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Stepan Bandera

Stepan Andriyovych Bandera (Ukrainian: Степа́н Андрі́йович Банде́ра, IPA: [stɛˈpɑn ɐnˈdʲrʲijowitʃ bɛnˈdɛrɐ]; Polish: *Stepan Andrijowycz Bandera*; 1 January 1909 – 15 October 1959) was a Ukrainian politician, Nazi-collaborator and theorist of the militant wing of the far-right Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists^{[1][2]} (OUN) and a leader and ideologist of Ukrainian ultranationalists known for his involvement in terrorist activities.^{[1][3][4]}

Born in Galicia (at the time Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria, part of Austria-Hungary) into the family of a Greek-Catholic priest, young Bandera became a Ukrainian nationalist. After the Empire disintegrated in the wake of World War I, Galicia briefly became a West Ukrainian People's Republic; following the Polish–Ukrainian War of 1918–1919, it was integrated into eastern Poland. In this period, Bandera became radicalized, and after Polish authorities refused to let him leave for Czechoslovakia to study, he enrolled at the Lviv Polytechnic, where he organized Ukrainian nationalist organizations. For orchestrating the 1934 assassination of Poland's Minister of the Interior Bronisław Pieracki, Bandera was sentenced to death but the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. In 1939, following the joint German–Soviet invasion of Poland, Bandera was released from prison, and he moved to Kraków in the German-occupied zone of Poland.

Bandera cultivated German military circles favorable to Ukrainian independence, and organized OUN expeditionary groups. When Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union, he prepared the 30 June 1941 Proclamation of Ukrainian statehood in Lviv, pledging to work with Nazi Germany.^{[5][6]} For his refusal to rescind the decree, Bandera was arrested by the Gestapo, which put him under house arrest on 5 July 1941,^[7] and later between 1942 and 1943^[8] sent him to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.^[9] In 1944, with Germany rapidly losing ground in the war in the face of the advancing Allied armies, Bandera was released in the hope that he would be instrumental in deterring the advancing Soviet forces. He set up the headquarters of the re-established Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council, which worked underground. He settled with his family in West Germany where he remained the leader of the OUN-B and worked with several anti-communist organizations such as the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations^{[10][11]} as well as with the

Stepan Bandera	
Степан Бандера	
 <div></div> <div></div>	
Personal details	
Born	Stepan Andriyovych Bandera <div> <div> <div>1 January 1909</div> <div> Staryi Uhryniv, Galicia, Austria-Hungary (now Ukraine)</div> </div> </div>
Died	15 October 1959 (aged 50) <div> <div> <div> Munich, West Germany</div> </div> </div>
Citizenship	<div> <div> <div> <u>Austria-Hungary</u> (1909–1918)</div> <div> <u>Second Polish Republic</u> (1918–1939)</div> <div> <u>Stateless</u> (1939–1959)</div> </div> </div>
Nationality	Ukrainian
Spouse(s)	<u>Yaroslava Bandera</u>
Relations	<u>Vasyl Bandera</u> (brother)

British intelligence agencies.^[10] Fourteen years after the end of the war, Bandera was assassinated in 1959 by KGB agents in Munich.^{[12][13]}

On 22 January 2010, the outgoing President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko awarded Bandera the posthumous title of Hero of Ukraine.^[14] The European Parliament condemned the award,^[15] as did Russia,^[16] Polish, and Jewish politicians and organizations.^{[17][18][19]} The incoming president Viktor Yanukovich declared the award illegal, since Bandera was never a citizen of Ukraine, a stipulation necessary for getting the award. This announcement was confirmed by a court decision in April 2010.^[20] In January 2011, the award was officially annulled.^[21] A proposal to confer the award on Bandera was rejected by the Ukrainian parliament in August 2019.^[22]

Bandera remains a highly controversial figure in Ukraine,^{[23][24][25]} with some Ukrainians hailing him as a liberator who fought against the Soviet, Polish and Nazi states while trying to establish an independent Ukraine, while other Ukrainians as well as Poland and Russia condemn him as a fascist^[26] and a war criminal^[27] who was, together with his followers, largely responsible for the massacres of Polish civilians^[28] and partially for the Holocaust in Ukraine.^{[29][30][31][32]}

