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Bykivnia: how grave robbers, activists, and foreigners ended official silence about Stalin's mass graves near Kiev

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The story of Bykivnia is one of boundless mass murder by Stalin's People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, or NKVD, against Soviet and Polish citizens, but also the depressing tale of how, for seven post-war decades, Soviet and post-Soviet authorities attempted to relegate the killing site to oblivion, how boys and men mangled and looted the skulls and bones for years, and how even after the official veil of silence and deceit was lifted, the state took decisions about the gravesite in haste and secrecy, without anything resembling public debate.

Both the Soviet authorities and the leaders of independent Ukraine attempted to block investigation of the thousands of corpses of victims of Stalin's pre-war and wartime terror in a forest east of Kiev, near the village of Bykivnia, which now falls under Kiev's jurisdiction. None of the numerous German, Soviet, and post-Soviet excavations that took place intended to uncover the whole truth; in fact, the Soviet diggings *erased* much of the evidence. But this cover-up failed, thanks to pressure from within – activists and, gruesomely, grave looters, who mistreated the human remains – and from abroad, mainly from Poland. Ukraine's rulers have acknowledged that the graves of Bykivnia hold Soviet citizens and Polish citizens and soldiers, all of whom were murdered by the NKVD. Yet not they, but grave looters, activists, and foreign investigators broke the state-imposed silence about Stalin's mass graves near Kiev.

A site for 'special needs'

The Soviet political police shot over 800 people from Kiev, which became the capital of the Ukrainian Soviet republic in 1934, and the surrounding area between 1930 and 1936. They died as alleged counterrevolutionaries. But unprecedented mass murder, the Great Terror, arrived under Soviet Ukraine's People's Commissars of Internal Affairs Izraïl Leplevskii (appointed in June 1937) and Aleksandr Uspenskii (appointed in January 1938). Both acted under specific directives from Moscow, but the ethnic Russian Uspenskii seemingly believed that almost all Ukrainians were nationalists and that all ethnic Germans and Poles were spies and saboteurs. As a result, from 5 August 1937 to 27 November 1938, at least 12,823 persons were shot in Kiev, almost all on the decision of extrajudicial *troikas*, groups of three officials.[1] The figure included 1,199 of the NKVD's own officers.[2] Thousands more death verdicts were imposed up to 19 September 1941, the day when the German army occupied Kiev. The victims included, for instance, 1,745 alleged German spies and close to 2,000 Polish citizens, mostly military men imprisoned in 1939.[3]

The total number of people shot in Kiev in the Stalinist terror up to mid-1941 is still unclear. Ukraine's former NKVD archives are largely held by a successor organization, the Security Service of Ukraine. It has stated that it can document the execution in Kiev and subsequent burial in Bykivnia of 14,191 named people.[4] Although various independent researchers make much higher estimates of the total death toll – 115,000, for instance – and these are now repeated by officials, they cannot be taken at face value, as they are based on questionable suppositions, namely the total *available* burial space and estimates of the time and car rides spent on shooting people and transporting bodies.[5]

The main killing locations were a prison at Rosa Luxemburg Street (today's Lypky Street), where the NKVD of the Kiev oblast (region) had its headquarters and shot people in the cellar; a prison in the Lukianivka district, where prisoners were brought up in an elevator; the republican NKVD's headquarters on Instytutska Street, known as the October Palace (rebuilt after the Second World War and now housing an International Centre of Culture and Arts); and a police prison at Korolenko Street (now Volodymyr Street). Whatever the location, the shootings were always carried out between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m.

Although there are stories of unannounced shootings in corridors and on stairways, according to Andrii Amons, a retired military prosecutor who probably read more NKVD files in Kiev than

anyone else, formal procedures were usually followed. The arrestee was brought into a room by the local commander and an assistant. There a prosecutor asked, for example, 'Are you Ivanov Ivan Petrovich?', and after the victim's 'yes' he would continue with, 'By resolution of the troika [or dvoika, or military tribunal] you have been sentenced to capital punishment.' The victim's arms were at once tied behind the back, and in that very same room, he or she was forced to kneel and face the wall, restrained if he or she resisted, and murdered by one or two shots in the back of the head. The prosecutor and a physician verified if death had occurred. At the height of the Great Terror, about a hundred persons were shot in this way almost every day.[6] Relatives who inquired with the NKVD about the disappeared were told that they had been exiled without the right to correspondence. After Stalin died, the lie was changed: the convicts had supposedly succumbed to disease in captivity in the 1940s.

It was official ever since the 1920s that the corpses of such victims had to be buried in the clothes worn at the time of death 'without any ritual, so as not to leave traces of the grave'.[7] Up to the mid-1930s, in Kiev the shot people were placed in pits at the edge of the Lukianivka Cemetery and possibly also at two other sites.[8] But when space ran out, the NKVD began transporting the corpses to pits east of the city, across the Dnieper, near the hamlet of Bykivnia.[9] On 20 March 1937, the presidium of the Kiev city soviet decided on the 'allotment and demarcation of land for special needs'. KGB veterans confirmed five decades later that these 'special needs' (Ukrainian: *spetspotreby*) referred to the burial of shot people.[10] Working at night, 800 metres off the road from Kiev to Brovary, the NKVD erected what locals dubbed the Green Fence – a 2.5-metre-high wooden fence, without any openings other than the gate, painted green and topped with barbed wire. It enclosed about 200 by 260 metres, or about 4 hectares. Armed guards in civilian clothing watched outside; in June 1941, they donned their NKVD uniforms.[11]

Like the arrests, interrogations, and shootings, the transports and burials to the site took place at night. A veteran NKVD lorry driver recalled in 1989 that at Rosa Luxemburg Street, special pincers were used to hoist the corpses by the legs and neck, after which canvas was used to cover the gruesome cargo. To keep blood from flowing through the cracks, there was also canvas on the bottoms of the lorries.[12] A man who worked as a signalman at the October Palace recalled this scene as well, which he used to witness from a window (in the summer, there was early morning light at loading time). It haunted him for the rest of his life.[13]

Two or three NKVD cars accompanied the convoy. It made a right turn into the forest and drove through the gate toward empty pits. (Who dug them is unclear.) Before the war, Dmytro Makarenko used to drive a three-coach tram, number 23. Frequently at 2 a.m., on his last trip, two to five canvas-covered lorries crossed the track from left to right. This was half a kilometre from the fence. He also had a passenger who probably guarded there and used to demand that the tram halt at 'Pioneer Camp', a stop that officially had been abolished.[14] NKVD men cleaned the vehicles and the canvas in a nearby pond.[15]

