

The Present State of Ukrainian Historiography on the Holodomor and Prospects for Its Development

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The question of the Famine-Genocide of 1932–1933 will remain at the center of heated social and political debate in Ukraine for some time to come. This is a matter not only of deeply traumatized memories and a wholly understandable yearning to smash the wall of silence built up over the decades by the Communist regime about this terrible human catastrophe. The significance of the Holodomor issue lies in the fact that the manner of its perception allows one to clarify Ukraine’s place in a temporal matrix of “past—present—future,” to be aware of the importance of safeguarding the state independence of Ukraine, as well as her professing to democratic values and to the fact that there is no alternative to a European path for her development.

While defending the academic principle of distancing historical study from politics and rejecting a didactic role for history, one cannot argue against the weighty role of historians in influencing how society imagines its own past. By the same token, one cannot deny social influences on the process of “creating historical scholarship.” The aim of this article is to analyze the evolution of research on the Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine over an extended period of time, beginning in the 1930s and ending in the present day.

I will examine the complicated path followed by Ukrainian historical scholarship—from the denial of the very fact of the Holodomor under the Soviet policy of “imposed amnesia” to its acknowledgment and the identification of this crime as an act of genocide on the part of the Soviet regime. In fact, today a large number of professional historians realize the importance of researching the Soviet collectivization of agriculture and the Famine through the prism of a simultaneous analysis of socio-economic, political, ideological, and nationality issues. This should be viewed as an undeniable achievement.

Nevertheless, some negative trends also affect contemporary Holodomor studies, including a lingering closed-mindedness among Ukrainian historians, who tend to participate anemically in the sorts of scholarly

discussions on the matter taking place in the West. Moreover, there are obvious signs of the issue’s politicization, manifested by the presence of Communist and anti-Semitic interpretations of the Holodomor in the field of historical writing in contemporary Ukraine.

Holodomor Historiography to 1991

In order to better appreciate the development of the historiography of the Holodomor, it is useful for one to have an idea of how the matter had been dealt with in Soviet times.

The earliest treatments of the Famine basically involved its total denial—an “imposed amnesia,” if you will—which enabled an obliterative celebration of the gains of socialism in the Soviet countryside in the early 1930s. These were “codified” in 1938 in the *Short Course of the History of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of the Soviet Union*.¹ Rather than providing a truthfully apocalyptic account of the horrors that took place in the countryside, these accounts painted a picture of the victorious strides made by the regime towards the establishment of a happy and prosperous rural life. For several decades thereafter, the political and ideological concepts of the *Short Course* remained the norm throughout the USSR, including the Ukrainian SSR.²

However, notwithstanding the Stalinist regime’s repressive and punitive actions, as well as its pervasive

1. *Istoriia Vsesoiuznoi Komunistychnoi partii (bil'shovykiv). Korotkyi kurs* (Kyiv, 1938).

2. For example, see the dissertation synopses (“avtoreferaty”) M. I. Tsapko, “Bor’ba bol’shevikov Khar’kovschiny za kollektivizatsiiu sel’skogo khoziaistva (1928-1932)” (Kyiv, 1952); A. P. Iaroshenko, “Bor’ba komitetov nezamozhnykh selian Ukrainy pod rukovodstvom bol’shevistskoi partii za kollektivizatsiiu sel’skogo khoziaistva (1929-1930)” (Lviv, 1952); and S. N. Ioffe, “Bor’ba Kommunisticheskoi partii za kollektivizatsiiu sel’skogo khoziaistva (1928-1934): Na materialakh Chernigovskoi oblasti” (Kyiv, 1953) as well as D. F. Virnyk et al, eds., *Narysy rozvytku narodnoho hospodarstva Ukraïns’koi RSR* (Kyiv, 1949); Sergei Trapeznikov, *Bor’ba partii bol’shevikov za kollektivizatsiiu sel’skogo khoziaistva v roky pervoi stalinskoi piatiletki* (Moscow, 1951); and Diadichenko et al, eds., *Istoriia Ukrainkoi SSR*, vol. 2 (Kyiv: Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR, 1956), 358 and passim.

propaganda, memories of the Famine of 1932–1933 never faded in Ukraine, particularly at the level of social consciousness.

During the brief period of the Thaw under Nikita Khrushchev, the problems involved in the collectivization of agriculture could be alluded to,³ but the subject of the Famine remained prohibited in public discourse. This is hardly surprising: the criticism of Stalin's cult of personality, initiated by the ruling Communist Party, had clear ideological limits, and it could certainly not extend to the existing system of authority. In this context, the subject of the Ukrainian Famine remained “politically dangerous”: the open recognition of the millions of deaths during the Famine could not only potentially undermine the effectiveness of the Communist regime, but also its legitimacy. Sensitive to this issue, in the early days of the Brezhnev era Bolshevik ideologists re-imposed a strict information embargo. The so-called “liberal interpretations” of “food stocks problems” in early 1933 made by historians at the time of the Thaw were “corrected” and suppressed.⁴

Soviet authorities also tried to maintain an informational blockade abroad, but various organizations in the Ukrainian diaspora constantly “hindered” these efforts, and sought for decades to direct world attention to the crimes committed by Stalin and his totalitarian regime. The success of the Ukrainian diaspora in attracting public attention to the issue of the Famine during the commemoration of its fiftieth anniversary in the early 1980s⁵ and the continued action on the part of diaspora Ukrainians and Western scholars⁶—particularly the work of the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine—compelled the Soviet authorities, on the eve of the release of the Commission's preliminary results, to reconsider their total ban on mentioning the Famine. This led to the publication of some cautious articles. The first appeared in the November 1987 issue of the theoretical journal of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union's Central Committee, *Kommunist*.⁷ It suggested

a new “historical scheme,” acknowledged problems with agriculture in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and even mentioned the fact that a famine had occurred in 1932–1933. This item was accompanied by an explicit statement that the fault for this lay not with the regime (i.e., the ruling Communist Party), but in “the breach of the principles of Lenin's cooperative plan” by Stalin. It also suggested that the Famine of 1932–1933 should be seen as a common disaster suffered by all Soviet people: “from Ukraine, the Don and the Kuban; to the Middle and Lower Volga region; and to the Southern Ural Mountains and Kazakhstan.”⁸

Of course, the decision by Communist authorities to stop denying the fact of the Famine was not simply the result of external pressure. The liberalization of social and political life in the USSR in the era of glasnost and perestroika also contributed significantly. This did not mean, however, that the authorities themselves were ready to pursue active research into the matter or to offer assistance to Westerners looking to investigate it further. Perestroika and glasnost notwithstanding, ordinary professional Soviet historians had no access to the necessary archival documents regarding the Famine; these records were opened only to a limited group of Party scholars who were considered reliable.

Throughout 1988 the leading all-Union and republican Party and Soviet periodicals continued to publish material that reflected the official historical scheme of the events in the late 1920s and early 1930s.⁹ Nevertheless, there was a substantial growth in the number of authors, mainly journalists and other writers, who sought to present an alternative to the official interpretation of events by showing the tragedy in the way it was preserved in the people's memory. This task was primarily undertaken by the historical and educational organization Memorial, founded in 1988. One of its major projects, spearheaded by the late Volodymyr Maniak, was the publication of a *Knyha-memorial* (Book-Memorial) that would challenge the reigning policy of forgetfulness.¹⁰

All the same, the Communist Party expected to assume the role of ideological curator to scholars interpreting the “difficult chapters” of the historical past

3. *Istoriia Ukrainiskoi SSR*, vol. 2 (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 1969), 295.

