HOLODOMOR

THE GENOCIDE OF THE UKRAINIANS

A HISTORY WITH SOURCES

VICTORIA A. MALKO

Holodomor
The Genocide of the Ukrainians
A History with Sources

Holodomor
The Genocide of the Ukrainians
A History with Sources

Victoria A. Malko

The Press at California State University, Fresno

Sponsored by the Ukrainian National Women's League of America

Published by The Press at California State University, Fresno
2380 E. Keats Avenue, Fresno, California 93740

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Malko, Victoria A., 1965- author. | Ukrainian National Women's League of America, sponsoring body.
Title: Holodomor, the genocide of the Ukrainians : a history with sources / Victoria A. Malko.
Description: Fresno, CA : The Press at California State University, Fresno, [2023] | Sponsored by the Ukrainian National Women's League of America. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN: 2023951344
ISBN: 978-1-959274-06-3 (cloth) | 978-1-959274-08-7 (Kindle)
Subjects: LCSH: Genocide--Ukraine--History--20th century. | Holodomor survivors--Ukraine. | Famines--Ukraine--History--20th century. | Ukraine--History--1921-1944.
Classification: LCC: DK5351 .M35 2023 | DDC: 947.7084--dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2023951344

Layout and design: Volodymyr Goshylyk

Cover Image: "The Bitter Memory of Childhood." Photo from Freepik. Premium License.

This haunting statue of a girl clutching a handful of wheat stalks stands in the middle of the alley leading to the National Holodomor-Genocide Museum in Kyiv, Ukraine. The statue is dedicated to the most vulnerable victims of the genocide—children. The statue, as part of the memorial complex, was conceptualized and designed by the Ukrainian artist Anatoly Haydamaka and architect Yuri Kovalyov for the 75th commemorative year. Wheat is the symbol of life and prosperity. It became a weapon of the genocide orchestrated to destroy the very fabric of the Ukrainian nation. The wheat symbolizes the Ukrainian nation's determination to live and prosper, the nation's future.

Printed in the United States of America

Contents

Detailed Contents

Acknowledgements

I have tried in this book to tell a historical account of the genocide against the Ukrainian nation perpetrated by Moscow's rulers past and present. In the words of Raphael Lemkin, the father of the U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, it is a classic case of genocide, the destruction of the people and their culture. The resurgence of Stalinism in Russia and the war against Ukraine that has commenced since the Revolution of Dignity demonstrate the continuity between Stalinist and neo-Stalinist attempts to prevent the crystallization of the nation and subvert Ukraine from within by non-lethal and lethal means. Thus, the struggle for Ukrainian history, language, and culture continues.

Obviously much must be left out of a storyline this short that tries to encompass such a vast topic. The students should get from these pages a solid foundation, on which they can build through further readings (see Bibliography). If students have reactions or questions, I wish they would write to me. This is the first edition. To forestall one criticism: I wish that there could be room for more photographs. However, visual representations of the Holodomor were deliberately destroyed by the perpetrators. One danger in dealing with matters so painful and near to us is that we are living in the violently disruptive time in history. I would ask each student to keep a record of current events in the news which relate to the issues discussed in this book.

Acknowledgements and thanks? To too many students, scholars, museums, and libraries to mention. Above all, thanks to the sons and daughters of the Holodomor survivors, who read the entire manuscript, provided insightful comments and suggestions: Dr. Lubow Jowa, president of the Ukrainian Heritage Club of Northern California, Mykola Kotcherha, president of the Ukrainian Genocide Famine Foundation-USA, and Victor Rud, Esq., chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee of the Ukrainian American Bar Association. I am beholden to Olga Starow, the daughter of Simon Starow (pseudonym Miron Dolot), for editing all witness testimonies and providing documents, letters, and photographs from her father's private archive. I have also used biographical material from the Miron Dolot Papers, preserved in the Hoover Institution Library and Archives. Halyna Plachynda shared photographs of her father, Serhii Plachynda, from her family archive. An exchange of correspondence with Olha Matula enriched this narrative with materials about her mother, Varvara Dibert, preserved in her private archive. Zina Poletz Gutmanis, director of the "Holodomor: Minnesota Memories of Genocide in Ukraine" project put me in contact with Olexandra Kostiuk's great-granddaughter Vitalia Bryn-Pundyk, who provided additional biographical materials and photographs from her family archive.

The archivists and staff at museums and libraries in Ukraine and the United States have helped the author chase down sources. Andrii Kohut, director of the Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine (*HDA SBU*), assisted with locating diaries written by Oleksandra Radchenko and Yuri Sambros. Archivists Dmytro Stasiuk, Oleksandr Tykhenko, and Maria Dendebera at the Central State Cinephotophono Archive of Ukraine named after H. Pshenychnyi (*TsDKFFAU*) aided the author in acquiring photos of schools and the trial of the Ukrainian intelligentsia in the 1930s. Special thanks to Nadiia Lykholob who selflessly assisted with locating photographs in the Central State Archive of Civic Organizations of Ukraine (*TsDAHOU*), the Central State Archive-Museum of Literature and Art of Ukraine (*TsDAMLMU*), and the Central State Audiovisual and Electronic Archive of Ukraine (*TsDAEA*). Propaganda cartoons from the 1930 satirical magazine come from the National Library of Ukraine named after V. I. Vernadskyi. Oleksandr Mikhno, director of the Pedagogical Museum of Ukraine of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, and his research assistant, Tetiana Poliukhovych, deserve special mention for allowing unlimited access to digital collections of periodicals and photographs of schools published between 1923 and 1933 in Soviet Ukraine. Olha Rokytska of the Kyiv Regional Institute of Advanced Pedagogical Studies in Bila Tserkva shared unique photographs and biographical sketches of school principal, Vasyl Ivchuk, the victim of Stalinism and the hero of Ukraine. At the National University "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy,"

Taisiia Sydorchuk, director of James E. Mace Museum, kindly guided the author through a vast personal archive of James E. Mace. In Simi Valley, California, Ira G. Pimstein and Jennifer Newby of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum facilitated access to papers pertaining to the work of the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, directed by James E. Mace. I am most grateful for their help. My gratitude also goes to all individuals and organizations that have granted permissions to reprint texts and images.

At The Press at California State University, Fresno, Dr. Sergio La Porta ably guided the process of completing revisions. Any shortcomings of this work are, of course, my own. The printing of this volume would not be possible without grants from the Naftali Foundation and the Ukrainian National Women's League of America (UNWLA), which commissioned the writing of these learning materials for students and instructors. Special thanks to Natalie Pawlenko, president, and Ludmila Wussek, education committee chair, of the UNWLA for their support.

My deepest thanks go to my mother, Tamara Chernihovets, and father, Anatoly Malko, the children of the Holodomor survivors, who lived through Stalinism and survived the Nazi occupation of Ukraine to witness the reinstatement of Ukraine's independence. My mother was orphaned during World War II. My father survived the famine of 1946–1947. To this day, he vividly remembers how for two weeks he and his elder sister swollen from prolonged starvation awaited their mother's return from Western Ukraine with food she was able to procure. In their late eighties, my parents have been retraumatized by a full-scale Russian war of aggression, launched in February 2022 with a declared genocidal intent to eradicate Ukrainians from the face of the earth and destroy Ukraine as a subject of international law. On March 10, 2022, my father walked out of charred Irpin under intense shelling. Before boarding an evacuation bus, he gave a lengthy interview to Brent Renaud, a crusading filmmaker, for a documentary on the global refugee crisis. Renaud was the first American journalist killed by a sniper's bullet at the Irpin River crossing three days later. After narrating a story of his harrowing escape from occupied Irpin, located in the vicinity of the Hostomel airfield used by the Russian military as a staging ground for an assault on Kyiv, my father concluded that for every generation of Ukrainians there is a war.

In history courses, students have been wondering why the Holodomor has been excluded from curricula. This book will make them think and discover the truth. I dedicate it to the victims, survivors, and students of the Holodomor, the classic case of genocide.

Preface

Why study the Holodomor?

The reasons for learning about the Holodomor as genocide go beyond revealing its causes and consequences. The genocide, which has never been prosecuted, is now being repeated as a result of the 2022 Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. This has far-reaching global security implications. It represents a classic case of genocide denial, disinformation, and cover-up by the press and academia. It verges on the destruction of the identity of a nation, creating a national Stockholm syndrome.

The Holodomor was an intentional act of mass extermination of people in Ukraine and ethnically Ukrainian regions of the Soviet Union. It falls under the definition of genocide as stated in Article II of the U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted in 1948. The top leadership of the Communist Party and the GPU (State Political Directorate, better known as secret police) of the USSR, along with their collaborators, perpetrated this crime at both national and district levels. This genocide specifically targeted Ukrainians as a national group in order to thwart the crystallization of the nation and prevent Ukraine's secession from the Soviet Union.

Raphael Lemkin, Polish-Jewish émigré, lawyer, and the person who coined the term "genocide," believed that Soviet genocide was the classic example of the destruction of the Ukrainian nation. He conceptualized it as a four-pronged attack. The first prong was aimed at the Ukrainian intelligentsia, the second against the Ukrainian Orthodox Church clergy, and the third against independent farmers. The ethnic composition was further diluted by scattering Ukrainians throughout the Soviet Union and resettling Russian loyalists in Ukrainian villages that had been depopulated by deportations to labor camps and famine.

According to Article II of the U.N. Convention, all genocidal acts apply to the Holodomor:

a) people who resisted were killed either through execution or starvation;
b) there was huge bodily and mental harm caused to all Holodomor victims, both those who died and those who survived;
c) there were artificially created conditions of life calculated to destroy the Ukrainians (deportations, blacklisting, confiscation of grain and everything edible, passport regime, travel ban to procure food, forced labor in concentration camps, forced resettlement beyond Ukraine's borders in the Russian Far North and Siberia);
d) all those measures prevented births within the Ukrainian national group; and
e) children were forcibly separated from their parents (dispossessed, deported, or executed) and placed in state-run orphanages where they were brought up in adherence to communist ideology and loyalty to the colonial regime.

Legal scholars argue that the list of genocidal acts in Article II of the U.N. Convention is exhaustive: acts a) through c) constitute physical genocide, act d) contains a concept of biological genocide, and act e) constitutes cultural genocide.

The exact number of victims may not be known because the perpetrators deliberately destroyed evidence to cover up the crime. While estimates vary, some Soviet, Russian, and Ukrainian historians and demographers suggest a range of 3 to 5 million victims, excluding those who were starved to death outside Ukraine. However, recent research by Ukrainian scholars indicates that the figure could be as high as 10 million, including Ukrainians who settled in regions beyond Ukraine's borders, such as the Northern Caucasus, the Central Black Earth, the Lower Volga, and Kazakhstan.

Dr. James E. Mace, executive director of the U.S. Congress's Commission on the Ukraine Famine, described Ukraine as a "post-genocidal society." The Ukrainians as a nation endured immense suffering, experiencing all stages of genocide. As outlined by Dr. Gregory H. Stanton's ten stages of genocide model, genocide can be halted at any stage (see **Appendix**). Ideally, it should have been stopped at the pivotal stage of persecution, but Ukraine found itself isolated and defenseless. Nevertheless, the Ukrainian people never gave up their fight for liberation from Soviet totalitarian oppression. Over eighty years after the Holodomor, they rose up in the Revolution of Dignity in 2013–2014 opposing Russian colonialism and defending their cherished value – freedom.

Ninety years have passed since the Holodomor and forty years since the surviving witnesses testified before the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine. However, before there were commemorations, there was a protest on December 17, 1933. The *New York Times* reported that over 100 Ukrainian Americans were attacked and injured by American communists in Chicago when 5,000 marched on the streets to protest the killing of millions in Ukraine.

Ukrainian organizations in diaspora brought the issue to the attention of the League of Nations. Leaders of the Ukrainian National Women's League of America wrote a letter to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Regrettably, the League of Nations was powerless, and Ukraine was not even a member of the organization. The U.S. diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union in November 1933, when millions of Ukrainians were being exterminated, left an open wound in the souls of the Ukrainian people.

Since the fiftieth anniversary of the Holodomor in 1983, U.S. presidents have regularly issued statements condemning this crime. In 2018, the U.S. Senate reaffirmed the findings of Dr. Mace's 1988 report to Congress, stating that "Joseph Stalin and those around him committed genocide against Ukrainians."

Even today, the Russian government, as the legal successor of the Soviet Union, denies the stories of the victims, challenges the legal definition of the Holodomor as genocide, and persecutes scholars who study the Holodomor as genocide. The stories of survivors, told from their own perspectives, are crucial for gaining a deeper insight into the Soviet totalitarian regime and the current Russian efforts to rehabilitate Stalinism, revise the past, and deny the Holodomor. These stories of courage and struggle for human dignity among Ukrainians will serve as an inspiration for the younger generation, encouraging them to be cognizant of injustice and to actively defend human rights.

CHAPTER 1

The Roots of Genocide

Twice in the twentieth century the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse – war, pestilence, famine, and death – descended on Ukraine. In the twenty-first century, Ukraine finds itself once again caught in the crossfire between Russia and the West, with Russia openly declaring its intention to destroy the Ukrainian people in whole. Understanding the historical differences between Ukraine and Russia helps contextualize the violence that became a defining feature of the totalitarian regime imposed by the imperial power on its colony. This violence led to what Raphael Lemkin, the father of the U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, referred to as a "classic case of genocide," as both the people and their culture were systematically destroyed.

1.1 Ukraine and Ukrainians

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe the origins of Kyivan Rus
- explain the course of events that led to civilizational differences between the Muscovites and Ukrainians

Ukraine traces its written history to the ninth century. During this time, the ancient **Kyivan Rus** state emerged, with its center in present-day Ukraine. The trade route shifted from the Islamic-centered Volga to the Dnipro River trade route, connecting the Vikings in the north to Greek Constantinople in the south, then the center of international commerce. The Vikings established their dynasty in Kyiv. The Kyiv period marked the beginning of the cultural consolidation of Rus.

In 988, Kyiv's **Volodymyr the Great** expanded his control and influence over more lands, and through a dynastic marriage with a Byzantine princess adopted Christianity as the state religion for Kyivan Rus. After 1036, the Kyivan ruler **Jaroslav the Wise** routed the nomads and established his own version of the Roman *imperium*, centered around St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv, with a library of manuscripts, scribed in Church Slavonic. In the second half of the eleventh century and beginning of the twelfth century, a "cultural revolution" took place: a multiethnic, multilingual, and non-territorial community with a "low" culture was transformed into a new "high" culture based on a written and sanctified Slavic language. Thus, the Kyivan Rus entity appeared on the stage of European history as a political and religious center. Meanwhile, Moscow emerged as an outpost on the Moskva River in 1147.

In 1169, **Andrei Bogoliubsky**, the son and grandson of Kyivan princes, known as Andrei-Kitai (his mother was a daughter of a nomad leader), attacked and destroyed Kyiv and separated the northern Vladimir-Suzdal territories from Kyivan Rus (see **Figure 1.1**). On the looting rampage, Bogoliubsky stole the Orthodox Church relic – the icon of the Blessed Virgin. Later, this icon was placed in the shrine of the Russian Orthodox Church and renamed after St. Vladimir. This event marked the beginning of the appropriation of Ukrainian history, art, and culture and distortion of the historical memory of Ukrainians.

Figure 1.1 *Andrei Bogoliubsky's destruction of Rus* by Oleksandr Melnyk, 2011. Canvas, acrylic, 202 x 170 cm. Collection of the Artist.

What would later become Muscovy had been colonized by Kyivan Rus but was not really an integral part of it. The rise of the Muscovy period began not with the acceptance of the Kyiv tradition (its laws and culture that were transplanted there) but its negation and destruction. It was not Mongol domination which separated Muscovy from Kyivan Rus but rather the lack of any sense of community and the absence of mutual interest.

The Mongol invasion of 1240 led to further decline of Kyivan Rus. The tradition of the ancient polity continued in the southwestern regions of Galicia and Volyn. In the fourteenth century, Galicia was annexed by Poland while Volyn came under Lithuanian rule. The **Rus code of law** survived and became the framework for the Lithuanian code of law. During the course of more than four centuries from 1240 to 1654, the ancestors of the Ukrainians and Muscovites lived in different states and in different cultural spheres. The 1654 military treaty between two rulers and two states was interpreted three centuries later in 1954 as a "reunion" of "fraternal peoples," of which there is no record.

Even though Orthodox religion is considered a common civilizational feature of these "fraternal" peoples, it is significant that the Muscovites and the Ukrainians developed different messianic concepts. Muscovy embraced the political concept of the "Third Rome," while Ukraine viewed Kyiv as the "Second Jerusalem." The visitors from foreign countries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries noted many differences between the two nations.

Click and Explore

Explore **Ukrainian Origins: A Genetic and Cultural History** from the Study of Antiquity and the Middle Ages to learn about genetic differences between Ukrainians and Russians.

1.2 Russian Colonialism

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- explain the nature of Russian colonial philosophy and its effects on Ukrainian statehood
- discuss imperial language policy toward non-Russian nations

Russia grew out of the principality of **Muscovy** after Mongol control of Russia began to ebb in the fifteenth century. Under the rule of Ivan III, the Russian empire initiated its "march of expansion" through conquest. This expansionist mentality, characterized by constant conquests against neighboring countries, has been difficult for foreign observers to comprehend.

In the seventeenth century, the Ukrainian statehood was revived by the Cossacks, military adventurers who built fortifications on the islands beyond the Dnipro rapids. The Cossacks practiced a form of military democracy, electing their commander-in-chief, called the hetman. They also established diplomatic ties with various European powers. However, an ill-fated alliance with Muscovy in 1654 resulted in the loss of "rights and privileges" for Ukrainians. Another alliance with Sweden in 1708 failed, and the massacre in the Cossack capital city of Baturyn foreshadowed the genocidal violence that would flare up centuries later with the same intent to destroy Ukrainian statehood.

The Poltava battle of 1709 between the Cossacks, allied with Sweden, and Muscovy became a turning point. Had **Ivan Mazepa** won the battle, Ukraine would become free of Moscow's control. In 1713, **Peter I** (then *czar* from Roman title *Cesar*) appropriated the term Rus for Muscovy through a decree in his drive to give a euphonic name for his new empire, while relegating the term *Malorossiia* (Little Russia) to Ukraine. He used the word "Russia" to convince the world that his empire was heir to ancient Rus, centered in Ukraine. Over the course of five centuries, Russian aggression had devoured numerous races speaking different languages, with an insatiable appetite for conquest.

Click and Explore

Explore the Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine and read about **Ivan Mazepa**, Ukrainian Cossack hetman's life and legacy.

Whether a monarchy or a communist utopia, Russia's goals of world domination remained unchanged. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the Russian empire was the world's largest, totaling 8,571,400 square miles and the population of 126 million according to the census of 1897. At the time, only 51 million (41%) were ethnically Russian. Over half of the inhabitants were colonial subjects. The authority of the czar or emperor was not limited by a constitution. In fact, there was no constitution or a set of laws independent of the ruler's will. The principle of autocracy did not recognize separate national territories within the monarch's authority.

The Ukrainian population was the largest non-Russian captive nation in the empire. The imperial government pursued forced **russification**. Ukrainian books and periodicals were forbidden, and Ukrainian leaders advocating for freedom and cultural autonomy were imprisoned. The government often discriminated against a separate Ukrainian identity by calling Ukrainians "Little Russians."

Kyiv, the capital of medieval Rus, was the center of learning from the eleventh through thirteenth centuries. Women of the clerical order enjoyed a high level of literacy and were founders of schools for girls. Institutions of higher education appeared in Ukraine early – Ostroh Academy, founded in 1576, and Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, established in 1615 – which prompted scholars to recognize the Ukrainian impact on Russian culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Several hundred years of colonial anti-Ukrainian policies resulted in eradicating Ukrainian language from social realm (ecclesiastic, administrative, and literary). The staggering illiteracy rate in Ukraine was a contribution of **Catherine II**: the "enlightened" ruler's decision to put serfs in bondage to their masters and liquidate all Ukrainian-language schools so that her imperial subjects would speak one common

language – Russian. It was necessitated by the Russian economic colonization of Ukraine. Catherine II destroyed the vestiges of the Cossack stronghold in their headquarters, the Sich, after annexing Crimea from the Ottomans in 1775. By 1795, three partitions of the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania by the Russian, Austrian, and German empires led to the partition of the Ukrainian lands. The attempts to outlaw the use of the Ukrainian language became the imperial policy.

Despite centuries of colonial anti-Ukrainian policies, Ukrainian leaders and movement emerged, striving to resurrect the language and history of Ukraine. Writers and poets like **Taras Shevchenko** played a crucial role, creating a national literary tradition and calling on Ukrainians to "cast off chains." The *Hromada* (community) movement spread Ukrainian education in the mother tongue. The first Ukrainian political party was formed in 1890, which was an important step that laid the groundwork for the demand for independent statehood. In 1911, Ukrainian scholar Mykola Stasiuk used the term "**colonialism**" to define the relationship between Russia and its Ukrainian provinces. His contemporary Max Weber compared non-Russian colonies in the Russian empire to the British colonies of Ireland and India. Unlike Britain's overseas colonies, Russia's colonies were contiguous.

Click and Explore

Explore *Origins: Current Events in Historical Perspective*, created by the Ohio State University and Miami University, and learn about **Taras Shevchenko, Poet of Ukraine**, spiritual founding father of the nation.

1.3 Totalitarianism

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe features that distinguish totalitarian dictatorships from constitutional democracies
- explain the ideological roots of Soviet genocide

The colonial regime imposed by Moscow rulers after the *coup d'état* in 1917 had four basic features or traits that distinguish totalitarian dictatorships from constitutional systems, namely:

(1) an ideology, to which everyone living in that society is supposed to adhere;
(2) a single mass party typically led by one man, the "dictator";
(3) a system of terror, both physical and psychic, effected through party and secret-police control; and
(4) a mass communications monopoly in the hands of the party.

The system that Vladimir Lenin and subsequently Joseph Stalin built had all the features of **totalitarianism**. They eliminated all other political parties and instilled fear through acts of violence. The system of terror made resistance futile because firearms of any kind were confiscated and people who resisted were exterminated through extrajudicial killings, while the perpetrators covered-up the crime and denied their culpability.

The ideological roots of what Raphael Lemkin, the father of the U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, called Soviet genocide against Ukrainians run deep. They stem from Marxist antinational bias as well as disdain for rural culture as opposed to the "progressive" or "internationalist" culture of the proletariat. German philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who laid the foundation for communism, used the labels like "reactionary" and "counterrevolutionary" to

describe national and social groups that opposed "progressive" communist goals. The *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, written for the Communist League Congress held in London in 1847, clearly showed their anti-national bias. In the Russian empire, there was no significant working class, and when the Bolsheviks took power, they ruled over a predominantly agrarian population, including Ukraine, where people spoke Ukrainian and had strong national consciousness.

To gain total economic and social control over Ukraine, especially its valuable grain reserves, Lenin and Stalin adapted Marxist doctrine to fit Bolshevik colonizing ideology. The self-styled leader of the world proletariat, Lenin himself declared in a speech in Switzerland in 1914 that "it [Ukraine] has become for Russia what Ireland was for England: exploited in the extreme and receiving nothing in return." Lenin's use of the term "internal colony" in reference to Ukraine was put on a back burner until Ukrainian communists raised the issue of Ukraine's colonial exploitation by the Russian empire and its successor the Soviet empire. Lenin's minority faction, which referred to themselves euphemistically as Bolsheviks (the majority), had to rely on deception, coercion, and brute force to maintain power.

The Bolshevik nationality policy demonstrated a contradiction between proclaiming the "right of every nation to self-determination and even to secession" while denying this right in the name of "international" interests of the proletariat. Lenin himself cynically explained the duplicity of this policy in his *Theses on the National Question*, adopted in 1913. Lenin adopted Engels' thesis about the mission of the proletariat to "destroy nationality" through the "merging with one another" within a large multinational "community" and adapted it to conditions of the Russian empire. Lenin endorsed assimilation, which implied russification. Lenin's concept of state centralism was based on Russian great-power nationalism. He opposed the idea of the federation in principle because he believed it loosens economic ties and is unsuitable for a unitary state. Lenin never defined "democratic centralism"; rather, the regime that he established was better known as the "dictatorship of the proletariat" with his party as the "proletarian vanguard." The rule was centralized without any trace of democracy.

The assimilation of nations in Lenin's mind meant to be nonvoluntary because it involved the supremacy of one nation over another. In Lenin's view the dominant nation was Russia; thus, he welcomed the process of assimilation in Ukraine as a "progressive" factor. Any form of resistance to assimilatory russification was labeled "bourgeois nationalism" because it posed danger to "international" unity of the proletariat. Lenin condemned the idea of "national culture" and coined an indefinable concept, "international culture of the proletariat," instead. This "internationalization" was a fine substitute for russification as an instrument of establishing power in the Bolshevik multinational state.

Lenin's treatment of the "Ukrainian question" was closely tied to his hostile attitude toward the "petty bourgeois" class of small proprietors because their aspirations ran contrary to the idea of abolishing private property. To transform a primarily agrarian "bourgeois-democratic" revolution into the "socialist revolution" of the proletariat, he proposed a tactical plan to equitably distribute the land (part of which was held by landlords). Bolsheviks used the slogan "land and freedom" to gain support, but their ultimate goal was to nationalize all land and make it property of the state, more precisely of the proletariat represented by the party. This plan was in compliance with Marxist doctrine, but for propaganda purposes, the transfer of land was the party's "double task." The advantage of such a political "double task" was that it made it easy to switch from "pro" to "contra" and vice versa at any given time, depending on tactical or propagandistic expediency.

Lenin's treatise, *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916), tied together the nationality and land questions, providing justification for Bolshevik rule in Ukraine under the guise of championing the "right to self-determination" for oppressed nations and of "land and freedom" for tillers. Overall, the Bolshevik regime in Russia exhibited totalitarian characteristics and imposed oppressive policies on Ukrainians, rooted in Marxist ideology and a disregard for national identity and rural culture.

Key Words

Andrei Boholiubsky | Catherine II | colonialism | Ivan Mazepa | Jaroslav the Wise | Kyivan Rus | Muscovy | Peter I | Rus code of law | russification | Taras Shevchenko | totalitarianism | Volodymyr the Great

Summary

1.1 Ukraine and Ukrainians
Ukraine's history can be traced back to the ninth century when Kyivan Rus emerged, centered around Kyiv. The region experienced cultural consolidation and adopted Christianity as the state religion. However, Kyivan Rus declined after attacks by Muscovy in the twelfth century. Ukrainians and Muscovites developed different cultural and religious concepts over the centuries, despite sharing the Orthodox religion. The historical "reunion" between Ukrainians and Muscovites in 1654 is disputed, and visitors during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries noted significant differences between the two nations.

1.2 Russian Colonialism
Russia emerged from the principality of Muscovy in the fifteenth century as Mongol control declined. Under Ivan III, the Russian empire began expanding through conquests. The Ukrainian statehood was reestablished in the seventeenth century by Cossacks, who practiced military democracy and maintained diplomatic ties with European powers. However, an ill-fated alliance with Muscovy resulted in loss of rights, and a subsequent alliance with Sweden failed. The Russian empire pursued forced russification, suppressing Ukrainian language and culture. Ukrainian scholars and movements fought against this oppression, and by the early twentieth century, demands for independent statehood emerged.

1.3 Totalitarianism
After the 1917 *coup d'état*, the colonial regime imposed by the Russian rulers had four features that distinguished it from constitutional systems: an ideology, a single mass party led by a dictator, a system of terror, and a monopoly on mass communication. Lenin and Stalin built a totalitarian system with these traits, eliminating other political parties, instilling fear through violence, and controlling communication channels. The oppression against Ukrainians had ideological roots in Marxist bias against nationality and rural culture. Lenin's regime relied on deception, coercion, and force to maintain power, implementing assimilation and russification policies while denying the right to self-determination.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. What are some cultural differences between Kyivan Rus and Russia? Why did Peter I appropriate the term Rus for Russia?
2. How did Russian colonialism affect the Ukrainian society and culture?
3. What are some distinguishing characteristics of totalitarian dictatorships? How do they differ from constitutional democracies?
4. What are the ideological roots of Soviet genocide against Ukrainians?

CHAPTER 2

The Ukrainian Struggle for Liberation, 1917–1921

In 1919, a Ukrainian artist published a caricature "World Peace in Ukraine!" in Vienna, depicting the reality on the ground in Ukraine after World War I. Surrounded by a Bolshevik (to the north, man with a hat and a red star), a Russian White Army soldier (to the east, with the Russian eagle flag and a short whip), and to the west a Polish soldier, a Hungarian (in a pink uniform) and two Romanian soldiers, Ukraine was partitioned between various powers. Following the collapse of the Habsburg empire, its subjugated peoples established new independent states. However, following the collapse of the Russian empire, of the conquered peoples of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine who declared their independence, only Poland gained statehood as part of Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points plan. The U.S. officials failed to see the potential threat of Russian expansionism, which allowed the Kremlin's leaders to use violence against civilians in Ukraine. Ukraine's bid for statehood met the challenge of Russian invasions. The first invasion lasted from January to April 1918, the second from January to August 1919, and the third started in December 1919. On their third attempt, Bolsheviks occupied Ukraine. Their communist ideology, aimed at eliminating the alleged privileged classes or groups blamed for sabotaging state policies, provided the legitimacy for violence.

2.1 The Modern Ukrainian Government

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe the Central Rada's domestic and foreign policy achievements
- explain why the Hetmanate failed

During World War I, while battles between Russia and Germany raged on the wheatfields of Ukraine, the governments in Ukraine were working on reconstructing their nation. From March 1917 to April 1918, nationalist and socialist forces came together to form the **Central Rada** (Ukrainian for "Council"), which was the first modern Ukrainian government. The Ukrainian Revolution, in fact, started in the faraway northern capital of the Russian empire, Petrograd, when the Volhynian regiment, mainly composed of Ukrainians took the side of the protestors during street demonstrations against food shortages. The protests quickly escalated into a rebellion against the tsarist regime in March 1917 (the February Revolution according to the Julian calendar then in use). The tsar abdicated, and the liberal members of the Duma formed the Provisional Government. The Provisional Government controlled the situation in Ukraine through local self-government agencies but was in no hurry to allocate resources for implementing reforms in Ukraine.

The chairman of the Central Rada was a notable historian, **Mykhailo Hrushevskyi**, and representatives from various Ukrainian political parties were part of the government. One significant achievement of the government was issuing the First Universal in June 1917, which demanded autonomy for Ukraine within a federal Russian republic (see **Figure 2.1**). The "Universal" was the historic name used by the Cossack hetmans for their decrees. This assertion of autonomy worried the Provisional Government, but as the Russian army suffered major defeats in battles with Germany and Austria, Petrograd became more willing to compromise.

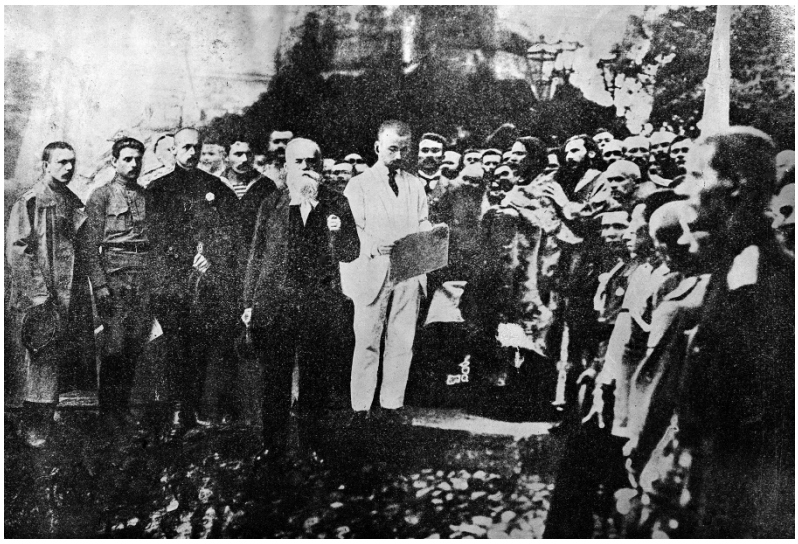


Figure 2.1 Proclamation of the First Universal of the Ukrainian Central Rada to the people of Ukraine after the prayer service on St. Sophia Square. M. Kovalevsky is reading, on the left is the head of the Ukrainian Central Rada M. Hrushevskyi. Kyiv, June 25, 1917. Courtesy of *TsDAEA*, od. obl. 2-031003.

The Central Rada presided over impressive revival of Ukrainian cultural life. With tsarist restrictions on national minorities lifted, "Prosvita" societies, cooperatives, and cultural clubs reemerged throughout Ukraine. The Central Rada established fifty-three new Ukrainian secondary schools, including three Ukrainian gymnasia in Kyiv. However, these schools often lacked buildings and had to share spaces with Russian-language schools or hold classes in the evenings. For instance, Gymnasium No. 1 named after Taras Shevchenko (see **Figure 2.2**), later renamed Kyiv Labor School No. 1, operated without a permanent building, whereas the First Russian Gymnasium occupied a former palace. Russian, Polish, and Jewish minority schools were also established.

Figure 2.2 A choir of the Kyiv Labor School No. 1 named after Taras Shevchenko, with school principal Volodymyr Durdukivskyi, 1920s. Courtesy of *TsDKFFAU*, od. obl. 0-I 86088.

After the Bolsheviks overthrew the Provisional Government on November 7, 1917 (October 25 Old Style, hence the October Revolution, or more precisely *coup d'état*), they set a parallel government in Kharkiv. When Bolsheviks launched their military aggression against Ukraine on December 17, 1917, Lenin used a tactic of disinformation, pretending to grant independence to Ukraine while preparing the Red Army to invade. His ultimatum was deliberately worded: "On the Recognition of the Ukrainian National Republic by the Council of People's Commissars and on the Presentation of the Central Rada with an Ultimatum in Response to its Counterrevolutionary Activity." The "counterrevolutionary activity" meant that the Ukrainian Central Rada refused to recognize the Soviets. The Bolsheviks' goal was to discredit the UNR government that began setting up diplomatic missions in Germany, Poland, Austria, and Czechoslovakia.

On January 22, 1918, the **Fourth Universal** of the **Ukrainian National Republic** (UNR) declared Ukraine independent, breaking away from the federation with the Russian republic. This was done because only a fully independent state could conclude an international treaty. It was issued to the sound of the firing of Russian guns across the Dnipro. To secure Ukraine's independence, the Central Rada decided to make peace with the Central Powers (Germany and Austria). They signed a treaty in February 1918 at **Brest-Litovsk** (see **Figure 2.3**). The Central Powers recognized the independence of the UNR in exchange for one million tons of grain and assistance in returning the Ukrainian prisoners of war and arming the Ukrainian army to fight against the Bolsheviks.

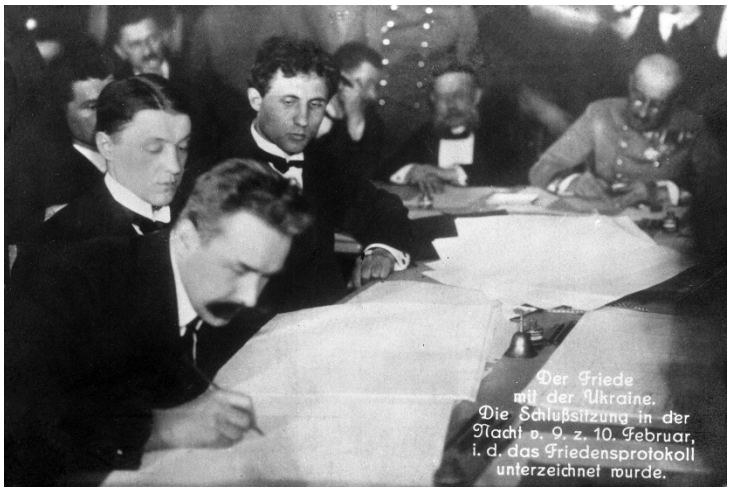


Figure 2.3 Signing of the Brest Peace Treaty between the Ukrainian National Republic and the Central Powers. From left to right: M. Levitskyi, O. Sevriuk, M. Liubynskyi. Brest-Litovsk, January 27 (February 9), 1918. Courtesy of *TsDAEA*, od. obl. 2-154097.

However, the efforts to conclude a separate peace treaty with the Central Powers did not result in any military assistance that could stop the Bolshevik invasion. The only victory that the Central Rada achieved was at the ballot box. It gained two-thirds of votes in the Ukrainian elections to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, mostly among the rural delegates. Ukrainian parties secured 53 percent, whereas Bolsheviks obtained only 10 percent of all votes cast in Ukraine. The popularity of the Central Rada did not mean the majority of those who voted for it were also willing to fight for it. Bolsheviks subverted Central Rada's efforts to recruit an army, when they disbanded military regiments and made all ranks and uniforms obsolete. The masses were tired of the war and wanted to return to their land.

The Central Rada's decision to overturn private land ownership in January 1918 caused disturbances in the villages. The slogan of "socialization of land" was popular among poorer farmers, but it did not mean they desired a collectivist organization of agriculture. The idea of communal land distribution, similar to Russian repartition of land by the village commune was alien to highly individualistic Ukrainian smallholders. The Ukrainian government's failure to satisfy the demand for land redistribution led to a loss of trust from the people.

The Red Army advanced from the north and staged uprisings in many cities. In Kyiv, troops loyal to the Central Rada suppressed a rebellion led by the workers of the Arsenal, later portrayed by Alexander Dovzhenko in his famous movie *Arsenal*. Eventually, the Ukrainian government was forced to abandon the city. On January 29, 1918, in these tragic days of the capital's defense, the Bolshevik forces at **Kruty** encircled and slaughtered a unit consisting of some 300 Ukrainian student volunteers. The victims became martyrs for the nationally conscious Ukrainians. The youths sacrificed their lives to allow the Ukrainian delegation to arrive in Brest-Litovsk on time.

The Central Rada's decision to sign a peace treaty with the Central Powers was a futile attempt to stop the Bolsheviks from subjugating Ukraine. Neither Germans nor Austrians had any interest or sympathy for the Ukrainian national movement. A claim that the German *Drang nach Osten* and the Ukrainian national movement were in some kind of alliance had no basis in fact. The Ukrainian struggle for national liberation was an independent development in which neither the Allies nor the Central Powers played any significant part. Despite assertions by Soviet historians that from the mid-nineteenth century Germany worked actively to break up the Russian empire and create independent Ukraine, evidence

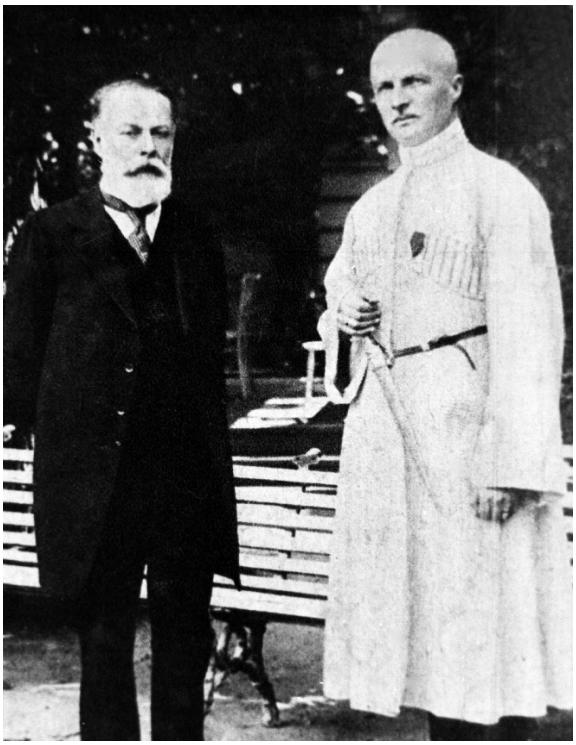


Figure 2.4 Hetman of Ukraine P. Skoropadskyi (right) and Chairman of the Council of Ministers F. Lyzogub. Kyiv, 1918. Courtesy of *TsDAEA*, od. obl. 0-200314.

suggests otherwise. Before World War I, Germany's investment in Russia totaled 441.5 million rubles, or 19.7 percent of the country's foreign capital. The Reich's policies were aimed at colonizing the black earth belt, the fertile lands of Ukraine.

In March 1918, after signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk separately with German and Austrian governments, Ukraine, rather than being independent, became a de facto zone of occupation by German and Austrian troops, and a transit station for many refugees. The Central Rada failed to gather one million tons of grain to satisfy German military authorities. This provided an excuse for occupying powers to appoint Hetman **Pavlo Skoropadskyi** as Ukraine's ruler in April 1918 (see **Figure 2.4**). His rule was brief and marked by a health crisis caused by multiple epidemic diseases such as chickenpox, dysentery, cholera, and typhus.

The Spanish flu pandemic swept through Ukraine in the summer and fall of 1918. By October 1918, nearly 50 percent of the population in urban and rural areas of Ukraine had been infected with the new strain of flu, on top of concurrently running slew of other infectious diseases. Temporary closure of schools, public health education campaigns, and prophylactic measures were implemented.

Click and Explore

Explore the following collection of **Infographics about Ukraine in the early XX century** in English, German, and Ukrainian to learn about ethnographic boundaries of Ukrainian settlements and comparison of coal, wheat, and sugar production in Ukraine and the Russian empire.

2.2 The Directory of the Ukrainian National Republic

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe the Directory of the UNR's economic and cultural policies
- assess the Directory's achievements on the military front

Following the collapse of Germany and Austria, the conservative rule of Hetman Skoropadskyi was swiftly overthrown by national socialist forces in December 1918. This marked the beginning of the next phase in the struggle for Ukrainian national liberation, spearheaded by the **Directory** of the Ukrainian National Republic. Led by figures, such as Volodymyr Vynnychenko and **Symon Petliura** (see **Figure 2.5**), the Directory continued the work started by the Central Rada to rebuild the nation, operating from an armored train, constantly on the move from city to city. One of the most significant accomplishments of the Directory was the enactment of a law of January 1919 that officially recognized Ukrainian as the state language and mandated its use in all educational institutions, as well as the All-Ukrainian Academy

of Sciences. Concurrently, the Ministry of Education approved a new orthography, leading to the publication of textbooks and instructional materials.

Figure 2.5 The General Secretariat of the Central Rada, 1917. Sitting, from left: Ivan Steshenko, Khrystofor Baranovskyi, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, Serhii Yefremov, and Symon Petliura. Standing: Pavlo Khrystiuk, Mykola Stasiuk, and Borys Martos. Courtesy of *TsDAHOU*. f. 408, op. 1, spr. 141, ark. 25.

Ukrainian cultural and educational associations were formed to support local self-governing administrations, reflecting the prevailing spirit of enthusiasm and selflessness among the citizenry, dedicated to the idea of Ukrainian statehood. Notable musicians, such as **Kyrylo Stetsenko**, a student of **Mykola Lysenko**, played a pivotal role in the Ukrainian cultural renaissance. Stetsenko arranged Ukrainian folk songs and composed liturgical works, notably the *Panakhyda*, which was the first canonical national requiem. In 1919, Stetsenko, together with **Oleksandr Koshyts**, founded the Ukrainian National Chorus aimed at showcasing the achievements of Ukrainian national music to the world. To provide financial support for schools, the Poltava intelligentsia established a cooperative Educational Association called "Ukrainian Culture," which successfully raised funds. Other cooperatives emerged to support the functioning of schools and printing of textbooks.

Click and Explore

Read **"Toll of the Bells"** to learn about the forgotten history of nationalism, oppression, and murder behind a Ukrainian carol that became a Christmas classic.

While the Directory achieved significant advancements on the cultural front, these achievements were not matched on the military front. By December 1918, after Skoropadskyi flight from Kyiv a month after World War I ended in armistice, the Directory's army embraced nearly 100,000, with continuous recruitment from both urban and rural areas. Cossack chiefs (*otamans*) at all levels, sergeants, self-made captains, colonels, teachers, and citizens of every rank rushed to support the independence movement. The Directory's army seemed formidable enough to defend against the Bolsheviks' potential invasion from the north and the threat posed by the White General **Anton Denikin**'s Russian Monarchist troops in the southeast. However, despite the Directory's initial successes and the enthusiasm of its Ukrainian supporters, the army rapidly dwindled, shrinking to a mere 21,000 within a few months. The Directory faltered in its implementation of reforms. The Bolsheviks' slogan "land to the tillers" resonated more with unsuspecting Ukrainian farmers who were unaware of the true intentions of the Bolsheviks regarding land policy.

2.3 Russian Policy toward Ukraine

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- analyze Russian policy toward Ukraine
- assess the significance of Ukrainian national liberation movement

In March 1919, the Bolsheviks took leadership at the **Third International**. On November 21, 1919, the Politburo meeting adopted Lenin's theses outlining the Russian Communist Party's policy toward Ukraine. In his theses, Lenin emphasized caution regarding Ukrainian "nationalist" traditions. His requirement for all Bolshevik officials to use the Ukrainian language disguised the instrumental purpose of indoctrinating cadres loyal to the occupying regime rather than guaranteeing language rights. Further, Lenin proposed to launch a propaganda campaign as a tool to alter mass consciousness in the desired direction: to merge Ukraine with Russia. Lenin realized that the colonial regime had to be backed by military force. Notable is Lenin's guidance on class differentiation, without a clear definition of who belonged to either a "poor" or "middle peasant" or "kulak" category. This illustrates that the classification started in 1919, and categories for social divisions marked certain groups as enemies of the occupying regime, subject to eventual extermination.

In his theses, Lenin singled out the All-Ukrainian Teachers' Union for "special surveillance" with subsequent disintegration. It was liquidated in 1920, when teachers were forced to join a new professional union for educational employees. Immediately, and "without fail," recruiting half of the local population into soviets to support the regime clearly set the mechanism for genocidal violence that these "ordinary" people perpetrated a decade later. In anticipation of potential resistance, Lenin directed the Politburo to disarm the countryside. The theses also established a blueprint for the Bolshevik food policy in Ukraine.

During their occupation of Ukraine, the Bolsheviks requisitioned grain from Ukrainian farmers. In January 1919, Lenin dispatched Aleksandr Shlikhter to Ukraine as commissar of supply with orders to feed Russia's cities and the Red Army. As many as 2,700 activists from Petrograd and Moscow arrived to assist Shlikhter with grain expropriation. He later reported that "blood was spilled for every pound of grain collected." In response, from April to June 1919, as many as 328 anti-Bolshevik rebellions swept through Ukraine. The Bolsheviks held the big cities, but had lost the countryside. Bands of Ukrainian farmers cut telegraph lines, seized sections of railroads, and prevented Bolshevik officials from functioning.

Click and Explore

Browse the **New York Public Library**'s digital collections to examine **"Harold M. Fleming Papers, 1917–1971: Russian Revolutionary Era Propaganda Posters."** A poster by Nikolaii Pomansky, published by the propaganda department in Moscow in 1919 touted: "Only the Red Army will give us bread". The artist told the story in two parts. The top half presents the problem: "Denikin has occupied Kharkov and Ekaterinoslav. There is no bread in Moscow and Petrograd." The bottom half presents the solution: "The Red Army is advancing – bread is coming to Soviet Russia." The scales in the center illustrate an increase in bread ration from one-eighth of a pound (top) to a pound and a half (bottom).

The White Army, led by Anton Denikin, capitalized on the anti-Bolshevik uprisings and pushed the Directory to retreat towards Kyiv. The Ukrainian collaborators had fled to Russia as Denikin proceeded to threaten Moscow itself. Denikin's policy overturned the achievements of the previous Ukrainian governments in the sphere of education, with the banning of Ukrainian language and imposition of Russian as the official language. Denikin's Order No. 22 "To the People of Little Russia" referred to Ukraine in pejorative terms. It reversed the policy of mandatory use of Ukrainian language in schools that conducted classes in Russian and banned the teaching of history and geography of Ukraine. Ukrainian language teaching became optional. A clarification was added on September 20, 1919, which allowed teachers in early grades to use their students' "native language as a supplementary tool to improve comprehension" in the classroom.

In the absence of the central government, Ukraine's territory was divided and controlled not only by Denikin's White Army, but also a score of warlords, including **Nestor Makhno**. Warlords, who led anarchist bands in central and eastern Ukraine, did very much as they wished. They were outside of the Directory's control, and did no justice to the national liberation movement. Despite the fact that atrocities, including pogroms in Jewish settlements, were perpetrated by warlords, the Red and White Armies, still Soviet historiography blamed Petliura and his command for the 1919 pogroms.

The Galician division's betrayal further weakened the Ukrainian cause, and Western powers showed little concern for the plight of the Ukrainian people. However, Petliura achieved a symbolic victory on August 8, 1919, when the World Socialist Conference in Lucerne recognized the Ukrainian National Republic's independence. Summing up this period of struggle for national liberation, Petliura expressed disillusionment and dark foreboding: "The territory of Ukraine has been considered [by the great powers] as a booty if they can support their claim to it with the military force, but not as a home for the Ukrainian people and minorities who enjoy the right to freedom and equality." He condemned Russian communists who sought to bolster their own republic's claim to greatness by extracting resources from Ukraine. In hindsight, he realized that the Russian Bolsheviks used Marx's anti-capitalist rhetoric as an instrument to "leapfrog into the ranks of great powers."

From 1921 onwards, with the implementation of the **New Economic Policy** (NEP), there was a temporary liberalization of the intellectual atmosphere in Soviet Ukraine. Communist Party planners expressed no preference for a specific scientific paradigm, and most scholars disagreed on how to interpret Marx's philosophy. At the time, few were aware of Engels' compliment to Marx's achievements as the "Darwin of history." Hannah Arendt drew parallels between the two theories: "The 'natural' law of the survival of the fittest is just as much a historical law and could be used as such by racism as Marx's law of the survival of the most progressive class." Intellectuals were unsuspecting that forces of nature and history let loose by these theories would not permit free action or opposition, or even sympathy, to interfere with the struggle to eliminate "enemies of the people," based on race or class.

Key Words

Anton Denikin | Brest-Litovsk Treaty | Central Rada | Directory | Fourth Universal | Kruty | Kyrylo Stetsenko | Mykhailo Hrushevskyi |Mykola Lysenko |Nestor Makhno | New Economic Policy (NEP) |Oleksandr Koshyts | Pavlo Skoropadskyi | Symon Petliura | Third International | Ukrainian National Republic

Summary

2.1 The Modern Ukrainian Government

During World War I, as Russia and Germany fought on the battlefields of Ukraine, the Ukrainian government faced challenges in rebuilding the nation. The Central Rada, the first modern Ukrainian government, was formed, demanding autonomy within a federal Russian republic. After the Bolsheviks overthrew the Provisional Government, they established a parallel government in Kharkiv. The Central Rada declared Ukraine independent and signed a peace treaty with the Central Powers, but it failed to stop the Bolshevik invasion. The Central Rada struggled to recruit an army, and their decision to overturn private land ownership further alienated the masses. Ultimately, they were forced to retreat from Kyiv. The power vacuum was filled by the appointment of Hetman Pavlo Skoropadsky as Ukraine's ruler. His administration collapsed as soon as World War I ended, and the Spanish flu pandemic and other infectious diseases further devastated Ukraine.

2.2 The Directory of the Ukrainian National Republic

The conservative rule of Hetman, backed by the German bayonets, was overthrown by national socialist forces in December 1918. The Directory of the Ukrainian National Republic took over and continued the nation's reconstruction efforts. The Directory passed a law in January 1919, recognizing Ukrainian as a state language and requiring its use in educational institutions. Cultural and educational associations were formed. Musicians composed Ukrainian liturgical music and established the Ukrainian National Chorus to showcase the Ukrainian culture around the world. However, the Directory struggled on the military front, facing the challenges from both Bolsheviks and Russian monarchist troops.

2.3 Russian Policy toward Ukraine

Bolshevik policies toward Ukraine, outlined in the 1920s, became a blueprint for genocidal extermination of Ukrainians in the 1930s. The Bolsheviks prevailed over the White Army monarchist forces and anarchist warlords. The Red Army drowned the Ukrainian national liberation movement in blood, while blaming the UNR leaders for violence in the Jewish settlements, often instigated by the Bolshevik provocateurs. The anti-Bolshevik uprisings in Ukraine made it clear that the policy of grain confiscations to feed the Russian urban proletariat and Red Army soldiers had its limits. The economic liberalization, however, did not portend liberalization in political and cultural spheres. The law of history dictated the survival of the "progressive" class, which meant the liquidation of the unfit.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. What was the significance of the Fourth Universal issued by the Central Rada?
2. Why the Directory of the Ukrainian National Republic was more successful on the cultural rather than the military front?
3. Which of the Lenin's theses concerning the Russian policy toward Ukraine constitute a blueprint for genocide?
4. What were the successes and failures of the Ukrainian national liberation movement?

CHAPTER 3

Lenin's Red Terror and the Famine, 1921–1923

Once Lenin and the Bolsheviks gained power, they implemented Marx's doctrine by replacing trade with barter and abolished commodity-money relations with the free market. They nationalized industrial enterprises and collectivized agriculture, aiming for total appropriation of the economy. However, their initial attempt to build utopia resulted in an economic crisis and the devastating famine of 1921–1923. To overcome the crisis, Lenin reversed some policies by allowing private enterprise, abandoning the collectivization of agriculture, and restoring free trade. This transition from **War Communism**, a set of extraordinary measures that included grain confiscations and the **Red Terror**, to the New Economic Policy (NEP) marked a turning point. The 1920s famine broke the anti-Bolshevik resistance in Ukraine. Swarms of homeless children roamed the streets. Orphanages in Ukraine became hot spots of death and disease. Lenin's policies toward Ukraine would later serve as a blueprint for the future genocidal extermination of this oppressed population.

3.1 The Red Terror

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe the Red Terror in the 1920s
- discuss deportations of the Ukrainian intelligentsia

Figure 3.1 Felix Dzerzhinsky at the desk, 1920s. Courtesy of the Pedagogical Museum of Ukraine.

Following the introduction of the NEP, which allowed some economic and civic liberties, the Bolsheviks expressed concern about the potential for subversive activities. In a telegram to the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, **Viacheslav Molotov** and **Felix Dzerzhinsky**, the first chief of the Soviet secret police (see **Figure 3.1**), emphasized the need for increased vigilance. They proposed the creation of a "militant apparatus" to combat perceived counterrevolutionary threats by enlisting "staunch party comrades" for this purpose. In 1921, the GPU, the Soviet secret police, conducted a major "counterinsurgency operation" to suppress the last vestiges of the struggle for liberation in Ukraine. Between 1919 and 1921, the GPU liquidated 6,000 "bandit" groups

and arrested 40,000 insurgents in Ukraine. During this period, the Bolshevik secret police confiscated 43 cannons, 1,812 shotguns, 31,788 rifles, 2,312 sabers, and 3,902 revolvers.

The occupying Bolshevik authorities introduced a system of hostage taking (*zaruchnytstvo*) and authorized the summary execution of civilians (*vidpovidachi*) blamed for harboring or aiding "bandits." According to a decree, issued on May 30, 1921 by **Volodymyr Zatonskyi**, the head of the council on combatting bandit activities in the Kyiv military district, plenipotentiaries were instructed to select one civilian from every twentieth household in a village or at least one civilian from every independent farmstead to be executed. The number of civilians executed would double if a Soviet government official had been murdered. These measures left even the most ardent supporters of Ukrainian liberation without the morale to continue their fight. One witness recounted how GPU special detachments took fifty hostages in a village and forced them to draw slips labeled "life" or "death." The fortunate ones who drew "life" had to kill the unfortunate others who drew "death." The cynicism of Bolshevik extrajudicial killings was based on forcing civilians to carry out executions of their neighbors.

Click and Explore

Watch **Red Terror** from the UATV series "Making History" to learn more about the Bolshevik totalitarian methods of government in Ukraine.

In May 1921, the first show trial of the Ukrainian Party of **Socialist-Revolutionaries** was fabricated by the GPU, the Soviet secret police, following direct orders from the Central Committee of the Communist Party. A correspondent for the newspaper *Kommunist* remarked that "after the trial the Ukrainian intelligentsia should feel like after a cold, not very pleasant, but refreshing bath." The threat of repression loomed over their heads.

In 1922, the Soviet secret police underwent reorganization. New legislation granted the GPU the authority to crush "counterrevolutionary actions" and to carry out special tasks assigned by the central authorities. The GPU, as well as plenipotentiary representatives of the Communist Party at the district level, were granted rights to conduct searches while arrests could be made without special resolutions or orders. Detainees had to be released within two months or have their arrest prolonged. The GPU did not have the power to hand down sentences, and all cases, whether political or civilian, were transferred to "courts."

The Soviet secret police faced a funding deficit that led to a decline of morale among its members, resulting in many desertions. The economy was in ruins, and industrial enterprises struggled to transfer money to the state treasury due to a lack of currency in circulation. By April 1922, the number of secret police personnel had dropped from 34,000 to 18,000. On July 4, 1922, Dzerzhinsky, the head of the GPU, requested the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) to ensure that GPU personnel received adequate financial remuneration and food.

A large-scale deportation of Ukrainian intelligentsia boosted the sagging reputation and revenues of the GPU. By August 3, 1922, the GPU in Soviet Ukraine had compiled a list of candidates to be deported. Among the seventy-seven members of the intelligentsia on the list were **Serhii Yefremov** and **Volodymyr Chekhivskyi**, who had served in the government of the Ukrainian National Republic in the 1920s, as well as numerous professors and lecturers from institutes of higher education. The order for deportation came from the Central Committee at the Twelfth Conference of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), held on August 4–7, 1922. During the conference, Grigorii Zinoviev, the Politburo member, delivered a speech discussing anti-Soviet parties, arguing that, under the conditions of the NEP, the Communist

Party could not make political compromises as it had in the economic sphere. Zinoviev argued that repressions were "dictated by revolutionary advisability, with respect to crushing those groups seeking to capture the old positions that had been taken from them by the proletariat." Although Zinoviev did not explicitly define the targeted group in ethnic terms, it was understood to be the Ukrainian intelligentsia.

The legal basis for the deportations was established three days after the conference with the issuance of a decree on August 10, 1922, titled "On Administrative Exile," by the All-Union Central Executive Committee. This decree led to the creation of a special commission tasked with deporting "counterrevolutionaries" to foreign countries or to distant regions of the Russian SFSR. It was believed that deporting the intelligentsia from Soviet Ukraine abroad would consolidate anti-Soviet sentiments among the Ukrainian émigré community in the West. As a result, the Russian Far North and Siberia became their destinations.

In the latter half of August 1922, mass arrests of candidates for deportation commenced. Soviet Ukrainian leaders had to report to Moscow about the progress of the operation in the republic. To facilitate this, a secret commission responsible for political censorship was established within the Commissariat of Education to combat "petty bourgeois ideology." Initially headed by **Stanislav Kosior**, and later by Volodymyr Zatonskyi, this commission played a key role in controlling dissent.

The primary motive behind the deportations of the Ukrainian intelligentsia was the Bolsheviks' fear of losing control over society following the introduction of a liberal economic policy (NEP). They believed that such a policy would lead to demands for freedom of speech and thought, posing a threat to the government's stability. The deportations, along with other measures such as suppressing the national liberation struggle, confiscating church property, purging the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox clergy, and conducting the trial of Socialist-Revolutionaries – all aimed at preventing and suppressing any opposition to the Bolshevik regime. Meanwhile, the "Moscow Gold," a shorthand for looted church jewelry, was used to subsidize revolution and Communist International and conduct intelligence activities abroad.

3.2 The Famine of 1921–1923 in Ukraine

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- analyze the causes of the famine of 1921–1923 in Ukraine
- describe the famine relief efforts
- assess the use of the famine as a method of genocide against Ukrainians

In Ukraine, the famine broke out in 1921 and lasted until the summer of 1923. It was caused by a combination of factors including droughts, the postwar devastation, the policy of grain expropriation for shipment to Russia, and the excessive export of grain outside the Soviet Union. Droughts alone caused about 20 percent of the harvest lost in 1921. The regions in Ukraine that suffered the most were Donetsk (40 percent), Zaporizhzhia (63 percent), and Katerynoslav (64 percent). The Council of People's Commissars of the Russian SFSR deliberately ignored the famine in the southeastern regions of the Ukrainian SSR until early 1922 to ensure uninterrupted transport of grain from Ukraine to Russia. It was only after mass mortality that the famine was officially recognized, prompting Christian Rakovsky, the head of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR, to appeal for aid.

The scale of human suffering during the famine was staggering. By January 1922, approximately 1.9 million people had starved in the five affected provinces in southern Ukraine. This number increased to 3.2 million by April and by June peaked at 3.8 million, which accounted for 40 percent of the population in the affected areas. Widespread diseases such as typhus and cholera further exacerbated the situation,

claiming over half a million lives by August. The official census data indicates that Ukraine lost between 5.5 to 7.5 million people as a result of World War I, the war for national liberation, and the famine.

Figure 3.2 Famished children, Berdiansk, Ukraine, 1922. *Source:* Photographic Archives of the International Committee of the Red Cross, V-P-HIST-02591-07A.

The central government in Moscow established a Central Commission for Food Supply in Russia, but Ukraine did not receive any support until October 1921. Even then, the assistance provided to cities like Kharkiv and Kyiv was limited. By the fall of 1922, nearly 2 million children were starving in Ukraine's southeastern provinces, but less than half of them received food relief. Parents had the option to apply for assistance through a special commission of the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee or seek help from foreign charitable organizations. International relief missions documented the effects of starvation, capturing powerful images of partially or fully unclothed children, such as the one shown in **Figure 3.2**. It was one of the seventeen photographs mailed by the Ukrainian Red Cross in an official envelope date-stamped as arriving in Geneva on May 5, 1922. It is now housed in the State Archives of the Canton of Geneva in Switzerland. It was also used in a poster and on a postcard to raise relief funds by the Jewish World Relief Conference in 1921–1922.

Foreign aid efforts eventually came into play, but only after considerable delay. The **American Relief Administration** (ARA), which had been operating in the Volga region, the second largest grain-producing area, since August 1921, provided 180.9 million emergency rations to starving Ukrainians only after receiving approval from the Russian SFSR on January 10, 1922. The Fridtjof Nansen charitable mission contributed 12.2 million in emergency rations, Workers' International Relief, established by the Communist International, offered 383,000 emergency rations to Soviet Ukraine. The Soviet government declared that the famine had ended in the fall of 1922, but it continued in Ukraine until the summer of the following year. One contributing factor to the prolonged suffering was the diversion of Western food aid from Ukraine to Russia.

In January 1923, the Ukrainian Red Cross opened free kitchens to feed 63,000 starving children. By February, the capacity of these kitchens grew to 100,000, but subsequently no more than 70,000 children received assistance. In April 1923, various foreign charitable organizations, including the ARA, Nansen mission, American Baptists (Mennonites), and the Swiss Red Cross, stepped in and fed 360,000 children in Ukraine. Unfortunately, foreign assistance dwindled as the Soviet Union began exporting grain to sell on the global market. It was perplexing for these foreign missions to comprehend how the Soviet government could prioritize selling grain for profit while its own people were dying from hunger.

The famine of 1921–1923 paralyzed the most rebellious regions of Ukraine's countryside. When survival became the most immediate concern, it became impossible for partisan resistance in the villages to continue. Consequently, the famine became "the ultimate weapon in the Soviet pacification of Ukraine and a proven method of genocide." Ukrainian journalist Vasyl Hryshko, who himself was a prisoner of Soviet concentration camps and a political refugee, argued that while it cannot be proved whether the

Soviet regime intentionally planned and executed the famine as a genocidal act, but the Russian authorities did use it as an effective tool in the final stages of subjugating Ukraine.

The Soviet authorities denied the existence of the famine in Ukraine and obstructed efforts by Western European and American relief organizations to mount a comprehensive operation to rescue the Ukrainian people from mass starvation. Simultaneously, they welcomed relief efforts in the Volga region. During the 1920s, the Soviet authorities strategically utilized the famine to suppress opposition. Although the totalitarian government did not need to publicly announce its premeditated plan, Lenin's letter to Molotov explicitly states that the famine provided a unique opportunity to seize church property and "not hesitate to put down the least opposition."

Click and Explore

To learn about the first of three famines that Ukraine's population suffered under the Soviet totalitarian regime, a famine that, contrary to popular belief, was not caused by drought and crop failures, but by the policies of the Soviet state, watch **The Famine in Ukraine, 1921–1923**, created by the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

3.3 Orphans

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe conditions in orphanages in Ukraine in the 1920s
- explain the impact of famine on human behavior

The devastating famine resulted in a significant increase in the number of orphans. Prior to the revolution in 1914, there were about 8,000 orphans registered in Ukrainian orphanages in the Russian empire. In 1921, the total number of orphans reached 100,000, but by the end of 1923, the number of orphans surged to 750,000. With an estimated million homeless children added to that total, it can be assumed that one of every eight children in the region was an orphan. The orphanages, which were already overcrowded and poorly funded, became breeding grounds for epidemics and widespread deaths among the children.

The dire conditions in these institutions were further exacerbated by the Bolsheviks' decision to relocate 56,000 children from famine-stricken areas in Russia to Ukraine. As a result, these evacuated Russian children accounted for 75 percent of all children in Ukraine's orphanages in 1922. In his speech at the Seventh All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets, held in December 1922, **Hryhorii Petrovskyi** reported that Ukraine accommodated 80,000 children, most of them evacuated from the Volga region, while Ukraine was obligated to take care of only 25,000. This organized relocation plus uncontrolled migration of starving children from Russia strained resources of the orphanages in Ukraine to their limit.

A specific example, such as the Kollontai Children's Home outside Poltava, illustrates the appalling conditions that visiting foreigners were not shown. This orphanage lacked basic access to functioning water system, drains, electricity, or proper sanitation facilities. Both the staff and the orphans resorted to using the surrounding grounds as a toilet. Ukraine's orphans died by the tens of thousands. Those who managed to survive were severely affected both physically and morally. They had to endure brutality, vice, chronic deprivation, disease, and malnutrition as part of their everyday lives.

The conditions of overcrowding in the orphanages were not the only challenges faced by the children in Ukraine during this time. Urban juvenile criminality also kept pace with the overall sharp rise in

criminality. A report from the Mykolaiv region in the spring of 1922 revealed incidents where children amidst hunger, shortages, and disease, resorted to robbing their supervisory personnel. These orphans were forming gangs and raiding neighboring orphanages, where they would forcibly gag victims and strip them naked. Additionally, in the Zaporizhzhia region, spoiled or poorly cooked food led to high mortality rates among the children.

The situation was further aggravated by negligence and mismanagement. In one instance, a hospital train carrying eighteen sick children arrived in Kyiv in December 1921. However, the official in charge failed to isolate them immediately, resulting in the infection of an additional 162 children over the course of four days. The person accountable for this negligence faced only three days of jail time. Moreover, the effects of syphilis-infected troops marching through Ukraine during World War I started to manifest in the early 1920s. In 1919, in Kharkiv city's orphanage, 17 percent of all children were found to have the disease. Tests conducted between 1920 and 1922 on an average of 1,000 orphans in Kharkiv each year, revealed a significant rise in the number of orphans afflicted by syphilis. In 1922, only one hospital in Kharkiv cared for infants and children infected with syphilis.

In his classic work, *Man and Society in Calamity*, Pitirim Sorokin analyzed the impact of famine on human behavior. As a survivor of the 1921–1922 famine, Sorokin identified a range of behaviors that victims engage in. Drawing on evidence from various global calamities—wars, revolutions, and famines—Sorokin highlighted the rarity of cannibalism in non-cannibalistic societies (less than one-third of 1 percent of the population), while emphasizing the widespread occurrence of violations of basic honesty and fairness in pursuit of food, such as misuse of rationing cards, hoarding, and taking unfair advantage of others (ranging from 20 to 99 percent), but highly variable. He noted that under extreme starvation conditions, half of the population succumb to pressure of starvation, surrendering or disengaging from most of the other activities, irreconcilable with food-seeking activities.

For the first time cases of cannibalism were reported in areas affected by the famine in southern Ukraine. Based on Sorokin's observation, more than 99 percent of the population avoided such behavior. As a result of World War I, revolution, and famine, human life lost value. Along with physical degradation, morality and dignity vanished. This Lenin's famine of 1921–1923 became a "dress rehearsal" for the Great Famine of 1932–1933, the apex of the Holodomor, perpetrated with greater ruthlessness by Stalin's henchmen with support of "devils in military uniforms" (the GPU), who created conditions incompatible with life, causing physical and mental suffering among millions of their victims.

Click and Explore

Browse the **Select 1920s Famine Photos from Ukraine** in the photo directory, created by the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium of the University of Alberta's Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, and compare images of the famine of 1921–1923 to the images of the Holodomor of 1932–1933.

Key Words

American Relief Administration | Felix Dzerzhinsky | Hryhorii Petrovskyi | Red Terror | Serhii Yefremov | Socialist-Revolutionaries | Stanislav Kosior | Viacheslav Molotov | Volodymyr Chekhivskyi | Volodymyr Zatonskyi | War Communism

Summary

3.1 The Red Terror

After the implementation of the NEP, the leaders of the Communist Party emphasized the need for increased vigilance. They proposed the establishment of a "militant apparatus" to combat counterrevolutionary activities. The GPU, the Bolshevik secret police, conducted a major operation to suppress resistance in Ukraine and disarm the countryside, liquidating "bandit" formations and arresting insurgents. Red Terror tactics, including hostage taking and summary executions, were employed to suppress opposition. The reorganization of the Soviet secret police expanded their authority to crush "counterrevolutionary" actions. A large-scale deportation of Ukrainian intelligentsia helped boost the reputation and revenues of the GPU. The deportations were justified by the fear of losing control over society due to the introduction of liberal economic policies, and they aimed to prevent any opposition to the Bolshevik regime. These measures were accompanied by the confiscation of church property, purges of Ukrainian clergy, and the use of looted church jewelry to finance revolution and intelligence activities abroad.

3.2 The Famine of 1921–1923 in Ukraine

The famine in Ukraine from 1921 to 1923, marked by droughts, postwar devastation, grain expropriation, and excessive grain exports, had devastating effects. It led to mass starvation and rampant diseases, causing the loss of millions of lives. The Ukrainian Red Cross and foreign charitable organizations provided some relief, but foreign assistance dwindled when the Soviet Union prioritized selling grain for profit. The famine served as a tool for Soviet authorities to pacify and subjugate Ukraine, and while its genocidal intent cannot be proven, the Soviets did hinder rescue efforts and used it deliberately to suppress opposition.

3.3 Orphans

In the aftermath of the famine in Ukraine from 1921 to 1923, the number of orphans skyrocketed. The overcrowded and underfunded orphanages became breeding grounds for epidemics and mass deaths. Conditions in the orphanages were deplorable, lacking basic amenities like water, drains, and electricity. The surviving orphans faced physical and moral degradation, enduring brutality, vice, chronic deprivation, disease, and malnutrition. The dire situation also led to a rise in juvenile criminality. The famine not only caused physical degradation but also eroded morality and dignity, setting the stage for the more ruthless Great Famine of 1932–1933, orchestrated by Stalin's regime.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. What methods did the Bolshevik occupational authorities use to "pacify" the Ukrainian resistance?
2. Why did the GPU target the Ukrainian intelligentsia in the 1920s?
3. What were the consequences of the famine of 1921–1923 in Soviet Ukraine? Why Western and American relief organizations were giving aid to the second largest grain-producing area in the Volga region in Russia rather than in Ukraine?
4. Why there were so many orphans in Soviet Ukraine? What made the conditions in the orphanages worse?

CHAPTER 4

Soviet Ukrainization, 1923–1929

Following decisive victories on the "first front" – military – when GPU detachments with the support of the Red Army suppressed anti-Bolshevik resistance in Ukraine and the "second front" – economy – Bolshevik leaders changed course to solidify their gains. The Russian Communist Party formally adopted the New Economic Policy (NEP) at the Tenth Congress in March 1921; however, the NEP could not become effective because of the famine. While the outside world provided humanitarian relief and assumed the communists were returning to a civilized policy, the economic recovery was temporary as Moscow began gathering controlling power into its own hands in all branches of life. The Bolsheviks initiated battles on the "third front" – culture. The "cultural revolution" started with restructuring of society in Ukraine. The creation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1923 was meant to showcase to the world the fulfillment of a principle of self-determination for national minorities. A flood of decrees and activities spurred hopes for national renaissance not only in Ukraine but wherever Ukrainians were living within the Soviet Union. However, as the tenth anniversary of the Bolshevik *coup d'état* (in Soviet historiography referred to as the Great October Socialist Revolution) approached, Ukrainian separatism was proclaimed a great danger to the Soviet empire, and Bolshevik leaders set out plans to suppress it.

4.1 Soviet Nationality Policy

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- discuss the Soviet nationality policy toward Ukraine
- assess the implementation of the Soviet Ukrainization policy
- discuss the achievements of the Ukrainian cultural renaissance

The Russian Bolsheviks outlined their nationality policy toward Ukraine in resolutions of the Tenth (1921) and Twelfth (1923) Communist Party Congresses, which coincided with the establishment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). While the creation of the USSR was presented as a "voluntary union" of "equal nations," it effectively solidified Russian control over Ukraine and other non-Russian territories. The union agreement, drafted in December 1922, took months to negotiate, and a proposal by the Ukrainian delegation for a bicameral parliament with a Council of Nationalities to safeguard the rights of constituent national republics was rejected by Stalin. On July 6, 1923, the Soviet Union was officially born. The day became an official Soviet holiday, known as the Day of the USSR or Constitution Day.

In Ukraine, the nationality policy, referred to as ***korenizatsiia*** (indigenization) in Russian, was labeled "Ukrainization." The policy was Moscow's tactical adjustment to pacify a growing demand for self-determination by promoting Ukrainian language and culture. After centuries of Russian imperial prohibition on the use of the Ukrainian language in print and on the stage, one decade of liberal language policy produced a constellation of artistic talent in Ukraine. Masterpieces created by the Ukrainian writers and artists in the late 1920s and early 1930s contributed to the European cultural heritage. **Ukrainization** went further than similar policies for other nationalities because Ukrainians constituted a significant portion (40 percent) of the non-Russian population in the USSR at that time, making the nationality problem predominantly the "Ukrainian problem."

Discussions of the national question took place at the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921, where Stalin, then People's Commissar of Nationalities, clashed with critics from the national republics. Among them were prominent Ukrainian politicians: Volodymyr Zatonskyi, who spoke of the Russian "colonizing element" in Ukraine with its belief in "one indivisible" Russia, and Mykola Skrypnyk, who stated that in Stalin's report the national question "had not been resolved in the least." In August 1921, the Council of People's Commissars in Ukraine signed a decree "On the Introduction of the Ukrainian Language in Schools and Soviet Institutions." It polarized the leadership. Some like the Commissar of People's Education in Ukraine argued that schools should educate students while acknowledging their national distinctiveness, while others believed that "without consistent efforts to Sovietize national schools, they would inevitably remain citadels of Ukrainian nationalism."

The Twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in June 1923 issued a decree to further intensify Ukrainization in all state and party organizations. This was followed by additional decrees in July and August, mandating the use of Ukrainian language in schools, and expanded it to all levels of government. One way to strengthen the Ukrainian language was to establish Ukrainian-language schools in proportion to the Ukrainian population in the area. Another way to assure the implementation of the decree was to train teachers of the Ukrainian language. Between 1927 and 1929, the number of Ukrainian-language schools increased slightly from 79 to 81 percent, reflecting the proportion of the Ukrainian population.

Alongside schools for ethnic Ukrainians, there were also over a thousand schools for Russian-speaking minorities, German settlements having four times the number of Polish and six times the number of Jewish language schools. Ethnic minorities such as Jews, Germans, Bulgarians, Belarusians, Moldavians, and Greeks had schools that provided instruction in their native languages. This policy contradicted Marxist principles of eventual amalgamation of nations and Lenin's view that minority language schools hindered the creation of a unitary state.

The policy was a mixed success; it faced resistance from Russian-speaking parents and government officials, appointed by Moscow. While Moscow gradually embraced Ukrainization as policy, its appointees did not want to learn Ukrainian. The reduction of Russian language use in schools was never accepted by the Russian minority, most of whom regarded Ukrainian with contempt or hostility. Russian propagandists argued that the Ukrainian proletariat being exploited had embraced Russian because it was "more advanced." Thus, based on the presumed superiority of Russian language and culture, they deemed the policy of forcing the proletariat to learn Ukrainian as "inadmissible."

The Ukrainian literature and theater during the period of Ukrainization made colossal strides. Poetry flourished, with its huge diversity of schools ranging from the neo-classics led by **Mykola Zerov** to futurists like Mykhailo Semenko. The literature for children and youth acquired a colorful figure of Mike Johansen, the author of breathtaking adventure and travel stories. Dozens of dramas and comedies were written by playwrights like **Mykola Kulish** and staged by theater directors like **Les Kurbas** (see **Figure 4.1**). The Impressionist school of prose writing was colorfully represented by the unique genius of Hryhorii Kosynka. Many novels were written by the new generation of Ukrainian writers that included Andriy Holovko, Valerian Pidmohylny, and others.

