The Nationalization of Identities: Ukrainians in Belgium, 1920–1950

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By 1950 about 8,000 Ukrainians lived in Belgium. Some of them had settled there in the interwar period, others had arrived after the Second World War. With their presence, Belgium obviously ranked far behind the traditional destinations of Ukrainian immigrants, such as Canada, the United States, France, and Germany, but it hosted many more Ukrainians than other countries without special ties with Ukraine.[1]

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1. Despite the size of the Ukrainian community in Belgium, research on it is still in its infancy. In 1990 Mykola Kohut, who had studied at the Catholic University of Leuven and had been the president of the Ukrainian Learning Educational Society for over forty years, wrote a report "Vidomosti pro ukraintsiv u Belhii" for the Ukrainian Center for Social Research in New York. A summary of it was published as a chapter "Ukrainians in Belgium" in *Ukraine and Ukrainians throughout the World: A Demographic and Sociological Guide to the Homeland and Its Diaspora,* ed. Ann Lencyk Pawliczko (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 214–30. Two M.A. dissertations on Ukrainians in Belgium have been defended at the Catholic University of Leuven: Janick Fierens's "Oekraïense studenten aan de Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (1931–1951)" (1993) on Ukrainian students' life at that university, and Vicky Hoogmartens's "De Oekraïense immigratie in Belgisch-Limburg (1947–1997)" (1998) on the Ukrainian community in the Campine. Ukrainians are mentioned in Frank Caestecker's study of Belgian refugee policy *Alien Policy in Belgium 1840–1940: The Creation of Guest Workers, Refugees and Illegal Aliens* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2000) and in Idesbald Goddeeris's study of the Poles in Belgium in 1945–50 *Polonia belgijska w pierwszych latach po II wojnie światowej* (Warsaw: Semper, 2005). This article uses for the first time international academic literature to describe Ukrainian organizational life in Belgium. It also uses Ukrainian émigré periodicals and the archives of the Ukrainian Relief Committee, Volodymyr Popovych (its president for over thirty years), and the Polish Institute of National Remembrance. We rely also on interviews with Mykola Kohut and Omelian Koval, the president of the Ukrainian Relief Committee.

This article analyzes two aspects of the Ukrainian migration in Belgium. First, it reconstructs the waves of Ukrainian immigration to, and emigration from, Belgium, for not all Ukrainians settled permanently in Belgium. Secondly, it focuses on the identities of the Ukrainian migrants. Ukrainian nationalism underwent some essential developments in the first half of the twentieth century. Ukraine had proclaimed independence and obtained formal autonomy within the Soviet Union; Galicia and Transcarpathia, which had been under foreign rule, were incorporated into the Ukrainian SSR in 1945; and the population of Soviet Ukraine was Ukrainianized. In this article we examine how the inhabitants of these regions who emigrated to Belgium developed their identities. Through their organizations, which can be seen as expressions of common identities and exclusion, we define the most important identities among the Ukrainian immigrants and trace how they changed during the crucial decades between 1920 and 1950. Was there a common Ukrainian identity, and if so, when and how did it appear? Was it marginal or did it bridge the various divisions (social, historical, and geographical) among the Ukrainians in Belgium?

The Interwar Period
The Migration Process

In the interwar period several hundred, and perhaps as many as 1,000, Ukrainians arrived in Belgium.[2] This group was very heterogeneous and can be divided into four main categories: miners, political refugees, clergy, and students. The categories are not mutually exclusive: some miners, for instance, had fled Ukraine for political reasons.

The first group of Ukrainians arrived in Belgium as foreign labour for Belgian coal mines. At the beginning of the 1920s the Belgian coal

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2. All statistics about Ukrainians in Belgium use the parameter of Ukrainian descent. They do not distinguish between clearly Ukrainian descendants (including those with Ukrainian roots who do not identify themselves as such) and those who declare themselves to be Ukrainian on the basis of subjective parameters such as attitudes and values. Moreover, in view of Ukraine's changing borders, a simple distinction of "those of Ukrainian descent" is problematic. The job registers of the Zolder coal mine illustrate the problem of identifying Ukrainian workers from territories outside the borders set by the Yalta Conference. In 1947 the mine administration called them Polish Ukrainians, Ukrainian Poles, or Balts. In this article we use linguistic and religious criteria for Ukrainian identity; for example, we regard interwar Polish citizens who spoke Ukrainian and were Greek Catholics as Ukrainians.

industry needed new workers: it had come out of the war intact and was even ready to expand after the discovery of new coal strata, but new social legislation, including the eight-hour working day, reduced labour productivity, and indigenous workers turned to other industries with better working conditions. Therefore the industry relied increasingly on foreign workers, such as Germans and Poles who had left the Ruhr area because of the German crisis, North Africans who had been forced to help France during the war and refused to return home, and Dutchmen and Italians who were recruited specifically to the Belgian coal mines. But there was still a labour shortage. When a big strike in Britain in 1926 raised the demand for Belgian coal, the mines organized collective recruitment in Eastern Europe. By 1930 almost 12,000 Poles, 3,000 Czechoslovaks, and a few thousand Yugoslavs, mostly Slovenians, worked in the Belgian coal mines. The economic crisis put an end to this recruitment drive, but in 1937 it was reactivated. About 3,500 Poles and a similar number of Czechoslovaks were employed in the coal mines. Some of them brought their families. In 1939 about 30,000 Poles lived in the Belgian coal-mining regions.

There were also Ukrainians among these East European miners. The Lviv scholar Stepan Kacharaba who analyzed the emigration from Western (Polish-ruled) Ukraine in the interwar period, counted 256 ethnic Ukrainians among the Polish recruits to the Belgian coal mines.[3] Their number must have been even higher among the Czechoslovak recruits. While the Polish miners came mostly from Silesia, Pomerania, the Dąbrowa Bassin, and the Poznań region (only 1,700 miners were recruited in Galicia), most Czechoslovak migrants came from Subcarpathian Ruthenia, the poorest region of the country inhabited largely by Ukrainians. Unfortunately, it is impossible to determine their exact numbers. Most sources classified the migrants by their citizenship, not their ethnicity. Moreover, the mines employed not only people supplied by collective recruitment, but also individual volunteers, such as Russian refugees, and even foreigners without residence permits. Finally, not all migrants settled in Belgium. Many of them were fired during the economic crisis in the early 1930s and returned to their homeland. The number of Polish miners decreased from almost 12,000 in September

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3. Stepan Kacharaba, *Emihratsiia z Zakhidnoi Ukrainy (1919–1939)* (Lviv: Lvivskyi natsionalnyi universytet im. Ivana Franka, 2003), 349, 356.

1930 to fewer then 8,000 in May 1934. More than half, maybe up to two-thirds, of the Czechoslovak miners who had arrived in 1937 had left Belgium by December 1938.[4]

A second group of Ukrainians that arrived in Belgium in the interwar period consisted of political refugees. Some of them fled Subcarpathia after its assignation to Czechoslovakia in the Treaty of St. Germain in 1919, but most of them belonged to the anti-Bolshevik emigration. In his monograph on the White emigration in Belgium, Wim Coudenys counts about 3,300 emigrants from Russia and the Soviet Union between 1919 and 1923.[5] He does not mention Ukrainians, but several authors, such as Volodymyr Troshchynsky and Mykola Kohut deal with them.[6] Most of the Ukrainian refugees had been soldiers in the Army of the Ukrainian National Republic, the Ukrainian Galician Army, or the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen. Unlike the Ukrainian miners, most of the political refugees were intelligentsia and settled in Belgian cities. Unfortunately, there are no quantitative data.[7]

Belgian Redemptorists were responsible for a third group of Ukrainians in Belgium. In 1913 their order accepted Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky's request to reassign members who had been active among Ukrainians in Canada since 1899 to Galicia, where they did missionary work for the Greek Catholic Church and founded six new monasteries.[8]

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4. Goddeeris, *Polonia belgijska*, 15–26; Caestecker, *Alien Policy in Belgium*, 60–2, 123–4; Myroslaw Melnyk, *Les ouvriers étrangers en Belgique* (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1951), 61–84.

5. Wim Coudenys, *Leven voor de tsaar: Russische ballingen, samenzweerders en collaborateurs in België* (Leuven: Davidsfonds, 2004), 325.

6. Kohut, "Ukrainians in Belgium," 217; Volodymyr Troshchynsky, "Vytoky ta istorychna dolia mizhvoiennoi ukrainskoi politychnoi emihratsii v Evropi," *Ukrainska diaspora*, 1994, no. 5: 11.

