

# WOMEN AND HOLODOMOR-GENOCIDE: VICTIMS, SURVIVORS, PERPETRATORS

SECOND SYMPOSIUM

Commemorating the 85th Anniversary  
of the Holodomor-Genocide

California State University, Fresno  
Henry Madden Library, 2206

**OCTOBER 5, 2018**



**Cover art: "THE BITTER MEMORY OF CHILDHOOD"**

This haunting statue of a young girl clutching a handful of wheat stalks stands in the middle of the alley leading to the Memorial in Commemoration of the Victims of the Holodomor in Kyiv, Ukraine. The statue is dedicated to the most vulnerable victims of the Ukrainian famine-genocide – children. The statue, as part of the memorial complex, was conceptualized and designed by the Ukrainian folk artist Anatoliy Haydamaka and architect Yuriy Kovalyov for the 75th commemorative year.

Wheat is the symbol of life, prosperity, spiritual wealth. It is the grain which, for centuries, has been associated with our nation's livelihood. During the 1932-1933, however, it became a weapon of the genocide orchestrated to destroy the very fabric of that nation. On August 7, 1932, Joseph Stalin authored a law with a sentence ten years of imprisonment or death for the misappropriation of collective farm property. This law led to mass arrests and executions. Even children caught picking handfuls of grain from collective farm fields were convicted. It became known as the law of "Five Ears of Grain." While serving as a reminder of the devastation characterized by the law, the wheat symbolizes the Ukrainian nation's determination to live and prosper; the nation's future.



# PROGRAM

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5

## BREAKFAST

### POSTER EXHIBIT "WE WERE KILLED BECAUSE WE ARE UKRAINIANS"

Presented by the Holodomor Victims Memorial, Kyiv, Ukraine

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

### BOOK DISPLAY: COLLECTION ON THE HOLODOMOR

Contribution of Chris Langer, Public Services Librarian

California State University, Fresno

Dr. Lubow Jowa, President, Ukrainian Heritage Club of Northern California

Olga Starow, Los Angeles County Public Library

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

### EXHIBIT OF STUDENT MULTIMEDIA PROJECTS

8:00 – 8:50 a.m.

### WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Master of Ceremonies: **Dr. Victoria A. Malko**, Coordinator, Holodomor Symposium

**Dr. Michelle DenBeste**, Dean, College of Social Sciences

8:50 – 9:00 a.m.

### LECTURE

#### **Dr. Myroslava Antonovych**

Director, Centre for International Human Rights

National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Ukraine

**"Women and Children as Victims of Genocidal Acts in the Holodomor against the Ukrainian Nation"**

9:00 – 10:15 a.m.

## COFFEE BREAK

### LECTURE

**Dr. Olga Bertelsen**, Visiting Research Scholar

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

European University Institute, Florence, Italy

**"Women at Sites of Mass Starvation: Ukraine, 1932-1933"**

10:30 – 11:45 a.m.



## LUNCH BREAK

### LECTURE

**Daria Mattingly**, Lecturer, Slavonic Studies Department

University of Cambridge, UK

**“[Extra]Ordinary Women: Female Perpetrators of the Holodomor”**

12:15 – 1:30 p.m.

## COFFEE BREAK

### LECTURE

**Jars Balan**, Director

Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies

University of Alberta, Canada

**“Rhea Clyman: A Forgotten Canadian Eyewitness to the Hunger of 1932”**

1:45 – 3:00 p.m.

### BOOK SIGNING AND HORS D'OEUVRES RECEPTION

Historian **Volodymyr Serhiychuk** will sign copies of his book,

*Holodomor of 1932-1933 as Genocide Against Ukrainians*

3:00 – 3:15 p.m.

### LECTURE

**Dr. Volodymyr Serhiychuk**, Professor of History

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine

**“To Honor All Innocent Victims of the Holodomor”**

3:15 – 4:30 p.m.

### SUNG EPIC POEMS

Performed by **Ola Herasymenko-Oliylyk**, Merited Artist of Ukraine

“Дума про 33 рік” (A ballad about the year 1933) (6 minutes)

“Ой, сум та сум по Україні” (Oh, sorrow all over Ukraine) (3 minutes)

4:30 – 4:40 p.m.

### CLOSING OF THE SYMPOSIUM



## GUEST LECTURERS

DR. MYROSLAVA ANTONOVYCH, Doctor of Law (Ukrainian Free University, Germany, 2008); LL.M. (McGill University, Canada, 1999); Specialist of Law (Lviv National University, Ukraine, 1995); Candidate of Philology (Kyiv Linguistic University, Ukraine, 1988); Specialist of English Language and Literature (Dnipropetrovsk National University, Ukraine, 1981). She is the Director of the Centre for International Human Rights and Associate Professor of the Faculty of Law at the National University Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. She is a former Judge ad hoc of the European Court of Human Rights (2010-2014). Dr. Antonovych was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Cincinnati, OH (1996) and President of the Ukrainian Fulbright Association (2006-2011). She is the author of over 100 publications in Public International Law, International Human Rights and Genocide Studies.



