

- Trudy, over to you, thank you.

- Okay. Well, good evening, everybody, and good evening from a very cold, wet London where we're going into tier-three lockdown. But I must admit, this group is becoming more and more special, and so thank you all for joining us and thank you, Wendy, for this, the genius of setting it all up. And today, I'm dealing with the Jews of the Ukraine and the Jews of Soviet Russia. If you remember, at the last session, I started looking at the chaos at the end of World War I, but I've had questions from people that made me realise I'm going to have to talk a little bit about how the Jews came to be in Eastern Europe.

*Visuals are displayed throughout the presentation.*

And those of you who know your Jewish history will know that by the 1200-1300s, Europe becomes, Western and Central Europe becomes a very, very dangerous place for Jews, it's very much the power of the church. And what happens is the Kingdom of Poland, which was vast, which later made a marriage treaty with Lithuania, combined together into the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania. And it becomes a very important country, its main currency was salt. And it was a vast land with a huge peasant population and a nobility, it was the largest nobility per capita in the world.

And basically, various kings offered charters to Jews to come and settle in the Polish lands. And then the Poles annexed the Ukraine. And it was Jews who went into the Ukraine to parcel up the land, so that's how they came. Now, of course, Zionist historians will always tell you that one of the great tragedies of Jewish history is that the Jews had no real power to determine their own destiny. Really, for about 350 years, under a relatively enlightened Polish crown, they lived a life, it became the centre of Ashkenazi culture, it was the centre of Yiddish, it was the centre of the great yeshivot. It was the centre of people like the Baal Shem Tov, the Vilna Gaon, it was a very important centre in the Jewish world.

But tragically, the Polish kingdom disintegrates. At the end of the Thirty Years' War, 1618 to 1648, a war that ravaged the whole of Europe, Poland was weakened, and it led to all sorts of revolts that I'm going to talk about in a moment. But the Polish crown never really recovered. And if you think where Poland is geographically, it was situated between Russia, the Habsburg empire, later Austria-Hungary, and Prussia. And beginning in 1772 and culminating really in the Russian Revolution, in the First World War, this whole area was swallowed up, with the majority of Jews living in that area now becoming subjects of the czars.

And they were confined to an area known as the Pale of Settlement. Now, many of you will know this well, but by the time you get well into the czarist rule, their attitude to the Jews as they tried to hold on to their country, bearing in mind it was the largest empire in the world, a primitive, backward empire, they didn't even free the serfs till 1863, and the Jews do become

the major whipping boys. And between 1881 and 1914, something like 40 percent of the Jews of Eastern Europe living in the Pale, their lives have become so terrible that 40 percent of them make the decision to get out either because of economic hardship or because of pogrom. Now, the people I'm, and of course, that's where some of your families came to Britain, America, South Africa, et cetera, but I'm concerned with the Jews who stayed behind in Eastern Europe. And of course, they were then ravaged by the First World War, that war that we spend so much time talking about because it marked the whole of the Western world and still marks us.

If you want to look at the origins of World War II, you need to look at the origins of World War I and what happened in World War I. So last week, I began to look at what happened in that war. And if you remember, the way the Allies were ranged, and I'm looking just at the big powers, France, Britain, and Russia. And on the other side, Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Turkey. These are the countries that are going to be important as far as the Jews are concerned. And America, of course, entering the war late on the side of the British, the French. And what happens is revolution breaks out in Russia, the Russian Revolution, which then becomes the Bolshevik Revolution.

And that means, with the Bolshevik Revolution, everything is up for grabs. Now let's talk about the Ukraine, I've already mentioned to you that Ukraine had been annexed by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Now, it was known as borderland, that is the name, that is what Ukraine means, it means borderland. And one of the interesting questions that we have to ask ourselves is what on earth is Ukrainian identity, what is Ukrainian nationalism? And frankly, some Ukrainian nationalists trace their origins back to Kievan Rus, but the majority actually trace their origins back to the Cossacks, because who lived in the Ukraine when it was conquered by the Poles and by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth?

Well, it was the home of runaway serfs, tartars. It's the borderland. It made the Wild West seem a very, very civilised place. You know, I've spent a lot of my working time travelling in Eastern Europe just after communism collapsed. I was involved with what is now called IHRA, you might know of it because it's the International Task Force of Holocaust Remembrance in Education. And myself and colleagues worked all over the Ukraine, in Belarus, in areas which even in the early 90s were incredibly primitive. And I remember the words of my friend, Phillip Shaff, I've mentioned him to you before because, of course, his grandfather was the rabbi of Oswiecim. He was a Polish Jew, but he'd come to London in 1938, which had saved his life.

And he was an extraordinary man, he later became a fellow of the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. And he would say, "We walked the same earth and we looked at the same sky." And frankly, when I'm travelling in the more primitive parts of the Ukraine, eastern Poland, Belarus, I really got a smell of it. But having said that, I've also had some of the most profound teaching experiences in my life in Eastern Europe. So before I get on to the what is unfortunately quite a horror story of what happened to the Jews in the Ukraine, I want to give you something a little more positive. We had been teaching in a little shtetl, really, just outside Kiev to a group of Ukrainian teachers who'd been joined by teachers from Belarus.