7. Caestecker, *Alien Policy in Belgium*, 47, 69, 70; Kohut, "Ukrainians in Belgium"; Janina Samborska, "Ukraintsi u Belhii: Problemy sotsialnoi adaptatsii," *Ukrainska diaspora*, 1995, no. 8: 145–51.

8. Father Achiel Delaere (1868–1939) began missionary work among Ukrainian immigrants in Manitoba and Saskatchewan (Armand Boni, *Pioniers in Canada: de Belgische Redemptoristen in de provincies Québec, Manitoba en Saskatchewan* [Brugge: De Kinkhoren, 1945], 278). In 1913 the Redemptorists started to build a network of six monasteries in Ukraine. In Galicia they were active in Holosko, Zboiska, Lviv, Ternopil, and Stanyslaviv. In Volhynia they had a building in Kovel (Lucianus Willem Ceyssens, *Louis Vangansewinkel [1892–1968], Redemptorist van Linde-Peer Missionaris onder de Oekraïners* [Peer: Uitgave V.Z.W. Heemkundige Kring Peer, 1945], 54; Richard

Thus several dozen Belgian Redemptorists lived in Galicia and Volhynia until their departure at the outbreak of the Second World War. They also convinced the Belgian Sisters of Mercy of Saint Vincent de Paul to open a representation in Galicia in 1922. These monasteries stimulated contacts and exchange programs with Belgium. About 300 Galician novices entered the convents of the Belgian Sisters. Most of them chose the enclosed convent in the East Flemish town of Deinze.

The last group, the students, came to Belgium also thanks to the Redemptorists, who had set up an exchange program at the Catholic University of Leuven that offered young Ukrainians—mainly young men—the opportunity to study in Belgium. Ukrainian students received a scholarship from the Comité du Foyer Universitaire Slave[9] and were lodged in a Ukrainian student residence. Altogether, this program supported seventy-eight Ukrainian students in Leuven before the Second World War.[10] By 1939 most of them had returned to Galicia, but those who did not had to stay in Belgium in the succeeding years.[11]

Houthaeve, *De gekruisigde Kerk van de Oekraïne en het offer van Vlaamse missionarissen* [Moorslede: Hochepied, 1990]; Don Lukie and Rita Chernoff, eds., *Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Ukrainian Rite Redemptorists, 1906–1981* [Winnipeg, Friesen Yearbooks, 1982]).

9. The committee was founded in 1926 and offered Russian young men opportunities to receive a higher education in Belgium. By 1928 seventy-two Russian students stayed at a boarding house in the city centre of Leuven. Many of them participated in the local Russian choir and orchestra. At the beginning of the 1930s, however, the number of Russian students declined and the number of Ukrainians, who also received help from the committee and lived only a few streets away, increased. Although the two student groups had much in common, there were some tensions between them. The Russians objected to the Ukrainians' insistence on Kyiv as the cradle of Russian culture and their agitation for Ukraine's independence. In 1933 the Russian students disapproved of a Ukrainian song and dance evening organized by the Ukrainian students in cooperation with the Catholic University of Leuven and convinced the university authorities to withdraw their official support of the event (Coudenys, *Leven voor de tsaar*, 74, 77, 79–82, 157).

10. Zenon Tatarsky, ed., *Liuven 1930–1985: Ukrainski studenty u Liuvenskomu katolytskomu universyteti* (Toronto: Basilian Press and Tovarystvo kolyshnikh ukrainskykh studentiv Liuvenskoho katolytskoho universytetu, 2001) is a very informative account of Ukrainian student life at the Catholic University of Leuven. See also Vladimir Ronin, "L'Ukraine en Belgique (1814–1914) (Contribution to the First Ukrainian Symposium Organized by the Belgian Association for Ukrainian Studies at the Catholic University of Leuven [Louvain], 24 November 1994)," *Slavica Gandensia* 221 (1995): 54–9.

11. Of the Ukrainian students that could be traced later, forty-seven returned to Ukraine, eleven settled in Belgium, seven moved to other European countries, and three migrated overseas (Tatarsky, ed., *Liuven 1930–1985*, 489–97). See also the information

In view of the incomplete information about certain groups, the continuous migration into and from Belgium, and the vague criteria for Ukrainian, it is impossible to give a quantitative survey of the Ukrainian presence in Belgium. Most scholars estimate the total number of Ukrainians in the interwar period at 600,[12] but they do not include the Ukrainian novices in Belgian convents. The latter numbered about 300 girls.[13] Thus, a preliminary estimate of the total number of Ukrainians in Belgium between the wars amounts to 900 people. Thus, the Ukrainian emigration in Belgium was larger than in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and most other European countries. Only France, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland hosted more Ukrainians, but these countries were much larger and closer the Ukrainian homeland, or had a special connection with Ukraine.[14]

Immigrant Organizations

Ukrainian immigrants set up a network of organizations in Belgium. An analysis of their activities and their internal (with each other) and external (with non-Ukrainian organizations) relations can show how their members identified themselves. Did the Ukrainians in Belgium share a Ukrainian identity, and if so, how did they define it? Or did they remain divided by social (intelligentsia versus workers), geographical (cities versus mining provinces), or regional (Galician, Subcarpathian, Russian) differences?

Organizations of the intelligentsia originated very early. The oldest ones were founded before the First World War. The Ruthenian Neutral Circle (Cercle Neutre Ruthène, or CNR), located in Liège, aimed to inform the Belgian public about the Ruthenians in Subcarpathia, Galicia, and Bukovyna. It continued its activities in the interwar period. Similar

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in the student bulletin *Informatsiinyi lystok: Natsionalnyi soiuz ukrainskykh studentiv u Belhii*, 1957, no. 4: 5–8 (copy located in TseSUS Archive, box 5, at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute).

12. Kohut, "Ukrainians in Belgium," 217; Volodymyr Pavlovych Troshchynsky and Anatolii Andriiovych Shevchenko, *Ukraintsi v sviti* (Kyiv: Alternatyvy, 1999), 144; and Samborska, "Ukraintsi u Belhii," 145–7. S. Bozhyk counted only about 300 Ukrainians in the interwar years (Volodymyr Kubijovyč, ed., *Encyclopedia of Ukraine* [Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1984], 1: 193).

13. Interview with Mykola Kohut on 15 September 2005.

14. Some more quantitative data can be found in Pawliczko, ed., *Ukraine and Ukrainians throughout the World*, 117; and Vic Satzewich, *The Ukrainian Diaspora* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 56.

groups appeared in Belgium during the struggle for Ukrainian independence. The most important of them was the Diplomatic Mission of the Ukrainian National Republic headed by Professor Andrii Iakovliv in Brussels. It defended Ukrainian interests and through a subsidiary soldiers' mission took care of the arriving soldiers and political refugees.[15] The mission was dissolved in 1923, and its role was assumed by two organizations: the European Federation of Ukrainians Abroad (Fédération Européenne des Ukrainiens à l'Etranger, or FEUE) and the Society of Former Ukrainian Soldiers (Tovarystvo kolyshnikh ukrainskykh voiakiv, or TKUV). FEUE represented the Council of National Ministers of the Ukrainian National Republic (Rada narodnykh ministriv UNR) in Belgium. It maintained contacts with Symon Petliura in the 1920s and protested against the Polish pacification of Galicia in the 1930s. Some of its twenty members would play an important role in the Ukrainian National Council (Ukrainska natsionalna rada) after the Second World War. The veteran organization TKUV participated in Belgian parades and commemorations and published the periodical *Voiak* with the Royal War Museum in Brussels.[16] The members of both organizations were participants in the failed project of an independent Ukrainian state. Although their hometowns were now in Czechoslovakia, Poland, or the Soviet Union, they shared a Ukrainian national identity.[17]

But they had no contacts with their countrymen in the mining regions of Belgium. The latters' organizations were completely different. They

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15. Kohut, "Ukrainians in Belgium," 217–18; Symon Narizhny, *Ukrainska emigratsiia: Kulturna pratsia ukrainskoi emigratsii mizh dvoma svitovymy viinamy* (1942; reprint, Kyiv: Vyd-vo im. Oleny Telihy, 1999), 2: 127; Oleksander Shulhyn, *Bez terytorii: Ideolohiia ta chyn uriadu UNR na chuzhyni* (1934; reprint, Kyiv: Iurinkom Inter, 1998), 273–336; and Andrew Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), 111–14. Oral source: interview with Omelian Koval, the president of the Ukrainian Relief Committee in Brussels since 1986, at 72 Charlemagne Avenue, on 30 and 31 March 2005.

