

Revisiting the Great Famine of 1932–1933

*Politics of Memory and Public Consciousness
(Ukraine after 1991)*

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Rethinking the Soviet period has become one of the central problems involved in constructing a new model of collective memory in Ukraine within the framework of nationalized history. In contrast to more remote historical periods, the rethinking and rewriting of the Soviet past has had and continues to have special meaning in present-day historical mythology. First, the social and political meaning of that “past” has been actualized in the present; it has been used quite straightforwardly in political infighting. Second, the methods involved in the recollection of that past have gone considerably beyond the professional standards to which historians were accustomed at the time of the disintegration of the USSR. Third, for the authorities, as well as for most professional historians and a large part of the Ukrainian population, the Soviet “past” constitutes present reality in two senses. On the one hand, individual memory remains vital, reflecting the collective experience of the last ten to thirty years of Soviet rule (for many, memory goes back even further). On the other hand, the civic culture,¹ ideological power structures, and state institutional hierarchies, having undergone certain formal transformations, remain essentially unchanged, so that the “past” is still physically embodied in the “present” and naturally, influences the nature of change in historical memory. And even the “gains of Independence Square” proclaimed by the current authorities do not change this situation.

In evaluating the role of Soviet-era social institutions inherited by post-independence Ukrainian society, and the individuals who represent and embody those institutions when it comes to the formation of historical memory, some scholars advance explanations in the spirit of instrumentalism, along with a drop of conspiracy theory. Thus Professor George Grabowicz of Harvard University asserts:

... today the Ukrainian establishment is making strenuous efforts to carry out what I would call an amnesia project—a more or less conscious but consistently and successfully realized program of actions and measures intended to obliterate the recent Soviet past forever and to ensure that it is not researched or reviewed. This is being done for perfectly obvious reasons: since the former Soviet *nomenklatura* continues to retain the leading positions in every single sector of social, institutional and, most particularly, political life, these people will hardly agree to support any program of remembering, rethinking and reevaluating the legacy of the past, with which they are associated in the closest possible way.²

The political writer and essayist Mykola Riabchuk comments on the problem in a similar key. Analyzing the role of the authorities in commemorating key dates of Soviet Ukrainian history (Volodymyr Shcherbytsky's 85th birth anniversary, the anniversary of the famine of 1932–33, or the “jubilee” of the Young Communist League of Ukraine, which is most often mentioned contextually), Riabchuk indicates that in one way or another their behavior is part of a “certain discursive strategy.” If the anniversaries of communist symbols are worked into a general linear scheme of “Ukrainian statehood,” and thus directly legitimize the current administration which still bears the hallmarks of the Soviet order, that administration also makes use of key dates associated with anti-Communism (such as the famine of 1932–33) in order “to lend a certain respectability to the post-communist regime, which supposedly represents the interests of the whole nation and supposedly distances itself from the dubious practices of its predecessors.”³

The historian Stanislav Kulchytsky notes the “muffled disregard of the famine on the part of our bureaucratic elite”⁴ and explains it by means of a psychological factor—incapacity to absorb the whole stream of negative information and a corresponding unwillingness to recall the “black pages” of the past.

These fairly similar approaches offer a generally sound explanation of the post-communist authorities' attitude to “the past in the present,” citing their natural desire to legalize the new regime with the aid of historical arguments (or the conscious or unconscious desire to ignore those portions of the historical map that are considered undesirable, or perceived as such). Still, this treatment is clearly prone to exaggerate the element of planning in the authorities' actions, which in my view are fairly spontaneous, situational and reflexive—hardly the results of a well-considered strategy. The thesis of conscious and deliberate “forgetting” (or amnesia) is at variance with the authorities' obvious desire to take part in “remembrance” from time to time and, even more, to have an active influence on

the nature of that remembrance (although here, too, the orientation and character of “remembrance” are determined situationally and expressed in utterly standard forms).

Moreover, the commentators cited above obviously exaggerate the degree to which the current authorities⁵ realize and admit their direct link with the communist past and their fear, supposedly associated with this, of losing social legitimacy. Enough time has already passed for images of the current authorities and their communist predecessors to separate and become dissociated. Over 15 years of independence, despite the parallel existence of Soviet and post-Soviet structures of power that mimic one another, society has had time to form new notions of them. A whole complex of new images and *idées fixes* has arisen—a kind of ideological buffer zone that has afforded the oligarchs secure protection against the “attacks” of those who demanded a “trial of Communism” or a “second Nuremberg,” with the obvious political subtext of discrediting those who held power at the time.⁶ This buffer zone is all the more secure because Ukraine, like most of the former Soviet republics (with the exception, perhaps, only of the Baltics and Armenia), did not experience what was known in postwar Germany as “de-Nazification” and in the post-communist lands of East Central Europe as “de-communization,” “lustration,”⁷ and the like. The Noah’s ark of the authorities survived both the right-wing anti-communist escapades of the 1990s and the *ersatz* orange Flood of 2004.

To be sure, it should not be forgotten that this buffer zone was built in comradesly fashion both by the former communist *nomenklatura* who managed to stay in power and by their opponents from the national-democratic camp, some of whom entered the power structures themselves. In the early 1990s these two forces reached a tacit compromise based on a formal community of interests—the building of Ukrainian statehood. The former communists turned into nationalists and, with no less zeal than their recent opponents, set about publicly condemning the “crimes of the totalitarian regime,” thereby neutralizing possible accusations against themselves. (The bellwether figure par excellence is Leonid Kravchuk. From 1980 to 1988 he headed the Department of Agitation and Propaganda of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine (CC CPU) and was necessarily involved in counter-propaganda measures pertaining to the 50th anniversary of the famine of 1932–33. In 1989 he became head of the Department of Ideology of the CC CPU and, until the change of course, took an active part in debates with the national democrats. In 1991, he became president of Ukraine, winning far more votes than his competitor from the national-democratic camp, Viacheslav Chor-

novil. In 1993, Mykola Plawiuk, president of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) "in exile" and leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (Melnyk faction), transferred the powers of the president of the UNR to Kravchuk. This manifested the symbolic link between the UNR authorities and those of present-day Ukraine, as well as the extreme pragmatism or *naïveté* (or cynicism?) of some diaspora political figures (the cynicism of the Ukrainian oligarchs of the period goes without saying; in their moral frame of reference, this was a perfectly normal transition). Most Ukrainian diaspora organizations supported this policy openly or indirectly, clearly compromising their basic principles for the sake of the idea of state-building. As a parliamentary deputy serving continuously since 1994, Kravchuk invariably held to the principle of joining factions that directly or indirectly supported those in power. In Leonid Kuchma's times he belonged to the "oligarchic" faction—the (United) Social-Democratic Party. Under Viktor Yushchenko, he became a tribune of the "opposition" at the very time when "opposition" status became perfectly safe, that is, it presented no danger to his private capital or to his personal liberty, as it would have done in Kuchma's day. In 1993, it was Kravchuk, then holding presidential office, who gave his official blessing to government measures associated with the 60th anniversary of the famine of 1932–33. Kravchuk was also among the initiators of one of the most odious commemorations of the last few years, the 85th anniversary of the birth of Volodymyr Shcherbytsky, first secretary of the CC CPU from 1972 to 1989, responsible for the cruel persecution of the Ukrainian dissident movement, large-scale Russification, and the cover-up of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

Those who revived the Communist Party of Ukraine in 1993 inherited its real and imaginary "sins" and thus created an additional buffer for the oligarchs in their own persons.