4. *Ocherki istorii Kommunisticheskoi partii Ukrainy*, 4th rev ed (Kyiv: Political Literature Publishing House of Ukraine, 1977), 459 and 472.

5. Dzheims Meis [James Mace], “Vidznachennia ukrains'koiu diasporoiu 50-richchia holodomoru,” in *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini: prychny ta naslidky*, eds. V. A. Smolii and V. M. Lytvyn (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003), 796–800.

6. Robert Conquest, *Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (London: Hutchinson, 1986); Roman Serbyn and Bohdan Krawchenko, eds., *Famine in Ukraine, 1932-1933* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986); and Dzeims Meis, “Diial'nist' Komisii Kongresu SShA z vvychennia holodu v Ukraini,” in *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini: prychny ta naslidky*, eds. V. A. Smolii and V. M. Lytvyn (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003).

7. V. Danilov, “Oktiabr' i agrarnaia politika partii,” *Kommunist*, 16 (1314) (1987): 29–38. See also Danilov's article in the newspaper

Sovetskaia Rossia, 11 October 1987.

8. *Ibid.*, 36.

9. V. P. Danilov, “Diskussiiia v zapadnoi presse o golode 1932-1933 i 'demographicheskoi katastrofe' 30–40-kh godov v SSSR,” *Voprosy istorii*, no. 3 (1988): 116–121; V. P. Danilov, “Kollektivizatsiia: kak eto bylo/Besedu s zav. sektorom Instituta istorii SSSR AN SSSR zapisal A. Il'in,” *Pravda*, 26 August and 16 September 1988; S. V. Kul'chyts'kyi, “Do otsinky stanovyscha v sil's'komu hospodarstvi URSR u 1931-1933 rr.,” *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, no. 3 (324) (1988); S. V. Kul'chyts'kyi, “Trydtsiat' tretii,” *Sil's'ki visti*, 12 June 1988.

10. V. Maniak, “Narodovi poveraiet'sia istoriia, a istorii—pravda. Rozdumy nad rukopysom knyhy-memorialu ‘1933: Holod,’” *Literaturna Ukraina*, 27 July 1989.

that had recently come out into the open. In January 1990, it instructed scholars and educators to start studying the Famine, Stalinist repressions and other problems “caused by the cult of personality and its consequences,” with the findings to be submitted “for the consideration of the Central Committee.”¹¹ But the times had changed, and the Party’s ideological grip over historians was becoming weaker and weaker.

The staging of a landmark international symposium titled “The Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine” in September 1990, with scholars from the United States, Canada, Italy and West Germany also taking part, reflected the growing activity of non-Party bodies with regard to the issue.¹² Interestingly enough, the publication of the Party-sponsored *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv na Ukraïni: Ochyma istorikiv, movoiu dokumentiv* (The Famine 1932-1933 in Ukraine: Through the Eyes of Historians, in the Language of Documents) was formally approved on the first day of the symposium. When the book appeared in November 1990,¹³ many readers were shocked by its contents. At this point, Ukraine’s Party leadership affirmed that the subject of the Famine had been “finally clarified” and was now “closed to public discussion.” Given the general indifference shown by the broader Ukrainian public to the matter, as well as vociferous criticisms mounted by neo-Stalinist elements of how collectivization and the Famine had been presented, initially it seemed that this might happen. Nevertheless, Famine research would continue.

The Famine of 1932-33 as Interpreted by Today’s Ukrainian Historians

After the declaration of Ukraine’s independence, thanks to the resulting absence of ideological pressure and the new-found freedom of access to archival resources, a number of Ukrainian researchers of the Famine of 1932–33 directed their energies towards creating a more comprehensive factographic map of the tragic events in Ukraine as a whole and at the regional level. And yet, there emerged a dominant tendency to regionalize research, as attested by numerous scholarly articles, dissertations, and monographs.¹⁴ The desire to provide a

dramatic increase in documentary proof that a genocidal famine had taken place also prompted a series of works in which scholars adopted the role of commentators on published archival materials and eyewitness testimonies. Typical of these were 33: *Holod: Narodna Knyha-Memorial* ([19]33: Famine: A People’s Book-Memorial),¹⁵ *Chorna knyha Ukraïny* (The Black Book of Ukraine)¹⁶ and others.

As scholarly analyses of the Holodomor probed ever deeper, it became increasingly apparent that the divisions (which emerged both in Ukraine and beyond its borders) between the proponents of “economic history” (those who sought to elucidate the reasons for and mechanisms of the occurrence of the Famine by way of a detailed analysis of Stalin’s agrarian policy) and “political history” (those who focused primarily on the study of politico-ideological processes and the specifics of the nationalities policy in Stalin’s “Revolution from Above”) were historiographically unproductive. However, the structuralist approach to historical processes, which involves the study of collectivization through the

stranakh Vostochnoi Evropy (20-30 roky XX veka) (Kharkiv, 1994), vol. 1, 223-230; S. V. Markova, *Naseleni punkty Kam'ianets'-Podil's'kyi State Pedagogical University, Naukovi pratsi*, 1998, vol. 2 (4): *Istorychni nauky*, 191-194; N. Babych, “Dramatychni trydtsiati (do temy “Velykyi holod na Myrhorodshchyni 1932-33 rr.” in *Storinky istorii Myrhorodshchyny*, vyp. 3 (Poltava 2002), 157-187; V. M. Zubkovs'kyi, “Holodomor 1932-1933 rr. na Zaporizhzhzi,” *Naukovi zapysky*, vyp. 46: (*istorychni nauky*) (Kyiv-Berdians'k, 2002), 109-113; and M. Sribniak, “Sumshchyna v umovakh holodomoru 1932-1933,” *Slovo Prosvity*, 2005, no. 42 ff.

The following is a list of dissertations dealing with the Holodomor, each with its own 18-20 page synopsis published in the city in which it was completed: N. P. Romanets, “Selianstvo i radians'ka vlada u 1928-1933 rokakh: problema vzaiemovidnosyn (na materialakh Dnipropetrovs'koï oblasti)” (Dnipropetrovs'k University, 1995); Ie. Iu. Iatsenko, “Holodomor 1932–33 na Kharkivshchyni” (Kharkiv State University, 1999); S. V. Markova, “Holodomor 1932-1933 na Podilli” (Chernivtsi National University, 2002); and A. M. Bakhtin, “Kolektyvizatsiia sil's'koho hospodarstva i holod na terytorii Pivdnia Ukraïny (1929-1933 roky)” (Kyiv Mohyla Academy National University, 2006).

I. H. Shul'ha, *Holod na Podilli* (Vinnytsia, 1993); B. I. Tkachenko, *Pid chornym tavrom: Istorychna rozvidka pro henotsydy na Ukraïni i, zokrema, na Lebedynshchyni v 1932-1933r., skriplena naivysshchym suddeiu—liuds'koïu pam'iattiu* (Lebedyn, 1994); R.H. Nesterov, *Trahichni roky na Myronivshchyni (1928-1932): Z litopysu ridnoho kraiu* (Myronivka, 2000); I.V. Rybak, A. Iu Matvieiev, *Trahichniy perelom. Kolektyvizatsiia i rozkurkulennia na Podilli ta Pivdenno-Skhidnii Volyni* (Kam'ianets'-Podil's'kyi, 2001); S.V. Markova, *Holodomor 1932-1933 na Podilli* (Kyiv, 2003); V. H. Akopian et al, *Trahediia stolittia: holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv na Mykolaïvshchyni* (Mykolaïv, 2003); L. D. Didorenko, *Holodomor 1932-1933 rr. na Krasnopil'shchyni* (Sumy, 2003); and M. Shytiuk and A. Bakhtin, *Pivdenna Ukraïna: kolektyvizatsiia i holod (1929-1933 roky)* (Mykolaïv, 2007).