16. For a picture of King Leopold III with a board member of the veterans' organization on the commemoration of the First World War, see Kohut, "Vidomosti pro ukraintsiv u Belhii," 11.

17. Kohut, "Ukrainians in Belgium," 223; Narizhny, *Ukrainska emigratsiia*, 2: 127; Tatarsky, ed., *Liuven 1930–1985*, 47: Troshchynsky and Shevchenko, *Ukraintsi v sviti*, 11; *Holos Khrysta Cholovikoliubtsia (De stem van Christus Mensenminnaar, La voix du Christ Ami des Hommes)* 4, no. 1 (1946): 33 and 1949, nos. 7-8: 8–12; *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii*, 1 October 1945. Oral source: interview with Omelian Koval, 30 and 31 March 2005.

were local in scope and regional in loyalty. Their members were bound
by regional origin or family ties and lived in the same town or worked
in the same mine. The Ukrainian Society (Ukrainska hromada), in
Seraing, for instance, was founded by Galicians, and in spite of its name,
excluded Subcarpathian workers. The workers' associations also had a
very different program: their members gathered in bars and sometimes in
parish and mining halls to sing and dance. Local authorities and mine
managers, who wanted to keep the foreign workers in their mines and
discourage mobility, supported them. The Belgian trade unions did not
provide support specifically for Ukrainian miners: they had Italian, Polish,
and Jewish branches, but no Ukrainian ones.[18]

The intelligentsia in the cities and the miners in the provinces both
had contact with the Redemptorist Fathers. From 1924 a Belgian priest
who had worked in Canada, Louis Van de Bossche (Bosky), ministered
to Ukrainians in Belgium. From 1936 this work was done by two
Redemptorists with missionary experience in Galicia: Jozef Deweerdt and
Richard Costenoble.[19] These priests, however, could not unite the provincial
communities or bridge the gap between them and the urban circles in
Brussels and Liège. Although they welcomed both Greek Catholics and
Ukrainian Orthodox to their services, they observed the geographical
division: Costenoble served the cities while Deweerdt ministered to the
Ukrainians in the provinces. Only on rare church occasions, such as Andrei
Sheptytsky's two visits to Belgium, did the intelligentsia, miners, students,
and clergy participated in common celebrations.[20]

Nor did the students serve as a link between the dispersed Ukrainian
communities. Their contacts were limited to the Ukrainian intelligentsia
and Belgian sympathizers. They did not collaborate with the miners,

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18. Caestecker, *Alien Policy in Belgium*, 269; Kohut, "Vidomosti pro ukraintsiv u
Belhii," 10, 61. Oral sources: conversations with Mykhailo Khoma, the current vice-
president of the Ukrainian Relief Committee; Andrei Bylyna, the grandson of the owner
of the Ukrainian café in Seraing; and Andrei Haidamakha, born among Subcarpathian
workers in the mining village of Eisden, at the Frankopole Nostalgia Reunion of the
Ukrainian Youth Association on 22–23 October 2005.

19. Houthaeve, *De gekruisigde Kerk,* 310–17.

20. Alfred Deboutte, *Leven van Richard Costenoble, Redemptorist 1885–1975* (Leuven:
Deboutte, 1978), 149–51; Kohut, "Vidomosti pro ukraintsiv u Belhii," 18; and Zoriana
Yaworsky Sokolsky, "The Beginnings of Ukrainian Settlement in Toronto, 1891–1939,"
in *Gathering Places: Peoples and Neighbourhoods of Toronto, 1834–1945,* ed. Robert F.
Harney (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1985), 279–302.

although they conducted similar activities such as folk dancing. From 1931 the National Union of Ukrainian Students (Natsionalnyi soiuz ukrainskykh studentiv, or NaSUS), a subsidiary of the international Central Union of Ukrainian Students (Tsentralnyi soiuz ukrainskoho studentstva, or TseSUS), tried to draw the attention of the Western public to the Ukrainian question by means of choral and dance performances. NaSUS was integrated in the organization of foreign students in Leuven, and in 1938–39 Andrii Kishka headed the Circle of Foreign Students in Louvain (Cercle Internationale des Etudiants Etrangers).[21]

The intelligentsia in the cities and workers in the mining regions had their own organizations, which did not collaborate with each other. Of course, there were individual contacts; for example, some political refugees worked in the mines, but there was no interaction on the organizational level. Certain groups, such as the Redemptorist Fathers and the students, could have bridged these social and geographical gaps but did not do so. Apparently, Ukrainian descent was not the decisive factor in the construction of identities. Only the intelligentsia (students, soldiers, and politicians) that had supported Ukrainian statehood in 1917–22 had a concept of national identity. Although they called themselves Ukrainians, the Ukrainian miners identified themselves with a region of Ukraine rather than with Ukraine as a whole.[22]

The Second World War and the First Postwar Years
The Migration Process

The migration movements of individual Ukrainians just before, during, and immediately after the Second World War are difficult to reconstruct. Some Ukrainians left Belgium; for example, some returned

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21. Fierens, "Oekraïense Studenten aan de Katholieke Universiteit Leuven," 69–73 and 81–100; Narizhny, *Ukrainska emigratsiia*, 1: 71, 304; Ronin, "L'Ukraine en Belgique," 54–9; and *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii*, 1 January 1947.

22. Wsevolod Isajiw draws a distinction between folk community-type groups and nationality-type groups ("Definition and Dimensions of Ethnicity: A Theoretical Framework," in *Challenges of Measuring an Ethnic World: Science, Politics and Reality: Proceedings of the Joint Canada-United States Conference on the Measurement of Ethnicity, 1–3 April 1992* [Ottawa: Statistics Canada and United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1993], 411). While the former organizations manifest their regional identity in traditional folk dances, the latter express a collective Ukrainian identity in which immigrants from different regions feel at home. Folklore may serve a different function in different circumstances: the singing and dancing of the Ukrainian student ensemble, unlike those of the miners, were part of host society-oriented politics.

to the short-lived Carpatho-Ukraine (1938–39), while others, such as liberated German POWs (April 1945), streamed into the country. It is impossible to estimate their numbers.

The first large group of Ukrainians that arrived in Belgium consisted of about 1,500 young Ukrainian women. It arrived in the autumn of 1945 from German *Ostarbeiter* camps. To avoid compulsory repatriation from Germany to the Soviet Union, they had joined young Belgian men who had been either POWs (about twenty percent), voluntary workers, or conscripted labourers and were returning home. To circumvent Belgium's commitment to repatriate all Soviet citizens, they married their Belgian companions, received Belgian citizenship, and stayed in Belgium. Many of them had contacts with the Soviet embassy, which with help from the Belgian Communist Party, tried to locate them. The embassy even offered consulate passports to women who were not hostile to the Soviet system, enabling them to visit their families in the USSR.[23]

Another homogeneous group of Ukrainians also found its way to Belgium. As before the war, Ukrainians came to study at the Catholic University of Leuven. In May 1945, after negotiating with the Red Cross and the Soviet Repatriation Mission, the Ukrainian Relief Committee (Ukrainskyi dopomohovyi komitet, or UDK) brought about twenty students from occupied Germany to Belgium. When the first Belgian consulate reopened in Wiesbaden at the end of 1947, individual Ukrainians could apply for studies in Belgium. From 1945 to 1950 altogether ninety Ukrainian students studied in Belgium, practically all of them on scholarships. Just as before the war, most students left Belgium after completing their studies. They did not return to Eastern Europe but migrated to several destinations across the Atlantic.[24]

The largest group of postwar Ukrainian migrants were the displaced persons recruited in German POW camps for the Belgian coal mines

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23. Iars Balan et al., *Zarubizhni ukraintsi: Dovidnyk* (Kyiv: Ukraina, 1991), 164; Lieselotte Luckx, "De gedwongen repatriëring van Sovjetburgers aan de vooravond van de Koude Oorlog (1944–1949)," (M.A. dissertation, University of Ghent, 2005), 153–70; Els Witte, Jan Craeybeckx, and Alain Meynen, *Politieke geschiedenis van België: Van 1830 tot heden* (Antwerp: Standaard Uitgeverij, 1990), 236; and *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii*, 1 November 1945. Oral source: interview with Omelian Koval, 30 and 31 March 2005.