But the secrecy could not be total: locals who at first suspected that weapons were stored behind the mysterious fence did notice. In the mornings, herdsmen would find objects that had fallen off the trucks. Moreover, as a local woman recalled in 1988, 'on the road leading toward the gate of that fence we saw bloody spots. Many saw those bloodstains, but were afraid to talk about them.'[16]

In the autumn of 1939, or early in 1940, Polish prisoners arrived at the nearby train station in Darnytsia. They came from the Starobilsk camp in eastern Ukraine as part of the large number of Polish civilians and military arrested by the NKVD in 1939.[17] Whether they were shot in Kiev or Bykivnia, their corpses were buried at Bykivnia. Definitely shot at Bykivnia, from June 1941, were Red Army members and civilians who probably came from western Ukraine.[18]

The role of the German occupiers, 1941–42

The Germans occupied the region in September 1941. Local witnesses agree that they neither shot nor buried anyone in the Bykivnia region.[19] Instead, they came to investigate the graves. As early as 21 September, a German who had arrived on a motorcycle with a sidecar asked, 'Where are the corpses?' and ordered locals whom he designated to carry out a modest exhumation. As the daughter in the Dembovsky family recalled in the late 1980s, the Germans

> pointed out a freshly loosened part of the ground and told us to dig there. I dug to the depth of the spade end and could not go further, for there was something. I cleaned the earth from the place and suddenly saw the corpse of a woman with a dead child in her arms. The corpses had not yet decomposed. Below them were other corpses.

Pictures were taken.[20] The German News Agency wrote an item, and various newspapers brought out the news, such as the *Berliner*

Börsen-Zeitung and Kiev's *Ukraïnske Slovo*, on 30 September and 8 October, respectively.[21]

Other German-supervised exhumations followed. When one of the diggers, Petro Kukovenko, told his father about it, the latter went to see for himself. He returned with the identity papers found on one corpse – and, apparently, gave them to a Jewish man who was staying with them.[22] In April or May 1942, Germans wearing uniforms ordered Vira Nikitina and Vasyl Makarenko to come with them and to bring two spades. 'They'll bury you there!', someone cried out. The soil seemed rock-solid, so they used a crowbar to break the layer of lime or alabaster. The corpse they found was that of a man in blue trousers with light-blue stripes, officer's boots, a tunic, a belt, and a belt buckle. A German took a picture and ordered them to fill up the hole. In a second pit they found a woman in brown shoes, a blue dress, and pre-war stockings. More pictures were taken, and they covered this body as well.[23]

According to Mrs A. S. Dembovska, others began arriving as well, on their own initiative. 'Many Kievans', she recalled, according to a record from 1989, 'started coming here to excavate the burials and to look for their relatives. A woman who stayed overnight at our place recognized the corpse of her son or husband.' Dembovska seems alone in acknowledging that even at that time, a certain gold rush began: people from Bykivnia and nearby 'made excavations, whereby they found gold wares, personal items, and also things, clothes, and shoes that one could actually still use as intended. All of this was bartered for produce, and some enriched themselves from this. This was in 1941–1943.'[24] A memorial was not placed, even though the auxiliary city administration prepared one, apparently because the German authorities disallowed it.[25]

The Soviet authorities who arrived when the Germans left took a manifold approach to Bykivnia. The village elder (mayor) was arrested and he confessed that he had discovered the corpses of 'enemies of Soviet rule executed by the NKVD' (as the record put it) and had made arrangements for a memorial. Symon Dembovsky, who had been mentioned in the Nazi-sponsored press, was beaten into confessing that he had *invented* the pre-war executions, and was sentenced to ten years. He was released in 1954.[26] The authorities ordered or allowed locals to appropriate the fence for rebuilding homes, which the retreating Germans had burned to the ground, and levelled the terrain and planted acacias.[27] The Extraordinary State Commission for investigation of Nazi crimes (ChGK) was not involved; as yet, there was no Soviet claim that the Germans had buried people there.

Marauders, the KGB, and government commissions, 1961–87

Nothing happened until the 'Thaw' – the lessening of censorship under Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. At a commemoration in Kiev of Ukrainian intellectuals and artists shot in Soviet Karelia, a tearful woman approached one of the organizers, the theatre director Les Taniuk. Frosyna Mykytivna's message stunned him: there were mass graves in the forest near Bykivnia, holding a very large number of corpses – 'half of Kiev'. She introduced Taniuk to Petro Kukovenko, one of the diggers of 1941, who on 26 August 1962, showed him the site and told his story. Also present were Taniuk's companions Alla Horska and Vasyl Symonenko. Taniuk wrote about it in his diary:

> We walked along the perimeter of the absent green fence. A huge territory. … This morning it was damp, foggy, and drizzling a bit. The earth gave way under our feet, and it was an awful sensation to walk on human remains. Vasyl took me by the elbow: 'Look …' On a small cleared space five lads were playing football. A sixth one, unusually overweight, who found running difficult, stood at the goal. 'Boys will be boys', I said. 'They're playing a game.' 'But look *what* they're playing with …' I went closer. The lads were playing football with a skull, shot through from the back, at the top. I reached for that skull. It seemed to me that of a child. For it was still very small. The children were playing football with the skull of a child, filled with hay. Skulls – bigger ones – also lay at the goal. The earth had washed away, and time had polished them. We looked around. The area was scattered with skulls.