Figure 4.1 Les Kurbas (1887–1937). Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

Ukrainization of schools accelerated under the leadership of the Commissar of Education, **Oleksandr Shumskyi**, who advocated for rapid and comprehensive Ukrainization in all aspects of life (**Figure 4.2**). He opposed the appointment of non-Ukrainians to government and party positions. Shumskyi disagreed with Dmitrii Lebed, a Russian ideologue appointed as the second secretary of Ukraine's Communist Party, over the "theory of two cultures." In his article on the national question, published in the newspaper *Kommunist* on March 17, 1926, Lebed argued that "theoretically, a struggle between the two cultures is inevitable. In Ukraine, due to historical circumstances, the city culture is Russian but the village culture is Ukrainian." He believed that Ukrainian culture would hinder the "progressive" movement of the communists, no true Marxist could accept "the victory of Ukrainian culture." However, Shumskyi believed that "the proletariat would not allow a struggle with the peasantry over the cultural expression – language," as it would mean giving the "bourgeois nationalists" a green light to unify the masses under their leadership.

Figure 4.2 Oleksandr Shumskyi (1890–1946), Commissar of Education in Soviet Ukraine in 1924–1927. Source: Plamia, 1924. Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

Before the dark clouds began to gather on the horizon, Mykola Skrypnyk intensified the introduction of education in the native tongue for Ukrainian children outside Ukraine's borders in the Russian SFSR. The Ukrainian national awakening reached areas where Ukrainians had settled for centuries, such as Kuban, Central Black Earth, Lower Volga, Western Siberia, and the Far East. While some territories, like Kursk and Voronezh Governorates on the border with Ukraine, were briefly incorporated into Ukraine from 1918 to 1920, they were transferred to the Russian SFSR after the establishment of the Soviet Union. Kuban, with over 3 million Ukrainians, and the Far Eastern Republic, with over 300,000 Ukrainians, enjoyed national-cultural autonomy. However, as of 1924, for over 7 million Ukrainians in the Russian SFSR, there were only 150 schools. These schools often lacked textbooks and classrooms.

New Ukrainian-language schools sprang up in the Kuban area in the Northern Caucasus, where descendants of Cossacks had settled over the centuries. One of the first teacher training colleges with Ukrainian-language instruction was established in a Cossack settlement of Poltavska. On July 15, 1924, this college celebrated the graduation of twenty-nine new "red pedagogues" who had completed a three-

year course of study with instruction in the Ukrainian language. In the Far East, Ukrainian sections were established in local education districts. Ukrainian studies became mandatory in two pedagogical technical colleges in Valuisk and Ostrohrad. Voronizh University also established a department dedicated to Ukrainian studies. These educators became a tuning fork in fostering a sense of national consciousness among their students. They imparted knowledge about Ukrainian history and culture, acted as guardians of national memory and mythology, thereby developing their students' ethnic identity. It is worth noting that the curtailment of Ukrainization began outside of Ukraine first, followed by policies aimed at eradicating Ukrainian "bourgeois nationalism" within Ukraine.

Overall, the Soviet policy of Ukrainization had ambiguous goals. On one hand, it aimed to overcome resistance to Bolshevik oppression and actively engage the population in the construction of the Soviet state. On the other hand, the objective of increasing the number of Ukrainians in the ranks of the Communist Party and government offices did not empower these representatives of the republic to have more influence over matters of local concern. Instead, it aimed to ensure their loyalty and servitude to the central authorities in Moscow. Although the use of the Ukrainian language was officially recognized in the public sphere, the *de facto* language spoken in schools, higher education institutions, and offices was Russian.

Click and Explore

To learn about the Soviet policy of indigenization and its outcomes watch **Ukrainization Policy**, created by the International Broadcasting Multimedia Platform of Ukraine as part of the UATV "Making History" series.

4.2 Liquidation Lists

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe classification into categories for liquidation of "suspected counterrevolutionaries" in Ukraine
- discuss the punitive policies of the Soviet state

The policy of Ukrainization, proclaimed in 1923, had an ambiguous nature, serving as a façade for the true objective of suppressing those who believed in cultural distinctiveness and national statehood, an approach called "double bookkeeping." In November 1923, a secret circular from Moscow instructed its local GPU offices to monitor professors, lecturers, and students and their activities in associations, meetings, and publications by installing a network of informers to report about public sentiments, private comments, and anti-Soviet clandestine activities in Ukraine.

Observers called the Soviet Ukrainization policy a "mousetrap" because a good number of Ukrainians who had immigrated abroad came back to Ukraine in 1925 at the invitation of the Soviet government. Moscow dispatched "Ukrainian diplomats" Yuri Kotsiubynskyi and Oleksandr Shumskyi to the largest diaspora centers in Vienna and Warsaw, respectively, to lure Ukrainian émigré scholars and writers, as well as to extradite Symon Petliura and his generals under an "amnesty," and eventually to put an end to Ukrainian political activities outside of the Soviet borders. Some contemporary scholars disagree with the "mousetrap" argument. They agree, though, that most active members of the nationally conscious intelligentsia lured back to Ukraine ultimately faced disappearance, exile, or execution.

The Soviet authorities initiated the classification into categories for liquidation less than a year after the introduction of the *korenizatsiia* policy. In February 1924, in preparation for a crackdown on the Ukrainian intelligentsia, the GPU, the Soviet state security police, issued a secret circular with instructions for keeping records on "suspected counterrevolutionaries" in Ukraine in three broad categories:

Political Parties and Organizations

1) All former members of prerevolutionary bourgeois political parties.
2) All former members of monarchical unions and organizations (Black Hundreds).
3) All former members of the Union of Independent Grain Growers (at the time of the Central Rada in the Ukraine).
4) All former members of the gentry and titled persons of the old aristocracy.
5) All former members of the youth organization (Boy Scouts and others).
6) All nationalists of all shades of opinion.

Officials and Employees in the Active Service of Tsarism

1) Officials of the former Ministry of Internal Affairs: all officials of the *Okhranka* [secret political police], police and gendarmerie, secret agents of the *Okhranka* and police. All members of the frontier corps of gendarmerie.
2) Officials of the former Ministry of Justice: members of the district and provincial courts, jurymen, prosecutors of all ranks, justices of the peace and examining magistrates, court executors, and heads of county courts.
3) All commissioned and non-commissioned officers, without exception, of the former tsarist army and fleet.

Secret Enemies of the Soviet Regime

1) All former commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers, and enlisted men of the White movements and armies, the Ukrainian Petliurist formations, and various rebel units and bands who actively resisted Soviet rule. People amnestied by the Soviet authorities are not excluded.
2) All those employed in a civil capacity in the departments and local offices of White governments, the armies of the Ukrainian Central Rada, and the Hetman's state police.
3) All servants of religious bodies: bishops, Orthodox and Catholic priests, rabbis, deacons, churchwardens, choirmasters, and monks.
4) All former merchants, shopkeepers, and "Nepmen."
5) All former landowners, big land-leasers, well-to-do peasants (who formerly employed hired labor), big craftsmen and proprietors of industrial establishments.
6) All persons having someone among their near relatives who at the present time is in an illegal position or is conducting armed resistance against the Soviet regime in the ranks of anti-Soviet bands.
7) All foreigners, irrespective of nationality.
8) All those with relatives or acquaintances abroad.
9) All members of religious sects and communities (Baptists in particular).
10) All scholars and specialists of the old school, particularly those whose political orientation is undeclared up to this day.
11) All persons previously convicted or suspected of contraband and espionage.

As is evident from these lists, a substantial portion of the population was marked for annihilation. On September 17–25, 1924, the GPU launched a series of operations, arrested and imprisoned 19,670

opponents of the Soviet regime in Ukraine. A secret GPU instruction of October 1924 drew attention to the growing influence of the **Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church**. The local GPU officers were instructed to increase the number of secret informers among the faithful and to recruit priests themselves for secret service work.

In a letter to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), Dzerzhinsky outlined basic principles of the punitive policy of the Soviet state. He emphasized that the policy cannot be merciful toward the accused and cannot be expensive either: "they have to cover expenses for their upkeep with their own labor." He proposed to exile the accused to desolate areas with no roads, such as Pechora or Obdorsk. These places in the Russian wilderness would be settled by exiled Ukrainian intelligentsia and farmers, together with their families, further isolating them from their homeland.

Perceived "passivity" of the GPU during the NEP was temporary. Economically prosperous and culturally awakened, Ukraine presented a threat of political separation from Russia, which would mean a collapse of the Soviet system. As a secret GPU circular of June 1925 instructed, the secret police "should therefore not lose a good opportunity to unmask our enemies, in order to deal them a crushing blow when the time comes."

4.3 On Ukrainian Separatism

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe the factors leading to the assault on the Ukrainian nation in 1926
- discuss the destruction of the Ukrainian national identity

In 1926, Stalin's emphasis on communist ideals led to a reduction in autonomy, both economically and culturally, within the Soviet Union. Central authority was strengthened by bringing all commissariats in Soviet republics under Moscow's control. The crackdown on private commerce and plans for collectivization of agriculture resulted in a decline in living standards. The GPU assault on Ukrainian society commenced in March. Two months later, a Soviet secret police agent assassinated Petliura in Paris (see **Figure 4.3**).


Тіло С. Петлюри, привезене з Institut Medico-Légal, вносять до церкви.

Figure 4.3 The casket with the body of the Chief Otaman of the Ukrainian National Republic Simon Petliura is brought to the Romanian church. Paris, May 30, 1926. Photo from *Tryzub* magazine (Paris), no. 35–36, June 27, 1926. Courtesy of *TsDAHOU*, f. 408, op. 1, spr. 117, ark. 110.

In August 1926, Metropolitan **Vasyl Lypkivskyi**, who headed the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, and had been known as "secret propagator of Ukrainian separatism," was arrested. In September, the OGPU issued a circular "On Ukrainian Separatism," which outlined motives, goals, forms, and methods of combatting a "tendency to separate Ukraine from Russia."

In October 1926, five months after Petliura's murder, a propaganda film was released under an acronym *PKP*, decoded as "Piłsudski Bought Petliura," aiming to denounce the Ukrainian national leader as a traitor and Piłsudski's agent. A poster for the film *PKP* (**Figure 4.4**), featuring the Red Cavalry chasing down soldiers of the UNR army, amplified the false notion that the Bolsheviks were successors of the Ukrainian National Republic. The propaganda film was released following the assassination of the leader of the Ukrainian government-in-exile, Petliura, a first salvo in Moscow's efforts to curtail the Ukrainian cultural renaissance.

Figure 4.4 A poster for a propaganda film *PKP*, decoded as "Piłsudski Bought Petliura," designed by A. Finohenov.

Figure 4.5 Lazar Kaganovich (1893–1991). Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

Stalin appointed **Lazar Kaganovich**, a Jew from Ukraine, as secretary general of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine (**Figure 4.5**). Kaganovich, who was born in Kyiv Governorate and worked as a tailor, studied the Ukrainian language and promoted its use among "red" bureaucrats. Kaganovich ran into conflict with Shumskyi when, as the secretary general, he used the struggle with "nationalist inclinations" as an effective method to establish his authoritarian rule. Half a year after the appointment of Kaganovich, Shumskyi approached Stalin and demanded to replace him with **Vlas Chubar**, a Ukrainian.

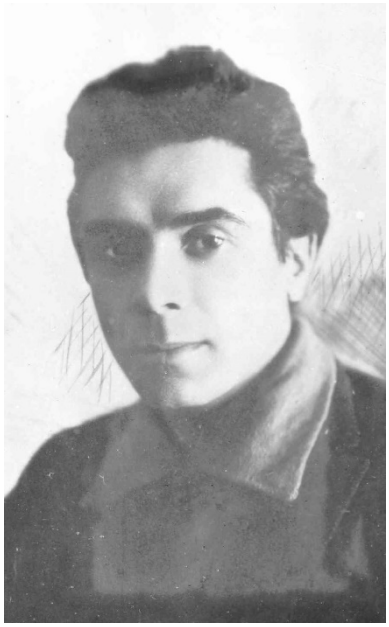


Figure 4.6 Mykola Khvyliovyi (1893–1933), (real name Mykola Fitiliov), writer, poet, security officer. Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

It was under these circumstances that Stalin wrote a letter to "Comrade Kaganovich and other members of the Politburo," warning them about the "national deviationism," referring to **Mykola Khvyliovyi**'s slogan "Away from Moscow!" Mykola Khvyliovyi (**Figure 4.6**) articulated his thesis that the question of Ukrainian literature should be separated from that of Russian literature on the grounds that Ukrainian literature had been more influenced by European culture than by Moscow at a communist faction meeting during the First Congress of Proletarian Writers in 1925. Khvyliovyi eventually had to submit to party discipline, but his words did not go unnoticed. Stalin, in a conversation with Shumskyi, agreed with some of the arguments, but in writing he gave a political *carte blanche* to his emissary in Ukraine. Kaganovich skillfully used Stalin's method of "double-bookkeeping" to deal with the opposition. Kaganovich,

supported by Stalin, began a campaign of vilification against his opponents and dismissed Shumskyi in March 1927.

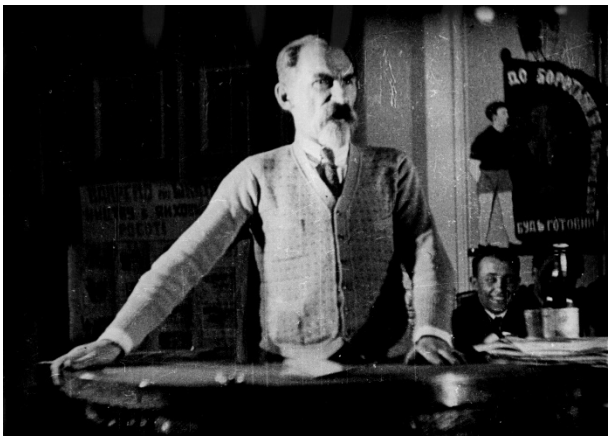


Figure 4.7 Pioneer of Bolshevism in Ukraine and Shumskyi's successor as the People's Commissar of Education, Mykola Skrypnyk, speaks at a meeting of the Communist Children's Movement (Young Pioneers), Kharkiv, 1930. Courtesy of *TsDKFFAU*, od. obl. 0-97364.

In his place, a staunch communist **Mykola Skrypnyk** was appointed, no less a supporter of the Ukrainization policy (see **Figure 4.7**). Skrypnyk was a man of influence and prestige. Kaganovich referred to Skrypnyk as one of "the best of Old Bolsheviks." The son of a railroad worker, Skrypnyk became involved in the revolutionary movement while studying in Kharkiv and dedicated the rest of his life to it. Skrypnyk was arrested fifteen times, sentenced to a total of thirty-four years of imprisonment, exiled seven times, and on one occasion was sentenced to death. On Lenin's suggestion, Skrypnyk was dispatched to Ukraine as a representative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Skrypnyk held various important positions in Ukraine, including secretary of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, attorney-general, and People's Commissar of Internal Affairs, Justice, and Education.

Skrypnyk was also a member of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Executive Committee of the Communist International, six times a delegate to Communist International congresses and leader of the Ukrainian delegation. In the inner party struggles, he supported Stalin against the opposition. In recognition of his prolific literary contribution, Skrypnyk was made a member of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR. He also edited one of the leading journals for educators in Ukraine. Skrypnyk, despite his vocal criticism of "national deviationism," took his own life in 1933, two months after Mykola Khvyliovyi, whose death marked the beginning of an era so poignantly described by Polish publicist, Jerzy Giedroyc, in his letter to Ukrainian literature researcher Yuri Lavrinenko, who later used it as the title for a collection of that generation's best literary works – ***Executed Renaissance***. This exceptional publication that saved their works from Soviet oblivion was born in the head of Jerzy Giedroyc, the editor-in-chief of *Kultura*, a Polish émigré magazine based in Paris.

Click and Explore

To learn more about the Soviet assault on Ukrainian culture in the 1920s and 1930s, watch **Execution of the Ukrainian Renaissance** from the UATV "Deadly Heritage" series.

The Soviet campaign for Ukrainization was permanently linked to Skrypnyk's name because of his role in creating the first universally recognized standard Ukrainian orthography. In 1926, a proposal was prepared by the State Commission for the Regulation of Ukrainian Orthography of the People's Commissariat of Education. Known as the Kharkiv orthography, or *Skrypnykivka*, it was formally approved in September 1928 by Skrypnyk. Subsequently, it was reformed in 1933 because of its alleged embrace of "nationalist deviation." Skrypnyk's refusal to pattern Ukrainian on the Russian model was one of the chief reasons for his downfall in 1933. One of the most vehement charges pressed against him was that he had helped introduce new symbols into Ukrainian orthography. This was criticized as "bourgeois" in 1932, but in 1933 was equated with "assistance to the annexationist plans of the Polish landlords."

On the pages of his émigré journal *Tryzub* (Trident), published in Paris, Symon Petliura, the leader of the Ukrainian national government-in-exile, strongly criticized Skrypnyk and the Ukrainian communists. Petliura argued that the dictatorship of the proletariat had clear class and national characteristics, with the Russian minority holding influential positions in the administrative bureaucracy and the military ruling over the Ukrainian majority. He likened the Bolsheviks to the Conquistadors and their "Ukrainization" to a colonial policy, where the colonizers are required to learn the language of the colonized to create an illusion that rapacious extraction of resources is carried out not by the foreign power but by "brothers" who "speak our language."

Deconstructing Chubar's speech addressed to a congress of the Communist Youth League in April 1926, Petliura summed up Soviet nationality policy as a failure. Articulating his idea that the pro-Moscow orientation means political and cultural suicide for Ukraine, Petliura dubbed the Bolsheviks' policy as the "catching of Ukrainian souls." He warned: "The [Soviet] government can transport trainloads of Ukrainian bread, sugar, coal, all of Ukraine's riches, except her Ukrainian soul." Petliura accused Chubar of representing an illegal occupational regime and described his speech aimed at the younger generation of Ukrainians as an attempt to train new Janissaries. In May 1926, Petliura was assassinated by Samuil (Sholem) Schwartzbard on his way to a meeting of Ukrainian émigré organizations in Paris.

The assassination of Petliura was one tactic employed by the Bolsheviks to eliminate prominent political opponents of the regime. As Petliura was a popular figure in Ukraine and among émigré communities in the West, it was a high-profile assassination. Another tactic was to stage a trial of Schwartzbard, Petliura's assassin, in Paris. Schwartzbard was viewed as an avenger by some and as a Bolshevik agent by others. The trial was meant to mar the reputation of the respected Ukrainian leader in the eyes of the international community and to stir anti-Ukrainian sentiments among the Jewish diaspora. Lawyers presented several hundred documents as evidence that Petliura's government, in circumstances of complete anarchy, discouraged and actively prosecuted those of his troops who succumbed to Bolshevik provocations and engaged in pogroms against vulnerable Jewish neighbors. These documents did not convince the jurors of his innocence. Significantly, some Jewish organizations did support the Ukrainian liberation movement, and the Directory did recruit Jewish politicians to work in the government of the short-lived Ukrainian National Republic in accordance with its policy of empowering national minorities in Ukraine. The GPU's disinformation planted during the trial permanently besmirched Petliura's reputation and thwarted the Ukrainian-Jewish cooperation.

Petliura had long been a target of the Bolsheviks and sentenced to death during the trial of Socialist-Revolutionaries in 1921. His escape and political activities in Paris presented an ideological threat to Moscow. Stalin, with Piłsudski's rise to power in 1926, sought to prevent a renewed Polish-Ukrainian campaign against Moscow. The trial in Paris was skillfully managed by Schwartzbard's attorney, Henri Torrès, a communist. Via their embassy in Paris, the Bolsheviks supplied necessary documents and witnesses to steer the process toward the desired outcome. Archival evidence substantiates the revelation that the trial in Paris was orchestrated by the GPU in Moscow.

Ukrainian communists, after a decade of futile attempts to blend the two ideologies of nationalism and socialism weathered a storm in 1926, but the calm did not last long. The Bolshevik vision of a unitary state meant the inevitable destruction of any vestiges of Ukrainian national identity and state sovereignty. While such aspirations clouded the minds of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, the Ukrainian Orthodox clergy, and teachers who were the sons and daughters of the priests, as well as toiling masses who tilled their land that provided them with a sense of dignity and economic security, the state devised a multi-pronged attack on these targeted groups.

Moscow introduced the policy of "Ukrainization" in 1923 to appease Ukrainian communists. Like a temporary retreat under the NEP, it was the NEP in the cultural sphere. Behind the seemingly idyllic

façade, allowing Ukrainian statehood within the Soviet Union with trappings of the "Ukrainian Renaissance," Moscow was preparing for an offensive. The beginning of the "offensive" in 1928 was also the end of the NEP. Stalin's hasty termination of the NEP and elimination of the most active participants of Ukrainization as "counterrevolutionaries" was not a betrayal of Lenin but a logical continuation of his predecessor's practices.

Key Words

Executed Renaissance | korenizatsiia | Lazar Kaganovich | Les Kurbas | Mykola Khvyliovyi |Mykola Kulish | Mykola Skrypnyk |Mykola Zerov | Oleksandr Shumskyi | Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church | Ukrainization | Vasyl Lypkivskyi | Vlas Chubar

Summary

4.1 Soviet Nationality Policy

The Russian Bolsheviks developed their nationality policy for Ukraine through resolutions at the Tenth and Twelfth Communist Party Congresses, coinciding with the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Ukrainization, the Ukrainian version of the indigenization policy, was a concession of the central authorities aimed to pacify growing demands for self-determination by promoting Ukrainian language and culture. Special administrative and educational institutions were established to implement the policy, including village councils in national minority areas. While Ukrainization had the goal of engaging the population in the construction of the Soviet state and increasing the number of Ukrainians in party and government positions, it was also driven by a desire to maintain central authority and loyalty to Moscow. The implementation of Ukrainization faced challenges, such as resistance from non-Ukrainian appointees and a limited use of the Ukrainian language in practice.

4.2 Liquidation Lists

The policy of Ukrainization served as a cover for suppressing cultural distinctiveness and national aspirations. The government implemented surveillance, informer networks, and mass arrests to control dissent. Ukrainians who returned from emigration were lured under false pretenses and subsequently faced persecution. The GPU targeted "secret enemies of the Soviet regime" for liquidation based on political affiliation and perceived threats to the regime.

4.3 On Ukrainian Separatism

The strengthening of Moscow's control over economic and cultural life preceded an assault on Ukrainian society. In Ukraine, the Soviet secret police initiated a campaign to combat the alleged Ukrainian separatism. Assassinations, arrests of prominent leaders, and smear campaigns were employed to destroy the Ukrainian national identity and instigate anti-Ukrainian sentiments outside of Ukraine. While the policy of Ukrainization was in full swing, the Soviet authorities began preparing for a multi-pronged attack against the Ukrainian intelligentsia, clergy, and farmers associated with the aspirations for Ukrainian independence.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Why was the Soviet nationality policy viewed as a "Ukrainian problem"?
2. Was the Soviet policy toward Ukraine an affirmative action or a concession of Moscow authorities to the national communists in Ukraine? Why?
3. When did the classification into categories for liquidation start? Who were the "secret enemies of the Soviet regime"? Why?
4. What did Mykola Khvyliovyi's slogan "Away from Moscow!" refer to? How did Stalin respond to the "literary discussion" of 1926?
5. What were some of the methods of fighting "Ukrainian separatism"?

CHAPTER 5

The Ukrainian Intelligentsia on Trial, 1930

The targeting of the Ukrainian intelligentsia marked the beginning of a systematic effort to erase Ukrainian national identity. In the 1920s, the deportations of ideological opponents did not solve the issue. The GPU, the Soviet secret police, initiated an operation to liquidate "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" in 1932, disguising it as a "grain procurement campaign." However, the groundwork for this operation had been laid over the course of a decade. Those intellectuals who were once candidates for deportation in 1922 were now facing trial in 1929. The older generation of patriotic elites was gradually replaced by Soviet cadres, and in 1933, the backbone of Ukrainian society was shattered by a genocidal famine.

5.1 The SVU Trial

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- discuss Stalin's repressions against the Ukrainian intelligentsia
- describe the methods of secret police to repurpose the brain of their victims

The Bolshevik regime employed an arsenal of tools to "reeducate" the Ukrainian intelligentsia: arrests, imprisonment, torture, show trials, and "self-criticism." They exerted both overt public pressure through propaganda campaigns in the mass media and covert psychological pressure to reshape or destroy the mentality of Ukrainian intellectual elites. Once the categories for liquidation were established (see Chapter 4), there was an increase in publications about foiled conspiracies against the Bolshevik regime. From 1927 to 1929, the old intelligentsia were branded as "saboteurs," "anti-Soviet," and "socially alien elements." The GPU, the Soviet secret police, established a network of informants in all Ukrainian institutions of higher education. In 1927, 732 were recruited, and their numbers doubled to 1,409 the following year in 1928.

In 1929, Stalin authorized a crackdown on the Ukrainian intelligentsia who were accused of being members of a nationalist organization, aiming to discredit them and gain support for his "revolution from above." The goal was to undermine their influence in the eyes of workers, the purported backbone of the Soviet regime, because this intelligentsia had connections to the countryside, which had been a wellspring of Ukrainian national liberation struggle. In April 1929, the GPU claimed to have discovered several cells of an organization called the SVU. That same year, the Communist Party publicly attacked historians Mykhailo Hrushevskyi, who served briefly as the president of the independent UNR, and Serhii Yefremov, along with many teachers and students, accusing them of "bourgeois nationalism." In

May, members of the Union of Ukrainian Youth (*Spilka ukrainskoi molodi*, or **SUM**), including **Borys Matushevskyi** and **Mykola Pavlushkov**, his sister, and their friends were arrested. Among the allegations, the GPU accused SUM leaders of organizing an "illegal" requiem service for Symon Petliura, assassinated in Paris in 1926 by a Soviet agent, at St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv during which one hundred leaflets were distributed. Academician Yefremov, Pavlushkov's uncle, recorded in his diary that "infanticide" had already started as arrests and searches swept through major cities.

The SVU show trial was conducted in Kharkiv, the political capital of the Moscow-created "Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic." In a report, dated December 1, 1929, **Vsevolod Balytskyi**, the head of the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR, known as "Ukraine's guillotine" among the Ukrainian communists, stated that the "operation to apprehend SVU collaborators" was carried out in twenty-eight regions, resulting in the arrests of over 700 people. Ultimately, the GPU arrested, deported, or executed more than 30,000—intellectuals, artists, writers, scientists, and teachers—and publicly tried forty-five of them at the Kharkiv Opera house in the spring of 1930. **Figure 5.1** depicts a scene from the Kharkiv Opera house, which was transformed into a courtroom for a show trial of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (*Spilka vyzvolennia Ukraïny*, or **SVU**), dubbed as "opera SVU, libretto GPU" in popular lore.

Figure 5.1 The courtroom in the Kharkiv Opera during the trial in the case of the Union for the Liberation of Ukraine, 1930. Courtesy of *TsDKFFAU*, od. obl. 2-25997.

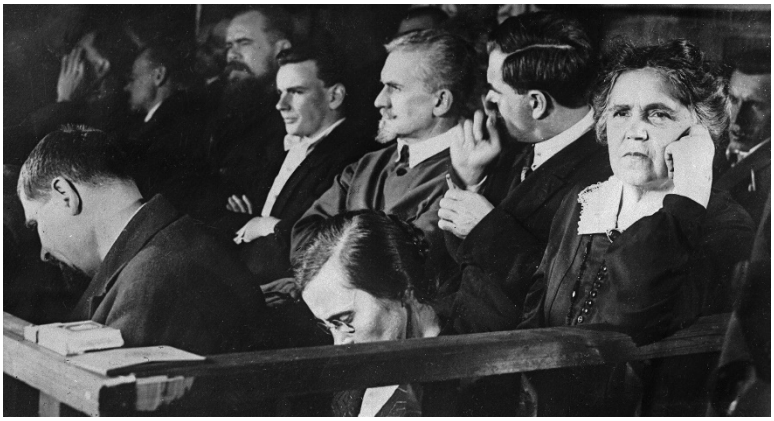


Figure 5.2 Teacher Nina Tokarivska (first row), writer Lyudmila Chernyakhivska (second row), former Prime Minister of the Ukrainian National Republic Volodymyr Chekhivskyi, student Borys Matushevskyi during the SVU trial, 1930. Courtesy of *TsDKFFAU*, od. obl. 2-25995.

The GPU scrupulously selected the defendants for the trial. Engineer Kost Turkalo, an associate member of the **All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences**, published a list of convicted individuals from the SVU trial in the 1950s, before scholars were granted access to their case files. Among the forty-five defendants, over half were teachers of Ukrainian language and history, as well as professors from Institutes of People's Education and their students. Two women were among the accused (see **Figure 5.2**).

Many of the teachers were sons and daughters of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church clergy, who were part of the educated elite, targeted for annihilation. Notably, Volodymyr Chekhivskyi, who had given up politics for theology, was also implicated. A cartoon on the front cover of a special issue of a satirical magazine, published in 1930, mocked his "inner struggle" as a former insurgent in the

UNR army and a religious leader (see **Figure 5.3**). The cartoon was clearly anti-Ukrainian as blue and yellow are colors of the Ukrainian national flag and the trident is its coat of arms.

Figure 5.3 Propaganda cartoon in a special issue about the SVU in the *Chervonyi perets* (Red Pepper) satirical biweekly magazine, 1930. Courtesy of the National Library of Ukraine named after V. I. Vernadskyi.

One third of the defendants were from Kyiv, with the remainder from Poltava, Odesa, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, and Chernihiv "branches" of the fabricated organization. Only five witnesses were called to testify during the trial. Although the defendants' guilt was never established, the court handed down sentences of three to ten years of imprisonment. Most of them were later executed during the Great Terror or died in labor camps. One defendant, student Borys Matushevskyi, recalled his interrogator stating, "We have to bring the Ukrainian intelligentsia to its knees, this is our task—and it will be carried out; those whom we do not [bring to their knees], we will shoot!"

The methods of the GPU were brutal. Victims experienced a level of scrutiny where every phrase, gesture, and thought were meticulously registered. A person was "anatomized." This process of "anatomizing" a person's consciousness was considered a pinnacle of Bolshevik justice. The system was characterized as a "refined sadism." During interrogations, victims would maniacally repeat whatever was demanded by the investigators.

When Mykola Pavlushkov (pictured in **Figure 5.4**), a student at the Kyiv Institute of People's Educations, was arrested, his uncle, Serhii Yefremov, documented in his diary that "the Ukrainization of the Narym territory has begun." Narym in Western Siberia served as a region for resettling the second wave of exiled Ukrainians. Pavlushkov's interrogation file (260 typed pages) is a fictitious account of his uncle's counter-revolutionary activities, pre-drafted by the interrogators, to which a frightened young man affixed his signature. In a misguided attempt to secure his own freedom, Pavlushkov collaborated with the GPU by providing information against his own uncle. In his desperation, Pavlushkov disclosed alleged connections of the organization with foreign centers and their preparations for an armed uprising. He even testified about his uncle's supposed involvement with warlords during the 1918–1919 struggle for the national liberation of Ukraine, despite being a teenager at that time. The apparent contradictions and insinuations present in his testimony went "unnoticed" by his interrogators. His mother believed that he had been driven to insanity by the interrogators and coerced to sign incriminating evidence against others.

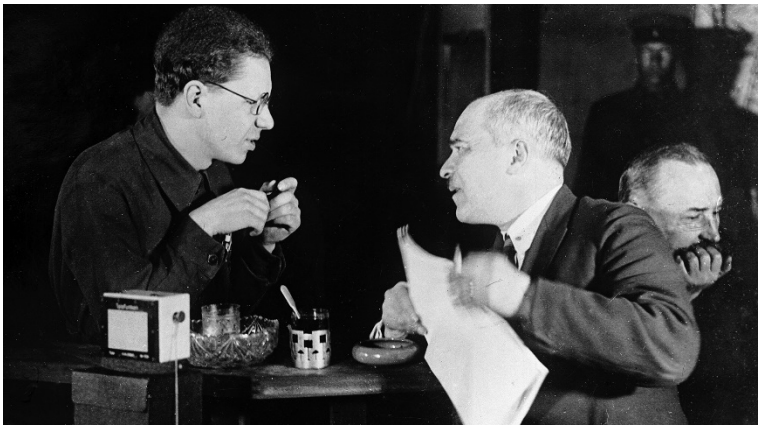


Figure 5.4 Mykola Pavlushkov, a student of the Kyiv Institute of People's Education, talks with the defense attorney Semen Ratner during the SVU trial, Kharkiv, 1930. Courtesy of *TsDKFFAU*, od. obl. 2-25994.

Several generations within families were put on trial and annihilated. Academician Mykola Slabchenko was described by one of his students to investigator as someone who "charmed us with his originality, energy, talent, love for Ukraine, and European outlook… [he] wanted to raise us as future Ukrainian professors." His son, Taras Slabchenko, a young promising scholar, possessed a deep sense of patriotism similar to his father. According to witness testimony, Taras Slabchenko spoke about Ukraine's colonial dependence and advocated an independent budget and the utilization of natural resources within the republic. In his lectures, he aimed to instill a sense of pride in Ukraine's history and the distinctiveness of the Ukrainian people. However, these expressions resulted in charges of "chauvinist indoctrination" due to his desire to cultivate Ukrainian identity. Defense Attorney Semen Ratner acknowledged that Ukraine lost some of the best intellectual elite but crossed this thought from the final version of his defense argument.

The public court hearings commenced on March 9, deliberately chosen on Taras Shevchenko's birthday. This choice aimed to instill fear into the hearts of Ukrainians, who revered the Prophet's call to freedom from tyranny. Similarly, the trial's conclusion coincided with Easter Sunday, symbolized by the chiming of church bells that soon would be destroyed and recast into bullets to blow out the "brain" of the nation. Instead of mass celebration, the GPU initiated mass persecution. Restructuring of the nation's brain circuitry began. The renaissance, which was underway since the days of the UNR and sustained by ambiguous policy of indigenization that removed barriers to flourishing of the national language and culture, turned into the dark age of executions.

The prosecution's charges were incredulous: a small group of prominent intellectuals had conspired to overthrow the Soviet government through armed rebellion. Despite the case being labeled "top secret," excerpts from the final sentencing statement were published in the leading newspaper *Visti* even before the trial concluded. The disinformation campaign unleashed in the press spread insinuations such as the admission by defendant Volodymyr Durdukivskyi, former principal of Ukrainian Gymnasium No. 1 (renamed Labor School), that he conspired to assassinate Stalin and other Soviet leaders like Voroshilov and Skrypnyk. Durdukivskyi was accused of referring to Stalin as the "main enemy of the people" who held onto power through an "unconquerable will."

After the trial ended, on April 28, 1930, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine awarded eight GPU investigators with orders of Red Banner for exposing the alleged "counterrevolutionary" and "anti-Soviet" plot of the SVU. The case was reopened in August 1989, prior to Ukraine's independence from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and all the defendants were found not guilty. They were innocent of the crimes they were accused of and posthumously rehabilitated. Upon reviewing the trial proceedings, lawyer Anatolii Bolabolchenko concluded that the ruling of Stalin's court was biased. The chief justice, four state prosecutors, four public prosecutors, and thirteen defense attorneys had barely enough time to read the extensive case files, comprising 237 volumes and over 100,000 pages, in the twelve days that court was in session. The defense was rendered ineffective due to the lack of time to prepare arguments and the fear of being seen as too lenient toward the supposed "enemies of the people." The outcome of the trial was predetermined, serving the purpose of lending an unmerited aura of legitimacy to the show trial.

Simultaneously with the show trial, authorities launched a mass campaign to censure the "enemies of the people." In late March 1930, Commissar of Education Mykola Skrypnyk announced that students and professors in many institutes demanded the most severe punishment for the "fascist agents within Soviet institutes," influenced by the revelations in the press about the activities of the SVU and the SUM. Party cells in pedagogical institutes mobilized students to hold meetings where they publicly condemned the SVU for its alleged attempt to restore the old bourgeois order in Soviet Ukraine. These gatherings aimed to force intellectuals to profess their loyalty to the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Communist Party, and the GPU as its sentinel. Even Serhii Hrushevskyi, a professor at the Donetsk Institute of People's Education and nephew of Mykhailo Hrushevskyi, Ukraine's renowned historian and former head of the

government during the national liberation struggle, was forced to denounce his uncle. Both met grim fates.

Ukrainian publicist Dmytro Solovey, who witnessed the SVU trial and personally knew some of the defendants with whom he shared a prison cell in the 1920s, wrote in his memoirs, *Golgotha of Ukraine*: "When I was listening to radio broadcasts of the SVU trial proceedings, I became convinced that the entire process was not genuine but deliberately staged as part of a plan orchestrated by the GPU, with all the necessary 'facts' assembled to construct case." Solovey claimed that Serhii Yefremov signed a self-incriminating verdict in order to protect his students from inevitable arrests. Additionally, Solovey suggested that Yefremov may have been motivated to save his beloved wife by complying with everything that was demanded of him. The theatrics of the trial diverted public attention, both in Soviet Ukraine and abroad, from the crude methods employed by the GPU to physically annihilate prominent members of Ukraine's intelligentsia and crush aspirations of national liberation.

The formation of a new elite required the elimination of the old intellectual elite. One of the investigators in the SVU case, Solomon Bruk, cynically expressed the intent to Holoskevych: "How we would love to kill all of the Ukrainians; alas, we can't. But you, the Ukrainian intelligentsia, we will exterminate to the last." Durdukivskyi, a defendant, recalled how Bruk, dressed in his blue GPU uniform, would "hypnotize and instill terror in his victims." The interrogators were relentless, forcing their victims to write lengthy "confessions" day after day, often on weekends and holidays. These confessions delved into the minutiae of their life stories, revealing names and places. When provoked to believe they had been betrayed by their comrades, most of the defendants, including women, withstood the pressure. However, eventually, all of them were coerced into signing a verdict dictated to them by their tormentors.

In parallel to the SVU trial, collectivization was unfolding, camouflaged under the slogan of class struggle, as the alleged Union for the Liberation of Ukraine had its social base in the countryside. The blueprint for the extermination of Ukrainians was set in motion: independent farmers formed the social base of the SVU, with the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences serving as the "headquarters," supported by a network of "commanders" from the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and trained "militant terrorists" from the Union of the Ukrainian Youth (SUM).

The SVU and the SUM were the first among fifteen major "underground counterrevolutionary organizations" that the GPU "discovered" in Ukraine between 1930 and 1937. The exposure of these organizations led to the systematic annihilation of the pre-Soviet Ukrainian intelligentsia as a collective. Decades of scholarly accomplishments by the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences were obliterated, and the research staff were purged. The trial in spring of 1930 and subsequent discovery of numerous "counterrevolutionary" groups marked the beginning of the end for Ukrainization. These deemed "superfluous" members of the Ukrainian intelligentsia became a source of free labor for industrial projects administered by the GPU in desolate places scattered along the Arctic Circle and in the Russian Klondike.

5.2 The Gulag

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe the Soviet system of concentration camps
- discuss the use of bread rationing as a tool of coercion

As Dzerzhinsky, dubbed "Iron Felix," founder of the secret police, envisioned, to stimulate the Soviet economy and settle remote areas lacking intelligentsia, punitive policies had to be merciless. The regime's leading opponents needed to be ruthlessly dealt with to establish control over society, turning them into subservient slaves fed by the hands of their executioners. Thus, the GPU established a system of

concentration camps in the 1930s, initially repurposing places where Russian tsars used to hold criminals and political prisoners, including the renowned "Iron Felix," who spent more than a decade in exile and escaped three times. It was the February Revolution that propelled him from a prison cell in Moscow to the Central Committee as Lenin's right hand. Stalin, the "Man of Steel," who became indispensable to Lenin and responsible for the implementation of his directives, known by his nickname as "Comrade Index Card" for his managerial skills, also tasted Siberian exile and knew the informer's craft first hand. The **Gulag** camp system Lenin and Stalin created would surpass tsarist prisons in scale and cruelty.

By 1923, Bolsheviks had established the **Solovetsky Special Purpose Camp** in the Russian Orthodox Solovetsky Monastery. From tsarist times, this monastery was not only a cloister where Orthodox martyrs sought salvation in prayer and fasting, but also a place where "criminals" repented for their transgressions against Russian laws and beliefs. Within the cold, desolate towers prisoners endured confinement in silent cells. Especially "incorrigible heretics" were thrown into dungeons and fed only bread and water. In one such underground cell Petro Kalnyshevskyi, the commander-in-chief of the Zaporozhian Sich Cossacks, spent twenty-eight years of his life. He was exiled to the monastery by the order of Catherine II. When Alexander I offered to free him, the 110-year-old Cossack declined. It is said his only wish was that the tsar built a new prison because the old one was unbearable. Brigadier-General and hero of the Russo-Turkish war Kalnyshevskyi died in 1803 at the age of 112 and was buried beside the cathedral wall. All Ukrainian prisoners felt obligated to pay their respects at his tomb.

Trains carrying prisoners bound for the notorious Solovetsky camp arrived at the Kem railway station, where the detainees could sense the impending horrors. Initially, the camp housed prisoners of war, who primarily worked for their own upkeep, experiencing a relatively moderate level of terror. In 1926 and 1927, the camp's population shifted to include Ukrainian prisoners, such as officers from Petliura's armed forces, Ukrainian clergy, and members of the old pre-revolutionary intelligentsia.

The Solovetsky Islands on the White Sea became known as the "Soviet Union in miniature," a symbol of the whole system where forced labor was an organic part of a new society and every individual was considered property of the state. Following the Solovetsky camp, the White Sea–Baltic Sea Canal camp and the region of Kolyma in Siberia became subsequent destinations as the system expanded. For the next fifteen years, Kolyma remained a central location within the camp system. Prisoners were assigned to various labor tasks, including highway construction, railroad building, logging, land clearing, electric power line installation, oil drilling, radioactive clay mining, coal mining, the construction of temporary ice roads used for winter transportation, brick manufacturing, the construction of barracks for prisoners and homes for paid employees, tar and rock processing, salt mining, equipment repair, cargo loading and unloading, truck driving, kitchen duties, and other services. Thus, these desolate areas in the Russian Far North and Siberia were settled, and the use of political prisoners as slave labor became institutionalized in the first socialist state.

A period of "savage lawlessness" in the Solovetsky camp set in during the First Five-Year Plan, when Stalin consolidated his power and launched campaigns to eradicate "all capitalist elements." Stalin expanded the GPU apparatus and, with the help of a Special Assignment Army of the GPU, suppressed rebellions in villages, confiscated the property of well-to-do farmers, and exiled them, along with their families, to the Solovetsky Islands. By February 1932, the number of concentration camps in the Soviet Union doubled compared to 1929. The composition of prisoners also changed during this time, with the majority being Ukrainian, most sentenced to ten years of hard labor. These Ukrainian farmers, clergy, writers, professors, and their students were labelled as "counterrevolutionaries."

When Stalin made the decision to eliminate the remaining Ukrainian intelligentsia and purge the "unstable elements" within the Communist Party, he initiated a new construction project known as the **White Sea–Baltic Sea Canal**. The idea was conceived in February 1931, when the overflowing Solovetsky camp, housing Ukrainian insurgents, intelligentsia, and farmers along with dispossessed Kuban

Cossacks, prompted the transfer of many prisoners to work on the canal. More than 100,000 perished during its construction. Among those banished to build the canal were members of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences and student Pavlushkov, who joined other Ukrainian compatriots living among "the despairing, groaning, mocking and crying flotsam of humanity."

In contrast to the Panama Canal, which took 28 years to complete over a length of 80 kilometers, or the Suez Canal, which took 10 years to construct over 160 kilometers, the Soviet White Sea–Baltic Sea Canal, spanning 227 kilometers, was finished in just one year and nine months, using only timber, sand, and rocks, all without the aid of mechanical tools! It was named after Joseph Stalin, the Great Teacher, and became a "school" for transforming the "incorrigible" into active builders of communism. The construction was immortalized in a collective monograph penned by dozens of prominent Soviet writers in 1934.

The use of a "labor army" was not originally Stalin's idea but it was proposed by Leon Trotsky. Stalin personally designed the route of the canal. The canal was not built purely out of an economic necessity to develop the wilderness of Karelia, abundant with tall pines, as a potential source of foreign currency in the global timber market. It was not primarily intended to secure the Baltic frontier or provide passage for the Soviet navy to global navigation and trade networks. The local workforce in Karelia was unreliable, and the possibility of war in the Pacific in 1931 was remote. If the canal was meant to showcase Soviet efficiency, it ironically fell short. As Stalin himself noted, it turned out to be "shallow and narrow." On the opening day, heavy equipment and engines had to be removed from submarines which were then hauled through locks and gates. Crucially, the canal was not initially included in the original First Five-Year Plan. So why was the construction plan pushed through in 1932 and completed in 1933?

The canal project became a catalyst for a new wave of purges that unfolded after the order telegraphed on December 14–15, 1932 to russify all Ukrainian institutions outside the borders of the Ukrainian SSR, just before Postyshev's arrival to Ukraine on a special assignment from Stalin. Postyshev's mission was to eradicate nationalism at its core, which, at that time manifested not only in figures like Hrushevskyi and Yefremov of the UNR but also among Ukrainian communists. All of them, except for Khvyliovyi and Skrypnyk who took their own lives in 1933, ended up in GPU labor camps.

During this period, the GPU functioned as a separate entity within the state, having its own administrative departments that mirrored People's Commissariats, trusts, highways, railways, as well as civilian and military public works. The traditional military-style divisions of the "labor army" were changed into "phalanxes," "columns," and "brigades." Terms like "tempo" and "socialist competition" became part of the vocabulary. The influx of new prisoners sent to the GPU-run labor camps included Ukrainian farmers, participants in uprisings from 1929 to 1932, teachers, writers, poets, scholars, and even students. These were not hardcore criminals but political opponents of the regime, convicted for "counterrevolutionary crimes," as well as starving villagers accused of "theft of socialist property" for gathering stalks of wheat in the fields. Additionally, members of the patriotic Ukrainian intelligentsia deemed "socially dangerous elements" were also targeted. These comprised a significant portion, 52.8 percent, of the combined three most frequently used articles of conviction, while only 7.5 percent were convicted for "abuse of power, economic and military crimes" (related to Communist Party purges) during this period.

Within the social hierarchy, imposed by the communist regime, the food for those on the bottom, prisoner-slaves, significantly differed from what intellectuals would consume on a daily basis. The menu consisted of meager options such as rye flour, barley, dehydrated potatoes, beets, barely edible salted fish, offal (liver, lungs, and intestines), tallow, sugar, and vegetable oil. Food storage conditions were dire, with items freezing in winter and rotting in summer. Fresh vegetables, onion and garlic, known for their ability to prevent scurvy, were never provided. The menu itself was limited, with breakfast

consisting of a tablespoon of porridge or soup made from ground barley, accompanied by a mug of hot water. Lunch included a soup called *balanda*, made from ground barley or dehydrated potatoes and beets with a small amount of "meat" added, along with a small piece of rotten fish, often kept in open barrels full of maggots. Dinner was a variation of breakfast, with soup from barley flour and a mug of hot water. Tallow or vegetable oil, amounting to 15 grams per person, were used in cooking. Kitchen personnel doled portions out according to special standing or "blat" (ability to bribe). Pleas for more soup were answered with whacks over the head with an iron ladle and obscenities, "Ask the prosecutor, you son …, he'll give you more!"

Bread was a crucial component of the prisoner's diet, accounting for 80 percent of their diet. To control the distribution, the administration established a daily ritual of bread rationing. Upon returning from work, the prisoners received a portion of bread proportional to the percentage of daily work quota completed. Political prisoners engaged in hard labor and achieving 91 to 100 percent of their quota were entitled to 21 ounces of bread per day. Those working in non-quota-based jobs received 17.5 ounces, while those completing 50 to 70 percent received 10.5 ounces. Prisoners who could not work received 7 ounces, and no one received more than two pounds, or a kilogram of bread. The bread was baked from moldy flour and intentionally underbaked to a level of 54 percent, containing 20 percent more moisture than fully baked bread, making it heavy and soggy. As a result of consuming half-baked bread, offal, and salty fish, prisoners suffered from scurvy, experiencing teeth and gums decay, weakening of their limbs, and dark blotches over their bodies.

In the oppressive and dehumanizing environment, the daily routine served as a form of regimented punishment. Prisoners in the labor camp worked full ten-hour days, with only Sundays designated as a rest day, although they were ordered to go outside for searches. The tremendous number of explosions and millions of kilograms of blown-up rock debris from the construction of the White Sea–Baltic Sea Canal could have been used to build seven Cheops pyramids. The construction of the canal was initially projected to cost 400 million rubles, but its actual cost turned out to be over 101 million rubles. It was built by cheap labor. The stark difference in pay between free workers and those subjected to slave labor was a foundation of the socialist economy and a factor in the success of the Soviet industrialization plan. However, some scholars argue that these penal camps primarily served political objectives and fell short in terms of economic performance. These labor camp conditions continued to exist until the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is crucial to note that Ukrainian intelligentsia did not require "correction" in these labor camps because they were innocent.

Click and Explore

Watch **Gulag: The Story** to learn about the origins of the Soviet concentration camp system from 1917 to 1933.

5.3 Forced Labor

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- discuss the use of Ukrainian political prisoners as forced labor for the development of Russian mineral resources
- explain why Western governments ignored the fate of prisoners of Soviet labor camps

By some estimates, from 1930 to 1938, approximately 400,000 farmers who were deprived of land and property, clergy who lost their ecclesiastical status, and intellectuals who were dismissed from their jobs

were forcibly deported from Ukraine. Additionally, another 530,000 were exiled to "corrective labor" camps, resulting in a total of 930,000 forced laborers, consisting of 563,000 men and 367,000 women. The majority of these were killed, starved, or worked to death. George Kitchin, a Finnish businessman, who spent four years in GPU prisons and camps before being freed from the Solovky with assistance from the Finnish government, reported that the mortality rate for the years 1929–1930 was 22 percent among the prisoners engaged in hard labor in timber camps. In addition to the dead, 20 percent of prisoners became completely disabled and 30 percent suffered partial disabilities before completing their sentences, resulting in a survival rate of only 13 percent.

In the Soviet Union the GPU built and managed its industrial economy through labor camps. The GPU transformed into an extensive industrial organization, overseeing a vast number of forced laborers deployed to the most inhospitable regions of the country, where volunteer labor was scarce, particularly in the Russian Far North, the wilderness of Central Asia, and the harsher areas of Siberia. Eugene Lyons, a Western observer, described the nature of this institution in 1937, stating that when civilian economic authorities could not cope with a particularly difficult industrial task, the GPU would administer it with compulsory labor using such "educational" methods as "brutal beatings, a diet of garbage, a fearsome mortality rate, a regime that shriveled the spirit and withered the body of the victim and degraded the masters no less than the slaves."

Knowledge about Soviet concentration camps had circulated in the West since the 1920s. Articles about Soviet prisons were published in the German, French, British, and American press. In 1926, a Georgian White Army officer named S. A. Malsagov, who managed to escape from the Solovetsky Islands, released a book titled *Island Hell*, which detailed his experiences there. Likewise, in 1927, a French writer named Raymond Duguet published a book, *Un Bagne en Russie Rouge* (A Prison in Red Russia), where he provided an accurate description of the guards' personalities and the horrors of mosquito torture. Furthermore, a French senator authored a widely cited article based on testimony from refugees, drawing parallels between the situation in the Soviet Union and the findings of the League of Nation's investigation on slavery in Liberia.

Following the expansion of Soviet concentration camps in 1929 and 1930, foreign attention towards the camps shifted away from the plight of prisoners and instead focused on the perceived economic menace the camps posed to Western business interests during the Great Depression. According to the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce's handbook published in New York in 1936, the USSR claimed the first place worldwide in terms of timber resources. Its vast forest areas in the Far North and Siberia were estimated to cover 950 million hectares (2.35 billion acres), accounting for one-third of the world's total. However, at the beginning of the First Five-Year Plan, only about one-third of this area had been exploited. Consequently, efforts were made to utilize these extensive timber regions. The delivery of timber for industrial purposes saw a significant increase from 41.1 million cubic meters in 1927–1928 to 99.4 million cubic meters in 1932, marking a 142 percent rise. Overall, during the 1930s, the Soviet Union ranked first in timber production and second, after Canada, in timber exports. In 1931, European countries such as England, Holland, Germany, France, and Belgium accounted for 84 percent of Soviet timber exports, with England alone making up a range of 33 to 40 percent. Canada was the only country to ban the importation of pulpwood and lumber from the Soviet Union, citing the use of forced labor in Soviet industries.

The growth of timber industry was driven by domestic necessity. The Soviet paper and publishing industries had collapsed when the supply of timber from Finnish forests became unavailable after Finland gained independence following World War I. The Soviet paper industry was revived in the 1930s when the virgin forests of the Russian taiga were opened up for forced settlement. The coordination of cutting operations carried out by the GPU in concentration camps, which were euphemistically referred to as "corrective-labor" camps disguised their true nature: the exploitation of political prisoners as unpaid industrial slaves. Between 1928 and 1930, as many as nineteen timber felling camps were

established under the jurisdiction of the GPU. Hundreds of thousands of exiled Ukrainian intelligentsia and farmers, living on starvation rations, were forced to meet timber cutting quotas that exceeded their physical capabilities.

In Britain and the United States, pressure mounted to boycott cheaper Soviet goods produced by forced labor due to concerns over ethical reasons and the impact on domestic industries. The British Labor Party opposed a ban on Soviet goods, expressing solidarity with their socialist brethren and harboring suspicions about the motives advocating for the boycott. In the United States, however, the American Federation of Labor supported the boycott. The United States Tariff Act of 1930 (section 307) stipulated that "All goods . . . mined, produced or manufactured . . . by convict labor and/or forced labor . . . shall not be entitled to entry at any of the ports of the United States." Based on this provision, the U.S. Treasury Department banned the importation of Soviet pulpwood and matches. Although the U.S. State Department did not support the ban, which lasted only a week, discussions on the issue persisted. In May 1931, *The Times* of London published a series of articles on forced labor in the Soviet Union, culminating with an editorial condemning the British government's decision to grant diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union. During the Great Depression in the United States, there was an increase in support of diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union.

In these labor camps, known as "corrective-labor camps," or "Institutions for the Re-education of the Un-submissive," to the public, the construction of canals or highways, as well as loading and unloading of freight, were carried out without mechanical tools. The conditions in camps were extremely harsh, leading to both physical and moral debasement, often resulting in rapid death.

Key Words

All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences | Borys Matushevskyi | Gulag | Mykola Pavlushkov | Solovetsky Special Purpose Camp | SUM | SVU | Vsevolod Balytskyi | White Sea–Baltic Sea Canal

Summary

5.1 The SVU Trial
In the 1930 SVU trial in Soviet Ukraine, a group of leading intellectuals and teachers of Ukrainian language and history faced charges of conspiring to overthrow the government through armed rebellion. The trial was staged by the GPU with pre-assembled facts to legitimize the persecution of Ukrainian intelligentsia. Witnesses described the trial as a theatrical show, diverting attention from the brutal methods used by the GPU to eliminate Ukraine's intellectual elite and suppress national liberation aspirations. The investigators employed relentless tactics to extract confessions and coerced defendants into self-incriminating verdicts. The SVU trial marked the beginning of the end for Ukrainization, leading to the annihilation of the pre-Soviet Ukrainian intelligentsia and their banishment to forced labor camps.

5.2 The Gulag
In the 1930s, the Soviet Union established a system of concentration camps known as the Gulag, with the aim of eliminating opposition to the regime. These camps, initially repurposed from tsarist prisons, subjected prisoners to brutal labor and inhumane conditions. The Solovetsky Special Purpose Camp, located in the Solovetsky Islands, became a symbol of this system. Ukrainian prisoners, including farmers, clergy, writers, and intellectuals, were among those sent to the camp. The construction of the White Sea–Baltic Sea Canal became a catalyst for further purges, with thousands of prisoners, including members of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, forced to work on the canal. The conditions in the camps were harsh, with prisoners enduring meager rations, heavy labor, and limited medical care. The Gulag system persisted until the collapse of the Soviet Union, and its impact on the Ukrainian society was devastating.

5.3 Forced Labor

The Soviet concentration camps, known as "corrective-labor camps" or "Institutions for the Re-education of the Un-submissive," served as a means of exploiting political prisoners as unpaid industrial slaves, particularly in the timber industry. The conditions in these camps were brutal, leading to high mortality rates and the physical and moral degradation of the prisoners. Foreign interest in the camps initially focused on the fate of the prisoners, but later shifted towards the economic threat they posed to Western business interests during the Great Depression. Despite concerns about forced labor, there was growing support for diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union in the United States.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Why did the Ukrainian intelligentsia become the first target for liquidation?
2. What methods did the Bolsheviks use to "reeducate" the Ukrainian intelligentsia?
3. Why was a system of concentration camps established in the first socialist state?
4. What were the top three articles of conviction in the 1930s? Why did the Ukrainians comprise the major part of prisoner-slaves?
5. Why did "democratic West" ignore reports about the use of forced labor in Soviet concentration camps?

CHAPTER 6

Stalin's Great Famine, 1932–1933

The title of the painting by Lydia Bodnar-Balahutrak in **Figure 6.1** alludes to Stalin's commandments to implement a systemic genocide. "In an effort to break the will of a nationally conscious Ukrainian farmers …, Stalin ordered the expropriation of all foodstuff and grain. His henchmen … carried out these orders beyond belief. The result was mass murder by decree." The quote for describing the Stalin's harvest comes from the chronicle, *The Armament of Ihor*, quoted in Robert Conquest's *The Harvest of Sorrow*:

> The black earth
> Was sown with bones
> And watered with blood
> For a harvest of sorrow
> On the land of Rus

Figure 6.1 *A Despot's Commandments* by Lydia Bodnar-Balahutrak, 1991. Oil, wood, collage, paper, 20 x 16 in. *Fragments Series*. The Barrett Collection, Dallas, Texas.

Moscow's implementation of "grain requisitions" served as a deceptive cover for a "special operation" aimed at breaking Ukraine's resistance to the policies of colonization. This operation involved a range of repressive measures: blacklisting, blockading, and intentionally starving the population into submission within the **territory of the Holodomor**.

6.1 The Rebellion

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- explain the intent of Stalin's genocide
- discuss the dehumanization of the Ukrainians
- describe mass uprisings of the 1930s in Ukraine

By 1932, the majority of farms in Soviet Ukraine had already undergone collectivization. In 1933, 48 percent of collective farms in Ukraine failed to pay workers for their earned workdays, leaving a staggering four million farmers and fourteen million dependents without the means to survive.

Testimonies from survivors and witnesses reveal that two-thirds of the victims were those who worked on the collective farms. There were no farms to collectivize because Ukraine was singled out to be the first republic to comply with the Soviet experiment. It is crucial to note that collectivization itself was not the issue. Instead, the confiscation of all edible resources, down to the last kernel of wheat or potato or a pot of borsch on the stove was the primary cause of the devastating death toll during the forced starvation of Ukrainians.

Soviet historians have argued that Stalin employed organized terror to preserve the collective farm system and his own position as head of the All-Union Communist Party. Stalin achieved this through masterminding a deliberate famine. However, the economic rationale fails to explain the intent of genocide. The famine was deliberately imposed on territories predominantly inhabited by non-Russian populations, encompassing Ukraine, extending to the Northern Caucasus and even as far as the Central Asian republics that fell under Moscow's economic colonization.

The peak of the campaign to liquidate small farm proprietors coincided with the trial of Ukrainian intelligentsia in February and March of 1930. Thousands of Communist Party and Communist Youth League activists were mobilized for the "grain procurement" campaign, swayed by propaganda that labeled the so-called "kulaks" as pariahs and untouchables. This narrative, as depicted in *Forever Flowing* by Vasily Grossman, a Soviet Jewish correspondent, reveals the degrading perception of "kulaks" as subhuman. In the novel, Anna, a war widow from southern Russia, who arrived in Ukraine to answer the party's call for the intensification of grain procurement, confessed that the incessant propaganda dehumanized the victims as deserving utmost contempt: "they stank; they all had venereal diseases; they were enemies of the people and exploited the labor of others."

Figure 6.2 A tugboat brigade during grain confiscations in the village of Novokrasne of the Arbuzyn district, now Mykolaiv region, November–December 1932. Members of the brigade hold specially made metal probes used by the activists to search for the last food reserves buried in the ground by the villagers. The owner, who was hiding grain, was sentenced to a 10-year term in a concentration camp. Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

Relentless propaganda instigated hatred toward those targeted for annihilation. Slogans repeated at meetings, special instructions broadcast on the radio, and scenes of kulaks burning grain shown at movie theaters created an atmosphere of animosity. Stalin himself referred to them as "parasites" and openly advocated for their destruction. To the perpetrators, these individuals were not human. Members of the Communist Party, local activists, and particularly the ***buksyry***, or tugboat brigades (see **Figure 6.2**), dispatched to expedite grain procurement, displayed no sympathy for the condemned. They firmly believed that eliminating these "enemies of the people" would bring about immediate happiness. Tugboat brigades, often larger than local brigades, sometimes consisted of 800 members from various organizations such as Komsomol, communists, non-communists, and pioneers, included zealous fanatics who settled personal scores while loudly proclaiming their "political awareness" and simultaneously pilfering from others.

The Bolshevik perpetrators denied the humanity of independent-minded Ukrainian farmers. The targeted members of the group were equated with vermin, insects, or diseases. This dehumanization overcame the natural human aversion to murder. Hate propaganda in print and on the radio vilified the victim group. Bolshevik leaders taught their followers to regard victims as alien to society. In Ukraine, farmers, labeled ***kurkuli***, were portrayed as spiders, snakes, or vermin in Soviet propaganda posters. **Figure 6.3** and **Figure 6.4** from the January 1930 issue of the *Chervonyi perets* (Red Pepper), satirical biweekly magazine, printed in Kharkiv, featured on its front cover an illustration of three men attempting to sneak into a collective farm with a locked gate under the cover of night. The headline states: "From the front – 'holy men,' but from the rear …" The cartoonist, B. Fridkin, directs the reader's attention: "Collective farmer! Before admitting these three citizens into your collective farm, go to page 4." The punch line on the bottom of page 4 reads: "See?! With a shotgun, an ax, and a can of gasoline, the '*kurkuli* are growing into socialism.'" The top half of the front cover is yellow, while the bottom half is blue. Yellow and blue colors were used in Soviet propaganda cartoons, hinting that these "saboteurs" were Ukrainian nationalists, as yellow and blue are national colors of Ukraine.

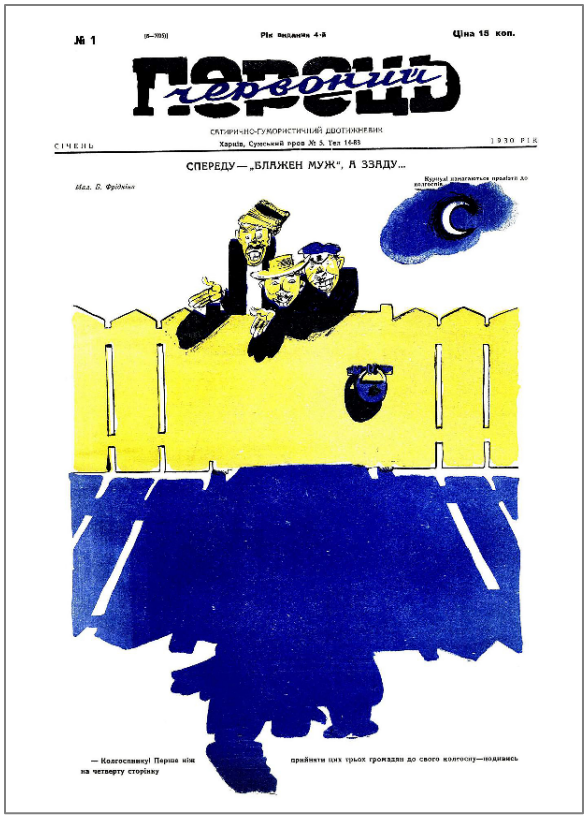


Figure 6.3 Propaganda cartoon in the *Chervonyi perets* (Red Pepper) satirical biweekly magazine, 1930 (front). Courtesy of the National Library of Ukraine named after V. I. Vernadskyi.

Figure 6.4 Propaganda cartoon in the *Chervonyi perets* (Red Pepper) satirical biweekly magazine, 1930 (back). Courtesy of the National Library of Ukraine named after V. I. Vernadskyi.

The dictator ruling from the Kremlin had anticipated that the Ukrainian people would resist his plans and took preemptive measures to prevent armed uprisings. Searches were conducted in towns and villages, targeting every household to seize any form of weapons, including hunting rifles. Secret orders and instructions regarding the confiscation of arms were issued prior to Stalin tightening his control over Ukraine. As a result, the rebels had to resort to using farm tools since the weapons remaining from the war for national liberation in Ukraine had been taken away by the GPU, and civilians were prohibited from possessing any firearms. While ordinary citizens were stripped of their arms, communists were allowed to carry weapons, with German semi-automatic Mauser C96 pistols becoming the symbol of status for Soviet commissars.

In 1930, Ukrainian farmers armed themselves with sticks, pitchforks, and axes, posing a threat to Stalin's plans. The GPU documented a surge of violence against the Soviet regime. The Ukrainian SSR

experienced the highest number of recorded mass uprisings in 1930, totaling 4,098 (as shown in **Figure 6.5**). Since the success of Stalin's project relied on Soviet Ukraine, there were significantly more disturbances in this region compared to the other three major grain-producing regions: Central Black Earth (1,373), Northern Caucasus (1,061), and Lower Volga (1,003), where a considerable number of Ukrainian farmers resided. These uprisings in Ukrainian villages undermined the legitimacy of the Soviet government.

Figure 6.5 Mass Uprisings in the Ukrainian SSR in 1930. Courtesy of the DNVP "Kartohrafiia," 2019.

The map illustrates that Volyn and Podillia regions witnessed a higher number of insurgencies, with rebels gaining control over district centers. Groups of villagers, ranging from 300 to 500, armed themselves with handmade weapons and attacked Soviet guards, who returned fire with machine guns. According to Vsevolod Balytskyi, the head of the GPU in Ukraine, the Soviets lost control of most villages in the Shepetivska border area. In the Liubarskyi district, twenty-nine village councils were dissolved, and police units were expelled from the district center. By early March, the uprising had spread from the town center to neighboring villages, where insurgents utilized horses from the collective farm and, armed with pitchforks or knives, targeted Communist Youth League members, Communist Party members, and Soviet plenipotentiaries. By mid-March, sixteen districts in the Ukrainian western border zone were overrun by insurgent farmers, resulting in the takeover of 340 village committees and 73 village soviets in Tulchynskyi and two nearby districts. New administrations were elected in those villages liberated from Soviet control.

Stalin closely monitored the situation in Tulchyn. On March 19, 1930, Balytskyi wrote to Stanislav Kosior, the top Communist Party official in Soviet Ukraine stating that "Stalin is proposing the adoption of more aggressive measures in the Tulchynskyi district," and emphasized the need for decisive action instead of speeches. The uprisings were suppressed forcefully, involving the use of machine guns and artillery in

certain areas. Concurrently, uprisings further erupted in the south, in regions settled by German Mennonite agricultural colonists, gradually advancing toward the then Soviet Ukrainian capital of Kharkiv. The peak of the riots occurred in March 1930, coinciding with the SVU trial, which aimed to divert attention from the coordinated operation to suppress the people's struggle for freedom from colonial subservience. Despite the GPU's proclamation of "peace having returned to practically all of Ukraine," another large-scale uprising erupted in early April in Pavlohrad, Dnipropetrovsk region, resulting in the deaths of twenty Communist Party plenipotentiaries.

The aftermath of uprisings in Soviet Ukraine resulted in the deportation of entire families to GPU concentration camps as a form of retribution. Approximately 150,000 were deported, while 170,000 were sentenced for crimes against the state, leading to the confiscation of their property. By 1931, mass uprisings in Ukraine were suppressed, but determined insurgents resorted to new tactics, forming small, isolated units. The GPU reported the presence of 288 such "gangs" operating in the republic. The number of protesters significantly declined from over one million in 1930 to 75,000 in 1931. During the second wave of repressions in 1931, over 130,000 insurgents were deported from Ukraine. However, by July 1932, the number of mass protests tripled from 319 the year before to 923, with over 200,000 participants.

Faced with the escalating resistance in Ukraine, which was spiraling out of control, Stalin, while on vacation in Crimea in August 1932, authorized arrests and executions under the pretext of the "protection of socialist property" law. It became known as **"five ears of wheat" law**. Anyone gleaning stalks of wheat after the crop was collected could get a sentence of ten years of imprisonment or death for the "misappropriation of collective farm property." Even children caught picking handfuls of grain from collective farm fields were convicted.

To suppress uprisings and resistance to grain and food confiscations in the countryside, the GPU, militia, and army detachments carried out "special operations" in Ukraine. Dr. Gregory H. Stanton noted that genocide is typically organized by the state, often using militias to maintain plausible deniability. Resistance efforts by Ukrainian farmers sometimes persisted for several days and nights, and some cases, weeks. Villages were set on fire, and participants – men, women, and children – were either captured, executed, or exiled to labor camps. In October 1932, a rebellion in Ukrainian Cossack settlements erupted in the Kuban area of the Northern Caucasus. Nearly 6,000 armed Cossacks, along with a larger number of unarmed men, fought the local GPU troops. Following a brief night engagement, more than half of the secret police officers were killed. Several GPU units were completely wiped out. The Ukrainians successfully repelled the government troop attacks for five days, but on the sixth day, the government forces acquired additional artillery, tanks, and chemical weapons. Finally, on the thirteenth day the resistance was crushed.

Click and Explore

To learn more about the causes and consequences of mass uprisings in 1930 in Soviet Ukraine, watch a documentary created by the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

6.2 Extermination by Starvation

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- discuss extermination measures used by Stalin's henchmen in Ukraine and Ukrainian settlements in the Northern Caucasus to suppress the opposition to the regime

One of the repressive measures introduced during the Soviet era to punish those who failed to fulfill grain-requisition targets was blacklisting, known as ***chorni doshky*** (see **Figure 6.6**). Names of proprietors and collective farms were publicly displayed on billboards and published in newspapers as a means of condemnation. The practice of blacklisting collective farms was first implemented on November 4, 1932 by Stalin's appointee in the Northern Caucasus, Lazar Kaganovich, the head of the extraordinary grain-procurement commission. He went to Ukrainian Cossack farmsteads to convince them into "voluntarily" surrendering surplus grain. The decision to condemn farmers for "maliciously sabotaging" grain procurement was made by Stalin.

The blacklisting policy was later implemented in Ukraine with a resolution "On Measures to Strengthen Grain Procurement" adopted on November 18, 1932 by the Communist Party in Ukraine. During Molotov's second visit to Kharkiv, then the capital of Soviet Ukraine, he spent two days with Ukrainian communists discussing how to implement Stalin's instructions, specifically the blacklisting piloted in the Northern Caucasus. The Ukrainian resolution closely mirrored the Northern Caucasus resolution, with minor variations. The repressive measures, outlined in these resolutions, aimed to physically destroy Ukrainian farmers and suppress resistance. They included:


ЧОРНА ДОШКА
СІЛ, ЩО ЗЛІСНО САБОТУЮТЬ ХЛІБОЗАГОТІВЛІ
1. Село ВЕРБКИ, Павлоградськ району,
2. Село ГАВРИЛІВКА, Межівськ району.
1. Село Вер ки—Павлоградського району
2. Село Гаврилівн —Межівського району
3. КОЛГОСП «КОМІНТЕРН» —АПОСТОЛІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
4. КОЛГОСП «ЧЕРВОНЕ КОЗАЦТВО» — АПОСТОЛІВСЬКОГО Р-НУ.
5. КОЛГОСП ІМ. ШЕВЧЕНКА —БЕРДЯНСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
6. КОЛГОСП «ЧЕРВОНИЙ СТЯГ» — БЕРДЯНСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
7. КОЛГОСП «КОМІНТЕРН» —ВАСИЛЬКІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
8. КОЛГОСП ІМ. ЧУБАРЯ—ВАСИЛЬКІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
9. КОЛГОСП ІМ. СТАЛІНА—В.-БІЛОЗЕРСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
10. КОЛГОСП «КОМІНТЕРН»—В.-БІЛОЗЕРСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
11. КОЛГОСП «ІСКРА»—В.-ЛЕПЕТИСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
12. КОЛГОСП «БЛЮХЕРА—В.-ЛЕПЕТИСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
13. КОЛГОСП «ЗАПОРОЖЕЦЬ»—ГЕНІЧЕСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
14. КОЛГОСП «ОБОРОНА КРАЇНИ»—ГЕНІЧЕСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
15. КОЛГОСП «17 ЖОВТ»—КОЛАРІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
16. КОЛГОСП «КОМІНТЕРН»—КОЛАРІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
17. КОЛГОСП ІМ. ВОРОШИЛОВА—КРИВОРІЗЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
18. КОЛГОСП «ЧЕРВОНА УКРАЇНА»—КРИВОРІЗЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
19. Колгосп «ЧЕРВОНИЙ ПРАПОР»—МАГДАЛИНІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
20. КОЛГОСП «ГІГАНТ»—МАГДАЛИНІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
21. КОЛГОСП «ЛЕНІНСЬКИЙ ШЛЯХ»—МЕЖІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
22. КОЛГОСП «РЕЙХЕНФЕЛЬД»—МОЛОЧАНСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
23. КОЛГОСП «АВАНГАРД»—МОЛОЧАНСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
24. КОЛГОСП «ШАХТАР»—НИКОПІЛЬСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
25. КОЛГОСП ІМ. ЛЮБИМОВА—Н.-ВАСИЛІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
26. КОЛГОСП «ГІГАНТ»—Н.-ВАСИЛІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
27. КОЛГОСП «ШЛЯХ ЛЕНІНА» Н. СИРОГІЗЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
28. КОЛГОСП «ШИРОКЕ ПОЛЕ»—Н.-СИРОГІЗЬКОГО РАЙ
29. КОЛГОСП «ВІЛЬНИЙ СТЕП»—ПАВЛОГРАДСЬКОГО ЛОН.
30. КОЛГОСП «КОМІНТЕРН»—ЧЕЧЕЛ. СІЛЬР., П'ЯТИХ ТСЬКО
31. КОЛГОСП «10-РІЧЧЯ ЖОВТНЯ»,—ЧЕЧЕЛ. СІЛЬРАДИ, П
ХАТСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
32. КОЛГОСП «ІНТЕРНАЦІОНАЛ»—СОЛОНЯНСЬКОГО РАЙОН.
33. КОЛГОСП «РАДЯНСЬКА УКРАЇНА»—СОЛОНЯНСЬКОГО РАЙОН
34. КОЛГОСП ІМ. ПЕТРОВСЬКОГО—БЕРЕСТЯН. СІЛЬРАДИ, Ц.-
СТЯНТИНІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
35. КОЛГОСП «14-РІЧЧЯ ЖОВТНЯ»—Ц.-КОСТЯНТИНІВСЬКОГО
36. КОЛГОСП «ЗЕЛЕНИЙ ЛАН»—БОЖЕДАРІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
37. КОЛГОСП «ЗЕЛЕНИЙ ГАЙ»—БОЖЕДАРІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
38. КОЛГОСП «П'ЯТИРІЧКА» — Н.-ТРОЦЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
39. КОЛГОСП «ЧЕРВОНА УКРАЇНА»—Н.-ТРОЦЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
40. КОЛГОСП «ПРОГРЕС»—В.-ТОКМАЦЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
41. КОЛГОСП «ЧЕРВОНА ЗІРКА»—В.-ДНІПРІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.
42. КОЛГОСП ІМ. ПЕТРОВСЬКОГО—В.-ДНІПРІВСЬКОГО РАЙОН
43. «КОМІНТЕРН»—ЛОЗОВАТСЬКОЇ СІЛЬР., ЛИХІВСЬКОГО РАЙОНУ
44. КОЛГОСП ІМ ВОРОШИЛОВА—ЛОЗОВАТСЬКОЇ СІЛЬРАДИ, ЛИХІ
СЬКОГО РАЙОНУ.

Figure 6.6 Blacklisted collective farms and villages, published in newspaper *Zoria* on January 1, 1933. Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

a) the immediate suspension of trade activities in the villages and the removal of all available goods from cooperative and state stores;
b) the prohibition of trade activities among collective farms and private farmers;
c) the suspension of crediting activities;
d) investigations of collective farms in these villages and the removal of "counterrevolutionary elements" and the organizers of grain-collection disruptions.

Regional executive committees were tasked with implementing these measures and reporting to the Communist Party's Central Committee. Independent farmers faced fines in the form of an additional meat procurement and potato quotas. If independent farmers delivered grain by established deadlines, these fines could be canceled. However, fines could also be doubled in extraordinary circumstances. Moreover, all loans of seed grain issued to independent farmers had to be repaid and credited to collective farm quotas. To enforce these measures, brigades of collective farm activists were organized, with a target of dispatching at least 1,100 throughout Ukraine by December 1, 1932.

If each of these 1,100 brigades dispatched in Ukraine searched 100 households, each with an average of five people, approximately 550,000 people, or about 3 percent of the population of 20 million, were affected. However, these 3 percent of households were responsible for producing 20 percent of the grain, indicating that independent farmers, though a minority, were disproportionately impacted. For instance, in two districts in the Poltava region, regular search brigades procured 7,046 metric tons in 67 villages, while a tugboat brigade procured 8,107 metric tons in 25 villages. Tugboat brigades, consisting of 50 to 200–800 outsiders, often employed forceful tactics to achieve "impressive results." This highlights the oppressive nature of Stalin's policy, often overlooked by critics who attempt to downplay Soviet totalitarianism and depict the Soviet Union as comparable to Western societies, "nothing to fear and even something to admire."