DR. OLGA BERTELSEN is a historian and a doctor of medicine by training. She defended her doctoral thesis in History and East European Studies at the University of Nottingham (United Kingdom) and during the 2018-2019 she will be a Visiting Research Scholar at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute (Florence, Italy). She is a recipient of postdoctoral research and teaching fellowships at New York University, Harvard University, Columbia University, and the University of Toronto, and has published widely on state violence in Ukraine, the gender aspect of Soviet genocides, and Ukrainian-Jewish encounters. In January 2018, her article on the Ukrainian famine and the Soviet politics of silence published in

the *Genocide Studies International* in 2017 was nominated for the Conquest Prize for Contribution to Holodomor Studies. She is the author of monographs on the Ukrainian theatre director Les' Kurbas ("Smoloskyp," 2016), and on the House of Writers and Stalin's terror (Carl Beck Papers, 2013). She also published a collection of translated archival documents on the persecution of Zionists in Ukraine in two volumes (*On the Jewish Street*, 2011), and edited a collection of essays entitled *Revolution and War in Contemporary Ukraine: The Challenge of Change* (Ibidem-Verlag/Columbia University Press, 2017).

DARIA MATTINGLY is a Ph.D. Candidate in Slavonic Studies at University of Cambridge, UK. She has recently submitted her dissertation on the rank-and-file perpetrators of the Holodomor and their representation in cultural memory. She is a convener of Places of Amnesia research group which focuses in its seminars on themes less commonly studied and has written articles and reviews on topics in Ukrainian history and cultural history. She was educated at Kyiv Shevchenko University and University of Bristol, where she received her MA in Russian history.



JARS (JAROSLAW) BALAN is an author, poet, scholar, editor, translator and long-time Ukrainian community activist. He has written and published extensively on a wide variety of topics in Ukrainian Canadian history, theatre and literature. He first became involved with the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS) shortly after its founding in 1976, and over the years was engaged by the Institute as an editor, literary translator, conference organizer, project consultant and research associate while pursuing a successful career as a freelance writer. In 1991 to mark the centenary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada, he initiated the founding of the Kalyna Country Ecomuseum on the territory of the oldest and largest agricultural colony established by Ukrainian pioneers.



In 2000 Jars was made the coordinator of the Kule Ukrainian Canadian Studies Centre at CIUS, and since July 2017 has served as the Director of the Institute. His research on the Holodomor's Canadian dimension began in 2011, when he commissioned historical surveys of Alberta newspaper coverage that revealed a surprising amount of information about developments in Soviet Ukraine during the time of the Great Famine, or Holodomor. Jars subsequently followed this up with additional investigations of major Canadian dailies, and in the process discovered the story of a remarkable Toronto journalist named Rhea Clyman who travelled through Soviet Ukraine during the early stages of the devastating hunger. Since then, he has been gradually working on a biography of Ms. Clyman while at the same time studying the reports of other Canadian correspondents, technical specialists, workers and visitors who were in Ukraine at or around the time of the famine. He is also currently conducting research into the participation of Ukrainians in Canada's Armed Forces during the Second World War, while also laying the groundwork for a comprehensive examination of the immigration of Ukrainian refugees, or "Displaced Persons," in the aftermath of the war.



DR. VOLODYMYR SERHIYCHUK is professor of history at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kiyv and a member of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. Over several decades of his prolific academic career, in addition to numerous polemic articles in scholarly and popular journals, professor Serhiychuk has published more than fifty monographs on the history of Ukraine. These include the history of the Cossack state, the Germans and Jews in Ukraine, ethnic minorities and the borders of Ukraine, pogroms in Ukraine during 1914-1920, the history of OUN/UPA, the history of Greek Catholic Church in Ukraine, the history of western Ukraine and deportations of Poles, the Ukrainian Crimea, the Ukrainian- Turkish relations, the spread of the Ukrainian Diaspora around the world, on the contributions Ukrainians have made to the development of world science and culture, as well as biographies of key political and military leaders. His recent book *Голодомор 1932-1933 років як геноцид українства* (2016) has been translated into English *The Holodomor of 1932-1933 as Genocide against Ukrainians* (2018).



## GUEST ARTISTS

ANDREW TKACH has produced long form television programs for more than 25 years, most recently directing two feature length documentaries on Ukraine's tumultuous history. Before that he produced a documentary on how climate change was affecting the last dog sled hunters of Greenland and an expose of child miners in the West African gold industry for NBC. In 2013, he interviewed the Chinese dissident artists Ai Wei Wei in Beijing, just days before his arrest for a doc examining Chinese internet censorship.



Prior to forming his own company, Messy Moment Media, Tkach was the principal long form producer of Christiane Amanpour for both CNN and CBS 60 Minutes, winning multiple Emmy's for their work. He is currently executive producing a weekly environmental documentary series in Kenya made by African filmmakers. Filmography: Hunger for Truth (2017), Generation Maidan: A Year of Revolution & War (2015), On Thin Ice (2014), Activist (2013), Imelda & Me (2012), Secrets & Sins (2011), Scars of Racism (2011), Buddha's Warriors (2010), Generation Islam (2009), God's Muslim Warriors (2008), Czar Putin (2007), War Within (2006), Where Have All the Parents Gone (2006), World's Most Dangerous Gang (2005), Of Human Bondage Slavery Today (1995), Heroin Connection (1993), Murder Capital (1991), Moscow Vice (1989), Urban Nomads (1988).



