

“Ukrainization” and the Famine of 1932–33 in Ukraine

The establishment of the Bolshevik regime in Russia in the fall of 1917 and later in Ukraine led to the deceleration and annihilation of nation-state building and cultural rebirth in Ukraine. For some time, however, putting a stop to these processes was impossible. Moreover, owing to tactical considerations associated with the “consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat,” the Bolsheviks were forced to make certain concessions to the increasing demands of the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union. The resulting compromise between the Bolsheviks and the national minorities of the USSR was the so-called policy of *korenizatsiia* (indigenization), which was initiated at the Twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) (hereafter RCP[B]), held in 1923. In Ukraine, this policy was known as “Ukrainization.” Its goal was to ensure that Soviet rule would “take root” at the local level (in the non-Russian regions of the USSR). Its implementation involved ensuring sufficient representation of indigenous cadres in party and state structures and the use of their native language in those bodies; the publishing of books and periodicals in their languages; and establishing schools, institutions of higher learning, and cultural institutions that, by implementing Soviet policy in the language of the titular nationality, would prepare cadres loyal to the Bolshevik Party.

The cultural sphere was an area of particularly broad scope for the implementation of Ukrainization; steps were taken to ensure the development, along communist lines, of Ukrainian literature, art, scholarship and science, and education. The American historian Robert Sullivant noted that two conceptions formed the basis of the liberal policy of Ukrainization in the cultural sphere.¹ The first was the admission that in some realms, Bolshevik dogma was unnecessary. This conception was most prevalent in the area of language, where attempts to consider Russian the language of Bolshevism were rejected, and it was recognized that Ukrainian, Polish, and other languages could be considered proletarian.

The other conception that stimulated Ukrainization processes in the cultural sphere was Lenin’s and Stalin’s conviction that as long as the Soviet state was weak, it had to find support in the ranks of non-Bolsheviks, and concessions had to be made so long as they did not undermine the fundamental precepts of Bolshevik dogma.

The central leadership understood that lack of support from the local population was one of the reasons for the failures that the Bolsheviks often experienced in Ukraine throughout the Civil War. It was decided that compromises should be made, and at the Fourth Conference of the RCP(B) in June 1923 it was emphasized that “in the borderlands...different methods must be used. In particular, in endeavoring to gain the support of the toiling masses there, greater accommodation must be made than in the central oblasts [provinces] to elements that are revolutionary-democratic or even simply loyal to Soviet power.”² It was recognized that the role

¹ Robert Sullivant, *Soviet Politics and the Ukraine, 1917–1957* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 111–12. For a detailed study of Soviet nationality policies, including Ukrainization, see Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001).

² I. V. Stalin, *Tvory*, vol. 5 (Kyiv, 1952), 289–90.

of the intelligentsia in the republics differed in many respects from its role in the central provinces of the USSR, and that because the intelligentsia in the hinterlands was weakly developed, “every effort should be made to attract to the side of Soviet rule”³ all representatives of this social stratum.

The Soviet policy of Ukrainization in the cultural sphere was based on recognition of the special features of Ukraine as a region not only in language, cultural development, and so forth, but also in matters concerned with the building of a socialist state, which were distinct from similar problems in other regions. In particular, the peasantry was much more important to the success of the Soviet program than elsewhere. It was therefore important that the development of Ukrainian culture emphasize not only rural aspects but also that expressions of Ukrainian culture encourage the strengthening of ties between peasants and workers.

It should be noted that the Bolshevik leaders did not see the policy of compromise with the nationalities as permanent. For them, this was a temporary measure meant to facilitate the consolidation of Soviet rule and statehood. At the Seventh All-Ukrainian Conference of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine (hereafter CP[B]U) in April 1923, Leon Trotsky stated that the “nationality issue is not a Bolshevik goal...only a fact, but a fact that, if treated carelessly, may turn the Bolshevik program of the construction of communism ‘upside down.’”⁴

Even though these concessions were temporary, their positive aspects had an important impact on Ukrainian cultural development.

A significant catalyst for “Ukrainization” was the mass Ukrainian national and cultural movement “from below,” which involved millions of individuals. The Ukrainian people attempted to compensate for their loss of political independence by focusing on the cultural sphere, which could later facilitate the establishment of independent statehood. The policy of “Ukrainization” objectively facilitated this cultural renaissance, supporting it with legal guarantees, providing certainty, and discouraging it from provincialism. For its part, the mass movement pressured the state apparatus and the party to implement “Ukrainization.”