24. Of the ninety Ukrainians who started their studies between 1945 and 1950, only nineteen stayed in Belgium. The most popular destinations were Canada (23), the United States (19), and other European countries (15) (Tatarsky, ed., *Liuven 1930–1985*, 489–97).

between 1947 and 1950. The Belgian mining industry had survived the war almost undamaged and faced a labour shortage. Initially, it employed German POWs, but international protest forced Belgium to look for other solutions. At the beginning of 1947 the Belgian mining industry agreed with American and British authorities to recruit workers among the DPs in their occupation zones. On 11 April 1947 the first transport of 429 DPs arrived in Belgium, and by the end of July 1947 almost 14,000 DPs were employed in the Belgian coal mines. The mine managers could not fulfil their promises of housing and family accommodation, and workers' enthusiasm fell rapidly. By the end of 1948 the transports stopped because the Marshall Plan undercut Belgium's competitive advantage. In the end, 22,477 DPs arrived between 1947 and 1951.[25] Half of them were Poles, and the second largest group (6,650) were Ukrainians[26] (see table 1).

The recruits were allowed to work only in the mines, but they retained all the rights of registered International Refugee Organization DPs and were promised naturalization and free access to the Belgian labour market after two years. But the promise was not honoured because the economic situation deteriorated. In 1949 the DPs could either continue working in the mines or move only to specific sectors, such as agriculture, domestic employment, and metallurgy. Competition with indigenous workers for the few jobs outside mining was fierce. According to a survey at the end of 1948, Ukrainian miners considered their working conditions intolerable, and more than half of them wanted to leave Belgium.[27] In April 1949 many DPs protested against their predicament

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25. In July 1947 the Preparatory Commission for the International Refugee Organization, the predecessor of the International Refugee Organization, met the wishes of the Polish state to introduce the specific category "Ukrainians," thus separating Polish DPs from Polish Ukrainians. The Polish authorities were willing to accept the Polish DPs (including Polish Jews), but not Polish Ukrainians because they wanted to rid themselves of the Ukrainian minority in Poland (Ihor Stebelsky, "Ukrainian Population Migration after World War II," in *The Refugee Experience: Ukrainian Displaced Persons after World War II*, ed. Wsevolod W Isajiw, Yury Boshyk, and Roman Senkus [Edmonton: CIUS Press, 1992], 23). See also Jacques Vernant, ed., *The Refugee in the Postwar World: Preliminary Report of a Survey* (Geneva: High Commission for Refugees, 1951); and Marta Dyczok, *The Grand Alliance and Ukrainian Refugees* (Basingstoke and New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's Press in association with St. Antony's College, 2000), 74–112.

26. Goddeeris, *Polonia belgijska*, 119–25.

27. The survey was done by UDK, which asked its regional representatives to fill out a form for the local branches. Since at that time UDK still represented most of the

Table 1: Immigration of Ukrainian Miners to Belgium, April 1947–December 1951 (Number of Individuals)

April–June 1947[a]	July–Dec. 1947[b]	Jan.–June 1948	July–Dec. 1948	Jan.–June 1949[c]	July–Dec. 1949	Jan.–June 1950	July–Dec. 1950	Jan.–Dec. 1951[d]	Total[e]
1,000	4,519	726	338	38	11	6	5	7	6,650

[a] The first transport arrived in Belgium on 11 April 1947 and brought 425 refugees to Belgium, among which UDK counted 340 Ukrainians. The second one, eleven days later, brought 135 young Ukrainian men. The third and fourth transports, on 27 April and 3 May respectively, brought 447 and 400 refugees to Liège, but there is no information on their nationality or ethnicity. However, *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii* later mentioned an overall number of 1,000 Ukrainians in the first four transports (1 May 1947, 15 May 1947, and 1 June 1947).

[b] From mid-1947 the Preparatory Commission for the International Refugee Organization (PCIRO) and the International Refugee Organization (IRO) registered the Polish Ukrainians separately. Their monthly statistical reports are presented here at semi-annual intervals (Stebelsky, "Ukrainian Population Migration after World War II," 54).

[c] In 1949 the Belgian government brought the international recruitment programs to a standstill, because international competition threatened economic growth and employment opportunities. When they were restarted in 1951, few volunteers could be found (Goddeeris, *Polonia belgijska,* 124–5).

[d] In 1951, with the dissolution of IRO, the collective transports and international data collection on the DPs came to an end.

[e] Volodymyr Maruniak claims that 17,003 Ukrainians immigranted to Belgium from mid-1947 to December 1950. He counted 1,103 Ukrainians recruited in the British Zone and seventy-three from Austrian camps (*Ukrainska emihratsiia v Nimechchyni i Avstrii po druhii svitovii viini,* 332–3). This confirms the fact that most of the Ukrainians came from the American Zone.

in front of the International Refugee Organization office in Brussels. The Belgian authorities reacted aggressively and arrested 170 Ukrainian demonstrators.[28]

Ukrainian miners, the survey is the best indicator of their discontent. See *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii,* 16 October 1949.

28. Frank Caestecker, *Vluchtelingenbeleid in de naoorlogse periode* (Brussels: VUBPress, 1992), 75–82, 145; idem, "Mineurs d'Europe centrale en Belgique," in *Histoire des étrangers et de l'immigration en Belgique*, ed. A. Morelli (Brussels: Couleur livres, 2004), 166; *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii,* 1 December 1950; and "Zvit holovy UDK v Belhii na IV richni zahalni zbory UDK, 10.6.48–15.5.49," Popovych (president of UDK, 1952–86) Archive at the Archives of the Catholic University of Leuven, Mgr. Ladeuzeplein 21, Leuven, Belgium, UDK file.

Given these restrictions, many Ukrainians left Belgium and migrated overseas, mostly to Canada and the United States, but also to Argentina, Paraguay, and Venezuela. Even the 170 Ukrainians who had been imprisoned in 1949 left Belgium. Thanks to the intervention of Baldwin I, who was crowned in July 1950, the Belgian government paid the refugees' passage to Canada in four transports between November 1950 and January 1951. Ironically, upon their arrival they were forced to work in gold mines.

It is impossible to give the exact number of Ukrainians who came to and left Belgium after the war. We attempt to estimate the number that came to Belgium in table 2. Adding up the number of Ukrainian DPs, women, students, and novices, we arrive at almost 8,500 individuals. We do not count some groups such as the pre-war emigrants who did not leave Belgium during the Second World War and individual Ukrainians who arrived immediately after being liberated from German POW and *Ostarbeiter* camps in April 1945. This is an estimate of the in-migration; it does not take into account the out-migration overseas.

Table 2: Estimated Number of Ukrainian Immigrants in Belgium, 1945–1950

DPs	6,650
Women	1,500[a]
Students	90[b]
Novices	150[c]
Total	8,390

[a] Estimated according to Kohut, "Ukrainians in Belgium," 218.
[b] Tatarsky, ed. *Liuven 1930–1985*, 495–6.
[c] Kohut, "Vidomosti pro ukraintsiv u Belhii," 33; and *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii,* 7 November 1955

There are no statistics about the Ukrainians who left Belgium because most of them did so on an individual basis. Ukrainians who left Belgium in transports went mostly to Germany, where they joined their compatriots from other countries. Moreover, the Belgian Institute for Statistics does not refer to Ukrainians as a separate category.[29] For a general idea

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29. The number of Polish and Soviet emigrants to Canada reached a peak in 1951–52

of the number of Ukrainians who left Belgium, we turn to UDK's annual report of July 1951, which states that besides the 1,500 women who arrived in 1945, there were about 4,500 Ukrainians in Belgium at the time. This means that about 2,500 Ukrainians had left Belgium.[30] In fact the number was higher, since the overseas emigration continued after July 1951 and desertion from the mines among DPs was fairly high.[31] Only those who had big families or health problems, or had applied too late for the free transportation stayed behind.[32]

Immigrant Organizations

Before the arrival of the Displaced Persons. Although the sources are silent on this, we can assume that the activities of most Ukrainian organizations declined during the Second World War. Isolated data show that the Ukrainians in Belgium interacted with both the Germans and the Allies. The Ukrainian National Committee in Belgium (Oekrainsch

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and declined abruptly after 1957, the last year of collective Canadian recruitment (Goddeeris, *Polonia belgijska*, 153).

30. The Belgian statistics yearbook does not report specifically on Ukrainian migration, which was included in the USSR category. Therefore, we have no idea how many Ukrainians were in Belgium at the time of the 1947 and 1960 censuses. We assume that prior to the overseas emigration there were 6,650 Ukrainian DPs, a pre-war emigration of between 200 and 500 Ukrainians, and a student group of twenty to fifty persons. Since we know nothing about the women who arrived in 1945, we leave them out of our discussion.

