (14-10-2015)

¹³⁹ *Pointerst*, 'Museum Bandera, Dubliany, Zhovkva Raion, Lviv Oblast, Ukraine' <https://en.pointerst.com/ua/showplace/muzej-bandery-2> (14-10-2015)

¹⁴⁰ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 491.

¹⁴¹ *Karpaty.info*, 'Stepan Bandera Historical Memorial Museum' <http://www.karpaty.info/en/uk/if/kl/st.ugryniv/museums/st.bandera/> (14-10-2015)

¹⁴² 'Stepan Bandera museum' <http://museum-bandera.if.ua/> (14-10-2015)

¹⁴³ *Karpaty.info*, 'Stepan Bandera Historical Memorial Museum' <http://www.karpaty.info/en/uk/if/kl/st.ugryniv/museums/st.bandera/> (14-10-2015)

century.¹⁴⁴ The fifth museum is located in Stryi, the city where Bandera attended high school. This museum is called the Family museum of Stepan Bandera. According to the website *Igotoworld – Ukraine*, the museum was opened in 2010 and dedicated to the 101st birth anniversary of the OUN leader. The museum is located in the house where Bandera lived during his school years. It contains personal belongings, documents and photos of Bandera's life.¹⁴⁵

Rossoliński-Liebe visited several of these museums, followed guided tours and interviewed their directors. According to him: 'The museum exhibitions, similarly to Bandera's hagiographies, did not address the question of Bandera's world view, the OUN ideology and the atrocities committed by the OUN and UPA. Religion was very visible and significant in all post-Soviet Bandera museums. It merged with nationalism and transformed the museums into shrines promoting nationalism and denial.'¹⁴⁶ Additional information about the interior of these museums has been found on the website *Karpaty.info*, a website which describes itself as 'a catalog of tourist services in the Ukrainian Carpathians'. Overall, it is quite difficult to find information in English on the internet about the museums established for Bandera. However, information about the museums in Ukrainian is much easier to access and also more extended. Because of this limited access to English information and the likeliness of all expositions being in Ukrainian, it seems the museums focus on Ukrainian citizens only and are less interested in attracting foreign visitors. The purpose of the museums seems to be highlighting Bandera's heroic deeds and his dedication to Ukrainian independence.

Beside the opening of these museums, numerous streets are named after Bandera in Western-Ukraine. Furthermore, monuments and statues have been revealed in several towns. The first monument for Bandera was the one in Stryi, the current monument there was unveiled on the 17th of August 1992. A few months later, in November 1992, a plaque as memorial to Bandera was placed on Stepan Bandera Street (which was previously named Lenin Street) in Ivano-Frankivsk. Quite a few years later, on the 13th of October in 2007, an immense statue for Bandera was revealed in the center of Lviv. According to *The Ukrainian Weekly*, the idea for constructing the statue traces back to 1993. The statue was funded by the Lviv Oblast, the city of Lviv, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and contributors from the Ukrainian diaspora. Extra money was raised by the sale of calendars dedicated to Bandera. The monument consists of a 7 meter high statue of Bandera himself on a pedestal. This pedestal even contains capsules with soil from both Bandera's birthplace Stryi

¹⁴⁴ *Karpaty.info*, 'Regional Liberation Struggle Museum after Stepan Bandera'
<http://www.karpaty.info/en/uk/if/fr/ivano-frankivsk/museums/liberation/> (14-10-2015)

¹⁴⁵ *Igotoworld.com - Ukraine*, 'Family museum of Stepan Bandera'
http://ua.igotoworld.com/en/poi_object/67216_muzei-semi-stepana-bandery.htm (14-10-2015)

¹⁴⁶ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 491.

Uhryniv and from the place where he was killed, Munich.¹⁴⁷ This statue can be regarded as an object for worshipping and remembering Bandera. The statue was protected by followers of Bandera, but was nonetheless vandalized within a few months.

The Bandera monuments were and still are the gathering places for the commemorations on the 1st of January and the 15th of October. According to the Canadian political scientists Liebich and Myshlovska, the initiative for building the monuments often came from civil society organizations such as local branches of the OUN, UPA or other nationalistic parties.¹⁴⁸ According to their in-depth research, in some towns the monuments were financed by local businessmen, for instance as part of an election campaign or to promote their business. Respondents in their survey suggested 'if other cities have a Bandera monument, why shouldn't we?' which makes it a symbol of civilization.¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, the funding for several monuments was carried out by the Svoboda political party. In 2007, the Lviv City also named a journalistic award after Bandera, which would be presented to the journalist who best covered the history of the Ukrainian national liberation movement.¹⁵⁰

In 2008 the project *Velyki Ukraïntsi* or *The Greatest Ukrainians* was aired on Ukrainian television. It was based on the BBC program *100 Greatest Britons*. The Ukrainian public could determine through mobile votes who they considered to be 'the greatest Ukrainian in history'. After the top 100 was announced, a re-vote started for the top 10, which resulted in the winning of Yaroslav the Wise as 'Greatest Ukrainian'. However, shortly after the show had aired, rumors started about possible fraud. A couple of days before the final results it seemed that Stepan Bandera was on the winning hand. According to the project chief editor, Vakhtang Kipiani, the rating for Yaroslav the Wise was made by just several tens of mobile telephones. Furthermore, Kipiani received data from mobile communication providers which showed that the Prince received most votes in the last days of the elections. Kipiani claimed that without these votes, Bandera would definitely have won the election.¹⁵¹ Unfortunately, the website for the election is no longer in function, but according to several sources the website also contained a forum on which viewers could discuss Ukrainian history as well as the results of the voting. This led to heated debates between the western and eastern Ukrainians.

¹⁴⁷ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 'Lviv unveils statue to Stepan Bandera', 21-10-2007, 3.
http://ukrweekly.com/archive/pdf3/2007/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_2007-42.pdf (16-10-2015)

¹⁴⁸ Liebich & Myshlovskaa, 'Bandera: memorialization and commemoration', 760.

¹⁴⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁵⁰ УКРАЇНА ЛЬВІВСЬКА МІСЬКА РАДА, Розпорядження № 495, 12-10-2007 (25-11-2015) [http://www8.city-adm.lviv.ua/Pool%5CInfo%5Cdoclmr_1.NSF/\(SearchForWeb\)/C80E4FAD6E57B422C22573760056D927?OpenDocument](http://www8.city-adm.lviv.ua/Pool%5CInfo%5Cdoclmr_1.NSF/(SearchForWeb)/C80E4FAD6E57B422C22573760056D927?OpenDocument)

¹⁵¹ *Unian*, 'Prince Yaroslav the Wise was named the greatest Ukrainian of all time', 19-05-2008
<http://www.unian.info/society/116997-prince-yaroslav-the-wise-was-named-the-greatest-ukrainian-of-all-time.html> (03-11-2015)

An article by the Ukrainian researcher Oleksandr Hrytsenko refers to the Ukrainian researcher Volodymyr Kulyk, according to whom: 'Fearing a victory for the polarizing figure of the twentieth-century nationalist icon Stepan Bandera, the channel managers allegedly doctored the voting results in order to produce a politically correct winner, the medieval-era Prince Yaroslav, who is honoured in both narratives'.¹⁵² According to Rossoliński-Liebe, Bandera was not appointed as 'Greatest Ukrainian' 'due to a fraud conducted by a group of political activists who wanted to prevent the division of Ukraine which, according to them, Bandera's winning would cause.'¹⁵³ According to the Canadian researcher Ivan Katchanovski, both president Yushchenko and other nationalist politicians used the results of the show as evidence of the growing popularity of Bandera. However, Katchanovski aims the results can be seen as 'non-representative', because the TV voters were self-selected and it was possible to vote an unlimited number of times. Furthermore, according to him a 2007 KIIS (Kyiv International Institute of Sociology) poll proved that only one percent of the Ukrainians regarded Bandera as 'the greatest Ukrainian'.¹⁵⁴ In another article Katchanovski provides other survey results. For instance, according to a poll by the Razumkov Centre in 2004, twenty percent of the respondents held a positive view of Bandera and thirty-five percent had a negative view of Bandera, described by Katchanovski as 'leader of the OUN involved in the Nazi genocide of Jews, Ukrainians and Russians in Ukraine.' He also cited a 2007 KISS poll which showed that only three percent of western Ukrainians regarded Bandera as a great Ukrainian, whilst he was not named by one of the respondents in the rest of the country.¹⁵⁵ The results of these surveys show less people had a positive view of Bandera than would be expected seeing the results of *The Greatest Ukrainian* show. It is therefore both possible the votes for Bandera were only from a small group of people, as the surveys were conducted in a 'non-representative' group of respondents or the respondents quickly changed their opinion.

The 50th anniversary of Bandera's death

The year 2009 marked two special events. It was both hundred years after Bandera's birth as well as fifty years after his death in 1959. Right before and during the year, new research on Bandera was conducted which led to newly published books, articles and documentaries. The year started with the distribution of a special postal stamp by the *Ukrainian State Enterprise of Posts (Ukrposhta)* in

¹⁵² Volodymyr Kulyk, 'War of memories in the Ukrainian media. Diversity of identities, political confrontation, and production technologies' in: Ellen Rutten, Julie Fedor and Vera Zvereva (ed.), *Memory, Conflict and New Media. Web wars in post-socialist studies* (London and New York 2013) 63-81, there: 75.

¹⁵³ Rossoliński-Liebe, *Stepan Bandera*, 511.

¹⁵⁴ Ivan Katchanovski, 'Terrorists or National Heroes? Politics of the OUN and the UPA in Ukraine', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 48 (2015) 223.

¹⁵⁵ Ivan Katchanovski, 'The politics of Soviet and Nazi genocides in Orange Ukraine', *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 62, No. 6 (August 2010) 988.

honor of Bandera's 100th birthday, on which Bandera is pictured as an adult.¹⁵⁶ Furthermore, on the first of January, several commemorations were held for Bandera, for instance in his birth place Staryi Uhryniv. President Yushchenko, who was invited but did not show up, wrote in his message of greetings that 'Bandera was a symbol of struggle for Ukraine's independence'. On the same day, a new sculpture for Bandera was unveiled in Ivano-Frankovsk.¹⁵⁷

The Ukrainian Weekly of the 4th of January 2009 opened with a story about the commemorations for Bandera which had already started the week before, on December the 26th. On this day, residents from Ternopol gathered near Bandera's stature to honor him. According to the political analyst Zenon Zawada, who was present during the celebrations: 'The day's speakers stressed Bandera's role in the liberation struggle of Ukrainians, and noted that such statues were a sign of national consciousness being reborn in Ukraine.' Furthermore, the article referred to a special ceremony which was hosted in the national opera and a documentary about Bandera's life which was shown on television. Additionally, according to Zawada: 'Politicians are already expressing their willingness to support 2009 commemoration efforts. On December the 25th, the Verkhovna Rada mustered 236 votes to approve a list of government-recognized historical dates to commemorate next year, which included the 100-year anniversary of Bandera's birth'. However, it should be mentioned that the Verkhovna Rada consists of 450 deputies and only a small majority voted in favor of this decision.¹⁵⁸ A few weeks later, Zawada reported on the celebrations in Staryi Uhryniv. In this article, he described Bandera as 'legendary leader' and wrote: 'It was Bandera's unbending conviction, rejection of any cooperation with enemies and dedication to nothing less than full Ukrainian independence that elevated him to symbolize the political ideal for Ukrainians. At the same time, he became the antithesis to a hero for his enemies, particularly the Soviets, who cast him as the ultimate criminal and villain.'¹⁵⁹

The Russian website *Russia Today* also reported about the celebrations. The article 'Ukraine to commemorate xenophobic national heroes' announced the new year in Ukraine would begin with a controversial celebration. 'On January the 1st the country will honour former Ukrainian nationalist leader Stepan Bandera. The decision to introduce the holiday was made by the country's parliament on Thursday. Bandera is known for masterminding the massacre of Poles in Volhynia during the

¹⁵⁶ *Universal Postal Union*, 'UA001.09' <http://www.wnsstamps.post/en/stamps/UA001.09> (10-11-2015)

¹⁵⁷ *ITAR-TASS World Service*, 'Ukraine marks centenary birth anniversary of Stepan Bandera', 02-01-2009, found on: Factiva (13-11-2015)

¹⁵⁸ Zenon Zawada, Kyiv Press Bureau, 'Monument commemorates 100th birthday of Stepan Bandera', *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 04-01-2009, 1 & 8. http://ukrweekly.com/archive/2009/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_2009-01.pdf (13-11-2015)

¹⁵⁹ Zenon Zawada, Kyiv Press Bureau, 'Thousands gather to honor leader of Ukraine's liberation struggle. Bandera remembered at centennial ceremonies', *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 18-01-2009, 1-5-8. http://ukrweekly.com/archive/2009/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_2009-03.pdf (13-11-2015)

WWI.¹⁶⁰ These three reports on the same event mark the difference between the Ukrainian and Russian point of view. Whereas in the Ukrainian report Bandera is pictured as a hero and someone who was dedicated for the Ukrainian independence, in the Russian report Bandera is pictured as a 'xenophobic' hero and associated with the massacre of the Poles in Volhynia, even though he was imprisoned during the event.

The article 'Ukrainian Nationalists Celebrated the Birthday of their Idol Stepan Bandera' about the commemorations, published by *The Voice of Russia* (which after the 9th of November 2014 merged into *Sputnik*), reported: 'the Ukrainian government is trying to make Bandera a national hero'. The article referred to Konstantin Zatulin, director of the Institute for the CIS, who explained: 'Ukrainian historians feel free to invent different stories to prove that it was possible to fight against Hitler and the Red Army at the same time'. According to him 'real aim of the OUN was to oppose the struggle of the Soviet army against the Nazi invaders', that all foreigners were potential victims of OUN terrorism and that therefore the 'Banderovtsy do not merit a place in the history books'. The article concludes with the statement: 'Russia opposes any attempts to whitewash the Nazi criminals and their collaborator accomplices in all forums'.¹⁶¹ This article seems to focus on convincing the reader that the Ukrainian state is committing the 'whitewashing of history'.

During the year, other celebrations were organized, such as a special exhibition at the National Museum of History of Ukraine in Kiev for which objects from the Stepan Bandera Museum of the Ukrainian Liberation Struggle in London were transported to Kiev. Furthermore, during that year once again a petition was started to have the remains of Bandera transferred to Ukraine where he had to be reburied at the Lykachiv Cemetery in Lviv.¹⁶² Voices for this action had been raised before, but until now Bandera's remains are still located in Munich.

