

Holodomor Archives and Sources: The State of the Art

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It was here, in Toronto, four years ago, that I spoke at one of the sessions of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAASS) about the status and prospects for publishing documents related to the Holodomor in Ukraine in 1932–33.¹ Naturally, the question follows as to why are we again talking about source materials and archives rather than the events, developments, causes and consequences of this most terrible catastrophe in Ukraine's history?

To start with, I would like to underscore the fact that the Famine was one of the most taboo topics in the pages of Soviet history. In Ukraine *no archival document* about the Famine was published until the late 1980s. For over half a century, all Western historiography relied solely on oral evidence, intermittent documents from diplomatic archives, materials from journalists, and random photographs. Generally, this was the period of the “pre-archival” historiography of the Holodomor, as it were.

For decades, the prohibition on any information about the Famine-Genocide was an integral part of the official policy of the totalitarian Soviet regime. It affected the fullness of documentary focus on the tragedy in a negative manner. Nevertheless, the unprecedented scale of the terrorist action against the peasantry in Ukraine, the understanding by the contemporary Party and government leaders of the potential for social upheaval, the need for the authorities to break the Ukrainian peasantry, and, finally, the functioning of channels of secret record-keeping produced a great mass of written information about the pre-conditions, causes, scale and consequences of the Famine at all levels of power. Party committees, governmental institutions and newspaper editorial boards were deluged with letters, complaints, appeals and statements about the real situation in rural regions. Therefore, it was not possible to establish control over or prohibit the flow of documents “born of” the Holodomor, much less destroy it.

The most precarious time for these documents was the initial period of their existence. It may safely be assumed that a significant number of records related to the

registration of diseases and deaths in hospitals and village councils was destroyed without delay, “while still hot”; today we have at our disposal some documented direct instructions issued by governing bodies about such destruction,² as well as about the falsification of causes of death in extant medical records of that time.³

2. On 13 April 1934, the Odesa Oblast Executive Committee sent “Top Secret” Instructions to all local councils and district (raion) executive committees of Odesa oblast (with copies to all Party district committees and inspectors of the Directorate of National Economy Register, later—the Central Statistical Board). This document, recently found at the State Archives of Odesa Oblast, provides direct documentary evidence testifying to 1934 large-scale actions performed by state authorities to wipe out traces of crime against the Ukrainian peasantry. According to the instruction, all “the 1933 deaths records from all village councils without exception” must be withdrawn. “The above records have to be transferred to district executive committees to be kept secretly” (State Archives of Odesa Oblast, f. R–2009, op. 1, spr. 4, ark. 91, 92; published in: *Holodomory v Ukraïni: Odes'ka oblast' (1921–1923, 1932–1933, 1946–1947). Doslidzhennia, spohady, dokumenty*, compiled by L. Bilousova, D. Badera, P. Bondarchuk (Odesa: Astroprint, 2007), no. 78 (facsimile).

In 1993 similar records from the State Archives of Vinnytsia Oblast were first referred to and quoted by Ivan Shul'ha. In 2003 same flat conclusion about the destruction of ZAGS offices' books was repeated by Stanislav Kulchyts'kyi and Hennadii Efimenko. Russian historian Nikolai Ivnitsky (2000, 2003) followed his Ukrainian colleague's conclusion (with no reference to archival documents) about the withdrawal and total destruction in 1934 of the ZAGS office register books from 1932–33, noting that only a few of them were preserved. In fact, at that time they could not know that approximately 4,000 death register books survived in Ukraine (I. Shul'ha, “Holod 1932–1933 rr. na Podilli,” *Holodomor 1932–1933 rr. v Ukraïni: Prychyny i naslidky: Mizhnarodna naukova konferentsiia. Kyïv, 9–10 veresnia 1993 r. Materialy* (Kyïv, 1995): 141; S. Kulchyts'kyi, H. Efimenko, *Demografichni naslidky holodomoru 1933 r. v Ukraïni. Vsesoiuznyi perepyt naselennia 1937 r. v Ukraïni: Dokumenty i materialy* (Kyïv, 2003): 189, fn. 73 (on-line version: <http://www.history.org.ua/kul/contents.htm>); N. Ivanitskii, *Repressivnaia politika sovet'skoi vlasti v derevne (1928–1933 gg.)* (Moskva, 2000): 293; N. Ivnitskij, “Il ruolo di Stalin nella carestia degli anni 1932–33 in Ucraina (dai materiali documentari dell' archivio del Cremlino del Comitato centrale del Partito comunista dell' Unione Sovietica e dell' OGPU,” *La morte della terra. La grande “carestia” in Ucraina nel 1932–33. Atti del Convegno Vicenza, 16–18 ottobre 2003* (Roma: Viella, 2004): 90.

3. See, for example, the death record from the village of Antonivka, Stavyshe raion, Kyiv oblast (21 June 1933) with cause of the death “died of starvation” crossed out; instead of it is added: “unknown” (State Archives of Kyiv Oblast, f. 5634, op. 1, spr. 969, ark. 86–86v.).

1. See my paper “The Publication of Sources on the History of the 1932–1933 Famine-Genocide: History, Current State, and Prospects,” *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, vol. 25, no. 3/4 (2001): 167–86.

Paradoxically, in the period following the Second World War the preservation of republic and all-Union-level documents in secret, controlled-access archival collections [*spetsfondy*] ensured their conservation. In this instance the regime itself rendered a service to future historians. By contrast, the documents of local authorities, regional institutions and organizations were regarded as inconsequential and “neglected,” never to become a part of restricted collections.

After the collapse of the Communist regime the archival administration of Ukraine has undertaken a disclosure of documents unrivaled by any other territory of the former USSR. This process has continued for an extended period, and today the proportion of secret documents in the state archives of Ukraine (which stood at 0.55 percent by January 2007⁴) is one of the lowest in Europe. Naturally, among the opened materials most in demand were documents related to the history of the 1932–33 Holodomor. They have become the principle source base for scholarly research into this painful topic, and have helped to destroy numerous myths of the twentieth century.

At the same time, new myths compel us to continue our research in these same archives. On the far Left we see open and cynical speculation about these documents, while democratic forces offer sincere but misleading statements born of unfamiliarity with the historical source material. As a result, in the whirlpool of contemporary political battles in Ukraine the source base for researching the Holodomor gets covered up by numerous layers of speculations that need to be cleared away. Therefore, I wish to start my presentation by examining several myths of recent vintage.

I.

The closed nature, unavailability or inaccessibility of archives in Ukraine is a widespread stereotype, especially today when a stalwart Communist has been appointed the National Archivist and is threatening the country with a clampdown on access to archival materials.⁵ However, the truth of the matter is that the former Archive of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine (now the Central State Archives of Public Organizations) has completed the full process of disclosing its collections and closed down the unit re-

sponsible for processing secret documents. The Archives of the State Security Service of Ukraine is now one of the most accessible in Ukraine. It energetically makes available materials that were previously totally secret—and even posts them on the Internet. It is impossible to make these documents secret once again, because the legislative regulations that protect public access to disclosed state information resources are too strong in Ukraine today.

Notwithstanding attempts by the Communists to censor its web portal, the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine continues to develop openly accessible documentary Internet resources on the history of the Holodomor, the Great Terror and other crimes of the Soviet regime.⁶

A new myth was recently pronounced by the Ukrainian Communists. Their leader Petro Symonenko, cynically misconstruing documents of the higher Party administration, has included Stalin’s henchmen of the 1930s as being among the first to publish historical sources related to the Holodomor:

Communists were the first to provide information about the Famine in Ukraine. It was still in 1933 that the Politburo of the Communist Party of Ukraine published all the most significant materials about the situation of 1932–33, not hiding the truth about these events.

Furthermore, this archives expert assuredly declares, “Today one cannot find a single document that proves that the Famine was an intentional policy to eradicate the peasantry.” His conclusion: “Therefore, the position of the Communist Party today is the following: there actually were famine and tragedy, but this was not a tragedy just of the Ukrainian nation but of all the peoples of the Soviet Union and Ukraine.”⁷ Thus, the thesis is quite simple: there indeed was a Famine, and the Communists were the first who recognized the starvation and published all the documents related to it themselves. Therefore, we need to close the books on the Holodomor archives.