Right there, Symonenko composed a verse that he later included in a poem that became famous in Ukraine: 'We trample underfoot our enemies and friends./O poor Yoricks, all in the same style!/In the graveyard of executed illusions/There is no room for graves.'[28]

The three sent a memorandum about Bykivnia to the city soviet. The Kiev Club of Creative Youth to which they belonged was immediately dispersed, and some of its members were arrested or fired from their jobs. Taniuk felt compelled to move to Odessa, where the KGB confiscated many documents from him, and then to Moscow. He returned from this exile only in 1986. Symonenko was viciously beaten in the street and died from his wounds. Horska became engaged in 'dissident' work and in 1970 was murdered, officially by her father-in-law.[29]

It is easy to find assertions that after the war, grave robbery at Bykivnia took decades to start.[30] But that seems unlikely if looting

had already begun during the war. Diggers came and found pre-war Polish coins and banknotes and buttons with the Polish eagle, but their real quest was for gold.[31] The marauders severed skulls from trunks. In conversation with the writer Marco Carynnyk in 1991, Kukovenko recalled not only that these skulls and bones 'began to lie around in the whole area' but also that 'children brought them to school. … Everyone saw them. I went there. I saw what was going on. They'd dig up graves, the foresters would fill them in, and then they'd dig them up again.'[32]

On 13 April 1971, militiamen arrested three boys who had removed gold teeth and crowns from skulls that they dug up. It turned out that in total, sixteen boys from Darnytsia had removed over a hundred skulls from at least nineteen pits. By then, the graves-ite already had over a hundred such holes. Two days later, for the first time since the 1930s, the organization that had perpetrated the crime, now renamed the KGB, began digging, with the assistance of a forensic expert and a local public prosecutor. They all worked under the false premises formulated by Ukrainian KGB chief Vitalii Fedorchuk: the prisoners came from a camp, not a prison, and had been shot during the Great Patriotic War, as the Soviet–German war was called.[33]

Accordingly, Minister of Internal Affairs Ivan Holovchenko chaired a special Government Commission for the Investigation of the Crimes Committed by the Hitlerites in the Region of the Dnieper Forest Area of the City of Kiev. The commission gave itself just four to five days to investigate and bury the human remains. The speed was meant to preclude "conversations" before the 9 May commem-oration of the Second World War.[34] For eight days, Soviet Ukraine's chief forensic-medical expert, O. Hryshchenko, investigated. He counted 3,805 corpses in 207 pits and followed instructions in con-cluding that they were buried no more than thirty years ago. The skulls and bones were thrown into thirty or more large wooden trunks and lowered into a deep pit.[35]

Petro Shelest, the leader of the Communist Party of Ukraine from 1963 to 1972, paid a visit and wrote in his diary that he found the 'dis-covered' (as he put it) graves a horrible sight. He even added, dishon-estly, it seems: 'Who these people are, why they were executed, and who executed them is not yet known, but I guess it's possible to find traces of this crime.'[36] In its very first publication about the Bykivnia graves, on 24 April the Soviet Ukrainian press reported the burial.[37]

A research team of the regional KGB studied archives and ques-tioned NKVD veterans.[38] It also destroyed evidence, including traces

Figure 3.1 KGB officers look on as a forensic expert examines human bones extracted from the Bykivnia mass graves. April 1971.

of the Polish identity of many of the victims. A man called Feodosii Riaboshtan worked at a furnace at the Ninth Forest Factory on the Left Bank. One night two uniformed men visited him and ordered him to burn the contents of six or seven bags that had a stench of corpses. Riaboshtan saw they were old passports, birth certificates, and similar documents, and refused – until he was promised a bottle of liquor. He died in unusual circumstances shortly thereafter.[39]

In the years that followed the authorities brought in heavy machinery to level the surface. 'The skeletons, bones, skulls – everything was crushed and spread across the territory', Andrii Amons has noted. 'They brought in a 1.5-meter layer of earth and covered it.' The authorities also seem to have ordered foresters to plough the area around the graves so as to hamper access to the terrain.[40]

Yet the reburials, levelling, and ploughing did not bar grave looters. They kept coming well into the 1980s. In 1989, a Ukrainian journalist who referred to unnamed witnesses reported that a very large area near Bykivnia was disturbed up to 2 metres deep, using home-made ladders. Scattered about lay bottles of vodka and eau-de-Cologne and 'hundreds, thousands of skulls'. One of the looters was arrested when he tried to sell a jar with gold teeth at a bus stop for three bottles of vodka. An experienced digger, he told his captors, could fill up a jar in one night.[41]

But there were also secret commemorations. In the late 1960s, if not earlier, unknown people placed wooden crosses with icons on them in the area.[42] Mykola and Halyna Lohvanov lived in Bykivnia. They and their relatives and friends visited the graves on Easter or Victory Day.[43] Such visits resembled the custom of *pomynky*: wakes on the first night after a person's death, on the tenth day, and a year later. Mykola Lysenko, an agricultural economist from Kiev, visited the Lohvanovs, who were his in-laws, in May 1986.

> We went there to offer them our congratulations, he's a veteran of the Second World War, to give them our best wishes on Victory Day. When we came there, they were preparing baskets, packages, in order to go somewhere. 'Where are you going?' I said. 'On this day', they said, 'and on Easter we always go to the pits to commemorate the dead, those who were shot before the war by the NKVD satraps.' Well, we joined the procession and went. It isn't very far, maybe a kilometre or a kilometre and a half at the most. When we got there, a horrible picture opened before our eyes. An area of several hectares was dug up and covered with human bones. Remnants of clothing, shoes, children's toys, and then skulls and bones, and it was all lying around dug up and scattered. Well, you know, the women began wailing because it's horrible when people show such disrespect … for their own people. We had a meal there.

Lysenko vowed to tell the world about the terrible crime and began taking pictures and questioning about fifteen fearful local witnesses. He also took some skulls with bullet holes with him. After a year, he asked for help from the Writers' Union's party bureau. Ivan Drach and Serhii Plachynda from that bureau took pictures themselves, and, in late 1987, Drach and the secretary of the Writers' Union Communist Party committee, Oleksa Musiienko, asked Kostiantyn Masyk, the first secretary of the party committee for the city of Kiev, to take measures for the creation of a single mass grave and the placement of a sign 'To the Victims of the Stalinist Terror from the Ukrainian People'. Masyk rushed to Bykivnia to see for himself. That same month, December 1987, the KGB studied the terrain and found pits (a recent one was 1.5 by 2.5 metres), cavities, 2-metre-high earthen walls, and 'parts of human skeletons – skulls, bones of arms and legs, and also partly decayed remains of shoes and other clothing items'. It proposed that the militia guard the site – but not so much to preclude looting as to prevent 'use of the mentioned circumstances for hostile purposes' – and that the KGB's internal troops 'put [it] in order'. Police troops did surround the site and placed 'No Entry' signs.[44]

