

# SOURCES AND RESOURCES ON THE FAMINE IN UKRAINE'S ARCHIVAL SYSTEM\*\*

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During the last few years the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine has developed and posted on the web a comprehensive database of documentary resources on the 1932-1933 Famine-Genocide in Ukraine. The site includes the pilot version of the "Electronic Archive of the Holodomor" with full texts of 1,500 documents from the state archives of Ukraine and Russia; the most comprehensive available set of photo and film documents on the Holodomor; related party leaders' speeches; a full list of documentary online exhibitions posted on the web by state archival institutions; an online bibliography of source publications and surveys of sources; announcements on the latest source publications; documentary Internet resources; and other reference materials.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See the special section of the official web portal of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine, "Genotsyd ukrains'koho narodu: Holodomor 1932-1933 rr.," <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/index.php> (also in English as "Genocide of the Ukrainian People: The 1932-1933 Famine," <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/index-eng.php>). The "Electronic Archive of the Holodomor" comprises the core of this section; see <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/Publicat/>.

Today archivists and scholars are approaching the end of the second decade of intensive efforts to seek out, declassify, and make available these materials. The time has come to draw conclusions and at least pose, if not fully answer, the following questions: What is the documentary base for studying the Famine-Genocide? Is the information potential of this documentary base sufficient? What is the ratio between published and unpublished documents? Are there any as yet unstudied groups of documents? Should we expect sensational new archival discoveries? In other words, what is the state of the art of Holodomor archives and sources?

The next question is what should be done further. Which sources should be put on the agenda as priority items for researchers?

First of all, let us recall that in Ukraine *not a single archival document* about the Famine was published until the end of the 1980s. For over half a century, all Western historiography relied solely on oral evidence, episodic documents from diplomatic archives, materials from journalists, and sporadic photographs. Generally, this was the period of what can be called the "pre-archival" historiography of the Holodomor.

During the nearly two decades of "archival" historiography, we have learned that a great mass of written information, both secret and open, about the preconditions, causes, scale, and consequences of the Famine had been produced at all levels of state authority. Even though they were aware of the dangerous nature and content of these documents, central authorities were unable to establish total control over or prohibit the flow of papers "born of" the Holodomor, much less destroy them all. Party committees, governmental institutions, and newspaper editorial boards were deluged with letters, complaints, appeals, and statements about the real situation in rural regions.

The most precarious time for these documents was the initial period of their existence. It may safely be assumed that a significant part, mainly those related to the registration of illnesses and deaths in hospitals and village councils, was destroyed immediately, "while still hot." Today we have in our possession documented, direct instructions issued by governing bodies ordering the destruction of such records,<sup>2</sup> and also evidence confirming the falsification of causes of death in civil registry and medical records of that time.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine (hereafter TsDAVO), fond 318 (National Economic Survey Administration [*Upravlinnia narodnohospodars'koho obliku*], Kharkiv and Kyiv, 1923-1941), 1596 files (*spravy*).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, the death record from Antonivka village, Stavyshe raion, Kyiv oblast (21 June 1932), with the cause of death "died of starvation" crossed out and "unknown" added in its place (State Archives of Kyiv Oblast, fond 5634, opys 1, sprava 969, arkushi 86r-86v [hereafter *op.*, *spr.*, *ark.*]). See figures 2a and 2b.

Paradoxically, in the post-World War II period the preservation of republic- and all-Union-level documents in secret, controlled-access archival collections (*spetsfondy*) secured their conservation and integrity exceptionally well. In this instance, the regime itself rendered a service to future historians. By contrast, the documents of local authorities and regional institutions and organizations were regarded as inconsequential and thus "neglected," never to be put into closed secret collections.

After the collapse of the communist regime, the archival administration of Ukraine undertook a disclosure of documents unrivaled in any other territory of the former USSR. This process has continued, and today the proportion of classified documents in the state archives of Ukraine (which stood at 0.55 percent at the end of 2006 and 0.47 percent at the end of 2007) is one of the lowest in Europe.<sup>4</sup> Naturally, among the declassified materials, the documents related to the history of the 1932-1933 Holodomor were in greatest demand. They have become the principal source base for scholarly research into this painful topic and have helped to destroy numerous false myths of the twentieth century.

Unfortunately, in the maelstrom of political battles in present-day Ukraine, the source base for researching the Holodomor has become the object of numerous attempts to manipulate the facts. I would like to mention a few.

One of them, recently advanced by the Ukrainian communists, is very curious. Their leader, Petro Symonenko, cynically misconstruing documents of the higher party leadership, 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 as early as 1933 that the Politburo of the Communist Party of Ukraine published all of the most significant materials about the situation of 1932-33, not hiding the truth about these events." Furthermore, the "archives expert" assuredly declares, "Today one cannot find a single document that proves that the Famine was an intentional policy to eradicate the peasantry," and draws the conclusion, "Therefore, the position of the Communist Party today is the following: famine and tragedy did occur, but this was a tragedy not just of the Ukrainian nation, but of all the peoples of the Soviet Union and Ukraine."<sup>5</sup> His thesis is thus quite simple: there indeed was a famine, the

<sup>4</sup> Regarding the declassification of archives, see the web portal of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine, "Rozsekrechuvannia arkhiviv," <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Archives/Rozsekr-arch.php>.

<sup>5</sup> See interview with the leader of the Ukrainian Communist Party conducted by Anton Zikora, "Symonenko vyznaie til'ky ody henotsyd—'Turechchyny proty Virmenü'," *UNIAN*, 24 November 2006, <http://unian.net/news/print.php?id=174464> (accessed 28 April 2008). Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

communists were the first to recognize the starvation, and they published all the relevant documents themselves. We can therefore close the books on the Holodomor archives.

Fittingly, the position of the Ukrainian communist leader fully coincides with the conception of another document—the guidelines proposed by the Russian Federal Archival Agency (Rosarkhiv) for a collaborative project titled "Famine in the USSR: 1932-33." I would like to cite some of the cynical instructions contained in that document: "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"; and "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, one can publish a selection of civil registry offices' certificates from the Volga region [Povolzh'e], with specific records of starvation deaths in the Lower and Middle Volga territories in 1933." In other words, by selecting several examples of deaths by starvation in Ukraine, the Volga region, and the Northern Caucasus, the project could conclude that the entire USSR suffered from the Famine equally.<sup>6</sup> Of course, there is no denying that famine struck other parts of the Soviet Union. However, this should in no way diminish the fact that Soviet authorities 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." It is, obviously, in this way that the document's authors expect us to interpret the efforts, in 1933, of the Ukrainian public in Western Ukraine to provide the world with information about the Holodomor. The author of this concept is Viktor Kondrashin, a professor at Penza University and director of the project. In a recent interview he characterized the Ukrainian law acknowledging the Holodomor as an act of genocide (adopted in November 2006) as "dancing on the bones of victims" and an attempt

<sup>6</sup> The cited document is preserved in the author's archives. See also facsimile publication of the guidelines for the above-mentioned project with comments: O. Palii, "Moskva nakazala Ianukovychu," *Ekspres* (Lviv), 5-6 May, 2007.

by "certain political forces" to "line their pockets" using the history of the Famine.<sup>7</sup>

Ukrainian historians and archivists categorically rejected this approach and proposed instead to prepare a number of individual volumes of documents devoted to specific regions of the USSR, with relevant comments and conclusions in each volume. We insisted on distinguishing between famine resulting from state grain procurements, and *artificial* famine resulting from *grain procurements coupled with a total non-grain food requisition*. Our proposals were met with displeasure and labeled as an attempt to "blur the overall picture of this phenomenon [starvation] in the common history of the state that existed at that time." "The differentiation between 'famine' [*holod*] and 'famine-genocide' [*Holodomor*] would not withstand scholarly criticism," we were told, and then presented with the initial results of our Russian colleagues' manipulation of source material: "Analysis of documents discovered in the Russian State Archive of the Economy that deal with vital statistics for 1933 has already shown that the correlation of mortality and birth rates in Ukraine and Russia in the epicenter of the Famine was roughly the same. *No unique distinction of these processes in Ukraine was observed when compared to Russia* [my emphasis]."<sup>8</sup> This dreadful conclusion, which has the sound of a judge passing sentence, was reached *before any* serious study and comparative analysis of the vital statistics registers from affected territories in Ukraine and Russia had begun.

Let these statements lie on the conscience of those who make them.