31. *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii*, 3 April 1949 and 1 October 1950; and "Skhematychnyi zvit z pratsi UDK v Belhii v dilovomu rotsi 1950–51 (vid 21.6.1950 do 22.7.1951)," Popovych Archive, UDK file. Oral source: interview with Omelian Koval, 30 and 31 March 2005. In his annual report the president of UDK stated that fifty to sixty percent of the Ukrainians in Belgium wanted to leave ("Zvit holovy UDK-u na II richni zahalni zbory UDK, 1.6.1947/2–3," Archive Comité Ukrainien de Secours, Avenue Charlemagne 72, Brussels, "Richni zvity, 1945–1950"). On desertion among DPs in Belgium, see Goddeeris, *Polonia belgijska*, 153; Albert Martens, *Les immigrés: Flux et reflux d'une main d'œuvre d'appoint la politique belge de l'immigration de 1945 à 1970* (Leuven: Presses Universitaires de Louvain, 1976), 73; and Vernant, ed., *The Refugee in the Postwar World*, 100.

32. *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii*, 1 December 1950; and "Zvit holovy UDK v Belhii na IV richni zahalni zbory UDK, 10.6.48–15.5.49," Popovych Archive, UDK file. The sources differ on the number of Ukrainians in Belgium: according to Kohut, 6,000 Ukrainians still lived in Belgium in 1951 ("Ukrainians in Belgium," 214–15); according to UDK estimates, their number fell to about 4,000 by 1955 ("Les Ukrainiens en Belgique fêtent leur X-e anniversaire," article in an unspecified Belgian newspaper, 1955, in the Popovych Archive, "Materiialy pro ukrainske zhyttia v Belhii").

Nationaal Comiteit in België, the former FEUE) had contacts with the German institution that dealt with East European immigrants. Initially, it had to report to the Russian Institution of Trust for Belgium (Russische Vertrauensstelle für Belgien), but after protests the Nazis set up a parallel institution of trust for Caucasian and Ukrainian emigrants (Vertrau-ensstelle für kaukasische und ukrainische Emigranten in Belgien) in April 1943.[33] At the same time TKUV had contacts with the Ukrainian-Canadian allies. It was approached by the Ukrainian Canadian Service-men's Association (Comité de l'Union des Combattants Ukrainienne de l'Armée Canadienne, or UCSA). In May 1945 the two organizations, together with the Ukrainian-American Soldiers, organized a celebration of the Holy Mother in Brussels.[34]

After the war, a very different organizational framework took shape. The main concern of Ukrainian organizations was material support for the Ukrainians on Belgian territory. On 1 June 1945, on the initiative of the Ukrainian-Canadian allies, UDK was created in Brussels. Similar committees were set up in other countries. Ukrainian Canadians supported Ukrainian refugees in various countries of Europe. In 1944 the Canadian umbrella organization, the Ukrainian Canadian Committee (Komitet ukraintsiv Kanady, or UCC), succeeded in obtaining Canadian govern-ment support for a European relief fund, called the Ukrainian Canadian Relief Fund (Fond dopomohy ukraintsiv Kanady, or UCRF), which along with the United Ukrainian American Relief Committee (Zluchenyi ukrainskyi amerykanskyi dopomohovyi komitet, or ZUADK) financed the operations of the Central Ukrainian Relief Bureau (CURB) in London. The Belgian UDK was one of the first branches of CURB in Western Europe, and during the first three years of its existence it was almost entirely financed by its Canadian mother organization.[35]

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33. Wim Coudenys studied the Archives of the Aliens Department at the Ministry of Interior. Correspondence between the Nazis and both institutions of trust can be found in files 37C18 and 37C4 (Wim Coudenys, "Een caleidoscoop des levens. De vele gezichten van de Russische emigratie in België," *Koninklijke Zuid-Nederlandse Maatschappij voor Taal- en Letterkunde en Geschiedenis. Handelingen* [Brussels, 2001], 263). See also Coudenys, *Leven voor de tsaar*, 252, 333.

34. "Invitation of UCSA and TKUV in 1944" and a TKUV document of 19 May 1945, Popovych Archive, UDK file.

35. Satzewich, *The Ukrainian Diaspora*, 99; and *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii*, 15 April 1946.

UDK in Brussels was the first officially registered Ukrainian organization in Belgium. It received recognition and financial support from the Ukrainian immigrants in other countries. The Canadians managed to unite all factions of the Ukrainian-Belgian community around three common points: material aid, legal assistance, and contacts with Ukrainians in other countries. UDK became the umbrella organization for all Ukrainians in Belgium. Under the guidance of Mykola Hrab, a pre-war political refugee, and Mykola Demchuk, a student, it absorbed the interwar FEUE, cooperated closely with TKUV, the Redemptorist Fathers, and the Ukrainian students, and became the main Ukrainian organization in the mining regions. From October 1945 it published its own periodical *Visti,* which reported on its work among all these groups.[36] It also participated in the international activities of its mother organization in London; for example, it sent food parcels to the DP camps in Germany and Austria.

But UDK's primary purpose was to help Ukrainians in Belgium. Since it was registered, it was recognized as an intermediary by Belgian and international authorities. Although this did not bring it additional subsidies, UDK could work with Belgian firms to find jobs for refugees. By 1946 it covered the whole country with a network of nine local branches and boasted 535 members. In other words, more than half of the Ukrainians in Belgium belonged to UDK. This is a very high participation level: Polish organizations could mobilize no more than twenty to twenty-five percent of the Polish emigration in Belgium.[37] It is not clear to what extent its members found suitable jobs in Belgium. There were more opportunities in 1945–46 than in the following years: besides coal mines, agriculture, quarries, and forestry welcomed foreign workers. Apparently, this was not sufficient, and UDK also looked for jobs abroad. It also functioned as a mediator between the Ukrainian girls in Belgium and the Ukrainian sisters in Philadelphia and the Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood of Canada.[38]

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36. *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii,* 1 October 1945 and 1 January 1946; *Le Moniteur Belge,* 9 June 1945; and "Kasovyi zvit UDK v Belhii, 1.6.1945–21.5.1947," UDK Archive, "Richni zvity, 1945–1950." Another Ukrainian journal in Belgium mentions the hegemony of *Visti* (*Tryzub: Orhan natsionalno-derzhavnoi dumky* 1, no. 1 [September 1947]: 12–13).

37. Goddeeris, *Polonia belgijska,* 173; and oral source: interview with Omelian Koval, 30 and 31 March 2005.

38. *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii,* 1 October 1945; 1 November 1945;

UDK cooperated closely with the Redemptorist Fathers. The latter regularly celebrated mass before UDK meetings, and UDK published the parish program in its *Visti*. As before the war, the Redemptorist Fathers served both the Greek Catholics and the Ukrainian Orthodox and organized Ukrainian religious life in the whole country. However, their monthly *Holos Khrysta Cholovikoliubtsia*, which began to appear in 1946, was aimed only at a Greek Catholic readership. In the same year the Redemptorists became part of the new international structure of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva, or UHKTs) and came under the leadership of Ivan Buchko, the apostolic visitator of all Ukrainian Catholics in Western Europe. His conception of the Church's mission was consistent with the objectives of UDK: to unify the diaspora, stop forced repatriation, and promote relief activities.[39] Later the UHKTs created a subordinate general vicariate for all Ukrainian Greek Catholics in which Rev. Jacques Perridon and then Rev. Maurice van de Maele acted as the spokesmen for Belgium. The Redemptorist Fathers continued to minister to the Ukrainian Orthodox.[40]

The interwar veterans' organization came under the UDK umbrella and used its *Visti* as a communication channel to attract new members. The campaign was not very successful, probably because Ukrainians had fought on both sides in the war: there were Ukrainian veterans who had fought in the Wehrmacht before deserting on French territory and those who had served in General Stanisław Maczek's First Armoured Polish Division.[41]

Students too could count on UDK's support, although they received aid also from other sources. The Belgian Committee of Assistance for East Slavic University Students (Comité Belge d'Assistance aux Universitaires Slaves Orientaux, or COBAUSO) provided scholarships to

15 April 1946; 15 June 1946; and 1 January 1947.

39. He expressed these ideas in his first pastoral letter of 30 November 1948 (Alexander Baran, "The Ukrainian Catholic Church," in *The Refugee Experience,* ed. Isajiw, Boshyk, and Senkus, 151–2).