In keeping with this logic, the Head of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine went one better in her public speeches: “Who needs this? My generation

4. See the section “Declassification of archives” of the web-portal of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine: <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Archives/Rozsekr-arch.php>

5. Here the author refers to Olga Ginzburg, a former Verkhovna Rada deputy for the Communist Party of Ukraine and building-materials factory director who was appointed as head of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine in September 2006. During her tenure she raised great concern by stating that she wished to curtail the openness of the archives in respect to politically sensitive materials. Ginzburg was replaced as head of the State Committee on Archives in April 2008 by Oleksandr Udod, a professional historian [Ed.].

6. See the special section of the official web portal of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine “Genocide of Ukrainian People: 1932–1933 Famine”: <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/index.php>; also: “Totalitarian regime in Ukraine” (<http://www.archives.gov.ua/News/Totalitaryzm.php>), “Ukrainian Martyrology” (<http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Martyrolog/>), “1947: Vistula Operation [Akcja Wisła]” (<http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/VIS-LA/>), etc.

7. Interview of the Communist party leader, UNIAN, 26 November 2006 (<http://unian.net/news/print.php?id=174464>).

does not want it.”⁸ The national archivist goes one step further and, contrary to the stance of her Party boss, has produced one more myth: documents about the Holodomor were falsified by “nationalists” when the Archives of the CPU Central Committee were transferred to the state in 1991. Therefore, these documents should be subject to forensic investigation with respect to their authenticity. The absurdity of such an assumption is obvious.

Fittingly, the position of the Ukrainian Communist leader falls in line with the concept of another document, namely, the guidelines proposed by the Russian State Archival Service for a collaborative project titled “Famine in the USSR. 1932–33.” I would like to cite some cynical instructions of that concept:

Considering the “Ukrainian factor,” we should select the documents in such a way that they prove the universal character of the grain requisitioning agricultural procurement process in 1932 [...] in the crisis regions. [...] At the same time, document selection should be conducted in such a way as to portray a tragedy of the Soviet peasantry as a whole without emphasizing Ukraine. To this end, we could publish a selection of Civil Registry Offices’ certificates with particular records about starvation deaths in the Lower and Middle Volga regions in 1933.

This is basically saying that by selecting several samples of starvation deaths in Ukraine, the Volga region, and the Northern Caucasus region one could conclude that the entire country suffered from the Famine.⁹

Of course, there certainly is no denying that famine struck other parts of the Soviet Union. However, this should in no way diminish the fact that Soviet authorities had deliberately targeted ethnically Ukrainian rural areas with measures to ensure the starvation of the peasantry there and that the devastation wreaked by this action was massive.

Moreover, in keeping with the best traditions of Communist propaganda, the above document recommends emphasizing that “anti-Soviet organizations” “used the existence of the Holodomor in the USSR to achieve their propaganda aims.” Obviously, it follows that this is how scholars should view the efforts of the Ukrainian public in western Ukraine who sought to deliver information about the Holodomor to the world. Viktor Kondrashyn, a professor at Penza University and the project director, is the author of this concept. Moreover, in a recent in-

terview he characterized the law of Ukraine (adopted in November, 2006) acknowledging the Holodomor as act of genocide as “dancing on the bones of victims” and an attempt by “certain political forces” aimed at “lining their pockets” from the history of the Famine.¹⁰

Ukrainian historians and archivists categorically rejected this approach and proposed to prepare several individual volumes of the documents related to the situation in specific regions of the USSR with relevant comments and conclusions in each tome. We insisted on discriminating between famine as a result of State grain procurements and artificial famine as a result of grain procurements coupled with total non-grain food requisition. This incurred displeasure. Our proposals were labeled as an attempt “to whitewash the overall picture of this phenomenon [of starvation] in the common history of the state that existed at that time. The differentiation of the situation between “famine” and “Holodomor” will not withstand scholarly criticism.” And then we were presented with the initial results of our Russian colleagues’ manipulation of the source material: “Studies of the documents revealed in the Russian State Archives of the Economy about the natural migration of the population in 1933 have already shown that the correlation of mortality and birthrates in Ukraine and Russia in the epicenter of the Famine were roughly the same. No unique distinction of these processes in Ukraine was observed when compared to Russia.”¹¹

There is nothing left to do but to present my condolences to those Russian colleagues and archivists who are forced to engage in the realization of political ideologies coming from above, acting against their conscience and professionalism (as well as their code of ethics).

Long-anticipated documents on the Famine from the Russian Federal Security Service’s (FSB) Archive, which are being declassified as part of the above-mentioned Russian project and are soon to be made public, may become the subject of new manipulations. In talking about the documents, Professor Kondrashyn assuredly promises: “The FSB’s archives will make it possible to reveal the truth of what had happened in Russia’s rural regions in the 1930s.” And then we hear the standard formula: “This was not only a Ukrainian tragedy; rather it was a tragedy of the Soviet peasantry as a whole.”¹²

There is more to it. Documentary photographs provide fertile ground for speculation, especially for those

8. Public press-conference of the Head of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine, 13 June 2007 (<http://www.maidan.org.ua/static/news/2007/1181744831.html>; http://www.aratta-ukraine.com/text_ua.php?id=814).

9. Source cited: author’s archives; facsimile publication of the guidelines for the mentioned project and comments: O. Palii “Moskva nakazala Ianukovychu,” *Ekspres* (L’viv), 5–6 May 2007.

10. See Action Ukraine Report, no. 832, 22 April, 2007; www.izvestia.ru/news/news132448/; some other statements by Kondrashyn: “Historians call the Famine-Genocide a myth” (<http://news.mail.ru/politics/1532494/print/>); “It is absolute stupidity if the Famine would be recognized as Genocide of Ukrainian people” (<http://directory.com.ua/news101429.html>).

11. From the author’s archives.

12. See Action Ukraine Report, no. 832, 22 April 2007.

who deny the Famine-Genocide. For obvious reasons, one cannot find significant photographic evidence about the regime's crimes in the state archives. Only a tiny group—something in the range of 100 plus items—may be considered authentic. I am referring to the thirty photos of victims of the Famine in Kharkiv taken by the engineer Alexander Wienerberger (from the collection of the Viennese Cardinal Theodore Innitzer); the collection of about eighty photos by Marko Zhelezniak from the village of Udachne in Donetsk oblast; several unique photos by Mykola Bakan', the repressed rural amateur photographer from Chernihiv oblast; and some photos taken illegally by foreign correspondents.¹³

Understandably, the very limited number of Famine photos has led to the unfortunate practice of substituting photographs of another historical period and different regions as depictions of the 1932-33 Famine in Ukraine. As a rule, they are photos from the period of the first Soviet famine in 1921-22, mostly from the Volga Region.¹⁴ And vice versa, some Russian authors use authentic Ukrainian Famine pictures to depict the famine in the Middle Volga region.¹⁵

This negligence and sometimes even deliberate attempts on the part of authors to use striking but inauthentic photos as the symbols of the awful tragedy are

used by critics to claim falsifications (and not just of the photos). The latest publication by Ruslan Pyrih¹⁶ and the traveling documentary exhibition from the archives of the Security Service of Ukraine, entitled "Declassified Memory,"¹⁷ have already become the objects for such charges, particularly on the part of the Communists. Oleksandr Holub, a Communist and the only member of the Ukrainian Parliament who voted against the Law "On Famine-Genocide," actively uses the arguments about falsified photos of the Famine to criticize valid work.