#### ARCHIVAL SOURCES

To give an idea of the large and diverse complex of archival sources on the Holodomor that we are aware of today, we refer to the classification scheme

<sup>7</sup> "Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) Archives to Offer Real Picture of the 1929-1932 Famine, Says University Rector," *Action Ukraine Report (AUR)*, no. 832, 22 April 2007, <http://action-ukraine-report.blogspot.com/2007/04/aur832-apr-22-stalins-great-terror-70.html#a6>; "Rassekrechennye arkhivy FSB proliut svet na golodomor," *Izvestiia*, 17 April 2007, <http://www.izvestia.ru/news/news132448/>. For other statements by Mr. Kondrashin, see "Istoriki nazyvaiut mifom genotsid ukrainskogo naroda v 1932-1933 godakh," *news.mail.ru*, 19 December 2007, <http://news.mail.ru/politics/1532494/>; "Unikal'nye dokumenty iz arkhivov FSB o zhertvakh golodomora 1930-kh gg.," *www.directory.com.ua*, <http://directory.com.ua/news101429.html>. On the latter site Kondrashin states, "It would be absolute stupidity if the Famine were to be recognized as a genocide of the Ukrainian people." All sites accessed 29 April 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Source document from the author's archives.

proposed by Ruslan Pyrih, the well-known Ukrainian historian of the Famine-Genocide and former director of the State Archives of Ukraine.<sup>9</sup> Table 1 at right, based on our very preliminary estimates, shows how each group of documents figures in the overall representation of source materials for studies of the Holodomor.

The first group consists of documents of the Soviet Union's highest organs of power: the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, the People's Commissariat of Land Resources, the Committee for Procurement, the Unified 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 issues of the Famine-Genocide. They are kept in Moscow at the Archive of the President of the Russian Federation, the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (RGASPI), the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), and the Russian State Archive of the Economy (RGAE).

The documents of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU, the supreme state and party authority, reflect the true policy followed in all areas of societal life. Some 270 matters directly related to Ukraine were discussed during the 69 meetings of the Politburo held in 1932-1933. 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 where the rural population retained its spirit of patriotism and aspirations to independence and resisted collectivization, grain and food procurements, and sovietization.

<sup>9</sup> The first general survey and classification of sources on the Holodomor was offered by Ruslan Pyrih in 2003 in a special chapter of a foundational work published by the Institute of History of Ukraine, National Academy of Science of Ukraine; see R. Ia. Pyrih, "Dokumenty z istorii holodu u fondakh arkhivoskhovyshch Ukrainy," in *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: Prychyny ta naslidky*, ed. V. M. Lytvyn, 8-26 (Kyiv, 2003); [http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/Documents/Famine\\_32-33.php](http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/Documents/Famine_32-33.php). An updated version of this survey is published as an introduction to a more recent publication; see Ruslan Pyrih, ed., *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: Dokumenty i materialy* (Kyiv, 2007), 5-33.

The 2003 volume also includes several other surveys of sources on the Holodomor: by N. V. Platonova and T. V. Vrons'ka on the State Archives of Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine (pp. 26-41); by V. I. Marochko on materials in the Russian archives (pp. 41-50); by Vas. M. Danylenko and V. I. Prystaiko on the State Archives of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) (pp. 81-98); and an analysis of published documents by O. M. Veselova and Marochko (pp. 50-81).

**Table 1.** Approximate proportion of the principal groups of documents on the 1932-33 Famine-Genocide in Ukraine.

Source of documents	percentage of total
All-Union organs of power and administration <sup>12</sup>	
Republic-level organs <sup>23</sup>	
Local party and government organs <sup>49</sup>	
Foreign diplomatic legations, political and public organizations, and materials of foreign press media <sup>1</sup>	
Letters, claims, complaints, petitions <sup>8</sup>	
Oral testimonies (published) <sup>7</sup>	

A mass of Chekist documents from the OGPU, preserved at the Central Archive of the Federal Security Service of Russia (FSB), also belongs in this group. Here one finds 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, the hunting down and arrest of kulaks and people in nationalistic organizations, more confiscations of grain and bread, and the organization of blockades at railroads.

The statistics generated by the higher levels of the OGPU should be treated with considerable caution, since they were subjected to an almost incredible downward revision. For example, one report from April 1932 contains information about only "eighty-three cases of swelling and six cases of death because of starvation in Ukraine."<sup>10</sup> One can imagine what sort of manipulation such data had experienced.

The first category should also include a group of NKVD archival *fonds* held at the State Archive of the Russian Federation. These concern specially displaced persons—the so-called "kulak deportation" to the Ural region and other parts of the GULAG. There are also 32,000 personal files of Ukrainian "special settlers" held at the State Archive of Sverdlovsk Oblast."

<sup>10</sup> Pyrin, *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini*, 12.

<sup>11</sup> V. I. Marochko, "Rosii's'ki arkhivni dzherela ta zbirnyky dokumentiv pro prychyny ta obstavyny holodomoru," in Lytvyn, *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraini*, 45-46.

Key documents from the archives of higher party and government agencies were published extensively in the early 1990s, usually with financial support from 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 *Stalin i Kaganovich: Perepiska* (2001; 2003), *"Sovershenno Sekretno": Lubianka Stalinu o polozhenii v strane* (2001 -), and the distinguished five-volume edition, *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni*, prepared by the prominent historian Viktor Danilov and his colleagues (the third volume [pub. 2001] contains documents from 1930 to 1933). Also notable is a volume edited by the Ukrainian historians Iurii Shapoval and Valerii Vasyl'iev, which contains the travel diaries of Viacheslav Molotov and Lazar' Kaganovich during their visit to Ukraine and the Northern Caucasus in 1932-1933, along with Politburo minutes from that period and other documents from the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History (2001). Many documents of this first group were later republished in Ukrainian editions.<sup>12</sup>

The second group includes documents of republic-level (i.e., Ukrainian) governmental and administrative bodies: the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine (CP[b]U), the Council of Peoples Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR (RNK), the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee (VUTsVK), the People's Commissariat of Land Resources, the Ukrainian Collective Farms Center, the State Political Administration (GPU), the People's Commissariat of Justice, the General Prosecutor's Office, the Supreme Court, and various other people's commissariats (i.e., Health Care, Education, and others). These documents are preserved in Ukrainian central and departmental (*haluzevi*) state archives: the Central State Archives of Public Organizations (TsDAHO), the Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government (TsDAVO), the State Archives of the Security Service of Ukraine (DA SBU), and the State Archives of the Ministry for Internal Affairs (DA MVS). Almost all of the documents of the Communist Party and a part of the key documents of Soviet governmental agencies have already been published.

<sup>12</sup> O. V. Khlevniuk et al., eds., *Stalin i Kaganovich: Perepiska 1931-1936gg.* (Moscow, 2001; English ed., New Haven, 2003); G. N. Sevost'ianov et al., eds., *"Sovershenno Sekretno": Lubianka—Stalinu o polozhenii v strane (1922-1934 gg.)*, 10 vols. (Moscow, 2001-); V. Danilov, R. Manning, and L. Viola, eds., *Tragediia sovetskoi derevni: Kollektivizatsiia i raskulachivanie*, vol. 3, *Konets 1930-1933* (Moscow, 2001); Iurii Shapoval and Valerii Vasyl'iev, *Komandyry velykoho holodu: Poizdki V. Molotova i L. Kahanovycha v Ukraïmu ta na Pivnichnyi Kavkaz, 1932-1933 rr.* (Kyiv, 2001).

This group is notable for its wealth of information about the immediate causes, conditions, mechanics, technologies, and executors of the man-made Famine. There is extensive factual material regarding the total confiscation of food, extensive food shortages, widespread bloating from starvation, mortality, and cannibalism. The absolute subordination of these republic-level authorities to instructions from Moscow is quite striking in the documents here. They are similar in nature to the first group, as they were produced by the republican counterparts to all-Union structures.

The documents of the Central Committee of the CP(b)U are the most informative because of the party's key place among governing bodies. It should be noted, however, that the amount of information in a document is almost always inversely proportional to the level of its origin — the higher the level, the less information about the Famine it contains.

Documents of republic-level executive authorities (principally the People's Commissariat of Land Resources, Ukrainian Collective Farms Center, All-Ukrainian Union of Agricultural Collectives, and the People's Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection) contain extensive factual material about the Famine according to the sector of administration involved. As for the archives of the Peoples Commissariat of Health Care, at least 12,000 files from the early 1930s were destroyed in Kyiv in 1941 as Soviet troops retreated.<sup>13</sup>

The documents of law enforcement bodies—the GPU, Peoples Commissariat of Justice, and the General Prosecutor's Office—are especially important, as these institutions participated intensively in the mass repression of the peasantry and carefully documented their activities.

