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Alfred J. Rieber

During and after World War II a great variety of violent conflicts and protest movements broke out behind the lines of the Wehrmacht and the Red Army all along the western and southern borderlands of the European part of the Soviet Union. To define and analyze them politicians, publicists, historians, and social scientists have employed a number of concepts: resistance and collaboration, Shoah or Holocaust, ethnic cleansing, deportation and forced resettlement, wars of national liberation, partisan or revolutionary warfare, and internal wars. Each of these has given rise to a vast literature and the concepts themselves have undergone refinements and permutations.[1] But there have been fewer attempts to

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[1] Much of the early literature on the European resistance movements was devoted to the question of whether or not it made a substantial contribution to the war effort. For two contrasting interpretations, see Henri Michel, *European Resistance Movements, 1939–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960) and Walter Laqueur, *Guerilla: A Historical and Critical Study* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), chap. 5. The military value of the resistance has been virtually dismissed by John Keegan, *The Second World War* (New York: Penguin, 1990), 483–96. Related debates have taken place over the real and mythic character of the resistance, the difficulties of making clear distinctions between resistance and collaboration, and the instrumental uses of these terms in the discourse of the cold war and the post-Soviet nationalists. One of the earliest attempts to broaden and refine the patterns of behavior in occupied territories was Stanley Hoffmann, *Decline or Renewal: France Since the 1930s* (New York: Viking, 1974), 26–44. An important distinction was made between collaboration in Western and Eastern Europe by John A. Armstrong, "Collaborationism in World War II: The Integral Nationalist Variant in Eastern Europe," *Journal of Modern History* 40: 3 (September 1968), 396–99. Since then further revisions have been introduced by Jan T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad: The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988) and Jacques Semelin, *Unarmed Against Hitler: Civilian Resistance in Europe, 1939–1943* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993). Russian historians have retained the strict definition of collaboration while acknowledging complex motivations. See, for example, Mikhail Ivanovich Semiriaga, *Kollaboratsionizm: Priroda, tipologiia i proiavleniia v gody Vtoroi Mirovoi Voiny* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2000). The controversy triggered by Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, rev. and enl. (New York: Viking, 1965) over whether there was or was not a Jewish resistance produced a flood of books. Most useful here are Jack Nusan Porter, *Jewish Partisans: A Documentary of Jewish Resistance in the Soviet Union during World War II*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1982) and Dov Levin, *Fighting Back: Lithuanian Jewry's Armed Resistance to the Nazis, 1941–1944*, trans. Moshe Kohn and Dina Cohen (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985). In Western Europe a smaller but

perceive them as parts of a larger phenomenon or to reveal the linkages that connect them all. The purpose of this essay is to suggest that the concept of civil war can provide this missing integrative function.

First, to meet objections. The Soviet civil wars, it may be argued, lacked some of the classic attributes of the genre exemplified in the experience of the English, American, Spanish, or Russian Civil Wars. The conventional definition insists on engagements between two relatively evenly matched regular armies commanded by rival governments, each claiming legitimate authority over the same territory; foreign intervention, where it existed, remained limited to supplying men and material, and did not lead to international war.

The crucial difference in the Soviet case was that its civil wars took place under a unique set of circumstances.[2] First, they were fought in the midst of a large-scale conventional war with the overwhelming preponderance of military power deployed by the two belligerents, each of which took a highly ambivalent if not openly hostile attitude toward irregular armed bands – even, on occasion, those operating behind the lines of its mortal enemy. Second, in their conduct of the war on the Eastern Front both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union adopted radically transformative means and aims that deeply affected the demographic and social structures of the civil population under their control. Third, the clash of the great powers and the civil wars were both continuations, albeit on a more violent and destructive scale, of a long-term contest over the structure and boundaries of states contending for control of the borderlands. Fourth, Stalin perceived the conflict through the prism of a "civil war mentality," a legacy of previous episodes in the struggle over the borderlands that had already in the prewar period impelled him to exterminate most of the potential leadership of an internal opposition, especially in the national republics. As a result of these four factors, the civil wars in the Soviet borderlands were, as the plural implies, many-sided, uncoordinated, and confused, often taking the form of minimal or everyday acts of resistance, with many incidents of participants switching sides, dropping out, and reentering, and overshadowed by terrible reprisals on the part of the German occupation forces, the Soviet police, and the "destruction battalions."

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similar debate has taken place over whether collaborators and resisters were engaged in a civil war. See, for example, Henri Amouroux, *La vie des français sous l'occupation* (Paris: Fayard, 1961), who opts for "a pitiless civil war," and Claudio Pavone, *Una guerra civile: Saggio storico sulla moralitá nella Resistenza* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 1991), who takes a similar stand.

[2] Parallel civil wars in Greece, Albania, and Yugoslavia were fought within territories totally occupied by the Axis powers. The nearest parallel to the Soviet case was that of China. But even there the main bases of the nationalist and communist forces were outside the Japanese zone of occupation.

The Transformative Nature of the War

On the Nazi side the transformative character of the war was expressed in a set of four interrelated myths that underlay Hitler's war aims: the volkisch ideal, the fear of a "Slavic flood," Lebensraum, and redemptive anti-Semitism.[3] From the opening volley of the war against Poland, Hitler was determined to exploit the civilian population, both Jews and Poles alike, as forced labor, to weaken them physically, strip them of their cultural identity, and inundate them with waves of German colonists who would encounter no resistance from the enfeebled and denationalized local population.[4] In 1941 Hitler resurrected the bugbear of "Judeo-Bolshevism" by announcing that the Soviet Union was to be the object of a "war of annihilation." It was a slogan shared by large sections of the German military and economic elites. They too endorsed the necessity of killing off Soviet prisoners of war and selected groups of civilians in order to clear the way for the large-scale colonization of the East by German agricultural settlers.[5] This fit well into

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[3] Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1997); Woodruff D. Smith, *The Ideological Origins of Nazi Imperialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[4] Martin Broszat, *Nationalsozialistische Polenpolitik, 1939–1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche, 1961); Robert L. Koehl, *RKFDV: German Resettlement and Population Policy, 1939–1945. A History of the Reich Commission for the Strengthening of Germandom* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957). An excellent overview is John Connelly, "Nazis and Slavs: From Racial Theory to Racist Practice," *Central European History* 32: 1 (1999), 1–34, who stresses the role of resistance versus compliance as the major criteria in Hitler's treatment of different Slavs, although it seems to me that he underestimates Hitler's particularly hostile attitude toward the Russians as distinct from that of many of his subordinates.

[5] Hans-Adolf Jacobsen quotes the infamous statement, "[t]he Bolshevik soldier has forfeited every claim to be treated as an honorable soldier and in keeping with the Geneva Convention…." Jacobsen, "The Kommissarbefehl and Mass Execution of Soviet Russian Prisoners of War," in Helmut Krausnick et al., *Anatomy of the SS State* (New York: Walker, 1968), 524. According to Jacobsen's figures, based on an OKW Prisoner of War Department report on the whereabouts of Red Army prisoners, dated 1 May 1944, the total taken was 5,165,381, out of whom 2 million died from "wastage," 280,000 perished in transit camps, and 1,030,157 were shot while attempting to escape or while being transferred. But the total was probably closer to 4 million. Ibid., 531. See also Christian Streit, *Keine Kameraden: Die Wehrmacht und die Sowjetischen Kriegsgefangenen, 1941–1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche, 1978); Horst Boog, et al., *Das Deutsche Reich und der Zweite Weltkrieg*, vol. 4, *Der Angriff auf die Sowjetunion* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1983), esp. the chapter by Jürgen Forster, "Das Unternehmen 'Barbarossa' als Eroberungs- and Verniehungs-Krieg," 413–50; and Eberhard Jäckel, *Hitlers Herrschaft: Vollzug einer Weltanschauung* (Stuttgart: Deutsche, 1986). Winfried Baumgart, *Deutsche Ostpolitik: Von Brest Litowsk bis zum Ende des Ersten Weltkreiges* (Vienna: Oldenburg, 1966) notes that during World War I the Army Command's order of priority for the distribution of food produced on Russian territory was: the Army of Occupation, the Russian population, and the inhabitants of the Kaiserreich. In 1941 the needs of the Russian population were not taken into any account whatsoever.

Hitler's belief that the independent German farmer was the volkisch ideal, the main guarantor of the longevity of the Reich for a thousand years.[6] "My long term policy," he boasted in 1941, "aims at having eventually 100 million Germans settled in these territories." The morale of the common German soldier required the Germanization of the conquered lands, which was, in Hitler's words, "a positive war aim."[7]

Once the invasion of the Soviet Union had begun, Nazi policies toward the Jews also underwent a transformation from persecution to extermination. Whatever the effects of confusion in the Nazi bureaucracy, Hitler's own tactical flexibility, the latitude given to subordinates on dealing with the Jewish question, and the practical difficulties involved, nonetheless the decision to murder the Jews was irrevocably taken after June 1941.[8] Indoctrinated by the regime's relentless propaganda and exposed to heavy casualties in a brutal campaign, the officers and men of the Wehrmacht indiscriminately expanded the killing fields.[9] The combination of Hitler's genocidal racist policy against the Jews, his war of extermination against the Russians, the destruction of state institutions, radical redrawing of boundaries, and massive resettlements of populations plunged the borderlands into a cauldron of destruction and bitter internecine warfare.[10]

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[6] Karl Lange, "Der Terminus 'Lebensraum' in Hitlers *Mein Kampf*," *Vierteljahrschaft für Zeitgeschichte* 13 (1965), 426–37.

[7] Norman Rich, *Hitler's War Aims* (New York: Norton, 1973–74), 2: 326–32; *Hitler's Table Talk, 1941–1944: His Private Confessions*, with an introduction by Hugh Trevor-Roper, 2nd ed. (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 3–4, 17, 21–22, 33, 34–35, 37–39, 40, 42, 53, 55, 68, 92–93 repeat his references to exploitation and colonization of the East.

[8] Götz Aly, *"Final Solution": Nazi Population Policy and the Murder of the European Jews*, trans. Belinda Cooper and Allison Brown (London: Oxford University Press, 1999), 254, argues for a March 1941 date for when the decision to deport European Jews to the East was taken. The two classic interpretations of the relationship between Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union and his extermination of the Jews emphasize the preeminence of one or the other of these initiatives at the expense of the other. For the view that Judeophobia inspired Hitler's attack, see Lucy Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews, 1933–1945* (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1975); the thesis that the main purpose behind Hitler's war in the East was the destruction of Bolshevism is in Arno Mayer, *Why Did the Heavens Not Darken? The Final Solution in History* (New York: Pantheon, 1988).

[9] Omer Bartov, *The Eastern Front, 1941–45: German Troops and the Barbarization of Warfare* (New York: St. Martin's, 1986), and idem, *Hitler's Army: Soldiers, Nazis and War in the Third Reich* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). But compare Truman Anderson, "Incident at Baranivka: German Reprisals and the Soviet Partisan Movement in Ukraine, October–December 1941," *Journal of Modern History* 71: 3 (September 1999), 585–623, who cites Wehrmacht orders that "the Ukrainian population which sympathizes with the Germans is to be exempted from collective punishment."

[10] To be sure, Hitler's theory and practice of war in the East was often inconsistently applied and modified by the competing needs and conflicting viewpoints of his subordinates. The classic treat-

Stalin's aims were no less transformative, if more veiled. The Soviet leader was not disposed like Hitler to engage in "table talk" or to announce to the world his next motives and plans, however vaguely defined. This is not to say that Stalin was more of a pragmatist, he was just more secretive. To a greater degree than Hitler his aims must be sought in his tactical moves, which were not always consistent or unambiguous. To foreign statesmen he gave the impression that the war was all about territory and security in the traditional sense of the word.[11] To be sure, Stalin's strategic thinking reflected both a profound sense of Russia's historical demands in the West stretching back to the Seven Years' War and those most recently advanced by tsarist negotiators in 1915–16.[12] In the interwar period the Soviet leadership reacted to perceived threats from the USSR's immediate neighbors, Poland and Romania, by reaffirming the need to restore territory lost after World War I.[13] But there was more to Stalin's war aims than

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ment remains Alexander Dallin et al., *German Rule in Russia, 1941–1945: A Study of Occupation Policies*, rev. 2nd ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1981). See also Timothy Mulligan, *The Politics of Illusion and Empire: German Occupation Policy in the Soviet Union, 1942–1943* (New York: Praeger, 1988) and Theo Schulte, *The German Army and Nazi Policies in Occupied Russia* (Oxford: Berg, 1989).