On the other hand, the underestimation of the value of the huge collection of official photo and film documents from the period of collectivization and the Holodomor is, in my opinion, a great mistake. There are no dead bodies or emaciated corpses in these propaganda photos. However, they reproduce the frightening atmosphere in which the tragedy of the Ukrainian village took place: children gather frozen potatoes while smiling for a reporter; kulaks (in Ukrainian: *kurkuli*) are dekulakized and dispossessed in a dramatic fashion; so-called "enemies of the people" are denounced; there are meetings of collective farmers, meetings of committees of poor peasants; and columns of Chekists on the march; and there is harvesting with modern agricultural equipment and the issuance of rations to collective farmers.

Official photo-documents of 1932-33 could be a powerful instrument in shaping public awareness. This was well understood by Andrei Marchukov, the author of a recent publication of documents titled *Operatsiia 'Golodomor'* (Operation 'Holodomor') in the popular Russian historical magazine *Rodina*.¹⁸ Besides providing generally uninformative textual documents, he shows a sequence of eleven photographs that evoke the peaceful and steady, almost pastoral, atmosphere of harvesting without a hint of the catastrophe. Photos from Ukraine are shown alongside photos from the Volga region, effectively "leveling out" any differences in the situation between Ukraine and other regions of the USSR. The one and only photo showing famine, titled "Starving People

13. Most of the authentic photos are presented in a special section of the web-portal of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine: <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/photos.php>.

14. Misuse of the 1921-1923 photodocuments (mostly without any captions, or references to sources) to depict the tragedy of 1932-1933 is becoming increasingly popular; below are some samples:

<http://rep-ua.com/show/print.php?id=56415>: survey "Holodomor in Kyiv"; http://sian-ua.info/index.php?module=pages&act=print_page&pid=13090: survey "Holodomor in Chernihiv Region: Traces of Crime"; <http://www.oda.ck/index.php?article=254>: Survey "The Harvest of Death" (Cherkasy region); <http://www.oda.kherson.ua/cgi-bin/control.pl?lang=uk&type=body&id=.../control/uk/data/politics/gniva.html>: Essay "Time has no power on Memory" (revealed are 11 photos, mostly from the times of the first Soviet famine, including photos from criminal cases of those condemned for cannibalism); <http://www.intv-inter.net/news/article?id=57709269>: report "An exhibiton about the Famine-Genocide opened in Berlin museum"; picture taken by UNIAN and republished in *Svoboda* (26 October 2007), no. 43: 1: President Yushchenko shows photo with victims of famine in Samara guberniia during the first Soviet famine to illustrate the 1932-33 Famine in Ukraine. The photo mentioned was captured by Nansen mission and published already in 1925 (Antoni Starodworzki, *Sowiecka Reforma Rolna: Przyczynek do zagadnen socjologicznych* [Warszawa, 1925]: 49). This sample is a courtesy of Dr. Roman Procyk; <http://forum.korrespondent.net/read.php?2,298227,page=1>: same photo entitled: "Cemetery in Kharkiv. Frozen corpses of Ukrainian peasants starved to death"; *Uriadovyi kur'er* (17 October 2007), no. 191: report on official opening ceremony of the exhibition "Exterminated by Hunger: Unknown Genocide of Ukrainians" (picture from Kazan guberniia, 1921 (www.geocities.com/holod3233/false-h3.html)).

15. See the publication by the *Izvestiia* editorial office entitled "The unique documents from the FSB Archives about the victims of Famine" illustrated by the documents from the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine web portal: <http://directory.com.ua/news101429.html>.

16. *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: Dokumenty i materialy*, compiled by Ruslan Pyrih (Kyiv: Vydavnychiy dim "Kyievo-Mohylians'ka akademiia," 2007). Note in particular the fly-leaf and spine of the book (with photos from the period of the 1921-1923 famine).

17. The exhibition is based mainly on declassified documents from the SBU Archives; a facsimile of the documentary collection is published online at: http://www.sbu.gov.ua/sbu/control/uk/public/article?art_id=49757&cat_id=53076. Most of the documents are included into the recently published book: *Rozsekrechena pamiat': Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni v dokumentakh GPU-NKVD*, compiled by V. Borysenko, V. Danylenko, S. Kokin et al. (Kyiv: Stilos, 2007). 604 pp.; the full on-line text of the book can be found at: <http://www.ssu.gov.ua/sbu/doccatalog/document?id=69753>.

18. A. Marchukov, "Operatsiia 'Golodomor,'" *Rodina* (2007), no. 1: 60-67; addendum: *Kogda bezumstvuiet mechta*, Ibid.: 68-76. Online version (with introduction only): <http://istrodina.com/rodina/articul.php3?id=2100&n=107>.



Молотьба на колхозном поле.
Днепропетровская область. 1933 г. РГАСФД.

РОДИНА 1-2007

Both photos supposedly depict the pastoral life of collective farmers in Dnipropetrovs'k oblast, 1933. Official photo documents from the Russian State Archives of FilmPhoto Documents, published in the magazine "Rodina" (no. 1, 2007).

in Ukraine,” looks unconvincing and somehow fantastic. To add insult to injury, the single Famine photograph is—seemingly on purpose—missing any reference to an archival source, while all the others—without exception—have specific references to archival collections. The reader, thus, receives the message that the provenance of the photograph is unknown and that it is, thus, suspect. It cannot be attributed to a reputable archival source, otherwise the author would have mentioned it.

Unfortunately, such myths are produced not only by those who adhere to the postulates of totalitarian thinking. Sergei Maksudov, the well-known scholar who has been studying collectivization and the Famine question for over a quarter of a century, poses the following question in a recent interview with the newspaper *Moscow News*:

Why was an organization not set up [in Ukraine] to collect all the relevant evidence and to draw up the lists of those who died and perpetuate their memory? Only a few collections of government decrees and several memoirs have been published [...], and precious as it may be, this represents a teardrop in the ocean. [...] It is quite possible [...] to take advantage of contemporary registers kept by rural councils, state registration offices, etc. Tens of thousands of such tomes and other valuable documents are rotting in Ukrainian archives.¹⁹

Only a person who has never seen how the documents are kept in the archives could refer to them in such a careless and superficial way. And the terms “a teardrop in the ocean” and “tens of thousands” of volumes with lists of victims are myths that are accepted by the public, especially when they are brought to life by a credible scholar.

Certain undertakings initiated at the upper state level face definite pitfalls, if their realization is approached in an unprofessional manner and without taking into account the documentary base. Here I have in mind the compilation of a full list of Holodomor victims. Without a doubt the need to eternalize the memory of the millions who died in the artificial Famine is our sacred duty. But the majority of people involved in such grandiose plans are unaware that it is impossible to make a full register of the victims. The basis for compiling credible lists lies only with mortality registers, medical certificates, other medical or local documents, and, to some extent, oral evidence. But according to preliminary estimations, the extant mortality/birth registers for the years of 1932–33 cover a maximum of one-third of the territory afflicted by Famine, and the direct mortality records related to the Famine constitute no more than 1.5 percent of total mor-

ality records of civil registry offices. The cause behind this was the strict prohibition at the time on recording starvation as the reason for death. I do not know who committed the sin of dividing the souls of innocent victims into the categories of those who died because of starvation and those who died because of other causes. In addition, medical and sanitary documents were assigned names only for local residents, so that hundreds of thousands of unfortunate people fleeing starving villages remain anonymous in documents that list them as nameless “beggars.” As a result, if one were to rely on civil registry books for a list of Famine victims, they would find in Odesa oblast, for example, a total of only... 4,000 (!) persons. Certainly, the low number of documented names of victims could itself become a factor for new insinuations.

Sometimes unprofessional but patriotic circles set up wildly adventurous projects. Recently, a press release was issued regarding the approval of a projected Museum of the Victims of the Famine-Genocide in Kyiv. The Museum was projected not only to have exhibition halls, but also “a library with research center for recovering lost historical data.”²⁰ However, it was unclear as to how it is possible to recover lost data and who would do this.

The long list of explicit, hidden, and potential insinuations that surround archival documents about the Famine-Genocide should serve as something of a warning to us for the future. Today we are completing the second decade of intensive exploration for materials as well as their large-scale declassification and publication. The time has come to draw conclusions and answer the following questions: what is the documentary base for studying the Famine-Genocide? What is its information potential? Are there groups of documents that have yet to be studied? What is the correlation between the published and unpublished documents? Should we count on sensational new archival findings? I will try to answer at least some of these questions.