40. Dmytro Blazheiovsky, *Ukrainian Catholic Clergy in Diaspora (1751–1988): Annotated List of Priests who Served outside of Ukraine* (Rome: author, 1988), 241; Hoogmartens, "De Oekraïense immigratie in Belgisch-Limburg," 57; *Holos Khrysta Cholovikoliubtsia* 3, no. 4 (November 1948); and *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii,* 1 October 1945 and 15 April 1946.

41. The division was formed in 1942, and in 1944 it helped liberate cities in France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. There are Ukrainian names on some of the 250 graves of its fighters at the war cemetery of Lommel in the Flemish Campine.

Soviet refugees. Moreover, the Apostolic Visitator Ivan Buchko bought a residence for students at the centre of Leuven.[42] There was no religious division in NaSUS, but there was a Catholic Federation of Ukrainian Students, which admitted only Greek Catholic Ukrainians. Almost all of them were also members of NaSUS. As before the war, NaSUS belonged to the Circle of Foreign Students. But there was an important shift in its activities: they were no longer directed only at Belgians but also at the Ukrainian community. After the war the student choir and dance ensemble regularly performed for local UDK branches in mining villages, thereby contributing to the cohesion of the Ukrainian community.[43] This may be attributed to the common experiences of students and miners: most of them had been deported to Germany during the war and had refused to go back to Ukraine.

Only one group, the largest one, did not come under UDK's umbrella. Contacts with the newly arrived Ukrainian girls proved to be difficult. Initially, UDK lobbied on behalf of these women and protested against Soviet demands to repatriate them. Later however, UDK cut off contacts with them because it feared Soviet infiltration. The Soviet Mission forcibly organized some of these women into the Union of Soviet Patriots (Union des Patriottes Soviétiques), which included also interwar immigrants from Subcarpathia and other ethnic groups from the Soviet Union with communist sympathies, and published the Russian periodical *Patriot*.[44]

The postwar organizational framework of the Ukrainian community in Belgium differed considerably from the interwar structure. The paramount need for aid and the means made available by overseas Ukrainian donors led to the formation of an umbrella organization. UDK tried to appeal to all Ukrainians in Belgium. It was successful in uniting Ukrainians with different professions, of different generations, and living in various places. Only the Ukrainian women who had married former Belgian POWs or workers in Germany remained unorganized. Nevertheless, the fault lines of the interwar

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42. On Brouwerstraat. Since 1960 the Ukrainian Student Residence is at Halfmaartstraat 15.

43. Baran, "The Ukrainian Catholic Church," 153; Fierens, "Oekraïense studenten aan de Katholieke Universiteit Leuven," 58–60; *Obnova: Biuleten Tovarystva ukrainskikh studentiv katolykiv,* 1947; *Tryzub* 5 (April 1948), 11; and *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii,* 15 October 1945, 15 June 1946, and 1 January 1948.

44. Wilson, *The Ukrainians,* 114. Oral source: interview with Omelian Koval, 30 and 31 March 2005.

period were bridged to a large extent. The Ukrainian ethnic or national element was now more prominent in the immigrants' identity than before the war. On the other hand, in 1945–47 Ukrainian organizations were focused more on the material needs of Ukrainians in Belgium and less on political life in Ukraine than they were in the interwar period.

The arrival of the Displaced Persons. Upon their arrival the Ukrainian DPs were integrated into the existing Ukrainian organizations in Belgium. Almost all of them joined UDK: by December 1948 the committee had 5,839 members. This is a very high rate of participation.[45] Through UDK the Ukrainian DPs started to collaborate with one of the two Belgian trade unions.

UDK accepted the General Christian Trade Union Federation's (Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond—Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens, or ACV-CSC) offer of cooperation in defence of the DPs' workers' rights. Along with Italians, Poles, Balts, Belarusians, and Yugoslavs, Ukrainians received a separate voice in the migrants' cell within the ACV-CSC. Iaroslav Pryshliak[46] reported on its work in the column *Do pratsi—Au travail*[47] in *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii.* However, Belgian unionists and foreign workers had different objectives. The former wanted to control the influx of new immigrants and their employment in the labour market in order to protect their indigenous members, while the latter hoped that the union would improve their working conditions and protect them from repatriation. Unlike other immigrant groups, which were divided between the Christian and the larger socialist General Trade Union Federation of Belgium (Algemeen Belgisch vakverbond—Fédération Générale du Travail de Belgique, or ABVV-FGTB), the Ukrainians all belonged to the Christian

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45. UDK membership, which amounted to 535 in 1946, thus grew by 5,304 members. By December 1948 6,583 Ukrainian DPs had arrived in Belgium (see table 1). This means that more than eighty percent of the newly arrived DPs joined the UDK.

46. In the Archives of the Polish Security Apparatus Iaroslav Pryshliak is identified as a former soldier of the 14th Galician Waffen-SS Division. He was also active in 1947 as a secretary of UDK ("Sprawy ukraińskie. Komunikat Wiadomości Bieżących," Archive of the Institute of National Remembrance, Ulica Towarowa 28, Warsaw, IPN BU 00231/309, 2: 157–9).

47. The ACV-CSC published one edition of *Au Travail* in Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, and German. Later, only the Polish version *Przy Pracy* came out as an independent journal and the other versions became columns in immigrant papers (Goddeeris, *Polonia belgijska,* 138).

trade union. This unanimity shows that UDK was very influential among the newcomers.[48]

While the Ukrainians presented a united front in relation to the host society, they were soon fragmented internally for political reasons. The newly arrived DPs brought with them their political experience in the DP camps in Germany, where there had been heated political controversy among Ukrainians with different historical experience, ideologies, social backgrounds, and faiths. As a result, two contrary processes took place. On the one hand, refugees from different parts of Ukraine learned to live and work together; on the other hand, political life became sharply polarized. The Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council (Ukrainska holovna vyzvolna rada, or UHVR) and the Ukrainian National Rada (Ukrainska natsionalna rada, or UNRada) both claimed to represent the Ukrainian nation in exile. UHVR was created in mid-1944 on Ukrainian territory and included representatives from all Ukraine. In exile, however, it confined itself to the External Units of the OUN (Zakordonni chastyny OUN, or ZCh OUN), the largest political party abroad, led by Stepan Bandera. UNRada was set up in 1947 on the initiative of all the other political parties in exile and maintained strained relations with ZCh OUN. The youth organizations fell along this political fault line: Plast cooperated with UNRada while the Ukrainian Youth Association (Spilka ukrainskoi molodi, or SUM) was the youth wing of ZCh OUN. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (Ukrainska Avtokefalna Pravoslavna Tserkva, or UAPTs) remained independent and above the political fray.[49]

Soon, political rivalry in the DP camps started to influence relations in UDK in Belgium. From mid-June 1947 articles on affairs unrelated to Belgium in *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii* were

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48. Goddeeris, *Polonia belgijska*, 136; Kohut, "Ukrainians in Belgium," 226; *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii*, 1 June 1947, 1 July 1947, 1 December 1947, and 1 February 1948.

49. Volodymyr Kulyk, "The Role of Discourse in the Construction of an Emigré Community: Ukrainian Displaced Persons in Germany and Austria after the Second World War," in *European Encounters: Migrants, Migration and European Societies since 1945*, ed. Rainer Ohliger, Karen Schönwälder, and Triadafilos Triadafilopoulos (Aldershot, Hants, Eng. and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 222–3; Vasyl Markus, "Political Parties in the DP Camps," in *The Refugee Experience*, ed. Isajiw, Boshyk, and Senkus, 113–15; Satzewich, *The Ukrainian Diaspora*, 98; and Ihor V. Zielyk, "The DP Camp as a Social System," in *The Refugee Experience*, ed. Isajiw, Boshyk, and Senkus, 464–7.

borrowed from the nationalist *Ukrainska trybuna* and the liberal *Chas.*[50] In April 1948 the Bandera faction-linked SUM started the column "V pokhodi" (On the March) in *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii* and banned any news from Plast, which had previously appeared in the paper from time to time.[51] This caused some controversy in UDK, and a group of interwar immigrants around Dmytro Andriievsky started its own periodical *Tryzub* (1947–48), which was similar in spirit to its namesake published by Symon Petliura in Paris (1925–40).[52]

The substantial increase in the Ukrainian emigration in Belgium led to the establishment of UAPTs in Belgium. Its head, Archbishop Mykhail Khoroshy, arrived in September 1948.[53] In contrast to the relations among political organizations, the relations between the two Ukrainian churches were amicable. This may be attributed to a common enemy: the Russian Orthodox priest in Liège, Valent Romensky, who acted in the name of the Russian Exarch of the Ecumenical Throne in Western Europe,[54] but was not recognized by the Ukrainians (UDK President

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50. For example, the patriotic article about the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (Ukrainska povstanska armiia, or UPA) on 15 October 1947 and about the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council in *Chas* on 15 December 1947. From 1946 to 1949 the weekly *Ukrainska trybuna* was one of the most widely read newspapers. Eventually, it came under the control of the Bandera faction and reflected its program and activities. The more popular *Chas* was a general liberal nationalist periodical with a wide circulation, which published the leading émigré writers of different political affiliation. See Roman Ilnytzkyj, "A Survey of Ukrainian Camp Periodicals, 1945–50," in *The Refugee Experience,* ed. Isajiw, Boshyk, and Senkus, 277–87.