On 15th October 2009, the 50th anniversary of Bandera's death was celebrated all over the world. Furthermore, several media platforms wrote about Bandera. For instance, *the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America* wrote: 'October 15th, 2009 marks the 50th anniversary of the death of one of Ukraine's most devoted heroes and patriots, Stepan Bandera, leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. A symbol of the revolutionary struggle for a Ukrainian independent state, Stepan Bandera continues to be an inspiration for Ukrainians around the globe.' This statement was also published in *The Ukrainian Weekly*. *Interfax*, a Russian press group, reported on the 14th of October

¹⁶⁰ *Russia Today*, 'Ukraine to commemorate xenophobic national heroes', 27-12-2008

<https://www.rt.com/politics/ukraine-to-commemorate-xenophobic-national-heroes/> (13-11-2015)

¹⁶¹ *Voices from Russia*, 'Ukrainian Nationalists Celebrated the Birthday of their Idol Stepan Bandera', 03-01-2009 <https://02varvara.wordpress.com/2009/01/03/ukrainian-nationalists-celebrated-the-birthday-of-their-idol-stepan-bandera/> (27-10-2015)

¹⁶² *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 'Petition seeks Bandera's reburial', 06-09-2015, 2.

http://ukrweekly.com/archive/2009/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_2009-36.pdf (12-11-2015)

on an opinion poll conducted under Russian citizens on Bandera. According to the results, thirty-seven percent of the respondents answered they viewed Bandera -falsely referred to as leader of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army - as a terrorist and murderer, whereas six percent regarded him as a hero of the Ukrainian people. Another twenty-five percent described Bandera as 'a complicated and controversial figure', whilst twenty-four percent had not heard about Bandera before the survey took place. Other questions led to the following result: a majority of the respondents described Bandera as a criminal, whereas only eight percent said Bandera was a fighter for Ukraine's independence.¹⁶³ During these events several parties, including Svoboda, asked president Yushchenko to reward Bandera with the 'Hero of Ukraine' award.¹⁶⁴ According to Svoboda leader Oleh Tiahnybok: 'Svoboda demands that the President of Ukraine should award the leader of OUN, Stepan Bandera, with the title of the Hero of Ukraine and declare the struggle of OUN-UPA the national liberation struggle of the Ukrainian nation and October 14 - the day of creation of UPA - the state holiday. The President must do this without a fail.' Furthermore, many Ukrainians abroad, including the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada, had pressed Yushchenko to grant the honor to Bandera.¹⁶⁵ Yushchenko, however, did not fulfill their demands and on the 18th of October, *The Ukrainian Weekly* correspondent Zawada reported: 'Yushchenko fails to act on naming Bandera Hero of Ukraine'.¹⁶⁶

This chapter described the creation of the two myths around Bandera during and straight after his life. The first one was created by the Soviets and pictured Bandera as a friend of the Germans, a fascist and a pure evil man. This myth was spread in the propaganda of the Soviets under the Russians but also under Ukrainians. They later expanded it with stories of former Ukrainian nationalists who described the 'horrible deeds' they committed on orders of the OUN and Bandera. Furthermore, the word 'Banderites' often appeared in articles, although it was often used to describe other Ukrainian nationalists and not Bandera himself. In a reaction to this propaganda, the OUN developed its own 'Bandera myth', in which Bandera is presented as a national hero, a symbol of the Ukrainian nationalist struggle and a 'martyr' who was willing to die for an independent Ukrainian state. In order to strengthen this myth, several Bandera biographies were published, the first Bandera museum was opened and his death was commemorated each year by Ukrainian

¹⁶³ *Interfax: Ukrainian General Newswire*, "'Terrorist, murderer'" Bandera cannot be described as hero – poll', 14 October 2009 (13-11-2015)

¹⁶⁴ *Kyiv Post*, 'Svoboda wants Yushchenko award Ukraine's hero title to OUN leader Bandera', 13-10-2009 (20-11-2015) <http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/svoboda-wants-yushchenko-award-ukraines-hero-title-50591.html?flavour=full>

¹⁶⁵ Norman J.W. Goda, 'Who was Stepan Bandera?', *History News Network*, 02-10-2010 <http://historynewsnetwork.org/article/122778> (26-10-2015)

¹⁶⁶ Zenon Zawada, Kyiv Press Bureau, 'Yushchenko fails to act on naming Bandera Hero of Ukraine', *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 18-10-2009, 1 & 10 http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/2009/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_2009-42.pdf (13-11-2015)

communities all over the world. Overall, the Soviet myth focused on all the 'bad characteristics' of Bandera, whereas the Ukrainian nationalist myth paid attention to all his 'good qualities'.

The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in Ukraine's long desired independence. The independence led to an increase of research on Bandera and the OUN, which resulted in the publication of several strongly positive biographies of Bandera. Furthermore, Ukraine's independence and the state building process of Ukraine led to the search for new identities and new role models. In order to create a stable basis for the Ukrainian state, new ideals were needed. These were found in the revival of Ukrainian nationalism. New political parties and organizations were created, other organizations returned from exile. Many saw Bandera as their spiritual leader and role model, wherefore they wanted to follow his guidelines. The new Ukrainian history school textbooks in the nineties started to picture Bandera as a true hero, whereas Russian textbooks continued the line of the old Soviet books and pictured him as an extremist and a fascist. During the first years of Ukrainian's independence, the first memorials for Bandera were revealed in western Ukrainian towns. These statues would be followed by many more in the coming years. Additionally, streets were named after Bandera and museums were opened. The next chapters will further describe the remembrance of Bandera, the attempt to award him with the 'Hero of Ukraine' award and his symbolic role during the Euromaidan protests.

Chapter 3 ‘Hero of Ukraine’ or ‘traitor to the Ukrainian people’?

In the first twenty years of Ukraine's independence, Stepan Bandera had served as a national symbol in mainly the western regions of the country. In this area, monuments and museums dedicated to Bandera were established and streets were named after him. Furthermore, several books about Bandera were published. The ultimate goal of Bandera's supporters and admirers was achieved in early 2010. In January of this year Bandera was, after several incentives of Svoboda and other nationalist groups, posthumously rewarded with the Hero of Ukraine award by President Yushchenko. What followed was a widespread and heated debate between the Ukrainian nationalists, the Russian state, and Polish, Jewish and Western authorities. All over the world attention was paid to this controversial figure named Stepan Bandera.

This chapter will look further into how Bandera was pictured by both the Ukrainian nationalists, the Russians and other parties. Firstly, the rewarding of Bandera with the ‘Hero of Ukraine’ award and the reactions of the several parties on this will be discussed. Furthermore, attention will be paid to the development of the teaching of the Ukrainian history. Finally, the annulment of the ‘Hero of Ukraine’ award and the reactions on this will be discussed.

Bandera proclaimed as ‘Hero of Ukraine’

During his presidency, President Yushchenko already rewarded Roman Shukhevych, the chief commander of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, as ‘Hero of Ukraine’ on the 65th anniversary of the creation of the UPA in 2007. The title ‘Hero of Ukraine’ and the associated award was created in 1998 on initiative of the former president Leonid Kuchma.¹⁶⁷ The award is most likely based on the ‘Hero of the Soviet Union’ awards that were presented during the Soviet Union to persons or collectives for heroic feats in service to the Soviet state and society. After rewarding Shukhevych with the award, Yushchenko started to receive several requests from Ukrainian nationalistic parties to reward Bandera with the same award. A peak of these requests followed in 2009, when the 50th anniversary of Bandera's death was celebrated.

Yushchenko however seemed to ignore these requests. This all changed after early January 2010, when Yushchenko was already eliminated after the first round of the presidential elections since he only received 5.45 percent of the vote. A few days later, on the 22nd of January, when Ukrainian Unity Day was celebrated - the anniversary of the unification of eastern and western Ukraine in 1919 - Yushchenko unexpectedly proclaimed Bandera ‘Hero of Ukraine’ for ‘defending

¹⁶⁷ Alexander J. Motyl, ‘Ukraine, Europe, and Bandera’, *Cicero Foundation Great Debate Paper*, no. 10/05 March 2010, 10.

national ideas and battling for an independent Ukrainian state.¹⁶⁸ Almost 2 weeks later, Yushchenko made a working trip to the Ivano-Frankivsk region in Western Ukraine. During this journey he also visited the museum of Stepan Bandera in his birthplace Staryi Uhryniv. Pictures of this day show him receiving a guided tour through the museum. Afterwards, Yushchenko laid flowers at the monument of Bandera next to the museum.¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, he wrote 'Glory to Stepan Bandera! Glory to Ukraine!' in the museum's guestbook. The director of this museum, Stepan Lesiv, was later interviewed by *The New York Times*. According to him: 'Every people, every nationality, has a right to their own government and their own history.' and 'Bandera, and many in Ukraine, have struggled for and died for this goal.'¹⁷⁰

Yushchenko's decision to award Bandera was quickly picked up by the Ukrainian, Russian and Western media. Several media outlets, including *The Moscow Times*, reported Yushchenko's move had something to do with 'embarrassing his two rivals fighting to succeed him' since he himself had no real influence in the Ukrainian politics anymore and acted as a lame duck.¹⁷¹ According to the Russian news website *Pravda.ru* the award was 'a scandalous move'.¹⁷² According to an article by *Russia Today* about the matter 'Bandera's supporters – mainly in Western Ukraine – claim he fought for Ukraine's independence against both Soviet and German soldiers. However, many others in his country and Russia believe he was a war criminal who collaborated with the Nazis during WWII and killed innocent people.'¹⁷³ Dmitry Babich, working for *Russia behind the headlines*, wrote:

'On Jan. 29, 2010, after his crushing defeat in the first round of voting, Yushchenko declared OUN's late leader Stepan Bandera, considered to be a criminal against humanity in Soviet times, 'a hero of Ukraine.' Yanukovich condemned the move as an action contributing to polarization of Ukrainian nation. But Tymoshenko, obviously tied by her promises to nationalists, abstained from any reaction,

¹⁶⁸ RFE/RL Ukrainian Service, 'Yushchenko Grants Hero Status To Controversial Ukrainian Nationalist', *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, 22-01-2010
http://www.rferl.org/content/Yushchenko_Grants_Hero_Status_To_Controversial_Ukrainian_Nationalist/1937123.html (27-10-2015)

¹⁶⁹ *Ukrainian Foto*, 'President Yushchenko visits museum of Stepan Bandera', 05-02-2010
<http://ukrafoto.com/reportages.php?id=2481&lng=english> (22-10-2015)

¹⁷⁰ Clifford J. Levy, "'Hero of Ukraine' Splits Nation, Inside and Out', *The New York Times*, 01-03-2010
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/02/world/europe/02history.html?_r=0 (21-10-2015)

¹⁷¹ *The Moscow Times*, 'Yushchenko Honors War Nationalist', 25-01-2010
<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/yushchenko-honors-war-nationalist/398082.html> (27-10-2015)

¹⁷² *Pravda.ru*, 'Fascism rehabilitated in Ukraine?', 08-02-2013 http://english.pravda.ru/society/stories/08-02-2013/123728-fascism_ukraine-0/ (22-10-2015)

¹⁷³ *Russia Today*, 'Jews worldwide outraged by Yushchenko's praising of nationalists', 30-01-2010
<https://www.rt.com/politics/bandera-hero-nationalism-yushchenko/> (27-10-2015)

thus allowing Yanukovich to play on the fears of people for whom Bandera was a symbol of anti-Semitism and violence.¹⁷⁴

Beside the fact that this article refers to the wrong date of the announcement, it also incorrectly claims Tymoshenko did 'abstain from any reaction', since she did react on the matter saying 'the historical truth should be the guideline in the discussion to either award or not award Bandera'.¹⁷⁵ An article by Olga Masalkova in *Russia Today* refers to MPs from Crimea according to whom: 'the presidential decree is connected with the glorification of Nazi accessories'. Furthermore, the article accuses Yushchenko of political motives.¹⁷⁶ Overall, the Russian media presented a rather negative picture of Bandera, focused on his collaboration with the Nazi's and the innocent victims of the OUN and UPA.

The Ukrainian press presented a more positive view, in which they also blamed the Soviet Union and the Russians for the disinformation on Bandera. According to the Ukrainian website *Kyiv Post*: 'controversial freedom fighter Bandera headed the OUN and backed the UPA, which fought against the Soviets and Nazis for Ukraine's independence. But Soviet and Russian propaganda has convinced many in Ukraine and abroad that the UPA collaborated with the Nazis.'¹⁷⁷ According to *The Ukrainian Weekly*, President Yushchenko 'fulfilled the hopes of patriotic Ukrainians by posthumously bestowing the nation's highest honor, the title Hero of Ukraine, on Stepan Bandera, the nationalist hero who led the Ukrainian liberation movement for three decades against Polish, Nazi and Soviet oppression.' Stepan Bandera's grandson, also named Stepan, said in his acceptance speech, published in several newspapers including *The Ukrainian Weekly*: 'What was hoped for for decades has finally happened. The Ukrainian state has recognized the heroic deeds of Stepan Bandera and the hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian patriots who died for this country. This order is a brave act towards historical justice which affirms the truth and a new era of a Ukraine that we dream of.'¹⁷⁸

Within the Ukrainian press the awarding was presented as something many Ukrainians had had hoped or longed for, although it should be mentioned that the majority of the Ukrainian citizens were not particularly in favor of Bandera - seeing the results of the surveys conducted in Ukraine around the *The Greatest Ukrainians* TV-show. This is underlined by a report of Megan K. Stack,

¹⁷⁴ Dmitry Babich, 'Ukraine: Democracy without democrats?', *Russia Beyond the Headlines*, 08-02-2010 <http://rbth.co.uk/articles/2010/02/08/8210ukraine.html> (19-10-2015)

¹⁷⁵ Interfax-Ukraine, 'Tymoshenko: Historic truth should be guideline in Bandera issue', *Kyiv Post*, 30-01-2010 <http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/tymoshenko-historic-truth-should-be-guideline-in-b-58317.html>

¹⁷⁶ Olga Masalkova, 'Bandera: Ukraine's national hero or traitor?', *Russia Today*, 18-02-2010 <https://www.rt.com/politics/bandera-ukraine-court-crimea/> (27-10-2015)

¹⁷⁷ *Kyiv Post*, 'Bandera gets an award', 28-01-2010 <https://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/bandera-gets-an-award-58201.html> (26-10-2015)

¹⁷⁸ Zenon Zawada, 'Yushchenko honors Bandera with Hero of Ukraine title', *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 31-01-2010, 1 http://ukrweekly.com/archive/pdf3/2010/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_2010-05.pdf (26-10-2015)

reporter for *The Seattle Times* in Ukraine and Russia. According to her, the news was received with jubilation in Lviv while in the Russian-speaking provinces in the east of Ukraine disgust and dismay predominated.¹⁷⁹ Beside *The Seattle Times*, also the *BBC*, *Reuters* and *AFP* reported about the event. In their reports, the *BBC* wrongly referred to Bandera as 'one of the commanders of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army' and claimed he 'headed one of the factions of the anti-Soviet Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists'.¹⁸⁰ The report of *Reuters* is more focused on Yushchenko and his motivation for rewarding Bandera, according to them 'embarrassing his rivals' and 'irritate the Kremlin'.¹⁸¹ *AFP* presented a more or less objective report about the situation in which they explained both the pro-Bandera side as well as the controversies around him. Furthermore, they argued Yushchenko had often been accused of 'concentrating on history at expense of concrete reform'.¹⁸²

Beside the media, also several academics reacted on the event. In the following paragraph an overview will be given of the reactions of these scholars. Katchanovski described Bandera in his opinion piece as 'A terrorist as Hero of Ukraine' and wrote: 'Viktor Yushchenko strives to gain back his popularity in Galicia by making a Galician leader of a radical nationalist organization involved in terrorism, ethnic cleansing, and Nazi genocide, a "Hero of Ukraine" and alienating the rest of Ukraine'.¹⁸³ Anton Shekhovtsov, a Russian academic, published in a reaction on his blog: 'Stepan Bandera (1909–1959) was one of the most notorious Ukrainian fascists, terrorists and Nazi collaborators, who was responsible for deaths of hundreds (if not thousands) of Poles, Russians, Jews and Ukrainians'.¹⁸⁴