II

First of all, let me briefly characterize the large and diverse complex of sources of which we are aware today. For this purpose, the scheme proposed by Ruslan Pyrih, the well-known Ukrainian historian of the Famine-Genocide and former National Archivist is quite acceptable.²¹

20. See: *Pechers'k* (September 2007), no. 19: 2; <http://www.obkom.net.ua/news/2007-08-31/1050.shtml>.

21. The first general professional survey of sources on Holodomor and their classification was offered by Ruslan Pyrih in 2003 in a special chapter “Dokumenty z istorii holodu u fondakh arkhivovskhovysch Ukraïny” of the fundamental volume published by the Institute of the History of Ukraine, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine titled *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: Prychyny i naslidky*

19. Sergei Maksudov, “Genocide Remembered,” *Moscow News*, 17 May 2007: <http://mnweekly.rian.ru/cis/20070517/55248790.html>.

1: The first group consists of the documents of the Soviet Union's supreme organs of authority: the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, the People's Commissariat of Land Resources, the Committee for Procurement, the General State Political Administration (OGPU), the All-Union Committee for Migration, and many others. The documents in this group are of crucial importance for studying the main questions about the Famine-Genocide. They are kept in Moscow at the Presidential Archives, the Russian State Archives of Socio-Political History, the State Archives of the Russian Federation, and the Russian State Archive of the Economy.

The documents of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR, the supreme state and Party authority, reflect the true policy followed in all areas of public life. Some 270 cases directly related to Ukraine were discussed during the 69 meetings of the Politburo held in 1932-33. The reason for such careful and consistent attention to the republic was, according to Stalin, "the danger of losing Ukraine," a strategic region for the Soviet Empire in which the rural population retained its spirit of patriotism and aspirations to independence and resisted collectivization, grain and food procurements, and Sovietization.

A mass of Cheka documents from the General State Political Administration (OGPU) preserved at the Central Archive of the Federal Security Service (FSB) also belongs in this group. Here are dispatches, reports, circulars, and instructions regarding the social and political situation in rural regions of Ukraine: discontent, resistance to grain confiscation, group protests, the intent to emigrate, a mass exodus out of Ukraine and measures in response, including the repression of participants in protests, hunting down and arresting kulaks and [people in] nationalistic organizations, more confiscations of grain and bread, and the organization of blockades at railroads.

The statistics stemming from the higher levels of the OGPU should be treated with considerable caution since they were subjected to an almost unbelievable downward projection. For example, one report from April 1933 contains information about "83 cases of swelling

because of starvation and 6 cases of death because of starvation ... [in Ukraine]."²² One can only imagine the sort of manipulation such data had undergone.

The first category should also include a group of archival fonds of the NKVD at the State Archive of the Russian Federation. It concerns specially displaced persons, the so-called 'kulak deportation' to the Ural region and the other parts of the GULAG. There are 32,000 personal files of Ukrainian displaced persons held at the State Archive of Sverdlovsk oblast that also pertain to this matter.²³

Key documents from the archives of higher Party and government agencies were published extensively in the early 1990s, usually with the financial support of Western institutions. This was the decade of "skimming off the cream" from declassified Russian archives. More recently, thanks to the efforts of leading Russian historians, some landmark titles have appeared, including *The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence* (2001), *'Top Secret': Lubyanka to Stalin on the Situation in the Country* (2001), and the distinguished five-volume edition of *The Tragedy of the Soviet Village* by the prominent historian Viktor Danilov (the third volume contains documents from 1920 to 1933, [published in 2001]). Also notable is the volume edited by the Ukrainian historians Yurii Shapoval and Valerii Vasyliiev, which contains the travel diaries of Viacheslav Molotov and Lazar Kaganovich during their visit to Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus in 1932-33, along with contemporary Politburo minutes and other documents from the Russian State Archives of Political and Social History (2001). Later many documents of this group were republished in Ukrainian editions.

2: The second group includes the documents of republic-level governmental and administrative bodies: the Central Committee of the Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee, the People's Commissariat of Land Resources, the Ukrainian Collective Farms Centre, the State Political Administration (GPU), the People's Commissariat of Justice, the General Prosecutor's Office, the Supreme Court, and various People's Commissariats (e.g., Health Care, Education and others). These documents are preserved in Ukrainian central and departmental state archives: the Central State Archives of Public Organizations (TsDAHO), the Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government (TsDAVO), the State Archive of the Security Service,

(Kyiv: Naukova dumka, 2003): 8-26; online version: http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/Documents/Famine_32-33.php.

An updated version of the survey by Ruslan Pyrih is published as introduction to the recent publication: *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini: Dokumenty i materialy*, compiled by Ruslan Pyrih (Kyiv: Vydavnychiy dim "Kyievo-Mohylianska akademiia," 2007), 5-33.

Also, in the 2003 volume are represented some other special surveys of the sources on Holodomor: from the State Archives of Ministry of Internal Affairs (N. Platonova. V. Vrons'ka, pp. 26-41), from Russian archives (V. Marochko, pp. 41-50), from the State Archives of the SBU (V. Danylenko, V. Prystaiko, pp. 81-98), analysis of the published documents (O. Veselova, V. Marochko, pp. 50-81).

22. *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini: Dokumenty i materialy*, 12.

23. V. Marochko, "Rosii's'ki arkhivni dzherela ta zbiryky dokumentiv pro prychny ta obstavyny holodomoru," *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini: Prychny i naslidky*, 46.

Голодающие на Украине. 1930-е гг.



РОДИНА 1-2007

Голодомор 1932-1933 років на Сумщині

ЧЕРВОНІЙ СУД

ЗА ПРИХОВУВАННЯ ХЛІБА КУРКУЛЯ ПИЛИПЧЕНКА—РОЗСТРІЛЯТИ

Про Ярионських куркулів, з яких зривали хлібозаготівель, Стеба, Товчигречку П. тощо—ми писали. Колишній куркуль Товчигречка називав батько своїх до слюди, узявши з себе активіста! до нього не було доведено твердого звинувачення, Стеба Т., що мав до революції 35 га землі, злісно зривав хлібозаготівель, погано хліб з землі. Пилипченко Михайло Іванович, куркуль, мав 16 га землі. Цей куркуль ще з початку хлібозаготівель розбазарював хліб, його з тайом було затримано в Бача-шаській сільській.

Ця зривка, класових ворогів, трупів викрив.

До Товчигречки було доведено тверде звинувачення. Але він мало того, що злісно не виконував хлібозаготівель, ще провадив і агітацію проти хлібозаготівель.

Пилипченко приховував хліб, м'ясо і навіть скриню з одягом в латки вмаз у хлібі в коморі.

Всіх цих зривників судили вишні сесії Обласуду.

На суді встановлено, що ці куркулі мали між собою змову—хліба держати не давати.

На суді ці класові вороги тримали себе зухвало, вони перед нами намагалися агітувати проти хлібозаготівель. Пилипченко, у якого виявлено в хлібі два пуди сала м'ясо, борошно, зерно, поксивував

судові, заграв від держави тому, що малі злість! Він намагався й тут приховати свою куркульську обличчя ворога, хотів увикати з себе „доброго батька“.

З „доброго“ батька машкару зривав.

Сини соціалістичної батьківщини, що сумлінно виконали завдання перед державою, довели судові, як сайди, про куркульську змову зривати хлібозаготівель, для чого ці куркулі навіть провадили свої збори.

Суд ухвалив:
За приховування, за гнітіння хліба, куркуля Пилипченка розстріляти.

Товчигречка І. Стебоні міру соціалістично встановлено кожному по 10 років ув'язнення в далеких місцевостях Радсоюзу, після відбуття кари —порятки в правах на 5 років та заборонити після відбуття кари жити в Чернігівській області.