What was the role of the community of professional historians in these developments? On the one hand, their actions were determined by the ideological market (which demanded the nationalization of history). On the other, they themselves formulated those demands, creating a kind of research opportunity. If in the latter half of the 1980s historians carried out ideological orders directly, on the cusp of the 1990s they largely began to determine those requirements themselves and to influence the conjuncture of the ideological market in their own right. The merging of these two functions remains one of the most notable features of the current state of official Ukrainian historiography.

This in turn is reflected in the formation of the collective memory of the Soviet past. On the level of social thought and everyday conscious-

ness, we see the dominance of notions representing an alloy of personal experience and propaganda issued by various political forces with fragmentary information about the past communicated through the media. Naturally, the schools, with their systematized standard courses in Ukrainian history, play a significant role. It is quite difficult to establish the course of change in mass consciousness without systematic research, but available information in the form of letters to the editor, television programs and shows dealing with problems of Ukrainian history and the like indicates that many new ideological elements associated with the reevaluation of the Soviet past have become fairly well established as fixed stereotypes.⁸

All this is clearly illustrated by the “inscription” of notions about the famine of 1932–33 in “national” historical memory.

The calm and “dispassionate” scholarly analysis of problems associated with the famine of 1932–33 in Ukraine itself is complicated by a whole series of sociocultural and political factors. First of all, such a huge trauma as the loss of several million people on one’s own territory in peacetime, with biological, social and sociopsychological consequences that have not yet been fully apprehended, can hardly be a subject of purely academic discussion. Since the topic itself was forbidden for decades, the compensation mechanism for that taboo is fairly obvious. It should also be remembered that for some ethnic Ukrainians the famine of 1932–33 remains part of living memory. Many of those still alive, including some scholars, know of it not only from scholarly works, political writings or archival sources,⁹ but also from stories told by relatives and acquaintances (there are also those who survived the famine in early childhood, although, understandably, the number of direct witnesses is now very small). And the very fact of the demise of millions of people who died a terrible martyr’s death in their own homes in peacetime, having entered mass consciousness, is beginning to influence the judgment even of those professionals most inclined to unprejudiced evaluation. Professional historians are also subject to pressure from society at large (especially when public statements are called for) and from the declarations of various political forces. Popular publications, literary works, television programs and films about the events of 1932–33, as well as a whole variety of public events, create a certain cultural setting in which the professional historian, who means to render a purely scholarly judgment on a historical phenomenon, finds it rather difficult to remain within the confines of a balanced academic style. Periodically, the strong emotional charge of the problem even brings out a measure of social hysteria, and in that context scholarly appeals for a sober and rational examina-

tion of the question may be regarded (and often are regarded by a segment of the public) as a challenge to public opinion or as a show of disrespect for the memory of the victims.

The famine of 1932–33 is an integral element of domestic political discussion and even of foreign-policy initiatives. In some cases it has been used to discredit part of the current political elite, which was brought up by the regime that organized the famine (this also helps explain the authorities' fairly "reserved" attitude to the problem and accusations leveled against them because of that attitude). In other cases the subject of the famine calls forth emotional parallels with the current state of the Ukrainian nation, allegedly the result of suffering and losses in the years of totalitarianism. Third, today's left-wingers have openly been called heirs to the party responsible for the famine of 1932–33—an obvious attempt to discredit them in the struggle for power.

There is one more important circumstance that has a direct bearing on the nature and orientation of interpretations of the events of 1932–33. During the years of Soviet rule, inhabitants of the Ukrainian lands had to endure mass famine three times, in 1921–23, 1932–33 and 1947. But the greatest famine—that of 1932–33, which has come to be known as the *holodomor* (a term with no exact English equivalent, but meaning a man-made famine) according to a tradition inherited from the Ukrainian diaspora—has been transformed through the efforts of political writers, historians and public activists into one of the most imposing symbols of national historical memory. It finds multifarious instrumental application in a variety of spheres, ranging from politics and social initiatives to art. This may be explained by the fact that the famine of 1921–23 was not covered up even in Soviet historiography. It was explained by postwar devastation and natural causes, and the state organized assistance to those suffering from starvation, including aid from abroad. The famine of 1947 was also not ignored by the authorities, although Soviet-era historical works that actually mentioned it spoke only of "food-supply problems" associated with the selfsame postwar devastation and drought. The famine of 1932–33 was set apart by the very fact that a cover-up was attempted. The population, according to popular knowledge, was not only left to its own devices but also became the object of actions that scholars designate as "terror by famine," while the international resonance of the disaster was muffled by the efforts of Western politicians, journalists, and broad circles of pro-Soviet Western intellectuals favorably disposed to cooperation with the USSR. It was this famine that the authorities tried to wipe out of collective memory; the subject was rendered taboo.

Understandably, historians dealing with this set of problems find themselves constantly drifting between two related discourses: ideological and scholarly, with the former clearly prevailing over the latter. Naturally, after 1991 efforts have been made to link the famines of 1921–23, 1932–33 and 1947 into a chain of related events. For example, in an article by an author whose high academic reputation is not in doubt, the famine of 1921–23 is called (metaphorically, to be sure) “a dress rehearsal for 1933.”¹⁰ In an introduction to a publication with the eloquent title *Famines in Ukraine, 1921–23, 1932–33, 1946–47: A Crime against the Nation*¹¹ S. V. Kulchytsky writes of the “establishment of a planned command economy adequate to the totalitarian regime” as the general cause of all three famines. In their afterword, the authors of the book assert that 20th-century famines were the “consequence of the functioning of dictatorial totalitarian regimes. And this is an almost *undeniable rule*”¹² To be sure, the causes (grain requisitions, droughts, etc.) are spelled out on the level of factual exposition, but in the general context and in the texts themselves there are direct statements to the effect that, to a greater or lesser degree, all three episodes are manifestations of one strategic line associated in one way or another with the “subjugation of freedom-loving Ukrainian peasant farmers.” The idea of linear continuity has attained institutional embodiment; the Association of Researchers of the Famine-Genocide of 1932–33, a public organization established in June 1992, was renamed the Association of Researchers of Famines in Ukraine in 1998.

