

Khashchevatoye's history

Khashchevatoye is a big village and an administrative center of the local village council. It is located on the left bank of the South Bug River, 7 km. away from the county center. The Pidhorodnya-Pudnytsya railroad and the Balta-Uman highway go through Khashchevatoye. Its population was 2677 people in 2009. The neighboring villages of Antonove and Progress are subordinated to the Khashchevatoye village council. From the 18th to the beginning of the 20th century Khashchevatoye was known as a Jewish shtetl.

An ancient settlement of Chernyakhov culture was discovered near Khashchevatoye.

The village was first mentioned in 1362. Then, this area was a part of the Kingdom of Lithuania. In the 16th century the settlement was destroyed and a new village, Kachuchynka, was founded in its place. The Kachuchynka villagers took part in the Haidamak movement. In June of 1768 the Khatsch Khashchevatoye centurion (an officer who commanded 100 men), Y. Panko, joined together with Ivan Gonta and the rebels under Maksym Zaliznyak command. During this period, a lot of Jews (and Ukrainian Catholics) were murdered *en masse*. In Uman, for example, they mention between 20000 to 33000 killed Jews in what is called the Massacre of Uman.

In 1785 Khashchevatoye became an administrative center of the 36 local settlements. At the time the main road from Kiev to Odessa ran through Khashchevatoye. A Polish aristocrat, Alexander Stanislav Pototsky, owned this territory at the time. He created several folwarks (serfdom-based farms) in the area and Khashchevatoye was the largest of them. In 1803 there were 296 households and 681 people in Khashchevatoye. The landlord often let the refugees from Western and Northern Ukraine settle on his lands. Pototsky welcomed the new settler with temporary benefits, yet after a short time he enserfed all of them. The villagers were obliged to work 2-3 days for the landowner. They were paid for their extra work. Gradually the village community was divided into several classes of impoverished peasants, well-to-do peasants, and privileged overseers.

Pototsky had a winery in Khashchevatoye, which was very profitable. The local serfs were obliged to buy a set quota of alcohol per year from him. Pototsky often rented out his lands, mills, and taverns to people, who often exploited local peasants. Devastated by the feudal oppression, many villagers ran away from Khashchevatoye.

In 1847 Wojciech Julian Lopushansky bought Khashchevatoye and 4661 acres of land. At the time there were 583 male peasants in the village. Hear how the new owner describes his newly acquired property: "Most of the peasants ran away. Those who stayed are so poor that they do not have any houses or livestock to help them work on the land. That is why most of them are forced to rent out their land. Local peasants have absolutely no means to pay taxes, or to feed their families".

Nevertheless, the new landlord continued to exploit the peasants. He often forced them from their land and homes. In 1847 W-J Lopushansky expropriated 238 acres of

land from 46 peasant households. He built summer houses on the expropriated land. Lopushansky founded two villages, Yulianovka and Antonovievka. After his death his sons ran down the estate and sold it to Philip Yakovlevich Karel, the personal doctor of Alexander II, in 1857.

The 1861 reform was devastating for the Khashchevatoye peasants. They refused to sign the redemption act until January 9, 1869. At the time there were 143 households with 290 male peasants in the village. The landlord kept 1584 acres of fertile land, the church kept 171 acres, and the emancipated peasants received only 1072 acres, 104 of which were unsuitable for crops. The household serfs rarely received any land (0.1-0.2 acres). The Khashchevatoye peasants had to pay 35,000 rubles over 49 years for the land they received.

With the rise of capitalism, the financial situation of Khashchevatoye peasants got even worse. The number of landless peasants grew dramatically. Impoverished peasants had to seek work at the landlord's estate. In the beginning of the 20th century there were 720 households with 4335 male peasants in Khashchevatoye. In 1906, 229 households were landless; 103 households had less than an acre; 48 households had an acre; 140 – from 2-5 acres; and only 6 households had 10 acres of land. In the 1870s, Khashchevatoye became an administrative center of the local volost (region). In 1905, an orthodox church, a synagogue, a post office, an administrative building, a bank, a hotel, a drugstore, a water mill, a school, a one-year trade school, and four road stations were operating in Khashchevatoye. Local peasants were obliged to pay all administrative expenses.