The effort to restore Russified Ukrainians to their native roots—the Ukrainian language and culture—was an intrinsic aspect of the “Ukrainization era.” Industrialization led to mass migration from the village to urban areas, as a result of which cities ceased to be centers of Russian culture alone. The employees of state, party, union, and other apparatuses were also Ukrainized, for inability to speak Ukrainian could mean the loss of their jobs.

The intensity of the process of “Ukrainization” is attested by statistics. The proportion of Ukrainians in the working class grew from 40.1 percent in 1924⁵ to 49.9 percent in 1926⁶ and

³ Ibid., 290.

⁴ L. Trots'kyi, “Pro natsional'ne pytannia (Z promovy na VII Vseukr. part. konferentsii v Kharkovi),” in *Natsional'na polityka radians'koi vlady: Zbirka* (Kharkiv, 1923), 7.

⁵ *Professional'noe dvizhenie na Ukraine za 18 mesiatsev: mai 1923 – noiabr' 1924: Otchet Ukrbiuro V.Ts.S.P.S. vtoromu s'ezdu professional'nykh soiuzov Ukrainy* (Kharkiv, n.d.), 45.

⁶ TsDAHO Ukraïny (Central State Archives of Public Organizations of Ukraine, hereafter TsDAHO) (Kyiv), f. 1, op. 20, spr. 2249, fol. 68.

57.7 percent in 1929.⁷ The proportion of Ukrainian party members grew from 23.7 percent in 1923 to 39.8 percent in 1925⁸ and 47 percent in 1926.⁹ By the end of the 1920s, the language of administration in Ukraine was largely Ukrainian. More than 80 percent of primary schools conducted lessons in Ukrainian. The use of Ukrainian as the language of instruction became widespread in higher and secondary special educational institutions, in scholarship, and in cultural and educational institutions. The publication of Ukrainian-language books increased. The nationally conscious intelligentsia did much to promote a renewal of Ukrainian historical memory. The 1920s were the only period, until independence, in which Ukrainian history was considered an autonomous process, developing alongside Russian history and not as a provincial or regional component of the latter. This approach to the past was consistent with the formally equal status of Ukraine and Russia in the Soviet federation as it was understood at the time.

Summarizing the effects of Ukrainization, the Eleventh Congress of the CP(B)U, in 1930, noted “a rapid growth of Ukrainization among the proletariat and, most importantly, among its leading cadres. Along with this, we have an undeniable systematic growth in the ranks of Ukrainians in the proletariat; moreover, the process of Ukrainization is greatly outpacing the growth of new cadres. In the last three years, the number of those who speak, read, and write Ukrainian has grown greatly.... These three elements—school, press, and Ukrainization—are a strong foundation that truly provides for the unprecedented development in the briefest time frame of a Ukrainian culture that is national in form and proletarian in content.”¹⁰

But the Moscow authorities were concerned that this national and cultural development was getting out of control and feared a decentralization of civic life in the USSR. During the brief period of “Ukrainization,” two tendencies emerged that cast doubt on Russian rule over Ukraine. In the first place, a strong catalyst for “Ukrainization” in urban centers was the village, which served as the base for “Ukrainization.” Villages not only augmented the cities with a Ukrainian element but also provided talented activists of the Ukrainian renaissance. In the second place, a clear differentiation between two styles of national culture—archaic and modern—was taking place in the 1920s. Archaic culture was characterized by the recreation of traditional forms and coexistence with the colonial structure. The second, modern and dynamic culture did not tolerate colonial structures and sought to destroy them. This type of national culture was characterized by Mykola Khvyliovyy’s phrase “Away from Moscow!” The phrase itself defied any centralization in the cultural sphere.

As a result of the dynamic development of national culture, a new order was taking shape in Ukraine. Although it was communist, it was also Ukrainian. The next step after “Away from Moscow!” in the cultural sphere could become “Away from Moscow!” in the economic and political spheres. Moscow could not allow this, as the autonomy of Ukraine would mean the de facto collapse of the Bolshevik empire. Consequently, at the end of the 1920s the leadership of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) (hereafter AUCP[B]), with Stalin at its head, began

⁷ *Natsional'nyi perepys robotnykiv ta sluzhbovtiv Ukraïny (zhovten' – lystopad 1929 r.): Zb. stat. materialiv* (Kharkiv, 1930), XVI.

⁸ *Izvestiia TsK KP(b)U*, 1923, no. 11: 49.