Присутні на суді колгоспники та особисті свідки, вітаючи вирок суду, запевняли суд, що план хлібозаготівель Ярмолівці виконують з честю.

Другого дня колгоспники, виявляючи злісних зривників, знайшли йому з хлібом у сина Пилипченка. Цього зривника треба покарати теж як і батька.

До всіх ветеранів 7 дивізії

Командування та Політвідділ Н-ської Червонопрапорної ім. М. В. Фрунзе Дивізії почали першозначну історію Дивізії, яка була видала на 1928 року до 10 річчя Дивізії.

Виділено комісію з 3 товаришів, якій доручено скласти план нового видання, зачтатися з ветеранами дивізії, подати нові дані до розділу про територіальне буланництво, досвід партполітич. роботи за ці роки. У військовій історії Дивізії повинна знайти своє місце й героїчна боротьба Дивізії 1931 та 1932 років за зразкову, за передову в стрілецькій справі.

Комісія прохав всіх ветеранів Дивізії, червоноармійців і бійців Дивізії вислати свої спогади про бойове минуле Дивізії, характерні бойові епізоди, фотографії, листівки тощо на адресу: Чернігів, Політвідділ Дивізії ім. Фрунзе, комісії перевидавання історії Дивізії.

[Голова комісії САВІН]

“Радянське життя, 1933 р.

За приховування хліба куркуля Пилипченка. – 7 січня, арк.1.

Top: “Source unknown.” Starving people in Ukraine, 1930s. Photo published in “Rodina” (no. 1, 2007). Bottom: “Kulak Pylypchenko to be executed for hiding grain” (“Soviet Life,” local newspaper, Sumy oblast, 7 January 1933).

and the State Archive of the Ministry for Internal Affairs. Almost all of the documents of the Communist Party and a part of the key documents of Soviet governmental agencies have already been published.

A general characteristic of this group is the high level of information as to the immediate causes, conditions, mechanics, technologies and executors of the man-made Famine. There is extensive factual material regarding the total confiscation of foods, extensive food shortages, widespread bloating [from starvation], mortality, and cannibalism. The absolute subordination of these local authorities to instructions from Moscow is quite evident from documents here. They are similar in scope to the first group as they were produced by the republican counterparts to all-Union structures.

The fullest representation of the Holodomor is provided by the documents of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, because of its key place among governing bodies. It should be noted, however, that almost always the degree of information in a document is inversely proportional to the level of its origin: the higher its level of origin, the less concrete information it contains about the Famine.

Documents of republican executive authorities (mainly the People's Commissariat of Land Resources, Ukrainian Collective Farms Centre, All-Ukrainian Union of Agricultural Collectives, People's Commissariat of Worker and Peasant Inspection) contain extensive factual material about the Famine according to the sector of administration involved. As for the Archives of the People's Commissariat of Health Care, at least 12,000 files from the early 1930s were destroyed in 1941 in Kyiv as Soviet troops retreated.²⁴

The documents of law enforcement bodies—the General Political Administration (GPU), People's Commissariat of Justice and the General Prosecutor's Office—are of particular importance as these institutions participated intensively in the mass repression of the peasantry and they carefully documented their activities.

The Archives of the General Political Administration (GPU)—the most powerful branch of the republic's repressive penal system—became the last major collection related to the Holodomor to be declassified in Ukraine. More than 150 documents (exceeding one thousand pages) were made public in 2006 in digital form through an Internet posting; they have subsequently been displayed for over a year in the large-scale touring exhibition titled

"Declassified Memory." During this period, the exhibit has traveled to every oblast center (usually supplemented with local documents from the state oblast archives) and arguably has become the most influential instrument for raising the awareness of the people in Ukraine about this tragedy. The process of making these documents public reached its apogee in August 2007 with the publication and launch of a documentary collection bearing the same name (and comparable content) as the exhibit.

The GPU's operative papers document the extent of Cheka and militia involvement in the mass confiscation of foods through intensive repressions.

The GPU's statistics, as mentioned earlier, include falsified data about the scale of starvation and mortality; even the Chekists themselves recognized this fact. One can cite the chief of the Kyiv oblast branch of the GPU from April 1933 to appreciate just how much the agency's figures deviate from the real situation in Ukraine and complicate the process of drawing up a register of victims' names: "The GPU's raion offices do not keep a tally, and sometimes even a village council does not know the true number of those who died from starvation."²⁵ In a similar vein the Chief of Kharkiv city branch department of the GPU stated in March 1933 that "the mortality rate has become so high that a host of village councils have stopped registering those who died."²⁶ We have no reasons to believe that the situation in other regions was any different.

The documents of the People's Commissariat of Justice and the Prosecutor's Office of the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian SSR provide evidence of government-led terrorism against the peasantry through court repressions.

The key documents of the Departmental State Archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs are concentrated in the collections titled "Protocols of Special Proceedings and Tribunals [*Triiky* or *Troiky*]" and "The Criminal Cases of Court and Out-of-Court Bodies." The criminal files reveal the shocking truth about the total social collapse in rural regions and mental aberrations that led to the eating of corpses and cannibalism. Of the 83,000 cases launched by the NKVD in 1932-33, we have records for no more than 3,000 today (the rest were destroyed in 1956). Approximately 426,000 criminal cases of so-called special deportees—persons interned in 1932-33 in the Krasnoiarsk region, Irkutsk, Kemerovo, Tomsk oblasts and other oblasts, and the Komi Republic—constitute a separate block of documents of this archive.²⁷

24. Vadim Kogan, "Search and Findings: Primary Sources concerning the Famine in Ukraine in 1932-1933 (Medical aspects [of] the Problem), *Ahapi* [The Ukrainian Historical and Medical Journal, National Museum of Medicine of Ukraine, Kyiv], no. 13 (2002), <http://histomed.kiev.ua/agapit/ag01-15e.html>, republished on the the website ArtUkraine.com, <http://www.artukraine.com/Famineart/mecasp.htm>.

25. *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: Dokumenty i materialy*, 22.

26. *Ibid.*

27. See: V. Plastonova, V. Vrons'ka, "Arkhivni materialy NKVS i DPU u fondakh Derzhavnoho arkhivu MVS Ukraïny", *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: Prychyny i naslidky*, 26-41.

More than 2,500 people were convicted of cannibalism. The documents for 1,000 of these cases have survived. They include photographs of the material evidence and of those who committed these crimes. This unique indictment of the Communist regime remains the sole body of documents related to the Famine that is still unpublished. In my opinion, society is still not ready today to accept these grizzly photos and textual records. It is a matter for the future.

3: The third group is the largest one. It includes the documents of local Party and Soviet organs: oblast, city and raion committees of the Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) of Ukraine; oblast and raion executive committees; local organs of the GPU; militia, court, the prosecutor's office, health care bodies, education institutions, worker and peasant inspectors, village councils; and the like. The orders of these agencies provide little information as they essentially extrapolated political estimations and measures from above to local conditions. In contrast, the reports and correspondence of Party oblast committees to the Central Committee of the CP[B]U in Kyiv provide the utmost detail about the processes involved. This group of documents presents a striking picture of starvation and death, local political attitudes, and manifestations of mass protest and resistance. Comparable documents were sent by local governing agencies (oblast executive committees) to the republican authorities.

The documents of this group are concentrated primarily at state archives of those seventeen (present-day) oblasts on whose territories the Holodomor raged, in the network of regional archives maintained by the security services (i.e., in seventeen archival divisions tied to the oblast administrations of the SBU and the Ministry of Internal Affairs), and also at the TsDAHO and TsDAVO and central archives of the SBU and MVS.

Only a tiny portion of the documents from this group have been published, naturally in local editions. Over the course of the last year, by order of the President of Ukraine, this large body of documents, which constitutes up to half of all the known materials on the Holodomor, is being processed by the state archives under the rubric of the project entitled "National Register of Memorial Collections."²⁸ The document-by-document or group annotation for the collections and their separate parts, files, groups of documents and individual items is centered in Kyiv and is being prepared for posting on the website of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine.