15. L. B. Kovalenko and V. A. Maniak, comps., 33: *Holod: Narodna Knyha-Memorial* (Kyiv, 1991).

16. F. Zubanych, comp., *Chorna knyha Ukraïny: Zbirnyk dokumentiv, arkhivnykh materialiv, lystiv, dopysiv, stattei, doslidzhen', ese* (Kyiv, 1998).

11. Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine [TsDAHOU], f.1, op. 32, spr. 2859 ark. 29. The text of this missive was published in *Radians'ka Ukraïna*, 4 February 1990.

12. “Holodomor: bil' narodnyi,” *Trybuna*, no. 11 (1990); “Mizhnarodnyi simpozium ‘Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv na Ukraïni,’ Kyïv, 5–7 veresnia 1990r.,” *Visnyk Akademii nauk Ukraïns'koï RSR*, 1 (1991).

13. F. M. Rudykh, ed., and R. Ia. Pyrih, comp., *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv na Ukraïni: ochyma istorikiv, movoiu dokumentiv* (Kyiv: Political Literature Publishing House of Ukraine, 1990).

14. E. I. Kovalenko, “Golod 1932-1933 v Donbasse,” *Letopis' Donbassa* (Donets'k, 1992), vyp. 1, 54-56; Ie. Iu. Iatsenko, “Stalinizm i holod 1933 r. v Ukraïni (na materialakh Slobozhanshchyny),” in *Totalitarizm i antitotalitarne dvizheniia v Bolgarii, SSSR i drugikh*

prism of a simultaneous analysis of socio-economic, politico-ideological, and nationalities issues, provided a way of moving beyond the limitations and inadequacies of research caused by the abovementioned division.

A structuralist approach underpinned *Holod 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: prychny i naslidky* (The Famine of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Causes and Effects, published by the Institute of the History of Ukraine.¹⁷ In its eleven chapters an array of scholars, most of whom were well known in the field in Ukraine, analyzed the socio-economic, political and ethnonational aspects of the collectivization of agriculture and the Holodomor, as well as the latter's demographic effects. Also examined were elements of the information blockade imposed on the subject; contemporary efforts to overcome this blockade by Ukrainian émigré political and community organizations; and the successful actions to this end by the Ukrainian diaspora, the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine and the International Commission of Inquiry into the 1932–33 Famine in Ukraine in the 1980s, among others. These articles were complemented by a study of extant sources, a historiographic study, and a bibliographic study.

The fracturing of Soviet-era intellectual isolation from the international scholarly historiographical community, as well as the ongoing study of archival sources and the memoirs of eyewitnesses, created the necessary conditions for the creation of new conceptual models appropriate to a deeper understanding of the complex dilemmas of the period of collectivization and famine, as well as for the establishment of a connection to the current period of Ukrainian history. The issue of the genocidal nature of the Famine of 1932–33 acquired a particular importance in this regard.

Russian historians have uniformly maintained that the description of the Famine as genocidal is juridically inaccurate and politically motivated, dismissing the term “Holodomor” as an ideologically tainted neologism. For their part, Western historians have expressed varying views on this issue, while those in Ukraine have for the most part been in agreement that “genocide” and “Holodomor” are entirely appropriate terms for the events of 1932–33. Opposition to these terms in Ukraine today is, as a rule, expressed by representatives of particular political forces outside the context of scholarly discussion.

The social significance of this issue has prompted scholars to focus on the adoption in 1948 of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (commonly, the Genocide Convention) and the various definitions of the concept of “genocide.” This question was examined by George Grabowicz in the article “Holodomor i pam'iat' (The Ho-

lodomor and Memory), published in the journal *Krytyka* in 2003.¹⁸ Grabowicz noted the particular political conditions surrounding the adoption of the Convention (including the demands by the USSR and the UK to exclude “political and other groups” from the definitional list of victims) and provided a sketch of the current scholarly discussion about the concept of genocide. The Harvard-based scholar also expressed his conviction that “more important than a basic and fixed juridical definition of the concept of genocide is the dynamic of its development, its evolution during the course of the genocidal twentieth century, and its function in the future.”¹⁹

Current interpretations of the UN Convention of 1948 in international jurisprudence were the subject of an analysis by Prof. Oleksii Haran' of the Kyiv Mohyla Academy, in his article “Recognition of the Holodomor as Genocide: A Problem of Interpretation or Political Manipulation?”²⁰ The author refers to material that appears on Prevent Genocide International's Web site (<http://www.preventgenocide.org/>) and pays particular attention to the differentiation by jurists between the concepts of “ethnic” and “national” groups as used in the Convention.²¹ Haran' stresses the consequent importance of “speaking of the genocide of the Ukrainian people, which includes representatives of other ethnic groups who also fell victim to the Holodomor.”²²

Grounds for describing the Ukrainian Famine as genocide in politico-legal terms were presented by Stanislav Kul'chyts'kyi in his monographs (in Ukrainian) *Holod 1932–1933 rr. v Ukraïni iak henotsyd* (The Famine of 1932–1933 as Genocide) and (in Russian) *Pochemu on nas unichtozhal? Stalin i ukrainskii Golodomor* (Why did he annihilate us? Stalin and the Ukrainian Holodomor).²³ Dr. Kul'chyts'kyi proceeded from what he maintains is the necessity of viewing the tragedy of the Holodomor in Ukraine not in ethnic but in national terms. “The Ukrainian people,” he emphasized, “should be understood not only as an ethnos, but also

18. Hryhorii Hrabovych, “Holodomor i pam'iat',” *Krytyka*, 12 (2003).

19. Ibid.

20. A. Garan' “Priznanie Golodomora genotsidom: problema tolkovannii ili politicheskaiia manipuliatsiia?,” *Ukraina segodnia* (online resource), 17 May 2007.

21. Notably the author puts forth a judicial definition of these concepts: “A national group means a set of individuals whose identity is defined by a common country of nationality or national origin”; “an ethnic group is a set of individuals whose identity is defined by common cultural traditions, language or heritage.”

22. Ibid.

23. S. Kul'chyts'kyi, *Holod 1932–1933 rr. v Ukraïni iak henotsyd* (Kyiv: National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine Institute of History, 2005) and S. Kul'chitskii, *Pochemu on nas unichtozhal? Stalin i ukrainskii Golodomor* (Kyiv: Ukrainskaia press grupa, 2007). In 2008, this author published another work on the subject from a more strictly academic perspective; see S. Kul'chyts'kyi, *Holod 1932–1933 rr. iak henotsyd: trudnoshchi usvidomlennia* (Kyiv: Nash chas, 2008).