51. The scouting organization Plast did not put political ambition first, but rather embraced a harmonious education of body and mind. It cooperated with the schools in the DP camps and initially enjoyed more support than SUM. SUM had a political mission of national mobilization and recruited young people between eighteen and thirty years of age. Plast found it difficult to adapt its program to the third wave of emigration in 1949–51, but it was revived in the United States and Canada. See Daria Markus, "Education in the DP Camps," in *The Refugee Experience,* ed. Isajiw, Boshyk, and Senkus, 183; and Volodymyr Maruniak, *Ukrainska emihratsiia v Nimechchyni i Avstrii po Druhii svitovii viini* (Munich: Akademichne vydavnytstvo P. Beleia, 1985), 277–9.

52. *Tryzub,* 1947, no. 9: 12–13 and 1947, no. 11: 6–7; *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii,* 1 November 1947, 15 December 1947, 1 January 1948, 1 April 1948, 15 April 1948, and 4 September 1949.

53. Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, "The Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church in West Germany, 1945–50," in *The Refugee Experience,* ed. Isajiw, Boshyk, and Senkus, 168.

54. "Zvit holovy UDK v Belhii na III zahalnykh zborakh 1.6.1947–20.6.1948," UDK Archive, "Richni zvity, 1945–1950."

Kishka even advised the Belgian authorities to expel him). UDK had close ties with both Ukrainian churches. Its meetings always began with a Catholic and an Orthodox service, and every local branch had two vice-presidents, one from each denomination. The hierarchs of both churches supported each other; for example, Bishop Buchko attended the dedication of the Orthodox chapel in Maurage, Wallonia. The exact numbers of Greek Catholics and Ukrainian Orthodox are unclear: of the 5,839 UDK members in December 1948, 1,924 declared themselves to be Greek Catholics and 1,040 Ukrainian Orthodox, but 2,875 members did not declare their affiliation.[55]

The socio-cultural activities of UDK were not affected by the political polarization. In fact, they increased in scope as the newly arrived DPs and the interwar immigrants learned to work together. The pre- and postwar migrants also worked together in the Ukrainian Learning Educational Society (Ukrainske naukovo-osvitne tovarystvo, or UNOT), which arose in 1947 and set up Saturday schools for Ukrainian children. By 1949 UNOT ran twelve schools and taught 346 children the Ukrainian language, geography, history, and culture, using textbooks from Germany. Another example of this socio-cultural cooperation was the Ukrainian commercial cooperative Dnipro, established in 1948. It was founded by a newly arrived student with pre-war cooperative experience in Ukraine and an interwar immigrant with knowledge about the Belgian market.[56]

By mid-1948 UDK's host society-oriented policy embracing all Ukrainians regardless their political profile was challenged by the DPs' divisive, homeland-oriented politics. While UDK's cultural, economic, and religious activities promoted community unity, the political groupings imported from the DP camps led to controversy, strife, and polarization. It was unclear which tendency would prevail.

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55. We do not know why they did not declare their affiliation. They may not have identified with either church, or they may have been uncertain about the status of the two churches in Belgium. See *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii*, 1 October 1948 and 1 November 1948; "Pravylnyk Dopomohovo komitetu v Belhii 20.6.1948," Popovych Archive UDK file; and "Skhematychnyi zvit z pratsi UDK v Belhii v dilovomu rotsi 1948–49," UDK Archive, "Richni zvity, 1945–1950."

56. Myroslav Semchyshyn, "Kooperatyvni orhanizatsii ukrainskoi emihratsii v Zakhidnii Evropi," in *Ukrainska kooperatsiia diaspory: Istorychnyi ohlad 1930–1995,* ed. Omelian Pleshkevych (Chicago and Kyiv: Ukrainska svitova kooperatyvna rada, 1996), 59; *Tryzub,* 1948, no. 4: 6; and *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii,* 1 March 1948, 15 May 1948, and 15 June 1948.

The final split. UNRada, the legislative organ of the Ukrainian National Republic Government-in-exile, convened in occupied Germany in July 1948 and was recognized by all Ukrainian political parties. This event deeply affected the Ukrainian community in Belgium. In August 1948 sixty-two representatives of ten Ukrainian organizations in Belgium convened a coordination conference and recognized UNRada.[57] The First Congress of Ukrainians in Belgium, which was held in Brussels on 1 November 1948, aligned UDK's organizational structure with UNRada's and elected UDK's president, Andrii Kishka, head of the newly founded Supreme Council of Ukrainian Civic Organizations in Belgium (Holovna rada ukrainskykh hromadskykh orhanizatsii v Belhii, or HRUHOB). Each organization had a seat on HRUHOB, which functioned as the mouthpiece of UNRada in Belgium. Its office was located in a rented house at 7 Guimard Street in Brussels.[58]

The Bandera faction of the OUN soon left UNRada. This split extended to Belgium. In March 1949 some activists accused UDK of political and ideological insubordination to UNRada. They charged UDK with favouritism for the Banderites and the Greek Catholics. Although President Kishka was politically neutral, they set up the UNRada Support Committee (Komitet spryiannia UNRadi). At the next general assembly in June 1949, Mariian Dzoba was elected president, but the supporters of UNRada, led by I. Skyba, did not recognize him and submitted an alternate list of the executive board. This sparked a final rift. The dissidents were expelled from the executive board of UDK—democratically, according to the Banderites, and unfairly, according to their opponents—and in September 1949 transformed the UNRada Support Committee into the Union of Ukrainians in Belgium for Supporting UNRada (Soiuz ukraintsiv u Belhii spryiannia UNRadi, or SUB), which was headed by Andriievsky and Kishka. Thus, the polarization that had taken place in the German DP camps recurred in Belgium as organizations realigned themselves along new political fault lines.[59] However,

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57. The ten organizations were UDK, TKUV, UNOT, SUM, Plast, Dnipro, UHKTs, UAPTs, NaSUS, and the Union of Ukrainian Women in Belgium (Obiednannia ukrainok u Belhii, or OUB).

58. *Tryzub*, 1948, nos. 8–9: 14; and *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii*, 1 September 1948 and 15 November 1948.

59. Polish security saw political identification with UPA as the cause for the split but mentioned also the generational conflict. For example, Andriievsky, who was about fifty-

the Banderites' objectives reached beyond traditional party activities: by means of social and cultural work, they wanted to gain control over the whole Ukrainian community in Belgium.

The Bandera camp consisted of the umbrella organization HRUHOB and six other Ukrainian organizations. Three of them had a monopoly in their area of public life. UDK remained the largest organization: by mid-1950 it had twenty-one local branches and 3,408 registered members. That year it became the sole Ukrainian representative in the Belgian Committee for Refugees and served as an intermediary between the Belgian state and individual migrants in distributing relief. Taking advantage of Plast's identity crisis, SUM became the representative of all Ukrainian youth in Belgium. In its official program it did not mention its affiliation with the Bandera faction but stressed loyalty to Ukraine and Christian moral values.[60] Dnipro, which had its head office at the same address as HRUHOB, was the only Ukrainian cooperative in Belgium.

The other three organizations had to compete with organizations headed by SUB. All of them were larger than their rivals. HRUHOB collaborated with the ACV-CSC, and all its 803 members were automatically affiliated with the Christian trade union.[61] Secondly, OUB did not change its relationship with UDK and from November 1948 reported about its work in *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii*. Finally, UNOT experienced a few years of instability because of the high remigration rate and the resignation of some members, but it remained the main Ukrainian educational organization in Belgium.[62]

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five years old, had to give up his position to the younger ex-soldier Pryshliak ("Sprawy ukraińskie. Komunikat Wiadomości Bieżących," Archive of the Institute of National Remembrance, IPN BU 00231/309, 2: 157–9; and M. Demchuk, "Velyka manifestatsiia v Lezh," *Ukrainske slovo,* 18 September 1949).