In his opinion piece titled 'A Fascist Hero in Democratic Kiev' Snyder wrote: 'Yushchenko provoked protests from the chief rabbi of Ukraine, the president of Poland, and many of his own citizens.' and 'Bandera was burned in effigy in Odessa after he was named a hero; even his statue in west Ukrainian Lviv, erected by city authorities in 2007, was under guard during the election campaign.' Snyder describes there are several ways of telling the Ukrainian history, of which one is

¹⁷⁹ Megan K. Stack, 'Ukraine election reflects country's fragmentation', *The Seattle Times*, 06-02-2010 <http://www.seattletimes.com/nation-world/ukraine-election-reflects-countrys-fragmentation/> (27-10-2015)

¹⁸⁰ BBC Monitoring Newsfile, 'President declares insurgent army commander Hero of Ukraine', *BBC*, 22-01-2010 & BBC Monitoring Ukraine & Baltics, 'Ukrainian opposition party wary as president honours wartime nationalist leader', *BBC*, 22-01-2010, found on: Factiva (28-12-2015)

¹⁸¹ Reuters News, 'Ukraine leader's move on nationalist embarrasses rivals', *Reuters*, 22-01-2010, found on: Factiva (28-12-2015)

¹⁸² Agence France Presse, Ukraine president decorates controversial wartime rebel, *AFP*, 22-01-2010, found on: Factiva (28-12-2015)

¹⁸³ Ivan Katchanovski, 'A Terrorist as "Hero of Ukraine"', *OpEdNews*, 02-03-2010 <http://www.opednews.com/articles/A-Terrorist-as-Hero-of-Uk-by-Ivan-Katchanovski-100129-537.html> (27-10-2015)

¹⁸⁴ Anton Shekhovtsov, Stepan Bandera becomes a Hero of Ukraine, 24-01-2010 <http://anton-shekhovtsov.blogspot.nl/2010/01/stepan-bandera-becomes-hero-of-ukraine.html> (27-10-2015)

focused on Bandera's heroics. Overall, Snyder claims Yushchenko glorified Bandera in order to reject Stalin.¹⁸⁵ In his article 'The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army: Unwelcome Elements of an Identity Project' Himka wrote: 'Although the facts as established would seem to me to have meant that one could not make heroes out of OUN, UPA, or their leaders, this did not seem so to President Yushchenko or to many in Western Ukraine or to many in the overseas diaspora.'¹⁸⁶

According to an opinion article by the British journalist Roland Oliphant - nowadays to be found on the website *Sputnik*, but likely published on *RIA Novosti* (which no longer exists) - 'For the Soviets, and many in Russia today, Bandera's alliance with the Nazis was unforgiveable, and making him a hero is tantamount to glorifying a war criminal (there is compelling evidence to suggest his and his associates' involvement in massacres of Jews and Poles).' Additionally, he argues: 'The posthumous honor for Bandera will be seen as a last ditch attempt by Yushchenko to sabotage his successor and stick a middle finger up at Moscow.' Furthermore he gives the word to the Ukrainian journalist and historian Vakhtang Kipiani, who states Bandera's collaboration with the Nazis is indeed a problem, but didn't the Soviets collaborate as well? According to him: 'Bandera was a Ukrainian nationalist who did everything he could for Ukrainian independence including using quite hard methods.'¹⁸⁷

Iryna Magdysh, a Ukrainian cultural manager, submitted an opinion article to the *Kyiv Post* in which she wrote: 'I am a witness of Russia's Dmitry Medvedev-Vladimir Putin regime, which is actively fighting against the Ukrainian language (through economic means, through books and the information market) and the Ukrainian church. All of this is happening in free and independent Ukraine. But, at the same time, the deputies of the European Parliament – having no great knowledge of Ukrainian history – want to forbid us from having our own vision of our national past. The Russians are developing their own vision by creating a special federal committee. But at the same time, Ukrainians aren't granted the right to have our own point of view. And if we do have it, it's called fascism or Nazi collaboration.'¹⁸⁸

This overview shows the scholars differed on Yushchenko's move. Where Shekhovtsov really condemns the rewarding and describes Bandera in a very negative way, Katchanovski, Snyder and

¹⁸⁵ Timothy Snyder, 'A Facist Hero in Democratic Kiev', *The New York Review of Books*, 24-02-2010 <http://www.nybooks.com/daily/2010/02/24/a-facist-hero-in-democratic-kiev/> (25-11-2015)

¹⁸⁶ John-Paul Himka, 'The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army: Unwelcome Elements of an Identity Project', *Ab Imperio*, 4/2010, 83-101, there: 94.

¹⁸⁷ Roland Oliphant, 'What Does Bandera Mean to Us?', *Sputnik News*, 26-01-2010 <http://sputniknews.com/analysis/20100126/157684387.html> (29-10-2015)

¹⁸⁸ Iryna Magdysh, 'Ukrainian have right to honor their own heroes', *Kyiv Post*, 04-03-2010 <http://test.kyivpost.com/article/opinion/op-ed/ukrainians-have-right-to-honor-their-own-heroes-61046.html> (29-10-2015)

Himka share their doubts about the award. They do not explicitly share a negative attitude towards Bandera, but state the rewarding is not a good idea. Oliphant presents a more objective or even positive image of Bandera by giving the floor to Kipiani. Finally, Magdysh shows her anger towards the Russian and European reactions on the matter. She blames the Russian government for 'fighting against the Ukrainian language' and argues the European Parliaments wants to forbid Ukrainian from having their own vision of its past.

As already mentioned, the reactions at the political level were predominant negative. Then still presidential candidate Viktor Yanukovych, who quickly reacted on Yushchenko's decision, argued rewarding Bandera with the title 'Hero of Ukraine' was a step towards a greater split in the country.¹⁸⁹ The Polish president Lech Kaczynski also condemned the decision and additionally said that the activities of the OUN-UPA are viewed very negative in Poland. On the 26th of January, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reacted with the following statement: 'The decree bestowing Stepan Bandera with the Order of Hero of Ukraine is an event so odious that it could not but evoke a singularly negative reaction, primarily in Ukraine. Already known is the position on this question of a whole array of Ukrainian politicians, believing that decisions of this kind do not serve to consolidate Ukrainian public opinion. Quite a few negative responses have appeared outside Ukraine, too. As to the Russian reaction, the media and public entities have spoken out exhaustively in this connection. The tonality of the assessments varies from sarcastic irony to severe criticism, which fully matches the public sentiments in Russia.'¹⁹⁰

Additionally, prime-minister Putin said on the 15th of February during a meeting with president Nazarbayev from Kazakhstan: 'The events of the recent months were no surprise to me, as the Orange movement's leaders essentially dealt a "slap in the face" to their own political sponsors supporters by conferring the title of Hero of Ukraine on Stepan Bandera, who not merely collaborated with the Nazis but instigated atrocious massacres of Jews and Poles.'¹⁹¹ On the 25th of February the European Parliament issued a resolution on the situation in Ukraine, which included a statement about Bandera namely: 'The European Parliament deeply deplores the decision by the outgoing President of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko, posthumously to award Stepan Bandera, a leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) which collaborated with Nazi Germany, the title

¹⁸⁹ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 'Yanukovych blames Yushchenko', 07-02-2010, 10

http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/2010/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_2010-06.pdf (22-10-2015)

¹⁹⁰ The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Press Release Russian MFA Information and Press Department Commentary Regarding the Decree of Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko Bestowing the Order of Hero of Ukraine on Stepan Bandera, 26-01-2010

http://archive.mid.ru/BDOMP/Brp_4.nsf/arh/9D08B52A6772F578C32576B8002F146D?OpenDocument (27-10-2015)

¹⁹¹ The Russian Government, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin meets with the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev, 15-02-2010 <http://archive.government.ru/eng/docs/9419/> (29-10-2015)

of 'National Hero of Ukraine'; hopes, in this regard, that the new Ukrainian leadership will reconsider such decisions and will maintain its commitment to European values.¹⁹² This statement shows that the European Parliament associated Bandera with the putative crimes committed by the OUN in cooperation Nazi Germany and therefore condemned the rewarding.

Overall, the reactions in the Russian press and from the Russian authorities were focused on the 'terrorist activities' Bandera was involved in. Furthermore, the Ukrainians were blamed for distorting the history. According to the Russian press, Bandera and the OUN/UPA members were 'brutal Nazi henchmen' and were glorified in Ukraine for murdering many Jewish and Polish citizens.¹⁹³ The first reactions from Ukrainian nationalists were focused on the joy about the recognition of Bandera's role as national hero, but also the role of the propaganda from the Soviet Union and Russia in blacklisting Bandera. The western press acted reserved, while the European Parliament even condemned the rewarding.

The debate continues

After the decision of Yushchenko to name Bandera 'Hero of Ukraine', several western Ukrainian towns reacted by rewarding Bandera as 'honorary citizen' of their city. These towns were all situated in the region where Bandera grew up, such as Lviv, Lutsk, Nadvirna and Ivano-Frankivsk.¹⁹⁴ Contrary reactions followed from for instance Sevastopol (Crimea) and Donetsk (East-Ukraine), where the town councils condemned Yushchenko's move. The Donetsk district administrative court reacted by declaring Yushchenko's decision unlawful and mentioning that anyone who died before 1991 could not be seen as citizen of Ukraine and therefore could not be rewarded with a Hero of Ukraine award. It should be mentioned that several of the other 'Heroes of Ukraine' were Soviet heroes who were not born in Ukraine and therefore, according to the train of thought of the Donetsk district administrative court, should also not have been rewarded with the award.

On the 7th of February, the second round of elections resulted in a win for Yanukovych who was at the end of the month installed as the new president of Ukraine. When Yanukovych visited Russia in the beginning of March, the Russian media but also *Reuters* reported that, during his talk with president Medvedev, Yanukovych had promised to repeal the 'Hero of Ukraine' decree to

¹⁹² European Parliament resolution of 25 February 2010 on the situation in Ukraine <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2010-0035+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> (14-05-2015)

¹⁹³ Edward Lucas, 'Power and History', *Diplomaatia*, no.82 (June 2010) <http://www.diplomaatia.ee/en/article/power-and-history/> (29-10-2015)

¹⁹⁴ Interfax-Ukraine, 'Ivano-Frankivsk City Council awards honorary citizen titles to Bandera and Shukhevych', *Kyiv Post*, 06-05-2010 <https://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/ivano-frankivsk-city-council-awards-honorary-citiz-65945.html> (27-10-2015) & Ukrainian News, 'Lviv City council to confer city's honorary citizen title on Bandera', *Kyiv Post*, 06-05-2010 <https://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/lviv-city-council-to-confer-citizens-honorary-citizen-65921.html> (27-10-2015)

Bandera on the 9th of May 2010. On this day, the Russian state celebrates the victory over Nazi Germany during the Second World War. This promise was considered as a move towards Russia by the Ukrainian and Western media. However, according to the Russian television journalist Yevgeny Kiselyov the situation was slightly different. He argued: 'When asked in Moscow about the controversial decision by former president Viktor Yushchenko to confer the title of Hero of Ukraine on Stepan Bandera, the Ukrainian nationalist who led an armed resistance movement in Western Ukraine against Soviet rule in the 1940s and 1950s, Yanukovich could offer only a vague answer because he is caught between a rock and a hard place — between the largely pro-Bandera western half of Ukraine and the largely anti-Bandera eastern half. Nonetheless, most of the Russian media left the impression that Yanukovich had already decided to revoke the title.'¹⁹⁵

On the same date Yanukovich was elected, the Canadian *Edmonton Journal* published an opinion article by Marples titled 'Hero of Ukraine linked to Jewish killings; Honorary title sure to provoke divisions among Ukrainian today'. Unfortunately this article is no longer available on the website of the journal and cannot be found on other websites. However, the article did lead to a debate between historians and other scholars, since Marples argued Yushchenko had made a mistake by rewarding Bandera with the award since this would only provoke further divisions in the Ukrainian society. This debate resulted in the publishing of the book *Passion over Bandera* in which different authors, historians and journalists including Marples, but also Snyder and Bandera's grandson Stepan Bandera explained their point of view on Bandera, the OUN and the UPA in academic articles, essays or letters. These contributions had been published before on for instance the Ukrainian website of *Krytyka* (a monthly Ukrainian/English magazine), the *Edmonton Journal* and the Russian language publication website *Zaxid.net*.¹⁹⁶ Unfortunately most of the publications were either in Russian or Ukrainian, but according to the information available in English it can be argued that many of the contributors were personally involved in either the OUN or the UPA.¹⁹⁷

The Russian newspaper *Vremya Novostei* published on the 5th of March an article by the Russian politician Aleksandr Liberman. In this article, he wrote about the controversial Hero of Ukraine award and argued: 'There is no question that Stepan Bandera was a combination of Ukrainian patriotism, national chauvinism and ruthless cruelty toward opponents of the creation of an independent Ukraine. Bandera, who headed the OUN from 1941 to 1959, and his comrades-in-arms were willing to collaborate with anyone and against anyone for the sake of achieving independence, but no one will ever forgive Bandera for his close contacts with the Nazi Third Reich.'

¹⁹⁵ Yevgeny Kiselyov, 'Trading Squabbles for Salo', *The Moscow Times*, 29-05-2010 <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/trading-squabbles-for-salo/402693.html> (27-10-2015)

¹⁹⁶ <http://krytyka.com/ua>, <http://edmontonjournal.com/> & <http://zaxid.net/>

¹⁹⁷ Yevheniya Sakal, 'Passions over Bandera', *Krytyka*, March 2010 <http://krytyka.com/en/reviews/passions-over-bandera> (29-10-2015)

With the same casual indifference, the Banderovites murdered Poles and Germans alike and fought against the Soviets, exterminating any Jews they encountered along the way. [...] However, the Ukrainian president will encounter open resistance from western Ukrainians, for whom Bandera was and still is a hero. After all, it was thanks to the support of the population of western Ukraine, which suffered cruelly from Sovietization, that the OUN managed to endure for so long.¹⁹⁸ In this article Liberman presents a very negative picture of Bandera who he accuses of 'ruthless cruelty towards opponents of the creation of an independent Ukraine'. Furthermore, he argues the Ukrainian president (probably referring to Yanukovich) would encounter resistance from western Ukrainians in his attempt to annul the award.

The rewarding of Bandera was received with enthusiasm in the Western regions of Ukraine, where Bandera was in several cities also rewarded as 'honorary citizen'. In the East and South of the country the move was condemned and seen as unlawful. The award also led to a debate between several Ukrainian scholars and journalists about Bandera and whether it was a mistake or not to posthumously present him with the award. The Russian media continued with spreading a negative image of Bandera.