And we brought in some of the great and the good from the Washington Museum, from Yad Vashem, et cetera, and we were talking methodology with them. And it was then that I had the most profound teaching experience of my life and actually, it has become quite a famous story because everyone was so shocked by it, that in the seminar, there were many teachers from the villages. And so you're going back to the early 90s, they didn't have computers, they didn't have access. And particularly those who came from Belarus, it was still a communist state.

And they then, we said to them, look, we want to know how you teach the story because remember, there were towns and villages in Eastern Europe, in Ukraine, in Belarus, that had been 50%, 60% Jewish. And this teacher came up, she was very tentative, a middle-aged woman. And she said, "I bring an urn into the classroom and I tell my students to write down all their hopes and dreams. Then I put them into the urn and I set fire to it."

And that's how I teach them what happened to your children." And it was an extraordinary experience, so before I go on to the darkness, it's important to remember that everywhere, you find enlightenment and you find kindness. But the the problem with the Ukraine at the end of the war, the First World War had been incredibly brutalising. And one of the things I tried to establish with you, although the majority of Jews were never communists, those who really were so powerful in creating the revolution were of Jewish birth.

And I showed you at the last session that extraordinary picture where you see Trotsky and Joffe signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the German high command. As far as Ukrainian nationalists, Belorussian nationalists, Polish nationalists were concerned, Jews were communists. Even Churchill, if you remember that article I referred to, he hoped that Zionism would pull the Jews away from communism, which he saw as a world disease.

And just to reiterate, it wasn't just what happened in Russia. Revolution followed from country to country to country, all the others failed, but the majority of the leadership were of Jewish birth. And ironically, Trotsky and his compatriots, they had a herem passed against them by rabbis in Eastern Europe. So the revolution itself, and in the chaos of the revolution, there were all these conflicting armies, which I also mentioned at the last session. There was, of course, the Red Army that was created after the Red Guards by Trotsky, better known to his enemies as Bronstein, the Polish army under General Pilsudski, Poland I'm going to talk about tomorrow, the White Russian army, that was the army of the aristocrats, the Monarchists, the conservatives, and those socialists who hated communism under the control of Denikin.

And there was a Ukrainian independence movement under Petliura. So the first question I'm going to ask is actually about Ukrainian independence. What on earth does Ukraine mean and is there such a thing as authentic Ukrainian nationalism? And as I said to you before, the Ukrainian nationalism, which really does not become an important movement until this period, there's one important poet, it goes back to its origin, some to Kievan Rus, but the majority to the creation of the Cossack power base. In 1648, at the end of the Thirty Years' War, the Cossacks

under Bogdan Khmelnytsky went on the rampage. And who did they destroy?

They destroyed any Polish nobility they could get their hands on because, remember, Polish and Lithuanian landowners had come into the Ukraine and parcelled up the land and they were ruling it basically not from their estates but from the capitals, wherever the court was. And who do you think was managing the estates? Well, of course, the Jews. The Jews fulfil an incredibly important part in the economy of that time. Now, what happens is they go on the rampage against Polish nobility, any Poles they can get their hands on, Polish clergy, this is important.

The Cossacks were Ukrainian Orthodox, they hated the Polish Catholics and, of course, the Jews. It's very difficult to come up with numbers. The scholars of the time put it as far as 100,000, I mean, lost in the most appalling way. And of course, it destroyed not just life, not just property, but also the great yeshivot, the study centres. And it leads in the end, ironically, to the creation of the Hasidic movement out of the ideas of a man called the Baal Shem Tov who had seen, who knew, he wasn't born at the time, but he knew of the horror.

And what he wanted to do was to explain to the Jews that it wasn't over, that what God wanted was not necessarily study but love of him. And of course, out of that comes Hasidism and later Chabad, Chokhmah, Binah, Da'at, when a third-generation Hasidic master called Zalman of Liadi brings it back to scholarship and today, of course, it's one of the most important of the Orthodox groups within the Jewish world. So, but the horror, Petliura, and this is where we come to the first problem, to the Jew, he's one of the most appalling murderers in Jewish history.

To the Ukrainians, he is a symbol of Ukrainian nationalism and of Ukrainian revolts, there are statues of him. And the next, there were other Cossack revolts, 18th century, again, heroes. And there can be nothing more diverse, if you like, than the image of the Cossack, just think about the Cossack. Horseback, pride in his physical strength, pride in, really, in all the pleasures of the flesh, and the Jew. Who is the image of perfection in the Jewish world?

Well, it's the scholar, the pale scholar, the image of, the greatest prize in marriage, if you were the richest man in town, the greatest prize in marriage for your daughter was not the second richest man's son, but the rabbi, or if not the rabbi, the yeshiva student. So you couldn't have seen any more clash of civilizations than that of the Cossack and the Jewish world. It's almost, and this is, of course, is going to come up quite often when we talk about the creation of Israel, because you can make the case that the rabbonim after the exile deliberately suppressed revolts because the Jews were once a great warlike people. Never forget, they held out against the might of Rome. Look, we are in the middle of Hanukkah.