In the Soviet Union the subject of the famine of 1932–33 was absent from intellectual space even in the first years of the “thaw” of the 1950s, although the number of direct witnesses to the catastrophe of 1932–33 was still sufficient for it to register at the very least as a phenomenon of collective memory. According to contemporary testimony, talk of this famine was undesirable even within the family circle, as children might inadvertently mention it in school, with negative consequences for adults. The only attempt to make a partial concession and admit the famine as a fact dates to the late 1960s. Writing about the famine was confined to *samydav*¹³ or to oblique references in works of Soviet counterpropaganda intended to refute the “fabrications of bourgeois falsifiers” (direct polemical engagements on this subject were not recommended).¹⁴

In the late 1980s, given the general wave of revisionism with regard to the Stalinist period of Soviet history, the famine became, for the first time, a subject of public discussion and research in Ukraine itself. The scenario of its “restoration” was standard. The initiative came from political writ-

ers, and ideological institutions had to react, making the subject relevant and visible, which led to its recognition.

A strong external stimulus to the official recognition of the famine of 1932–33 was the activity of the Ukrainian diaspora. As early as 1983, Ukrainians in the United States established an organization called Americans for Human Rights in Ukraine. Owing to its active participation and the assistance of Ukrainian research centers in Canada and the United States, the problem of the famine of 1932–33 came to public attention. The initiative arose following the study of documents about the Holocaust; the parallels were all too obvious. Generally speaking, in considering the role of the diaspora in internationalizing the problem of the famine of 1932–33, it is important to bear in mind that efforts to endow the famine with weight and significance in international public opinion copied the example of the joint project of the Jewish diaspora and Israel to internationalize knowledge of the Holocaust. At the same time, this borrowing took place against the background of conflict between the Ukrainian and Jewish diasporas over questions of Ukrainian participation in the killing of Jews during the Second World War. On the other hand, it is well known that attempts to compare structurally similar tragedies of other peoples with the Holocaust have often met with resistance on the part of some Jewish historians, as in the case of efforts to treat the genocide of Armenians during the First World War as an atrocity on the same level as the Holocaust. All this has had its effect both on the methods of representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora and on perceptions of their activity. In 1985, after considerable bureaucratic delays and intensive lobbying on the part of the Ukrainian diaspora, a Congressional committee was established to research the famine (the American historian James Mace,¹⁵ who specialized in Ukraine of the 1920s and 1930s, was appointed its executive director). The first volume of the committee's report, based mainly on the oral testimony of émigré Ukrainian survivors of the famine, appeared in 1987.

In 1988, an international commission of jurists was formed on the initiative of one of the largest Ukrainian diaspora organizations, the World Congress of Free Ukrainians. It confirmed the fact of large-scale famine in Ukraine in 1932–33, giving the "excessive grain requisition of July 1932" as its immediate cause and identifying forced collectivization, de-'kulak'ization and the central government's desire to combat traditional Ukrainian nationalism as the preconditions.¹⁶

In 1987, the CC CPU established a special commission composed of scholars from the Institute of History of the Ukrainian SSR Academy of

Sciences and from the Institute of Party History of the CC CPU, which was given the task of refuting the conclusions of the American Congressional committee on the basis of archival sources. Yet it was the very materials of the Ukrainian commission that confirmed the fact of large-scale famine in 1932–33 and became one of the arguments for public recognition of that tragedy by the authorities. According to the reminiscences of participants, the documents that they received were a revelation to them, as archival materials on the subject had not been available even to the most “faithful” researchers. As a result, Volodymyr Shcherbytsky, who then headed the CPU, was obliged to admit the fact of the famine’s occurrence in his speech on the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution (giving drought as the cause). Understandably, this became possible only because the general level of revision of Stalinism in the USSR had already gone beyond the criticism of “particular failings” and “errors.”

Since the initial purpose of the committee, that of counterpropaganda, had become irrelevant, it ceased working “to order,” but certain scholars belonging to it continued their archival research. Some of their work was published in the press and, significantly, in journals that functioned as official party organs (for example, in the CC CPU journal *Pid praporom leninizmu* [Under the Banner of Leninism]). A general statement of their conclusions took the form of a documentary collection, *The Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine: Through the Eyes of Historians, In the Language of Documents*.¹⁷ The materials contained therein became the subject of special discussion at a session of the Politburo of the CC CPU in January 1990: according to eyewitnesses, the attitude of Volodymyr Ivashko, then first secretary of the CC CPU, was decisive in clearing the book for publication.¹⁸ In February 1990 the CC CPU adopted a resolution “On the Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine and the Publication of Associated Archival Materials.” The rhetoric of the resolution was a mixture of conclusions—fairly radical for the time—on the cause of the famine (carrying out the policy of grain requisitions “on a compulsory basis, with the extensive use of repressive measures”) and ritual references to the violation of “Leninist principles of peasant cooperation.”¹⁹ Later, at the level of the Politburo of the CC CPU, a decision was made to include the subject of “Total Collectivization and Famine among the Rural Population in 1932–33” in the “Republican Program for the Development of Historical Research and Improvement of the Study and Propaganda of the History of the Ukrainian SSR.”

It may be said with certainty that it was these decisions and the publication of the documentary collection that initiated open and thoroughgo-

ing discussion of the problem of the famine of 1932–33. The prohibition was lifted officially at the highest level. Public organizations became involved. In particular, with the active support of the Memorial Society, a number of public conferences, including regional ones, were organized in the early 1990s to “revive the memory” of 1932–33. The subject produced its enthusiasts, the writers Volodymyr Maniak and Liudmyla Kovalenko-Maniak, who carried out an extensive project to collect oral and documentary evidence, thought to have been lost, about the famine of 1932–33. A book of testimonies, 33: *Famine. A People’s Memorial Volume*, appeared under their editorship in 1991.²⁰

That book marked the first instance of turning to everyday national consciousness as an alternative to official history. The method of its compilation was quite simple: Stanislav Kulchytsky drafted a list of questions that appeared in *Sil’s’ki visti* (Village News), one of the largest mass-circulation newspapers, in December 1988. Appealing to its readers, Kulchytsky indicated that historians possessed very few documents (and access to them was minimal indeed); hence the testimony of eyewitnesses was particularly important. Readers were asked to “recall” instances of resistance to the requisition of foodstuffs on the part of local party and government representatives; repressive measures against leading workers and collective farmers because of their grain-requisition arrears; forms of decentralized assistance to the starving (at the local level) on the part of the authorities; the fate of villages blacklisted for failing to meet grain-requisition quotas; the numbers of fellow villagers who died of starvation; assistance from the cities during the spring sowing campaign of 1933; and, quite simply, their own observations.²¹ Close to 6,000 letters were received,²² a 1,000 of which were published in the book.

