

Two Regimes (A Memoir)
University Course

A Guide for Instructors
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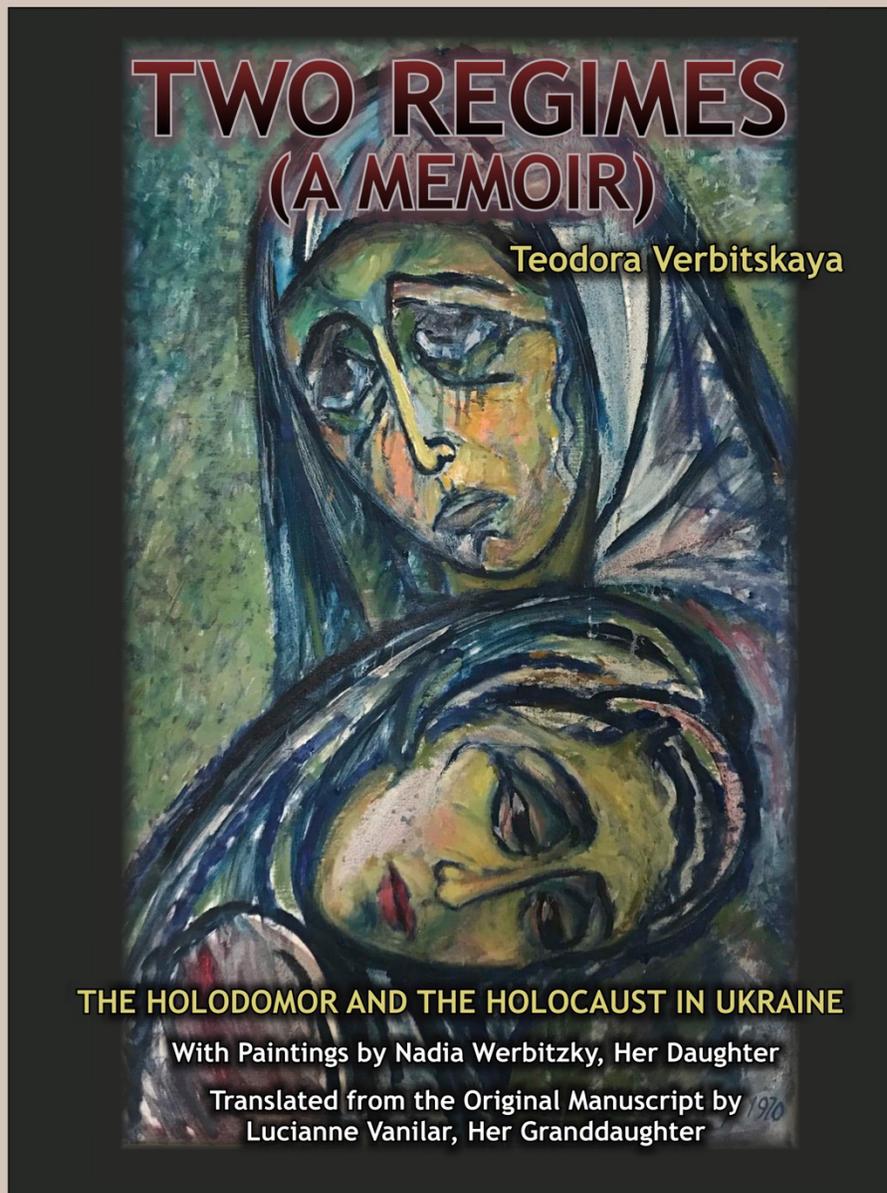


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Introduction

For those who wish to gain a greater understanding of Ukrainian history, as well as many of the forces that are still at play today both in Ukraine and the wider world, *Two Regimes (A Memoir)*, by Teodora Verbitskaya, is an invaluable firsthand account of one of the most tumultuous periods of this nation's past. Spanning over the years leading up to the Holodomor and on through the end of World War II, Verbitskaya's intimate and detailed account of what she saw and experienced during this time offers us a unique window through which to view some of the worst atrocities of the Twentieth Century, as well as the very real lives of those who lived during these times. History books may provide us with numbers of the dead and wounded, descriptions of the most significant events to take place, and profiles of people whose actions affected the lives of many, but firsthand accounts such as that within *Two Regimes* allow us to put faces to the numbers and see the impact that these events had on the human beings who experienced them. Verbitskaya's story, moreover, also affords us the opportunity to hear from some of those whose voices are most often lost. Few uncensored autobiographical texts authored by those living in Ukraine during this period survived to the present day, and fewer still of those that did survive were written by women.

This course is designed to stand as a companion piece to Verbitskaya's memoir, both to offer those studying her work a greater understanding of the historical context in which she lived, as well as to validate the facts and events that she describes for any who might cast doubt on the veracity of her words. Those studying this course will be given an explanation of the major themes and events which have guided Ukrainian affairs over the centuries, as well as a detailed account of all the major happenings described or referenced in the memoir and their aftermath. Upon completion, those who use this course should have a greater understanding both of Ukrainian history and the wider world this nation is situated in, as well as a greater appreciation for Verbitskaya's story and the context in which it takes place.

Today, understanding this area of history and hearing the words of people like Teodora Verbitskaya has seldom been more important. As some try to turn back the clock and rewrite the past to fit their own interests, we have a duty to push back and let truth be spoken. In failing to confront history with honesty and a critical eye, we risk giving those who would shroud the past the power to rewrite our future. While so many of those from Verbitskaya's time had their voices taken from them, it is up to us to listen to those voices which remain and allow them to tell their stories.

Course Outline and Overview

This course is broken into six modules, each of which has a separate focus. Depending on time constraints, instructors may choose to devote more class time to some modules than others (for example, modules III and V contain more materials and may require more time compared to the others). Each module contains a suggested outline, explaining what should be covered in class, lists of both primary readings and optional secondary readings, and a list of potential essay prompts and project ideas, all of which can double as in-class discussion topics.

Outlines

Each module outline will explain the focus of the module, what will be covered in readings, as well as lectures and in-class discussions. These should serve as a jumping off point for instructors, as well as a list of bare minimum topics which should be covered in any course during each module. Instructors should feel free to expand upon this outline to cover additional topics or explore topics in more detail. Those instructors who have additional expertise in some areas covered in the course (such as Shoah literature or Eastern European history, for example) may choose to expand upon these sections of the course, and this should be encouraged so long as other topics are not neglected.

Readings:

Each module in this course is accompanied by lists of primary and secondary texts. Additionally, a list of recommended texts is included at the end of this course. The primary texts consist of sections of *Two Regimes (A Memoir)*, as well as other selected materials, and all should be required in any version of this course. Secondary texts consist of selections from *The Gates of Europe* and *Lost Kingdom*, by Serhii Plokhy, *Red Famine*, by Anne Applebaum, and *Bloodlands*, by Timothy Snyder. It is *highly* recommended that *all* selections from these texts be required reading in most versions of this course, as they are vital to understanding the historical context surrounding *Two Regimes* and all serve to validate and vet the factual authenticity of Teodora Verbitskaya's account of events. Recommended texts, on the other hand, may be assigned in whole or in part at the instructor's discretion and/or remain as suggested further reading for students who wish to learn more on their own time or who may want to consult them as they work on class projects. If possible, instructors should have read through all recommended texts prior to beginning the course so that they may determine which shall be assigned as required reading alongside the primary and secondary texts. Additionally, instructors should view these lists of texts as a starting place and feel free to add their own required and recommended readings according to their own research and areas of expertise.

It will also be up to instructors to tailor the required readings to fit the type and level of the course being taught. A full-semester 3-credit course (using the standard 15-18 credit hour semester system common in US universities as a point of reference here)

should include all of the primary and secondary texts, as well as a selection of the recommended texts and additional readings and resources selected by the instructor. For a 1-2 credit course, on the other hand, instructors may want to limit required readings to the primary and secondary texts, as well as a possible small selection of additional readings.

In the case of high school or secondary school versions of this course, instructors may need to pare down the readings, assigning students individual page selections from the chapters listed in the secondary text sections of each module, rather than the entire chapters themselves. Because each instructor will have to make their own determinations on the length and breadth of readings assigned in each of their classes, based on factors such as grade level, the aptitude of their students, and the requirements and policies of their local educational system, no attempt is made here to suggest which parts of the secondary texts should be assigned. The factors which go into such determinations can be highly variable from one class to the next, so it is up to the instructor to use their best judgment in selecting readings which best align with the type of course they are teaching, while also working to ensure their students receive as much valuable information as is feasible.

Instructors teaching graduate-level versions of this course are advised to assign all primary and secondary texts, as well as a significant portion of the recommended readings and additional readings found and curated by the instructor themselves. Depending on the length and breadth of the course being taught, instructors may consider assigning the entirety of the four secondary texts the course is built around (especially *Red Famine* and *The Gates of Europe*), as well as other books, chapters, articles, documentaries, primary documents, autobiographical works, and additional resources, as is fitting.

In the case of shorter seminars, one-off lectures, or lecture series, this course should be used as a guide to formulate a lesson plan around *Two Regimes*, even if many of the resources provided may not be applicable for some types of class structure. In these cases, instructors should read the entirety of the primary and secondary texts, as well as many of the recommended texts, potentially combining these with their own independent research and using them to inform their exploration of *Two Regimes* as they situate the memoir in a broader historical context. While the structure of the course may need to be significantly altered to fit some formats or forums, both the module outlines and project prompts can be used in a similar way as the instructor plans their lesson. The module outlines can serve as lists of topics that may be discussed, while project and essay prompts can be used as potential subjects to be explored during the lesson.

For those who wish to include *Two Regimes* in an entirely different course, such as a course on Shoah literature or World War II history, this guide can act as a resource for instructors deciding how to incorporate the memoir into the class they will be teaching. The history outlines and project prompts should serve to inform their lectures and organization of classroom discussion as students read *Two Regimes*, and the secondary and recommended texts can act as a valuable source of additional materials which may be taught alongside the memoir.

Project and Essay Prompts:

Included in each module is a list of potential project prompts corresponding to the relevant subject matter, as well as an additional list of project prompts at the end of this course which incorporate themes drawn from throughout the course that do not fit in any one module alone. These materials are meant to serve as suggestions for the kinds of assignments instructors may want to use in the course but are in no way a comprehensive list. Also included in each module are selected paintings and photographs from the memoir which can be used as prompts for in-class discussion or visual stimuli for project prompts. All project prompts can also be adapted to act as prompts for in-class discussions or activities. Instructors are encouraged to design their own essay and project prompts in addition to the ones listed here, using these as a framework to start with, as well as edit or adapt the listed prompts to fit the type of course they are building.

Details, such as word count or specific requirements for outside research, have deliberately not been included as it will be up to the instructor to determine the appropriate number and length of assignments, as well as grading criteria and other details, according to the aptitude and level of their students and the accreditation requirements of the course they are teaching. It will also be up to the instructor to determine when and how to assign projects. Although the prompts listed in each module are designed to correspond to the relevant material being covered in that portion of the course, they need not be restricted to that module alone. Many of the prompts can also work well for semester-length term papers, projects, or group assignments. The specific type of project associated with each prompt is also subject to change by the instructor. While essays are generally the standard with each of the listed prompts, instructors may choose to have the students use the given prompts to build group projects, in-class presentations, artistic projects, scrapbooks, posters, public presentations, audio-visual projects, plays or reenactments, or any number of other potential projects using various mediums, including unique project proposals suggested by students themselves.

As has been said above, it will be up to the instructor to determine how many assignments will be required to complete their version of this course, the length of these assignments, what percentage of the final grade each will be worth, and which prompts will be available for students at each stage of the course. However, below are provided several potential options appropriate for a 3-credit hour course using the standard 15-18 credit semester used by most US universities:

Example 1: Six short essays or reaction papers, each corresponding to one of the modules, as well as one long term paper or long group project (the entire class may work on a group project, or the class may be divided into smaller groups). The instructor may require students to give short presentations in place of one or more of the module essays, assigning them on a rotating basis so that presentations are given regularly in class throughout the semester.

Example 2: One medium length essay to be completed near the midpoint of the semester, covering subject matter from modules I-III, and one longer term paper

covering subject matter from modules IV-VI (or, alternatively, this term paper may cover a topic drawn from anywhere in the course). The instructor may choose to assign six short quizzes which cover each module as a means of ensuring that students stay on top of the course readings, or they may choose to instead grade students on participation in classroom discussions and activities which demonstrates that they have completed and understood the readings.

Example 3: One large group assignment in which the entire class and the instructor work together to select a topic, or topics, on which to produce a final project. The first half of the semester may be used to educate students on how to gather and evaluate research, work together as a class to set goals and determine the scope and subject matter of the assignment, and determine which job(s) individual students will have in producing the final project. The second half of the semester may be used to continue gathering research and putting together the final project. Students will then be evaluated based on their participation and the quality of their work on the project. In addition to this, the instructor may also choose to assign six short quizzes or reaction papers to encourage students to keep up with the readings.

This type of collaborative class project could have many advantages over more traditional types of assignments and methods of evaluating student performance. Some potential advantages include: allowing students to play to their strengths by choosing jobs which best fit their skill set rather than relying on one size fits all exams or assignments, giving students valuable real world research skills for high end academic work, and teaching teamwork, collaboration, and communication skills. It will be up to the instructor to guide the course of the project and ensure that all work is distributed evenly among students and that no one student is expected to do an excessive amount of work at any single point in the semester (which may be overwhelming and interfere with their performance in other classes).