On December 6, 1932, communist authorities of the Ukrainian SSR adopted a joint resolution "On Adding Villages that Maliciously Sabotage Grain Procurements to the Blacklist." This resolution listed six villages in Dnipropetrovsk, Odesa, and Kharkiv regions to be added to the All-Ukrainian blacklist. It contradicted the previous resolution issued on November 18 as it targeted entire villages rather than collective farms as units of socialist economy or village soviets as administrative units. Consequently, all blacklisted village residents, including farmers, entrepreneurs, machine-tractor station workers, and teachers were condemned. The goal of the Stalin's policy was not simply to meet grain procurement targets, but to create conditions that made life of all village residents impossible. Ultimately, the Ukrainian SSR was secretly blacklisted by January 1933.

An aspect of the policy that received little publicity and remains understudied is blockade of areas at night by military and GPU troops before the search operations conducted by the tugboat brigades. Official documents do not explicitly outline instructions to blockade blacklisted villages, but it is evident that such control over population movement was necessary to enforce the ban on trade in the famine-stricken areas. Witnesses have provided chilling accounts of the experience of being blacklisted and living under village blockades enforced by troops. Survivors from the blacklisted village Liutenka vividly remember the roads and paths being blocked by GPU patrols, preventing anyone from entering or leaving the village. Goods were confiscated from stores, and essential items like salt, matches, oil, soap, and medicine were seized. Schools, the mill, pharmacy, and post office were all closed. Special brigades conducted house-to-house searches for grain, although nothing was found. In December 1932, a mass death toll was witnessed, and the blockade was not lifted until the beginning of the spring sowing season in 1933.

Mikhail Frenkin, a teacher in an adult school in the Zhytomyr region, recounted how villages were blockaded by special GPU units. Frenkin described how teachers, especially the Komsomol and Communist Party members, assisted in this task. During the night, mobile units of the GPU (*mangruppy* – in Russian, maneuverable groups) drove arrested villagers to the railcars waiting for deportation. This operation was conducted in secrecy, and the Communist Party apparatus actively participated. Any dissenting voice would lead to immediate arrest, as part of the terrifying campaign of repression.

To legitimize this special GPU operation, a decree was published in the press on November 26, 1932 by the Commissariat of Justice and Prosecutor General of Ukraine. The decree asserted that repressive measures were necessary to suppress "sabotage" and "class resistance against grain procurement" in 243 districts in Soviet Ukraine. In 1932, the GPU arrested 21,197 "saboteurs" (1,491 in August, then 2,526 in September, followed by 2,850 in October, and an additional 14,330 in November). The majority of arrests occurred in November, coinciding with Molotov's visit to Ukraine, which aimed to extract as much grain as possible. Individuals were arrested under various pretexts. One-third of the arrested were charged under the new law on protection of socialist property, known as "five ears of wheat" law, adopted in August 1932. Another third was arrested for agitation against the grain-requisition campaign. The remaining third was arrested for speculation, refusal to transport grain, or criticism of authorities. Most of those targeted were independent proprietors, and 16.8 percent were labeled *kurkuli*.

Repressions further intensified, when on December 5, 1932, Balytskyi, the head of the GPU in Soviet Ukraine, issued "Operative Order of the GPU USRR No. 1." This order outlined the main task of the GPU to defeat the "counterrevolutionary underground." A special operative group, led by Karl Karlson, the deputy head of the GPU in Soviet Ukraine, was formed to carry out this mission. By mid-December, the operation resulted in the arrest of 16,000 "enemies of the people" and the confiscation of 11,340 tons of grain. Balytskyi reported that the GPU had apprehended "bandit formations" supposedly organized by the Ukrainian National Republic's government-in-exile. The operation also targeted former members of parties dissolved by the Bolsheviks, students and professors from Kyiv institutes, and "saboteurs" on collective farms. In total, 589 such groups were accused of "sabotaging" grain procurement. It becomes evident that the pretext of "grain procurement" served as a cover for the organized GPU operation that primarily targeted Ukrainians associated with national aspirations for independence.

Click and Explore

To learn more about the law of "five ears of wheat," watch **Holodomor: Stalin's Secret Genocide**, a documentary directed by Andrea Chalupa and produced by the Holodomor National Awareness Tour, the Canadian Research and Documentation Centre, the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, and the Canada Ukraine Foundation.

6.3 Collapse of Schools

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- explain how the genocidal famine was unfolding in urban and rural settings
- discuss how the prolonged starvation affected children

Oleksandra Radchenko, a teacher of the Russian language in Soviet Ukraine, left a poignant account of the Holodomor in her diaries, documenting both her observations and thoughts on the unfolding tragedy. Radchenko was deeply affected by the horror she witnessed in her village. She lamented dwindling numbers of children in her school, noting their emaciation and infestation with parasitic worms due to the lack of food.

Radchenko recounted horrifying stories of kidnappings, cannibalism, and the sale of human meat disguised as sausages in the market. Overwhelmed by despair, she grappled with the realization that countless children were being starved to death while feeling helpless to alleviate their suffering. As the death toll rose and entire villages succumbed to starvation, Radchenko continued to report on the devastating impact of the famine. Her writing led to her arrest in 1945 on charges of "anti-Soviet propaganda." She courageously defended her words during the trial, emphasizing the need for future generations to know the truth about the brutal methods employed to build socialism. Radchenko eventually returned to Ukraine after years in labor camps and was posthumously rehabilitated in 1991. Her diaries, revealing the harsh reality of the Holodomor (see excerpts in **Witness Accounts**), were finally accessed by her family a decade later, shedding light on the extent of the genocide.

In an effort to secure the loyalty of teachers, the authorities offered generous rewards and privileges during the period from 1928 to 1932 in Soviet Ukraine. Primary school teachers saw their salaries double in addition to receiving periodic bonuses, housing, social security, and pensions. Even during the famine, teachers who remained loyal to the regime were included on a list to receive food rations (***paiki***) for

themselves and their dependents. However, archival documents reveal that by spring of 1932, teachers in rural areas were facing food shortages. A letter from Mayorov, the secretary of the Odesa regional bureau of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, expressed concerns about the impact of the shortage on teachers' morale and a possibility of a significant shortage of teachers for the new school year. He requested food supplies for 80 percent of the rural teachers and their dependents to sustain them until the next harvest.

The blame for the "irregularities" in supplying teachers and delayed payment of salaries was shifted to the *kurkuli* and "their agents" who tried to "hamper cultural-educational work." The All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee newspaper *Visti* reported on March 17, 1932 that the Commissariat of Supply, the Ukrainian Co-operative Association, and the Ukrainian Collective Farm Center made efforts to arrange supplies for teachers from collective farms within ten days. However, ten days were not enough for the three bureaucratic agencies to comply with the directive but too long for teachers to go without bread or salary to buy it. Consequently, the shortage of teachers reached 98 percent by the start of the school year in 1933, leaving many rural schools in Ukraine without students and teachers.

To survive, teachers taught their students how to subsist on food surrogates, including digging for gophers' food stores, collecting beans in the fields, and even consuming clay. After vandalizing birds' nests, children resorted to eating grasses, insects, worms, tree buds, mushrooms, and various weeds. They endured harsh conditions, often walking to school barefoot while the privileged few, especially the children of village activists or GPU officers, could afford to wear boots.

The collective farms provided food for those who worked in the fields but not their children, forcing them to fend for themselves. However, when mass deaths among the farmers became widespread, the authorities sent children to weed sugar beets. A survivor recounted, "How could we weed when we could hardly stand on our feet? But they fed us according to how well we weeded."

If teachers had the means, they would nourish their students with a dish called ***zatirka***. The recipe was simple: a little flour mixed thoroughly with water, seasoned with salt, and boiled. Once the *zatirka* was removed from the stove, each child would receive a portion of 200–300 grams. When spring arrived, some sorrel and newly harvested potatoes were added to the *zatirka*, transforming it into a "borsch" of sorts. Salt was scarce due to the deliberate suspension of trade in villages, and there was a lack of animal fat and oil, making these ingredients unobtainable. Teachers in schools received a supplement to their "borsch" in the form of a spoonful of beans cooked in water, and the schoolchildren received the same, except for the children of "enemies of the people."

Figure 6.7 Schoolchildren from the village of Rakovychi, Radomysl district, Kyiv region (hot breakfast), 1934. Courtesy of *TsDKFFAU*, od. obl. 2-3348.

In 1932–1933, rural schools introduced "hot breakfasts." A photograph taken in 1934 captured well-fed schoolchildren from the village of Rakovychi in the Radomysl district of the Kyiv region a year after the peak of the genocidal famine (**Figure 6.7**). These children were survivors from a district that had lost one third of its population between 1932 and 1933. In the first half of 1932, out of 3.5 million children in rural schools in Soviet Ukraine, only 73,000 received

such a "hot breakfast," consisting of 100 grams of bread substitute and a cup of tea per day. Only 15–20 percent of schoolchildren and 40 percent of teachers in rural schools were provided with "hot breakfasts," especially those showing signs of physical exhaustion or anemia. Two-thirds of children were too malnourished to even walk to school. During that time, nearly 10 percent of children in Soviet Ukraine suffered from anemia, and five percent suffered from tuberculosis. Despite the provision of the "hot breakfasts" to 15–20 percent of the republic's 4.4 million schoolchildren, one must question whether the Soviet government intended to "save" these children.

Two years after millions of children were starved to death by the genocidal famine, the Bolsheviks continued to conceal their crime. The slogan "Children – our happiness" appeared on the front page of the newspaper *Za bilshovytskyi nastup* (For the Bolshevik Offensive), published by the Markhlevskyi district Communist Party committee on September 10, 1935, to welcome students and teachers at the beginning of the school year. The front page article featured portraits of Lenin and the "beloved teacher" Stalin, along with a quote from Moscow's emissary to Ukraine, Postyshev, emphasizing "Work with children – Bolsheviks' pride."

Figure 6.8 Vasyl Ivchuk, school principal in the village Dudarkiv, Boryspil district (second row, second on the left) with his colleagues and fifth-grade students, 1937. Courtesy of the Museum of the History of Education of Kyiv Region, od. obl. 3191.

Vasyl Ivchuk, the school principal in the village of Dudarkiv, Boryspil district, Kyiv region, demonstrated remarkable resourcefulness in ensuring meals for children across all grades (see **Figure 6.8**). To provide additional nourishment, Ivchuk organized a practicum with a local meat processing plant, allowing his students to work after classes in exchange for a cup of soup. Through this ingenious initiative, the principal managed to save all school-age children in his village from starvation. However, the Soviet government did not forget his actions; he was arrested and executed five years after the genocidal famine.

In June 1933, recognizing the likelihood of many classrooms being empty on the first day of school, Volodymyr Zatonskyi proposed to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) to lower the age of admission to the first grade from eight to seven years. He suggested implementing this policy at the beginning of the 1933–1934 school year, utilizing budget allocations for pre-school groups. By doing so, schools could increase their enrollment by hundreds of thousands of children. However, despite exhausting all available "reserves" and enrolling pre-school children below the age of eight in the first grade, the situation remained catastrophic. On September 9, 1933, in the Vinnytsia region alone, the school attendance was only 45 percent in the Novoushytskyi district, 56 percent in the Yanushpilskyi, and 50 percent in the Horodotskyi districts. The high mortality rate among children and teachers resulted in the closure of twenty-eight schools in the Kharkiv region on September 1, 1933. In the Krasnohrad district alone, 62 percent of primary school children (grades 1 through 4) and 58 percent of secondary school children (grades 5 through 7) did not show up on the first day of school.

As the new school year started in 1933, a teacher entered the classroom and noticed the alarming absence of children. Starting the roll call, the teacher called out names. Referring to the previous year's roster, the teacher expected to see thirty-eight children, but after marking names with crosses, he counted only fourteen still alive. After 1931, all Soviet schools had to conclude lessons with a ritual in which children

stood at their desks and, in unison chanted "Thanks to comrade Stalin for our happy childhood!" Choking on tears, the teacher stood up before the children were required to perform the ritual and hurried out of the classroom.

Vasyl Bashtanenko recalled the distressing conditions faced by children who, swollen from prolonged starvation, were compelled to attend school but could hardly learn anything. Among his twenty-five classmates, 70 percent were afflicted with swelling. Oles Derhachov, a history teacher in the village of Pshenychne, Solonianskyi district, Dnipropetrovsk region, recounted instances of children dying in school. Children would recite their homework, only to lose consciousness and collapse at their desks. Emaciated children who sought medical assistance in the nearby village of Novopokrovka would perish at the doorstep of the clinic. Others would meet their end on the streets. Alexander Wienerberger, an Austrian engineer who had worked in Kharkiv, the former capital of Soviet Ukraine, captured a photograph depicting the plight of starving and neglected children (see **Figure 6.9**).

Figure 6.9 "Hungernde und verwahrloste Kinder, die sogenannten 'Besprisornyje'" (Starving and neglected children, the so-called *bezprytulni*) by Alexander Wienerberger, 1933. Source: *Muss Russland hungern? Menschen- und Völkerschicksale in der Sowjetunion* by Ewald Ammende and Alexander Wienerberger (Wien: W. Braumüller Universitäts-Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1935). Courtesy of *TsDKFFAU*, od. obl. 0-249172.

In May 1933, in the village of Rudky, Tsarychanskyi district, Ivan Brovko, a seventeen-year-old teacher, witnessed the tragic moment when ten-year-old Mariika Hailo sighed, rested her head on the desk, supported by her swollen hands, and peacefully succumbed to eternal slumber. The classroom fell into silence, profoundly affected by the scene. Only Lenin's portrait hanging above the blackboard on the wall wore a smile. Amid the eerie quietude, a loudspeaker in the schoolyard blared a cheery song: "Our life is joyful today and will be happier tomorrow!" No one came to retrieve Mariika's lifeless body and give her a proper burial. Her mother, slowly succumbing to starvation, could not attend. Her sister had passed away the previous month, and her father, who had died the day before, was interred in a mass grave. Mariika joined her father, a war veteran and amputee, in that anonymous resting place.

Schoolchildren across Soviet Ukraine suffered severely from starvation, particularly in rural areas. At the beginning of the 1934–1935 school year, enrollments declined. However, the enrollment of Russian children in primary schools increased from 8.6 to 11 percent, driven by the resettlement of Red Army veterans and loyalists from Russia into depopulated villages affected by the genocidal famine. Tugboat brigades that were previously assigned to carry out grain requisitions were dispatched to welcome new settlers. Often local population resented the newcomers, muddied their water wells, and burned their homes, especially when new settlers moved into homes left vacant by the famished and diseased Ukrainian farmers.

Click and Explore

Browse oral history archives and listen to **Children of Holodomor Survivors Speak** on the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre website.

Key Words

aktyv | buksyry | chorni doshky | "five ears of wheat" law | kurkuli | paiki | petliurivtsi | territory of the Holodomor | zatirka

Summary

6.1 The Rebellion
Mass uprisings erupted in Soviet Ukraine in 1929, peaked in 1930, and lasted until 1932, posing a threat to the success of Stalin's project. The government employed tactics of suppression, including arrests, executions, and the use of military force, to quell the uprisings. The GPU organized "special operations" that resulted in the deportation of thousands of insurgents and the confiscation of their property. The uprisings were characterized by violence, destruction, and loss of life, and efforts to resist Soviet control persisted despite the authorities' harsh measures.

6.2 Extermination by Starvation
The testimonies of survivors from blacklisted villages and witnesses provide harrowing accounts of the repressive measures implemented during Stalin's "special operation" to starve Ukrainians into submission in 1932–1933. Villages were blockaded by GPU troops, with roads and paths sealed off, essential goods seized, and facilities like schools and post offices closed. Special brigades conducted thorough searches for grain and anything edible, leaving households devastated. The repressive nature of the policy is evident in the disproportionate impact on independent farmers, who constituted a minority but produced a significant portion of the grain. The press published decrees justifying these actions, while arrests and repressions increased, targeting "saboteurs" and nationally conscious Ukrainians. The starvation was a result of a deliberate GPU operation disguised as grain procurement, aimed at suppressing dissent and undermining Ukraine's independence.

6.3 Collapse of Schools
During the genocidal famine in the 1930s in Soviet Ukraine, schools were severely affected. As food supplies dwindled and starvation gripped the population, children suffered greatly. Many students were too weak to attend classes, and those who did often faced dire circumstances. Reports emerged of children dying in school, collapsing at their desks after reciting their homework. Emaciated children sought medical help but often succumbed to their conditions before receiving aid. The enrollment rates plummeted, with classrooms left nearly empty on the first day of school in 1933. The collapse of schools mirrored the overall devastation and loss of life experienced by the Ukrainian population.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Why there were more uprisings in Ukraine in 1930 than in other grain producing regions of the USSR?
2. What were some of the repressive measures used by the Kremlin authorities to "overcome resistance" in Ukraine?
3. When was the collectivization of farms in Ukraine completed? Was collectivization the main cause of genocidal extermination of Ukrainians that followed in 1932–1933?
4. In what ways were victims dehumanized?
5. What role did teachers play during the Holodomor?

CHAPTER 7

Aftermath

The map of famine featured in **Figure 7.1** covers the territories historically inhabited by Ukrainians and highlighted in various shades of red reflecting the severity of the death toll. It was originally published in October 1933 in Lviv, a city in western Ukraine that was then under Polish control. This marked a period when the Ukrainization process was halted. Under the guise of "fulfilling a grain procurement plan," the authorities confiscated grain and everything edible, concealing their genocidal intent to resolve the so-called "Ukrainian question" in Stalin's paradise. No people, no problem.

A special operation targeting Ukrainian Cossack settlements in the Northern Caucasus served as a blueprint for subsequent larger-scale operations throughout Ukraine and other Ukrainian settlements in primarily grain-growing regions of the Soviet Union. As part of the suppression, the Russian language supplanted Ukrainian as the medium of instruction. Ukrainian language books were removed from libraries and schools, often ending up being burned. The extermination of Ukrainian intellectuals commenced with the eradication of their ideas. Ukrainian history was rewritten. For generations, Ukrainians were prohibited from remembering and commemorating the victims of this genocide, with the authorities enforcing a deliberate collective amnesia.


ЗА УКРАЇНУ

БЕЗПАРТІЙНИЙ ПОЛІТИЧНИЙ ДВОТИЖНЕВИК.

Ч. 1–2. Львів, дня 1. жовтня 1933 р. Рік І.

МАПА ГОЛОДУ НА УКРАЇНІ.

Місцевості, де лютує голод, зафарбовано червоно, при чому густота зафарбованим відповідає ступневі голоду.

Figure 7.1 "Map of Famine in Ukraine," *Za Ukrainu* (*For Ukraine*, Lviv), no. 1–2, October 1, 1933. Courtesy of *TsDAHOU*, bibl. f., inv. no. 6281-0.

7.1 The End of Ukrainization

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe the Kuban operation of 1932–1933

- discuss the end of the policy of Ukrainization under the guise of the intensification of "grain procurement"

The liquidation of Ukrainization began beyond the borders of Soviet Ukraine. On December 15, 1932, Stalin and Molotov signed a resolution to "immediately discontinue Ukrainization" in the Northern Caucasus, the Central Black Earth, the Far East Region, Kazakhstan, Central Asia, and other areas and "prepare the introduction of Russian language school instruction" in all ethnically Ukrainian areas throughout the Soviet Union. In the Northern Caucasus region of Kuban, an area settled predominantly by Ukrainian Cossacks in the eighteenth century and Ukrainian farmers from Poltava and Chernihiv regions in the nineteenth century, the Ukrainian Cossack settlement *stanytsia* **Poltavska** was surrounded by GPU detachments, and all 30,000 inhabitants were herded together, allowed to bring a few personal belongings, and deported to Siberia. The following day, the regional newspaper in Krasnodar reported about the successful "liquidation" of the "Ukrainian-nationalist-Petliura nest" in Kuban. The settlement was renamed Krasnoarmeiskaia, after the Red Army regiment. As part of this process, Ukrainian language instruction was abolished in schools of Kuban, and teachers were deported.

Vadim Denisov, a Russian officer of the regional GPU, recorded how the "**Kuban operation**" of 1932–1933 was planned and executed in two stages. During the preparatory stage, lists of people to be liquidated or deported were compiled in four categories:

(1) Category A: active resisters who were to be executed;
(2) Category 1: passive resisters who would face sentences of 10 years or longer in labor camps;
(3) Category 2: disloyal who would be sentenced to five years of exile and hard labor in concentration camps, followed subsequently by permanent settlement near the Arctic Circle or, if physically fit, into administrative exile in special settlements in Siberia; and
(4) Category 3: loyalists and regime supporters who would be spared.

The process of drawing up these lists lacked investigation and was arbitrary. Once the lists were completed, a crackdown operation would commence with the involvement of additional troops.

The GPU and local militias were responsible for carrying out the operation. Roads were blocked by patrols. Executions of those listed in Category A were conducted in fields outside villages, with victims forced to dig their own graves. Reports detailing these executions, along with the lists of victims, were filed by GPU expeditionary forces. Executions also took place in prisons in Rostov and Krasnodar. Those in Category 1 were herded to local train stations and transported like cattle to transit camps, where they would be confined in GPU-run labor camps established for various industrial projects across Russia.

Children above the age of sixteen were registered separately from their parents and faced shorter terms of sentencing, while children under ten were entrusted to the care of close relatives who were not subject to deportation. These children were later placed in orphanages in different cities throughout the Soviet Union. All these crimes were never documented and left no trace in the archives. Only lists of people sentenced to execution, along with reports following the executions, were maintained by GPU field offices. The documentation related to the people transported by train to forced settlements or exile included instructions and a transport registry, but no case files containing names, birthdates, length of sentence, or reasons for sentencing were compiled.

In the Kuban operation, 2 million people were arrested, with as many as 500,000 executed, while the remaining 1.5 million were transported to the Russian Arctic Circle and Siberia, where they perished. The number of executions in the Kuban operation may seem beyond the realm of possibility. It is based on the account of the GPU operative Denisov, which could potentially involve guesswork. Yet, in retrospect, Robert Conquest attributed 1 million out of 7 million Ukrainian losses in 1932–1933 to the Northern Caucasus Territory.

The *stanytsia* Poltavska, the Ukrainian Cossack settlement, received significant attention as an example and served as a blueprint for subsequent operations. Another *stanytsia*, Umanska, which would later be renamed Leningradskaia, after the cavalry regiment stationed there, became the target. Ivan Polezhaiev, in a diary entry of February 18, 1933, recounted his arrival as the new director of the pedagogical college. He discovered that out of fifty third-year students scheduled to graduate that spring, only three instructors and eleven students were still alive. Two days later, Polezhaiev was summoned by the local GPU and instructed to remove all Ukrainian textbooks, which were then taken to the secret police headquarters. Gradually, he realized that his mission was to curtail Ukrainization within the college, a task that he found uneasy and unpleasant.

Between 1929 and 1934, during the "great purges" of educators in Ukraine, which coincided with the launch of the First Five-Year Plan and extended to the end of the Holodomor, over 30 percent of teachers were victims of repressions and executions. In December 1934, four lists of banned authors were published, which included the works of Ukrainian historians, sociologists, linguists, poets, writers, and anyone else who had been arrested. The authorities decreed that all their books must be removed from libraries, bookstores, and educational institutions, effectively eliminating their words and ideas.

The genocidal famine in Soviet Ukraine became an instrument of the nationality policy. On December 14, 1932, Stalin and Molotov signed a resolution, which demanded "correct Ukrainization" in Soviet Ukraine and other regions densely populated by ethnic Ukrainians throughout the Soviet Union. The resolution also called for a struggle against perceived "counterrevolutionary" elements, who this time were accused of organizing the famine. The greatest burden of the genocidal famine fell heavily on Ukrainian farmers, who were considered politically dangerous. However, for purely organizational reasons, they could not launch an offensive on the city and pose a direct threat to the regime. The Stalinist regime used the famine and false stories about those allegedly responsible for it as a pretext for initiating large-scale repressive campaigns and purges.

As a consequence of the "arrested Ukrainization," the repression of Ukrainian intelligentsia, particularly teachers, had a detrimental impact on the linguistic aspect of Ukrainization, ultimately diminishing its influence and signaling that the Ukrainian language was no longer the primary means of modernization. To gain social status and access new information, scientific thought and knowledge, one had to turn to the Russian language. In the subsequent years, the number of Ukrainian schools decreased, and the Soviet authorities no longer actively enforced the systematic Ukrainization of higher education. Instead, they allowed predominance of the Russian language. In 1932–1933, nearly 42 percent of schools had Russian-language classrooms, but the following year, the number increased to 94 percent. Some scholars view the identification of "local Ukrainian nationalism" as the primary threat in November 1933 to be the definitive end to Ukrainization.

It wasn't until October 1989 that the policy of russification began to be reversed, when the Ukrainian language was proclaimed the official language of the republic, to lay the foundation for the declaration of state sovereignty and eventually the independence of Ukraine in 1991. The reinstatement of independence echoed the initial proclamation made by the Ukrainian National Republic back in 1918.

7.2 Denationalization

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe Stalin's assault on the Ukrainian national development
- discuss the effects of the policy of russification

Dispatches of foreign diplomats and oral histories of Holodomor survivors provide evidence of dramatic shifts in national identity within Ukrainian society as a result of this historical trauma. In 1933, foreign diplomats openly acknowledged that Bolshevik policies in Ukraine were in part dictated by the necessity of "denationalizing those regions in which Ukrainian or German consciousness have awakened, threatening possible political difficulties in the future, and where, for the sake of the unity of the empire, it is better that a preponderantly Russian population reside." These were observations of **Sergio Gradenigo**, the Royal Consul of Italy, who wrote from the Kharkiv Consulate to the Embassy of Italy in Moscow on May 31, 1933, at the height of the genocidal famine:

> This calamity, which is claiming millions of lives, is destroying the infancy of an entire nation and is really affecting only Ukraine, Kuban, and the Central Volga. Elsewhere it is felt much less or not at all. …
>
> In conclusion: The current disaster will bring about a preponderantly Russian colonization of Ukraine. It will transform its ethnographic character. In a future time, perhaps very soon, one will no longer be able to speak of a Ukraine, or a Ukrainian people, and thus not even of a Ukrainian problem, because Ukraine will become a *de facto* Russian region.

After the suicide of Mykola Skrypnyk, Gradenigo sent a confidential report to the Italian Embassy in Moscow on July 19, 1933, describing details of Skrypnyk's death and warning about genocidal capabilities of the regime:

> The dying man was carried to the university clinic, where he regained consciousness during the blood transfusion. He told Postyshev, who had come by, that the real danger for Communism lay in Russian imperialism, which was on the rise. …
>
> Proceeding at all speed at present is the reform of Ukrainian spelling (it has been stripped of the vocative which Russian, unlike Ukrainian, does not have). In government offices the Russian language is once again being used, in correspondence as well as in verbal dealings between employees. …
>
> [W]e can only conclude that the Ukrainian people are about to go into an eclipse, which could well turn out to be a night without end, because Russian imperialism, with its present tender mercies (i.e., tender Communist mercies), is capable of wiping a nation—nay, a civilization—right off the face of the earth if we aren't very careful.

Foreign observers had long recognized Moscow's intention "to settle the Ukrainian problem once and for all" and saw the persecution of Ukrainian intellectuals, the famine, and the suppression of Ukrainian language and culture as part of a concerted effort to crush any remaining traces of Ukrainian identity. The Royal Consul General in Odesa, in a confidential letter to the Italian Ambassador in Moscow on February 19, 1934, wrote:

> The persecutions conducted against the Ukrainian intellectuals, accused of sympathizing with their colleagues and brothers in Galicia and Poland; the suicide of Skrypnyk, the Ukrainian Commissar for Public Education; the incarceration of numerous Germans [in the Volga region] accused of sympathizing with the Ukrainians; the withholding of the grain reserves from the peasants, which has turned Ukraine over the spring of last year into the site of an unprecedented famine, which according to reliable evidence has sent 7,000,000 people to their deaths; all of these things betoken the Moscow Government's intention to use every means at their disposal to crush every last vestige of Ukrainian nationalism. …
>
> Ukraine used to be the sole major population center endowed with some degree of ethnic, linguistic and historical cohesiveness that was resisting Moscow's centralization program. This obstacle may now be said to have been overcome.

A report written by a German Consulate official in Kharkiv illustrates the effects of the construction of a "Ukrainian Soviet culture." The German diplomat observed,

> Ukrainian Ukraine has been destroyed. According to approximate estimates, *one-fifth* of its 30-million population, or about 6 million, died from famine in 1932–1933. The people were now sufficiently weak to suffer the final blows of Moscow's centralism: the elimination of the hitherto obligatory Ukrainian-language examination for officials and administrators, the "reorganization" of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, the "purge" of higher education, the destruction of millions of books and other printed materials of the pre-Postyshev era...
>
> What is the situation in Ukraine today, now that Stalin's prefect has already had two and one-half years for the "construction of a Ukrainian Soviet culture"? Here are several examples:
>
> …
>
> I have the opportunity to visit the highest foreign-policy official of Ukraine. He speaks no Ukrainian. In the People's Commissariat of Ukraine, as I learn from him, Russian is spoken.
>
> In the cities one hears almost nothing but Russian. Whoever speaks Ukrainian thereby shows that he is from the countryside and is backward.
>
> Neither in Kiev, nor in Stalino [Donetsk], nor in Kharkov could I acquire a Russian-Ukrainian or Ukrainian-Russian dictionary. "This sort of thing" is no longer available.
>
> The Ukrainian press is rarely bought. … There is no Ukrainian literature. There is hardly a Ukrainian book that is not a translation from the Russian. There are no longer any Ukrainian history books.

In a report on the political situation in Ukraine in 1933, the German Consulate official under the subsection, "The Ukrainian Question," assessed the population's sentiment as follows:

> Characteristic of the population's mood is the widespread view that the Soviet government promoted the expansion of the famine so as to force the Ukrainians to their knees. The frequently heard cynical comment made by individual communists—"We do not fear the hungry; it is the well-fed who are dangerous to us!"—has contributed to strengthening this feeling, even if it hardly corresponds to the view of the party leadership.
>
> Moscow has recognized the tenseness of the situation and has even artificially increased it by the claim of German and Polish attempts at separating Ukraine.

The report, written on January 15, 1934, noted that Postyshev, Stalin's confidant, was sent to Khrakiv with unlimited powers to eliminate the danger of "separatist" tendencies in Ukraine and create the preconditions for an "assault on the Ukrainian front." The report further described how the assault on the Ukrainian national development unfolded:

> The signal was the removal of Education Commissar Skrypnyk, who had long been a representative of an emphatically Ukrainian Communist orientation. He was followed by high officials in the central apparatus in Kharkov and by leading personalities in the provinces.
>
> In the jurisdictional area professors of the Academy of Sciences and of Kiev University, directors of the Institute of Linguistics and the Kiev Film School, school directors, many employees of the "education front," and officials lost their positions and sometimes their freedom. They were all accused of working on behalf of the counterrevolution by promoting Ukrainian chauvinism—be it in language, scholarship, or literature, or be it in administrative regulations. Secret organizations with supposed ties to "German and Polish fascism" were uncovered in ways that enabled the GPU to demonstrate once again its talent for constructing highly treasonous intrigues. …
>
> Revelations of so-called organizations must be regarded with skepticism. They serve above all as a deterrent against *any* Ukrainian tendency and remind the people of the intensified vigilance of the GPU. A new phase in the struggle against Ukrainianism has begun with the well-

> known November resolutions of the supreme Party leadership in Kharkov. While they also mention the danger of "Great Russian chauvinism" in addition to "Ukrainian chauvinism," this should be regarded as only a theoretical concession to the Ukrainian masses. In reality, a continually intensifying "Great Russian Communist chauvinism" is the current rule for Soviet policy in Ukraine.

These firsthand observations made by the German Consulate official are supported by the account of Mendel Osherowitch, a Jewish journalist, who visited Ukraine, his country of birth, in early 1932. Osherowitch traveled there to see his family and document life in Soviet Union through a series of articles titled *How People Live in Soviet Russia*. One chapter of his travel notes focuses on the pervasive fear instilled by the GPU throughout the country. Without the "strongest pillar" – the GPU and many of its overt and covert agents – Stalin's regime would collapse. Notably, Osherowitch reveals that his own brother served in the GPU.

In June 1934, the capital of Ukraine was transferred back to Kyiv, the historic capital dating back to medieval times. During Soviet times, the capital had been Kharkiv, an industrial city where the Bolsheviks first established themselves in their attempt to seize control of Ukraine. The transfer symbolized the triumph over Ukrainian nationalism, as reported by the *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston) under the headline "Separatism in Ukraine Suppressed." The reporter observed, "'Symbol of victory over the nationalist elements in Ukraine' is *Izvestiia*'s, the government's newspaper, description of tomorrow's official transfer of the Ukrainian capital from Kharkov to Kiev." The shift in capitals from Kharkiv to Kyiv in 1934 was not the victory of the Ukrainian countryside over the russified industrial centers. Kyiv did not follow social trends seen in other industrialized capitals like Budapest, Prague, or Warsaw. Rather, it represented the victory of Soviet power over perceived "nationalistic counterrevolution."

7.3 Psychological Effects

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe the labor camp conditions causing serious bodily and mental harm
- discuss the psychological symptoms and syndromes suffered by the Holodomor survivors

Historians, who have examined the period from the 1920s to the 1930s, recognize it as a profound rupture in the life of Ukrainian society, with far-reaching effects on social psychology, mentality, and culture. This assessment is supported by the definition of genocide in Section (b) of Article II of the U.N. Convention on Genocide, which includes causing serious bodily or mental harm. During this time Ukrainian intellectuals and thousands of skilled farmers endured immense mental suffering in GPU labor camps and forced settlements. Approximately 60,000 "counterrevolutionaries" were among the "labor army" forced to construct the White Sea–Baltic Sea Canal. An internal investigation, conducted by a special GPU commission in 1930–1932 revealed widespread "abuse of power" by a dozen notorious camp guards at the canal. These guards engaged in systematic torture, humiliation, and murder of prisoners as a means of concealing their own administrative crimes. The prisoners experienced beatings, sexual exploitation, theft of food rations, and degrading treatment from the moment they arrived at the Kem transit station.

The guards greeted the prisoners with beatings and Russian expletives to instill a sense that the power in the camp was not "Soviet," but rather that of the "Solovets," and there was no avenue for lodging complaints with a prosecutor. The imprisoned were put naked "on the stones," confined in unheated cells. In summer, they were exposed naked to mosquito bites, or perched on narrow planks where they were forced to sit motionless in a crouched position. For a minor violation of the rules, the imprisoned were beaten up by virtually everybody, from overseers to convoys to guards, or locked into "wagons" (unheated isolation log cells) to freeze, or incarcerated into a cube one meter in height with all the walls inside lined with sharp wooden slivers. Mock executions were frequent. A failure to complete an

"assignment" could result in carrying a log with a "leave of absence" note all the way from the forest a few kilometers back to the camp. The imprisoned were forced to carry water from one ice-hole to another, shovel snow from one side of the road to another side, or repeat out loud "seagull one," "seagull two" two thousand times. Lawlessness was absolute.

The camp administration deliberately turned a blind eye to the widespread abuses taking place as violence had become institutionalized within the system. Consequently, prosecuting a dozen of the most notorious guards did not bring about any substantial change. Among the guards responsible for the abuses were former officers of the White and Red Army, former Soviet officials, and even former GPU officers. Following the investigation, twelve guards were found guilty, with three of them executed, while the rest received prison sentences from three to eight years in various GPU camps. During the trial, one of the guards stated that beatings and torture were not isolated incidents but an integral part of the system, tolerated and approved by the civilian administration. The notion that these camps aimed to forge criminals into productive members of society is unfounded, as the majority of these so-called "criminals" had committed no actual crime and did not require any "remediation."

Genocide shattered moral foundations of society, eroding respect for the elderly, compassion, kindness, honor, dignity, and mercy. In the environment of total terror and suspicion, deliberately stimulated by the ruling regime, denunciations were viewed as acts of patriotism and "class vigilance." The GPU infiltrated every aspect of life with thousands of secret agents, known as *seksots*, who eavesdropped on conversations and denounced their neighbors. The widespread practice of denunciations took a severe toll on people's psychological well-being, resulting in depression, anger, irritability, and a sense of doom. The fabric of families was torn apart as children denounced their parents and spouses betrayed each other for a meager reward of 10–15 percent of the confiscated food. The GPU did not keep records of violations, so there is little evidence of the complete lawlessness. Furthermore, arbitrary executions conducted by ***troikas***, composed of party secretary, a GPU official, and a local lumpen activist, without any semblance of trial, further eroded the already deteriorating sense of justice.

During the Holodomor, one of the most horrifying experiences of dehumanization was **cannibalism**, serving as a unique indictment of the communist regime. Scholars have documented a thousand cases of individuals convicted of cannibalism, with photographs serving as haunting evidence in the State Archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. Society continues to struggle with accepting these gruesome visual and written records. Analyzing these extreme cases of degradation, Olga Bertelsen explains that people's mental processes and cognitive abilities became entirely consumed by a single thought: where to find food. The prolonged starvation and constant uncertainty about securing food disrupted the flow of other thoughts and ideas, leading to intellectual and moral degradation. In conditions of food deprivation, the human brain functions in a way that reinforces primitive perceptions and limited intellectual strivings, weakening memory while intensifying recollections related to food-related activities until the person's death. According to memoirs of Holodomor survivors, people ceased to engage in typical daily human activities, neglecting personal hygiene, cooking, marriage, and sexual relations.

In their desperation to survive, starving people committed horrific crimes, relinquishing their ideals of freedom on both individual and collective levels. As Russian philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev noted, "freedom is always difficult; slavery is always easy," and a by-product of a hijacked enslaved mentality of "the fallen" is violence. Scholars explain that food deprivation and constant threat of death paralyze the will for freedom, free speech, and intellectual pursuits. Victims find the struggle for freedom physically and mentally impossible, with slavery appearing as a more attractive option than death. In the case of starving individuals, their inclination toward violence was conditioned by physiological and biochemical factors. The fabric of society in Ukraine underwent a profound transformation, with family ties weakened or severed, and altruism, humanism, and self-sacrifice giving way to extreme egocentrism and animalistic behavior.

Like other historians and medical professionals who have studied the effects of extreme starvation, Olga Bertelsen highlights particularly catastrophic impact that the genocidal famine of 1932–1933 had on the behavior, social conduct, and mentality of women. More women were prosecuted for cannibalism during this period. Psychiatrists view cannibalism as a symptom of mental disorder, involving a delusion that persists despite contradicting socially accepted codes of behavior. Women resorted to criminal acts because they were trapped in "double bind" situations that threatened their survival and led to dramatic changes in their personality and self-identity. Women turned ovens and gardens into burial places for "unusable" parts of human heads and bones, be it from their own child, husband, or unsuspecting passerby. Bolshevik henchmen and the GPU, dubbed "devils in military uniforms," created conditions incompatible with life, causing mental suffering among the victims-turned-criminals.

Although cases of cannibalism were primarily limited to rural areas of Ukraine, teachers were aware of this phenomenon and cautioned their children to remain vigilant and stay home to avoid the risk of being kidnapped on the way to school. The ghettoization within the sealed Ukrainian borders concealed the crime, exacerbating the famine and people's transgressions.

Prolonged exposure to images of agony and death in homes, on the streets, and in schools had severe consequences for the victims, including stress, depression, dysfunction, and pathological behavior. Drawing on the methodology used by psychologists studying post-traumatic stress disorder, historian Vitalii Ohienko identified individual and collective behavioral characteristics exhibited by Holodomor survivors. Apathy became a defense mechanism, enabling survivors to detach themselves from the painful realities they faced. Fear transformed into helplessness as the brutality of fellow human being fostered distrust and submissive behavior. The acceptance of death as inevitable robbed victims of the will to live, while desensitization dulled the shock of witnessing human skeletons strewn along roadsides or piled in railway station yards (see **Figure 7.2**). Traditional burial rituals and grieving were disrupted.

Figure 7.2 "Even childhood was not spared" (a handwritten caption in album: "Auch das Kindesalter blieb nicht verschont"), Kharkiv, 1933. Source: Alexander Wienerberger, *Die Hungertragödie in Südrussland 1933*, also known as the *Innitzer Album*, 1934, p. 16. Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

Scholars studying the social and psychological consequences of the Holodomor and its long-term effects have concluded that the Bolsheviks employed various tools of social control. In addition to concentration camps and prisons to break the will of opponents of the regime, propaganda campaigns were used to brainwash and whip up enthusiasm among their supporters. Ideology was leveraged to monopolize collective consciousness. Through a system of rewards and punishments, known as "sticks-and-carrots," those who embraced the regime were granted food rations, apartments, and promotions, while dissenters faced starvation rations, prison bunks, and eventually execution by *troikas*.

Scholars have identified several syndromes and symptoms of psychological disorders associated with the Holodomor, including hunger psychosis, fear of authority, widespread distrust, moral and physical degradation, the misuse of law leading to the criminalization of society, learned helplessness characterized by a code of silence, the loss of expertise in agriculture and entrepreneurship, fatalistic attitudes, survivor syndrome, escapism manifested as living in a dual reality, and the ***Homo Sovieticus*** syndrome, which denotes an inability to think independently outside the prescribed narrative.

One enduring characteristic of chronic collective trauma is the **Stockholm syndrome**. Iryna Reva found evidence among Holodomor descendants that suggests the existence of a psychological alliance between

the Ukrainian people and the aggressors. The result was an impulse to appear loyal to Soviet rather than national identity and a fear of using the Ukrainian language. Helpless and subservient victims of the Holodomor were compelled to identify with their perpetrators. Survivors of GPU labor camps recounted how bread was distributed ritualistically by the perpetrators to condition the victims into submission. This method of disciplining was also used on collective farms where food was provided in exchange for loyalty to the regime, leaving those who were unemployed, sick, or young without means of survival. In her memoir, "*Skazhy pro shchaslyve zhyttia…*" ("*Speak of the Happy Life …*") Anastasiia Lysyvets, who attended school during the Holodomor, vividly described how food was used as a tool to punish the non-compliant individuals and reward those who complied (read excerpts from her memoir in **Witness Accounts**). It may take several generations to fully recover from the effects of the Stockholm syndrome that has afflicted the Ukrainian psyche.

It typically takes more than two generations – Macauley says five – to erase memories of past traumas. The outcomes of historical traumas such as wars, genocides, and famines are transmitted epigenetically and have a neurobiological impact on the mental health of survivors and their descendants. Additionally, the sociocultural mechanism of trauma transmission carries psychological consequences, resulting in changed worldviews, attitudes, and behaviors. Psychologists Viktoriia Gorbunova and Vitalii Klymchuk conducted a study on the sociocultural transmission of post-traumatic stress disorder among second, third, and fourth generations of Holodomor survivors, including 721 individuals. They discovered a close connection between the pattern of silence regarding traumatic events during the Holodomor and the level of suffering experienced by respondents' families during that period. The researchers also found a correlation between avoiding discussions about the Holodomor and denying or devaluing its significance within families, particularly among individuals with limited knowledge about these traumatic events. The most prevalent behavioral strategies within families correspond to trauma-related themes, such as eating habits and attitudes towards food. The researchers suggested that truthful trauma-focused storytelling within families and communities sharing traumatic events can alleviate the psychological consequences of **transgenerational trauma**.

Click and Explore

Explore **Voices of Holodomor Witnesses** from the Holodomor Museum's series of materials about the people who survived the Holodomor genocide.

Key Words

cannibalism | denationalization | Homo Sovieticus | Kuban operation | Sergio Gradenigo | stanytsia Poltavska | Stockholm syndrome | transgenerational trauma | troika

Summary

7.1 The End of Ukrainization

The liquidation of Ukrainization began outside of Soviet Ukraine, with the arrest and deportation of Ukrainian Cossacks and farmers from the Northern Caucasus region. This operation served as a blueprint for subsequent operations, resulting in mass arrests, executions, and deportations of Ukrainians throughout the Soviet Union. The Ukrainian intelligentsia, particularly teachers, were targeted and eliminated, leading to a decline in Ukrainian-language education. The Ukrainian SSR witnessed a significant reduction in the number of teachers, while Russian language predominance was encouraged. The genocidal famine of 1932–1933 was used as a tool to suppress Ukrainian nationalism and consolidate Soviet power. The Stalinist regime capitalized on the famine, spreading false narratives, and launching repressive campaigns to further control the population.

7.2 Denationalization

Reports from foreign diplomats based on their personal observations reveal the devastating impact of Stalinist policies on Ukrainian society. These policies aimed to suppress Ukrainian nationalism and promote russification, leading to the destruction of Ukrainian language and culture. The reports highlight the effects of the elimination of Ukrainian institutions and the dominance of Russian language and culture. The fear instilled by the GPU, the Soviet secret police, further exemplifies the extent of control and repression imposed by the regime. The transfer of the capital from Kharkiv to Kyiv in 1934 symbolized the triumph of Soviet power over perceived "nationalist counterrevolution." These accounts illustrate the profound shifts in national identity and the systematic dismantling of Ukrainian autonomy during this period.

7.3 Psychological Effects

The Holodomor had profound psychological effects on individuals, families, and the Ukrainian society as a whole. The prolonged exposure to images of agony and death resulted in stress, depression, dysfunction, and pathological behavior among survivors. The trauma led to individual and collective characteristics such as apathy, fear, distrust, helplessness, resignation, desensitization, and disrupted grieving. The repressive regime utilized tools of social control, including propaganda campaigns and conditioning through food distribution, to instill loyalty and submission. Stockholm syndrome emerged, creating a psychological alliance between the Ukrainian people and their oppressors. The trauma was transmitted across generations, impacting mental health and shaping behaviors and worldviews. The consequences included silence about these traumatic events, denial, devaluation, and altered attitudes towards food.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Why was the Ukrainization campaign curtailed outside the borders of Ukraine before it was ended within the republic?
2. How did Stalin and his accomplices use the starvation of Ukrainians in 1932–1933 as an instrument of the nationality policy?
3. What was the outcome of the Kuban operation of 1932–1933?
4. What were the effects of the construction of a Soviet culture in Ukraine?
5. Which psychological syndromes are most difficult to overcome for Holodomor survivors?

CHAPTER 8

Denial

Figure 8.1 Detail of *Will the Grass Grow Over It?* by Lydia Bodnar-Balahutrak, 2014. Oil, pigmented wax, print media collage on stretched linen, 48 x 96 in. Artist's Collection.

"Where has that life gone? And what has become of all that awful torment and torture? Can it really be that no one will ever answer for everything that has happened? That it will all be forgotten without even any words to commemorate it? That the grass will grow over it?" The excerpt from Vasily Grossman's novel, *Everything Flows* spans the painted collage (**Figure 8.1**). The metaphor of growing grass that covers a truth buried by the state relates to the effects of forgetting over the natural progression of time. By posing the question to the viewer, the piece complicates a fear of forgetting with the notion of healing that can be offered through the passing of time and regrowth. From a distance, the aesthetics of nature dominate, but upon closer inspection, the piece is revealed to be composed of media clippings from Western coverage of the Holodomor that are collaged and overlaid with paint. Documentary photos of emaciated famine victims and the language of reportage symbolize the buried history beneath the surface.

The passage brings attention to the issue of denial which lasts throughout and always follows genocide (see Stages of the Holodomor as Genocide in **Appendix**). If genocide goes unacknowledged, "[it] is among the surest indicators of further genocidal massacres," warns Dr. Gregory H. Stanton, the president of Genocide Watch. Russian officials, following their Soviet predecessors, deny that the Holodomor was a genocide. Moreover, Stalin, the key perpetrator of the Holodomor, is enjoying renewed popularity in Russia, and systematic denials of Stalin's genocides against the Crimean Tatars, Chechens, and Kazakhs have become the norm in the Russian Federation. Ukraine's efforts to affirm the Holodomor as genocide clash with Russia's denial which protects its self-image. The denial tactics employed by Russia involve challenging the legal definition of the Holodomor as genocide, reinterpreting it as an "all-Union famine," concealing the true extent of population losses, and silencing the truth.

8.1 Legal Challenge

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning of the Holodomor denial
- discuss legal challenges to the definition of the Holodomor as genocide

In November 2006, Ukraine passed a law officially recognizing the Holodomor as genocide against the Ukrainian nation and criminalizing its denial. The following year, Ukraine initiated a global campaign to gain recognition of the Holodomor as genocide by the United Nations and other international organizations. In response, during the NATO Summit in Bucharest, Romania, in April 2008, the Russian State Duma (the lower house of the Federal Assembly) adopted a resolution, stating that "there is no historic evidence that the famine was organized on ethnic grounds." Earlier in March 2008, Russian diplomat Valerii Loshchinin, the envoy to the United Nations office in Geneva, told the seventh session of the U.N. Human Rights Council: "We urge against political speculation on subjects related to the general, sometimes tragic, historical past, and against using this for a voluntary interpretation of the rules of international law." The diplomat also argued that Ukraine's Holodomor should not be recognized as genocide under the 1948 U.N. Convention on Genocide.

Deniers of the Holodomor assert that Cold War politics influenced the drafting of the 1948 U.N. Convention on Genocide, "gutting" many original ideas of **Raphael Lemkin** (see **Figure 8.2**) and rendering it "stillborn." They further claim that the 1948 U.N. Convention should not be applied retroactively due to the term being coined after the famine. Legal scholars refute this argument, pointing out that the prohibition of genocide is a *jus cogens* norm that supersedes the general rule of non-retroactivity. Additionally, the 1968 U.N. Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity states that no statutory limitations apply to crimes against humanity and the crime of genocide as defined in the U.N. Convention on Genocide, regardless of the dates of their commission, "even if such acts do not constitute a violation of the domestic law of the country in which they were committed." The U.N. Convention on Statutory Limitations eliminated any potential domestic barriers to prosecution of persons for acts of genocide.

Figure 8.2 Raphael Lemkin. Photo by Arthur Leipzig. Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

Significantly, the U.N. Convention on Genocide itself reflects the ***génocidaire*** Stalin's influence as Stalin and his Foreign Minister Molotov reviewed and edited the draft. In bold red pencil, Stalin crossed out the word "political" as a motivation for committing genocide, and Molotov crossed out the entire last paragraph on cultural genocide. They also eliminated the "shortcomings" in the draft theses that they found unacceptable from the Soviet standpoint, crossing out phrases like "forced labor" and "confiscation of property." Clearly, Stalin could not incriminate himself.

Regrettably, Lemkin's conceptualization of **Soviet genocide** against the Ukrainian nation remained obscured until 2008 when typewritten notes of his 1953 speech in New York City were "discovered" in the New York Public Library and published. Historian Roman Serbyn, influenced by Lemkin's conceptualization, argues that the Holodomor meets the criteria outlined in Article II of the U.N. Convention on Genocide, asserting that the Ukrainian case falls under the two categories of "national" and

"ethnic(al)." The intent of the Soviet government was "to destroy in part" the nationally conscious elites and the vibrant farming population to reduce Ukrainians to obedient russified "cogs of the great state mechanism," Stalin's favorite imagery for Soviet citizens. Serbyn also highlights the parallel elements in Stalin's strategy, which involved both lethal and non-lethal methods to create a single state with a single Soviet people with a uniform consciousness:

> In this way Ukrainians would be destroyed as a national and an ethnic group. To achieve this goal, Stalin used lethal means, starvation imposed on the Ukrainian farming population – the costliest in terms of human lives, but also executions and deportations to Siberia of any Ukrainians opposed or accused of opposition to the regime and its policies. The nonlethal method was "reeducation" of the society into loyal citizens of the [G]reat Russian state that Stalin was building.

Putin's **hybrid warfare** in Ukraine mirrors Stalin's approach of subjugating Ukrainians through both lethal and non-lethal means.

In response to Russia's legal challenge, Ukraine initiated investigations into human rights violations committed by the Soviet government. In May 2009, the Security Service of Ukraine launched a criminal case for the crime of genocide in Soviet Ukraine in 1932–1933 and initiated court proceedings on the basis of Article 442 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine. After examining the evidence, in January 2010, the **Kyiv Court of Appeals** declared Stalin and his accomplices guilty of perpetrating "the genocide against a part of the Ukrainian national group by deliberately creating conditions of life calculated to bring about its destruction" (see **Figure 8.3**). Although the perpetrators were held accountable posthumously, this ruling set an important precedent.

Figure 8.3 Lazar Kaganovich, Joseph Stalin and Pavel Postyshev, January 1934. Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

8.2 The "All-Union Famine"

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- explain the rhetoric behind the concept of the "all-Union famine"
- distinguish between the economic cause advanced by Soviet agriculture experts and the nationality policy as the real cause of the Holodomor

The Russian rhetoric regarding the "**all-Union famine**," characterized as a "tragedy of the entire Soviet countryside," points to its economic cause and eliminates national and ethnic targeting in Ukraine and Ukrainian settlements in the Russian SFSR. To control the narrative and counter Ukraine's recognition of the Holodomor as genocide, Russian historian Viktor Kondrashin on behalf of the head of the Federal Archival Agency issued instructions to Russian scholars on how to present the "famine of 1929–1934 in the USSR." **Decree No. 47 of the Federal Archival Agency**, issued in October 2007, outlined the conceptual framework of the famine as a tragedy caused by enforced collectivization and industrialization, using the generic term "all-Union." Scholars were directed to conform their writing to this framework, suppressing any evidence of the unique situation in Ukraine. Historians were required to use a preapproved collection of documents from Russian archives. This collection of archival materials became a tool of information warfare, aiming to impose Russian political interpretation of the famine on academia and export it to Ukraine.

In January 2007, the Russian Federal Archival Agency sent a letter to the head of the State Committee on Archives in Ukraine with the same instructions, except different date range of 1932–1933 in the title, deliberately singling out the "Ukrainian factor" that had to be eliminated from the historical narrative. The following year, the agency organized an international conference in Kharkiv, titled "The Famine in the USSR in the 1930s: Historical and Political Interpretations," on the eve of the Holodomor Remembrance Day. The conference, initially planned for Kyiv, featured participants who had previously attended a Moscow conference. The participants included Viktor Kondrashin and Nikolai Ivnitskii, the authorities on famine research in the USSR, as well as Mark Tauger, professor of Russian and Soviet history at West Virginia University, and Stephen Wheatcroft, professor of Russian and Soviet history at the University of Melbourne, Australia, who used Russian archives to write his book, *The Years of Hunger*. However, the political agenda of the Ukrainian-Russian relations took precedence over historical research. Speakers at the plenary session included the Russian ambassador to Ukraine Viktor Chernomyrdin and the director of the "Historical Memory" Foundation Aleksandr Diukov among others. The conference hosts had affiliations with the pro-Russia Party of Regions. The conclusion on the causes and number of victims of the famine had been prepared in advance and distributed on a CD containing documents from Russian archives. The Russian position was further reinforced in an open letter to the presidents of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. The letter accused then President Viktor Yushchenko of using the "tragedy of the 1930s" for legitimizing his political course aimed at "excluding Ukraine from the common cultural, historical and economic space of the unique East-Slavic civilization." This conference, viewed as a provocation and insult to Ukraine, restricted participants to invitees only and was held in a remote hotel location far from the city center. It had limited impact within the academic community but succeeded in exacerbating political polarization surrounding the Holodomor.

The argument of the "all-Union famine" is propagated to shift blame away from the Communist Party and the GPU (Soviet secret police) for the genocide committed against Ukrainians. It also seeks to deny that the famine specifically targeted Ukrainians who were nationally conscious. Scholars like Stanislav Kulchytskyi, a Ukrainian historian respected by his Russian colleagues, adopted the "all-Union famine" argument as his historiographical credo due to his Communist Party upbringing. Kulchytskyi argues that the Holodomor was a "famine within the famine." Yet his colleague Vasyl Marochko questions, if there was an "all-Union famine," where was its epicenter?

Scholars who focus on the ostensible economic causes of the famine overlook the fact that the process of "total collectivization" of farms in Soviet Ukraine had already been completed by the autumn of 1931, or at the latest, the spring of 1932, which was earlier than in Soviet Russia. They disregard the arguments put forth by Dr. James E. Mace, executive director of the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, who highlighted that the famine occurred after the harvest was collected in the autumn of 1932, lasting through the winter and spring of 1933. The absence of famine in 1934, despite a smaller crop than in 1932, means there was sufficient food in 1932 but that the famine was intentionally created. Soviet records on grain harvests and state procurements indicate that the crop in 1932 was larger than in 1931, indicating that crop failure was not the cause of the famine. Rather, rapacious state procurements, which had been increasing since 1929, played a significant role. The climate had a more detrimental impact in 1931, and Soviet historians considered it a worse year than 1932. In the summer of 1932, Molotov, acting as Stalin's personal envoy, cited that drought in the Volga basin, Southern Urals, Western Siberia, and Kazakhstan in 1931 as a reason why Ukraine had to fulfill its grain procurement obligations to the central authorities.

Stalin's "crushing blow" to the Ukrainian farmers was disguised as a winter "grain procurement" campaign. It is an established fact that it was a planned operation carried out by the GPU, starting in the fall of 1932 and continuing into the spring of 1933. The GPU was assigned the task of suppressing an alleged "armed uprising aimed at overthrowing Soviet rule and establishing a capitalist order under the so-called Independent Ukrainian Republic." Simultaneously, on February 16, 1933, the Communist Party issued directives to prohibit civilian registries from documenting cases of starvation-related deaths and

transferred the registration process to the GPU. Village councils were instructed not to record the cause of death. The GPU also controlled population movement and blockaded villages, preventing starving individuals from seeking food elsewhere.

Many Western economists approach claims of the genocidal nature of the famine in Soviet Ukraine with skepticism. Alec Nove, for example, famously disagreed with Robert Conquest's assertion that Stalin's actions were directed specifically against Ukrainians, stating that the intention was to strike a "devastating blow" at peasants in grain-surplus areas, many of whom happened to be Ukrainians, rather than targeting Ukrainians, "many of whom were peasants." Such viewpoints, which focus primarily on agricultural policies, create the impression that Ukraine had no intelligentsia and that all Ukrainians were solely "peasants." However, it is important to note that in the 1930s, the world was predominantly rural, with only 22 percent urbanization. In comparison, the United States had an urban population of 56 percent, while the Soviet Union had 19 percent, which was close to the global average. The United Nations publication on population loss during the 1930s reports that no other country, except the Soviet Union, experienced such a significant decline in population. Unfortunately, specific statistics regarding the percentage of population loss in Soviet Ukraine are not provided. The epicenter of the 1932–1933 famine was in Ukraine, as well as in the Northern Caucasus and other grain-producing regions in the Russian SFSR where Ukrainian farmers had settled.

In the 1930s, the "crushing blow" to Ukrainian nationalism was piloted in the Northern Caucasus in November 1932 before it hit the core of the "national spirit" in Ukraine, synchronized with the "grain procurement" campaign. On December 15, 1932, Stalin and Molotov signed a resolution to "immediately discontinue Ukrainization" in the Northern Caucasus, the Far East Region, Kazakhstan, Central Asia, the Central Black Earth, and other areas and "prepare the introduction of Russian language school instruction" in all ethnically Ukrainian areas throughout the Soviet Union. At the same time the Soviet leaders imposed domestic and international information blockades on the famine in Soviet Ukraine.

The **"blockade decree" of January 22, 1933** created a "Stalinist ghetto," from which starving Ukrainians, young or old, could not escape. Blame for this criminal act was placed on the victims. In November 1933, "local Ukrainian nationalism" was declared to be the preeminent danger to Soviet power in the region. In January 1934, at the Seventeenth Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), **Pavel Postyshev** gloated, "The past year [1933] was the year of defeat of the nationalist counterrevolution." Not incidentally, Postyshev's speech regarding the breakthrough on the grain procurement front that devolved into scapegoating of Ukrainian "bourgeois nationalists," as well as Kosior's speech on the national question, were published in a separate brochure by the International Publishers in New York in English translation with the aim of convincing not only Western observers but even Ukrainians abroad that Bolshevik policies were victorious. Thus, the Soviet disinformation campaign killed two birds with one stone, domestically and internationally. Today, the Russian **disinformation war** follows the same logic, targeting domestic trust in the governmental institutions and international perceptions of Ukraine and its history.

8.3 Cover-Up

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- discuss the cover-up of the Holodomor losses as one of the Russian denial tactics

One of the most effective denial tactics in the Russian disinformation war is diminishing the scale of the Holodomor losses. In the 1930s, Italian, German, and Japanese diplomats filed dispatches to their respective governments, reporting about the situation in Soviet Ukraine. As early as May 31, 1933, Italian Royal Consul in Kharkiv Sergio Gradenigo reported 10–15 million killed, commenting that "[i]n my opinion this number will be surpassed and may have already been reached." A month later, in his

June 22, 1933 dispatch, Gradenigo reported 9 million deaths in Ukraine alone according to government representatives, adding that "[i]n university circles, however, there is talk of 40–50 percent of the entire Ukrainian population, a figure which I consider to be more accurate (15–16 million)."

Three years after the atrocity, in 1936, American psychologist **William Horsley Gantt** of Johns Hopkins University published an epidemiological study with results of the First Five-Year Plan in the *British Medical Journal*, quoting 15 million deaths based on estimates of Soviet public health officials. Dr. Gantt served as chief of Medical Division of the American Relief Administration during the famine of 1921–1922, and visited the Soviet Union numerous times, including in the summer of 1933. In a letter to agricultural economist at U.S. Department of Agriculture Dana Dalrymple, dated March 6, 1964, Dr. Gantt confirmed that he "got the maximal figure of fifteen million" dead in the 1932–1933 famine privately from Soviet public health officials and doctors, emphasizing that starvation was complicated by epidemics.

Abruptly, after half a century of denial, historians and demographers, allowed "exclusive access" to Russian archives, revealed that the death toll was about 3.5 million. In March 1988, the Institute of History of Ukraine received a draft of the executive summary of the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine. Soviet historian Stanislav Kulchytskyi was commissioned to write a brochure, *1933*, aimed at propagandists and general public, in which he challenged the "irrational idea that the man-made famine was genocide perpetrated against Ukrainians as a national group." Using Cold War rhetoric, Kulchytskyi dismissed the U.S. Commission findings by stating that Congressmen's task was "to help the American people better understand the role of Soviets in organizing the famine" and to create in the minds of the American people an image of the Soviet Union as an "Evil Empire." A historian by training, Kulchytskyi offered his estimate of demographic losses after the 1937 census was declassified in 1987. His formula was simple: 1.7 million (difference between 1933 and 1937) plus 1.8 million (hypothetical natural population increase between 1933 and 1937) equals to 3.5 million.

Thirty years later, in 2018, in a newspaper article, Kulchytskyi argued that "demography, unlike history, where everyone has his own opinion, is a precise science." Kulchytskyi admitted that he was second after Stephen Wheatcroft of Melbourne University to be granted a privileged access to secret files in the Russian archive in Moscow during his visit in 1990. Kulchytskyi also revealed that using the same Soviet census data, Russian dissident demographer Aleksandr Babionyshev of Harvard University, who wrote under pseudonym Sergei Maksudov, estimated Ukraine's losses in a range from 4 to 4.8 million.

Russian scholars estimate Holodomor losses in Soviet Ukraine as follows: Elena Osokina – 2.7 million, Viktor Danilov and Ilia Zelenin – 3.5 million, Viktor Kondrashin – 3.5 million, and Sergei Maksudov – 4.5 million. These scholars use the 1926 Soviet census and the repressed 1937 census figures, but ignore the fact that Ukrainians became victims beyond the borders of the republic, in grain-growing regions of the Northern Caucasus, the Central Black Earth, the Lower Volga, and even Kazakhstan. Based on the 1926 Soviet census, there were 5.8 million Ukrainians in the European part of the Russian SFSR. Of these, 3.1 million lived in the Northern Caucasus, where they constituted 37 percent of the population. The percentages varied from less than 1 percent in the southern regions to 62 percent in the Kuban district (Krasnodar region) in the northwest. More than 1 million Ukrainians lived in the Voronezh region (33 percent of the population), the territory which Skrypnyk planned to add to Ukraine through negotiations with Moscow in the 1920s.

As early as 1935, chief demographer of Soviet Ukraine **Oleksandr Asatkin** expressed his concern over the peak of mortality observed in 1933. In his note addressed to the leadership of the Communist Party of the Ukrainian SSR, he presented figures on changes in the population of Soviet Ukraine between 1926 and 1934. On September 2, 1937, he was executed for allegedly "falsifying" the census because his staff failed to reach the projected 35 million, reporting instead 27.9 million, a population loss of 7.1 million in Soviet Ukraine. Besides, in November 1942, Ukrainian economist and statistician Stepan Sosnovyi published his

article under the evocative title, "Truth about the Famine in Ukraine in 1932–1933," in which he estimated total population losses in Soviet Ukraine between 1932 and 1938 at 7.5 million, including 4.8 million deaths from 1932 (1.3 million) to 1933 (3.5 million) as a result of enforced starvation. His article was reprinted in a Ukrainian diaspora newspaper in Germany on February 5, 1950. The map in **Figure 8.4** shows that in the northern, non-grain-producing regions, the mortality in 1933 exceeded 12–14 times that of 1927, which points to the deliberate nature of the famine used as a tool of genocide.

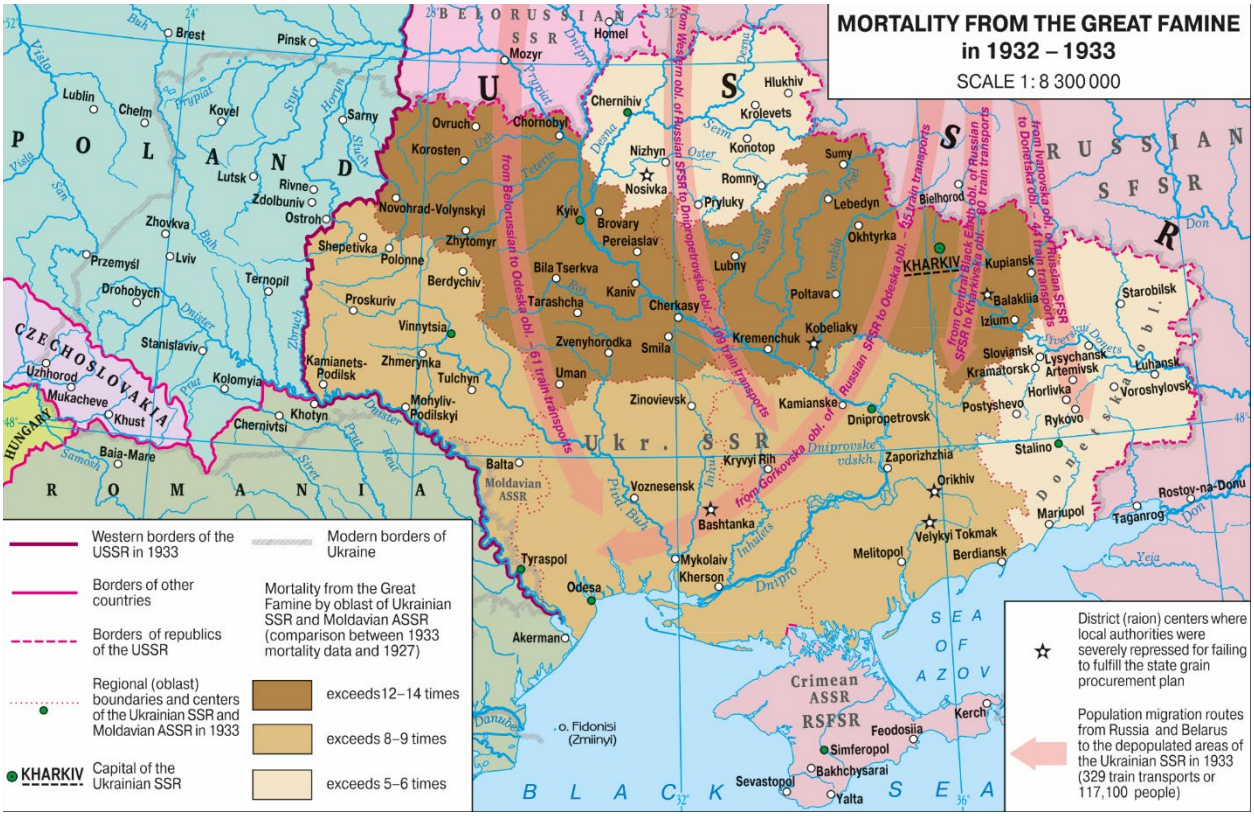
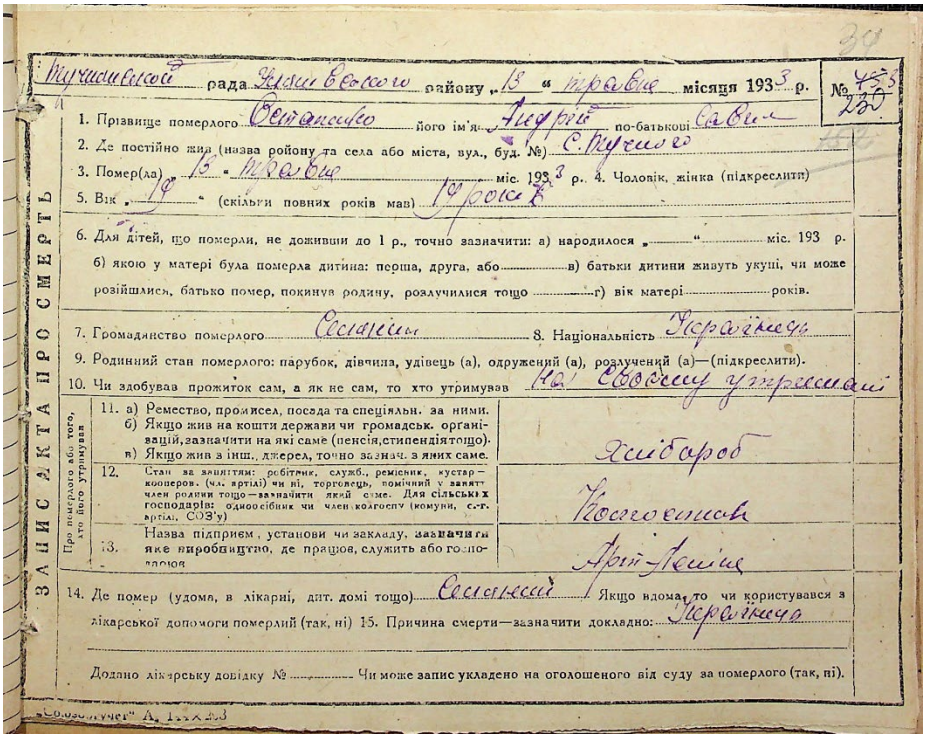


Figure 8.4 Mortality from the Great Famine in 1932–1933 in the Ukrainian SSR. Created by the DNVP "Kartohrafiia," 2019.

The preeminent Russian government-funded propaganda news outlet *Sputnik International* launched a disinformation campaign months before the unveiling of the U.S. National Holodomor Memorial on November 7, 2015 in Washington, D.C. Caught in their web were five leaders of Ukrainian academic institutions and associations in North America, who appealed to the chairman of the U.S. Committee for Ukrainian Holodomor-Genocide Awareness, Michael Sawkiw, Jr., with a request not to use the figure over 7 million victims as has been known in the Ukrainian diaspora but instead use 3.9 million as a "consensus" figure. Otherwise, they warned, "it will cause protests in certain anti-Ukrainian circles, and will be immediately used by the Kremlin propagandists to discredit Ukrainian science for incompetence." This "consensus" figure includes neither birth deficits, fertility decline, nor ethnic Ukrainian population losses of the Russian SFSR. The population of Soviet Ukraine was inflated and further diluted by resettlement of Russian and Belorussian families of Red Army veterans and loyalists in the areas depopulated by the famine (329 train transports or nearly 117,149 Russian settlers as shown in **Figure 8.4**). These numbers do not include workers recruited from outside the Ukrainian SSR to replace the losses in labor force.

Already in the 1950s, many scholars considered 4.8 million to be a conservative estimate, pointing to up to 8 million as the number of deaths in Ukraine under the Soviets. Victims on the "territory of the



ЗАПИС АКТА ПРО СМЕРТЬ

Тучненської рада Ямпільського району 13 травня місяця 1933 р. № 230

1. Прізвище померлого Остапенко його ім'я Андрій по-батькові Савич
2. Де постійно жив (назва району та села або міста, вул., буд. №) с. Тучного
3. Помер(ла) 13 травня міс. 1933 р. 4. Чоловік, жінка (підкреслити)
5. Вік 1 (скільки повних років мав) 1 рік
6. Для дітей, що померли, не доживши до 1 р., точно зазначити: а) народилося "..." міс. 193 р. б) якою у матері була померла дитина: перша, друга, або ... в) батьки дитини живуть укупі, чи може розійшлись, батько помер, покинув родину, розлучився тощо ... г) вік матері ... років.
7. Громадянство померлого Совгрім 8. Національність Українець
9. Родинний стан померлого: парубок, дівчина, удівець (а), одружений (а), розлучений (а)—(підкреслити).
10. Чи здобував прожиток сам, а як не сам, то хто утримував На совєтску утриманні

Про померлого або того, хто його утримував

11. а) Ремесло, промисел, посада та спеціальн. за ними. б) Якщо жив на кошти держави чи громадськ. організацій, зазначити на які саме (пенсія, стипендія тощо). в) Якщо жив з інш. джерел, точно зазнач. з яких саме. — Злидень
12. Стан за заняттям: робітник, служб., ремісник, кустар—кооперов. (чл. артілі) чи ні, торговець, поміч. у заняттях членів родини тощо—зазначити який саме. Для сільських господарів: одноосібник чи член колгоспу (комуни, с.-г. артілі, СОЗ'у) — Колгоспник
13. Назва підприєм., установи чи закладу, зазначити яке виробництво, де працював, служить або господарює — Арт-Хліб

14. Де помер (удома, в лікарні, дит. домі тощо) Сільський / Якщо вдома, то чи користувався з лікарської допомоги померлий (так, ні) 15. Причина смерти—зазначити докладно: Українець

Додано лікарську довідку № ... Чи може запис укладено на оголошеного від суду за померлого (так, ні).

Figure 8.5 A death certificate, issued to Andrii Ostapenko from the village Tuchne, Sumy region, on May 13, 1933, lists the cause of death "Ukrainian." Courtesy of *DASO*, f. R 7720, op. 1, spr. 458, ark. 34.

Holodomor" included not only those who starved to death in the fields and villages but also members of various professions who were persecuted, lost jobs and consequently were deprived of any means to survive, the cannibals who suffered extreme mental anguish and turned to beastly behavior, the innocent prisoners of the GPU labor camps who died from overwork and starvation rations in Russian permafrost, the orphaned children who died from neglect and malnutrition without their names being recorded and the cause of death cynically listed as "Ukrainian" (**Figure 8.5**).

On the documents that were meant to record causes of death, the local offices of ZAGS (Registry of Vital Statistics) were instructed not to list starvation as a cause of death, but to substitute any of a number of approved diseases. Archives in Ukraine contain documents with instructions and a death certificate that had originally listed starvation as cause of death, but later visibly "corrected" to "unknown." Doctors, who were state employees, put down all sorts of diseases as the causes of death, including "sudden illness." Bodies of starved to death victims were picked up by trucks every morning and evening at medical centers. Doctors instructed the truck drivers: "There is no famine. People are dying not from starvation but from protein deficiency dropsy." Doctors as Communist Party members touted the official line not to use the word "famine," but hide the truth from the people and name the cause of death from starvation as death from protein deficiency dropsy. Professors M. D. Strazhesko, M. M. Huberhrits, and V. M. Kohan-Yasnyi conducted clinical trials with patients suffering from protein deficiency dropsy during the genocidal famine.

The mortality rate among children was catastrophic. Historians have used statistics on school enrollments and archival documents to estimate losses among school-aged children. The death toll ranges from 1.7 million to more than 3 million children of preschool and school age in 1932–1933 in Soviet Ukraine. The discrepancy in the numbers is due to different sets of statistical data used. Such practices became the butt of jokes about "two sets of statistics—one secret set for themselves [the Soviet leaders] and a false set for the public" among American diplomats who arrived in Moscow in 1934 to work in the newly opened U.S. Embassy. The punch line goes as follows: "the Soviet system has two sets of statistics, and both are false."

The names of many diseased children were registered just as nicknames, as they were foundlings. Often the orphans were given names of famous Ukrainian, Russian, or even foreign writers: Lesia Ukrainka, Ihor Maiakovskyi, Arkadii London, Anna Akhmatova, Maxim Gorky, Karl Libknekht, or Bernard Shaw.

In the Mykolaiv State Archives, several death certificates issued in 1933 include nicknames "Unknown" for children in care of the state-funded orphanages (see **Figure 8.6**). Doctors in rural regions avoided the word "starvation" when writing the cause of children's death because it was too risky; they could lose a job, even life. Many orphanages did not compile death records, or their records were incomplete. In some regions, death certificates were not issued for infants, who perished before reaching one year of age.