The appeal to “witnesses” through the newspaper created a precedent for commemorative practice unique in Ukrainian experience. This was, in effect, a program of “remembrance” that not only influenced the direction and nature of the whole process but also largely determined the way in which the events of 1932–33 were subsequently imagined in mass consciousness—indeed, in the formation of collective historical memory. The efforts of local enthusiasts to revive the memory of the famine met with active support, both institutional and financial, from the Ukrainian diaspora.²³ Such public organizations as Rukh, Memorial, the All-Ukrainian Prosvita Society, the Writers’ Union of Ukraine, and the Ukraine Society, as well as academic institutions and the press, became involved in the organization of public events dedicated to the famine of 1932–33. It became apparent that for decades hundreds and thousands of people had

kept their own reminiscences or those of people close to them, neighbors and acquaintances, and only the strict taboo on the subject had rendered it “invisible.” The collection of testimonies in the regions of Ukraine, organized as a true grassroots initiative, and numerous community events in villages and towns that had suffered from the famine (memorial services, processions with crosses, the erection of memorial tablets, monuments, crosses, grave mounds and the exhibition of documents)—all this evoked mass “remembrance” of the events of 1932–33. This revival of memory was already taking place in a new context and flowing directly into the Ukrainian national historical narrative, which was then taking shape. By the same token, the process of “remembrance” had already taken on its own logic and dynamics. The public revelation of testimonies and documents created a corresponding sociopsychological atmosphere in which new testimonies and references were already contributing to a certain scenario and being dramatized either consciously or subconsciously.

Since history was being put into active service in the late 1980s to legitimize Ukraine’s claim to sovereignty, a subject of such colossal emotional and political potential could not remain on the sidelines of practical politics. On the cusp of the 1990s, references to the famine became an obligatory element of virtually all public appearances, oral or written, dedicated to criticizing the Soviet system. This applied particularly to the condemnation of “external influences” on Ukraine, first and foremost those of communist ideology and the communist rule that it sustained, which were presented as “fundamentally alien” to the Ukrainian tradition and mentality. In conjunction with this, as Mykola Riabchuk has noted, a rather characteristic change of terminology took place over time in the rhetoric of politicians representing the authorities. The terms “Stalin regime,” “totalitarian regime,” “totalitarian system,” and the like were used in official documents, appeals and speeches, but the word *communist* was generally absent.²⁴ Riabchuk considers this part of the above-mentioned strategy, although one might imagine that those responsible for composing the texts of politicians’ public appearances made use of scholarly and popular literature in which this particular terminology is dominant. Moreover, there are instances of senior government officials referring to the “communist regime” as the organizer of the famine of 1932–33,²⁵ so it may be assumed that these nuances did not have the same symbolic meaning for the leadership of that day as they have for Riabchuk and other intellectuals.

During the years of independence, a certain algorithm was worked out for public references to the famine. As a rule, interest peaked in anniver-

sary years: 1993, 1998 and 2002–3. In every instance, the subject of the *holodomor* was exploited for political purposes by a variety of forces (it should be noted that in all instances the “bursts” of interest in the subject coincided chronologically with pre-electoral or electoral campaigns, whether parliamentary or presidential). Some of the national-democratic forces and the more radical right-wingers made use of the subject in their struggle against the left, which managed to keep a stable hold on the sympathies of a significant part of the population, especially in eastern and southern Ukraine, until 2002. The left-wingers, for their part, periodically exploited references to the famine in their propaganda directed against the ruling authorities.²⁶ The authorities themselves, referring to the subject in connection with anniversary dates, issued directives enumerating commemorative events and persons responsible for them but were fairly stingy when it came to financial support for those events. Depending on the regional balance of political forces, the local authorities carried out those directives or ignored them. Quite often the local authorities simply carried out the directive, the population was “informed,” and *pro forma* measures were taken so that a report could be prepared. For instance, on 20 November 2003 the authorities in Kharkiv oblast held a “residents’ information day.” The report on it noted that “those taking part included deputy heads of the *oblast* state administration, heads and deputy heads of *rayon* state administrations and city executive committees, as well as heads of enterprises, institutions and organizations of the region.”²⁷ Interestingly enough, this tedious bureaucratic style is quite an accurate reflection of the wholly perfunctory attitude generally adopted by local authorities in response to such initiatives from the center, which were no less perfunctory to begin with. In other instances, such directives from the central authorities were sabotaged outright (the motives can only be guessed at)—needless to say, with no consequences for those responsible.

The first president of Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, who had been fairly successful in exploiting the slogans of the national-democratic opposition (Rukh) during the *perestroika* period, assisted personally in the organization of activities commemorating the 60th anniversary of the famine of 1932–33. The cause also gained considerable support from activists of the national-democratic movement of the late 1980s who became high-ranking government officials,²⁸ and from the diaspora, which gained a voice and moral weight in Ukrainian domestic politics for a time.²⁹ In September 1993, Kravchuk took part in an international conference on “The Famine of 1932–33 in Ukraine: Causes and Consequences.” The leader’s presence at the conference was considered substantial proof of the

authorities' interest in the "revival of historical truth," although it may be assumed that the approach of the 1994 elections was also an (unadvertised) motive.

Still, the feigned or genuine enthusiasm of the supreme authorities and the civic courage of initiators close to those authorities had their limits. In May 1993, the official program of activities proposed by the organizing committee included an item on the trial of those responsible for the famine before a People's Court (Tribunal),³⁰ and the Days of Sorrow and Remembrance of Victims of the Famine were planned as a large-scale stage spectacle (with the best directorial talents—Yurii Illienko, Mykola Mashchenko, and Leonid Osyka—summoned to put it on). In July of the same year both the idea of the tribunal and the stage-spectacle component vanished from the program.³¹

With Leonid Kuchma's accession to power, the ideological sphere became less significant in government policy. (It was during his administration that the post of vice-premier for humanitarian issues was marginalized and, unlike in the previous period, became more technical. In the corridors of power, the holder of that office came to be known as "folksy" [*sharovarnyi*]). Accordingly, key dates and events took on narrowly pragmatic significance. It was difficult to get along without them, but they were more an auxiliary factor strengthening the authorities' hand than a principal element in the formation of their image, as had been the case in previous years. Still, this pragmatism had important systemic consequences; it was in Kuchma's times that the famine of 1932–33 was legitimized as part of official commemorative practice. In October 1998 the government adopted a special resolution on the 65th anniversary of the famine of 1932–33, and in November of that year President Kuchma signed a special decree establishing a Day of Remembrance of Famine Victims. In 2003 the Ukrainian authorities undertook foreign-policy initiatives in order to gain recognition of the famine of 1932–33 by the international community.

The social situation itself impelled the authorities to change their attitude: as the domestic political struggle grew more intense, the president's milieu had to devote more attention to gaining ideological legitimacy by exploiting the ideological construct generally known as the "national idea."

By the early 2000s, the famine of 1932–33 had become an important element of that idea. In February 2002 (a year of parliamentary elections regarded as a test of strength prior to the presidential elections of 2004), Leonid Kuchma signed a decree "On Measures Related to the 70th Anni-

versary of the Famine in Ukraine.” The document is extraordinarily interesting because, on the one hand, it reproduced in detail all the ritual commemorative practices introduced by popular initiative during previous years and, on the other, it contained standard bureaucratic rhetoric³² intended to “recode” the play of symbols and seize the initiative from the opposition.³³ On 6 December 2002, Kuchma issued a directive to establish a Memorial to the Victims of Famine and Political Repression in Kyiv.³⁴ The execution of that directive turned into an endless dispute between various Kyiv offices, compounded by bureaucratic obstruction, that continues to this day.