[11] In his conversations with Anthony Eden in December 1942 Stalin stated: "I think that the whole war between us and Germany began because of these western frontiers of the USSR, including particularly the Baltic States. That is really what the whole war is about and what I would like to know is whether our ally, Great Britain, supports us regarding these western frontiers." Cited in *Anglo-American Perspectives on the Ukrainian Question, 1938–1951: A Documentary Collection*, ed. Lubomyr Y. Luciuk and Bohdan S. Kordan (Kingston, ON: Limestone, 1987), 53. He enlarged on this theme at Teheran: "What was needed was the control of certain physical points within Germany, along German borders, or even farther away to insure that Germany would not be able to embark on another course of aggression." *Foreign Relations of the U.S., 1943: Conferences at Cairo and Teheran* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961), 532.

[12] An imperial conference of March 1756 was the first to spell out a policy of granting East Prussia to Poland while Russia acquired Courland and "frontier rectifications" to bring to an end "disorders" in western Belorussia and western Ukraine. *Sbornik imperatorskago russkago istoricheskago obshchestva*, no. 136 (1912), 31–33. For similar but more ambitious goals during World War I, see *Russian Diplomacy and Eastern Europe, 1914–1917* (New York: King's Crown, 1963).

[13] In acquiring these territories, geopolitical considerations were uppermost in the minds of the Soviet leadership. Ever since the mid-1920s, discussions in both the Politburo and the Revolutionary Military Council, as well as the operational plans of the General Staff, emphasized the strategic importance of these areas for both the Soviet Union and its prospective enemies, Poland and Romania: "Large-scale victories with large-scale political results are possible only south of Poles'e: for us, Sovietization of Galicia and Bessarabia and a direct threat as a consequence of this to the capitals of both governments, and for our opponents the splitting off from the Soviet Union of the richest regions inside our country, the creation for the Poles of 'Greater Poland' [,] and for Romania of 'Greater Romania,' the loss for us of such important economic seaports as Odessa and Nikolaev and as a direct consequence of this a threat to our most important coal and railroad resources in the Donetsk and Krivoi Rog basins." Oleg Nikolaevich Ken and Aleksandr Ivanovich

acquiring territory, important though that may have been. Stalin pursued his own transformative policy by organizing the extermination or forced resettlement of potentially dangerous classes. From 1939–40, following an unknown number of summary executions, the NKVD organized a series of deportations aimed specifically at destroying the old elites of the Baltic states, eastern Poland (*kresy*), and Bessarabia. His hasty and brutal methods proved to be less discriminating. Estimates of deported Polish citizens run from slightly less than 400,000 to over 1.25 million, of whom about half were ethnic Poles and almost a third Jews. Following the German invasion the execution of 4,500 Polish officers in the Katyn′ camp was a particularly severe loss for the former ruling elite. Similar "selective" deportations of civil and military authorities in the Baltic states aimed to eliminate the prewar elites. In Latvia the deportees included 380 former officers of the tsarist and Latvian armies, 601 leaders of the judiciary and security agencies, 2,329 active members of right-wing parties and "anti-Soviet organizations," and 1,240 landowners and high government officials. Two waves of deportations in Estonia sent 70,000 people east in boxcars. In Bessarabia there was a massive flight of the old landowning and governing class and a reverse flow of approximately 300,000 former inhabitants, mainly Jews and left-wing sympathizers who had gone into exile after 1918 and were resettled by the Soviet occupation forces.[14] Stalin's policy of class warfare with ominous overtones of ethnic cleansing imposed from above revived an old self-fulfilling prophecy of disloyalty in the western borderlands.

With the outbreak of war Stalin resorted to measures of deportation on a violently ascending scale in response to real or imagined opposition within the Soviet Union. His repressive methods were rooted in his experience in the Russian Civil War, the struggle against the kulaks, and the incorporation of new territories. When Soviet forces crossed the frontiers of 1940, he applied his radical

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Rupasov, *Politbiuro TsK VKP(b) i otnosheniia SSSR s zapadnymi sosednimi gosudarstvami (konets 1920–1930-kh gg.): Problemy. Dokumenty. Opyt kommentariia* (St. Petersburg: Evropeiskii dom, 2000), 495–96. At the same time, Soviet diplomacy aimed to prevent Poland from "using western Ukraine and western Belorussia as 'piedmonts' in the struggle against the Ukrainian and Belorussian Republics." Ibid., 497.

[14] Valentina Sergeevna Parsadanova, "Deportatsii naseleniia iz Zapadnoi Ukrainy i Zapadnoi Belorussii v 1939–1941 gg.," *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia*, no. 2 (1989), 46–63; Natal′ia Sergeevna Lebedeva, "The Deportation of the Polish Population to the USSR, 1939–1941," in *Forced Migration in Central and Eastern Europe, 1939–1950*, ed. Rieber (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 28–45; Gross, *Revolution from Abroad*, chap. 1; Lebedeva,*"Katyn′": Prestuplenie protiv chelovechestva* (Moscow: Progress, 1994); Artem Markovich Lazarev, *God 1940: Prodolzhenie sotsialisticheskoi revoliutsii v Bessarabii* (Kishinev: Shtiintsa, 1985), 82–83; "Pod maskoi nezavisimosti (dokumenty o vooruzhennom natsionalisticheskom podpol′e v Latvii v 40–50-kh gg.)," *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, no. 11 (1990), 115; "Vooruzhennoe natsionalisticheskoe podpol′e v Estonii v 40–50-kh godakh," ibid., no. 8 (1990), 168–70.

population policies to Eastern Europe and Germany, leading to the expulsion of Germans from all territories east of the Oder-Neisse-Trieste line, the destruction of prewar social and political structures in the same region, and equally massive deportations and resettlement of both class and national "enemies." The radical and transformative aspect of Stalin's wartime policies, like those of Hitler, incited powerful reactions among the populations of the western borderlands and often led to unintended consequences in Central Europe, where the Soviet advance sparked or stoked civil wars outside the Soviet frontiers.[15]

Traditions of Struggle over the Borderlands

Although radical and transformative, both the great power conflict between Germany and Soviet Russia as well as the civil wars it spawned exhibited strong elements of continuity rooted in historical memories and imperial rivalries. The complex struggle over the borderlands had at one time or another involved a variety of multicultural states and their unwilling subjects. On one level, the imperial rivals – Russian, Habsburg, Hohenzollern, and Ottoman – sought to expand their territorial bases and secure new resources; on another level, they sought to subjugate, assimilate, or convert the indigenous peoples who were brought under their control. Their competition and the internal resistance that it engendered passed through many permutations over the course of more than four centuries, from the rise of these empires to their fall in the 20th century, and these things continued among their successor states.

The high levels of violence and instability within the borderlands both before and after their conquest and incorporation into the empires were the product of several persistent "geo-cultural" factors. The population of the borderlands was extremely diverse in its ethno-linguistic and confessional composition as the result of centuries of state-sponsored and spontaneous migration, colonization, and forced resettlement. International boundaries were the product of continuous warfare and shifting power alignments interrupted by only brief periods of peace. Consequently, they did not correspond to natural or national lines of demarcation. Once the borderlands were incorporated into the empires they became frontier zones. Their populations, distinct in history and culture from the dominant ethnic cores (German, Russian, and Turkish), often identified them-

[15] See the following articles in Rieber, *Forced Migration*: T. V. Volokitina, "The Polish-Czechoslovak Conflict over Teschen: The Problem of Resettling Poles and the Position of the USSR," 46–63; Emilia Hrabovic, "The Catholic Church and Deportations of Ethnic Germans from the Czech Lands," 64–82; G. P. Murashko, "The Fate of Hungarian Minorities in Slovakia after the Second World War: Resettlement and Re-Slovakization, Moscow's Position," 83–95; and A. S. Noskova, "Migration of the Germans after the Second World War: Political and Psychological Aspects," 96–114.

selves with their fellow nationals or coreligionists across the borders. As conquered and unassimilated peoples with external ties, they were regarded by the respective central powers as potentially disloyal and unstable elements, as indeed they often proved to be. The history of the Habsburg, Ottoman, and Russian frontier zones was replete with violent protests of all kinds, ranging from social banditry to open rebellion, as well as more subtle forms of opposition to imperial authority.[16]

The imperial response to real or imagined treachery frequently took the form of deportations, sometimes accompanied by resettlement of the frontier zones. In the Russian case, two examples may be taken as illustrative. Following the Polish revolts of 1830–31 and 1863–65, the tsarist government deported thousands of participants, confiscated their properties, and attempted in a confused and mainly unsuccessful way to resettle Russian landowners in their place.[17] Foreign invasion often triggered the most violent reaction against minorities in the western borderlands. During World War I the Russian military forcibly uprooted about 200,000 Jews and the same number of Germans in what one scholar has called "a brutal foretaste of the horrors inflicted upon the next generation under the Stalin regime."[18]

In the Russian empire, opposition to central authority in the frontier zones extended back to the 17th century. With the rise of national consciousness, which proceeded at different and uneven tempi in different regions of the imperial periphery, the ethno-confessional basis of protest acquired new forms of discourse and organization. The historical antecedents of the Soviet civil wars were particularly strong in four complex frontier zones: the Cossack steppe, the Polish-Ukrainian-Russian borderland, the Baltic-Belorussian-Polish borderland, and the North Caucasus. The oldest pedigree belongs to the unstable southern

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[16] Alfred J. Rieber, "Struggle over the Borderlands," in *The Legacy of History in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*, ed. S. Frederick Starr (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1994), 61–90. A full-scale analysis is planned in a forthcoming work to be entitled "The Cold War as Civil War: Russia and Its Borderlands."

[17] Leonid Efremovich Gorizontov, "Pomeshchik ili muzhik? Russkoe zemlevladenie v strategii resheniia pol'skogo voprosa," in *Imperskii stroi Rossii v regional'nom izmerenii (XIX–nachalo XX veka): Sbornik nauchnykh statei*, ed. Petr Ivanovich Savel'ev (Moscow: Moskovskii obshchestvennyi nauchnyi fond, 1997), 86–129.

[18] Peter Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking: Refugees in Russia During World War I* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 24, also mentions the use of the expression "cleansing" in contemporary sources dealing with the expulsion of the Jews. For general treatments of the history of deportations in the region, see Rieber, "Repressive Population Transfers in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe: A Historical Overview," in idem, *Forced Migration*, 1–27, and Philip Ther, "A Century of Forced Migration: The Origins and Consequences of 'Ethnic Cleansing,'" in *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944–1948*, ed. Ther and Ana Siljak (Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001), 43–74.

frontier where all the great Cossack rebellions that sparked civil war in the Russian state – those led by Kondratii Afanas′evich Bulavin, Ivan Isaevich Bolotnikov, Stepan Timofeevich Razin, and Emil′ian Ivanovich Pugachev – had their origins.[19] Although by the end of the 18th century the imperial government had repressed, resettled, and co-opted the Cossacks, the tradition of freedom (*volia*) was sanctified in myths and legends. In the 19th century it separated into two streams: one flowed into the Ukrainian national movement, the other followed the old course of Cossack particularism.[20] Forced underground, they resurfaced during two great crises that threatened the state in the 20th century, in 1917–20 and in 1941–42, when anticommunist Cossack autonomists were supported by foreign intervention.