The archives of the GPU—the most powerful branch of the republic's repressive punitive-justice system—were the last major collection related to the Holodomor to be declassified in Ukraine.<sup>14</sup> In 2006 over 150 documents (more than 1,000 pages) were made public in digital form through posting on the Internet; subsequently, they went on display for over a year in a large-scale touring exhibition titled "Declassified Memory." During this time, the

<sup>13</sup> Vadim Kogan, "Search and Findings: Primary Sources concerning the Famine in Ukraine in 1932-1933 (Medical Aspects [of] the Problem)," *Agapit* (Kyiv), no. 13 (2002), <http://histomed.kiev.ua/agapit/agl/ag01-15e.html>; republished on the the website *ArtUkraine.com*, <http://www.artukraine.com/famineart/medasp.htm>.

<sup>14</sup> For the most recent survey of the SBU archives, see Vasyli' Danylenko, "Dokumenty Haluzevoho derzhavnoho arkhivu Sluzhby bezpeky Ukraïny iak dzherelo vvychennia Holodomoru 1932-1933 rr. v Ukraïni," in *Rozsekrechena pam'iat': Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv V Ukraïni v dokumentakh GPU-NKVD*, comp. V. Borysenko et al., 20-44 (Kyiv, 2007).

exhibit was shown in every oblast capital city (usually supplemented with local documents from the state oblast archives) and, arguably, has become the most influential instrument for raising awareness in Ukraine about this tragedy. The process of making these documents public reached its culmination in August 2007 with the publication of a documentary collection bearing the same name (and comparable content) as the exhibit.

GPU papers of day-to-day operations document the extent of Chekist and militia involvement in the mass confiscation of food 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 March 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 district [*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."<sup>15</sup> In a similar vein, the chief of the Kharkiv city branch department of the GPU stated in June 1933 that "the mortality rate has become so high that a host of village councils have stopped registering those who died."<sup>16</sup> We have no reason to believe that the situation in other regions was any different.

The documents of the Peoples Commissariat of Justice and the Prosecutor's Office of the Supreme Court of the Ukrainian SSR provide evidence of government-led terror against the peasantry through the judicial system.

The key documents of the State Archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs are concentrated in the collections titled "Protocols of Special Proceedings and Tribunals [*troiky*]" and "Criminal Cases in Trial Courts and Extrajudicial Organs." The criminal files reveal the shocking truth about the total social collapse in rural regions and the psychic trauma that led to the eating of cadavers and cannibalism. Of the 83,000 such cases launched by the NKVD in 1932-1933, we have a record of no more than 3,000 today (the rest were destroyed in 1956). More than 2,500 people were convicted of cannibalism. Documents for 1,000 of these cases have survived. In my opinion, the public is still not ready today to accept these grisly photo and text records. However, the Kherson Oblast State Administration has posted a documentary piece titled "The Famine of 1932-33 in Kherson Oblast" on the Internet and published eleven photographs without any reference to their origin. Three

of them appear to be photos from the criminal cases of those convicted of cannibalism.

A separate block of documents of the Ministry of Internal Affairs archive contains approximately 426,000 criminal cases of so-called special settlers and deportees—persons interned in 1932-1933 in the Krasnoïarsk territory, the Irkutsk, Kemerovo, Tomsk, and other oblasts, and the Komi Republic.<sup>17</sup>

The third group is the largest. It includes the documents of local party and government organs: oblast, city, and raion committees of the communist party; oblast and raion executive committees; and the local organs of the GPU, the militia, the judiciary, the prosecutor's office, health care bodies, educational institutions, workers' and peasants' inspections, village councils, and the like. The orders issued by these agencies provide little information, as they essentially applied the center's political estimations and directives to local conditions. In contrast, the reports and correspondence of regional offices sent to Ukrainian central authorities provide highly detailed and personalized accounts of the events involved. They present a vivid picture of starvation and death, local political attitudes, and manifestations of mass protest and resistance.

The documents of this group are concentrated primarily at the state archives of those seventeen (present-day) oblasts on whose territories the Holodomor raged and in the network of corresponding oblast archives of the SBU and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Only a tiny part of these documents have been published — naturally, in local editions.

The fourth group of documents includes materials from foreign diplomatic legations, political and public organizations, and the foreign press.<sup>18</sup> This is the smallest and least studied group of documents in Ukraine. Included in this category are reports of the German and Italian general consulates in Kharkiv, Kyiv, and Odesa; information from British diplomats and economic experts; and analyses by the Polish police. The authors of these reports were unanimously convinced of the undeniably man-made nature of the Famine, a deliberate measure taken by the regime to suppress the Ukrainian peasantry.

<sup>17</sup> See N. V. Platonova and T. V. Vrons'ka, "Arkhivni materialy NKVS i DPU u fondakh Derzhavnoho arkhivu MVS Ukrainy," in Lytvyn, *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni*, 26-41.

<sup>18</sup> For a survey of this group, see Pyrih, *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni*, 28-31.

The fifth group includes letters, affidavits, complaints, petitions, and diaries. These are vivid, deeply psychological depictions of the personal experiences of those confronted by the reality of this tragic event.

Letters were typically sent to republic-level institutions in Kharkiv (VUTsVK, RNK, and the Central Committee of the CP[b]U), or addressed personally to highly placed officials (such as Hryhorii Petrovs'kyi or Vlas Chubar), or to local government, land-management, and law-enforcement bodies. The letters of peasants addressed to Stalin, Molotov, and Kaganovich and sent to the editorial boards of central newspapers constitute a significant block of documents. Mikhail Kalinin's office alone received approximately 30,000 letters. The higher party and governmental leaders were quite aware of the damning nature of these letters, which reflected the slaughter that had become a reality of life in the village. It is hardly accidental that five million letters from the 1930s disappeared from the Russian State Archive of the Economy without a trace.<sup>19</sup> Only a small number of items from this group has been published. No special editions with such documents have yet appeared in Ukraine.

Recently, the State Archives of the SBU disclosed excerpts from two unique diaries from the Famine era: one by Oleksandra Radchenko, a teacher, and another by Dmytro Zavoloka, a party investigator and official with the Kyiv Oblast Auditing Commission. Both reveal a profound comprehension of the situation and attempts to come to grips with the tragedy emotionally. Both the diaries and their authors were suppressed.<sup>20</sup>

In sum, according to preliminary estimates, the entire archival legacy of the Holodomor consists of about 70,000 to 80,000 documents concentrated within about 2,000 archival *fonds* and collections. The overwhelming majority of them, being documents of local authorities, are found in the regional archives of Ukraine.

#### PUBLISHED SOURCES

As for the body of published material that is out in the open and has gone into academic and public circulation, the bibliography of scholarly works related to the Holodomor of 1932-1933 includes about 1,500 items. Of these, only about 250 are documentary publications: up to 35 book editions of documents (of which 26 are regional in scope) that appeared between 1990

<sup>19</sup> Marochko, "Rosiis'ki arkhivni dzherela ta zbirnyky dokumentiv pro prychny ta obstavyny holodomoru," 47-48.

<sup>20</sup> See these diaries in Borysenko et al., *Rozsekrechena pam'iat'*, 539-72.

and 2007, and the remainder—over 200 items—journal and newspaper publications. In total, documentary publications contain about 5,000 archival documents, comprising some 6 to 7 percent of their total number.<sup>21</sup>

Is this a great or a small number? I think it is sufficient. Despite the relatively small number of items, the most important and crucial materials in terms of range and content have been published. They afford us the possibility of making conceptual and legal conclusions about the conditions, causes, and consequences of the man-made Famine. Moreover, today there is not much hope of making sensational new discoveries of related documents.

The continual republication of documents that have appeared in earlier editions is strong testimony to a certain exhaustion of the source base. The share of republished materials in documentary editions ranges from 30 to 70 percent, suggesting that their publishers are beginning to "go round in circles." The latest document collections confirm this thesis. I would like to mention several of them.