⁹ *Ob itogakh ukrainizatsii: Tezisy Plenuma TsK KP(b)U* (Minsk, 1926), 7.

¹⁰ *XI z'izd TsK KP(b)U: Stenohrafichnyi zvit* (Kharkiv, 1930), 737–38.

a counterattack. By this time, Soviet power had become sufficiently consolidated, and Moscow, which was implementing centralizing policies, could afford to renege on previous compromises.

The idea that “Ukrainization” was needless and harmful was already beginning to spread in Ukraine by the second half of the 1920s. The Bolshevik leadership considered it in the context of anti-Soviet culture. On 12 May 1926, at a meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee (hereafter CC) CP(B)U, its general secretary, Lazar Kaganovich, said, “It is impossible to separate the development of culture from the general economic and political conditions in the country. As in the economy, we have two parallel processes developing—the growth of the socialist economy and the growth of the private capitalist economy. As in the economic sphere, we have set ourselves the goal of gradual mastery over the socialist economy and the transformation of private agriculture. Likewise, in the cultural sphere we cannot but see two parallel processes—the growth of Soviet culture and the growth of anti-Soviet culture. The task of the party is to promote incorporation into Soviet culture.”¹¹ “Soviet” culture was, of course, understood to be Russian culture. Even during the “Ukrainization” of the 1920s, Ukrainians were actively coopted into the “superior” Russian culture. In 1925, the Politburo of the CC CP(B)U declared it essential that the “Russian language be taught in all educational institutions of Ukraine.”¹² As a result, despite the significant gains of “Ukrainization,” by the end of the 1920s 1.3 million Russified Ukrainians continued to declare Russian as their native language.¹³ The percentage of primary and secondary schools in which the language of instruction was Russian remained significantly higher than the percentage of the ethnically Russian population.

In tandem with the Bolshevization and prohibition of pluralism of cultural life in Ukraine, the Communist Party also carried out a counteroffensive in other spheres. It liquidated private agriculture in the villages and imposed collective farms, proceeding also to root out the principle of private ownership in industry and trade.¹⁴

All these policies were directly associated with the offensive against the village, which had played a key role in the national-liberation movement. Ultimately, this offensive led to the famine of 1932–33 in Ukraine.

The direct cause of the famine was the imposition of excessive grain-requisition quotas. Forced collectivization was a severe blow to agricultural production. The exile of well-to-do peasants, who were the most successful farmers, as well as the destruction of tools and livestock by the peasants themselves, who did not want to surrender their hard-earned property, could not but have an impact on the size of the harvest. Nevertheless, grain-requisition quotas were not reduced, as the party leadership believed that collective farms would provide a larger harvest than individual farms. Therefore, in order to fulfill requisition quotas, not only was “excess” grain taken, but also the grain that was supposed to feed the villagers and their families. The situation was aggravated by the fact that peasants were prohibited not only from crossing the

¹¹ TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 6, spr. 97, fol. 46.

¹² *Ibid.*, spr. 75, fol. 197.

¹³ *Dilo* (Lviv), 20 September 1929.

¹⁴ V. Moroz, “Holod 33-ho roku i ukraïnizatsiia: Paraleli i vzaiemozalezhnosti,” *Suchasnist'*, 1983, no. 10: 10.

borders of the republic but even from leaving their villages, according to a directive of the CC CP(B)U and the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR.¹⁵

However, it is also important to note that alongside the direct cause of the famine, its deeper roots can be found not just in forced collectivization and dekulakization but also in the efforts of central party authorities to carry out a decisive offensive against national and cultural development. The general secretary of the European Congress of Nationalities, Dr. Ewald Ammende, wrote: "The process of collectivization means a campaign against land, nationality, and religion," and added: "It would be incorrect to conclude that the policy of destroying entire groups of the population was used only against nationalities. The leadership in Moscow used such methods against those groups of the population that continued, like national groups, to support ideas of religion, family, and nationality."¹⁶

This conclusion is confirmed by the assertion of the well-known specialist in agriculture Konstantyn Kononenko, who wrote: "Anyone who considers the famine created in Ukraine in 1932–33 a repressive measure intended to suppress the Ukrainian peasantry's resistance to collectivization is deeply mistaken. The swollen, starving peasantry that was on the verge of death was virtually unable to resist. All that a human being thought of in such a situation was where to get a piece of bread, and nothing more. And what kind of resistance can we speak of when...as early as 1931, 65 percent of all farms in Ukraine were collectivized? It would be strange to think that all the horrors of the 1930s were perpetrated in order to increase the number of collectivized farms by 4 percent and bring the total to 69 percent, which was accomplished in that year. No, the famine was not simply a police measure but the substance of economic policy in Ukraine—not a penalty or a punishment but an end in itself."¹⁷