This final project may also take many different forms, and it will be up to the instructor to either choose the type and topic beforehand, or guide the students through suggesting and discussing their own proposals as a class. Some examples of the types of projects that could be completed include a documentary film, a public presentation or exhibit at their university or a local institution (such as a high school, library, or museum), or an essay written as if for publication in an academic journal.

Example 4: Six short essays or reaction papers, each corresponding to one of the modules, as well as one long term paper or long group project. (The entire class may work on a group project similar to the one above, albeit less involved, or the class may be divided into smaller groups to work on their own projects. The instructor may also give students the option of choosing between the term paper or working on a group project). The instructor may require students to give short presentations in place of one or more of the module essays, assigning them on a

rotating basis so that presentations are given regularly in class throughout the semester.

Cautionary Note for Those Teaching or Taking This Course:

Both students and instructors should be continually aware that we live in a world which is, and has always been, full of propaganda, purposeful or unintentional misinformation, misunderstandings, poor/biased interpretations of historical events, and false assumptions on the part of authors and commentators which come about as a result of their own biases, poor sources of information, censorship, or the broader context of beliefs common in the societies within which they lived.

In studying Soviet history, these problems in sorting through propaganda, misinformation, altered/censored historical documents, and biased historical narratives can be particularly difficult. Historians must contend with both anti-Soviet narratives, which often distorted facts to fit their own goals and assumptions as they evolved over time, as well as pro-Soviet narratives propagated both within and outside of the Soviet Union, which depict a *heavily* altered version of history in which many facts were ignored, distorted, or completely fabricated.

The echoes of misinformation surrounding the Holodomor, in which Soviet authorities denied that a famine was taking place, destroyed records, and placed blame on overzealous local party functionaries for all that went wrong, still resonate today in the form of continued debate over whether the famine was simply the result of a failure in agricultural collectivization or a deliberate attack on the Ukrainian peasantry and people. Similarly, pro-Soviet propaganda during WWII, when the Soviet Union and Western powers were trying to present a united front as they fought against the Axis powers, still has an impact to this day on our view of this historical period. Later, during the Cold War as various sides tried to promote their interests, the world was faced with a veritable flood of misinformation and propaganda over the course of decades, and the narratives woven together during this time potentially have more bearing on present day views of the world than any others that arose during Soviet history.

Ultimately, it is the job of historians, such as yourselves, to view *all* received information with a skeptical eye and to do the work required to verify facts, consider multiple different views (and the historical context in which those views arose so as to parse out truths and falsehoods within them), and to exercise restraint in putting forth or repeating ideas or information that you have not vetted. Although not everyone is an historian, this concept can also be applied to everyday life as it is our solemn duty as responsible citizens to speak truth to power and verify all information before putting it out into the world, even if the results are uncomfortable and do not align with what we would like to believe.

Module I: *Two Regimes* (A Memoir)

Module Description/Suggested Instructions:

Module I is focused on introducing students to the course, reading the entirety of *Two Regimes*, and showing students how to collect and analyze research in preparation for later phases of the course.

While portions of *Two Regimes* are included in the primary reading sections of the following five modules, to be reread in context of the relevant history covered in each, it is best that students read the entire memoir as one unbroken narrative rather than in sections split up over an extended period of time. However, depending on how much class time can be allotted to Module I, instructors may choose to discuss parts I and II of *Two Regimes* over two separate class periods. Additionally, instructors may choose whether to screen *Two Regimes – Two Genocides* in class or ask students to watch the documentary film on their own time.

Historical Information to Be Covered in Class:

-In addition to reading and discussing *Two Regimes* during this module, instructors should also take time in one or more class periods to instruct students on how to collect and evaluate research. While some students may already be experienced in conducting research using the tools available to them through their school, the internet, or local institutions, others may be new to this type of research or only partially aware of all the resources at their disposal and how to access them.

This instruction period should include:

- How to access the university library (or local libraries if this is not applicable).
- How to find relevant books and materials at the library and check them out.
- How to access databases through the library (such as JSTOR or the MLA (Modern Language Association) Bibliography), and an overview of useful databases available through the library.
- How to use search tools within databases to filter results and search for key words and topics.
- How to avoid common pitfalls while conducting research (such as avoiding material that is out of date or published by an unreliable source), as well as how to evaluate the quality of research materials and find good sources (such as respected peer-reviewed journals).
- How to find and access free, high-quality databases available on the internet, such as the Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine, hosted by University of Alberta's Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies.
- How to use advanced Google search tools (or search tools on other internet browsers) to locate specific information.

Primary Texts:

Two Regimes: Pgs. xi-xii, xxi, 2-150

Documentary Film: *Two Regimes – Two Genocides*

Assignment Prompts

- 1) In *Two Regimes*, Verbitskaya talks about how the “burden fell on feminine shoulders” during the Holodomor. What does she mean by this? How did life during this time generally differ between men and women? What unique challenges did women face?
- 2) How was the culture of fear and suspicion within Ukraine during the Great Terror described by Verbitskaya? How did it affect people’s actions and what they were willing to talk about aloud? How does this compare to descriptions described in the texts?
- 3) Throughout *Two Regimes*, Verbitskaya’s descriptions of food are a ubiquitous component of her story. Why do you think this is so? How was food important in Ukrainian culture, beyond simple sustenance, and how is this expressed in the ways that she talks about food? Why, for example, were actions such as baking the birthday cake near the end of her memoir so meaningful? Why was it necessary to create a story about an impending wedding to oblige Verbitskaya to use sparse ingredients to bake a cake that she would not otherwise have baked for herself, and why was it so important to her daughters that she did so? Conversely, why did Verbitskaya’s daughters visit the terribly abusive Frau Blei to give her coffee, a precious commodity at that time? What might the meaning of that have been, and what message might this action have sent? Are there other meaningful experiences related to food in the memoir that could be discussed, and how might they be related to each other?

Module II: Overview of the History of Ukraine; Ukrainian Independence; The Russian Revolution and Its Aftermath

Module Description/Suggested Instructions

In module II, the instructor should overview the pre-Russian Revolution history of Ukraine, briefly going over important points and broad themes which have been recurrent throughout its past. This would include analyzing how issues such as Ukraine's geographic placement and the actions of its neighbors have impacted its development as a nation, as well as major cultural movements which have occurred within the country, among other things.

Once this brief overview has been completed, the instructor should move on to explore in more detail the events leading up to the Russian Revolution and the Bolshevik Revolution; Ukraine's brief history as an independent nation; the chaotic, often bloody events which followed these upheavals; and the final absorption of Ukraine into the Soviet Union and its aftermath. After the instructor has thoroughly reviewed this history and discussed the content of the readings, students should then be encouraged to discuss the events recounted in *Two Regimes* which took place during this period and how they were impacted by and intertwined with the broader history of Ukraine and the world. While the instructor may choose to guide elements of this discussion, such as by asking questions about how specific events affected Teodora Verbitskaya's family and the world around them, students should also be encouraged to talk about what struck them most during their study of both the readings and this section of the memoir in a more free-form format which encourages spontaneous discussion.

Historical Information to Be Covered in Class:

Ukraine's Early History and Place in Europe as Bridge Between East and West

-Throughout its history, Ukraine has straddled the border between Europe and Central Asia, and has been influenced by a wide variety of different cultures since the Neolithic Era. Attracted by the incredibly fertile land of its black earth region, successive waves of immigrants, invaders, and colonizers have moved into Ukraine over the millennia, sweeping into the open, indefensible plains. Often bringing death and destruction, these new arrivals also left their imprint on the rich cultural makeup of this part of the world. Early in its history, many nomadic cultures, such as the Scythians and the Cimmerians (mentioned in Homer's *Odyssey* as residing in the northern Black Sea region of what is present-day Ukraine) called Ukraine's vast steppe regions home. Scythian states in Ukraine formed strong links with Greek states further south, basing their economy on the export of grain to these regions.

-Ukrainian lands were later subject to invasion by the Goths and Sarmatians, among others, and the Greeks established city-states on the Black Sea coast. Centuries later, the Romans established colonies of their own in Crimea.

-During the Fourth and Fifth Centuries AD, the Huns began invading Ukraine and the eastern Roman Empire, forcing many to flee west during the era of the Period of

Migrations (or the Period of Barbarian Invasions) in Europe. The Huns, like other invaders of Ukraine's steppe regions, came and went in time. However, people existed in Ukraine before the Huns and other transient invaders, and continued to inhabit the region after each faded in turn. It was in the Sixth Century AD that the Slavs were first generally recognized and written about in surviving records when they came into contact with the Byzantine Empire, although it is now believed that they have existed in the northern forested regions of Ukraine for millennia, unknown to literate cultures.

-Following the Period of Migrations came the Viking Age with traders, raiders, and settlers from Scandinavia spreading outward, traveling along coastlines and rivers from the Arctic north to the shores of Africa in the south, and from the beaches of Portugal in the west to the Volga River and the Caspian Sea in the east. Attracted by the wealth, culture, and prestige of Byzantium (later renamed Constantinople, and today known as Istanbul), some of these Norse travelers settled in nearby regions, including along the Dnieper River at the site of present-day Kyiv. Although the exact origins of the Kingdom of Kyivan Rus' are still debated, it controlled much of the territory of present-day Ukraine at its height and had a profound impact on the cultural development of the region until its disintegration and collapse amidst the Mongol invasions of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries.

-In the wake of the Kyivan Rus', the principality of Galicia-Volhynia arose, in which tribute was paid to the Mongols and the Mongols in turn recognized the legitimacy of the state. During the Fourteenth Century, the principality came under Polish and Lithuanian control after they successfully fought the Mongols, each taking portions of the country, after which Poland later controlled much of the territory in the Fifteenth Century. During this time, many Poles, Lithuanians, Germans, and Jews immigrated to the region and native Ukrainians began to face increasing levels of oppression, leading to a string of successful rebellions. Following the decline of the Golden Horde, the Crimean Khanate was founded, occupying the southern Ukrainian steppes and Black Sea shores and gaining wealth through a vast trade in slaves seized from Ukraine and Russia until the Eighteenth Century.

-In 1569, Ukraine came under the control of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. This period saw increasing Polonization of Ukrainian society and large numbers of Polish peasants moved into the countryside and integrated with the previous inhabitants. Some groups of peasants who fled serfdom would eventually become known as the Cossacks and were renowned for their military prowess. The Polish state made use of the Cossacks in some of their conflicts with the Tatars and the Tsardom of Russia (also known as the Tsardom of Muscovy or the Tsardom of Rus'), although they were not granted autonomy, and attempts were made to force much of the Cossack population into serfdom.

-These repressions against the Cossacks led to a series of rebellions, which eventually resulted in a major rebellion led by Bohdan Khmelnytsky in 1648. Following the rebellion, the Cossack Hetmanate state was formed and a treaty of protection was signed with Russia in 1654. However, this treaty was overturned by a 1667 treaty with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, dividing Ukraine between them, although the Cossacks initially retained some autonomy under the Russians. Over time, Cossack autonomy dissipated, despite sporadic Cossack uprisings, until

the far west of Ukraine came under Austrian control while the rest of Ukraine became part of the Russian Empire in the late Eighteenth Century under Catherine II.

-In 1791, Catherine II established the Pale of Settlement, an area within the Russian Empire where Jews were permitted to live, do business, and move more freely (although they still faced significant restrictions and persecution, and some cities and localities within the Pale nevertheless expelled Jews or forbade them from living in rural settlements). The Pale of Settlement encompassed all of modern-day Moldova and Belarus, most of Ukraine, and significant portions of Lithuania and Poland, although its borders varied over time and later Russian rulers began to shrink its size. Life inside the Pale was often bleak, with few economic opportunities and frequent, bloody attacks called pogroms against the Jews living there, leading many to immigrate outside of the Russian Empire. However, Jewish culture nevertheless thrived within the Pale and had a great influence abroad as Jews moved elsewhere.

-During the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries, Ukrainian cultural and independence movements gained traction amidst a broader climate of European nationalism. Many peoples chafing under the yoke of imperial powers began to recognize their own cultural autonomy and pushed for recognition or independence. These movements in Ukraine were often centered around the University of Kyiv, and emphasis was put on promoting the Ukrainian language, Ukrainian culture, and Ukrainian history as separate from Russian language, culture, and history, or that of any other neighboring power. This led some to advocate for Ukrainian autonomy within the Russian Empire, or for the creation of a separate Ukrainian state. Fearing a potential rebellion, Imperial Russian authorities imposed strict repressions against “Ukrainophiles,” seeking to prevent the ascendance of Ukrainian culture and language, and often banning Ukrainian-language publications. In Austrian-controlled Galicia, on the other hand, “Russophiles” were oppressed while Ukrainian intellectuals fled the Russian Empire to settle there. As a result, Ukrainophiles became ascendant in Galicia and this ideology gradually filtered back into Russian-controlled eastern Ukraine. At the start of WWI, Russophiles were detained en masse and held at Talerhof, Europe’s first concentration camp.¹

The Russian Revolution

-WWI had a severe impact the Russian Empire and weakened its leadership. Russia’s military began performing poorly in the war and conditions on the Eastern Front were terrible. Tsar Nicholas II chose to take direct control of the Russian military in 1915 in an attempt to turn things around, but he was not equipped to handle this job and the decision severely backfired as the Russian public began to hold him directly responsible for the Russian military’s continued failures. In addition to this, the war had also had major negative impacts on the Russian

¹ Plokhy, Serhii. *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine* (Revised). Basic Books 2021: 3-200

economy as food shortages and agricultural disruption became increasingly common.