The coming to power of political forces defining themselves as an opposition to the “Kuchma regime” was supposed to signal a change in the attitude of the supreme authorities to the problem of the Famine of 1932–33, if only because of the general image of the “new” administration and the sincere desire of the new head of state to promote the restoration of genuine historical memory. Nevertheless, the first declarations and actions of the new authorities intended to commemorate the famine of 1932–33 and to endow it with genuine social significance were strangely reminiscent of the practices of the previous administration. On 4 November 2005, President Viktor Yushchenko signed a decree “On Honoring the Victims and Casualties of Famines in Ukraine,” a mirror image of the standard rhetoric found in similar documents issued by the Kuchma government. A whole series of initiatives proposed in the document amounts to the same standard scheme intended to ensure the “restoration of historical justice” and “citizens’ profound awareness of the causes and consequences of the genocide of the Ukrainian people.”³⁵ In 2005–2007 the presidential office has issued seven ‘commemorative’ decrees devoted to 1932–1933.

What was the attitude to the problem on the part of the legislative authorities? In June 1993 the Association of Researchers of the Famine-Genocide of 1932–33 in Ukraine initiated a proposal to establish a temporary commission of the Verkhovna Rada (Supreme Council or parliament) of Ukraine. On the basis of documents available to scholars, the commission would determine that the famine was a crime against the Ukrainian people, an act of outright genocide that had undermined the gene pool and the spiritual and cultural potential of the Ukrainian nation. The matter was to be referred to the International Court of Justice at the Hague.³⁶ “By way of carrying out the decree of the president of Ukraine,” the Institute of Ukrainian History of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine proposed that the Verkhovna Rada “consider the question of the famine of 1932–33 in Ukraine and render an evaluation of that action that would not

be at variance with the truth ... a situation has arisen that necessitates an official evaluation of the famine as a deliberate action on the part of a totalitarian state."³⁷

The authors of the proposal referred to the conclusions of the American Congressional commission and the international commission of jurists and scholars (1988), noting that the official evaluation contained in the CC CPU resolution of 26 January 1990 "is not fully in accord with the truth." In July 1993 the organizing committee in charge of commemorating the 60th anniversary of the famine of 1932–33 (headed by Vice-Premier Mykola Zhulynsky) proposed to the leadership of the Verkhovna Rada that the problem be discussed at one of its sessions. A formal reply was received with a request to prepare a historical background paper and a draft parliamentary resolution, as well as to suggest someone qualified to speak about the famine. Further consultations with key figures in the leadership of the Verkhovna Rada made it apparent that there was no prospect of discussing the famine of 1932–33 during the current session. The elections of 1994, both parliamentary and presidential, were drawing near, and the deputies were interested in entirely different questions. Moreover, the composition of parliament, formed during the Soviet period, did not favor political scenarios promoting the thoroughgoing condemnation of the crimes of the communist regime. In addition, Ukraine was undergoing a large-scale economic and social crisis,³⁸ and social morale was already quite low. Consequently, when certain activists and amateur famine researchers insisted on emphasizing facts that were difficult to accept, the public response was one of sociopsychological rejection and fatigue with a surfeit of negativism.

In 2003, the situation looked different. By that time, the subject of the famine had reached the peak of its political and ideological significance. As in the past, the executive authorities approached the anniversary with restraint, although they mined the subject quite extensively to show their "unity with the people." One of the additional reasons for such restraint may well have been a desire not to worsen relations with Russia, especially in 2003, which was declared the year of Russia in Ukraine. Ideological rhetoric of the day often repeated such constructions as "the famine organized by Moscow" and references to centuries-old imperial (meaning Muscovite and Russian) policy in Ukraine. Popular writings of the time included works by authors such as A. Kulish.³⁹ The explanatory texts accompanying the photo exhibition on the walls of St. Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery in Kyiv, located near the monument to famine victims, include direct reminders that villages devastated by the famine of

1932–33 were repopulated by settlers from Russia. A work of popular history prepared by scholars (with a press run of 3,000 copies) indicates (with no reference to generalizations based on factual data) that the proletarians “sent to Ukrainian villages to collect grain” consisted mainly of ethnic Russians and that “military units and other power structures composed mainly of ethnic Russians were used to carry out forced collectivization, dekulakization and the requisition of foodstuffs in Ukraine during the famine period.”⁴⁰ At the same time, parliament became extraordinarily active. Paradoxically enough, the very issue of the famine of 1932–33 became a cause of dissension in the ranks of the many-colored opposition, which included left- and right-wing elements. The communist faction, which formally belonged to the opposition, became the most active opponent of any consideration of the famine in parliament. Our Ukraine, a coalition of center-right forces recently allied with the communists in the struggle against the “Kuchma regime,” became the major promoter of special parliamentary hearings. It was supported by some of the pro-presidential factions (with the consent of Leonid Kuchma, to be sure), deepening ideological fissures within the opposition. They were joined by the socialists, who thus violated the “unity of the left.” The speaker of parliament, Volodymyr Lytvyn, also showed considerable activity. Since he was a historian by education, the organization of such hearings was a marvelous opportunity for him to consolidate his image as a scholar-politician and a nationally aware intellectual capable of reliving the tragedies of the past together with his people.

In February 2003 special hearings on the famine of 1932–33 were held at the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. A special session of parliament took place on 14 May 2003. The keynote speech was given by Vice-Premier Dmytro Tabachnyk, also an historian by education. By official standards, his declarations on behalf of the executive authorities were extraordinarily radical: in particular, the famine of 1932–33 was termed a “Ukrainian Holocaust.”⁴¹ Parliament approved an “Appeal to the Ukrainian People” in which the famine was called an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people.⁴²

Also in 2003, the joint efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and the Ukrainian diaspora resulted in a number of initiatives (pursuant to a presidential decree) intended to obtain international recognition of the famine of 1932–33 as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people. In September 2003, speaking at the 58th session of the UN General Assembly, Leonid Kuchma called on the delegates to render due respect to the memory of the famine victims. The Ministry of Foreign