Unfortunately, no academic studies have yet been undertaken in the current attitudes towards Bandera, the OUN and the UPA. However, several opinion polls have been conducted in different time periods which also help to provide an objective picture of attitude towards Bandera. For instance, according to an opinion poll conducted in April 2010 by FOM-Ukraine (a political sociology company with links to Russia) 60.2 percent of the respondents reacted negative on the hero title for Bandera. Only 19.5 percent of the respondents had positive feelings, whereas 12.4 percent were undecided and 7.9 percent did not answer the question.¹⁹⁹ The results of this survey were quickly used by President Yanukovich to prove that most of the Ukrainians were opposed to the 'heroization of Bandera'.²⁰⁰ In September 2010, 1200 Ukrainians from 18 years and older were questioned by the Ukrainian Democratic Circle, a Ukrainian Sociological Service. In this poll, 51 percent expressed a negative attitude towards Bandera, 28 percent expressed a positive attitude, 17 percent could not answer the question and five percent did not know Bandera.²⁰¹ Another survey, conducted by the Research & Branding Group in 2010, showed that almost half of the respondents in the West, 48 percent, agreed that Bandera deserved the hero of Ukraine award, whilst only 8 percent shared this

¹⁹⁸ Aleksandr Liberman, 'Ukrainian U-Turn', *Vremya novostei*, 05-04-2010, found on: The Current Digest of the Russian Press (30-10-2015)

¹⁹⁹ *Interfax: Ukrainian General Newswire*, 'Poll: Nearly two thirds of Ukrainians against Ukrainian hero title for Bandera', 26-04-2010 <http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/press-conference/37444.html> (16-11-2015)

²⁰⁰ *ITAR-TASS World Service*, 'Most Ukrainians oppose Bandera's heroization – Yanukovich', 27-4-2010, found on: Factiva (16-11-2015)

²⁰¹ *Ukrainian National News Agency*, 'Ukrainians name their heroes', 4-10-2010, found on: Factiva (16-11-2015)

opinion in the South and East.²⁰² In October 2009, 1600 Russian citizens from all the regions were questioned by Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VTsIOM). The results show 37 percent considered Bandera a terrorist and murderer, whereas 6 percent answered 'Bandera can be seen as hero for the Ukrainian people'. Almost a quarter of the respondents, 24 percent, first heard about Bandera from the interviewer.²⁰³

Education of Ukrainian history

The previous chapter already paid attention to the several history school books published in the Soviet Union, Ukraine and Russia. This research showed Bandera and the OUN were pictured in rather positive way in the Ukrainian textbooks. However, this changed when president Yanukovich took office and appointed a new education minister, namely Dmytro Tabachnyk from the Party of Regions. Tabachnyk hold a negative view of Bandera. When he was asked on Ukrainian television whether he considered Bandera and Shukhevych 'heroes of Ukraine', he replied: 'No, they are not heroes.' Furthermore, he argued that it was important and necessary to tell the truth about events in history.²⁰⁴ According to Tabachnyk, this was not the case under Yushchenko's presidency. Therefore, he demanded the history book to be rewritten.

In the new textbook Bandera, but also the OUN and UPA were pictured as 'nationalists, organizers of mass murders and collaborators.' Furthermore, in this history book, the Soviet/Russian term 'Great Patriotic War' was restored referring to the Second World War. The textbook paid, compared to the previous editions, significantly less attention to the OUN.²⁰⁵ The organization is reduced to one sentence, namely: 'The struggle against Stalin's totalitarianism in the country was headed by the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists [OUN] which had around 20 thousand [supporters]'. The book paid no further attention to Stepan Bandera himself or his death. Therefore, it is likely a part of the Ukrainian school children were not anymore, or to a lesser extent, educated about Bandera's role in the Ukrainian history.

In their critical reaction on the school book, the *Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group* gave the word to historian Volodymyr Serhiychuk and political analyst Oleksy Haran. According to Serhiychuk, the book described the Ukrainians during the war as collaborators. Haran argued the

²⁰² Katchanovski, 'Terrorists or National Heroes? Politics of the OUN and the UPA in Ukraine', 223.

²⁰³ *Ria Novosti*, 'Четверть россиян не знают, кто такой Степан Бандера', 14-10-2009
<http://ria.ru/society/20091014/188797013.html> (23-11-2015)

²⁰⁴ *Kyiv Post*, 'Tabachnyk: Bandera, Shukhevych are not Ukrainian heroes', 03-04-2010
<http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/tabachnyk-bandera-shukhevych-are-not-ukrainian-her-63127.html>
(03-11-2015)

²⁰⁵ Hélène Dounaevsky, 'Building Wiki-history. Between consensus and edit warring' in: Ellen Rutten, Julie Fedor and Vera Zvereva (ed.), *Memory, Conflict and New Media. Web wars in post-socialist studies* (London and New York 2013) 130-142, there: 131-132.

book is 'a partial return to the previous framework, classic Soviet historiography'.²⁰⁶ Additionally, the Canadian researcher Taras Kuzio studied the changes under the Yanukovych government. According to him 'anti-nationalism statements were widespread in this government'. For instance, Deputy Prime Minister Borys Kolesnikov described his then orange opponents as 'nationalist bandits'. Kuzio argues: 'Such language is a throwback to Soviet views of nationalist partisans who operated in Western Ukraine in the 1940s.' Furthermore, Kuzio described education minister Tabachnyk as 'the most hard line proponent of the new 'anti-nationalism''. Under him, Kuzio argues, Ukraine returned to the Soviet view of the Ukrainian nationalists, who were then seen as murderers and Nazi collaborators. According to Kuzio, Tabachnyk is of the opinion: 'Stepan Bandera and Yuriy Shukhevych will remain in history as nationalists, and organizers of mass murder and they will forever be stained by the brush of collaborationism.'²⁰⁷

The teaching of Ukrainian history and the role teachers played in the nation building process in Ukraine, was researched by the Ukrainian social psychologist Karina Korostelina in 2010 and 2011. During her study, conducted in several regions of Ukraine in randomly chosen schools, she conducted interviews with the teachers about their way of teaching and their opinion of the history books. Overall, her results revealed three major national narratives employed by the history teachers, namely the pro-ethnic Ukrainian narrative, the pro-ethnic Russian narrative, and multicultural narrative. The teachers of the first group, the 'pro-ethnic Ukrainian narrative', told Korostelina that many of their children had a rather negative picture of Bandera and other nationalists. They argued they spent a significant amount of their time in the classroom explaining the good deeds of these nationalists. Furthermore, these teachers tried to present Ukraine as a young, developing country that the Ukrainian history and nation is very old. Additionally, they denied any involvement of the OUN and UPA with the Nazi regime. The teachers of the second group, the pro-ethnic Russian narrative, told Korostelina they taught their children about the collaboration of the OUN/UPA with the Nazi's. Furthermore, they openly argued they were of the opinion it was a mistake to give Bandera the status of hero of Ukraine. According to Korostelina's observations, many of these teachers did not use the Ukrainian textbooks available, since they were not applicable, but used their own material.²⁰⁸ Teachers belonging to the last group, 'the multicultural narrative', all 'condemn the imposition of nationalism but do not praise the Soviet time'. These teachers promote 'a normative

²⁰⁶ *Gazeta.ru*, 'New History Textbook contains Biography of Yanukovych, Human Rights in Ukraine - Information website of the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group', 21-09-2011

<http://www.khpg.org/en/pda/index.php?id=1316554964>

²⁰⁷ Taras Kuzio, 'Soviet conspiracy theories and political culture in Ukraine: Understanding Viktor Yanukovych and the Party of Regions', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 44 (2011) 228.

²⁰⁸ Karina Korostelina, 'Constructing nation: national narratives of history teachers in Ukraine', *National Identities*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (2013) 401-416.

order that emphasizes the multicultural nature of Ukraine because of the presence of different ethnic groups, their accomplishments, and prominent figures.’ Overall, Korostelina argues this group of teacher critically approached the Ukrainian history and showed the negative features of Ukrainian nationalism as well as of communism.

Korostelina’s research shows the different ways in which the Ukrainian history is taught to Ukrainian school children. It demonstrates the majority of the teachers researched do not strictly adhere to the prescribed textbooks, but also add their own material and show other points of view. Especially children taught according to the ‘pro-ethnic Ukrainian narrative’, who most likely live in the west of country, are learned that Bandera is a great hero. Children who are taught according to the ‘pro-ethnic Russian narrative’ will learn the opposite.

Annulment of the ‘Hero of Ukraine’ award

The debates around the ‘Hero of the Ukraine’ award for Bandera continued in 2011. This year started again with the annual march for Bandera’s birthday. According to the Turkish *Cihan News Agency*, the only media channel which can be found that reported about the march, around two thousand members of Svoboda attended this rally.²⁰⁹ Several other media channels did report about the Stalin statue which was blown up in Zaporizhya (a town in the center of Ukraine) on New Year’s Eve. According to the suspected offenders, the action was conducted ‘to honor Bandera’. However, the deed led to negative publicity and the arrest of several Ukrainian nationalists.²¹⁰ Furthermore, it resulted in even more protection of the Bandera statue in Lviv in fear of reprisal. In order to complete this statue, since it was not fully finished, the Lviv Regional Council decided to fund it with 400.000 Ukrainian hryvnia (according to the current exchange that is around 160.000 Euro).²¹¹

On the 12th of January, President Yanukovich announced that the ‘Hero of Ukraine’ award presented to Bandera, was officially revoked. The award was canceled through the Supreme Administrative Court of Ukraine and not through a presidential decree by Yanukovich himself. The judicial system in Ukraine can however not be described as independent and it is therefore likely the court followed the will of the executive branch. Yanukovich’s move naturally once again led to a heated debate between the pro and anti-Bandera camps.

In an article called ‘Hero one day, but not the next: Stepan Bandera debate flares’, the *Kyiv Post* published, based on information by *Reuters*, ‘Bandera was the ideological leader of nationalist

²⁰⁹ *Cihan News Agency (CNA)*, ‘Nationalists March in Ukrainian Capital’, 02-01-2011, found on: Factiva (24-11-2015)

²¹⁰ *Interfax: Ukrainian General Newswire*, ‘Tryzub Association says its members detained on suspicion of blowing up monument to Stalin in Zaporizhia’, 11-01-2011, found on: Factiva (24-11-2015)

²¹¹ *Interfax: Ukrainian General Newswire*, ‘Lviv regional council approves budget for 2011’, 04-01-2011, found on: Factiva (24-11-2015)

fighters who fought for independence in western Ukraine in the turbulence leading up to the outbreak of war and beyond.²¹² According to the *New York Times*, Yushchenko's political party, called *Our Ukraine*, criticized Yanukovich for 'attempts to rewrite the history of Ukraine and to belittle — in order to please Moscow — the heroes of the Ukrainian people.'²¹³ Together with Yushchenko the chairmen of the regional councils of Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv and Ternopil made a statement saying: 'The enemies failed to defeat Bandera when he was alive and they are afraid of him when he is dead. We view the war against Bandera and against his supporters as an attack on the civil, constitutional and national rights of Ukrainians.'²¹⁴ According to *The Ukrainian Weekly*: 'Observers said the court ruling demonstrates the lack of independence in the judicial system in Ukraine, as in much of the former Soviet Union.'²¹⁵ The Ukrainian newspaper *The Day* published on the 18th of January an article on the opinions about the events around the annulment of Bandera's award. The article gives the floor to several Ukrainian professors who all almost share the same opinion, for instance according to the historian Volodymyr Marchuk the withdraw of the award showed 'ignorance of our own history, and unwillingness to take our history as it is.' Several of the professors mentioned in their reaction a return to the Soviet version of history.²¹⁶

On the 17th of January, *Interfax* reported about a press conference held in Kyiv on the matter. According to the present Ukrainian historian Vladyslav Verstiuk (working at the History Institute of the National Academy of Science of Ukraine), it was a mistake to award Bandera with the 'Hero of Ukraine' title, but argued Bandera will remain a hero (and anti-hero for others) without the title. He described Bandera as a 'great Ukrainian myth that helped re-establish Ukraine's independence in the 1990s, and it is impossible to cut him out of Ukrainian history.' Another historian at the press conference, Serhiy Hmyria (a Communist Party member) argued Bandera never deserved the 'Hero of Ukraine' title.²¹⁷

After the annulment of the award other attempts to glorify Bandera were undertaken. OUN-UPA veterans in Lutsk started to collect money to erect yet another monument for Bandera. According to

²¹² *Kyiv Post*, 'Hero one day, but not the next: Stepan Bandera debate flares', 14-01-2011
<http://www.kyivpost.com/content/ukraine/hero-one-day-but-not-the-next-stepan-bandera-debat-94769.html> (23-11-2015)

²¹³ Clifford J. Levy, "'Hero of Ukraine' Prize to Wartime Partisan Leader Is Revoked', *The New York Times*, 12-01-2011 http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/13/world/europe/13ukraine.html?_r=0 (23-11-2015)

²¹⁴ *BBC Monitoring Ukraine & Baltics*, 'Senior Ukrainian councillors, ex-president slam ruling on nationalist leader', 12-01-2011, found on: Factiva (23-11-2015)

²¹⁵ *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 'Court strips Bandera of Hero of Ukraine title', 23-01-2011
http://ukrweekly.com/archive/pdf3/2011/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_2011-04.pdf (23-05-2015)

²¹⁶ *The Day*, 'Depriving Stepan Bandera of the rank of a Hero of Ukraine is...', 18-01-2011
<http://www.day.kiev.ua/en/article/society/depriving-stepan-bandera-rank-hero-ukraine> (23-11-2015)

²¹⁷ *Interfax: Ukrainian General Newswire*, 'Historians: Conferring the Hero of Ukraine title to Bandera was mistake', 17-01-2011, found on: Factiva (24-11-2015)

the head of the regional council of the Brotherhood of OUN-UPA veterans of the Volyn region Vasyl Kushir: 'For us Stepan Bandera has remained a Hero, for us he is a symbol of the struggle for the Ukrainian State. And we believe that there will be a monument to Stepan Bandera in Lutsk with the support of the community.'²¹⁸ The city of Ternopil made plans to name a square after Bandera to 'immortalize his memory'.²¹⁹ Furthermore, the town council of Zhovkva also decided to award Bandera with the title of honorary citizen, just as Lviv and Lutsk did before. However, according to my research Bandera never lived in Zhovkva.²²⁰ The Svoboda party in Lviv even wanted to rename the Lviv airport after Bandera, but according to Deputy Iuryi Mykahl'chyshyn, a Bandera stadium was also on their list. He argued: 'The entire city will be carrying Bandera's name, because he is its most living symbol.'²²¹

In a reaction on the announcement of the withdrawal 'several hundred protesters' took the streets and rallied against the decision. According to a report by *Agence France Press*, this included several regional lawmakers who adopted a resolution as protest against the 'illegal decision'. This was the same statement as the previously mentioned one by the regional councils and was focused on the power Bandera had when still alive.²²² The leader of the opposition party *For Ukraine* Vyacheslav Kirilenko, reacted the following: 'Stepan Bandera was, is and will be a hero of Ukraine irrespective of any court's rulings. As for the normative part of this case, I think that when the matter is considered objectively shortly, with the participation of the public and taking into account all arguments and legal rules, the title of Hero of Ukraine will be returned to Stepan Bandera, even though I don't think that this is so important for public perception of this Ukrainian patriot. People in many regions, cities and villages of Ukraine revere him as a real Ukrainian hero as it is.'²²³

The annulment of the award was received in Russia with enthusiasm, for instance *Russia Today* published with an article titled: 'Nazi collaborator loses "Hero of Ukraine" title'. The article described the 'controversial decision' was ruled unlawful by the court. The article highlighted 'The decision was met with strong opposition both in Ukraine and abroad, and was condemned by Russia,

²¹⁸ *Day.Kiev.ua*, 'Depriving Stepan Bandera of the rank of a Hero of Ukraine is...', 18-01-2011

<http://www.day.kiev.ua/en/article/society/depriving-stepan-bandera-rank-hero-ukraine> (26-10-2015)

²¹⁹ *Ria Novosti*, 'Ukrainian city to name square after nationalist leader', 18-01-2011, found on: Factiva (24-11-2015)

²²⁰ Interfax: Ukrainian General Newswire, 'Zhovkva Town Council awards title of honorary citizen to Bandera', 26-01-2011, found on: Factiva (24-11-2015)

²²¹ Per Anders Rudling, 'The Return of the Ukrainian Far Right. The Case of VO Svoboda Wodak' in: Ruth & John E. Richardson, *Analysing Fascist Discourse. European Fascism in Talk and Text* (New York 2013) 235.