Kononenko's assertions are indeed correct. The famine of 1932–33 was not simply a social experiment in collectivization or an act liquidating the kulaks as a class but something different, as both collectivization and the exile of kulaks were, by 1932, largely completed. It is also important to note that both collectivization and dekulakization took place in Russia as well, but mass murder on such a scale did not occur there. These facts show that the issue in question was in "a completely different realm and a totally different struggle" carried out by the central government under the auspices of collectivization in Ukraine.¹⁸

This struggle was also discussed at party congresses. At this very time, it was emphasized particularly that "the principal danger in Ukraine is local nationalism." The leadership of the Communist Party of the USSR always associated the national question with the peasant question. In his speech to the Yugoslav Commission of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI) on 30 March 1925, Stalin stressed that "The peasantry forms the basis of the army of the national movement.... [W]ithout a peasant army there is not and cannot be a strong national movement. This is what we have in mind when we say that the national question

¹⁵ TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 16, spr. 9, fols. 115–16.

¹⁶ Quoted in *Mezhdunarodnaia komissiiia po rassledovanniiu goloda na Ukraine 1932–1933 godov. Itogovi otchet 1990 goda* (Kyiv, 1992), 110.

¹⁷ K. S. Kononenko, *Ukraina i Rossiia* (Munich, 1965), 276.

¹⁸ V. Hryshko, *Moskva sl'ozam ne viryt': Trahediia Ukraïny 1993 roku z perspektyvy 30-richia (1933–1963)* (New York: DOBRUS, 1963), 11.

is, in essence, the peasant question.”¹⁹ Given such a formulation, the interdependence of Soviet policies on the nationalities and the peasantry in the republics was inevitable. This was especially true of Ukraine, where the peasantry was numerous and had been very active during the turbulent years of the national democratic revolution of 1917–20. Thus collectivization turned into the destruction of private agriculture, and famine made the peasantry more “obedient.”

It should be noted that the assault on the peasantry was only one constituent of the attack on the Ukrainian national movement. It was followed by an assault on the national intelligentsia, which played a leading role in creating the national forms of statehood and in the development of a national spiritual culture; it was the leader and driver of the Ukrainization policy, its major agent and catalyst. Only in close cooperation with the national intelligentsia could the peasantry be a national force and present strong national resistance. That is why the assault on the peasantry had to be conducted in concert with that on the intelligentsia, along with the rollback of Ukrainization. The turbulent years of the creative development of Ukrainian culture turned into the “Executed Renaissance.”

The assault on the Ukrainian intelligentsia and the termination of Ukrainization policies was undertaken under the direct leadership of Joseph Stalin. He did not trust the Ukrainian party organization and considered Ukraine a serious obstacle to the realization of the communist experiment as well as his personal plans and aspirations to power. In a letter of 11 August 1932 to Lazar Kaganovich, Stalin revealed the essential purpose of Bolshevik policy vis-à-vis Ukraine. He wrote: “We should set ourselves the goal of turning Ukraine, in the shortest possible time, into a real fortress of the USSR, a truly exemplary republic.”²⁰ As shown by previous and subsequent events, this goal was to be carried out by means of the famine-genocide and mass repression.

At the Seventeenth Congress of the AUCP(B), Stanislaw Kosior stated: “Under the direct leadership of the CC AUCP(B) and Comrade Stalin, according to his instructions, we in Ukraine waged a struggle to uncover nationalist deviation in the CP(B)U, a struggle against counterrevolutionary nationalist elements, against nationalism in general.”²¹ Almost 80 percent of Ukrainian cultural and artistic cadres were destroyed during this period.²² Volodymyr Zatonsky, who replaced Mykola Skrypnyk as people’s commissar of education, provided interesting data about this when he stated that that in 1932–33 alone, the number of academic personnel in Ukraine decreased by 1,649.²³

Pavel Postyshev, secretary of the CC AUCP(B), was sent to Ukraine from Moscow to oversee the implementation of policy in the national and economic spheres. Formally, he was given the posts of secretary of the Kharkiv Oblast Party Committee and second secretary of the CC CP(B)U, but in fact he had unlimited authority. Even Kosior, the general secretary of the CC

¹⁹ I. Stalin, *Marksyzm i natsional'no-kolonial'ne pyttannia* (Kyiv, 1940), 157.