In the Polish case historical memories fixed upon a golden age of statehood, a spirit of cultural superiority, and an insurrectionary tradition. Under Russian rule these translated into a series of large-scale rebellions that occurred with almost generational regularity in 1794, 1830–33, 1863–64, and 1905. After winning independence in 1920 the Poles renewed their ancient bid for domination over the borderlands by launching a war against the young Soviet state.[21] The Polish struggles for national independence (or wars of national liberation) were complicated by ethnic conflicts with Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and other nationalities inhabiting the contested frontier zone between the Russian and Polish core regions. In the imperial provinces of Estland and Lifland peasant unrest was of-

[19] For new interpretations of the Time of Troubles as a civil war in which the Cossacks played a key role, see Aleksandr Lazarevich Stanislavskii, *Grazhdanskaia voina v Rossii XVII v.: Kazachestvo na perelome istorii* (Moscow: Mysl, 1990) and Chester S. L. Dunning, *Russia's First Civil War: The Time of Troubles and the Founding of the Romanov Dynasty* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2001). The best survey of Cossack rebellions remains Paul Avrich, *Russian Rebels, 1600–1800* (New York: Norton, 1976).

[20] See Frank Evhen Sysyn, "The Khmelnytsky Uprising and Ukrainian Nation-Building," *Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 17: 1–2 (Summer–Winter 1992), 141–69; Zenon E. Kohut, "Myths Old and New: The Haidamak Movement and the Koliivshchyna (1768) in Recent Historiography," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 1: 3 (1977), 359–78; Peter Holquist, "'Conduct Merciless, Mass Terror': Decossackization on the Don, 1919," *Cahiers du monde russe* 38: 1–2 (1997), 127–62. Frank Sysyn reviews the most recent avatar of the tradition in "The Reemergence of the Ukrainian Nation and Cossack Mythology," *Social Research* 58: 4 (1991), 845–65. For suggestive insights, see also John A. Armstrong, "Myth and History in the Evolution of Ukrainian Consciousness," in *Ukraine and Russia in Their Historical Encounter*, ed. Peter J. Potichnyj et al. (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1992), 125–39.

[21] For insights into this tradition see Jan Ciechanowski, *The Warsaw Rising of 1944* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), chap. 2; Gorizontov, *Paradoksy imperskoi politiki: Poliaki v Rossii i russkie v Pol'she* (Moscow: Indrik, 1999), esp. pt. 1, chap. 1, and pt. 2, chap. 2. But resistance should be balanced by the opposite tradition of accommodation to Russian rule. Stanislaus A. Blejwas, *Realism in Polish Politics: Warsaw Positivism and National Survival in Nineteenth Century Poland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984).

ten mythologized by the indigenous intelligentsia in the late 19th century. But there were large-scale risings like the Mahtra War of 1858, and by 1905 the combination of economic grievances and Russification created a revolutionary situation.[22]

Along the southern and southeastern frontier zones from the Crimea to the North Caucasus, Muslim opposition to imperial rule took the form of rebellions and mass flight. Throughout the 18th century the Bashkir people fiercely resisted assimilation into the empire, erupting in three full-scale rebellions that threatened from time to time to provoke intervention by the Ottoman empire.[23] Following all three wars between Russia and the Ottoman empire in the 19th century large-scale flights of the Muslim populations from a wide arc of territories from Bessarabia to Circassia gave a clear indication of their basic loyalties, a fact not lost upon Russian administrators of these frontier zones.[24] The warrior societies of the North Caucasus proved to be the most difficult to conquer and the most persistently rebellious, from the Murid uprising under Shamil in the 1850s to the resistance to collectivization that lasted until the eve of World War II. Outbreaks of "bourgeois banditry" proved particularly troublesome for the Soviet authorities in two of the autonomous republics that were to suffer most from Stalin's deportations – the Chechen-Ingush and Kabardino-Balkarian.[25]

In the 20th century the disconnected, regional character of the uprisings underwent a dramatic change. The growth of communications, generalized agrarian crises, the rise of national movements, the spread of revolutionary parties on an empire-wide scale, and military defeats all led to simultaneous if not coordinated

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[22] Edward Thaden, ed., *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855–1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 34, 56, 213–15, 259–67.

[23] Boris Emmanuilovich Nol′de, *La formation de l'empire russe: Études, notes et documents* (Paris: Institut des études slaves, 1952), vol. 1, chap. 4.

[24] Viktor Il′ich Zhukov, *Istoricheskoe znachenie prisoedineniia Bessarabii k levoberezhnogo Poddnestrov′ia k Rossii* (Kishenev: Shtiintsa, 1997), 37; Alan Fischer, "Emigration of Muslims from the Russian Empire in the Years after the Crimean War," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 35: 3 (1987), 356–71; following the final Russian conquest of the Caucasus almost 400,000 Adygei, Abazy, and Nogai emigrated from the Kuban district alone. Anatolii Vasil′evich Avksent′ev and Viktor Anatol′evich Avksent′ev, *Severnyi Kavkaz v etnicheskoi kartine mira* (Stavropol: Stavropol′skoe knizhnoe izdatel′stvo, 1998), 98.

[25] Moshe Gammer, *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar: Shamil and the Conquest of Chechnia and Daghestan* (London: Frank Cass, 1994), especially chap. 25; and for the persistence of revolts, Kornilii Aleksandrovich Borozdin, "Lezginskoe vosstanie v Kakhetii v 1863 g.," *Russkii vestnik*, nos. 7, 9 (1890), 51–77, 172–92; A. I. Ivanov, "Natsional′no-osvoboditel′noe dvizhenie v Chechne i Daghestane v 60–70kh gg. XIX v," *Istoricheskie zapiski*, no. 12 (1941), 163–99; Abdurakhman Avtorkhanov, "The Chechens and Ingush during the Soviet Period and Its Antecedents," in *The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance toward the Muslim World*, ed. Marie Bennigsen Broxup (New York: St. Martin's, 1992), 154–87.

risings in 1905–6 and 1918–19 that exhibited particular features in the borderlands. In the case of 1905–6 they were more violent and explicitly political on the periphery than in the ethnically Russian center.[26] In 1918–19 the civil wars in the borderlands broke out only after the end of the conventional war and the beginning of intervention first by the Central Powers and then the Allies. In retrospect they strongly resemble a dress rehearsal for 1941–47, being accompanied by a similar mixture of both collaboration with the intervention and resistance to it, by wars of secession or national liberation, pogroms against Jews, communal warfare, and ethnic cleansing.[27] But a crucial missing ingredient in the Soviet civil wars was a Russian nationalist opposition, which was forestalled by Stalin and blocked by Hitler.

Civil War Mentality

As a man of the borderlands Stalin was particularly susceptible to the complex relationship between ethnic conflict, civil war, and foreign intervention.[28] Stalin's view of revolution was always more territorial than internationalist. In 1917 he played a relatively minor role in the revolutionary events. Even after the Bolshevik seizure of power he was more skeptical than his colleagues about the prospects of revolution in the West.[29] A man of the borderlands himself, his active

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[26] Abraham Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905*, vol. 1, *Russia in Disarray* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 152. For specialized accounts, see Toivo U. Raun, "The Revolution of 1905 in the Baltic Provinces and Finland," *Slavic Review* 43: 3 (1984), 453–67; Marian Kamil Dziewanowski, "The Polish Revolutionary Movement and Russia, 1904–1907," in *Russian Thought and Politics*, ed. Hugh McLean et al. (The Hague: Mouton,1957), 375–94; Charters Wynn, *Workers, Strikes and Pogroms: The Donbas-Dnepr Bend in Late Imperial Russia, 1870–1905* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 211–26; Robert Weinberg, *The Revolution of 1905 in Odessa: Blood on the Steps* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), esp. chap. 3 on the pogrom; S. F. Jones, "Marxism and Peasant Revolt in the Russian Empire: The Case of the Gurian Republic," *Slavonic and East European Review* 67: 3 (July 1989), 403–34. A general study of civil wars in the borderlands in 1905 is still needed.

[27] The standard work remains Richard Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997). Also the older work of John Reshetar, *The Ukrainian Revolution,1917–1920: A Study in Nationalism* (New York: Arno, 1972), orig. published 1952, has not been superseded. For new perspectives, see the special issue of *Cahiers du monde russe* 38: 1–2 (1997) and Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Freedom and Terror in the Donbas: A Ukrainian-Russian Borderland, 1870s–1990s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 94–99.

[28] Rieber, "Stalin: Man of the Borderlands," *American Historical Review* 106: 5 (December 2001), 1651–91.

[29] Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary, 1879–1929* (New York: Norton, 1973), 178–79; Robert M. Slusser, *Stalin in October: The Man Who Missed the Revolution* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987). In the debates over a separate treaty with Germany in the winter of 1917–18 Stalin stated, "[t]here is no revolutionary movement in the West; nothing exists, only a

role in the civil war reinforced his belief that the relationship between the periphery of the old empire and its Russian core was the key to both state building and the spread of revolution.[30] The periphery was a necessary resource base for the center. But it was also vulnerable to the temptations of bourgeois nationalism and intervention from abroad.[31]

Stalin returned to the theme of civil war during the war scare of 1928 on the eve of collectivization, when he openly stated that "the seizure of power by the proletariat in October 1917 was a form of civil war." But, he continued, it had only been foreign intervention that forced the Bolsheviks to adopt war communism.[32] Was there the implication here that a new threat of intervention linked to an internal class war would require a revival of civil war policies? The rhetoric and tactics of the campaign against the kulaks provided unmistakable evidence that Stalin and his subordinates bore the permanent scars of "a civil war mentality."[33] In 1930 the Soviet leaders were deeply concerned that Russia's western neighbors, especially Poland, would take advantage of mass uprisings by kulaks in right-bank Ukraine and Belorussia to launch an intervention.[34] Everywhere ethnic groups were particularly vulnerable to political terror. In general, recent

potential." *The Bolsheviks and the October Revolution: Minutes of the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolshevik), August 1917–February 1918*, trans. Ann Bone (London: Pluto, 1974) 177–78.

[30] On 14 March 1918, in *Izvestiia*, Stalin put his own stamp on the rationale for the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Assuming that the Germans would meet resistance in their occupation of Ukraine, "[i]s it necessary to prove that a fatherland war [*otechestvennaia voina*], begun in Ukraine, will have every chance of counting on all-out support from the side of the ally [i.e., the Ukrainian Soviet Republic]?" Was it not clear, he concluded, that Ukraine was "the focal point of the workers' revolution, begun in Russia, and of the imperialist counterrevolution coming from the West?" Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin, *Sochineniia* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1946–52), 4: 45–48. He had already adumbrated the formula of "a fatherland war" in late February in notes for the secretariat of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. Ibid., 42–43.

[31] Ibid., 31, 42–43, 45–48, 66–73, 74–75, 150–51, 160–64, 236, 354–58, 377–79, 408–12.

[32] Ibid., 11: 147.

[33] Moshe Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power: A Study of Collectivization* (New York: Norton, 1975), 482 ff. was the first to point this out. The theme has been further developed by Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) and Lynne Viola, *Peasants and Rebels under Stalin: Collectivization and the Culture of Peasant Resistance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); the latter maintains that Fitzpatrick still underestimates peasant "resistance." See also Andrea Graziosi, *The Great Soviet Peasant War: Bolsheviks and Peasants, 1917–1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 20, 27, 54, 63, 67, where the author makes the most explicit case of all for collectivization as being act two of a prolonged Russian civil war. While focusing on the peasantry as a class, Graziosi nevertheless make it clear that the violence was most widespread and intense in the national regions.

[34] Ken and Rupasov, 514–19, includes important new archival material.

evidence has confirmed that the rate of dekulakization was greater among certain national minorities, like the Greeks, Bulgarians, and Germans, who were both economically better off and who lived along the Black Sea frontier districts.[35]

At the same time, the Japanese occupation of Manchuria created new frontier problems for Stalin. As tension increased in the Far East, Stalin's fear that the Korean population on the Soviet side of the border had become a fertile field for the recruitment of Japanese spies prompted him to launch the first mass deportation of an entire ethnic minority as a preventative measure.[36] The danger that the German invasion of June 1941 would once again ignite a civil war was not lost on Stalin.