What is Hanukkah about? It was a revolt against the Greeks, beg your pardon, and then, of course, the destruction of the second temple. And after that, when the rabbonim regroup, you can make the case that they encase the Jew in the wall of law, they need to be safe. That is the secret of the Jews, the safety of the Torah and the Talmud. Now, with the kind of forces of the 19th and 20th century, you are going to see another notion that comes out of the Zionist

movement, a reaction against the passivity of the Jew.

And we've got to be careful because it's overstated by Zionists. And it's important to remember that, by this period, we already do have Jewish self-defense groups. So, but the situation in the Ukraine, the Jew is at the mercy of the Polish army, the White Russian army, the Red Army, even under Bronstein, although the Red Army, all the directives were not to attack the Jews, there were pogroms, but the received wisdom, and I say that very carefully 'cause I'm going to be talking about that, between 1918 and 1921, the total of 1,236 different pogroms against the Jews of the Ukraine.

Now, again, and I mentioned this last time, there is even a quarrel over how many people died. Depending on what side you are on, the figures are between 50,000 and 100,000, I mean, 50,000 people. So we're looking at an appalling time in history. And the man who led the Cossacks, who led the Ukrainian nationalist forces, was a man called Symon Petliura. He's very controversial, so can we see his picture, please, Judy? Here you see Symon Petliura, I'm going to give you a bit of background to him. His dates are 1879 to 1926.

He was born to a Cossack family. And Cossacks had had certain privileges regarded land ownership and also access to education within the Russian Empire. I should mention that Ukrainian, any thought of Ukrainian nationalisms was totally suppressed by the czars. The Ukrainian language was banned from the minute the czars took control of that part of the world right up until the Russian Revolution. Now, his ambition, early ambition, was to become an Orthodox priest. In 1898 though, he's attending a seminary and he, like so many young people, 1898, the horror of the reign of Nicholas II. That gentle, quiet creature, Nicholas II, whose reign unleashed the most appalling terror on so many, many people. And like so many Jews who are going to fight for their freedoms, whatever that means, Bundism, Zionism, or getting out, Petliura joins a Ukrainian Revolutionary Party.

And of course, when his membership was discovered by the priesthood, he was expelled from the seminary. He moved to Kuban, which was a sort of Cossack town and a stronghold, where he worked as a teacher. And he went into the archives of the Kuban Cossacks, they're a very important Cossack tribe. And he helped to organise over 200,000 documents. He's an intellectual and he wants to get to the root of Ukrainian nationalism because what he wants above all else is the independence of his people from the evil czars. 1903, he's arrested for organising a branch of the Ukrainian Revolutionary Party and for writing anti-czarist articles. He's released in 1904, he moves to Kiev and then to Lviv.

Lviv at that time, Lwow, the problem with all these cities is quite often, they are under different rule at different times. Lviv at this time was part of the Habsburg Empire, which was more liberal, comparatively more liberal, than Czarist Russia. And he published under the name of Tagon. And he worked as an editor for a Ukrainian journal and contributed to the Ukrainian national language. He's working on the origins of Ukrainian language just as a man called Eliezer Ben-Yehuda is working on the revival of Hebrew language, this is all about nationalism in

action. He then moves to St. Petersburg and published in the Socialist Democratic Monthly, free Ukraine.

So a lot of these revolutionary parties are working together. He closes down, he has to move. So like so many Jews who are also fighting for freedom, he had to keep on moving around. He, in his time, he published over 15,000 articles, reviews, poems. He's a very charismatic figure, he's a brilliant speaker, and he really sets a fire under Ukrainian nationalism. And his work actually helped shape the mindset of Ukrainian nationalism before World War I. He later on is going to continue this work in Paris. And his legacy is constantly studied. So important, he is today one of the great heroes of the Ukraine. He married in 1909, had a daughter.

And of course, in World War I, what happens, there is revolution. And when the czarist empire collapses, can perhaps we have Ukrainian freedom? And in May 1917, he attended the first of all Ukrainian conferences of soldier deputies in Kiev. And despite the fact that he'd had no army training, he was appointed head of the army committee and the first secretary for military affairs. You see, the czarist empire has now collapsed. We're going for independence. He was anti-communist, he disagreed with the Politburo, and he organises Cossack, the haidamak regiments of Cossacks in Sloboda and in Kharkov.

So he's a Cossack hetman and he's pulling together the Cossack legions and his forces are now involved in the fight. In April the 28th, there's a putsch, he's arrested for four months, and then he's back and he becomes chief of the military forces of the Directorate of the Ukraine. They have gone independent, but they're having to fight on two fronts. They're fighting the Whites who are trying to capture everything, the White armies under Denikin, remember? And after the end of the war, his armies have help from the British and the French. What they're trying to do is to destroy the Bolsheviks and take back the czarist empire. And he continues, so he's fighting both. He's head of the Directorate. And they created a new republic, he's fighting both the Bolsheviks, the White Russians, and the Romanians.