OLA HERASYMENKO-OLIYNYK, born in Lviv, Ukraine, is the first professional bandurist\* to have been featured as a soloist with an American Symphony orchestra. Prior to settling in the United States, she has performed extensively with Bandura Trio under her direction in Ukraine, Poland, Germany, Spain, Japan, Vietnam, and the Philippines. Since 1989 with her husband, Yuriy Oliynyk, she has performed in many lecture recitals presenting Ukrainian music, culture, and history at colleges, universities, museums, and libraries. Ola received her bachelor's degree at the Lysenko Conservatory in Lviv and master's degree at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Kyiv, the capital city of Ukraine. Her repertoire includes works of Ukrainian as well as international composers. She recorded three of Y. Oliynyk's concertos for bandura and symphony orchestra. This was a first historic recording featuring the bandura with a symphony orchestra on CD. Subsequently, she was awarded a medal and the title of Merited Artist of Ukraine.

In Sacramento, California, she organized the Bandura Ensemble at the Ukrainian Heritage School as well as the Ukrainian String Ensemble. She also organized festivals of Ukrainian classical and folk music.

\*The bandura is a Ukrainian stringed instrument of the lute family. It has over fifty strings, including short auxiliary strings along the body. The modern bandura evolved from an instrument that appeared in the 16th century. Traditionally, the bandura was played by a kobzar or minstrel, often a Cossack who had been blinded in captivity. The kobzar's repertoire consisted primarily of the *duma*, a type of folk ballad about Cossack exploits. The *duma* was an epic song built around historical events and embedded with religious and moralistic elements. Although many *duma* themes deal with military action in some form, they impart a moral message in which one should conduct oneself properly in the relationships with the family, the community, and the church.

GEORGE WYHINNY is originally from the suburbs of Chicago. His formal acting training began at the National High School Institute Theatre Arts Division at Northwestern University (also known as Cherubs). He received conservatory acting training from the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. Upon return to the United States, George attended Stanford University where he completed his Bachelor of Arts with Honors, majoring in Drama with a minor in English. He wrote, produced, and performed in his undergraduate thesis titled "Secrets of the Forest," a thirteen-character one-man play about Ukraine in the late 30s and early 40s. He now lives in Los Angeles working both in front of as well as behind the camera. He just founded his own production company that has several projects in development.



## EVENT TITLES AND SYNOPSES

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M. (HML ROOM 2206)

### POSTER EXHIBIT “WE WERE KILLED BECAUSE WE ARE UKRAINIANS”



This year marks the 70th anniversary of the proclamation of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. For Ukraine, the issue of preventing the crime of genocide is particularly important. A genocide, known as the Holodomor, was committed by the Soviet regime which used hunger as a weapon against the Ukrainian nation. For over half a century, Ukrainians were forbidden to mention the word “famine” or commemorate those who perished in 1932-1933. The world knows little about this crime. This poster exhibition has been prepared by the National Museum “Holodomor Victims Memorial” in Kyiv, Ukraine. The purpose of the documentary exhibition “We were killed because we are Ukrainians” is to show the Holodomor as a process, not a phenomenon; to show the history of the Holodomor as a story of the genocide against the Ukrainian nation through the prism of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 9:00 – 10:15 A.M. (HML ROOM 2206)

### “WOMEN AND CHILDREN AS VICTIMS OF GENOCIDAL ACTS IN THE HOLODOMOR AGAINST THE UKRAINIAN NATION”

DR. MYROSLAVA ANTONOVYCH, Director, Centre for International Human Rights, National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Ukraine

The presentation deals with one of the mental elements (*mens rea*) of the Holodomor as a crime of genocide, namely a victimological aspect. The author argues that, on the one hand, the protected group in the Holodomor had a clear national character, and, on the other hand, Ukrainian women and children as victims who suffered the most during the Holodomor and comprised majority of the Holodomor victims were no doubt a substantial group for the survival of the Ukrainian national group. The author also analyzes material elements of the Holodomor-genocide (*actus reus*) constituting massive destructions of the Ukrainian national group committed mainly by deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction (an act of physical genocide), imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group (containing a concept of biological genocide); and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group (including an act of cultural genocide). The elements of the crime of genocide are traced in each of these acts.





FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 10:30 – 11:45 A.M. (HML ROOM 2206)

“WOMEN AT SITES OF MASS STARVATION: UKRAINE, 1932-1933”

DR. OLGA BERTELSEN, Visiting Research Scholar, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, Florence, Italy

Disasters and calamities, such as famines, have a tremendous effect on human behavior, social conduct and mentality. Everything changes in a human being--physiology, perceptions, memories, emotions, and thinking patterns. This talk will focus on women's reactions to the 1932-1933 famine in Ukraine, known as the Holodomor, and will examine wide-ranging effects of extreme starvation on their mentality and behavior. Special attention will be paid to an analysis of psychological and psychiatric conditions provoked by prolonged food deprivation, which transformed women's perceptions of social norms of behavior and changed their identities. The distance between the moral and the immoral withered away, and at the peak of the delirium many resorted to cannibalism and the killing of their neighbors. Women's testimonies allow us to capture some of their individual experiences, and their responses to the famine suggest that in acquiring skills of survival, the majority surrendered the ideals of freedom and abandoned the norms of appropriate social behavior on individual and collective levels. At this stage the gender themes (especially women's roles and behaviors during man-made famines) and the issue of cannibalism remain the least investigated topics among others. The information about this phenomenon at sites of genocide is scattered, and presents a research challenge from a methodological perspective. This talk will include information about the discovery of additional archival documents on cannibalism and gender specific patterns of behavior during the Holodomor, which expands our understanding of human tragedies caused by state violence.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 12:15 – 1:30 P.M. (HML ROOM 2206)