4: The fourth group of documents includes materials from foreign diplomatic legations, political and public organizations, and the foreign press.²⁹ This is the smallest and least studied group of documents in Ukraine. In-

cluded in this category are reports of the German and Italian consulates general in Kharkiv, Kyiv and Odesa; information from British diplomats and economic experts; and analyses by the Polish police. Some of these materials have appeared in various editions published since the late 1980s.

A prominent feature of all the material in this group is its attempts to assess the situation and the conviction of its authors of the undeniably artificial nature of the Famine, that is, it represented a deliberate measure taken by the regime to suppress the Ukrainian peasantry. It was not accidental that Stalin demanded that Kaganovich "isolate those whining, rotten diplomats."³⁰

5: The fifth group includes letters, affidavits, complaints, petitions and diaries. These are vivid, deeply psychological depictions of the personal experience of the reality and tragedy of this event.

Letters were typically sent to republican institutions in Kharkiv (the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee [VUTsVK], the Council of People's Commissars [RNK], and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine) or addressed personally to highly-placed officials (such as Hryhorii Petrovskiy or Vlas Chubar) or to local Soviet land and law enforcement bodies. The letters of peasants sent to the editorial boards of central newspapers, although addressed to Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich, et al., constitute a significant block of documents. Mikhail Kalinin's office alone received approximately 30,000 letters. These letters, which reflected the slaughter that had become the reality of life in the village, informed higher Party and governmental leaders of what was happening. It is hardly accidental that 5 million letters from the 1930s disappeared from the Russian State Archive of the Economy without a trace.³¹ Only a small number of items from this group has been published. No special editions with such documents have appeared in Ukraine.

Recently the Archive of Security Service of Ukraine made public excerpts from two unique diaries from the Famine era, written by the teacher Oleksandra Radchenko and Dmytro Zavoloka, a Party investigator and official with the Kyiv Oblast Auditing Commission. Both reveal a profound understanding of the situation and attempts to come to grips with the tragedy emotionally. Both the diaries and their authors were repressed.³²

The diagram on the following page shows how each group of documents figures in an overall representation of source materials for studies of the Holodomor (includ-

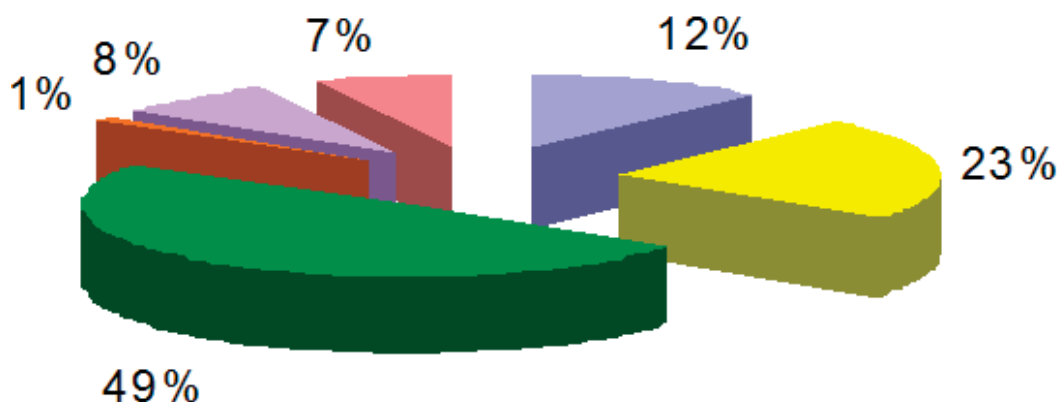
30. *Stalin i Kaganovich. Perepiska, 1931-1936 gg.* (Moscow, 2001), 210; <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/Citates.php>

31. V. Marochko, "Rosii's'ki arkhivni dzherela ta zbirnyky dokumentiv pro prychny ta obstavyny holodomoru," 47-48.

32. See the publication of the diaries: *Rozsekrechena pamiat': Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini v dokumentakh GPU-NKVD*, 539-572.

28. See note 40.

29. See Ruslan Pyrih's survey of this group: *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini: Dokumenty i materialy*, 28-31.



Approximate Proportion of the Principle Groups of Documents on the 1932-33 Famine-Genocide in Ukraine

49% Documents of local Party and Soviet organs; 23% Documents of republication governmental and administrative bodies; 12% Documents of USSR's highest all-Union authority; 7% Oral testimonies (published); 8% Letters, claims, complaints, petitions; 1% Documents of foreign diplomatic legations, political and media organizations, and materials of foreign press media.

ing published oral accounts). According to our very preliminary estimates, the archival legacy of the Holodomor consists of about 70 to 80 thousand documents concentrated in approximately 2,000 archival fonds and collections. An absolute majority of them—the documents of local authorities—are to be found in the regional archives of Ukraine.

III

The next question is how to describe the existing body of published documentation, i.e., that part of the archival documents that is out in the open and has entered academic and public circulation? The bibliography of works related to the Holodomor of 1932–33 includes about 1.5 thousand items. Of these, only about 250 are documentary publications. Book editions of documents which appeared between 1990 and 2007 number a little more than 30 volumes (of which 23 are regional in scope). The remainder—over 200 items—are articles. In total, the documentary publications reproduce about 5 thousand archival documents, representing some 6–7 percent of their total number.³³

33. See our survey of published documents: Hennadii Boriak, "The Publication of Sources on the History of the 1932-1933 Famine-Genocide," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, vol. 25, no. 3/4 (2001): 167-86; online version: <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/BoryakHarvard.pdf>. The online bibliography of related source materials is published by the State Committee on Archives of

Regional collections of documents have been published for 15 of the 17 oblasts located in the Ukrainian SSR in the early 1930s. Kyiv and Donetsk oblasts present a geographic lacuna in the circle of regional publications.

Electronic publications are becoming increasingly popular as the most efficient and cost-effective way of making editions available. For example, about 50 facsimiles of documents were posted on the web by regional archives. A database entitled "Electronic Archives of the Holodomor" on the web portal of the State Committee on Archives includes about 1,500 documents.

This begs the question: Is this a large or small number? I would simply say: It is enough. Disregarding the relatively small number of items, the most important and crucial materials in term of range and content have been published. They afford the possibility of making conceptual and legal conclusions about the conditions, causes and consequences of the man-made Famine. Moreover,

Ukraine: <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/Documents/Bibliogr.php>. It is based on a most comprehensive work published in 2001 by the M. Gorky Odesa State Research Library and the Institute of the History of Ukraine, National Academy of Science of Ukraine: *Holodomor v Ukraini. 1932-1933 rr.: Bibliohrafichnyi pokazhchyk*, compiled by L. Bur'ian, I. Rykun (Odesa, 2001), 656 pp. See also the recent bibliography of selected documentary publications: *Holodomor v Ukraini 1921-1923, 1932-1933, 1946-1947. Materialy do bibliohrafiï dokumentalnykh publikatsii*, compiled by L. Odynoka, L. Prykhod'ko and R. Romanovs'kyi (Kyiv: State Committee on Archives of Ukraine, 2005), 55 pp.; online version: <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Publicat/Golodomori.pdf>.

today there is not much hope for making sensational discoveries of documents concerning the Holodomor. It would be worthwhile to look at increasing the focus on regional materials and the micro-historical level in order to create the most accurate chronicle of the Great Famine possible.

The continual republication of documents that have appeared in earlier editions is a strong testimony to the exhaustion of the (readily-available) source base. The share of recycled materials in documentary publications is 30–70 percent. The publishers of documents are beginning “to go round in a circle.”

The newest documentary publications provide some proof for such a thesis. I would like to mention just a few of them.