Romania also wants part of Ukraine. It's important to remember, those of you who have visited the Ukraine, I don't know if any of you ever travelled in the countryside, it's one of the lusciest places I've ever seen. It's black earth. I mean, it could be such a fertile, wonderful country. Anyway, they are defeated. And in December 1919, he's forced to withdraw to Poland, which had previously, under General Pilsudski, talk about him tomorrow, he had been regarded as head of the Ukrainian government, it's over. And he actually signed an alliance in Warsaw recognising independent Poland and Poland's right to Galicia.

And he does this in return for the Poles helping him fight Trotsky. So you see, this whole area is up for grabs now. It's fascinating because Churchill said, "Once the big armies stop fighting, the pygmy armies have to fight now." So if you think about it, Ukrainian independence, Belarus, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, this is all the collapse of the Russian Empire. What about the Habsburg empire? We're going to see that as well, 15 national groups. And the problem for the Jew, the Jews have a huge presence in the Ukraine and in Belarus and in Poland, this is the

heartland of the Jewish world.

Now, the problem is that, during the war, what happened during the war is that Petliura and his troops, to what extent were they involved in murderous pogroms? Now, we know that there are an appalling amount of pogroms, we know there was appalling amount of loss of life. Jews were murdered either as Christ killers or as commissars. Now, to what extent was Petliura responsible? There were also all sorts of Cossack warlords. As I said to you, this made the Wild West seem incredibly tame. This is a horrific, ghastly time in which to be alive, to stay alive in this terrible time. And don't forget, the majority of the Jews in the Ukraine, although they lived in the cities, many of them lived in the small towns and villages.

And they were the ones who were most at risk. But Petliura, he issued this statement on August the 26th, 1919. "It's time to realise that the world Jewish population, their children and their women were enslaved and deprived of national freedom just as we were. They should not go anywhere away from us. They have been living with us since time immemorial, sharing our fate and our misfortune with us. I decisively order that all those who will be inciting you to carry out pogroms will be expelled from our army and tried as traitors to the motherland. Let the courts try them for their actions without sparing the criminals the severest punishments according to the law.

The government of UNR," that's the Ukrainian independence, "understanding all the harm that pogroms inflict on our state, have issued a proclamation to the entire population of the land with the appeal to oppose all measures by enemies that instigate pogroms against the Jewish population. Signed, Petliura." So his revolt fails. He is betrayed by the Poles and he flees to Paris. Ironically, Pinchas Krasny, who was a representative of the Jews of the Ukraine at the League of Nations, thanked Petliura for his support of Zionism. Jabotinsky who, remember, came from Odessa, also entered in correspondence with some of the Ukrainian nationalists.

And also, although he had little money at his disposal, in February 1921, he assigned 15,000 Polish marks to Jewish refugees from Poland. So this man is going to be accused of being the major perpetrator of the pogroms. Certainly, the pogroms in the Ukraine were huge, horrific, who were the major perpetrators? But the evidence is a little bit strange, and I'm going to come on in a minute to the trial. Today, he has been completely rehabilitated and in fact, he is a national hero. Can we see please a picture, the next slide?

Here, you see him with his troops. He was a very popular figure with his men. And after the collapse of the Ukraine, what's going to happen to the Ukraine is the Soviets are going to take the bulk of it and the Poles the rest. So the Jewish population are either going to be under Poland, dealing with that tomorrow, or under the Soviet Union. So can we go on to the next? Here, you have his wife and his child. And then we come on to an extraordinary story. Let me just clarify for you though. I think we've established that the pogroms were not the policy of Petliura, but the commanders punished entire Jewish communities and very few commanders were actually published.

We know now that Petliura didn't order any attacks and did send telegrams to his commanders telling them to act. But he did accept the idea that Jews had brought the pogroms on themselves. I mean, for example, when in March 1919, he visited the city of Zhytomyr while a pogrom was in full swing and he didn't do anything about, to stop it. This is the telegram he sent. "The pillaging banditry and shamelessness which the Bolsheviks ruled Ukraine has turned the people against these new pillagers, Muscovites and Jews."

And he believed the only safety for the Jews was to prove that they were loyal to Ukraine. So ironically, today, we're right in the middle of a controversy over the Ukraine again. And Moscow's view on, Putin made a statement when he visited the, when he actually, when, no, let me get this right, I think he makes a statement, in October 2017, there was a newly created days of defenders of the Ukraine. And the municipal government of the city of Vinnitsa erected a statue to Petliura in Jerusalemkaya, which was the Jewish section of the town. And that's right, and Putin actually says, "Petliura was a man of Nazi views.

He's an antisemite who massacred Jews during the trials," because obviously, the Soviet regime took no blame whatsoever in the pogrom, so they were all perpetrated, according to the Soviets, by the Whites and by Petliura. So however, something is going to happen, something that's going to cause an absolute uproar. And that is what happens with a man called Sholem Schwarzbard. And I'm going to tell you his story and how their lives actually come together. He was born in Bessarabia. Again, in czarist Russia, he came from a working class Jewish background. His mother and three older brothers died, he's apprenticed as a watchmaker. 1903, again, just imagine what the czarist empire was like, the horror, the poverty, the oppression of all peoples. He became very interested in socialism.