17. V. M. Lytvyn and V. A. Smolii, eds., *Holod 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: prychny i naslidky* (Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003).

as a political nation, and Ukraine not only as a territory where Ukrainians live, but also as a country. If we adopt this approach to the events of 1932–33, then we should recognize that the genocide was a terror campaign with famine as a means, directed at Ukrainians in the Ukrainian SSR and the Kuban region under the guise of a grain procurement operation.²⁴

Dr. Kul'chyts'kyi was also drawn to the constructive ideas of Terry Martin about a “national interpretation of the Holodomor,”²⁵ and of Andrea Graziosi about the differences that distinguish various instances of starvation in 1931–33 in the USSR as a whole, the Kazakh famine and epidemics of 1931–33, and the Ukraino-Kuban Holodomor of late 1932 and early 1933.²⁶ In his development of these concepts, Kul'chyts'kyi attempts to integrate the events of the Famine in Ukraine with the general context of the Communist Revolution of 1918–38, and thus sets apart those events/elements, which were common to the overall Soviet and specific Ukrainian situations.²⁷ In so doing, he also highlights those phenomena which were unique to Ukraine and the Kuban region in late 1932 and early 1933, in particular the massive number of deaths caused by the confiscation of all foodstuffs, not only grain, from the peasants of these territories.²⁸

In examining the Famine-Genocide through the prism of analysis of the functioning of the Ukrainian SSR as a state entity (albeit a *de facto* state with limited jurisdiction), Kul'chyts'kyi makes the fate of the various ethnic groups of which the republic's population was comprised an important consideration. Research of this topic in Ukraine is only now beginning to gain momentum, for example, the series of scholarly articles published on the impact of the Famine on Ukraine's Germans and Jews.²⁹ This issue has also been examined as part of more general overviews of the life of one or another of the republic's ethnic communities in the 1920s and 1930s.³⁰

24. S. Kul'chyts'kyi, *Holod 1932-1933 rr. v Ukraïni iak henotsyd* (Kyiv: Institute of the History of Ukraine, 2005).

25. Teri Martin [Terry Martin], “Pro kozhnoho z nas dumaie Stalin,” *Krytyka*, 12 (2003).

26. A. Gratsiozi [A. Graziosi], “Holod u SRSR 1931-1933 rr. ta ukraïns'kyi holodomor,” *Ukraïns'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, 3 (2005).

27. S. Kul'chitskii, *Pochemu on nas unichtozhal? Stalin i ukraïnskii Golodomor* (Kyiv, 2007), 90-91.

28. *Ibid.*, 86, 97-101. The author's thoughts on this matter are expressed more succinctly in his *Holod 1932-1933 rr. v Ukraïni iak henotsyd* (Kyiv, 2005), 314.

29. V. V. Ivanenko, “Golod nachala 30-ykh godov i sud'ba nemetskih kolonistov,” *Voprosy germanskoi istorii* (Dnipropetrovs'k, 1996), 150–157; A. I. Beznosov, “Mennonity iuga Ukraïny v gody ‘velikogo pereloma’ (1928–33 gg.)” *Voprosy germanskoi istorii* (Dnipropetrovs'k, 2001), 75–88; Ia. S. Khonihsman, “Kolektyvizatsiia, holodomor, i zanepad ievreis'koho zemlerobstva v Ukraïni,” *Ukraïns'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, 2-3 (2004): 66–75 and *passim*.

30. The dissertations, each with a short published synopsis,

Closely related to the matter of ascertaining the genocidal nature of the events of 1932–33 is the problem of establishing the motive and intentions of those who caused the Holodomor. Although most Ukrainian researchers agree that the Famine was caused by the large-scale political and socio-economic experimentation conducted by the Stalinist authorities, and more directly, by the confiscation of foodstuffs and the blockade of those regions afflicted by starvation, the country's scholars are nevertheless divided on their interpretation of the motives for such actions. Some emphasize Stalin's desire to destroy the economic independence of the peasantry and force them onto collective farms³¹; others believe that eliminating the Ukrainian national movement's base of support and neutralizing the threat of “Ukrainian separatism” to be of primary importance³²; and still others (this approach is gaining wider acceptance) propose that a combination of social and national motives stood behind the actions of the Stalinist leadership.³³

Another important aspect of assessing the regime's motives is the examination of the threats perceived by the Communist authorities (real or imagined), as well as the determination of whether a close connection can be made between Stalin's urge to eliminate such threats and the Holodomor. In this respect, the studies of the forms and the scale of the Ukrainian population's opposition to forcible collectivization, published by Valerii Vasl'iev, Oksana Hanzha, and Kul'chyts'kyi,³⁴ as well as those

include N. V. Ostasheva, “Kryza menonits'koï spil'noty ta zakordonna menonits'ka dopomoha (1914–poch. 30-kh rr. XX st.)” (Dnipropetrovs'k, 1996); V. O. Dotsenko, “Ievreis'ke hromads'ke zemleoblashtuvannia v Ukraïni (20-ti–30-ti roky XX stolittia)” (Kyiv, 2005); L. L. Misinskevych, “Natsional'ni menshyny Podillia v 20–30-kh rr. XX stolittia” (Kyiv, 2000); and others.

31. I. H. Shul'ha, *Holod na Podilli* (Vinnytsia, 1993); M. M. Shytiuk, *Nasyl'nyts'ka kolektyvizatsiia sil's'koho hospodarstva iak odna z holovnykh prychnyn holodu 1932–1933 rokiv*; and *Holod-genotsyd 1932–33 rokiv na terytorii Mykolaivshchyny: pohliady istoryky, ochevydstiv, arkhivni materialy* (Mykolaiv, 2003), 33-44, 50-67.

32. V. I. Ulianych, *Teror holodom i povstans'ka borot'ba proty henotsydu ukraïntsv u 1921–1933 rokakh* (Kyiv, 2004).

33. *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: prychnyny i naslidky* (Kyiv, 2003); S. Kul'chitskii, *Pochemu on nas unichtozhal? Stalin i ukraïnskii Golodomor* (Kyiv, 2007); and others. Professor Simon Gerhard of the University of Cologne provides some perspective on this approach when he rightfully notes that from the point of view of Stalin regime “both the economically independent peasant and the nationally conscious Ukrainian were enemies and had to be humbled.” See Gerhard's “Chy buv holodomor 1932-1933 rr. instrumentom ‘likvidatsii ukraïns'koho natsionalizmu?’” *Ukraïns'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, 2 (2005): 118.

34. V. Vasil'iev, “Krestianskie vosstania na Ukraine 1929-1930 rr.,” *Svobodnaia mysl'*, 9 (1992); V. Vasil'ev; L. Viola, *Kollektivizatsiia i krest'ianskoe soprotivlenie na Ukraine: noiabr' 1929-mart 1930 g.g.* (Vinnytsia, 1997); V. Shkvarchuk, “Zhynochyi bunt [19 serpnia 1932 roku]: (Za materialamy ‘Sprava No. 1947/26483’ Kyïvs'koho oblviddil DPU,” *Siverians'kyi litypys*, 4 (1996); O. I. Hanzha, “Opir selianstva politytsi sutsil'noi kolektyvizatsii v Ukraïni,” *Problemy istorii Ukraïny: fakty, sudzhennia, poshuky*, 2001, vyp. 4; S. Kul'chyts'kyi (in addition to his

by James Mace, Nikolai Ivanitskii, and Lynne Viola are particularly significant. All the scholars mentioned have provided evidence that this opposition was massive, that it took many forms (active and passive), and that oppositional attitudes to the regime were spreading throughout all strata of Ukrainian society, including the republic's Communist nomenklatura. Kul'chyt's'kyi reached an interesting conclusion (although one which has yet to be additionally substantiated) that Stalin turned the Ukrainian SSR into the epicenter of repression, because of his fears of opposition from the Kharkiv-based Communist apparat and its potential as a catalyst for a crisis that "could transform from a red one into a blue-and-yellow one, and exploit its border status and constitutional rights to effect a separation from Moscow."³⁵