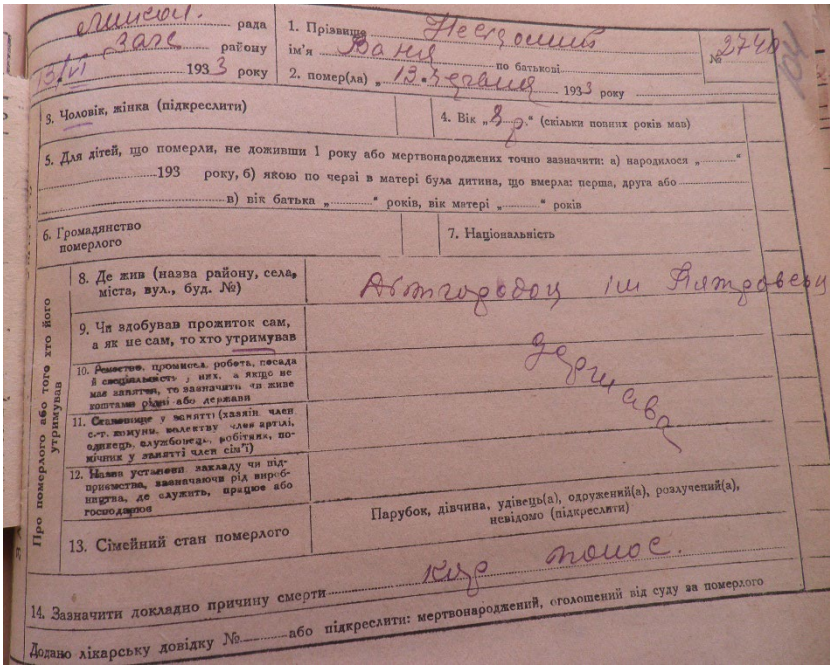


Figure 8.6 Death certificate of 8-year-old Vania Nevidomyi (Ivan the Unknown), who died on June 13, 1933 in the state-run orphanage named after H. Petrovskyi. Courtesy of *DAMO*, od. obl. P1010030.

By the winter of 1932–1933, death certificates no longer appeared. Not only were causes of death altered and death certificates forged, but ZAGS records from the fatal years were sanitized in local offices. A significant part of the documents related to the registration of illnesses and deaths in hospitals and village councils was destroyed "while still hot." Top secret instructions, issued in April 1934 by the Odesa Regional Executive Committee (with copies to all lower-level executive committees and inspectors of the Central Statistical Board), provide evidence of how the crimes against the Ukrainians were covered up by the perpetrators. As a result, the extant vital statistics registers for the years of 1932–1933 in the state archives contain 3 million deaths because the archival records were purposefully and systematically destroyed by the regime for decades. Thus, erasing the record of memory was a crucial part of Stalin's war against Ukraine then as it is now a crucial part of Putin's disinformation war, in the same battlespace – the mind.

Click and Explore

To locate the **places of mass burials of Holodomor-genocide** on a geographical map of Ukraine, visit **the National Holodomor Genocide Museum**. The geoportal contains a map of the administrative system of the Ukrainian SSR (1929–1934) and the territory of the Holodomor. The map features the places of mass burials, the monuments and memorial signs, commemorating the victims. The search is possible by region, district or the settlement.

8.4 Silencing the Truth

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- discuss the criminalization of the Holodomor studies
- explain the policy of secrecy
- discuss how the party purges contributed to the silencing of the truth

While targeting Ukraine's information space, Russia is protecting its own by silencing the truth about the past, thus undermining justice. On December 1, 2011, the Meshchanskii district court in Moscow declared books written by Vasyl Marochko, a Ukrainian historian and past president of the Association for Holodomor Studies, "extremist" and ordered them to be removed from the shelves of the Ukrainian Library in Moscow. In December 2014, the municipal court in Russian-occupied Feodosia in Crimea charged the director of the library for storing "extremist literature" (Article 20.20 of the Russian Criminal Code) and imposed a fine in the amount of 2,000 rubles for storing a dozen books in Ukrainian, including Marochko's books on the Holodomor, in two municipal libraries. These books are scholarly publications, written between 2007 and 2014 based on the analysis of new documentary evidence from the Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine and other state and former Communist Party archives. In Russia, books about the Holodomor, which is a crime against humanity, are criminalized and erased from history and memory.

Russia has banned scholarly publications that examined the GPU's role in the Holodomor, deflecting attention from the institution that has perpetrated the crime of genocide but has never been held accountable. Among works included in the list of "extremist" literature is an influential volume on the history of the Soviet secret police in Ukraine. It has been referenced by scholars of Stalinism and Stalin's security apparatus since its publication in 1997. Together with Marochko's books, the 2011 Moscow court verdict criminalized this scholarly publication in an attempt to control the official historical narrative promoted by Russia. In the 1930s books were banned by entire lists, often burned. This practice is making a comeback.

To suggest that there was a famine was made illegal. The witness, who was ten at the time of the genocidal famine, told the U.S. Commission that in all the parks, there were loudspeakers placed as part of the radio network, which was itself linked to the post office. He recited a song that one could always hear in these parks, songs being sung in Russian:

> Swiftly as birds, one after another,
> Fly over our Soviet homeland
> The joyous refrains of town and country:
> Our burdens have lightened—
> Our lives have gladdened!

> They broadcast this song while people were dying in the [Great] Famine. "Our lives have gladdened." I can recall this song from my school years, when they were teaching the children to sing *The Patrolling Pioneer*. What kind of country is this in which children patrol over the fields to keep kernels of grain from the starving peasants for the sake of a "better life"? They themselves sang, "The joyous refrains of town and country." And this song would play every day, ten times a day, and as you were listening to the song, everywhere all around you people are screaming, and dying, while the song was playing on: *"Our burdens have lightened."*

School teachers indoctrinated their students about Pavlik Morozov, a young Pioneer hero, who "unmasked" his own father for hiding grain. Students were forbidden to use the word "famine" though food was insufficient even in towns, and in the neighboring village no one was left at all. Teachers, too, chose to participate in Soviet propaganda and grain-requisition campaigns, instilling "love for the Soviet rule" by beating students and calling them a "Petliurite puppy." Teachers, like other Soviet officials, who could see death all around were not permitted—did not permit themselves—to see "starvation."

Worst of all, the people were forced to forget. "In 1934, no one talked about the famine as if it had never happened," recalled the survivor. Arrests of the enemies of the people continued. The authorities continued to remove portraits of the "leaders": Skrypnyk, then Kosior, and even "the friend of children"

Postyshev. Quietly, Taras Shevchenko's portrait was taken down but later placed back on the wall. After a while people stopped talking about the famine even among themselves.

The Soviet leaders did not allow even the faintest reference to reality. The refusal to face the truth was applied inside the country and on a world scale. **Arthur Koestler**, a Hungarian-born British writer and author, described two "belts of silence" surrounding the famine in his anti-totalitarian book, *The Yogi and the Commissar*:

> I spent the winter of 1932–33 mainly in Kharkov, then the capital of Ukraine. . . . Traveling through the countryside was like running the gauntlet: the stations were lined with begging peasants with swollen hands and feet, the women holding up to the carriage windows horrible infants with enormous wobbling heads, sticklike limbs, swollen, pointed bellies. You could swap a loaf of bread for Ukrainian embroidered kerchiefs, national costumes and bedcovers … Under my hotel room window in Kharkov funeral processions marched past all day. The electricity supply in Kharkov had broken down; there was no light in the town, and the trams functioned only for an hour or so a day to take workers to the factories and back. There was also no fuel or petrol in the town and the winter was hard even for Ukraine, with temperatures of 30^0 below zero. Life seemed to come to a standstill, the whole machinery on the verge of collapse.
>
> . . . at the time not the slightest allusion to real conditions was allowed to appear in the Soviet press, including the newspapers of Ukraine itself. Each morning when I read the Kharkov *Kommunist* I learned about plan-figures reached and over-reached, about competitions between factory shock brigades, awards of the Red Banner . . . and so on; the photographs were either of young people, always laughing and always carrying a banner in their hands . . . Not one word about the local famine, epidemics, the dying out of whole villages; even the fact that there was no electricity in Kharkov was not once mentioned in the Kharkov newspaper. It gave one a feeling of dreamlike unreality; the paper seemed to talk about some quite different country which had no point of contact with the daily life we led; and the same applies to the radio.
>
> The consequence of all this was that the vast majority of people in Moscow had no idea of what went on in Kharkov. . . . The enormous land was covered by a blanket of silence and nobody outside the small circle of initiates could form a comprehensive picture of the situation.
>
> A second belt of silence isolated the country from contacts with the outside world. Foreign missions and newspaper correspondents were concentrated in Moscow. . . . To smuggle out news vetoed by the censor meant expulsion; a risk which both journalists and their employers will take only reluctantly, and only when vital issues are at stake. But "vital issues" is an elastic term, and the practical result of continuous pressure was that even conscientious newspapermen evolved a routine of compromise; they cabled no lies, but *nolens volens* confined themselves to "official dope" . . . The cumulative effect of all this was a picture distorted by half-truths and systematic omissions. This was the foundation on which direct Soviet propaganda could build."

The information blockade was imposed after the Third All-Ukrainian Party Conference in July 1932, when Stalin and Molotov made any mention of the famine punishable as a counter-revolutionary crime. Yet, historians, like Stanislav Kulchytskyi, continued to argue in 1988 on the pages of a Ukrainian historical journal that the famine was "neither organized, nor man-made, but was an unforeseen outcome of Stalin's economic planning," and that the Communist Party did all it could to alleviate the suffering of the starving population. Rather than alleviating the suffering of the starving population, the Communist Party was constantly on a look out for "enemies of the people"; purges were conducted periodically. In fact, the Postyshev purge of 1933 followed five previous purges of the Communist Party in 1920, 1921, 1924, 1925, and 1929–1930, in which the non-Russian party organizations were hit harder than those in the Russian regions.

In January 1933, Stalin declared that enemies had become increasingly invisible. Like his predecessor Lenin, Stalin called for "revolutionary vigilance." Stalin's answer to the unpopular economic and cultural transformation of life was more terror, while keeping it disguised under political vigilance. The goal of the 1933 purge was to establish an "iron proletarian discipline" within the Communist Party ranks by expelling "foreign" elements. Purge commissions made decisions. Their members were "politically literate" cadres who were ideological allies, never worked in the opposition, and had been Communist Party members for over a decade. These criteria excluded most Ukrainians. More Ukrainians were also purged. Of the 104,458 new members and candidate-members since 1931, the Communist Party purged 37 percent. Between June 1932 and October 1933, approximately three-fourths of the officials of the local soviets and the local party committees were dismissed and replaced by newcomers dispatched from Moscow.

Findings by an investigator in the Chernihiv regional Communist Party organization revealed instances of paying bonuses to the district party bosses, wasting funds on drinking and entertainment, unlawful redirecting of food rations designated for the needy to supply party bureaucrats. District police patronized local gangs, and sold guns and bullets to gangsters. Instead of guarding the rule of law, local police engaged in sadistic behavior: beating the imprisoned during interrogations, undressing the victims or pushing them off the roof, robbing households at a gunpoint, imposing arbitrary fines on smallholders, locking up owners until they surrender their cows or horses, delaying the distribution of teachers' food rations for more than a month. Every visiting Communist Party secretary, head of the GPU, or police "behaves as if entitled to the money, bread, alcohol, and constantly demands to be fed, but writes off the consumed or confiscated products as compensation for services to the public." "I am from the Center!" was the mantra. Local courts were dysfunctional; people had nowhere to turn for protection. The purged party members lost jobs, apartments, food rations, but were released from prisons due to overcrowding.

By 1934, before the Great Terror, the Communist Party purged its own ranks to get rid of those who did or did not carry out its programs vigorously enough during the collectivization in 1928–1929 and the grain requisitions in 1932–1933. In many instances, the same activists participated in both campaigns. As archival documents from just one regional Communist Party organization in Chernihiv revealed, the perpetrators purged over 60 percent of their own rank-and-file to cover their tracks.

Click and Explore

To learn more about the cover-up of the extermination of Ukrainians inside the Soviet Union and the tale of two Western journalists, Walter Duranty and Gareth Jones, the former amplifying the Soviet disinformation while the latter telling the truth that the world did not want to hear, watch **Soviet Propaganda Masked Deadly Policies**, created by the International Ukrainian TV channel FREEDOM.

Key Words

"all-Union famine" | Arthur Koestler | "blockade decree" of January 22, 1933 | Decree No. 47 of the Federal Archival Agency | disinformation | génocidaire | hybrid warfare | Kyiv Court of Appeals | Oleksandr Asatkin | Pavel Postyshev | Raphael Lemkin | Soviet genocide | William Horsley Gantt

Summary

8.1 Legal Challenge

Ukraine officially recognized the Holodomor as genocide and criminalized its denial, seeking international recognition through the United Nations and other organizations. In response, Russia denied

the famine's ethnic basis and argued against recognizing it as genocide under the U.N. Convention. Deniers of the Holodomor claim that Cold War politics influenced the Convention's drafting, but legal scholars refute this, stating that genocide prohibition supersedes non-retroactivity. The Soviet influence on the U.N. Convention is evident, with Stalin and Molotov editing the draft to omit incriminating statements. Lemkin's conceptualization of Soviet genocide reemerged in 2008, supporting the Ukrainian case under the Convention's criteria. Ukraine pursued investigations and in 2010, the Kyiv Court of Appeals held Stalin and his accomplices guilty of genocide, establishing a significant precedent.

8.2 The "All-Union Famine"

The "all-Union famine" argument aims to shift the blame from the Communist Party and the GPU for the genocide against Ukrainians. Scholars who focus on the economic causes of the famine overlook the fact that collectivization in Soviet Ukraine was already completed by 1931 or 1932, earlier than in Soviet Russia. The famine was not caused by crop failure but rather excessive state procurements. The Ukrainian population suffered from mass starvation due to confiscations and requisitions enforced by the state. The famine was aggravated by Stalin's policies, including blaming local Communist Party cells for the grain shortage and suppressing Ukrainian national identity. The scale of the tragedy was immense, and the region experienced a significant decline in population during the 1930s.

8.3 Cover-Up

Downplaying the Holodomor's magnitude and distorting the historical truth are key tactics used in the Russian disinformation war. During the 1930s, diplomats from Italy, Germany, and Japan reported on the situation in Soviet Ukraine, citing from 7 to 10 million deaths. American psychologist William Horsley Gantt published a study in 1936, citing Soviet health officials' estimates of 15 million deaths. However, after years of denial, historians and demographers, with access to Russian archives, revealed that the death toll was 3.5 million. This figure was based on the analysis of Soviet census data. The deliberate suppression of information, destruction of archival records, and the use of propaganda continue to be employed as part of the Russian government's disinformation campaign, denying the severity of the Holodomor.

8.4 Silencing the Truth

Russia is suppressing the truth about the past while protecting its own self-image. Book censorship extends to publications examining the role of the Soviet secret police in the Holodomor. The Soviet regime used silence as a tool of coercion, forbidding any mention of the famine and forcing people to forget. The information blockade created a distorted picture, while purges and terror were employed to maintain control within the Communist Party ranks. The purges also aimed to expel "foreign" elements, disproportionately affecting non-Russian party organizations. Overall, the Communist Party purged its own ranks to eliminate those who were not seen as sufficiently loyal during collectivization and grain requisition campaigns.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. What arguments are there to counter the deniers' assertion that the Holodomor does not fit the definition of genocide?
2. Why was the Russian historian commissioned to advance the concept of the "all-Union famine"?
3. What tactics did the perpetrators of the Holodomor use to cover up their crimes?
4. Why did the Russian courts criminalize the study of the Holodomor?
5. How did the policy of secrecy contribute to silencing the truth about the Holodomor?

CHAPTER 9

The United States and the Holodomor

The Washington Group Cultural Fund commissioned the artwork depicted in **Figure 9.1** as a tribute to the Holodomor Memorial in Washington, DC. The memorial, designed by architect Larysa Kurylas and erected in 2015, serves as a public monument where people can gather to remember and honor the victims of the Holodomor with flowers, personal notes, and special tributes. The artwork portrays the horror of the starved to death people of Ukraine, with a field of wheat gradually fading away, symbolizing the countless lives lost and forgotten. A wall of text in both English and Ukrainian tells the story of Moscow's totalitarian regime.

Figure 9.1 *Holodomor Memorial in Washington, D.C.* by Lydia Bodnar-Balahutrak, 2021. Oil, wax, resins on stretched linen, 36 x 60 in. Collection: The Embassy of Ukraine, Washington, D.C.

The **Cold War**, a geopolitical struggle between Russia and the West, actually began after World War I, not after World War II. It emerged from the division of the world into two systems: Woodrow Wilson's democracy and Vladimir Lenin's dictatorship. Wilson's policy of the "one, and indivisible Russia" prevented Ukraine from asserting its right to self-determination. Franklin D. Roosevelt took it even further by granting diplomatic recognition to the Stalinist regime, which had already committed atrocities in Ukraine, effectively burying Ukraine's dream of independence for decades. Millions of people perished during Lenin's famine of 1921–1923 and even more during Stalin's Great Famine of 1932–1933, the apogee of the Holodomor, which was a genocide that was ignored and erased from history for over half a century. It was not until 1988 that the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine officially condemned Stalin and his associates for perpetrating genocide against Ukrainians, but no international tribunal prosecuted the perpetrators.

Now, ninety years later, Ukraine has once again become a battleground between Russia and the West due to the rehabilitation of Stalinism, revision of the past, and Holodomor denial. The seeds of this genocidal violence were planted in the 1920s when the Wilson administration allowed Ukraine to be "swallowed up

by insatiable maw of red Moscow." The Kremlin's genocide against Ukrainians reached its peak in 1932–1933, but the Roosevelt administration silenced the truth about Stalin's crimes for political reasons. The blindness of U.S. leaders once again "allowed Moscow, with American lend-lease support, to be the conqueror." As we approach the ninetieth anniversary of the Holodomor, Russia's neo-Stalinist war of aggression against Ukraine poses a serious challenge to the U.S. government and has far-reaching implications for European and global security.

9.1 Wilson's Policy of "Indivisible Russia"

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- explain Wilson's policy toward Ukraine
- assess the U.S. officials' response to the threat of Russian expansionism

President Wilson's **Fourteen Points** on how to deal with the future world order, presented in January 1918, included his commitment to preserve the territorial integrity of what was referred to as "Russia" at that time. The Ukrainian delegation at the **Paris Peace Conference** presented a map of Ukraine with a prospectus outlining the geographic boundaries of territories historically settled by Ukrainians, including the region of Kuban in the Northern Caucasus. Unfortunately, their bid for recognition of Ukraine's independence within its historic territories was rejected, and Ukraine was incorporated into the Soviet Union.

Before the Paris Peace Conference, there was no significant effort to address the potential threat of Russian expansionism to European security. Ukraine's struggle for national liberation from the oppressive policies of German and Russian occupiers went unnoticed by the major powers. It was assumed that a democratic constitutional government would be established in Russia. A group of about 150 political and social scientists organized by Wilson's adviser and long-time friend, Col. Edward House, presented the ***Inquiry*** report to President Wilson in January 1919. The authors of the report recommended the formation of an independent Ukrainian state, which would have included Crimea. However, Wilson's decision was influenced by his top Russian adviser, Frank A. Golder, who urged the president: "For the sake of the peace of the world, for the sake of Russia and Ukraine, for the sake of the Central Powers themselves, Great Russia and Little Russia must be united into a strong and free nation."

The official stance of the United States was reinforced by the Department of State, which directed the Liquidation Commission not to extend credit sales of surplus stocks to Ukraine. This included clothing, blankets, medical supplies, and motor equipment stored by the American Forces in France. A telegraphic report from the U.S. Commission to Negotiate Peace to the Secretary of State advised: "The recognized Ukrainian Mission in Paris, which has purchased large quantity of American Army supplies, represents the Petliura Government."

Secretary of State Robert Lansing ordered an investigation into the transaction between the Ukrainian Mission in Paris and American military authorities. It was revealed that a contract for the purchase of supplies had been accepted in April 1919, valued in excess of $11,500,000. However, the contract was annulled in January 1920, without any explanation, no motive or reason given. Ukrainian leader Petliura sent a note to Allied and U.S. commanders in Paris, stating that for two years since December 1918, "Ukraine alone has been fighting against the third Bolshevik onslaught and attempt to bring communist experiment to Ukraine." He requested free transit through Europe of medical supplies purchased by the Ukrainian representatives in France to help the army and people of Ukraine to withstand existential dual threats from Russian occupation and epidemics of infectious diseases. However, his calls to restore Ukraine's physical well-being to resolve the problem on the Eastern Front went unheeded.

Wilson's policy of **"quarantine"** and minimal intervention did not seek the "disruption of Russia." The U.S. intervention was far from consistently anti-Bolshevik as evidenced by the transfer of ammunition to Bolshevik forces. The preference for "a unified entity with which to conduct trade" implied the lack of support for potentially viable independence movements. Such policy of "Russia first" distorted the U.S. administration's approach to Ukraine, which is evident from the message the State Department addressed to the U.S. Commission to Negotiate Peace in Paris:

> On the basis of past investigations, the Department is disposed to regard the Ukrainian separatist movement as largely the result of Austrian and German propaganda seeking the disruption of Russia. It is unable to perceive an adequate ethnical basis for erecting a separate state and is not convinced that there is a real popular demand for anything more than such greater measure of local autonomy as will naturally result from the establishment in Russia of a modern democratic government, whether federative or not. The Department feels, accordingly, that the policy of the United States, while leaving to future events the determination of the exact character of the relations that exist between Great and Little Russia, should tend in the meantime, rather to sustain the principle of essential Russian unity than to encourage separatism.

Due to a lack of accurate information available in the State Department concerning Russia, the readily available misinformation had a great influence. Erroneous perceptions resulted in short-sighted U.S. policy. Secretary of State Lansing was influenced by exaggerated tales about the intentions of German militarism in Ukraine. The misunderstanding and lack of help in the efforts of Ukrainians to secure their liberation aided the Bolsheviks. Without external support, the Ukrainian National Republic collapsed, and the Red Army marched into Ukraine.

The inability of U.S. officials to see the potential threat of Russian expansionism allowed the Russian occupiers to commit violence against civilians in Ukraine. The Kremlin's leaders openly expressed their intent to do so in their decrees and public statements. Their intent was apparent: "We need Ukraine, not its people." Between 1921 and 1923, it took one fifth of the Red Army (one million troops), supplemented by more than 200,000 in punishment battalions and requisitioning squads, to suppress resistance in Ukraine. The struggle for national liberation cost 4 million innocent lives, more than Ukrainian military and civilian deaths in World War I. What followed the Red Terror was Lenin's famine of 1921–1923, in which 2.8 million innocent people died in southeastern Ukraine. At the time, grain confiscated from Ukraine was shipped to the Volga region to rescue the starving in Russia. The American Relief Administration (ARA) initially prioritized assisting Russia, which prolonged starvation in Ukraine till the summer of the following year. In total, Ukraine lost between 5.5 to 7.5 million people because of World War I, the war for national liberation, and the famine. The aid provided by the ARA did not exert any real concessions from Russia but rather helped keep Bolsheviks in power.

9.2 Roosevelt's Recognition of the USSR

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- explain the factors responsible for Roosevelt's decision to grant diplomatic recognition of the Soviet government
- assess the role of American journalists and politicians in silencing the truth about the Holodomor

The election of Franklin D. Roosevelt as president raised the possibility of American recognition of the Soviet government, promised during his campaign. Roosevelt's decision on the issue was made without the full benefit of the intelligence gathered by the U.S. government. The State Department received reports filed from the U.S. Legation in Riga and the Embassy in Berlin about the guerrilla warfare in the Northern Caucasus and village uprisings in Ukraine in 1930, the widespread starvation reaching from

rural districts to larger cities in Ukraine in 1931, the daily deaths occurring in the country in 1932, Postyshev's appointment as Ukraine's new ruler in January 1933, and the executions and imprisonments for "counterrevolutionary sabotage." Despite the reports' accuracy, officials in the State Department failed to connect the dots and instead focused on "Russian agriculture" and sentiments of the Soviet people, neglecting the extermination of Ukrainians. Even the reports about Postyshev's "pacification" of Ukrainian nationalism were viewed through the prism of the "anti-peasant policy" of excessive grain procurement rather than the genocidal decimation of Ukrainians.

The Roosevelt administration received letters from Ukrainian diaspora organizations with appeals for help. The first Ukrainian group to send an appeal to a member of the Roosevelt administration was the U.S. World War Veterans of Ukrainian Descent of New York. On September 18, 1933, Vladimir Jurkowsky, the organization's secretary, sent a letter to Postmaster General James J. Farley, who was also chairman of the Democratic Committee in Roosevelt's home state. It contained possible "political dynamite"; thus, the committee referred it to the State Department. The response on October 11, 1933 from Robert F. Kelley, acknowledging the receipt of "photographs and newspaper clippings relating to the suffering of persons living in the Ukraine," enclosed with the letter addressed to the Postmaster General, was curt: "Your letter and its enclosures have been read with interest." Despite clear evidence, officials in charge of the U.S. government studiously expressed their disinterest.

In November 1933, leaders of the Ukrainian National Women's League of America (UNWLA), one of the most active organizations in the Ukrainian-American community, approached Eleanor Roosevelt with a request to exert some influence to pressure the Soviet government to allow duty-free admission of relief packages through ***torgsin***, a network of government stores that sold food in exchange for hard currency or gold (see **Figure 9.2**). Mrs. Roosevelt replied that although she realized "that the need was very great, she deeply regretted" that she could do nothing to help. This summary of Mrs. Roosevelt's response comes from a letter preserved in UNWLA archives in New York.

Figure 9.2 Torgsin in the city of Putyvl, 1933. By August 1933, Ukraine had 256 government stores that sold bread and consumer products in exchange for foreign currency and gold, each one averaged 400 customers daily. In 1932, the Soviet regime collected 21 tons and in 1933 44.9 tons of gold from Ukrainian farmers. Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

Eleanor Roosevelt, reflecting on her past life on her seventy-fifth birthday, advised in her *Autobiography*: "I think that one of the reasons it is so difficult for us, as a people, to understand other areas of the world is that we cannot put ourselves imaginatively in their place. We have no famine. But, if we were actually to see people dying of starvation, we would care quite a bit." Eleanor Roosevelt took part in the genocide definition discussions at the United Nations, speaking vis-à-vis the Soviet representative, Andrei Vyshinsky. The Soviets managed to force a dilution of Raphael Lemkin's original and intended broader-scoped definition of genocide. This political tactic worked, because other nations were afraid of not getting any definition at all, if they failed to appease the Soviets on this point.

The UNWLA also published a pamphlet and sent it for comment to the Soviet Embassy on January 3, 1934. A month later it received a letter from Boris Skvirsky, Embassy Counselor, who replied that the idea that the Soviet government was "deliberately killing off the population of the Ukraine" was "wholly

grotesque." The Soviet government claimed that the Ukrainian population had actually increased and the death rate was lower compared to the pre-war times of tsarist days. The Roosevelt administration sought closer ties with the Soviets and considered the famine as an internal affair. The reality of mass starvation in Ukraine, perpetrated by Stalin and his accomplices, seemed to require a double standard of blindness from American politicians.

Click and Explore

Explore **a commemorative issue of the UNWLA's publication *Our Life* of November 2003** that features a collection of documents from the **UNWLA Archives** about the Great Famine in Ukraine. It highlights the work of the Emergency Relief Committee for Starving Ukrainians and includes letters from the American Red Cross and the White House as well as Resolution 399 of May 1934, dealing entirely with the question of the famine in Ukraine, the first resolution in which Moscow's politics were addressed in U.S. Congress.

When Lenin died in 1924, the Communist *Daily Worker* portrayed with almost religious fervor its conviction—and the conviction of most American leftists—that the light of Lenin's revolution, the "Soviet star of hope," would continue to illuminate and inspire the world. "The building of the Russian myth required no Machiavellian propaganda tricks," noted **Eugene Lyons** in his *Assignment in Utopia*. "The outside world in depression years had need of it as a fixed beacon in the storm of doubt." Given the rise of Nazism, the Soviet Union seemed to offer the only hope for humanity at that time.

After closely observing Stalin's government policies for two years since the opening of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, Ambassador William C. Bullitt sent a dispatch to the Secretary of State, providing his assessment of the future:

> There is genuine admiration in the Soviet Union for American technical efficiency and there is full realization of the fact that the Communist movement in the United States is still completely impotent; but it is believed that the people of the United States will not have sufficient political sense to cope with the problems of the productivity of the modern machine and modern agriculture and that after a series of recoveries and crises the United States too will fall (or rise) into the "heaven" of Communism.
>
> To summarize: The aim of the Soviet Government is and will remain, to produce world revolution. The leaders of the Soviet Union believe that the first step toward this revolution must be to strengthen the defensive and offensive power of the Soviet Union. They believe that within ten years the defense position of the Soviet Union will be absolutely impregnable and that within 15 years the offensive power of the Soviet Union will be sufficient to enable it to consolidate by its assistance any communist government which may be set up in Europe. To maintain peace for the present, to keep the nations of Europe divided, to foster enmity between Japan and the United States, and to gain the blind devotion and obedience of the communists of all countries so that they will act against their own governments at the behest of the Communist Pope in the Kremlin, is the sum of Stalin's policy.

These insightful predictions of Ambassador Bullitt reached Washington on August 2, 1935, coming two years after the tragic reality of the genocidal famine in Ukraine, which caused millions of deaths, had been deliberately concealed. It was during this time that the United States decided to grant diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union.

Among the journalists complicit in concealing the truth about the genocidal famine in Ukraine was **Walter Duranty**, a Pulitzer Prize winner (**Figure 9.3**). Originally from Britain, Duranty served as the *New York Times* correspondent in Moscow, or rather Moscow's man at the *New York Times*, earning the reputation as "the one-legged Anglo-American granddaddy of fake news." He garnered personal attention from Stalin and consistently reported the Communist Party's perspective in his articles. In September 1933, Duranty wrote that, based on his knowledge, there were no famine conditions.

Figure 9.3 Walter Duranty (1884–1957), pictured in 1936 at a luncheon given in his honor by the Association of Foreign Press Correspondents at the Hotel Lombardy in New York. Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

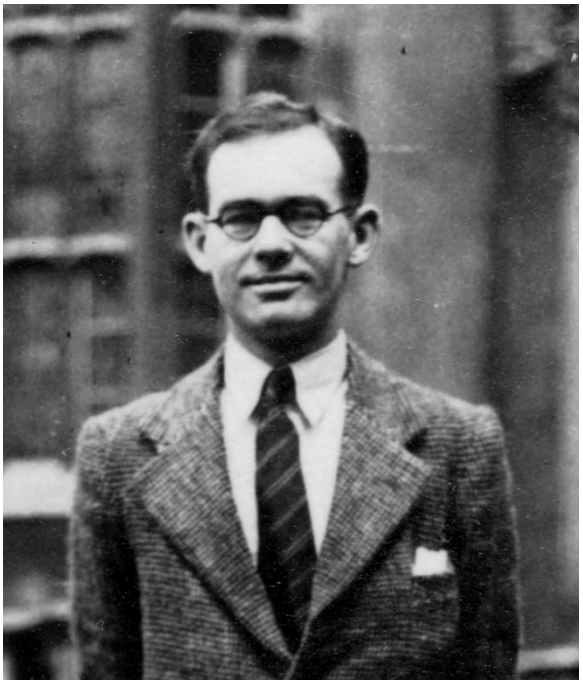


Figure 9.4 Gareth Jones (1905–1935). Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

However, he privately informed the British Embassy staff that he believed up to 10 million people might have died due to the famine, despite downplaying its severity in his dispatches.

The circumstances surrounding Duranty's work in Moscow remain obscured within Stalin's secret archives. In 1925, the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party discussed the potential deportation of Duranty from the Soviet Union, but the decision was later revoked. Duranty received the Pulitzer Prize in 1932 for his coverage of "Soviet Russia" the previous year. In one of his dispatches from Moscow in March 1933, he quoted the grotesque cliché often attributed to Stalin, "you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs."

The first reliable report on the forced starvation in Ukraine within the English-speaking world was presented by **Gareth Jones**, a Welsh journalist (**Figure 9.4**). Jones, utilizing his connection to David Lloyd George, obtained a diplomatic visa from the Soviet Embassy in Great Britain. He entered the Soviet Union in March 1933 and spent his initial week in Moscow interviewing various individuals, including Communist Party officials, Western correspondents, foreign consuls, Soviet literary figures, and ordinary citizens enduring long bread lines. Jones's handwritten diaries formed the basis for twenty-one articles published between March 31 and April 20, 1933, in newspapers such as the *Evening Standard*, *Daily Express*, *Western Mail*, and *Financial News*. While Jones used the shorthand, popular term "Russia" in his article titles as a general description of the famine-affected areas, his diaries specifically mentioned Ukraine and its particular districts.

Click and Explore

To view **Gareth Jones's 1933 Soviet diaries**, visit a web site designed by Nigel Linsan Colley, his nephew. These three diaries cover his 1933 trip to the Soviet Union, especially his remarkable off-limits unescorted foray in Ukraine during the height of the famine, which represents the only independent Western verification of the Holodomor.

Commenting on the British "scare story" being echoed in the American press, Walter Duranty dismissed the notion of a famine in Ukraine, instead labeling it as a "serious food shortage." He went even further, claiming that while there was no actual starvation or deaths from starvation, there was widespread mortality due to malnutrition-related diseases. Reflecting on Duranty's role in covering up the famine, **Malcolm Muggeridge** (see **Figure 9.5**), who served as the Moscow correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian* during the 1930s, condemned Duranty as the primary villain: "Duranty was the villain of the whole thing. ... He wrote things about the famine and the situation in Ukraine which were laughably wrong. There is no doubt whatever that the authorities could manipulate him."

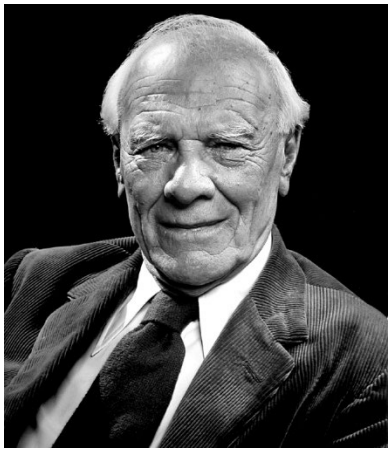


Figure 9.5 Malcolm Muggeridge (1903–1990). Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

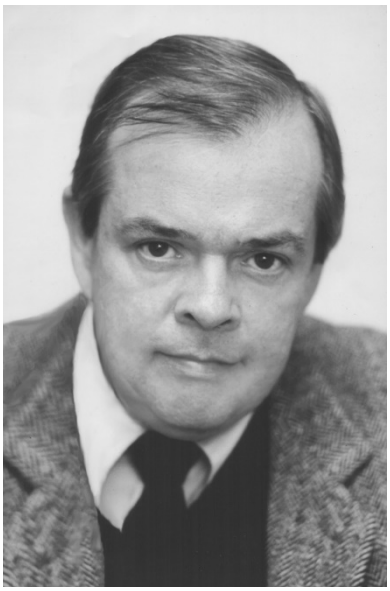


Figure 9.6 James Mace (1952–2004). Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

Both American journalists and politicians colluded with the Soviets in covering up the famine. Despite Duranty's deceit, he was invited to meet with President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932, and his counsel was sought regarding the recognition of the USSR. This interaction aimed to remove any obstacles, including Stalin's genocide, and shape American public opinion in alignment with their desired narrative before negotiations. Upon his return to the United States in April 1934, journalist Eugene Lyons acknowledged that, at the time, it was considered socially unacceptable to speak the truth about Stalin's crimes within "enlightened" circles. **James E. Mace**, executive director of the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine (see **Figure 9.6**), noted that FDR, along with many others of his time, shared the same blind spot and indifference towards the famine victims' pleas for assistance.

Malcolm Muggeridge stood out as one of the few journalists who fearlessly exposed the truth. In an interview with Marco Carynnyk, a Canadian writer, he recounted how L. B. Golden, the general secretary of the Save the Children Fund, approached the British Foreign Office in August 1933 seeking advice. Golden had received troubling information about the famine in Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus from private letters. However, the first secretary of the Soviet Embassy assured him that the harvest was a "bumper one," leading Golden to inquire whether a public appeal should be made. The British Foreign Office advised against taking any action. Muggeridge captured the British government's stance, revealing that since the Soviet authorities denied the existence of a famine, it was agreed that no statements should be made. This silence persisted due to the deliberate campaign of misinformation orchestrated by the Soviet authorities, while British and U.S. leaders turned a blind eye to the atrocities, appeasing the Soviet dictator.

Click and Explore

Listen to an interview with British journalist and author, Malcolm Muggeridge, **Reflections on Stalin's regime and the Holodomor**, produced by the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre.

Dr. Mace's assessment of the American response to the Holodomor, the forced starvation of Ukrainians, highlighted that both the State Department and the White House possessed plentiful and timely intelligence about the tragedy. However, they consciously chose not only to ignore it but also to never acknowledge it publicly. The primary focus of American policymakers at the time was the competition between American and Soviet wheat exports on the global market, overshadowing concerns about the treatment of non-Russian nations under Soviet nationality policy. Despite this, President Franklin D. Roosevelt remained determined to establish and maintain positive relations with the USSR. Dr. Mace concluded that the "U.S. government participated, albeit indirectly, in what is perhaps the single most successful denial of genocide in history."

Had the U.S. government paid greater attention to fact-based analyses during that period, it could have potentially helped policymakers avoid, or at least prepare for, the events that unfolded in the subsequent years. A Latvian Minister to the USSR warned that if the United States recognized the Soviet Union, any hope of a change in Russia would be abandoned. Another significant intelligence analysis disregarded by the U.S. government came from Military Attaché Major Emer Yeager in Warsaw in February 1931, who highlighted the potential dangers posed by Germany and Russia to Poland. Yeager also reported on Ukrainian resistance to Russian policies and warned that the five-year plan had military objectives rather than solely economic ones. Unfortunately, these dispatches were silently filed away and forgotten. Furthermore, the Military Intelligence Division deliberately destroyed valuable information regarding the Ukrainian separatist movement. The significance of these reports was not fully grasped, contributing to a lack of understanding and appropriate action by U.S. authorities.

9.3 The Biden Administration's Stance

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- discuss the Biden administration policy toward Ukraine

The one-hundred-year existential struggle between democracy and totalitarianism has taken a new turn with Putin's neo-Stalinist agenda, as he seeks to challenge the global primacy of the United States and restore Russia's position in international politics. Putin's "systematic challenge to the West," characterized by Ivo H. Daalder, former U.S. Ambassador to NATO, has raised concerns about a potential second Cold War between the United States and Russia. The United States came out of World War I as a leading industrial power. World War II lifted the United States out of the Great Depression, and the country expanded its economic and military power as a result. Whether the United States will win the "second Cold War" with Russia is too early to tell.

Putin's revanchist ambitions to expand Russian influence and counter NATO have caused varying reactions, with some anticipating this move and others shocked by it. Following the assault on the U.S. Capitol in January 2021, Putin capitalized on perceived weaknesses within the United States and escalated tensions by deploying armed forces to the Ukrainian borders, taking advantage of the American shambolic withdrawal from Afghanistan as a signal to proceed with his "special military operation" in Ukraine.

Even before Putin launched his full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the Biden administration had already formulated a policy to deter Russia. The policy included implementing economic sanctions

against Russia, diplomatically isolating Russia, providing military and economic support to Ukraine, and strengthening NATO's defenses. About three weeks after the first Russian missiles fell, the U.S. Congress allocated $13 billion in emergency aid for Kyiv as part of an omnibus bill. In total, Congress appropriated $113 billion in aid to Ukraine in four installments, with approximately 60 percent, or 67 billion, designated for military assistance.

By April 2022, Russian units were compelled to abandon their advance toward Kyiv. On April 14, 2022, the Ukrainian parliament passed a resolution categorizing the actions of the Russian leadership, military, and security forces as genocide. President Biden also referred to Russian President Putin's actions in Ukraine as genocide, and Congress introduced two resolutions recognizing Russia's actions as genocide.

In September 2022, Ukrainian armed forces achieved significant success against the Russian Army in Kharkiv. Two months later, in Kherson, Russian commanders ordered a retreat from the Dnipro River's western bank to conserve manpower and equipment. However, by the war's 18-month mark, lawmakers began to question whether the United States could sustain the level of support in perpetuity, especially when the White House had stated time and again that the United States would support Ukraine "for as long as it takes," meaning arming and financing Ukraine's war effort against Russia until Kyiv achieved a total military victory. The U.S. intelligence community also expressed skepticism about whether Kyiv's counteroffensive, planned for the summer of 2023, could break through three layers of Russian defensive fortifications.

By August 24, 2023, Ukraine's Independence Day, the Biden administration accomplished two objectives: to assist Ukraine in resisting Russia's aggression and to ensure NATO was kept out of the conflict with a nuclear-armed Russia. American minimalist policy of pipette-like weapons supplies resulted in a grueling 10-week long Ukrainian counteroffensive along three points of the 600-mile front line. The desired goal of a full Russian troop withdrawal, which Ukraine had been pursuing for over a year and a half, remained elusive. Some experts and analysts suggested adjusting U.S. policy by pivoting toward armed neutrality so that Ukraine could keep the territory it held.

On October 19, 2023, against the domestic political backdrop of a barely avoided government shutdown and a speaker-less House of Representatives, President Biden sought to unify the American people as defenders of democracy. He gave a powerful speech from the Oval Office laying out the existential challenge presented to global order and U.S. leadership by Putin's aggression against Ukraine and Hamas's deadly attack on Israel on October 7, Putin's 71st birthday. In his speech, Biden requested one hundred billion dollars for the "arsenal of democracy," borrowing a phrase from President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Of this amount, $60 billion would be allocated for Ukraine, $10 billion for Israel, and the remaining $30 billion for Taiwan, the Indo-Pacific, and border security.

"We are facing an inflection point in history," said President Biden. He also told Americans that the cost of walking away from the conflicts in Ukraine and Israel would be much higher. It would embolden aggressors elsewhere. It would threaten national security. It would erode American credibility. Ukraine and Israel, Biden noted, are democracies attacked by authoritarians bent on their destruction. Stopping them is consistent with American values. President Biden framed the argument in terms of American power and responsibility, stating that "American leadership is what holds the world together." Analysts commented that this was "an application of U.S. grand strategy from Truman to Reagan." Critics pointed out that Biden did not outline a way out of the conflicts or define the precise goals the United States sought to achieve by supporting Ukraine.

Ukraine has been the epicenter of the century-long "Cold War" between Russia and the West. The U.S. government's response in the 1920s and 1930s ignored the victims in the quest for a "greater good" to "make the world safe for democracy" and in the struggle against a "greater evil" to rid the world of Nazism. With the storming of the U.S. Capitol and then chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan, Russia's

leaders felt a decline in U.S. power and subsequently unleashed genocidal violence with the aim of annihilating the Ukrainian nation. While the Biden administration has called the Russian actions in Ukraine a "genocide," it has yet to acknowledge the Holodomor as its precursor, the crime that remains unpunished.

"Whether or not the American people desire it, the historical development of world affairs is leading America at an ever-accelerating pace toward a final show-down with aggressive Russian imperialism. This America must face, not only as the leader of the Western world, but also as the defender of her own security and independence," warned Ukrainian scholars in 1956. In 2023, American scholars agree that getting the Russian war of aggression to end with a Ukrainian victory would be by far the best thing Americans could do for themselves.

Key Words

Cold War | Eugene Lyons | filtration camps | Fourteen Points | Gareth Jones | Inquiry report | James E. Mace | Malcolm Muggeridge | Paris Peace Conference | "quarantine" | torgsin | Walter Duranty

Summary

9.1 Wilson's Policy of "Indivisible Russia"
President Wilson's commitment to preserving the territorial integrity of "Russia" was the death knell for Ukraine. The lack of understanding and assistance from the Wilson administration allowed Russian expansionism to go unchecked, resulting in violence against Ukrainians, including the devastating Red Army suppression of Ukrainian independence movement and Lenin's famine, which claimed millions of lives. The U.S. policy prioritized maintaining unity of Russia and conducting trade, thus aiding the Bolsheviks in their suppression of the struggles and aspirations of the Ukrainian people.

9.2 Roosevelt's Recognition of the USSR
During the Holodomor, the American government, including the State Department and the White House, had access to extensive and timely intelligence about the tragedy but deliberately chose not to address it, prioritizing good relations with the Soviet Union and the competition between American and Soviet wheat exports. The U.S. government's lack of acknowledgment and inaction regarding the genocide led James E. Mace to conclude that they participated indirectly in one of history's most successful denials of genocide. The failure to heed fact-based analyses and warnings from sources such as the Latvian Minister and the Military Attaché about the Soviet regime's intentions and the resistance in Ukraine further underscored the U.S. government's negligence and lack of comprehension of the unfolding events.

9.3 The Biden Administration's Stance
The Biden administration has labeled the violence and aggression of the Russian military in Ukraine as genocide, acknowledging the deliberate intent to destroy the Ukrainian nation. However, while the White House has acknowledged the ongoing genocide in Ukraine, the U.S. leader has yet to officially recognize the Holodomor, a precursor to the current crimes, as a genocide. The recognition of the ongoing genocide signifies a departure from the U.S. government's response in the past, which ignored the suffering of the Ukrainian people in pursuit of other geopolitical goals. The Biden administration's stance marks a significant shift in acknowledging and addressing the atrocities committed by Russia against Ukraine.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. How did the Wilson administration's response to the threat of Russian expansionism in the 1920s affect Ukraine's struggle for liberation?

2. How did Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration treat reports about the forced starvation of Ukrainians?
3. What role did American journalists and politicians play in silencing the truth about the Holodomor?
4. Who were the truth tellers? Why did the world ignore their reporting?
5. Why has Ukraine ninety years after the Holodomor become a battlefield between Russia and the West?

CHAPTER 10

The Russian War and the Ongoing Genocide

With the advent of the "Russian world" in the twenty-first century, Ukraine has experienced a series of events that have had profound implications for its and humanity's future. Beginning with massive protests in 2013, known as the Euro Maidan, Ukrainians from all walks of life rallied to defend their country's pro-European orientation, away from Russia. This movement was met with escalating violence from then-President Viktor Yanukovych, aided by Moscow's advisers and hired thugs. The situation worsened as snipers targeted and killed peaceful protesters, leading to Yanukovych's eventual flight to Russia and the formation of a new Ukrainian government in Kyiv. However, under the smokescreen of the Sochi Olympics, Russia annexed Crimea, then invaded and launched a war in Donbas in eastern Ukraine. The violence escalated in February 2022, with Russia's expanded territorial invasion of Ukraine, resulting in mass killings, infrastructure destruction, and war crimes against the Ukrainian people. Russia has violated the U.N. Genocide Convention, as independent experts have documented evidence of the deliberate targeting of the Ukrainian national group and the ensuing genocide.

10.1 The Revolution of Dignity, 2013–2014

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- describe the events that led to the Revolution of Dignity
- discuss the annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of the war in Donbas in 2014

In 2013, the European Union gave Ukraine a November deadline to sign an Association Agreement. Russia opposed Ukraine's European choice. Pro-Russian President Yanukovych agreed to do so until Moscow put pressure on him to overturn such a course. Russia attempted to bring Ukraine back into its imperial sphere of influence by offering Yanukovych's government a counter proposal to join the Eurasian Customs Union of Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. Russia took overt actions. Putin launched a brief customs war with Ukraine, then threatened to introduce a visa regime for Ukrainians travelling to Russia. President Putin travelled to Kyiv and President Yanukovych to Moscow. On November 21, on the eve of the EU Summit in Vilnius, Yanukovych announced that Ukraine would not sign the agreement.

Demonstrations started on the Maidan – Independence Square – the next day. Hundreds of thousands of people took to the main squares of cities all over Ukraine to defend a pro-European orientation, away from Moscow. Students and professors, fathers with sons were building tents, cooking food, enlisting in self-defense units armed with Molotov cocktails, volunteering paramedic and paralegal services to support the demonstrators. The civil society awakened. Armed with plastic helmets and wooden shields,

people from all walks of life stood up for the dignity of their choice to be free from the Kremlin's diktat. For this reason, the **Euro Maidan** is also known as the **Revolution of Dignity**.

Yanukovych and his inner circle escalated the violence against peaceful demonstrators. Moscow sent advisers and busloads of hired thugs to suppress the protests. Snipers were placed at the former secret police headquarters facing the Maidan. They shot and killed innocent people, immortalized as the **Heavenly Hundred** (see **Figure 10.1**) Protests lasted until February 21–22, 2014, when Yanukovych fled the country to Rostov in Russia.

Figure 10.1 Memorial to the Heavenly Hundred, Kyiv, Ukraine, November 23, 2018. Photo by the Author.

Ukraine's parliament deposed Yanukovych from office. Three hundred seventy-two deputies (80 percent of the total number of MPs) voted in favor of this legislation. A new government was formed and new presidential elections set on May 25, 2014. Petro Poroshenko won on the first ballot. Despite this legitimate transfer of power, Russian government sponsored television channels expressed hostility to the new Ukrainian government. Subsequently, Russian state officials and propagandists kept calling the new Ukrainian government "illegitimate" and the Ukrainian men and women who stood on the Maidan as "Nazis" who took power in Kyiv with the aid of the United States and NATO.

Under the smoke screen of the Sochi Olympics, Russia annexed **Crimea** in March 2014. The annexation of Crimea was not a spur of the moment decision. It was in the planning stages for years. The only question was when. On December 2, 2013, two weeks after the demonstrations started in Kyiv, a city councilman in Crimea's Sevastopol organized a petition, asking President Putin to send troops from Russia to "protect" the Russian population of Crimea. Within hours after Ukraine's parliament created its post-revolutionary unity government on February 27, masked men in camouflage uniforms without insignia, euphemistically called **"little green men,"** stormed the regional parliament building in the city of

Simferopol and installed a pro-Russian zealot as the leader of the Crimean parliament. The legislature called for a sham "referendum" regarding the peninsula's status on March 16, 2014. Putin expressed his support for the referendum in Crimea. Soon, Russia's parliament passed a resolution to legitimize the addition of territories to the Russian Federation.

Then Russia unleashed a war in **Donbas** in eastern Ukraine. By mid-April, proxy "volunteers" from the Russian armed forces, often referred to by Western media as "separatists," took power in two eastern provinces of Ukraine, Donetsk and Luhansk. Russia alleged that the Ukrainian government wanted to forcibly Ukrainianize this region by transforming the "glorious Russian Donbas land" into a field of bloody crimes.

By the summer, protesters from the Maidan formed a core of a new Ukrainian armed force and militias loyal to the Ukrainian government. They gained slow but steady successes until the regular Russian army intervened in mid-August 2014. By March 2016, the United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights recorded more than 9,000 killed and over 21,000 wounded in eastern Ukraine. Nearly two million became internally displaced. Widows and orphaned children lamented the fallen victims of Russia's aggression with the melancholic Lemko folklore song and exclamations "*Heroi ne vmyraiut*!" (Heroes do not die!).

Ukraine's prospect of joining the European Union, the most powerful union of democratic states, which could help Ukraine build a robust economy and transparent judicial system, was perceived as an existential threat to the Russian autocratic identity. Putin launched his **"Russian world"** narrative after securing victory in the March 2012 presidential elections. The narrative was based on the need to "protect" Russians and the Russian-speaking populations in the "near abroad" to promote the imperial notion. He opted for indirect political control by creating a frozen conflict in eastern Ukraine, similar to those in "near abroad": Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Nagorno-Karabakh. Ukraine upended Putin's Eurasian vision of what post-Soviet order should look like. The prospects for a mutually-agreeable compromise became dim.

In his attempts to prevent Ukraine from establishing closer ties with the EU and NATO, Putin played his national security card by claiming that NATO was expanding and encircling Russia, despite the fact that only Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are immediate member states across its border. Russia's longest border is with China, which is not a NATO member. Rather, Russia is vying for hegemony over the post-Soviet space, resentful of the American role in strengthening democracy around the world and America's long-standing policy of preventing any one power from dominating Europe.

Click and Explore

To learn about the Revolution of Dignity, watch **Ukraine's History and Its Centuries-Long Road to Independence** on the PBS News Hour website.

10.2 The Russian Invasion, February 2022

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- explain the geopolitical goal of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022
- discuss the essence of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine

In world history textbooks, the year 2014 might be identified as the beginning of World War III when Ukraine for the third time in the history of civilization has become a battlefield between Russia and the West. Two **Minsk agreements** that Russia with the assistance of France and Germany tried to force Ukraine to sign failed. Presidents Poroshenko and Putin signed ceasefire agreements, but they were short-lived and constantly violated by the Russians, who denied the presence of the Russian Army on the territory of Ukraine. President Volodymyr Zelensky, who was elected in 2019 on the platform to bring peace to Ukraine, ended up fighting off a full-scale Russian invasion launched in the early morning hours on February 24, 2022.

The hybrid war launched in 2014 turned into an outright military invasion in 2022, the year that marked a centennial of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a moribund entity that Putin was trying to resuscitate. This Russian armed aggression, dubbed a **special military operation**, has been a logical continuation of Putin's strategic plan designed to destroy Ukraine's statehood. When gas, milk, customs, and other wars failed, grabbing lands in the Ukrainian industrial region of Donbas and expanding the zone of occupation to adjacent mineral rich lands of southeastern Ukraine and to bar its access to the Black and Azov Seas became paramount. Russia's geopolitical goal became apparent on the eve of the invasion when in his address to the nation, Putin issued an ultimatum to NATO to roll back to the Cold War status quo.

For the first time since World War II, new generations of Ukrainians born in the twenty-first century will never forget the menacing features of this war: horrific images of naked, bloody, and mutilated bodies, moldy cellars, air sirens, indiscriminate shelling. The war awakened the memory of their ancestors' struggle for independence to preserve freedom from Russian imperial oppression. Stalin erased one generation of Ukrainian intellectual and cultural leaders, writers, and artists. Now Putin is killing another. Clearly, sovereign democratic Ukraine and imperial authoritarian Russia cannot exist on one map.

On the eve of the invasion in a television address, Putin announced **"denazification" –** the destruction of the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian nation as the goal of his "special military operation." He also offered an unfounded justification for the war by misusing the term "genocide" for political purposes. He invoked the term multiple times to claim that the military operation was necessary to protect Russian speakers in the Donbas region in eastern Ukraine from genocide at the hands of the "Kyiv regime." Russia neither presented any evidence nor petitioned the United Nations for an investigation or international action.

Russian occupation forces began mass killings of the civilian population, destroying Ukrainian cities and villages, infrastructure, committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide against the Ukrainian people. On the day of the invasion, the President of Ukraine issued a martial law beginning at 5:30 a.m. World democracies expressed their support for Ukraine in the fight for independence, condemned the aggression of the Russian Federation, and provided Ukraine military, political, and humanitarian aid.

On October 13, 2022, at an emergency meeting on the topic of "Further escalation of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine," the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted Resolution 2463 (2022), recognizing the Russian regime as terrorist and proposing to create an international tribunal to prosecute the crime of aggression against Ukraine. On November 21, 2022, the NATO Parliamentary Assembly recognized the Russian Federation as a terrorist state.

Click and Explore

Visit a special page of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe entitled **"Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine"** to read texts of PACE resolutions.

In order to understand the nature and essence of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, it is prudent to study the speech of late Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to Great Britain and judge at The Hague, Volodymyr Vasylenko, presented at the round table of the National Forum "New Strategy for Peace and Security" in October 2018:

> If we carefully analyze the history and the current stage of Ukrainian–Russian relations, we can come to the conclusion that Russia, the Russian ruling elite, the Russian elite in a broad sense, Russian society consider Ukraine to be their existential enemy, not just an enemy, but an existential one, and everyone should realize this – the state leadership, the leading Ukrainian elite. The ultimate goal of the current Russian policy is the destruction of Ukraine as a subject of international law.
>
> Russia seeks to realize this goal through war, and this war did not begin on February 20, 2014. It began more than 300 years ago, continues now, and will continue until one of the sides wins this war. I hope that Ukraine will win... Ukraine's historical mission is to destroy this empire.
>
> The war that Russia is currently waging, often called a hybrid war, actually has two components: 1) armed aggression; and 2) humanitarian aggression.
>
> The purpose of armed aggression is the physical destruction of the party against whom it is committed. The goal of humanitarian aggression is the destruction of the national identity of the population and its final extermination.
>
> A country may be defeated as a result of armed aggression, but it will certainly liberate itself and recover if its identity is preserved. However, if a country loses its identity, it will never recover and never become an independent state again…
>
> Humanitarian aggression has four components: 1) the linguistic and cultural war that Russia is waging all the time against Ukraine; 2) information and propaganda war; 3) war against Ukrainian historical memory; and 4) interdenominational war.
>
> If humanitarian aggression against a state succeeds, then the state simply disappears. Conclusion: In the confrontation with Russia, Ukraine can survive only as Ukrainian Ukraine.

As to the responsibility of the Russian Federation for the crime of genocide, on November 24, 2018, the then President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko stated during the ceremony commemorating the Holodomor victims:

> The historical responsibility for the Holodomor lies with the Russian Federation as the legal successor of the USSR, and this crime has no statute of limitation…
>
> Russia again, as it did a hundred years ago, launched aggression against Ukraine in order to return it back to the empire. The Kremlin once again hates and fears a free European Ukraine. But ... they will no longer be able to turn back the wheel of history ... The genocide of the Ukrainian people was very carefully planned. They wanted to solve the Ukrainian question once and for all because it troubled Russia for centuries. Only the integration of Ukraine into the Euro-Atlantic sphere guarantees the country peace, security, independence, and prosperity.
>
> We will not deviate from this strategy. Ukraine will definitely become a full member of NATO and a full member of the EU ... This goal of the Ukrainian nation was once defined by the Ukrainian poet Khvyliovyi: "Away from Moscow! Europe now!"... And there will be no more Holodomor, no Great Terror, no russification.

The Russian invasion in February 2022 became possible because of the ambivalent attitudes of the West.

10.3 The Ongoing Genocide

By the end of this section, you will be able to:

- discuss the Russian state-orchestrated incitement of genocide
- explain the genocidal intent and patterns of destruction targeting Ukrainians

Amid continued violence in Ukraine, international experts in genocide studies, law, and history conducted an independent inquiry into the Russian Federation's responsibility for breaching the U.N. Genocide Convention during its invasion of Ukraine. In their report, issued in May 2022, the experts concluded that Russia was responsible for direct and public incitement to commit genocide under Article III (c) of the U.N. Genocide Convention. They described a pattern of atrocities indicating an intent to destroy the Ukrainian national group, in part. The experts warned of a serious risk of genocide in Ukraine, triggering the legal obligation of all U.N. member states to prevent genocide. In July 2023, an updated independent inquiry extended the findings beyond incitement to the actual commission of genocide and concluded that the Russian Federation violated the U.N. Genocide Convention beyond a reasonable doubt.

Click and Explore

Listen to a briefing **Russia's Genocide in Ukraine** held by the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission) in Washington, D.C.

As the pretext for invading Ukraine, Putin and Russian state officials falsely claimed that Ukraine had committed genocide against civilians in Russian-controlled areas in the Donbas. Ukraine submitted a request to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for a hearing, accusing Russia of violating the U.N. Convention by falsely claiming that Ukraine committed genocide in order to justify its invasion.

Specific evidence of Russia's continuing direct and public incitement includes denial of the Ukrainian national identity, including the Ukrainian language, denigration of the history of Ukrainian people, accusations in a mirror, dehumanization, demonization of Ukrainians as an existential threat, and conditioning the Russian audience to condone atrocities. Russian propagandists repeatedly invoke "denazification" as one of the main goals of the invasion. They have depicted Ukrainians as subhuman ("zombified," "bestial," or "subordinate"), diseased or contaminated ("scum," "filth," "disorder") and the epitome of evil ("Nazism," "Hitler youth," "Third Reich"), rendering them legitimate targets for destruction. The latter epithets construct Ukrainians as an existential threat, falsely drawing historical parallels to the Soviet Union's battles with Nazi Germany in World War II. Such false comparisons amplify the propaganda's impact on the Russian public to condone mass atrocities.

The day before the widely celebrated Victory Day, marking the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany, Putin sent a telegram to Russian-backed "separatists" claiming Russians are fighting "for the liberation of their native land from Nazi filth," vowing that "victory will be ours, like in 1945." The Russian Orthodox Church has publicly reinforced this historical parallel and praised Russia's fight against "Nazis." At the same time, the Russian Federation authorities have denied atrocities committed by its forces and rewarded soldiers suspected of mass killing in Ukraine. There is mounting evidence that Russian soldiers have internalized the state propaganda campaign by echoing its content while committing atrocities. Reported statements by soldiers include threats to rape "every Nazi whore," "hunting Nazis," "we will

liberate you from Nazis," "we're here to cleanse you from the dirt" (following a public execution), among others.

Click and Explore

Examine a collection of publicly available statements by Russian politicians and other officials, compiled under the title **Russia's Eliminationist Rhetoric Against Ukraine** by the Just Security organization. Just Security is based at the Reiss Center on Law and Security at New York University School of Law.

The acts committed by Putin's neo-Stalinist regime in Ukraine since February 2022 align with the definition of genocide outlined in Article II of the U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Russian forces have directly participated in:

- killing Ukrainian men, women, and children in a variety of ways, including summary executions, missile strikes, shelling, targeting Ukrainian political activists, journalists, veterans, religious leaders, lawyers, writers for liquidation;

- causing serious bodily and mental harm through multiple, systematic tactics that have escalated over time, including extensive, industrialized-scale torture in chambers, camps, and detention centers created and funded for this purpose; using rape and sexual violence against women, men, and children age 4 to 82 years old across nine regions of Ukraine; leaving behind mines and booby traps in homes, in food facilities, and on corpses; making direct and indirect nuclear threats;

- deliberately creating conditions intended to obliterate life, including the destruction of entire cities, like **Mariupol**, **Bakhmut** and others in Donetsk and Luhansk regions; targeting critical infrastructure, such as electric power grid and water supply, timed for harsh winter, to pose a significant threat to the physical survival of Ukrainians; confiscating Ukrainian grain, destroying agricultural fields and businesses, and killing farmers – all in an effort to starve the Ukrainians into submission and to create a global food crisis; denying medical services and destroying hospitals; besieging cities across Ukraine and deliberately inflicting fatal conditions on Ukrainian inhabitants (**Bucha**, Chernihiv); targeting schools, theaters, libraries, museums, Ukrainian Orthodox Churches, archives and heritage sites of Ukrainian history;

- preventing births within the Ukrainian national group, using sexual violence such as rape of Ukrainian women and girls to inflict trauma on the victims so that they would never want to have children or castration of male Ukrainians so that they can't have children; deporting pregnant and fertile-age women to Russia; bombing maternity hospitals to severely impact Ukraine's declining birthrate;

- forcibly transferring children to Russia or Russian-controlled territory; out of 5.3 million Ukrainians deported to Russia, over 700,000 children have been forcibly transferred to orphanages or adopted into Russian families, according to Moscow-controlled news agency TASS, so that they will not know their language and culture but will instead grow up as obedient subjects of the Russian regime. Ukrainian officials have been able to verify 19,393 children's identities because Russian authorities try to conceal these forcible transfers. Russian legislation is being reformed to expedite the adoption of children from Donbas, while Ukrainian children forcibly sent to Russia are forced to take Russian classes.

In March 2023, the United Nations released a report stating that there were 8.1 million Ukrainian refugees scattered throughout Europe, with 2.8 million of them in Russia. Many of those in Russia were forcibly deported by Russian occupiers and subjected to a "filtration" process designed to erase or eradicate Ukrainian expressions of identity. Approximately a quarter of Ukraine's total population were driven from their homes. The United Nations estimated that one Ukrainian child per second was made a refugee by Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022. Russia's systematic efforts to drive the Ukrainians from their homes and beyond their national borders created the largest refugee crisis recorded in Europe since World War II.

Click and Explore

Listen to a briefing **Russian War Crimes in Ukraine**, held by the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe in Washington, D.C. on May 4, 2022.

Russia appears to be continuing a deliberate **depopulation campaign** in occupied areas of Ukraine in order to facilitate the repopulation of Ukrainian territories with Russians. Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar stated on April 26, 2023 that Russia is trying to change the ethnic composition of Ukraine by actively conducting a large-scale resettlement of people, mainly from poorer and remote regions of Russia into Ukraine. Malyar noted that the most intensive efforts are ongoing in the occupied Luhansk region. The Institute for the Study of War (ISW) reported on specific instances of Russian authorities overseeing the depopulation and repopulation of areas of occupied Ukraine, particularly in the occupied Kherson region over the course of 2022. Ukrainian sources remarked in October 2022 that Russian authorities in then-occupied parts of the Kherson region deported large groups of Ukrainian residents to Russia under the guise of humanitarian evacuations and then repopulated their homes with Russian soldiers. Russia may hope to import Russians to fill depopulated areas of Ukraine in order to further integrate occupied areas into Russia socially, administratively, politically, and economically, thereby complicating conditions for the reintegration of these territories into Ukraine. These actions amount to a deliberate ethnic cleansing effort and violate the U.N. Convention.

"Genocide Never Again" by Ed Stein depicted in **Figure 10.2** highlights the failure of the international community to respond to instances of genocidal violence throughout history. When it comes to the meaning and use of the term and its applicability to the case of Ukraine, some leaders have unequivocally called Russian violence in Ukraine a genocide, while others have refrained. Out of 193 member states in the United Nations, only sixteen countries officials have referred to the legally defined crime of genocide or employed a broader meaning of the term. Most of these are European countries plus Canada and the United States. The ICJ has interpreted this definition narrowly, emphasizing the need to establish perpetrators' specific genocidal intent, to the complete exclusion of other motives. The ICJ prosecutes individual cases, it cannot hold a state accountable for genocide. It would require establishing a special international tribunal to prosecute the crime of aggression. Notably, the Convention's definition of genocide excludes "cultural genocide"— the annihilation of a group's identity by

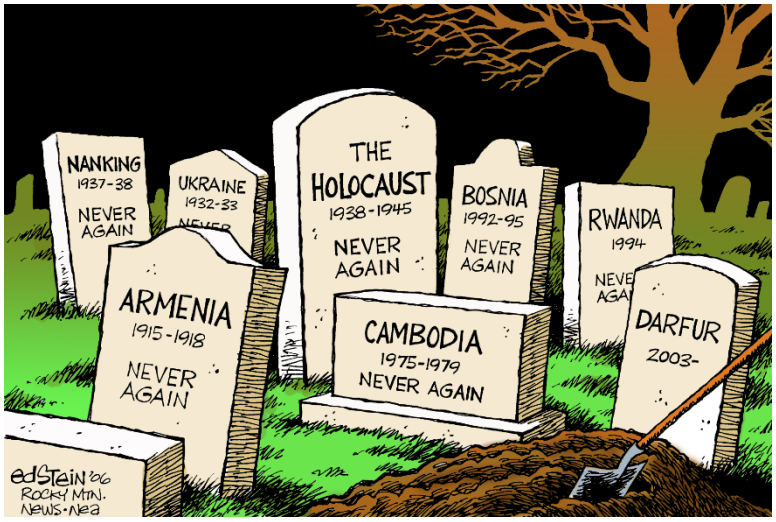


Figure 10.2 "Genocide Never Again" by Ed Stein, *Rocky Mountain News*, 2006. Courtesy of the Denver Public Library.

attacking cultural symbols, traditions, language — even though many commentators may use "genocide" more broadly to include such attacks. In fact, Raphael Lemkin, the Polish lawyer who coined the term "genocide," intended to include cultural genocide in his original definition.

In 2022, following a report by the New Lines Institute for Strategy and Policy and the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, entitled "An Independent Legal Analysis of the Russian Federation's Breaches of the Genocide Convention in Ukraine and the Duty to Prevent," concluding that Russia violated the Genocide Convention, 47 members of the European Parliament sent a letter to EU leaders concurring with the report and urging EU action. The European Parliament in its May 2022 resolution "The fight against impunity for war crimes in Ukraine" expressed its full support for the investigation launched by the International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor into alleged war crimes, crimes against humanity, and crimes of genocide committed in Ukraine, and called to take all necessary actions in international institutions and for support to be given to the ICC Prosecutor in investigating and prosecuting suspected perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity and, possibly, genocide. However, this should not be just Europe's responsibility because under the U.N. Genocide Convention, its signatories have much broader responsibilities, including a legal obligation to prevent genocide.

Click and Explore

Read statements made in U.N. bodies, such as the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the Human Rights Council as well as comments from government leaders and heads of state and official resolutions from legislative bodies in **Compilation of Countries' Statements Calling Russian Actions in Ukraine "Genocide"** on the Just Security website. Just Security is based at the Reiss Center on Law and Security at New York University School of Law.

In 2023, the New Lines Institute for Strategy and Policy and the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights issued an updated report, entitled "The Russian Federation's Escalating Commission of Genocide in Ukraine," concluding that the Russian Federation has not only continued but escalated its efforts to commit genocidal acts, accompanied by a jingoistic refrain "We Can Do It Again," threatening to renew past atrocities committed by Russia against Ukrainians as the international community watches. The authors of the report urged State Parties to the Genocide Convention to take actions to stop the commission of genocide.

In *Black Book of Communism*, Polish scholars argued that from the Bolshevik *coup d'état* in 1917 to the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, driven by the ideology of creating *Homo Sovieticus*, secret police persecuted, tortured, and eventually executed up to 60 million innocent victims. Demographers estimate that Ukrainians account for 29.5 million of the victims in the twentieth century social catastrophes. In the twenty-first century, the stakes are even higher for Ukraine's people as this crime is being repeated once again. The perpetrators are the descendants of secret police operatives who served in the Cheka–GPU–NKVD–KGB–FSB. To quote Robert Conquest, "Until they publicly purge themselves of this guilt, until they break with this horror in their past, they remain not only its heirs, but also its accomplices."

Key Words

Bakhmut | Bucha | Crimea | "denazification" | depopulation campaign | Donbas | Euro Maidan | Heavenly Hundred | "little green men" | Mariupol | Minsk agreements | Revolution of Dignity | "Russian world" | special military operation

Summary

10.1 The Revolution of Dignity, 2013–2014
In 2013, massive protests erupted on the Maidan, with people from all walks of life defending Ukraine's pro-European orientation. Yanukovych escalated violence against the demonstrators, and Moscow sent advisers and hired thugs. Snipers targeted and killed peaceful protesters. Yanukovych eventually fled the country, and a new government was formed. Under the smokescreen of the Sochi Olympics, Russia annexed Crimea and unleashed a war in eastern Ukraine. The annexation of Crimea had been planned, and Russia orchestrated a sham referendum. Russia continued its aggression in eastern Ukraine, resulting in thousands of casualties and displaced refugees. Putin's "Russian world" narrative aimed to protect Russians and Russian-speaking populations in the "near abroad" and prevent Ukraine's closer ties with the EU and NATO.

10.2 The Russian Invasion, February 2022
In 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, coinciding with the centennial of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Putin's strategic plan aimed to destroy Ukraine's statehood. The war unleashed by Russia included mass killings, destruction of infrastructure, and war crimes against the Ukrainian people. The international community condemned Russia's aggression and provided support to Ukraine. Efforts were made to recognize the Russian regime as a terrorist state and establish an international tribunal to prosecute the aggression. The conflict has deep historical roots, with Russia viewing Ukraine as an existential enemy and seeking to destroy its national identity. Ukraine's historical mission is seen as defeating the Russian empire and preserving its own identity. The Russian invasion in 2022 was made possible, in part, by the ambivalent attitudes of the West.

10.3 The Ongoing Genocide
In May 2022, an independent inquiry conducted by international experts examined the Russian Federation's violation of the U.N. Genocide Convention during its invasion of Ukraine. The experts determined that Russia was directly inciting genocide, targeting the Ukrainian national group. Evidence included denial of Ukrainian identity, dehumanization, and framing Ukrainians as an existential threat. Russian forces engaged in mass killings, attacks on shelters and evacuation routes, indiscriminate bombardment, sieges, destruction of infrastructure, and sexual violence. They also forcibly relocated millions of people from Ukraine to Russia, aiming to change the ethnic composition of Ukraine. In 2023, Russia not only continued but escalated its efforts to commit genocide. The U.N. Genocide Convention is a binding agreement; it requires states to stop the commission of genocide.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. What were the causes of the Revolution of Dignity, 2013–2014?
2. What was Russia's response to the Euro Maidan?
3. How did the United Nations respond to Russia's annexation of Crimea and the war in the Donbas?
4. What were the causes of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, one hundred years after the founding of the Soviet Union and ninety years after the Holodomor?
5. What is the most effective way to prevent a genocide?

Learning Activities

Genocide Definition

Raphael Lemkin coined the term *genocide* in 1944 from the Greek root *genos* (race, tribe) and Latin *-cide* (*caedere* – to kill). Lemkin wrote: "Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accompanied by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups."

It was codified in the U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (hereafter Genocide Convention) in 1948. The Genocide Convention is an international treaty, which the Soviet Union (now its legal inheritor Russian Federation) ratified in 1954. Russia's obligations under the Genocide Convention are *erga omnes*, or owed to the international community as a whole, which stems from the *jus cogens* status of the prohibition of genocide. The Genocide Convention provides for criminal liability of individuals for genocide and related acts, while States can be held responsible for such acts under a distinct, though at times overlapping, legal framework.

Article I of the Genocide Convention imposes duties on State parties regarding genocide which "whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish."

Article II defines genocide as follows:

> *Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such*
>
> *(a) Killing members of the group;*
> *(b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;*
> *(c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;*
> *(d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;*
> *(e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.*

There are three constituent elements under Article II of the Genocide Convention: (1) the commission of any of the genocidal acts committed against (2) a protected group (3) with the intent to destroy the group in whole or in part.

Article III lists the punishable acts, including: "(a) genocide; (b) conspiracy to commit genocide; (c) direct and public incitement to commit genocide; (d) attempt to commit genocide, and (e) complicity in genocide."

Click and Explore

Read the text of the **Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide**, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 9, 1948, in United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 78-I, No. 1021 (1951).

Holodomor Definitions

RAPHAEL LEMKIN (1953)

What I want to speak about is perhaps the classic example of Soviet genocide, its longest and broadest experiment in Russification – the destruction of the Ukrainian nation. ...

Ukraine is highly susceptible to racial murder by select parts and so the Communist tactics there have not followed the pattern taken by the German attacks against the Jews. The nation is too populous to be exterminated completely with any efficiency. However, its leadership, religious, intellectual, political, its select and determining parts, are quite small and therefore easily eliminated, and so it is upon these groups particularly that the full force of the Soviet axe has fallen, with its familiar tools of mass murder, deportation and forced labor, exile and starvation.

The attack has manifested a systematic pattern, with the whole process repeated again and again to meet fresh outbursts of national spirit. The first blow is aimed at the intelligentsia, the national brain, so as to paralyze the rest of the body. ...

Going along with this attack on the intelligentsia was an offensive against the Churches, priests and hierarchy, the "soul" of Ukraine....

In the deportation, families were deliberately separated, fathers to Siberia, mothers to the brickworks of Turkestan and the children to Communist homes to be "educated." ...

The third prong of the Soviet plan was aimed at the farmers, the large mass of independent peasants who are the repository of the tradition, folklore and music, the national language and literature, the national spirit, of Ukraine. The weapon used against this body is perhaps the most terrible of all – starvation. ...

The fourth step in the process consisted in the fragmentation of the Ukrainian peoples at once by the addition to Ukraine of foreign peoples and by the dispersion of the Ukrainians throughout Eastern Europe. In this way, ethnic unity would be destroyed and nationalities mixed.

...

[I]f the Soviet program succeeds completely, if the intelligentsia, the priests and the peasants can be eliminated, Ukraine will be as dead as if every Ukrainian were killed, for it will have lost that part of it which has kept and developed its culture, its beliefs, its common ideas, which have guided it and given it a soul, which, in short, made it a nation rather than a mass of people.

Click and Explore

Visit the New York Public Library's digital collection **Raphael Lemkin Papers** to view photographs and read correspondence as well as statements related to the ratification of the U.N. Genocide Convention.

JAMES E. MACE (1983)

The Ukrainian famine of 1932–1933, which followed the forced collectivization of Soviet agriculture, is much more than the most appalling event in the Soviet government's war against the peasantry. Persuasive evidence suggests that it was really a function of Soviet nationalities policy, carried out in tandem with a campaign to crush every manifestation of Ukrainian national life and constituting an attempt to crush the social basis of that life. …

…

If we are to understand the famine of 1932–1933, we must place it in the context of Stalin's policy toward the Ukrainians:

1) The destruction of the Ukrainian communist leadership, designed to neutralize the Ukrainian SSR as a political factor in Soviet life.
2) The destruction of Ukrainian spiritual, intellectual, and cultural elites and institutions, designed to "decapitate" the Ukrainian nation.
3) The replacement of the Ukrainization policy with a policy of Russification, designed to push Ukrainian culture out of the cities and back to the countryside whence it had come.
4) The famine, a policy designed to crush the social basis of Ukrainian nationhood.

Understood in this context, the famine becomes intelligible as an attempt to destroy the Ukrainian nation as a political factor, as a social organism, to destroy the Ukrainian nation as such. Millions of Ukrainians died as a result of this policy. The only word to describe it is genocide.

ANNE APPLEBAUM (2019)

Holodomor, man-made famine that convulsed the Soviet republic of Ukraine from 1932 to 1933, peaking in the late spring of 1933. It was part of a broader Soviet famine (1931–34) that also caused mass starvation in the grain-growing regions of Soviet Russia and Kazakhstan. The Ukrainian famine, however, was made deadlier by a series of political decrees and decisions that were aimed mostly or only at Ukraine. In acknowledgement of its scale, the famine of 1932–33 is often called the Holodomor, a term derived from the Ukrainian words for hunger (*holod*) and extermination (*mor*).

References

Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of International Law, 1944), 79.

Raphael Lemkin, "Soviet Genocide in the Ukraine" (typewritten notes), Folder 16, Box 2, Reel 3, ZL-273, "The Raphael Lemkin Papers, 1947–1959," Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, New York Public Library.