And he moonlighted for a group called Iskra which, of course, was the name of Lenin's newspaper, and Lenin's nom de plume. 1905, there is a revolution in Russia, the failed revolution. He becomes involved in Jewish self-defense units. He's arrested, imprisoned, let out under an amnesty, but then fled to the Habsburg empire. He worked in a number of towns and cities, he had a very nomadic life, Vienna, Budapest. And he turns towards anarchy. Now, anarchy is a creed that believes that, if you basically give everything, very much like the Bolsheviks, you give everyone, each according to their need, that all the problems between people will disappear.

And the anarchists even believed that one day, the need for law would wither away. However, until that happened, they were prepared to use terror tactics. And ironically, an awful lot of the anarchist leaders were of Jewish birth. And some of you may know, of course, the incident in London where, Sidney Street, the siege of Sidney Street, where Jewish anarchists got involved in a terrible incident with the British police. In 1908, he's arrested in Vienna for a small theft in a restaurant, sentenced to hard labour. Evidently, he took the rap for someone else and, because this other chap was anarchist and they were stealing the money anyway for the revolution. And that Schwarzbard cared absolutely nothing about money.



He served his sentence and then is rearrested, this is in Vienna, for carrying forbidden books. He flees to Switzerland, this is the path of so many young revolutionaries, then to Paris where, again, he works as a watchmaker. He marries a fellow immigrant from Odessa, and war breaks out. So he enlists with his one surviving brother in the French Foreign Legion. He becomes a war hero, has a brilliant military record. And he wins the Croix de Guerre and he is transferred to a French infantry division. So he's an idealist, an anarchist, and now he's a war hero.

And in September 1917, in dreaming of the Soviet Revolution, he and his wife travelled back to Russia where they are arrested by anti-communist forces, flees and joins the Red Guard and ran a unit for them. He's caught up in the civil war. And then he goes back to Odessa, where he tries to establish anarchist schools, worked with the Bolsheviks who were centralising the school system. And he witnesses the pogroms. And they pushed him into joining into that international brigade, which was actually defeated by Petliura's forces and Denikin. And July-August 1919, that's when he witnesses the full horror of the pogroms, which actually are going to blight the whole of his life and lead him to terrible nightmares.

He returns to Odessa where he's betrayed and he escapes as a French war veteran, shipped back to France via Istanbul and Beirut. So this is an overt now, because he fought in the French in the war, he goes back on a French troop ship and finishes up in Paris. He becomes disillusioned again with communism. And in Paris, he's a watchmaker, becomes a French citizen, and becomes involved with an interesting group of anarchists that included Alexander Berkman. Those of you who know your American history, that should ring bells, because Alexander Berkman was an Eastern European immigrant to America, for a long time, the boyfriend of Emma Goldman. And he attempted to assassinate Frick, the Frick collection.

He assassinated Frick as an exploit, he attempted to assassinate Frick as an exploiter of the workers. He served a sentence. And then in 1919, the American government, terrified of the spread of communism and anarchy, began to expel Eastern Europeans who had associated with communism and anarchism. And that's when Emma Goldman and Berkman were kicked out of America, along with nearly 40,000 other Eastern Europeans, the majority who were of Jewish birth. You know, I keep on saying Jew, Jewish birth, the problem of definition, you can spend an awful lot of time deciding what Jewish identity means to you, whether it's religious, whether it's cultural, whether it's national with the state of Israel, whether we are a peoplehood, what binds us.

Never forget that quote of Elias Canetti, "There are no people more difficult to understand than the Jews." But the problem is also the outside definition. How Jewish were any of the communist leadership? Well, they'd thrown it all away, but they're still seen as Jews. These characters are seen as Jewish troublemakers and revolutionaries. Anyway, so he's in Paris. And it's in Paris that he realises there's something he must do. Because after the war, after the failure of the Ukrainian independence, Petliura also comes to Paris where he was now living.

He was at the centre of emigrate Ukrainian life. And you can just imagine the atmosphere in Paris, there were all sorts of groups, as there were in London, who have escaped from Eastern Europe, who have escaped from the ravages in Munich, many of them blamed the Jews for all the problems of the world, the Protocols were really spinning out of all control. So Petliura had relocated to Paris. Schwarzbard had never met him, but he blamed him for the murders, for the pogroms he himself had witnessed. So he recognises what he looks like from a picture in an encyclopaedia, a picture of him with Joseph Pilsudski.

And on May the 26th, 1926, he approaches Petliura on the Rue Racine near the Boulevard Saint-Michel, those of you who remember the days when we went travelling in Paris, remember the Boul , and asked him, "Are you Mr. Petliura?" Petliura raises his cane and then Schwarzbard pulls out a gun and shot him five times. And after he'd fallen to the ground, he shot him twice more. And he turns himself in to a passing policeman and was arrested, okay. Now, the effect of the shooting. Petliura was a great hero of the Ukrainian expat community. And in fact, not every Jew was against him. But if you think of important figures like Simon Dubnow, the majority of Jews blamed, and certainly the Zionists in Palestine blamed Petliura for the pogroms. He's brought to trial. And can we see the next slide, please?