The effect of the Stalinist "Revolution from Above" on the political loyalty of the Ukrainian SSR's population, the growth of anti-Soviet sentiment in its largest demographic (the peasantry), their anticipation of a coming war in which the USSR would lose, the increasingly nationalistic nature of these sentiments, and the Stalin regime's repressive actions against the bearers of such sentiments are the subject of a series of my own publications.³⁶ I advance the hypothesis that there is a possible connection between the Holodomor and the strategic military planning of the Soviet leadership, in particular with regards to the preparation of the USSR for a future war. Elements of such a preparation would have included not only the modernization of the state's military-industrial complex, but also the "political preparation of the rear-guard." It is suggested that this preparation was achieved by way of propaganda campaigns and by a purge of disloyal elements that could be dangerous during wartime. The obvious disloyalty to the Communist regime of a significant segment of the Ukrainian peasantry could well have prompted Stalin to employ famine as an instrument of physical liquidation of a potential "fifth column."

above-mentioned works), "Opir selianstva sutsil'nii kolektyvizatsii," *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, 2 (2004) and others.

35. S. Kul'chitskii, *Pochemu on nas unichtozhal? Stalin i ukrainskii Golodomor* (Kyiv, 2007), 89.

36. Works by L.V. Hrynevych include: "Stalins'ka 'revoliutsiia z hory' ta holod 1933 iak factory politizatsii ukrains'koï spil'noty," *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, 5 (2003); "Pro odyń taiemnyi proiekt stalins'koho kerivnytstva kintsia 1920-kh rr.," *Problemy istorii Ukraïny: fakty, sudzhennia, poshuky. Mizhvidomchyi zbirnyk naukovykh prats'*, vyp. 11 (Kyiv, 2004); "'Test na politychnu loial'nist': suspil'no-politychni nastroi naselennia USRR v umovakh 'voiennoi tryvohy' 1927 roku," *Problemy istorii Ukraïny: fakty, sudzhennia, poshuky. Mizhvidomchyi zbirnyk naukovykh prats'*, vyp. 13 (Kyiv, 2005); "Tsina stalins'koï 'revoliutsii zhory': ukrains'ke selianstvo v ochikuvannii na viinu," *Problemy istorii Ukraïny: fakty, sudzhennia, poshuky. Mizhvidomchyi zbirnyk naukovykh prats'*, vyp. 16, ch. 1 (Kyiv, 2007).

The question of identifying the perpetrators of the genocidal crimes in Ukraine is becoming a matter of increasingly active interest. Some researchers, clearly prompted by subjective factors, ascribe guilt exclusively to the person of Stalin, or to the leader and his closest entourage (Molotov and Kaganovich). This approach has not gained much acceptance by Ukraine's scholars, among whom there is a discernible trend of broadening the responsibility for the mass killings beyond Stalin to the entire Party-state power structure, as well as to the rank-and-file executors of the genocide, for example, the local activists.

Positions taken by the upper echelon of the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR during the Holodomor have been examined by Valerii Vasyli'iev,³⁷ Yurii Shapoval,³⁸ and Hennadii Iefymenko.³⁹ Mykola Doroshko's monograph on the Ukrainian SSR's Party-state nomenklatura includes a special analysis of this question. In particular, Doroshko concludes that "the leadership of the republic failed to stand up to the dictates of the center, and actually became a leading force in the execution of a policy that cost the Ukrainian people a multitude of victims."⁴⁰

In recent years, articles have been published and dissertations defended devoted to the analysis of the functioning of various governmental structures in the conditions of collectivization and famine, including the organs of state security, internal affairs, and the justice ministry.⁴¹ In addition, Ukrainian researchers have made an effort to understand the phenomenon of participation in repressive campaigns in the countryside by particular groups, such as members of poor peasants' committees (*komnezamy*) and militant atheists' associations.⁴²

37. V. Vasyli'iev, "Tsina holodnoho khliba. Polityka kerivnytstva SRSR i URSR v 1932-1933, in *Komandyry velykoho holodu: Poizdki V. Molotova i L. Kahanovycha v Ukraïnu ta na Pivnichnyi Kavkaz, 1932-1933*, eds. V. Vasyli'iev and Iu. Shapoval (Kyiv, 2001).

38. Iu. Shapoval, "III konferentsiia KP(b)U: prolod trahediï holodu," in Vasyli'iev and Shapoval, *Komandyry velykoho holodu*. See also Iu. Shapoval, "Holod 1932-1933 rokiv: politychne kerivnytstvo USRR i Kreml'," *Suchasnist'*, 6 (2003).

39. H. Iefymenko, "Rol' natsional-komunistiv u holodomori 1932-1933 rr.," *Problemy istorii Ukraïny: fakty, sudzhennia, poshuky*, issue 7: *Spetsial'nyi* (Kyiv, 2003).

40. M. Doroshko, *Kompartiino-derzhavna nomenklatura USRR u 20-30-ti roky XX stolittia: sotsioistorychnyi analiz* (Kyiv, 2004).

41. See V. M. Nikol's'kyi, *Represyvna diial'nist' orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky SRSR v Ukraïni (kinets' 1920-kh-1950-ti rr.: Istoryko-statystychni doslidzhennia* (Avtoreferat dysertatsii) (Donets'k, 2003); V. M. Kryvonis, "Sotsial'ni funktsii orhaniv 'pravoporiadku' v period holodomoru 1932-1933 rr. v Ukraïni," *Ukrains'kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, 1 (2004); and I. V. Subochiev, *Diial'nist' orhaniv iustyt'sii Ukraïny v umovakh zdiisnennia polityky kolektyvizatsii na seli (1928-1933 rr.)* (Dnipropetrovs'k, 2006).

42. O.A. Mel'nychuk, *Komitety nezamozhnykh selian na Podilli (1920-1933 rr.)* (Avtoreferat dysertatsii) (Kyiv, 1998); V. O. Voloshenko, *Komitety nezamozhnykh selian v Donbasi (1920-1933)* (Avtoreferat dysertatsii) (Donets'k, 2003); T. Ievsieieva, "Diial'nist' spilky 'voiovnykh bezvirnykiv' Ukraïny pid chas sutsil'noi kolektyvizatsii 1929-1933 rr.," *Problemy istorii Ukraïny: fakty, sud-*

However, the issue of “silent witnesses” has not yet been adequately addressed.