60. "Programme 1-er Congrès des Travailleurs Ukrainiens en Belgique (31.10–1.11.1948)," Popovych Archive, UDK file; and "Union de la Jeunesse ukrainienne en Belgique / Verbond der Oekraïense Jeugd in België," *Le Moniteur Belge,* 30 July 1949. Since 1845 *Le Moniteur Belge* has been the official publication of the Ministry of Justice. It announces new laws and the registration of organizations.

61. HRUHOB's influence on Ukrainian syndicalism within the Christian ACV-CSC became clear when it enrolled all 803 of its male members. Members of HRUHOB became members of ACV-CSC automatically, without signing up individually. Other immigrant communities, such as the Polish one, had a lower degree of syndicalism because their members had to join the ACV-CSC individually.

62. Goddeeris, *Polonia belgijska,* 166; Semchyshyn, "Kooperatyvni orhanizatsii ukrainskoi emihratsii," 59–60; and *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii,* 5 June

SUB, in contrast, presented itself as the national committee of Ukrainians in Belgium and opened its doors to all sympathizers of UNRada. By mid-1949 it had 650 members and the support of four organizations. Most but not all of their leading members had arrived in Belgium before the Second World War. Both UHKTs and UAPTs were affiliated with SUB, although Kishka accused the Bandera faction of exploiting religion and gave this as the reason for the split. The third organization was TKUV, which the veterans of the Second World War did not join. Consequently, its membership remained more or less the same as in the interwar years. The last SUB member organization was the Ukrainian affiliate of the socialist trade union ABVV-FGTB. It was organized in 1949 as a competitor of the union controlled by the Bandera faction. ABVV-FGTB, however, was less active in the recruitment of immigrants, and the Ukrainian workers were represented by a Polish unionist, Władysław Dehnel.[63]

Thus each Ukrainian camp was tied to a different Belgian trade union. In making their choice they did not take into account the ideological differences between the Belgian unions: HRUHOB was not manifestly a Christian democratic organization, and SUB did not have a socialist profile. The heir of UDK simply continued to work with the trade union that UDK had joined, and SUB chose the only other major union available. The Belgian trade unions became drawing cards in the competition between the Ukrainian organizations. HRUHOB was more successful here. Thanks to its affiliation with ACV-CSC, HRUHOB became associated with the Christian pole in the polarized Belgian society.[64] As a result, by 1948–49 it became evident that the Bandera

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1949, 15 February 1950, 1 July 1950, 15 July 1950, 1 November 1950, and 7 January 1951.

63. Dehnel attacked UDK in his general letter of August 1950, criticizing UDK because it took up a political agenda and in this way reversed its original idea of embracing all elements of Ukrainian society. See *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii*, 15 April 1950 and 1 October 1950; M. Demchuk, "Velyka manifestatsiia v Lezh," *Ukrainske slovo*, 18 September 1949; *Belgian Monitor*, 30 July 1949 and 18 February 1950. On Dehnel, see Goddeeris, *Polonia belgijska*, 142–4.

64. Polarization is the division of society according to political ideology. In the second half of the twentieth century there was a Roman Catholic, socialist, and liberal pole in Belgium. Labour unions, schools, companies, and even sport clubs affiliated themselves with one of these poles.

faction had captured the dominant role in Ukrainian community life in Belgium.

The rivalry between HRUHOB and SUB culminated in several lawsuits involving the Ukrainian house in Brussels and a fight in the little Walloon municipality of Hanzi-Pomerolles near La Louvière. In 1948 Kishka, who headed UDK, had rented with private funds a house for UDK on Guimard Street. When he was not re-elected president, he refused to transfer the lease to the next board and to leave the house. A Belgian judge ruled against him four times, but Kishka vacated the house only in the 1950s when he migrated to Canada. By that time UDK had already established itself at another address, at 72 Charlemagne Avenue. The other incident, in Hanzi-Pomerolles, is a good example of the hostility between UDK and SUB. After the UDK branches in Hanzi-Pomerolles and Péronnes-Resse switched to SUB, some local UDK members beat up Mykola Trembach, the SUB president in Hanzi-Pomerolles. Seven of them were found guilty and were sentenced by the court in Mons. As a result, UDK and SUB attacked each other in the press: UDK in *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii* and SUB in *Ukrainski visti* and *Ukrainske slovo*. Their articles did not address ideological issues but merely vilified the other side.[65]

One organization remained on the sidelines in the controversy. The student union NaSUS continued its attempts to bridge the growing division in the Ukrainian community. Its choir, for instance, performed at both UDK and SUB celebrations. In 1949 NaSUS decided to change its executive each year, electing alternately proponents of the Bandera and the Melnyk factions. Two years later it elected a unity executive led by the Third Force (Tretia Syla).[66]

The dispute in UDK clearly marked a shift from a united to a polarized Ukrainian community in Belgium. The rift has not healed to

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65. The paper *Ukrainske slovo* expressed the ideas of the Melnyk faction of the OUN and was published in Paris from 1948. *Ukrainski visti* was the voice of the Ukrainian Revolutionary Democratic Party (Ukrainska revoliutsiina demokratychna partiia, or URDP) and supported UNRada until the 1960s. See Ilnytzkyj, "A Survey of Ukrainian Camp Periodicals, 1945–50," 277; Kulyk, "The Role of Discourse in the Construction of an Emigré Community," 224; Maruniak, *Ukrainska emihratsiia v Nimechchyni i Avstrii,* 277–9; *Visti Ukrainskoho dopomohovo komitetu Belhii,* 1 April 1950, 1 May 1950, 1 August 1950, 10 December 1950; and *Biuleten Soiuzu ukraintsiv u Belhii,* 31 March 1950.

66. From then on the members wore a golden three on their student hats (Tatarsky, ed., *Liuven 1930–1985,* 118–19). *Biuleten Soiuzu ukraintsiv u Belhii,* 31 March 1950.

this day. It was caused by Ukrainian organizations outside Belgium, primarily the Bandera faction, which tried to capture the leadership in the community. The fault lines that emerged cut across social divisions such as generations and classes, although SUB represented mostly pre-war immigrants while UDK consisted mostly of DPs. Previous polarizing factors, such as regional identities, were pushed into the background. The Ukrainian community in Belgium, which was developing a common national identity, was split by a political dispute that polarized the whole Ukrainian diaspora.

Conclusion

The Ukrainian emigration in Belgium changed fundamentally in the first half of the twentieth century. In the interwar period different types of immigrant organizations appeared at different places of settlement. In provincial mining areas, folk community-type groups of economic immigrants sprang up. They expressed a regional identity and received support only from mine managements. In the cities organizational life was based on nationality-type groups consisting of Ukrainian political refugees from different parts of Ukraine. They received minimal support from the Belgian government. After the Second World War, the united Ukrainian relief effort overcame the geographical dichotomy of the emigration in Belgium. Although UDK appealed to all Ukrainians, it did not represent the largest group of new Ukrainian immigrants, the women who married Belgians who had worked in Germany during the Second World War. The mass influx of DPs in 1947–48 caused a change in the priorities of UDK. From a defensive umbrella organization focused on integrating newcomers, UDK became a partisan player in the larger political dispute splitting the postwar emigration. The Ukrainian community in Belgium became polarized between two political blocs, which used contacts with the host society to increase their influence. As more than half of the Ukrainian population in Belgium emigrated overseas and no new immigrants arrived, the Ukrainian community in Belgium was doomed to remain divided.

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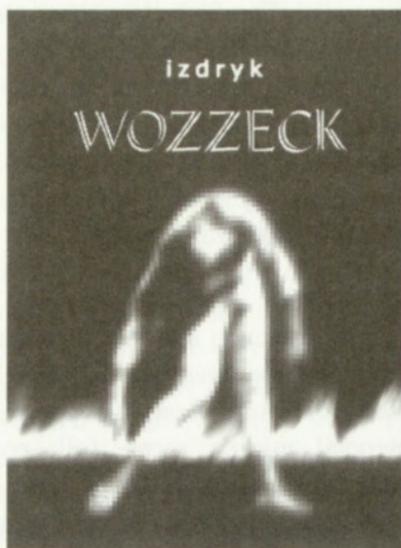
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