Thank you, this is the trial, it's going to become an incredibly important trial. It's electrifying, and the defence is given 18 months to prepare, and the defence was that Petliura was executed because he was responsible for pogroms which led to the death of 15 members of Schwarzbard's own family. And the prosecution, their defence was that Petliura, sorry, the prosecution's case, Petliura was not responsible for the pogroms and anyway, Schwarzbard was a communist agent. So along with the criminal case, you also have a civil case bought by Olga Petliura. And the man who defended Petliura was one of the most extraordinary lawyers of his age, a man called Henri Torres, can we see his picture, please?

Oh, sorry, no, that is, yes, Henri Torres, thank you very much. His dates are 1891 to 1966. You realise we're gradually coming more into the modern period. His grandfather, Isaiah Levaillant, had founded the League for the Defence of Human Rights during the Dreyfus Affair. He came from a family of lawyers who were dedicated to the Jews and also dedicated to justice. He was an active communist, he was a journalist. He also had a Great War record, he was an infantry officer, injured at Verdun, and was awarded the Croix de Guerre. He, as I said, he was a lawyer, he really was most interested in criminal law.

He'd been involved in several trials, not just in Paris, but also in Moscow, Romania. And he has initiated a campaign against the ghastly treatment of Jews in Bessarabia. I'm going to tell you what happened to him later on because, and then we go back to the case. After the Nazi invasion, he fled to South America. He was expelled from both Uruguay and Brazil because of his communist associations. He moved to Canada and then America. He campaigned against Vichy, was a great supporter of de Gaulle. And in Vichy France, he was, of course, expelled from the bar, he's in absentia, but he's expelled from the bar because he's a Jew, and condemned to death in absentia.

In New York, he becomes the editor-in-chief of the Voice of France and later professor of law at Rio and San Paulo, what an extraordinary life. After the war, he returns to France. And between 48 and 50, he's a Gaullist senator and he's president of the High Court of Justice. Prolific writer, he wrote lots of plays, plays with legal angles, and he died in Paris in 1966. And this is the man who defends Petliura. And I think it's quite extraordinary, really, because all sorts of witnesses were called for the defence. And basically, it took the jury only 35 minutes to decide that he was not guilty, well, he was guilty, but justifiable homicide. This is the summing up. The Judge Flory directed the jury. Did he cause Petliura's death?

Yes. Did he intend to kill him? Yes. Did he ambush him? Did he act with premeditation? Well, actually, the answer is yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. But the case was so strong and the defendants were called from all over the world and all sorts of it, it became the cause celebre, all sorts of important characters in Britain, people like H. G. Wells, they all gave their support to Schwarzbard, he had killed this man who was the great criminal against his own people. So as I said, the jury, after 35 minutes, he is free. And in fact, and the civil damages awarded something like half a frank. And, you know, I remember when I was in Paris in the heady days when we could still travel, I often, I know this is going to sound very weird, how can I put it in a way it doesn't sound weird?

I'd often go to cemeteries because it's a way of finding out so much about how people, not just how people died, but you'd look at the groups of the characters. And ironically, we were visiting the cemetery where Dreyfus was buried, that's why I wanted to go. And I was with Patrick and he said, "Well, let's go and find Petliura." And there were fresh flowers on Petliura's grave. You see the problem, at the time, the majority of Jews believed he was the great evil one. How evil was he? It's up for, you got to remember, it was when the archives of the Soviet Union were finally opened up that we have more and more information.

Today, his record is still incredibly problematic, but he is still a hero in Ukraine today, he's one of the great nationalist heroes because he is the man who, he kept Ukrainian culture together, he fought for Ukraine, and so clash of ideas. Let's have a look at his real rehabilitation, Judy, the last slide. Here you are. This issued in the Ukraine which, by the way, of course, has a Jewish president. So if you are thinking of all the mixed messages that come out of the Ukraine, it's absolutely, absolutely extraordinary.

So that's the story of the Ukraine and, of course, what's going to happen to most of the Jews who are left alive in the Ukraine, they're now going to come under Soviet rule. Whereas the, because Ukraine is swallowed up, and the other side is going to fall under Poland. And you do realise, don't you, that this division between the two sides of the Ukraine still exists to this day. And when we look at Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, and we have to look at them because these little countries were homes to, I would imagine so many of you who are listening today, we looked at Germany and at Austria, also great homes to the Jewish people.

And now we're moving to Eastern Europe. And my guess is probably three quarters of us listening are going to have families somewhere in Eastern Europe originally. Now, the whole notion of self-determination of nations, I'm not going to rush Soviet Russia, I've done my usual trick, I haven't left myself enough time and I'm taking Wendy's point very seriously. And as London's just got into the third stage, I'm very much working on the assumption that we have a lot of time. But what I want to finish on is basically the whole concept of the springtime of nations at the end of the First World War and the Treaty of Versailles.