Khashchevatoye peasants gradually grew frustrated with the status quo. During the first Russian revolution of 1905 the Uman branch of RSDLP (Russian Social Democratic Labor Party) disseminated proclamations in Khashchevatoye, which called on peasants to organize armed units and take over the property of landlords. In April 1905, fearing a massive rebellion, local officials sent a request to the Sebastopol regiment to provide troops to keep the peasants under control. In May 1905 peasants went on strike, during which they chanted "Soon there will be no landlords and no palaces. We will take over their land and forests among us."

Influenced by the revolutionary agitation of F. Zhovtyak, a sailor from the Black Sea Fleet, Khashchevatoye peasants planned an armed rebellion for December of 1905. The rebellion, however, did not take place. Zhovtyak was arrested and sentenced to death. Upon the request of the local authorities a dragoon squadron was stationed in the village. The local landlords also sponsored the so-called armed Black Companies, which terrorized local peasants to distract them from revolutionary activities. Despite all the precautions, the revolutionary ideas continued to spread among peasants. On May 1, 1907, armed peasants set the estate of the Khashchevatoye landlord on fire. On June 22 of the same year peasants attacked the landlord's security guards.

After Pyotr Stolypin agrarian reform, local authorities organized a so-called exemplary field to encourage local peasants to apply for their independent lots. Yet,

according to the regional land committee, this strategy had little effect. One of the committee members reported that most villagers were against the new division of communal lands proposed by Stolypin.

In 1867 a school was opened in Khashchevatoye, and 35 boys and 18 girls attended it the first year. 5 boys and 2 girls graduated annually from the school. In 1912 the school received government funding in the amount of 6 kopeks per student per year.

In 1913 the local authority started building the village hospital.

In the spring of 1917, the Khashchevatoye villagers learned about the February revolution and the end of the tsarist rule. A massive demonstration took place in Khashchevatoye on May 1, 1917. By the end of January 1918 Soviet rule was established in the village. A. F. Zalevsky, O. M. Trygubchak, S.T. Ozeransky, and P. I. Dobrytsky were among the founding members of the first revolutionary committee (revkom) in Khashchevatoye. A former sailor of the Baltic Sea Fleet, B. M. Kondratsky was the first head of Khashchevatoye revkom. New government immediately started distributing livestock and land expropriated from local landlords among impoverished peasants.

In 1918, the population was about 12,000 people, half Jews, half Ukrainians. Some of them were peasants, some were shopkeepers, some worked in the sugar factories in the vicinity. Life between the Jewish community and the Ukrainians was good, compared to other villages around who suffered pogroms. Between 1919-1921, there were a lot of pogroms in Ukraine. First by the Ukrainian revolutionary forces, led by Petlyura. The first pogrom in Khashchevatoye was on March 9, 1919. Then the very cruel ones by the Cossacks, led by Grigoryv. Perhaps the most devastating pogrom in the village happened in January 1920. After 3 years of fighting in a bloody civil war, the White Army's forces in the area, commanded by Anton Denikin, attacked in massive pogroms as they retreated. As they withdrew from Ukraine, they unleashed a brutal onslaught on Khashchevatoye's Jews, plundering homes, torching buildings, raping women, and brutally torturing and killing many men. Denikin's troops slaughtered indiscriminately, mutilating corpses beyond recognition. Over fifty perished, forty suffered grave injuries, and more than two hundred sustained harms. Overall, the violence left over 100 people dead. The details, almost day by day, as well as lists of the victims were published by survivors from the village, begging for help from humanitarian organizations in the United States, as HIAS. In March 1918 the village was taken over by Austrian troops and the previous order was restored. Yet in November the invaders were forced out of Khashchevatoye by Petlyura's Ukrainian nationalist troops, which stayed through February of 1919.