Within a week, the republic's Prime Minister Volodymyr Shcherbytsky agreed to 'measures to uncover the possible inciters and to interrupt the provocative conjectures intending to link the events during the fascist occupation with so-called "victims of Stalinist terror".[45] KGB officers told witnesses that their story must be that they had never seen or known *anything*. In turn, these witnesses tearfully reproached Lysenko that they would be arrested.[46] That same month, a criminal investigator called V. Hubriienko studied the area for five days. He concluded that there were human remains in an area about 200 by 260 metres, totalling about 4 hectares. He counted 2,158 skeletons, mostly in the central part, at a depth of 0.2 to 4 metres.[47]

On 24 December, the government established the second Bykivnia commission, headed by Minister of Internal Affairs Ivan Hladush and including twelve others such as Iurii Kondufor, the republic's most powerful historian. Its mandate was 'researching the remains of Soviet citizens destroyed by the German-fascist invaders during the Great Patriotic War discovered in the 19th quarter of the Darnytsia Forest Area of the city of Kiev'.[48] Already the day after, it witnessed a reburial, 5 metres below the surface and right next to the reburials from 1971. This time it involved thirty-four wooden containers with human remains, and eight boxes with items such as Polish officers' boots and metal badges inscribed 'KOU NKVD USSR', Kiev Regional Department of the NKVD of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Ending its work as early as 30 December, the Hladush commission dated the burials to 'approximately forty-five years' ago, or '1941–1943'.[49]

The government ordered the Kiev city administration to manage the gravesite and improve the road toward it, and it ordered the construction company Kievproekt to make a design for the future memorial site. Almost as an afterthought, it also ordered a criminal investigation of the 'outrages' against the human remains.[50]

Activism and further confrontation since the late 1980s

Less than five months later, on 6 May 1988, the very first official memorial was inaugurated: a granite cube with an inscription reading 'ETERNAL MEMORY. Here are buried 6,329 Soviet warriors, partisans, underground activists, peaceful citizens tortured to death by the fascist occupiers in 1941–1943'. The deed was done by low-ranking officials, such as the deputy secretary of the city party

committee, V. I. Mykhailovsky. Present in silence were city party committee secretary Masyk (who later became one of independent Ukraine's deputy prime ministers) and the head of the city soviet, V. A. Zhursky. Local people were absent, for no one had invited them and no announcement had been made. Kiev's evening newspaper reported the event the day after.[51]

The Ukrainian 'Memorial' society, recently founded to expose the crimes of Stalin's regime, organized its own commemorative meeting at Bykivnia on 15 July 1988, which was filmed by the KGB.[52] The society was gravely concerned about a proposal put forward by Zhursky and adopted by the city council to build a train station in the forest.[53] Now aid to its cause came from an unexpected source – Moscow. Bypassing Soviet Ukraine's ultra-conservative authorities, Taniuk brought the correspondent of Moscow's *Literaturnaia gazeta* (*Literary Newspaper*) to Bykivnia. Sergei Kiselev's report appeared on 30 November 1988, and had the effect of a bombshell. Soviet censorship had never before cleared an assertion that the Bykivnia graves held victims of Stalin's regime.

Ukraine's authorities dared not dismiss the report by the prestigious periodical out of hand.[54] Typically for Mikhail Gorbachev's time of glasnost (openness or transparency), the publicity was followed by rapid action by state and civil actors. Articles by foreign correspondents who visited Bykivnia added to the pressure. On 5 December, half a century after the Great Terror, Criminal Case 50–0092 was opened to investigate the killings.[55]

A meeting by Memorial and other activists at the House of Cinema on 6 December demanded an end to the construction of a railway station; a truthful memorial; dismissal of Hladush from the government commission; and a board of advisors with people recommended by civil organizations. The meeting also demanded that the relevant archives be opened and the KGB instructed to inform about all anonymous burial sites from the Stalin-era terror.[56] Two days later, the Ukrainian government reconvened ('renewed') the Hladush commission, with a revised composition, for the purpose of 'additional study of the circumstances and documents' and to come up with proposals.[57]

The Hladush commission and the criminal investigators approached the witnesses at Bykivnia, but at first they refused to speak – people in militia uniforms had been threatening them. Whether these were KGB officers is unclear; the agency claimed to be cooperating in the investigation by questioning pre-war 'colleagues' and visiting the central KGB archives in Moscow.[58] Ultimately, the

Prosecutor's Office questioned over 250 witnesses. It also carried out some kind of re-enactment, created video recordings, solicited expert opinions, and scrutinized dozens of earlier criminal files and other records.[59]

The government commission convened once a week at Hladush's office, and then once every three weeks. The journalist Kiselev could attend and heard many commission members profess a lack of qualifications to question the forensic experts' earlier conclusions about the timing of the murders. But the final meeting did acknowledge that *Literaturnaia gazeta* had written the truth, and ruled that the incorrect words be erased from the memorial stone. Just before the closing, Kiselev called out, 'What about an exhumation?!' A representative of the Communist Party in the commission smiled and declared it unnecessary, even *immoral*: 'We should not disturb the bones of those who perished – it's not Christian. All the more so because there was already an exhumation in December 1987. What's left to prove if we now know the main thing – who exterminated those people. No necrophilia, please!' Although Hladush did favour a new exhumation, his commission disbanded without deciding on the matter.[60]

All the same, a third Soviet exhumation did begin in April 1989. Unlike the archeological exhumation at Kurapaty, for instance, a similar site in neighbouring Belarus, this exhumation was thoroughly forensic, and was conducted by soldiers of the Internal Troops and a youth search club. At first Kiselev was the only journalist present. Later a correspondent of RATAU, Soviet Ukraine's press agency, joined him. For the first few days, only mangled corpses (in non-anatomical positions) were found. The diggers reburied the remains of 6,783 people – slightly more than the number on the memorial. A journalist's report gives a sense of the atmosphere:

> A soldier calls out from the pit, 'Found a skull with a bullet hole.' We come nearer. Company Sergeant Major Iu. Sh. does not hide his thoughts: 'I'm not saying that Stalin did many good things, but he did take the country out of its postwar collapse.' Private S. Sh.: 'I cannot say anything about Stalin. I don't have a personal opinion of him.'[61]

This excavation found near the memorial, at a depth of 5 metres, the chests from 1988 with Polish officers' boots and other Polish items. As in 1971 and 1988, the diggings were strictly limited in time: the company hired for the diggings had been ordered to finish by Victory Day, 9 May.[62] The haste was solely because of the lack of commitment by the authorities.

