

EMPIRICAL AND CLASSICAL ATTEMPTS OF COUNTING DEMOGRAPHIC LOSSES FROM THE GENOCIDE- HOLODOMOR IN UKRAINE IN 1932–1933

The exact victims' number of the Genocide-Holodomor does not exist, and it is hardly possible to establish it. In an effort to conceal the scale of crime and its disastrous consequences, the Kremlin leadership banned the authorities of civil status records, the authorities of natural population movement, and medical institutions to record true causes of deaths. When the famine peaked in 1933, the dead were buried in the peasant's yards, and in mass graves without any registration. According to S. Kulchytskiy, at that time, the work of state authorities in the countryside had been violated, and sometimes, it was completely paralyzed. In 1934, the bodies of population registration and related archival services were subordinated to the NKVD of the USSR. Free access to demographic information ended.

Difficulties in counting the total number of people starved to death are used sometimes to cast doubt on the Ukrainian national tragedy and to deny its genocidal character. According to international law, the key to qualifying the crime of genocide is not a number of killed people, but intention to destroy a particular group through the total or partial elimination of its members. The number of victims is not a legal feature of genocide, but only one of the crime's circumstances. The clarification of this circumstance is only an auxiliary means that prove an intention of partial or complete destruction of a particular group. Moreover, it helps to resolve the issue of the crime's gravity, and to impose appropriate punishment. In the presence of directing crime against a group as such, the murder of any number of its members is a crime of genocide.

Even if, during the Genocide-Holodomor, not a few million Ukrainians died, but many less, it would not change the genocidal nature of this crime. Numerous calculations, particularly those whose results indicate a minimum number of the Genocide-Holodomor victims, indicate that millions were killed. The exact number of millions – 3, 5, 7 or 10 – from the legal point of view, is not of fundamental importance. Therefore, in terms of qualifying the Genocide-Holodomor as a crime of genocide, any political manipulation of quantity related to number of victims, both in their

direction and in increase, is pointless; and in moral terms, such actions are speculative, and blasphemous.

Despite the objections to the fact of famine made by the Communist authorities, and the concealment of demographic information, the scale of demographic catastrophe in Ukraine has attracted an attention of foreign journalists, diplomats, and specialists, who worked in the USSR at that time.

The first empirical estimates of the Genocide-Holodomor victims' number began to appear in the western press at its height. Unlike journalists' reports, diplomat assessments were closed, and became known only much later. An analysis of correspondence and diplomatic reports at that time indicates that there are large differences in the numbers of the victims' of the crime. They ranged between 1 million and 15 million. The only logical conclusions based on these estimates are that: the victims of the Genocide-Holodomor organized by the Communist regime joined in death by millions of people in Ukraine and abroad; and that the Ukrainian nation suffered the greatest number of losses.

Thus, in the analytical report, "Famine and the Ukrainian Question," prepared in May 1933, by the Royal Consul of Italy in Kharkiv, S. Gradenigo, said that the policy of the Moscow government "is aimed at liquidating the Ukrainian problem in a few months, amounting to 10 or 15 million souls. This figure should not seem exaggerated. I think that it has been reached already, and probably will be exceeded... From this, I conclude: the present catastrophe will cause the colonization of Ukraine mainly by the Russian people. This policy will change its ethnographic nature. Perhaps in the very near future it will not be necessary even to talk about Ukraine or the Ukrainian people, and, therefore, there will be no Ukrainian problem, as Ukraine will actually become a part of Russia."

In a political report of the German Consulate in Kiev, dated 15 January 1934, it was noted: "The Ukrainian question stated this year can be estimated only in the context of mass starvation. Because of this catastrophe that people consider Moscow's politics responsible for, the gap between Ukrainians as advocates of self-sufficiency and Moscow's centralism, of course, has deepened. A remarkable attitude in the mood of the population is a common belief that the Soviet government deliberately intensified the hunger to force Ukrainians fall on their knees." It is also worthwhile to cite the document, "Is Ukraine Ukrainian?" written in May 1936, by an anonymous author after a week-long trip to Ukraine. In this

document, now is stored in archives of the German Foreign Ministry, states: “Ukrainian Ukraine was destroyed. Of more than 30 million of its population, according to rough estimates, one fifth, that is 6 million people, died of starvation.”

Along with the empirical estimates of the Genocide-Holodomor victims' number, there are many expert assessments made through use of various methods by numerous researchers in the 1940s–1950s. The sources of these assessments were the all-encompassing Censuses of 1926, and 1939. They recognized the fact that the stunning results of the All-Union Census in 1937 were deemed defective by the Soviet leadership, which prohibited its publication. According to expert estimates made upon the declassification of Soviet demographic statistics, the upper limit of the loss decreased from 15 million to 7.5 million, and the minimum limit increased from 1 million to 2.5 million.

Following the discovery made in the late 1980s during access to previously closed Soviet archives, a further narrowing of the total number of the Genocide-Holodomor victims in Ukraine was possible. Estimates of researchers began to fluctuate in the range from 5.2 million to 2.6 million victims stricken by the hunger death.