Children	3
Parents	<u>Andriy Bandera</u> (father) <u>Myroslava Głodzińska</u> (mother)
Alma mater	<u>Lviv Polytechnic</u>
Occupation	Politician
Awards	<u>Hero of Ukraine</u> (annulled)
Signature	
Military service	
Allegiance	 <u>OUN</u> (1929–1940)  <u>OUN-B</u> (1940–1959)
Branch/service	 <u>UPA</u> (1942–1956)
Battles/wars	<u>World War II</u>

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Early life

Bandera was born in Staryi Uhryniv, Galicia, Austria-Hungary. He attended the Fourth Form Grammar School in Stryi.^[33] After graduation from high school in 1927, he planned to attend the Ukrainian College of Technology and Economics in Poděbrady in Czechoslovakia, but the Polish authorities did not grant him travel papers.^[34]

In 1928, Bandera enrolled in the agronomy program at the Lviv Polytechnic (then Politechnika Lwowska),^[35] one of the few programs open to Ukrainians at the time.^[33] This was due to restrictions placed on minority enrollment, which was aimed primarily at Jews and Ukrainians, in both secondary schools (*gymnasia*) and university-level institutions by the Polish government.^[36]

Pre-World War II activity

Early activities

Stepan Bandera had met and associated himself with members of a variety of Ukrainian nationalist organizations throughout his schooling—from Plast, to the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (Ukrainian: Українська Визвольна Організація) and also the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) (Ukrainian: Організація Українських Націоналістів). The most active of these organizations was the OUN, and the leader of the OUN was Andriy Melnyk.^[33]

Because of his determined personality, Stepan Bandera quickly rose through the ranks of these organizations, becoming the chief propaganda officer of the OUN in 1931, the second in command of OUN in Galicia in 1932–1933, and the head of the National Executive of the OUN in 1933.^[35] For Bandera, an inclusive policy of nation building was important and therefore, he focused on growing support amongst all classes of Ukrainians in Western parts of Ukraine. In the early 1930s, Bandera was very active in finding and developing groups of Ukrainian nationalists in both Western and Eastern Ukraine.^[33]

OUN

Stepan Bandera became head of the OUN national executive in Galicia in June 1933. He expanded the OUN's network in the Kresy, directing it against both Poland and the Soviet Union. To stop expropriations, Bandera turned OUN against the Polish officials who were directly responsible for anti-Ukrainian policies. Activities included mass campaigns against Polish tobacco and alcohol monopolies and against the denationalization of Ukrainian youth. He was arrested in Lviv in 1934, and tried twice: first,



Young Stepan Bandera in the Plast uniform, 1923



Sign pronouncing Polish as the official language in the Wołyń Voivodeship, 1921. Copy written in Ukrainian.

concerning involvement in a plot to assassinate the minister of internal affairs, Bronisław Pieracki, and second at a general trial of OUN executives. He was convicted of terrorism and sentenced to death.^[35]

The death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment.^[35] He was held in Wronki Prison; in 1938 some of his followers tried unsuccessfully to break him out of the jail.^[37] According to various sources, Bandera was freed in September 1939, either by Ukrainian jailers after Polish jail administration left the jail,^[38] by Poles^[39] or by the Nazis soon after the German invasion of Poland.^{[40][41][42]}

Soon thereafter Eastern Poland was occupied by the Soviet Union. Upon release from prison, Bandera moved to Kraków, the capital of Germany's occupational General Government. There, he came in contact with the leader of the OUN, Andriy Atanasovych Melnyk. In 1940, the political differences between the two leaders caused the OUN to split into two factions; the OUN-M faction led by Melnyk preached a more conservative approach to nation-building, while the OUN-B faction, led by Bandera, supported a revolutionary approach.^[43]

Formation of Mobile Groups

Before the independence proclamation of 30 June 1941, Bandera oversaw the formation of so-called "Mobile Groups" (Ukrainian: мобільні групи) which were small (5–15 members) groups of OUN-B members who would travel from General Government to Western Ukraine and, after a German advance to Eastern Ukraine, encourage support for the OUN-B and establish local authorities run by OUN-B activists.^[44]