"The Man-Made Famine of 1932–1933 in the Ukrainian SSR: Testimony of Dr. James E. Mace to the United States Senate, November 15, 1983," typewritten notes, 1, 12–13.

Anne Applebaum, "Holodomor," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, November 12, 2019, https://www.britannica.com/event/Holodomor.

Notes

holodomor (in Ukrainian) spelled with a lower-case *h* means famine, an acute scarcity of food, caused by drought, crop failure, population imbalance, or war, typically accompanied by starvation and epidemics that lead to increased mortality. The word appeared in 1898 in a periodical describing destitute population suffering from extreme starvation. It is derived from *holod* (starvation) and *mor* (having the same meaning as Latin root *mort*, or death), meaning "death caused by starvation."

Holodomor of 1932–1933 – the ultimate stage of the genocide of the Ukrainians in the Soviet Union

Holodomor is an intentional act of mass extermination of people in Soviet Ukraine and areas historically settled by the Ukrainians in the Soviet Union as defined in Article II of the U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted in 1948.

Discussion Questions

1. Were there any major differences among these definitions that stood out to you? Explain.
2. What do you notice about the language describing the Ukrainians as opposed to other persecuted groups? How is it different?
3. What does it mean for something to be "systematic"? Why is it important to understand that the perpetrators behaved in a systematic as opposed to an unplanned way?
4. What does it mean "the classic example of genocide"? What tools of extermination did the perpetrators who targeted Ukrainians use?
5. Compare these three definitions with the one in the introduction (see U.N. Genocide Convention Article II and its application to the Holodomor). How would your perspective change depending on whether you adopt a narrow versus a broad definition of the Holodomor as genocide?

Holodomor Definitions: Sorting It Out

As you read the Holodomor definitions, note key words and phrases on the chart. Compare and contrast the definitions by answering the discussion questions. Find common threads running through these definitions.

Definition	Who are the victims? How are they described?	Who are the perpetrators? What are their motives?	What terms are used to emphasize the nature of the Holodomor?
Raphael Lemkin (1953)			
James E. Mace (1983)			
Anne Applebaum (2019)			

Analysis of Documentaries

Summary: Authentic visual media that recorded the Holodomor as genocide are scarce because the topic was taboo throughout seventy years of the existence of the Soviet Union until its dissolution. Most of the surviving footage is propaganda of happy life in the Soviet workers' "paradise." Archival materials have been periodically sanitized. Most documentaries have been filmed many decades after the fact with children of the Holodomor survivors.

Materials: DVDs of documentaries

Suggested documentaries:

Soviet Story (11 min.)
Genocide Revealed (26 min.)
Holodomor: Voices of Survivors (30 min.)
Harvest of Despair (55 min.)
The Hunger for Truth: The Rhea Clyman Story (50 min.)

Directions: Have students view one of documentaries that introduce the story of the Holodomor. Students may work individually or in groups, analyzing the documentary film, and sharing their reflections in a small group or as a whole class.

Guidelines for Analysis of Documentaries

1. *Basic Identification*: What is the title of the documentary film? When and where was it created? Who created it?

2. *Producer's Intent*: What is the producer's place in society (profession, social class, gender, ethnicity, religion, political beliefs)? Why do you think the producer created this film? What is the main idea presented in the documentary? Who is the intended audience for this film? How might the intended audience shape the perspective of this film? What is the producer's style?

3. *Historical Context*: What specific historical period or epoch does this documentary present? What historical events might have influenced the creation of this documentary? Is this film consistent with what you know about the historical record from that time?

4. *Content of the Source*: What historical facts do you learn from this film? What biases or other cultural factors might have shaped the message of the documentary's producer? What historical perspectives are left out of this film? What questions are left unanswered by this documentary?

5. *Relevance of the Source*: How might this documentary film confirm or contradict issues raised in other sources?

Analysis of Photo Documents

Summary: In the 1930s any attempt to document the starved Ukrainians was considered a criminal offense. The attempts at photo documentation by American photographers as well as an Austrian engineer that made it across the borders of the USSR were not widely disseminated.

Materials: Holodomor Photo Directory

Featured Collections:

Alexander Wienerberger: Innitzer Album
Alexander Wienerberger: Beyond the Innitzer Album
James Abbe Collection
Nikolai Bokan Collection
Whiting Williams Collection

Directions: Have students select an authentic photograph from a directory of photographs preserved in photo archive in Ukraine and in private collections that depicts the Holodomor in Ukraine in the 1930s. Students can work in teams analyzing the same photo document. These photos could be assembled in Google Slides so that each team can report the findings to the entire class. This way ten teams can analyze ten different photographs. It is recommended that the instructor assist teams with analysis, depending on the complexity of the image, then lead the class discussion, comparing and contrasting these photo documents. This activity can be completed in person or online.

Questions for Photo Document Analysis

1. What subjects and objects do you see in the photograph?
2. What explanation can you give for what is happening?
3. What connections can you make between this image and other images that you have seen before?
4. Why did the photographer choose to take this photograph?
5. What did you learn about the Holodomor from this photograph?
6. Why are photographs important for understanding the Holodomor?

Historiography Paper

Summary: As an application of critical thinking skills, students will evaluate three secondary sources related to the Holodomor as genocide. Students will write a four-page paper essay style, discussing and analyzing the arguments in three books or articles.

Materials: Students can use secondary sources listed in Bibliography or search newly published monographs or articles in peer-reviewed journals.

Directions: Have students read three secondary sources. After a brief one paragraph introduction providing some background on the issue, students will then focus on the three sources for the rest of the paper. Students must identify the thesis and at least two key points (or three key points if there is no thesis) for each work. Students must also discuss the sources used by the book or article and indicate if the sources are relevant and sufficient. The paper must also clearly identify and discuss at least one primary source used and discussed by one of the secondary sources and analyze the author's interpretation of this source. Students must also identify strength and weakness of each book or article. Finally, in the extended one paragraph conclusion, students must comment on the extent to which the different scholarly works agree or disagree about key aspects related to the issue or topic.

Guidelines for Historiography Paper

The specific instructions provided below are to assist students in avoiding using invalid sources or merely summarizing sources in the historiography paper.

Sources: You must have three secondary sources that are either an article in a peer-reviewed scholarly journal or a chapter in a monograph or a book written on a narrow topic by a historian. Be sure you do not use any primary sources or first-hand accounts for the Historiography Paper. If you identify articles using the databases on the library website, then you will know that they are from approved journals. If you use articles doing a web search, they may not be scholarly and you will lose points. The books that you use must be scholarly and should have a chapter focused on an issue directly related to your narrow topic. You cannot use encyclopedias (even if they are focused on the cases of genocide), magazines, textbooks, or popular books written by non-academic historians. You should look up information about academic qualifications of the author of each book you intend to use and keep in mind that University Press books undergo a peer review process whereas books published by Random House, Double Day, Da Capo, Prentice Hall, and Norton do not undergo as thorough a review and might be written by either scholars or by popular historians.

Key Points: If there is a clearly stated thesis or overall argument in the article or book chapter, then you must accurately re-state it in the first sentence discussing that work. The two most important points in the article or chapter must be identified and re-stated in your own words. If there is no thesis, you should identify three key points. After identifying the key points, you will indicate what kind of evidence and sources are used and must discuss one primary source discussed by one of the authors and analyze the author's interpretation of this source. You will further identify one strength and one weakness of each secondary source. In this last assessment there are a wide range of points you could make as long as you are clear and identify a specific issue (such as the author does not explain how the evidence supports the point as opposed to evidence is not clear in the way that it should be). In the conclusion, you are required to compare and analyze the similarities and differences between the points in each work.

Museum Exhibit

Summary: As an application of critical thinking skills, students will design a virtual museum exhibit related to the Holodomor as genocide, using primary and secondary sources.

Directions: Students will create a virtual museum exhibit using Google Slides, Power Point, or any online presentation tool. The museum exhibit must be well-thought out and coherent. All of the objects must be relevant and have a specific purpose. A random collection of ten items will not earn a passing grade even if all items are related to the topic in some way. The required elements for the exhibit are as follows: the exhibit must include ten items and each of these must be tagged (given a title that identifies each item in an appropriate way with source citation) and organized so that they can be viewed in a specific order as though a visitor was walking through an actual museum exhibit. At least half (a minimum of five) of the items must be excerpts from primary sources or photos of primary source objects, two of the items must provide background information relevant to the topic, and at least one must be an excerpt from a newspaper article; the last three items will be determined by the students and the only requirement is that they be relevant and clearly identified. Students may have up to twenty items in their exhibit, but only ten are required (see a rubric with the exhibit requirements). Students can complete this assignment individually or in teams.

Guidelines for Museum Exhibit

The **Museum Exhibit Rubric** provides specific criteria for scoring the exhibit, including integration of artifacts, diversity of documentary evidence, and source citations. However, students are also encouraged to be creative and to have one element be unique to their exhibit and symbolize a key aspect of their topic.

Materials: Students may use information and images from websites and segments from films and documentaries. However, sources must be reliable and websites – objective. The following is a list of resources that students may use, followed by a list of a few resources that are not reliable and, thus, cannot be used.

Resources that can be used for Museum Exhibit:
1. Photographs and documents from digital archives
2. Personal histories from museum websites
3. Encyclopedias available online
4. Newspapers, such as *New York Times, Times of London* and other national newspapers
5. Reports prepared by human rights organizations
6. Interviews with eyewitnesses posted on websites

Resources that CANNOT be used for Museum Exhibit:
1. News or television websites, such as BBC, PBS, NBC
2. Spartacus educational website
3. You Tube videos that are not clearly identified by the title of the original film or documentary
4. Institute for Historical Review website
5. Websites with images or information that do not have a clearly identified author or citations to sources
6. You Tube clips from Hollywood films should not be used if documentaries or actual footage of events are accessible, and no more than one segment from a film should be used in any exhibit

Museum Exhibit Rubric

Criteria / Score	Excellent (100–90)	Proficient (80)	Adequate (70)	Developing (60–50)
ARTIFACTS (10%) Exhibits are required to have 10 items. All items must be clearly identified and directly relate to the topic as well as to each other.	Ten artifacts are present and they are directly related to the narrow topic.	Ten artifacts are present, but they are not all related to the narrow topic.	Less than 10 artifacts, or insignificant, or artifacts that do not relate to each other.	Only a few artifacts that are relevant and/or relate to each other are present.
INTEGRATION (60%) Every item selected for the exhibit is significant not just in and of itself but significant because it connects to all other items in the exhibit, and together they tell a compelling and coherent story. Students are focusing on a narrow aspect of relatively broad topic, and all objects should relate to this specific issue/aspect.	Diverse array of artifacts that relate to each other and tell a coherent and compelling story.	Artifacts tell a story, but it is not entirely clear or compelling.	Artifacts do not all connect to each other and do not tell a story that is entirely clear.	Artifacts are not related to exhibit topic or each other. The artifacts are not different from each other and do not connect at all or clearly tell a story.
DIVERSITY (20%) Exhibit should be creative and should be as original as possible as opposed to a replica of an existing museum exhibit. A diverse array of artifacts, including text, images, video, and descriptions of museum features, should be included.	Different kinds of artifacts are used, including newspaper articles, original documents or testimonies, images, videos, etc.	Only one or two kinds of artifacts are included, and/or most of the exhibit is text.	Exhibit does not have all items and the artifacts included are very similar and only represent one or two kinds of items.	Either less than ten items or items that are not directly related and also are not different kinds of items.
SOURCES/CITATIONS (10%) Each artifact must be labeled and have a Chicago style citation (except for You Tube videos). The source of the information, image or video must be credible and so it is better to use museum and scholarly websites as opposed to random web pages. Be sure if you use an image or documentary that you know it is identified correctly, authentic, and in the case of documentaries objective.	Sophisticated and credible sources and correct citations (Chicago Manual of Style)	Credible sources and citations that are correct or have only minor errors (a period instead of a comma)	Sources are not credible and citations are missing or not in the correct format.	Sources are not credible and the citations are missing or are not in correct style.

Art History Essay

Directions: Scholars argue that history is written by winners. History textbooks usually present the winner's point of view. Think about books promoted or prohibited under Communism or Nazism. Think about news channels you are listening to. Each outlet has its own scented view: liberals here and conservatives there. Intentionally or unintentionally, we align with people similar to us and accept the group view. When you begin to write an art history essay, you become a researcher: the information you gather will determine the quality and depth of your analysis. You will find yourself becoming a detective. Make sure you present your arguments in such a way based on all the following questions answered: Who made the artwork? Why? What purpose does it serve? Why is it important? Reinforce your thoughts with specific quotes from your sources.

Materials: Choose one of the artworks from this book or the following collection and write a comparative art analysis essay.

"Holodomor through the eyes of Ukrainian artists," Morgan Williams, Founder and Trustee

Questions for Discussion

1. Identify the medium: What are you looking at? There are several categories of art expression. Is this a work of architecture, clay pottery, or painting? How did the artist express hir or her ideas? The message is in the medium.
2. Analyze it. Does it have a recognizable form? Is this representational and figurative or non-representational art? Why? What purpose does the form serve in the art making?
3. For centuries, images have been used by the church and state for the purposes of manipulation or for exhibiting power. Today images are still a way to influence your perception of reality. Evaluate the image in context and decipher the message based on logic and context of contemporary politics.
4. Discuss the aesthetics and formal elements of the selected artwork in connection to the artist's identity and cultural heritage.
5. Find another graphic artist or another medium representing conflict in history. Compare and contrast your selected artwork with the other one depicting wars or mass violence.
6. In your essay, articulate why you selected the artworks that are the focus of your analysis.

For more details on how to draft a winning essay, see **"Art History Writing Guide,"** developed by Swarthmore College.

Witness Testimony Reflections

Summary: To learn about the Holodomor as genocide and develop critical thinking skills, students will reflect on witness testimonies and make personal, historical, and world connections through sharing with classmates.

Materials: Student copies of ten eyewitness accounts (see excerpts in **Witness Testimonies)**.

Directions: Have students summarize several survivors' accounts in their own words, focusing on who, what, when, where, why, and how. Then ask students to record emotions that they noticed, paying attention to the survivors' choice of words, expressions. After reading the witness accounts, invite students to ask questions or share responses, comparing and contrasting these accounts.

Questions for Discussion

1. Why is using witness testimony as a primary source valuable in studying the events of the Holodomor?
2. What information did you gain from reading the diaries and memoirs?
3. What are some limitations or challenges presented by such testimony?
4. In what ways have you become a witness by reading Holodomor memoirs?
5. How has becoming a witness influence your attitudes and future behavior?

Analysis of Historical Documents

Summary: As an introduction to learning about the Holodomor as genocide and developing critical thinking skills, students will analyze and evaluate archival documents and make personal, historical, and world connections through sharing with classmates.

Materials: Student copies of ten historical documents (see excerpts in **Archival Documents**) and the **Perpetrators' Intent and Targets** worksheet.

Directions: Have students read and analyze a selected historical document in teams. Each team of four students works on the same document, dividing their roles as leader, recorder, timekeeper, and presenter. The presenter will report the findings on the chart or the blackboard for class discussion. Ten teams will work on different documents. It is recommended that the teacher assist individual teams with document analysis, depending on the complexity of the text and knowledge of the students, then lead the class discussion, comparing and contrasting these documents. This can be done in person or via online breakout rooms.

Guidelines for Document Analysis

1. *Basic Identification*: What type of source is it? When and where was it created? Who created it?

2. *Author's Intent*: What is the author's place in society (profession, social class, gender, ethnicity, religion, political beliefs)? How might the author's social background shape the author's perspective in this source? Why do you think the author created this source? Does the author have an argument? If so, what is it? Who is the intended audience for this source? How might the intended audience shape the perspective of this source? What is the author's style?

3. *Historical Context*: Under what specific historical circumstances was this source created? What larger historical events, processes, or structures might have influenced this text? Is this source consistent with what you know about the historical record from that time?

4. *Content of the Source*: What historical facts do you learn from this source? What biases or other cultural factors might have shaped the message of this source? How do the ideas and values in the source differ from the ideas and values of our time? What historical perspectives are left out of this source? What questions are left unanswered by this source?

5. *Relevance of the Source*: How might this source confirm or contradict issues raised in other primary or secondary sources?

Adapted from California State University, Fullerton's "Instructions for Primary Source Analysis Essay"

Perpetrators' Intent and Targets

To assess violence dynamics during the Holodomor, use the following matrix to tally the number of proxy variable appearances in ten primary source documents selected for analysis. Indicate a perceived change in conceptual categories over time from mass violence to genocide.

To distinguish genocides from other large-scale violence, scholars use proxy variables to measure intended purpose and intended targets.

Intent is measured by purpose of violence (destruction in cases of genocide vs. all other types of violence, such as repressions or injuries in cases of mass violence). One proxy variable that is used to measure the intent is *future orientation* and another is *communicative violence* (violence used to send messages of fear or intimidation).

Proxy variables for measuring *intended purpose*:

	Intended Purpose	**Future Orientation**	**Communicative Violence** (messages of fear and intimidation)
GENOCIDE	Destruction	Perpetrators cannot envision a future that entails co-existing with victims	Little to no communicative violence
MASS VIOLENCE	Repression Non-destructive harm	Perpetrators can envision a future that includes their victims in a submissive role	Extensive evidence of communicative violence

Targets of the violence can be measured by selection of intended target group (unqualified vs. qualified) using proxy variables of *logistics of violence* (coordinated and systematic vs. possibly *ad hoc*), and *pursuit of victims* (pursuit over time and across distance even when inconvenient in cases of genocide vs. little to no pursuit across time or distance because victims are selected on criteria of convenience or killing may take place in single instance typical in cases of mass violence).

Proxy variables for measuring *intended targets*:

	Intended Targets	**Logistics of Violence**	**Pursuit of Victims**
GENOCIDE	Unqualified group selection	Coordinated *and* systematic	Pursuit (even when inconvenient) over time and across distance
MASS VIOLENCE	Qualified group selection	Possibly coordinated and systematic Possibly *ad hoc*	Little to no pursuit across time – killing may take place in single instance; victims selected on criteria of convenience

The following matrix has been developed based on an analytical framework adapted with permission from Kristina Hook, "Pinpointing Patterns of Violence: A Comparative Genocide Studies Approach to Violence Escalation in the Ukrainian Holodomor," *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 15, no. 2 (2021): 10–36.

	GENOCIDE					MASS VIOLENCE		
Document Date Author	Cannot envision future	Active destruction	Coordinated, systematic	Pursuit of victims	Unqualified victim descriptions	Can envision future	Violence to intimidate	Qualified victim selection
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								

Archival Documents

Document 1

Letter from Petrovsky to Molotov and Stalin on the difficult food situation and famine in the Ukrainian SSR (Excerpts)[1]

June 10, 1932

During the sowing campaign in Pryluky, Lokhvytsia, Varva, Chernukhy, Pyriatyn, and Mala Divytsia districts, I came face-to-face, so to speak, with the village life. That does not mean that we, Ukrainian communists, did not know what was happening in our villages (although we are still being accused of being detached from the countryside). We knew there would be severe pressure and hell to pay during state grain procurements. In my opinion, the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine is guilty of not objecting to but beginning to fulfill the state's grain plan of 510 million *puds*[2] for Ukraine, in the name of maintaining the pace of building socialism and in light of the tense state of international affairs. It was in this sense that I understood the necessity to execute Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) directives on grain procurements, which we adopted for mandatory implementation.

We knew beforehand that fulfilling state grain procurements in Ukraine would be difficult, but what I have seen in the countryside indicates that we have greatly overdone it, we tried too hard. I was in many district villages and saw a considerable part of the countryside engulfed in famine. There aren't many, but there are people swollen from starvation, mainly poor farmers and even middle-class farmers. They are eating food scraps from the bottom of the barrel, if any are available. During meetings in villages, I am yelled at for nothing, old women cry, and men sometimes do so as well. At times, criticism of the situation created goes very deep: "Why did they create an artificial famine? After all, we had a harvest. Why did they take away the sowing seeds? That did not happen even under the old regime. Why should Ukrainians make perilous journeys for bread to areas that are not growing grain? Why isn't grain being brought here?" And so on.

It is difficult to provide explanations under the circumstances. You obviously condemn those who committed excesses, but generally feel like a carp squirming on a frying pan. In response to the desperate cry for relief [in the form of] sowing seeds and grain for food, I promised something with regard to sowing seeds but told the farmers to find seed in their own region. Regarding grain for food relief, I cannot promise anything, or very little. Mass thefts are occurring in the villages because of the famine, mainly of poultry: they steal chickens, ducks, take potato scraps, and butcher calves and cows during the night and eat them.

Right now, the men are sowing millet and buckwheat. The days for sowing millet are ending but not for buckwheat, and the villagers are expecting it from us. They have always objected to oats because they consider the labor to be a lost cause, since oats will not ripen or even grow into a good grass in this region. There will be insufficient sowing in these districts compared to last year's area. There is still a month or a month and a half before the new crop. This means that famine will intensify. Therefore, I am asking you directly: Would it not be possible to send relief to the Ukrainian countryside in the amount of two, or, if worse comes to worst, one and a half million *puds* of grain? If this assistance could be provided, then the [Communist] Party would be supported by the poor farmers and even the middle-class farmers against our class enemies and collectivization would be invigorated. Relief must also be provided because starving farmers will begin removing unripe gran and much of it will be lost in vain. The situation in the countryside is particularly grave.

[…]

---

[1] *RGASPI*, fond 82, list 2, file 139, sheets 162–65; quoted in Yuri Shapoval and Valeriy Vasyliev, *Komandyry Velykoho Holodu: Poyizdky* (Kyiv: Henesa, 2001), 212–15. See English translation in *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Documents and Materials*, compiled by Ruslan Pyrih and translated by Stephen Bandera (Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy Publishing House, 2008), 33–36.

[2] *pud* is a unit of weight of the Russian Imperial measurement system equivalent to 16 kilograms.

Because of the general famine, as you know, villagers have started flocking to the Central Black Earth region, Belarus, and the North Caucasus. In some cases, two thirds of all men have left their villages in search of bread. ... Naturally, there is mayhem at the railway stations and in transports. Speculation [for profit] is also emerging. The situation can no longer be tolerated. I had suggested promoting the idea of organizing trips for grain by the cooperative society and collective farms, but two to three days ago, the People's Commissariat for Railways [issued] what amounts to a ban on trips for grain. Tickets are not being issued to villagers, or are being issued in very limited numbers. Farmers have asked me: Why are trips for grain prohibited? This however plays into the kulaks' hands. Every such fact is used against the [Communist] Party and collective farms. In the last while, anti-collective farm sentiment has grown stronger. In some places people are leaving collective farms, taking away horses and other property.

I wrote this letter in Pryluky. I did not reach anybody in Kharkiv and am sending it to you without [the knowledge of] comrade Kosior and other Politburo members.[3] In closing, I once again request that you consider all methods and resources available to provide urgent food relief in the form of grain to the Ukrainian countryside and to supply buckwheat for sowing as quickly as possible in order to make up for what has not been sown.

H[ryhorii] Petrovsky

Discussion Questions

1. Find and underline examples of qualified (or differentiated) references to the Ukrainian populace, distinguishing between Ukrainian communists and Ukrainian villagers and between "poor" and "middle-class" farmers. Is this differentiated victim selection associated with mass violence or genocide?
2. Find and underline examples of envisioning a future, with references to building socialism's popularity and food aid request for starvation victims.
3. Find and underline references to unqualified victims of starvation along gender and class lines.
4. Is there evidence that policies were highly coordinated?
5. Is there evidence that the authorities knew the people were dying?
6. Who used the term "artificial famine" for the first time in this letter?
7. Where did the starving villagers go in search of food?
8. Why did the authorities issue a ban on travel and sale of train tickets for Ukrainian villagers?
9. What were the reasons why people were leaving collective farms?

[3] This was part of the Soviet Ukrainian leaders' behavior: Kosior did not dare officially inform Stalin about the situation in the republic, so Petrovsky and Chubar did so semi-officially.

Document 2

Letter from Chubar to Molotov and Stalin on agricultural affairs in the Ukrainian SSR (Excerpts)[4]

June 10, 1932

[…] In two trips (with a small break), I spent 15 days in the hardest hit districts and villages of Kyiv and Vinnytsia regions. I became familiar with the state of affairs in 13 districts of Kyiv region (visited four villages) and four districts of Vinnytsia region (visited eight villages). I should point out that I was unable to collect and check statistics for every district and village to the same extent. Nevertheless, the main facts in all these districts and villages are similar enough that some general conclusions can be made. What in fact happened to those districts that emerged extraordinarily weakened in the spring (some villages destroyed, in the direct sense)?

[…] Along with the general weakness of the state grain procurement plan, caused primarily by lower harvests across Ukraine and colossal losses during harvesting (the result of organizationally and economically weak collective farms and utterly inadequate control by the districts and center), a system of requisitioning of all grain, including seed reserves, from private farmers was introduced and everything of value was confiscated from collective farms. Even if collective farms met their plan targets, they received an extra second and often third [grain quota target]. In many cases, grain issued to collective farmers as advance payment for work was confiscated by brigades for state grain procurement. As a result, the majority of collective farms in those districts were left without grain, without animal feed concentrate for livestock, without food for the disabled, for teachers. [...]

The collective farmers with fewest workdays suffered most, although initially it seemed only private farmers were deprived of grain. In March and April, there were tens and hundreds of malnourished, starving and swollen people dying from famine in every village; children abandoned by their parents and orphans appeared. Districts and regions provided food relief from internal reserves, but growing despair and the psychology of famine resulted in more appeals for help. Under these circumstances the collective farms, Soviet state farms and districts should have launched a broad network of public kitchens to deal with the acute shortage of food products in general, and grain in particular.

Cases of malnutrition and starvation were noted in December and January both among private farmers (particularly those whose farms and belongings were sold for failing to meet grain procurement targets) and among collective farm workers, especially those with large families. [...]

A few words about the excesses of those in charge of economic campaigns and the violations of revolutionary lawfulness that took place in these districts and unquestionably influenced their economic conditions. They were primarily the following:

1) Orders for sowing were received by the districts that violated crop rotation [practices]; the districts, in turn, assigned absurd tasks to the collective farms, ignoring the views and experience of collective farm workers and [the rules of] agronomy. They were forced to sow winter crops on stubble fields, which predictably reduced crop capacity, and so on. As a result, in Babansky district, for example, with a capacity of 150–200 *puds* of wheat yield per hectare, they collected only 60–70.

2) Districts were overloaded with work, which disrupted fall sowing and winter plowing. The deep tilling of land for sugar beets led to a drop in crop yields and loss of interest among collective farms. Very few collective farms in these districts had fully prepared their lands for beets by the fall; as a rule, 30–50 percent was prepared.

3) In the battle for bread, the right to sell the property of malicious non-deliverers of grain (the 1929 law) was abused. Private farmers' harvests were gathered and threshed on so-called "red threshing floors" with threshed grain delivered to grain collectors. This was followed up by rigid "farmstead"

---

[4] *RGASPI*, fond 82, list 2, file 139, sheets 144–53; quoted in Yuri Shapoval and Valeriy Vasyliev, *Komandyry Velykoho Holodu: Poyizdky*, 206-212. See English translation in *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Documents and Materials,* comp. Ruslan Pyrih, trans. Stephen Bandera (Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy Publishing House, 2008), 36–38.

targets which were left unfulfilled and resulted in the forced sale of all property, including buildings, domestic goods and chattel, footwear, clothing, and so on. In some villages, 20 percent or more of farms have been sold. And the malicious humiliation of private farmers, the majority of who would have become collective farmers, and that of expelled collective farmers, then it becomes clear why independent farmers have no working animals, land allotments or livestock. Those whose livestock was not sold by way of repressions themselves sold or butchered [their livestock]. Leaderless [grain confiscation] brigades were on the rampage. Those guilty of excesses were put in trial, but you cannot prosecute all their crimes with one trial.

In addition to grain procurements, the same methods were applied to potato and, especially, meat procurements. A question arises: Is it not time to abolish the system of [confiscated property] sales in districts that have undergone total collectivization (because the tools and means of production have been sold off)?

After such actions, it's clear why so few village council heads and leading activists from the previous campaigns are left in local areas. Some were put on trial and removed, while others ran off on their own. Few district leaders have survived. The new people have lost their heads under colossal pressure from a public demanding food and the return of illegally sold property and improperly collectivized stock.

[…] The proper functioning of agriculture has been impaired in the Ukrainian SSR over such a large area that special adjustments are required to state grain and meat procurement targets and other agricultural goals, in connection with which it will be necessary to address the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars separately.

V[las] Chubar

Discussion Questions

1. Find and underline examples of qualified (or differentiated) view of Ukrainians, distinguishing between collectivized farmers and those resisting). Is this differentiated victim selection associated with mass violence or genocide?
2. Find and underline references to unqualified victims of starvation.
3. Is there evidence that Soviet government policies were highly destructive?
4. Find and underline instances of violence used to intimidate.
5. Did the Soviet authorities attempted to pursue victims?
6. Did the author of the letter use language hinting at a future without Ukrainians?

Document 3

Letter from Stalin to Kaganovich and Molotov commenting on the leadership of the Ukrainian SSR[5]

July 2, 1932
To Kaganovich. To Molotov

1) Pay more serious attention to Ukraine. [Vlas] Chubar's corruptness and opportunism and [Stanislav] Kosior's rotten diplomacy (with relation to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)) and a criminally reckless approach to affairs will lose Ukraine in the end. It is not up to our comrades' challenge to lead Ukraine today. If you attend the Ukrainian conference (I insist on it), use all measures in order to win over workers' sentiment, isolate the whining and rotten diplomats (regardless of personas!) and ensure a truly Bolshevik decisions by the conference. I have a feeling (even a conviction) that we will have to remove both Chubar and Kosior from Ukraine. Perhaps, I am mistaken. You will have an opportunity to check the matter at the conference.[6]

Regards!

J. Stalin

Discussion Questions

1. In his instructions to Kaganovich and Molotov to attend the upcoming Ukrainian conference of communist leaders, Stalin urges his comrades to "pay more serious attention to Ukraine." Why is he urging his associates to isolate Ukraine's leadership?
2. Who are the "whining and rotten diplomats" and why is Stalin concerned that a "criminally-reckless approach to affairs will lose Ukraine in the end"? Does Stalin appear to envision a future in which Ukraine is "lost"?
3. Find and underline evidence of Stalin's emerging zero-sum thinking and hardening view of the Ukrainian vs. Soviet distinction?
4. Why are Ukraine's communist leaders the target of Stalin's policy?

[5] *RGASPI*, fond 558, list 11, file 740, sheet 41; quoted in Edward Rees, Oleg Khlevnyuk, R. W. Davis, Liudmila Kosheleva, Larisa Rogovaya, eds. *Stalin i Kaganovich: Perepiska. 1931–1936* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2001), 164. See English translation in *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Documents and Materials,* comp. Ruslan Pyrih, trans. Stephen Bandera (Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy Publishing House, 2008), 41–42.

[6] On July 3, 1932, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) passed a resolution "On the Ukrainian Party conference" ordering Kaganovich and Molotov to take part in the Third All-Ukrainian conference of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine.

Document 4

Letter from Stalin to Kaganovich on changing the leadership of the Ukrainian SSR[7]

August 11, 1932

… 3) The main issue is now Ukraine. Matters in Ukraine are currently extremely bad. Bad from the standpoint of the Party line. They say that, in two regions of Ukraine (Kyiv and Dnipropetrovsk, I believe), nearly 50 district Party committees have spoken out against the grain procurement plan as unrealistic. They say the matter is no better in other district committees. What does this look like? This is not a Party, but a parliament, a caricature of a parliament. Instead of directing the districts, Kosior is always waffling between CC AUCP directives and the demands of district committees, and he's waffled himself to the end. Lenin was right when he said that a person who lacks the courage to go against the flow at the right moment cannot be a real Bolshevik leader. Bad from the standpoint of the Soviet line. Chubar is no leader. Bad from the standpoint of the GPU. [Stanislaw] Redens[8] is incapable of leading the battle with counterrevolution in such a large and unique republic as Ukraine.

If we do not correct the situation in Ukraine immediately, we could lose Ukraine. Also keep in mind that within the Ukrainian Communist Party (500,000 members, ha, ha) there is no lack (yes, no lack!) of rotten elements, active and latent petlurites and direct agents of Piłsudski. As soon as things get worse, these elements won't hesitate to open a front within (and outside) the Party, against the Party. Worst of all, the Ukrainian leadership does not see these dangers.

It is necessary:

a) to remove Kosior from Ukraine and replace him with you [Kaganovich]; you will retain the post of secretary of the CC AUCP(b);
b) after this, transfer Balitsky to Ukraine as chairman of the Ukrainian GPU (or PP [authorized plenipotentiary] to Ukraine, as it seems the GPU chairman position in Ukraine does not exist) and he will remain deputy chairman of the [All-Union] OGPU; make Redens a deputy to Balitsky in Ukraine;[9]
c) in a few months replace Chubar with another comrade, say, Hrynko or anybody else, and appoint Chubar to be Molotov's deputy in Moscow (Kosior can be made one of the secretaries of the CC AUCP(b));[10]
d) Set yourself the goal of turning Ukraine into a fortress of the USSR, a real model republic, within the shortest possible time. Don't spare money for this purpose.

Without these and similar measures (economic and political strengthening of Ukraine starting with the districts along the border, etc.), I repeat once again: we may lose Ukraine.

What do you think on this matter?

This requires attention as soon as possible, immediately after [your] arrival in Moscow.

Regards!

J. Stalin

---

[7] *RGASPI*, fond 81, list 3, file 99, sheets 146–151; quoted in Rees, Edward, Oleg Khlevnyuk, R. W. Davis, Liudmila Kosheleva, Larisa Rogovaya, eds. *Stalin i Kaganovich: Perepiska. 1931–1936* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2001), 273–74. Reprinted in *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Documents and Materials,* comp. Ruslan Pyrih, trans. Stephen Bandera (Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy Publishing House, 2008), 47–49.

[8] Stanislaw Redens (1892–1938) was a member of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) from 1927 to 1934 and the head of the Ukrainian SSR republican GPU from 1931 to 1933). He was replaced by Vsevolod Balitsky as head of the Ukrainian GPU in February 1933.

[9] Vsevolod Balitsky (1892–1937) was dispatched to the Ukrainian SSR by the Politburo of the CC AUCP(b) resolution "On a Special GPU Commissioner for Ukraine," dated November 24, 1932. Balitsky was the deputy head of the OGPU (Joint State Political Directorate) of the USSR (1931–1934). He was in charge of the GPU (political police) in Ukraine in 1933–1937 and was a member of the Central Oversight Commission of the All-Union Communist Party.

[10] Hryhorii Hrynko (1890–1938) was the SNK USSR People's Commissar for Finance (1930–1937).

11.VIII.32

P. S. I have spoken to Menzhinsky about Balitsky and Redens. He agrees and fully supports the changes.[11]

Discussion Questions

1. How does Stalin refer to Ukrainian society? Are these differentiated references ("good" vs. "bad" elements in society) or *unqualified* descriptions of the populace?
2. How does Stalin refer to the entire republic of Ukraine? What is the tone of his voice?
3. Considering that Symon Petliura was assassinated by a Soviet secret police agent in Paris, France in 1926, why does Stalin use the term "petliurites" and "agents of Piłsudski" in his 1932 letter to Kaganovich on changing the leadership in the Ukrainian SSR?
4. Find and underline six examples of imagining a *future without Ukraine*.
5. Find and underline six instances of Stalin's growing *systematic and coordinated* control over Ukraine.
6. Find and underline three instances categorized as *active neglect* (willful destruction) of the famine's now catastrophic impact on the Ukrainian population.

[11] Vyacheslav Menzhinsky (1874–1934) was the head of the GPU of the USSR from 1926 to 1934.

Document 5

Letter from Kaganovich to Stalin on personnel changes in the Ukrainian SSR[12]

August 16, 1932

… 4) Regarding Ukrainian affairs:

a) I fully and completely agree with your opinion on the state of affairs in Ukraine. The problem is that, among the leadership, the matter of grain procurement and their talk of the impossibility of carrying out the plan has developed into an issue of attitudes towards Party policies. The lack of confidence and perspective, confusion and the formal performance of "duty" – these are the main elements of the bacteria eating away at some of the [Communist Party] activists and affecting the top "a bit" (slightly). The theory that we, Ukrainians, have innocently suffered, is creating solidarity …among not only the middle leadership, but sat the top as well. I think that regardless of the organizational conclusions, the time has come for the CC AUCP(B) to officially, in a political document, assess the state of affairs and call for the organization of a decisive breakthrough. They are not taking their own conference resolution seriously, considering it to be forced, to some extent.

An official political resolution from the CC will quickly fix the majority of the [Party] activists and will make it easier to fix the general state of affairs in Ukraine.

You are also correct in connecting the issue to the international situation, to Piłsudski's efforts; there is a grave danger within Party organizations and weakness of the ideal of battling with putridity and lack of principles. It was pitiful to look at the Ukrainian activists at their conference.

b) Concerning the issue of replacing Kosior, I agree that he has shown <u>significant</u> weaknesses and shortcomings. As the head of the largest organization in the Party, he made matters easy for its leaders. Can he be corrected? It's more difficult for me to say than for you. Perhaps it's worthwhile to take him by the […],[13] crack a few ribs to teach him a lesson; however, the situation in Ukraine is so difficult that there is little time for teaching.

c) Regarding my personal issues, I can state the following:

With my vast experience in managing and placing cadres and after analyzing the situation, I realize that there is obviously no other way out. It will naturally be easier for me to take to the task directly because I know the country, economy and the people. Truth be told, the people are not the same; I previously knew them to be different; they have gradually changed for the worse, in other words, changed considerably as a result of "softness" and lightness of management according to the principles of "do not offend" or mutual amnesty. This is, by the way, one of the factors that kills the mood – to have to start from the very beginning with the people in the same Ukraine! However, Comrade Stalin, you have put the question so broadly and clearly from the standpoint of the Party's interests that there can be no serious hesitation. After all, you have not only the official political right, but also the moral right of a comrade, to do as you see fit with the person You [sic] have formed as a political figure, meaning me, <u>Your student</u>.

d) I agree with you concerning the other proposals, the issue is only one of timeframes, but I intend to speak to you in person (about Hrynko and Chubar). I currently feel so physically exhausted (terrible headaches), that, without rest and treatment, it will be difficult for me to take on a new major burden.

e) I am also worried about Moscow, i.e., who might be put in place because so much work has already been done, but we will talk about this in person.

f) We will also have to think about other workers, fresh blood (at least some) for Ukraine…

---

[12] *RGASPI*, fond 558, list 11, file 740, sheets 155–59; quoted in Rees, Edward, Oleg Khlevnyuk, R. W. Davis, Liudmila Kosheleva, Larisa Rogovaya, eds. *Stalin i Kaganovich: Perepiska. 1931–1936* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2001), 283–284. Reprinted in *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Documents and Materials,* comp. Ruslan Pyrih, trans. Stephen Bandera (Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy Publishing House, 2008), 49–51.

[13] Illegible word.

Discussion Questions

1. Kaganovich describes the once-differentiated Ukrainian communists as "bacteria eating away" at the Party's leadership. Why?
2. Why does Kaganovich view even Ukrainian communists as threatening unified Soviet rule?
3. Why did Kaganovich refer to the international situation, specifically Piłsudski, in connection with the need to change leadership in the Ukrainian SSR?
4. Find and underline two direct references to envisioning a *future without Ukrainians*.
5. Kaganovich suggests bringing "other workers, fresh blood… for Ukraine," referring to the soon-initiated resettlement program that brought Russians into Ukrainian territories. Why?
6. Find and underline two instances of increasing *coordination and systematization* of policies toward Ukraine.
7. Find and underline ten *unqualified*, negative references to the Ukrainian character.

Document 6

Resolution of the CC AUCP(B) and USSR SNK on grain procurements in Ukraine, the Northern Caucasus and the Western region[14]

December 14, 1932

On hearing reports from Comrades Rumiantsev, Secretary of the Western regional Party committee; Kosior, Secretary of the CC CP(b)U; Stroganov, Secretary of the Dnipropetrovsk regional Party committee; and Sheboldaev, Secretary of the Northern Caucasus regional Party committee, the CC AUCP(b) and the SNK USSR resolve the following:

1. The CC CP(b)U and RNK of the Ukrainian SSR, on the personal responsibility of Comrades Kosior and Chubar, shall fully complete the grain and sunflower seed procurement plans by the end of January 1933.

2. The Northern Caucasus regional Party and executive committees, on the personal responsibility of Comrades Sheboldaev and Larin, shall fully complete the procurement plan for grain by January 10 to 15, 1933, and for sunflower seeds by the end of January 1933.

3. The Western regional Party and executive committees, on the personal responsibility of Comrades Rumiantsev and Shelekhes, shall fully complete the procurement plan for grain by January 1, 1933, and for flax by February 1, 1933.

4. In view of extremely poor efforts and the absence of revolutionary vigilance in a number of local Party organizations in Ukraine and the North Caucasus, a significant number of districts has been infiltrated by counterrevolutionary elements: kulaks, former officers, petliurites, supporters of the Kuban Rada, and so on. They have managed to find their way into collective farms as directors and other influential administration members, accountants, storekeepers, threshing floor foremen, and so on. They have succeeded in infiltrating village councils, land management bodies and cooperative societies, and are now trying to direct the work of these organizations against the interests of the proletarian state and Party policy, as well as trying to organize a counterrevolutionary movement and sabotage of the harvest and sowing campaigns. The CC AUCP(B) and SNK USSR order the CC CP(B)U, North Caucasus regional Party and executive committees and the RNK of Ukraine to resolutely root out these counterrevolutionary elements by means of arrest and long-term imprisonment in concentration camps, without stopping short of capital punishment for the most malicious elements.

5. The CC and RNK instruct party and government organizations of the Soviet Union that the worst enemies of the Party, working class, and collective farm peasantry are the saboteurs of grain procurement who have Party membership cards in their pockets. To please kulaks and other anti-Soviet elements, they organize state fraud and double- deals, and fail to complete tasks established by the Party and government. The CC and RNK order appropriate structures to apply austere repressions against these traitors and enemies of Soviet rule and collective farms, who still carry Party membership cards in their pockets: five-to-ten-year terms of imprisonment in concentration camps and, under certain circumstances, execution by shooting.

6. The CC and RNK point out that instead of the correct Bolshevik implementation of nationality policy, "Ukrainization" was carried out mechanically in a number of districts of Ukraine, failing to take into consideration the peculiarities of every district and without the meticulous selection of Bolshevik

[14] *RGASPI*, fond 17, list 3, file 911, sheets 42–44; *TsDAHOU*, fond 1, list 20, file 5243, sheets 234–238; Yuri Shapoval and Valeriy Vasyliev, *Komandyry Velykoho Holodu: Poyizdky V. Molotova i L. Kaganovicha v Ukrainu i na Pivnichnyi Kavkaz, 1932–1933* (Kyiv, 2001), 210–12. Reprinted in *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Documents and Materials,* comp. Ruslan Pyrih, trans. Stephen Bandera (Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy Publishing House, 2008), 65–68.

cadres. This made it easier for bourgeois nationalist elements, petliurites and others to create their legal façades and counterrevolutionary cells and organizations.

7. The CC and RNK particularly point out to the Party and executive committees of the Northern Caucasus region that the irresponsible, anti-Bolshevik Ukrainization which affected nearly half of the districts in the North Caucasus do not correspond to the cultural interests of the population. It was carried out with a complete lack of supervision on the part of territorial agencies over the Ukrainization of schools and the press, and provided the enemies of Soviet rule with legal façades for organizing resistance to the endeavors of Soviet authorities by kulaks, [czarist] officers, re-emigrating Cossacks, members of the Kuban Rada, etc. In order to crush the resistance to grain procurement by kulak elements and their "Party" and non-party flunkeys, the CC and SNK USSR resolve the following:

a) To relocate the entire population of the most counterrevolutionary Poltava *stanytsia* (North Caucasus) to the northern regions of the USSR in the shortest time possible, with the exception of those collective and individual farmers who are truly loyal to Soviet rule and who have not been implicated in grain procurement sabotage. Populate this village with conscientious collective farmers who are Red Army soldiers and are currently working in territories that suffer from shortages and poor quality of land. Transfer all lands, winter crops, buildings, inventory and livestock from the farmers being expelled to these settlers.

Responsibility for implementing this resolution (paragraph "a") shall rest with Comrades Yagoda, Gamarnik (with Comrade Bulygin as his substitute), Sheboldaev, and Yevdokimov.

b) Prosecute and sentence traitors of the Party who were arrested in Ukraine for organizing the sabotage of grain procurement to five-ten year terms in concentration camps: former district secretaries, chairmen of executive committees, directors of land management bodies and chairmen of district associations of collective farms, specifically: Golovin, Pryhoda, Palamarchuk, Ordelian and Lutsenko in Orikhiv district; Khoroshko, Us' and Fishman in Balakliya district; Yaremenko in Nosiv district; Liashenko in Kobeliaky district; Lensky, Kosiachenko, Dvornik, Zyka and Dolgov in Velykyi Tokmak district.

c) Exile all former communists who were expelled from the Party for sabotaging the sowing and grain procurement campaigns to the northern regions as kulaks.

d) Propose that the CC CP(B)U and RNK of Ukraine pay serious attention to the proper implementation of Ukrainization, to eliminate its mechanical implementation, to expel petliurites and other bourgeois-nationalist elements from Party and government organizations, to meticulously select and train Ukrainian Bolshevik cadres and to ensure Party management of and supervision over Ukrainization on a regular basis.

e) Immediately change the language used in offices of Soviet entities and cooperative societies, as well as all newspapers and magazines in the Ukrainized districts of the North Caucasus, from Ukrainian to Russian, explaining that Russian is more understandable to Kuban residents. Also, prepare to change the language of instruction at schools to Russian by autumn. The CC and RNK order the regional Party and executive committees to immediately investigate the staff working at schools in Ukrainized districts.

f) In cancellation of a previous resolution, allow delivery of goods to Ukrainian villages and grant Comrades Kosior and Chubar the right to suspend delivery of goods to particularly retrograde districts, until they fulfill the grain procurement plan.

Chairman, SNK USSR, V. Molotov (Skryabin)
Secretary, CC AUCP(B), J. Stalin

Discussion Questions

1. Why did the Politburo of the Communist Party of the USSR issue a resolution in December 1932, after the harvest had already been gathered, demanding that the leaders in Ukraine and the North Caucasus region, settled by a large ethnic Ukrainian population, confiscate grain and sunflower seeds (set aside for the next year's sowing campaign) by the end of January 1933?

2. Who did the resolution blame for "sabotage of the harvest and sowing campaigns"? Find and underline labels used to describe the victims.
3. What kind of repressive measures were meted against "traitors and enemies of Soviet rule"?
4. Why did the Central Committee of the Communist Party demand the "correct Bolshevik" implementation of nationality policy, dubbed "Ukrainization" in Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus? Who was blamed for deviations from the Bolshevik policy?
5. What was the reason for deporting the entire Ukrainian Cossack settlement, called Poltava, to distant locales in the Russian wilderness? Who were new settlers relocated to the depopulated Northern Caucasus district?
6. What evidence is there of increasing control over Party policies in Ukraine?
7. What evidence is there of enforced russification?
8. Why did Molotov and Stalin, who signed the resolution, frame it as "grain procurements" when in fact their purpose was to curtail the use of the Ukrainian language in schools, offices, books, newspapers, and magazines in the North Caucasus region, especially Kuban, and territories in Western Russia bordering Ukraine with a substantial ethnically Ukrainian population?

Document 7

Resolution of the CC AUCP(B) and USSR SNK on Ukrainization in the Far East Region, Kazakhstan, Central Asia, the Central Black Earth Region and Other Areas[15]

December 15, 1932

The CC AUCP(B) and Council of People's Commissars firmly condemn the statements and suggestions made by individual Ukrainian comrades about the mandatory Ukrainization of entire areas of the USSR (for example, the DVK[16] [Far East Region], Central Asia,[17] the TsChO[18] [Central Black Earth Region] and so on). Statements of this nature only play into the hands of those bourgeois-nationalists who, after being chased out of Ukraine as malicious elements, have emerged in newly Ukrainized areas to continue their mischievous work.

Authorize the regional [Communist] Party and executive committees of the DVK, regional Party and executive committees of the Central Black Earth, Kazakh regional [Communist Party] committee and [regional] Council of People's Commissars to immediately discontinue Ukrainization in [their] regions, printing of all Ukrainian-language newspapers, and switch to publications in the Russian language and, by autumn 1933, prepare the introduction of Russian language for school instruction.

Secretary, CC AUCP(B), J. Stalin
Chairman, SNK USSR, V. Molotov (Skryabin)

Discussion Questions

1. Why did the Politburo of the Communist Party of the USSR issue a resolution on December 15, 1932, following the resolution issued on December 14, 1932?
2. Who were the "malicious elements" and why were they blamed for their "mischievous work"?
3. Why did the Politburo demand "to immediately discontinue Ukrainization" in these regions?
4. What specific Ukrainization measures were prohibited?
5. What was the time frame for the introduction of Russian language for school instruction?

---

[15] *GARF*, fond 5446, list 18, file 466, sheets 177; *RGASPI*, fond 17, list 3, file 911, sheet 43; Yuri Shapoval and Valeriy Vasyliev, *Komandyry Velykoho Holodu: Poyizdky V. Molotova i L. Kaganovicha v Ukrainu i na Pivnichnyi Kavkaz, 1932–1933* (Kyiv, 2001), 312–13. Reprinted in *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Documents and Materials,* comp. Ruslan Pyrih, trans. Stephen Bandera (Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy Publishing House, 2008), 68–69. The documents include hand-written note: "Original kept by CC AUCP(B)."

[16] According to the 1926 Soviet census, the Far Eastern Region listed 315,203 Ukrainians, whereas in the 1937 census their number increased to 328,286, apparently due to mass deportations and political exile.

[17] Central Asia was comprised of Kazakh and Kyrgyz autonomous republics within the Russian Federation. According to the 1926 census, Kazakh autonomous republic had 860,822 Ukrainians or 13.2% of the population and 549,859 Ukrainians in 1937 when it became a separate republic. Ukrainians from the Northern Caucasus were exiled to the steppes of Kazakhstan.

[18] Compare the number of Ukrainians who resided in the Central Black Earth Region, comprised of Voronezh, Kursk, Orel, and Tambov gubernias, in 1926 and 1937, respectively: Voronezh gubernia (1,078,552 or 32.6% of the population in 1926, dropped to 482,774 or 12.3% in 1937) and Kursk gubernia (554,654 or 19.1% in 1926, down to 191,239 or 6.2% in 1937).

Document 8

Report from the GPU to Stalin on the completion of the deportation of villagers from districts in Kuban[19]

December 29, 1932

The deportation from the Poltava *stanytsia*[20] in the Northern Caucasus was completed on December 27.[21]

2,158 families (9,187 persons) have been deported in five trains to the Urals, where the necessary preparations for their arrival, lodgings and employment have been completed.

I also report that the deportation from 13 districts in the Kuban region conducted earlier was completed by December 19.

Currently, all 1,992 families (9,442 persons) deported from Kuban have been lodged and employed in Northern Kazakhstan and a special settlement in the Northern Region.[22] The relocation of these communities took place without excesses.

Deputy Chairman, GPU, Yagoda[23]

Discussion Questions

1. What does this report from the deputy chief of the Soviet secret police to the Communist Party leadership in Moscow indicate about the way for dealing with Ukrainians, including in the Kuban region?
2. Where did the GPU deport all residents from one Ukrainian Cossack settlement? What was the distance to the Ural Mountains?
3. Where did the GPU deport several thousands of Ukrainian families from a dozen of other districts in the Kuban region?
4. What kind of lodgings and employment do you think was prepared for their arrival? Compare this report with eyewitness testimonies narrated by the survivors of these deportations.
5. What do these deportations indicate about a Soviet *future with Ukrainians*? Think of what would a future look like with empty, population-depleted lands.
6. What was the time frame for completing these deportations? How did these deportations correlate with the end of Ukrainization?

---

[19] *APRF*, fond 3, list 30, file 196, sheets 108; A. N. Sakharov, "*Sovershenno sekretno": Lubianka – Stalinu o polozhenii v strane: v 4-h t.* (Moscow: Institut rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 2001), 386. See English translation in *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Documents and Materials*, comp. Ruslan Pyrih, trans. Stephen Bandera (Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy Publishing House, 2008), 74.

[20] In 1793–1794, Cossacks after the destruction of their headquarters and camps by Catherine II, who confiscated their lands and opened them for settlement by Germans, moved to the Kuban area in the Northern Caucasus. In 1917–1921, they supported the Kuban People's Republic. Until 1932, the Poltava Cossack settlement had Ukrainian schools and a teacher training college. In 1932–1933, the settlement was blacklisted, and the entire population was evicted. For more details about the deportations and the history of the Poltava settlement in the Northern Caucasus, see https://holodomormuseum.org.ua/en/news-museji/what-was-stanytsia-poltavska-punished-for/.

[21] The deportation of residents from the Poltava Cossack settlement in the Northern Caucasus was conducted in accordance with the CC AUCP(B) Politburo and SNK of the USSR Resolution "On grain procurements in Ukraine, the Northern Caucasus and the Western Region," issued on December 14, 1932. (See Document 6).

[22] The Northern Region refers to concentration camps in Komi and Karelian autonomous republics and areas near the Arctic Ocean in Russia. By 1933, there had been a dozen labor camps, the largest of them Solovetsky, While Sea–Baltic Sea, and Ukhta-Pechora concentration camps.

[23] Genrich Yagoda (1891–1938) was deputy head of the GPU (1924–1934) and later the head of its successor agency, the NKVD (1934–1936), the notorious Soviet secret police. The GPU administered a network of concentration camps known as the GULAG, the Main Directorate of Camps.

Document 9

Order from the SNK of the USSR and CC AUCP(B) on preventing the mass flight of starving villagers in search of food[24]

January 22, 1933

The CC AUCP and the Council of Peoples' Commissars of the USSR have received reports on the mass flight of peasants "for bread" to the Central Black Earth Region, Volga, Moscow Region, Western Region, and Belarus. The CC AUCP and Council of People's Commissars of the USSR do not doubt that the flight of villagers and the exodus from Ukraine last year and this year is [being] organized by the enemies of Soviet government, SRs [Social Revolutionaries] and agents Poland with the goal of spreading propaganda "through the peasants" against collective farms and the Soviet government in the northern regions of the USSR. Last year, the [Communist] Party, Soviet and chekist structures of Ukraine missed that counterrevolutionary undertaking by the enemies of Soviet regime. Last year's mistakes cannot be repeated this year.

First. The CC AUCP and Council of People's Commissars of the USSR order the Regional Council and the Official GPU Representative in the North Caucasus to prevent the mass exodus of peasants from the North Caucasus to other regions and entry into the region from Ukraine.

Second. The CC AUCP and Council of People's Commissars order the CC CP(b)U, Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR, Balitsky and Redens to prevent the mass flight of peasants from Ukraine to other regions and entry to Ukraine from the North Caucasus.

Third. The CC AUCP and Council of People's Commissars order the Official Representatives of the OGPU in Moscow Region, Central Black Earth Region, Western Region, Belarus, Lower Volga and Middle Volga to arrest "peasants" fleeing north from Ukraine and the North Caucasus and, after the filtration of counterrevolutionary elements, return the remainder to their places of residence.

Fourth. The CC AUCP and Council of People's Commissars order Prokhorov to issue the corresponding commands through the GPU TO [transport division].

Chairman, Sovnarkom USSR, V. M. Molotov
Secretary, CC AUCP(b), J. Stalin[25]

Discussion Questions

1. What is the logic behind Stalin's order to hunt, catch, and destroy fleeing Ukrainian villagers?
2. Where did the starving villagers try to escape to procure food?
3. How long did the exodus of villagers from Ukraine last?
4. Who were the "enemies of Soviet government" blamed for the outmigration? What danger did they represent to Stalin and those around him?
5. Find and underline nine references indicating *a future vision in which Ukrainians no longer exist*.
6. Why did Stalin try to prevent starvation-driven outmigration from Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus instead of providing humanitarian assistance to the victims?
7. Find four instances of *systematic coordination* that serve as proxy variables indicating extensive pre-planning of the genocidal killing.

---

[24] *RGASPI*, fond 558, list 11, file 45, sheets 108–109; Roberta Manning, V. P. Danilov, and Lynne Viola, eds., *Tragedia sovetskoi derevni: Kollektivizatsia i raskulachivanie. Dokumenty i materialy: v 5-i tomakh*, vol. 3. (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2001), 635; A. N. Sakharov, *"Sovershenno sekretno": Lubianka – Stalinu o polozhenii v strane: v 4-kh tomakh* (Moscow: Institut rossiiskoi istorii RAN, 2001), vol. 4, 391. See English translation in *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Documents and Materials*, comp. Ruslan Pyrih, trans. Stephen Bandera (Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy Publishing House, 2008), 85–86.

[25] The document is signed by Stalin; Molotov's signature is missing.

8. Which organizations carried out Stalin's genocidal policy?
9. What did "filtration of counterrevolutionary elements" mean? What fate awaited the victims? What happened to the remaining villagers who were forcibly returned "to their places of residence"?

Document 10

Letter from Kaganovich to Stalin on resettlements to areas of the Northern Caucasus and Ukraine depopulated by the famine (Excerpt)[26]

October 2, 1933

Dear Comrade Stalin,

1) You inquired about the operational tasks we've assigned the resettlement committee for 1933. At the end of August, we ordered them to organize the resettlement of 10,000 to Kuban and Terek in early 1934 and 15,000 to 20,000 families to Ukraine's steppe. After Comrade Muralov arrived, we called him out and became convinced that he is currently recruiting from among army units only, and has nothing organized on location. We instructed him to plan out the entire campaign: identify resettlement locations, send people to organize housing and all necessary equipment, provide a timetable with exact deadlines, secure food, and so on.

He is to present all this in a few days. We think that in the remaining three months of 1933 he will not be able to do more; thus, we are not assigning him any additional tasks. It may be necessary to organize spontaneous resettlement beginning with some Middle Volga districts. This will have to be considered...

Discussion Questions

1. A year after a "special operation" to deport "enemies of the Soviet regime" started, Kaganovich updated Stalin on the "resettlement" to the areas depopulated by the famine. How many families were resettled?
2. Which areas were opened by the government authorities for resettlement?
3. Who were these new, non-Ukrainian settlers? Where did they come from?
4. Who was in charge of recruiting the new settlers?
5. How did the new, non-Ukrainian settlers benefit from a centralized campaign that prepared for them "housing and all necessary equipment" … and secured "food"?
6. Why did the Soviet government single out Ukraine by not providing the same food aid as their neighbors?
7. Find instances of *systematic coordination* that serve as proxy variables indicating extensive planning by the perpetrators.

[26] *RGASPI*, fond 558, list 11, file 741, sheets 80–81; quoted in Edward Rees, Oleg Khlevniuk, R. W. Davis, Liudmila Kosheleva, Larisa Rogovaia, eds. *Stalin i Kaganovich: Perepiska. 1931–1936* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2001), 370–71. See English translation in *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Documents and Materials*, comp. Ruslan Pyrih, trans. Stephen Bandera (Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy Publishing House, 2008), 119.

Witness Testimonies

Serhii Plachynda

Serhii Plachynda (1928–2013), a writer and publicist, was one of two children, who survived the Holodomor in his native village of Maslianykivka, Kirovohrad region. In 1947, he submitted his short story to a competition, describing the death of his grandfather in 1933, killed and dismembered by cannibals. The story was never published, and the editor on the jury advised him to tear it up and flush down the toilet; otherwise, the author might end up in prison.

Figure 11.1 Serhii Plachynda. Courtesy of Halyna Plachynda.

Plachynda earned a degree in philology at Kyiv State University (1953), and later pursued graduate studies at the Institute of Literature named after Taras Shevchenko, affiliated with the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR. He worked at the institute and served as editor for newspapers and periodicals. In 1959, he published a novel *Braty Misiatsia* (*The Moon's Brothers*), describing life and creative genius of the Ukrainian designer of space aircraft Yuri Kondratiuk-Sharhei. In 1968, he published historical novellas under the title *Neopalyma kupyna*, later banned and removed from libraries for the alleged "nationalist deviation."

Figure 11.2 Serhii Plachynda with his parents in the early 1930s. Courtesy of Halyna Plachynda.

Plachynda was an active participant in the movement for Ukraine's independence. In 1986, as the leader of a writer's association, he organized the first commemorative event to honor victims of the Holodomor in Soviet Ukraine. During the commemoration, he read out loud his appeal to Mikhail Gorbachev, requesting to lift a ban on studying the Holodomor. He collected signatures, and on the following day, he traveled to Moscow to present the appeal, signed by the Ukrainian writers, to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR. He was later informed that Gorbachev read the appeal and signed a resolution, authorizing "to publish everything about the famine of 1933 in Ukraine." Then Plachynda began writing and publishing his memoirs. In addition to historical novellas and short stories, Plachynda wrote biographies of Oleksandr Dovzhenko and Yuri Yanovskyi, as well as a dictionary of ancient Ukrainian mythology and collections of Ukrainian myths and legends.

Reference

Natalka Pozniak-Khomenko, "Mify i lehendy Serhiia Plachyndy" (Myths and Legends of Serhii Plachynda), *Ukraina moloda*, September 17, 2013, ttps://www.umoloda.kiev.ua/number/2333/169/82989/#.

Both grandfathers sacrificed their lives to save me

By Serhii Plachynda

"Screams *Vynos!* and *Lyzu!* still wake me up"

– I'm turning 84 this year, but to this day two screams still wake me up, bringing me back to 1933, – recalls Serhii Plachynda – *Lyzu!* (*Lick!*) and *Vynos!* (*Carry out!*). I was a five-year-old boy. Once I walked inside my neighbor Ivanko's house and overheard him begging his mother: *Lyzu! Lyzu!* What could it mean? At that time plates were made not of porcelain but of clay, with pores. And they could keep the smell of a cooked meal for a long time, for instance, borsch. So, Ivanko did not beg for a piece of bread, but for a chance to lick that plate! Yet, his mother would not allow him to do so because it caused vomiting and bleeding of the tongue, which was already severely injured...

The second scream, which still makes me shudder, is *Vynos!* That's what my grandfather Volovyk hollered, when he was driving his horse-drawn cart picking up dead bodies in our village of Maslianykivka. And his *Vyno-o-o-os!* – meek, hauling – has stuck in my memory. Albeit no one was left to carry out the dead… I saw how my grandfather would enter every yard and drag dead bodies by their feet with all his remaining strength...

"Both grandfathers sacrificed their lives to save me"

His nickname – Volovyk – reflected his job as he was looking after oxen. He was a good farmer, but his own oxen were "expropriated," so he was forced to take care of oxen on the collective farm. For his macabre job he received a ration – a little flour. Grandpa pounded *kurai* – some sort of a steppe weed, mixed with a handful of flour, and baked pancakes from that "dough" to feed me. Until he died. When I ran outside to meet him, the grandfather was already dead sitting in his cart...

But the most devastating blow for me was the death of my second grandfather, Maxim Mytrofanovych Plachynda. I remember going into the house – it was around early April 1933 – and seeing my father, swollen from starvation, with a puffy face, feet heavy from edema, sitting next to my grandfather Maxim. Grandfather was not swollen because he was a strong man, huge, with a luxurious Cossack mustache. He worked as a collective farm guard... And, suddenly, he handed me a caramel – white, with a red stripe. To this day I don't understand: where did he get it? Grandfather Maxim said, "Tomorrow I'll go to Elizavetivka (Kirovohrad until 1924 was called Elizavetgrad) and get you *makukha* (sunflower oilcake or pomace). Oh, I was dreaming about that oilcake! I was not dreaming about bread, but about the oilcake: you take a small piece of it and munch on it in your mouth for a long time, it smells of oil, as if you eat something for a long time, which creates the illusion that you are sated... The next morning, I stood at the gate awaiting my grandfather. He went to town across a plank bridge over the river. There he was caught by cannibal thugs. They killed him, dismembered his body, and then sold pieces of meat on the black market. That's when the police arrested them... And until that evening, I was waiting in vain for my grandfather with the oilcake, standing there as a sentinel. When the grandfather did not return, my mother began to scream and cry, fearing that there must have been an accident because people were often killed. Then a policeman visited us and ordered my father to come with him for body identification. For the rest of my life, I was afraid to ask what my father saw that day...

This is how both of my grandfathers sacrificed their lives to save me. I still feel guilty because if it weren't for me, starving, my grandfather Maxim wouldn't have to go get that oilcake, and grandfather Volovyk would himself have enough to eat.

"The boys started eating, and suddenly screamed"

Sometime in the middle of April 1933, the boys from our village who remained alive were taken to a kindergarten – a nursery, as they called it then. It was a typical summer kitchen on hilly outskirts of the village. There were five of us. As I remember now, two boys were sitting on the right and two on the left. Under an open sky, our cook Kashchykha was ladling a nettle soup. She was a stout woman – she didn't starve because she ate well. She cooked dinners for communists and Komsomol members. These guys weren't hungry; see, they even had food cooked for them! When the people in the village were starving to death, these guys gained weight. And that Kashchykha grew plump around them too! I got angry at her then for some reason: she either hit me or said something, I don't remember. So, she put a cup of a hot nettle soup in front of me, but I refused to touch it. I thought: I'd rather die, but won't eat the soup that she had cooked. Then the boys started eating. And suddenly tears swelled their eyes! They screamed! Large tear drops were rolling down their swollen cheeks. I fainted from that loud scream. When I regained consciousness, I found myself standing near the corpses of the children, hardly comprehending anything at all.

At that moment, my mother appeared, grabbed me in her arms. "I won't let you devour my son!" – she screamed! And she carried me home. And I felt ashamed that she was carrying me in her arms because I was already big enough to walk. Of course, at that time there was no one to be ashamed of in the village – the entire village died out; the silence was creepy. Neither roosters would sing cock-a-doodle-doo nor dogs bark – all of them, together with cats, were eaten too.

When I became a journalist and wrote an article about one surgeon, I asked him quietly (we could not talk about it aloud then): what could have happened to those poor children? He replied that after a prolonged starvation their intestines became as thin as cigarette paper. And when they started eating that nettle soup, the nettle, like rocks, tore their intestines inside. This was a terrible death. He added: you didn't eat, that's why you survived.

"After burying their own children, they wanted me to be alive"

But, looking back, do you know what impressed me most? The incredible kindness of people, especially women. They endured better than men. I don't know, maybe nature has endowed a woman – as the caretaker of the humankind and the mother of the nation – with a survival code no matter what...

When the summer began and my mom started working in the field, she had to lock me in the house, while two grandmothers guarded me. How could you call these women grandmas? Both of them were young: one was 26 years old, and the other was about 28. They aged so early from grief: one lost two children, who starved to death, and the other – three... So, they guarded me; at that time children were frequently kidnapped. Mama didn't ask them to help; they did it voluntarily. They took turns and walked by our windows, from time to time telling me, "Serhiechku, we are here!!!" And they said it as if they were lamenting because they had no strength to speak.

My mother would be back home in the evening, extremely tired from tying 11 shocks, that is 660 sheaves [of wheat]. For this backbreaking job she was given a kilogram of bread, as I still remember now – black, soggy, heavy – a small piece by all measures. My mother would place me on a bench, kneel down, take a quart of water and feed me tiny pieces to prevent bowel twisting... And these two "grandmothers" came and watched me eat. They are still in my vivid memory – in white kerchiefs, simple blouses, with earthy faces, dark from grief. These generous village Madonnas, having buried their own children, really wanted me to be alive.

By the way, in our village, of all the children only me and my neighbor Olenka survived. When in May the nursery was reopened again (Kashchykha no longer worked there), only me and this girl got to eat.

Our parents, when Olenka and I grew up, wanted us to get married. But it wasn't meant to be: I went to Kyiv to study; she married a guy from the neighboring village. Later fate brought us together again – Olena and my wife gave birth in the same maternity hospital in Kirovohrad...

"In Russian Kalynivka there were lots of children"

Unfortunately, in that wonderful Holodomor Victims Museum, built thanks to Viktor Yushchenko's initiative, in the memory books of our village Maslianykivka it is written that... only 14 people died, reason being inflammation of lungs and other diseases! … And what about my two grandfathers, was it a mirage? Or those boys who died after eating the deadly soup?

Also, I would like to add that not all villages were starving equally at that time. Next to our Maslianykivka there were the villages of Kalynivka, Klynsti and Pokrovske. They were populated mostly by Russians, resettled there by tsarina Catherine II from Orel, Kursk, Voronezh and other provinces. When we moved to live in Kalynivka and I went to school there, I was surprised that there were so many schoolchildren there because in my native Ukrainian village not only children died, but almost all teachers. All schoolchildren were clean, well dressed, playful. I think they weren't starving as we were. Then on several other occasions I saw young girls walking along the streets in the village, singing... The nearby villages have gone extinct, and here it seems as if nothing happened. Later we lived in Klyntsi and Pokrovske, and there the situation was better than in my native Maslianykivka. This explains that the blow was aimed at Ukrainians; the purpose was to exterminate the Ukrainian villagers. Undoubtedly, it was a genocide, the deliberate extermination of Ukrainian farming population – the core of the nation. Where there is a village – there will be Ukraine. Our government officials should remember this even today. If we fail to support the village, we might lose Ukraine.

Reference

Excerpted from an interview with Serhii Plachynda by Lina Kushnir, "Iz ditei u seli vyzhyly tilky ia i Olenka" (Out of all children in the village, only Olenka and I survived), *Ukraina moloda* (Young Ukraine), November 24, 2011, http://www.umploda.kiev.ua/number/1985/171/70696/.

Discussion Questions

1. What were some of the most vivid memories of the five-year-old witness of the Holodomor?
2. How did two grandfathers try to keep the grandson alive?
3. Why do you think both grandfathers who worked on collective farms could not survive in 1933?
4. Pitirim Sorokin in his study *Man and Society in Calamity: The Effects of War, Revolution, Famine, Pestilence upon Human Mind, Behavior, Social Organization and Cultural Life* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1942, p. 81) argues that only less than one-third of one percent of population succumb to cannibalism in a non-cannibalistic society, while more than ninety-nine percent of people avoid such behavior. Why did village thugs turn to cannibalism?
5. According to the witness account, what kind of "hot meals" did the Soviet government provide to feed the emaciated children in the nursery?
6. What kinds of surrogate food did the witness mention in his story?
7. How did the eyewitness describe women's survival strategies during the Holodomor?
8. Were all the villages suffering equally from starvation? Why?
9. According to the eyewitness, who were the target of the deliberate Soviet policy of extermination?

Simon Starow

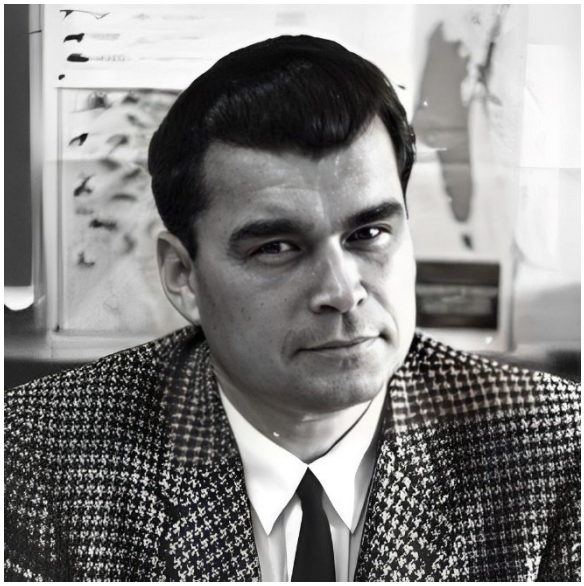


Figure 12.1 Miron Dolot (Simon Starow), 1960. Source: Miron Dolot Papers, Hoover Institution Library and Archives.

Simon Starow (1916–1998), a Ukrainian American writer (pseudonym Miron Dolot), historian, and professor of Slavic languages. He was born on April 27, 1916 in the village Verhuny, Cherkasy region, Ukraine. His father Mytrofan was killed in 1919 for his loyalty to the Ukrainian National Republic while Starow was an infant.

In 1937, Starow graduated with a degree in history from the Kyiv Pedagogic Institute. He served in the Soviet 44th Army Infantry Division during the Soviet-Finnish War of 1939–1940 on the Ukhta Front.

In 1945, he fled the Soviet Union to West Germany as a political refugee. He lived in a Displaced Persons camp in Frankfurt am Main, where he was a member of the Ukrainian émigré press until 1949, when he immigrated to the United States. As the Secretary-General of the Union of Ukrainian Journalists-Emigrants, he contributed hundreds of articles to various Ukrainian diaspora newspapers. In German DP camps he met poet Todos Osmachka. Starow began his doctoral studies at a German university, but abandoned it in order to come to the United States.

From 1952 to 1955, Starow lived in Los Angeles and pursued his postgraduate studies in history at the University of California in Los Angeles. While studying, he worked as a language instructor for the Voluntary Training Unit of the Marine Corps Reserve. Known as Marine Reserve Unit 12-25, it was the only military reserve group in the nation to do battle with Russian language at the North Hollywood Armory. The "pilot" class was offered under Los Angeles City Schools adult education program. The language was chosen because it was recognized as "key" tongue in global planning for either peace or war. He became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1954.

In 1955, Starow moved to Monterey, California to teach Ukrainian language at the U.S. Army Language School. First Ukrainian language lessons started there in August with a class of ten students. There were neither textbooks nor teaching materials available. Everything had to be created from scratch. The department chairman, Boris Alexander, and instructors, Dr. Yar Slavutych and Vasyl Hryshko, were Ukrainian native speakers with experience in language teaching and writing. Over three years, they developed a basic course in Ukrainian, sharing the tasks of writing dialogues, drafting pronunciation guides and grammatical rules with drills and exercises, translating and editing materials. The materials also included teacher's and student's guides, tape recordings, tests, military films, a reader, and a song book. These materials comprised five thousand typewritten pages.

In addition, Starow compiled Ukrainian-English and English-Ukrainian military dictionaries. Outside his teaching duties, Starow contributed articles to Ukrainian and American newspapers and journals, and gave radio interviews. He and other instructors from the Ukrainian language department were frequently invited as speakers in local schools and colleges, the Carmel Art Association, Book Lover's Club, Lions International Club. They participated in art and book exhibitions in the Presidio library and Officer's

Club, as well as Monterey Public Library. Starow retired from the U.S. Department of the Army in January 1986.

Starow lived through the Holodomor, the genocide which culminated in 1932–1933, leading to deaths from forced starvation of millions of Ukrainians. He wrote a first-person survivor account of the circumstances surrounding the systematic extermination of his countrymen from 1929 to 1933, perpetrated by Joseph Stalin and his accomplices. Written under a pseudonym, Miron Dolot, his memoir *Execution by Hunger: The Hidden Holocaust* is a gripping tale of the horrors he lived through when a teenager in a small farming village in Ukraine.

Published by W. W. Norton in New York in 1985, his memoir was the first English language publication on the topic in the United States. It received more than a hundred positive reviews in England, France, Germany, Australia, Canada, Poland, and the United States. The book was published in French and Polish translations. In 1997, the memoir was translated into Ukrainian by Rostyslav Dotsenko, a political prisoner who survived ten years of forced labor in Stalin's concentration camps. Starow was also working on a manuscript about the history of Displaced Persons camps in Europe, but fell seriously ill and passed away on August 9, 1998 at the age of 82 after a prolonged illness.

References

Excerpted from the Miron Dolot Papers, Hoover Institution Library and Archives, as well as from typewritten notes in Olga Starow's private archive.

Crawford, Canoy. "If War Comes, Marine Corps Reserves Will Know Russian Lingo: Progress of Valley Language School Points Way to New Training Field." *Valley Times*, September 8, 1953, 3.

The May Day Celebration

By Miron Dolot

The year 1932 witnessed the last battle of *collectivization*: the battle for bread, or to be more specific, for the crop of 1932. On the one side was the Communist government; on the other, the starving farmers. The government forces resorted to any means in getting as many agricultural products from the countryside as possible, without regard to the consequences. The farmers, already on the verge of starvation, desperately tried to keep what food they had left, and, in spite of government efforts to the contrary, tried to stay alive.

It may be of help to the reader to remember that up to the end of 1931, the Communists fought their war against the farmers under the guise of fighting against "the *kurkuls* as a social class." But by 1932, the situation had already changed: the so-called kurkuls had already been physically liquidated, and collectivization had been completed except for a small number of farmers who were still clinging to their freedom. Thus, the battle now was fought between the Communist forces and the collective farmers; the Collectivization Campaign now changed into the Grain Collection Campaign.

The long and cold winter of 1931–1932 was slowly giving way to spring. By April, the snow had already melted away, and the weather became damp and drizzly. Often a heavy fog would descend upon our village, as if attempting to cover and hide the misery of our existence. Then cold winds would chase away the fog and bring cold torrential rains in their place.

Around this time the plight of the villagers became desperate. This was the memorable spring of 1932 when the famine broke out, and the first deaths from hunger began to occur. I remember the endless procession of beggars on roads and paths, going from house to house. They were in different stages of starvation, dirty and ragged. With outstretched hands, they begged for food, any food: a potato, a beet, or at least a kernel of corn. Those were the first victims of starvation: destitute men and women; poor widows and orphaned children who had no chance of surviving the terrible ordeal.

Some starving farmers still tried to earn their food by doing chores in or outside the village. One could see these sullen, emaciated men walking from house to house with an ax, or a shovel, in search of work. Perhaps someone might hire them to dig up the garden, or chop some firewood. They would do it for a couple of potatoes. But not many of us had a couple of potatoes to spare.