The effects of the tragedy of 1932-33 are being studied by Ukrainian scholars primarily in the form of assessments of demographic losses. Alongside studies by Russian and Western researchers, such as Robert Conquest, Sergei Maksudov (aka Alexander Babyonshev), Stephen G. Wheatcroft, and Valentina Zhiromskaia, are those of Ukrainian scholars Stanislav Kul’chyts’kyi⁴³ and Serhii Pyrozhkov.⁴⁴ Despite the variations in statistical methodology, and certain differences in the total number of victims, there is general agreement that demographic statistics have made it possible to determine, with varying degrees of accuracy, some indicators of the demographic catastrophe that occurred in the early 1930s. Pyrozhkov, the director of the Institute of Demography and Sociological Research at the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, calculated that the sum total of direct and indirect losses in population in Ukraine amounted to 4.6 million.⁴⁵ Kul’chyts’kyi put the figure at between 3 to 3.5 million.⁴⁶ Generally speaking, Wheatcroft agrees with the latter numbers.⁴⁷

Researchers have also turned their attention to changes in the direction of Soviet nationalities policy, the ending of Ukrainianization and the intensification of Russification tendencies, and other political shifts and transformations that took place in the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR after 1932-33. In particular, according to Vasyl’iev, “1933 became one of the decisive moments in the Sovietization of Ukraine, the strengthening of the Stalinist system in the republic, and the intensification of the repressiveness of the totalitarian regime.”⁴⁸ Ukrainian scholars have uniformly stressed the heavy moral and psychological impacts of the Holodomor, although research on this subject remains a task to be undertaken in the future.

zhennia, poshuky. Mizhvidomchyi zbirnyk naukovykh prats', Vyp. 11 (Kyiv 2004); L.O. Dudka, *Spilka voiovnnych bezvirnykh v antyrehliiini propohandi v Ukraïni (20-ti–40-vi roky XX st.)* (Avtoreferat dysertatsii) (Kyiv 2005).

43. S. Kul’chyts’kyi, *Demohrafichni naslidky holodu 1933 r. na Ukraïni* (Kyiv, 1989); S.V. Kul’chyts’kyi and S. Maksudov, “Vtraty naselennia Ukraïny vid holodu 1933 r.,” *Ukraïns’kyi istorychnyi zhurnal*, 2 (1991).

44. S. Pirozhkov, *Trudovoi potentsial v demohraficheskoi izmerenii* (Kyiv, 1992), 63; S. Pyrozhkov, “Smertnist’ naselennia Ukraïny ta demohrafichni vtraty v ekstremal’ni situatsii,” in *Holod 1946–1947 rokiv v Ukraïni: prychny i naslidky* (Kyiv-New York, 1998), 32, 40.

45. *Ekonomicheskie izvestiia* (Kyiv), 24 November 2006.

46. S. Kul’chitskii, *Pochemu on nas unichtozhal? Stalin i ukraïnskii Golodomor* (Kyiv, 2007), 161–62.

47. S. Uitkroft [S. Wheatcroft], “Suchasne uivlennia pro pryrodu ta riven’ smertnosti pid chas holodu 1931–1933 rokiv v Ukraïni,” in Vasyl’iev and Shapoval, *Komandyry velykoho holodu*, 184.

48. V. Vasyl’iev, “Tsina holodnoho khliba,” in Vasyl’iev and Shapoval, *Komandyry velykoho holodu*, 173.

Other matters that continue to attract increasing scholarly attention in Ukraine include the mechanism of the Communist regime’s cover-up of the truth about the Famine, the effect of the policy of “enforced amnesia” on mass consciousness, and the emergence of “historical memorylessness.” James Mace described the latter phenomenon as a syndrome characteristic of a post-genocidal society. The subject of official political memorialization of the Holodomor in contemporary Ukraine has also been studied by historians.⁴⁹ Individual scholars have assayed comparative studies of the Famine and the history of mass killings in other countries, but these have yet to become a significant trend in Ukrainian historiography. Ukrainian scholars also remain, for all practical purposes, outside of current discussions conducted by Western historians about the similarities and differences between two tragedies that were visited on the population of Ukraine in the 20th century—the Jewish Holocaust and the Holodomor. However, certain scholars readily apply the term “Holocaust” to the events in Ukraine in 1932-33, something that is characteristic of the works of Yurii Mytsyk, Shapoval, and Vadym Zolotar’ov,⁵⁰ among others.

Politicized Interpretations of the Famine of 1932-1933

In 1990, Marco Carynnyk delivered a presentation at the first scholarly conference in Ukraine on the topic of the Holodomor, in which he drew attention to the emotional content of discussions concerning the famine, and underlined the negative influence that this had on their conduct. Seventeen years later the situation is largely unchanged. Just as a recollection of the Famine is traumatic to those who experienced its events, so it appears to foster an ongoing crisis in Ukraine’s historical scholarship, to the point of a crisis of identity among historians themselves. Treatments of the topic continue to be highly politicized, and a significant number of Ukrainian scholars appear to be unable to jettison the approach, characteristic of the Soviet period, which stresses the didactic role of history. The Holodomor has also become a topic of significant interest to certain anti-Semitic and xenophobic writers.

Ethnocentrism in portraying the Famine shows up among some Ukrainian scholars who, shunning comparative analysis and analogies, strive to view the matter

49. G. Kas’ianov, “Razrytaia mogila: golod 1932-33 godov v ukraïnskoi istoriografii, politike i massovom soznanii,” *Ab Imperio*, 3 (2004).

50. For example, see “Ukraïns’kyi holokost, politychnyi teror, etnichni chytsky (1932–1935)” in Iu. Shapoval; V. Zolotar’ov, *Vsevolod Balyts’kyi: osoba, chas, otochennia* (Kyiv, 2002), 181–257; and the *Ukraïns’kyi holokost 1932–1933. Svidchennia tykh, khto vyzhyv* series edited by Yurii Mytsyk, which has been published in Kyiv since 2003.

outside a broader historical context. Emphasizing the exclusively national character of the Holodomor, a number of them sometimes remain deliberately silent about the fact of famine in other parts of the Soviet Union—notably Russia—during the early 1930s, while others even deny its existence. This ethnocentric approach is further marked by the intentional neglect of the problem of the participation of some Ukrainians in conducting repressive measures in the countryside and, in its stead, by an attempt to demonize the northern neighbor, attributing to Russia and Russians a genetic hatred of Ukraine and Ukrainians and the establishment of a “linear connection” between the events of the famine years 1921-1923, 1932-1933 and 1946-1947. Finally, the accompanying construction of stereotypical images of “enemies of the Ukrainian people” and “enemies of the Ukrainian nation,” with Russians and Jews usually cast in this role, should be mentioned.

Special attention should be paid to publications that appear under the banner of scholarly studies, but actually send out a xenophobic message and introduce anti-Semitism to a mass consciousness.⁵¹ The absolute majority of such works in which the theme of inter-ethnic confrontation is highlighted has been produced by the Inter-regional Academy of Personnel Management (Ukrainian acronym: MAUP), a non-governmental higher educational establishment based in Kyiv. In 2002, a conference titled “The Famine of 1932-1933 as an Enormous Tragedy for the Ukrainian Nation” was organized under its auspices, which some participants used as an opportunity to demonstrate their xenophobia.⁵² Other conferences organized by MAUP have been convened under such anti-Semitic titles as “The Jewish-Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 as a Prelude to Red Terror and the Ukrainian Famine” in 2005⁵³ and “Punitive Agencies of the Jewish-Bolshevik Regime” in 2006⁵⁴ (the latter being expressly identified as “a forum on the Holodomor in Ukraine”).

The Famine Researchers’ Association has unfortunately also been guilty of provoking inter-ethnic tensions through some of its publications. Particularly notable is Andrii Kulish’s “scientific-publicist” work *Genocide*.

51. These studies were considered in Per Anders Rudling, “Organized Anti-Semitism in Contemporary Ukraine: Structure, Influence and Ideology,” *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 44, nos. 1-2 (March–June 2006).

52. The proceedings appeared as *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv iak velychezna trahediia ukrains'koho narodu: Materialy Vseukrains'oi naukovoï konferentsii*. Kyiv, 15 lystopada 2002 r. (Kyiv: MAUP, 2003).