²²² *Agence France Press*, 'Hundreds protest in Ukraine after hero award revoked', 13-01-2011, found on: Factiva (23-11-2015)

²²³ *ITAR-TASS World Service*, 'Ukraine's Higher Arbitration Court upholds ruling on Bandera', 12-01-2011, found on: Factiva (24-11-2015)

Poland and the world Jewish community.²²⁴ In article published on *Pravda.ru* titled 'Bandera busted back to cheap criminal, the Ukrainian Nazi collaborator lost the title 'Hero of Ukraine'', the Portuguese writer Cristiano Alves argued: 'the famous Nazi collaborator Stepan Bandera' was freed by the Soviets before the Second World War and that the KGB eventually succeeded in killing 'the criminal Stepan Bandera, who killed millions of his own people.'²²⁵ Where the attempt to award Bandera with the 'Hero of Ukraine' award received attention in the western media and politics, this was less the case when the award was annulled. Only one article can be found, it is titled 'Hero of Ukraine prize to wartime partisan leader is revoked' and was published in *The New York Times*. In this article, author Clifford J. Levy argued 'the award dispute reflects the longstanding geographic schism in Ukraine and its impact on the nation's politics.'²²⁶

This chapter outlined how Bandera was pictured by the Ukrainian nationalists, Russians and other parties both after the 'Hero of Ukraine' award ceremony and after its annulment. It also paid attention to the changes in the teaching of Ukrainian history. In 2010, the Ukrainian president Yushchenko rewarded Bandera with the 'Hero of Ukraine' award, which led to a widespread debate in media and politics in Ukraine and Russia as well as in "the West". Many Western outlets who reported on the case had never heard of Bandera before and used parts of both the Russian as well as the Ukrainian myth to describe him. In the whole debate evolving around the 'Hero of Ukraine' award, the Russian politics and media used their own version of the Bandera myth to underline why he did not deserve this award. Ukrainian nationalists, on the other hand, reacted with enthusiasm and used the award as a conformation of Bandera's good deeds. After the annulment of the award by Ukraine's new president, Yanukovich, another episode in the debate evolving around Bandera started. The Russian media reacted with enthusiasm and used the annulment as proof for the fact that Bandera was indeed a fascist and never deserved to be 'Hero of Ukraine'. The Ukrainian nationalists argued Bandera would remain a hero for them and started to protest against the decision, to build new Bandera monument. Several cities named Bandera as 'honorary citizen'.

Under the new education minister Tabachnyk, the history school books changed once again back to the more Soviet/Russian approach. The new books pictured Bandera, the OUN and UPA as 'collaborators, nationalists and organizers of mass murders'. Several academics reacted on his modification saying this was a return to the Soviet historiography. Furthermore, Ukrainian teachers

²²⁴ *Russia Today*, 'Nazi collaborator loses "Hero of Ukraine" title', 12-01-2011
<https://www.rt.com/politics/collaborator-hero-ukraine-title/> (26-10-2015)

²²⁵ Cristiano Alves, 'Bandera busted back to cheap criminal', *Pravda.ru*, 10-05-2011
http://www.pravdareport.com/world/europe/10-05-2011/117859-Bandera_busted_back_to_cheap_criminal-0/

²²⁶ Clifford J. Levy, "'Hero of Ukraine' Prize to Wartime Partisan Leader Is Revoked', *The New York Times*, 12-01-2011
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/13/world/europe/13ukraine.html?_r=0

were divided in several camps, where some promoted Bandera and his 'good deeds', others teachers told their children that the OUN/UPA collaborated with the Nazi's and that it was a mistake to reward him with the award.

Chapter 4 **Bandera symbolic role during Euromaidan**

In the early months of 2013 several monuments of Bandera in the Western region of Ukraine were attacked and destroyed, according to the Russian news agency *Itar-Tass* in total five. These monuments had been protected, since earlier treaties were made, but due to the large amount of monuments that needed this kind of protection it was not on a fulltime basis.²²⁷ Thus the vandals were able to attack and destroy the monuments. These attacks were only the beginning of another turbulent period in Ukraine. The current crisis situation, which started with the public protests on the Independence Square in Kiev, referred to as Euromaidan, led to renewed interest in the figure Bandera, both within Ukraine as in Russia and in the international media. The widespread presence of portraits with Bandera's face on them during the demonstrations led to the following question: Who was this man? Or how some media referred to it: Who was this Ukrainian nationalist?

This final chapter will pay attention to the 'return of Bandera'. It will discuss Bandera's symbolic role during the Euromaidan protests and the reactions on this in the Ukrainian, Russian and international media. It will also pay attention to the academic debate as well as contributions of bloggers and amateur websites on the issue. Finally, the development of Bandera's myth in 2015 will be discussed.

The return of Stepan Bandera

The Euromaidan protests started in late November 2013, when students and other young high educated Ukrainians started to protest against President Yanukovich and his decision not to sign the proposed Association Agreement with the European Union. Instead, Yanukovich wanted to establish closer ties with Russia, possibly by joining the Eurasian Customs Union. The prospect of becoming a 'satellite state' of Russia – a return to the Soviet area – was enough for the protesters to demand both the resignation of the Ukrainian government and the establishment of closer relations with the EU. After violent clashes between the protesters and the Ukrainian police on the 30th of November many other citizens joined the protesters.

On the 1st of December, a series of riots in the center of Kiev took place whereupon the Euromaidan square was again occupied. From this moment onwards members of the far-right party Svoboda and equivalent parties joined the occupiers. These protesters often wore helmets and ski mask as disguise. Furthermore, they brought along the black-and-red flags associated with the OUN and UPA.²²⁸ In addition, they started to shout several slogans from the 1940's such as: 'Glory to

²²⁷ *Itar-Tass*, 'Fifth monument to Stepan Bandera destroyed in Lvov region in Western Ukraine', 11-04-2013, found on: Factiva (25-11-2015)

²²⁸ Nikolas Kozloff, 'Ukraine: Nationalist Flags, Insignia and Curious Symbolism', *The World Post*, 16-01-2015 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nikolas-kozloff/ukraine-nationalist-flags_b_6489988.html (28-12-2015)

Ukraine! Glory to the heroes!' and 'Glory to the nation! Death to the enemies!' These activists also carried around portraits of Bandera and hanged these in public buildings such as the Kiev city council building.²²⁹ Other symbols of the right activists were the coat of arms of Ukraine, the trident and the neo-Nazi Wolfsangel symbol. This symbol, which showed a lion on blue background with three crowns around him, was the symbol of the volunteer Ukrainian battalions for the Nazi army.²³⁰ Overall, the majority of the protesters were, mostly in the Russian media but also in some western media, associated with far-right groups such as Svoboda.

However, the historian William Jay Risch shows in his article 'What the far right does not tell us about the Maidan' that not all the protesters supported far-right ideas or radical thoughts, in fact most of them were not even involved in a political party.²³¹ Furthermore, according to the Ukrainian-Canadian historian Serhy Yekelchuk not all the protesters were comfortable with the presence of all the Bandera images on the square, wherefore a large, quite prominently displayed portrait of Bandera was replaced by one of the less controversial Taras Shevchenko, a Ukrainian poet, artist and thinker from the nineteenth century.²³² Despite all of this, within a short period of time Bandera did become one of the symbols of the resistance in Ukraine against Russia. According to Yekelchuk: 'It can be argued that in the course of the Euromaidan Revolution, the image of Bandera acquired new meaning as a symbol of resistance to the corrupt, Russian-sponsored regime, quite apart from the historical Bandera's role as a purveyor of exclusivist, ethno-nationalism.'²³³

The international attention for Bandera rose during the turn of the year, when Bandera's 105th birthday was commemorated with torchlight marches in several Ukrainian towns including capital Kiev. Not only Ukrainian and Russian media outlets reported about these rallies, but also for instance the *BBC*, *The Australian*, *The Guardian* and several other Czech, Polish, Norwegian and Dutch news channels. As described in the introduction of this thesis, according to Ukrainian media such as *Kyiv Post* 'thousands of people' were present during the protests in Kiev and Lviv. However, according to *Russia Today*, 15.000 Ukrainians took part in the marches for the 'highly controversial figure' in Kiev.²³⁴ Several other sources mention 'hundreds of participants' or 'thousands of people present', while the Russian political analysts Stanislav Byshok and Alexey Kochetkov state 'a record of nearly

²²⁹ William Jay Risch, 'What the far right does not tell us about the Maidan', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Winter 2015) 137-144.

²³⁰ *Fare Network*, 'Monitoring discriminatory signs and symbols in European football' <http://www.farenet.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Monitoring-discriminatory-signs-and-symbols-in-European-football.pdf> (28-12-2015)

²³¹ Risch, 'What the Far Right Does Not Tell Us about the Maidan', 142.

²³² Serhy Yekelchuk, *The Conflict in Ukraine: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Oxford 2015) 107.

²³³ Yekelchuk, *The Conflict in Ukraine: What Everyone Needs to Know*, 107.

²³⁴ *Russia Today*, '15,000 march in Kiev to commemorate WWII Ukrainian nationalist leader', 02-01-2014 <https://www.rt.com/in-motion/ukraine-nationalists-march-bandera-082/> (19-10-2015)

ten thousand activists' were present. It is possible some media over exaggerated the number of protesters present for various reasons. For the Russian media, a higher number of protesters could be used as proof to show how widespread the support for Bandera was under the Ukrainian activists, which could help to convince the Russian television audience of their depraved character. On the other hand, pro-Bandera media and bloggers could use the number of demonstrators to underline how many people in Ukraine still honor Bandera as a national hero. The considerably higher turn-out was likely partly due the fact many western Ukrainians, including supporters of Bandera, were already present in Kiev for the Euromaidan protests whereby they could easily join the marches. Several media outlets also reported about the motives and opinions of the participants of the march. According to a report by *USA Today*, which is based on information by *AP*, one of the torch bearers was named Ihor Mykolaiv. When he was asked about his motives, he described Bandera as a man 'who fought for the country, the faith and the ideals' and he insisted that 'Bandera was never on the Germans' side.'²³⁵ Additionally, according to Jansen the participants of the march screamed: 'Bandera, come back and bring order'.²³⁶

Beside the marches, the Russian and Ukrainian media also reported about the Euromaidan protests and Bandera's role in them. For example *Russia Today* reported: 'Leaders of the Maidan protests and their Western backers wanted a united Ukraine dominated by the anti-Russian ideology of Stepan Bandera and his heirs. Instead, they got a smoldering wreck, terrorized by Nazi militias, oligarchs and their private armies, and a government in Kiev entirely out of touch with reality.'²³⁷ Several Russian media outlets including *Russia Today* and *Sputnik* also reported that Bandera's birthday, the 1st of January, was appointed as 'state holiday' by Yushchenko in the end of 2008. However, I have not been able to find any other, non-Russian, sources to verify this. According to reports by *Ukraine Today*: 'Bandera fought against both Hitler and the Red Army during the Second World War but Russia has accused the Ukrainian government of supporting Nazi ideology because of the popularity of Bandera among many Ukrainians.'²³⁸ These news articles underline that both the 'Bandera myths' were still used by the Russian and Ukrainian media.

The reaction of bloggers and scholars

With the return of Stepan Bandera to the news media, his name also reappeared in several amateur blogs and opinion pieces. Under titles such as 'Why I hate Bandera supporters' and 'Bandera's Ghost in Kyiv' these bloggers explained their opinion about Bandera. Overall, a very anti-Bandera picture

²³⁵ AP, '15,000 Ukraine nationalists march for divisive Bandera', *USA Today*, 01-01-2014
<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/01/01/ukraine-bandera/4279897/> (20-10-2015)

²³⁶ Jansen, *Grensland. Een geschiedenis van Oekraïne*, 195.

²³⁷ <http://rt.com/op-edge/208363-ukraine-maidan-protest-coup/> (27-11-2014)

²³⁸ <http://uatoday.tv/geopolitics/kremlin-fears-losing-ukraine-for-generations-374703.html> (19-10-2015)

dominated the online media. Although no clear proof has been found, it is possible many negative Bandera blogs were posted because many so called 'trolls' used the internet to spread the anti-Bandera picture of the Russian government. This is underlined by the fact that under several news articles about Bandera, both by the Russian and Ukrainian media, many comments appeared on the fascists characteristics of the Ukrainian government and Bandera's role in this.²³⁹

The anti-Bandera picture was also copied by several international media channels such as the *BCC* and *The New York Times*. Furthermore, sources such as *The Huffington Post* often referred to experts who expressed a rather pro-Russian view, for instance the previously cited Shekhovtsov. According to him: 'Bandera is a very controversial figure. If you read a history textbook in central or western Ukraine, you'll see a chapter on Bandera but no mention of the fact that he was involved in the Holocaust or pogroms in Lviv. Typically, he is described as a national liberation fighter.' However, within the same article Shekhovtsov also argued: 'Bandera has been glorified not because he was an anti-Semite but because he was a nationalist figure who fought against Soviet influence. When people glorify him, it doesn't mean that they are aware of this dark history or even endorse anti-Semitism'.²⁴⁰ Overall, Shekhovtsov blamed the Ukrainian government for misinforming the citizens of central and western Ukraine about Bandera.

