

Question 1

Can you explain why the Diviziynyky in Italy were labelled Surrendered Enemy Personnel (SEP) vice POWs?

Answer

The British government decided to label the Division members Surrendered Enemy Personnel likely because they had been informed through General Anders and other sources that the surrender would occur and that the unit was composed of Ukrainians. Exactly why and how this labelling occurred still has to be established.

7:55 pm

Question 2

Would you consider Wolf-Dietrich Heike's book, "Sie Wollten die Freiheit" a fair account of the Division?

Answer

Heike's accounts is particularly good on the time in Slovakia and Yugoslavia. He is reliable on most details.

7:57 pm

Question 3

These former soldiers seem rather lucky in comparison with the Cossacks who fought with the Germans. All most all of them were handed over by the British to the Soviet Union and most were shot or sent to the gulag camps where most died anyway. Would you care to comment how the Ukrainians were so lucky?

Answer

In fact, the execution of Cossacks and other troops handed over to the Soviets played an important role in saving the Division's men. The British troops who witnessed the handovers and massacres were nauseated by what they saw and sent

complaints to the higher authorities. There was a danger that this information would be leaked to the British public and cause a scandal. The transfer operations, as described by Nikoilai Tostoy and others, are recorded in my book. Another aspect of this story is the fear of a war breaking out between the Allies and the Soviet Union, especially because the latter was taking over Western European territories and imposing its rule on them. There were contingency plans to challenge and resist the Red Army if necessary (Churchill's "Operation Unthinkable"). It is possible that the "Galicia" Division was considered a force that could be used by the Allies in such an operation. Certainly scores of the Division's men were sent into the Soviet Union, often parachuted, by both British and American intelligence operations in the years following WW2 in order to make contact with the underground opposition to Stalin.

8:03 pm

Question 4

What strategies would you recommend in countering the exploitation of the Nazi label by Russian propaganda that feeds "useful idiots" in the western media, e.g. Scott Taylor of Ramparts and D. Pugliese of the G&M, among others?

Answer

The best way of fighting disinformation is with well researched and reliable information.

8:04 pm

Question 5

Did you investigate the role of Major Dennis Hills in thwarting the Soviet repatriation commission effort to recapture the Division?

Answer

I speak of Major Dennis Hills in the book and give accounts of his role.

8:15 pm

Question 6

Once given civilian status in the UK, did most return to Ukraine? Did many come to Canada?

Answer

Many rank-and-file soldiers stayed in the UK, but large numbers, including most of the officers, trainee officers and people with skills that could be used in professions, moved to Canada, the US, Australia and other countries. Almost no one returned to Ukraine. The several hundred who did -- mainly from the Rimini camp, where the Soviet repatriation commission was very active and made offers of amnesty -- served long terms of imprisonment.

8:16 pm

Question 7

Could I ask if there was any sort of selection of the soldiers to meet any sort of Aryan or at least Aryan-looking Ukrainians or was this not a factor in the sense, the Germans by 1943 would take any healthy Ukrainian man with two legs and two arms?

Answer

The only selection procedure had to do with height. To be accepted into the Division one had to be 165 inches or taller. This turned out to be important because hundreds of men who did not meet the criteria were diverted to regiments, which served near the front lines. They were in fact police regiments but were not named as such because this would have contradicted the agreement with the Ukrainian Central Committee, which was that Ukrainian volunteers would only serve in a front-line unit. The regiments were named Galician SS Volunteer Regiments 4, 5, 6, 7, which has added to terminological confusion. Some of these regiments have been

accused of war crimes, notably in the village of Huta Peniatska (Pol: Peniacka). The regiments had only German officers and were not under under the Division's authority or command. However, they sometimes viewed themselves as preparing to join the Division, and towards the end of the war a number of men from these regiments were indeed sent to the Division.

8:18 pm

Question 8

A polite request: Going forward, can we start using the more recent name of the Divisia, Halychyna, instead of the non-Ukrainian name of Galicia? I find the term Galicia to be associated with the German name for Halychyna and this is a slur on the motivation for the Division's formation.

Answer

Whether to go with established English usage is a judgement call. I chose "Galicia" because this is the most commonly used term in the history books and is close to the German name for the division "Galizien."

8:19 pm

Question 9

Were the soldiers paid reparations after the war ?

Answer

No reparations were paid after the war. They were deemed to have served in an enemy army, so were not eligible for any payments from Allied states. To the best of my knowledge Germany did not offer any compensation, although Germany kept lists of all soldiers who served in the force. After the force was renamed the 1st Division of the Ukrainian National Army, a break with the German military occurred and, for obvious reason, the veterans tried to avoid association with Germany.

8:19 pm

Question 10

Why is Rimini list still unable to be accessed in Uk?

Answer

I am not sure why the list cannot be accessed but it should be available. Michael Melnyk has found it and might be able to help.

8:20 pm

Question 11

Is there substantial material in the UK PRO about the Italian internment camps?

Answer

**** none provided ****

8:21 pm

Question 12

Would my father have been in danger if he travelled to soviet Ukraine while he was alive (he wanted to, but my mother forbade it).

Answer

**** none provided ****

8:22 pm

Question 13

In your research was there anything that you discovered that was not already known publicly known from other reference sources? Something that surprised you?

Answer

*** Answered in the verbal Q & A. Please review the webinar.

8:23 pm

Question 14

What is the status of your research on Ukrainians in 30th Waffen SS Division? s u

Answer

In the book I discuss this group and the two Battalion Ukrainiens, 1 and 2, that defected to the French Resistance. This is still a largely untold story but there are now some articles and sources that can be followed up. There is also a monument to the these men near Confracourt in France.

8:24 pm

Question 15

Wax there a list or nominal roll of of Division members who arrived in English and which has survived.

Answer

I am not sure about a nominal role of men who were transported to the UK. There likely is one but I have not accessed it.

8:26 pm

Question 16

Were those who were captured by the Nazis always given the choice between forced labour and serving?

Answer

No, many Red Army soldiers captured by the Nazis starved to death. Only in a limited number of cases were Ukrainians plucked from the camps when they agreed to serve in the

Division. During the war, Ukrainians in German-occupied territories were either sent to Germany for work in factories or were forced to work on building and repairing roads, rail lines and bridges (in the Baudienst). They had almost no choice. A number escaped from Germany or the Baudienst, where the work was extremely hard and conditions were atrocious. These were sometimes given the choice of joining the Division. Some men who were threatened with arrest by the Gestapo also joined the Division as a way of avoiding this fate.

8:29 pm

Question 17

How much additional information have you uncovered about the Юнаки story?

by

George Salmaniw

.The story of youth in the anti-aircraft defence has been recounted in greatest detail in a book by Zenon Zeleny and a text by Tymish Bilostotskyi. I draw on both in my book.

8:29 pm

Question 18

where were officers trained?

Answer

After completing basic training, men selected to be officers were sent for additional training to various camps throughout Germany. In most cases they avoided the destruction at Brody and in fact joined the Division in late 1944 or early 1945 in Slovakia or Yugoslavia.

8:30 pm

Question 19

How many Diviziya members joined the French Foreign Legion?

Answer

Quite a few from the BUK 1 and 2 joined the French Foreign Legion. They were to be sent back to the Soviet Union, but comrades in the French Resistance and contacts among Americans who had also fought alongside them in the Resistance convinced the French to offer them the option of joining the Legion. Several hundred did.

8:42 pm