53. These proceedings appeared as *Ievreis'ko-bil'shovyt's'kyi perevorot 1917 roku iak peredumova chervonoho teroru ta ukrains'kykh holodomoriv: Materialy IV Mizhnarodnoi naukovoï konferentsii*, 25 lystopada 2005 r. (Kyiv: MAUP, 2006).

54. See “Zvernennia do Verkhovnoi Rady Ukraïny uchasnykiv Mizhnarodnogo forumu z Holodomoru v Ukraïni ‘Kara!ni orhany ievreis'ko-bil'shovyt's'koho rezhymu’,” *Personal*, 2007, nos. 1, 2.

Famine in 1932-1933. Reasons, Victims, Perpetrators, which was published under the auspices of Association.⁵⁵ Some of the publications of the Association’s regional branches are also steeped in xenophobia and anti-Semitism (for example, the proceedings of the 2003 Kharkiv conference “The Holodomors in Ukraine: Reasons, Victims, Perpetrators”⁵⁶).

An examination of the profile of the authors of such odious works regarding collectivization and the Famine of 1932–1933 shows that the majority are individuals far removed from the historical profession. Politicians form one group of authors, while journalists are also a significant component. Last but not least, a small number of professional historians provide a scholarly veneer to these anti-Semitic interpretations of the history of collectivization and the Famine.

A historiographic characterization of the majority of xenophobic publications about the Famine of 1932-1933 is practically impossible: these are works not marked by intellectual rigor. The *idée fixe* of such publications is the notion of the “international conspiracy of world Jewry,” which, they claim, seized power in Russia and Ukraine in 1917. Typical in this regard is the approach sketched out in Kulish’s *Genocide* book (see above): the Jews of Ukraine in the interwar period are allotted a place as the “ruling people,” the Russians are the “people of the lash,” and Ukrainians are “people-victims.” The authors of anti-Semitic publications see the reasons for the Famine in the “genetic hatred” of Jews toward Ukrainians; in the ill-intentioned aspirations to depopulate Ukrainian territory for its settlement by “suitable ethnic material”; and in “revenge” against Ukrainians for “historical wrong-doings” suffered by the Jews—from the destruction of the Khazar kaganate to the pogroms of the Khmel’nyts’kyi era and the Independence struggle of 1917–1920. Another not uncommon explanation for the cause of the Holodomor is given as an attack by Judaism on Orthodoxy.

It is common for many anti-Semitic publications to twist and/or openly falsify historical facts, employing various manipulative methods to strengthen ethnic hostilities. We see, for example, the publication of lists of Jewish administrators and representatives of security structures, the attribution of a Jewish background to all the perpetrators of the Holodomor and the deliberate politicization of the question of using [in Ukrainian] the ethnonym “*zhyd*” rather than “*ievrei*.” The attempts to establish causal links between the Holodomor and Holocaust tragedies—occasionally even with an indirect

55. Andrii Kulish, *Henotsyd. Holodomor 1932-1933: Prychyny, zherty, zlochyntsi*, 3d rev. ed. (Kharkiv-Kyiv: Asotsiatsiia doslidnykiv holodomoru v Ukraïni, 2001).

56. *Holodomory v Ukraïni: Prychyny, zherty, zlochyntsi* (Kharkiv, 2003).

exoneration for the destruction of the Jews during the Second World War—seem quite shocking.⁵⁷

These amateurish authors can scarcely be considered the creators of an academic historical narrative. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the writings of individual professional historians who strive to present various ideological approaches in the form of “historical schemes,” buttressed by supporting scholarly argumentation. In this respect one could and should pay attention to the concept of “Jewish statehood in Ukraine” put forward by the doctor of historical sciences Serhii Bilokin’ in his presentation “Terror by Famine: Reflections about the Character of Statehood in Ukraine in the 1920s-1930s” at the international scholarly conference “The Holodomor of 1932–1933: Its Major Participants and Mechanics of Realization,” held in Kyiv in 2003.⁵⁸ Bilokin’ cites the following as the main reason for the genocide of the Ukrainians: (1) lack of independence; (2) the non-Ukrainian character of the authorities; (3) Communist Party activities.⁵⁹ He especially concentrates his attention on the question of the “un-Ukrainian character of state authority,” which then segues into a discussion about the “large” and “even crucial” role of Jewry in the social-political developments that took place on the territory of Ukraine during the first third of the twentieth century. The method suggested by Bilokin’ to personify the concept of “Jewish statehood in Ukraine” was partially realized by Kyiv University Professor V. Yaremenko in his 2006 MAUP-published work, *Just Who Carried Out the Genocide of the Ukrainians?*⁶⁰

The Ukrainian intelligentsia expressed its negative attitude to displays of xenophobia in a “Statement” (of principle) published in 2005 in the journal *Krytyka*.⁶¹ All the same, this comes in the face of the institutionalization of “scholarly centers” around which the authors of anti-Semitic writings group themselves, the launching of accompanying “scientific-organizational” and publishing

activity (i.e., the staging of scientific conferences, a growth in the number of newspaper and journal articles, the appearance of brochures and even books) and the occasional inclusion of that sort of article on the pages of serious academic publications. Regrettably, this is leading to the danger of xenophobic and anti-Semitic interpretations of the Famine of 1932–1933 establishing some legacy in the realm of Ukrainian scholarship.

Soon after Ukraine’s independence was declared, the country’s Communist Party was banned, and for a time Communist interpretations of the Famine were excluded from the public arena. This did not last long, however, since the Party was reinstated as an officially-sanctioned organization in late 1993. Over the last few years the attention paid by Communist historians to the Famine of 1932–1933 has grown considerably. Items noting the Communist versions of the causes of the Famine appear regularly on the pages of the Communist press. Several brochures on the topic have seen the light of day, including L. Hladkaia, L. Duz’ and V. Sydorenko’s *1933: Holodomor???* and G. Tkachenko’s *The Myth of the Holodomor—the Discovery of the Manipulators of the Mind*.⁶²

The authors of works upholding the Communist understanding of the Famine are for the most part Communist Party functionaries, some of them with only a basic history education. There is also a small circle of generally older scholars and lecturers (historians, jurists, philosophers) versed in Communist ideology and well-known for their public pronouncements in defense of the Soviet past. A few are highly-placed academics, such as Petro Tolochko, a specialist in medieval history. Exclusive interviews with Tolochko discussing the Famine were published in the Party newspaper *Komunist* and the tabloid *Bul’var Gordona*.⁶³ They were republished in the Communist press and some Russian history websites and cited as an independent expert viewpoint.

Common threads running through Communist publications include an obstinate ignorance of the sources that have emerged in the field over the last fifteen years and a total lack of substantial analysis of important contemporary studies published in Ukraine since independence. Works by Western or other scholars are judged *a priori* as hostile and malevolent—writings motivated by the desire of “America and the West” to ruin the Ukrainian-Russian alliance. The Communist evaluation of eyewitness accounts of the Holodomor

57. For example, *ibid*, pp. 3-4 provides the following citation: “This national minority [Jews—L.H.] wielded absolute power in the Moscow empire over the course of 20 years, and during the following 10 years their influence, while not commanding, was quite considerable. This is particularly emphasized by the authors of the preface to the collection of conference materials—it may be seen as absurd or unbelievable, but this is a fact: Ukrainians were saved from complete annihilation in the 1930s and 1940s by the coming of the National Socialists to power in Germany and the Second World War.”