During the year several opinion pieces, columns and articles were published on Bandera in the Ukrainian and Russian media. In order to provide an overview of these, a couple of them will be discussed in the following paragraphs. The articles are sorted by date of publication. In a column, published by *Russia Today* on the 28th of January 2014, the Russian journalist Sergey Strokan argued: 'The icon of the modern Ukrainian nationalist movement is Stepan Bandera – the notorious leader of the previous generation of Ukrainian nationalists who were fiercely fighting against the Soviet army during the Second World War. Gangs of cutthroats, obsessed with the idea of a unified Ukrainian state were hiding in the thick forests of Western Ukraine and hobnobbing with fascist Germany in an attempt to find a 'senior brother' to defeat the 'Soviet occupants'. Bandera, who was killed by a Soviet spy agent in 1959 while living in exile in post-war Munich, was later proclaimed 'a martyr' and a 'national hero' by the offspring of the founding fathers of the Ukrainian ultra-right movement'.²⁴¹ This quote provides a rather negative picture of Bandera, which is nevertheless mostly based on the murders committed by the UPA, something where Bandera personally was never involved in. However, it can be argued that Bandera probably did approve them, although no decisive proof can

²³⁹ Shaun Walker, 'Salutin' Putin: inside a Russian troll house', *The Guardian*, 02-04-2015

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/02/putin-kremlin-inside-russian-troll-house> (28-12-2015)

²⁴⁰ Nikolas Kozloff, 'Interview: What Can Be Expected From Ukrainian Right in the Midst of Political and Military Crisis?', *The World Post*, 30-07-2014 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nikolas-kozloff/interview-what-can-be-exp_b_5635592.html (20-10-2015)

²⁴¹ Sergey Strokan, 'Ukrainian ultras: New challenge to West', *Russia Today*, 28-01-2014 <https://www.rt.com/op-edge/ukrainian-violence-ultras-pravy-sektor-288/> (20-10-2015)

be found about this.

Two weeks later an opinion piece by Katchanovski was published in *The Moscow Times*. In this article Katchanovski wrote: 'Many leading media outlets, nationalist politicians and historians in Ukraine present Bandera and his faction of the OUN as national heroes who fought for an independent Ukraine against both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. They deny, justify or even falsify the collaboration of the OUN with Nazi Germany in the beginning and the end of World War II and involvement of the OUN and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in the mass murders of Jews, Poles, Russians and Ukrainians. For instance, some 1,500 Jewish, Ukrainian, and Polish victims of Nazi mass executions, whose remains were exhumed recently in Volodymyr-Volynskyi, were misrepresented as victims of the Soviet NKVD, the predecessor to the KGB.'²⁴² In this article, Katchanovski presents a negative picture of Ukrainian historians, media outlets and politicians, who according to him 'falsely presented Bandera as a national hero'.

A few months later, an article by Oleg Nemensky was posted on the website *Russia beyond the Headlines*. In this article Nemensky argued that due to the 'pressure of Ukrainian nationalists from Galicia in the government' the education of Ukrainian children was according to 'the nationalist trend'. According to him, the children were using textbooks that promoted an 'ultra-nationalist view of Ukrainian history' in which Bandera was pictured as a hero. Furthermore, Nemensky was of the opinion that the Ukrainian television regularly broadcasted programs that promoted Ukrainian radical nationalist propaganda.²⁴³ Firstly, this article falsely describes Bandera as leader of the UPA. Furthermore, it provides the picture that children in Ukraine are brainwashed with nationalist education. This might have been the case in some schools, but according to the previously mentioned research conducted by Korostelina (chapter 3), this was (and probably is) definitely not the case in all the Ukrainian schools.

The American political writer Nikolas Kozloff paid repeatedly attention to Bandera, who he described as a 'nationalist who sought to make Ukraine into a one-party fascist dictatorship free of other ethnic minorities'. He described Bandera as 'a poor model for a Ukrainian national ethos' and argued: 'Seventy years after the end of World War II, Ukrainians must eschew such symbols and look elsewhere in the search for a national identity.'²⁴⁴ All Kozloff's articles appear to have as key point a

²⁴² Ivan Katchanovski, 'Role of Far-Right Nationalists in Ukraine Protests', *The Moscow Times*, 12-02-2014
<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/role-of-far-right-nationalists-in-ukraine-protests/494349.html> (19-10-2015)

²⁴³ Oleg Nemensky, 'Understanding Ukrainian nationalism through the prism of Bandera', *Russia beyond the Headlines*, 26-04-2014
http://rbth.com/society/2014/04/26/understanding_ukrainian_nationalism_through_the_prism_of_bandera_36249.html (18-11-2015)

²⁴⁴ Nikolas Kozloff, 'Ukraine: Still Failing on World War II', *The Huffington Post*, 25-12-2014
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nikolas-kozloff/ukraine-still-failing-on_b_6380726.html (26-11-2015)

message to the Ukrainian citizens to search for another role model than Bandera.

In the Russian newspaper *Izvestia*, the Russian political scientist Sergej Makov argued Ukraine was 'backpedaling' the Minsk agreements. He provided several arguments for this, such as 'Ukraine is assuming no peace obligations and is not signing any agreements' and 'Kiev will teach young people in Russian-speaking regions that Hitler's associate Bandera is a hero and that Russia is Ukraine's external enemy.'²⁴⁵ This article shows a very negative view towards the Ukrainian government, which is according to Makov promoting Bandera under Ukrainian children.

All the previously discussed columns and articles have in common that they all blame the Ukrainian government, historians and media for spreading a positive picture of Bandera in which any negative aspects of him are omitted. According to them, Ukrainian youth but also other Ukrainians are therefore provided with misinformation about Bandera.

Where it is relatively easy to find articles and blogs published on the wrongdoings of Bandera, they can simply be found by searching on the key words 'Bandera' and 'nationalist' on *Google*, it is more difficult to find articles glorifying him. One reason for this may be the fact that these blogs and articles are published in the Ukrainian language and therefore do not appear when searching on the internet. One of the blogs that can be found is titled *Ukrainiancrusade.blogspot.com*. This blog provides the points of view of the Ukrainian far right on the current situation in Ukraine. According to the header on the website, *The Ukrainian Crusade* shares the following message 'We are the Banderites! We are coming! We are going into the wide world from the depths of our glorious nation with God in our hearts and a sword by our side.' The blog was launched at the end of August 2014 and since then published regularly about the events in Ukraine. An article on the blog describes Bandera as 'a lodestar of the nation' and 'the embodiment of self-sacrifice and fortitude for Ukrainian nationalists'. The (unknown) author of this blog post is of the opinion: 'Bandera, his life and example of his ideas - is something that can unite Ukrainian people and provide Ukrainian rights on Ukrainian lands'. The blog post concludes with the statement 'Stepan Bandera is not only our past but the future too.'²⁴⁶

Another more positive view is provided by the column of the Ukrainian-American Boris Danik published in the *Kyiv Post*. In this piece he wrote about 'The science of Bandera bashing' and argued: 'As another minimum, the issue of fairness of judgment should not be avoided. For someone decidedly critical of right-wing politics - in Ukraine as well as in the USA - to defend the memory of Bandera is indeed a matter of fairness and not ideological inclination. It is for me. Bandera is

²⁴⁵ Sergei Markov, How Kiev is Backpedaling on Minsk-2, 30 June 2015, found on: <http://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/45024698?id=45024698&view=default> (30-10-2015)

²⁴⁶ *The Ukrainian Crusade*, 'Stepan Bandera, a lodestar of the nation', 01-01-2015 <http://ukrainiancrusade.blogspot.nl/2015/01/stepan-bandera-lodestar-of-nation.html> (26-11-2015)

someone who spent most of the war in a Nazi concentration camp, where also his two brothers were murdered. He is someone who, with the OUN, openly stood up against Adolf Hitler, by declaring an independent Ukraine in Lviv on June 30, 1941, eight days after the start of German - Soviet hostilities. It promptly led to his arrest and jailing of his closest cohorts. That was when many well-known personalities in Western Europe, yes, cooperated with the Nazis to avoid Hitler's wrath.'²⁴⁷ In this column, Danik provided a short historical overview of Bandera's life, which is based on well-known facts. Furthermore, he argued many other also western European politicians cooperated with the Nazis, wherefore we cannot blame Bandera for this.

In March 2014, the Dutch journalist Michiel Driebergen visited Ukraine to report about the history of the country. He visited Lviv, where books and movies about Bandera and flags of the UPA were sold on the streets to many interested customers. Furthermore, he spoke to former members of the UPA and Canadian researcher Marco Carynnyk. Carynnyk argued that Ukraine, and especially western Ukraine, only used Bandera and the red and black UPA flag as symbols in the absence of better symbols. According to him, Ukrainians simply hardly knew their own history. Therefore, he said it is important to research the Ukrainian history and show who Bandera really was and what he did.²⁴⁸

The political debate

Beside academia, bloggers and media channels also politicians reacted on the whole Bandera controversy. According to chairman of the Russian Communist Party, Gennady Zyuganov, the 'Bandera movement is a form of Ukrainian ethnic nationalism in its most extreme forms'. In his writings about the crisis in Ukraine he argued: 'more than 30 thousands innocent Ukrainians were killed in the battles with Bandera followers' and 'the Bandera-style nationalism did not evolve into a national liberation idea but into a totalitarian sect of crazed fanatics who killed primarily native Ukrainians.' Furthermore, he frequently referred to 'Bandera-style nationalism', 'Bandera-style authorities', 'Bandera-style oligarchs' and 'Bandera-style junta'.²⁴⁹ Generally, Zyuganov shared a very negative opinion on Bandera.

On the 7th of March 2014, Russia's United Nations envoy Vitaly Churkin reacted on an earlier statement expressed by Ukraine's United Nations envoy Yuriy Sergeyev on Bandera. Sergeyev had argued that the Soviet Union 'tried to press Western allies to recognize what you called Banderas and others as killers'. In his speech, Churkin said that both the OUN and UPA collaborated with the Nazi's

²⁴⁷ Boris Danik, 'The science of Bandera bashing', *Kyiv Post*, 30-12-2013 <http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/boris-danik-the-science-of-bandera-bashing-334483.html> (20-10-2015)

²⁴⁸ Michiel Driebergen, 'Dubieuzie figuur symbool gedeeld Oekraïne', *Het Parool*, 8-03-2014 (25-11-2015)

²⁴⁹ Communist Party of The Russian Federation, Gennady Zyuganov: The crisis in Ukraine and its deep roots, 05-09-2014 <http://cprf.ru/2014/09/1108/> (26-11-2015)

during the Second World War and participated in mass killings of civilians and punitive operations in Belarus, Poland and Ukraine. According to him, Bandera issued the act of proclamation of Ukrainian statehood himself. Additionally, he aimed this proclamation claimed the Ukrainian state 'will work closely with Great Germany'. Furthermore, Churkin said: 'It is deeply disturbing that the followers of [Stepan] Bandera are openly marching these days in Ukraine, displaying his portraits and fascist insignia, and are wielding considerable political power in Kiev.'²⁵⁰

President Putin shared the opinion of the Russian government when he held a speech in the Kremlin about the current situation in Crimea and Ukraine on the 18th of March. In this speech, he said: 'Nevertheless, we can all clearly see the intentions of these ideological heirs of Bandera, Hitler's accomplice during World War II.' and 'I repeat, just as it has been for centuries, it will be a home to all the peoples living there. What it will never be and do is follow in Bandera's footsteps!'²⁵¹ In this speech, Putin labeled all the Ukrainian protesters as 'heirs of Bandera' and warned the Russian population for their intentions. Furthermore, he claimed that Crimea is freed from these 'evil persons'. Two weeks later, minister Sergey Lavrov argued: 'The Donetsk and Lugansk popular republics are headed by people [...] they want to defend their culture, their traditions, celebrate their holidays rather than anniversaries of Roman Shukhevych and Stepan Bandera.'²⁵² This speech and the official statements by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs tried to convince their audience that the majority of citizens in Ukraine glorified Bandera and celebrated his anniversary. This is obviously the picture they wanted to provide, but not the actual truth, since only a small amount of Ukrainians in the west of the country actually celebrated Bandera's birthday.

Recent statements from the Ukrainian political parties are more difficult to find. However, some older statements have been found. Back in January 2013, member of Parliament from the Party of Regions Vadym Kolesnichenko, posted a blog on the Ukrainian website *blogs.pravda.com.ua*. In this post Kolesnichenko argued, according to Liebich and Myshlovskaa, 'Stepan Bandera is a collaborator of Nazi Germany, the leader of the radical rightwing organization OUN and its armed wing, UPA, who collaborated with the Nazis during the Second World War in the fight against the anti-Hitler coalition. Stepan Bandera and the organization he headed are guilty of the crimes against humanity: they directly supported and contributed to the Holocaust (the extermination of more than 2 million Jews

²⁵⁰ Speech by Vitaly Churkin after United Nations meeting on the 7th of March 2014, found on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCZ0OLNVFs4> (17-11-2015)

²⁵¹ Kremlin, Address by President of the Russian Federation, 18-03-2014 <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603> (27-11-2015)

²⁵² The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Answers to questions of the mass media by the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, summarising the results of his negotiations with the US Secretary of State, John Kerry, Paris, 05-06-2014 http://archive.mid.ru/BDOMP/Brp_4.nsf/arh/E39851E809B2AF8344257CF2002EA50C?OpenDocument (27-10-2015)

and Roma) on the territory of Ukraine, planned and carried out the genocide of about 160 thousand unarmed Polish population of Western Ukraine (“Volyn massacre”) and organized terror against the civilian Ukrainians on political and ideological grounds.²⁵³ In this blog post, Kolesnichenko shared his rather negative opinion on Bandera, however he wrongly referred to him as leader of the UPA and blamed him for ‘the crimes against humanity’ the UPA committed. It is difficult to assess whether the UPA ‘contributed to the Holocaust’ as Kolesnichenko said.

The leader of Svoboda - the political party in charge of organizing the yearly marches on the first of January for Bandera’s birthday - Oleg Tiahnybok, made several positive comments on Bandera. For instance, according to the *Cambridge Globalist*, he argued: ‘The enemies of Ukraine could not cope with Bandera during his life and are afraid of him even after his death ... I am a Ukrainian nationalist and, to me, Bandera is a Hero with a capital H.’²⁵⁴ The Svoboda party has often been accused of Nazi ideology and was also responsible for the threats Rossoliński-Liebe received while doing his lectures tour in Ukraine. Seeing their statements, it is pretty obvious that for Svoboda and its members Bandera is a hero.

In the middle of the chaos of the Euromaidan protests, a new Ukrainian political party called Right Sector was established. It started as a paramilitary confederation in November 2013 and became a political party in March 2014. Its members are from several already existing parties such as the Stepan Bandera All-Ukrainian Organization Tryzub (established in 1993 with as aim to fulfill Bandera’s plans of a Ukrainian United Independent State). According to an interview with Right Sector Parliamentarian Borislav Bereza: ‘When we speak, for example about Bandera, I was too once one of those who thought, having imbibed Soviet propaganda, that he was a fascist. But I was able to read many books and to think and figure out the truth: that this was a man who spent much of the war inside of a German internment camp. That he was liquidated by Soviet, rather than Nazi, intelligence agents.’²⁵⁵ In his article ‘Are there Nazis in Ukraine? A visit to Lviv’ Joshua Tartakovsky also interviewed Bereza, who is - as specifically mentioned - of Jewish descent. Bereza argued that Bandera fought those who opposed Ukrainian independence, but was not an anti-Semitic. According to Bereza, the fact that Bandera was imprisoned by the Germans and later killed by the Soviets, proved he was as against the Germans as he was against the Soviets. Furthermore, Bereza said Bandera respected the minorities of Ukraine. In Bereza’s view, the UPA was not a fascist party, but a

²⁵³ Liebich & Myshlovskaa, ‘Bandera: memorialization and commemoration’, 763.