²⁰ O. V. Khlevniuk et al., eds., *Stalin i Kaganovich. Neizdannaiia perepiska, 1931–1936* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2001), 274.

²¹ *XVII s'ezd Vsesoiuznoi Kommunisticheskoi partii (b) 26 ianvaria – 10 fevralia 1934 g. Stenograf. otchet* (Moscow, 1934), 199.

²² Iu. Lavrinenko, *Rozstriliane vidrodzhennia* (Paris: Instytut Literacki, 1959), 965.

²³ V. P. Zatons'kyi, *Natsional'no-kul'turne budivnytstvo i borot'ba proty natsionalizmu: Dopovid' i zakliuchne slovo na sichnevii sesii VUAN* (Kyiv, 1934), 9–10.

CP(B)U, carried out his orders. Vsevolod Balytsky was also sent to Ukraine, where he was put in charge of the GPU of the republic, and many party and state officials were dispatched there as well. Radical personnel changes were implemented in the party apparatus.

In carrying out his actions, Postyshev often referred in his speeches to the resolution of the CC AUCP(B) of 24 January 1933 [“On Strengthening the CP(B)U Central Committee and Oblast Organizations,” issued in response to the failure to meet grain-requisition quotas]. Particular attention was paid to those instances that referred to agriculture. Inasmuch as the resolution associated the disaster in agriculture with “erroneous nationality policy” and the “growth of bourgeois nationalism,” the main assault was aimed in those directions.

The radical measures implemented in 1932–33 may be regarded as the result of a decision by Stalin and other leaders to destroy any basis for anti-Soviet opposition in Ukraine. It may also be supposed that the drive for collectivization and industrialization led the central government to consider any expression of independence in the cultural sphere as an attack on the party itself.

Stalin’s linking of the problems of grain requisition and the national question was also influenced in some measure by the Ukrainian leaders’ earlier submission of inaccurate reports on the real situation in the agricultural sphere. For example, in a letter of 26 April 1932 from Kosior to Stalin, Kosior wrote only of isolated cases of famine and of starvation in certain villages. Kosior also stressed that those cases were nothing other than the result of local “bungling” and excesses, and that “all talk of ‘famine’ in Ukraine must be categorically rejected.”²⁴ This was written at a time when thousands of people were dying and cannibalism had occurred in some places. In Kyiv province, cases of cannibalism had already been recorded by June 1932.²⁵ Such an attitude on the part of individual Ukrainian party and state leaders to the actual situation cannot be called anything but criminal, for they knew about the terrible conditions in the village, and some leaders even considered it urgent to appeal to the CC AUCP(B) to adopt a resolution on halting grain requisitions and proclaiming free trade.²⁶ Documents such as Kosior’s letter to Stalin could not but have an impact on the formation of the central authorities’ view of developments in Ukraine. And later, when Ukrainian authorities began to raise the alarm, it was too late—by this time Stalin and his milieu might well have come to think that the crisis in the grain-requisitioning campaign was not so much a problem of a failed harvest as of sabotage by local nationalists. This was all the more likely because nationalism was frequently mentioned in correspondence from Ukraine. In the above-mentioned letter from Kosior to Stalin, for instance, there is mention of a “counterrevolutionary manifestation of an openly Petliurite character” in Ploskiv county (raion), Kyiv province.²⁷

The central authorities’ association of the nationality question with the problem of grain procurement was to some degree the result of certain Ukrainian party and state leaders speaking up against high grain-procurement quotas and plans. In the circumstances of the time, even slight deviations on this issue could be characterized as “nationalism.” Thus, Skrypnyk’s address at the

²⁴ TsDAHO. f. 1, op. 1, spr. 2029, fol. 67.

²⁵ Ibid., f. 1, op. 101, spr. 1143, fol. 14.

²⁶ Ibid., f. 1, op. 101, spr. 1107a, fol. 1.

²⁷ Ibid., f. 1, op. 1, spr. 2029, fols. 70–71.

Third All-Ukrainian Party Conference in July 1932, in which he came out against unreasonable grain-procurement quotas, was an act of bravery. In his address, Skrypnyk said: “I do not agree with those comrades who, in the current agricultural campaigns, devote most of their attention to the question of grain procurement. One should not hypnotize oneself with the problem of how much grain should be taken from our harvest.”²⁸ Given the circumstances, it would have been easy to deem this statement a nationalist deviation.