58. S. I. Bilokin’, “Teror holodom: mirkuvannia pro kharakter derzhavnosti v Ukraïni 1920-1930 rokiv,” in *Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv: osnovni diiovi osoby i mekhanizmy zdiisnennia: Materialy Druhoï Mizhnarodnoï naukovoï konferentsii*. Kyïv, 28 lystopada 2003 r. (Kyiv: MAUP, 2004).

59. *Ibid*, 11.

60. V. Yaremenko, *Tak khto zh zdiisnyv henotsyd ukraïntsviv?* (Kyiv: MAUP, 2006).

61. “Proty ksenofobiï, za ievropeis’ku Ukraïnu. Zaiava ukraïnskoi intelihentsii,” *Krytyka*, 6 (2005).

62. L. Gladkaia, L. Duz’, V. Sydorenko, *1933: golodomor???* (Odesa, 2005); G.S. Tkachenko, *Mifo golodomore—izobretenie manipulatorov soznaniem* (Kyiv, 2006).

63. “Vedushchii spetsialist drevnemu Kievu akademik Petr Tolochko: ‘My uzhe dogovorilis’ do togo, chto Iisus Khristos byl shchiryim ukraïntsem, gutsulom.’” *Bul’var Gordona*, 10 (46) (2006); “Petro Tolochko: Istoriu namahaiut’sia pidminyty mifamy, *Komunist*, 13 August 2007.

published today in Ukraine is extremely emotional and offensive. The authors label such testimonials as “aggressive, unsubstantiated attacks” on the Communist Party.

The conceptual scheme adhered to by Communist historians was formulated by “official” Soviet historians in the late 1980s, when the CPSU finally lifted its long-standing ban on mentioning the Famine at all. They recognize the very fact of famine, but categorically deny its artificial nature and anti-Ukrainian (genocidal) thrust. Characteristically, there are efforts not only to minimize the Famine losses in Ukraine, with the Communists giving a figure of approximately 700,000 dead, but also to impose on Ukrainian society a concept of the 1932–1933 Famine as an “ordinary event,” one of many that took place in the lands of the former Russian Empire. One author, writing in this vein in *Komunist*, states: “Just think—a famine! In the nineteenth century alone, there were forty years of famine or semi-famine in tsarist Russia.”⁶⁴ When writing the word Famine, Communist authors generally put the word in quotation marks or affix the epithet “so-called.” They also downplay the significance of the 1930s tragedy by suggesting that famine rages in present-day Ukraine, with the number of its victims reaching as high as 5.5 million.

As for causes, those proposed closely follow the historical line of the Stalinist *Short Course*. Trotskyist and *kurkul* (Ukrainian for “kulak”) wreckers are identified as culprits, with the latter shouldering most of the blame. They are said to have sabotaged collectivization efforts, hidden away enormous quantities of grain, slaughtered animals, and to have been so outraged with the Soviet regime that they starved their families and themselves to death. Drought is also commonly given as a cause of the Famine. Other themes that commonly appear in Communist accounts include the efforts of the Communist Party to provide assistance to those afflicted by famine as well as the characterization of the Famine of 1932–1933 as a “common sorrow for all Soviet peoples.”

Among the many publications that represent a neo-Communist version of Famine history, particular attention should be paid to an article written by Professor Valerii Soldatenko. Named “The Hungry Thirty-Third: Subjective Thoughts on Objective Process,” it was published in the newspaper *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*. It outlines a concept that contains a veiled justification of the Famine as a response on the part of the Soviet government, “provoked by the capitalist world,” to prepare for a future war, thus directly linking the radical measures undertaken by the Stalinist leadership in the

agricultural sphere to the Soviet victory over Germany in the Second World War.⁶⁵

In recent years the Communist historians’ activity has been increasingly intense, and their pressure on scholars who research Famine-related issues has been quite aggressive. In early 2007, V. Shekhovtsev, a historian and lawyer who had worked in the Public Prosecutor’s office for 35 years, famous today for his active defense of Stalin, addressed V. Kalinichenko, head of the Ukrainian history department of Kharkiv National University, in an open letter to the socialist newspaper *Dosvitni vohni*, which summoned him to a public hearing at which the professor would act on behalf of the prosecution, while Shekhovtsev himself would take the side of the defense.⁶⁶ Shekhovtsev had been provoked by the publication of *Capital of Despair: The 1932–1933 Famine in the Kharkiv Region as Seen by Eyewitnesses*, to which Kalinichenko had written the preface.⁶⁷ In his letter, the jurist threatened that the professor had exposed himself to libel suits brought by the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Kosior, Postyshev, etc. He also called upon Kalinichenko to come forth with precise, extensive medical documentation to prove the wrongful deaths of every purported victim.

Conclusion

Ukrainian historical scholarship has traveled a difficult path in shedding light on the matter of the Famine of 1932–1933. This was almost guaranteed by the very difficulties of Ukraine’s historical development process. Under conditions in which the Communist Party monopolized authority and ideology, Ukrainian historical science stepped forward as an active instrument for the realization of a state policy of “imposed amnesia.” It stayed silent and denied even the very fact of the tragedy of the Holodomor. After the fall of the Soviet Union, Ukrainian state independence created favorable conditions for a truthful accounting and deeper understanding of the events of 1932–1933.

In spite of an unstated policy of “inert ignorance” toward Holodomor topics persistently followed by post-Communist Ukraine’s higher leadership, Ukrainian scholars made considerable strides toward piecing together an outline of the facts of the Famine of 1932–1933, establishing an understanding of its causes and effects, and elucidating the genocidal essence of this

64. D. Derych, “Pravda pro ‘Holodomor’ 33-ho, *Komunist*, 49 (246) (1998).

65. Valerii Soldatenko, “Holodnyi trydtsiat’ tretii. Sub’iektyvni dumky pro ob’iektyvni protsesy,” *Dzerkalo tyzhnia*, 28 June 2003.

66. I. T. Shekhovtsev, “Vri, no znai meru! Otkrytoe pis’mo doktoru istoricheskikh nauk, professoru, zaveduiushchemu kafedroi istorii Ukrainy Khar’kovskogo natsional’nogo universiteta im. Karazina Kalenichenko V. V.,” *Dosvitni vohni*, 2 (2007): 265.

67. T. Polishchuk, ed., *Stolytsia vidchayu: holodomor 1932–1933 rr. na Kharkivshchyni vustamy ochevydstiv* (Kharkiv, 2006).

crime committed by the Stalin regime. The field of Holodomor studies in contemporary Ukraine is extremely diverse, and the research being conducted clearly demonstrates a sea change in both the outlook and level of professionalism among scholars dealing with the topic. Also evident is the politicization of the Famine issue, which is revealed in particular by the existence of its ethnocentric, anti-Semitic and Communist interpretations. Despite certain achievements, Ukrainian historical study still remains insufficiently integrated into the global scholarly realm. A sociocultural inertia—approaching the sphere of Ukrainian history with an assumption of self-sufficiency—is clearly manifested by the fact that scholarly discussions concerning Holodomor issues taking place in the West very often remain generally unnoticed in Ukraine.

In October 2007, at a Fulbright conference in Kyiv, Dr. Martha Bohachevsky-Chomiak noted that she felt modern Ukrainians were too prone to a negative evaluation of today's reality and tended to picture everything darker than it actually was. I would not like to serve as proof of Dr. Bohachevsky's statement, so in summing up my overview of contemporary Ukrainian historiography on the Famine of 1932-1933, I would like to state that in spite of the difficulties and arguments, the research process is proceeding and even accelerating. Its prospects, which I fully expect to be realized, give one hope.

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