-The failed 1905 Revolution in Russia continued to have an impact long after it was put down, as did the memory of Bloody Sunday and the nationwide protests and soldier mutinies which came as a result. The 1905 Revolution also led to the creation of the Duma, or parliament (which would later form a Provisional Government after the February Revolution in 1917). Additionally, various revolutionary movements continued underground in Russian society from this time and would gain steam as the war went badly and public opinion of the government soured.

-This unrest culminated in the February Revolution (8-16 March 1917) following protests over food shortages. As a result, Nicholas II was convinced to abdicate the throne and the Duma formed the Provisional Government. Simultaneously, networks of Soviets (Workers' Councils) were formed in various cities across the Russian Empire, particularly in Petrograd (St. Petersburg). The Soviets advocated for control over some government affairs and various militias, and soon a dual government was formed. The Soviets controlled many aspects of domestic governance while the Provisional Government controlled the military and foreign affairs.

-Many different social movements vied for power during this chaotic period and sought influence in the Provisional Government and the local Soviets. These included groups such as the Bolsheviks (headed by Vladimir Lenin), the Social-Democrats, the Mensheviks, the Social Revolutionaries, and Anarchists. However, the Bolsheviks moved from the fringes and began to gain increased support in many areas with their promises to pull Russia out of the war with Germany, give land to the peasants, improve conditions for workers, and end the famine caused by WWI.

-Despite the war's unpopularity, the Provisional Government refused to withdraw Russian troops from the battlefield, stoking anger and further unrest. Moreover, its violent reaction to armed protests resulted in hundreds of deaths, further degrading its standing in public opinion. Various socialist revolutionary groups used this as justification to further the revolution and the Bolsheviks began to gather myriad workers' militias into Red Guards, which could be used to overthrow the government.

-On 7-8 November 1917, the October Revolution was launched when the Bolsheviks initiated an armed insurrection against the Provisional Government in Petrograd, successfully overthrowing it and taking power themselves.²

Ukrainian Independence and the Russian Civil War

-Soon after the February Revolution, the Ukrainian People's Republic was founded and the Central Rada (Central Council) was elected in Kyiv on 4 March 1917. On

² Applebaum, Anne. *Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine*. Doubleday, 2018: 13-47; and Plokhyy, Serhii. *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine (Revised)*. Basic Books 2021: 187-214

March 7, Mykhailo Hrushevsky, a renowned historian and author of a comprehensive history of Ukraine as an entity separate from Russia, was elected Head of the Central Rada, with representatives of two major Ukrainian political parties selected to be his deputies. While the selection of an historian to become the leader of a newly-formed state might seem strange today, historians such as Hrushevsky were deeply important to the independence movement and the formation of a Ukrainian identity separate from Russia. For many years, historians within the Russian Empire writing about “Little Russia” or “The Ukraine” (as Ukraine was considered to be a province of Russia by imperial authorities) were obliged to treat this history as an element of Russian history, rather than the history of a distinct nation with its own history, culture, and language.

-The Central Rada promised major reforms, such as the redistribution of land from major landholders to the peasants. Moreover, the Central Rada also promised fairness and equality for all Ukrainians, including ethnic minorities such as the Jews, and made efforts to incorporate members of these minorities into the government. The proposals planned by the Central Rada were popular among much of the Ukrainian population, especially the poor and peasants. However, it did not have the bureaucratic organization to implement these plans and enforce new laws across Ukraine, nor did it have the military power at its disposal to defend the new state’s sovereignty (especially as many Ukrainian troops were still serving on the frontlines during WWI). Moreover, many powerful Ukrainians, such as wealthy landowners and the business elite, opposed the Central Rada’s plans and did what they could to stymie its efforts. Foreign powers also sought to influence and intervene in Ukraine before the Central Rada had time to organize a new state apparatus and consolidate power.

-On 28 June, the Central Rada issued its First Universal, declaring Ukraine’s autonomy within the Russian state without actually declaring its independence.

-On 16 July, the Central Rada issued its Second Universal, which stated the agreement of reciprocal recognition between the Central Rada and the Provisional Government in Russia.

-On 20 November, in response to the October Revolution and Bolshevik efforts to stage their own revolution in Kyiv, the Central Rada issued its Third Universal, declaring Ukraine’s independence from the Russian state and forming the Ukrainian People’s Republic (UNR), although a formal federal connection was maintained with the Russian government.

-After failing to instigate a revolution in Kyiv, the Bolsheviks left the city and traveled to Kharkiv, which was closer to the Russian border, to establish their own Bolshevik Ukrainian government. Other Bolsheviks then proceeded to establish other People’s Republics on paper across Ukraine in an attempt to undermine the Central Rada’s legitimacy.

-Hostilities between the Central Rada and the Bolsheviks began immediately after the declaration of independence, with Bolshevik forces taking multiple cities over in January and February of 1918.

-In response to Soviet pressure, on 22 January 1918, the Central Rada issued its Fourth Universal, declaring Ukraine’s complete and total independence from all foreign powers.

- Kyiv was finally captured by the Bolsheviks on 9 February 1918 and the members of the Central Rada fled.
- In desperation, the Central Rada turned to the Germans to form an alliance. The Germans agreed to aid the Ukrainian government in return for Ukrainian agricultural products, as Germany was facing a serious food crisis. The German and Austrian armies proceeded to enter Ukraine and push Bolsheviks out of Ukraine, retaking Kyiv on 1 March 1918.
- Desperate to end the war, the Bolshevik government in Petrograd then signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Central Powers on 3 March 1918, ending Russia's involvement in WWI and forcing the Bolsheviks to recognize the independence of Ukraine.
- Ukrainian troops and their German and Austrian allies continued to fight the Bolsheviks, and by the end of April 1918, had succeeded in completely recapturing all Ukrainian territory. However, unrest continued as various groups continued to oppose the Bolsheviks and the Central Rada, such as local Bolsheviks and the Revolutionary Insurgent Army of Ukraine, among others.
- On 29 April, the Central Rada ratified the Constitution of the Ukrainian National Republic. However, this same day, a coup d'état was launched by conservative members of the All-Ukrainian Union of Landowners with support from the Austrians and Germans, proclaiming Pavlo Skoropadsky Hetman of Ukraine and establishing the Hetman government, repealing all laws passed by the Central Rada.
- Skoropadsky then went about consolidating power and forming a new government, pulling elements from Ukraine's Cossack past and wearing a Cossack uniform in an attempt to create the appearance of legitimacy. Moreover, he also allowed many Russian refugees fleeing the Bolsheviks, such those of the upper and middle class who were being persecuted, to find safety in Ukraine.
- In November 1918, however, the Central Powers were defeated by the Allies in WWI and German troops completely withdrew from Ukraine. Skoropadsky departed with the Germans and the Hetmanate was overthrown by the Directorate of Ukraine, which had replaced the Central Rada as the governing body of the Ukrainian People's Republic.
- Soon after the withdrawal of the Germans, the Bolshevik government in Russia annulled the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and resumed hostilities in Ukraine.
- At the same time, Ukrainians in Galicia proclaimed the Western Ukrainian People's Republic (WUNR) while Poles in western Galicia joined the Second Polish Republic. Hostilities soon broke out, and by October, the Poles had defeated the Galician Ukrainians and Poland annexed eastern Galicia.
- Other foreign powers soon intervened in Ukraine, with the French landing forces in southern Ukraine in December 1918. However, the French soon withdrew forces in April 1919.
- A large Bolshevik offensive swept across much of eastern and central Ukraine early in 1919, and Kyiv was taken from the Directorate on 5 February.
- In May 1919, Nykyfor Hryhoriv launched an armed rebellion against the Bolsheviks in Ukraine in response to massive grain requisitions. Although the Bolsheviks recaptured the areas controlled by Hryhoriv's forces by the end of May, forcing him

and his remaining followers to flee, this rebellion sowed chaos in the countryside and severely disrupted Bolshevik military planning.

-On 25 June 1919, the White Russian Armed Forces of South Russia advanced on Ukraine, taking Kharkiv on 30 June and Kyiv on 31 August.

-Despite these White Russian advances, that winter the Bolsheviks began to advance and soon had retaken most of Ukraine, save for Crimea.

-The Ukrainian People's Republic again looked to a former enemy, asking Poland to aid them in the fight against the Bolsheviks. In April 1920, a formal agreement was signed in which the Polish annexation of Galicia was recognized and Polish forces entered Ukraine. Kyiv was retaken on 7 May with Polish aid, but then was soon overrun in late May amidst a Bolshevik counteroffensive which pushed Polish and Ukrainian forces from most of Ukraine. Bolshevik forces were then defeated near Warsaw and retreated.

-White Russian forces took advantage of this chaos to stage a renewed offensive in southern Ukraine. Amidst the White Russian offensive, the defeat against the Polish near Warsaw, and terrible economic conditions in Bolshevik Russia, the Bolsheviks sued for peace with Poland and an agreement was signed on 12 October.

-Meanwhile, the remaining forces of the Ukrainian People's Republic, under the Directorate, planned a counteroffensive from their position near the Polish border in western Ukraine, but were attacked by the Bolsheviks on 10 November and pushed into Poland. The Bolsheviks then turned their attention to defeating the remnants of the White Russian army and overran Crimea, their last stronghold, in November. The remaining forces of the Directorate turned to guerilla warfare, launching raids into central Ukraine in October 1921, but their remaining forces were surrounded and destroyed on 17 November 1921.³

Pogroms and Property Theft Against Ukrainian Jews During the War for Ukrainian Independence

-The immensely chaotic and bloody period of Ukrainian history between 1918 and 1921 left the country in ruins and led to death and destruction among all segments of Ukrainian society. However, of all the people of Ukraine, Ukrainian Jews suffered the most. The Jews were viciously targeted by every side during this period, resulting in the death of at least 50,000 Jews during more than 1,300 pogroms between 1918 and 1920 (although some estimates put the death toll as high as 200,000). In addition, tens of thousands of Jews were also raped and injured during these years, and theft of Jewish property was rampant all across Ukraine. In many cases, the same Jewish communities were targeted again and again by different sides as territory changed hands, and local Ukrainians also commonly took advantage of the chaos to kill, hurt, or steal from their Jewish neighbors. The seizure of hostages by one group or another from Jewish communities in order to force members of these communities to pay for their release was a frequent occurrence as well. Antisemitic propaganda and misconceptions were also widespread, with people on all sides at one time or another believing that Jews were

³ Applebaum, Anne. *Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine*. Doubleday, 2018: 13-66

acting as informants to their enemies, frequently leading them to seek reprisals against Jewish communities.

-Members of the Directorate killed the highest number of Jews across Ukraine. Although Symon Petliura, the leader of the Directorate, did not himself espouse antisemitic views, and even published directives ordering his troops not to target Jewish communities, his army was made up of a conglomeration of insurgent forces and he had little ability to prevent them from engaging in violence against Jews. The Bolsheviks also, on paper at least, did not condone antisemitic violence, but their soldiers were nevertheless responsible for many of the attacks and cases of blackmail or theft. The same was true of the anarchist Revolutionary Insurgent Army of Ukraine. The White Russian forces in Ukraine, conversely, actively promoted antisemitic attacks, depicting all Jews as Bolsheviks and all Bolsheviks as Jews, and blaming the Jews for Bolshevik atrocities. However, much of the violence against Jewish communities occurred in areas where no one held power and bandits and criminals had a free hand to do as they wished.⁴

The 1921-1923 Famine in Ukraine

-In the wake of war and unrest between 1917 and 1921, Ukraine's economy and agricultural system lay in ruins. In addition to the destruction and death which ravaged the cities and countryside during the time, Ukraine was also still suffering from the effects of WWI and had no time to recover before the Russian Revolution and the fight for independence plunged the country into chaos. In addition to this, as armies marched to and fro across Ukraine and bands of criminals and insurgents wreaked havoc, all sides sought to feed their forces by requisitioning agricultural products, often violently. All of these factors tore the Ukrainian agricultural system apart and sparked major food shortages.

-Added to this were Bolshevik grain requisitions both during and after the multifaceted conflict. Desperate to feed both their armies, as well as the general public back in Russia (to whom they had promised bread should they gain power), the 1919 *Prodrazverstka* (grain requisition or food apportionment) was introduced. This food tax stripped the countryside of agricultural products in areas that the Bolsheviks controlled and disincentivized production among the peasants, who knew that the food they labored to produce would just be requisitioned.

-As time went on, the Bolsheviks also began to increase persecution of the kulaks (well off peasants who owned a fair amount of land and had enough capital to hire labor). In addition to targeting them directly, Bolsheviks also recruited some peasants to join local *komnezamy* (poor peasants' committees), which often took resources from kulak farmers. These actions meant that many of the most productive farms in Ukraine were soon ruined.

-Severe drought in southern regions of the Soviet Union also contributed to decrease crop yields and sparked famine. As the situation worsened, Soviet authorities demanded more and more grain from an already stricken Ukraine, sending vast quantities to Moscow, Petrograd, and the Volga Valley region. The

⁴ Applebaum, Anne. *Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine*. Doubleday, 2018: 48-66

tactics they used also became increasingly brutal, including hostage taking, torture, and demonization of Ukrainians who refused to obey grain requisitions as “enemies of the people.”

