

## **June 1919. Pogrom in Bratslav committed by Otaman Liakhovitch's detachment.**

Extraction from the testimony of Mitrofan Trublaevitch (1848-1932), Ukrainian lawyer and social activist.

Liakhovich was born in Bratslav. His grandfather was a former county police chief ("ispravnik") and was dead by this time. Before Soviets his father also served as a police officer. The otaman by himself was a young man, who had no specific occupation, lived separately from his family and finally became a bandit. By the time of pogrom a few people from his family, father, mother, grandmother and sister, lived in Bratslav. When Liakhovich's detachment entered Bratslav, his relatives went to him and asked not to make any pogroms, but he did not want even to listen to them.

The pogrom took place like this.

I bathed in the Bug river and saw the boys that swim here near me shouted "Bandits!" They jumped out of the water, dressed hurriedly and fled. I looked around and saw that across the bridge on the Bug river some armed cavalry until with screaming galloped towards Bratslav. I dressed quickly and hurried home, but when he went outside I saw that on my way the armed man was walking across the street. I waited half an hour. When I saw that the street was empty I went home. I did not go by streets but by rear paths behind the gardens and thus happily got home. My neighbors thought that I have been killed.

It was around 5 pm. The city was poured into the dead silence. After 2-3 hours a friend of mine...walked up to me and said that Liakhovitch's bandit detachment arrived at Bratslav and sobered approximately almost 200 Jews. Later some people (Christians) started to come back from the city and I decided to go to the downtown to see what happened there. On the way I met a few friends and together we went to the market square. On the market square there was any sign nor from bandits nor from Jews. Most of the windows of Jewish houses were beaten and the doors were broken. No people could be seen inside. We went to inspect Jewish houses and came across some Jewish wretched hut where we heard the moaning. When we looked inside of the house, we saw a large pile of sabred Jews, old, young and children numbered all together around 30 people. Some of them were already lifeless, and others were still breathing and moaning. The dead and living were lying in one pile on each other. We separated the living from the dead, chose one heavily sabred man and took him to the hospital. He was unconscious and, the whole time while we were carrying him, repeated the words "Sha, Kinder" (Kids, be quiet!") His one eye was beaten out from its seat and hung around on a thick nerve. The hospital doctor, the man I knew, refused to accept the wounded person we brought. When I began to prove to him that he should take, the doctor opened the door to two adjacent rooms, where we saw that heavily beaten Jews were on all the

beds and on the floor. But we refused to take back our wounded man and the doctor finally was forced to accept him. We spread tighter the people lying on the floor, and put our wounded on the floor. In the hospital we learned that the same piles of sabred Jews, like the one we found, have been detected in several more houses. Moreover there were some individuals victims found in Jewish houses or in the streets...On the next day it became known that there were 93 Jews sabred to death and 107 Jews wounded.