“[EXTRA]ORDINARY WOMEN: FEMALE PERPETRATORS OF THE HOLODOMOR”

DARIA MATTINGLY, Ph.D. Candidate in Slavonic Studies, University of Cambridge, UK

While it is generally accepted that female perpetrators of mass violence are ordinary women with rather banal motives like their male counterparts, women who facilitated the Holodomor on the ground are portrayed as anything but ordinary in cultural memory. This explorative study however, shows that women have played a much larger role (or a wide variety of roles) than has been generally assumed so far by the scholars of the famine and that women can be just as evil as men. This explorative overview is an interdisciplinary study of the traces of such rank-and file perpetrators in history and in memory – seeks to shed overdue light on them. Therefore, in the first part of the lecture I will focus on the roles the women played in the mechanism of the famine on district and village level - their roles, their motivation as well as lives after the famine and locate them within the typology of the perpetrators of mass violence. In the second part of the lecture I will demonstrate that there is a clear gender bias in the portrayal of female perpetrators in Ukrainian cultural memory as promiscuous sadists, abnormal women or lacking agency and suggest possible reasons behind such representation.



FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1:45 - 3:00 P.M. (HML ROOM 2206)

"RHEA CLYMAN: A FORGOTTEN CANADIAN EYEWITNESS TO THE HUNGER OF 1932"

JARS BALAN, Director, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, Canada

In September 1932, a 28-year old freelance journalist from Toronto named Rhea Clyman, made an epic journey by car through the agricultural heartland of the Soviet Union. She had been enlisted as a guide and interpreter for two young women from Atlanta, Georgia who were seeking adventure and a first-hand look at what they naively believed was an exciting experiment in the creation of a new civilization. Their more than 2,700 km road trip took them from Moscow through Eastern Ukraine, the Donbas and the Kuban region, all the way to Tbilisi, Georgia, where Clyman was abruptly arrested by the Soviet secret police and given twenty-four hours to leave the country for allegedly spreading "false news" about the Soviet Union. Rhea's expulsion on the order of the Politburo, the first by Soviet authorities of a Western journalist in eleven years, was reported in scores of newspapers across North America, Europe and around the world. She subsequently wrote a detailed account of what she described as the "Famine-Lands" that she drove through, several early drafts of which were initially published in London's *Daily Express* newspaper before appearing in twenty-one feature articles run in the Toronto Telegram from 8 May to 9 June 1933. Her dramatically written reports provide a vivid eye-witness chronicle of the Great Famine, or Holodomor, when it was only beginning to exact its terrible toll on millions of citizens of Communist Ukraine. As remarkable as Rhea's achievements were during her four years in "Red Russia," her life afterwards was no less impressive for what she witnessed and accomplished despite the many challenges that she faced as a physically handicapped woman, born into a poor immigrant Jewish family, who repeatedly stared down adversity with unflinching courage, audacity, and steely determination.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 3:00 - 3:15 P.M. (HML ROOM 2206)

BOOK SIGNING AND HORS D'OEUVRES RECEPTION

Historian VOLODYMYR SERHIYCHUK will sign copies of his book, ***Holodomor of 1932-1933 as Genocide against Ukrainians***

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 3:15 - 4:30 P.M. (HML ROOM 2206)

"TO HONOR ALL INNOCENT VICTIMS OF THE HOLODOMOR"

DR. VOLODYMYR SERHIYCHUK, Professor of History, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine

This lecture is based on Professor Serhiychuk's new book about the Ukrainian famine-genocide of 1932-1933. By examining new archival evidence, Dr. Serhiychuk reopens the hotly debated issue of the number of millions who perished during that fateful year and the demographic losses due to exile, deportation, starvation, and the killing of Ukrainian politicians, intellectuals, clergy, and peasants by the Soviet authorities. The author believes that the materials from the Ukrainian archives give grounds to estimate the number of victims of this tragedy of at least seven million people. Presented in Ukrainian with English translation.



## SPECIAL EVENTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 5:30 – 6:30 P.M.  
(FRESNO ART MUSEUM BONNER AUDITORIUM)

### ONE-ACT PLAY “BURIED TRUTH”

Written and performed by GEORGE WYHINNY

This is the widely unknown true story of how Ukrainian farmers, men, women, and children were murdered by artificial famine. Told from the point of view of four journalists, one who lied and three others who tried to expose him and Joseph Stalin for their lies: how millions of Ukrainians were slaughtered and how the Kremlin hid these atrocities from the Western world. Using primary source documents, first-hand accounts, and witness testimonials, this piece memorializes the victims and celebrates Ukraine's heroes.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2:30 – 5:00 P.M.  
(UNIVERSITY BUSINESS CENTER ALICE PETERS AUDITORIUM)

### DOCUMENTARY “HUNGER FOR TRUTH: THE RHEA CLYMAN STORY”

“Hunger for Truth” shows the power of truth telling in the face of disinformation. The feature length documentary tells the story of Rhea Clyman, a young Canadian reporter who traversed the starving Soviet heartland when Stalin's genocidal famine was ravaging Ukraine. The film was an official selection at the 2018 USA Film Festival in Dallas, where it won Honorable Mention in the International Short Film Competition.