In total, approximately 7,000 people participated in these mobile groups, and they found followers among a wide circle of intellectuals, such as Ivan Bahriany, Vasyl Barka, Hryhorii Vashchenko and many others.^[45]

Formation of the UPA

World War II

OUN leaders Andriy Melnyk and Bandera were recruited before World War II into the Nazi Germany military intelligence Abwehr for espionage, counter-espionage and sabotage. Their goal was to run diversion activities after Germany's attack on the Soviet Union. Melnyk was given code name 'Consul I'. This information is part of the testimony that Abwehr Colonel Erwin Stolze gave on 25 December 1945 and submitted to the Nuremberg trials, with a request to be admitted as evidence.^{[46][47][48]}

In the spring of 1941, Bandera held meetings with the heads of Germany's intelligence, regarding the formation of "Nachtigall" and "Roland" Battalions. In spring of that year the OUN received 2.5 million marks for subversive activities inside the Soviet Union.^{[44][49][50]} Gestapo and Abwehr officials protected Bandera followers, as both organizations intended to use them for their own purposes.^[51]

On 30 June 1941, with the arrival of Nazi troops in Ukraine, Bandera and the OUN-B declared an independent Ukrainian state ("Act of Renewal of Ukrainian Statehood").^[52] This declaration was accompanied by violent pogroms.^[52] Some of the published proclamations of the formation of this state say that it would "work closely with the National-Socialist Greater Germany, under the

leadership of its leader Adolf Hitler which is forming a new order in Europe and the world and is helping the Ukrainian People to free itself from Moscovite occupation." – as stated in the text of the "Act of Proclamation of Ukrainian Statehood".^{[44][50]}

Bandera's expectation that the Nazi regime would *post factum* recognize an independent fascist Ukraine as an Axis ally proved to be wrong.^[52] In 1941 relations between Nazi Germany and the OUN-B had soured to the point where a Nazi document dated 25 November 1941 stated that "... the Bandera Movement is preparing a revolt in the Reichskommissariat which has as its ultimate aim the establishment of an independent Ukraine. All functionaries of the Bandera Movement must be arrested at once and, after thorough interrogation, are to be liquidated...".^[53] On 5 July, Bandera was transferred to Berlin. On 12 July, the prime minister of the newly formed Ukrainian National Government, Yaroslav Stetsko, was also arrested and taken to Berlin. Although released from custody on 14 July, both were required to stay in Berlin. On 15 September 1941 Bandera and leading OUN members were arrested by the Gestapo.

In January 1942, Bandera was transferred to Sachsenhausen concentration camp's special barrack for high-profile political prisoners Zellenbau.^[54] In April 1944, Bandera and his deputy Yaroslav Stetsko were approached by a Reich Security Main Office official to discuss plans for diversions and sabotage against the Soviet Army.^[55] In September 1944,^[56] Bandera was released by the German authorities and allowed to return to Ukraine in the hope that his partisans would harass the Soviet troops, which by that time had handed the Germans major defeats. However, in renewed pursuit of his dream of an independent Ukraine, he had his partisans fight against both Soviets and Germans.^[57]

Postwar activity

According to Stephen Dorril, author of *MI6: Inside the Covert World of Her Majesty's Secret Intelligence Service*, OUN-B was re-formed in 1946 under the sponsorship of MI6. The organization had been receiving some support from MI6 since the 1930s.^[58] One faction of Bandera's organization, associated with Mykola Lebed, became more closely associated with the CIA.^[59] Bandera himself was the target of an extensive and aggressive search carried out by the Counterintelligence Corps (CIC).^[60] It failed, having described their quarry as "extremely dangerous" and "constantly en route, frequently in disguise".^[61] Some American intelligence reported that he even was guarded by former SS men.^[62] His organization perpetrated many crimes, including hundreds of thousands of murders,^[52] counterfeiting, and kidnapping. After the Bavarian state government initiated a crackdown on it, Bandera reached an agreement with the BND, offering them his service, despite CIA warning the West Germans against cooperating with him.^[63]

Views towards other ethnic groups

Poles



Greetings archway "Glory to Hitler! Glory to Bandera! Long live the Ukrainian Independent State! Long live our leader S. Bandera" at Zhovkva Castle, Western Ukraine, July–August 1941.