Because of that same unwillingness, as the press quickly noted, the criminal investigation ended prematurely. It had to be closed supposedly because of the lapse of time and the death of those responsible, as Prosecutor Viktor Kulyk put it on 31 May.[63] He also ruled that relatives requesting extracted items might receive them, except for gold and other valuables (which he sent to the Ministry of Internal Affairs) and extracted human remains, which he sent to the Republican Bureau of Criminal Forensics. That these sixteen skulls (and some other remains) were not reburied became known, and in January 1990, seven Ukrainian intellectuals, including the leaders of the Memorial society (officially recognized the day before), demanded that the extracted remains be reburied at a symbolic site, near the October Palace. They and other activists relented only after a solemn reburial at Bykivnia on 13 February. Kulyk had underestimated the 'social-political side' of the matter, the Communist Party warned him.[64]

In mid-1989, the Hladush commission had recommended continued research by the Prosecutor's Office, publicity about its work, and a competition for a new memorial.[65] The Ministry of Culture called this competition, but it ended inconclusively, and in May 1990, Memorial unilaterally erected a large oak cross, a memorial stone, and an artistic barbed wire fence. It also lined the forest road with five signs and placed a 6-metre-long panel at the forest entrance, with the words 'Graves of Repressed People'.[66]

Ukraine became independent in 1991, but its post-Soviet authorities were also reluctant to face Bykivnia. For instance, when city mayor Leonid Kosakivsky opened the 'Memorial Complex Bykivnia Graves' in the presence of a number of bussed-in Kievans on 30 April 1994, he did so without publicity. The roadside now had a statue of a mourning man.[67] Even though the area eventually changed in status, becoming a 'state preserve' on 22 May 2001, and a 'national preserve' five years later, the site itself did not change. The very first visit by a Ukrainian president, Viktor Yushchenko, took place only in 2004.

The fourth Katyn cemetery

The Soviet authorities had reluctantly and belatedly acknowledged that the Bykivnia graves held victims of Stalin's regime, but ignored the Polish citizens among them. Prosecutors such as Kulyk refused to meet journalists who wished to discuss this matter and the stories they had heard about the burning of documents in 1971.[68] Poland

was informed not by officials, but by Ukrainian activists. In 1989, Memorial and other civic organizations told the Polish consulate about Poles at Bykivnia.[69]

In April 1990, the official Soviet media admitted for the first time that not Germans, but NKVD officers had murdered Polish prisoners at Katyn, the better-known burial site near Smolensk in Russia. Polish POW graves were also found at Kharkiv's Piatykhatky grounds, and the city administration there recognized them in 1991 with a memorial.[70] The Polish Public Prosecutor's Office in Warsaw received Lysenko in 1990, and Poland's Prosecutor Jacek Wilczur visited Bykivnia.[71] The very first Polish religious rite took place there in May, and that same year Stanislav Shalatsky, a Pole from Ukraine, handed Pope John Paul II in Rome a capsule with Bykivnia earth.[72]

But the authorities of independent Ukraine continued to claim that Bykivnia held only the remains of Soviet citizens. Ievhen Marchuk, chief of the Security Service of Ukraine, successor to the KGB, denied that his organization had any information about Polish POWs killed in Ukraine. Finally, on 5 May 1994, Marchuk's deputy Andrii Khomych showed Poland's deputy prosecutor general Stefan Śnieżko a 1940 list of 3,435 Polish POW names, which both men deemed previously unknown victims of the 'Katyn crime'.[73] Two years later, the Military Prosecutor's Office in Kiev finally gave Poland a list of Polish items found in 1971.[74]

But Poland remained barred from Bykivnia itself until 2001. On 25 June that year, Pope John Paul II included it in his tour of Ukraine, and a State Inter-Departmental Commission on Commemoration of Victims of War and Political Repression was founded. Led by Vitalii Kazakevich, it quickly came to an understanding with the Polish Council for the Protection of Struggle and Martyrdom Sites, led by Andrzej Przewoźnik.[75] This enabled five excavations to take place, in 2001, 2006, 2007, 2011, and 2012, all conducted by Poles headed by Andrzej Kola, a professor of archaeology who produced records only in the Polish language.[76] Polish television showed the activities, and a Polish photographer won an award for his work there.[77] A discovery on 25 August 2007 confirmed the burial at Bykivnia of Poles from the so-called 'Ukrainian Katyn List': the army ID sign of a senior sergeant and border guard.[78] Ultimately, the Polish investigators concluded that forty-one pits held Polish victims from 1937 and 1938, but fifty-four other pits held 1,488 Polish victims from 1940.

The latter victims were solemnly reburied on 27 October 2007, apparently along with corpses of victims of the pre-war terror. (The BBC and Reuters reported the burial of 'some 2,000' and '1,998

bodies, 474 of which were Poles'.) Four years later, on 30 June 2011, the remains of 492 persons from fifteen other 'Polish' pits were exhumed and reburied. It seems that the investigators deemed the latter also victims from murders that took place in 1940, for Przewoźnik's successor Andrzej Kunert concluded in 2012 that from a total of 69 'Polish' pits, the remains of 'at least 1980 persons' were found.[79]

But some Memorial activists (such as Roman Krutsyk – not Lysenko) publicly denounced the Polish diggings, as interference in Ukraine's internal affairs – and as illegal. Their envious frustration was easy to understand, as most victims of the pre-war terror were never excavated this thoroughly. They may also have been suspicious because Amons, who assisted the Poles, was born in Warsaw of Polish parents. But they were right about the illegality: In September 2009, a Ukrainian court imposed fines on 'Memorials of Ukraine', an entity serving the State Inter-Departmental Commission, for illegal excavations at Bykivnia. Because Deputy Prime Minister Dmytro Tabachnyk had succeeded Kazakevich as commission chairman, no one expected the verdict to be implemented, which indeed it was not.[80]

On 25 September 2010, Prime Minister Mykola Azarov told Polish President Bronisław Komorowski that a Polish cemetery would be allowed at Bykivnia. In preparation, another reburial took place there in 2011. On 4 November that year, President Viktor Yanukovych ruled that the central part of the new memorial to the 'victims of totalitarianism' be finished before 1 August 2012; and on 28 November 2011, he managed to gather Komorowski and his three Ukrainian predecessors, Leonid Kravchuk, Leonid Kuchma, and Viktor Yushchenko, for the placement of the memorial's corner stone.[81]