First and foremost is the comprehensive *Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: Dokumenty i materialy* (The Holodomor of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Documents and Materials) by Ruslan Pyrih, which was published in August 2007. The author is not only a renowned researcher, but also a pioneer in publishing documents from the former Archive of the Central Committee of the CPU (Communist Party of Ukraine). Let me cite some quantitative details about this publication. This is the largest known collection of documents. It contains approximately 700 documents from 20 Ukrainian and 5 Russian archives (using all the central and 14 of the 17 regional archives of Ukraine). Of 87 resolutions of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 65 are published for the first time. They fill in the gaps in the documents pertaining to the highest level of policy-making. Moreover, the extensive use of sources from Moscow archives made it possible for the author to describe the all-Union context of the situation, i.e., the state of agriculture production, the realization of plans of harvesting, and the situation with food supply, without which one could not objectively analyze what was happening in the Ukrainian village.

Reprinted items constitute more than 60 percent of the documents. Thus, while the task of *searching for archival documents* was the primary task for publishers of archival materials in the late 1980s, today’s authors face the no less daunting problem of *selecting documents* for their compilations. Generally, the book may be considered the first documentary encyclopedia and at the same time the first scholarly anthology of the Holodomor. It truly marks the culmination of a series of ground-breaking and pan-Ukrainian (both in content and composition) documentary publications that have appeared through the efforts of historians and archivists over the two last decades.

A volume of previously secret documents of the Security Service of Ukraine (the successor to the Ukrainian branch of the KGB; Ukrainian initials: SBU) under the

title *Rozsekrechena pam'iat': Holodomor 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraïni v dokumentakh GPU-NKVD* (Declassified Memory: The Famine-Genocide of 1932–33 in Ukraine in the Documents of the GPU-NKVD) came off the presses during this same period. The publication includes almost all of the 1,000-page collection of documents made public a year earlier and posted on the official website of the SBU in digital format.³⁴

The operative reports of the Cheka reflect a detailed awareness of Party and governmental officials about the situation in the Ukrainian village and thus, about the intentional and criminal nature of their actions. In addition, they identify the little-known instrument for realizing the regime’s policy—I am referring to the lower level of the Party leadership, the mediators between the peasants and the authorities, who emerged in Cheka documents as “adversaries with a Party membership card in their pocket.” But the exceptional value of these documents lies in the fact that they bring into focus the lesser-known elements of the mechanics of creating the Famine and also the scale of resistance from the Ukrainian village. First of all, they clearly document the confiscation of non-grain foodstuffs from villagers, which signals a specific operation that transformed the grain confiscation into a widespread Famine. Second, these documents reconstruct the grand picture of the spread of anti-Soviet sentiment: the mass walkout of peasants from collective farms and their claims for the return of their horses and plots; the seizure of assets; and open acts of protests. This, naturally, spurred the authorities to an energetic fight against this “counterrevolution.”

After Stalin’s openly anti-Ukrainian message—his order not to lose Ukraine in August 1932—the agencies of the GPU were transformed into an instrument of terror against the peasantry. It is in the Cheka’s documents that we find the (in my opinion) sensational definition used by the Chekists themselves for their operation in the villages: “rural terror.” That is the official terminology. The epithet “Petliurite,” i.e., *nationalistic*, is always used alongside the adjective kulakish (“*kurkulish*” in Ukrainian) to mark that the foe was not only a class enemy, but also an ethnic enemy at whom the Genocide was aimed.³⁵

A collection of documents of the GPU’s organs in the Crimea includes clear instructions on establishing a blockade on railroads in order to prevent the shipping of grains northwards, i.e., to the starving Ukrainian villages. Correspondence opened and inspected by the Cheka—letters of Ukrainian peasants to their sons who were

34. See note 17.

35. See V. Danylenko, V. Prystaiko, “Dokumenty Derzhavnoho arkhivu Sluzhby bezpeky Ukraïny iak dzherelo vyvchennia holodomoru 1932–1933 rr. v Ukraïni”, *Holod 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: Prychyny i naslidky*, 81–98.

serving in the Red Army—add to the picture of infernal catastrophe.

One more recent Kyiv publication, *Ukrains'kyi khlib na eksport: 1932-33*³⁶ (Ukrainian Bread for Export: 1932-33) compiled by Volodymyr Serhiichuk, is an example of a successful thematic collection of documents.³⁶ The source base of the book is the archives of the organizations responsible for removing grain from Ukraine, both in order to meet the needs of the domestic market (i.e., the USSR) and to dump them aggressively onto the European market in the late 1920s–early 1930s. Millions of Ukrainian peasants paid the terrible price for this policy with their lives.

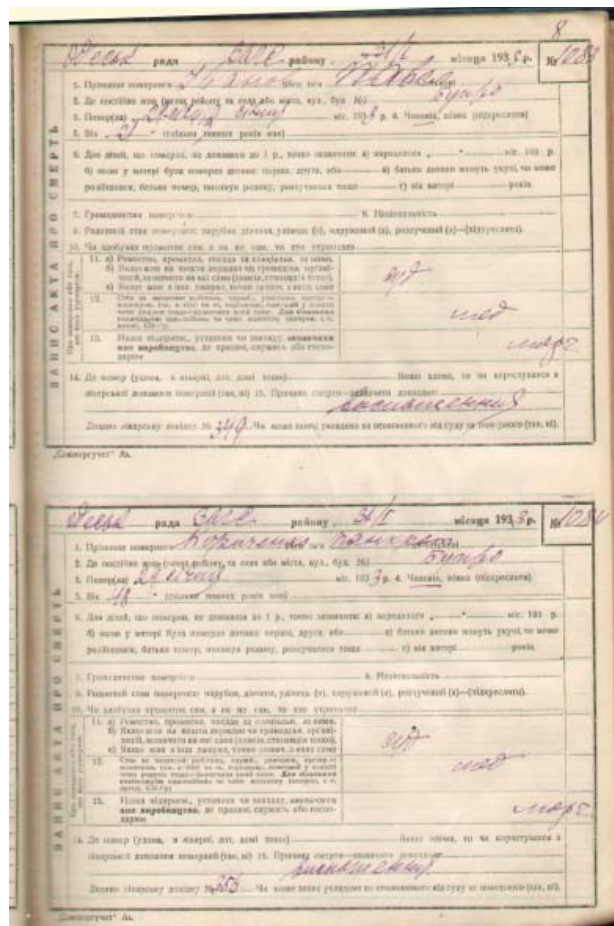
As for the recent regional publications, it would be worthwhile to note the volumes prepared by Sumy, Vinnytsia, Odesa, Kharkiv, Donetsk, Cherkasy and Luhans'k archivists in 2005-2007, based primarily on local archives with illustrative local factual materials.³⁷

I will mention only one example from the Vinnytsia collection. It is the resolution of the Vinnytsia Oblast Committee of the CPU, dated August 1, 1932, regarding the confiscation of millstones from peasants with the following motivation: “the availability of the millstones promotes bargaining away grain and speculating in cereals.” A year later the Oblast Prosecutor informed the Oblast Committee that the resourceful peasants were using meat-grinders instead of the confiscated millstones to mill cereals, and he proposed the confiscation of meat-grinders from peasants as well. The intentions of the organizers of the Famine-Genocide are quite obvious.³⁸

36. *Ukrains'kyi khlib na eksport: 1932-1933*, compiled by Volodymyr Serhiichuk (Kyiv: PP Serhiichuk M. I., 2006). 432 pp.