In a May 1941 meeting in Kraków, the leadership of Bandera's OUN faction adopted the program "Struggle and action for OUN during the war" (Ukrainian: "Боротьба й діяльність ОУН під час війни") which outlined the plans for activities at the onset of the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union and the western territories of the Ukrainian SSR.^[64] Section G of that document, the "Directives for organizing the life of the state during the first days" (Ukrainian: "Вказівки на перші дні організації державного життя"), outline activity of the Bandera followers during summer 1941.^[65] In the subsection of "Minority Policy", the OUN-B ordered the removal of hostile Poles, Jews, and Russians via deportation and the destruction of their respective intelligentsias, stating further that the "so-called Polish peasants must be assimilated" and to "destroy their leaders."



Monument to Poles killed by UPA, Liszna, Poland

In late 1942, when Bandera was in a German concentration camp, his organization, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, was involved in a massacre of Poles in Volhynia and, in early 1944, ethnic cleansing also spread to Eastern Galicia. It is estimated that more than 35,000 and up to 60,000^[66] Poles, mostly women and children along with unarmed men, were killed during the spring and summer campaign of 1943 in Volhynia, and up to 100,000 if other regions, such as Eastern Galicia, are included.^{[67][68]}

Despite the central role played by Bandera's followers in the massacre of Poles in western Ukraine, Bandera himself was interned in a German concentration camp when the concrete decision to massacre the Poles was made and when the Poles were killed. According to Yaroslav Hrytsak, Bandera was not completely aware of events in Ukraine during his internment from the summer of 1941 and had serious differences of opinion with Mykola Lebed, the OUN-B leader who remained in Ukraine and who was one of the chief architects of the massacres of Poles.^{[69][70]}

Jews

Bandera was an antisemite and Nazi collaborator.^[71] Ukrainian nationalism did not historically include antisemitism as a core aspect of its program and saw Russians as well as Poles as the chief enemy with Jews playing a secondary role.^[72] Nevertheless, Ukrainian nationalism was not immune to the influence of the antisemitic climate in Eastern and Central Europe,^[72] that had already become highly racialized in the late 19th century (indeed Bandera and his followers, similarly to the Nazis, advocated the selective breeding to create a "pure" Ukrainian race)^[73] and had developed an elaborate anti-Jewish discourse.^[74]

Hostility to both the Soviet central government and the Jewish minority was highlighted at the OUN-B's Conference in Kraków in May 1941, at which the leadership of Bandera's OUN faction adopted the program "Struggle and action of OUN during the war" (Ukrainian: "Боротьба й діяльність ОУН під час війни") which outlined the plans for activities at the onset of the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union and the western territories of the Ukrainian SSR.^[64] The program declared:

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 a

time 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.^[75]

Section G of the program – "Directives for organizing the life of the state during the first days" (Ukrainian: "Вказівки на перші дні організації державного життя") outlined activity of the Bandera followers during mid-1941.^[65] In a subsection on "Minority Policy", the leaders of OUN-B ordered:

Moskali [i.e. ethnic Russians], Poles, and Jews that are hostile to us are to be destroyed in struggle, particularly those opposing the regime, by means of: deporting them to their own lands, eradicating their intelligentsia, which is not to be admitted to any governmental positions, and overall preventing any creation of this intelligentsia (e.g. access to education etc)... Jews are to be isolated, removed from governmental positions in order to prevent sabotage... Those who are deemed necessary may only work under strict supervision and removed from their positions for slightest misconduct... Jewish assimilation is not possible.^{[76][77][78]}

Later in June, Yaroslav Stetsko sent to Bandera a report in which he stated "We are creating a militia which will help to remove the Jews and protect the population."^{[79][80]} Leaflets spread in the name of Bandera in the same year called for the "destruction" of "Moscow", Poles, Hungarians and Jewry.^{[81][82][83]} In 1941–1942 while Bandera was cooperating with the Germans, OUN members did take part in anti-Jewish actions. German police at 1941 reported that "fanatic" Bandera followers, organised in small groups were "extraordinarily active" against Jews and communists.^[84]