A small part of the terrain, holding the almost 2,000 Polish citizens, became a Polish Military Cemetery on 21 September 2012. It was inaugurated by the presidents of Ukraine and Poland, Yanukovych and Komorowski.[82] Thus emerged what Poland – but not Ukraine – calls 'the Fourth Katyn Cemetery', after Piatykhatky, Katyn, and Mednoe (all unveiled in the summer and autumn of 2000).[83] The term 'military cemetery' overlooks the fact that, like the other Katyn cemeteries, Polish civilians were among the dead of 1940. As always with Bykivnia, the matter had been stalled and then rushed. As Polish media reported in June 2013, the Polish inscriptions on the memorial are clandestine, for the Ukrainian state never signed a document allowing them. In fact, seemingly not a single document with permission for the Polish cemetery was prepared.[84]

But this opening does appear to mark the end of excavation, illegal or not. According to Andrii Kondratsky, head of the Kievan Society of Political Prisoners and Victims of Repression and a historian, grave looting had still taken place in the late 1990s.[85] Even as late as March 2004, Dmytro Malakov, of the Museum of the History of Kiev, warned me not to visit Bykivnia on my own because of the marauders there.

Conclusion

Similar large post-Soviet sites with victims of Stalin's Great Terror exist near Minsk (Kurapaty), Moscow (Butovo and Kommunarka), St Petersburg (Levashovo and Koirangakangas), Voronezh (Dubovka), and they also exist in cities such as Vinnytsia and Dnipropetrovsk. There, as at Bykivnia, no one seems to want to establish individual identities from remains, for instance through DNA analysis. In Kiev, too, the authorities successfully warded off judicial prosecution of NKVD veterans, despite many demands for them. For Bykivnia, it is clear that none of the many excavations have been probing enough, or even legal. They were undertaken by grave robbers, or, in the 2000s, by semi-secret government bodies that lacked the proper paperwork – that is, formal permission – from the state.

Activists and foreigners ended official silence about Stalin's mass graves at Bykivnia, but it took years for this pressure to put a full stop to the grave looting. Most Ukrainian citizens, meanwhile, have preferred to keep silent, out of fear, indifference, or both.

Notes

1 A. I. Amons (ed.), *Bykivnians'ki zhertvy abo Iak pratsiuvala 'Vyshcha dviika' na Kyïvshchyni* (Kiev: Mizhnarodna akademiia upravlinnia personalom, 2007), p. 73. It is disheartening that Amons granted publishing rights to an institution that had published many antisemitic books and articles.

2   O. H. Bazhan (eds), *Pam"iat' Bykivni: Dokumenty ta materialy* (Kiev: Ridnyi krai, 2000), pp. 59–60; H. Kuromiya, *The Voices of the Dead: Stalin's Great Terror in the 1930s* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 15–16.

3   On German spies, see Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, p. 60.

4   Pres-tsentr SB Ukraïny, 'Sluzhba bezpeky Ukraïny vstanovyla ta opryliudniuie imena 14191 zhertvy Bykivni', 14 May 2009, at http://sbu. gov.ua/sbu/control/uk/publish/article?art_id=86716&cat_id=39574 (accessed 22 August 2013).

5   On the procedure, see M. Lysenko, *Bykivnia: Zlochyn bez kaiattia* (Brovary: Krynytsia, 1996), p. 35.

6   Andrii Amons, interviewed in '"Stinky mizh ukraïns'kymy i pol's'kymy mohylamy mohly siahaty vs'oho 30–40 santymetriv"', *Ukraïns'kyi tyzhden'*, 24 September 2012, at http://tyzhden.ua/History/60703 (accessed 8 September 2013). On the Lukianivka Prison and on Luxemburg Street, see Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 56–7, 62–3.

7   V. M. Nikol's'kyi, 'Do pytannia shchodo rozshuku mists' pokhovannia zhertv politychnykh represii', in T. F. Hryhor"ieva (ed.), *VIII Vseukraïns'ka naukova konferentsiia 'Istorychne kraieznavstvo i kul'tura' (Naukovi dopovidi ta povidomlennia). Chastyna II* (Kiev and Kharkiv: Ridnyi krai, 1997), p. 158.

8   Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 57–8, 75.

9   M. Lysenko has said that such burials had occurred there as early as 1929, but has not offered the testimonies where this story is supposed to appear. M. Lysenko, interview in Brovary by M. Carynnyk, 12 October 1995; Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 23; An NKVD man who defected to the United States in 1946 has told an unlikely story about the pre-war years: 'In three specific KGB headquarters, I saw machines that were used in lieu of burial – grinding equipment. In Kiev, the KGB had a special room approximately three-fourths of a mile from the Dnieper River. A sewer line extended from the room to the river – a specially constructed pipe of extra-wide circumference, allowing a body to be flushed into the river. Predatory fish would swiftly destroy the evidence. In the city of Kharkov [Kharkiv], there was a similar setup.' A. Contract, *The Back Room: My Life with Khrushchev and Stalin* (New York: Vantage Press, 1991), p. 30.

10   Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 25, 59–60.

11   Petro Kukovenko, interview outside his house in Bykivnia by M. Carynnyk, 5 October 1991; Vira Nikitina, interview at her house in Bykivnia by M. Carynnyk, 6 October 1991; Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 24; Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 40, 49, 65.

12   M. Sh. Musorgskii, quoted in Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 62–3.

13   L. T. Husak, quoted in V. Savtsov, 'Bykivnia', *Radians'ka Ukraïna*, 19 April 1989, 3, partly translated in M. Carynnyk, 'The killing fields of Kiev', *Commentary*, October 1990, p. 21; Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 50–1.

14   Dmytro Andriiovych Makarenko, interview at his house in Bykivnia by M. Carynnyk, 5 October 1991; Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 63–4.

15 Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 41; H. A. Shamrai, quoted in Savtsov, 'Bykivnia', partly translated in Carynnyk, 'The killing fields of Kiev', pp. 21–2.

16 M. O. Nyzenko, quoted in Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 49–50. On objects, see Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 24.

17 Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 36; S. Kiselev, 'Tragicheskaia pravda o Bykovne do sikh por zasekrechena', internet periodical *Obozrevatel'* (Kiev), 21 May 2006, at http://kiyany.obozrevatel.com/news/2006/5/21/16509.htm (accessed 8 September 2013).

18 Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 66, 76; Valentyn Matiiash, interview at his house in Bykivnia by M. Carynnyk, 9 October 1991; Halyna Lohvanova, interview by M. Carynnyk outside her house in Bykivnia, 5 October 1991, and in the Bykivnia forest, 9 October 1991.