Phases of the Civil Wars

The civil wars in the borderlands fall into three fairly distinctive phases, although there were important regional differences reflecting specific historical and ethnoconfessional traditions. The common factors shaping each phase were the military situation, German occupation policies, and Soviet countermeasures.[37] Phase One, from the outbreak of war until early 1942, bore the impress of the initial German victories. Phase Two, which lasted until early 1944, was marked by dramatic changes in the fortunes of war: significant German advances in the south and the "wild flight" of the Red Army, succeeded by the German disaster at Stalingrad and, perhaps even more critically, the defeat at Kursk, followed by a steady but costly Soviet advance without the great breakthroughs that had characterized the earlier German offensives. In Phase Three the Soviet army "liberated" or "reoccupied" the western borderlands and advanced into Central Europe, bringing military victory but also the first signs of serious strain in the Big Three wartime alliance.

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[35] Kuromiya, 231–35.

[36] Over 170,000 Koreans were deported to Kazakhstan from the Far Eastern Province (Dal'krai) along with 7,000 Chinese and smaller numbers of other nationalities. During the war GOKO ordered 8,000 Korean soldiers demobilized and sent to labor battalions. It was a cruel irony of frontier zone politics that the Japanese likewise deported their Koreans from Southern Sakhalin as suspected Soviet spies. Pavel Markovich Polian, *Ne po svoei vole: Istoriia i geografiia prinuditel'nykh migratsii v SSSR* (Moscow: OGI and Memorial, 2001), 91–93. The NKVD took ten years to settle on the legal status of the Koreans, finally giving them passports but not allowing them to live in frontier areas. Terry Martin, who considers this the first instance of "ethnic cleansing," estimates that in 1922 only a third of the Koreans held Soviet passports. Martin, "The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing," *Journal of Modern History* 70: 4 (December 1998), 833–35.

[37] John A. Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans in World War II* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 22–26, proposes a different set of three phases for the partisan movement, but also attributes his periodization to the military situation and German occupation policies.

Phase One

The German invasion provoked anti-Soviet groups to attack the retreating Red Army, launch pogroms against the Jewish population, and attempt to establish or reestablish national independence. The Germans were willing to accept assistance in hunting down Communists, Jews, and Red Army stragglers, but repressed all efforts to set up autonomous or independent governments. Forces loyal to the Soviet Union, including Red Army units and individuals cut off from the main body, Communists, and members of the Komsomol sought to form partisan groups behind the German lines. Scattered, poorly armed, ignored, and occasionally betrayed by the local population, they suffered heavy losses. Most were destroyed within six months.[38] Already in this early phase of the war Stalin launched his first preemptive strikes against categories of individuals suspected of anti-Soviet behavior. Within weeks of the German invasion most of the elements of civil war in the borderlands had come together. Shortly after the German attack reports began to reach Stalin of panic, desertion, unauthorized flight, and defection.[39] He reacted on 9 July by personally issuing an order, as president of the State Committee of Defense (GOKO), to the Moscow area destruction battalions that they liquidate enemy diversionists or parachutists. He assigned them as the first of three major tasks "the struggle with possible counterrevolutionary outbreaks."[40] In the same spirit Lavrentii Pavlovich Beriia's watchful NKVD frontier troops detained over 700,000 suspects during the first year of the war.[41] Conflicting evidence reached Stalin concerning the Soviet Germans. Eight thousand flocked to the militia and fought in defense of the Brest fortress, while others, according to reports from the army and party leadership of the southern

[38] See *Bor'ba za sovetskuiu pribaltiku v Velikoi otechestvennoi voine, 1941–1945* (Riga: Voennonauchnoe obshchestvo, 1966), 2: 191, 239–43, 291 ff, which documents the defection of the first secretary of the party, Karl Siare, to the Germans and his betrayal of several partisan units; and A. S. Chaikovs'kyi, *Nevidoma viina: Partizans'kii rukh Ukraïni 1941–1944 rr., movoiu dokumentiv, ochyma istoryka* (Kyiv: "Ukraina," 1994) 16–25, 173–75.

[39] See, for example, "Polozhenie v raione g. El'nia: Iz pis'ma chlenov Shtaba oborony g. El'nia, Smolenskoi oblasti v Politbiuro TsK VKP(b)," *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, no. 7 (1990), 94–95; "O nedostatkakh v organizatsii zheleznodorozhnykh perevozok: Donosenie zamestitelia nachal'nika 3 Upravleniia NKO SSSR F. Ia. Tutushkina V. M. Molotovu," ibid., 198–200; "O poteriakh VVS Severo-Zapadnogo fronta v pervye dni voiny: Donesenie zamestitelia nachal'nika 3 Upravleniia NKO SSSR F. Ia. Tutushkina I. V. Stalinu," ibid., 201–2; and "Obstanovka na Severo-Zapadnom fronte: Donesenie chlena Voennogo Soveta Severo-Zapadnogo fronta V. N. Bogatkina nachal'niku Glavnogo upravleniia politicheskoi propagandy RKKA L. Z. Mekhlisu," ibid., 202–4; "Ob ostavlenii Rigi: Dokladnaia zapiska Ts KP(b) Latvii", ibid., 212–13.

[40] "O meropriiatiiakh po bor'be s desantami i diversantami protivnika v Moskve i prilegaiushchikh raionakh: Postanovlenie Gosudarstvennogo Komiteta Oborony," ibid., 205.

[41] I. I. Petrov, "Iz istorii partiinogo rukovodstva pogranichnymi voiskami (1941–1945 gg.)," *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no. 1 (January 1985), 36.

front, sniped at retreating Soviet troops and welcomed the Wehrmacht with bread and salt. Angrily he ordered Beriia "to boot them out of there" (*vyselit' s treskom*). Within two months the deportation of between 438,000 and 446,000 Volga Germans was under way.[42] Throughout the first six months of 1941 Stalin continued to receive disquieting reports from the command of the Frontier Troops along the Turkish, Iranian, and Afghan frontiers of increased military activity combined with "bandit" or "black partisan" border crossings and internal disturbances.[43] The fear that foreign intervention would also trigger massive internal opposition along this frontier continued to haunt him throughout the war.

In the newly annexed Baltic republics the first phase began with a brief but fierce anticommunist uprising in Lithuania, where national consciousness had developed rapidly in the interwar period. From around 100,000 to 125,000 men were involved, including at least one half the Lithuanian military that had been absorbed into the Red Army in 1940. They seized control of the capital, Kaunas, and proclaimed a provisional government before the Germans arrived, dispersed them, and drove them underground. The local communist parties, decimated by the purges four or five years earlier, were in no position to help organize resistance to the Nazi occupation.[44] The German invasion also touched off a massive pogrom. In the suburbs of Kaunas Lithuanian paramilitary nationalists slaughtered 2,300 Jews before the Einsatzgruppen arrived and began to recruit Lithuanians into their ranks. Many of the recruits were relatives of those who had been killed or deported by the Soviet authorities in 1940. By November 1941 the Germans and their Lithuanian helpers had exterminated 72 percent of all Lithuanian Jews. In 1942 small groups of survivors, mainly youths, formed resistance groups in the ghettos until it became clear that they were doomed unless their rebellions broke out into the forest. About 1,800 managed to join the partisans.[45]

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[42] Nikolai Fedorovich Bugai, *L. Beriia – I. Stalinu: "Soglasno vashemu ukazaniiu"* (Moscow: AIRO-XX, 1995), 36–39. The hunt was pursued into the ranks of the Red Army and by 1945 a total of 33,625 Volga German veterans had been resettled, many having been sent to labor armies.

[43] *Pogranichnye voiska SSSR v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voine: Sbornik dokumentov i materialov* (Moscow: Nauka, 1976), 601–5.

[44] *Bor'ba za sovetskuiu pribaltiku*, 1: 22–4, 112–14; K. Tazva, "Poet-borets," in *Ob estonskoi literature: Sbornik literaturno-kriticheskikh stat'ei* (Tallin: Estonskoe gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1956); "Za pravil'noe osveshchenie istorii kompartii Latvii," *Kommunist*, no. 12 (1964), 67–68; G. Zuimach, *Latvishskie revoliutsionnye deiateli* (Riga: Latviiskoe gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1958), 87–93; *Ocherki istorii kommunisticheskoi partii Latvii* (Riga: Latviiskoe gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1966), 3: 369–74, 378; *Ocherki istorii kommunisticheskoi partii Estonii* (Tallin: Estonskoe gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1970), 3: 39–41; Algirdas Martin Budreckis, *The Lithuanian National Revolt of 1941* (Boston: Lithuanian Encyclopedia Press, 1968); Vytas Stanley Vardys, *Lithuania under the Soviets: Portrait of a Nation, 1940–1965* (New York: Praeger, 1965), 69–71, 74–76.

[45] Martin Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust: Crimes of the Local Police in Belorussia and Ukraine, 1941–44* (London: Macmillan, 2000), 43–45, 62–63; Levin, *Fighting Back*, 95.

Revolts in Latvia and Estonia were smaller and less well organized. A premature attempt to seize Riga from the retreating Red Army was led by remnants of a prewar Latvian paramilitary organization. After the German arrival anywhere from 10,000–15,000 of them collaborated with the Wehrmacht in guarding communications and hunting down stragglers, escaped POWs, and party cadres who had taken to the woods. In the late fall the Arais detachment, many of whom had been trained in Germany, massacred 27,000 Latvian Jews in the Rumbl′sk forest.[46] In Estonia anti-Soviet resistance also centered on prewar paramilitary groups. In the summer of 1941 they committed acts of sabotage in the rear of the Red Army, and attacked the hastily organized local Soviet People's Defense Units who were attempting to carry out a scorched-earth policy. In the northern districts they were reinforced by volunteers who returned from having fought on the Finnish side in the Winter War to proclaim a "partisan republic." But the Estonian nationalists who helped the Germans to occupy Tartu were disarmed when they requested the right to establish an Estonian Republic.[47] During the first year of war the Germans opposed the formation of any large military units by the Baltic peoples. But they allowed the Estonians to create a Home Guard (Omakaitse) which together with local police units assisted the Germans in hunting Jews and Red Army stragglers.[48]

In Belorussia there was evidence of the same pattern of hasty, panic-stricken retreats and the breakdown of local authority, but also of confused and contradictory reports on the reaction of the local population.[49] The Belorussian anticommunist emigration provided leadership for the civil administration of the population and helped to recruit local police battalions (*Schutzmannschaft*) of 20,000 men which later became the nucleus for the Home Guard. The local police were used by the Germans to assist in hunting down and executing Jews. Later, the Home Guard was particularly effective in antipartisan sweeps in the

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[46] *Pogranichnye voiska*, 565–67; "Iz istorii Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny: Ob ostavlenii Rigi," *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, no. 7 (July 1990), 212; "Pod maskoi nezavisimosti," 116–17.

[47] "Podpol′e v Estonii," 168–71, based on NKVD archival sources but without specific references; *Bor′ba za sovetskuiu pribaltiku*, 2: 239–47; Mart Laar, *War in the Woods: Estonia's Struggle for Survival, 1944–1956* (Washington, DC: Compass, 1992), 12–14. The author was subsequently prime minister of independent Estonia.

[48] Seppo Myllyniemi, *Die Neuordnung der Baltischen Länder, 1941–1944: Zum nationalsozialistischen Besatzungspolitik* (Helsinki: Suomen Historiallinen Seura, 1973); Raun, *Estonia and the Estonians* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 158–59.

[49] According to German field reports the local population greeted the invaders with bread and salt, but the local Communist Party representatives praised the Belorussian peasantry's high level of patriotism. For the German reports, see Nicholas Vakar, *Belorussia: The Making of a Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), chap. 13; for the party reports, see "Polozhenie v raione El′nia," 93–95, and "O razvitii partizanskogo dvizheniia," *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, no. 7 (1990), 210.