-While the famine was officially recognized by the Soviets in Russia between 1921 and 1922, they failed to acknowledge the famine that was also unfolding in Ukraine. Moreover, the Soviets also refused to let aid organizations send famine relief despite the growing crisis, in part out of fear that foreign influences might spark rebellion. Finally, after a long delay and the deaths of hundreds of thousands in Ukraine, the Soviets did allow aid organizations to enter and offer aid.

-During these three years, according to some sources, 7.5 million people were impacted by famine in Ukraine, and an estimated 250,000-500,000 died in southern Ukraine, which was the region most severely impacted.⁵

Ukrainization

-Between 1923 and the early 30s, the Soviet Union embarked on a campaign of indigenization throughout its various national republics. At this time, the Soviets were more concerned with pre-revolutionary ideas fueling opposition to their rule than they were with nationalist movements potentially leading to rebellions. Indigenization was also seen as way to potentially increase the legitimacy of a weak Soviet government in the eyes of its citizens.

-In Ukraine, by far the largest state within the Soviet Union aside from Russia itself, this process was taken further than in any other Soviet state. Ukrainization included requiring party and state leaders within Ukraine to be fluent in Ukrainian and familiar with Ukrainian history and culture, recruiting Ukrainians into state and party machinery, funding Ukrainian cultural institutions, requiring Ukrainian to be taught in schools, and creating separate Ukrainian units of the Red Army, among other things.

-This effort to rapidly Ukrainize Ukrainian society had mixed results and led to myriad problems. In August of 1923, for example, the Soviets decreed that Ukrainization of all Ukrainian schools (save those of ethnic minorities) was to be completed in just two years. As a result, teachers who did not speak Ukrainian were forced to give lessons in disjointed Ukrainian to students who also did not speak Ukrainian, creating chaos in the school system and severely restricting the education of many children. Nevertheless, Ukrainization dramatically increased literacy rates among speakers of Ukrainian, and Ukrainian art and literature saw a significant resurgence during this period.

-However, despite publicly supporting Ukrainization in the 1920s, Stalin’s views shifted radically in the 1930s. Some Ukrainian elites, who had been promoted and legitimized over the better part of a decade by Ukrainization, began to oppose some of Stalin’s programs, such as forced collectivization of the peasants. As a result, Stalin abruptly reversed the policy of Ukrainization, executing or imprisoning the majority of Ukrainian artists, writers, and intellectuals, as well as the portions of the

⁵ Applebaum, Anne. *Red Famine: Stalin’s War on Ukraine*. Doubleday, 2018: 67-95

Communist party that had been tasked with Ukrainization, and many newspapers and schools were switched to Russian.⁶

Primary Texts:

Two Regimes:

Pgs. 2-36

Footnote 18 The German Famine of 1921-22

Two Regimes Film Study Guide Part 2 Holodomor:

“Background to Ukraine,” Orest Zakydalsky.

Online Resources:

<https://tworegimes.com/wp-content/uploads/230-Background-to-Ukraine-by-Orest-Zakydalsky.pdf>

Secondary Texts:

Red Famine:

Introduction

Chapter 1 (The Ukrainian Revolution, 1917)

Chapter 2 (Rebellion, 1919)

Chapter 3 (Famine and Truce, The 1920s)

Chapter 4 (The Double Crisis, 1927-9)

The Gates of Europe:

Chapter 18 (The Birth of a Nation)

Chapter 19 (A Shattered Dream)

Chapter 20 (Communism and Nationalism)

Lost Kingdom:

Chapter 10 (The People’s Song)

Chapter 11 (The Fall of the Monarchy)

Chapter 12 (The Russian Revolution)

Chapter 13 (Lenin’s Victory)

Chapter 14 (National Communism)

Assignments and Essay Prompts:

1) Who was Yaroslav the Wise and why is he important to Ukrainian history? How is he important to Russian history? How do Ukrainian and Russian depictions of him and his impact differ, and why are these differences important?

⁶ Plokhyy, Serhii. *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine (Revised)*. Basic Books 2021: 229-243

2) Who was Taras Shevchenko and why is he important in Ukrainian history? How did his life and work impact the formation of a unique Ukrainian national identity? Why was he perceived as a threat by Imperial Russian authorities, and what did they do to him in response?

3) Why was an historian such as Mykhailo Hrushevsky chosen as the first leader of independent Ukraine following the Russian Revolution? What did he do to gain recognition and why was his work considered so important at the time? Why were historians so vital in the development and recognition of a unique Ukrainian national identity, and how did the work of historians such as Hrushevsky differ from work of many other historians in Imperial Russia?

4) The Cossacks figure prominently in Ukrainian history and culture. Who were they and why are they important today? Who was Bohdan Khmelnytsky, and why was the formation of the Cossack Hetmanate still important today? How did the history of the Cossacks in Ukraine influence the Ukrainian independence movement?

5) Explore the importance of the Kingdom of Kyivan Rus' to modern Ukrainian history and national identity. How has this historical state taken on a mythical importance in modern Ukraine and Russia? How does Russia interpret this history, and how does it differ from Ukrainian interpretations? How has Russia used the legacy of Kyivan Rus' to justify its imperial conquests?

6) Who was Pavlo Skoropadskyi? How did he come to power as Hetman of Ukraine and why did he lean on Cossack cultural heritage to increase his legitimacy?

7) Explore Marxist, Leninist, and Stalinist theories on nationality. What actions did Stalin take as Commissar of Nationalities? How did his time in this position potentially impact his actions later in life?

8) *Two Regimes*:

Pg. 65, "Revolution," Painting 24 by Nadia Werbitzky

Pg. 113, "Cossack," Painting 38 by Nadia Werbitzky

9) *Two Regimes*:

Maps: Map of Ukraine and borderlands

Module III: The Holodomor (1932-1933)

Module Description/Suggested Instructions:

In module III, the instructor should first outline the background leading up to the Holodomor, its causes and progression, and the impact that it had on Ukraine in its immediate aftermath. Particular attention should be turned to analyzing how and why the peasantry were targeted in this way; how the label of “kulak” began to take on an ever expanding definition and the reasons behind this; how ordinary people became indoctrinated to see the kulaks, and, more generally, all peasants as sub-human; the effect that this shared trauma had on the fabric of Ukrainian society at all levels; and the reasons why Stalin and Soviet functionaries chose to trigger mass starvation in the countryside and why they singled out Ukraine for particularly harsh treatment.

Verbitskaya’s, and additionally, Applebaum’s works, of all the texts assigned in the readings for this course, are characterized by a particular emphasis on firsthand accounts of events as they took place, both from the perspective of the victims, as well as the perpetrators. In classroom discussions during this module, students should be encouraged to discuss particular firsthand accounts which resonated with them. The instructor may ask students to mark down particular sections before they begin the readings so that they may have them prepared before classroom discussions, or they may ask students to think of examples as discussions progress. The instructor can then turn the discussion toward the events recounted in *Two Regimes*, asking students to relate Verbitskaya’s account with other descriptions of what took place during this period of time.

Historical Information to Be Covered in Class:

Causes of the Holodomor (1932-1933)

-On October 1, 1928, Joseph Stalin launched his first Five Year Plan which called for the rapid collectivization of industry and agriculture across the Soviet Union. This Collectivization scheme crippled the agricultural system and was especially disastrous for Ukraine, where forced collectivization and confiscation of all or most food products was brutally carried out and many who resisted or hid food faced death, imprisonment, torture, and rape. As more and more farmers were forced onto collective farms, killed, or imprisoned, the majority of the most productive farms in the Soviet Union were destroyed. The collective farms that replaced them were often inefficient, and the peasants who worked on them had little incentive to produce more food compared to private farmers whose livelihoods depended on the quantity and quality of crops they produced. Common problems included issues such as orders to grow crops on specific collective farms which could not be grown in that area and the poor maintenance of machinery which had been well cared for and prized on private farms.

-During the famine and the years preceding it, Soviet authorities increasingly demonized the kulaks. Originally, kulaks were defined as peasants who owned a significant amount of property and could afford to hire labor. From the early days of

the Soviet Union, Soviet propagandists labeled the kulaks as class enemies to turn the population against them. However, as time went on, the definition for who could be considered a kulak was progressively expanded until it applied to virtually all peasants, and anyone the Soviets found undesirable could be branded as such. These efforts to dehumanize the “kulaks” allowed the Soviets to justify killing, maiming, and confiscating all property from all peasants given this label. Any peasant who exhibited Ukrainian nationalist tendencies or a “kulak mindset,” as well as any suspected or accused of doing so, could then be targeted. During the years leading up to the famine, an intensifying campaign of dekulakization led to the destruction of many formerly productive agricultural enterprises, disrupted or destroyed communities, turned people against each other, and led to the removal of many individuals with the skills and knowledge to effectively farm the land.

-In addition to the negative effects of forcing rapid agricultural collectivization on the population, fears of a growing Ukrainian nationalist movement in the years leading up to the famine led to a campaign to cripple the movement through any means necessary. This movement was strongest among the peasants, and both Leninist and Stalinist ideology before the famine held that the seeds of nationalism were to be found amongst the peasantry. Soviet authorities directly persecuted any who expressed, or were deemed to express, Ukrainian nationalist tendencies, but collectivization and the resulting famine also worked to suppress peasant nationalism in other ways. Scattering the peasants by breaking up traditional communities, either by forcing them to leave their homes to live on collective farms, or by creating conditions in the countryside which were unbearable so that they left to look for food and employment in the cities, achieved this goal. Triggering a major famine which specifically killed off a significant portion of the peasantry, and sapped the will and energy to organize a nationalist movement, also had the same intended effect.

-During the Holodomor, far higher grain quotas were levied on Ukraine by Moscow than any other part of the Soviet Union. These were coupled with a complete disregard for conditions on the ground, such as severe drought and the collapse of Ukraine’s agricultural system. The quotas far exceeded the agricultural production capacity of Ukraine, even on a good year, and Soviet authorities used the arbitrary numbers set by Moscow to justify stripping nearly all food from the countryside in an attempt to meet them.

-Stalin launched a campaign to recruit thousands of volunteers from industrial cities across the Soviet Union with the organizational and political skills to help industrialize agricultural production and dispatched them to collective farms and Machine and Tractor Stations. The decree issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party called for 25,000 volunteers, and as such, these activists were known as Twenty-Five-Thousanders. However, activists sent to the countryside faced resistance from the communities they were assigned to and lacked knowledge of peasant life, agriculture, or the local culture and language, making them ineffective and in many cases counterproductive. Twenty-Five-Thousanders were also frequently guilty of embodying a zealous commitment to cause, dehumanizing peasants and using violent tactics against any who showed resistance or attempted to hide or procure food.

-The Soviet Union continued exporting agricultural goods, even as the famine became dire and hundreds of thousands were dying, so as to procure hard currency which could then be used to purchase arms and goods necessary for industrial development. Across the Soviet Union, the Soviets also opened Torgsin stores, in which gold could be used to buy food at high prices. As food prices skyrocketed and people became desperate, these stores collected vast amounts of gold as people traded in heirlooms or hidden wealth to survive. Frequently, those who brought in gold were later targeted, the authorities believing that they might have more hidden away. In this way, by opening the Torgsin and continuing to export food, the Soviets used the famine to gain large amounts of hard currency.

-As the Holodomor progressed and the peasants became desperate, Soviet authorities employed increasingly harsh methods to collect food, even though there was no hope of reaching the mandated grain quotas. Private farmers who failed to reach their unachievable quotas were forced to give up livestock to fill the gap, meaning that many lost sources of food which would allow them to survive, such as milk cows, as well as the very beasts of burden used to farm the land. On collective farms, the situation was no better, as the workers on farms that failed to meet their quotas were often punished and their rations reduced or eliminated entirely.

-Soviet authorities took advantage of the extreme desperation among Ukrainian peasants to turn them against each other by rewarding those who informed on their neighbors about hidden food. In many cases, these informants would be given a portion of the food stolen from those they informed on as an incentive. This system created a culture of suspicion within already traumatized communities, tearing them apart and leaving people paranoid and hateful of one another even long after the famine had ended.

-The Soviets also brutally targeted Ukrainian peasants who attempted to find alternative ways of feeding themselves, even though these survival strategies had no impact on grain procurement or meeting mandated quotas. Examples include:

-Poisoning agricultural waste products which could have been eaten to prevent starving Ukrainians from finding anything edible in refuse heaps.

-Banning gleaning (the practice of going to already harvested fields to collect seeds that had dropped to the ground, potatoes that had been missed, etc.), and punishing those caught doing so—including children—with summary execution or imprisonment.

-Shooting or imprisoning those who walked along railroads in an attempt to find bits of grain that had fallen off trains.

-The mass slaughter and confiscation of any animals which could be eaten, including family pets and farm animals used to perform work.

-The destruction of wild edible plants which desperate peasants began eating, such as river reeds, were burned or stomped into the mud.

-Taking food, such as stew cooking on a stove, and pouring it out so that it could not be eaten.

-Looking for signs that food was being cooked, such as smoke rising from a chimney, and launching surprise raids against these homes.

-Specifically targeting peasants who “looked” as if they were still finding some way to eat once most of the population had begun suffering from severe malnutrition

and started dying.

-Eventually banning Ukrainian peasants from going to the cities to look for employment or a way to subsist there.

