

UCD 341.324(477.72):355.01

*Kateryna Yaniuk,
Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University
ORCID ID: 0009-0000-1741-6465*

“There was only Kakhovka where we all felt at home, but they took it away”

Kakhovka is a town in the Kherson region. It is located on the left bank of the Kakhovka Reservoir of the Dnipro River, above the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant.



Memorial sign in honor of Ukrainian Hetman Bohdan Ruzhynskiy.

Author: Taras Demyanenko from Ukrainian Wikipedia. 4.08.2009.

https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Файл:Pamyatnyk_Rujynskomu.jpg (Revised: 10.07.2024)

February 24, 2022, was a turning point in the history of this region. It all started in the morning when a convoy of russian equipment was traveling from Crimea through Nova Kakhovka, which is about 10 km away.

Explosions were heard in the town from nearby Nova Kakhovka, where russian troops were shelling a military unit from the side of the temporarily occupied Crimea. A few hours later, russian troops entered the town and occupied it.

The first clashes, explosions of military equipment, and explosions at military warehouses could be heard, but still somewhat distant. Panic broke out in the town, and the news grew worse every hour.

Around 17:00, the Kherson regional administration began to report that the South of the Kherson region ceased to be under the control of Kyiv.

The beginning of the occupation was an extremely difficult period.

There was a shortage of food in stores, medicine in pharmacies, and various moods of the population, which weighed heavily on people's psyche.

On February 27, the city continued to be under full russian occupation.

Residents, especially government officials, began to leave the town, faced with a choice of staying and potentially risking their lives due to patriotic feelings or leaving due to uncertainty.

Every Sunday from March 6 to April 3, anti-occupation rallies were held in the town.

On March 6, the first rally was held, and several thousand residents of Kakhovka went to the center with Ukrainian flags.



Pro-Ukrainian rally “Kakhovka is Ukraine” in Kakhovka on March 6, 2022.

<https://x.com/consultings82/status/1500479794097668104> (Revised: 10.07.2024)

On March 21, the next day, after the third rally, in Kakhovka, russian troops cut off all communications in the town until the end of the day.

The last rally, which was held on April 3, was disrupted by the russian invaders, who surrounded the meeting place with military equipment, and then fired stun grenades and shots into the air to disperse the crowd of demonstrators, who by that time had already dispersed peacefully.

On April 4, the russian occupiers cut off all communications for the second time by the end of the day. The last rally, which was held on April 3, was disrupted by the russian invaders, who surrounded the meeting place with military equipment, and then fired stun grenades and shots into the air to disperse the crowd of demonstrators, who by that time had already dispersed peacefully.



Pro-Ukrainian rally “Kakhovka is Ukraine” in Kakhovka on March 6, 2022. <http://ukraine-youth-debates.de/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/kahovka-1.jpeg> (Revised: 10.07.2024)

Everyone who expressed support for Ukraine was taken to an unknown place, which the locals call the “basement”. Patriots were held there for an average of 3 to 7 days. After that, they were sent home with glassy eyes full of extreme fear. Some were beaten, and some were threatened with the shooting of their families or the forced deportation of their children to Russia.



Water leakage from the Kakhovka Reservoir due to a destroyed dam. June 6, 2023. Reuters. <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/pidryv-kakhovska-hes-evakuatsiya-zahroza-zaes/32446581.html> (Revised: 10.07.2024)

On June 6, 2023, the biggest environmental disaster of the entire war occurred – an explosion at the Kakhovka Dam of Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant.

Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant was blown up by russian occupiers on June 6, 2023 and cannot be restored.

The direct damages caused by the explosion at the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant may exceed 2 billion dollars.



A view of the breached dam on June 6. Author: Alexey Konovalov/TASS/Reuters

<https://edition.cnn.com/2023/06/07/world/gallery/ukraine-nova-kakhovka-dam-collapse/index.html> (Revised: 10.07.2024);



Consequences of the terrorist attack by the russian invaders at the Kakhovka HPP on June 6, 2023.

<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-sytuatsia-oleshktivska-hromada/32889546.html> (Revised: 10.07.2024)



Occupied Oleshky, flooded as a result of the destruction of the Kakhovska HPP, June 23. Source: AP photo
<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-sytuatsia-oleshkiwska-hromada/32889546.html> (Revised: 10.07.2024)

The tragedy caused significant damage to the residential and communal sectors, and the energy sector, and caused significant indirect damage to agriculture due to the loss of irrigation in the region.

Everyone is waiting for de-occupation, and the Ukrainian flag will soon fly in all Ukrainian cities without exception. I look forward to the day when I can return to my hometown.

We believe in the Armed Forces of Ukraine! Glory to Ukraine!