Crowds of starving wretches could be seen scattered all over the potato fields. They were looking for potatoes left over from last year's harvest. No matter what shape the potatoes were in, whether frozen or rotten, they were still edible. Others were roaming the forest in search of food; the riverbanks were crowded too; there was much new greenery around: young shoots of reed or other river plants. One might catch something, anything, in the water to eat.

But the majority of those who looked for help would go to the cities as they used to do before. It was always easier to find some work there, either gardening, cleaning backyards, or sweeping streets. But now, times had changed. It was illegal to hire farmers for any work. The purpose of the prohibition was twofold: it was done not only to stop the flow of labor from the collective farms, but also, and primarily, to prevent the farmers from receiving food rations in the cities.

There were some villagers who saw their salvation in the cities' marketplaces. There they brought for sale their best clothes, from prerevolutionary times, their family heirlooms, handicrafts, women's jewelry which had been passed on from generation to generation, homemade shirts, towels, tablecloths—all embroidered with traditional Ukrainian designs—handwoven Ukrainian rugs, and other valuables. These they sold for next to nothing, or bartered them for something edible. But many of the hungry villagers didn't go to the marketplaces with the intention of selling or bartering something; they had nothing to sell, and no money to buy anything. These public places were their last resort for finding some food. They became permanent residents there. I saw many such villagers when I went there occasionally for my mother. They wandered in the midst of the market crowds with outstretched hands, with tearful eyes, begging passers-by not to let them die. But most of the time the city dwellers would hurry past them, with eyes downcast, as if afraid or ashamed to even look at them. Soon, these starving beggars

became such an everyday sight that the city people became used to them, and no longer paid any attention to them. The rejected hungry multitudes turned to scavenging. They would go over garbage and trash, taking anything that had been discarded: corncobs, apple cores, fruit peelings, even bones. At night, the hungry and starving slept right in the marketplaces under tables and benches, in bushes, or backyards.

Some of them would be mugged or even murdered during the night; others would be picked up by the militiamen on night duty, loaded onto trucks, taken out beyond the city limits, and dumped somewhere to fend for themselves, with strict orders not to return to the city. Yet many of them would return in spite of the danger; others would dejectedly go back to their villages, resigning themselves to death; some were in such a weakened state that they died where the militia had dumped them.

Many of the doomed tried to save themselves by going to the railroad stations and railroad tracks. Those who had something valuable to sell came there with their wares in the hopes of finding buyers among the travelers. Others came empty handed, just to beg for a piece of bread or a morsel of food. But one could also still find a few bold souls who came to the station intending to travel to some more distant cities, usually in Russia, where there was no famine. However, such an undertaking was a very difficult and risky one. Train tickets were sold only to those who had written permission from the collective farm. It stated that its bearer was permitted to travel to a certain destination. The GPU men and the militiamen were constantly checking travelers' documents. Even those who were returning from Russia to Ukraine with legal travel documents were searched. Any food found in their baggage was confiscated.

By this time our village was in economic ruin. Poverty was universal. We had never been rich, it is true, but economically, we had always been completely self-sufficient and had never gone hungry for so long. Now starving, we were facing the spring of 1932 with great anxiety for there was no hope of relief from the outside. Deaths from starvation became daily occurrences. There was always some burial in the village cemetery. One could see strange funeral processions: children pulling homemade wagons with the bodies of their dead parents in them or the parents carting the bodies of their children. There were no coffins; no burial ceremonies performed by priests. The bodies of the starved were just deposited in a large common grave, one upon the other; that was all there was to it. Individual graves were not allowed, even if someone were still physically able to dig one. This strange ordinance originated with Comrade Thousander who was supposed to have said: "There is nothing wrong with a common grave," implying that the Soviet man who lives and works in a collective can also be buried in a collective grave.

Looking back to those events now, it seems to me that I lived in some kind of a wicked fantasy world. All the events which I witnessed and experienced then and which I am now describing, seem unreal to me because of their cruelty and unspeakable horror. It is simply too difficult to associate all those happenings with real life in a normal human society.

I shall never forget the celebration of May Day in our village in 1932. May Day is an important Communist holiday, and the village administration would not miss it. On this day the Spring Sowing Campaign was to be launched officially, even though spring sowing and planting had been going on since the beginning of April.

Our collective farm specialized in growing potatoes, tomatoes, cabbage, onions, and other vegetables which required much care and many workers. On the eve of May Day, to attract attention to the launching of the Spring Campaign, the collective farm administration made a special announcement: A hot meal was to be distributed from an outdoor kitchen in the village square to the participants of the celebration, which was to take place in the morning. After the celebration and their meal, the collective farmers were to go straight to their field work.

I came to the square with our school. It was an established custom that the village school, which in my village was a nine-year school, was the focal point of such celebrations. We had to sing and recite poems, play games, and show everyone that we were very happy. It took quite an effort on our teacher's part to explain to us each time how to look happy, and it was particularly difficult for us to imitate "happy youngsters" this year. Many of our schoolmates had already died, and many others were sick from starvation and could not participate in the celebration. Nevertheless, nobody could ignore the

Communist holidays. We students had to participate like everyone else, and we had to smile and laugh whether we wanted to or not.

On the way to the square, we had to sing the songs we had learned for this occasion. We also carried a huge red flag and the usual Communist slogans such as "Long Live the Communist Party," "Long Live the Soviet Regime!" and "We thank the Communist Party for Our Happy and Prosperous Life!"

The first thing I noticed upon reaching the square were some kettles hanging over the fire. Around these kettles was a cordon of militia deputies guarding them like some treasure. All of the militia were armed with shotguns. The village administrators stood close to the kettles, which were being tended by several women. The huge crowds of hungry participants were kept at some distance from the kettles by a row of tractors.

The scene I saw in the square is impossible to forget. There were literally hundreds of emaciated people staring at one focal point: the kettles steaming with hot food. Some of the onlookers stood on their own, others were so weak that they had to be supported by relatives or friends. Many others could only lie on the ground. The crowds were strangely quiet and orderly but tense with expectation, waiting for something to happen.

When Comrade Thousander mounted a tractor to begin the celebration with one of his usual harangues, all the protruding eyes that had been fixed on the steaming kettles and the smoke from the fires turned to him. He started by congratulating all of us on the holiday. Then he reminded us that in celebrating May Day, we must (and he emphasized must) show solidarity with all proletarians, whatever that meant. At the end of his long speech, he announced that with the celebration of the May Day, the collective farm began its Spring Sowing Campaign. The best way to celebrate these two great patriotic events, he admonished, was to take part in the socialist competition for speedy fulfillment of one's work norms in the field.

By this time, his hungry audience began growing impatient. The hundreds of pairs of eyes had lost interest in him long ago, and again kept their hungry stare on the kettles. They could wait no longer. Very slowly but persistently, the multitude began to advance forward, getting closer to the kettles.

"And now"—Comrade Thousander was shouting his finale to his hungry audience—"now, thanks to our dear Communist Party, we are able to celebrate these two events with our traditional hot buckwheat porridge!!!"

The hungry and ragged crowd did not wait for him to finish his last words. Men, women, children, all who could, rushed to the kettles, shouting, shrieking, cursing. Hundreds of feet trampled over those who were weaker or who lay on the ground, and tried to crawl to the kettles.

But no one managed to get to them. At the moment it seemed that the threatening crowd was about to overrun the area with the kettles, a shot rang out, then another…. This however did not stop the stampede. Then a desperate man mounted one of the tractors and started shouting something. A third shot sounded. The man on the tractor wavered a second and then fell. This third fatal warning signal caught the attention of the crowd, and the tumult subsided.

Comrade Thousander, who had stood on the tractor speechless and helpless during the uproar, now regained his composure. Surveying the crowd contemptuously from his high position, he shouted angrily, "Stop behaving like wild animals!"

"You'll have to wait your turn in lines," he continued. "The first ones to receive the meal will be those who are able to work in the field." Saying this, he stepped down from the tractor and took his place by the kettles to supervise the distribution of the food.

Slowly order was restored. The hungry ones were properly lined up. Some were standing; some lying in their waiting lines, all holding food containers: bowls, pots, and cans. Comrade Thousander nodded benevolently, signaling the May Day meal to begin. Each person received two large scoops of buckwheat porridge. No one was forgotten or omitted.

After the meal was finished, Comrade Thousander mounted the tractor again to make an important announcement. From now on, he said, the members of the collective farm who worked in the field would receive a pound of bread, and two hot meals daily. Then he ordered those who were able to go immediately to the field and start working.

There were not many who left for the fields. The buckwheat porridge could not perform miracles. Many were too weak to walk for a longer distance, or even get up. They remained sitting or lying in the square, licking the remainder of the porridge from their containers.

We, the pupils, and our teachers, were the last ones to receive our portions of the porridge. While the hungry crowds were gulping their shares, we had to sing patriotic May Day songs, thanking the Communist Party and the Soviet government for granting us a happy and prosperous life. All the while we endured the hunger pangs torturing us and envied those who were already eating their porridge.

The man shot and killed on the tractor was dragged away from the place where he had fallen and left lying in the square in open view. I noticed after a while that a starving dog approached him, and after some careful sniffing, started licking the blood off his wound.

Reference

Miron Dolot, *Execution by Hunger: The Hidden Holocaust* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1987), 137–43. Reprinted with permission from W. W. Norton & Company.

Notes

collectivization – an economic policy of Bolshevik occupation authorities aimed at the liquidation of 5.2 million small farms by stripping owners of their plots of land, farm animals, and farming equipment, while forcing them into 25,000 collective farms owned by the state. Stalin's 1929 article, "The Year of the Great Breakthrough," spelled out the policy. Ukrainian farmers, who resisted the collectivization policy, were forced into labor camps, exiled into forced settlements in the Russian wilderness, or executed on the spot. Soviet Ukraine was one of the first republics subject to total collectivization in one to two years.

kurkul (in Russian *kulak*) – an ideological label, created by Bolsheviks to brand small proprietors as enemies of the state and to eliminate them. In 1930, the label was applied to all those who resisted collectivization irrespective of land ownership or wealth. They were dispossessed of property, evicted from their homes, resettled to village outskirts, shot if they resisted, or exiled to Siberia.

GPU (in Russian *Gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie*), or State Political Directorate, a successor of Cheka. From 1922 to 1934, the GPU (Ukrainian abbreviation DPU) was a special organ of the Bolshevik occupational regime in Soviet Ukraine, which carried out political repressions, executions, arrests, and deportations. In 1928, the GPU was granted the right to conduct trials without prosecutor's consent. In 1929, the so-called *troika* were instituted to expedite the prosecution of legal cases. In 1932–1933, the GPU oversaw the implementation of the law on the "protection of socialist property" (known as the "five ears of wheat" law) and conducted arrests, deportations, and executions of all those who were charged for violating the law by gleaning kernels of wheat in the fields.

Thousanders (*tysiachnyky*) refers to the so-called 25,000 urban workers recruited to volunteer for work in the countryside. Their initial task was to carry out the "total collectivization of agriculture on the basis of the liquidation of the kulaks as a class," proclaimed in 1929. Many of them became collective farm chairmen or board members, or were assigned to work in the machine-tractor stations (MTS). Upon arrival in a given village they had absolute authority over all village inhabitants and institutions. Out of 8,421 activists recruited in Russian urban centers, about 6,435 were dispatched to villages in Ukraine; the remaining volunteers were dispatched to the North Caucasus and Kazakhstan. Most of them (80 percent) served in village soviets. Their task was accomplished by the end of 1931, when 85 percent of farms in Soviet Ukraine were collectivized.

Discussion Questions

1. Who were the perpetrators and who were the victims of the Grain Collection Campaign?
2. What actions of the government qualify the Holodomor as an intentional act calculated to destroy, in whole or in part, the Ukrainians?
3. How did the Communists disguise their anti-Ukrainian policy in 1931?
4. When was collectivization completed in Soviet Ukraine?
5. When did the famine break out and the first deaths from forced starvation begin to occur in Ukraine?
6. What strategies did starving people use to survive?
7. Why did the government prohibit travel from the collective farms in Ukraine in search of food?
8. What effect did the genocidal famine have on Ukrainian culture and traditions?
9. How would you characterize the behavior of bystanders?
10. Why did the Soviet government use the GPU and militiamen to confiscate food?
11. Why did the Soviet authorities prohibit relief for Ukraine from the outside?
12. In their memoir, Beatrice and Sydney Webb lauded communism as "new civilization." How would you compare the image of Soviet society created by the British socialists with the Ukrainian teenager's account of the May Day celebration in his village in 1932?
13. Why was it difficult for village schoolteachers to explain to children how to imitate "happy youngsters"?
14. What methods did the Soviet authorities use to force people to work for the regime?

Anastasia Lysyvets

Anastasia Lysyvets (1922–2011), a Ukrainian teacher and author of the Holodomor memoir. She was born in the village of Berezan in the Kyiv region at the end of 1922. Her father was a farmer. The family owned six hectares (approximately 15 acres) of land that corresponded to the number of "eaters in the family." The farmstead consisted of a mare with a filly, a cow, a hog, and chickens. They had a cart, a plow, a cultivator, and several harrows. The family's hut was whitewashed with a clay-covered earthen floor and a thatched roof. Behind the hut grew cherry, apple, and pear trees and a big nut tree.

Figure 13.1 Anastasia Lysyvets, a school pupil in Grade 9, village Berezan, Kyiv region, 1938. Courtesy of the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance.

Lysyvets was 10 years old when she lost most of her family to the Holodomor. Her parents, sister, and brother died from forced starvation during 1932–1933. She wrote her memoir in the mid-1970s, more than forty years after the actual events took place. As a modest rural teacher of the Ukrainian language and literature, she wrote her account without an expectation that her memoir would ever be published. It would have been impossible in the Soviet Union. The memoir was intended for her children as well as for her future grandchildren.

Lysyvets wrote accounts of two most tragic events in twentieth-century Ukrainian history – the Holodomor and World War II – in ordinary school notebooks. She also kept a diary all her life like other members of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, a dangerous pursuit. Her daughter Natalka Bilotserkivets submitted the first part of her mother's memoir, entitled *Speak of the Happy Life…* for publication on the eve of Ukraine's independence. In 1993, the memoir was published in Ukrainian, later translated into Romanian and French.

In 2008, K.I.S. Press published an expanded version as part of its historical series, under the title *Memoirs. The Great Famine. The Great War*. In 2012, an excerpt in English was first published in *The Holodomor Reader: A Sourcebook on the Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine*, published by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies.

Natalka Bilotserkivets recalled the final days of her mother's life. Once rereading her own memoir, the mother, with a perplexed look in her eyes, mused: "Did this really happen to me? I suppose it did…" To her last breath, the survivor remembered her ravaged childhood and the weeping of the martyrs.

Reference

Natalka Bilotserkivets, "An Unforgotten Life: On My Mother's Memoirs," in Anastasia Lysyvets, *Speak of the Happy Life: Memoirs of the Holodomor*, translated from the Ukrainian by Alexander J. Motyl and Tatiana Yablonska (Kyiv: Dukh i Litera Publishing House, 2021), 5–6.

Speak of the Happy Life…

By Anastasia Lysyvets

It was the fall of 1934, my sixth grade. I was twelve years old, and all my relatives considered me grown-up, very literate and well-educated, because no one in our family had ever made it to the sixth grade before. I loved to study. I always got "excellent" grades and only sometimes "good" ones. On holidays I received awards and gifts at school. It seemed to me that even the collective-farm head, Kozatsky, had begun to look at me and Mykola with different eyes. Or perhaps he felt ashamed for the deaths of our father and mother, Halka, and Vasylko. Perhaps… We didn't abuse our requests for allocations from the collective farm. We were ashamed to do that; we were proud kids.

Both Mykola and I ran to school barefoot. All the pupils at school already had shoes, while I being ashamed of my bare feet, refused to go to the blackboard and answer the teacher's questions. I hid my coarse feet beneath the desk so the teachers wouldn't see them. But most of the teachers appeared to have understood what the matter was. They stopped asking me to come to the blackboard or their desk and let me answer from my place.

We began to get ready for the October Revolution holiday. We were instructed to walk in lines through all of Berezan with flags, banners, and portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Molotov, Kosior, Postyshev and others whom I no longer remember. In the market place not far from the primary school, they set up a raised platform where the bosses from the district [Communist] Party committee, the district executive committee, and representatives of the collective farms and schools were supposed to stand. Among the many bosses on the platform was Kozatsky – our head of the Fourth GPU Collective Farm. Yahor Hurynovych was there as the representative of the teachers, and then there were Yakiv Danylovych, the school principal and Ivan Klymovych Maksiuta, the Pioneer leader.

I was chosen to represent the pupils and to stand on the platform and make a speech. Seeing my confusion, Ivan Maksiuta said, "Don't worry. Just remember to speak of our happy life, of collective farming bringing happiness to the farmers and their children, of the party of Bolsheviks. You must say that fascism has risen in the West, that its people are suffering from hunger and cold, that ordinary people, workers and farmers are tortured for speaking the truth about our Soviet rule."

I listened to my teacher to the end and then said that I might not be able to make a speech and that maybe someone else should.

"No, no, Nastia Lysyvets, you speak. You're a straight-A pupil, the best in the school, as well as an exemplary Pioneer. You simply must."

At home I wrote my speech on a sheet of paper torn from some old notebook. It's too bad that I didn't save that sheet. I can't fully recollect the exact sentences and phrases I spoke from the holiday platform on that November 7, 1934. What a shame! But I remember the gist of it, as well as the excitement, the gestures and facial expressions of a confused 12-year-old girl, delivering such a speech from that platform for the first time.

The problem was that I had to climb the platform in my dirty, black-and-blue bare feet with bloody sores. Here's why. When I had begun to cough, grandma made me wear disgusting, hard-as-steel high boots that uncle Mykhailo had made me from his old ones. Nothing caused me greater misery than those boots. They cut and chafed my feet. My feet hurt so much that I could hardly stand wearing them. I was ready to catch a cold and die rather than put on those awful, coarse, tight boots that cut my tortured feet.

In the evening I washed my dress and kerchief, washed my hair, and polished my boots with the tar grandma had brought for that purpose. Grandma and I thought the tar would soften the boots. I had no iron, so I pressed my dress with the rolling pin my mother used for the bed linen, towels, covers, and tablecloths. My old calico dress wasn't supposed to be rolled flat like that, so it remained creased and stretched out and looked even uglier. The wide men's boot shafts on my thin, stick-like legs reached above my knees.

Very early in the morning I got up, woke Mykola, had a breakfast of potatoes, bread and pickled cucumbers, and started to get dressed for the holiday. Prisia Padalka and Nadia Kolesnyk dropped in on me. I put on my dress, all the while biting my lips. It pained me that the girls had such nice dresses and shoes, while I had those awful high boots. Seeing that grandma wasn't around, I made a firm decision not to wear the boots, but to go barefoot in spite of my bad cough.

My feet were freezing. I started to shiver, while my teeth chattered. I hopped up and down and rubbed my feet with my hands, but nothing helped. We finally made it to school. There they arranged us in columns with placards, slogan banners, and portraits. The three of us and one other girl stood together. I stood in the middle so that the teachers and people couldn't see my bare feet. While the columns were being formed, I'd lift one foot, press the rim of my dress to it with my hand and when the foot got a bit warmer, I'd warm the other one.

A cold thin rain began to drizzle. There were other barefoot people in the columns, but no one paid any special attention to them and I calmed down. The column started to move through Berezan. We were ordered to sing "The Youth International" and "The International." At first, I didn't want to sing, but when Nadia Kolesnyk began to beautifully sing "We children of the holy army of labor will own the land, while trouble will await the parasites," I began to sing along quietly. I liked both the tune and the lyrics, and the refrain of "The International" sounded quite lovely:

Hear, the trumpets have sounded,
The time of revenge has come.
Within the International
Human rights we shall attain.

We didn't march in step, we walked more like a flock, trotting along so as not to lag behind the first column. Finally, we reached the square where the platform stood.

Ivan Maksiuta beckoned to me with his fingers to go to the platform. Good heavens! I was ready to sink into the ground, to turn into the wind, to disappear without any trace rather than suffer the burning shame of approaching the platform barefoot, in an old dress and an old kerchief. But the teacher's order was an order and I went, my head lowered. I quickly jumped onto the platform and stood in the corner, glad that the bottom board was wide enough to shield my bare feet from people's eyes.

The festivities began. Speakers spoke loudly about our happy life, the victory of collective farms, about the Soviet rule for which so much workers' blood had been shed. They cursed our enemies, both internal and external, often repeating the word "death." Death to World Imperialism! Death to the kulaks! Death to the traitors of Soviet rule! Death to the fascists in Germany and Italy! Death to everyone who hoped to defeat us!

I was trembling, thinking they'd forgotten about me. First, the secretary of the district [Communist] Party committee made a speech, then the secretary of the district Komsomol committee; Kozatsky spoke on behalf of the Berezan collective farmers and Yahor Hurynovych on behalf of the teachers and intelligentsia. Finally, they said, "The floor is given to straight-A pupil, Nastia Lysyvets, on behalf of the Pioneer organization of the Berezan Seven-year School." Scattered applause followed, just as after each announcement. The bosses moved over, making way for me at the front of the platform. I removed a crumpled page from my sleeve. My hands were shaking. My legs were trembling. My teeth were chattering. But I began in a shaky though loud voice:

"Comrades collective farmers, Pioneers, pupils, and all working people! On behalf of the Pioneer organization of the Berezan school I convey to you our warmest Pioneer greetings in honor of the glorious anniversary of the Great October Revolution!"

These words received applause, even from the bosses on the platform. Yahor Hurynovych also applauded. I felt more confident and started to read from my paper. I said that we were happy, that collective farming had brought happiness to the farmers, that we were the only ones in the world to be so happy, that such happy and free children existed only in our Soviet country, because abroad in the West, people were suffering in servitude, the poor children of working people were dying of hunger… I spoke a lot, exactly as my teacher had suggested. And I finished with a cry: "Long live the anniversary of the

Great October Revolution!" The people applauded again, and I went back to my corner of the platform, while hiding my bare feet behind the wide board…

Written in 1976

Reference

Anastasia Lysyvets, *Speak of the Happy Life: Memoirs of the Holodomor*, translated from the Ukrainian by Alexander J. Motyl and Tatiana Yablonska (Kyiv: Dukh i Litera Publishing House, 2021), 74–79.

Note

The commemoration of the Great October Socialist Revolution became a national holiday in the Soviet Union in 1927. It was celebrated on November 7 (October 25 Old Style) after the adoption of the Gregorian calendar.

Figure 13.2 Young pioneers on the stage; above is the inscription "Glory to the Great Stalin!" Courtesy of the Pedagogical Museum of Ukraine.

Discussion Questions

1. What methods did the Soviet regime use to hide the truth about the Holodomor of 1932–1933?
2. What role did teachers play during the Holodomor?
3. Why was Anastasia invited to present a speech during the celebration of the October Revolution?
4. How did the narrator feel about speaking during the communist holiday after all her family, including her father, mother, and two siblings, died from the enforced starvation?
5. What purpose did Soviet propaganda serve?
6. Who were the "enemies of the people"?
7. Did the ideology of "internationalism" really guarantee human rights to Soviet citizens?
8. What is the best way to respond to a totalitarian regime's constant manipulation of reality?

Varvara Dibert

Figure 14.1 Seventh grade class, Taras Shevchenko School of Ukrainian Studies, Washington, D.C. (1969). Back row, standing: Varvara Dibert; back row, seated, center: Irene Jarosewich; front row, left: Larysa Kurylas. Courtesy of Larysa Kurylas.

Varvara Dibert (1898–1994) (nee Kramarenko) was born on November 8, 1898 in the village of Sanzharivka and grew up in the village of Pedynivka in the Kyiv province, where her father was a priest. The village was located in the heart of Ukraine, a few miles away from Taras Shevchenko's native village of Moryntsi. At the age of nine Varvara was sent to Kyiv to study at a diocesan school. Upon completion of the eighth grade, she obtained the right to be a teacher. In 1916, at the age of seventeen, she began teaching in a primary school for girls in the town of Kaharlyk near Kyiv. Varvara Dibert was denied admission to the University of Kyiv because of her social background (she was the daughter of a priest). She was admitted to the Teachers' Training Institute after she changed her name. When Varvara was 18, her father died.

Varvara Dibert was a witness and a participant of the Ukrainian national liberation struggle of 1917–1921. While working as a teacher, she also served as a go-between for the Ukrainian National Republic's army detachment that guarded the leaders of the Directory. She was assigned to carry messages and documents to Symon Petliura's headquarters in Kam'ianets-Podilsky. There she also briefly served as a nurse at a military hospital and caught typhus. When the Bolshevik Red Army began advancing on Kyiv, the president of the Central Rada (Ukrainian parliament), Mykhailo Hrushevskyi, had to flee, and her elder brother and her two cousins drove Hrushevskyi out of Kyiv to Zhmerynka. When Bolsheviks came to power, her elder brother worked as a teacher in the Poltava area. Her middle brother joined Symon Petliura's army.

In 1922, Varvara married Vasyl Dibert. In 1924, her son Oleksandr was born. And four years later, in 1928, her daughter Olha was born. Her husband was arrested after a Russian student in the commercial institute where he taught reported that the instructor was teaching in Ukrainian, thus "fostering nationalist politics in his lectures." Her husband was imprisoned for a few months. In 1929, when forced collectivization started, her husband and other non-communist party members who occupied leading positions, were dismissed from jobs. Up to 1929, food was available in Kyiv at many private stores, restaurants, and from farmers who were permitted to bring food to sell at city bazaars.

After the NEP was curtailed, all stores and restaurants were government owned. Access to special stocked stores was limited to those with government privilege or party affiliation. Food shortages began at the end of 1929. In the 1930s, Kyiv adopted a food ration distribution system. Ration coupons were unevenly distributed. Party members had unlimited food supply available to them at special stores and cafeterias. Varvara Dibert used a one-week pass, on loan from a co-worker, the wife of communist official, to visit the special cafeteria. The food that she brought home fed six people, including her

husband and two children plus two children of a friend, whose husband was arrested. Military factory employees received 800 grams of bread per day, factory workers – 500 grams, service personnel – 400 grams, and dependent children – 200 grams. Bread was the major staple food at the time. Her husband received soup for lunch from which he removed meat and other solid ingredients and brought them home to their children. Food was not available to farmers.

In spring 1934, Varvara Dibert visited her brother who worked as a teacher in the village of Lazarivka, Zhytomyr region, located 17 kilometers from the Fastiv railway station. In these 17 kilometers she passed two villages that were totally empty. The roads and houses were overgrown, all windows were broken, all doors were missing, and all signs of life were gone. In Lazarivka one half of the population died. In this village in the 1940–1941 school year, there were no first grades because, like everywhere in Ukraine, there were few births in 1933.

In 1943, Varvara Dibert and her husband with two children evacuated from Kyiv to Przemysl, Poland, and then to Germany. From 1945 to 1958, the family lived in Displaced Persons camps in Bamberg, Bayreuth, Neu Ulm, and Munich. Finally, they immigrated to the United States. Her grown-up children went ahead without her; she stayed behind. She could not leave for America for a long time on account of the spots on her lungs.

Once in America, Varvara Dibert began teaching at a parish school in Newark, New Jersey. In the 1970s, she worked as a teacher at the Taras Shevchenko School of Ukrainian Studies in the greater Washington, D.C. area. She actively participated in school conferences and wrote articles on school-related topics to various magazines, funded by the Ukrainian diaspora churches. Among her numerous students in the Taras Shevchenko School was Larysa Kurylas, the designer of the Holodomor Memorial in Washington, D.C., who credited her teacher for first lessons about the genocide against Ukrainians in 1932–1933.

In the 1990s, Dibert was the oldest of more than two hundred witnesses to testify before the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine about schools and students during the Holodomor. She also testified before the Ukrainian World Congress and the International Court in The Hague.

Notes

Vasyl Dibert was a delegate from the "Arsenal" factory in Kyiv at the First All-Ukrainian National Congress on April 7, 1917, where the Central Rada was elected. He was a member of the Central Rada's committee for electing the first president of the UNR, Mykhailo Hrushevsky.

References

"Case History SW1: Varvara Dibert (born in 1898, Kharkiv region)," translated from Ukrainian by Darian Diachok, in U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932–1933: Report to Congress* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988), 367–68.

Olha Matula, "Varvara Antonivna Dibert (1898–1994)," *Iuvileina Knyha soboru UPTs sv. Andriia Pervozvannoho* (Jubilee Book of the Cathedral of St. Andrew the First-Called of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church), Metropolitan of Washington, D.C., 322. Courtesy of Olha Matula, personal archive.

Olha Matula, "Svidok Holodomoru" (The Holodomor Witness), *Vira* (*Faith*), vol. XXXIII, no. 2 (April – June 2008): 22. Founded in 1974, *Vira* (*Faith*) is a publication of the United Ukrainian Orthodox Sisterhoods of the USA named after St. Princess Olha in South Bound Brook, NJ.

Larysa Kurylas, "With Gratitude to the Sisterhood: Reflections on the Creation of the National Holodomor Memorial," *Our Life* (published by UNWLA), November 2020, 20–21.

"Svidchennia Varvary Antonivny Dibert pro Holodomor v Ukraini 1932–1933 rokiv" (Witness Testimony of Varvara Antonivna Dibert about the Holodomor in Ukraine in 1932–1933), *Vira* (*Faith*), vol. XXXIII, no. 2 (April–June 2008): 24.

Warwara Dibert, *Affidavit*, sworn before Maryan P. Godbold, notary public, State of Maryland, November 9, 1987, 1. Courtesy of Olha Matula, private archive.

Homeless Children

By Varvara Dibert

People began to die in 1932. And it wasn't because the harvest was bad. That year there was a gorgeous harvest. The [Great] Famine was the result of the confiscation of everything that peasants had. It all began in 1932 and 1933. There was a tremendous number of homeless children in Kiev. It was awful how many of them there were.

…

Well, first of all, most of these children were of parents who had been arrested. And if the parents were taken, the children would be placed in orphanages. But not all the children wanted to go to orphanages. And they would try to escape in all sorts of ways. They would hitch rides under railroad cars, and they would also manage to get on steamers. Or they would escape on foot. … And they would also ride on top of the trains in the summer – they couldn't in winter, of course, ride on the tops of trains – or they would get in between the buffers. A lot of them were actually killed this way. But most of the homeless were children of dekulakized parents. This was going on continuously.

And the interesting thing was the system of ethics that prevailed among them. For example, my youngest brother had just been released from prison, and managed to get himself another job and a passport. One day, he was on the streetcar, and his purse was lifted. It contained his passport and money. Well, the money was not that important as the passport, where it had already been marked down that he had been arrested. So, they took his money, but returned the passport, through the mail slot in our door. As I was about to leave the house, he walked in looking like a corpse. He said that they had taken his passport, and he would have to go through the GPU to get another, and he had already been in prison. And the next day – what joy! As I was about to leave, I stepped into the corridor and looked down to see a soiled envelope containing the passport. They took the money as you would expect – we had already given up on the money. My husband and I were working, and so there was no real shortage of money.

…

When we were living in Kiev, right next to our house there was a building, which earlier had been a theater. In 1933 they converted it into a movie house, and it was adjacent to our courtyard. So that when I passed through the gates of our courtyard, I would walk right past it – I was living in an apartment just on the inside of the courtyard. Our house was number six, and this other building was number four. And as I walked out the gate, I encountered the former theater on the right. This theater was converted into a collection point for homeless children (*bezprytulni*). The police would go around catching the children. They had built plank beds there. Absolutely no one, no outsiders, was allowed to enter this place. The police stood guard. Once I managed to get a peek inside, but I didn't really see that much. I only saw that they had built up these plank beds, not proper beds as such, but plank beds (*nary*). Three or four plank beds were stacked one on top of the other. And inside, you see, were all these homeless children milling about – ragged, dirty, and hungry. But I would very often see, as I would be leaving through the gates, how a large truck would arrive with children that had been caught. And then, I also saw how they would carry the dead children from the building. It was horrid. During the winter – it was obviously quite cold there – they would carry them out wrapped in rags. It was awful to look at it; and some of the corpses would be completely naked. And they stacked them up in the truck as if they were stacking lumber. And when I reached the corner onto Artem Street, I could hear the radio loudly blaring from the corner about the happy life of children in the Soviet Union, and about the terrible events going on in Italy and in Spain. At work you would hear the same things from the radio in the corridor. It was horrible.

…

I was teaching in school then. And in 1933 I took care of two small children whose parents had been arrested. Their mother had been a teacher… And I went there and took her children back to my house. I

managed to have them formally accepted as lodgers – at that time, you were forbidden to take anyone in; you didn't have the right to. But I managed to have them officially registered, and I even had them enrolled in school.

We had ration cards. With one child's ration card you got 100 grams of butter a week, and 200 grams of bread a day. Today you normally won't find a child who eats 200 grams of bread, because the child also has, oh, roast meat, and pudding, and porridge, and fruit, and anything you like.

…

My husband and I used to get a little more, so that we normally gave the children the bread. But as to whether the children were completely satisfied, and as to whether they had what they needed, the answer is no, they never had what they needed in those years. As my son once said, "Oh, Mommy, I think that if there really were enough potatoes, then we wouldn't need this bread." That's what the child said. So, I really can't say that we actually went hungry the way others did.

I remember once my husband, who worked as a mechanic, drove out to fix some machinery at a collective farm. He brought back ten or twenty pounds of green beans. And in each pod, in each single pod, there was a weevil. Can you imagine that? So, I sat down and pulled out each weevil individually from each pod with a needle, threw it out and cooked the green beans.

Later, I got tuberculosis. And while at the tuberculosis sanatorium, I was given some dog fat. I didn't use the fat myself; I used it to prepare the potatoes. They didn't know that this was what I did. You see, my thinking was: I didn't know whether or not I would survive the tuberculosis, but at least my children would get nourishment. So, I can't really say that we experienced the same kind of hunger as the people in the villages. But it's terrible to even think about it now: How I sat and pulled out those weevils.

One day an acquaintance of ours paid us a visit. He was an elderly man who was already quite swollen. And he told us that it was very bad with him, that there wasn't enough to eat. Well, what could I give him? I could give him a bowl of soup. He ate the soup. And I also gave him some of those green beans with the weevils. Two days later, they told us that he had died. He was already swollen. So, what could we really have done for him?

The main concern were the four children; we had four children at the time: Our won two and two others, the children of our acquaintance. In the school where I used to work in the library, they used to give the school children a plate of porridge for a small amount of money. And all the people working there, including the teachers and I, were entitled to the same ration of porridge. I myself never took a single spoonful of that porridge. I would bring it home with me. I would bring it and divide it among the four children. I never made any distinction between my own children and the others as to what I gave them. The other two children I treated for all practical purposes as if they were my own, and we never discriminated between them.

They spent a whole year with us, until their mother returned to emotional health. The year 1933 was drawing to a close. And another tragedy befell them: The husband had finished serving his three-year term, but when they freed him, they denied him the right to work. Only later was he allowed to work in the Donbas.

…

And then there were the children. The trucks would also pick these children up, and just keep picking them up. Some people would try to take them in; others would take them to the orphanages. A lot of homeless children escaped; they didn't want to live there. I had some acquaintances in those homes, and they used to say that the conditions were not all that bad, that the children were treated well, that they received enough food, that they got clothes. But they kept escaping. They didn't want to stay. I myself once spent some time with one of these homeless children – this was in the hospital when my lungs were bad. It was a 17-year-old girl, who had been living in one of the orphanages. And when she came down with tuberculosis, they got her a place in this hospital. And she had a bed right alongside mine. Since she knew Ukrainian, I spoke in Ukrainian with her. The Jews, you know, generally would only speak Russian. So, we struck up a sort of a friendship. And just imagine! Her friends, the children from the orphanage somehow got the idea that the cure for tuberculosis was to swallow raw eggs. I have no idea

where these homeless children managed to get those eggs, but the entire month that I was there in the hospital with her, they would bring her baskets of eggs. They did this every week, every Saturday or Sunday – these homeless children. Where they got the eggs, whether they stole them directly, or whether they would buy the eggs with the money they stole on the street, I have no idea. But the fact is that the entire month that I was there she got her weekly basket of eggs from her friends. And it is interesting to note that it was never the same person who would bring the eggs, always someone different.

Reference

"Case History SW1: Varvara Dibert (born in 1898, Kharkiv region)," translated from Ukrainian by Darian Diachok, in U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932–1933: Report to Congress* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988), 376–80.

Notes

bezprytulni – homeless children were orphans who lost their parents due to famines or deportations. At first, this anomalous social phenomenon was caused by the famine of 1921–1923, when tens of thousands of orphans traveled from famine-stricken areas to urban centers of Soviet Ukraine. In the 1930s, the causes of a huge influx of orphans in Soviet Ukraine were dekulakization, deportations, and political repressions. In May 1933, the number of homeless children reached 11,000 on the streets of Kharkiv, then the capital of Soviet Ukraine. At the time, orphanages could not accommodate all the homeless children; many were branded on the hand and deported to the outskirts of the city without the right to return, thus deprived of all means of survival. The capital of Soviet Ukraine was transferred from Kharkiv to Kyiv in 1934. The name was spelled Kiev following the Russian pronunciation until the twenty-first century, when it was changed to Kyiv to reflect the Ukrainian pronunciation.

Dekulakization (in Russian *raskulachivanie*), in Ukrainian *rozkurkulennia*, was a form of political terror in the village that targeted well-to-do farmers, so-called *kurkuli*, and aimed at the liquidation of economic self-sufficiency of private and family enterprises. In Soviet Ukraine, the campaign of "eliminating kulaks as a class" camouflaged anti-Ukrainian policy of the Bolsheviks. Under the slogans of building socialism and fulfilling grain procurement plans, well-to-do and later poorer farmers were dispossessed of land, farm animals, equipment, even houses, and banished to forced settlements in Siberia, sentenced to death or decades of forced labor in concentration camps in the Russian Far North and Siberia. The confiscated property served as "capital funds" for collective farms.

According to Varvara Dibert's testimony, she schooled her youngest brother at home because at the time religious schools were shut down. When her brother wanted to enroll in a technical school to be trained for a career, he was rejected for being a priest's son. Eventually, he enrolled in an agricultural institute and upon graduation started working as an agronomist. He was arrested and charged with having been a non-commissioned officer in Petliura's Army. He spent six months in prison.

Passports were introduced by the Soviet government decree of December 27, 1932. The reason behind introducing the internal passport system was to stop the exodus of starving Ukrainians to procure food in urban areas of Soviet Ukraine, neighboring Russia, and Belarus. Only persons possessing a passport had a right to migrate within the Soviet Union. Passports were not issued to residents of villages, thus limiting their freedom of movement during 1932–1933 to procure food to survive.

The Donets River industrial basin in southern Ukraine, north of the Sea of Azov, is the main center of the Donbas. Welsh engineers, among them John James Hughes, constructed a metallurgical plant there in 1870 and a small town for coal mine workers around it. It was the beginning of Yuzivka, named after Hughes (modern day Donetsk). See Serhii Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine* (New York:

Basic Books, 2015), 175. Workers for the Donbas industrial projects were recruited in Russia; Ukrainian farmers who fled to the industrial construction site were often denied jobs.

The collector for the homeless children in Kyiv during 1932–1933 is also described in Warwara Dibert, *Affidavit*, sworn before Maryan P. Godbold, notary public, State of Maryland, November 9, 1987, 6–7. Courtesy of Olha Matula, private archive.

Discussion Questions

1. According to the eyewitness, what caused the Great Famine in 1932–1933?
2. Why were there so many homeless children?
3. How did the eyewitness describe the "system of ethics" that prevailed among the homeless children?
4. How did the Soviet government treat homeless children in a collection center inside a former theater?
5. Why did the Soviet government institute a policy of prohibiting taking homeless as lodgers in the city?
6. What survival strategies did the eyewitness use to save her own and her colleague's children?
7. What is the moral of the narrator's story about the homeless children bringing a basket of eggs to a tuberculosis-stricken girl in the hospital?

Oleksandra Kostiuk

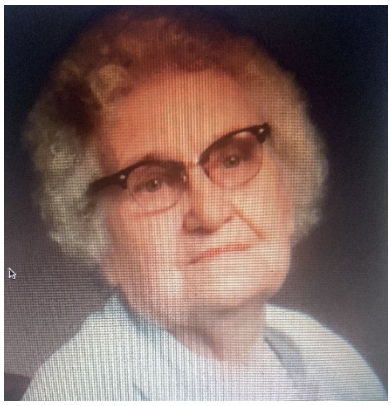


Figure 15.1 Oleksandra Kostiuk. Courtesy of her great-granddaughter Vitalia Bryn-Pundyk.

Oleksandra Kostiuk (1899–1985), pseudonym Nadiya Lan, Lada Horlytsia, was a Ukrainian American writer, educator, chemical engineer, social and cultural activist. She was born on March 14, 1899 in the Kharkiv region. She studied chemistry at the Kharkiv Medical Institute (1926), Pedagogical Institute (1930), and Institute of People's Education named after O. Potebnia (1934). Together with her husband, Ivan Kryvobabko, professor of physical chemistry, she wrote a textbook on physical chemistry, published in Kharkiv in 1933.

From 1934 she taught at the inorganic chemistry department of the Chemical and Technological Institute in Rubizhne, Luhansk region, and during 1940–1941 at the Kharkiv Pedagogical Institute. She was a member of the "Pluh" (Plow) literary association (1924), and was subjected to repressions. Her husband was arrested in 1938 for the alleged anti-Soviet activity, interrogated, and murdered in prison.

In 1944, Oleksandra Kostiuk emigrated to Germany, where she lived and taught chemistry in various Displaced Persons camps. In 1949, she emigrated to the United States, where she settled first in Chicago, later in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In 1956, she founded the school of Ukrainian studies. She also directed the "Orliata" drama group and co-founded the Ukrainian Literary Arts Club of Minnesota.

Oleksandra Kostiuk wrote novels, poems, short stories, and plays. She contributed articles to diaspora newspapers and magazines. The was editor of the musical quarterly *Visti* (*The Herald*, 1963–1972), which later became *Muzhychni Visti* (1970–1972). Her daughter, Oksana Bryn, a soprano, performed in St. Paul Opera in Minneapolis, Minnesota, as well as on stages in Winnipeg, Toronto, Detroit, and New York's Carnegie Hall. In the 1970s, Oksana Bryn taught vocal performance at the University of Minnesota and worked as a voice coach in music school theaters. Her repertoire included works of Ukrainian, Italian, French, and Czech composers.

Oleksandra Kostiuk was active in many Ukrainian American organizations, including the Ukrainian National Women's League of America, the American Association of Ukrainian Journalists, and the Friends of the Research Center of History of Immigration in Minneapolis.

References

Yu. Kovaliv, "Kostiuk Oleksandra Fedorivna," *Entsyklopediia Suchasnoi Ukrainy* [online], ed. I. M. Dziuba, A. I. Zhukovskyi, M. G. Zhelezniak et al. (Kyiv: Instytut entsyklopedychnykh doslidzhen NAN Ukrainy, 2016), vol. 14, https://esu.com.ua/search_articles.php?id=6148.

Ivan Lysenko, "Bryn Oksana," *Slovnyk spivakiv Ukrainy* (Kyiv: Vyd-vo "Rada," Liga Ukrainskykh metsenativ, vyd-vo M. P. Kots, 1997), 39.

Olelksandra Kostiuk papers (1948–1982), Immigration History Research Center Archives of the University of Minnesota (identifier IHRC 1266).

Life Before and After the Holodomor

By Oleksandra Kostiuk

Q: Please state your first and last name.

A: Oleksandra Kostiuk, born in *Sloboda* Ukraine.

Q: When?

A: On March 14, 1899. My family was quite large, about 50 members, but only two or three survived. Most of them were either deported or died during the Holodomor, orchestrated by Moscow. …

Q: Did your family take part in the Ukrainian national revival before the revolution?

A: Yes, of course. I lived in the suburb of Kharkiv as an orphan, adopted by my family. I studied at the primary school, later in a [girls'] gymnasium in Kharkiv. … I was an excellent student – graduated from the seventh grade with a golden medal. In 1917, when the revolution occurred, new ideas swept across the land, and refugees from Galicia (in western Ukraine) brought with them revolutionary Ukrainian songs and Ukrainian consciousness. We were not aware of these ideas. Our consciousness did not go beyond [Taras Shevchenko's] *Kobzar* and [Mykola] Gogol. Gogol's *Taras Bulba*, and *Kobzar* were on top of my reading list. The refugees brought [Vasyl] Simovych's *Grammar* and works by [Borys] Hrinchenko, as well as agricultural magazines with Ukrainian articles – all of these were our new literature. We organized an underground Ukrainian literary circle, and I was in charge – as the one who was well versed in the Ukrainian question – of teaching Ukrainian … We did this in secret, usually meeting at someone's house.

Toward the end of 1917, during one of the meetings of the Ukrainian literary circle, which was organized by Leonid Arsenievych Bulakhovskyi (a Christian Jew, an excellent Ukraine specialist, later Ukrainian academician.) I read my translation of Oleksiy Tolstoy's poem "Malorosiia." In the poem, I mentioned the name Ukraine. Inspired by Leonid Arsenievych, I translated this poem. It was not a brilliant translation (later I kept revising it for several years), but I translated the part that was censored. The director of the gymnasium was angry, and I was suspended – the medalist, approaching graduation, without the right to apply to any other gymnasia.

I was saved by my Ukrainian teachers. One of them was the teacher of French and the poetess Khrystyna Alchevska. The others were the Cossack from Kuban Oleksander Dmytrovych Koropenko and Volodymyr Shapoval, the defrocked priest, sanctioned for performing a requiem during the centennial commemoration of Shevchenko. Thanks to these Ukrainians' appeals I could complete my education. After all, I was an excellent student with a stipend for academic achievement, and besides, I was the medalist, an honor for the gymnasium So, I graduated from the gymnasium with the gold medal, which I did not receive because with the outbreak of the revolution the Bolsheviks had confiscated all the gold.

Thus, the literary circle flourished and turned into the Student House which started publishing a journal, first under the title *Mysl*. The title was chosen so that it could be interpreted both in Ukrainian and Russian. I was selected as the section editor. Later I completed the eighth grade. That entitled me to receive a school certificate, equivalent to graduation from a boys' gymnasium, to pursue higher education. I applied and was admitted to three or four institutes as the medalist with the school certificate. After completing my higher education, I became a teacher in the village where I grew up.

I worked in the "Prosvita" Society and actively participated in the drama club as a chorister and dancer, and later as a lead actress. But then the Bolsheviks came. The "Prosvita" functioned for a time, but soon was closed. I transferred to the Solodovnikov's Red Army Theater, as a lead actress. In 1922, I was arrested, still dressed in my stage costume, during a performance of the drama "The Steppe Guest" (I

played the role of Natalia). I spent three weeks at the Cheka office on Kinna Street, but thanks to the investigator Udalov I was lucky to be released. …

After I was freed, I moved to my friend in Derkachi, where there was an agricultural farm, to work at a school alongside noted writers such as Yakiv Mamontiv, Mykhailo Vetukhiv, Oles Kandyba, Kost Danylivskyj and many others. Hnat Martynovych Hotkevych taught the Ukrainian language there. He was a talented person, an artist, musician, dramatist, historian, writer, poet and bandurist. He is called the father of the bandurists. While he was still a student, he taught his fellow students how to play the instrument. He was the founder and director of the first bandurist cappella, later named after Shevchenko.

Then, in 1921, the university was restructured into several institutes. One of these institutes was for training teachers and had a department of social education (*Faksotsvykh*). Young teachers who taught there were proficient in Ukrainian. Since Russian was the language of instruction in schools, very few teachers spoke Ukrainian. Out of the six teachers who taught in the village schools, I was the only one who taught classes in Ukrainian. … After I completed my studies at the department of social education along with seven other graduate students, I was appointed to a pedagogical scientific research institute. …

As soon as the SVU *show trial* started in 1930, I left the institute because I refused to condemn the defendants in that SVU trial. … Intellectuals like me came under surveillance and so I had to move to Rubizhne in the Donbas. There I found work at the department of inorganic chemistry. I was in charge of a chemistry lab and served as a secretary of the science section.

In 1938 my husband was arrested. Despite the ban on lecturing in Ukrainian, he had continued to teach using his native Ukrainian language. Added to this the security police also found out about his social background – that he was the son of a well-to-do farmer whose family had been deported. To this day I have never found out what happened to my husband.

…

Q: What can you tell us about the founding of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church? Did you or your friends participate in this movement?

A: Ukrainians, from commoners to scholars, all took part in this movement. Metropolitan Lypkivskyi was an extraordinarily passionate speaker. And so was Archbishop Oleksander Yaroshchenko. I have never seen such a brilliant speaker. These were the pillars of the Autocephalous Church. Volodymyr Chekhivskyi – a scholar, civilian, but with theological training, was also a good orator. Thus, after the 1921 Sobor, when the Autocephalous Church was officially established, new priests were ordained for the parishes. There were enough candidates because the Kharkiv Seminary had many talented seminarists, all descendants of the Ukrainian clergy. They led church services in Church Slavonic, but their thoughts, ideas were directed toward Ukraine and the necessity to fight for Ukraine. So, they were patriots. They became priests and served in these parishes, disseminating God's word in Ukrainian. Moscow-affiliated priests opposed this, occasionally even instigating fights, but nevertheless the Autocephalous Church kept developing further. Of course, our family belonged to this church. In Kharkiv, there was the beautiful St. Michael's Cathedral on Sumska Street, the first cathedral of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church. It was demolished and razed in 1927 as I recall, and a hotel constructed in its place. Archbishop Yaroshchenko was arrested and exiled. And the Metropolitan Lypkivskyi also ended his days in exile, who knows where. Rumor had it that he too was arrested. …

Q: Can you tell us why they arrested you in 1921?

A: I was arrested because I was a secretary in the "Prosvita" Society, a teacher of the Ukrainian language, and a lecturer on historical themes. My future husband enlisted in Petliura's army. He served as a secretary of our "Prosvita" Society and gave me all the minutes of the meetings for safekeeping. Although I hid the seal of the "Prosvita" and the meeting minutes, the security police found them and arrested me. Earlier, they had arrested my fiancé's friend who had joined the army and then caught

typhus and returned home. They arrested him: Hryts Pavlenko. When I learned that the authorities were looking for me, I tried to hide. Meanwhile, the friend was detained. I thought I could outsmart the Cheka, the Extraordinary Commission – Cheka, so I went to their office and left a note, in which I stated that I work at the Red Army's Theater as an actress, and to "Please release Hryts Pavlenko, I do not want an innocent person to suffer because of me."

I thought that my work at the theater could save me. But it didn't. And so, I was arrested right on the stage at the end of the play "The Steppe Guest," still dressed in my costume – and was brought directly to the Extraordinary Commission office. They were ready to transfer me to a prison in Kholodna Hora, but the investigator Udalov helped me and let me go free. …

Q: Do you think the Bolshevik famine caused a deadly blow to the Ukrainian farmers?

A: It is a hard question. Eleven million deaths. Isn't that a deadly blow? It took a long time to recover … that percentage of the population [that was lost]. The majority of the population resettled there after the Holodomor consisted mostly of Moscow's people, being resettled onto rich lands and prosperous farmsteads previously owned by the Ukrainians. That was a mixing of [two] nations.

Q: Did you have a chance to visit your village after the famine or not?

A: After the famine? I recall how I visited the Kremianetsk village, near Rubizhne. All the houses there were empty. In some houses I saw decomposed skeletons and bones. And some houses were notorious for being places where cannibals used to live. The entire village died out. I was working as an assistant at a military institute, and visited the village by chance. I did not intend to go there. To harvest a crop, students from urban universities were dispatched to villages to work in the fields. The authorities provided meager food for the students [who worked], but the starving villagers themselves could only hope for a piece of bread. And the starving were all collective farm workers. They were scraped clean of everything edible to the last kernel. It is hard to imagine how people who managed to survive could recover. They ate tree bark, acorns, and various weeds. Very few actually survived. Now when I look back, I cannot understand how people could find the strength to endure such a starvation diet and survive. As a result of the Holodomor, the number of children in schools dropped and so schools were closed in 1931 and 1933. By the 1938–1939 [school] year, there were few children in schools because there were no births.

Reference

"Case History LH47 Oleksandra Kostiuk, b. March 14, 1899, near Kharkiv," in *Oral History Project of the Commission on the Ukraine Famine*, vol. 1, 558–65.

Notes

Sloboda – a historical region located in northeastern Ukraine. The term derives from a settlement free of tax obligations. The territory corresponds to the present-day Ukrainian regions of Kharkiv (in its entirety), and parts of the Sumy, Donetsk, and Luhansk regions, as well as parts of the Belgorod, Kursk, and Voronezh regions that were historically settled by Ukrainians but eventually transferred to Russia as a result of conquests or unequal treaties.

Vasyl Simovych (1880–1944) worked in the 1920s and 1930s on improving the system of the Ukrainian language, especially its phonetic terminology. He authored *Practical Grammar of the Ukrainian Language* (1918) and *Grammar of the Ukrainian Language* (1921)

Borys Hrinchenko (1863–1910) – a classical Ukrainian prose writer, political activist, historian, publicist, and ethnographer. He was instrumental in the Ukrainian cultural renaissance as one of the organizers of the first "Prosvita" (Enlightenment) Society in Kyiv. He edited the four-volume *Dictionary of the Ukrainian Language* (1907–1909), which included 70,000 words from literary works and folklore sources. He wrote short stories, poetry and translated works by Friedrich Schiller, Johann-Wolfgang Goethe, Heinrich Heine, Victor Hugo and others. He advocated for the education of Ukrainian children in their native tongue. He wrote several school textbooks, including *Ukrainian Grammar*. He also wrote a historical drama "The Steppe Guest" (1897).

Leonid Bulakhovskyi (1888–1961) was a Ukrainian linguist, professor, academician, the author of works on general, Ukrainian, and Russian linguistics as well as methods of language teaching.

Malorosiia – a belittling term used to describe Ukraine as "Little Russia."

Khrystyna Alchevska (1882–1931) – a Ukrainian writer, playwright, novelist, poet, and teacher. In 1902, she graduated from the Kharkiv Girls' Gymnasium. For a year, she studied at the Sorbonne teacher training course in Paris, France. After graduation, she returned to Ukraine and worked as a teacher of Ukrainian and French in secondary and higher educational institutions in Kharkiv. She translated Beranger, Voltaire, Hugo, and Jules Verne. She was the youngest daughter of Khrystyna Alchevska (1841–1920), a founder of the Kharkiv Women's School (1870–1919). In 1879, the family opened another school in the village of Oleksiivka (now in the Luhansk region). In 1887, Borys Hrincheko worked at this school along with enthusiasts who taught in Ukrainian.

In Ukraine at the time, all 8-year-olds were required to enroll in primary school. The narrator was 16 when she graduated from the gymnasium.

Faksotsvykh a blend of *Fakultet sotsialnoho vykhovannia* or the department of social upbringing.

SVU – abbreviation from *Spilka vyzvolennia Ukrainy* or Union for the Liberation of Ukraine, a fictitious political organization created by the OGPU in order to eliminate Ukrainian intellectual elites.

Rubizhne is a city in Luhansk region in eastern Ukraine, situated on the left bank of the Donets River near the cities of Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk. Rubizhne was founded in 1895 and incorporated as a city in 1934. Since 2014, Rubizhne has been the site of the war and is currently under the *de facto* control of the Russian military.

Vasyl Lypkivskyi (1864–1937) headed the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC). In May 1919, he celebrated the first Liturgy in the Ukrainian language—after translating many of the liturgical books into modern Ukrainian—in St. Nicholas's Cathedral in Kyiv. Although this action was opposed by the Russian hierarchy, who defrocked Lypkivskyi, it was welcomed by supporters of the emerging Ukrainian national church. In the summer of 1919, Lypkivskyi became parish priest of St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv. In October 1921, the All-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council in Kyiv, which had declared the establishment of the UAOC in May 1920, elected Lypkivskyi the first metropolitan of the church. Without a traditional episcopal ordination, Lypkivskyi was vilified by the Russian church as a non-canonical bishop outside the apostolic succession. Lypkivskyi visited more than 500 parishes after his election and oversaw the growth of the UAOC. By 1927, the church claimed 36 bishops and over 2,500 priests. Insisting on the active participation of the laity in church affairs, he propagated many church reforms, and he modified many Orthodox canons and traditions, including the celibacy of bishops, with the result that married men were admitted to episcopal ordination. He was also insistent on preserving the independence of the Ukrainian church vis-à-vis the Moscow Patriarchate. Lypkivskyi's popularity soon earned him the enmity of the Soviet authorities, who, after arresting him a few times, had him dismissed by the All-Ukrainian Orthodox Church Council in 1927. From 1927 to 1937 he lived in a Kyiv

suburb, under virtual house arrest and in poverty. He was arrested by the NKVD in 1937, charged with anti-Soviet activity, and executed.

Discussion Questions

1. How would you characterize the narrator's family?
2. Who is Taras Shevchenko and why was his poetry on top of the narrator's reading list?
3. What kind of literature did western Ukrainian refugees bring to eastern Ukraine?
4. Why did Ukrainians conduct language classes and literary activities in secret?
5. Why was the narrator dismissed from the gymnasium?
6. Who helped to reinstate her in the gymnasium so that she could complete her education?
7. Was the narrator a good student?
8. How did she overcome gender discrimination in education?
9. Why did the narrator take an active role in the "Prosvita" Society?
10. Why was Russian the language of instruction in Ukrainian schools? What proportion of teachers could use Ukrainian in the classroom setting? Why?
11. What happened to the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and its clergy? Why?
12. Why did the narrator refuse to condemn the defendants in the SVU trial in 1930?
13. Why did the Soviet secret police arrest Oleksandra Kostiuk?
14. Why was her husband arrested?
15. According to this eyewitness, what was the effect of the famine of 1932–1933 on the Ukrainian villages?
16. According to the eyewitness, why there were so few students in Ukrainian schools in the 1930s?

Yuri Sambros

George (Yuri) Sambros (1894–1957) was born on April 7, 1894 in Trostianets, Kharkiv Governorate (modern day Sumy region). On the eve of World War I, he graduated from a gymnasium and was admitted to Kharkiv University. On April 30, 1916, he was mobilized from the University for military service, completed the 5-month military courses of the Kyiv 2nd Infantry Military School. He was on the Romanian front as an ensign, was demobilized in February 1918 and returned to Trostianets. From September 1918, he took up the position of a teacher of the Ukrainian language and literature in public and private schools. On August 26, 1919, he was mobilized by the Denikin Army, which occupied Trostianets.

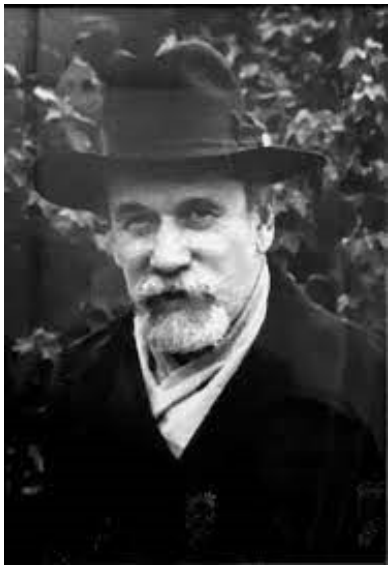


Figure 16.1 Yuri Sambros. Source: Sumy Historical Portal, November 17, 2019.

From December 1919 to February 1920, he was ill with typhus. Then he was appointed by the Kharkiv Provincial Department of People's Education to the position of a language teacher in schools in Trostianets. From 1920 to 1923, he worked in various sections of regional and district departments of the Commissariat of People's Education, initiated and chaired a new labor union for education employees. From 1923, he was appointed as an instructor of teaching methods at the higher courses for teachers in the city of Sumy. He became an editor of the periodical *Nasha osvita* (Our Education), published in Sumy in 1924.

During 1929–1930, he was a member of the supervisory board of the Sumy school district. In 1930, Sambros published results of his study of language use among students in teacher training institutes. On September 1, 1930, after the reorganization of the Sumy teachers' college into a pedagogical institute, he became an associate professor, head of the didactics department (one of the sections of pedagogy). Together with his friend, Borys Antonenko-Davydovych, Sambros founded an orphanage for homeless children.

The authorities did not forgive Sambros for his White Army past and his attachment to the Ukrainian idea. Such people were not hired and deprived of voting rights. Sambros was lucky, he was considered a valuable employee and was kept at work with the permission of the Communist Party authorities. In 1930, following the SVU trial, a wave of repressions swept across Ukraine. On October 15, 1930, the GPU came to his house, searched it, and arrested him. The GPU interrogated him and pressured to confess to participation in a "counterrevolutionary" military nationalist organization. A meticulous self-defense strategy saved him. He was released.

Fearing further reprisals, Sambros resigned from his job in Sumy and moved to Kharkiv. There he was in charge of the teaching practicum for students at the Kharkiv Institute of People's Education. He lived in Kharkiv during 1932–1933 and recorded his account of the famine in a diary. To his private diary he confided his thoughts on the nature of the communist system, which he compared to a "meat grinder of dead and alive," the atmosphere of fear in the society, physical and mental harm caused to the Ukrainian intelligentsia (using his friends as case studies), the mass starvation and deaths among children, and the strategies of survival.

To avoid inevitable arrest, Yuri Sambros escaped across the border to Russia in search of work. He settled in Omsk, then in Novosibirsk, and finally in Komyshlov in the Sverdlovsk region. Over the years, he

realized the correctness of his decision to leave Ukraine. In his homeland, many friends and associates were repressed and executed. In Komyshlov, Sambros taught in a teacher training college from 1946 to 1954. He earned a candidate of pedagogical sciences degree and was a recipient of an honorary teacher title in the Russian Federation.

Sambros, despite his outward loyalty to the authorities, was skeptical of the Soviet system, which is evident in his critical remarks in his diary. He entrusted his wife not to show the diary to anyone and publish his manuscript only after the last of the witnesses described in it pass away. His diary was popular among the Ukrainian dissidents. A copy of his diary was found during a search in the house of Ivan Svitlychnyi and became part of the criminal investigation. Sambros wrote his autobiography *Shchabli: Mii shliakh do komunizmu* (Stages of Life: My Journey to Communism) in 1957, but it was published in New York in 1988.

Reference

Anatolii Bahlai, "Yurii Sambros," *Sumskyi istorychnyi portal* (*Sumy Historical Portal*), November 17, 2019, https://history.sumy.ua/research/article/9108-bahlai-anatolii-yurii-sambros.html.

A Daily Golgotha

By Yuri Sambros

Most horrible were the stories told by my friends about starving children. As a consequence of collectivization, the breaking up of families, the deportation of fathers and mothers, and death caused by enforced starvation, many children were left homeless, wandering around aimlessly and dying from starvation in droves. The police picked them up along the roads, on the railways, in city squares and streets, swollen, scary, and handed over to special children's houses that were under the strict control of the GPU. No outsiders were allowed there. But in order to work among these starving children, the GPU, by special selection, mobilized politically reliable teachers, from whom they extracted non-disclosure agreements that they would not tell anyone about what they saw there...

But people are people, and the teachers who were mobilized there secretly told their loved ones and acquaintances about the terrible sight, about mass deaths and the fate of unfortunate starving children crammed into those secret houses. The government failed to completely hide the scale of child starvation from the public, everyone knew about it, although people did not speak about it publicly.

I remember how one well-known Ukrainian poet, informed about it, with great indignation told me in an intimate conversation about the mass deaths and starvation of bloated children. He was an ardent supporter of the Soviet government, but sharply condemned the Stalinist clique of Soviet leaders for "organizing the famine." He said that the future, history – will forgive them many of their mistakes and sins against innocent people, may forgive them for the inhumane methods of dekulakization, deportations, and executions – but will never forgive and should never forgive the death and suffering of children, tortured by the starvation organized by them... Maybe I was wrong, but I told the poet then that I agreed with him...

How was my situation at that time against the background of this mass starvation? In what state was I personally then?

My sustenance in those days depended entirely on my energy and persistence in legally and illegally obtaining the right to visit dining halls. But the bread ration itself and the dining halls still did not provide enough nutrition. I had to procure food by my own means. I also had to look for something to eat in stores and city bazaars.

But the stores were empty. Kharkiv's food stores were a strange picture at that time. Their spacious halls and facilities, once filled from floor to ceiling with shelves full of produce, were now empty. There was nothing on the shelves, or there were batteries of vodka bottles of all calibers. Vodka was everywhere in all windows, whether it was a food store or a hardware store; bottles of vodka, like a downpour, flooded the whole city. Only at a single counter in some stores there stood food "produce": 5–6 trays or dishes with a hastily, poorly prepared dish – vinaigrette made of minced vegetables resembling silage, with stale, tasteless sauerkraut; pate of fish giblets with sour cabbage and salted, sliced, pickled cucumbers; occasionally – pieces of some kind of cold meat in gravy, which looked like an ointment; pickled green tomatoes with a moldy smell of the barrel; cold, sour, stuffed baked tomatoes with peppered, so that it does not stink, soft minced meat made from rotten, suspicious meat; occasionally, finally, as treats, boiled eggs or some kind of small fruits, and the like. All these dishes (I remember them so vividly!) appeared on the counter in minimal sizes and were immediately bought up by customers, and the store again stood empty for 3–5 hours, flickering only with the light of numerous vodka bottles on its shelves.

…

Nevertheless, I wanted to eat unbearably; therefore, I had to buy that standard silage, available throughout Kharkiv, and force myself to eat it. To some extent, only the city bazaars helped out, where fresh tomatoes, milk, and vegetables were sold at bargain prices. I bought large red tomatoes, cut them with a knife, salted them heavily and ate them with bread. Tomatoes with bread were for me mostly a standard, regular breakfast and dinner. Although I love fresh tomatoes, I was sick of them.

Lunch – in some dining hall – consisted of a plate of soup with beetroots, potatoes and some cereal, a plate of porridge and, not every day, a microscopic portion of roast meat. It was real nutrition after all. Therefore, the right to register at a dining hall became a matter of life and death.

As a non-union member, I had no right to visit a dining hall. Doomed to die of hunger like an outcast. I kept silent about the fact that I was not a union member and tried not to tell anyone in Kharkiv, so the secretary of the institute's union of scientific personnel, a shallow young lady, who treated me kindly and with respect, gave me coupons for lunches in a dining hall for scientific personnel for a long time, without asking of proof of my union membership. In this way, every month I received a book of coupons for the whole month and had a daily meal. Indeed, I lived, breathed, and dined back then – by "backstairs influence," illegally.

However, later, when the bouts of starvation became much more acute, authorities began to check dining hall registration, formalities in obtaining coupons, and so forth. I ended up losing the right to eat at a dining hall for scientific personnel. I had to have lunch somewhere in order not to die. Forgetting my shyness and timidity, I had to "stake one's all" on audacity and fraud.

Through an acquaintance of mine, the Ukrainian Kharkiv composer ~~Veriovka~~ [crossed out] Oleksandr Ivanovich Steblianko, I got coupons to the dining hall of the Ukrainian Writers' House named after V. Blakytnyi. I knowingly took risks: they could come up to me at the table and ask for a proof of membership in the writer's union, and kick me out of the table in shame... But there was no alternative, I had to take risks, and I started going to the writers' dining hall.

I was lucky: I dined there for about 1½ – 2 months, and no one ever asked me who I was... I had a respectable appearance, behaved decently and with dignity, dined there several times in an intimate community, "on friendly terms" with Boris, who sometimes visited Kharkiv, and Boris was known among the staff of the House as a Ukrainian writer; dined with Vasyl Aleshko, with ~~Veriovka~~ [crossed out] Steblianko. All of this was, obviously, enough for the *maître d'hôtel* as proof of my right to dine at the writers' hall. I personally felt very miserably. I sat as if on pins and needles, every minute waiting for trouble and shame. Going to lunch was for me a real moral torment, a daily Golgotha.

In this dining hall, people ate well, nutritiously, and, most important, culturally. Clean tablecloths, restaurant cutlery, paper napkins, trained waiters, restaurant menu system, buffet with snacks and vodka, and so forth – all this was a heavenly contrast against the background of starvation, against the background of bloated people dying under the fences... Anyone who had not been outside the walls of this privileged dining hall could not have felt all the horrors of starvation around us.

During my visits to the writers' dining hall, I could partially observe the life of writers. Honestly, there was mostly journalistic fry; "big fish" and "pillars" of society could be seen only occasionally and by chance. They lunched at home, with their family, because it was less expensive.

The most memorable was Ostap Vyshnia, whom I saw there, alas, only twice. Once I saw how he, agitated, with the help of the *maître d'hôtel*, served a table for 8–10 people, expecting a good company, placed carafes of vodka, bottles of beer, and snacks. His energetic face, sureness of movements, his cultured stature – are still in front of my eyes. I did not know then that in about 1–1½ years he would suddenly find himself in Tobolsk, in exile, and that there he was destined for a long time to play the modest role of the manager of a club theater in a remote Siberian town, from which I will also live not too far away...

In the end, as is known, Ostap Vyshnia got fortunate: he returned alive from exile and even returned to writing. But the exile did not go well for him: fear, caution, stiffness, trite themes and sleek style of his new feuilletons only occasionally allowed him to approach the creative level of his earlier masterpieces. After that, he never, until his death in 1956, wrote as ably as in his youth, before exile.

But I return to the story about my starvation diet.

I couldn't continue to have lunch for long in the writers' dining hall either. It became more and more difficult to get coupons, and later it became completely impossible.

Now Matvii began to help me, and through his colleagues at the Academy of Agricultural Sciences, he got me coupons for their academy's dining hall on Sumy Street (a little further up the road behind the building of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine). Here it was much simpler, more primitive, and the food was worse, but still enough. I found myself among the typical

agronomists, pig farmers, etc., with whom, of course, I had nothing in common. Fears that I was about to be exposed and expelled were somewhat less severe here, but still I felt uneasy. I was then like a dog that ran around the canteens and grabbed food from under the noses of strangers who stood gaping...

Thus, at the mercy of strangers, fighting for a piece of food stolen from somewhere, I struggled all the time during my stay in Kharkiv. Although I was half starving every day, I was not starving in the full sense of the word. Somewhere people bloated from the lack of protein and died, but I, like other Soviet employees at the time, one way or another, honestly or dishonestly, managed to get out of a scrape and survive; only lost weight. All earnings, almost all of them, went to procure food.

Reference

Haluzevyi derzhavnyi arkhiv Sluzhby bezpeky Ukrainy (Branch State Archives of the Security Service of Ukraine; hereafter, *HDA SBU*), f. 6, spr. 68805-FP, notebook No. 6, ark. 953–1052; reprinted in *"Represovani" shchodennyky: Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraini* ("Repressed" Diaries: Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine), edited by Yaroslav Faizulin (Kyiv: Feniks, 2018), 269–98, esp. 289–92.

Notes

Golgotha (in Greek Γολγοθᾶ, or Calvary in Latin) was a site outside Jerusalem's walls where Jesus was said to have been crucified according to the canonical Gospels. It is used metaphorically by the diary's author.

Oleksandr Steblianko (1896–1977) was a Ukrainian composer and folklorist, originally from the city of Lebedin, Kharkiv province (now Sumy region). From 1930 to 1934, he was a teacher of music theory and harmony at the Kharkiv Music College. He collected and researched folk songs of Eastern Ukraine. The folklorist was interested in the processes of Ukrainian song migration to other regions and recorded songs in the Kuban, Northern Caucasus, where millions of ethnic Ukrainians lived. He devoted sixty out of eighty years of his life to collecting and arranging more than 2,000 Ukrainian folk songs.

Vasyl Ellan-Blakytnyi (1894–1925), born Vasyl Ellansky, was a Ukrainian poet, journalist, and politician. As a poet, using the pseudonym Ellan, he was hailed as a pioneer of Ukrainian proletarian literature. After the Borotbist party was dissolved in 1920, he joined the Ukrainian Communist Party and became a member of its Central Committee. In 1923, he founded a literary organization of Ukrainian revolutionary writers, "Hart" (meaning derived from tempering steel, figuratively meaning endurance, acquired in the fight against difficulties). He wrote proletarian poetry, satirical feuilletons, and polemic articles.

Borys Antonenko-Davydovych (1899–1984), born Borys Davydov, was a Ukrainian writer, translator, and linguist. During the 1930s, he was sentenced to death, which was later substituted with ten years of imprisonment and hard labor in Russian concentration camps in the Gulag.

Vasyl Aleshko (also spelled Oleshko) (1889–1942) was the author of poetry, stories, and dramatic plays. He published his works in literary and scientific journals and magazines. The main theme of his works was social and political transformation in village life after the revolution of 1917. In the 1930s, he was persecuted for his activities in the Ukrainian renaissance movement.

Ostap Vyshnia (1889–1956), born Pavlo Hubenko, was a Ukrainian writer, humorist, and satirist. In 1933, he was sentenced to ten years in a forced labor camp in Siberia. He was one of the few representatives of the "executed renaissance" group of Ukrainian artists and writers who survived the executions.

Discussion Questions

1. According to the diarist, what were the causes of child homelessness?
2. How would you characterize the conditions in the GPU-run orphanages?
3. In the opinion of a famous Ukrainian poet, who was responsible for the mass deaths of children during the "organized famine"?
4. What was the situation in food stores in the capital of Soviet Ukraine – Kharkiv?
5. According to the diarist, why shelves were full of "batteries of vodka bottles of all calibers" when streets were full of starving people? (Note: grain was used to produce vodka, which was one of the most important sources of revenue in the USSR)
6. What was the most vivid memory of the diarist of a typical food "produce" or dish one could occasionally procure in a store? Was this "silage" nutritious?
7. What kind of fresh produce was available on bazaars? Was it affordable?
8. Did the government organize free public kitchens to assist the starving people?
9. Who had the right to register at a dining hall?
10. How did the diarist reflect on his behavior of procuring lunch "illegally"?
11. Why did going to lunch was "a daily Golgotha" for the starving diarist?
12. How did the diarist compare the privileged Writers' House dining hall experience with the reality outside it on the streets of Kharkiv?
13. Why was the fate of the Ukrainian talented writer Ostap Vyshnia the most memorable for the diarist? How did exile in Russian Siberia affect his writing?
14. How did the diarist manage to "get out of a scrape" and survive?

Oleksandra Radchenko

Oleksandra Radchenko (1896–1965) was born in Okhtyrka (modern Sumy region). During the Holodomor she lived in Chuhuyiv in the Kharkiv region. Her husband worked as a forester. She had three daughters. Their family had food reserves because they were not subject to grain procurement quotas. They hired villagers to do daily tasks in their household to save them from death by forced starvation. In spring of 1933 her husband was dismissed from his job because of a denunciation. Soon he was prosecuted for "pilfering socialist property."

Figure 17.1 Oleksandra Radchenko. Courtesy of *HDA SBU*.

From 1926 to 1936, Radchenko worked as a teacher. From 1937 to 1939, she worked at a meteorological station. In 1940, she moved with her family to Western Ukraine. In 1941, part of Western Ukraine was occupied by Romanian troops, which at that time were Nazi allies. Oleksandra and her husband Vasyl Radchenko were arrested and sent to the concentration camp. They stayed there for several months, until Vasyl's acquaintances helped to free them. After his release, Vasyl continued to work as a forester. Oleksandra Radchenko contacted a German journalist, who promised to publish her diaries about the Holodomor, but never did.

In 1943, her 17-year-old daughter Elida was taken to Germany among other forced laborers to work at military industrial plants or as servants in German families. A year later, in 1944, her husband Vasyl was accused for "aiding the fascists" and dispatched to the front line in a punishment battalion. In 1945, her daughter and husband returned home to Kamianets-Podilskyi, but on July 7 that year Oleksandra Radchenko was arrested. Following a six-month interrogation, she was charged with having written "anti-Soviet propaganda." Her notebooks were confiscated by Stalin's security police during a search of Radchenko's apartment.

Radchenko's diary covered the period from 1926 through 1943. Several notebooks were destroyed, but the surviving notebooks contained enough material to convict the author. In her January 8, 1932 entry, the diarist described the celebration of the Orthodox Christmas and grain requisitions, but toward the end of the month, she switched from Ukrainian to Russian. Typically, memoirists use the official language of the state rather than their native language to distance themselves emotionally from the events. During her trial she told the judges, "I wrote because after 20 years the children won't believe what violent methods were used to build socialism."

While in prison camps, Oleksandra Radchenko fought for her release and wrote protests, but to no avail. In August 1955, she returned home, health ruined after spending a decade in dehumanizing forced-labor camps. Radchenko passed away in 1965 in Vovchansk, Kharkiv region.

In 1991, Radchenko was rehabilitated, posthumously. Her family would have to wait another decade to get access to her diaries in the Sectoral State Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine to learn the truth. In 2001, excerpts from her diary were published in Ukrainian for the first time.

References

Yaroslav Faizulin, *"Represovani" shchodennyky: Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraini* (Kyiv: Feniks, 2018), 31–32.

Rozsekrechena pam'iat. Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraini v dokumentakh GPU–NKVD, comp. by V. Borysenko, V. Danylenko, S. Kokin, O. Stasiuk, Yu. Shapoval (Kyiv: Vydavnychyi dim "Stylos," 2007), 539.