-Preventing people from sending food to friends or relatives and confiscating any food that was found in letters or packages.⁷

Impact of the Holodomor

-3,500,000-5,000,000 deaths have been attributed to the Holodomor by some sources, although the total could be far higher. These numbers include those who died directly due to starvation, those who died due to secondary impacts, and lost births. Although the entire country was affected, those in rural areas were by far hit the hardest, with the highest percentages of the population dying in Ukraine's most productive agricultural areas.

-The Ukrainian nationalist movement was crippled in many areas as a result of the famine. The population of Ukraine was heavily traumatized and both communities and organizations were broken apart. Moreover, the famine also caused many people to relocate to the cities in search of work and food, integrating with the urban population, where Russification was more prevalent, and losing their cultural connection to the land and their local communities.

-After the famine, much of the population of Ukraine suffered from collective trauma, especially in the countryside, and the scars of this event continue on to the present day. Many of those who survived were affected by survivor's guilt and had to live with the memories of what they did to survive, as well as the impact of seeing so many in their communities and families die around them. Some survivors resorted to theft, murder, prostitution, and even cannibalism to survive. The famine also tore numerous families and communities apart, leaving lasting harm that would endure for generations.

-The famine greatly increased childhood mortality rates, as well as numbers of lost births, and the effects of malnutrition impacted childhood development for millions, leaving them with permanent scars.⁶

Primary Texts:

Two Regimes:

Foreword by Alexander Motyl

Pgs. 36-58;

Footnotes:

5. Guilty without Guilt

8. Kulak

9. NKVD

10. Cheka

17. The Solovki

25. Collective Farms

⁷ Applebaum, Anne. *Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine*. Doubleday, 2018: 133-330

30. Starvation
36. Dispossession

Two Regimes Film Study Guide Part 2 Holodomor:

The Holodomor 1932-1933 by Valentina Kuriliw
Holodomor at a Glance

Online Resources:

<https://tworegimes.com/wp-content/uploads/-Foreword-by-Professor-Alexander-Motyl-for-Two-Regimes.pdf>

<https://tworegimes.com/wp-content/uploads/250-Holodomor-1932-1933-by-Valentina-Kuriliw.pdf>

<https://tworegimes.com/wp-content/uploads/240-Holodomor-at-a-Glance.pdf>

Secondary Texts:

Red Famine:

Chapter 5 (Collectivization: Revolution in the Countryside)
Chapter 6 (Rebellion, 1930)
Chapter 7 (Collectivization Fails, 1931-2)
Chapter 8 (Famine Decisions, 1932: Requisitions, Blacklists, and Borders)
Chapter 9 (Famine Decisions, 1932: The End of Ukrainization)
Chapter 10 (Famine Decisions, 1932: The Searches and the Searchers)
Chapter 11 (Starvation: Spring and Summer, 1933)
Chapter 12 (Survival: Spring and Summer, 1933)

Bloodlands:

Chapter 1 (The Soviet Famines)

Kuriliw, Valentina. *Holodomor in Ukraine: The Genocidal Famine, 1932 – 1933: Learning Materials for Teacher and Students*, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2018

Assignments and Essay Prompts

1) The UN, in Article 2 of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, defines genocide as “any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures

intended to prevent births within the group; [and] forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”⁸

During the Holodomor, Soviet authorities denied that a famine was taking place, downplayed its severity, blamed the famine on inept or overzealous local Ukrainian authorities down the chain of command, and sharply curtailed both internal and external documentation of the famine. In later years, some scholars who have written about the Holodomor speak of it in as the disastrous result of a failed policy of agricultural collectivization, rather than a deliberate, premeditated attack on the Ukrainian peasantry, Ukrainian national movements, and the Ukrainian people as a whole.

Using both the assigned materials and outside research, write an essay exploring whether the Holodomor should be classified as a genocide. In doing so, consider the broader historical context, such as earlier Ukrainian famines that came about or were worsened by Soviet requisition of Ukrainian agricultural products, Soviet fears of the growing Ukrainian nationalist movement in the years preceding the Holodomor, and the evolution of Leninist and Stalinist thought concerning the peasantry, peasant nationalism, and Ukrainian nationalism as a whole. Also consider the actions of Soviet authorities before and during the famine, such as the continued export of agricultural products to foreign countries even as millions starved, the way in which the definition of the kulaks was expanded over time to include an ever-broader portion of the population, and the increasingly dehumanizing language used to describe the kulaks.

2) How did the Holodomor act to break families and communities apart? How did this affect larger organizations and movements?

3) Find an autobiographical document from one of the soldiers/police/party officials/activists who helped implement the Holodomor. This person can be someone who was in leadership, someone who wrote about and promoted the Soviet actions against the Ukrainians, or someone who was on the ground enforcing the food requisitions and persecutions of “kulaks.” What is the nature of this document—memoir, confession, letter, statement to a court, etc.—and how did the forum in which it was to be viewed potentially impact its content? Does the author express remorse, satisfaction, anger, or other emotions? Considering all of these factors, what can be learned from this document in context of the history covered in this course? What precautions should be taken when evaluating the veracity and honesty of this account?

4) Explore how the definition of “kulak” changed over time during the years preceding the Holodomor. Did these changes of definition come from the top? Did definitions of kulaks change from region to region, or time to time, to fit specific

⁸ Andreopoulos, G. J., “genocide.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 9 August 2023.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/genocide>

social, political, or economic goals? If so, what were these goals and how did they affect how kulaks were defined? Further, how can we compare the progressive dehumanization of people deemed to be kulaks to the dehumanization of other groups elsewhere in history?

5) *Two Regimes*:

Pg. 43, "Farewell (Parting with His Horse)," Painting 18 by Nadia Werbitzky
Front Matter, "Holodomor," Painting 1 by Nadia Werbitzky

Module IV: Aftermath of the Holodomor; The Great Terror; The Start of War In 1939

Module Description/Suggested Instructions:

In Module IV, the instructor should start by discussing Valentina Kuriliw's writings, along with the last chapters of Applebaum's work and the long-term impacts of the Holodomor on the people of Ukraine. Particular emphasis should be put on the collective trauma experienced by the population and how it affected them, the impact on Ukraine's nascent nationalist movement compared to where it was before the forced famine, the ways in which the events of 1932-1933 had long term impacts on Ukraine's agricultural production, and how the events which took place during this period could be seen as foreshadowing for the Great Terror soon to come. If time allows, the instructor may choose to cover this section of the module separately from the following sections so that classroom discussion may focus on this area alone, and the instructor may again ask that students select specific firsthand accounts which resonated with them.

The instructor should then turn to outlining the causes that led up to the Great Terror, the events which took place once it began, and the effects that it had on Soviet society generally as well as Ukraine specifically. Special emphasis may be placed on comparing Verbitskaya's account of the atmosphere of fear and mistrust which permeated Ukrainian society, as well as the abduction of her husband, in the descriptions outlined within the readings.

Finally, the instructor should then turn to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the beginning of WWII in 1939, explaining the background undergirding these developments, how the purges during the Great Terror were connected with Soviet leadership's expectations that war was imminent, and outlining the early events of the war. The instructor can then turn to Verbitskaya's account of these events from her perspective in Ukraine, contrasting the limited knowledge available to average Ukrainian citizens, and the rumors swirling around them with what we know today, looking back on these events from an informed place.

Information to Be Covered in Class:

The Great Terror

-The Great Terror was a campaign to purge or scare into submission all who had challenged, might challenge, or were perceived as challenging Stalin's control over the Soviet state and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. As a result of the disastrous consequences of Stalin's first Five Year Plan, disquiet over his leadership had grown among high-ranking Soviets and some began to believe that he should be replaced. Stalin subsequently acted to consolidate his control over state power and strengthen his position by executing or arresting Soviet leaders who might try to depose him or threaten his grip on power. These purges then extended to include

lower ranking members of the Soviet leadership, bureaucracy, and military, as well as many average people among the lowest levels of society.

-Stalin and Soviet leadership also believed that a great war was coming and wanted to purge the state and society in general of all who might prove disloyal after war broke out. These included counterrevolutionaries, party infiltrators, and political enemies.

-The Great Terror was carried out chiefly by the NKVD, who employed tactics such as mass executions, imprisonment, and torture to increase control over the population through fear.

-The purges initially targeted party leadership, Old Bolsheviks, and members of the bureaucracy, but were later expanded to include ethnic groups such as the Volga Germans, as well as military leadership and the Red Army as a whole, which had disastrous consequences when war broke out soon after.

-Between 1936 and 1938, it is estimated that over a million people were killed across the Soviet Union, including those who died in the Gulag system during this time, while millions more served sentences in prisons or forced labor camps.

-In 1938, Stalin halted the Great Terror and blamed the NKVD for the mass killings, soon executing Nikolai Yezhov and Genrikh Yagoda, both of whom led the NKVD during this time. Although technically halted, the use of fear, mass surveillance, and repression continued on for decades.

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact

-On August 23, 1939, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was agreed to by the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. Publicly a nonaggression pact, which barred either side from aiding an enemy of the other, it also contained a secret agreement between Nazi and Soviet leaders to divide up Eastern Europe, chiefly Poland.

The Invasion of Poland and the Soviet Invasion and Annexation of Other States and Territories in Eastern Europe

-Almost immediately following the signature of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, Nazi Germany invaded Poland on 1 September 1939.

-The Soviet Union waited over two weeks to launch its invasion of Poland as the Nazis severely weakened the Polish military, leading Hitler to threaten a reevaluation of the lines agreed to in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. On September 17, 1939, the Soviet Union launched its own invasion of Poland from the east, surprising Polish soldiers, some of whom thought the Soviets were sending troops over the border to fight the Nazis. Caught between Nazi and Soviet forces, Poland quickly collapsed and was divided by the conquering powers along the lines established by the pact.

-Between April and May of 1940, after the Soviet Union had conquered all of Poland east of the line established by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the NKVD secretly executed nearly 22,000 Polish officers and intelligentsia, many of them killed and buried in the Katyn forest, for which the massacre is named. Of those executed, 8,000 were officers captured during the 1939 invasion, 6,000 were police, and 8,000

were Polish intelligentsia. The Nazis later announced the discovery of the mass graves in the Katyn forest. The Soviets denied any involvement and blamed the massacre on the Nazis.

On 30 November 1939, the Soviet Union also invaded Finland, launching the Winter War. After suffering heavy casualties and failing to attain most of its goals, the war eventually ended on 13 March 1940, with the Soviet annexation of parts of Keralia and Salla.

-Later in 1940, the Soviet Union also annexed Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Moldova, and the Bessarabia and northern Bukovina regions of Romania.⁹

Primary Texts:

Two Regimes:

Pgs. 58-74

Footnotes:

41. Joseph Stalin

46. Siberia

53. Polish Operation of the NKVD

54. Joachim von Ribbentrop

56. Katyn

57. Mobilization Edict

59. Budennovsky Army

Two Regimes Study Guide Part 2 Holodomor:

The Holodomor 1932 – 1933 by Valentina Kuriliw

Holodomor Timeline

Secondary Texts:

Red Famine:

Chapter 13 (Aftermath)

Chapter 14 (The Cover-Up)

Chapter 15 (The Holodomor in History and Memory)

The Gates of Europe:

Chapter 21 (Stalin's Fortress)

Lost Kingdom:

Chapter 15 (The Return of Russia)

Bloodlands:

Chapter 2 (Class Terror)

Chapter 3 (National Terror)

⁹ Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*. Basic Books (AZ), 2010: 119-154

Assignments and Essay Prompts:

- 1) Before the Russian Revolution, Stalin was exiled and imprisoned many times in Imperial Russia for bank robbery, kidnapping, and extortion. What were his experiences in prison and exile? How might these experiences potentially have impacted his views on and construction of the Soviet Gulag system?
- 2) Compare the rumors about the war being discussed in Ukraine during the beginning of WWII to what we know now. What can this tell us about the type of information available to average Ukrainians during this time?
- 3) How did the experiences of Jewish men and women differ during the Holocaust? What unique dangers did each face, and how were they treated differently by Nazi forces?
- 4) Compare views on the patriarchy and the roles of men and women in Nazi ideology and Soviet Communist ideology. What similarities can be seen—either in theory, or in practice? How do they differ? What practical effects did these differences have? How were issues such as sexual violence endemic on both sides during the war? Was sexual violence used as a war tactic to create a mindset of defeat among besieged populations?
- 5) How might the Holodomor have influenced the development of the Nazi Hunger Plan? How did the Hunger Plan differ from the Holodomor when they tried to implement it?
- 6) How was the theft and destruction of food used as a weapon against Ukrainians? How did the Soviets justify these actions, and why were they implemented? What specific actions did they take to deprive Ukrainians of food above and beyond requisitioning grains to fill the quotas set by Soviet authorities in Moscow?
- 7) *Two Regimes:*
 - Maps: Map of Gulag Camp Administrations
 - Pg. 60, "Gulag," Painting 21 by Nadia Werbitzky
 - Pg. 45, "Eternal Motherhood," Painting 19 by Nadia Werbitzky
 - Photographs:
 - Pg. 37, Photograph 7 Mother with starving children.jpg, by Alexander Wienerberger
 - Pg. 49, Photograph 8 On all the streets, the starving.jpg, by Alexander Wienerberger
 - Pg. 50, Photograph 9, Banner – 19180830 – grave uritzky red terror.jpg
 - Pg. 50, Photograph 10, HolodomorVyizdValky.jpg

Pg. 51, Photograph 11, Mass graves for the victims of starvation.jpg,
by Alexander Wienerberger

Pg. 52, Photograph 12, Even childhood was not spared.jpg, by
Alexander Wienerberger

Pg. 54, Photograph 13, Standing in line for black bread.jpg, by
Alexander Wienerberger

Pg. 56, Photograph 14, Stalin in July.jpg

Pg. 57, Photograph 15, Starving and neglected children.jpg, by
Alexander Wienerberger

Pg. 69, Photograph 16, The empty food distribution centers are
besieged by the needy population.jpg, by Alexander Wienerberger

Module V: The Shoah (Holocaust); The Nazi Invasion and Occupation of Ukraine

Module Description/Suggested Instructions:

In Module V, the instructor should begin by explaining the background behind why Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union, beginning with an explanation of Nazi ideology regarding their belief in a racial hierarchy and conspiracy theories about secret plots to undermine or attack the German people, supposedly being orchestrated by the Jews, as well as how they used these beliefs to justify persecution and then execution of Jews, Slavs, Roma, and other groups of people (such as the disabled, political prisoners, and POWs). Then the instructor may move on to explain the reasons why the Nazis believed that they needed *Lebensraum* to construct a great land empire, and how they planned to transform Eastern Europe into an undeveloped frontier through the destruction of both the people and the cities in which they lived.