Discussion with Emmy award-winning filmmaker **Andrew Tkach** and **Dr. Michelle DenBeste**, Dean of the College of Social Sciences, will follow.



## THE HOLODOMOR

More than eighty years ago the Ukrainian people became victims of a crime of unimaginable horror. Usually referred to in the West as the Great Famine or the Terror Famine, it is known to Ukrainians as the Holodomor. It is a compound of *holod* (hunger) and *mor* (mass death as in a plague) from *moryty* (to cause death), meaning extermination by hunger. As James E. Mace, Executive Director of the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, noted, "It is a unique term that has arisen from the depths of a victimized nation itself."

The Great Famine of 1932-1933 took place principally in Ukraine, the North Caucasus, and the lower Volga. Soviet census data reveal that between 1926 and 1939 the Ukrainian population lost several million people as a result of both increased mortality and a decreased birth rate. The loss – variously estimated at between five and seven million – includes an undetermined number of deaths from starvation that evidently runs in the millions. This is corroborated by Soviet figures showing that grain procurements increased while harvests declined, resulting in a food supply insufficient to sustain the population. It is further corroborated by ample eyewitness testimony.

The famine resulted from three policies of the Soviet government designed to seize the means of food production from the Ukrainian farmers and force them to submit fully to Soviet dictates. First, the liquidation of the "kulaks" in 1929-1930 removed the most productive and independent sector of rural Ukrainian society. Second, the collectivization of 1929-1932 dispossessed most of the remaining farmers and brought them directly under state control. Third, the heavy procurement quotas of 1930-1931, and the total requisition of 1932, deprived the farmers of food.

Having suppressed and liquidated the intelligentsia and much of the Ukrainian Communist Party apparatus, the Soviet government proceeded to starve independent but now leaderless Ukrainian farmers. While millions of Ukrainians were dying of hunger, the Soviet government was exporting their grain and using the proceeds to industrialize the USSR.

The purpose of this man-made famine was apparently twofold. First, the regime sought economic control of the Ukrainian farmers, who in general, favored individual enterprise and opposed collectivization. Second, it sought political domination over the Ukrainian people, who on the whole desired independence and resisted Russian rule. The famine achieved both.



The SVU Trial, 1930. *Source:* James Mace, "Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (SVU)," *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, vol. 5 (1993).

The SVU trial, March 9 to April 19, 1930, was one of the first show trials in the Soviet Union. Among forty-five defendants, half were teachers and professors of the Institutes of People's Education, writers, academicians. The other half were members of former Ukrainian political parties, representatives of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. The trial took place in the Kharkiv Opera Theater; thus, dubbed "opera SVU, libretto GPU." After the trial, a third of school teachers in Ukraine were dismissed from their jobs, arrested and persecuted for vigorously promoting the study of Ukrainian language and culture. Most defendants, except one, perished.





## UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON THE UKRAINE FAMINE

In 1983, the Congress of the United States created and funded a special purpose commission to investigate the genocidal famine in Ukraine in 1932-1933. The Commission of the Ukraine Famine proper consisted of two U.S. Senators, four U.S. Representatives, three representatives of the Executive Branch, and six Public Members representing the Ukrainian-American community.

The Commission had a paid staff of four, directed by the late Dr. James E. Mace, a professional historian and specialist on the history of Soviet Ukraine. The primary function of the Commission was to gather records and conduct historical research concerning the Holodomor. Dr. Mace systematically reviewed U.S. Government archives from that period, while other staff members traveled throughout the United States and Canada interviewing survivors and witnesses of the Holodomor. The six Public Members assisted them by serving as local liaisons and coordinators where they resided. The Congressional Members opened doors as needed in Washington, and succeeded in obtaining a second round of funding for the Commission.

Approximately two hundred survivor accounts were recorded and transcribed in the original language, and many of them were translated into English as well. These accounts were compiled and published in a massive three volume report. A separate report presented a summary of the historical documents collected by Dr. Mace and his interpretations.

The data collected by the Commission staff and these reports constituted the most substantial compilation of evidence and facts concerning the Holodomor that existed when they were published on April 22, 1988. Dr. Mace made sure that the authorities and historians in Ukraine (still Soviet at that time) were aware of the Commission's work. Just three weeks before the Commissions' reports were released, the first articles describing the Holodomor as historical fact were published in Ukraine. In this way, the Commission's work effectively brought to light the history and tragedy of the Holodomor and induced the start of research about the Holodomor in Ukraine. [Written by Dr. Oleh Weres]



Dispossessed family near their own house in the village Udachne, Donetsk region, 1930s. Photo by Marco Zheliznyak. *Source:* Archive of Photo Documents, Holodomor Victims Memorial.



# UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON THE UKRAINE FAMINE FINDINGS

Based on testimony and staff research, the Commission on the Ukraine Famine makes the following findings:

1. There is no doubt that large numbers of inhabitants of the Ukrainian SSR and the North Caucasus Territory starved to death in a man-made famine in 1932-1933, caused by the seizure of the 1932 crop by Soviet authorities.
2. The victims of the Ukrainian Famine numbered in the millions.
3. Official Soviet allegations of “kulak sabotage,” upon which all “difficulties” were blamed during the Famine, are false.
4. The Famine was not, as is often alleged, related to drought.
5. In 1931-1932, the official Soviet response to a drought-induced grain shortage outside Ukraine was to send aid to the areas affected and to make a series of concessions to the peasantry.
6. In mid-1932, following complaints by officials in the Ukrainian SSR that excessive grain procurements had led to localized outbreaks of famine, Moscow reversed course and took an increasingly hard line toward the peasantry.
7. The inability of Soviet authorities in Ukraine to meet the grain procurements quota forced them to introduce increasingly severe measures to extract the maximum quantity of grain from the peasants.
8. In the Fall of 1932 Stalin used the resulting “procurement crisis” in Ukraine as an excuse to tighten his control in Ukraine and to intensify grain seizures further.
9. The Ukrainian Famine of 1932-1933 was caused by the maximum extraction of agricultural produce from the rural population.
10. Officials in charge of grain seizures also lived in fear of punishment.
11. Stalin knew that people were starving to death in Ukraine by late 1932.
12. In January 1933, Stalin used the “laxity” of the Ukrainian authorities in seizing grain to strengthen further his control over the Communist Party of Ukraine and mandated actions which worsened the situation and maximized the loss of life.
13. Postyshev had a dual mandate from Moscow: To intensify the grain seizures (and therefore the Famine) in Ukraine and eliminate such modest national self-assertion as Ukrainians had hitherto been allowed by the USSR.
14. While famine also took place during the 1932-1933 agricultural year in the Volga Basin and the North Caucasus Territory as a whole, the invasiveness of Stalin’s interventions of both the Fall of 1932 and January 1933 in Ukraine are paralleled only in the ethnically Ukrainian Kuban region of the North Caucasus.
15. Attempts were made to prevent the starving from travelling to areas where food was more available.
- 16. Joseph Stalin and those around him committed genocide against Ukrainians in 1932-1933.**
17. The American government had ample and timely information about the Famine but failed to take any steps which might have ameliorated the situation. Instead, the Administration extended diplomatic recognition to the Soviet government in November 1933, immediately after the Famine.
18. During the Famine certain members of the American press corps cooperated with the Soviet government to deny the existence of the Ukrainian Famine.
19. Recently, scholarship in both the West and, to a lesser extent, the Soviet Union has made substantial progress in dealing with the Famine. Although official Soviet historians and spokesmen have never given a fully accurate or adequate account, significant progress has been made in recent months.

*Source:* United States Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932-1933: Report to Congress* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1988), pp. vi-vii.





The 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, ratified by both the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR, affirms that genocide, whether committed in war-time or peace-time, is a crime under international law. Article II defines genocide as any of several acts “committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group.” Among these acts is “deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.” The acts of the Government of the USSR in 1932-1933 with regard to the Ukrainian people fit squarely within this definition.

Dr. Raphael Lemkin (1900-1959), a lawyer of Polish Jewish background, coined the term “genocide” in 1943 and then used it in his book *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, published the following year. He studied linguistics and later law at Lviv University (then part of Poland, now western Ukraine). From 1929 to 1934, he worked as a prosecutor for the district court in Warsaw. After the double invasion of Poland by German and Soviet troops in September 1939, he became a refugee. With the help of his pre-war associate McDermott, Lemkin received permission to enter the United States in 1941. It was due to his perseverance in lobbying the delegates to the United Nations that the General Assembly passed the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide on December 9, 1948.

In 1953, Lemkin was invited to speak at the commemoration of the Great Famine, held at New York’s Manhattan Center. Professor Lemkin expanded his discourse beyond the peasants and the famine and spoke of the genocide as a four-pronged destruction of the Ukrainian nation<sup>1</sup>. First, the Soviet attack on the Ukrainian intelligentsia, the “brain” of the nation. Second, the Soviet destruction of Ukrainian religious institutions, the “soul” of the nation. Third, the destruction of Ukraine’s independent farmers, “the repository of the tradition, folklore and music, the national language and literature,” in short, “the national spirit,” which occurred on mass scale during the famine of 1932-1933. Fourth, the fragmentation of the Ukrainian people by the addition of foreign peoples and the dispersion of Ukrainians throughout Eastern Europe. Highlighting similarities between Hitler’s attack on the Jews and Stalin’s steps in the systematic destruction of the Ukrainian nation, Lemkin called it “the classic example of Soviet genocide”:

Notably, there have been no attempts at complete annihilation, such as was the method of the German attack on the Jews. And yet, if the Soviet program succeeds completely, if the intelligentsia, the priests and the peasants can be eliminated, Ukraine will be as dead as if every Ukrainian were killed, for it will have lost that part of it which has kept and developed its culture, its beliefs, its common ideas, which have guided it and given it a soul, which, in short, made it a nation rather than a mass of people. The mass, indiscriminate murders have not, however, been lacking – they have simply not been integral parts of the plan, but only chance variations. Thousands have been executed, untold thousands have disappeared into the certain death of Siberian labor camps. [ . . . ]

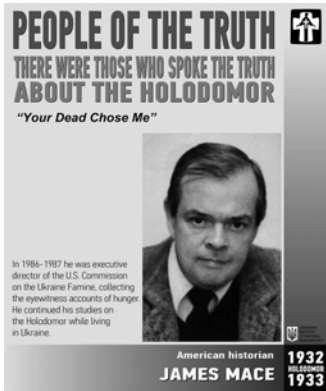
[ . . . ] This is not simply a case of mass murder. It is a case of genocide, of destruction, not of individuals only, but of a culture and a nation.