First and foremost is the comprehensive *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: Dokumenty i materialy*, compiled by Ruslan Pyrih and published in August 2007.<sup>22</sup> The author is not only a renowned researcher, but also a pioneer in the publication of documents from the former Archives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. Let us remember that in 1990, at significant personal risk, he personally untied the "archival sources bag" and published the first documentary collection on the Holodomor in Ukraine.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> See my survey of published documents: Hennadii Boriak, "The Publication of Sources on the History of the 1932-1933 Famine-Genocide," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 25, no. 3-4 (2001): 167-86; <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/BoryakHarvard.pdf>. An online bibliography of related source materials is published by the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine; see "Holodomor 1932-1933: Publikatsiï ofitsiinykh dokumentiv, inshykh arkhivnykh materialy, spohadiv, svïdchen'"; *Materialy do bibliohrafiï*, "<http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/Documents/Bibliogr.php>. It is based on a more comprehensive work published in 2001 by the M. Gorkii Odesa State Research Library and the Institute of History of Ukraine, National Academy of Science of Ukraine; see L. M. Bur'ian and I. E. Rykun, comps., *Holodomor v Ukraïni, 1932-1933 rr.: Bibliohrafichnyi pokazchuk* (Odesa, 2001), 656 pp. See also a recent bibliography of selected documentary publications, L. P. Odynoka, L. F. Prykhod'ko, and R. V. Romanovs'kyi, comps., *Holodomory v Ukraïni 1921-1923, 1932-1933, 1946-1947: Materialy do bibliohrafiï dokumental'nykh publikatsii* (Kyiv, 2005), 55 pp.; <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Publicat/Golodomori.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> Ruslan Pyrih, ed., *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: Dokumenty i materialy* (Kyiv, 2007), 1128 pp.

<sup>23</sup> Ruslan Pyrih et al, comps., *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv na Ukraïni: Ochyma istorykiv, movoiu dokumentiv* (Kyiv, 1990).

Pyrh's 2007 publication, with approximately 700 documents from 20 Ukrainian and 5 Russian archives, is the largest known collection of Holodomor documents. Reprinted items constitute more than 60 percent of the total number. Thus, while *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. Pyrih's book may be considered the first documentary encyclopedia, as well as the first scholarly anthology on the Holodomor. It truly represents the culmination of a succession of broadly based national documentary publications that appeared over the last two decades.

At about the same time, the volume *Rozsekrechena pamiat': Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni v dokumentakh GPU-NKVD* came out, containing declassified materials from the archives of the secret police.<sup>24</sup> The exceptional value of these documents lies in the fact that they reveal the lesser-known elements of the mechanics of creating the Famine and also the scale of the resistance coming from the Ukrainian village. First and foremost, they clearly document the confiscation of non-grain foodstuffs from villagers. This signals a specific operation that transformed the grain confiscation into a widespread famine. Second, these documents reconstruct the larger 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 protest. This, naturally, spurred the authorities to an energetic fight against "counterrevolution." See, for example, the anti-Soviet leaflet from the Chernihiv region from the early 1930s (figure 1, right). The main idea of this "enemy propaganda" is, to quote, "Down with Soviet power, which oppresses people and forces them into slavery!" In fact, this is a counterrevolutionary appeal!<sup>25</sup>

After the openly anti-Ukrainian signal from Stalin—his instruction not to "lose Ukraine" in his letter of 11 August 1932 to Kaganovich<sup>26</sup>—the agencies of the GPU were transformed into an instrument of terror against the peasantry. It is in the Chekists' documents that we find the sensational (in my opinion) definition used by the Chekists themselves for their operation

<sup>24</sup> V. Borysenko et al., comps., *Rozsekrechena pamiat': Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv V Ukraïni V dokumentakh GPU-NKVD* (Kyiv, 2007), 604 pp.; full text online version, [http://ssu.kmu.gov.ua/sbu/control/uk/publish/article?art\\_id=69643&cat\\_id=69642](http://ssu.kmu.gov.ua/sbu/control/uk/publish/article?art_id=69643&cat_id=69642) (accessed 3 July 2008).

<sup>25</sup> Two copies of the original leaflet under the title "Okhvisha za vil'ne zhyttia" are kept at the Berezna Museum of Regional History (Chernihiv oblast); online publication, <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Avtografy/R-14.php?22>. See figure 1.

<sup>26</sup> Khlevniuk et al., *Stalin i Kaganovich*, 273-74.

Охвиша за вільне житт..  
Надсилається громадянам  
М. Бер. також і селянам в то-  
му щоб у зил до уваги оцу  
охвишу. Боритися за вільне жит-  
тя не ідуть до колективів,  
не ведіть своїх предків в рабст-  
во. А ведіть до вільного хо-  
рошого життя. Долой совец-  
ку владу яка пригнічує і  
примушує людей ити у ни-  
волю. Хай живе вільне  
селянське і робітницьке життя

**Figure 1.** Anti-Soviet leaflet titled "For a Free Life!" (*Okhvisha za vil'ne zhyttia*) distributed in the city of Berezna in the Chernihiv region. Berezna Museum of Regional History, 2 copies.

**Transcription:** Охвиша за вільне життя надсилається громадянам м. Бер[езна] також і селянам в тому щоб узил до уваги оцу охвишу. Боритися за вільне життя. Не ідуть до колективів, не ведіть своїх предків в рабство. А ведіть до вільного хорошего життя. Долой совецку владу яка пригнічує і примушує людей ити у ниволу. Хай живе вільне селянське і робітницьке життя.

**Translation:** Leaflet for a Free Life, sent to the citizens of the city of Ber[ezna] and also to the villagers in order that they give this leaflet their consideration. Fight for a free life. Do not go to the collectives, do not lead your ancestors [*sic*] into slavery. Lead them, rather, to a free, good life. Down with Soviet power, which oppresses people and forces them into slavery. Long live a free peasants' and workers' life.

in the villages—"rural terror" This is the official terminology. The epithet "Petliurite" (i.e., nationalist) is always used alongside the adjective "kulak" to mark not only the class enemy, but also the ethnic enemy at whom the genocide was aimed.<sup>27</sup>

A collection of documents of the GPU organization in Crimea includes clear instructions on establishing railroad blocks in order to prevent the shipping of grain northward, to the starving Ukrainian villages.<sup>28</sup>

The source base for yet another recent Kyiv publication, *Ukraïns'kyi khlib na eksport—1932-1933* (2006) by Volodymyr Serhiichuk, are the archives of the organizations responsible for removing grain from Ukraine both to meet the needs of the domestic market (i.e., the USSR) and to dump the grain aggressively onto the European market in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Millions of Ukrainian peasants paid a terrible price for this policy.<sup>29</sup>

As for recent regional publications, I would like to note the volumes prepared by Sumy, Vinnytsia, and Odesa archivists in 2005-2007, based primarily on local archives. The second edition of the Odesa volume and also the Kharkiv, Cherkasy, Luhansk, and Donetsk volumes should be mentioned as notable new contributions to the growing bibliography of regional documentary collections.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> See Vas. M. Danylenko and V. I. Prystaiko, "Dokumenty Derzhavnoho arkhivu Sluzhby bezpeky Ukraïny iak dzhерelo v'vychennia holodomoru 1932-1933 rr. v Ukraïni," in Lytvyn, *Holod 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni*, 81-98.

<sup>28</sup> Borysenko et al., *Rozsekrechena pam'iat'*, 28, 57-58.

<sup>29</sup> Volodymyr Serhiichuk, comp., *Ukraïns'kyi khlib na eksport—1932-1933* (Kyiv, 2006), 432 pp.

<sup>30</sup> L. A. Pokydchenko, comp. *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv na Sumshchyni* (Sumy, 2006), 356 pp.; R. Iu. Podkur et al., comps., *Holod ta holodomor na Podilli 1920-1940 rr.*, (Vinnytsia, 2007), 704 pp.; L. H. Bilousova et al., comps., *Holodomor v Ukraïni: Odes'ka oblast' (1921-1923, 1932-1933, 1946-1947 rr.): Spohady, dokumenty, doslidzhennia* (Odesa, 2005), 152 pp.; Bilousova et al., comps., *Holodomory v Ukraini: Odes'ka oblast' (1921-1923, 1932-1933, 1946-1947): Doslidzhennia, spohady, dokumenty* (Odesa, 2007), 460 pp.; Kharkiv Oblast State Archives and the Media Technology Research Center, "Holodomor 1932-1933 rr., Kharkivs'ka oblast': Svidchennia, dokumenty," <http://www.golodomor.kharkov.ua/docs.php?lang=ua> (full text database, includes 329 documents, accessed 15 May 2008); B. F. Parseniuk et al., *Nevhamovnyj bil, 1932-1933: Istorychni doslidzhennia, narysy, svidchennia, spohady, dokumenty*, ed. S. F. Blidnov (Donetsk, 2007), 198 pp.; P. Zhuk et al., *Holodomor 1932-1933 na Cherkashchyni: Knyha pam'iaty V dokumentakh ta spohadakh* (Cherkasy, 2007), 484 pp.; M. M. Starovoïtov and V. V. Mykhailychenko, *Holodomor na Luhanshchyni 1932-1933 rr.: Naukovo-dokumental'ne vydannia* (Kyiv, 2008), 288 pp.