Smolensk area.[50] The mass of the Belorussian peasantry apparently resisted the blandishments of the collaborationist regime, but they did not immediately join the partisans in any numbers. Instead, in the wake of the German advance they began to dismantle the collective farms. For people without arms or military training this was the major form of everyday resistance or "warfare" against the Soviet system.[51]

The civil wars in Ukraine were the most complex and savage of all, due to long-standing ethnic and religious splits and equally sharp ideological divergences rooted in the experience of the Ukrainian revolutionary war of 1918–20 and the fierce infighting among émigré groups in interwar Poland and elsewhere in Europe. The German invasion released a flock of historical ghosts from the older generation. Former tsarist officers, supporters of Hetman Pavlo Petrovych Skoropads′kyi, and relics of Symon Vasyl′ovych Petliura's army – figures all too familiar to Stalin – returned in the baggage trains of the Wehrmacht. During the first phase of the civil war in Ukraine four well-defined groups had established themselves.[52] The Ukrainian Central Committee was the most consistently collaborationist. Formed in the former Polish districts of western Galicia under German occupation, it promoted cultural activities to break the monopoly of Polish culture while quietly laying the political groundwork for a future Ukrainian state. After June 1941 the Germans allowed it to spread its activities into eastern Galicia. Closely associated with it was the Metropolitan of the Greek Catholic Church, Andrei Sheptyts′kyi, whose letters both to Hitler and the Vatican expressed his fervent support for the German Army.[53]

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[50] John Loftus, *The Belarus Secret: The Nazi Connection in America* (New York: Paragon House, 1989). Loftus was a member of the Office of Special Investigations of the Criminal Justice Department of the U. S. Department of Justice. His account is based on the archives of the SS and interviews with members of Einsatzgruppe B. See also V. Kalush, *In the Service of the People of a Free Belorussia: Biographical Notes on Professor Radoslav Ostrowsky* (London: Abjednannie, 1964) written, according to Loftus, by Ostrovskii himself, a veteran anti-Bolshevik revolutionary who had been a leader of the Belorussian Hramoda under Polish rule. For the involvement of the local police in the murder of Jews, see Dean, *Collaboration in the Holocaust*, 38, 46, 60, 65 and *passim*.

[51] In February 1942 the local civil administration ordered the formal liquidation of the collectives. By this time many of the peasants were convinced that the Red Army would never return. Bernhard Chiari, *Alltag hinter der Front: Besatzung, Kollaboration und Widerstand in Weisrussland, 1941–1944* (Dusseldorf: Droste, 1998), 129.

[52] The standard survey continues to be John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 3rd ed. (Englewood, CO: Ukrainian Academic Press, 1990). But see also Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History,* 2nd ed. (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1994), especially chap. 23.

[53] In his letter of 23 September 1941, congratulating Hitler on the taking of Kyiv he wrote: "The business of liquidating and extirpating Bolshevism, which you as the Führer of the great German Reich have taken upon yourself as the goal in this campaign, has earned your excellency the gratitude of the entire Christian world." Similar sentiments were repeated in 14 January 1942. "Al′ians:

The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) was the most militant, revolutionary group with strong fascist leanings. Formed in 1929 by veterans of the Ukrainian revolutionary war and a younger generation of anti-Polish activists, its main enemy in the interwar period was the Warsaw government. It was active throughout communities of the Ukrainian "piedmont" in Volhynia, the Sub-Carpatho-Ukraine region in Czechoslovakia, and the Bukovina in Romania. The NKVD tracked its contacts with the Gestapo and accused it of espionage within the Soviet Union. Moscow denounced it as a tool of Nazi Germany and in 1938 ordered the assassination of its leader Evhen Konovalets.[54] It was hardly surprising that at the end of the war Stalin insisted upon the incorporation of the "piedmont" territories into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Even before the German invasion, OUN had split into two warring factions. One wing led by an old comrade in arms of Konovalets, Andrei Mel′nyk (OUN-M) initially clung to a Germanophile position. The breakaway group under Stepan Bandera (OUN-B) was quickly disillusioned by Hitler's hostility to Ukrainian statehood and ended up opposing Germans as well as Poles and Communists. Its underground organization clashed with the OUN-M for control over local administration, leading in September 1941 to a round of mutual assassinations. The Gestapo successfully destroyed the legal organizations of both groups.[55] Initially, the clandestine OUN-B placed their hopes on a mass political movement. But by early 1942 they decided to bring under their control some of the armed bands that had formed spontaneously in reaction to brutal German occupation policies and the infiltration of Soviet partisans from the north.[56] This brought them into conflict with the fourth Ukrainian nationalist group.

The Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) was originally formed by Taras Borovets (whose nom de guerre was Taras Bulba, whence the name *bul′bovtsy*), claiming to represent a democratic anti-Soviet strain linked to the tradition of Petliura. He volunteered to assist the Wehrmacht in wiping out pockets of Red Army men. He gathered a force of 3,000 men before the Germans attempted to disarm him. Taking to the woods, the *bul′bovtsy* followed the torturous path of so many fighters in these civil wars. They fought both Germans and Soviet parti-

OUN-SS," *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal*, no. 4 (1991), 62. For the letter to the Vatican in August 1941, see Hans Jacob Stehle, "Sheptyts′kyi and the German Regime," in *Morality and Reality: The Life and Times of Andrei Sheptyts′kyi*, ed. Paul Robert Magocsi (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1989), 129.

[54] "OUN na sluzhbe fashizma," *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal*, no. 5 (1991), 16.

[55] Volodymyr Kosyk, *Ukraïna i nimechchyna u Druhii svitovii viini* (Lviv: Ivan Franko University, 1993), 122–23, 177.

[56] Oleksandr Vovk, "Do pitannia postannia UPA pid provodom OUNSD," *Ukraïns′kyi istoryk*, no. 30 (1995), 138, 141; Chaikovs′kyi, *Nevidoma viina*, 222–23. I am grateful to Yaroslav Hrytsak for providing me with these sources.

sans, then reached a truce with the latter for mutual survival. German and Soviet agents competed in a deadly game to turn them.[57] By the spring of 1942 it become clear that labels of collaborationism and resistance were not very useful in identifying group loyalties, and they were to become even less so in the second phase when the situation became even more tangled.

Meanwhile, despite Hitler's orders the Wehrmacht, hurting for replacements, was recruiting among Ukrainians. By the end there were at least five Ukrainian military units formed on the basis of accords with the Germans: the Nationalist Military Detachments (VVN), the Brotherhoods of Ukrainian Nationalists (DUN), the Galician Division of the Waffen SS, the Ukrainian Liberation Army (UVV), and the Ukrainian National Army (UNA). Informed estimates put the total of Ukrainians who served as Osttruppen and Nazi auxiliary units at around 250,000.[58]

In the Ukrainian civil wars the Jewish population suffered the greatest losses, mainly in the first phase, although the slaughter continued until the return of the Red Army. Anti-Semitism in Ukraine had a long and checkered history dating back to the 17th century. During the Ukrainian revolutionary war of 1918–20 the popular image of the Jews as agents of Bolshevism was widespread. OUN-B embraced anti-Semitism at its second congress in Krakow in August 1941.[59] Two years later it omitted the resolution from its program and Jewish specialists were admitted to the ranks of the UPA. But by then there were few Jews left in Ukraine to reap the benefits; when the Soviet forces returned, the UPA executed its Jewish doctors.[60] Most Jewish historians argue that the destruction of the Jewish population of Ukraine, reduced from 870,000 to 17,000, could not have been accomplished without the aid of the local population, because the Germans

[57] "OUN na sluzhbe," 55.

[58] Peter J. Potichnyj, "Ukrainians in World War II: Military Formations. An Overview," in *Ukraine during World War II: History and Its Aftermath. A Symposium*, ed. Yury Boshyk (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986), 62; Wolfdieter Bihl, "Ukrainians in the Armed Forces of the Reich: The 14th Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS," in *German-Ukrainian Relations in Historical Perspective*, ed. Hans-Joachim Torke and John-Paul Himka (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1994), 141.

[59] "The Jews in the USSR constitute the most faithful support of the ruling Bolshevik regime, and the vanguard of Muscovite imperialism in Ukraine. The Muscovite-Bolshevik government exploits the anti-Jewish sentiments of the Ukrainian masses to divert their attention from the true cause of their misfortune and to channel them in times of frustration into pogroms on Jews. The OUN combats the Jews as the prop of the Muscovite-Bolshevik regime and simultaneously it renders the masses conscious of the fact that the principal foe is Moscow." Resolution of the Second Congress, as quoted in Philip Friedman, *Roads to Extinction: Essays in the Holocaust* (New York: Conference on Jewish Social Studies, Jewish Publication Society of America, 1980), 179–80 and 182–89.

[60] Shmuel Spector, *The Holocaust of Volhynian Jews, 1941–1944* (Jerusalem: Achva Press, 1990), 271.

lacked the manpower to reach all of the communities that were annihilated, especially in the remote villages. They admit that there were cases of Ukrainians assisting hunted Jews but minimize their number. Ukrainian historians question the reliability of their colleagues' sources, maintaining that the Ukrainian auxiliaries were assigned mainly to duties as guards and that their two SS divisions were only formed in 1944–45, after the bulk of the Jewish population had been killed.[61] Individual cases have been and will continue to be cited on both sides of the question. But the condemnation of Jews by churchmen, nationalists, and ordinary peasants, whatever their motives or numbers, revealed abiding social antagonisms that erupted into open violence under the pressures of this transformative war.

Along the southern borderlands the Don Cossacks and Crimean Tatars were among the most disaffected elements, although they too were divided, contributing recruits both to the Red Army and to the armed opposition. The fact that Hitler considered the Cossacks racially acceptable descendants of the Goths and the Tatars also facilitated their recruitment into the German forces. Early in the campaign individual Wehrmacht commanders accepted Cossack volunteers to be used as scouts or replacements in combat units. For this reason it is difficult to determine how many Cossacks defected. By July 1942 there were several company- or regimental-sized formations in action. According to the testimony of the General of the Osttruppen, there were 75,000 men in the so-called Eastern Battalions, including an unspecified number of Cossacks, but their major involvement only occurred in the second phase.[62]

The first exaggerated reports from partisan units in Crimea to Marshal Semen Mikhailovich Budennyi claiming that "the overwhelming majority of the Crimean Tatars in the mountain districts and adjacent areas are following the fascists" were retracted, but not before the damage was done in Moscow. The

[61] From the large often polemical literature, in addition to Friedman, *Roads* and Spector, *Holocaust*, see, for example, Peter J. Potichnyj and Howard Aster, eds., *Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1990), esp. the contribution of Aharon Weiss, "Jewish-Ukrainian Relations in Historical Perspective" (409–20) and the comments by John-Paul Himka. In his eagerness to prove that only the Germans bear the burden of guilt, Daniel J. Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Alfred E. Knopf, 1996), 223–30, 408–9 considers the Ukrainian police, when he considers them at all, as operating under different pressures than the Germans. For a more balanced picture, see Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 258–70, although the argument that few Jews also survived in Greece and France fails to take into account the ease with which the Germans could round up the highly concentrated urban Jewish population of these countries.

[62] Samuel J. Newland, *Cossacks in the German Army, 1941–1945* (London: Frank Cass, 1991), 86; Iurii Stanislavovich Tsurganov, *Neudavshiisia revansh: Belaia emigratsiia vo Vtoroi Mirovoi Voine* (Moscow: Intrada, 2001), 124–26.

Germans brought with them Tatar émigrés representing the old Milli Farka Party of the Civil War days, who in December 1941 formed a Tatar National Committee led mainly by former landowners, dispossessed kulaks, and sons of ulema. By February 1942 plans for the creation of a Tatar army were well under way. Nine thousand volunteers were immediately accepted, the men recalling "vivid memories of the comradeship in arms in the period 1917–1918." Soviet countermeasures were frustrated by the absence of Crimean Tatars in the underground party organizations and ineffective propaganda.[63]

By the end of the first phase, there were very few active supporters of the Soviet system behind the German lines. But the anti-Soviet groups were badly divided. Probably the smallest number were ideologically committed collaborators, volunteers in the local police, and German military units. A slightly larger group had gone into hiding, disillusioned by the behavior of the Germans but unwilling to organize resistance against them. By far the largest number of individuals was either passive or willing to cooperate on a limited basis.