In the speech excerpted above, Lemkin estimated that between 1932 and 1933, 5 million Ukrainians starved to death, “an inhumanity which the 73rd Congress decried on May 28, 1934.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Raphael Lemkin addressed his speech to the Ukrainian American Congress Committee. Dr. Steven Jacobs, Dr. Roman Serbyn, and Mr. Marko Suprun located the text of the speech in the Rare Books and Manuscripts Division of the New York Public Library (hereafter NYPL), “The Raphael Lemkin Papers, 1947-1959,” ZL-273, Reel 3. The actual typewritten notes were found in Box 2, Folder 16. The manuscript was first published in Lubomyr Luciuk and Lisa Grekul, eds., *Holodomor: Reflections on the Great Famine of 1932-1933 in Soviet Ukraine* (Kingston, Ontario: Kashtan Press, 2008), 235-42. Full version with a commentary can be found in *Soviet Genocide in the Ukraine*, ed. by Lubomyr Y. Luciuk (Kingston, Ontario: Kashtan Press, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Raphael Lemkin, “Soviet Genocide in the Ukraine” (originally untitled speech), NYPL, “The Raphael Lemkin Papers, 1947-1959,” ZL-273, Reel 3, Box 2, Folder 16.





*I remain convinced that for Stalin to have complete centralized power in his hands, he found it necessary to physically destroy the second-largest Soviet republic, meaning the annihilation of the Ukrainian peasantry, Ukrainian intelligentsia, Ukrainian language, and history as understood by the people; to do away with Ukraine and things Ukrainian as such. The calculation was very simple, very primitive: no people, therefore, no separate country, and thus no problem. Such a policy is Genocide in the classical sense of the word. --Dr. J. E. Mace*

**Dr. James Edward Mace** (1952-2004) was of Cherokee origin, born in Muskogee, Oklahoma in 1952.

He received his doctorate in history from the University of Michigan in 1981. His doctoral dissertation was published as a book, *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation: National Communism in Soviet Ukraine, 1918-1933*. He spent his post-doctoral years at the Harvard Ukrainian Institute. From 1985 to 1988, he served as staff director of the U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine.

In 1993, Jim Mace moved to Ukraine and became a professor of political science at the National University Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. He died in Kyiv in 2004 at the age of 52. Seven thousand people attended his funeral, and a massive monument was later constructed over his grave as befitting a national hero.

Dr. Mace was the first historian to directly state “The Holodomor was an act of genocide.” When people in Ukrainian asked him how it was that he made studying the Holodomor his life’s work, he would reply, “Hey, I’m an Indian; I know about genocide.” [Written by Dr. Oleh Weres]

**Dr. Robert Conquest** (1917-2015) was British-American historian, poet, and Holodomor scholar.

He was senior research fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution. He authored many historical and literary works, including *The Great Terror: Stalin’s Purges of the Thirties* (1968), *Present Danger: Towards a Foreign Policy* (1979), *We and They: Civic and Despotic Cultures* (1980), and *The Man-made Famine in Ukraine* (with James Mace, Michael Novak and Dana Dalrymple) (1984).

Dr. Conquest was educated at Winchester College, the University of Grenoble, and Magdalen College, Oxford. After service in World War II, he joined the British Diplomatic Service. He was First Secretary in the United Kingdom delegation to the United Nations and was awarded the Order of the British Empire. He held fellowships at a variety of American institutions, including the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. He was also a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

An accomplished poet and critic, Dr. Conquest published two novels, nine volumes of poetry and a collection of literary criticism. Dr. Conquest was a recipient of U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom, and Ukraine’s Medal of Honor in recognition of his path-breaking book, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (1986) on the Terror Famine in Ukraine and its historical context.



*[T]he assault by famine on the Ukrainian peasant population was accompanied by a wide-ranging destruction of Ukrainian cultural and religious life and slaughter of the Ukrainian intelligentsia. Stalin [...] saw the peasantry as the bulwark of nationalism; and common sense requires us to see this double blow at Ukrainian nationhood as no coincidence.*





## FIGHTING FOR THE TRUTH

The Ukrainian National Women's League of America (UNWLA) was one of the most active organizations in the Ukrainian-American community that tried to raise awareness about the famine. At their national congress, held in Chicago on November 12, 1933, the League unanimously adopted a "Memorandum of the Ukrainian National Women's League of America, to the American Red Cross, concerning the Famine of the Ukrainians in Soviet Russia." The UNWLA appointed emergency relief committee. Nellie Pelekhovich of New York chaired the committee. She wrote to the President, his wife, Cordell Hull, Bishop Manning of New York, and a host of newspapers. She prevailed upon the Ukrainian sculptor Alexander Archipenko to donate a bronze statue to serve as first prize in a raffle organized to raise funds to purchase food through *torgsin*.