## NEW RESEARCH

In the context of our thesis, that there has been a certain exhaustion of the archival source base for identifying the key moments and mechanisms in the creation of the Famine, I would like to draw your attention to several new, top-priority bodies of material and the prospects for new investigative projects — especially, for a careful reconstruction of the course of the tragedy of the Ukrainian village and an estimation of its consequences.

The first segment of the documentary base, almost completely unexamined and unavailable until recently, consists of the vital statistics registers kept by local civil registry offices. In accordance with the law, they have been held in the archives of the Ministry of Justice for seventy-five years and closed to researchers. The seventy-fifth anniversary of the Great Famine coincides with the termination of the confidentiality measures for personal information in the registers. At the request of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine, oblast state archives have launched a large-scale project aimed at an early declassification and acquisition of the extant registers for 1932-1933 and subsequent years for preservation by the state. (In many cases, a single volume of these registers will contain entries up to the end of the 1930s.)

In general, we can speak of about 4,000 vital statistics registers acquired by the state archives.<sup>31</sup> This amounts to at least one million pages of records for 1932-1933. According to very preliminary calculations, they contain information about no more than three million deaths. The extant mortality/birth registers for the years of 1932-1933 cover *a maximum of one-third* of the territory afflicted by the Famine, and mortality records *directly attributed* to the Famine constitute *no more than 1.5 percent* of the total mortality records of civil registry offices. The reason behind this was the strict prohibition on recording starvation as a death factor at that time. Thus, direct indications of death because of starvation ("starvation," "unbalanced diet," "exhaustion," "emaciation," "atrophy," "dystrophy," and "avitaminosis") are rare. At the same time there are certain regularities in identifying euphemistic diagnoses ("dropsy [edema]," "heart dropsy," "dysentery," "pneumonia," "intestinal tuberculosis," "swelling," etc.) and certain compound diagnoses (pneumonia-emaciation, myocarditis-emaciation, etc.). Figure 2, next page, shows an example of one such record.

<sup>31</sup> See public reports on the transfer of registers in November 2007: "U Lavrinyovycha vyryshyly dostrokovu zaarkhivuvaty roky Holodomoru," *Ukrainska pravda*, 23 November 2007, <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2007/11/23/67313.htm>; "Miniust Ukrainy peredaet V arkhivy sviditel'stva o gibeli ukraintsev ot Holodomora," *Obkom*, 23 November 2007, <http://www.obkom.net.ua/news/2007-11-23/1710.shtml>.

с/рада <u>Сіва-Винишчине</u> району "21" <u>Червня</u> міс. 1932 р.		№ 24
померлого <u>Коробий</u> його ім'я <u>Ієросинія</u> по-батьківськи <u>Алексей</u>		86
в. (назва району та села або міста, вул., буд. №) <u>в. Антонівка</u>		
міс. <u>Червня</u> міс. 1932 р. 4. Чоловік, жінка (відкреслити).		
(скільки повних років мав)		
вік померлого, не доживши до 1 р., точно вказати: а) народився <u>1</u> міс. 1932 р.		
у матері була померла дитиною: перша, друга, або <u>5</u> а) батьки дитину мають укупі, чи може		
батько помер, покинув родити, розлучився тощо <u>вкупі</u> г) вік матері <u>45</u> років.		
причина померлого: <u>ЧСРЮ</u> 3. Національність <u>Українець</u>		
а) померлого: парубок, дівчина, удівець (а), одружений (а), розлучений (а) — відкреслити.		
б) проживав сам, а як не сам, то хто утримував <u>ма. Гайденко</u>		
в) родство, промисел, посада і спеціальність у них		<u>материнство</u>
а) чи був померлий членом держави чи громадських організацій, чи не був (пенсія, стипендія тощо)		<u>м. Ф. укр. "Ладія"</u>
б) чи був в інших держав, точно вказати в яких саме		
в) чи був в зайнятті: робітником, службовцем, ремісником, кустарем, артистом (чл. артилі) чи ні, торговцем, помісником у військовій частині тощо — вказати саме.		
г) чи був власником господарства: одиноким чи членом когоспарткооперативу, а-т. артилі, СОЗу)		<u>в Ч. укр. "Ладія"</u>
д) чи був підприємцем, установи чи закладу, вказавши яке саме підприємство, де працює, служив або господарює.		
е) чи був в лікарні, дит. будинку тощо) <u>вдома</u> Якщо вдома, то чи користувався а		
б) чи отримав допомоги померлих (так, ні) <u>ні</u>		
в) чи отримав смерті — вказати докладно <u>НС вродил.</u>		
г) чи отримав лікарську довідку № <u>—</u> Чи може запис складено на оголошеного від суду за померлого.		

Figure 2a. Falsified diagnosis: Death record for eight-year-old Iefrosyniia (Khrosyna) Korobii, from the death record book for Antonivka village, Stavyshe raion, Kyivoblast, 21 June 1932. State Archives of Kyiv Oblast, fond 5634, op. 1, spr. 969, ark. 86.

вдома (удом, в лікарні, дит. будинку тощо) <u>вдома</u> Якщо вдома, то чи кор	
допомоги померлих (так, ні) <u>ні</u>	
смерті — вказати докладно <u>НС вродил.</u>	
лікарську довідку № <u>—</u> Чи може запис складено на оголошеного від суду за пом	

Figure 2b. Close-up of line showing crossed-out cause of death ("z holodu").

In addition, medical and paramedics' documents record only the names of local residents, so that hundreds of thousands of unfortunate people fleeing starving villages remain anonymous in documents, which simply list them as nameless "beggars." Special methods will be needed to properly assess the demographic data as well as to reconstruct the instructions given to local physicians in making diagnoses. As noted earlier, the Chekists themselves acknowledged that local authorities produced falsified data about the scale of starvation and mortality.

Thus, this unique group of documents must be studied not only by historians, but also by professional physicians and demographers. The concentration of the registers in twenty-five oblast state archives today (whereas previously they had been dispersed among hundreds of raion and local depositories) will open up this possibility, although clearly it will be a complicated undertaking and one that may raise more questions than it answers. Certainly, the low number of documented names of Famine victims could itself become a factor for new insinuations on the part of those denying the Famine as genocide.

Another source that researchers and publishers of documents generally overlook is local press materials; namely, newspapers and nonperiodical publications from 1932-1933. Until recent times local press publications were more likely to be used as illustrations to the written documentation rather than as historical sources.<sup>32</sup>

These materials have an extraordinary informative potential. They contain numerous references about the harvesting process, reports on sessions of itinerant raion courts with their verdicts (including the death sentence), as well as dozens of names of persons condemned and lists of the villages posted on the "black list." Examining local press media makes it possible to reconstruct the personal aspect of this tragedy on a microlevel in each village. They contain invaluable data for compiling a chronicle and martyrology of those repressed during the Holodomor as well as a very accurate geographical map of the Great Famine.

Utilizing this resource requires considerable effort, a special methodology, and a carefully organized work plan, mainly because it is dispensed throughout a number of libraries, and also because of its great size. According to the Ukrainian Book Chamber, more than 1,000 newspaper titles were

<sup>32</sup> See for example, facsimiles of newspaper publications in the collections of documents from the Sumy, Odesa, and Luhansk regions: Pokydychenko, *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv na Sumshchyni*; Bilousova et al., *Holodomory v Ukraini: Odes'ka oblast'*; Starovoitov and Mykhailychenko, *Holodomor na Luhanshchyni 1932-1933 rr.*

published in the 486 raion centers of the Ukrainian SSR in 1932-1933 with varying periodicity. The total number of the available press materials may be estimated at about 150,000 items.

A third group of documents, problematic in nature, are photos from the time of the Holodomor. Documentary photographs provide fertile ground for manipulation of public opinion, especially by those 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 one hundred or so items—may be considered authentic. I refer to thirty photos of victims of the Famine in Kharkiv taken by the engineer Alexander Wienerberger (preserved in 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 Bokan', the persecuted rural amateur photographer from Chernihiv oblast; and some photos taken surreptitiously by foreign correspondents.<sup>33</sup>

Understandably, the very limited quantity of Famine photos has led to the unfortunate practice of substituting photographs from other historical periods and regions as depictions of the 1932-1933 Famine in Ukraine. As a rule, these are photos from the period of the first Soviet Famine in 1921-1922, mostly from the Volga Region.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, some Russian authors

<sup>33</sup> The most extensive collection of authentic photos is kept at the H. Pshenychnyi Central State Film Photo Phono Archives of Ukraine and presented online; see State Committee on Archives of Ukraine, "Genocide of the Ukrainian People: The 1932-1933 Famine," <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/photos.php>.