Affairs and the Ukrainian mission to the UN prepared a draft resolution for the 58th session condemning the famine and terming it an act of genocide, but the attempt to secure adoption of the special resolution proved unsuccessful. The Ukrainian authorities had to content themselves with a joint declaration of 36 states that did not contain the word “genocide.” It is hard to say whether this was an achievement or a failure: in any case, the events of 1932–33 became an object of (not particularly acute) attention on the part of the international community, but the desired resonance was not achieved. It is safe to predict that future efforts to secure recognition of the famine of 1932–33 as an act of genocide, especially on the international level, will be no less intense. President Yushchenko’s above-mentioned decree includes a point on promoting “additional” measures intended to obtain “recognition by the international community of the famine of 1932–33 in Ukraine as a genocide of the Ukrainian people and one of the greatest tragedies in human history.”⁴³ In November 2006 the Ukrainian Parliament has adopted the Law On Man-Made Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine. Article 1 of the Law stated that ‘The Man-Made Famine of 1932–1933 in Ukraine is a genocide of the Ukrainian People.’ According to the Article 2 of the Law public denial of the Man-Made Famine of 1932–1933 was proclaimed as a contamination of the memory of the millions of victims’ and ‘humiliation of the dignity of the Ukrainian people.’ The *Holodomor* ‘denial’ was labeled as ‘unlawful’ act, however, no further clarifications or legal provisions were introduced.⁴⁴

Having emerged in Ukrainian intellectual and ideological space in the mid-1980s as part of the general critique of the Soviet past, the subject of the famine of 1932–33 became an important functional element of political disputes and ideological differences. It solidly established itself among popular historical notions of the Ukrainian past and became part of “text-book” history. The speed with which it entered collective memory is to be explained above all by its utility both for the incumbent authorities and for many of those who aspired to the role of opposition. At the same time, the efforts of those who helped construct images of the famine of 1932–33 at the professional scholarly or political/ideological levels found an echo in the segment of the population for which the famine was still part of inherited “popular memory” and those who were direct witnesses to the famine of 1946–47. Thanks to this, the already constructed memory of 1932–33 became more organic and natural, shedding the formal characteristics of “invented tradition.”

Naturally, such a large-scale project could not have been completed without scholars. Their contribution to the formal scholarly elaboration of

the problem can be grasped by means of the following figure: by 2001, the bibliographic total of publications about the famine of 1932–33 amounted to more than 6,000 items.⁴⁵ The scholarly study of the subject and its presence in collective consciousness are gradually drawing apart: in the first instance, there is a growing dominance of elements of rational analysis, while the second is stuck fast at the level of “lacrimogenesis”⁴⁶ and remembrance of a great national tragedy. To be sure, for many Ukrainians, regardless of ethnic origin, interest in the subject is also a matter of profound moral and ethical significance based on the desire to render due respect to the memory of the victims of the terror-famine. That said, it should be noted that precisely on the level of everyday consciousness one does not encounter any explicit demands, even symbolic ones, to punish those responsible for organizing the famine.

On the level of practical politics, the subject of the famine remains a matter of political speculation and pragmatic exploitation; its moral significance becomes lost in political squabbles or is discredited by those attempting to exploit it. It is not identified in social consciousness with high moral and ethical standards. For politicians, references to “national traumas” generally serve to promote immediate political goals and mobilize the populace in the short term. Naturally, Ukrainian politicians are no exception to the norm.

Turning to long-term prospects, the evolution of collective national memory with regard to the “revived” subject of the famine of 1932–33, as analyzed in this article, attests to the complete absence of strategies both on the level of public organizations and on that of the state policy of remembrance. We are not speaking here of anything resembling the huge “Holocaust industry,” for which Ukraine has neither the financial resources nor the requisite cultural tradition (unless the latter can be invented). One can hardly speak even of something on the scale of the Institute of National Memory created by Ukraine’s closest neighbors, the Poles. Attempts to establish similar structures in Ukraine look like inept parodies. In May 2002 the people’s deputy Lev Lukianenko presented Vice-Premier Volodymyr Semynozhenko with an official project for the establishment of a Research Institute on the Genocide of the Ukrainian People. He proposed an institute with a staff of 30 (20 of whom would be scholarly researchers and assistants) with an annual budget of approx. 500,000 hryvnias (close to US \$90,000 at the time). It would concentrate on three areas of research: 1) *holodomory* (“man-made famines”), 2) large-scale repressions, and 3) deportations. The proposal was not approved, for, according to an official note from the Institute of History of

the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, “the problem of large-scale repressions and deportations is being studied as part of the program ‘Rehabilitated by History,’” which already comprised “hundreds of research works and several defended candidate and doctoral dissertations. Dozens of books and many hundreds of articles have been published.” The same document proposed the establishment of a Center for the Study of Famines as part of the Institute of Ukrainian History, with a staff of ten researchers.⁴⁷ As a result, the above-mentioned Center for the Study of Genocide in Ukraine, with a staff of three, was indeed established. It constitutes the most active and productive element of the Association of Researchers of Famines in Ukraine. The center, which functions as a subunit of the Institute of Ukrainian History, is currently occupied with the subject of “The Genocide of National, Ethnic and Religious Groups in Ukraine in the 20th Century: A Historical, Political and Legal Analysis.”

On 11 July 2005 President Viktor Yushchenko signed a Decree on the Establishment of an Institute of National Memory, the realization of which turned into an extraordinarily unedifying spectacle involving politicians, businessmen and community activists. The clash of personal ambitions, material interests and political speculation with regard to the institute itself, its ideology, location, financing, and so on serves to discredit an idea of uncommon importance to society. By the end of 2006 the institute still exists in a form of two rooms in the Cabinet of Ministers premises with the staff comprised of the director and his two deputies.

The new Ukrainian political and intellectual elites are not prepared to mobilize public opinion by exercising their potential for symbolic politics (which have their subjective and objective limitations in Ukraine) in a well-considered and consistent manner. In some cases, the elites mistakenly consider symbolic politics to be of secondary importance; in others, their purely ethical or narrow ideological interests limit the social significance of particular symbols.

NOTES

1 In the present context, the term “culture” refers to certain standards of social behavior, communication, collective reactions, traditions and hierarchies of values.

2 H. Hrabovych, “Ukraïna: pidsumky stolittia,” [Ukraine: The Summary of the Century] *Krytyka*, No. 11 (1999): 7. Professor Grabowicz disagrees with my treatment of his comments quoted in this article, especially with the term “conspiracy theory.” He explained in a private discussion (August 2005) that he was referring not so much to a deliberate rational strategy on the part of the authorities as to the general attitude of the current establishment. The establishment he had in mind was of course that of the Ku-