In November 1933, leaders of the UNWLA approached Eleanor Roosevelt with a request to exert some influence to pressure the Soviet government to allow duty-free admission of relief packages through *torgsin*. Mrs. Roosevelt replied that although she realized "that the need was very great, she deeply regretted" that she could do nothing to help. This summary of Mrs. Roosevelt's response comes from a letter preserved in archives of the Ukrainian National Women's League of America in New York. The organization's president, Iwanna Rozankowsky, provided this document to Dr. James E. Mace, Staff Director of the United States Commission on the Ukraine Famine. The UNWLA also published a pamphlet and sent it for comment to the Soviet Embassy on January 3, 1934. A month later it received a reply from Boris Skvirsky, Embassy Counselor, who replied that the idea that the Soviet Government was "deliberately killing off the population of Ukraine" was "wholly grotesque." Claiming that the Ukrainian population increased at an annual rate of two percent during the past five years, Skvirsky dismissed UNWLA evidence as spurious. The death rate in Ukraine "was the lowest of that of any of the constituent Republics composing the Soviet Union," he concluded "and was about 35 percent lower than the pre-war death rate of Tsarist days."

One of the leading activists of the Ukrainian Women's Union, Milena Rudnytska during the 1932-1933 famine organized meetings with politicians, scientists, and educators to address the issue and provide famine relief. Through her international ties with women's organizations, Rudnytska was selected to seek international aid support and bring the situation to the attention of the League of Nations. On 29 September 1933, in Geneva 14 countries met and Rudnytska along with the other members of the Ukrainian delegation presented their findings about the famine and the need for international assistance. After several hours, the League decision was that the famine was an internal problem of the USSR, which was not a member of the League and therefore no help would be forthcoming.

*Source:* U.S. Commission on the Ukraine Famine, *Investigation of the Ukrainian Famine, 1932-1933: Report to Congress* (Washington, DC: US GPO, 1988), p. 176. *Torgsin* was a web of special state-run stores, established in 1932, to extort gold and valuables from the population in exchange for food and foreign-made products. The term is an abbreviation from "torgovlia s inostrantsami" (translated as "trade with foreigners"). An estimated 33 tons of gold and 1,420 tons of silver were extorted from Ukrainian villagers to pay for imported American and European goods and industrial equipment.



Union of Ukrainian Women presidium (with Milena Rudnytska in the center).

*Source:* Lidiia Burachynska, "Union of Ukrainian Women," *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, vol. 5 (1993).



# THE RESOLUTION OF THE UKRAINIAN NATIONAL WOMEN'S LEAGUE OF AMERICA ON THE HOLODOMOR

Remembering that the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the national parliaments of a number of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe participating States have recognized the Holodomor as the national tragedy of the Ukrainian people,

Recalling that the United States House of Representatives (HRES 1314 EH) on September 23, 2008 openly stated that in 1932 and 1933, an estimated seven to 10 million Ukrainian people perished at the will of the totalitarian Stalinist government of the former Soviet Union, which perpetrated a famine-genocide in Ukraine in an effort to break the nation's resistance to collectivization and communist occupation,

Reminding the world that for over half a century the genocidal famine was hardly spoken or written about inside and outside Ukraine, due to an academic skepticism and silence enforced by political correctness,

Recognizing that the great majority of the Ukrainian people, under the Soviets, lived in a country where the instigators of the famine and their political descendants were their leaders, to whom the Ukrainians were obligated to profess solidarity, thus suffering from collective psychological trauma,

Acknowledging that the perpetrators—not just in the eyes of their victims, but for the world at large—were never formally and symbolically judged and punished,

Noting that denial of the Ukrainian famine-genocide is a defining stage of the process and may take innocent and not-so-innocent forms,

Emphasizing that raising public awareness of humanitarian tragedy, such as the Holodomor, is an important way for ensuring that mass killing of the kind, when food was used as a weapon, never happen again,

On the eve of the 85th anniversary of the Ukrainian famine-genocide of 1932-1933, the Ukrainian National Women's League of America, in a general meeting resolved to:

- promote awareness of the Holodomor among the general public and academic community by incorporating this knowledge into educational and research programs;
- enlighten the general public about the recognition of the Holodomor as genocide by organizing commemorations and inviting members of the Ukrainian American and local communities to take part in commemorative events;
- teach forthcoming generations lessons about this tragic page in history of the genocidal twentieth century;
- encourage families of survivors to contribute their stories to a digital archive as witness accounts of genocidal crimes on the part of the Holodomor perpetrators for the International Criminal Court;
- demand justice and rectification of innocent and not-so-innocent denial of the Ukrainian genocidal famine (specifically, request universities that teach the Holodomor and other genocides to update their resources to include the term “Ukrainian famine-genocide” in their materials and curricula and revise information they present for public use (such as brochures, maps on websites or monuments, etc.) to reflect accurate and up-to-date information about Ukrainian history).

May 23, 2017



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