<sup>34</sup> Misattribution of the 1921-1923 photodocuments (mostly without any captions or references to sources) to depict the tragedy of 1932-1933 is becoming increasingly widespread. See, for example, "Holodomor u Kyievi (foto)," *Internet reporter*, 9 December 2006, <http://rep-ua.com/56415.html>; Raïsa Mykhailenko, "Holodomor na Chernihivshchyni: Slidy zlochynu," *Vysoky val*, 24 January 2008, [http://sian-ua.info/index.php?module=pages&act=print\\_page&pid=13090](http://sian-ua.info/index.php?module=pages&act=print_page&pid=13090); Cherkasy Regional State Administration, "Holodomor 1932-33 na Cherkashchyni: Obzhynky smerty," <http://www.oda.ck.ua/index.php?article=254>; Kherson Regional State Administration, "Nad pamiattiu ne vladnyi chas," <http://www.oda.kherson.ua/cgi-bin/control.pl?lang=uk&type=body&id=../control/uk/data/politics/gniva.html> (revealed are eleven photos, mostly from the times of the first Soviet Famine, including photos from criminal cases of those condemned for cannibalism); and "V Berlins'komu muzeï vidkrylas' vystavka pro Holodomor," *INTV*, 15 October 2007, <http://www.intv-inter.net/news/article/?id=-57709269>. Recently, a picture taken by the news service UNIAN was republished in the news report "Viktor Yushchenko: 'Holodomor—naibil'sha u sviti trahediia,'" *Svoboda* (New Jersey), no. 43, 26 October 2007. It shows President Yushchenko displaying a photo

use authentic Ukrainian Famine pictures to depict the Famine in the Middle Volga region.<sup>35</sup>

This negligent practice, which is sometimes a conscious decision on the part of some authors to use striking, but non-authentic photos as the symbols of the awful tragedy, allows critics to claim falsifications (and not just of the photos). The latest publication by Ruslan Pyrih,<sup>36</sup> the documentary exhibitions from the archives of the SBU entitled "Declassified Memory,"<sup>37</sup> as well as many online exhibitions posted on the web by Ukraine's oblast state administrations have already become targets for such charges, particularly on the part of the communists. They regularly use arguments about falsified photos to discredit legitimate works.

On the other hand, it is a great mistake, in my opinion, to underestimate the value of the huge collection of official photo and film documents from the period of collectivization and the Holodomor. There are no dead bodies or emaciated corpses in these staged propaganda photos. However, they reproduce the frightening ambience 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 denounced in dramatic

of victims from Samara gubernia during the first Soviet Famine as an illustration of the 1932-1933 Famine in Ukraine. The original photograph was taken by the Nansen mission and published in 1925 (see Antoni Starodworski, *Sowiecka reforma rolna: Przyczynek do zagadnien socjologicznych* [Warsaw, 1925], 49). I am grateful to Dr. Roman Procyk for alerting me to this example. The same photo, with the caption "Kladovyshche v Kharkovi. Zamerzli trupy ukrains'kykh selian pomerlykh z holodu. 1933 rik," can be found in the discussion forum on the *Korrespondent.net* website, see <http://forum.korrespondent.net/read.php?2,298227,page=1>. The government newspaper *Uriadovij kurier*, no. 191, 17 October 2007, contains a report on the official opening ceremony of the exhibition "Exterminated by Hunger: Unknown Genocide of Ukrainians" that features a photograph from Kazan gubernia, 1921. A discussion of many such misattributions can be found in the article, "Golod na Ukraine 1932-1933: Istoricheskie manipulatsii," <http://www.geocities.com/holod3233/index.html>; and [www.geocities.com/holod3233/false-h3.html](http://www.geocities.com/holod3233/false-h3.html).

<sup>35</sup> See the publication of the *Izvestiia* editorial office illustrated by documents from the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine web portal: Elena Loria, "Unikal'nyie dokumenty iz arkhivov FSB o zherstvakh Golodomora 1930-kh gg.," *Izvestiia nauka*, 24 November 2006, <http://www.inauka.ru/history/article69901.html>.

<sup>36</sup> Pyrih, *Holodomor 1932-1933 rokiv v Ukraïni*. See especially the spine of the book, the dedication page, and the back endpaper (photos from the period of the 1921-1923 Famine).

<sup>37</sup> The exhibition is based mostly on a collection of declassified documents from the SBU archives; a facsimile of the entire documentary collection is published online, [http://www.sbu.gov.ua/sbu/control/uk/publish/article?art\\_id=49757&cat\\_id=53076](http://www.sbu.gov.ua/sbu/control/uk/publish/article?art_id=49757&cat_id=53076). Most of the documents are included in the recently published book, Borysenko et al., *Rozsekrechena pam'iat'* (see note 24).

fashion; so-called "enemies of the people" are unanimously condemned; there are meetings of collective farmers, meetings of committees of poor peasants; 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 1932-1933 can 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'" in the popular Russian historical magazine *Rodina*.<sup>38</sup> Besides providing generally uninformative textual documents, he shows a sequence of eleven photographs that evoke the peaceful, cheerful, 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 in Ukraine," looks unconvincing and somehow mythological. To add to this, the singular Famine shot is—seemingly "accidentally"—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 likely suspect. It cannot be attributed to a reputable archival source; otherwise the author would have mentioned it.

In my opinion, it is high time to make a definitive identification of the existing and widely used photos, possibly with the participation of scholars internationally via a special Internet forum, in order to dot the *is* in the ongoing discussions regarding the quantity and authenticity of the documents of this group. I would especially like to stress the necessity for the creation of a centralized memorial register and the publication of all photo documents, without exception, that contain scenes from everyday life in the Ukrainian village during the early 1930s. They are presently dispersed throughout various archival and museum repositories. According to preliminary calculations, there are *no more than ten thousand* such items. The publication of these documents will make possible a reconstruction of the landscape of the tragedy in the widest sense.

The fourth segment of the documentary base that I would like to mention when speaking about potential avenues of investigation is regional archival materials. They constitute the largest group in terms of their quantity, but

<sup>38</sup> Andrei Marchukov, "Operatsiia 'Golodomor,'" *Rodina*, no. 1 (2007): 60-67; addendum, "Kogda bezumstvuiet mehta," 68-76. Online version (of introduction only), [http://istrodina.com/rodina\\_articul.php3?id=21008m=107](http://istrodina.com/rodina_articul.php3?id=21008m=107).

the least utilized to date in terms of research and publication. These documents allow us to study the question on a microhistorical level and to create the most accurate chronicle possible of the Great Famine in its regional manifestations.

By order of the president of Ukraine, since the end of 2006, all state archives have been working on a nationwide register of *archival fonds* bearing a memorial character — in order to give due recognition to the many victims of famines and other political repressions of Soviet times. Documents related to the Great Famine have become the core of this "National Register of Memorial Collections." All of the materials are being professionally catalogued by collection (*fond*), file (*sprava*), and document group or individual document. At present some two thousand descriptions of *these fonds* have been sent to Kyiv to be posted on the website of the State Committee on Archives.<sup>39</sup>

One more group of unstudied documents consists of the over 400,000 criminal files of so-called special deportees—persons interned in 1932-1933 in different parts of the GULAG, and also 1,000 criminal files of persons convicted of cannibalism. They are kept at the State Archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. To this group should be added the archival fonds of the NKVD at the State Archive of the Russian Federation that concern specially displaced persons—the so-called kulak deportation.

The documents for the 1,000 cases of those convicted of cannibalism include photographs of the material evidence and of those who committed these crimes. This unique indictment of the communist regime remains a still unpublished body of documents related to the Famine.

Let me add a few words regarding the project titled "Electronic Archive of the Holodomor: A Consolidated Register of Archival Documents Online."<sup>40</sup> This project aims to provide open access to sources by publishing (electronically) *all* the documents related to the Famine-Genocide on the Web. Texts would appear in the database either transcribed from their published versions, or as scans of original documents (in PDF or other graphic formats). Each document would be accompanied by all requisite information—date, caption, location, bibliographic information (if need be), and so on. The pilot version

<sup>39</sup> See selected materials submitted for the National Register of Memorial Collections, <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Archives/Reestr/>. To date, fonds from TsDAVO and the state archives of Dnipropetrovsk, Luhansk, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Kherson, Khmelnytskyi, and Chernihiv oblasts are listed.

