

**Subject: INFO-RUSS: What Spain has to do with it?**

Date: Mon Dec 9 1996 13:32:35 -0700

From: Alejandro Nalpak

To: info-russ@smarty.ece.jhu.edu

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From the keyboard of Alejandro Nalpak  
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*А час спустя, заря позолотила  
Чужой горы чернильные края.  
Дай оглянуться, там мои могилы,  
Разведка боем, молодость моя...  
(Эренбург, из "Испанской тетради")*

What Spain has to do with it?

Nobody knows. They've been in Spain, of course, but it was hundreds years ago, and then they were driven away and went north (those left alive...).

There was a mute and rarely spoken about story/legend in the family. There was a man, a fighter pilot; in the end of 1930-ties he was sent to Spain (as a "volunteer", of course), to fight against Franco. He managed to come back, alive and decorated. To meet his death at home. As most of those who came back, he was arrested and thrown in Gulag. He disappeared in there; nobody ever heard of him again. What left of him, was a name, "uncle Vitaly", and a faded photo of a military man, an officer with the rank rhombs on his collar, a man with a strong, intelligent face, his hairs thrown back... After the family moving many times from one location to another back in Russia, and later on -- in the emigration, the photo disappeared too..

Nobody is left now to tell his story.

His father was apparently a teacher; he and his family were murdered by the Germans; his grand-father (a man at the root of the family) was a rabbi; the place was Ukraine, Belaya Tserkov' and probably Stavischi. I never heard of that pilot having his own family. His cousin and the cousin's brother-in-law (married to two sisters) went to the war of 1941-45. The cousin, who used to be an electrical engineer before the war, went through the entire war, from the first till the last day of it, as a military engineer, installing and later on -- digging out land-mines; the cousin's brother-in-law used to be a worker at soap-making factory before the war, also went through the entire war as an infantry soldier, a private... Their families -- women and kids -- have been left behind in Kiev; by almost a miracle they've got out of Kiev right before the Germans completed surrounding the city. Their train was bombed to rubble by "stukas", diving bombers, and they walked in night for their lives, carrying dead-tired kids. Four years later, the two soldiers came back too, with multiple wounds, yet alive... (The real heroes in all this were probably women, two sisters and their mother, who did what they've done for love, and not for their believes nor because they were commanded to.)

These kids grew up and, each in their own time, emigrated to the States, and brought in those of their parents still alive with them. Both of those old soldiers as well as their wives-sisters, have passed away by now. (One of the sisters, the cousin's wife, have died in Russia, and the family brought in

her ashes with them.) Their four children live now in the East Coast, -- an accountant, a retired construction engineer, a wood-carver, and a university professor; one of them can even be found in "Who is who in America"...

Those who went to fight in Spain in 1930-ties, were required to use assumed names. But they were perhaps allowed to keep their first names. How they called "uncle Vitaly" back there; "don Vito"?

Красивое имя -- высокая честь,  
Гренадская волость в Испании есть...

His bones are rotting now deep in a dirt somewhere in Russia.

Облака плывут, облака,  
В дальний край плывут, в Кольму,  
И не нужен им адвокат,  
Им амнистия ни к чему...

His grand-parents' graves in Ukraine were vandalized and erased from the face of earth by local mobs long while ago. His parents remains (same as parents of his cousin) have no graves either. Those who might've known more about him, rest at quiet, discreet cemeteries on the American East Coast.

And "The sky is clear all over Spain".

But what Spain has to do with it?

Very Spanishly yours,  
Alejandro Nalpak

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P.S. From the owner/coordinator:

Here are some selected reader's comments to that Nalpak's posting:

(\*) "What Spain has to do with it?"

Alejandro, are you referring to the song by Tina Turner  
"What love has to do with it?"  
Spain-love... That misterious and difficult to explain  
one-way love/attraction in Russia to Spain?...

(\*\*) Dear misterious Nalpak, are you trying to shed light on your  
relations with Spain? And on your being so Spanish Don Alejandro?...

(\*\*\*) Oh dear, you are getting too subtle, our sneaky hidalgo  
Alejandro... It is not nice to make your readers think too hard!

"What Spain has to do with it?" This begs for reversal...  
What those fighter pilot, military miner, a foot soldier,  
their women and kids, -- what they have to do with Spain? right?

And of course, it was not Spain (alone) that falls under that  
heavy question mark... A substitution begs here; with all those  
unmarked graves, the question you are hinting on, must be,

What Russia and Ukraine and Spain has to do with those people?

Or the other way around,

What those brave, selfless, hard working, talented people have to do with such shitty places; why have they to give their love and lives and children to countries and nations who murder them and spit on their graves?

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**Subject: INFO-RUSS: Waco & holocaust**

Date: Wed, 21 Apr 93 00:49:49 CDT

From: lawc@marv.eng.uiowa.edu (Alejandro Nalpak)

To: info-russ@smarty.ece.jhu.edu

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From the keyboard of Alejandro Nalpak

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The fire of Waco is still burning; more than 80 people let themselves be led into inferno death by a nut with a Russian street-name Koresh. A few hours in a raw tonight TV talks only about that; Peter Jenkins, Ted Koppel, and the rest are busy talking about those poor nuts who did it to themselves.

Yet there is another, very quiet event today, very little time is allocated for it: memorial services not for 80, not for 80 000, but 6 millions people who died about 50 years ago, murdered by other people, super-nuts. Their death came to them in fire, by gas, by bullets, by starvation: holocaust. When the time came for some of them, they vowed to die only after each one of them kills at least one Nazi soldier: Warsaw ghetto uprising. They died, all right. Their souls did not; other men and women later on vowed not to meet their fate, ever, without weapon in their hands: Israel. There were other people under the six-point star 50 years ago who died fighting. But the great majority were helpless: women, children, old people. Take a moment right now; let it be a little memorial. Try to recall somebody in your family, or somebody you met in your life, who was burnt by that fire. Or at least that horrifying photo you saw a long while ago: skeletons of babies... And, in the back of your mind, don't forget those who've done it. And those in grey uniform, they weren't alone; some locals were instrumental too: Babii Yar. Don't forget about this if you are still there "где свободно дышит человек". Whether you are a Jew, my reader, or not, let your soul do a little crying. No man is an island; and your time may come too, God forbid; will you be able to look straight into your fate's eyes as they did?

Memorially yours,

Alejandro Nalpak