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Lies, fraud and sacrilege*

Why does Putin make all the Soviet dead of the Second World War... “Russians”?

Saturday 21 May 2022, by [MITRALIAS Yorgos](#) (Date first published: 18 May 2022).

May 9 has come and gone, and as has been the constant for the past two decades, both Mr. Putin’s enemies and friends have repeated in unison that on May 9 of every year, Russia remembers and honors the 20 or 25 plus million of its dead during World War II. It even seems that in recent years, and even more so this year because of Mr. Putin’s war on Ukraine, these millions of Russian dead have been commemorated even more forcefully in order to highlight - apparently - the absence of Ukrainians from the martyrology.

All this is just another huge lie. Or rather a huge macabre fraud which only serves the Great Russian propaganda of the present regime. And this is why. First of all, all these dead commemorated were not Russians but... first and foremost Soviet civilians and military. The difference is not insignificant and the first person who should agree with it is Mr. Putin himself, who knows something about the abyss that separates the cursed Soviet Union from his Russian Federation, since he usually loses his temper in public when he talks about the October Revolution, Lenin and his Bolsheviks.

But let’s see if there is a grain of truth in Mr. Putin’s propaganda. Were the Soviet citizens and servicemen who died during and because of the Second World War only Russians? The answer is given by the following table borrowed from the relevant Wikipedia article (in French and English), which is based on Vadim Erlikman’s study: *Poteri narodonaseleniia v XX veke: spravochnik*, Moscow 2004 (ISBN 5-93165-107-1) pp. 23-35.

Deaths by Soviet republic

Soviet Republic	Population 1940	Military Dead	Civilian Dead	Total	Deaths as (% 1940 Pop.)
Armenian SSR	1.320.000	150 000	30 000	180 000	13,6%
Azerbaijan SSR	3 270 000	210 000	90 000	300 000	9,1%
Byelorussian SSR	9 050 000	620 000	1 670 000	2 290 000	25,3%
Estonian SSR	1 050 000	30 000	50 000	80 000	7,6%
Georgian SSR	3 610 000	190 000	110 000	300 000	8,3%
Kazakh SSR	6 150 000	310 000	350 000	660 000	10,7%
Kirghiz SSR	1.530.000	70 000	50 000	120 000	7,8%
Latvian SSR	1 890 000	30 000	230 000	260 000	13,7%
Lithuanian SSR	2 930 000	25 000	350 000	375 000	12,7%
Moldavian SSR	2 470 000	50 000	120 000	170 000	6,9%

Soviet Republic	Population 1940	Military Dead	Civilian Dead	Total	Deaths as (% 1940 Pop.)
Russian SFSR	110 100 000	6 750 000	7 200 000	13 950 000	12,7% (A)
Tajik SSR	1.530.000	50 000	70 000	120 000	7,8%
Turkmen SSR	1 300 000	70 000	30 000	100 000	7,7%
Uzbek SSR	6 550 000	330 000	220 000	550 000	8,4%
Ukrainian SSR	41 340 000	1 650 000	5 200 000	6 850 000	16,3% (B)
Unidentified	-	165 000	130 000	295 000	
Total USSR	194 090 000	10 700 000	15 900 000	26 600 000	13,7%

The answer, obviously, is no. Of course, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, which at the time had by far the largest population (110 million), had more deaths in absolute numbers than any other Soviet Socialist Republic. However, things change considerably when the calculation is made on the basis of the percentage of the population of each Soviet Republic represented by its civilian and military dead. Indeed, the percentage of dead Russians (12.7%) is lower than the average percentage of the entire Soviet Union (13.7%)! Moreover, the percentage of Ukraine is considerably higher (16.3%), which places it in second place in terms of human losses, after Belarus (25.3%), which paid the heaviest blood toll, as evidenced by one of the two or three most important films in world cinema: the terrifyingly realistic and at the same time deeply philosophical film "*Come and See*" (Иди и смотри) by the great Soviet director Elem Klimov ...

But what about the "small" peoples and nations of the USSR which are permanently ignored by Mr. Putin, in spite of the fact that their populations were almost decimated during the war? Like, for example, the Yakuts who lost about 61% of their men who fought with the Red Army! Or the Jews of the USSR who also suffered enormous losses, the greatest of all the nations of the Soviet Union, since out of the 500,000 who fought in the ranks of the Red Army, 200,000 were killed, or 40% (!), while 2 million Jewish civilians also lost their lives. It is obviously because of this well-organized falsification of history that we persist in speaking, for example, of the "liberation of Auschwitz by Russian soldiers", when in reality "Auschwitz was liberated by the 322nd division of the Red Army's 'First Ukrainian Front'". That is, mainly by Ukrainian soldiers. And this is only one of countless examples of this kind...

So, when Putin and his Great-Russian propaganda not only ignore the sacrifices of all these peoples, nations and nationalities, but even confiscate their sacrifices and deaths by attributing them to "Russians", we no longer have a simple fraud, a simple lie, but something much worse, a real sacrilege! And the reason for this sacrilege is more than obvious. **Having decreed that there is no Ukrainian nation (1), Putin obviously cannot admit that there were millions of Ukrainians who died fighting the Third Reich 80 years ago.** And even more, it is inconceivable for him to accept that Ukrainian casualties were proportionally greater than the already appalling Russian losses. In fact, **since he insists on declaring that Ukrainians are nothing but "Nazified" Russians, he ends up - quite "reasonably" in his irrationality - by russifying their World War II deaths as well.**

So, we have to admit that the ghosts of the past are haunting the present as never before, when even the terrible blood toll paid by the Soviet population in its anti-fascist struggle is today the object of a well-orchestrated operation of falsification of history. Just to serve the propagandistic needs of the unscrupulous grave robber that is Mr. Putin!

Yorgos Mitralias

1. See our text: Putin: "Lenin is the author of today's Ukraine" - Or how all this is the fault of... Lenin and the Bolsheviks! : <http://europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article61979>

* The photo accompanying our text is by the important Soviet Jewish photojournalist Dmitri Baltermants and has its own tragic history. It was taken in January 1942, in Kerch, Crimea, immediately after the first Wehrmacht withdrawal and the discovery of the bodies of both Soviet partisans and 5,000 Jews massacred in a ravine by the infamous Nazi Einsatzkommando. The photograph, published in 1965 and known worldwide as "Grief", shows "men and women searching for their husbands, fathers, brothers or sons among the corpses that litter the ground". The woman wearing a white kerchief was photographed as she discovered her husband's body (neither of them was Jewish). Five months later, the Nazis returned to Kerch, and then an event occurred that strongly recalls the Ukrainian news of today: 10,000 soldiers of the Red Army and 5,000 inhabitants of the city took refuge in the "catacombs", which are nothing more than tunnels of an old limestone quarry. There they fought for six months, with less and less food, water and ammunition, and resisted the constant attacks of the enemy, to whom they inflicted enormous losses. Their resistance continued until October 1942, and was only broken when the German forces flooded the galleries, after making massive use of poison gas. Of the approximately 15,000 people who took refuge in the catacombs, only 48 survived...

Mariupol is not far from Kerch, it is just on the opposite coast of the Sea of Azov, and if all the above reminds you of something of the bloody news of this spring 2022, then you have seen right...