Once this groundwork has been laid, the instructor should then outline the course of the war, taking time to explain how events, such as the inability for the Nazis to achieve a quick victory, drastically changed Nazi plans concerning the future of the native populations of Eastern Europe. Particular emphasis should be placed on both why the invasion did not go as planned, why these battlefield realities had such a massive impact on Nazi policies in occupied territories, and how they used these impacts as a justification to carry out actions borne of pre-existing racist views.

Finally, and most importantly for this module, the instructor should take ample time to explain in detail both the motives behind the Shoah, as well as the course of events and how Nazi policy toward targeted populations changed over time, as well as why treatment initially varied between those native to Western versus Eastern Europe. Emphasis should also be placed on analyzing the roots of anti-Semitism in Europe, how Nazi propaganda sought to dehumanize Jews, Slavs, and Roma, as well as how anti-Semitism within Soviet society played a major role in aiding Nazi efforts as they carried out persecutions and mass executions.

Information to Be Covered in Class:

The Nazi Invasion of the Soviet Union: Background

-In Hitler's Nazi ideology, it was believed that Germany needed *Lebensraum* (living space) for the German people to expand into and settle so that they could build a great empire. To achieve this, they sought to clear much of Eastern Europe of its cities, cultural sites, and most of its population, save for some, such as the ethnic Germans of Ukraine, who were considered racially pure. Populations to be removed included the Jews, Roma, and Slavs—all considered racially inferior *Untermenschen* (under persons)—although the Jews and Roma were targeted far more harshly and their removal was considered a higher priority than the removal of Slavic populations. In addition to these ethnic populations, the Nazis also targeted

homosexuals, the disabled, and members of groups such as the Freemasons and Jehovah's Witnesses, among others. Many who appeared to be members of these groups (such as Muslim Soviet POWs who were circumcised and suspected of being Jewish) were also interred or killed as well. Only a small portion of the native Slavic population was to be reserved as slave labor for the Nazis. These actions would be done in order to create a vast eastern frontier similar to the American West, in which successive generations of German men could settle with their families and test their mettle (in adherence with an idealized vision of Aryan masculinity), creating a strong, rugged German society. To achieve this, the Nazis envisioned *Generalplan Ost* ("General Plan East," a work in progress which evolved over time and shifted drastically in response to events on the battlefield). This entailed:

-*Der Hungerplan* (The Hunger Plan), in which Nazi forces would kill much of the population of Eastern Europe through starvation by seizing agricultural products and diverting them to Germany and Nazi forces. Inspired in part by the Holodomor, this plan was only partially implemented. Nazi forces lacked the personnel and organization to enforce this plan the way the Soviets had in 1932-1933, and a reversal of battlefield fortunes hampered their efforts and led the Nazis to instead deport millions of forced laborers to Germany to fill a growing labor shortage as more and more German men were sent to war.

-*Endlösung der Judenfrage* (The Final Solution to the Jewish Question) was the plan to eliminate the entire Jewish population of Europe. This program evolved over time in response to events as WWII progressed. Originally planned predominantly as the mass deportation of Jews from Europe, sending them across the Ural Mountains into central Asia, or to Madagascar off the coast of Africa, both of these early proposals were thwarted by the supremacy of the British Navy (in the case of the former), and the failure of Nazi forces to force the collapse of the Soviet Union (in the case of the latter). Although violence against Jews had always been a component of the Final Solution from the early stages of its implementation, over time this violence became more systematized and total. The first implementation of mass murder began in Eastern Europe, in many places beginning with the murder of Jewish men labeled as partisans (resistance fighters), then progressing to the execution of Jews deemed unfit to serve as laborers, and eventually progressing to the massacre of Jewish women and children and the complete destruction of entire communities, save for a select few who would remain as slave labor for a time. This progression was carried out unevenly across Nazi-controlled territory, with entire Jewish settlements destroyed in some areas early on during the invasions of Eastern Europe and other communities relocated and killed more slowly in stages, while in Western Europe, the mass murder of Jews from these areas did not begin on a large scale until they were deported to Eastern European concentration camps. In the vein of countless examples of Jews being blamed for myriad misfortunes and societal problems throughout history, Nazi propagandists in Soviet territory portrayed the Jews as responsible for Soviet atrocities, attempting—and in many areas succeeding—to rally the local population to aid in the mass

killings and turn over Jews who were in hiding. Hitler had, moreover, long argued that Jews secretly controlled the governments of Western Europe, the United States, and the Soviet Union, and predicted that these powers would one day conspire to destroy German civilization in a great war. The beginning of war with the Soviet Union, though launched by the Nazis, and the United States eventually joining the fight, then acted to “confirm” what Hitler had long prophesized. As a result, the Nazis could therefore argue that WWII was not just a fight to establish a German empire, but instead a fight for the very survival of German civilization against the Jews and their allies, justifying the complete eradication of all Jews within Nazi control.¹⁰

Operation Barbarossa

-On 22 June 1941, Nazi forces launched Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union.

-Envisioned as a lightning campaign that would quickly overwhelm Soviet forces and lead to their collapse, in much the same way the successful invasions of Poland and France played out, Nazi forces experienced initial success during Operation Barbarossa as the invasion took the Soviet Union by surprise, with Stalin and his advisors believing Hitler would not break the Molotov-Ribbentrop non-aggression pact and launch an invasion for at least another year. Over the preceding year, the Soviet Union had greatly expanded its borders, taking vast swaths of territory in Eastern Europe and quickly acting to massacre, deport, or imprison significant portions of the populations of these regions which might have resisted their rule. However, the Soviets had failed to fully consolidate their power over these newly-acquired territories or establish fortified defensive lines on their borders, allowing the Nazis to more easily overwhelm the Red Army.

-As Operation Barbarossa was launched, the Nazis sent three major battle groups into the Soviet Union. Army Group North struck from East Prussia, moving into the Baltic States on the way to Leningrad. Army Group Center, meant to deliver the main blow, moved into Soviet territory from the Pripet Marshes to march toward Smolensk and Moscow. Army Group South launched their attack from southern Poland into Ukraine, aiming to take Kyiv and move to the shores of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.

-The attempt to take Kyiv was successful as Soviet lines collapsed across the battlefield. Hundreds of thousands of Soviet prisoners were taken after being surrounded by Nazi forces and overwhelmed by superior tactics (despite large Soviet advantages in men and tanks, as well as a large but outdated air force), inept Soviet commanders, and Stalin refusing to allow his commanders to pull their men back to more defensible positions. During their initial advances, the Nazis took the whole of Soviet Ukraine and Belarus, Soviet-occupied Poland east of the lines drawn

¹⁰ Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*. Basic Books (AZ), 2010: 155-224; and Plokhy, Serhii. *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine (Revised)*. Basic Books 2021: 259-290

by the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, and Soviet-occupied Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. Meanwhile, Nazi-Germany's ally, Romania, launched an invasion from the south, retaking Bessarabia and linking up with Army Group South. In a matter of weeks, the Nazis had advanced hundreds of miles deep into Soviet territory and soon came to the outskirts of Moscow.

-However, pockets of Soviet troops stubbornly held onto territory despite being surrounded, attacking Nazi forces from the rear and blocking key rail and road transit routes. Hitler and his commanders then wasted valuable time in August 1941, debating where to strike next following their initial gains. As summer moved into fall, the Nazis also suffered from the effects of Stalin's scorched earth policies, in which the Soviets destroyed crops and food stocks, dismantled and moved entire factories east, blew up infrastructure such as bridges, and removed rail cars (Soviet rails were of a different gauge than German rails, meaning German trains could not be used to transport equipment and supplies along Soviet railroads). Despite destroying, capturing, or dispersing the bulk of the Red Army's forces in the initial months of the war, the Nazis had underestimated the Soviets' capacity to call up reserves from the east and were soon confronted with vast numbers of fresh troops who, although poorly trained and ill-equipped, posed a serious threat to an increasingly exhausted Nazi invasion force. In addition, autumn rains bogged down the Nazi military as it attempted to advance along largely dirt roads, unable to use rail transport, and winter came early. The winter of 1941, the most brutal in decades, and combined with various other factors, proved disastrous for Nazi forces as they were exhausted, not equipped for winter war, had difficulty maintaining logistical lines, could not rely on the land for supplies due to scorched earth tactics, were opposed by Siberian units, adept at fighting in freezing temperatures, and possessed equipment unsuitable for such cold temperatures.

-Although Nazi forces were halted and what was supposed to be a quick campaign devolved into a protracted, bloody war of attrition which would eventually deplete Nazi Germany of much of its strength, they nevertheless benefitted from portions of the populations of occupied territories collaborating with them, or at least offering little to no resistance. In the wake of the Soviet famines and the brutal purges of the late 30s, some at first welcomed the Nazis as liberators, even if this view quickly changed for many as the Nazis enacted their own purges, requisitions of agricultural products, mass killings, and deportations of people to forced labor camps. Many others, although opposed to the Nazis, did little to act on this opposition due to fears of the return of Soviet forces. In these cases, while the Soviet leadership called on all Soviet citizens in Nazi-occupied territories to engage in partisan resistance, it was widely believed that should the Soviets return, those who led or participated in resistance efforts would be seen as a threat to Soviet control later on and would be purged. Demonstrating this type of initiative, organization, and willingness to use violence against an occupying force, in Soviet eyes, made them dangerous and a potential threat to their regime after their lands were reoccupied.

-Nazi occupiers also benefitted from previous Soviet purges of the intelligentsia and any who openly resisted Soviet rule, meaning that many who might have organized and led resistance movements against the Nazis were no longer present.¹¹

The Nazi Occupation of Ukraine

-Following the initial invasion of Ukraine, Hitler established the Reichkommissariat Ukraine on 20 August 1941. Comprised of Ukrainian and some Polish and Belarusian territory, this administrative district was transferred from military to civil administration on 1 September 1941.

-While some Ukrainians greeted the Nazis as liberators and actively collaborated with them to fight the Soviets and participate in mass killings of Jews and other groups, others engaged in pro-Soviet partisan activity. Still others either stayed uninvolved or joined the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, which included elements of the Ukrainian nationalist underground and fought against both the Nazis and the Soviets.

-Under Nazi occupation, the region was brutally administered, with purges of the population to remove anti-Nazi dissidents (as well as anyone who might have been perceived as a threat to the new regime), mass killings of ethnic groups, such as the Jews and Roma, the mass appropriation of agricultural products, and the abduction of millions to labor for the Nazis, either in Ukraine, or in Germany as Ostarbeitern. Education and cultural activities were limited, and many Soviet institutions, such as the collective farms, were turned over to Nazi control rather than being abolished. Much of the Ukrainian population starved as Nazi administrators diverted food supplies away from the cities to feed their armed forces and Germans outside of Ukraine. In the countryside, peasants were forced to labor to produce food for the Nazi occupiers. In all, including those killed during the Shoah, as well as others who died as a result of mass killings, starvation, disease, and casualties of war, 7 million people died in Ukraine (approximately 15% of the population).¹²

The Shoah (Holocaust) in Ukraine

-Over the course of the Nazi occupation of Ukraine from 1941 to 1945, between 1.4-1.5 million Ukrainian Jews were systematically murdered in accordance with Nazi

¹¹ Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*. Basic Books (AZ), 2010; and Royde-Smith, J. Graham. "Operation Barbarossa." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 8 August 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Operation-Barbarossa>.

¹² Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*. Basic Books (AZ), 2010: 155-224; and "Second World War." Originally Appeared in the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, Vol. 5 (1993). *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies. Accessed August 30, 2023. <https://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CS%5CE%5CSecondWorldWar.htm>.

ideology. (Accurate numbers of Jewish victims in Ukraine during the Shoah are difficult to calculate because so many were executed by firing squad or gas van in mass killings of entire communities. Records of these murders are sparser than the better-documented murders which took place in Nazi labor or death camps. Moreover, significant portions of the Ukrainian Jewish population were poor peasants from the countryside, for whom population statistics are less complete and their deaths poorly recorded).