However, when Bandera was in conflict with the Germans, the UPA under his authority sheltered Jews,^[85] and included some Jewish fighters and medical personnel.^{[86][87]} In the official organ of the OUN-B's leadership, instructions to OUN groups urged those groups to "liquidate the manifestations of harmful foreign influence, particularly the German racist concepts and practices."^[88] Several Jews took part in Bandera's underground movement,^[89] including one of Bandera's close associates Richard Yary who was also married to a Jewish woman. Another notable Jewish UPA member was Leyba-Itzik "Valeriy" Dombrovsky. (While two Karaites from Galicia, Anna-Amelia Leonowicz (1925–1949) and her mother, Helena (Ruhama) Leonowicz (1890–1967), are reported to have become members of OUN, oral accounts suggest that both women collaborated not of their own free will, but following threats from nationalists.^[90]) By 1942, Nazi officials had concluded that Ukrainian nationalists were largely indifferent to Jews and were willing to both help them or kill them if either better served the nationalist cause. A report, dated 30 March 1942, sent to the Gestapo in Berlin, claimed that "the Bandera movement provided forged passports not only for its own members but also for Jews."^[91] The false papers were most likely supplied to Jewish doctors or skilled workers who could be useful for the movement.^[92]

Death

On 15 October 1959, Bandera collapsed outside of Kreittmayrstrasse 7 in Munich and died shortly thereafter. A medical examination established that the cause of his death was poison by cyanide gas.^{[93][94]} On 20 October 1959, Bandera was buried in the Waldfriedhof Cemetery in Munich. On 17 August 2014, unknown vandals toppled the cross on top of his grave.^[95]

Two years after his death, on 17 November 1961, the German judicial bodies announced that Bandera's murderer had been a KGB defector named Bohdan Stashynsky who acted on the orders of Soviet KGB head Alexander Shelepin and Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev.^[96] After a detailed investigation against Stashynsky, a trial took place from 8 to 15 October 1962. Stashynsky was convicted, and on 19 October he was sentenced to eight years in prison.

Family

His brothers Oleksandr and Vasyl Bandera, the former holding a PhD in Political Economy from the University of Rome and the latter being a graduate in Philosophy, Lviv University, were arrested by Germans and interned in Auschwitz, where they were allegedly killed by Polish inmates in 1942.^[97]

His father Andriy Bandera was arrested by the Soviets in late May 1941 for harboring an OUN member and transferred to Kyiv. On 8 July he was sentenced to death and executed on the 10th. His sisters Oksana and Marta–Maria were arrested by the NKVD in 1941 and sent to a GULAG in Siberia. Both were released in 1960 without the right to return to Ukraine. Marta–Maria died in Siberia in 1982, and Oksana returned to Ukraine in 1989 where she died in 2004. Another sister, Volodymyra, was sentenced to a term in Soviet labor camps from 1946 to 1956. She returned to Ukraine in 1956.^[98]

Legacy

In an interview with Russian newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* in 2005, former KGB Chief Vladimir Kryuchkov claimed that "the murder of Stepan Bandera was one of the last cases when the KGB disposed of undesired people by means of violence."^[99]

In late 2006, the Lviv city administration announced the future transference of the tombs of Stepan Bandera, Andriy Melnyk, Yevhen Konovalets and other key leaders of OUN/UPA to a new area of Lychakiv Cemetery specifically dedicated to victims of the repressions of the Ukrainian national liberation struggle.^[100]

In October 2007, the city of Lviv erected a statue dedicated to Bandera.^[101] The appearance of the statue has engendered a far-reaching debate about the role of Stepan Bandera and UPA in Ukrainian history. The two previously erected statues were blown up by unknown perpetrators; the current is guarded by a militia detachment 24/7. On 18 October 2007, the Lviv City Council adopted a resolution establishing the Award of Stepan Bandera.^{[102][103]}

On 1 January 2009, his 100th birthday was celebrated in several Ukrainian centres^{[104][105][106][107][108]} and a postage stamp with his portrait was issued the same day.^[109] On 1 January 2014, Bandera's 105th birthday was celebrated by a torchlight procession of 15,000