The Second Phase

A second phase began roughly after Stalingrad, when Germany lost the strategic initiative and suffered serious manpower shortages. Responding to the forced labor drafts, thousands of young men joined German-sponsored militia and military units partly under pressure and partly in order to fight the partisans who began to appear in large numbers in 1943. Unnumbered others fled to the forests to join various bands or the partisans. During this phase the Soviet government centralized and reorganized the operations and structure of the partisan units in order to carry out sabotage, launch reprisals against anti-Soviet units, and reassert a Soviet presence in the occupied territories through intimidation and terror. More ominously, Stalin, often prompted by Beriia, reacted violently to signs of disaffection in the North Caucasus by ordering massive deportations of entire ethnic groups.

In the Baltic republics Latvians and Estonians collaborated more fully with the Germans than the Lithuanians. After Stalingrad the Germans reversed their policy of forbidding the formation of large military units in the Baltic territories and issued mobilization orders. The Estonians responded by fielding six frontier regiments and forming the 20th SS Division. This was offset by the flight of 5,000 Estonians to Finland where they enlisted in the war against the Soviet Un-

[63] "Krymsko-Tatarskie formirovaniia: Dokumenty tret'ego reikha svidetel'svuiut," *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal*, no. 3 (1991), 9; Edige Mustafa Kirimal, *Der Nationale Kampf der Krimtürken mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Jahre 1917–1918* (Emsdetten: Lechte, 1952), 305; Bugai, *L. Beriia – I. Stalinu*, 146–48.

ion. Russian and Estonian sources disagree on the degree to which participation in German-sponsored units was voluntary and also on their responsibility for civilian deaths in the republic.[64] For the first time the NKVD reported that Estonian émigrés were beginning to consider the possibility of a German defeat and the need to find alternative sources of outside support by making contact with British and American intelligence in Sweden and Finland.[65] Under German pressure, in 1943 representatives of Latvian local self-government endorsed the mobilization of four classes of youth that provided more than 30,000 men for two SS divisions, known collectively as the Latvian Legion. At the same time, according to NKVD documents, about 30,000 mainly working-class men were active in the Latvian underground in Riga and other cities, while 20,000 joined the partisans.[66]

In Belorussia by the end of 1943 large areas had become refuges for a variety of armed groups engaged in a multisided struggle that remains obscure in many details. There were bands of Red Army soldiers, some still holding out against the Germans, others virtual deserters; elements of the Polish Home Army (Armja krajowa) competed with Belorussians for positions in the local administration, or else hunted Jews. Still others bided their time until they could participate in Operation *Burza* (Tempest) to liberate towns in their borderlands (*kresy*) between the departure of the Germans and arrival of the Soviet forces. Jewish refugees and armed partisans, perhaps as many as 10–15,000 at their peak strength, fought for survival. But their number diminished as losses could not be replaced and the Soviet Partisan Command discouraged the creation of separate Jewish units for fear of antagonizing the local population. Finally, nationalist Belorussian bands fought Soviet partisans or hid out in hope of emerging from the war as representatives of an independent country; a few like the Kaminsky brigade degenerated into banditry.[67] Despite the increasingly chaotic situation the Germans refused to

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[64] Russian sources from the late Soviet period claim that a grand total of 50–60,000 Estonians fought on the German side and shared responsibility for the deaths of approximately 60,000 civilians and 64,000 Soviet POWs and about 250,000 Jews. "Podpol′e v Estonii," 172–73. *Bor′ba za sovetskuiu pribaltiku*, 2: 239–47; Raun argues that the Estonians showed great reluctance to serve in German units and volunteered in small numbers. Laar claims that Soviet efforts to form partisan detachments in Estonia repeatedly failed due to the absence of support from the local population and the opposition of 15,000 "forest brothers." Raun, 159; Laar, 11, 18–19.

[65] "Podpol′e v Estonii," 174.

[66] "Pod maskoi nezavisimosti," 118.

[67] Vakar, *Belorussia*, 195–96; Dean, *Collaboration*, 142–44; Porter, *Jewish Partisans*, 8–9, 11–12, 19; Dallin, "The Kaminsky Brigade: A Case Study of Soviet Disaffection," in *Revolution and Politics in Russia: Essays in Memory of B. I. Nikolaevsky*, ed. Alexander and Janet Rabinowitch (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1972), 243–80; Witalij Wilenchik, *Die Partisanbewegung in Weisrussland, 1941–1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1984). In all cases numbers are elusive. By

grant the Belorussian civil administration any autonomy to mobilize the population "against the Bolsheviks."[68] The extreme splintering of the warring groups was due to the underlying ethnic conflicts and the inability of the Belorussian political leaders to overcome the low level of national consciousness among the peasantry, who remained passive until a concerted effort by the Soviet authorities stimulated a burgeoning partisan movement.

The driving force behind the organization of a mass partisan movement was the secretary of the Belorussian Party, Panteleimon Kondrat'evich Ponomarenko. In contrast to the pessimistic reports of Beriia's men, he extolled the patriotic, spontaneous response of the Belorussian collective farmers. Both interpretations were self-serving. Ponomarenko proposed a separate administrative organ of "the partisan struggle," offered to take command of it and, apparently on his own authority, urged his party people to remain behind the rapidly advancing German lines in order to organize and lead the local partisan detachments.[69] Although the Central Committee publicly endorsed most of Ponomarenko's recommendations, a muted struggle within the party apparat seriously hampered the central organization of the partisan struggle. Long before the outbreak of war, preparations to wage partisan warfare on Soviet soil aroused suspicions of defeatism and were disrupted in 1937 by the blood purges. Up until the spring of 1942 attempts to revive the project encountered resistance from several sources including Lev Zakharovich Mekhlis, the high command, and more importantly from Beriia. As part of his imperial bureaucratic design to expand the power of the NKVD under the guise of promoting the war effort, he insisted that "the organs of the NKVD should in the future carry out the organization of partisan detachments and diversionist groups."[70] Beriia intended to wage the civil war on his own terms.

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contrast, the labor draft produced 100,000 volunteers for work or military service. Mulligan, *The Politics of Illusion*, 85.

[68] Jerzy Turonek, *Belarus' pad niametskai akupatsyiai* (Minsk: Belarus, 1993), 98, 117, 176; Chiari, 114–28.

[69] As part of his personal appeal to Stalin, Ponomarenko also contrasted the "utter fearlessness" of the Slavic population with the urbanized Jews who "were seized by an animal fear." See the telegrams of Ponomarenko to Stalin (2 July 1941, and undated, but no later than 12 July 1941), in "O razvertyvanii partizanskogo dvizheniia," *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, no. 7 (1990), 196, 210.

[70] "Ob organizatsii bor'by v tylu germanskikh voisk," *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, no. 7 (1990), 217; "O sozdanii partizanskikh otriadov i diversionnykh grupp dlia deistvii v tylu protivnika, ibid., no. 9 (1990), 197–98; and I. G. Starinov, "Podryvniki na kommunikatsiiakh agressora," *Voprosy istorii*, no. 7 (1988), 100–12, which are the important memoirs of a participant. Even before any diversionist activity was reported, the NKVD was already in the grip of a civil war mentality. The day after the German invasion the Moscow city and oblast administration of the NKVD issued instructions to its agents to "uncover the counterrevolutionary underground…," although it was left to

Stalin's decision in May 1942 to appoint Ponomarenko to head a Central Partisan Staff in Moscow with deputies from the NKVD and NKGB did not resolve the bureaucratic infighting or allay suspicions over the trustworthiness of units beyond the immediate reach of army and police.[71] For Beriia the key to success of the partisans was to bring them under the control of the frontier troops. Their main purpose would be, as he stated in 1943 in his instructions to the chief of its Political Administration, the intensification of the struggle "against ideological diversionists."[72] For the army command specific sabotage missions directed against communications networks and carried out by well-organized units drawn from the regular army took precedence.[73] Foremost in Ponomarenko's program were political issues directed mainly at retaining the loyalty of the civilian population and combating both collaboration and nationalist agitation.[74]

In Ukraine the splintering effect of the second phase multiplied the fronts of the civil war and inaugurated the most murderous episode of ethnic cleansing. In the western and central regions the fighting among the rival nationalist groups intensified as German and Soviet agents penetrated their organizations.[75] The OUN-B clashed with the Borovets group, forcibly incorporated some of its units into their growing ranks, and usurped the name Ukrainian Insurgent Army.[76] Metropolitan Sheptyts'kyi had become disillusioned by the Nazi "reign of terror" and began to fear that the civil war was tearing Ukraine to pieces. The Germans, he wrote, were exposing the young to "terrible demoralization" by "recruiting them into police and militia units and misusing them for perverted purposes." In

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their vivid imagination as to whom this might include. "Moskovskie chekisty v oborone stolitsy, 1941–1942," *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal*, no. 1 (1991), 10.

[71] Leonid D. Grenkevich, *The Soviet Partisan Movement, 1941–1944: A Critical Historiographical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 1999), 6–7, 84–86, 91–95; Starinov, 108–11.

[72] Petrov, 38–39.

[73] Vsevolod Ivanovich Klochkov, *Deistviia partizan Ukrainy na zheleznodorozhnykh kommunikatsiiakh v tylu fashistskikh voisk, 1941–1944* (Kyiv: Nauka, 1984).

[74] Panteleimon Kondratevich Ponomarenko, *Vsenarodnaia bor'ba v tylu nemetsko-fashistskikh zakhvatchikov, 1941–1944* (Moscow: Nauka, 1986), 420–23 contains the full text.

[75] "OUN na sluzhbe," 55.

[76] Soviet sources citing the NKVD archives state that "on the basis of imprecise figures the northern and southern groups of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (in November 1943?) are estimated at approximately 15,000." "OUN na sluzhbe," 50. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, 115, gives an estimate of 30–40,000. Ukrainian émigré sources give slightly more generous figures reaching as high as 45–50,000; but as Subtelny notes, "[c]ompared to other underground movements in Nazi-occupied Europe, the UPA was unique in that it had practically no foreign support. Its growth and strength were, therefore, an indication of the very considerable popular support it enjoyed among Ukrainians." Subtelny, 474.

May 1943 he reported to the Vatican, "All of Volhynia and part of Galicia are full of bands which have a certain political character. Some are made up of Poles, others of Ukrainians, and others of Communists; others are truly bandits, people of all nationalities, Germans, Jews, and Ukrainians." After Stalingrad, on the initiative of the Germans, he agreed to endorse the formation of a volunteer SS Galician division in the vain and naive hope that "if the German defeat continues and there is a period of anarchy and chaos we will be very happy to have a national army to maintain order and counteract the worst outrages until regular Soviet troops arrive."[77]

While the fratricidal conflict among Ukrainians was taking place, a bloody ethnic war was breaking out in the mixed Ukrainian-Polish areas of Volhynia and Kholm. The killings began in the spring and summer of 1943, reaching a climax in the winter, when the UPA unleashed a massive assault to cleanse the area of the Polish population. Its aim was to forestall postwar Polish claims to the area. The Polish Home Army came to the defense of their countrymen and conducted their own reign of terror against the Ukrainian population west of the San River. Here was a case of neighbors turning against one another with rare ferocity.[78] It recalled in many ways the fierce Haidamak rebellions of the 18th century that became enshrined as myth in Ukrainian folklore.[79]

The German penetration into the Kuban also revived myths of Cossack liberties. As in the Crimea and the Don the Germans allowed the return of émigré veterans, thus establishing another historic connection with the Russian Civil War. In October 1942 the Germans organized a self-governing region with a

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[77] Stehle, "Sheptyts′kyi," 134–38. The response was overwhelming. Over 82,000 mobbed the recruiting offices, but only 13,000 were judged worthy of meeting the SS standards. Subtelny, 472, 477. Controversial evidence suggests that the Germans used threats of reprisals to coerce individuals who sought to avoid service in the division. Yury Kyrychuk, *Narysy z istorii ukraïns′koho natsyonalno-vyzvol′noho rukhu 40–50 rokiv XX stolitiia* (Lviv: Ivan Franko National University, 2000), 52. Although OUN-B opposed the idea, it may have attempted to infiltrate the division for its own purposes. Yaroslav Hrytsak, *Narys istorii ukraïny: Formuvannia modernoï ukraïnskoï natsii XIX–XX stoletiia* (Kyiv: Heneza, 1996), 251. Thus were the lines between collaboration and resistance blurred.