-Before the Nazi invasion, Ukraine had the largest Jewish population of all states within the Soviet Union, and one of the largest Jewish populations of any state in Europe. Jews have been living in Ukraine for over a thousand years, and have been present in the region since the time of the Kyivan Rus' Kingdom. Moreover, they have been an integral part of Ukrainian society from this time to the present day. Ukrainian Jewish communities have also been an important part of Jewish culture worldwide, with Ukraine being the birthplace of Hasidism and many other cultural and religious practices.

-Most Ukrainian Jews lived in the western half of the country, making evacuation impossible for the majority of Ukraine's Jewish population amidst the rapid Nazi advances across the Soviet Union. In eastern portions of the country, such as left bank Ukraine (east of the Dnieper River), and southern Ukraine, most of the Jewish population was able to escape, with an estimated 800,000-900,000 Ukrainian Jews fleeing deeper into the Soviet Union.

-In some settlements, large portions of Jewish communities (particularly men) were massacred soon after the occupation began, while in other areas of Ukraine, Jews were gathered into ghettos, which varied in size and organization, with Judenrats (Jewish Councils) established to govern these communities. Men were often conscripted to carry out forced labor, and violence against the inhabitants was rampant. Torture and sexual violence against Jewish women and children on the part of Nazi police, soldiers, and local auxiliary forces native to the region was also widespread and common across occupied territories.

-Before the invasion, when planners of Generalplan Ost intended to deport many Jews across the Ural Mountains, Nazi authorities planned to execute significant portions of the Jewish population, rather than the entire population. Those to be executed immediately included Soviet POWs of Jewish origin, Jewish functionaries within the Communist Party and Soviet bureaucracy, as well as all political commissars within the Red Army (who were mistakenly believed to be primarily Jewish). However, Nazi police and Wehrmacht increasingly targeted Jews throughout occupied territory at all levels of society, and were granted increasing levels of autonomy to deal with "threats" to their occupation as they saw fit, with Jewish men often labeled as "partisans" and executed en masse. Moreover, Nazi propagandists also blamed massacres carried out by the NKVD against thousands of political prisoners during the Soviet retreat on "Jewish" Bolsheviks and "Jewish" NKVD members (however, most Bolsheviks and members of the NKVD were not Jewish, despite what the propagandists would have had people believe). Nazis then tried to argue that all Jews carried the blame for these mass killings, as well as other Soviet atrocities carried out before the invasion. During the early months of the Nazi occupation of Ukraine, thousands of Jewish men were murdered in "reprisals"

for their supposed crimes. Moreover, the Nazi occupiers also enlisted the help of many native Ukrainians to carry out pogroms on their own, as well as work with Nazi organizers to carry out more organized mass killings. In recruiting Ukrainians to carry out pogroms and mass killings, the Nazis played off of preexisting antisemitism among portions of the population, as well as hatred toward the Soviet system by casting Jews as responsible for all the ills the Soviets had brought to Ukraine.

- Ukrainian Jews, as well as many Jews across much of Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe, were often massacred near the places where they lived or were captured, rather than being sent to concentration camps. Despite the emphasis on death camps in present day Shoah memory in the US, the majority of Jews killed by the Nazis were executed by firing squad or gas van instead of in camps such as Auschwitz-Birkenau or Treblinka. The general public in Western countries only became aware of the death camps during the latter portions of WWII as Nazi-occupied territories were liberated, but the true scope of the massacres in countries such as Ukraine were not commonly recognized in the West for a considerable amount of time because they occurred in territories covered by the Iron Curtain after the war, and often took place in secluded places, such as forests, with the bodies of victims buried in mass graves or cremated. The majority of Western European Jews were not killed en masse until they were transported to Eastern European countries, often for political reasons, as well as practical reasons as most death camps were constructed in places where the largest Jewish populations were present, such as Poland.

-The first mass killing of Jewish Ukrainian women and children took place in July 1941, in Ostroh, Volhynia. An even larger massacre took place in Kamianets-Podilskyi between 27-29 August 1941, in which the police executed 23,600 Jews by firing squad (of which 14,000 were refugees forced out of Hungarian-controlled Transcarpathia). Between 27-29 September 1941, Nazi forces and their collaborators carried out the largest mass killing of Jews during the Shoah, as well as the first massacre of the entire Jewish population of a major Ukrainian city, when they forced the Jewish community of Kyiv to assemble for “resettlement” (a common ploy used to give victims a false sense of security, as well as a euphemism employed by the Nazis and their allies, along with phrases such as “special treatment,” to obfuscate the true meaning of their intentions and to maintain a thin veil of plausible deniability). The Jews of Kyiv were told to gather their valuables, documents, and warm clothing before assembling at the appointed time and place to be transported out of Kyiv, after which they were instead detained and executed in the Babyn Yar ravine, where the bodies were then buried.¹³ A similar massacre took

¹³ Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*. Basic Books (AZ), 2010: 187-276; “Holocaust.” *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, December 2008.
<https://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CH%5C0%5CHolocaust.htm>.

place in Mariupol, as recounted in *Two Regimes*, in October 1941.¹⁴ By July 1942, only an estimated 600,000 Jews remained in Ukraine, but the majority were killed between July and November of that year during a renewed campaign. By the beginning of 1943, almost all Jews in Nazi-occupied Ukraine had been murdered, save for a select few reserved for forced labor camps. Of these, most were killed over the course of that year.

-Sexual violence was widespread against Jews before the largest massacres began later in 1941 (most often against women and girls, but presumably against men and boys as well),¹⁵ with Nazis and their collaborators entering ghettos to prey on those who could not speak out or defend themselves. There are also numerous accounts of men from Einsatzgruppen death squads, Nazi police, and local collaborators tasked with carrying out massacres selecting women and girls to rape from those to be executed before killing them in turn. Despite the comparative lack of discussion over this aspect of the Shoah in popular memory, it is important not to bury or ignore these facts even if they are difficult to talk about.

-Also important to remember are the heroic actions of Jewish resistance fighters in Ukraine during the Nazi occupation. The history of Ukrainian resistance movements during WWII is complex and difficult to summarize, with myriad groups—ranging from well-ordered organizations to small bands of fighters—espousing many different ideologies and fighting for many different causes. Some preyed on the local population and were little more than bandits, while others engaged in their own violence against Jewish communities and refugees. Still others, often comprised in part of or led by Jews, acted to protect Jewish refugees, helped rescue Jews from ghettos (often in coordination with the local Judenrat), or created diversions which allowed Jews to escape.¹⁶

Primary Readings:

Two Regimes:

Pgs. 75-102

Footnotes:

60. Partisans

64. SS

¹⁴ Verbitskaya, Teodora. *Two Regimes (A Memoir)*. Translated by Lucianne Vanilar. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall-Hunt Publishing Company, 2023.

¹⁵ The assertion that Jewish men and boys were likely victims of sexual violence is a deduction made by the author and is not directly discussed in the text that has been cited for this section.

¹⁶ Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*. Basic Books (AZ), 2010: 187-276; and "Holocaust." *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, December 2008.

<https://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CH%5C0%5CHolocaust.htm>.

- 72. Jülich
- 73. Ostarbeiter
- 76. Forced labor camps
- 78. Opladen
- 79. The distinction between designations of types of forced labor camps
- 82. Düsseldorf
- 84. Köln-Deutz

Maps: Map of European Russia, Railways in the Russian Empire around 1900
Maps: Map of Germany, Map of Europe

Online Resources:

Two Regimes Film Study Guide Part 3 Holocaust:
Historical Overview by Dr. Michael Berenbaum
Holocaust Timeline
Holocaust – at a Glance

Online Resources:

<https://tworegimes.com/wp-content/uploads/340-Holocaust-Historical-Overview-by-Dr.-Michael-Berenbaum.pdf>

<https://tworegimes.com/wp-content/uploads/350-Holocaust-Timeline.pdf>

<https://tworegimes.com/wp-content/uploads/330-Holocaust-at-a-Glance.pdf>

<https://tworegimes.com/wp-content/uploads/330-Holocaust-at-a-Glance.pdf>

Secondary Readings:

The Gates of Europe:

Chapter 22 (Hitler's Lebensraum)

Bloodlands:

Chapter 5 (The Economics of Apocalypse)

Chapter 6 (The Final Solution)

Chapter 7 (Holocaust and Revenge)

Chapter 8 (Nazi Death Factories)

Lost Kingdom:

Chapter 16 (The Great Patriotic War)

Assignments and Essay Prompts:

- 1) How did Soviet authorities treat the Ukrainian Orthodox Church after coming to power? Did this differ in any ways compared to how they treated the Russian Orthodox Church? With the start of the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, how did policy regarding the Russian Orthodox Church change? Did these policy changes differ concerning the Ukrainian Orthodox Church?
- 2) In *Two Regimes*, Verbitskaya talks about a Cossack battalion which fought for the Nazis. How is this example emblematic of other Nazi collaborators in Ukraine? What were the various motives which drove Ukrainians to work and fight for the Nazis? How do various groups of collaborators differ in their motivations and actions? Did some groups change sides multiple times, and why?
- 3) During the Shoah in Ukraine, many of the mass killings of Jews were performed by Ukrainians under Nazi supervision. In other cases, Ukrainians were encouraged to commit pogroms against Jewish communities, or chose to do so of their own accord. Explore the history of Ukrainian collaboration in the Shoah. How can these actions be traced back to a broader history of antisemitism among some elements of Ukrainian society? What comparisons can be drawn between these and the mass pogroms against Jews which took place across Ukraine in 1918 and 1919?
- 4) Find an autobiography written by someone else who lived through the Nazi invasion and occupation of the Soviet Union and compare it to *Two Regimes*. The student may choose an autobiography written by someone who lived in the same country or region, or possibly a different country entirely. The student may also choose an autobiography written by someone of a different ethnic group, social class, gender, etc. How do these two texts differ? Were they both written outside of the Soviet Union, or was the chosen text censored? How do differences in location and identity potentially create differences between the two, and what can be learned from these differences?
- 5) Why are the mass killings of Jews in Eastern Europe generally given less attention in popular culture than the murder West European Jews? How did early coverage of the Shoah in the West affect how they are depicted today? How did the Soviets treat Shoah remembrance compared to remembrance projects in the West? What effect did the Iron Curtain have on the flow of information and historical facts out of Eastern Europe?
- 6) *Two Regimes*:
 - Pg. 87, "Run Home Little Girl," Painting 31 by Nadia Werbitzky
 - Pg. 97, "Hell's Threshold," Painting 34 by Nadia Werbitzky
 - Photographs:
 - Pg. 83, Photograph 17 Battle of Moscow.jpg
 - Pg. 95, Photograph 18 Stroop Report – Warsaw Ghetto Uprising 10.jpg

26537.jpg Pg. 96, Photograph 19 Stroop Report – Warsaw Ghetto Uprising -
Pg. 99, Photograph 20 The last Jew in Vinnitsa.jpg
Pg. 100, Photograph 21 Buchenwald Ohrdruf Mass Graves 74266.jpg
Pg. 103, Photograph 22, Umschlagplatz loading.jpg
Pg. 104, Photograph 23, Deportation to Treblinka from ghetto in
Siedlce

Module VI: Ostarbeiter and Nazi Labor Camps; Soviet Counteroffensive and Reoccupation; End of WWII and Its Aftermath

Module Description/Suggested Instructions

Module VI will be focused on wrapping up the course, as well as exploring the end and aftermath of WWII and the Shoah, including the destruction wrought in Ukraine and the brutal purges and forced relocation of millions of people following the end of the war. The instructor should start by explaining how the *Ostarbeiter* labor system worked, as well as Nazi forced labor camps and collective farms within Ukraine itself. Here, Verbitskaya's account of her experiences will be particularly useful in giving students a firsthand view of how this system functioned from one who was there.

Next, the instructor should turn to explaining how the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union turned against Axis forces and revisit how these events affected Nazi policies concerning the populations of Eastern Europe. The instructor should also outline the events which acted as a turning point in the war, such as the battles of Stalingrad and Kursk, through to the Soviet reoccupation of Ukraine.

The instructor should then explore the aftermath of WWII in the Soviet Union, and Ukraine specifically, listing the material and human costs of the conflict and the Shoah, with a focus on Stalinist purges and mass relocations of an already devastated population, and the lack of adequate aid from the state in rebuilding a shattered society. These actions, in context of all that had happened over the course of the war, as well as the preceding decades, are important for understanding the character of the Soviet system, as well as Stalinist policies.

Finally, a significant portion of this module should be focused on recapping many of the themes and events covered in the course and again discussing *Two Regimes* as a whole, as was done in Module I, in context of all that the students have learned about the historical context surrounding Verbitskaya's memoir. Students should be given space to express their own thoughts and conclusions in a free form format, and the instructor should encourage them to bring up topics or details of the course which stuck with them. Moreover, this time should also be taken as an opportunity to allow students to bring up and discuss any subjects from throughout the course that they still do not understand or would like to know more about. If the instructor has chosen to assign an end-of-semester project, class time should also be devoted to help students workshop their project, ask questions, or give presentations, etc., depending on what type of project has been assigned.