This is President Wilson. "Self-determination is not a mere phrase, it is an imperative principle of action which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril. This is the whole notion that people have a right to self-determination of nations." And it was at the Treaty of Versailles, of course, and the San Remo conference that the Jews are going to be able to stake their claim to a Jewish homeland. But this is his Secretary of State Robert Lansing in December the 30th, 1918. He writes this in his diary. The more I think about the President's declaration, the more convinced I am of the danger of pushing such ideas into the minds of certain peoples. The phrase is simply loaded with dynamite. It will raise hopes that can never be realised, it will, I fear, cost thousands of lives.

What a calamity that phrase was ever uttered. What effect on the Irish, the Indians, the Boers, the Muslims of Palestine and Syria and Morocco, of Tripoli. How will it harmonise with Zionism to which the President is committed?" And this is 1924 from a Jewish traveller called Alfred Doblin. "Today's states are the graves of people. The more or less arbitrary form nations of Europe were collective beasts that taught the masses, their subjects, the barbarism of nationalism rather than the values."

So I'm going to end on that because I'm sure there's going to be a lot of questions. But, and I will look with you at Russia tomorrow, and I don't intend to hurry any of this. So either way, we will certainly get to Poland and Lithuania this week and next week. 'Cause I know, particularly the South Africans, that many of them obviously will know a lot about their history, but I think it's important to look at what happened to Lithuania post World War I. And another reason, and I think you're going to have to bear this in mind, when it came to the Shoah itself, yes, it was the Germans who put the whole thing in motion. But many of the cruellest perpetrators came from Latvia, Lithuania, and the Ukraine, not Poland, Poland is a very complicated issue. I'm not going to fudge it, but I am going to deal with it, I hope. So let's have a look at the questions, if that's okay, Wendy, I'm going to the questions.

Q&A and Comments:

Q: This is from Ram Romanov. "My dad was born in Shchastia, Ukraine, was caught in a pogrom in 1919 and fled at six years old to Moldova and picked up by Ochberg and taken to South Africa. My family and I returned to the shtetl two years ago and there were no more Jews there. All we found acknowledging the presence of Jews was a Magen David in the backyard,"

A: Yeah. It's very strange when you go back to Eastern Europe. We became obsessed, actually, particularly in Poland because we were going to Poland under communism and it was a poor country. So they hadn't repaired in the flats and in the wooden houses, they hadn't repaired the door lintels and you could see where they were pushed out.

Q: Is there a map of the area for us to look at?

A: You will have maps tomorrow, I promise. And I want to thank Judy for her brilliance in managing to get them on the screen. Yes, would it be possible for you to use maps? Yes, indeed, it would, and you're going to have them tomorrow. The problem we had with choosing maps was that it was very difficult to find a very clear map. But I think we've solved the problem.

Q: I'm slightly confused, was Petliura responsible for the pogroms?

A: Well, that's the whole point, George, and it's a fascinating one. He did give directives to his people not to perpetrate the pogroms, but his commanders did, and he didn't follow it up, okay. I think the balance is now that the majority, I think majority blame goes with Denikin. But there were also all these wild Cossack groups. It was a blood lust, it is beyond horror. In fact, Petliura, look, this is what, of course, Schwarzbard survived, he actually died in South Africa. He was in South Africa, he was a poet, Schwarzbard, and he was, and a writer. He was in South Africa raising money for a Yiddish dictionary, an encyclopaedia, when he had a heart attack in 1938.

He writes a fabulous article, The Speech I Didn't Make, this is in a book called The Golden Tradition by Lucy Dawidowicz. And he actually starts it this way, "Whenever I read the chronicles of world history, my heart bleeds each time I encounter human injustice." And he talks about the horror of the pogroms and he talks about the horror of Ukrainian history. As far as he was concerned, Petliura was guilty. Could I, that Torres was defending, yes, of course. I assume you meant, did I misspeak? Yes, of course, Torres was defending Schwarzbard.

Q: What ideology drove the Cossacks?

A: Oh, Dion, I don't think there was an ideology, I know they wanted their freedom. The Cossacks were a fascinating, the reason they had concessions of land is that they were the crack troops that protected the czar. In 1848, when there were 52 revolutions throughout Europe, the czar Nicholas I actually lent his Cossacks to the young Franz Joseph, he only just taken the throne in 1848, and he lent him a regiment. There's a brilliant book called Wider Flows the Don about the Cossacks, it's very romantic. I mean, I don't think there's much romantic about the Cossacks, you know, these wild free horsemen.

Q: How do you define a Cossack, are they soldiers or an ethnic group?

A: Oh, what a lovely question, Andrew. Can you give me time on that, they weren't, they were a group, they saw themselves as a tribe, Cossack tribes. And they were religious, remember, they

are Ukrainian religious, Ukrainian Orthodox. They went against the Polish Catholics.

Q: How did Jews make the election to move to Eastern Europe?

A: They didn't exactly elect, George. They didn't elect to move. They were thrown out of Spain in 1492, they'd been thrown out of England in 1290, thrown out of France in 1326 and then, when the Black Death hit Europe, there was a terrible pandemic. The Black Death that murdered, killed a third of the population of Europe. And basically, Jewish history has always been about where can we go next? Ironically, and this is something that I've been thinking about a lot, it gave them an incredible flexibility that makes Jews very able to survive economically. And it's a long, deep discussion that, I've got to think of a way of how we can do it. So they didn't make the election, you could always convert and stay behind, but you know when people tended to convert?