[78] Timothy Snyder, "'To Resolve the Ukrainian Problem Once and For All': The Ethnic Cleansing of Ukrainians in Poland, 1943–1947," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 1: 2 (2000), 86–120 provides the comprehensive account. But see also Weiner, 253–55. Polish sources estimate 60–80,000 men women, and children were slaughtered. Antoni B. Szczesniak and Wieslaw Szota, *Droga do nikad: Dzialalnosc Organizacji Ukrainskich Nacjonalistów i jej likwidacja w Polsce* (Warsaw: Wydawn. Ministerstwa Oborony Narodowej, 1973), 170. See "Al′ians: OUN-SS," 57–58 for Soviet documentation.

[79] Jaroslav Pelenski, "The Haidamak Insurrections and the Old Regimes in Eastern Europe," in *The American and European Revolutions, 1776–1848: Socio-Political and Ideological Aspects*, ed. Pelenski (Iowa City: Iowa University Press, 1980), and Kohut, "Myths Old and New."

population of 160,000 modeled on the prerevolutionary Cossack communes. They established a Junkers' Officer School, reintroduced the paraphernalia of the traditional Cossack regiments, and nourished high hopes for the formation of a Cossack Army of 75,000 men. Although their plans were doomed by the Stalingrad defeat, about 14,000 Cossacks accompanied the retreating Germans to Belorussia, where their units fought Soviet partisans.[80]

In the North Caucasus the first people of the autonomous republics to suffer mass deportation was the Kalmyks, followed by the Chechens and the Ingush. Like most people of the region the Kalmyks suffered terribly from both the German occupation and the Soviet return, yet they supplied fighters to both sides: 20,000 men to the Red Army and 5,000 cavalry placed under German command. After Stalingrad the rapid reconquest of the region led to a muted contest between the advocates of reconstruction and rehabilitation (mainly party cadres) and the NKVD, which won out in the end. In October 1943 Stalin approved Beriia's recommendation for deportation as a punishment for fighting against the Red Army and as "a means for regulating interethnic conflict (*mezhdunatsional'nyi konflikt*)."[81]

In the Chechen-Ingush republic armed opposition to collectivization had never been fully repressed. From 1937 to 1939, 80 bands of more than 1,000 men kept up the clandestine struggle, although most of these had been broken up on the eve of the war. The German attack stimulated the formation of new bands as well as a series of assassinations of party and NKVD personnel. On the other hand, the Chechens also produced their share of recruits for the Red Army. Moreover, by August 1943 local NKVD units were reporting that "for six months bandit activity was virtually paralyzed as a result of amnesty and arrests." But Beriia ignored them, advancing plans to deport the entire population that were finalized in December and carried out in January and February 1944.[82]

Divided loyalties and civil strife also ripped apart the Karachaev and Cherkessy autonomous okrugs. The *karachaevtsy* sent a strong group of volunteers to the Red Army, but the arrival of the Germans led to the formation of the Karachaev National Committee and the dissolution of collective farms. In 1944 the NKVD reported fighting against 12 bands, supported by substantial elements among the population and the ulema. With the return of the Red Army

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[80] Newland, 61, 86; Tsurganov, 127–42. According to intelligence of a Russian émigré organization, even after Stalingrad, despite depressed living conditions in the Taganrog area, "the population was favorably disposed toward the anticommunist [Cossack] army." Ibid., 129

[81] Bugai, *L. Beriia – I. Stalinu*, 69–70. Following the arrest of local bands 91,919 Kalmyks were deported and the autonomous republic was abolished.

[82] Ibid., 69–70, 101.

the National Committee fled with the Germans and the bands were repressed. Nevertheless, the Sovnarkom ordered the deportation of over 69,000 persons.[83]

A similar situation developed in the Kabadino-Balkarian Autonomous Republic, where the population was subjected to even greater conflicting pressures. Several thousand men rallied to the Red Army and at least 5,000 more were executed by the Germans. But several thousand more either joined a nationalist legion (as 600 of them did) and anti-Soviet bands, or deserted from the Red Army. Reporting to Stalin that in 1942–43 the NKVD had arrested over 1,700, including members of the Communist Party and Komsomol, Beriia accused the nationalists of conspiring to unite Balkaria with Karachaev into a state under Turkish protection. Having played to Stalin's borderland complex, he then proposed to use the troops "freed" from the Chechen-Ingush operation to deport the entire population of Balkaria, concluding with his formulaic phrase, "I await your orders."[84] Stalin responded in predictable fashion.

In the Russian core the largest potential source of an army of Russians to fight Russians was the abortive Vlasov movement. Taken prisoner by the Germans in early 1942, Major-General Andrei Andreevich Vlasov represented himself as a Russian nationalist willing to organize an army of Soviet POWs as an independent ally of Germany in order to sweep away the Soviet regime. But in the end Hitler contemptuously brushed aside the proposals of his supporters in the intelligence section of the German General Staff: "We will never build up a Russian army; that is a phantom of the first order." Speculation continues to this day on how great a chance Vlasov had to create a large anti-Soviet army. His German handlers waxed enthusiastic over his one and only contact with the Soviet population in early 1943 – during a speaking tour that took him to Riga, Pskov, and the surrounding area. They also provide evidence that even as late as the fall of 1943, 2,000–3,000 POWs were volunteering for his movement every day and that the appearance of small Vlasov units at the front had a striking effect on the Red Army desertion rate. In late 1944, when hopes for a German victory were fading, Heinrich Himmler on his own responsibility acceded to their pleading and permitted the formation of the Committee for the Freedom of the People of Russia (KONR) and the recruitment of two divisions – Vlasov

[83] Ibid., 56–61.

[84] Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii f. 9401, op. 2, d. 64, ll. 162–67. The entire episode is analyzed in Bugai, *Kavkaz: Narody v eshelonakh (20–60 gody)* (Moscow: Insan, 1998), 120–33, 153–73, which, on the basis of archives, demonstrates Beriia's determination to use the breakdown of order in the North Caucasus in order to enhance his own power and discredit local bureaucracies, mainly party and Komsomol, not under his control.

wanted ten.[85] But the gesture was too little, too late. In the end Vlasov and his Russian Liberation Movement were a negligible military factor and an ephemeral political phenomenon. But Vlasov gave rise to serious concern among the Soviet leaders. Initially they reacted to his proclamations with studied silence, but his tour of the northwest front forced their hand. They moved rapidly to condemn him and attempted to penetrate his organization with their agents.[86] If anything, the shadowy Vlasov movement merely confirmed Stalin's suspicions of anyone who survived behind the German lines and increased his fears of internal opposition.

By the end of the second phase, that is, at the height of the German advance, it is impossible even to give precise figures on how many of the 70 million people living behind the lines were involved in the civil wars. Recent estimates of active participants have not changed the earlier ones: about a million individuals were engaged on each side. But these numbers still tell us little because the motivations, level, and steadfastness of commitment were so radically different. Moreover, it is impossible to count the passively disloyal. There was a large and ill-defined "twilight zone," as Armstrong calls it, that expanded and contracted often in response to rumors or reports from the front. At times parts of the same village were controlled by different bands; a different village elder was often selected every day to avoid fatal accusations of collaboration with the Germans or cooperation with the partisans. The most widespread evidence of "leaving the Soviet system" was the massive decollectivization, at least where the Germans permitted it. But there was no mass peasant uprising as there had been during the civil war of 1918–20.[87]

Still, the Soviet system in much of the occupied territory was in a shambles. On 1 January 1944, a Politburo decree signed by Stalin and Georgii Maksimilianovich Malenkov outlined the need to restore the shattered Soviet structure of the Belorussian Republic: "Bearing in mind that in regions liberated from the

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[85] The standard work remains Catherine Andreyev, *Vlasov and the Russian Liberation Movement: Soviet Reality and Émigré Theories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). The German case for Vlasov has been made by one of his handlers, Wilfried Strik-Strikfeldt, *Against Stalin and Hitler: Memoir of the Russian Liberation Movement, 1941–1945* (London: Macmillan, 1970). Access to Soviet archives has not substantially changed the picture except to disclose more details on the complex relationships between Vlasov and the émigrés. Tsurganov, chaps. 7 and 8. In a cruel irony Vlasov was originally turned over to the Germans by Russian peasants. *Materialy po istorii Russkogo osvoboditel'nogo dvizheniia, 1941–1945 gg.: Stat'i, dokumenty, vospminaniia*, (Moscow: Graal, 1997), 364–65.

[86] Alexander Dallin and Ralph S. Mavrogordato, "The Soviet Reaction to Vlasov," *World Politics* 8: 3 (April 1956), 307–22; Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans*, 243–48.

[87] Armstrong, *Soviet Partisans*, 312–17, 330; Semiriaga, 485–529; Kuromiya, 259–95. But compare Weiner, 305.

German occupiers, the party, soviet and economic organs will have to be practically created anew and that a large number of new activists will have to be drawn into their work, the Belorussian state and party organizations are obliged to improve in every possible way the selection of cadres in Soviet and party organs, promoting people for work in these organs who are completely reliable and capable of restoring the economy that has been ruined by the German invaders and liquidating the consequences of the German occupation."[88] Without the war there could not have been civil war; but without the contradictions and brutality of the Germans the anti-Soviet forces would certainly have multiplied greatly. As it was, neither side succeeded in convincing the mass of the population in the borderlands that its victory would be in its best interests.

The Third Phase

During the third phase the advance of the Red Army changed the character of the civil wars in three ways. First, the anticommunist bands in the pre-1939 territories of the USSR were either broken up or disintegrated of their own accord, and large-scale desertions of Osttruppen took place despite belated, desperate efforts of the Wehrmacht to recruit from the local population. Second, the nationalist bands dug more deeply into the congenial soil of their native strongholds in the Baltic republics and western Ukraine, fighting in ever diminishing numbers until the war was long over. Third, Stalin and Beriia extended their policy of massive deportations to the Crimea and the frontier zone with Turkey.

In Belorussia a three-way struggle opened up. The partisans, still starved for arms and equipment, nevertheless increased at an exponential rate. Shortages of manpower forced the Germans early in 1944 to create a Weissruthenische Heimatwehr, which the local nationalists vainly envisaged as the nucleus of a Belorussian Army. Elements of the Polish Home Army became more active, unleashing terrorist tactics against Jews, partisans, and Polish civilian "collaborators"; a few even entered into agreements with local German commanders to conduct joint operations against the Soviet partisans.[89] In the wake of the Red Army, NKVD units arrived. In the first half of 1945 they were arresting a monthly average of about 1,000 and killing about 100 "bandits" and other "anti-

[88] Politburo Protocols, 1 January 1944, "O blizhaishchikh zadachakh Sovnarkoma BSSR i TsKP(b) Belorusii," Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsial′no-politicheskoi istorii (RGASPI) f. 17, op. 3, d. 1049, ll. 236–38.

[89] Chiari, 160–61, 289–95. In December 1943 there were about 100,000 partisans in Belorussia, but according to Starinov, 109, only 60 percent were armed. By the end of the war there were 374,000, as the fence-sitters jumped to the Soviet side. N. I. Epoletov, "Iz opyta raboty kompartii Belorussii po razvitiiu partizanskogo dvizheniia (1941–1944)," *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, no. 5 (May 1987), 106–8.