²⁵⁴ Raisa Ostapenko, ‘The Success of Russia’s Propaganda: Ukraine’s ‘Banderovtsy’’, *Cambridge Globalist*, 29-01-2015 <http://cambridgeglobalist.org/2015/01/29/success-russias-propaganda-ukraines-banderovtsy/> (29-09-2015)

²⁵⁵ Vladislav Davidzon, ‘Right-wing Ukrainian leader is (surprise) Jewish, and (real surprise) proud of it. A Q&A with the Right Sector Parliamentarian Borislav Bereza’, *Tablet Mag*, 01-12-2014 <http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-news-and-politics/187217/borislav-bereza> (20-10-2015)

resistance movement in which also Jews took part.²⁵⁶

The current Ukrainian government, under President Poroshenko, approved a new package of laws on the 'decommunisation' of Ukraine. The laws ban 'Nazi and Communist symbols and the public denial of the criminal nature of the Communist totalitarian regime 1917–1991'. Furthermore, former KGB arches were opened and the Soviet term 'great patriotic war' was once again replaced with the more Western term Second World War. Most importantly, the laws provide public recognition to anyone who fought for Ukrainian independence in the 20th century, including members of the UPA.²⁵⁷ These law underline the return of the Ukrainian government to a more pro-Bandera approach as was the case under President Yushchenko.

Overall, there is a huge difference between the Russian and Ukrainian media coverage of the Euromaidan protests and the reactions in their governments. In the Russian media, the protesters were referred to as 'banderivsti', while the temporary government was presented as a 'fascist junta'.²⁵⁸ Several articles by the Russian media spread false information, such as the fact Bandera was the leader of the UPA and was responsible for many murders. Most of the Ukrainian media and politics present Bandera as a hero of the nation and blame the Russians for any negative information about him. However, there were also negative sounds in Ukraine for instance from the political party 'Party of Regions', the party of former president Yanukovich. In several other, international, media articles titled 'Understanding Bandera' 'Who was Bandera?' 'Hero or Villian?' were published. Within these articles for instance the British media presented a balanced picture of Bandera in which attention was paid to both the Russian and Ukrainian points of view.

Opinion polls in Ukraine and Russia

The previous section showed the Ukrainian and Russian media spread a contrary image of Bandera during the Euromaidan protests. Both in 2014 and 2015, several opinion poll have been conducted by the Ukrainian Polling organization *Rating* and the Russian polling organization *Levada Center* under the Ukrainian and Russian citizens about their attitude towards Bandera. In the Ukrainian opinion poll, conducted in April 2014, forty-eight percent of the Ukrainian citizens shared a negative attitude towards Bandera. Of the other respondents thirty-one percent had a positive attitude, seventeen percent were undecided about the matter and four percent knew nothing about Bandera. The poll was conducted in several Ukrainian cities all over the country, which also to the following

²⁵⁶ Joshua Tartakovsky, 'Are There Nazis in Ukraine? A Visit to Lviv', *SpeakOut*, 06-01-2015 <http://www.truth-out.org/speakout/item/28392-are-there-nazis-in-ukraine-a-visit-to-lviv> (17-11-2015)

²⁵⁷ Lily Hyde, 'Ukraine to rewrite Soviet history with controversial 'decommunisation' laws', *The Guardian*, 20-04-2015 <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/20/ukraine-decommunisation-law-soviet> (28-12-2015)

²⁵⁸ Nebojsa Malic, 'Not jumping for joy: Ukraine, a year later', *Russia Today*, 24-11-2014 <http://rt.com/op-edge/208363-ukraine-maidan-protest-coup/> (27-11-2014)

comprehensive results: the majority, seventy-six percent, of those living in Western Ukraine had a positive opinion of Bandera, in the north forty percent had a negative attitude to Bandera, in the central area this was thirty-nine. In the south and eastern regions seventy percent showed a negative attitude towards Bandera and in the Donbass area even seventy-nine percent. A small percentage of the respondents never heard of Bandera and couldn't answer the question.²⁵⁹

In April 2015, the same polling organization asked 2400 respondents who they thought were the three most prominent Ukrainians of all time. According to the results, Bandera made it to the top ten, 8.3 percent of the respondents named him as prominent Ukrainians. Taras Shevchenko was mostly named by the respondents.²⁶⁰ This survey was also conducted in May 2012 under 2000 respondents. At that moment, Bandera was mentioned by 4.3 percent of the respondents as prominent Ukrainian, although the article mentioned his name was in the top five in the west of country. Several recently conducted opinion polls by the Russian polling organization *Levada Center* pointed out that the majority of the Russian respondents never heard of Bandera before or failed to remember who he was.²⁶¹ These opinion polls show that the majority of both Ukrainian citizens had a negative attitude towards Bandera. Although, the majority of the Ukrainians living in western Ukraine had a positive opinion of Bandera. Overall, still quite many respondents had never heard of Bandera before or did not remember who he was.

Misinformation and controversy about Bandera

During the Euromaidan protests and also in the months afterwards, several false messages were spread in the Russian media, including articles on Bandera. This so called misinformation or disinformation was researched by the fact-checking website, *StopFake.org Struggle against fake information about events in Ukraine*, launched in March 2014 by alumni and students of Mohyla School of Journalism and the Digital Future of Journalism program in Kiev. Their latest item on Bandera, published on the 15th of September 2015 mentioned several Russian media have reported about the news the monument of Stepan Bandera in Lviv had been smashed and torn down on Sunday night. These articles argued that the attack on the monument showed that 'many people in Western Ukraine are not willing to put up with the current junta government'. This is however false information, since the Bandera monument was not destroyed. Furthermore, according to *StopFake.org* the headlines of the articles claimed the incident happened in the city of Lviv, while the

²⁵⁹ *Interfax*, 'Almost half of Ukrainians have negative attitude to Bandera – poll', 05-05-2014 <http://www.interfax.com/newsinf.asp?id=502455> (16-11-2015)

²⁶⁰ Rating Group Ukraine, Famous Ukrainians, 21-05-2015 http://ratinggroup.ua/en/research/ukraine/vydayuschiesya_ukraincy.html (26-11-2015)

²⁶¹ Levada Center, ЛИШЬ 36% РОССИЯН ЧУВСТВУЮТ ОПАСНОСТЬ ПРИБЛИЖАЮЩЕГОСЯ КРОВОПРОЛИТИЯ, 15-03-2014 <http://www.levada.ru/2014/03/15/lish-36-rossiyan-chuvstvuyut-opasnost-priblizhayushhegosya-krovoprolitiya/> (12-11-2015)

texts of the articles claimed the attack acquitted in the villages of Velykosilk, which is in the district of Lviv Oblast. The Russian reports were not entirely based on made-up information. The Bandera monument was indeed torn down, but this already happened two and a half years ago. The photos that were used in the Russian media were from this attack.²⁶²

Another article by *StopFake.org*, published on 19th October 2014, referred to a fake photo published on a *Vkontakte* (the Russian Facebook) page, which showed a banner with the heads of Stepan Bandera, Roman Shukhevych and Adolf Hitler. This photo was not, as mentioned, from the anniversary of UPA on the 14th of October in Kramatorsk, but from the anniversaries on 14th October 2012 in Lviv. Furthermore, the original photo of the actual banner shows the face of Eugene Konovalts instead of Hitler's. Concluding, *StopFake.org* argued: 'It needs to be recalled that the Ukrainian Rebel Army (UPA) struggled against the Nazis. So it's hard to imagine that Ukrainian patriots were holding a portrait of Adolf Hitler – the man who gave the orders to kill their fellow citizens and sent Stepan Bandera and his brothers in a concentration camp.'²⁶³

Beside the misinformation on the internet, in the end of 2014 a documentary called 'Secret of Bandera' was showed on the Russian television channel (which was controlled by Igor Kolomoisky, a Ukrainian billionaire). In this documentary, so called 'secrets' of Bandera are revealed. According to *Pravda.ru*: The 'filmmakers say that Bandera was a physically sick man of very small stature, who would not hesitate to beat his pregnant wife.'²⁶⁴ This documentary showed a rather negative picture of Bandera, which was probably done to convince Russian viewers of his depravity.

More negative remarks on Bandera were shown on the website *Slavyangrad.org*, owned by several journalists from the Donbass area. According to this website, Bandera was 'a ruthless mass murderer whose wartime atrocities can only be viewed as crimes against humanity'. Furthermore, they claimed: 'With his wholesale rehabilitation in Ukraine, the anti-fascist opposition has taken to calling his supporters 'Banderites' and their actions 'Banderism'.²⁶⁵ In an interview with Andrew Fursov, the director of the Centre of the Russian Studies of MGU (Moscow State University), the website referred to Bandera in terms of 'Bandera neo-Nazi revolt', 'American-Bandera revolt', 'West

²⁶² *StopFake.org*, 'Fake: Monument to Bandera Torn Down in Lviv', 15-09-2015

<http://www.stopfake.org/en/fake-monument-to-bandera-torn-down-in-lviv/> (17-09-2015)

²⁶³ *StopFake.org*, 'Fake Photo: Portrait of Hitler on Poster of Ukrainian Nationalists', 19-10-2014

<http://www.stopfake.org/en/fake-photo-portrait-of-hitler-on-poster-of-ukrainian-nationalists/> (17-09-2015)

²⁶⁴ *Pravda.ru*, 'Ukrainian nationalists want more worship and honors for Stepan Bandera', 29-12-2014

http://english.pravda.ru/news/world/29-12-2014/129411-stepan_bandera-0/ (22-10-2015)

²⁶⁵ Andrey Panevin, 'America's Dark History of Supporting Ukrainian Fascists and War Criminals', *Slavyangrad.org*, 10-08-2015 <http://slavyangrad.org/2015/08/10/americas-dark-history-of-supporting-ukrainian-fascists-and-war-criminals/> (17-11-2015)

Slavic Bandera neo-Nazi Reich'.²⁶⁶ In another article, the contributor George Eliason described Bandera as 'a mass murderer, torturer, and assassinated former leader of Ukraine's ultra-nationalist émigré political movement'. Additionally, he wrote on 'Bandera's attempted assassination of sitting President Franklin D. Roosevelt.' Furthermore, Eliason argued 'half a million of civilians died under Bandera, and 3 million prisoners of war died in concentration camps'.²⁶⁷ Overall, the information Eliason referred to is either incorrect or has been seriously exaggerated. For instance, no other material has been found that referred to any attempt of Bandera to assassinate President Roosevelt. This is probably done to present Bandera in a very negative daylight.

Furthermore, the discussion on the internet and in articles on Bandera also paid attention to two controversial places related to Bandera, namely the Bandera museum in London and the Lonsky Prison in Lviv. The Bandera museum in London, which is already discussed in chapter 2, dealt with renewed interests from especially Ukrainians living in the United Kingdom since the beginning of the Euromaidan protests.²⁶⁸ Beside these new visitors, the museum also started with a virtual online tour of its exposition, but the audio for this is unfortunately only available in Ukrainian. The museum got even more attention after the British blogger Graham Phillips, who is also working for several Russian websites, visited the museum in April 2015. Phillips tried to enter the museum with a cameraman, according to him 'to attend the special show/guided tour', but was denied entrance. In his *Youtube* video, Phillips described Bandera as a 'Ukrainian nationalistic figure', 'one of the most prominent Nazi collaborators of WWII' and argued he is interested in how the tour will be.²⁶⁹ After the heated debate that followed when Phillips was denied entrance, according to conversation in the *Youtube* video because he 'did not sign up for the tour and his name was not on the special list', Phillips left the museum. However, he posted both his video of his experience and a story about it on the internet. In this story, he described the museum as: 'A strange, closed doors museum with admittance only to those on a pre-approved list. Those pro-Ukrainians who go attempting to find vindication for their reverence for Bandera in a museum of revisionism, in which Bandera appears as a 'hero', rather than what he was – an unapologetic, ruthless, failure-prone Nazi collaborator.'²⁷⁰ His experience quickly

²⁶⁶ Paul Shalley & S. Naylor, 'Ukrainian Association with EU and the Mutiny of the Euro-Integrators. 15/03/14', *Slavyangrad.org*, 28-08-2014 <http://slavyangrad.org/2014/08/28/ukrainian-association-with-eu-and-the-mutiny-of-the-euro-integrators-150314/> (17-11-2015)

²⁶⁷ Gleb Bazov, 'Whitewashing Bandera for a US Audience', *Slavyangrad.org*, 10-08-2015 <http://slavyangrad.org/2015/08/10/whitewashing-bandera-for-a-us-audience/> (17-11-2015)

²⁶⁸ Darya Maljutina, 'Graham Phillips vs. Stepan Bandera: pro-Russian propagandist breaks into London museum', *Ukrainian Events in London*, 27-04-2015 <http://www.ukrainianlondon.co.uk/stepan-bandera/> (15-05-2015)

²⁶⁹ Graham Phillips, A Trip to the London Bandera Museum / Поездка в Бандера музея в Лондоне, 26-04-2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5GM5hM1WWs> (16-10-2015)

²⁷⁰ Graham Phillips, 'Who Is Ukraine's Stepan Bandera?', *Russia Insider*, 01-05-2015 <http://russia-insider.com/en/who-stepan-bandera/6217> (16-10-2015)

spread on the internet and also appeared on several Russian websites where the discussion about the museum continued. Overall, seeing this information, the museum is focused on a specific group of visitors, namely Ukrainian diaspora or Ukrainians visiting London, and is not open for any critical comments or visitors.

Another controversial place is the Lonsky Prison in Lviv, on the corner of the Bandera street also referred to as 'Prison at Lonskoho Street Memorial Museum'. In several Ukrainian media and in the prison itself, Bandera is pictured as a former prisoner. This information is partly true, since he was only a prisoner for a relatively short period of time in 1936 during his trial in Lviv. Regarding his short imprisonment, Bandera is given excessive attention. This is confirmed by Stephen M. Norris, an American historian, who visited the prison in Lviv. According to his research: 'Bandera and his followers are not held accountable for violence; instead, they are identified as prisoners, and therefore victims, of political violence. Lonsky thus establishes in brick and mortar what the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory and Ukrainian nationalists have advocated: namely, that Bandera, the OUN, and UPA have been subject to Soviet propaganda that has unfairly demonized them.' Furthermore, Morris argues the prison turned Bandera and his fellow nationalists in 'Ukrainian patriots and 'the founding fathers and mothers of the new, independent, Ukraine'. According to Morris: 'That Bandera and his fellow OUN-B members engaged in violent acts, particularly against Jews and Poles, does not matter; Bandera's declaration at his Lviv trial, while he was being held at Lonsky, acts as the final words on this subject.'²⁷¹ Unfortunately the website of the prison, which provides additional information, is only available in Ukrainian.²⁷²

Overall, the whole city of Lviv is quite a controversial place seeing for instance the huge statue of Bandera standing on the spot where the former ghetto was located. Furthermore, according to numerous reports by journalists who visited Lviv several shops and market stalls in the city sell t-shirts, scarfs and other material with Bandera's face on it. Additionally, restaurants can be found which are decorated with material of the OUN and UPA.