Information to Be Covered in Class:

Ostarbeiter and Nazi labor camps

-As it became apparent that the lightning victory envisioned by the planners of Operation Barbarossa would not be achieved, Nazi leaders began to think about how

to organize the economy of the Third Reich to support the increasingly costly and bloody war effort. Millions of German men had been recruited or conscripted to fight in first Western Europe and then Eastern Europe during the invasion of the Soviet Union, creating a massive labor shortage back at home. In order to produce enough food, arms, raw materials, and industrial products to continue the war effort and provide for the maintenance of occupied territories, as well as the service industry, it became necessary to find more workers to fill this labor shortage. In response, Nazi administrators greatly expanded a vast forced labor system throughout the occupied territories. In Ukraine, the Nazis partially abandoned aspects of Generalplan Ost, such as the Hunger Plan, realizing that they needed to keep a significant portion of the Slavic population alive to act as a workforce (some Jewish populations were also used as forced laborers, but many were massacred early on during Operation Barbarossa, and most of those kept alive to act as workers had been executed by the end of 1943). While much of Ukraine's industrial capacity was allowed to deteriorate, or had been deliberately destroyed or dismantled and moved by the retreating Soviets, the collective farm system was preserved to produce agricultural products for Nazi forces and Ukrainians were forced to labor producing raw materials or essential products to support the war effort.

-In addition to forced labor camps and collective farms inside of Ukraine, millions of *Ostarbeitern* (Eastern workers) were brought to Germany from across Eastern Europe (including over two million Ukrainians), either recruited using propaganda campaigns or forcibly abducted. These slave laborers worked on farms, in factories, or as servants in German households and often resided in vast camp complexes across Germany.¹⁷

Soviet Counteroffensive and Reoccupation of Ukraine

-The Nazis began losing the war against the Soviet Union after the disastrous battle of Stalingrad, in which both sides lost vast numbers of men (over 800,000 Germans, Hungarians, Romanians, and Italians on the Axis side were killed, wounded, or captured, and an estimated 1,100,000 on the Soviet side). Stalingrad had been targeted by Nazi forces with the intention of cutting off transport links with southern Russia and then using the city as a staging ground to launch a broader attack to take the major oil fields in the Caucasus. However, the Nazis divided their troops, creating significant logistical problems, and the Soviets put up fierce resistance, only slowly giving up land and exacting a heavy toll on the invading Axis forces. Stalingrad saw some of the fiercest fighting of the entire war on the Eastern Front, and combat was often waged block to block and building to building. The Soviets were pushed back into a narrow strip of the city along the Volga River, but Axis forces were unable to dislodge them and were exhausted amidst the onset of winter.

¹⁷ Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*. Basic Books (AZ), 2010: 155-276

-Between 19-23 November 1942, the Soviets launched Operation Uranus, a massive counterattack which targeted the flanks on either side of the main Nazi force. This counterattack took the Nazis by surprise, believing the Soviets incapable of raising so many fresh men or launching such an attack, and their flanks soon buckled, surrounding the remaining 250,000 men of the Sixth Army and the Fourth Panzer Army. Rather than allowing these troops to attempt to break out, Hitler ordered them to stand and fight, but by 2 February 1943, the remaining 91,000 encircled Nazi soldiers surrendered.¹⁸

-Following the Battle of Stalingrad, the Battle of Kursk proved to be another major turning point in the war. The Nazis launched their offensive on 5 July 1943. However, given advance warning by the British of the Nazi plans to launch an offensive in the area, the Soviets constructed a deep defensive line designed to wear down Nazi forces. Forced to divert troops to counter the Allied invasion of Sicily, the Nazis were unable to build up a strategic reserve to reinforce their offensive in Kursk and Hitler cancelled the offensive after one week of fighting. After this point, the Nazis were never again able to launch any major offensives during the war on the Eastern Front.

-From this point onward, the Axis powers were on the defensive. By August 1943, Soviet forces had recaptured Kharkiv, and Kyiv was retaken by November of that year. The Soviets then reached Galicia by the summer of 1944 and almost the entirety of Ukraine was under Soviet reoccupation by the following fall.

Throughout the Soviet march across eastern Europe as they reoccupied land and eventually began taking German territory, Soviet soldiers engaged in a systematic campaign of sexual violence against women and girls on a massive scale.¹⁹

Aftermath of WWII in Ukraine

-Ukraine was one of the hardest hit countries in Europe during WWII. By the end of the war, it had lost as many as 7 million of its citizens, or 15% of its population, and much of the country lay in ruins. Around 700 cities and 28,000 villages had been partially or completely leveled, 40% of its wealth had been lost, and 80% of its agricultural and industrial equipment had been destroyed. By 1945, Ukraine only produced 25% of its prewar industrial output and 40% of its prewar agricultural output. While it had gained 15% more territory than before the war, it was far from being one of the victors.

-Following the war, Stalin engaged in a campaign of mass relocations of populations within the Soviet Union, as well as purges of all those deemed disloyal (such as any who had left Ukraine and gone west during the war, including those who had been forcibly deported by the Nazis, as well as many who remained in Ukraine during Nazi occupation instead of fleeing east into Soviet-controlled territory). During the

¹⁸ Limbach, R., "Battle of Stalingrad." Encyclopedia Britannica, 15 August 2023.

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Stalingrad>

¹⁹ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia. "Battle of Kursk." Encyclopedia Britannica, 28 June 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Kursk>

war, Stalin and the NKVD learned a great deal about enacting mass relocations of entire populations, and they wasted no time in reorganizing the ethnic makeup of states within the Soviet Union in an effort to create non-minority states. In the formerly Polish territories added to Ukraine after the war, Soviet authorities deported nearly all Poles (around 780,000) to Polish areas under Soviet occupation. Similarly, ethnic Ukrainians (approximately 500,000) in Polish territory were deported from their homes to Ukraine. In addition to this, about 180,000 Ukrainians from western Ukraine were arrested and sent to the Soviet Interior and Siberia as punishment for participating in the Ukrainian nationalist underground (whether they had done so or were only accused of doing so), and a further 76,000 were deported east in 1947. Also in 1947, Polish Communist authorities deported the last remaining ethnic Ukrainians in Poland (around 140,000) from their borderlands in the east to formerly German lands in Poland's north and west. Moreover, Stalin also ordered the deportation of Tatars from Crimea and ethnic German populations in southern Ukraine. Throughout much of its history, Ukraine had been a multiethnic country, but following the murder of most of its Jewish population and the deportation of substantial portions of its ethnic Polish, German, and Tatar populations, it was transformed into a mostly ethnic Russian and Ukrainian state. However, while these actions were taken to fight the forces of nationalism by sealing and clearly demarcating borders within the Soviet Union along ethnic lines, and the incorporation of Ukrainian-settled regions of Poland, Romania and Czechoslovakia into Ukraine, new problems were created for Soviet authorities. These additions to the Ukrainian state brought in regions with a culture of democracy, autonomy, and self-organization which had not previously existed, or had been eradicated, in central and eastern Ukraine, leading to the strengthening of a nationalist movement in the west which would persist and spread through the country until it gained independence in 1991.²⁰

Stalinist Antisemitism

-Although the discussion over the extent to which Stalin was antisemitic and antisemitic policies continues, in the years after WWII ended, Jews were increasingly persecuted in the Soviet Union. Prominent Jewish figures were assassinated, Stalin publicly warned of Jewish agents with the Soviet Union working as agents for Western powers, and Jews were purged from various sections of the security apparatus.

-Some argue that Stalin saw Soviet Jews as a potential fifth column who might act to betray the Soviet Union to foreign powers, much the same way countless others throughout history have characterized Jews. He also may have seen Jews

²⁰ Plokhyy, Serhii. *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine* (Revised). Basic Books 2021: 277-306; and "Second World War." Originally Appeared in the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, Vol. 5 (1993). *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies. Accessed August 30, 2023.

<https://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages%5CS%5CE%5CSecondWorldWar.htm>.

cosmopolitan, with their own unique culture that could not be subsumed into Soviet culture the way other national cultures could be. Moreover, the Shoah raised unique concerns as well. Soviet Great Patriotic War propaganda following WWII relied on depicting Soviets (*especially* Russians) as the greatest victims of Nazi aggression. However, this view of the war broke down when Nazi persecution of the Jews was considered, as they (as well as other groups, such as Roma) were truly the victims who suffered the most during WWII. In addition to this, the Shoah was also seen as having given Jews a shared sense of identity, as they were singled out as a people and targeted for complete and total elimination. This shared identity was different from national identities and could not be subsumed into a unified Soviet identity in the same way, meaning that Jews might forever remain separate and thus a potential threat.

-In 1948, Soviet authorities began dissolving remnants of Jewish culture in the Soviet Union. Members of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, once one of Stalin's wartime allies, were arrested and charged with serving American interests.

Between 1948 and 1951, various Jewish cultural organizations were closed down, including museums, theatres, publishing houses, Yiddish newspapers, and schools.

-In 1952, Stalin stated that all Jewish nationalists were agents of the US intelligence service.

- In 1952, Stalin also ordered the execution of thirteen prominent Yiddish poets from the Soviet Union.

-During this time, the Soviet security services also began expelling Jewish members from their ranks.

-Although Stalin's true intentions remain obscured and the issue is still debated by historians to this day, there are some who believe that Stalin was planning a massive purge of Jews across the Soviet Union. This purge would have entailed staging show trials and instigating public uproar against the Jewish population, followed by the deportation of Jews across the Urals to concentration camps, where they may have then been eliminated. However, Stalin died before any such plan could be put into action and the evidence to support its existence is mixed.²¹

Primary Readings:

Two Regimes:

Pgs. 102-150

Footnotes:

91. SMERSH

92. Displaced Persons camps

93. Köln-Mülheim

96. Solingen

98. Brauweiler

101. United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration

²¹ Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*. Basic Books (AZ), 2010: 339-378

Secondary Readings:

The Gates of Europe:

Chapter 23 (The Victors)

Chapter 24 (The Second Soviet Republic)

Lost Kingdom:

Chapter 17 (The Soviet People)

Bloodlands:

Chapter 10 (Ethnic Cleansings)

Chapter 11 (Stalinist Anti-Semitism)

Chapter 12 (Conclusion: Humanity)

Assignments and Essay Prompts:

1) Why did the Nazis begin transferring Slavs to Germany to work as slave labor, and how did this differ from their original plan before the invasion of the Soviet Union? What triggered this change of plan? How did they implement it?

2) Why did Stalin enact mass transfers of entire populations from one place to another soon after the end of WWII? What was the motive behind creating non-minority states, and why did he think that this would curb various nationalist movements? What was the ultimate effect of these population transfers on the future development of European history?

3) Why did Stalin begin to target the Jewish population in the Soviet Union soon after the end of WWII? What set the Jews apart in his mind from other groups, and why did he believe they were particularly dangerous following the Shoah? How were his ideas possibly rooted in preexisting antisemitism present in Europe at the time, and how did he act on them?

4) *Two Regimes:*

Pg. 119, Photograph 24 StalingradRus.jpg

Pg. 120, Photograph 25 St. Lambert-surrender.jpg

Pg. 127, Photograph 26 Sherman tanks and transport of 8th Armoured Brigade moving through Kevalaer, Germany, 4 March 1945, B15147

Pg. 111, "Sorrow (Teodora's Soul)," Painting 37 by Nadia Werbitzky

Project Prompts Covering Subject Matter from Throughout the Course

1) Why does the Russian Federation under Vladimir Putin feel entitled to Ukrainian lands and people? How can the historical, cultural, and linguistic justifications used by modern day Russians be compared to earlier imperial claims on the part of the Soviet Union or the Russian Empire? Are the Russian interpretations of history that

are used to lend legitimacy to their actions today biased in favor of their interests given what has been covered in this course?

2) Why have conflicts over the Ukrainian language figured so prominently throughout Ukrainian history? From Imperial Russian and Soviet repression, to statements made by Vladimir Putin when he launched the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the Ukrainian language has remained a salient point in Russian imperialist ideology. Consider why Ukrainian has variously been delegitimized or even banned at various points throughout history by Russian authorities. Also consider the importance of figures such as Taras Shevchenko choosing to write in Ukrainian rather than Russian, even though Russian was considered to be the "language of culture" at the time. How do historical examples such as these compare to many modern Ukrainians choosing to speak Ukrainian rather than Russian following the 2022 Russian invasion?

3) Explain the origins of Ukrainian identity. How was it defined during different points in history, and how is it defined today? How was it shaped over time and what was it built on? How did Tsarist and Soviet authorities react to the formation and articulation of this identity over time? Why do Ukrainians view themselves as a separate people and nation?

4) Explore the role of Ukrainian artists, writers, historians, and public servants in forming a Ukrainian identity. Who were some of the most important figures? How did they react over the years, and why did they react the way they did?

5) Explore the importance of food and agriculture in Ukrainian history and society. How has its role as breadbasket of Europe affected its place in the world? How was it targeted by foreigners who wished to have access to Ukraine's fertile lands and productive agricultural system? What importance do food and various traditional dishes have in Ukrainian culture, religion and holidays?

6) Throughout the Soviet history covered in this course, how was "informant culture" used to break people apart, creating a climate of paranoia and mistrust? How were rewards used to encourage informants, and how were these rewards particularly powerful and destructive during times of hardship, such as the Holodomor, when access to food meant life and death?

Recommended Readings for this Course

Bohdan Klid and Alexander J. Motyl, *Holodomor Reader: A Sourcebook on the Famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine*. Toronto: CIUS Press, 2012

Motyl, Alexander J. "Deleting the Holodomor: Ukraine Unmakes Itself." *World Affairs* 173, no. 3 (2010): 25-23. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2787099>.

Arendt, Hannah. *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. London: Penguin Books, 2022

Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism. Antisemitism*. San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt Brace, 1985

Klüger, Ruth. *Still Alive: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered*. New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2012