The Teacher's Diary

By Oleksandra Radchenko

Wednesday, February 10, 1932

Today villagers told me that in the Kitsovsk forest, along the road from Chuhuiv, they saw two frozen children, still alive. Why didn't these passersby pick up the children? People have become so cruel. My God, what's happening around here? The children were obviously the offspring of destitute farmers dispossessed by [Soviet] authorities. Yesterday a frozen body was brought to the hospital in Khotomlia. Today they drove to pick up the dead carpenter from Khotomlia. I don't remember the person's name, but he was killed on a farmstead near Burluk. In Khotomlia Bozhko M. went crazy and grabbed an axe to attack the brigadier in charge of confiscating bread. The brigadier fled.

Robberies have become horribly common. I am so afraid of hunger; I'm afraid for the children. May God protect us and have mercy on us.

It would not be so offensive if it were due to a bad harvest, but they have taken away all the grain and created an artificial famine.

Tuesday, April 5, 1932

This artificially created famine is acquiring nightmarish proportions. No one understands why brigades confiscate all the grain, down to the last kernel. Even though they are now seeing the consequences of such confiscation, they still continue to demand more seed grain. And when a farmer vehemently objects that all the grain has already been expropriated, they respond with a question rather than an answer, "Then why did you allow all the grain to be taken away; you should have left some seed grain for sowing," and so an argument ensues. But the children are starving, emaciated, infested with parasitic worms because they have nothing left to eat but beet roots; even the other food substitutes are dwindling and there are still four whole months before the new crop. What is going to happen?!

This pauperization as a way of life is turning people into rude, cruel, criminally inclined savages. I remember myself three years ago, compared to now. What a difference**:** all my malice, all this bitterness – thanks to life's privations. I notice this change with horror. Even though I am aware of this, I know that I cannot moderate my anger. Every step of the way you have to face the absurdity of the orders, which with their cruelty deprive a person of a normal life. For example, the families of state employees no longer receive food rations, and the same state employees only get 18 kg, which lasts 8–9 days. What can one eat for the remaining 20 days? There's nowhere to buy food. In Vovchansk, a *pud* (16 kg) of rye flour costs 50–60 rubles.

My husband managed to get a *pud* of flour at his collective farm "Peremoha" – but what's next, better not to think.

Wednesday, April 6, 1932

Sometimes I am consumed by such uncontrollable bitterness that I get sick. I read about the "Soviet tempo" in the newspaper *Pravda,* about the opening of the first blast furnace in Europe, about the completion of the dam over the Dnipro, and many more wonders. All this is good, but what good is such a tempo for at the expense of children and people swollen from starvation? Famine has begun to rage everywhere, bringing all the catastrophes imaginable. Crimes are making their appearance with greater frequency. Anger at the government has reached such a degree that it seems if one were to light a match to it, unstoppable, raging fires would break out, like the ones during a summer drought in windy weather. Thoughts about the village children bloated from starvation are tormenting me and my anger is intensifying. Poor things, and socialism has been built for them. It's laughable – a macabre comedy of sorts.

Sunday, October 30, 1932

… I recall how astonishing it was to others later when I told them that a "lot of shoes, a shelf and a half" had arrived in the store. I record this on purpose because children in the future will not believe how scarce the supplies of daily necessities were. They will not believe that for months on end we did not eat white bread, did not see sugar. I used to remind my children not to throw away pieces of black bread because we might be starving later.

A second five-year plan is upon us. There is a terrible lack of food in the cities. Another year of starvation. Something's going to happen. How much patience do people have left?

Sunday, November 20, 1932

My neighbor, an old man, who works at a rabbit farm, told me he had been "swept clean by the authorities." This means they took everything, grain as well as vegetables. He has been subject to dekulakization for the past two years, and is now left almost a pauper, on the verge of begging for alms. He is 70 years old, his wife 65, and with their crippled daughter are all living together in a one room apartment – destitute people swept clean of everything that could have sustained them until February.

Our servant Shura has returned from a visit to Moldova (7 km away) and exclaims with desperation: "What's going on, it's terrible. Individual farm owners are completely ruined. All their belongings are taken away, trunks emptied, everywhere people crying and weeping. My children too – I have five of them."

All of this is happening in all the villages and farmsteads across Ukraine. And a typhus epidemic is spreading wildly, it's terrifying. What is going to happen next? Who gives such orders? What a mess! At the summer conference of the Communist Party of Ukraine, government leaders discussed the perversion [of the policy], getting the information [about the situation] too late, and now it is even worse.

Monday, January 9, 1933

Every year on Christmas Eve I have decorated a fir tree. Have hosted my sister Lilia and stuffed a bag of goodies for her. Rarely is there a home now where people decorate trees and stuff gift bags. The famine is already raging in Kharkov. Children are being kidnapped; sausages made of human meat are being sold on the market. …

Thursday, March 23, 1933

The ice broke last night and today it shifted. The meadow has flooded. Spring started on the 14th as there was a slight warming and the snow began to melt. On that day I drove with a plenipotentiary of the regional party committee, Kosmachov Serg[ei] Dm[itrievich], to Zarozhnoe to pick up rabbits.

I saw a lot of human suffering along the road and returned home with a heavy heart. On the way to Zarozhnoe we saw an old, dead man in rags, emaciated, without boots, in the field alongside the road. Apparently, he collapsed exhausted, froze or died instantly, and someone removed his boots. On the way back we saw this dead man again, abandoned by everyone. When it was mentioned in the Babchansky village soviet that the body of the dead man had to be picked up, the chairman, smiling, asked: "In which direction does he lie: legs toward our village or toward Zarozhnoe? If toward Zarozhnoe, then let their village soviet take him away."

Upon approaching Babka, our wagon almost ran over a 7-year-old boy on the road. My companion tried to warn him, but the boy staggered on as if he did not hear us; the horse was almost on him; I shouted and the boy finally, unwillingly, turned off the road; I managed to look him in the face. His facial expression has left a terrible, indelible impression on me. That unmistakable look in the eyes is typical of people who realize that they are going to die soon and do not want to. But this was a child. My nerves broke. "Why? Why children?" I cried quietly so that my companion would not notice. The thought

that I can do nothing, that millions of children are dying of starvation, that this is a catastrophe, has brought me to the brink of despair. Near the village soviet we met an old man with the same facial expression as that of the boy. …

A few days ago, our worker Konik came, his face and hands swollen [from the lack of protein]. He says that his legs are heavy and he is getting ready to die. "I pity the children," he says. "They don't understand anything – they are innocent." We gave him a bit to eat.

On Sunday, our priest Pomazinovskyi's wife came, begging, her eyes full of despair. She brought a velvet tablecloth, in very good condition, and asked for 2 *puds* of beet roots in exchange. I gave her all else I could spare in addition to the beet roots, and refused to take the tablecloth. But she insisted I take it, saying that no one wanted to take it because they couldn't give anything in return and no one needed it. There are 7 people in their household.

What is going to happen to us…? And what is going to happen to all the other millions of people?

Reference

Excerpted from "Shchodennyk uchytelky Oleksandry Radchenko" (Diary of Teacher Oleksandra Radchenko), *HDA SBU*, f. 6, spr. 75164-FP, envelopes 1–6; reprinted in *"Represovani" shchodennyky: Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraini* ("Repressed" Diaries: Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine), edited by Yaroslav Faizulin (Kyiv: Feniks, 2018), 45–48, 67.

Note

Peremoha in Ukrainian means "victory," which is typical of Soviet collective farms, named after communist leaders or euphemistic terms to stir enthusiasm among the "constructors" of socialism.

Discussion Questions

1. On what day did the diarist record that people began to encounter dead bodies in her village?
2. When did the diarist first mention the "artificial famine"? What is her evidence that the starvation was a result of a deliberate policy?
3. Why was the diarist afraid of starvation?
4. What kind of surrogate food did the emaciated children eat to survive?
5. Who was entitled to food rations and who wasn't? How long could it last?
6. How did the famine affect people's behavior?
7. Did the Soviet press report instances of the raging famine in Ukraine? Why not?
8. What attitude toward bread did the mother try to inculcate in her children?
9. How did Soviet government authorities respond to the facts of the famine in Ukraine?
10. Which age groups suffered the most? Why?
11. Which survival strategies were most effective?

Anatoly Dimarov

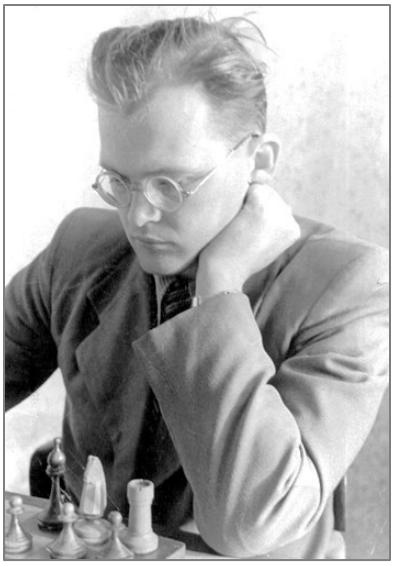


Figure 18.1 Anatoly Dimarov playing chess at the editorial office of newspaper *Radianska Volyn*, 1945, Lutsk. Source: *Anatolii Dimarov ta ioho knyhy* (Kyiv: "Tvim inter," 2012).

Anatoly Dimarov (real last name Harasiuta) (1922–2014) was born on the Harasky farmstead in Myrhorod, Poltava region. His father was a prosperous land owner, who was dispossessed of his property and persecuted. His parents divorced to protect the mother from harassment as the wife of the "enemy of the people." She changed her last name and adopted the name of the late village teacher, Dimarov, who was single and died just before Anatoly's father was arrested. The mother relocated with her three sons to the Donbas, where she found work as a teacher. Dimarov's adopted name became his pen name.

On completion of his education, he was conscripted into the army and fought during World War II. After being wounded on the front during the early days of the war, he remained in German-occupied Ukraine and lead an underground guerrilla group. After the war, he began working as a journalist and editor for a number of newspapers and publishing houses, first in Lviv and later in Kyiv. In 1950–1951 he studied at the Institute of Literature named after Maxim Gorky in Moscow, then in 1951–1953 he transferred to Lviv Pedagogical Institute.

The literary legacy of Anatoly Dimarov is vast, comprising dozens of volumes. In the 1960s, he wrote his trilogy *I budut liudy* (There Will Be People), published in 1964, 1966, and 1968, about life in the Ukrainian village in the 1920s and 1930s. It was heavily censored. He was one of the first writers who mentioned the events of the Holodomor in his autobiographical novel. For his epic novel *Bil i hniv* (Pain and Wrath) about the Ukrainian people's struggle for liberation in the twentieth century, published in 1974–1980, he received the prestigious Shevchenko State Prize in literature in 1981. Censors, however, cut nearly 300 pages from both novels, especially those pages with his honest depiction of the Holodomor. The latter, although heavily edited, nevertheless received the prize. He was spared from persecution due to his popularity as a prose writer and as a handicapped war veteran. He won a wide following in Ukraine for writing uncomplicated, though highly psychological prose, drawing on a rich personal experience in tackling conflicts.

In 2012, Anatoly Dimarov declined to receive the order of Yaroslav the Wise IV degree because he could not accept the award from the hands of then president Viktor Yanukovych, who the writer believed was pushing Ukraine toward the precipice. In November 2016, the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance added the writer's name to the publication *Nezlamni* (Unbroken), honoring the Holodomor survivors who spoke openly about their experiences living through the famine of 1932–1933 and persecutions of the Ukrainian intelligentsia.

Anatoly Dimarov was an ardent gemstone collector. He had travelled the length and breadth of the USSR in search of adventure and semi-precious stones, beginning his exploration of mineral deposits in Karadag in Crimea to the mountains of Altai, Caucasus, Pamir, Tianshan, and the Urals. He wrote a poem about stones, created a picture in stones framed in polished slices of stone, and used descriptions of stones in his short stories. His office desk, shelves, and bookcases were decorated with stones, resembling a geological museum.

Reference

Anatoly Dimarov, *In Stalin's Shadow*, translated from the Ukrainian by Yuri Tkach (Melbourne: Bayda Books, 1989).

A Parable About Bread

By Anatoly Dimarov

"Good health to you, Oleksiyivna! Going off into the fields?"

"Yes," Tania smiled palely and awkwardly: she was ashamed of her bare feet. But what could she do, if they had become so swollen that she could barely squeeze them into her shoes? So as soon as she left school, she took off her shoes.

"Children fast asleep?"

"Yes."

"Then let them sleep and grow healthy. And may you have good fortune too."

Tania thanked him and continued on her way. She hurried along, so that she could finish her quota. For well before lunch the children would begin to trickle in from the village to the beet plantation, all of them carrying bowls and spoons, with stomachs bloated from pigweed, chaff and potato peelings, with abnormally large eyes in their sharpened faces, with hungry mouths surrounded by wrinkles. They would assemble at the field camp where the *zatirka* would be boiling away and, standing to one side, would wait patiently until their mothers had finished working and came for lunch. They would wait in silence, even pretending that the large cauldron with the bubbling, steaming *zatirka* barely concerned them.

And when the mothers shared their pitiful rations with them, they would greedily sip the hot food and afterwards there would be no need to wash or dry the bowls or spoons; they would lick them dry, to a hot shine.

Tania's sons did not venture into the fields: they had been strictly warned not to leave the yard. She was frightened by rumors that children were already being caught and slaughtered for meat. So they met her each time at the gate.

She carried the *zatirka* in a glazed mug, running home from the fields. And not at all because she was afraid of being late for school: the whole way she fought the temptation to taste, to sip the seductively fragrant dish. For she was afraid that she wouldn't be able to stop herself then until the bottom was visible.

She saw her sons Andriyko and Yurasyk from afar. They stood by the gate, each holding a spoon. That spoon of Yurasyk's seemed especially big: he guarded it above all playthings, wouldn't part with it all day long and even placed it beside him at night.

When their mother drew up to them, Yurasyk immediately grabbed hold of the kerchief tied around the mug and accompanied her into the house.

The still steaming *zatirka* was poured into three bowls: Yurasyk got the most, Andriyko less, and mother even less. Her older son was already attending school: he would receive a bowl of millet gruel there – a hot breakfast. The smaller one would get nothing else, apart from dry and bitter pancakes made of acacia blossom, which fell apart even in the frying pan, and a broth of potato peelings, for Tetiana had sneaked a whole sack of the peelings from the pig farm.

Today Tetiana had brought dumplings instead of *zatirka*. Dividing them among her sons and having some herself, she then took each of them by the hand and went off to school: Andriyko attended the second shift too, and she refused to leave Yurasyk alone at home. So she sat him right at the back and he sat quietly, like a mouse. All the children had in fact long since become quiet and inert: they sat apathetically at their desks and didn't play during the breaks. Hunger alone shone out of their eyes.

And the janitor, Granny Natalka, no longer had to stop them during the breaks and yell her "Careful there, or I'll tell the teacher!", for Granny Natalka could barely move herself, being so sucked dry by hunger, that she was only skin and bones. Her face had shriveled into a fist, her mouth had become sunken and all her teeth appeared to have fallen out. She would rest a cheek on her hand and grieve tearlessly:

"What is happening, Oleksiyivna? At least they could take pity on the children! If the children die off, who'll be left to walk this earth?"

What could Tania say? That she, a simple village teacher, knew about the thoughts and intentions of those wise leaders, who badly needed to organize a famine? She only saw how the people suffered and died and, devastated, bewildered, could not fathom what all this was for.

However, she was frightened and remained silent. She didn't share her thoughts with anyone, afraid that any word, the slightest indiscreet expression, and she would be pronounced a kulak, a Petliurite or some other kind of agent and be dismissed from work.

And then there would be death. Inevitable, cruel, hungry. For her and for her children.

So, she remained silent. She would remain silent all her life, until the grave, afraid and trembling all her life. Remaining silent even when everyone else was speaking out, unable to believe that this was serious, that this was for a long time. And when she would be chided for her fearful silence, she would reply:

"I am already so scared, that I'll be trembling even in my grave."

So, Tania said nothing in answer to the old woman's crying, her tearless grieving, but walked past her silently.

And Granny Natalka could do nothing more than return home from school and pour out her despair in front of the old man:

"What's happening in this world of ours today, father?"

However, Grandpa Khlypavka also had other things on his mind other than idle conversation with the old woman.

…

Grandpa Khlypavka was deeply convinced that Stalin wasn't aware of anything. That it would be enough to get to him, to open his eyes, and he would immediately rise to the defense of his people. He would order them to be fed and clothed.

He would reach him somehow. Reach him and fall down at his feet:

"Save my Ukraine, father, otherwise there will be only crosses and graves left!"

So, Grandpa Khlypavka was preparing for the trip to Moscow.

…

Meanwhile, Grandpa Khlypavka was traveling by rail to the distant northern capital.

His son helped him reach Kharkiv by coaxing a conductor friend from a passenger train into taking his father, and the old man traveled in grand style in the service compartment. In Kharkiv the conductor said:

"You'll have to make it on your own from here on, grandpa. Go down to the freight yards and try to catch a freight train heading for Moscow."

Thanking him, the old man took his bag and set off for the station.

For three days and three nights the old man tried to get onto a train going in the direction of Moscow. For three days and three nights he clambered over the tracks, hiding from the militia which had exhausted its voices, whistled hoarse its whistles in attempting to drive away the hungry people.

"Scram! Get the hell out of here, or we'll throw you into prison!"

What was prison to them? What was prison to all these people who would crawl through fire or dive to the bottom of the ocean, if only to get a crust of bread, who made their way to the railway stations from villages exterminated by famine and, tearing open their empty mouths, called day and night, unable to attract the attention of the one and only God:

"Bre-e-ead…! Bre-e-ead…!"

And meanwhile a rumor had spread. An insistent rumor that in Moscow bread was being sold without ration cards: you could take as much as you wanted, as long as you had the money. And those who got there with no money wouldn't die either: if there was bread, then there would be alms.

And the people crawled onto the tracks, stormed the freight wagons, and often it happened that a good dozen men would pack themselves onto some wagon and freeze, so that no one would notice them and throw them off, waiting until the train set off and then whisper joyously: "We're off." They would be as happy as little children, without knowing that they weren't headed for the Red capital, but in the opposite direction, into those very same parts from which they had escaped, as if from hell.

Grandpa Khlypavka was lucky; he didn't climb onto one of these trains. Some railway worker, taking pity on the old man, whispered into his ear to go off to the marshaling yards where trains were being prepared for Moscow. And after many hardships the old man finally managed to clamber onto the roof of one such freight wagon, where others like himself were already lying.

They set off that evening, having spent all day lying in the hot sun, as if in a frying pan. Two didn't make it and died. They thought of sliding them off here and now, but came to their senses in time: if someone saw the dead, they would also find the living. They would throw them off outside the town.

Emerging from the city, the train sped off into the serene twilight of the steppe and the travelers rallied. They stirred, began to talk, especially when it became dark, to stop themselves from falling asleep and rolling off the roof. They couldn't see one another and only heard the voices. Occasionally someone would light up: a fiery speck would glow in the blackness, brightening and fading with the breaths of wind. Glowing like the hope which kept these people alive.

"If only we could make it there!"

"We'll get there. The worst is behind us."

"Uncle…! Hey, uncle…! Is it true that the shops there are bursting with the bread?"

"That they are, but not for us."

"Know what we're traveling on, good people?"

"A train."

"To hell with your stupid train. We're sitting on grain, that's what!"

"Grain?" everyone stirred.

"Lies…?"

"I swear by the holy cross! That railway man who helped us get on told me. All these wagons are stuffed full with our wheat, the whole train…"

They grew silent and believed him. They sniffed hungrily, greedily.

Eventually they began to talk again. The fellow on his right asked:

"Going off after some daily bread, grandpa?"

And when Grandpa Khlypavka said that he wasn't, they didn't believe him.

"What else can you be going for?"

"To save the entire nation."

They heard the old man out in silence, intently, without interrupting him.

"Well, grandpa, may luck be with you!"

Reference

Anatoly Dimarov, "The Hungry Thirties (A Parable About Bread)," in *In Stalin's Shadow*, translated from the Ukrainian by Yuri Tkach (Melbourne: Bayda Books, 1989), 161–63, 165–67.

Notes

Patronymics like Oleksiyivna, meaning the daughter of Oleksiy, were used as a sign of respect when addressing teachers and elders in Ukrainian villages. In modern day use, students and staff address their teachers by first name and patronymic, for instance, Tetiana Oleksiyivna.

In Ukrainian, children's names were often used with diminutive suffixes to express affection. For example, Andriy would be called Andriyko and Yuri would be called Yurasyk.

In the 1930s, a new dish called *zatirka*, or *zatyrushka*, was introduced into the Ukrainian cuisine. It was a variety of a low-calorie soup made of flour added to water, with a mixture of surrogates, such as grasses, leaves, oat or rye chaff. In August 1932, after the law of "five ears of wheat" was adopted, bread was given out to tractor drivers only, whereas collective farm workers in the fields were fed "hot meals" and had to eat their own bread. In November 1932, public kitchens on collective farms stopped functioning

because all grain and food were confiscated due to alleged failure to fulfill grain procurement plans. Mass deaths from starvation and appeals to the government for help in spring of 1933 led to the opening of 22,000 field kitchens on collective farms to feed those who had strength to sow and plant a new crop.

Discussion Questions

1. How did the eyewitness describe the conditions of the teacher, staff, and schoolchildren in his village during the famine?
2. What kind of surrogates did people use to eat to survive?
3. Why did the Soviet government provide the *zatirka* only to those who worked in the collective farm fields, but not the children?
4. What strategies did the teacher Tatiana Oleksiyivna use to save her own children?
5. Why did the teacher remain silent all her life about the famine?
6. Why did the old grandpa decide to travel to Moscow?
7. How did the eyewitness describe the exodus of starving people from villages to the railway stations?
8. Why did the Soviet government ship Ukrainian grain to Moscow by train wagons while those who grew wheat were deprived of anything edible and doomed to die?
9. What do you think happened to Grandpa Khlypavka in Moscow? Could he meet Stalin and "save the entire nation" of Ukraine?

Olexa Woropay

Olexa Woropay (1913–1989), pseudonym Oleksa Stepovyi, was a Ukrainian writer, ethnographer, and botanist. He was born on October 10, 1913 in Odesa in a well-to-do family. His father, Ivan Voropaiev, originally from the Petropavlovsk volost of Samara governorate (historical Yellow Wedge, a Ukrainian agricultural settlement in the Lower Volga region in Russia), fled from Odesa to escape the Bolshevik occupation. Evicted from their house by Bolsheviks, his mother with three little children evacuated to her native village in the Kherson region, where she was eventually starved to death in 1933.

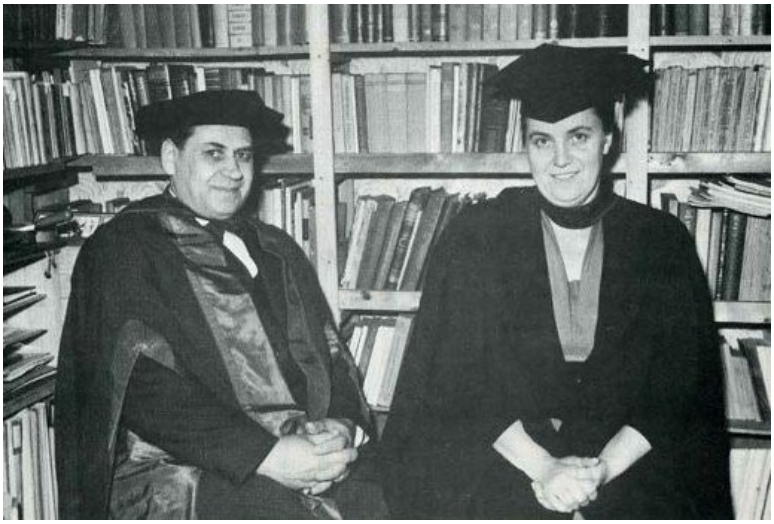


Figure 19.1 Olexa Woropay with his wife Vera. Source: http://www.ukrcenter.com/.

That year, in 1933, Olexa Woropay, at the age of 20, a graduate of an agricultural college, witnessed the Holodomor. He described what he saw in his memoir, *The Ninth Circle: In Commemoration of the Victims of the Famine of 1933*, first published in Ukrainian in 1953, translated into English and published in London in 1954. The American edition with an introduction by James Mace was published in 1983 by the Harvard University's Ukrainian Studies Fund.

In 1935, Woropay enrolled in an agricultural institute in Uman, but he did not complete his education because he was dismissed as "socially unreliable" due to his background. Thus, in 1937 he turned to gathering Ukrainian folklore and ethnographic materials.

In 1940, he moved to Moscow to earn a diploma at an agricultural academy. Later that year, he enrolled in a correspondence course at the Department of Philology to study Slavic ethnology at Odesa University. During World War II, in 1941 he evacuated to the Northern Caucasus to escape from the German occupation of Ukraine.

In 1942, he returned to Ukraine and settled in the Vinnytsia region. Two years later, together with his wife, he made his way to Germany. From 1944 to 1948, they lived in various Displaced Persons camps in Weimar and Augsburg. At the beginning of 1946, he resumed his studies of ethnography and folklore at the Augsburg camp-based branch of the Ukrainian Free University which had resumed activities in Munich. He contributed articles, essays, stories to various diaspora periodicals in Germany. He was an active member of the Ukrainian art movement in Augsburg, advocating an ethnographic approach to literature.

In March 1948, the fate brought the couple to the United Kingdom. While working odd jobs, Olexa Woropay enrolled in the University of London to study plant biology. He joined the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain and soon was elected to its board. He oversaw the educational and cultural section and helped with organizing a Ukrainian museum and library. His autobiographical short stories and memoirs paved the way to his membership in the International PEN Club. For several years he worked as an editor of various Ukrainian diaspora periodicals in London.

In 1957, he earned a doctoral degree in Slavonic ethnology from the Ukrainian Free University. In 1961, he earned his second doctorate from the University of London, specializing in plant biology. His wife defended her dissertation about the last Hetman of Ukraine, Pavlo Skoropadskyi, at the University of London. In 1960, the couple worked as research associates at the Slavic section of the National Library for Science and Technology in Leeds. From 1961 to his retirement in 1978, he worked at the National Library for Science and Technology, now part of the British Library Document Supply Centre.

Woropay was a faculty member in the ethnography department of the Ukrainian Free University, as well as a member of the Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences, the Ukrainian Mohyla and Mazepa Academy, the Institute of Biology, the Botanical Society of the British Isles, the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain, and the International PEN Club Centre for Writers in Exile.

Woropay was the author of numerous scholarly studies on ethnography, including Ukrainian folk legends, proverbs, songs and riddles, as well as novels, stories, and memoires describing life of Ukrainians as forced laborers in two totalitarian states, Stalin's Soviet Union and Hitler's Nazi Reich. His diaries were published in London in Ukrainian in 1970, later expanded into three volumes and published in London in Ukrainian in 1971, 1974, and 1980. The English translation, entitled *On the Road to the West: Diary of a Ukrainian Refugee*, appeared in 1982. The fifth volume of his diary was published in London in 1984. He died on July 20, 1989 in Leeds, England, United Kingdom; buried in Wetherby. Some of his works were republished in independent Ukraine, particularly several editions of his monumental compilation of Ukrainian national traditions.

References

L. Reva, "Do zhyttiepysu Oleksy Voropaiia – urodzhentsia Odesy," *Visnyk Odeskoho istoryko-kraieznavchoho muzeiu* (a publication of the Odesa Regional History Museum), vol. 10 (2011): 279–84, www.history.odessa.ua/publication10/stat78.htm.

See the date of birth in *DAOO*, f. 37, op. 3, spr. 930, ark. 65 zv. – 66.

An abridged version of his biography by Jaroslaw Wasyluk appears in English in the online encyclopedia, *Ukrainians in the United Kingdom*, available from https://www.ukrainiansintheuk.info/eng/02/woropayo-e.htm.

Hunger is not one's brother

By Olexa Woropay

1.

In the beginning of June, I was summoned by the chief agronomist of the MTS, who suggested to me that I should go to Kiev to attend a special course of instruction at the People's Commissariat for Agriculture of the Ukrainian SSR, dealing with the treatment of crops for insect pests. I agreed and received a travel permit, some pocket money, and set off.

While living at the village I had no idea of conditions on the railways. I found those conditions comparable to the biblical account of the building of the tower of Babel.

Between Vinnytsia and Kiev all stations, big and small, were glutted with people, littered with coats, high boots, bare feet, white scarves, corsets, embroidered blouses, and – always – sacks, sacks and sacks. Sacks were on everybody's shoulders, on those of women, men, girls, and children alike.

When the train halted, such crowds collected at every door such that, even if the cars had been ten times their size, they would not have been big enough to accommodate everyone. People climbed on to the roofs, broke through windows, quarreled with the militia, with the railway officials, and with each other . . .

"Where are we going to, auntie?" one would say.

"Eh, son, better not to ask. Would I drag my old bones along with a sack on my back if it were not for the children? I don't pity myself, but the children . . . "

In a third-class compartment, packed with people, I somehow found myself in a seat by the window. Opposite me was a young man, a crafty-looking type, perhaps a *kolhosp* book-keeper. He was learning over his bundle and dozing. I noticed he was trying not to fall asleep, and thought he was perhaps afraid of being robbed. Cautiously I spoke to him in a whisper:

"Do you come from far off? I think I've seen you somewhere before. Perhaps you are going to Kiev, and, in that case, we might as well travel together. "

"I am from Kalynivka," he replied, "and am going rather a long way. I've tried Kiev already, but there's the police . . . it's not much use there."

I asked again: "Perhaps to Moscow this time . . .?"

Now he spoke more readily. "They don't let you go there. I would like to go – there's plenty of bread, I know. One of our people was there – everything is cheap and plentiful. I'm going to Kursk – it's not so expensive there, either."

And he went on to tell me that he had already been beyond Kursk, and had bought one *pud* and a half of rye flour, taken it home, and was now on his way for more food, since what he had brought would not last until the next harvest. There was no hunger in the town he had visited, there were ample stocks of food and it was only the numbers of our own hungry people who had caused flour and potato prices to rise there. Earlier, everything had been cheaper, but now thirty-five or forty rubles was demanded for one *pud* of rye flour. Potatoes had been three rubles a *mera*, but now cost seven.

I asked him how much these things cost in our own market.

"In ours it's very expensive. Flour is 250–500, potatoes 85–90 rubles a *pud*. And, what is worse, one cannot buy these things except on the 'black market.' It's forbidden to trade, so that the militia would confiscate the goods, if they found out."

"But in Russia," I inquired, "is it not also forbidden?"

"No, there it is not. You may trade there as much as you wish. The markets are like they were here during the NEP."

Overhearing our talk about bread and markets, the man sitting beside me joined in our conversation, and later on a harsh bass voice from the upper deck intervened. Little by little, hesitantly, the whole wagon started to chatter.

From that chatter and from the stories told then I learned that a great number of people were travelling to Russia for bread. It was forbidden to go there, and the railway booking offices did not issue tickets to those who had no warrant. People tried extraordinary tricks, used fictitious stories, merely to travel to that hated Muscovy, to purchase a little of something edible in exchange for the last fur-coats, for carpets, and linen, to bring it home and so to save their children from dying of hunger.

Somehow they succeeded in getting through to Russia, but to return – that was a much more difficult task. One was not allowed to enter passenger cars with luggage, and so it was necessary to slip on to freight trains.

By day and night, from Russia into Ukraine there were empty trains being sent to the elevators and enormous granaries of the *Zahotzerno* – the Soviet state organization for the buying up of grain – which were overflowing with Ukrainian grain.

People would climb in stealthily with their baggage and travel in the empty freight cars, risking at every moment the loss of their precious cargo they hoped would save the lives of families impatiently waiting for them at home.

Transport security police used to raid the trains. NKVD men dealt ruthlessly with the "sack-carriers," confiscating the baggage and money, often sending those caught to prison, or deporting them to those special camps from which no-one ever returns alive.

The railway personnel robbed the peasants, too. Engine drivers conspired with guards of trains, stopped somewhere in open country between stations, entered the cars and demanded ten or fifteen rubles as payment on each sack. After collecting their "payment" they would drive the train to some stop – rarely used – force the peasants to get out and leave them on the bare platform, waiting hopelessly . . .

People waited in this way for a week or more, hungry and without shelter. They became ill and died there, by the stop. Their fate concerned nobody, they were alien and unwanted even in their own country.

If, by some chance, these people managed once more to get on a train, they had only further robbery to expect, and a further wretched delay at another stop.

I listened to pitiful tales such as these. and anxiety began to gnaw at my heart. It was a terrible and a strange thing to hear all this from people who already experienced it, who had seen all this and had barely survived, and who now were starting out for a second time on this fearful and dangerous journey.

Hunger, runs a Ukrainian folk proverb, *is not one's brother*.

2.

After seeing the wandering peasants and listening to their stories, I expected to find Kiev terrible, disagreeable, more like one of those dreaded camps from which no one returns.

But I was mistaken, as it happened. Kiev was not terrible at all. On the contrary, it was gay, flooded with sunshine, decorated with flowers, filled with the sounds of hooting cars, loudspeakers, the laughter of girls and joyful shouts of children. Kiev did not experience famine and lived the full and vigorous life of a big city.

But all this turned out to be merely on the surface, a first impression.

We, the agronomists, arriving for the course at the People's Commissariat for Agriculture, were accommodated at the former monastery of St. Michael, now transformed into the students' hostel. We used to lunch at a restaurant not far from St. Sophia Square, but we had to buy bread and other foods for breakfast and supper ourselves.

In the spring of 1933 only the villages of Ukraine were starving. Towns, in spite of everything, were supplied with food, though not quite in sufficient quantities. There was certainly no famine. Bread was sold without ration cards, though one person might only buy about two pounds of bread at one time.

The lines for bread were enormous. In one of the wings of the former monastery of St. Michael was a baker's shop. The line for bread used to reach almost to Khreshchatyk, the main thoroughfare of Kiev. Five assistants were working in the shop, but I was never able to buy bread there after less than two hours' wait.

One day while waiting in this line, I realized that Kiev was not really as gay as it had seemed to me on my first day there. The centrally planned food supply to the town was not working well. Since peasants in the suburban villages were themselves starving they could not, of course, supply the urban markets with any produce.

As a result, the majority of townspeople had to live only on what was supplied to the shops, but in the shops there was in fact very little. Bread was the only hope, but to obtain it whole families had to stand in line: father, mother, son, daughter, had each to wait their turn, since so little was given to one person.

Starving peasants were streaming into the town on foot and by train or other means. The shopkeepers were strictly forbidden to sell bread to these peasants.

And further, the so-called Ukrainian government, working through press and radio, incited the townspeople against the peasants. It was these latter, they said, who had been sabotaging production, and had thus created difficulties in the country. Kossior himself, in one of his speeches, alleged that in 1932 about two hundred million *puds* of grain had perished in the Ukrainian fields.

He, Kossior, liked to quote Stalin whether the quotation was to the point or not. But for once he had forgotten the words of his patron, words uttered in January of that year, 1933, at the combined plenary session of the Central Committee and the Central Control Committee of the CPSU.

". . . If there is any question of responsibility and of guilt, then the responsibility rests wholly and entirely with the Communists, and the guilty party in everything is us, we, the Communists" (*Pravda*, January 17, 1933).

The Kievans believed neither the papers, nor the radio, nor Kossior. They helped the peasants as much as they could; they gave them free sleeping accommodation in their own houses, defended them from the police, and insisted that the shopkeepers should sell them bread if they stood in the line.

I remember the following incident: in front of me in the bread line was a peasant woman, clothed in a scarf, a rough coat, high boots, and so on. It was plain she was not used to town life. Suddenly a truck full of militiamen drove up to the line for a raid (*razzia*) on the peasants.

In a moment the Kievan women had surrounded the "auntie," helped her off with her scarf and rough coat, and put on her one of their town coats – had transformed her into a townswoman!

When the militiamen departed, the country woman told the Kievans with tears how in her village, once the prosperous and famous *Trypillia*, the Communists were destroying the walls of houses, ruining stores, digging under the floors, searching everywhere for bread-grain.

"They have ruined our village," she lamented, "forced people to wander about the country, and now we are not even allowed to buy city bread with our own money . . . "

3.

Raids on peasants were carried out daily in Kiev. They were hunted like dogs, those toilers of the Ukrainian soil, and dispatched outside the city to "special" camps, about which I had heard while travelling to Kiev. Here people called them "death camps."

These "death camps" were ordinary huts, built of wooden boards, with bare plank beds or some old, much-used straw. The food was so scanty and so poor that people, exhausted by starvation, usually lasted less than a week after arrival.

Every night the bodies of the dead were hauled by wagons to the morgues at the city hospitals. From there the corpses were taken to the cemeteries where they were buried in common graves.

Such "death camps" existed not only near Kiev, but also near Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, and the other large towns of Ukraine.

Several years later I happened to meet a professor of medicine. In the course of our conversation the year 1933 was mentioned, and he told me this:

"I was then working at the main clinic of Dnipropetrovsk, and had the misfortune of having to examine the bodies of the dead which were brought from the Dnipropetrovsk death camps." At night NKVD lorries brought them and set them down in a heap in the mortuary. The professor also told me

that at a special meeting of the medical staff it was strictly forbidden to give any medical assistance to the starving peasants who came to the town. They were, it was said, enemies of the Soviet State.

Reference

Olexa Woropay, *The Ninth Circle: In Commemoration of the Victims of the Famine of 1933*, edited with an introduction by James E. Mace (Cambridge: Harvard University Ukrainian Studies Fund, 1983), 9–14. This memoir was first published in Ukrainian under the title *V dev'iatim kruzi…* (*In the Ninth Circle …*; London, 1953), then in English translation under the title *The Ninth Circle: Scenes from the Hunger Tragedy of Ukraine in 1933* (London, 1954).

Notes

MTS – a machine tractor station
kolhosp – a collective farm
Kursk – a town located across the border of Ukraine in Russia
pud is equal almost to 73 pounds
mera roughly equals 44 pounds
NEP – New Economic Policy, a more liberal approach to the economic problems of ownership put into action by Lenin in 1921, after the failure of so-called War Communism
NKVD in 1933 was known under the abbreviation OGPU, or Joint State Political Directorate, the Soviet secret police, a precursor of the KGB, now FSB
Stanislav Kossior – General Secretary of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine
CPSU – Communist Party of the Soviet Union
Pravda – a newspaper, published by the CPSU, translated from Russian as "truth"
Trypillia – the ancient three-field land cultivation civilization on the territory of Ukraine

Discussion Questions

1. Who were the people who "glutted" railway stations between Vinnytsia and Kiev?
2. How far did they travel in search of food? Why?
3. Who could get a permission to travel and who couldn't? Why?
4. Why did railway booking offices refuse to issue tickets to starving Ukrainians?
5. For what purpose did the authorities dispatch empty trains from Russia to Ukraine?
6. How and why did the transport security police conduct raids?
7. How can you explain that in the spring of 1933 the villages in Ukraine, which had rich soil and used to supply most of the food and grain on the market, were starving?
8. How did the Soviet authorities utilize the premises of St. Michael's monastery?
9. Why were the shopkeepers in the city forbidden to sell bread to the villagers?
10. How did the townspeople help the starving villagers to survive?
11. Where did the secret police dispatch those detained during the raids?
12. Why were the medical staff forbidden to give any medical assistance to the starving people who came to the town?
13. What evidence is there that the policy of genocidal extermination by creating conditions incompatible with life was systematic and deliberately organized?
14. According to the author, who should be held responsible for the genocidal famine?
15. Can you think of an equivalent English proverb to the Ukrainian folk wisdom that the author used in his memoir?

Wasyl Barka

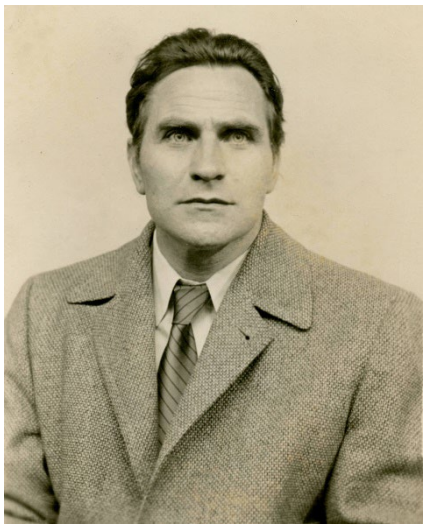


Figure 20.1 Wasyl Barka, 1956. Courtesy of TsDAMLMU, f. 1203, op. 1, od. zb. 8, ark. 5.

Vasyl Ocheret (1908–2003), who wrote under pseudonym Wasyl Barka, was born on July 16, 1908 in the village of Solonytsi in the Lubensky district of the Poltava Governorate. In 1927, upon graduation from the Lubny Pedagogical College, he worked as a teacher in a mining village in the Donbas. There he did not get along with the local authorities, accusing them of embezzling cooperative funds allocated for the children. He was arrested. Upon his friend's advice, he escaped to the Northern Caucasus.

In 1928, he enrolled in the Krasnodar Pedagogical Institute to study philology. Upon graduation, he pursued a postgraduate degree. Barka first appeared in press in 1929. The publication of his first book of poems (1930) provoked much ideological criticism, accusations of "bourgeois nationalism." Barka transferred from the Krasnodar Institute to the postgraduate school of the Moscow Pedagogical Institute, where in 1940 he defended his thesis on the realistic and the fantastic in Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

In 1941, after the Nazi invasion of Ukraine, Barka volunteered to fight in the front. In 1942, he was severely injured, captured, and as a POW forced to work on military industrial plants in Germany. Since 1943, he lived in Displaced Persons camps in Augsburg, where he was active in a literary association. In 1947, he moved to France.

In 1950, Barka immigrated to the United States. At times he was starving. He worked odd jobs to survive. Barka was close to the New York group of Ukrainian poets. Barka's works require intuitive rather than logical comprehension. His poetry developed and grew in stature, from the early lyrical collections to the monumental 4,000-strophe epic novel in verse "Svidok dlia sontsia shestykrylykh" (The Witness for the Sun of Seraphim, 1981), addressed to the theme of reconciliation between "man and the Creator." His first novel, *Rai* (Paradise, 1953), deals with the Soviet "paradise." His second novel, *Zhovtyi kniaz* (The Yellow Prince, 1962, 1968), about the Holodomor of 1932–1933, was translated into French (1981) and served as the basis for Oles Yanchuk's 1991 Ukrainian feature film *Holod-33* (Famine-33).

The critically acclaimed novel *The Yellow Prince* (1958–1961, second edition published in New York in 1968) was twice nominated for the Nobel Prize. The novel is based on the memoir about his experiences in the Ukrainian-speaking Kuban, now Krasnodar Region in the Northern Caucasus. Narrator visited several Cossack settlements, where the death toll was massive. The situation there closely paralleled that in Ukraine, being, if anything worse, and narrator saw dying farmers in Krasnodar and human meat sold in the market. Autobiographical details are of considerable interest not only to students of the Holodomor as genocide but also to students of Ukrainian literature. In 1981, Barka was awarded the Antonovych Prize, a literary award for writers in Ukraine and diaspora.

In his foreword to the first edition, reprinted in independent Ukraine in 1991, the author revealed that he collected witness accounts for twenty years, from 1941 to 1958, before he started writing his novel. The facts of the family drama were based on a twelve-page memoir of his neighbors, who were depicted in the novel as the Katrannyk family. In his novel, the author went beyond the description of the physical destruction to the analysis of changes in survivors' psyche to the level of metaphysical symbolism and Christian morality.

In the summer of 1999, Barka suffered a stroke and was hospitalized. He passed away on April 11, 2003 in a senior citizens home in New York.

References

Tetiana Kononchuk, "Vasyl Barka (1908–2003)," in *Zhyvytsia: khrestomatiia ukrainskoi literatury XX stolittia*, comp. M. M. Kononchuk et al., edited by M. M. Kononchuk, book 2 (Kyiv: Tvim inter, 1998), 243–47.

V. P. Morenets, "Barka Vasyl," *Entsyklopediia Suchasnoi Ukrainy* [online encyclopedia], edited by I. M. Dziuba, A. I. Zhukovskyi, M. G. Zhelezniak et al. (Kyiv: Instutyt entsyklopedychnykh doslidzhen NAN Ukrainy, 2003), vol. 2, https://esu.com.ua/article-40577.

The Plague

By Wasyl Barka

In the summer of 1928, due to sharp conflicts with local party members in the mining village of Nizhny ("Seventh Company") in the Donbas, I, a school teacher, on the advice of my friends, left for the southern Ukrainian region of Kuban, which had by then been transferred to the Russian SFSR.

When I got to the capital of the Krasnodar region, I saw that an exam had been announced for the newly opened Ukrainian department of the Faculty of Philology. I took and passed that exam after preparing for it the entire summer.

During my free days on weekends, I would go by tram to the area called "Rockel's Garden," which was actually an island on a lake. The owners left their garden's leftovers where they lay in the plots, and the local fishermen freely helped themselves to these – and so did I. After that I took the tram as it went farther, 10 kilometers more, to the Pashkivska station, to the bazaar. Compared to Donbas, which is a mainly mountainous area, here [in the Krasnodar region], the black soil is one of the richest in Europe. During the years of NEP, agriculture was restored to respectable prosperity. The courtyards were tidy: almost like they were before the revolution in Ukraine (I was born in 1908 and I saw them); the houses were whitewashed, flowers were planted near windows, gardens and orchards were in good condition, barns and sheds were cleanly maintained. Lots of poultry along with pigs and their piglets grazed freely, even venturing through openings in fences onto the wide streets, or into the fields of grass or just lying around, basking in the sun. The bazaar was full of dairy and meat products, garden produce and vegetables. You could buy a melon for a few pennies. Life in this Cossack village, invisible behind lush gardens, nestled under poplars and a tall church, was quite similar to that of old times. People were well nourished and very hospitable. The language spoken was Ukrainian, as it was in the Poltava region.

While studying there, I was invited on occasion by my fellow classmates in the Philology Department to visit Cossack villages with them. In one of these located close to the mountains and not far from the village there could even be seen an amazing rock called Soberoash in Adyghe [Circassian language]. The appearance and lifestyle of this wealthy Cossack village was similar to that of Pashkivska. The house we visited was immaculate, the owner calm and friendly and all the time everyone was busy in and around the household.

Once I traveled on foot through the Cossack villages right next to the mountains: through some having a Ukrainian population, and through other settlements of so-called "registered" Cossacks, which were Russian, for example, Tambovska, Saratovska. After spending a little time near the sea, I went back again on foot, going through still other Cossack villages. Everywhere the way of life was the same – prosperous. Only the Adygean auls with the crescent moon above their mosques (those that had survived the times) were much, much poorer. Occasionally, I even saw solid houses with roofs of sheet iron. …

The greater use of heavily enclosed courtyards was probably due to the fact that robbers had been operating for a long time in a pass that cut through the nearby jagged mountains with their overgrown terrain. One of the mountain passes was even called the Wolf's Gate.

Upon reaching Temriuk, I was able to get from there to the Azov Sea, and then by boat to Kerch and Feodosia (former Caffa) in the Crimea. Here I turned toward Sloviansk in the direction of Krasnodar along the Kuban River, and walked through the coastal towns. Everywhere were the scenes of a Ukrainian lifestyle: wealth accumulated by hard work. In one locality, a somewhat longer distance from the large Cossack settlements, there was a farm with a commune – the official name of the cooperative *artel*. When I stepped inside an unlocked house the farthest away, no one was there. Everyone was working in the field. On a long table there was a bowl of milk with bread next to it. A note left on the table invited any passer-by to help himself, and so I did. Traveling farther along the river, by evening I was already in the Cossack settlement of Elizavetynska (if I remember correctly). I knocked on a gate in one courtyard and entered; some giant dogs pounced on me, but the owners soon ran out and chased them away. Welcoming me, they gave me a bowl of borscht and bread for dinner. The home was in perfect order, with icons draped in embroidered towels hanging over flowers.

The level of prosperity was quite high not only in individual settlements, such as Pashkivska, but also in those that did not belong to the elite "branches" of the Cossacks such as the Don Cossacks, whom I visited later; the level of prosperity was similar in the other "branches," although not totally equally. The first wave of settlers of Cossack elites came from the Zaporizhzhya army, arriving in 1792, partly by sea and partly by land caravans. They lived well in the desert Kuban steppes, cultivating the land and founding the city of Ekaterinodar in 1794 (named after Catherine II, now renamed Krasnodar). There order from the imperial capital was to "guard the border!" There were about 13,000 settlers who came from the Black Sea (according to other sources: 17,000). Later waves of migrants arrived from mainland Ukraine: Cossacks from the Hetman region, and three years later 25,000 more. Then, with the successive influxes of Cossacks from the central regions of Ukraine (Poltava, Chernihiv, and others), the returnees from Turkey, the voluntary migration of non-Cossack Ukrainians from 1864 on, the number increased sevenfold, along with the registered Cossacks.

Before the war of 1914, according to incomplete statistical data, the number of Ukrainian Cossacks in the Kuban amounted to 1,340,000. Cossacks and lower officer ranks received a land allotment of 30 *desiatyn* for military service.

Their affluence made it possible for them to survive the devastating time of the civil war more easily than could the poorer Kuban Cossacks who came from non-Cossack strata and often suffered poverty.

Besides their "affluence," there was also the status distinction, a source of constant conflict between privileged Cossacks and the "foreigners." The Cossacks called the latter: "*hamsely*!" (a menial laborer noisily clanging) – to which the latter would reply "*kohuty*!" (roosters).

In Krasnodar, with a population of over 300,000, lifestyles were diverse – from the beggars living between two cathedrals: the "White Cathedral," on "Krasna" (Beautiful) Square near the main street and the "Red Cathedral," named for the color of its bricks – to the well-heeled Party members, government workers and the "nouveau riche" living in their luxurious quarters. Here there was plenty of produce at affordable prices. A quarter of a white *palianytsa* loaf (which was only made of white flour) and a quarter of a pound of *halva* cost 18 kopecks. If not buying *halva*, you could for about the same price buy some grapes or a few tomatoes. In the student cafeteria a lunch of borscht or maybe a soup and a piece of meat with some sauce cost 25 kopecks.

In the Kuban settlements the vast majority spoke pure Ukrainian. Women spoke Ukrainian exclusively, though among men who had been in military or government service, a mixture of Russian was thrown in. But in the city, it was Russian that was mainly used. According to estimates, the population was more than 60 percent russified. There was a large mixture of many national minorities who all maintained their own "National Clubs": Georgians, Jews, Persians (who had their own embassy), Turks, Armenians, Aisors (descendants of the Assyrians), Adygeans, Kabardinians, Greeks, Ossetians and Tatars. Without the Russian language they would not have been able to communicate with each other. However, the most important reason for Russian's dominance was the fact that it was the language of conducting official business. The Ukrainian population, when those who had begun to speak Russian were included, was probably almost equal to the number of Russians, but not significantly fewer.

My travels served me as an inspiration for poetry. I compiled two collections of my immediate impressions which were then published in Kharkiv by the State Publishing House of Ukraine.

My next visits to the settlements took place in the winter of 1931. At that time students were being mobilized to enforce "total collectivization." I was recruited because I knew how to draw a little and was initially assigned to create banners under the guidance of a student from a technical school who was a skilled draftsman. He would draw the letters in slogans on long, narrow red canvases and on whitened squares of plywood. I would then fill them – some in white, others in red on white – with a kind of glue paint. We were ordered to hang the slogan banners everywhere, most often between the poplars lining the streets, or in a square between pillars, and on houses, "the people's houses." We also nailed the plywood squares with their slogans everywhere or gave them to Komsomol members as posters to carry in their columns of demonstrators. All of this was done to promote the campaign for joining collective farms.

We ourselves lived in ordinary peoples' private houses.

At this time the collectivization campaign was raging through the Cossack settlements like a massive forest fire. The authorities divided the inhabitants into "hundred squads" and drove them to meetings on school premises. When finished making endless speeches, the authorities would line everybody up and march them in rows of eight abreast along the streets, all carrying the issued placards with their painted slogans. Cattle, taken away to newly created collective farms, starved and died without proper care. The Party leaders' ignorance and lack of experience resulted in a complete farming collapse.

Other townspeople, seeing that their cattle were also doomed to perish in the inevitable collective farm, quietly butchered them – this way at least they would not die in vain. The old familiar lifestyle broke down under the constant anxiety over what was coming. Our hosts, disheartened, moved quietly and slowly, as if forgetting what they had to do.

Then the business of the slogans and posters was over, and we were told to return to the city.

My first book of poetry, published in 1930, was dismissed by [Communist] Party criticism in the *Literary Gazette* (Kharkiv) as alien: full of idealism and religious sentiments. At this time, the attacks on the Ukrainian department and the writers' organization were becoming unbearable, so after finishing the course in the summer of 1931, I had to abandon my Ukrainian studies and dissociate myself from anything Ukrainian. I passed other competitive exams in order to continue my studies and enrolled in the Russian Faculty, Department of Western European Literature (Middle Ages). My knowledge of languages helped me compete, as did the proclamation of the "General Secretary" that "children are not responsible for their parents." I married and devoted more time to family affairs, especially after my wife became pregnant. But I regretted the distancing, the isolation from Ukrainian cultural life and the loss of opportunities for writing poetry.

A year later, in 1932, an even greater tragedy struck Kuban. The new political aim of Russian – their own term being "Soviet" – patriotism was to liquidate Ukrainian culture in a crushing offensive, total extermination by starvation: the famine-genocide. It caught everyone completely by surprise when refugees from all over starving Ukraine began arriving and recounting the inhuman horrors being perpetrated there.

I myself visited the central lands of Ukraine twice: to visit my father, who worked as a hired gardener on a collective farm in the Poltava region; and to see my brother, a master foundryman at a metallurgical plant in Dniprodzerzhinsk, in the Dnipropetrovsk region. I saw the conditions of those farmers and factory workers and heard many of their stories first hand.

The entire horror was repeated and even magnified in Kuban. Here, a third of the population perished from starvation starting in the fall of 1933.

On the eve of the campaign, special envoy Kaganovich visited the region and announced the [Communist] Party's directive: to confiscate everything "to the last grain." This, of course, meant anything and everything that was edible.

In Krasnodar it first started with the closing down of some dining halls, one of which was for scientific personnel and was where my wife and I used to eat. At the time, I was working as an assistant at the department there, having finished my studies.

Eventually, there were only two or three restaurants left open where one could get some corn soup, very watery, bluish in color. Bread, which was also made of corn, was distributed by coupons allocating 450 grams and nothing else. We survived by selling them at the bazaar and buying some produce, such as potatoes, oil. We were as thin as shadows and my legs were already swollen, the skin oozing a watery discharge.

Acquaintances who visited relatives in the Cossack settlements recalled seeing all food items "swept clean away." Brigades with armed guards went on rampages, robbing yards and houses – completely, down to the smallest bag of beans. They tore up floor planks, tore down oven walls, looking for hidden grain.

In courtyards and everywhere on the farmsteads, including in the fields, they probed the ground with iron "rods" pointed at one end and bent at the top like handles. They looted all the valuables from the homes and together with the confiscated food loaded them onto their carts. They even threw away children's porridge, trampling it so as to leave nothing with which to survive.

People began to die. Those who were healthier escaped to the city. Every day my wife and I saw them lined up in long hopeless queues at the stores, where they were not given anything, as the shelves were empty.

Winter came, and they collapsed exhausted in the muddy snow. They were everywhere: on the bricks of the sidewalks, under shop windows or in alleyways, on the square near the train station – everywhere, on the cobblestones and on the side pathways. They died where they fell.

Corpses lay on the streets everywhere in the city: men, women with children or lone souls. Trucks and carts barely had time to collect them and transport them outside the city and dump them *en masse* into lime pits or old abandoned wells. They also died on the roadsides leading to the city and in the city bazaars too, because they had nothing with which to buy food.

They died leaning against the walls of Torgsin, full of its fine produce. Here there were all kinds of the most delicious food: meat and milk, special brands of cheese, canned fish and vegetables, and grain. I myself got a bag of millet in exchange for my father's antique silver spoon, after handing it over to the cashier and receiving a coupon.

Even if a few of the villagers managed to exchange some food for a gold cross, it was so little that it only prolonged the agony of their slow death.

My wife and I were barely hanging on, ready to share the fate of the doomed villagers. By now I had a dozen open wounds exuding a brownish ooze from my blood vessels.

Fortunately, I managed to get a job in an art museum as a researcher, replacing my predecessor who had left the starving city. The salary was meager, but it offered a little bit of support; and even more of a relief, I was provided with two small rooms in the annex for free. That job helped us survive.

In the late autumn of 1933, I received a letter from teacher K. (I cannot mention the name and settlement). He and I had studied French together (he always had better pronunciation than me) under Professor Kozlova who had graduated from the Sorbonne before the revolution. He invited me to visit him and said I could buy a *suliia* (small bottle) of milk at the bazaar. He warned me to be very careful while walking away from the train station along the desolate lane to his settlement. There were cannibals hiding in the thick weeds, having come from who knows where; probably new settlers, as no one recognized them. They would catch some passer-by, tie a rope to each arm, stretch his arms out from his sides like a walking crucifix, then threaten him with knives until they reached their hidden lair, where they killed him. Apparently, they had heard that the meat of a frightened man tasted better.

I did not pay much attention to his warning at the time and arrived late in the evening by train to the designated station. Of those few who arrived at the same time, some stayed to spend the night there while others left on a flimsy horse-drawn carriage. I went by myself on foot, but thanks to his warning, remained watchful. I noticed a group of people in the distance moving quickly in my direction. I sped up and so did they; we ran like this until I caught up with a carriage full of settlers going to the station. Then the pursuers slowed down and fell behind.

The teacher recounted the conditions surrounding the famine late into the evening. Like everywhere else, the confiscation of food in his settlement was the same: down to the last kernel!

In the morning, we went to the bazaar. The teacher showed me how, after buying milk, you needed to tilt the bottle, then level it and watch how it slid down the glass. If it slid slowly, leaving a white film, then it was good; if the transparent somewhat greenish liquid slid quickly, then it was diluted with water. (The latter turned out to be the case without exception).

The appearance of the bazaar was incredibly miserable. Exhausted people in ragged clothes moved aimlessly as if they were only the shadows of living creatures. There were meager odds and ends on the stands: yellowish pieces of lard on stained pieces of paper, lumps of sugar, a little flour or grain in saucers; a handful of corn cobs, coarse flat cakes made of unleavened dough.

Suddenly, a commotion broke out, like a churning in the reeds, centered around one of the stands to the side. Some policemen had run over there along with someone from the station, and they quickly grabbed a hunched woman in a shawl tied low over a deathly gray face. They hastily bundled up the dark kerchief with meatballs that she had spread out and hurriedly, even at a run, dragged the arrested woman away along with her belongings. There was whispering among the people that the teacher and I

overheard: "That woman was selling meatballs made from a child's flesh: she slaughtered one to save the other! She's already half-crazy and didn't know what she was doing."

Then the rumors spread – she was shot instantly so she wouldn't talk about what she did; the case of cannibalism would be immediately closed; this was not an isolated case.

There was nothing left of the Cossack settlements' prosperity. Orchards were cut down for fuel, as were fences; even the roofs were torn off. Windows were closed up or covered with rags. Gardens were overgrown with thickets of weeds, the streets and roads too. Only in the middle of the roads and the streets was something else visible—the ruts from wagon wheels. It seemed that the plague had passed through the human settlement or some marauding Tartars had laid everything bare.

Reference

"Case History Misc06 (Wasyl Barka, b. July 16, 1908)," in James E. Mace and Leonid Heretz, eds., *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932–1933: Oral History Project of the Commission on the Ukraine Famine*, vol. 3 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990), 1704–8.

Discussion Questions

1. What was the way of life in Ukrainian Cossack settlements in Kuban in the Northern Caucasus before the New Economic Policy (NEP) was terminated in 1928?
2. What languages did the population of the Kuban region speak?
3. Why did more women speak Ukrainian than men?
4. When did the first Ukrainian Cossack settlements appear in Kuban?
5. What was the size of the Ukrainian population of Kuban on the eve World War I?
6. Who were considered the well-to-do social strata in Ukrainian settlements in Kuban?
7. What cultural traditions, especially attitudes toward bread, did the narrator observe?
8. Why were students recruited to participate in the "total collectivization" campaign in 1931?
9. What methods did the authorities use to force homestead farmers to join collective farms?
10. Why was the writer forced to abandon Ukrainian studies and publication of his poetry in Ukrainian and switch to study in Russian?
11. What happened to the Ukrainian language department in the teachers' college in Krasnodar, the capital of Kuban in 1930?
12. How did the anti-Ukrainian policy affect Ukrainians in central Ukraine and Kuban in the Northern Caucasus?
13. How many people in Kuban became victims of genocide in the fall of 1933?
14. What was the declared goal of the Soviet government official Kaganovich in the Northern Caucasus?
15. What methods did people use to survive forced starvation?
16. What repressive measures did the authorities use to confiscate grain and everything edible?
17. How did the government respond to reports about cannibalism?
18. Why did the mother against her biological instinct sacrificed her child?
19. Researchers have found that the government had enough stockpiles of grain for export to feed 10 million people in 1932 and 15 million people in 1933. Why did the authorities refuse to rescue starving Ukrainians?

Appendix

Stages of the Holodomor as Genocide

Stages of Genocide	As applied to the Holodomor
1. CLASSIFICATION: All cultures have categories to distinguish people into "us and them" by ethnicity, race, religion, or nationality ... Classification … is universally human and does not necessarily result in genocide unless it leads to dehumanization.	Less than a year after the introduction of the policy of Ukrainization, in February 1924, in a secret circular the GPU provided instructions for the keeping of records and listed a dozen categories of "suspected counter-revolutionaries" in Ukraine in broad categories, one of which was "secret enemies of the Soviet regime." It listed among others "rebel units" of the Ukrainian National Republic's army who fought on Symon Petliura's side, all servants of religious bodies, all former NEP men, well-to-do farmers (who formerly employed hired labor), all scholars and specialists of the "old school," particularly those without declared political orientation.
2. SYMBOLIZATION: When combined with hatred, symbols may be forced upon unwilling members of pariah groups. … To combat symbolization, hate symbols can be legally forbidden … as can hate speech. … The problem is that legal limitations will fail if unsupported by popular cultural enforcement.	Labels used to define the unwilling members of the pariah groups included "socially alien element," "parasitic element," "secret enemy of the Soviet regime," "suspected counterrevolutionary," "kulak," "saboteur," and "wrecker."
3. DISCRIMINATION: A dominant group uses law, custom, and political power to deny the rights of other groups. The powerless group may not be accorded full civil rights, or even citizenship. The dominant group is driven by an exclusionary ideology that would deprive less powerful groups of their rights. The ideology advocates monopolization or expansion of power by the dominant group. It legitimizes the victimization of weaker groups. Advocates of exclusionary ideologies are often charismatic, expressing resentments of their followers, attracting support from the masses. …	The spouses and children of the purged groups ("enemies of the people") were stripped of their citizenship, deprived of voting rights, separated from their service in the Red Army, denied employment and admission to schools and universities. Stalin's letter in 1926 urged to fight against "national inclinations" and to begin to persecute the activists of the Ukrainization policy.
4. DEHUMANIZATION: One group denies the humanity of the other group. Members of it are equated with animals, vermin, insects or diseases. Dehumanization overcomes the normal human revulsion against murder. At this stage, hate propaganda in print and on hate radios is used to vilify the victim group. The majority group is taught to regard the other group as less than	Independent farmers, labeled "kulaks" (tight fists), in Ukrainian *kurkuli*, were portrayed as spiders, snakes, vermin in Soviet propaganda posters; blue and yellow colors used in posters hinted that "saboteurs" were Ukrainian nationalists, yellow and blue are national colors of Ukraine.

human, and even alien to their society. They are indoctrinated to believe that "We are better off without them." ... They are equated with filth, impurity, and immorality. Hate speech fills the propaganda of official radio, newspapers, and speeches. … Genocidal societies lack constitutional protection for countervailing speech, and should be treated differently than democracies.	
5. ORGANIZATION: Genocide is always organized, usually by the state, often using militias to provide deniability of state responsibility. … Special army units or militias are often trained and armed. … States organize secret police to spy on, arrest, torture, and murder people suspected of opposition to political leaders. Special training is given to murderous militias and special army killing units.	Rural and urban communists, committees of non-wealthy peasants participated in grain requisition brigades; security service (the GPU), police, and the army organized special operations to suppress uprisings and resistance to grain and food confiscations in the countryside.
6. POLARIZATION: Extremists drive the groups apart. Hate groups broadcast polarizing propaganda. Motivations for targeting a group are indoctrinated through mass media. … Moderates from the perpetrators' own group are most able to stop genocide, so are the first to be arrested and killed. Leaders in targeted groups are the next to be arrested and murdered. The dominant group passes emergency laws or decrees that grants them total power over the targeted group. The laws erode fundamental civil rights and liberties. Targeted groups are disarmed to make them incapable of self-defense, and to ensure that the dominant group has total control.	Authorities broadcast polarizing propaganda in print and on the radio. Help to the "enemies of the people" and their families was punishable. Moderates were intimidated and silenced. There were no security protections for leaders of resistance. The countryside was disarmed, firearms of any kind were confiscated.
7. PREPARATION: Plans are made for genocidal killings. National or perpetrator group leaders plan the "Final Solution" to the ... targeted group "question." They often use euphemisms to cloak their intentions, such as referring to their goals ... They indoctrinate the populace with fear of the victim group. Leaders often claim that "if we don't kill them, they will kill us," disguising genocide as self-defense. Acts of genocide are disguised as counter-insurgency if there is an ongoing armed conflict or civil war. There is a sudden increase in inflammatory rhetoric and hate propaganda with the objective of creating fear of the other group.	Perpetrators blacklisted collective farms and entire villages, encircled villages and entire regions, used railroads and cattle cars to transport victims (accused of "anti-Soviet" or "counterrevolutionary" activities) and their families to concentration camps in Siberia. The legal justification for arrests and deportations was the law adopted on August 7, 1932, which criminalized attempts to pluck wheat ears left on the fields (crimes of "pilfering of socialist property").

8. PERSECUTION: Victims are identified and separated out because of their ethnic or religious identity. Death lists are drawn up. In state sponsored genocide, members of victim groups may be forced to wear identifying symbols. Their property is often expropriated. Sometimes they are even segregated into ghettoes, deported into concentration camps, or confined to a famine-struck region and starved. They are deliberately deprived of resources such as water or food in order to slowly destroy them. … Children are forcibly taken from their parents. The victim group's basic human rights become systematically abused through extrajudicial killings, torture and forced displacement. Genocidal massacres begin. They are acts of genocide because they intentionally destroy part of a group. The perpetrators watch for whether such massacres meet any international reaction. If not, they realize that the international community will again be bystanders and permit another genocide. At this stage, a Genocide Emergency must be declared. If the political will of the great powers, regional alliances, or the U.N. Security Council can be mobilized, armed international intervention should be prepared or heavy assistance provided to the victim group to prepare for its self-defense. Humanitarian assistance should be organized by the U.N. and private relief groups for the inevitable tide of refugees to come.	First victims were intellectual and cultural elites. In 1929, the GPU arrested 30,000 intellectuals, artists, writers, scientists, and teachers and in the spring of 1930, put forty-five of them on trial at the Kharkiv Opera House (the SVU trial). Entire Ukrainian well-to-do farmers and their families were deported to the Russian Far North and Far East to forced labor camps for not fulfilling the quotas ("malicious failure of grain procurement") and their property was expropriated. On December 14–15, 1932, Stalin and Molotov signed a resolution to "immediately discontinue Ukrainization" in the Northern Caucasus, Far East, Kazakhstan, Central Asia, Central Black Earth, and other regions and "prepare the introduction of Russian language school instruction" in all ethnically Ukrainian areas throughout the Soviet Union. The issue of forced starvation was brought to the attention of the League of Nations by Ukrainian community organizations, but it was deemed to be an internal matter. The United Nations did not exist at the time.
9. EXTERMINATION begins, and quickly becomes the mass killing legally called "genocide." It is "extermination" to the killers because they do not believe their victims to be fully human. When it is sponsored by the state, the armed forces often work with militias to do the killing. … Acts of genocide demonstrate how dehumanized the victims have become. Already dead bodies are dismembered; rape is used as a tool of war to genetically alter and eradicate the other group. Destruction of cultural and religious property is employed to annihilate the group's existence from history. … At this stage, only rapid and overwhelming armed intervention can stop genocide. Real safe areas or refugee escape corridors should be established with heavily armed international	Borders of the Ukrainian republic were sealed, preventing the starving from seeking food elsewhere (the "blockade decree" of January 22, 1933). In June 1933, famine claimed 28,000 lives a day. In November 1933, "local Ukrainian nationalism" was declared to be the pre-eminent danger to Soviet power in the region. In January 1934, at the XVII Party Congress Pavel Postyshev reported: "the past year [1933] was the year of defeat of the nationalist counterrevolution." The U.N. did not exist at the time, and the Soviet Union was not a member of the League of Nations (admitted later in 1934). No one on the international stage took responsibility to protect people starving in Ukraine, and the Soviet government did not allow any food assistance to come from the outside. Soviet authorities denied

protection.	the famine, and the great powers "turned a blind eye to murder." Leading democracies, the United States and Great Britain, compromised with the Soviet totalitarian regime in the USSR and extended diplomatic recognition in November 1933. The geopolitical considerations took precedence over human rights.
10. DENIAL is the final stage that lasts throughout and always follows a genocide. It is among the surest indicators of further genocidal massacres. The perpetrators of genocide dig up the mass graves, burn the bodies, try to cover up the evidence, and intimidate the witnesses. They deny that they committed any crimes and often blame what happened on the victims. They block investigations of the crimes and continue to govern until driven from power by force, when they flee into exile. There they remain with impunity … unless they are captured and a tribunal is established to try them. The best response to denial is punishment by an international tribunal or national courts. There the evidence can be heard, and the perpetrators punished. Tribunals or an International Criminal Court may not deter the worst genocidal killers. But with the political will to arrest and prosecute them, some may be brought to justice. When possible, local proceedings should provide forums for hearings of the evidence against perpetrators who were not the main leaders and planners of a genocide, with opportunities for restitution and reconciliation. … Justice should be accompanied by education in schools and the media about the facts of a genocide, the suffering it caused its victims, the motivations of its perpetrators, and the need for restoration of the rights of its victims.	Perpetrators buried victims in mass graves, forged civil registry records (failed to record deaths due to starvation, destroyed or misplaced death certificates), purged demographers, and discarded the 1937 census records. No commission in the Soviet Union has ever investigated human rights violations by the GPU officers and various organizations involved in perpetrating the crimes, as was done in other post-genocidal societies. In 2010, the Court of Appeals in Kyiv, Ukraine, "symbolically" put Joseph Stalin and his accomplices on trial and declared them guilty. Resolutions by Russia's State Duma refuse to recognize the Holodomor as genocide. The successors of Stalin, particularly security service operatives, who have made their careers and maintained the system never openly acknowledged or denounced their horrible crimes.

Adapted with permission from Gregory H. Stanton, "The Ten Stages of Genocide," *Genocide Watch*, 2020, https://www.genocidewatch.com/ten-stages-of-genocide.

Bibliography

Abramson, Henry. *A Prayer for the Government: Ukrainians and Jews in Revolutionary Times, 1917–1920*. Cambridge: Distributed by Harvard University Press for the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute and Center for Jewish Studies, Harvard University, 1999.

Adams, Arthur E. *Bolsheviks in the Ukraine: The Second Campaign, 1918–1919*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.

_____. "The Great Ukrainian Jacquerie." In *The Ukraine, 1917–1921: A Study in Revolution*, edited by Taras Hunczak, 247–70. Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1977.

_____. "The Deportation of the Ukrainian Intelligentsia." In *Genocide in Ukraine*, edited by Peter Kardash, 178–81. Melbourne: Fortuna Publishing, 2007.

Ammende, Ewald. *Human Life in Russia*. Introduction by the Rt. Hon. Lord Dickinson. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1936.

An Independent Legal Analysis of the Russian Federation's Breaches of the Genocide Convention in Ukraine and the Duty to Prevent, New Lines Institute for Strategy and Policy and the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, May 2022, https://newlinesinstitute.org/an-independent-legal-analysis-of-the-russian-federations-breaches-of-the-genocide-convention-in-ukraine-and-the-duty-to-prevent/.

Antonovych, Myroslava. "Individual and Collective Intent in the Crime of Genocide (on the Example of the Holodomor-Genocide against the Ukrainian Nation)." *Actual Problems of International Relations*, no. 145 (2020): 54–61.

Applebaum, Anne. *Gulag: A History*. New York: Doubleday, 2003.

_____. "Holodomor." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. November 12, 2019, https://www.britannica.com/event/Holodomor.

_____. *Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine*. New York: Doubleday, 2017.

Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Bosnia and Herzegovina v. Serbia and Montenegro), Judgment, ICJ Reports, 2007, at paras. 167–169, 174. https://www.icj-cij.org/public/files/case-related/91/091-20070226-JUD-01-00-EN.pdf.

Arendt, Hannah. "Ideology and Terror: A Novel Form of Government." In *The Great Lie: Classic and Recent Appraisals of Ideology and Totalitarianism,* edited by F. Flagg Taylor IV, 124–47. Wilmington: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2011.

Asatkin, Oleksandr, ed. *Narodne hospodarstvo USRR (statystychnyi dovidnyk).* Kyiv: Narodne hospodarstvo ta oblik, 1935.

Bahlai, Anatolii. "Yurii Sambros." *Sumskyi istorychnyi portal* (*Sumy Historical Portal*), November 17, 2019. https://history.sumy.ua/research/article/9108-bahlai-anatolii-yurii-sambros.html.

Bartosek, K., S. Courtois, J.-L. Margolin, A. Paczkowski, J.-L. Panné, N. Werth. *Czarna księga komunizmu. Zbrodnie, terror, prześladowania*. Warsaw: Prószyński i S-ka, 1999.

Batchinsky, Julian, Dr. Arnold Margolin, Dr. Mark Vishnitzer, and Israel Zangwill. *The Jewish Pogroms in Ukraine: Authoritative Statements on the Question of Responsibility for Recent Outbreaks Against the Jews in Ukraine*. Washington, DC: The Friends of Ukraine, 1919.

Berdiaev, N. A. "O rabstve i svobode cheloveka: Opyt personalisticheskoi filosofii." *Biblioteka "Vekhi,"* 2001. http://www.vehi.net/berdyaev/rabstvo/012.html.

Berelovich, A., and V. Danilov, eds. *Sovetskaia derevnia glazami VChK–OGPU–NKVD, 1918–1939: Dokumenty i materialy*, 4 vols. Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1998–2012.

Bertelsen, Olga. "'Hyphenated' Identities during the Holodomor: Women and Cannibalism." In *Women and Genocide: Survivors, Victims, Perpetrators*, edited by Elissa Bemporad and Joyce W. Warren, 77–96. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018.

_____. "The Writers and the *Chekists*' Discourse about the Holodomor." In *In the Labyrinth of the KGB: Ukraine's Intelligentsia in the 1960s–1970s*, 203–240. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2022.

_____. "Starvation and Violence amid the Soviet Politics of Silence: 1928–1929." *Genocide Studies International* 11, no. 1 (2017): 38–67.

_____. "Women at Sites of Mass Starvation: Ukraine, 1932–1933." In *Women and the Holodomor-Genocide: Victims, Survivors, Perpetrators*, edited by Victoria A. Malko, 33–49. Fresno: The Press at California State University, 2019.

Berzins, Janis. "Russia's New Generation Warfare in Ukraine: Implications for Latvian Defense Policy." Report from the National Defence Academy of Latvia and the Center for Security and Strategic Research. *Informal Institute for National Security Thinkers and Practitioners Blog*, April 30, 2014. http://maxoki161.blogspot.com/2014/04/russias-new-generation-warfare-in.html.

Bezo, Brent John Louis. "The Impact of Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma from the Holodomor Genocide of 1932–1933 in Ukraine." Doctoral diss., Carleton University, 2011.

_____, and Stefania Maggi. "The Intergenerational Impact of the Holodomor Genocide on Gender Roles, Expectations and Performance: The Ukrainian Experience." *Annals of Psychiatry and Mental Health* 3, no. 3 (2015): 1–4.

_____. "Living in 'Survival Mode': Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma from the Holodomor Genocide of 1932–1933 in Ukraine." *Social Science & Medicine*, no. 134 (2015): 87–94.

"Bill to Establish a Commission to Study the 1932–1933 Famine Caused by the Soviet Government in Ukraine (H.R. 4459 in the House of Representatives, S. 2456 in the Senate)." *Ukrainian Weekly*, April 1, 1984. http://www.ukrweekly.com/old/archive/1984/148419.shtml.

Billington, James H. "The Legacy of Russian History." In *The Stalin Revolution: Foundations of Soviet Totalitarianism*, edited and with an introduction by Robert V. Daniels, 159–68. Lexington and Toronto: D. C. Heath and Company, 1972.

Bilokin, Serhii. *Masovyi teror iak zasib derzhavnoho upravlinnia v SRSR, 1917–1941 rr.: dzhereloznavche doslidzhennia*, vol 1. Kyïv, 1999.

_____. *Masovyi teror iak zasib derzhavnoho upravlinnia v SRSR, 1917–1941 rr.: dzhereloznavche doslidzhennia*, vol. 2. Drohovych: "Kolo," 2013.

_____. "Rozstril'nyi spysok Solovkiv." *Literaturna Ukraina*, no. 27, July 9, 1992.

Bilotserkivets, Natalka. "An Unforgotten Life: On My Mother's Memoirs." In Anastasia Lysyvets, *Speak of the Happy Life: Memoirs of the Holodomor*, translated from the Ukrainian by Alexander J. Motyl and Tatiana Yablonska. Kyiv: Dukh i Litera Publishing House, 2021.