The development in 2015

The attention for Bandera in both Russia, Ukraine and the West continued after the Euromaidan protests in 2013-2014. In this last paragraph, the development of the Bandera myth in 2015 will be discussed. The year 2015 started with yet another march which was organized to celebrate Bandera's birthday in Kiev. This time, the organization was in the hands of both the Right Sector and Svoboda. These parties announced around five thousand people attended the rally. However, the present

²⁷¹ Stephen M. Norris, 'Inside L'viv's Lonsky Prison: Capturing Ukrainian Memory after Communism' <https://c-linkage.com/iccees2015/uploads/2521.pdf> (20-10-2015)

²⁷² Website of Lonsky Prison <http://www.lonckoho.lviv.ua/> (20-10-2015)

media estimated the amount of supporters on two thousand and the *OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine* estimated the amount of participants around 3.500 of which 70 percent were men.²⁷³ The website *Novorossia Today* even argued 'over ten thousand far-right extremists' were present - compared to the other numbers – this amount is rather overstated.²⁷⁴ Presumably, the presence was around two or maybe three thousand people. It should be mentioned this is quite a small amount of people, especially compared to other rallies organized in Europe for instance by the German Pegida. The attendees of the march included former and current members of the Verkhovna Rada, the Ukrainian Parliament, a fact that was especially highlighted by the Russian media likely to prove 'the fascist' character of the Parliament.

Several international journalists were present during the march, including a delegation from the French channel *Euronews*. This channel reported 'thousands of far-right Ukrainians' gathered to remember the 'controversial nationalist Stepan Bandera'. Furthermore, they interviewed several participants. For instance, Valentina Barchiuk, an economist and member of the Svoboda party, who argued 'Bandera always talked about Russia being the enemy and that it turned out he was right all along since Russia had attacked independent Ukraine'. Another participant, Volodymyr Petraniuk, said Bandera is for him the flag of the Ukrainian nation.²⁷⁵ According to *Russia beyond the Headlines*, which based their report on information by the Russian press agency *Interfax*, Kostantin Dolgov, an envoy for human rights, democracy and rule of law for the Russian Foreign Ministry, described the marches as 'a demonstration of further movement along the path of the Nazis!' He expressed these views in a reaction on the attack of two Russian journalists from *LifeNews TV* by participations of the march. Furthermore, he argued 'the march participants realized the inferiority of their views wherefore they attacked the journalists.'²⁷⁶

Beside the negative publicity in the Russian media and politics, negative expressions also followed from the Czech president Miloš Zeman. Zeman presented Bandera as 'a mass murderer' and argued he could not congratulate Ukraine with his birthday. His negative statements were quickly used by the Russian media, for instance *Russia Today*, as strengthening of the negative image of Bandera they tried to spread.²⁷⁷ However, Zeman was not fully informed about the situation, since he

²⁷³ OVSE SMM, Latest from OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine based on information received as of 18:00 (Kyiv time), 2 January 2015, 04-01-2015 <http://www.osce.org/ukraine-smm/133341>

²⁷⁴ *Novorossia Today*, 'Nazi torchlight procession in Kiev', 02-01-2015 <http://novorossia.today/nazi-torchlight-procession-in-kiev-video/> (27-11-2015)

²⁷⁵ *Euronews*, 'Far-right Ukrainians mark anniversary of nationalist hero Stepan Bandera', 01-01-2015 <http://www.euronews.com/2015/01/01/far-right-ukrainians-mark-anniversary-of-nationalist-hero-stepan-bandera/> (18-11-2015)

²⁷⁶ *Russia beyond the Headlines*, 'Russian diplomat says Ukraine torch-lit march participants', 02-01-2015 http://rbth.com/news/2015/01/02/russian_diplomat_says_ukraine_torch-lit_march_participants_42764.html (18-11-2015)

²⁷⁷ <https://www.rt.com/news/219783-nazi-parade-kiev-bandera/> (27-11-2015)

argued: 'I would also like to point out that president [Viktor] Yushchenko declared Bandera the hero of the nation already and that now a similar title is being prepared for Shukhevych who became known for having let thousands of Jews to be shot dead in Lviv in 1941. Unfortunately, I cannot congratulate Ukraine on such national heroes.'²⁷⁸ Firstly, Bandera was no longer 'Hero of Ukraine' since his award was revoked in January 2011. Furthermore, Shukhevych was already awarded with the title 'Hero of Ukraine' before Bandera and was also revoked of it in January 2011. Bandera's birthday was also celebrated in other cities in Ukraine, for instance Odessa. Here around 100 people gathered for a march, which was apparently banned by the city authorities, but still took place.²⁷⁹ Overall, the rallies for Bandera attracted less people than in 2014, but still led to a debate in the media because of the attack of the Russian journalists of the statements of president Zeman.

Later in the year, the week of 14th and 15th October 2015 marked the 73rd anniversary of the creation of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. This organization is, as described earlier in this thesis, often associated with Bandera whilst he never played an influential role in this moment. The week also marked the 56th anniversary of Bandera's assassination in Munich. The creation of the UPA was celebrated with the so called 'March of Heroes' in Kiev, a march that takes places annually. The Russian website *Sputnik* reported about this march, paid attention to the explosion which took place during the march and showed pictures of the banners that were carried around. One of these banners read: 'Bandera come, establish order'.²⁸⁰ Another banner displayed on the website had a picture of Bandera on it with the description 'Following the heroes'.²⁸¹ These banner show that the participants of the march definitely associated Bandera with the UPA. This information was used by *Russia Today's* video channel *Ruptly TV*, which uploaded a video of the march titled: 'Ukraine: Nationalists glorify Nazi-collaborator during annual "March for Heroes" in Kiev'.²⁸² This title specifically refers to Bandera, while the march was actually not organized for him but the former members of the UPA and their legacy.

The day after, Bandera's death was commemorated in Ukrainian communities all over the world with special gatherings. Additionally, on this day the Stepan Bandera museum in Ivano-

²⁷⁸ Czech News Agency, 'Zeman criticizes historical Ukrainian leaders', *Prague Post*, 08-01-2015

<http://www.praguepost.com/world-news/43706-zeman-criticizes-historical-ukrainian-leaders> (04-12-2015)

²⁷⁹ OVSE SMM, Latest from OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine based on information received as of 18:00 (Kyiv time), 2 January 2015, 04-01-2015 <http://www.osce.org/ukraine-smm/133341>

²⁸⁰ *Sputnik*, 'Kiev March of Ultrnationalists Interrupted by Blast', 14-10-2015

<http://sputniknews.com/europe/20151014/1028529491/kyiv-ultranationalists-blast.html>

²⁸¹ Maksym Kudymets, "'March of Heroes" by Ukrainian right-wing political groups in Kiev', *Demotix*, 14-10-2015 <http://www.demotix.com/photo/8793901/march-heroes-ukrainian-right-wing-political-groups-kyiv>

²⁸² *RT Ruptly*, 'Ukraine: Nationalists glorify Nazi-collaborator during annual "March for Heroes" in Kiev', 14-10-2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybitzrNyxJ4>

Frankivsk revealed a symbolic grave for him.²⁸³ Furthermore, a few days later, on the 17th of October, a new memorial stone cross for Stepan Bandera's grave was revealed on the Waldfriedhof cemetery in Munich. This was done by the Ukrainian ambassador to Germany Andriy Melnyk. It was necessary since the previous one had been vandalized.²⁸⁴ And that was not the first time Bandera's grave was attacked. For instance on the 17th of August 2014, the German police reported that the cross, which was placed on Bandera's grave, was torn down, the soil was removed and the vases with flowers were destroyed.²⁸⁵ This cross was replaced, but it was several times destroyed afterwards. The cross was not only being destroyed, but also vandalized. In the beginning of February 2015 the word 'Scum', which means something as 'bad, worthless person', was written in red ink on the stone cross on the grave of Bandera.²⁸⁶ The website, *UkrainianCrusade.blogspot.com* reported about the revealing of the new memorial stone. The blog post states 'Stepan Bandera passed into eternity on October 15, 1959 in Munich, but he still inspires a new generations of Ukrainian nationalists to great deeds in the name of Mother Ukraine and the Ukrainian nation. Despite that more than 50 years have passed since his death, Stepan Bandera's figure still strikes fear in the hearts of Ukraine's enemies. The memorial was desecrated meanly by unknown vandals. Despite all the enemy's filthy tricks the memorial was renewed!'²⁸⁷

The anniversary of Bandera's death also led to a few articles in the Russian and Ukrainian media about the matter. For instance, *Ukraine Today* published an article titled 'Nationalist Stepan Bandera remains controversial, 56 years after death' and an additional video in which Bandera's legacy is described. According to the website, 'with the annexation of Crimea, war in east Ukraine and EU sanctions on Russia, the legacy of Bandera has now reappeared, after being buried for half a century.'²⁸⁸ An article published on the English version of *Pravda.ru* refers to a publication in the Austrian *Contra Magazin* by Christian Saarländer. The article by *Pravda.ru* argued 'In western Ukraine, Stepan Bandera is considered a national hero. Numerous admirers of the Ukrainian Nazi leader often come to the monument at his grave in Munich. Many fascists from both Ukraine and

²⁸³ <http://museum-bandera.if.ua/main.php?m0prm=2> (20-10-2015)

²⁸⁴ *RT Deutsch*, 'Ukrainischer Botschafter in Deutschland bejubelt nationalistischen Aufmarsch zu Ehren von Nazi-Verbrecher Bandera in München', 20-10-2015

<http://www.rtdeutsch.com/34724/international/ukrainischer-botschafter-in-deutschland-bejubelt-nationalistischen-aufmarsch-zu-ehren-von-nazi-verbrecher-bandera-in-muenchen/> (21-10-2015)

²⁸⁵ *Reuters*, 'Grave of Ukrainian nationalist Stepan Bandera vandalized in Germany', 17-08-2014

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/17/us-germany-bandera-idUSKBN0GH0QF20140817#7xd2vGGA6ETjx2eh.99> (17-11-2015)

²⁸⁶ *Lifenews*, 'В Мюнхене на могиле Бандеры написали: «Мразь»', 06-02-2015

<http://lifeneews.ru/news/149514> (17-11-2015)

²⁸⁷ *Ukrainian Crusade*, 'A new memorial to Stepan Bandera was consecrated in Munich', 18-10-2015

<http://ukrainiancrusade.blogspot.nl/2015/10/a-new-memorial-to-stepan-bandera-was.html> (21-10-2015)

²⁸⁸ *Ukraine Today*, 'Nationalist Stepan Bandera remains controversial, 56 years after death', 16-10-2015

<http://uatoday.tv/news/nationalist-stepan-bandera-polarizes-ukraine-56-years-after-death-514501.html> (20-10-2015)

Germany visit Bandera's grave every year on October 15, on the anniversary of Bandera's death.' Saarländer wrote in his own article, Bandera collaborated with the Nazi's and the majority of the western Ukrainians see him as a national hero. Furthermore, he accuses the Ukrainian government of 'government-sponsored fascism'. Additionally, he argued 'the grave will soon be transferred to a 'free Ukraine'.²⁸⁹ This attempt has already been discussed in chapter 3, when in 2009 several statements were made about this intention, but it seems like no final decision has been made about whether to transfer Bandera's grave to Ukraine or not.

The chapter has shown that the controversy around Bandera is definitely not over and even reached another peak point during the Euromaidan protests. In these protests, starting from November 2013, Bandera was one of the symbols used by the far right protesters. Bandera's face appeared on several banners, posters and was shouted by the activists. Furthermore, Bandera was used as motivation for the protests against 'the Russian occupier'. In reaction to 'Bandera's presence' on Independence Square, several Russian and Ukrainian media restarted to publish about Bandera in either a negative or positive light. Additionally, several amateur websites were created and blog posts were written. These were mostly to discredit Bandera and were probably created with the help or on orders of the Russian Government. The Ukrainian website *StopFake.org* showed that many of the statements posted on the internet were based on misinformation. Overall, the myths around Bandera were reused and extended with more either negative or positive statements. Furthermore, Bandera was even discussed in a meeting of the United Nations.

The developments in 2015 show that the debate on Bandera continues and will probably stay a subjection of discussion between the Russians and Ukrainians. Only time will tell how the Bandera myths will be further used.

²⁸⁹ *Contra Magazin*, 'Faschismus in Bayern: Ukrainer pilgern zu Banderas Grab', 19-10-2015 <https://www.contra-magazin.com/2015/10/faschismus-in-bayern-ukrainer-pilgern-zu-banderas-grab/> (27-11-2015)

Conclusion

This research focused on the role of Stepan Bandera and especially the myth he became in the process of state building in Ukraine. The Bandera myth had already been created during his life, but was strengthened after his death and resulted in two different myths. They have been even more extended in the recent times during the debate about the 'Hero of Ukraine' award and the Euromaidan protests.

The myths of Bandera have been repeatedly used in the state building process of Ukraine. Firstly, the 'Ukrainian version' of the Bandera myth was used as a motive to continue the fight for an independent Ukrainian state after the failed proclamation in 1941. During the Soviet times, the myth was re-used as inspiration to continue the fight for an independent Ukraine from abroad, namely in for instance Canada and the United States. Finally, the Bandera myth reappeared during the perestroika en glasnost period and the turbulent years that followed. New Ukrainian political parties and organizations started to use the Bandera myth as an inspiration. They saw Bandera, likely his myth, as a role model and wanted to follow his guidelines. After Ukraine finally became an independent state in 1991, Bandera soon emerged in the daily life of the Ukrainians in the form of several statues. Some of these were immense, likely to underline the greatness of Bandera in the opinion of the principals. This 'greatness' was also mostly based on the achievements of Bandera according to the created Bandera myth. Furthermore, several streets were named after him and museums were opened. The statues, streets and museums all served the same purpose: to promote Ukrainian nationalism and underline Bandera's important role in this. Overall, the role Bandera played in the Ukrainian state building process and the way this is exhibited, is based on his myth.

The myths of Bandera were and are giving meaning by both the Russians and the Ukrainian nationalists. During the years after Bandera's death, the myths were extended and more information was added. The creators of the myths also reacted on each other. Whereas the Soviets started with their Bandera myth to discredit Bandera of his cult, the Ukrainian nationalists reacted with a Bandera myth in which his achievements were extended. This pattern continued after Ukraine's independence. The Ukrainian nationalists pictured Bandera in an even more positive daylight and started to glorify him on the streets. The Russians re-used the Soviet myth created of Bandera and continued with referring to Ukrainian nationalists as 'Banderites' and 'followers of Bandera' and accusing Bandera of mass murders. Both parties used their version of the myth to convince citizens of the 'truth around Bandera'.

During the recent Euromaidan protests, Bandera reappeared as symbol of the Ukrainian nationalists and their fight against the corrupt regime, in this case the 'Russian-sponsored' Yanukovich government. The Bandera myth was used by the Russian government to prove the

'fascist' character of the Ukrainian government. This was not only done to convince the Russian citizens of the fascist characteristics of their neighbor state, but also to convince the Western world.

The myths and stories researched picture Bandera as a hero, a martyr, a villain and a murderer. These legends make him appear to be someone who achieved grand things during his life. However, truth is he spent most of his adult life in prison or in exile.

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The picture on front page is made in Lviv and is presumably taken in January 2014. It is taken near the Stepan Bandera monument and shows presumably veterans of the UPA or OUN. Furthermore, both the red-and-black OUN flag as well as the Ukrainian flag are pictured. The picture is also used by several other websites and news sites. It is found on: <http://www.historyanswers.co.uk/history-of-war/stepan-bandera-ukrainian-nationalism-part-i-prelude-to-war/>

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