19 Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 48, 63; Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 25; interview with Makarenko; interview with Matiiash.

20 Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 47–8 (A. S. Dembovska); interview with Lohvanova (on the question).

21 'Ontzettende vondsten in Kiev', *Nieuwe Apeldoornsche Courant* (Apeldoorn, Netherlands), 29 September 1941, 1; A. P. Kollmus, 'GPU-Morde auch in Kiew. Hunderte der zu Tode Gequälten verschart', *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung. Tageszeitung für Politik und Wirtschaft, für Wehrfragen, Kultur und Unterhaltung*, 30 September 1941, p. 3; 'Shliakhom morduvan'. I v Kyievi lylasia nevynna krov', *Ukraïns'ke Slovo*, 8 October 1941, p. 2; 'U vil'nomu Kyievi', *Krakivs'ki visti*, 14 October 1941, p. 4; 'Kyïv zhyve novym zhyttiam. Vid nashoho spetsial'noho korespondenta', *Volyn'* (Rivne), 26 October 1941, p. 3; 'S"iohodnishnii Kyïv', *Krakivs'ki visti*, 27 November 1941, p. 4, reprinting most of P[etro] Oliinyk, 'Z ridnykh zemel'. S"ohodnishnii Kyïv', *Ukraïns'kyi vistnyk* (Berlin), no. 34, 2 November 1941.

22 Interview with Kukovenko; see also Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, p. 49.

23 Interview with Nikitina.

24 Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, p. 48.

25 L. Forostivs'kyi, 'Slidamy mychenytstva Ukraïny: "Khutir Bykovnia" ta "Babyn Iar" u Kyievi', *Svoboda*, 179, 4 August (1950), 2–3; also in L. Forostivs'kyi, *Kyïv pid vorozhymy okupatsiiamy* (Buenos Aires: Vydavnytsvo Mykola Denysiuka, 1952), pp. 75–8.

26 Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 48–9, 51–2.

27 *Ibid.*, pp. 66, 71; Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 26; L. Taniuk, *Tvory v 60-y tomakh*, vol. 6, *Shchodennyky 1962 r.* (Kiev: Al'terpres, 2006), p. 541.

28 Taniuk, *Tvory*, vol. 6, 538–42. The translation of the poem is from Carynnyk, 'The killing fields of Kiev', p. 20.

29 Les' Taniuk, interview at Bykivnia by M. Carynnyk, 3 November 1991.

30 Andrii Amons, interviewed in 'Klucz do prawdy leży w Moskwie', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 12 August 2006, p. 13, also at www.katyn.ru/index.php?go=Pages&in=view&id=386 (accessed 8 September 2013) ('the late 1960s'); Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, p. 67 ('from the middle of the 1970s'); Petro Kukovenko, interview outside his house in Bykivnia by M. Carynnyk, 5 October 1991 ('in 1971'); interview with Lohvanova.

31 Amons in 'Klucz do prawdy leży w Moskwie'.

32 Interview with Kukovenko; interview with Lohvanova.

33 Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 27–8.

34 *Ibid.*, pp. 29–30.

35 *Ibid.*, pp. 31–4. Four photographs from the excavation and reburial, 'Galeria – fotografie archiwalne', at http://bykownia.eu/galeria/materiay-archiwalne.html (accessed 1 October 2013).

36 Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 29–30. Shelest's diary says that he saw reburial in large wooden trunks on 16 April, which cannot be squared with the official and later dates for the forensic investigation: 20–27 April.

37 'Soobshchenie RATAU', *Pravda Ukrainy*, 24 April 1971, 4.

38 Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 30–1.

39 Oleksandr Andriiovych Kalosha, quoted in I. Radchenko, 'Pravda zavzhdy odna', *Molod' Ukraïny*, 10 December 1989, p. 2; Amons in '"Stinky mizh"'; that locals talked about this burning in the late 1980s is mentioned in V. Savtsov, 'Lis shumyt' taiemnytseiu', *Radians'ka Ukraïna*, 23 April 1989, p. 4.

40 Amons '"Stinky mizh"'; on ploughing, see Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 18.

41 Savtsov, 'Bykivnia'; on the arrested looter, see Kiselev, 'Tragicheskaia pravda'.

42 M. Rozhenko, 'Vstupni zauvazhennia', in M. Rozhenko & E. Bohats'ka (eds), *Sosny Bykivni svidchat': Zlochyn proty liudstva. Knyha persha* (Kiev: Ukraïns'kyi Tsentr dukhovnoï kul'tury, 1999), p. 6.

43 Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, pp. 17–18; interview with Lohvanova.

44 Interview with Lysenko; Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, pp. 19, 27–8; Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 36–7, 38.

45 Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 39–40.

46 Interview with Lysenko.

47 Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 40–1.

48 *Ibid.*, pp. 42–3.

49 Kiselev, 'Tragicheskaia pravda'; Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 43–5.

50 Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 44–5.

51 S. Bilokin, 'Shcho hovoryla pam"iat' zemli, koly buly zakryti arkhivy (Bykivnia i Vinnytsia v istoriohrafiï teroru)', in A. I. Amons, *Bykivnians'ki zhertvy* (Kiev: Mizhrehional'na Akademiia Upravlinnia Personalom, 2007), pp. 42–3, earlier version at www.s-bilokin.name/Terror/Bykivnja/USSR.html (accessed 6 November 2013); S. Kysel'ov (S. Kiselev), 'Arkhipelah Bykivnia', *Suchasnist'*, 10 (1990), 58.

52 Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 29.

53 Kysel'ov, 'Arkhipelah Bykivnia', pp. 59–60; interview with Matiiash; L. M. Protsenko, 'Pokhovannia represovanykh u Kyievi', in A. A. Kondrats'kyi & M. M. Rozhenko, *Materialy vseukraïns'koï konferentsiï sumnoï pam"iati velykoho teroru 1937 roku 'Zlochyn bez kary' 3–4 lystopada 1997 roku* (Kiev: Stylos, 1998), p. 152. Protsenko adds, without reference to a source, that a metro stop was also planned on the graves of the repressed.

54 Kiselev, 'Tragicheskaia pravda'; Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, pp. 29–30. The article was Sergei Kiselev, 'Taina Bykovnianskogo lesa', *Literaturnaia gazeta*,

30 November 1988, p. 2. Its Ukrainian equivalent was 'Taiemnytsia Darnyts'koï trahediï', *Vechirnii Kyïv*, 1 December 1988.