When they thought the outside world had much to offer them. If you take a Ukrainian village, do you really think people would want to convert to Ukrainian orthodoxy? Of course not, because they're not going to be part of the Polish-Lithuanian aristocracy. Acculturation, assimilation only occurs when the outside world has something you want. Yes, in the 30s, it was happening a bit in Warsaw, it was happening a bit in Krakow, but it has to be into a sophisticated middle class. One of the reasons there was such assimilation in Germany and in Vienna was because they were so attractive before the rise of fascism.

Q: This is from Talia. "My late father was born in Czernowitz, Romania, he spoke German to his parents who did not speak Romanian. His parents spoke only German. It used to be under the Austro-Hungarian Empire, today, it is in the Ukraine."

A: Yes, Talia, this is where the maps are going to come in. The Habsburg empire was also destroyed. So all these countries' borders had to be fixed, that's what the Treaty of Versailles was all about. They had to clean up the Habsburg empire, the Austria-Hungarian Empire rather, the Russian Empire, and the Turkish Empire. So it's interesting his parents spoke only German. You know, the late Hugo Gryn said he moved five times before he was five, but he never left his village, but he had different rulers.

You see, that's how often the borders changed in the First World War. So that's the reason Czernowitz was a borderland that kept on moving from one place to another in terms of who was in power. What is the word pale? It means stockading, that's all, it's the term that's used. It's a huge area though, again, maps. I will provide maps tomorrow, and I'm making a note in my head to give you more maps. It was the question of finding maps that we could really see on the screen. Yes, I believe Andre Schwarz-Bart was the uncle of Andre Schwarz-Bart who wrote *The Last of the Just*. I was told that, but I've never checked it.

And those of you who haven't read Andre Schwarz-Bart, *The Last of the Just*, it is an extraordinary book. It's soul-wrenching. There is a Hasidic legend that the world survives if there

are 36 righteous people. And this was the basis of the book. And tragically, Eddie Levy, the last of the just, perishes in Auschwitz. Yes, yes, of course. And Saul has just given us a bit of information. He was called, Schwarzbard was called the avenger. And there is a street named for him in Beer Sheva. And he was actually, his remains were transported to Israel and he was buried on the Moshav, thank you. The nokam, the avenger. And evidently, there are several cities in Israel that have been named after him. You know, I do love this group. We've all, you've always got answers.

Q: Will I be talking about Czech Jews?

A: Helen, I will be, but I'm not quite sure when, it's all to do with pulling all the information together. But of course, we'll talk about Czech Jews. It depends, I suppose.

Do you know of any books? Steven wants to know about books... Belarus, Sandra, was not part of the Ukraine, it was White Russia. But that also is mainly taken by the Soviets, it was all part of the czarist empire. What is the origin of Ukraine? Well, Martin, that's what I tried to explain, Ukraine means borderland. It was wild land, it was taken by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the land was parcelled up. It was the home to the Cossacks. What is the origin? That is a very, very good question. Russian nationalists denied that there's such a thing really as Ukrainian nationalism.

And it's in two parts, the bulk of it is in Russia where the majority of the people speak Russian, but you also have the Polish side because part of the Ukraine, after the First World War and after all the wars, is taken into Poland. That's why we've got so many problems. Now, why are we looking at it, is it our problem? This is the issue of Jewish history. How much of the outside world do you need to know in order to understand the history of the Jews? And I think that's what we're dealing with here, that we need enough of this.

And this is from Robert Turner, when will I discuss, I suppose you're talking about the Mischlinge in Nazi Germany. I will be looking at that later on and I'll be looking at that when I look at the Wannsee Conference. I think, have we got any more? I think we've actually, have we come to the end of the questions? Let me see. Wendy, I'm seeing if I've gotten more questions.

- Okay, thanks, Trudy.

- Oh, yes. Israel Zangwill appreciated Petliura's help for Jewish rights. Yes, this is the point, it did, it did actually, you know, it divided people. And another question, can I talk more about Galicia? Another question, are there records of Jewish inhabitants of Lypovets? What I suggest you do is you actually talk to a genealogist, there are some very good genealogists. Anyone, and this is from Rochelle, anyone from South Africa have family mainly from Lithuania, yes. Okay. Wendy, you got very good students, you know.

- I know. And very diligent students.

- Yeah, they are very, very diligent.
- [Wendy] And loyal to you, Trudy.
- Oh, it's keeping me sane and it looks like I'm, we're in lockdown again.
- So thank you very much. Thanks, Emilien, to you and to Judy, and we'll see you tomorrow.
- And Wendy, can I just say, I've completely missed time, so tomorrow, I will have to look at the Jews of the Soviet Union, 1919 to 1939, okay.
- That's fine.
- [Trudy] Okay. All right, take care.
- You're the boss. Thanks, take care.
- God bless.
- [Wendy] Thanks, bye-bye.