Soviet elements." Interrogations revealed a great variety of ethnic identities and political affiliations, ranging from former White officers to members of the Belorussian Communist Party.[90] The retreat of the Wehrmacht from Estonia and Latvia forced the nationalist "collaborationist" organizations underground, where they joined other groups of "forest brothers" in forming a "resistance" to Soviet reoccupation. Some of their leaders – like Stalin, also a "man of the borderlands" – assumed that they could win only with the help of foreign intervention. In Estonia the Union for Armed Struggle pinned its hopes for "liberation" on assistance from England or the U.S. "in case of war" or "some kind of political upheaval." For ten years in dwindling numbers they fought on. According to the records of the Estonian émigrés and the Soviet security services the "forest brothers" killed a total of about 1,700 Soviet personnel from among the army, partisans, party, police, and new Russian settlers, while losing about 1,500 of their own in dead and 8,000 taken prisoner.[91] In Latvia the "forest brothers" resembled their Estonian counterparts, but their service in the German army made them hardened, experienced, and well organized. As early as January 1945 Beriia reported to Stalin that the security organs had arrested 5,223 men, the majority being "German sympathizers," including the head of the Latvian Lutheran Church. Over the following eight years the Latvian groups carried out 3,000 killings, of whom 90 percent were Latvians. Although their largest units were broken up in 1946, bands remained in the field until the early 1950s.[92]

Of the three Baltic peoples the Lithuanians continued to display the highest level of political consciousness and organization. An estimated 100,000 took part at one time or another in the struggle against the restoration of Soviet power. Following the German withdrawal they formed a United Resistance Movement that combined a political arm, armed groups, and communications and supply networks. Already in 1944 Stalin was incensed by their activities, demanding an end to "liberal attitudes" and calling for the strictest repressive measures.[93] The NKVD needed little encouragement. From July 1944 to January 1945 they ar-

[90] "Osobaia papka Stalina," GARF f. 9401, op. 2, d. 92, ll. 276–82, 289–90; d. 93, ll. 49–52. In early 1945 in the rear of the First Belorussian Front, for example, one monthly list of arrests included 31 Germans, 590 Lithuanians, 214 Poles, 47 Russians, and 19 Belorussians.

[91] Laar, 19–20, 61–62, 77–81, 176, and "Podpol'e v Estonii," 175 agree on these statistics based on NKVD and Estonian archives, although neither gives exact citations. Where they disagree is on the total number of "forest brothers." Estonian émigré sources claim 40,000 at their peak strength, while Russian military historians add 6,500 amnestied to the killed and captured for a total of 16,000. The discrepancy might be explained by the large number of "forest brothers" who simply dropped out of the fight or emigrated over the postwar decade.

[92] GARF f. 9401, op. 2, d. 92, ll. 2212–19, 2269; Boris Meissner, *Die Baltischen Nationen: Estland, Lettland, Litauen* (Cologne: Mockus, 1991), 232–45; Semiriaga, 528.

[93] Laar, 26–28.

rested 20,949 men. Beriia's reports to Stalin increasingly differentiated among the prisoners as if to deny any unified character to the resistance and predetermine punishment according to categories of the Soviet criminal code.[94] Stalin, determined to extirpate the root causes, reverted to his 1940 policy of deportation (the official term was resettlement) of the families of "bandits" to the east and of Poles from Lithuania across the new Polish frontiers.[95]

There was a surprising upsurge of underground activity in Lithuania after the end of World War II. Beriia raised the old bugbear of foreign intervention: although the Lithuanian Liberation Army had been "partially destroyed," he reported, it "is counting on a new war of the USSR against England and the U.S. and is preparing for a rising in the rear of the Red Army" when it was forced once again to retreat from Lithuanian soil. In December 1945 the Lithuanian underground formed a National Council of Lithuania, but in April 1946 the NKVD seized most of its members, who "all came from the Soviet institutions of the Lithuanian SSR."[96] Undaunted, the military bands formed their own organization, the Lithuanian Freedom Fighters' Movement, which was able to maintain units of up to 800 men and to create serious difficulties for the resovietization of the republic.[97]

The third phase of the civil war in western Ukraine was fought on a larger scale than anywhere else in the borderlands. In 1944 alone the UPA launched 800 attacks against the Soviet authorities, in one region of Galicia alone killing 1,500 party and Komsomol activists. At the same time the Soviet forces claimed to have destroyed 36 bands of 4,300 Ukrainian nationalists. As it advanced the Red Army sought to mobilize all able-bodied men between 18 and 50 in the region, but thousands slipped through the nets into the underground. The party dispatched over 30,000 workers and 3,500 specially trained agitprop personnel into western Ukraine in an attempt to stabilize the political situation. But it had to admit that the persistence of wartime attitudes complicated their work. By the end of 1944 when western Ukraine was cleared of Germans, the local party membership had barely reached 30 percent of the prewar figure.[98]

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[94] Beriia's categories included intelligence and counter-intelligence agents of the enemy, their collaborators, participants in nationalist, anti-Soviet Lithuanian or Polish underground, traitors to the fatherland, German henchmen (*stavniki*) and accomplices (*posobniki*), and, beginning in March 1945, bandits. The latter were associated with the Lithuanian Liberation Army, whose raids Beriia enumerated in great detail. GARF f. 9401, op. 2, d. 92, ll. 96, 155–56, 389; d. 96, ll. 5–7.

[95] Ibid., d. 97, ll. 273–74, 332.

[96] Ibid., d. 96, ll. 306, 310–14; d. 102, ll. 290–91.

[97] Ibid., d. 102, ll. 47–48, 291, 308. By the early 1950s the NKVD had penetrated and rendered useless underground links with foreign intelligence. Laar, 26–28.

[98] Galina Georgievna Morekhina, *Partiinoe stroitel'stvo v period Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny Sovetskogo Soiuza, 1941–1945 gg.* (Moscow: Izdatel′stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1986), 121–23, 133.

Reoccupation of Ukraine by the Red Army intensified the fighting as the UPA multiplied its attacks in all directions – against the newly arrived Soviet authorities, Polish civilians, and the NKVD. Beriia punctiliously tallied the score in his fortnightly reports to Stalin. In the first year of the liberation stage from February 1944 to February 1945 the NKVD killed 73,333 "bandits" and took 73,966 prisoners; in addition 53,383 "bandits" and military objectors had voluntarily surrendered.[99] As the war drew to a close, fighting shifted almost exclusively to western Ukraine. There insurgent activity flared briefly then steadily diminished. The losses on the Soviet side were increasingly civilians – presidents of rural soviets, teachers, self-defense units. By June 1945 casualties had sharply declined, but the number of operations remained steady at about 700, suggesting that the large bands had been broken up.[100] Even so, in January 1946 the Soviet authorities still felt it necessary to deploy 20,000 NKVD troops, 10,000 supply troops, and 26,000 militia against the insurgents.[101]

Stalin's war against the nationalities on the southern borderlands reached its peak with the deportation of the Crimean Tatars, but its momentum continued with a different justification. Tens of thousands of Crimean Tatars preferred to retreat with the Germans than to remain under Soviet power. But small bands kept operating in the rear of the advancing Red army. Once again the Soviet authorities reacted at cross-purposes. The local party cadres sought to improve relations with the remaining population while the NKVD hatched other plans. In his most ambitious operation Beriia got approval of the GOKO to carry out the deportation of 180,000 Crimean Tatars as "traitors to the motherland."[102]

Where even Beriia could not cook up a case of conspiracy, he took a different line in justifying forced resettlements. Toward the end of the war he played on Stalin's fear of interethnic conflict in Georgia and of Pan-Turkic agitation and Turkish influence in the frontier zones in order to propose a virtual ethnic cleansing of the Transcaucasian border districts. First it was the turn of 16,700 households of Turks, Kurds, and Khemshily (Armenian Muslims) from five border districts and several villages of the Adzharian autonomous republic. This was followed by a massive deportation of 90–100,000 Meskhetian Turks (Islamicized Georgian peasants). None of these peoples had been occupied by the Germans or

[99] GARF f. 9401, op. 2, d. 92, ll. 9–14, 248–53, 275; d. 93, ll. 247–51, 395.

[100] Ibid., d. 96, ll. 13–18; d. 97, 13–16, 346.

[101] Ibid., d. 102, ll.101–110, 116–18. The final blow to the insurgent cause was the agreement negotiated by Lazar' Moiseevich Kaganovich (who had replaced Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev as first secretary of Ukraine) with Poland and Czechoslovakia for joint action in hunting down the remnants of the UPA. David Marples, *Stalinism in Ukraine in the 1940s* (New York: St. Martin's, 1992), 68.

[102] Bugai, *L. Beriia – I. Stalinu*, 149–53, 159.

showed any signs of "bandit" activity.[103] But the wartime experience had intensified Stalin's fears over the potential defection of Soviet nationalities who shared a common frontier with the same or similar ethnic and religious groups.[104]

Conclusion

Employing the prism of civil war brings into sharper focus long-term trends in the history of Russia's western borderlands. For one thing, it reveals the persistent tension between the building and dissolution of large multinational states such as the Russian empire and the Soviet Union. By attaching a periphery of ethno-territorial blocs to a Great Russian core, the principality of Moscow and its successors created a defensive glacis, one that also served as a cultural slope and as commercial outlets giving access to the great civilizations of Europe and the Middle and Far East. But the state faced great difficulties in providing an overarching integrative mechanism, whether ideological, social, or political, in order to guarantee the loyalty of its diverse subjects or citizens. External war or internal weakness at the center of power frequently led to rebellion along the periphery, where local elites and even at times substantial elements of the mass of the population maintained cultural and economic ties with their brethren across arbitrary boundaries that were neither natural nor ethno-religious. Yet so long as the center kept its nerve, stood united around a strong leader, and exercised its superior coercive power while the rebellious regions failed to coordinate their actions or gain powerful and disinterested external allies, the dissolution of the state was avoided. Such, in abstract form, were the prevailing circumstances in the great times of trouble from the early 17th century through World War II.

The participants in the civil wars from 1941–47 stood even less of a chance than their predecessors did of overturning the political system or winning independence. They were not united by any ideology except for anticommunism. Their programs were nationalistic but otherwise vague and often authoritarian.

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[103] Bugai, *Kavkaz*, 211–17. Speculation that their removal signaled how seriously Stalin was contemplating military action at the end of 1944 now appears baseless. Instead, Stalin's "Special File" reveals his concern over reports on Pan-Turkism and Turkish-German relations during the war. GARF f. 9401, op. 2, d. 99, ll. 19–41 (on Pan-Turkism); d. 100, ll. 108–244, 276–469 (translations of German documents on Turkey and Iran during the war); d. 102, ll. 110a–383 (translations of documents on German activities among the Turkic peoples).

[104] There were exceptions. For example Stalin was talked out of deporting the Karelo-Finnish people in 1944 by the vigorous intervention of the secretary of the Karelian Republic Party, who argued that "there was no parallel with the Crimean Tatars." But then again, on this occasion Beriia was not involved. S. G. Verigin, "O planakh likvidatsii Karelo-Finskoi SSR v avguste 1944 g." in *Karely, Finny: Problemy etnicheskoi istorii*, ed. Evgenii Ivanovich Klement'ev and Viktor Nikolaevich Birin (Moscow: Institut etnologii i antropologii RAN, 1992), 18–22, 28.

They could not count on any external support but were instead either used as cannon fodder or exposed to terrible reprisals by the Germans. They were poorly armed and heavily outnumbered by the great armies that fought over and around them. They frequently turned their wrath against long-standing ethnic enemies, slaughtering the innocent. They had to contend with the patriotic response, both spontaneous and artificially promoted, to what was perceived as a just war against an aggressor. There were also fears of reprisals. The slightest sign of disloyalty or disaffection touched off a savage Soviet overreaction, the result of Stalin's complex attitudes toward the borderlands from whence he sprang, and of his fears that the Anglo-Americans might seize the opportunity to replace the fading Germans as the new advocates of dismembering the USSR.

To review the factors that led to both the outbreak and the failure of the Soviet civil wars is to shed additional light on the final dissolution of the USSR, or what might be called the revenge of the borderlands. It may appear at first sight paradoxical that the breakup of the Soviet state was not accompanied by foreign war and intervention. But the paradox is only apparent. The very fact that there was no external threat deprived the central state authorities of their most powerful argument for unity. Moreover, they also were themselves disunited and lacked the will to use repressive measures. Finally, the secessionist movements, at least in the western borderlands, proclaimed both independence and democracy, at least in the initial and decisive stages of their separation. To be sure, there were some residual signs of the old conflicts that weakened these movements: the outbreaks of civil wars in the North Caucasus, Transcaucasus, and Central Asia. But with the notable exception of Chechnia, they were not directed against Russians. In sum, a comparison of the Soviet civil wars of 1941–47 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union can help explain the radically different outcomes of these complex historical processes.

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