However, the issue of determining the number of the Genocide-Holodomor victims remains controversial. As before, researchers get ambiguous results, even within the framework of same project.

Evidence of this was presented in 2008, in “Demographic Catastrophe in Ukraine as a Result of the 1932–1933 Genocide-Holodomor: Constituents, Scale and Effects,” by the scientific-analytical Report of the Institute of Demography and Social Research of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. The Report reveals the rather contradictory estimates of the quantitative parameters of human losses in Ukraine. Thus, on page 76 of the Report, it indicates that total demographic losses are from 5.5 to 5.6 million people, while the magnitude of human losses from morality varies within a range of no more than 3.4–3.5 million. On report page 78, total losses are estimated at 5.4 million, with allocation of losses in rural areas of 5.1 million people. On report page 82, total losses of Ukraine in 1932 are defined as 795,000, and in 1933 – 3.5 million; that is, in total, 4,295,000. On page 84, the Report summarizes that demographic losses of Ukraine resulting from the Genocide-Holodomor of 1932–1933, estimate the number of losses due to increased mortality at 4.5 million to 3.4 million people. Additionally, 1.1 million people were lost because of declining

fertility. At the same time, it states there that cumulative demographic losses are about 6 million people.

The ambiguity in the estimates of human losses from the Genocide-Holodomor is explained not as researchers' application of different methods of calculating demographic statistics, but due to the known unreliability of their basic data. Even if calculations are made according to all the rules of demographic science, and yet are based on Censuses statistics of 1937 and 1939, their results can hardly be considered reliable. As is well known, the quality of both Censuses is questionable.

The statistics of the Census of 1937 are particularly dubious. According to S. Kulchytskiy, there was from one-third to one-half deaths recorded in Ukraine, but death from starvation was not noted; and from March to August 1933, the real mortality (including natural) was in the range of 2–3 times exceeded from that specified in the documents of statistical accounting. Beginning in November, officials removed registration books of deaths, for 1933 and 1932, from the village council, and transferred them to secret departments of the district executive committees. In the SBU investigation materials of the criminal case No.475 On the Fact of Ukrainian Genocide in 1932–1933, only 3,186 such books were documented in the archives. During World War II, most of these books were destroyed or lost.

The records of censuses did not properly show the current population movement. The absurdity of statistics recorded in both censuses evidenced by fact that, according to their data, the population of Ukraine, from 1926 to 1937, decreased by only 538,639 people, and from 1926 to 1939, more than 3 million.

During the SBU investigation of the criminal case, No.475 On the Fact of Ukrainian Genocide in 1932–1933, the Institute of Demography and Social Research conducted a judicial-research experiment, which gave the following results: direct losses of the Ukrainian population at the territory of the Ukrainian SSR as result of the Genocide-Holodomor amounted to 3,941,000 people (in villages – 3,666,000 (93%), in cities – 275,000 (7%), and indirect losses (deficit of births) equal to 1,122,000 people (in villages – 762,000), in cities – 360,000). Among the famine killed 3,597,000 (91.2%) were Ukrainians, 345,000 (8.8%) were representatives of national minorities.

In this regard, it should be mentioned that, in the official letter of the State Economic Register of the State Planning Committee of the Ukrainian SSR dated on 22 April 1935, addressed to S. Kosior and

P. Postishev, it was noted that, in the beginning of 1934, the republic had not found present an estimated 4,179,000 rural people.

Under these circumstances, modern expert assessments cannot unconditionally be a non-alternative substitute, for professional evaluations carried out in the past as thoroughly as some of the first empirical assessments of the Genocide-Holodomor conducted by contemporaries especially, those who lived for years in Ukraine, visited the rural regions, and gained confidential access to the primary sources of the necessary information.

Given the extraordinary situation, it is necessary to develop new approaches to correcting rigged demographic statistics, and to use previously made expert and empirical assessments. Homogeneity of such approaches will help obtain results that are more reliable.

In order to restore historical truth; officially establish the truth; pay due attention to the victims' memory; and reveal the Genocide-Holodomor's disastrous consequences for development of the Ukrainian nation, it is necessary to continue to work to establish the number of the Genocide-Holodomor victims.

The Security Service of Ukraine, in May 2009, validated Case No 475, investigating the fact of committing the Genocide-Holodomor 1932–1933 in Ukraine. The findings obtained in its investigation and their confirmation in the Resolution of the Court of Appeal in Kyiv of 13 January 2010, relates only to the Genocide-Holodomor organizers. Consequently, the crimes committed by the actual perpetrators were not investigated. Accordingly, the whole picture of all the circumstances and consequences of the Genocide-Holodomor, including those relating to the number of Ukrainians killed by famine, remain without clarification.

Therefore, the present author proposes that the Conference address the SBU of Ukraine, with a proposal to investigate the crime of the Ukrainian Genocide-Holodomor in 1932–1933; and to initiate a new case to identify its perpetrators. Such an investigation will allow us more fully grasp the consequences of the Genocide-Holodomor, including clarifying the number of the Ukrainian people killed by famine. Clearly, a new investigation should be completed by court order that will officially confirm its conclusions and validate the number of the victims.