In June of 1919 the village was taken by Bolsheviks under the command of T. M. Hulyanytsky. Yet already in July of the same year local peasants from Bandurove, Kazavchyna, Yuzefpole, Solomia, Vilshanky, Bajbuzivka, and Kamyana organized a

rebellion against the Soviet rule. In August of 1919 Khashchevatoye was taken over by Denikin troops.

Only In February 1920, Bolsheviks were finally able to secure their control over Khashchevatoye and the revolutionary committee (revkom) restored their work. In June of 1920 elections to the local council took place. 3 communists and 12 candidates in the Communist Party created a working group, which organized 21 impoverished peasants into the first committee of poor peasants (CPP). According to the Bolshevik law about land of February 5, 1920, the Soviet government gave away 1888 acres of land expropriated from the local landlord and the church to the poor villagers of Khashchevatoye. To fight crime, revkom organized a militia unit of 34 people, 15 of whom were communists. In December 1920 a local unit of Komsomol (Communist Union of Youth) was organized with 15 young workers and students. M. S. Stavchansky was the first leader (secretary) of the local Komsomol unit. By the fall of 1923, the Khashchevatoye committee of poor peasants included 99 households. 20 of them were landless, 29 had less than 3 acres, and only 26 had houses. Despite the desperate shortage of means, the Khashchevatoye committee of poor peasants participated in the all-Ukrainian competition in agricultural achievements, 468 people were recognized with state awards.

In February of 1923, 25 households were organized into an agricultural cooperative "Plowman" [Khliborob]. In April 1924, 12 households created a cooperative "Sickle" [Serp], and in October of 1924 another 11 households created a collective farm or "Colony" [Kolonija]. Following the peasants' lead, local artisans created their own unions and cooperatives. 293 people created a saddlers' cooperative "Our Own Work" [Vlasna Pratsya], 46 - a cooperative "Tailors" [Kravets], 25 - a blacksmith cooperative "Wagoner" [Vozovyk], and 21 - a brick cooperative. In May of 1924, 148 people created a consumer society. A store and a bakery were open in Khashchevatoye.

In 1923-1932 Khashchevatoye was a big regional center. There was an elementary school, two 7-year schools, a reading room, an administrative building, and a hospital in the village. In 1930, 5 more collective farms were created. In 1931 a motor-tractor station was opened in Khashchevatoye. It quickly became one of the best stations in the USSR.

In 1932-1933 the villagers of Khashchevatoye suffered from the famine (Holodomor), which was artificially created by the Soviet government. The exact number of people who died in that year remains unknown.

On July 29, 1941, as part of World War II, the German Occupation of the village began. During this dark period, 230 villagers were kidnapped and deported to Germany to be used as forced labor.

By the fall approximately 500 Jews were expelled across the Bug River into Romanian control, to the Bershad ghetto.

In February of 1942 over 986 Jews, 376 of them children, were murdered by Nazi troops and their local collaborators. During the Nazi occupation around 230 people were taken to Germany for labor. On March 13, 1944, Khashchevatoye was liberated by the 5th Tank Army. Almost all the buildings in Khashchevatoye were destroyed during the liberating campaign. In 1947 a lot of people died in Khashchevatoye either from hunger or from contagious diseases.

Khashchevatoye was gradually rebuilt after World War II. A new collective farm "Ukraine" was organized. It became very prosperous in the early 1950s. Its head, D. T. Vojtyshyn was awarded the title of Hero of the Socialist Labor.

Nowadays the population of Khashchevatoye is about 2600 people. Most of the Khashchevatoye residents work in agriculture. There is a school, a community center, a library, a hospital, a preschool, several stores and restaurants.

Unlike many other villages in Eastern Europe where the local population happily erased all traces of the previous Jewish inhabitants, Khashchevatoye proudly commemorates those that have lived and perished in the village. The local museum acknowledges the Jewish narrative as an integral part of the village's past. The Khashchevatoye Tragedy Memorial Complex, unveiled in 2014, stands as Europe's most prominent tribute to the Holocaust's victims.