Bandera's grave in Munich, April 2014



Ukrainian postal stamp commemorating the centennial of Bandera's birth

people in the centre of Kyiv and thousands more rallied near his statue in Lviv.^{[110][111][112]} The march was supported by the far-right Svoboda party and some members of the center-right Batkivshchyna.^[113]

Attitudes in Ukraine towards Bandera

Bandera continues to be a divisive figure in Ukraine. Although Bandera is venerated in certain parts of western Ukraine, and 33% of Lviv's residents consider themselves to be followers of Bandera,^[114] he, along with Joseph Stalin and Mikhail Gorbachev, is considered in surveys of Ukraine as a whole among the three historical figures who produce the most negative attitudes.^[115]

A national survey conducted in Ukraine in 2009 inquired about attitudes by region towards Bandera's faction of the OUN. It produced the following results: In Galicia (provinces of Lviv, Ternopil, and Ivano-Frankivsk) 37% had a "very positive" opinion of Bandera, 26% a "mostly positive" opinion, 20% were "neutral", 5% "mostly negative", 6% "very negative", and 6% "unsure". In Volhynia, 5% had a very positive opinion, 20% a mostly positive opinion, 57% were neutral, 7% were mostly negative, 5% very negative and 6% were unsure. In Transcarpathia 4% of the respondents had a very positive opinion, 32% a mostly positive opinion, 50% were neutral, none had a mostly negative opinion, 7% had a very negative opinion and 7% were unsure. In contrast, in central Ukraine (comprising the capital Kyiv, as well as the provinces of Zhytomyr, Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Poltava, Sumy, Vinnytsia, and Kirovohrad) attitudes towards Bandera's faction of the OUN were 3% very positive, 10% mostly positive, 24% neutral, 17% mostly negative, 21% very negative and 25% unsure. In Eastern Ukraine (the provinces of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia) 1% each had very positive or mostly positive attitudes towards Bandera's OUN, 19% were neutral, 13% mostly negative, 26% very negative and 20% unsure. In Ukraine's south (the Odessa, Mykolaiv and Kherson regions plus Crimea) 1% each were very or mostly positive, 13% were neutral, 31% mostly negative, 48% very negative and 25% were unsure. In Ukraine as a whole, 6% of Ukrainians had a very positive opinion, 8% a mostly positive opinion, 23% were neutral, 15% had a mostly negative opinion, 30% had a very negative opinion, and 18% were unsure.^[116]

A poll conducted in early May 2021 by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation together with the Razumkov Centre's sociological service showed that 32% of citizens consider Stepan Bandera's activity as a historical figure to be positive for Ukraine, as many consider his activity negative; another 21% consider Bandera's activities as positive as they are negative. According to the poll, a positive attitude prevails in the western region of Ukraine (70%); in the central region of the state, 27% of respondents consider his activity positive, 27% consider his activity negative and 27% consider his activity both positive and negative;^[117] negative attitude prevails in the southern and eastern regions of Ukraine (54% and 48% of respondents consider his activity negative for Ukraine, respectively).^[117]

2014 Russian intervention in Ukraine



Ukrainian nationalists march through Kyiv, holding a banner with Bandera's portrait, as well as the flags of the Right Sector and Svoboda.



Lviv soccer fans at a game against Donetsk. The Ukrainian banner reads "Bandera – our hero"

During the 2014 Crimean crisis and unrest in Ukraine, pro-Russian Ukrainians, Russians (in Russia), and some Western authors^[118] alluded to the bad influence of Bandera on Euromaidan protesters and pro-Ukrainian Unity supporters in justifying their actions.^[119] Russian media used this to justify Russia's actions.^[27] Putin welcomed the annexation of Crimea by declaring that he "was saving them from the new Ukrainian leaders who are the ideological heirs of Bandera, Hitler's accomplice during World War II."^[27] Pro-Russian activists claimed: "Those people in Kyiv are Bandera-following Nazi collaborators."^[27] Ukrainians living in Russia complained of being labelled a "Banderite", even when they were from parts of Ukraine where Bandera has no popular support.^[27] Groups who idolize Bandera took part in the Euromaidan protests but were a minority element.^{[27][120]}



Headquarters of the Euromaidan, Kyiv, January 2014. At the front entrance there is a portrait of Bandera.