55   Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, p. 72. An example of the foreign press reports is B. Keller, 'Behind Stalin's green fence: who filled the mass graves?', *New York Times*, 6 March 1989, pp. 1, 8.

56   Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 45–6; Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 30.

57   Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 46–7.

58   *Ibid.*, pp. 57–8; Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 30.

59   Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, pp. 64–5. These rich materials are still largely unavailable for research.

60   Kiselev, 'Tragicheskaia pravda'. This memoir errs in calling the chairman Vasylyshyn and in asserting that the commission produced no official report. Compare 'Povidomlennia Uriadovoï komisiï, stvorenoï rishenniam Rady Ministriv URSR vid 24 hrudnia 1987 roku', *Radians'ka Ukraïna*, 16 April 1989.

61   Kiselev, 'Tragicheskaia pravda'; Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni*, p. 77. For the quotation, see Savtsov, 'Lis shumyt' taiemnytseiu'.

62   Kiselev, 'Tragicheskaia pravda'; Savtsov, 'Lis shumyt' taiemnytseiu'.

63   Bazhan, *Pam"iat' Bykivni,* pp. 72–9.

64   *Ibid.*, pp. 83–4, 85–6.

65   *Ibid.*, pp. 79–83.

66   M. H. Lysenko, 'Mohyly Bykivni chekaiut' …', in *Z arkhiviv VUChK-HPU-NKVD-KHB*, nos. 1–2 (4–5) (Kiev: Instytut istoriï Ukraïny NAN Ukraïny *et al.*, 1997), p. 434.

67   Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 47.

68   Radchenko, 'Pravda zavzhdy odna'.

69   Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 37.

70   A. Etkind, R. Finnin, U. Blacker, J. Fedor, S. Lewis, M. Mälksoo & M. Mroz, *Remembering Katyn* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012), p. 70.

71   Lysenko, *Bykivnia*, p. 37.

72   A. A. Kondrats'kyi, 'Pol's'kyi slid u Bykivni', in Kondrats'kyi & Rozhenko, *Materialy vseukraïns'koï konferentsiï*, p. 112.

73   A. Kunert, A. Siwek & Z. Walkowski, *Polski Cmentarz Wojenny w Kijowie-Bykowni (Czwarty Cmentarz Katyński)* (Warsaw: Rada Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa, 2012), p. 11; on Marchuk see Kiselev, 'Tragicheskaia pravda'.

74   Kunert *et al.*, *Polski Cmentarz*, p. 14.

75   *Ibid.*, p. 15.

76   See *ibid.*, pp. 15, 16–17. On language, see I. Muzychenko, 'Zasudyly za Bykivniu. Rozsliduvannia pidtverdylo nezakonnist' zinitsiiovanykh Dmytrom Tabachnykom rozkopok pokhovan' zhertv komunistychnykh represiï', *Ukraïna Moloda*, 19 September 2009, at www.umoloda.kiev.ua/regions/0/163/0/52542/ (accessed 26 September 2013).

77   A. Ferens (director), *Gdzie rosną poziomki?*, Agencja Filmowa for Program 1 of TVP S.A., 2006, at http://vod.tvp.pl/dokumenty/historia/gdzie-rosna-poziomki/wideo/gdzie-rosna-poziomki/4286747 and at www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5jooz_j51Y (accessed 6 November 2013). On the award-winning photograph, see Press Club Polska,

http://pressclub.pl/?page_id=1534 (accessed 1 November 2013); M. Rigamonti, 'The opening: Bykovnia. Archeology of crime', at www.rigamonti.pl/exhibitions/125,bykovnia–archaeology-of-crime/ (accessed 1 November 2013).

78 Kunert *et al.*, *Polski Cmentarz*, pp. 15–16.

79 *Ibid.*, p. 15; 'Ukraine reburies Stalin's victims', BBC News, 27 October 2007, at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7065913.stm (accessed 11 November 2013); Reuters, 'Victims of Stalin's rule reburied near Kiev', *Moscow Times*, 29 October 2007, p. 13.

80 Open letter by S. M. Kyrylenko, deputy chair of the Kiev chapter of Memorial, 15 August 2007, at 'Bykivnia – stane Tsvyntarom orliat u vidnosynakh Ukraïna-Pol'shcha?', Vseukraïns'ke Tovarystvo 'Memorial' im. V. Stusa, at http://memorial.kiev.ua/novyny/271-bykivnja-stane-cvyntarom-orljat-u-vidnosynah-ukrajina-polshcha.html (accessed 1 November 2013); Roman Krutsyk, '"Katyns'kyi" memorial u Bykivni??', 4 March 2011, at http://memorial.kiev.ua/statti/955-katynskyj-memorial-u-bykivni.html (accessed 4 November 2013); Muzychenko, 'Zasudyly za Bykivniu'.

81 Kunert *et al.*, *Polski Cmentarz*, p. 16; Ukrinform, 'Ukrainian presidents lay corner stone of memorial in Bykovnia tombs reserve', 26 November 2011, at www.ukrinform.ua/eng/news/ukrainian_presidents_lay_corner_stone_of_memorial_in_bykovnia_tombs_reserve_237055 (accessed 14 November 2013).

82 See, for instance, the presidents' official websites (accessed 6 November 2013): 'Otwarcie Cmentarza Wojennego w Bykowni', 21 September 2012, Oficjalna strona Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, at www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wizyty-zagraniczne/art,188,otwarcie-cmentarza-wojennego-w-bykowni.html; 'Vustup Prezydenta pid chas vidkryttia Memorialu zhertv totalitaryzmu na terytoriï Natsional'noho zapovidnyka 'Bykivnians'ki mohyly', Prezydent Ukraïny Viktor Ianukovych, 21 September 2012, at www.president.gov.ua/news/25472.html (accessed 4 February 2014).

83 Etkind *et al.*, *Remembering Katyn*, p. 115.

84 Wojciech Mucha and Piotr Ferenc-Chudy, 'Szczątki ofiar NKWD zalane betonem. Skandal bezradna Rada Andrzeja Kunerta', *Gazeta Polska Codziennie*, 13 June 2013, at http://gpcodziennie.pl/20574-szczatki-ofiar-nkwd-zalane-betonem.html#.UdSK_W01OSo (accessed 6 November 2013).

85 Kondrats'kyi, 'Pol's'kyi slid u Bykivni', p. 107.

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