Blackwill, Robert D., and Philip H. Gordon. "Containing Russia: How to Respond to Moscow's Intervention in U.S. Democracy and Growing Geopolitical Challenges." Special Report No. 80. New York: Council on Foreign Relations, January 6, 2018. https://www.cfr.org/report/containing-russia.

Blinova, Ekaterina. "Holodomor Hoax: Joseph Stalin's Crime That Never Took Place." *Sputnik News*, August 9, 2015. http://sputniknews.com/politics/20150809/1025560345.html#ixzz3iXdnBIyY.

Blundell, Nigel. *A Pictorial History of Joseph Stalin*. North Dighton: JG Press, 1996.

Bohlen, Charles E. *Witness to History, 1929–1969*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1973.

Bolabolchenko, Anatolii. *SVU − sud nad perekonanniamy*. Kyiv: UKSP "Kobza," 1994.

Bondar, Kateryna. "Legal Definition of Genocide: Examining the 1932–1933 Holodomor in Ukraine under the Genocide Convention." In *The Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine as a Crime of Genocide under International Law*, edited by Volodymyr Vasylenko and Myroslava Antonovych, 95–119. Kyïv: Kyïv-Mohyla Academy, 2016.

Bondarchuk, Andrii. "'Stokholmskyi syndrom' iak kintseva meta totalitarnoho rezhymu: vid vytokiv do suchasnosti." *Litopys Volyni*, no. 20 (2019): 55–64.

Boriak, Hennadii. "Population Losses in the Holodomor and the Destruction of Related Archives: New Archival Evidence." In *After the Holodomor: The Enduring Impact of the Great Famine on Ukraine*, edited by Andrea Graziosi, Lubomyr A. Hajda, and Halyna Hryn. Cambridge: Ukrainian Research Institute of Harvard University, 2013. Originally published in *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 30, nos. 1–4 (2008): 199–215. http://history.org.ua/LiberUA/BoriakPopulationLosses_2008/BoriakPopulationLosses_2008.pdf.

_____. *Sources for the Study of the Great Famine in Ukraine*. Cambridge: Harvard University Ukrainian Studies Fund, 2009.

Borys, Jurij. "Political Parties in the Ukraine." In *The Ukraine, 1917–1921: A Study in Revolution*, edited by Taras Hunczak, 128–58. Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1977.

_____. *The Russian Communist Party and the Sovietization of the Ukraine: A Study in the Communist Doctrine of the Self-Determination of Nations*. Stockholm: Norstedt & Soner, 1960.

Bray, William G. *Russian Frontiers: From Muscovy to Khrushchev*. New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963.

Buhaievych, Ihor. *Dozhylasia Ukraina … Narodna tvorchist chasiv holodomoru i kolektyvizatsii na Ukraini*. Kyiv: Ukrainskyi pysmennyk, 1993.

Carynnyk, Marco. "Blind Eye to Murder: Britain, the United States and the Ukrainian Famine of 1933." In *Famine in Ukraine, 1932–1933*, edited by Roman Serbyn and Bohdan Krawchenko, 109–38. Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986.

_____. "Malcolm Muggeridge on Stalin's Famine: 'Deliberate' and 'Diabolical' Starvation." In *The Great Famine in Ukraine: The Unknown Holocaust*, edited by Roma Hadzewycz, George B. Zarycky, and Marta Kolomayets. Jersey City: Svoboda Press for Ukrainian National Association, 1983.

_____, Lubomyr Y. Luciuk, and Bohdan S. Kordan, eds. *The Foreign Office and the Famine: British Documents on Ukraine and the Great Famine of 1932–1933*. Kingston: Limestone Press, 1988.

Chukhin, Ivan. *Kanalo-armeitsy: Istoriia stroitelstva Belomorkanala v dokumentakh, tsyfrakh, faktakh, fotografiiakh, svidetelstvakh uchastnikov i ochevidtsev*. Petrozavodsk: "Kareliia," 1990.

Colley, Margaret Siriol, Nigel Linsan Colley, and Naomi Field. *More Than a Grain of Truth: The Official Biography of Gareth Jones.* Lume Books, 2005; 2nd edition, 2019.

Colley, Margaret Siriol, and Nigel Linsan Colley. *Gareth Jones: A Manchukuo Incident*. Nottinghamshire: Nigel Linsan Colley, 2001.

"Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 9 December 1948." United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 78-I, No. 1021 (1951). https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%2078/volume-78-i-1021-english.pdf.

Conquest, Robert. *Kolyma: The Arctic Death Camps*. New York: Viking Press, 1978.

_____. *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror–Famine*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Cooper, R. Clarke. "Shaky territory for U.S. alliances." In "Experts react: The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan is complete. What's next?" *Atlantic Council*, August 30, 2021. https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/experts-react-the-us-withdrawal-from-afghanistan-is-complete-whats-next/#cooper.

Crankshaw, Edward. "When Lenin Returned." *The Atlantic Monthly*, October 1954. https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1954/10/when-lenin-returned/303867/.

Crowl, James William. "Angels in Stalin's Paradise: Western Reporters in Soviet Russia, A Case Study of Louis Fischer and Walter Duranty." Doctoral diss., University of Virginia, 1978.

Daalder, Ivo H. "Responding to Russia's Resurgence: Not Quiet on the Eastern Front." *Foreign Affairs* 96, no. 6 (2017): 30.

Dallin, David, and Boris Nicolaevsky. *Forced Labor in Soviet Russia*. London: Hollis and Carter, 1948.

Danilov, V., R. Manning, and L. Viola, eds. *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni. Kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie. Dokumenty i materialy, 1927–1939*, 5 vols. Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1999–2006.

Danilov, V. P., and I. Ie. Zelenin, "Organizovannyi golod. K 70-letiiu obshchekrest'ianskoi tragedii." *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, no. 5 (2004): 97–111.

Danylenko, Andrii, and Halyna Naienko. "Linguistic Russification in Russian Ukraine: Languages, Imperial Models, and Policies." *Russian Linguistics* 43, no. 1 (2019): 19–39. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11185-018-09207-1.

Danylenko, V. M., ed. *Pavlohradske povstannia 1930 r.: Dokumenty i materialy*. Kyiv: Ukrainskyi pysmennyk, 2009.

Danylenko, Vasyl, ed. *Ukrainska intelihentsiia i vlada*: *Zvedennia sekretnoho viddilu DPU USRR 1927–1929 rr.* Kyiv: Tempora, 2012.

David-Fox, Michael. *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to the Soviet Union, 1921–1941*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

_____. "What Is Cultural Revolution?" *The Russian Review* 58, no. 2 (1999): 181–201.

Davies, R. W., and S. G. Wheatcroft. *The Years of Hunger: Soviet Agriculture, 1931–1933*, vol. 5 Industrialization of Soviet Russia. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

de Madariaga, Isabel. *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981.

_____. "The Foundation of the Russian Educational System by Catherine II." *Slavonic and East European Review* 57, no. 3 (1979): 369–95.

DePetris, Daniel. "Is the Biden Administration's Ukraine policy sustainable?" *Defense News*, August 29, 2023. https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/2023/08/29/is-the-biden-administrations-ukraine-policy-sustainable/.

Dietsch, Deborah K. "Local Architect Designs Washington Memorial to Victims of Genocidal Famine in Ukraine." *Washington Post*, July 24, 2014.

Dimarov, Anatolii. "The Hungry Thirties (A Parable About Bread)." *In Stalin's Shadow*. Translated from Ukrainian by Iurii Tkach, 110–75. Melbourne: Bayda Books, 1989. http://shron1.chtyvo.org.ua/Dimarov_Anatolii/In_Stalins_Shadow_anhl.pdf.

Dobczansky, Jurij. "Affirmation and Denial: Holodomor-related Resources Recently Acquired by the Library of Congress." *Holodomor Studies* 1, no. 2 (2009): 153–62.

Dolot, Miron. *Execution by Hunger: The Hidden Holocaust*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1987.

Drovoziuk, S. I. "Bilshovytski tekhnolohii 'perevykhovannia' ukrainskoi intelihentsii u 20–30-kh rr. XX st." In *Naukovi zapysky Vinnytskoho derzhavnoho pedahohichnoho universytetu im. M. Kotsiubynskoho*, edited by P. S. Hryhorchuk, 193–97. Vinnytsia: VDPU, 2006.

_____. "Vysvitlennia dukhovnykh aspektiv henotsydu 1932–1933 rr. v ukrainskii istoriohrafii." In *Henotsyd ukrainskoho narodu: istorychna pam'iat ta polityko-pravova otsinka: Mizhnarodna naukovo-teoretychna konferentsiia, Kyiv, 25 lystopada 2002*, edited by V. A. Smolii et al., 295–304. Kyiv–New York: Vyd-vo M. P. Kots, 2003.

Drozdov, Konstantin. "Ukrainizatsia v Tsentralnom Chernozemie RSFSR v 1923–1928 gg.: K voprosu ob osobennostiakh natsionalnoi politiki bolshevikov v gody NEPa." *The NEP Era*, no. 4 (2010): 43–59.

"Experts react to Biden's 'inflection point' address on Ukraine and Israel." *Atlantic Council*, October 19, 2023. https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/experts-react-to-bidens-inflection-point-address-on-ukraine-and-israel/.

"Fact Sheet: On One Year Anniversary of Russia's Invasion of Ukraine, Biden Administration Announces Actions to Support Ukraine and Hold Russia Accountable." *White House Briefing*, February 24, 2023.

Faizulin, Iaroslav."*Represovani" shchodennyky: Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraini*. Kyiv: Feniks, 2018.

"Famine in the USSR, 1929–1934: New Documentary Evidence," with Historical Essay by Viktor Kondrashyn; English translation of the documents by Nikita B. Katz; English translation of the Note from the Compilers by Alexandra Dolgova. Moscow: Federal Archival Service, 2009. Compact Disc. http://resource.history.org.ua/item/0008508.

Fedyshyn, Oleh S. "The Germans and the Union for the Liberation of the Ukraine, 1914–1917." In *The Ukraine, 1917–1921: A Study in Revolution*, edited by Taras Hunczak, 305–22. Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1977.

Filene, Peter G. *Americans and the Soviet Experiment, 1917–1933.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967.

_____, ed. *American Views of Soviet Russia, 1917–1965*. Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1968.

"Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's Remarks and Answers to Media Questions at a News Conference." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation*, November 26, 2018. https://www.mid.ru/en/press_service/minister_speeches/-/asset_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmR/content/id/3420700.

Foreign Relations of the United States: The Soviet Union, 1933–1939, edited by E. R. Perkins, Rogers Platt Churchill, and John Gilbert Reid. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1952. https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1933-39.

"Four to Testify at Senate Hearings on Famine Commission Measure." *Ukrainian Weekly*, July 29, 1984.

Friedrich, Carl J., and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski. *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, rev. ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965.

_____. "The Model of Totalitarianism." In *The Stalin Revolution: Foundations of Soviet Totalitarianism*, edited by Robert V. Daniels, 198–213. Lexington and Toronto: D. C. Heath and Company, 1972.

Fukuyama, Francis. "January 6 and Geopolitics." *American Purpose*, January 6, 2022. https://www.americanpurpose.com/blog/fukuyama/january-6-and-geopolitics/.

Futey, Bohdan A. "International Legal Responsibility for Genocide: Justice in the Courts." Paper presented at a Conference on Famine-Holodomor, Kyiv, Ukraine, September 25–26, 2008, *Holodomor Education*, 2009. http://www.holodomoreducation.org/index.php/id/178/lang/en.

_____. "Legal Recognition of the Holodomor as Genocide: International Covenants, Agreements, and Court Decisions (Implementing Lemkin's Legacy)." Paper presented at the International Forum "Ukraine Remembers, the World Acknowledges!" on the 85th Anniversary of the Holodomor 1932–1933 – Genocide of the Ukrainian People, Kyiv, Ukraine, November 22, 2018.

Gamache, Ray. *Gareth Jones: Eyewitness to the Holodomor*. Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press, 2013.

Gantt, William Horsley. "A Medical Review of Soviet Russia: Results of the First Five-Year Plan." *British Medical Journal* 2, no. 3939 (July 4, 1936): 19–22.

Gentry, John A. "Belated Success: Soviet Active Measures against the United States." *American Intelligence Journal* 39, no. 2 (2022): 151–70.

Goble, Paul. "A New GULAG Is Emerging Just as Stalin's Did Slowly and Insidiously, Gudkov Warns." *Euromaidan Press*, August 17, 2018. http://euromaidanpress.com/2018/08/17/a-new-gulag-is-emerging-just-as-stalins-did-slowly-and-insidiously-gudkov-warns/.

Gorbunova, Viktoriia, and Vitalii Klymchuk. "The Psychological Consequences of the Holodomor in Ukraine." *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 7, no. 2 (2020): 33–68.

"Gosduma ne priznala Golodomor 1932–33 godov: Gosudarstvennaia Duma Rossii otritsaet priznaki genotsyda vo vremia goloda 1932–1933 godov na territorii SSSR." *Delo*, April 2, 2008. https://delo.ua/econonomyandpoliticsinukraine/gosduma-ne-priznala-1932-33-go-75225/.

Graziosi, Andrea. "The Impact of Holodomor Studies on the Understanding of the USSR." In *Contextualizing the Holodomor: The Impact of Thirty Years of Ukrainian Famine Studies*, edited by Andrij Makuch and Frank E. Sysyn, 49–75. Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 2015.

_____, ed. *Lettere da Kharkov: La carestia in Ucraina e nel Caucaso del Nord nei rapporti dei diplomatici italiani, 1932–33*. Torino: Einaudi, 1991.

Grechko, V. *Kommunisticheskoe vospitanie v SSSR*. Munich: Institute for the Study of the History and Culture of the USSR, 1951.

Gregory, Paul R., and Valery Lazarev, eds. *The Economics of Forced Labor: The Soviet Gulag*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Hoover Institution Press, 2003.

Grigorenko, Petro G. *Memoirs*. Translated by Thomas P. Whitney. New York: W. W. Norton, 1982.

Grinevich, Vladislav. "Podolannia totalitarnoho mynuloho – Chastyna 3: Chy buv SSSR imperiieiu, a Ukraïna – koloniieiu?" *Ukraina Moderna*, August 22, 2019. uamoderna.com/blogy/vladislav-grinevich/totalitarism-part-3.

Grossman, Vasily. *Forever Flowing*. Translated by Thomas P. Whitney. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Gutterman, Steve. "Russia: 1930s Famine Was Not Genocide." *Fox News*, April 2, 2008. https://www.foxnews.com/printer_friendly_wires/2008Apr02/0,4675,RussiaUkraineFamine,00.html.

Hammer, Joshua. "Vladimir Lenin's Return Journey to Russia Changed the World Forever." *Smithsonian Magazine*, March 2017. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/vladimir-lenin-return-journey-russia-changed-world-forever-180962127/.

Handbook of the Soviet Union. New York: American-Russian Chamber of Commerce, 1936.

Haynes, John Earl, and Harvey Klehr. *In Denial: Historians, Communism, and Espionage*. San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2003.

Hinton, Alex. "Is Russia Committing Genocide in Ukraine? A Human Rights Expert Looks at the Warning Signs." *The Conversation*, April 1, 2022.

_____. "Russia's Mass Kidnappings of Ukrainians are a Page Out of a Wartime Playbook – and Evidence of Genocide." *The Conversation*, July 20, 2022.

_____. "War Crimes or Genocide? Either Way, We Can't Let Russian Atrocities Go Unanswered." *Los Angeles Times*, April 5, 2022.

_____, and Sara E. Brown. *Russia's Political Misuse of the Term Genocide as Pretext for Invading Ukraine*. International Association of Genocide Scholars Research Brief, March 2022. https://genocidescholars.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/IAGS_HintonBrown_Mar22-Final.pdf.

Hladun, Oleksandr. "Viddaleni naslidky vtrat naselennya Ukrainy vid sotsialnykh katastrof u XX stolitti" (Distant Consequences of Population Losses in Ukraine from Social Catastrophes in the 20th century). In *Henotsyd Ukrainy u XX stolitti. Ukraina pid okupatsiinymy rezhymamy: istorychni realii ta postkolonialnyi syndrom. Materialy tretioi Mizhnarodnoi naukovo-praktychnoi konferentsii, Lviv, 4–5 kvitnia 2014* (Genocide in Ukraine in the 20th Century. Ukraine under Occupational Regimes: Historical Realities and Post-colonial Syndrome. Materials of the Third International Scientific and Practical Conference, Lviv, April 4–5, 2014), edited by L. Senyk, B. Morklianyk, R. Pak, M. Fitsuliak, I. Havryliv, M. Chornopyskyi, I. Khoma, A. Fedoryshyn, O. Muzychko, O. Polyanskyi; All-Ukrainian Public Association "Society for the Revival of the Ukrainian Nation"; Lviv National University named after I. Franko; Lviv Polytechnic National University; Institute of Literary Studies of LNU named after I. Franko; KZ LOR "Lviv Historical Museum," 337–347. Lviv: Dobryi druk, 2015.

Holt, Emily, and Grace Mahoney. "Rupture and Call: Famine Encounters from Contemporary Irish and Ukrainian Women in the Arts." *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies* 7, no. 2 (2020): 90–93.

"Holodomor in Kharkiv through the lens of Austrian engineer: photo gallery." *Euromaidan Press*, January 10, 2021. http://euromaidanpress.com/2021/01/10/1933-holodomor-in-kharkiv-through-the-lens-of-austrian-engineer-photo-gallery/.

"Holodomor Memorial Presented in Washington." *UNIAN*, August 5, 2015. https://www.unian.info/world/1108244-holodomor-memorial-presented-in-washington.html.

Holodomor v Ukraini 1932–1933 rokiv za dokumentamy politychnoho arkhivu Ministerstva zakordonnykh sprav Federatyvnoi Respubliky Nimechchyny, edited by A. I. Kudriachenko. Kyiv: Natsionalnyi instytut stratehichnykh doslidzhen, 2008.

Hook, Kristina. "Pinpointing Patterns of Violence: A Comparative Genocide Studies Approach to Violence Escalation in the Ukrainian Holodomor." *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 15, no. 2 (2021): 10–36.

Hosejko, Lubomyr. *Ukrainian Film Poster of the 1920s: VUFKU*. Kyïv: Oleksandr Dovzhenko National Center, 2015.

H.Res.1205 resolution recognizing Russian actions in Ukraine as a genocide, introduced by Rep. Steve Cohen (D-TN), June 24, 2022. https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-resolution/1205.

Hrushevskyi, Mykhailo. "The Traditional Scheme of 'Russian' History and the Problem of a Rational Organization of the History of the Eastern Slavs." *Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S.*, II, no. 4 (6) (1952): 355–64.

Hryshko, Wasyl. "The Origins of Soviet Genocide." In *The Ukrainian holocaust of 1933*, edited and translated by Marco Carynnyk, 8–68. Toronto: Bahriany Foundation, SUZHERO, DOBRUS, 1983.

_____. *Experience with Russia*. New York: Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, 1956.

Hunczak, Taras. *Symon Petliura and the Jews: A Reappraisal*. Toronto: Ukrainian Historical Association, 1985.

_____, ed. *The Ukraine, 1917–1921: A Study in Revolution*. Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1977.

International Commission of Inquiry into the 1932–33 Famine in Ukraine: The Final Report. Stockholm: Stockholm Institute of Public and International Law, No. 109, 1990. https://web.archive.org/web/20081001225745/http://www.ukrainianworldcongress.org/Holodomor/Holodomor-Commission.pdf.

Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine. Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 2001. http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/.

Ivanushchenko, Hennadii. "Diahnozy pro smert v period Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv, iak dzherelo stvorennia personalnykh baz danykh," *Prychyna smerti: ukrainets. Z istorii vyvchennia Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv na Sumshchyni*, 15–25. Sumy: Derzhavnyi arkhiv Sumskoi oblasti, 2008. https://daso.archives.gov.ua/wp-content/home/info/nashi-vydannya/15_prychyna-smerti.pdf.

Ivnitskii, Nikolai. "Golod 1932–1933 gg.: kto vinovat? (po dokumentam 'Kremlevskogo arkhiva')." In *Holodomor 1932–1933 rr. v Ukraini: prychyny i naslidky. Mizhnarodna naukova konferentsiia, Kyiv, 9–10 veresnia 1993,* edited by S. Kulchytskyi, 35–44. Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy NAN Ukrainy, 1995.

Jakobson, Michael. *Origins of the GULAG: The Soviet Prison Camp System, 1917–1934*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1993.

Johnson, Ben. "Russia Still Denies the Holodomor Was 'Genocide'." *Acton Institute*, November 27, 2017. https://www.acton.org/publications/transatlantic/2017/11/27/russia-still-denies-holodomor-was-genocide.

Jones, Gareth. *"Tell Them We Are Starving": The 1933 Diaries of Gareth Jones*, with an introduction by Ray Gamache, edited by Lubomyr Luciuk. Kingston: Kashtan Press, 2015.

Kalakura, Yaroslav. "Kompleks 'sovkovosti' postradianskoi istoriohrafii." *Ukraina – Evropa – Svit: Mizhnarodnyi zbirnyk naukovykh prats*, vol. 2, 163–74. Ternopil: Vyd-vo TNPU named after V. Hnatiuk, 2015.

Kalynyk, Oleksa. "Confiscation of Arms and Money." In *Communism: The Enemy of Mankind (Documents about the Methods and Practice of Russian Bolshevik Occupation in Ukraine)*, 47–54, Plate V, 56. London: Published by The Ukrainian Youth Association in Great Britain, 1955.

Kamenetsky, Ihor. "Hrushevsky and the Central Rada: Internal Politics and Foreign Interventions." In *The Ukraine, 1917–1921: A Study in Revolution*, edited by Taras Hunczak, 33–60. Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1977.

Kardash, Peter. *Genocide in Ukraine*. Translated by Daria Myrna. Melbourne: Fortuna Publishing, 2007.

Kasianov, Heorgii. *Ukrainska intelihentsiia 1920-kh – 30-kh rokiv: sotsialnyi portret ta istorychna dolia*. Kyiv: Globus-Vik; Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, 1992.

Hird, Karolina, Riley Bailey, Grace Mappes, Madison Williams, Yekaterina Klepanchuk, and Frederick W. Kagan. "Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment." *Institute for the Study of War*, November 16, 2022. https://isw.pub/UkrWar111622.

Khlevniuk, Oleg V. *The History of the Gulag: From Collectivization to the Great Terror*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004.

Khomenko, Olena. "Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine demands special international tribunal." *Atlantic Council, Ukraine Alert*, September 9, 2022. https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/russias-war-of-aggression-in-ukraine-demands-special-international-tribunal/

Kis, Oksana. "Defying Death: Women's Experience of the Holodomor, 1932–1933." *Aspasia* 7 (2013): 42–67.

_____. "Kolektyvna pam'iat ta istorychna travma: teoretychni refleksii na tli zhinochykh spohadiv pro Holodomor." In *U poshukakh vlasnoho holosu: Usna istoriia iak teoriia, metod, dzherelo*, edited by Helinada Hrinchenko and Nataliia Khanenko-Friezen, 180–91. Kharkiv: Skhidnyi Instytut Ukrainoznavstva im. Kovalskykh, 2010.

Kitchin, George. *Prisoner of the OGPU*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1935.

Klid, Bohdan, and Alexander Motyl, eds. *The Holodomor Reader: A Sourcebook on the Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine*. Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 2012.

Koestler, Arthur. *The Yogi and the Commissar and Other Essays*. New York: Macmillan, 1945.

Kohan, Vadym, and Raisa Nahorna-Persydska. "Medychni aspekty holodu 1932–1933 rr. v Ukraini." In *Holodomor 1932–1933 rr. v Ukraini: prychyny i naslidky. Mizhnarodna naukova konferentsiia, Kyiv, 9–10 veresnia 1993 r. Materialy*, edited by S. Kulchytskyi, 106–13. Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy NAN Ukrainy, 1995.

Kołakowski, Leszek. "The Marxist Roots of Stalinism." In *The Great Lie: Classic and Recent Appraisals of Ideology and Totalitarianism*, edited by F. Flagg Taylor IV, 156–76. Wilmington: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2011.

Koliastruk, Olha. *Intelihentsiia USRR u 1920-ti roky: povsiakdenne zhyttia*. Kharkiv: "Rarytety Ukrainy," 2010.

Kondrashin, Viktor. "Golod 1932–1933 gg. – obshchaia tragediia narodov SSSR: natsionalno-regionalnyi aspect." In *Sovetskiie natsii i natsionalnaia politika v 1920–1950-e gody: Materialy VI mezhdunarodnoi nauchnoi konferentsii, Kiev, 10–12 oktiabria 2013 g.*, edited by N. Volynchik, 187–201. Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2014.

_____. "Golod 1932–33 gg. v nauchnykh issledovaniiakh i istoricheskoi publitsistike." Stenogramma vystupleniia V. V. Kondrashina. "Rossiia-Ukraina: problemy ponimaniia i otsenok Golodomora 1932–33 gg." Seminar "Klioterapiia," 19 iiulia 2010 g. *Uroki istorii: XX vek*, October 4, 2010. https://urokiistorii.ru/article/1185.

_____. "Hunger in 1932–1933 – A Tragedy of the Peoples of the USSR." *Holodomor Studies* 1, no. 2 (2009): 16–21.

Kononchuk, Tetiana. "Vasyl Barka (1908–2003)." In *Zhyvytsia: khrestomatiia ukrainskoi literatury XX stolittia*, comp. M. M. Kononchuk et al., edited by M. M. Kononchuk. Book 2, 243–47. Kyiv: Tvim inter, 1998.

Kononovych, Leonid. *Tema dlia medytasii*. Lviv: Kalvariia, 2006.

Kostiuk, Hryhory. *Stalinist Rule in the Ukraine: A Study of the Decade of Mass Terror (1929–1939)*. New York: Praeger, 1960.

Kotkin, Stephen. "Communism: A Global Reckoning." *Wall Street Journal*, November 4–5, 2017.

_____. "The Communist Century." *Wall Street Journal*, November 4–5, 2017.

Kovalenko, Lidia, and Volodymyr Maniak, eds. *33-i holod: Narodna Knyha-Memorial*. Kyiv: Radianskyi pysmennyk, 1991.

Kovaliv, Panteleimon. *Vstup do istorii skhidniosloviankykh mov*. New York: Shevchenko Scientific Society, 1970.

Kovaliv, Yu. "Kostiuk Oleksandra Fedorivna." *Entsyklopediia Suchasnoi Ukrainy* [online], ed. I. M. Dziuba, A. I. Zhukovskyi, M. G. Zhelezniak et al. Kyiv: Instytut entsyklopedychnykh doslidzhen NAN Ukrainy, 2016, https://esu.com.ua/search_articles.php?id=6148.

Krivosheev, G. F. *Soviet Casualties and Combat Losses in the Twentieth Century*. London: Greenhill Books, 1997.

Kubijovyč, Volodymyr, ed. *Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopedia*, 2 vols. Toronto: published for the Ukrainian National Association by University of Toronto Press, 1963–1971.

_____, ed. *Entsyklopediia ukrainoznavstva*, vols. 1–8. Paris–New York: Vyd-vo "Molode zhyttia," 1955–1976.

Kulchytskyi, S. V., ed. *Holod 1921–1923 rokiv v Ukraïni: Zbirnyk dokumentiv i materialiv*. Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1993.

Kulchytskyi, Stanislav. *1933: trahediia holodu*. Seriia 1 "Teoriia i praktyka KPRS. Istoriia," No. 6. Kyiv: T-vo "Znannia" URSR, 1989.

_____. *Holodomor 1932–1933 rr. iak henotsyd: trudnoshchi usvidomlennia.* Kyiv: Nash chas, 2008.

_____. "Miliony zahyblykh: skilky same?" *Den*, April 13, 2018. https://day.kyiv.ua/uk/article/istoriya-i-ya/milyony-zagyblyh-skilky-same.

_____. *The Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine: An Anatomy of the Holodomor*. Translated by Ali Kinsella. Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 2018.

_____, and Olha Movchan. *Nevidomi storinky holodu 1921–1923 rr. v Ukraïni*. Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy NAN Ukrainy, 1993.

Kupensky, Nick. "Blindness, Hypnosis, Addiction, Fetish: The Language of Holodomor Denial." Paper presented at the Danyliw Seminar on Contemporary Ukraine, University of Ottawa, November 9, 2018.

Kurinnyi, Oleksii. "Holodomor 1932–1933 rr. na Pivnichnomu Kavkazi iak henotsyd ukraintsiv." In *Materialy Mizhnarodnoi naukovo-praktychnoi konferentsii "Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv: vtraty ukrainskoi natsii" (Kyiv, 4 zhovtnia 2016)*, edited by Olesia Stasiuk, Vasyl Marochko, Volodymyr Serhiichuk et al., 73–85. Kyiv: Vyd. Oleh Filiuk, 2017.

_____. "Ukrainska spilnota Pivnichnoho Kavkazu iak ob'iekt Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv." In *Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraini iak zlochyn henotsydu zhidno z mizhnarodnym pravom*, edited by Volodymyr Vasylenko and Myroslava Antonovych, 161–72. Kyiv: Vydavnychyi dim "Kyievo-Mohylianska akademiia," 2016.

Kuromiya, Hiroaki. "Democracies and the Holodomor." *Clio World*, no. 1 (2020): 28–35.

_____. "Stalin's 'Great Breakthrough' and the Trial of the Union for the Liberation of the Ukraine." Paper prepared for the conference, "Ukraine under Stalin, 1928–1939," at the University of Toronto, March 2–4, 1990.

Kuropas, Myron. "The Forced Famine in Ukraine, 1932–1933: Curriculum and Resource Guide for Educators." Prepared by Myron B. Kuropas, Ph.D., public member, U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, with the assistance of Dr. James E. Mace, executive director, U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine.

Kurylas, Larysa. "With Gratitude to the Sisterhood: Reflections on the Creation of the National Holodomor Memorial." *Our Life* (published by UNWLA), November 2020, 20–21.

Kushnir, Lina. "Iz ditei u seli vyzhyly tilky ia i Olenka" (Out of all children in the village, only Olenka and I survived). *Ukraina moloda* (Young Ukraine), November 24, 2011. http://www.umploda.kiev.ua/number/1985/171/70696/.

Kuzio, Taras. "Putin Forever: Ukraine Faces the Prospect of Endless Imperial Aggression." *Atlantic Council*, February 13, 2020. https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/putin-forever-ukraine-faces-the-prospect-of-endless-imperial-aggression/.

_____, and Paul D'Anieri. "The Soviet Origins of Russian Hybrid Warfare." *E-International Relations*, June 17, 2018. https://www.e-ir.info/2018/06/17/the-soviet-origins-of-russian-hybrid-warfare/.

Lamb, Harold. *The March of Muscovy*. New York: Bantam Books, 1966.

Lanovyk, B. D., M. V. Traf'iak, R. M. Mateiko, and Z. M. Matysiakevych. *Ukrainska emihratsiia vid mynuvshyny do siohodennia*. Ternopil: Charivnytsia, 1999.

Lavrinenko, Iurii. *Rozstriliane vidrodzhennia: Antolohiia, 1917–1933*. Kyiv: Smoloskyp, 2004.

Leggett, George. *The Cheka: Lenin's Political Police*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Lemkin, Raphael. *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of International Law, 1944.

_____. "Soviet Genocide in the Ukraine" (typewritten notes). Folder 16. Box 2. Reel 3. ZL-273. "The Raphael Lemkin Papers, 1947–1959." Rare Books and Manuscripts Division. New York Public Library.

_____. "Soviet Genocide in the Ukraine." In *Holodomor: Reflections on the Great Famine of 1932–1933 in Soviet Ukraine*, edited by Lubomyr Y. Luciuk and Lisa Grekul, 235–42. Kingston: Kashtan Press, 2008.

_____. *Soviet Genocide in the Ukraine*, edited by Lubomyr Y. Luciuk. Kingston: Kashtan Press, 2014.

Lenin, V. I. *Between the Two Revolutions: Articles and Speeches of 1917*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971.

_____. "Critical Remarks on the National Question." In *Collected Works*, translated by Bernard Isaacs and Joe Fineberg, edited by Julius Katzer, vol. 20, 17–51. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964.

Leshuk, Leonard. *U.S. Intelligence Perceptions of Soviet Power, 1921–1946*. London: Frank Cass, 2003.

Levchuk, Nataliia, Oleh Wolowyna, Omelian Rudnytskyi, Alla Kovbasiuk, and Natalia Kulyk. "Regional 1932–1933 Famine Losses: A Comparative Analysis of Ukraine and Russia." *Nationalities Papers* (2020): 1–21. https://doi:10.1017/nps.2019.55.

Liber, George O. "The Ukrainian Revolution of 2013–2014 and the Sources of Russia's Response." In *Revolution and War in Contemporary Ukraine: The Challenge of Change*, edited by Olga Bertelsen, 41–62. Stuttgart: *ibidem*-Verlag, 2016.

_____. *Soviet Nationality Policy, Urban Growth, and Identity Change in the Ukrainian SSR, 1923–1934*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Lozynskyj, Askold S. "A New Proposal for the Government of Ukraine." *Ukrainian Weekly*, January 31, 2021.

Luciuk, Lubomyr, ed. *Not Worthy: Walter Duranty's Pulitzer Prize and the New York Times*. Kingston: Kashtan Press, 2004.

_____, and Lisa Grekul, eds. *Holodomor: Reflections on the Great Famine of 1932–1933 in Soviet Ukraine*. Kingston: Kashtan Press, 2008.

Luhovyi, Oleksander. *Vyznachne zhinotstvo Ukrainy: istorychni zhyttiepysy v chotyriokh chastynakh*. Toronto: The Ukrainian Publishing Company, 1942. Digital Collection of the National University "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy." https://dlib.ukma.edu.ua/document/87.

Lyons, Eugene. *Assignment in Utopia*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1937.

Lysyvets, Anastasia. *Speak of the Happy Life: Memoirs of the Holodomor*, translated from the Ukrainian by Alexander J. Motyl and Tatiana Yablonska. Kyiv: Dukh i Litera Publishing House, 2021.

Lytvyn, Serhii. "Vbyvstvo S. Petliury i GPU: Do istoriohrafii problemy." *Z arkhiviv VUChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, no. 2/4 (13/15) (2000): 404–7.

Mace, James E. "Is the Ukrainian Genocide a Myth?" In *Holodomor: Reflections on the Great Famine of 1932–1933 in Soviet Ukraine*, edited by Lubomyr Y. Luciuk and Lisa Grekul, 49–60. Kingston: Kashtan Press, 2008.

_____. "Research on Documents" (typewritten notes). Ukraine Famine Hearing, April 30, 1987. Box 16921. Gary Bauer Files. Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum.

_____. "The American Press and the Ukrainian Famine." In *Genocide Watch*, edited by Helen Fein, 113–32. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.

_____, and Leonid Heretz, eds. *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932–1933: Oral History Project of the Commission on the Ukraine Famine*, vols. 1–3. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990. https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/009145045.

MacKay, Michael. "The Seeds of Genocide in Russia's Invasion of Ukraine." *Radio Lemberg*, April 17, 2018. http://radiolemberg.com/ua-articles/ua-allarticles/the-seeds-of-genocide-in-russia-s-invasion-of-ukraine.

Maksudov, Sergei (Aleksandr Babionyshev). "Byl li golod 1932–33 godov na Ukraine genotsydom?" *Blog Sergeia Maksudova*, September 16, 2016. http://www.maksudovsergei.com/.

Malko, Victoria A. "A Paradigm Shift in Studying History of the Holodomor as Genocide." Paper presented at the International Forum "Ukraine Remembers, the World Acknowledges" on the 85th anniversary of the Holodomor 1932–1933 – Genocide of the Ukrainian People, Kyiv, Ukraine, November 22, 2018.

_____. "Russian (Dis)Information Warfare vis-à-vis the Holodomor-Genocide." In *Russian Active Measures: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*, edited by Olga Bertelsen, 215–62. Stuttgart and New York: *ibidem*-Verlag and Columbia University Press, 2021.

_____. *The Ukrainian Intelligentsia and Genocide: The Struggle for History, Language, and Culture in the 1920s and 1930s*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2021.

Malyar, Anna. *Telegram.* April 26, 2023. https://t.me/annamaliar/672.

"The Man-Made Famine of 1932–1933 in the Ukrainian SSR: Testimony of Dr. James E. Mace to the United States Senate, November 15, 1983," typewritten notes, 1–13.

Manning, Clarence A. *Ukraine Under the Soviets*. New York: Bookman Associates, 1953.

_____. "Woodrow Wilson and American Foreign Policy." *The Ukrainian Quarterly* XII, no. 4 (1956): 332–38.

Marochko, Vasyl. *Entsyklopediia Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraini*. Drohobych: "Kolo," 2018.

_____. *Holodomor 1932–1933 rr.* Kyiv, 2007.

_____. "Leninskyi liudomor 1921–1923 rr.: 'bratnii' rozpodil smerti." *Slovo Prosvity*, April 19–25, 2018.

_____. "O. M. Asatkin – vyhadanyi 'falsyfikator' perepysu naselennia 1937 r." *Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, no. 4 (2017): 129–49.

_____. "'Russkii Mir' u Feodosii: zaborona slova pro Holodomor." *Istorychna Pravda*, January 28, 2015. http://www.istpravda.com.ua/columns/2015/01/28/146975/.

_____. "Statystyka zhertv Holodomoru: antropolohichno-demohrafichnyi dyskurs." *Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, no. 5 (2017): 112–32.

_____. *Terytoriia Holodomoru 1932–1933 rr.* Kyiv: PP Natalia Brekhunenko, 2014.

_____. "'Torgsin': zolota tsina zhyttia ukrainskykh selian u roky holodu (1932–1933)." *Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, no. 3 (2003): 90–103.

_____, et al. *Holodomor-henotsyd: terminolohiia*. Kyiv: Natsionalnyi muzei Holodomoru-henotsydu, 2019.

_____, and Götz Hillig. *Represovani pedahohy Ukrainy: zhertvy politychnoho teroru, 1929–1941*. Kyiv: "Naukovyi svit," 2003.

Marx, Karl. *Communist Manifesto*. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company for the Great Books Foundation, 1949.

Mattingly, Daria. "[Extra]ordinary Women: Female Perpetrators of the Holodomor." In *Women and the Holodomor-Genocide: Victims, Survivors, Perpetrators*, edited by Victoria A. Malko, 51–89. Fresno: The Press at California State University, 2019.

Matula, Olha. "Svidok Holodomoru" (The Holodomor Witness). *Vira* (*Faith,* a publication of the United Ukrainian Orthodox Sisterhoods of the USA named after St. Princess Olha in South Bound Brook, NJ), vol. XXXIII, no. 2 (April–June 2008): 22.

Mazepa, Isaak. *Ukraina v ohni i buri revoliutsii, 1917–1921*. Part I. Prague: Vyd-vo "Prometei," 1950.

Midttun, Hans Petter. "Hybrid War in Ukraine – Predictions for 2019 and Beyond." *Euromaidan Press*, April 18, 2019. http://euromaidanpress.com/2019/04/18/hybrid-war-in-ukraine-predictions-for-2019-and-beyond/.

_____. "What If Russia Wins in Ukraine? Consequences of Hybrid War for Europe (Part 2)." *Euromaidan Press*, May 22, 2020. http://euromaidanpress.com/2020/05/22/what-if-russia-wins-in-ukraine-consequences-of-hybrid-war-for-europe-part-2/.

Mischenko, Michael. "Hunger as a Method of Terror and Rule in the Soviet Union." *Ukrainian Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (1949): 219–25.

Misinkevych, L. L. "Zakonodavchi zasady represyvnoi polityky radianskoi vlady v Ukraini v 20–30-ti rr. XX stolittia." *Universytetski naukovi zapysky*, no. 1 (45) (2013): 5–14.

Mordowanec, Nick. "Activist Promises to 'Exterminate' All Ukrainians Who Won't Switch Sides." *Newsweek*, October 11, 2022. https://www.newsweek.com/activist-promises-exterminate-all-ukrainians-who-wont-switch-sides-1750839.

Morenets, V. P. "Barka Vasyl." *Entsyklopediia Suchasnoi Ukrainy* [online encyclopedia], edited by I. M. Dziuba, A. I. Zhukovskyi, M. G. Zhelezniak et al. Kyiv: Instutyt entsyklopedychnykh doslidzhen NAN Ukrainy, 2003. Vol. 2. https://esu.com.ua/article-40577.

Moroz, Valentyn. "Nationalism and Genocide: The Origin of the Artificial Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine." *The Journal of Historical Review* 6, no. 2 (1985): 207–20.

Motyl, Alexander J. "Kiev's Purge: Behind the New Legislation to Decommunize Ukraine." *Foreign Affairs*, April 28, 2015. https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/ukraine/2015-04-28/kievs-purge.

Mytsyk, Iurii, ed. *Ukrainskyi holokost 1932–1933: svidchennia tykh, khto vyzhyv*, vols. 1–9. Kyiv: Vydavnychyi dim "Kyievo-Mohylianska akademiia," 2003–2013.

Naimark, Norman M. *Stalin's Genocides*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.

Neufeldt, Colin Peter. "Collectivizing the *Mutter Ansiedlungen*: The Role of Mennonites in Organizing Kolkhozy in the Khortytsia and Molochansk German National Districts in Ukraine in the late 1920s and early 1930s." In *Minority Report: Mennonite Identities in Imperial Russia and Soviet Ukraine Reconsidered*, edited by Leonard Friesen, 211–59. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018.

Nikolskyi, Volodymyr. "Represyvna diialnist orhaniv GPU pid chas holodomoru v USRR (1932–1933 rr.)." *Z arkhiviv VUChK-GPU-NKVD-KGB*, no. 2 (2001): 477–95.

Ohienko, Vitalii. "Holodomor ochyma zhertvy: immobilizatsiia ta upokorennia pratseiu iak stratehiia vyzhyvannia." *Ukraina Moderna*, January 20, 2020. http://uamoderna.com/md/ogienko-holodomor.

_____. "Posttravmatychnyi stresovyi syndrom i kolektyvna travma v osobystykh naratyvakh svidkiv Holodomoru." *Ukraina Moderna*, April 6, 2018. http://uamoderna.com/md/ogienko-holodomor-trauma.

Okhrimenko, H. "Dyrektor shkoly riatuvav ditei vid holodnoi smerti." *Ukrainske slovo*, July 20–26, 2005.

Osherowitch, Mendel. "The Fear of the *GPU* Across the Country." In *How People Live in Soviet Russia: Impressions from a Journey*, edited by Lubomyr Y. Luciuk, translated from the original Yiddish edition by Sharon Power, 187–96. Toronto: University of Toronto Chair of Ukrainian Studies and The Kashtan Press, 2020.

Osokina, Elena. *Za fasadom "Stalinskogo izobiliia": Raspredelenie i rynok v snabzhenii naseleniia v gody industrializatsii, 1927–1941*. Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1998.

_____. "Zhertvy goloda 1933 g.: skolko ikh? (Analiz demograficheskoi statistiki TsGANKh SSSR)." *Istoriia SSSR,* no. 5 (1991): 18–26.

Panné, Jean-Louis. "Rafaël Lemkin ou le pouvoir d'un sans-pouvoir." Introduction to Rafaël Lemkin, *Qu'est-ce qu'un génocide?*, 7–66. Monaco: Édition du Rocher, 2008.

Papakin, Heorhii. "*Chorna doshka": antyselianski represii (1932–1933)*. Kyiv: Instytut istorii Ukrainy NAN Ukrainy, 2013.

_____. "'Chorna doshka' Holodomoru i liudski vtraty 1932–1933 rokiv." In *Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv: Vtraty ukrainskoi natsii. Materialy mizhnarodnoi naukovo-praktychnoi konferentsii, Kyiv, 4 zhovtnia 2016 roku*, edited by Olesia Stasiuk et al., 159–64. Kyiv: Vyd. Oleh Filiuk, 2017.

Patryliak, Bohdan. "How Stalin Crushed the Euromaidan of 1930." *Euromaidan Press*, December 1, 2014. http://euromaidanpress.com/2014/12/01/punishment-for-two-maidans-putincrimea-and-stalinholodomor/.

Pauly, Matthew D. *Breaking the Tongue: Language, Education, and Power in Soviet Ukraine, 1923–1934*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014.

Perri, Giuseppe. "*Korenizacija*: an Ambiguous and Temporary Strategy of Legitimization of Soviet Power in Ukraine (1923–1933) and Its Legacy." *History of Communism in Europe*, no. 5 (2014): 131–54.

Petrov, Viktor. *Ukrainski kulturni diiachi URSR 1920–1940 – zhertvy bilshovytskoho teroru*. New York: Prolog, 1959.

Pettypiece, Shannon, and Zoë Richards. "Biden says Russia is committing 'genocide' in Ukraine." *NBC News*, April 12, 2022. https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-calls-putin-actions-ukraine-genocide-rcna24131.

Phillips, Hugh D. "Rapprochement and Estrangement: The United States in Soviet Foreign Policy in the 1930s." In *Soviet–U.S. Relations, 1933–1942*. Translated from Russian by Kim Pilarski, 9–17. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1989.

Pidhainy, S. O., ed., *The Black Deeds of the Kremlin: A White Book*, vol. 1, *Book of Testimonies*. Toronto: Ukrainian Association of Victims of Russian Communist Terror, 1953, vol. 2, *The Great Famine in Ukraine in 1932–33*. Detroit: Democratic Organization of Ukrainians Formerly Persecuted by the Soviet Regime, 1955.

Pipes, Richard. *The Formation of the Soviet Union: Communism and Nationalism, 1917–1923*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964.

_____, ed. *The Unknown Lenin: From the Secret Archive*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.

Plokhy, Serhii. *Unmaking Imperial Russia: Mykhailo Hrushevsky and the Writing of Ukrainian History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.

"Podobrat ikh [dokumenty] sleduet takim obrazom, chtoby byla vidna tragediia vsego sovetskogo krestianstva, bez aktsenta na Ukrainu" [Kondrashin V. Plan-prospekt z rekomendatsiiamy shchodo vidboru dokumentiv dlia zbirnyka 'Golod v SSSR, 1932–1933.' Dodatok do lysta kerivnyka Federalnoho arkhivnoho ahenstva Rosiiskoi Federatsii V. Kozlova do Holovy Derzhkomarkhivu Ukrainy O. Ginzburg z propozytsiamy pro spivpratsiu. 17 sichnia 2007].

Personal Archive of Hennadii Boriak. Institute of History of Ukraine of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, December 5, 2017. http://resource.history.org.ua/item/0013470.

Polonska-Vasylenko, Natalia. *Vydatni zhinky Ukrainy*. Winnipeg: Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada, printed by Trident Press, 1969.

"Poroshenko Blames Russia as USSR Successor for 1930s Famine." *Interfax-Ukraine*, November 24, 2018. https://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/547761.html.

"Poroshenko: Istorychna vidpovidalnist za Holodomor – na Rosiiskii Federatsii." *Ukrainska Pravda*, November 24, 2018. https://www.pravda.com.ua/ukr/news/2018/11/24/7199187/index.amp.

Postyshev, P. P. "The Results of the Agricultural Year 1933 and the Immediate Tasks of the Communist Party of the Ukraine" (Speech delivered at the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, November 19, 1933). In *Soviet Ukraine Today*. New York: International Publishers, 1934. Od. zb. 819. James E. Mace Library and Museum Archives. National University Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.

Pozniak-Khomenko, Natalka. "Mify i lehendy Serhiia Plachyndy" (Myths and Legends of Serhii Plachynda). *Ukraina moloda*, September 17, 2013. https://www.umoloda.kiev.ua/number/2333/169/82989/#.

Pritsak, Omeljan. "The Origin of Rus'." *The Russian Review* 36, no. 3 (1977): 249–73.

Pritsak, Omeljan, and John S. Reshetar. "The Ukraine and the Dialectics of Nation-Building." *Slavic Review* 22, no. 2 (1963): 224–55.

Prystaiko, Volodymyr, and Yuri Shapoval. *Sprava "Spilky vyzvolennia Ukrainy": nevidomi dokumenty i fakty; naukovo-dokumentalne vydannia*, edited by Ivan Ilienko. Kyiv: INTEL, 1995.

Putin, Vladimir. "On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians." July 12, 2021. http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181.

Pyrih, Ruslan, ed. *Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraini: dokumenty i materialy*. Kyiv: Kyievo-Mohylianska akademiia, 2007.

_____. *Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Documents and Materials*. Translated by Stephen Bandera. Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy Publishing House, 2008.

"Rada vyznala dii viisk Rosii v Ukraini henotsydom ukraiinskoho narodu." *Radio Svoboda*, April 14, 2022. https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-rada-vyznala-diyi-viysk-henotsydom/31803585.html.

Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its fifty-third session (23 April–1 June and 2 July–10 August 2001). In Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth session, Supplement No. 10. Extract from the *Yearbook of the International Law Commission* (United Nations, 2001), vol. II (2), 112–13, https://legal.un.org/ilc/documentation/english/reports/a_56_10.pdf.

Reshetar, Jr., John S. *The Ukrainian Revolution, 1917–1920: A Study in Nationalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952.

Reva, Iryna. *Po toi bik sebe: sotsialno-psykholohichni ta kulturni naslidky Holodomoru ta stalinskykh represii*. Dnipropetrovsk: A. L. Svidler, 2013.

Reva, L. "Do zhyttiepysu Oleksy Voropaiia – urodzhentsia Odesy." *Visnyk Odeskoho istoryko-kraieznavchoho muzeiu* (a publication of the Odesa Regional History Museum), vol. 10 (2011): 279–84. www.history.odessa.ua/publication10/stat78.htm.

Rokytska, O. "Ivchuk Vasyl Yakovych, Heroi Ukrainy: podvyh liudianosti v neliudskyi chas." *Narodna osvita* 1, no. 10 (2010). https://www.narodnaosvita.kiev.ua/Narodna_osvita/vupysku/10/statti/rokicka.htm.

Roosevelt, Eleanor. *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt.* New York: Harper, 1961.

Rosenfeldt, Niels Erik. *The "Special" World: Stalin's Power Apparatus and the Soviet System's Secret Structures of Communication*. Translated by Sally Laird and John Kendal. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2009.

Rudnytsky, Ivan L. "The Fourth Universal and Its Ideological Antecedents." In *The Ukraine, 1917–1921: A Study in Revolution*, edited by Taras Hunczak, 186–219. Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1977.

Rudnytskyi, Omelian, Nataliia Levchuk, Oleh Wolowyna, Pavlo Shevchuk, and Alla Kovbasiuk. "Demography of a Man-made Human Catastrophe: The Case of Massive Famine in Ukraine, 1932–1933." *Canadian Studies in Population* 42, no. 1–2 (2015): 53–80.

Saltan, Oleksandr. "Stepan Sosnovyi – pershyi ukrainskyi doslidnyk Holodomoru." Lecture at the Kharkiv Historical-Philological Association webinar, November 19, 2020, *HistorySumy, Inc. (Sumskyi istorychnyi portal)*, January 15, 2021. Video, 2:32–37:40. http://history.sumy.ua/sources/media-documents/9304-pershyi-doslidnyk-holodomoru.html.

Sambros, Yuri. *Shchabli: mii shliakh do komunizmu* (Stages of Life: My Journey Toward Communism). New York: Suchasnist, 1988.

Saunders, David. *The Ukrainian Impact on Russian Culture, 1750–1850.* Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, 1985.

Sawka, Jaroslaw. "American Psychiatrist: Fifteen Million Dies in Thirties' Famine." *Ukrainian Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (1982): 61–67.

"SBU vozbudila ugolovnoe delo po faktu sovershenіia Genotsida." *UNIAN*, May 25, 2009. https://www.unian.net/politics/225116-sbu-vozbudila-ugolovnoe-delo-po-faktu-sovershenіya-genotsida-dopolnennaya.html.

Scherbak, Yurii. "Ukraine is the Epicenter of the 'World Hurricane'." In *Revolution and War in Contemporary Ukraine: The Challenge of Change*, edited by Olga Bertelsen, 71–73. Stuttgart: *ibidem*-Verlag, 2016.

Scherer, John L., and Michael Jackobson. "The Collectivization of Agriculture and the Soviet Prison Camp System." *Europe-Asia Studies* 45, no. 3 (1993): 533–46.

Serbyn, Roman. "*Holodomor*: The Ukrainian Genocide." In *Rafał Lemkin: A Hero of Humankind*, edited by Agnieszka Bieńczyk-Missala and Sławomir Dębski, 205–30. Warsaw: Polish Institute of International Affairs, 2010.

_____. "The Ukrainian Famine of 1932–1933 as Genocide in Light of the U.N. Convention of 1948." *The Ukrainian Quarterly* 62, no. 2 (2006): 181–94.

_____, and Olesia Stasiuk, eds. *Raphael Lemkin: Soviet Genocide in Ukraine (Article in 28 Languages)*. Kyiv: Maisternia knyhy, 2009. https://holodomormuseum.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/978-966-2260-15-1.pdf.

Sergeitsev, Timofei. "Chto Rossiia dolzhna sdelat s Ukrainoi." *RIA Novosti*, April 3, 2022. https://ria.ru/20220403/ukraina-1781469605.html.

Serhiichuk, Volodymyr. *Genocide-Holodomor of Ukrainians, 1932–1933*. Vyshgorod: PP Serhiychuk M. I., 2018.

_____. *"Holodni, bosi i rozditi": ukrainski dity v 1932–1933 rokakh*. Vyshgorod: PP Serhiichuk M. I., 2020.

_____. "Shkilna statystyka iak vazhlyve dzherelo dlia vstanovlennia kilkosti vtrat pid chas Holodomoru-henotsydu 1932–1933 rokiv." *Narodna tvorchist i etnolohiia*, no. 5 (2018): 5–15.

_____. "To Honor All Innocent Victims of the Holodomor." In *Women and the Holodomor-Genocide: Victims, Survivors, Perpetrators*, edited by Victoria A. Malko, 119–44. Fresno: The Press at California State University, 2019.

Shapoval, Yuri. "Holodomor i ioho zv'iazok iz represiiamy v Ukraini u 1932–1934 rokah." In *Holod v Ukraini u pershii polovyni XX stolittia: prychyny ta naslidky (1921–1923, 1932–1933, 1946–1947): Materialy Mizhnarodnoi naukovoi konferentsii, Kyiv, 20–21 lystopada 2013 r.*, 153–61. Kyiv, 2013.

_____. "Letters from Kharkiv: The Truth about the Holodomor through the Eyes of Italian Diplomats." *Den*, November 20, 2007. https://day.kyiv.ua/en/article/close/letters-kharkiv.

_____. "The Case of the 'Union for the Liberation of Ukraine': A Prelude to the Holodomor?" *Holodomor Studies* 2, no. 2 (2010): 153–82.

"Shcherbytsky Says Famine Was a Result of Collectivization of Soviet Agriculture." *Ukrainian Weekly*, January 10, 1988. http://www.ukrweekly.com/old/archive/1988/028801.shtml.

Shkandrij, Myroslav. "Breaking Taboos: The Holodomor and the Holocaust in Ukrainian–Jewish Relations." In *Jews and Ukrainians*, edited by Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern and Antony Polonsky, 259–73. Portland: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2014.

_____, and Olga Bertelsen. "The Soviet Regime's National Operations in Ukraine, 1929–1934." *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 55, nos. 3–4 (2013): 417–47.

Shkvarchuk, Volodymyr. "Rik 1934: Pokhvalne slovo tov. Roizenmanu, abo masova chystka Chernihivskoi oblpartorhanizatsii." In *Na kazarmennomu stanovyshchi (narysy z istorii Chernihivshchyny dovoiennykh rokiv)*, 9–19. Chernihiv: Chernihivski oberehy, 2002.

Shlikhter, A. "Borba za khleb na Ukraine v 1919 godu." *Litopys revoliutsii*, no. 2 (29) (1928): 96–135. https://chtyvo.org.ua/authors/Litopys_revoliutsii/1928_N2_29/.

Shuhaliova, Inna. "Stratehiia vyzhyvannia ditei-ditbudynkivtsiv u roky Holodomoru 1932–1933 v Radianskii Ukraini." *Materialy mizhnarodnoi konferentsii "Shtuchni holody v Ukraini XX stolittia," 16 travnia 2018 r.* Kyiv: Vyd-vo "Kolo," 2018.

Shore, Marci. *The Ukrainian Night: An Intimate History of Revolution*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018.

Sichynsky, Volodymyr. *Ukraine in Foreign Comments and Descriptions*. New York, 1953.

Smirnov, M. B. *Sistema ispravitelno-trudovykh lagerei v SSSR*, edited by N. G. Okhotin and A. B. Roginskii. Moscow: "Zvenia," 1998. http://old.memo.ru/history/nkvd/gulag.index.htm.

Smith, Kyle. "Stalin, Famine, and the *New York Times*: Mr. Jones tells the truth about Moscow's man at the Paper of Record." *National Review*, July 2, 2020. https://www.nationalreview.com/2020/07/movie-review-mr-jones-tells-truth-about-new-york-times-communism/.

Smolii, V. A. et al., eds. *Entsyklopediia istorii Ukrainy*, vols. 1–10. Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003–2013.

_____. *Pam'iat narodu: henotsyd v Ukraini holodom 1932–1933 rokiv, Svidchennya*, 2 vols. Kyïv: Vyd. "Kalyta," 2009.

Sniehiriov, Helii. *Naboi dlia rozstrilu (Nenko moia, nenko . . .): liryko-publitsystychna rozvidka*. Kyiv: Dnipro, 1990.

Snyder, Timothy. "The Soviet Famines." In *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin*, 21–58. New York: Basic Books, 2010.

_____. "The State of the War: Thoughts from Kyiv." *Thinking about…*, September 7, 2023. https://open.substack.com/pub/snyder/p/the-state-of-the-war.

Solodko, Pavlo. "Iak pysaty pro Holodomor. Instruktsiia rosiiskym istorykam." *Istorychna Pravda*, November 26, 2012. http://www.istpravda.com.ua/artefacts/2012/11/26/101572/.

Solovey, Dmytro. *Golgota Ukrainy*. Drohobych: "Vidrodzhennia," 1993.

_____. *Golgotha of Ukraine*. Part I, *The Moscow-Bolshevik Occupation Terror in Ukrainian SSR between First and Second World War*. Winnipeg: "Ukrainian Voice," 1953.

Sorokin, Pitirim A. *Man and Society in Calamity: The Effects of War, Revolution, Famine, Pestilence upon Human Mind, Behavior, Social Organization and Cultural Life*. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1942.

"Sprava SVU: iak bilshovyky nyshchyly ukrainsku intelihentsiiu." *Istoriia bez mifiv*, August 5, 2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEkUbQ5PQVU.

S.Res.713 resolution recognizing Russian actions in Ukraine as a genocide, introduced by Sen. James E. Risch (R-ID), July 20, 2022. https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-resolution/713.

Stanton, Gregory H. "The Ten Stages of Genocide." *Genocide Watch*, 2020. https://www.genocidewatch.com/ten-stages-of-genocide.

Stasiuk, Olesia. "Deformatsiia narodnoi kultury v roky henotsydu." *Problemy istorii Ukrainy: fakty, sudzhennia, poshuky*, no. 18 (2008): 349–61.

_____. "Donosy, kradizhky, samosudy v roky Holodomoru iak naslidok represyvnoi polityky." In *Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv: Vtraty ukrainskoi natsii. Materialy mizhnarodnoi naukovo-praktychnoi konferentsii, Kyiv, 4 zhovtnia 2016*, edited by Olesia Stasiuk et al., 175–79. Kyiv: Vyd. Oleh Filiuk, 2017.

_____. *Henotsyd ukrainstiv: deformatsiia narodnoi kultury*. Kyiv: Stylos, 2008.

Steinberg, Jacques. "Word for Word/Soft Touch; From Our Men in Moscow, In Praise of the Stalinist Future." *New York Times*, October 26, 2003. https://www.nytimes.com/2003/10/26/weekinreview/word-for-word-soft-touch-our-man-moscow-praise-stalinist-future.html?searchResultPosition=2.

Stepanenko, Kateryna, George Barros, Karolina Hird, Grace Mappes, and Frederick W. Kagan. "Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment." *Institute for the Study of War*, October 29, 2022. https://isw.pub/UkrWar102922.

Stojko, Wolodymyr. "The Attitude of the United States Towards Ukrainian Statehood, 1917–1920." *The Ukrainian Quarterly*, LVII, no. 3–4 (2001): 209–23.

Subtelny, Orest. *Ukraine: A History.* 4th edition. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009.

Sutton, Anthony C. *National Suicide: Military Aid to the Soviet Union*. New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1973.

Symon Petliura: Statti, lysty, dokumenty. New York: Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S., 1956.

Sysyn, Frank. "Nestor Makhno and the Ukrainian Revolution." In *The Ukraine, 1917–1921: A Study in Revolution*, edited by Taras Hunczak, 271–304. Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1977.

Taras Shevchenko's poem "My Testament." English translation by various translators. https://taras-shevchenko.storinka.org/my-testament-poem-of-taras-shevchenko-english-translation-by-various-translators.html.

Tarasov, Ruslan, Oleksiy Grytsenko, Vitaliy Panasiuk, and Stuart Greer. "How Ukraine's Holodomor Famine Was Secretly Photographed." *RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service*, November 22, 2018. https://www.rferl.org/a/how-holodomor-famine-was-secretly-documented/29615511.html.

Tauger, Mark B. "Retrospective for Yale Agrarian Studies." September 2014. https://agrarianstudies.macmillan.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/papers/TaugerAgrarianStudies.pdf.

_____. "Review of Anne Applebaum's 'Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine'." *History News Network* (George Washington University's Columbian College of Arts and Sciences), July 1, 2018. http://historynewsnetwork.org/article/169438.

_____. "The 1932 Harvest and the Famine of 1933." *Slavic Review* 50, no. 1 (1991): 70–89.

Taylor, S. J. *Stalin's Apologist: Walter Duranty: The* New York Times*'s Man in Moscow*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Teren, Tetiana. "Neopublikovana rozmova z Anatoliiem Dimarovym: Shkoduiu, shcho v takyi strashnyi chas zhyv, koly ne mozhna bulo pysaty pravdu." *Ukrainska Pravda*, July 7, 2014. https://life.pravda.com.ua/society/2014/07/7/174315/.

Tesliuk R., Andrusyshyn N., Bachynska M. "Teoretyko-metodychni pidkhody do rozuminnia zmistu katehorii 'demohrafichni vtraty' Holodomoru-henotsydu 1932–1933 rr. ta henotsydu v Ukraini 2022 r." In *Interdystsyplinarni pidkhody u doslidzhenni Holodomoru-henotsydu: materialy V Mizhnarodnoi naukovo-praktychnoi konferentsii (Kyiv, 25 lystopada 2021 roku)*. Kyiv: Instytut doslidzhennia Holodomoru Natsionalnoho muzeiu Holodomoru-henotsydu, 2022).

The Russian Federation's Escalating Commission of Genocide in Ukraine: A Legal Analysis. Washington, D.C.: New Lines Institute for Strategy and Policy and the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, July 2023. https://newlinesinstitute.org/rules-based-international-order/genocide/the-russian-federations-escalating-commission-of-genocide-in-ukraine-a-legal-analysis/.

The Soviet Empire: Prison House of Nations and Races; A Study in Genocide, Discrimination, and Abuse of Power, prepared by Joseph G. Whelan, analyst in Eastern European affairs, at the request of the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary. U.S. Senate. 85th Cong., 2nd Sess. Document No. 122. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1958. https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008514963.

"Timothy Snyder on Germany's Historical Responsibility towards Ukraine." Lecture in the German Bundestag on June 20, 2017, organized by the parliamentary faction of the German Green Party. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDjHw_uXeKU.

Tlumachnyi slovnyk ukrainskoi movy. 2018. http://sum.in.ua/f/Gholodomor.

Tomkiw, Lydia. "Toll of the Bells." *Slate*, December 19, 2019. https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2019/12/carol-bells-shchedryk-ukraine-leontovych.html.

Totten, Samuel, William S. Parsons, and Israel W. Charny, eds. *A Century of Genocide: Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts*, 2nd. ed. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Trani, Eugene P., and Donald E. Davis. "Woodrow Wilson and the Origins of the Cold War." *World Affairs* 180, no. 4 (2017): 25–46. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26510625.

Troshchynskyi, V. P. *Mizhvoienna ukrainska emihratsiia v Evropi iak istorychne i sotsialno-politychne iavyshche*. Kyiv: Intel, 1994.

Tucker, Robert C. *Stalin as Revolutionary, 1879–1929*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1973.

Turchenko, Fedir, and Inna Shuhaliova. "Dytiacha smertnist u roky Holodomoru 1932–1933 rokiv u Zaporizhzhi." In *Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv: Vtraty ukrainskoi natsii. Materialy Mizhnarodnoi naukovo-praktychnoi konferentsii, Kyiv, 4 zhovtnia 2016*, edited by Olesia Stasiuk et al., 109–15. Kyiv: Vyd. Oleh Filiuk, 2017.

Tylishchak, Volodymyr. *1930. U.S.R.R. Povstannia: Naukovo-populiarni narysy*. Kyiv: Smoloskyp, 2016.

Ukaz Prezydenta Ukrainy №64/2022 "Pro vvedennia voiennoho stanu v Ukraini." Februry 24, 2022. https://www.president.gov.ua/documents/642022-41397.

"Ukrainians March in Protest Parade. 10,000 Here Mark Anniversary of the 1933 Famine – Clergy Join in the Procession." *New York Times*, September 21, 1953.

U.N. Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Growth of the World's Urban and Rural Population, 1920–2000.* Population Studies No. 44. New York: United Nations, 1969.

UNHCR. Ukraine Refugee Situation, March 28, 2023. https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine.

United Nations, Treaty Series. *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 9, 1948*, vol. 78. 1951. https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%2078/volume-78-i-1021-english.pdf.

U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine. *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932–1933: Report to Congress*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988. https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/007398237.

U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Select Committee on Communist Aggression. *Communist Takeover and Occupation of Ukraine*. Special Report No. 4. 83rd Cong., 2nd Sess. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954–55. https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001855373.

Vakulenko, Serhii. "1933 in History of Ukrainian Language: Current Norm and Spelling Practice (an Example of Editorial Policy of Newspaper *Komunist*)." Paper presented at the American Association for Slavic Studies Conference in Philadelphia, PA on November 22, 2008. *Historians*, December 3, 2012. http://www.historians.in.ua/index.php/en/ukrayinska-mova/488-cerhiy-vakulenko-1933-ii-rik-v-istorii-ukrainskoi-movy-chynna-norma-ta-pravopysna-praktyka-na-prykladi-redaktsiinoi-polityky-hazety-komunist.

Vandenko, Andrei. "20 Questions with Vladimir Putin: Putin on Ukraine." *TASS*, February 20, 2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NG6dxqwxGE4.

Vasylenko, Volodymyr. "Metodolohiia pravovoi otsinky Holodomoru 1932–1933 rr. v Ukraini iak zlochynu genotsydu." In *Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraini iak zlochyn henotsydu zhidno z mizhnarodnym pravom*, edited by Volodymyr Vasylenko and Myroslava Antonovych, 13–73. Kyiv: Kyievo-Mohylianska akademiia, 2016.

_____. "The West must not force a Russian 'peace' on Ukraine." *Atlantic Council*, August 15, 2021. https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/the-west-must-not-force-a-russian-peace-on-ukraine/.

Vasyliev, Valerii, and Yuri Shapoval, eds. *Komandyry velykoho holodu: Poizdky V. Molotova i L. Kaganovycha v Ukrainu ta na Pivnichnyi Kavkaz, 1932–1933 rr.* Kyiv: Heneza, 2001.

_____, and Linn Viola. *Kolektyvizatsiia i selianskyi opir na Ukraini (lystopad 1929–berezen 1930 rr.)*. Vinnytsia: Logos, 1997.

Velychenko, Steven. *Life and Death in Revolutionary Ukraine: Living Conditions, Violence, and Demographic Catastrophe, 1917–1923*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2021.

Velychenko, Stephen. *Painting Imperialism and Nationalism Red: The Ukrainian Marxist Critique of Russian Communist Rule in Ukraine, 1918–1925*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015.

V'iatrovych, Volodymyr. "Oleksandra Radchenko – represovana za pam'iat." *Istorychna Pravda*, November 11, 2013. http://www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2013/11/22/139903.

Viola, Lynne. *The Unknown Gulag: The Lost World of Stalin's Special Settlements*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

_____, V. P. Danilov, N. A. Ivnitskii, and Denis Kozlov, eds. *The War Against the Peasantry, 1927–1930: The Tragedy of the Soviet Countryside*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

Volkov, A. G. "Perepis naseleniia 1937 goda: vymysly i pravda." In *Perepis naseleniia SSSR 1937 goda: istoriia i materialy*, vyp. 3–5 (II), 6–63. Moscow: Informtsentr Goskomstata SSSR, 1990.

"V Rosii knyhy pro Holodomor pryrivniuiutsia do ekstremizmu." *Istorychna Pravda*, June 27, 2012. http://www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2012/06/27/89363/.

Vynnychenko, Volodymyr. *Vidrodzhennia natsii*, vol. III. Kyiv-Vienna: Vyd. Dzvin, 1920. http://exlibris.org.ua/vinnichenko/index.html.

Warvariv, Constantine. "America and the Ukrainian National Cause, 1917–1920." In *The Ukraine, 1917–1921: A Study in Revolution*, edited by Taras Hunczak, 352–81. Cambridge: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1977.

Weber, Max. *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie*. Edited by Marianne Weber Tübingen, Mohr, 1922.

Weissman, Benjamin. *Herbert Hoover and Famine Relief to Soviet Russia, 1921–1923*. Stanford: Hoover Institution, 1974.

Weiss-Wendt, Anton. *The Soviet Union and the Gutting of the U.N. Genocide Convention*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2017.

Werth, Nicolas. "Food Shortages, Hunger, and Famines in the USSR, 1928–33." *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies* III, no. 2 (2016): 35–49.

Wolff, Larry. *Woodrow Wilson and the Reimagining of Eastern Europe*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2020.

"Woodrow Wilson and the Liberation of Nations (Editorial)." *The Ukrainian Quarterly* XII, no. 4 (1956): 293–97.

Woropay, Olexa. *The Ninth Circle: In Commemoration of the Victims of the Famine of 1933*, edited with an introduction by James E. Mace. Cambridge: Harvard University Ukrainian Studies Fund, 1983.

Wynar, Lubomyr. "Ukrainian-Russian Confrontation in Historiography: Michael Hrushevsky versus the Traditional Scheme of 'Russian' History." *Ukrainian Quarterly* XXX, no. 1 (1974): 13–25.

Yefimenko, Hennadii. "Stvorennia SRSR." *Tsei den v istorii*, July 5, 2018. https://www.jnsm.com.ua/h/0706U/.

Yefremov, S. O. *Shchodennyky, 1923–1929*. Kyiv: Hazeta "Rada," 1997.

Yekelchyk, Serhy. *Ukraine: Birth of a Modern Nation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

"Zakon Ukrainy 'Pro Holodomor 1932–1933 v Ukraini' No. 376-V (Vidomosti Verkhovnoi Rady Ukrainy 2006, No. 50, 504), 28 November 2006." In *The Holodomor of 1932–1933 in Ukraine as a Crime of Genocide under International Law*, edited by Volodymyr Vasylenko and Myroslava Antonovych, 226–28. Kyiv: Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, 2016. https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/376-16.

Zechenter, Elizabeth M. "Uses of Rape as a Military Weapon by Russian Forces in Ukraine." *International Law News* 50, no. 2 (Winter 2023): 7–12.

Zhurbeliuk, Halyna. "Metodyka istoryko-pravovykh doslidzhen problem holodu 1921–1923 rr. v Ukraini: rozvinchannia mifiv." In *Holod v Ukraini u pershii polovyni XX stolittia: prychyny ta naslidky (1921–1923, 1932–1933, 1946–1947): Materialy Mizhnarodnoi naukovoi konferentsii, Kyiv, 20–21 lystopada 2013 r.*, edited by Myroslava Antonovych, Hennadii Boriak, Oleksandr Hladun, and Stanislav Kulchytskyi, 51–58. Kyiv, 2013.

Zhurzhenko, Tatiana. "'Capital of Despair': Holodomor Memory and Political Conflicts in Kharkiv after the Orange Revolution," *East European Politics and Societies* 25, no. 3 (2011): 597–639.

Zhvanko, Liubov. *Sotsialni vymiry Ukrainskoi Derzhavy (kviten – hruden 1918 r.)*. Kharkiv: Prapor, 2007.

_____. "Tyf, cholera, 'ispanka': zakhody uriadu Skoropadskoho z podolannia epidemii." *Ukraina Moderna*, March 20, 2020. http://uamoderna.com/md/zhvanko-skoropadsky-pandemics.

Index

Page references for figures are italicized.

About the Author

Dr. Victoria A. Malko is a founding coordinator of the Holodomor Studies in the Department of History at California State University, Fresno. She is the editor of *Women and the Holodomor-Genocide: Victims, Survivors, Perpetrators* published in English (The Press at California State University, 2019), and Ukrainian (National University "Kyiv-Mohyla Academy" Publishing House, 2019); contributor to *Russian Active Measures: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*, edited by Olga Bertelsen (Columbia University Press, 2021); and author of *The Ukrainian Intelligentsia and Genocide: The Struggle for History, Language, and Culture in the 1920s and 1930s* (Lexington Books, 2021). She is a member of the editorial board of *American History and Politics*, a bilingual peer-reviewed journal, published by the Department of History of Taras Shevchenko National University, and *Ukrainian Voices*, a book series, published by *ibidem*-Verlag. She has served on the advisory board of the National Holodomor-Genocide Museum in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Genocide Studies | World History

In a complex globalized and technological century, which will be remembered as a new century of violence and genocides, Victoria A. Malko has written this important book to alert readers to new challenges and tasks that they will inevitably have to address—state violence, genocide, and unconventional wars, including the weaponization of food. A monumental scholarly work and excellent teaching material enriched by archival documents and witness testimonies, this book addresses the most crucial etiological, ontological, and epistemological questions associated with the Holodomor and the genocidal anti-Ukrainian nature of Soviet policies in Ukraine.

OLGA BERTELSEN, Tiffin University

Finally, a textbook on the Ukrainian genocide of 1932–1933, the Holodomor! Victoria Malko has performed an inestimable service for Holodomor studies by producing a jargon-free text that explains the causes and consequences of the Holodomor and provides a selection of key Soviet documents and Ukrainian eyewitness accounts. Her book will appeal and be of great use to a broad audience, ranging from students to journalists to policymakers to curious readers who desire to know more about one of the greatest crimes of the twentieth century.

ALEXANDER MOTYL, Rutgers University-Newark

Victoria Malko's *Holodomor, the Genocide of the Ukrainians: A History with Sources* is an invaluable addition to teaching the major historical developments essential to every classroom. Her textbook provides a compelling exploration of the Ukrainian Holodomor in all its complexity, deftly situating these events in their historical context while guiding students and other readers to consider the major consequences of events that have been undertaught in many classrooms around the world for far too long. Her extensive usage of primary sources provides a rich evidence base that is sure to spark important research and classroom conversations, while her carefully designed learning activities for students (and their teachers) based on these sources (including archival documents and witness accounts) will guide learners in both the content and history of the Holodomor while providing them critical skills in historical document-based learning. This textbook is sure to become both a teacher and student favorite, as it connects major historical events to dynamics now unfolding in real-time.

KRISTINA HOOK, Kennesaw State University

In 1932, the Soviet leadership with the support of the secret police began the systematic genocide of the Ukrainians, a targeted group that had opposed denationalization and political subjugation for decades since the Bolshevik occupation in the 1920s. In the 1920s, Moscow began attacks on Ukrainian intellectual and cultural elites, most of whom were exterminated. The second prong of the attack was aimed at the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. Its autonomy was liquidated, churches destroyed, and clergy arrested, exiled or executed. The third prong of the genocide targeted the farming population, backbone of the Ukrainian nation. By 1933, the farmers with their dependents were deported to labor camps in the Russian Far North and Siberia or deliberately starved to death when grain and everything edible was confiscated, and travel in search of provisions was banned, the borders of Ukraine being sealed by the military and special security forces. The exact number of victims may not be known because the perpetrators deliberately destroyed evidence. While estimates vary, some Soviet, Russian, and Ukrainian historians and demographers suggest a range of 3 to 5 million victims; however, recent research by Ukrainian scholars indicates that as many as 10 million Ukrainians became victims of the totalitarian regime. It was the most devastating genocide of the twentieth century, perpetrated by Joseph Stalin and his henchmen. The Kremlin covered up the crime and denied it for over half a century. The Ukrainian people today are again facing the threat of genocide as a result of Vladimir Putin's military invasion of their homeland. Forced out of their homes then and now, Ukrainians built lives in exile in all corners of the globe. Millions have made the United States of America their home. Today, the grandsons and granddaughters of Holodomor survivors bravely defend their country's sovereignty and national identity in the face of unimaginable violence and destruction. It will take generations to recover from this historical trauma.

In this textbook, the history of the Holodomor is approached from two perspectives: through a macro history of Ukraine in the 1920s and 1930s intertwined with a micro history of Holodomor survivors. Links to historical documentaries, video recordings of interviews with witnesses, museum exhibitions, and historical maps are embedded in the text. The materials can be used in lessons on the history of Ukraine of the early twentieth century, special history courses that focus on the study of totalitarianism, twentieth century dictatorships, as well as courses in genocide studies, sociology, psychology, criminology, ethics, and philosophy.

ISBN 978-1-959274-06-3
9 781959 274063
ISBN 978-1-959274-08-7
9 781959 274087