37. *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv na Sumshchyni*, compiled by L. Pokydenko (Sumy: Yaroslavna, 2006), 356 pp.; *Holod ta holodomor na Podilli 1920-ti-1940-i rr.*, compiled by R. Podkur, V. Vasyliiev, M. Kravchenko et al. (Vinnytsia: DKF, 2007), 704 pp.; *Holodomory v Ukraini: Odes'ka oblast' (1921-1923, 1932-1933, 1946-1947 rr.): Spohady, dokumenty, doslidzhennia*, compiled by L. Bilousova, O. Baranovs'ka, T. Volkova et al. (Odesa, 2005), 152 pp.; *Holodomory v Ukraini: Odes'ka oblast' (1921-1923, 1932-1933, 1946-1947): Doslidzhennia, spohady, dokumenty*, compiled by L. Bilousova, D. Badera, P. Bondarchuk (Odesa: Astroprint, 2007), No. 78: (Odesa: Astroprint, 2007), 460 pp.; *Holodomor 1932-1933 rr. Kharkivs'ka oblast': Dokumenty* (Kharkiv: Derzhavnyi arkhiv Kharkivs'koi oblasti, Doslidnyi tsentr mediatekhnologii, 2007). Full text data base, includes 236 documents: <http://www.golodomor.kharkov.ua/docs.php?page=1; Nevhamovnyi bil>. *Istorychni doslidzhennia, narysy, svidchennia, spohady, dokumenty*, compiled by S. Bliednov (Donetsk: Bliednov, 2007), 198 pp.; *Holodomor 1932-1933 na Cherkashchyni. Knyha Pamiati v dokumentakh ta spohadakh*, compiled by P. Zhuk, V. Zakharchenko, T. Kalynovs'ka et al. (Cherkasy: Vyd. Yu. Chabanenko, 2007), 484 pp.; *Holodomor na Luhanshchyni 1932-1933 rr.: Naukovo-dokumental'ne vydannia*, compiled by M. Starovoitov, V. Mykhailychenko (Kyiv: Stylos, 2008), 288 pp.

38. Source cited: V. Petrenko, “Holodomor 1932-1933 rr. — henotsyd narodu Ukraïny,” *Trahediia Holodomoru na Vinnytsyni 1932-1933 rr.: Bibliografichnyi pokazhchyk* (Vinnytsia, 2003); online version: <http://www.library.vinnitsa.com/publications/2003/print/golod03.html>.



Samples of death records in the Civil Registry books. January 1933. State Archives of Kyiv Oblast. f 5634/1/1143, fol. 8.

The Sumy publication presents for the first time a group of new materials that usually remain outside the attention of researchers and publishers of documents in all the regions. Here I refer to local press materials, namely, newspapers and non-periodical publications. These materials have an extraordinary informative potential. Each issue contains numerous references to the process of harvesting and reports on sessions of itinerant raion courts with pronouncement of their sentencing (including the death sentence), as well as dozens of names of those condemned and lists of the villages posted onto “the black list.” The publications of local press media make it possible to reconstruct the personal aspect of this tragedy on a micro-level in each village. They contain invaluable data for compiling a chronicle and martyrology of those repressed in the times of the Holodomor as well as a geographical map of the Great Famine.

IV

Returning to the topic of the exhaustion of the archival resource base for revealing key moments in and the mechanisms of the creation of the Famine, I would like to outline the prospects for investigating new bodies of materials, especially for a careful reconstruction of the course of the tragedy of the Ukrainian village and an estimation of its consequences.

1: Certainly, the local press materials mentioned above provide one area for new research. Utilizing this resource requires considerable effort, a special methodology, and a carefully organized work plan, mainly because it is dispersed over a number of libraries, and also because of its great volume. According to the Book Chamber of Ukraine, more than 1,000 newspaper titles were published in the 486 raion centers of Ukrainian SSR in 1932-33 with varying periodicity. A preliminary estimate allows us to put the total quantity of the press materials at about 150,000 items.

2: A second segment of the documentary base, absolutely unused and unavailable until recently, is the Vital Statistic Registers kept by local civil registry offices. According to enacted legislation, they must be held in the archives of the Ministry of Justice for 75 years and closed to researchers. The seventy-fifth anniversary of the Great Famine coincides with the termination of the confidentiality measures for the personal information in the registers. The State Committee on Archives of Ukraine initiated a large-scale project aimed at pre-term acquisition by oblast archives of the extant registers for 1932-33 and the subsequent years for state preservation. (In many cases, one volume of such a register will contain entries up to the end of the 1930s).

Generally, we can speak about four thousand Vital Statistic registers. This amounts to at least 1 million pages of records for 1932-33. According to very preliminary calculations, they contain information about no more than 3 million deaths.³⁹ As was noted above, the extant registers cover about one-third of the territories in which the Famine raged. Direct indications of death because of starvation (starvation, decay, atrophy, dystrophy, and avitaminosis) are rare. At the same time, there are certain regularities in identifying euphemistic diagnoses (like dropsy, heart dropsy, sharp pain, pneumonia, intestinal tuberculosis, swelling, etc.), and certain compound diagnoses (like pneumonia-atrophy, myocarditis-atrophy, etc.). Special methods will need to be employed for obtaining specific demographic information, as well as for reconstructing the instructions given to local physicians in making diagnoses.

39. See public reports on the transfer of the books, November 2007: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2007/11/23/67313.htm>; <http://www.obkom.net.ua/news/2007-11-23/1710.shtml>.

The concentration of the Registers today in 25 state archives (whereas previously they had been dispersed among hundreds of raion and local depositories) will open up the possibility of studying this unique group of documents. At the same time, it is understood that this will be a complicated undertaking and that it may raise more questions than it answers.

3: A group of "problematic" documents are photos from the time of the Holodomor. In my opinion, it is high time to make a definitive identification of these, possibly with the participation of researchers via a special Internet-forum, in order to dot the i's in the on-going discussions regarding the quantity and authenticity of the documents of this group. In particular, I would like to stress the necessity for the centralized memorial registration and the publication of all photo documents without exception which contain scenes from everyday life in the Ukrainian village during the early 1930s, which are presently scattered throughout various archival and museum repositories. According to preliminary calculations, there are no more than 10 thousand such items. The publication of these documents will make possible a reconstruction of the landscape of the tragedy in a wider sense.

4: The fourth segment of the documentary base I would like to mention when speaking about future prospects are materials from the regional archives. They constitute the largest group in terms of quantity, but they are the least utilized to date in terms of research and publication. By the order of the President of Ukraine, since last year all State Archives have started working on preparing a "National Register of Memorial Collections." Documents related to the Great Famine became a core of the Register. All of the materials would require annotation at the fond/collection, file group, individual file or document levels. The first results of this work are already displayed on the web portal of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine.⁴⁰

5: And in conclusion I would like to outline the project titled "Electronic Archives of the Famine-Genocide: A Consolidated Register of Archival Documents On-Line."⁴¹ The project, initiated last year at the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine, aims to provide open access to an archive by publishing (electronically) all the documents related to the Famine-Genocide on the Com-

40. See: Selected Materials for the National Register of Memorial Fonds: <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Archives/Reestr/>. Listed so far are fonds from the TsDAVO as well as the Dnipropetrovsk, Luhans'k, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Kherson, Khmelnyts'kyi, and Chernihiv state regional archives.

41. 1932-33 Famine-Genocide Electronic Archives (<http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/Publicat/>) is the core of a special section of the official web portal of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine "Genocide of Ukrainian People: 1932-1933 Famine": <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/index.php>

mittee's website. The texts would appear in the database in transliterated versions taken from the publication (in php format), or as facsimiles of digitized originals (in pdf format). Each document would provide the requisite information: date, caption, place of storage, bibliographic information (if need be), and so on.

The pilot version of the database includes approximately 1,500 documents from 1929 to the mid-1930s, approximately 10 volumes of documents as well as all the digitized documents from the State Security Service archives. Consequently, it is the largest electronic documentary resource and most comprehensive chronicle dealing with the day-to-day life of the Ukrainian village at that time.

Combining documents from different levels, origin, orientation, geography and content in a single database and the increasing opportunities for providing groups of documents in both facsimile and text formats afford the opportunity to create a representative and useful documentary base of the Famine-Genocide. The next step is the integration of visual materials (i.e., photo and film documents) and the development of adequate search tools. It should be noted that this large-scale project was made possible due to the generous support of the Ukrainian Studies Fund, Inc. Naturally, it requires further support.

Generally, we regard this project as the final step in making available the broadest selection of Holodomor sources possible and the culmination of considerable efforts in working on documents and their publication over an almost twenty-year period. The Electronic Archives of the Holodomor will open up the possibility to improve future historiography in this field qualitatively, while purging the source base from the sort of speculative and unprofessional insinuations I mentioned earlier in my paper.

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