- chma period, but it seems to my understanding that the post-Kuchma authorities are reacting in the same way. What psychologists call the “dynamic stereotype” remains unchanged. My comments in the present article refer only to Professor Grabowicz’s text, not to his subsequent remarks.
- 3 M. Riabchuk, “Pot’omkins’kyi iuvilei, abo shche raz pro amnistiiu, amneziiu ta ‘spadkoiemnist’ postkomunistychnoï vldy v Ukraïni” [Potiomkin’s Jubilee or Once Again About Amnesty, Amnesia and ‘Legacy’ of Post-Communist Power In Ukraine] *Suchasnist’*, No. 3 (2004): 74.
 - 4 S. Kul’chyts’kyi, “Demohrafichni naslidky holodu-henotsydu 1933 r. v Ukraïni,” [Demographic Consequences of Famine-Genocide of 1933 in Ukraine] in: *Henotsyd ukrains’koho narodu: istorychna pam’iat’ ta politychno-pravova otsinka. Mizhnarodna naukovo-teoretychna konferentsiia. Materialy* (Kyiv, 25 November 2000) (Kyiv and New York: Vydavnytvo M.P. Kots, 2003), p. 5.
 - 5 The basic text of this article was written in 2004, but the term “current authorities” still applies to much of the present-day political milieu, especially those from the middle ranks of the post-communist *nomenklatura*.
 - 6 The “Nuremberg-2” Ukrainian National Committee to Organize an International Trial of the CPSU was established in March 1996 at the initiative of the All-Ukrainian Society of Political Prisoners and Victims of Repressions, the Association of Famine Researchers, and the Vasyl Stus Memorial Society. The public tribunal was held in Lithuania in 2000 but had no serious resonance whatever in Ukraine, its time had passed.
 - 7 The subject of lustrations emerged immediately after the events of the autumn and winter of 2004, which came to be known as the Orange Revolution, but it was regarded as an attempt to settle accounts with the old regime and came to nought, receiving neither broad popular support nor the blessing of the new oligarchs.
 - 8 Quite interesting in this regard are the analytical studies of pupils’ papers on Ukrainian history written for a contest during the 1998–99 school year. Among the negative aspects of Ukrainian history, pupils clearly identified the “bloody specter of communism” and the “totalitarian Bolshevik system” (*sic*). See Fisher Claudia “Chy mozhna pysaty pro istoriiu bez heroïchnoho pafosu?” [Is it possible to write about history without pathos?] *Doba*, No. 2 (2002): 9.
 - 9 The mere reading of certain archival documents about the famine of 1932–33 can suffice to bring about psychological trauma.
 - 10 See O. Movchan, “Holod 1921–1923 rr.: ‘heneral’na repetytsiia’ 1933-ho,” [Famine of 1922-1923: A Dress Rehearsal of 1933] in *Holod 1932–1933 rokiv v Ukraïni: prychny i naslidky* [Famine 1932-1933 in Ukraine. Reasons and results] (Kyiv: Naukova Dumka, 2003): 220–245.
 - 11 O.M. Veselova, V.I.Marochko, and O.M Movchan, eds., *Holodomory v Ukraïni 1921–1923, 1932–1933, 1946–1947. Zlochyny proty narodu*, [Man-made Famines in Ukraine 1921-1923, 1932 – 1933, 1946-1947. [Crimes Against the People] (Kyiv and New York: Vydavnytvo M.P. Kots, 2002)
 - 12 *Ibid.*, p. 257 (emphasis added).
 - 13 It is worth mentioning the book *Ethnocide of Ukrainians in the U.S.S.R. (The Ukrainian Herald*, Nos. 7–8 (Baltimore, Md.: Smoloskyp Publishers, 1978), an English translation of Ukrainian *samvydav* (self-published) materials probably written by Stepan Khmara. The famine of 1932–33 receives particular attention in the chapter devoted to the demographic losses of ethnic Ukrainians during the years of Soviet rule.

- 14 The Russian-language CC CPU document “On Propagandistic Measures to Counteract the Anti-Soviet Campaign Unleashed by Reactionary Centers of the Ukrainian Emigration in Connection with Food-Supply Difficulties in Ukraine in the Early 1930s” states openly that “it is inconvenient for us to enter into direct polemics with foreign nationalist scribblers on this question.” Cited according to Dzh. Meis (James Mace), “Dial’nist’ Komisii Konhresu SShA z vyvchennia holodu v Ukraïni,” [Work of the Commission of the USA Congress on Study of Famine in Ukraine] in *Holod 1932–1933*, p. 805.
- 15 James Mace settled in Ukraine in the 1990s. He died in Kyiv on 2 May 2004. His fairly explicit endorsement of the interpretation of the famine of 1932–33 as an act of genocide, which was based on personal conviction and clearly made no pretense of “objectivity,” was exploited by politicians and political writers of the national-patriotic camp as an argument advanced by an “unbiased” professional historian and a foreigner to boot.
- 16 *Mezhdunarodnaia komissiia po rassledovaniiu goloda na Ukraine 1932–1933 godov. Itogovyi otchet 1990* [International Commission for Investigation of the Famine in Ukraine of 1932-1933. Final report 1990] (Kyiv: 1992), p. 15.
- 17 *Holod 1932–1933 rokiv na Ukraïni: o chyma istorykiv, movoiu dokumentiv* [Famine of 1932-1933 in Ukraine. Through the eyes of historians, in the language of documents] (Kyiv: Politydav Ukrainy, 1990).
- 18 S. Kul’chyts’kyi, “Demohrafichni naslidky holodu-henotsydu 1933 r. v Ukraïni,” [Demographic Consequences of Famine-Genocide of 1933 in Ukraine] in *Henotsyd ukraïns’koho narodu: istorychna pam’iat’ ta polityko-pravova otsinka (Mizhnarodna naukovo-teoretychna konferentsiia, Kyiv, 25 lystopada 2000 r.)* (Kyiv and New York: Vydavnytvo M. Kots, 2003), p. 20.
- 19 “U TsK Kompartii Ukraïny. Pravda pro narodnu trahediiu,” [In the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. The Truth About People’s Tragedy] *Radians’ka Ukraïna*, 7 February 1990.
- 20 *33-i: Holod. Narodna knyha-memorial* [The Year 33: A Famine. A People’s Book-Memorial] (Kyiv: Radians’kyj pys’mennyk, 1991).
- 21 S. V. Kul’chyts’kyi, “33-i: holod. Zaproshuiemo do stvorennia knyhy-memorialu,” [The Year 3: A Famine. An Invitation to Take Part in the Book-Memorial] *Sil’s’ki visti*, (9 December 1988).
- 22 Dzh. Meis “Henotsyd v Ukraïni—dovedeno!” [The genocide in Ukraine – Proven!] *Den’*, (22 November 2000).
- 23 Suffice it to note that ten publications on the famine were sponsored by Marian Kots, an American publisher of Ukrainian descent.
- 24 M. Riabchuk “Pot’omkins’kyi iuvilei, abo shche raz pro amnistiiu, amneziiu ta ‘spadkoiemnist’ postkomunistychnoi vldy v Ukraïni.” [Potiomkin’s Jubilee or Once Again About Amnesty, Amnesia and ‘Legacy’ of Post-Communist Power In Ukraine] *Suchasnist’*, No. 3. (2004): 77.
- 25 For example, in President Leonid Kuchma’s appeal to the Ukrainian people of 24 November 2003 in connection with the Day of Remembrance of Victims of Famine and Political Repression, we read: “The Famine and mass political repressions planned and carried out by the communist regime placed the very existence of the nation in question.” See the official Internet site of President L. D. Kuchma of Ukraine, www.president.gov.ua/activity/zavavinterv/speakto/114407592.html.