Hero of Ukraine award

On 22 January 2010, on the *Day of Unity of Ukraine*, the then-President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko awarded to Bandera the title of Hero of Ukraine (posthumously) for "defending national ideas and battling for an independent Ukrainian state."^[121] A grandson of Bandera, also named Stepan, accepted the award that day from the Ukrainian President during the state ceremony to commemorate the *Day of Unity of Ukraine* at the National Opera House of Ukraine.^{[121][122][123][124]}

Reactions to Bandera's award vary. This award has been condemned by the Simon Wiesenthal Center^[125] and the Student Union of French Jews.^[126] On the same day, numerous Ukrainian media, such as the Russian language *Segodnya*, published articles in that regard mentioning the case of Yevhen Berezhniak, a widely known Ukrainian Soviet World War II veteran, considering to renounce his own Hero of Ukraine title.^[127] The representatives from several antifascist organizations in neighboring Slovakia condemned the award to Bandera, calling Yushchenko's decision a provocation was reported by RosBusinessConsulting referring to Radio Praha.^[128] On 25 February 2010, the European Parliament criticized the decision by then president of Ukraine, Yushchenko to award Bandera the title of Hero of Ukraine and expressed hope it would be reconsidered.^[129] On 14 May 2010, in a statement, the Russian Foreign Ministry said about the award: "that the event is so odious that it could no doubt cause a negative reaction in the first place in Ukraine. Already it is known a position on this issue of a number of Ukrainian politicians, who believe that solutions of this kind do not contribute to the consolidation of Ukrainian public opinion".^[130] On the other hand, the decree was applauded by Ukrainian nationalists in western Ukraine and by a small portion of Ukrainian Americans.^{[131][132]}

On 9 February 2010, the Poland's Senate Marshal Bogdan Borusewicz said at a meeting with the head of Russia's Federation Council Sergei Mironov, that adaptation of the Hero title of Ukraine to Bandera is an internal matter of the Ukrainian government.^[133] On 3 March 2010, the Ivano-Frankivsk regional council called on the European Parliament to review this resolution.^[134] Taras Kuzio, a senior fellow in the chair of Ukrainian studies at the University of Toronto, has suggested Yushchenko awarded Bandera the award in order to frustrate Yulia Tymoshenko's chances to get elected president during the 2010 Ukrainian presidential election.^[135]

On 5 March 2010, President Viktor Yanukovich stated that he would make a decision to repeal the decrees to honor the title as Heroes of Ukraine to Bandera and fellow nationalist Roman Shukhevych before the next Victory Day,^[136] although the Hero of Ukraine decrees do not stipulate the possibility that a decree on awarding this title can be annulled.^[137] On 2 April 2010,

an administrative Donetsk region court ruled the presidential decree awarding the title to be illegal. According to the court's decision, Bandera was not a citizen of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (*vis-à-vis* Ukraine).^{[138][139][140][141]} On 5 April 2010, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine refused to start constitutional proceedings on the constitutionality of the President Yushchenko decree the award was based on. A ruling by the court was submitted by the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea on 20 January 2010.^[142]

In January 2011, the presidential press service informed that the award was officially annulled.^{[21][143]} This was done after a cassation appeals filed against the ruling by Donetsk District Administrative Court was rejected by the Higher Administrative Court of Ukraine on 12 January 2011.^{[144][145]} Former President Yushchenko called the annulment "a gross error."^[146]

In December 2018, the Ukrainian parliament moved to again confer the award on Bandera but the proposal was rejected in August 2019.^[22]