<sup>40</sup> State Committee on Archives of Ukraine, "Elektronnyi arkhiv Holodomoru: Zvedenyi reiestr arkhivnykh dok.," <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/Publicat/>.

of the database includes up to 2,000 documents. 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. We consider this project to be the final step in making available the broadest possible selection of Holodomor sources and the culmination of considerable work on documents and their publication over an almost twenty-year period. It should be noted that this large-scale project was made possible due to the generous support of the Ukrainian Studies Fund, Inc.

To conclude, let me present a unique, long-anticipated document (and the only one of its kind discovered to date). It is, in the full sense of the word, a "last minute find," which confirms the need to further process the regional documentary mass, in particular, the death records at local civil registry offices. This document, recently found at the State Archives of Odesa Oblast and shown in figures 3a-b (pages 30-31), is the first *direct documentary* evidence testifying to large-scale actions by state authorities in 1934 to eliminate any traces of crime against the Ukrainian peasantry.

On 13 April 1934, the Odesa Oblast Executive Committee sent a "top secret" instruction to all city councils and raion executive committees of Odesa oblast (with copies to all party raion committees and inspectors of the National Economic Survey Administration [*Upravlinnia narodnohospodars'koho obliku*], later—the Central Statistical Board).<sup>41</sup> According to this instruction, in March 1934 the National Economic Survey Administration carried out an inspection of civil registry offices in village councils throughout Ukraine. It was found that "this work is actually in the hands of class enemies—kulaks, Petliura henchmen, special deportees, etc." This supposedly resulted in a "fraudulent

<sup>41</sup> See Illustrations 3a and 3b, State Archives of Odesa Oblast, fond R-2009, op. 1, spr. 4, ark. 91,92; published in Bilousova et al., *Holodomory v Ukraïni: Odes'ka oblast'* (facsimile); document online, <http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine?Citates.php#citeatO1>.

In 1993 similar records from the State Archives of Vinnytsia Oblast were first referred to and quoted by Illia Shul'ha. At the time, Shul'ha had concluded that all death records for 1932-1933 were destroyed, save for a few rare exceptions (e.g., only four village councils in the entire Podillia region had preserved lists of dead for that period, accounting for 1,193 deaths). In 2003 Stanislav Kul'chyts'kyi and Hennadii Efimenko repeated the same flat conclusion about the destruction of all Civil Registry of Vital Statistics (ZAGS) records. The Russian historian Nikolai Ivnitskii (2000, 2003) followed his Ukrainian colleagues' conclusion (with no reference to archival documents) about the withdrawal and total destruction in 1934 of the ZAGS register books from 1932-1933, noting that only a few of them were preserved. In fact, at that time they could not have known that about 4,000 death register books had survived in Ukraine in local archives. See Shul'ha, "Holod 1932-1933 rr. na Podilli," in *Holodomor 1932-1933 rr. v Ukraïni: Prychyny i naslidky; Mizhnarodna naukova konferentsiia; Kyiv, 9-10 veresnia*

*overestimation* of death rates and *underestimation* of birth rates [my emphasis]" as well as the loss of records at civil registry offices' archives: "At village councils the records are kept in such a way that anyone can have free access to them. It was discovered that in some village councils the records have been simply stolen, possibly, for counterrevolutionary purposes."

With regard to supervising death and birth records at local archives and establishing "order" within vital statistics, certain measures were taken. Among them one can find the following instruction: "To withdraw death registration books from village councils: for 1933 from all village councils without exception and for 1932 according to the list provided by the National Economic Survey Administration. To transfer the withdrawn village council registration books to the raion executive committees for safekeeping as classified material" (see figures 3c-d).

From here the fate of the records remains unknown. No traces of the withdrawal or destruction of death records have been found in the archives of the central office of the National Economic Survey Administration kept in Kyiv.<sup>42</sup> Most likely, they were destroyed even before World War II. Paradoxically, in this case the lack of those documents within a well-preserved and integral archival *fond* is much more revealing and significant than would be their availability. Those documents represented a fatal danger for the authorities; thus, they were destroyed "at the top," but hundreds of instructions, forgotten or neglected, were disseminated throughout Ukraine, with dozens of copies accumulating as classified documents in the *fonds* of Ukrainian local authorities and institutions.

I do hope that new, similar findings will soon appear to testify to the measures taken by the authorities to get rid of dangerous documents, so devastating to the reputation of the Soviet state. This will enable us to better understand the present-day circumstances of the remarkable phenomenon known as the "Holodomor archives."

1993 z.; *Materialy*, ed. S. Kul'chyts'kyi (Kyiv, 1995), 141; Kul'chyts'kyi and Efimenko, *Demografichni naslidky holodomoru 1933 r. v Ukraïni: Vsesoiuznyj perepys naselennia 1937 z. V Ukraïni: Dokumenty ta materialy* (Kyiv, 2003), 189n73 (online: <http://www.history.org.ua/kul/contents.htm>); N. A. Ivnitskii, *Repressivnaia politika sovet'skoi vlasti v derevne (1928-1933 gg.)* (Moscow, 2000), 293; Ivnitskii, "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," in *La morte della terra: La grande "carestia" in Ucraina nel 1932-33; Atti del Convegno Vicenza, 16-18 ottobre 2003*, ed. Gabriele De Rosa and Francesca Lomastro (Rome, 2004), 90.

<sup>42</sup> TsDAVO, fond 318 (National Economic Survey Admin., Kharkiv and Kyiv, 1923-1941), 1596 files.

И/П.

У.С.С.Р.

ИНСПЕКЦИОННОМ.

13. IV. 34 г.

ВСЕМ ГОРСОВЕТАМ и РА ИСПОЛКОМАМ ОД. ОБЛАСТИ.

Копия: - РА ПАРХОМАМ, ИНСПЕКТОРАМ УИГО.-

УИУ Украины в конце Марта этого года провела обследование состояния работ ЗАГС'а в ряде сельсоветов всех областей Украины. Это обследование дало ряд фактов, свидетельствующих о грубейшем нарушении постановке учета рождаемости и смертности в сельсоветах.

В ряде сельсоветов эта работа находится фактически в руках классово-враждебных элементов - кулаков, потюровцев, административных выскочек и т. д.

Так, обследование установило, что в Одесской области в с. Лошине 1-го Дзержинского района ведение книг ЗАГС'а было поручено одному УИУ, дважды судившемуся и работавшему в сельсовете в период отбывания принудительных работ. После того, как этот вор-рецидивист объявил о дежурстве сельсовета, ведение книг ЗАГС'а было поручено одному кулаку Василью. Нет сомнения, что в значительной части сельсоветов области дела учета населения находятся в чужих руках, классово-враждебных, прямо заинтересованных в запутывании учета населения, и искажении статистических показателей, в худшем случае - в увеличении смертности и уменьшении рождаемости.

Как результат работы чуждых элементов, обследование установило, что на одних и тех же умерших лиц выписывалось по две, три карточки, одни и те же лица регистрировались дважды на территории двух сельсоветов, или учет населения умственно взнос не производился. Даже в лучших по постановке дела сельсоветах актовые книги ведутся небрежно, нет полного заголовка и смерти, приписок должностных лиц, нумерация перепутана, есть пропуски в книгах, что создает почву для всяких злоупотреблений и враждебных махинаций.

Хранение книг в сельсоветах такое, что к ним имеют доступ всяки. В некоторых сельсоветах оказалось, что книги просто валяются, возможно для контр-революционных целей.

Такое положение дальше не может быть терпимо и потому ИСПОЛКОМ ПРЕДЛАГАЕТ:

1. Немедленно организовать проверку сельских ЗАГС'ов, поставив задачу такого обследования - очистку аппарата ЗАГС'а от классово-враждебных элементов, упорядочение делопроизводства ЗАГС'а и хранения книг, как тожне регистрации, так и архива. Для проведения проверки выделить Инспектора ИГО и 2-х работников, особо доверенных, из состава районного актива.

2. Для обеспечения сплошного и постоянного контроля над ведением книг и предотвращения случаев повторных регистраций внести в обязанности председателей сельсоветов не позже 2-го числа послать вторые экземпляры записок в Инспекцию И. У. Входящие в сельсоветах заявки актов и переписки - в УИУ вторые экземпляры должны иметь подписи владельца и охраняемых печатью сельсовета и подписи председателя и

Нач. инсп. бюро

секретаря сельсовета.

3. Усилить надзор за регистрацией всех актов, особенно  
рождения и смерти, привлечь к ответственности в несвоевремен-  
ной регистрации или уклонение от нее.