- 26 The central organ of the Communist Party of Ukraine, the newspaper *Komunist*, periodically printed letters and appeals from pensioners, articles, and even humorous pieces (!) in which the famine of 1932–33 figured in the context of the current situation of most of the Ukrainian population, most notably pensioners. When the communists were preparing public actions in 2000, one of their slogans was “No to the sale of land and famine in 2000!” For a detailed discussion, see S. Kostyleva, “Novitnia kompartiiina presa Ukraïny pro storinky radians'koho mynuloho,” [The Contemporary Ukrainian Communist Media Speak About Soviet Past] in *Henotsyd ukraïns'koho narodu: istorychna pam'iat' ta polityko-pravova otsinka* [Genocide of Ukrainian people: Historical Memory and Political/Legal Assessment] (2003), pp. 573–82.
- 27 [Official Site of the President of Ukraine Accessed 23 June 2004] www.president.gov.ua/authofstate/prezidlist/localrada/diyalcommonely21/209325915.htm.
- 28 To name some of them: Mykola Zhulynsky, vice-premier of Ukraine in 1993; Ivan Dziuba, minister of culture; Dmytro Pavlychko, head of the Verkhovna Rada Commission on Foreign Affairs; Ivan Drach, head of the council of the Society for Relations with Ukrainians Abroad. See the Decree of the President of Ukraine “Pro zakhody u zv'iazku z 60-my rokovynamy holodomoru v Ukraïni,” [On Measures in Connection with the 60th Anniversary of the Famine in Ukraine] *Holos Ukraïny*, (20 March 1993).
- 29 Given the composition of the organizing committee responsible for preparing and carrying out the program of activities in connection with the 60th anniversary of the famine in Ukraine, it is possible to identify the organizations whose ideas were voiced by representatives of the national-democratic forces: the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, the Ukrainian National Aid Association (USA), the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Ukrainian World Congress (Canada), and the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organizations.
- 30 The group organizing the tribunal included the selfsame representatives of the writers’ “fronde” of the late 1980s who had enjoyed a fairly comfortable existence under the “macabre communist regime” and established themselves just as comfortably among the post-communist authorities: Ivan Drach, Pavlo Movchan and Volodymyr Yavorivsky. This very circumstance may be assumed to have deprived the idea of a public tribunal of the requisite moral weight.
- 31 “Protokol narady u vitse-prem'ier ministra Ukraïny, Holovy Orhkomitetu z pidhotovky ta provedennia zakhodiv u zv'iazku z 60-my rokovynamy holodomoru v Ukraïni 17 travnia 1993” [Minutes of the Meeting at the Deputy Prime-Minister’s Office, the Head of the Organizational Committee for 60th Anniversary of Man-Made Famine in Ukraine, 17 May, 1993]; “Plan osnovnykh zakhodiv u zv'iazku z 60-my rokovynamy holodomoru v Ukraïni (2 chervnia 1993 roku)” (documents from the private archive of S. V. Kulchytsky).
- 32 “Pro zakhody u zv'iazku z 70-my rokovynamy holodomoru v Ukraïni,” *Uriadovyi kur'ier* (29 March 2002).
- 33 The document includes detailed instructions on the organization of activities, down to such details as placing flowers before monuments, memorial tablets and places of burial of famine victims. Also noteworthy is the section of the decree proposing that local authorities “increase attention to the daily needs of citizens who survived the famine, improve medical and social services for them, help them tend their household gardens, and find ways of providing material assistance to such people.” Those who drafted the decree were aware of the impossibility of carrying out this section of it (and many others).

- 34 There was even a contest of architectural and sculptural designs, which presented quite a sorry spectacle from the aesthetic viewpoint.
- 35 Ukaz Prezydenta Ukraïny “Pro vshanuvannia zhertv ta postrazhdalykh vid holodomoriv v Ukraïni.” (Copy of original document from Author’s archive).
- 36 “Propozytsiï shchodo vshanuvannia 60-kh rokovyn holodomoru v Ukraïni” (document from the private archive of S. V. Kulchytsky).
- 37 Document from the private archive of S. V. Kulchytsky.
- 38 This may be illustrated by the expense of the planned activities themselves: one international scholarly conference alone, scheduled for September 1993, was to cost 12 million *kupono-karbovantsi*, while the total budget for the Days of Sorrow was to be 288,580,000 *kupono-karbovantsi* (US \$2.9 million) (draft estimates from the private archive of S. V. Kulchytsky).
- 39 See A. Kulish, *Knyha pam’iati ukraïntsv: Ukraïna 1932–1933 rr. Korotkyi perelik zlochyniv moskovs’koho imperializmu v Rusi-Ukraïni* [A Book of Ukrainian memory: Ukraine, 1932–33: A brief account of the crimes of muscovite imperialism in Rus’-Ukraine] (Kharkiv, 1996)
- 40 See P.P. Panchenko, et al., *Smertiu smert’ podolaly: Holodomor v Ukraïni 1932–1933* [The Death Overcame the Death. Man-Made Famine in Ukraine in 1932–1933] (Kyiv: Ukraina, 2003), p. 48.
- 41 Tabachnyk began his career as a professional historian and wrote both his candidate and doctoral dissertations on the political repression of the 1920s and 1930s. The defense of his doctoral dissertation took place when he was already a senior government official and became one of the first instances of the attainment of an academic degree by a government official of the highest rank.
- 42 The communist faction boycotted the session. Characteristically, the pro-presidential parliamentary majority also ignored it. Two hundred twenty-six out of 450 deputies voted in favor of the appeal.
- 43 In March 2006 the upper house of the Polish Diet (Senate) approved a resolution recognizing the famine of 1932–33 as an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people (Ukrinform, 17 March 2006).
- 44 *Vidomosti Verkhovnoi Rady*, No. 50 (2006): 504.
- 45 L.M. Burjan and I.E. Rikun, eds., *Holodomor v Ukraïni. 1932–1933 rr.: Bibliohrafichnyi pokazhchyk* [Famine in Ukraine 1932-1933. A bibliography] (Odesa and Lviv: ODNB im. M. Gor’kogo, Instytut istorii Ukrainy NAN Ukrainy, Fundatsija ukrainoznavchych studij Avstralii, 2001).
- 46 This term was used by the American historian Mark von Hagen to characterize a tendency in Ukrainian historiography of the 1990s associated with elements of incessant “mournful lamentation” over the losses and sufferings of Ukrainians since time immemorial. Let us note that this is not an invention or significant feature of Ukrainian historiography alone. The myth of the great suffering of this or that nation is common to almost all historiographies of the period of “national revival” not only in Europe but throughout the world (indeed, it is an indispensable component of the “national revival” scenario). It enjoys considerable popularity in post-Soviet space.
- 47 Inventory control card no. 4452/2, dated 12 July 2002; document from the private archive of S. V. Kulchytsky.