Commemoration

There are Stepan Bandera museums in Dubliany, Volia-Zaderevatska, Stryi Uhryniv, and Yahilnytsia. There is a Stepan Bandera Museum of Liberation Struggle in London, part of the OUN Archive,^[147] and The Bandera's Family Museum (Музей родини Бандерів) in Stryi.^{[148][149]} There are also Stepan Bandera streets in Lviv (formerly Mury street), Lutsk (formerly Suvorovska street), Rivne (formerly Moskovska street), Kolomyia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Chervonohrad (formerly Nad Buhom street),^[150] Berezhany (formerly Cherniakhovskoho street), Drohobych (formerly Sliusarska street), Stryi, Kalush, Kovel, Volodymyr-Volynskyi, Horodenka, Dubrovysia, Kolomyia, Dolyna, Iziaslav, Skole, Shepetivka, Brovary, and Boryspil, and a Stepan Bandera prospect in Ternopil (part of the former Lenin prospect).^[151] On 16 January 2017, the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance stated that of the 51,493 streets, squares and "other facilities" that had been renamed (since 2015) due to decommunization 34 streets were named after Stepan Bandera.^[152] Due to "association with the communist totalitarian regime", the Kyiv City Council on 7 July 2016 voted 87 to 10 in favor of supporting renaming Moscow Avenue to Stepan Bandera Avenue.^{[153][154]}

Monuments dedicated to Stepan Bandera have been constructed in a number of western Ukrainian cities, including a statue in Lviv, as well as Stryi Uhryniv, Kolomyia, Drohobych,^[155] Zalishchyky,^[156] Mykytyntsi,^[157] Uzyn,^[158] Buchach,^[159] Hrabivka,^[160] Horodenka,^[161] Stryi Sambir,^[162] Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk,^[163] Strusiv,^[164] Truskavets,^[165] Horishniy, Velykosilky, Sambir, Velyki Mosty, Skole,^[166] Turka,^[167] Zdolbuniv,^[168] Chortkiv,^{[169][170]} Sniatyn,^[171] and in such cities and villages as Berezhany, Boryslav, Chervonohrad, Dubliany, Kamianka-Buzka, Kremenets, Mostyska, Pidvolochysk, Seredniy Bereziv, Terebovlia, Verbiv, and Volia-Zaderevatska. In 2010 and 2011, Bandera was named an honorary citizen of a number of western Ukrainian cities, including Khust,^[172] Nadvirna,^[173] Ternopil,^[174] Ivano-Frankivsk,^[175] Lviv,^[176] Kolomyia,^[177] Dolyna,^[178] Varash,^[179] Lutsk,^[180] Chervonohrad,^[181] Terebovlia,^[182] Truskavets,^[183] Radekhiv,^[184] Sokal,^[185] Stebnyk,^[186] Zhovkva,^[187] Skole,^[188] Berezhany,^[189] Sambir,^[190] Boryslav,^[191] Brody,^[192] Stryi,^[193] and Morshyn.^[194]



Stepan Bandera monument in Ternopil

In late 2018, the Lviv Oblast Council decided to declare the year of 2019 to be the year of Stepan Bandera, sparking protests by Israel.^[195] Two feature films have been made about Bandera, among them are *Assassination: An October Murder in Munich* (1995) and *The Undefeated*

(2000), both directed by Oles Yanchuk, along with a number of documentary films. In 2021, the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory under the authority of the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture, included Bandera, among other Ukrainian nationalist figures, into Virtual Necropolis, a project intended to commemorate historical figures important for Ukraine.^[196]

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Further reading

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See also

- Lviv pogroms (1941)

External links

- Article about the assassination of Stepan Bandera The Assassination of Stepan Bandera - ARTICLE Bright Review (<http://www.brightreview.co.uk/ARTICLE-Bandera.html>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20191031182118/http://www.brightreview.co.uk/ARTICLE-Bandera.html>) 31 October 2019 at the Wayback Machine
- Stepan Bandera, His Life and Struggle (<http://exlibris.org.ua/murders/r04.html>)
- Bandera's supporters ready for new battle (<http://www.kyivpost.com/news/nation/detail/61561/>) (editorial) – *Kyiv Post* (11 March 2010)
- (in English) Stepan Bandera. Perspectives for Ukrainian Revolution (audiobook) Ukrainian Publishers House L.T.D. London. 1988.
- Recorded speech by Stepan Bandera, Munich 1956 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4E23fpnYajU>) on YouTube

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