4. Изъять из сельсоветов книги смерти за 1932 год по  
всему району сельсоветам, а за 1933 г. по списку, со-  
ставленному УИИХ. Изъятые от сельсоветов книги передать на хранение  
в секретном порядке при Райисполкомах.

5. Возложить ответственность за состояние регистраций  
актов гражданского состояния и сохранность архивов на секретаря  
Райисполкома.

О. П. ЗАК. ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЬ ОБЛПОЛКОМА

/ С. К А Р Г А /

В. О. СЕКРЕТАРЬ ОБЛПОЛКОМА

/ Г. Б Л О Х /

лпн. - 162 вкз.

расч. районки  
при вкз. № 1.

В. р. т. : 1111111111

НГ/ПК.  
У.С.С.Р.

Экз. №

Сов. Секретно.

ОБЛИСПОЛКОМ. ВСЕМ ГОРСОВЕТАМ И РАЙИСПОЛКО-  
МАМ ОД[ЕССКОЙ] ОБЛАСТИ.

13.IV.34 г.  
УНГО.

Копия: - РАЙПАРКОМАМ, ИНСПЕКТОРАМ

№ 478 о.с[екретно]

overwritten by hand: 184 т[аємно]

УНХУ Украины в конце Марта этого года произвело обследование состояния работы ЗАГС"а в ряде сельсоветов всех областей Украины. Это обследование дало ряд фактов, свидетельствующих о преступно-безобразной постановке учета рождаемости и смертности в сельсоветах.

В ряде сельсоветов эта работа находится фактически в руках классово-враждебных элементов—кулаков, петлюровцев, административно высланных и т. д.

Так, обследованием установлено, что в Одесской области в с. Ясиново I—Любашевского района ведение книг ЗАГС"а было поручено некоему ЖЕРУЛЮ, дважды судившемуся и работавшему в сельсовете в порядке отбывания принудительных работ. После того, как этот вор-рецидивист сбежал с деньгами сельсовета, ведение книг ЗАГС'а было поручено сыну кулака Васке. Нет сомнения, что в значительной части сельсоветов области дело учета населения находится в чуждых руках, классово-враждебных, прямо заинтересованных в запутывании учета населения, в искажении истинного положения вещей, в жульническом преувеличивании смертности и преуменьшении рождаемости.

Как результат работы чуждых элементов, обследованием установлено, что на одних и тех-же умерших лиц выписывалось по две, три карточки, одни и те же лица регистрировались дважды на территории двух сельсоветов, или учет населения умышленно вовсе не производился. Даже в лучших по постановке дела сельсоветах актовые книги ведутся небрежно, нет подписей заявителей и смерти, подписей должностных лиц, нумерация перепутана, есть пропуски в книгах, что создает почву для всяких злоупотреблений и вредительских махинаций.

Хранение книг в сельсоветах такое, что к ним имеет доступ всякий. В некоторых сельсоветах оказалось, что книги просто похищены, возможно для контр-революционных целей.

Такое положение дальше не может быть терпимо и потому  
облисполком П Р Е Д Л А Г А Е Т :

1. Немедленно организовать проверку сельских ЗАГС"ов, поставив задачу такого обследования—очистку аппарата ЗАГС"а от классово-враждебных элементов, упорядочение делопроизводства ЗАГС"а и хранения книг, как текущей регистрации, так и архив. Для проведения проверки выделить Инспектора НГО и 2-х работников, особо доверенных, из состава районного актива.

2. Для обеспечения сплошного и постоянного контроля над ведением книг и предотвращения случаев повторных регистраций вменить в обязанность председателям сельсоветов не позже каждого 2-го числа посылать вторые экземпляры записей в Инспектуры Н. Х. У. Остающиеся в сельсоветах записи актов и пересылаемые в УНХУ вторые экземпляры должны иметь подписи заявителей и скреплены печатью сельсовета и подписями председателя и секретаря сельсовета.

3. Усилить надзор за регистрацией всех актов, особенно рождений и смертей, привлекая к ответственности за несвоевременную регистрацию или уклонение от нее.

4. Из"ять из сельсоветов книги смертей за 1933 год по всем без исключения сельсоветам, а за 1932 г. по списку, сообщенному УНХУ. Из"ятые от сельсоветов книги передать на хранение в секретном порядке при Райисполкомах.

5. Возложить ответственность за состояние регистрации актов гражданского состояния и сохранность архивов на секретаря Райисполкома.

О. П. ЗАМ. ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЯ ОБЛИСПОЛКОМА  
/С. КАРГА/

В. о. СЕКРЕТАРЯ ОБЛИСПОЛКОМА  
/Г. БЛОХ/

Отп. - 162 экз.

расч. разсылки  
при экз. № 1.

Верно:

OBLAST  
EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE

TO ALL CITY AND RAION EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEES OF OD[esa] OBLAST

13.IV.34

No. 478 - t[op] s[ecret]

*overwritten by hand* 184-s[ecret]

Copy: — RAION PARTY COMMITTEES, UNHO\* [NATIONAL  
ECONOMIC SURVEY ADMINISTRATION] INSPECTORS

At the end of March this year UNKhU' [National Economic Survey Administration] of Ukraine carried out an inspection of the work of ZAGS [Civil Registry of Vital Statistics] offices in a number of village councils in every region of Ukraine. This inspection revealed a series of facts testifying to the criminally outrageous manner in which birth and death registration is conducted in the village councils.

In a number of village councils this work is actually in the hands of class enemies—kulaks, Petliura henchmen, special deportees, etc.

Thus, the inspection established that in Odesa oblast, in the village of Iasinovo I [Iasenove Pershe], Liubashivka raion, the entire recording process of the Civil Registry of Vital Statistics was entrusted to a certain ZHERUL', a twice convicted criminal, who was sentenced to compulsory labor at the village council. After this repeat-offender thief ran off with the village council monies, the management of ZAGS books was entrusted to Vas'ka, the son of a local kulak. There is no doubt that in a great number of village councils the job of registering the population is in alien hands, the hands of the class enemy, directly interested in muddling the registration [process], in distorting the true state of things, in fraudulently inflating mortality and underestimating birthrates.

The inspection also revealed that as a result of the activity of class enemies, there were numerous cases when two or three cards were issued to one and the same deceased person, or the same person was registered twice in two village councils, or that vital statistics were maliciously not registered at all. Even in the best-managed village councils, registration books are handled carelessly, entries for deaths lack testifying signatures, [or] the signatures of council officials, the numerical order is jumbled, there are omissions in the [registration] books, all of which is conducive to all sorts of abuses and harmful machinations.

At village councils [registration] books are kept in such a way, that anyone can have free access to them. It was discovered that in some village councils the [registration] books were simply stolen, possibly for counterrevolutionary purposes.

This situation can no longer be tolerated and for this reason the Oblast Executive Committee PROPOSES:

1. To immediately organize an inspection of village ZAGS offices, with the aim of purging class enemies from the apparatus, [and] regularizing office routines and custody of [registration] books, including current registrations as well as archived material. To dispatch an UNHO [National Economic Survey Administration] inspector and two especially trustworthy workers from among the raion [party] activists to conduct the inspection.

2. To impose on the chairmen of village councils responsibility for mandatory forwarding of a second copy of [all] registrations to the Inspectorate of the National Economic Survey Administration no later than on the 2nd day [of each month] to ensure complete and continuous control over [registration] bookkeeping and to prevent occurrences of double registration. Both the copy of registrations remaining in the village council and the copy sent to the National Economic Survey Administration must be signed by those who reported the event and authenticated with the seal of the village council and signatures of the village council chairman and secretary.

3. To increase supervision over all document registration, especially birth and death [records] by holding [individuals] accountable for untimely registrations or for failure to register.

4. To withdraw death registration books from village councils: for 1933 from all village councils without exception and for 1932 according to the list\*\* provided by the National Economic Survey Administration. To transfer the withdrawn village council registration books to the raion executive committees for safekeeping as classified material.

5. To make the secretary of the raion executive committee personally responsible for the proper conduct of civil registrations and the security of the archives.

A[cting] F[irst] Dep[uty] Chairman of the Oblast Executive Committee  
/S. Karga/

A[cting] Secretary of the Oblast Executive Committee  
/G. Blokh/

Number of copies typed — 162 copies

Recipients listed on copy no. 1

Verified [with the original]: *signature*

\* The text uses both Russian and Ukrainian terminology interchangeably, e.g., *Upravlinnia Narodnohospodars'koho obliku* (UNHO) and *Upravlenie narodnokhoziaistvennogo ucheta* (UNKhU); see also "V. o." (*vykonuiuchy obov'iazky*) in the second signature.

\*\* No such list has been found in the archives to date.