This issue also had an obverse character. Errors in nationality policy were considered one of the basic reasons for the failure to meet grain-procurement quotas. Postyshev in particular stressed this point at the Plenum of the CC CP(B)U in 1933 when he stated: “errors and blunders by the CP(B)U and, in particular, by Mykola Skrypnyk in carrying out the party’s nationality policy had a direct and immediate impact on the failure of grain requisitioning in Ukraine” in 1932.²⁹ Kosior, speaking at the Seventeenth Congress of the AUCP(B), emphasized that the nationalist deviation in the CP(B)U had “played an exceptional role in causing and deepening the crisis in agriculture.”³⁰ In this way, the central leadership of the AUCP(B), speaking through Postyshev and Kosior, placed the blame for the famine of 1932–33 on those who implemented the policy of Ukrainization. And then, at a time when millions of people were dying in the villages of Ukraine, mass arrests of the state and cultural elite began. Skrypnyk and Khvyliovyy committed suicide. A series of institutes of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences were purged. Dozens of newspapers and journals were banned from publication. In his poem *The Cross*, Mykola Rudenko wrote:

In the fumes of hell
Everything grew quiet, everything is silent,
And the dead cannot be counted,
Nor in the villages the graves.³¹

For the Ukrainian peasants, the famine became a punishment for their rebelliousness and for their role as the pillar of the national-liberation movement. The famine was organized according to the confiscation of produce based not on the size of the collected harvest but on the requirements of a plan developed by the political leadership. And because the peasants’ reserves of food products were minimal, fulfilling the plan meant certain death. This was demanded by Stalin and his milieu. Otherwise it is difficult to explain a genocide in which the last reserves of produce were confiscated, and available foodstuffs were often destroyed. Thus the famine of 1932–33 brought the Ukrainian peasants “to their knees” and made them more malleable for the formation of a new type of Soviet man—a builder of communism and, as such, a weaker basis for the national movement. Errors in grain requisitioning could be blamed on “bourgeois nationalism,” which created new opportunities for the destruction of Ukrainian political and cultural figures, Ukrainian cultural institutions, and thousands of representatives of the

²⁸ *Tretia konferentsiia Komunistychnoi partii (bil'shovykiv) Ukraïny, 6–9 lypnia 1932. Stenohraf. zvit* (n.p., 1932), 104.

²⁹ P. P. Postyshev, “Vykrytia i rozhrom natsionalistychnoho ukhylu v KP(b)U – neodminna umova dlia likvidatsii proryvu v sil's'komu hospodarstvi Ukraïny: Promova na Plenumi TsK KP(b)U 10 chervnia 1933,” in his *V borot'bi za lenins'ko-stalins'ku natsional'nu polityku partii: Zbirnyk* (Kyiv, 1935), 20.

³⁰ *XVII s'ezd Vsesouznoi Kommunisticheskoi partii (b) 26 ianvaria – 10 fevralia 1934 g. Stenohraf. otchet* (Moscow, 1934), 199.

³¹ Mykola Rudenko, *Khrest: Poema* (Kyiv, 1996), p. 27.

intelligentsia. Thus the assault on two fronts gave hope to the Moscow leadership that the Ukrainian anti-centralist forces and their base had been destroyed. This is corroborated by Postyshev's statement at the Twelfth Congress of the CP(B)U that "the previous year [1933] was the year of the destruction of the Ukrainian nationalist counterrevolution."³²

Large areas of Ukraine were depopulated during the famine of 1932–33. In striving to turn the republic into a "fortress of the USSR," the Stalin regime adopted measures to alter the socio-demographic situation. In August 1933, the Politburo of the CC AUCP(B) created the All-Union Resettlement Committee attached to the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and charged it with coordinating large-scale resettlement from Russia and Belarus to the depopulated territories of Ukraine and the North Caucasus. The first resolution in this regard called for the relocation of 20,000 families to the steppe regions of Ukraine. On 29 December 1933, the Resettlement Committee reported that the plan of resettling collective farmers to Ukraine had been overfulfilled at 104 percent.³³

The famine of 1932–33 cannot be regarded only as a targeted assault on the Ukrainian peasantry with the goal of eradicating its freedom-loving national spirit and destroying the basis of the Ukrainian national-liberation movement—an action that the party leadership carried out so as later to put the blame on "Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism" and thereby end the policy of Ukrainization. Such an assertion ignores the whole complex of problems associated with the famine. It is an inarguable fact that national and, in particular, national cultural problems were decisively involved in this tragedy, affected it and, in turn, were themselves affected by it. The bleeding white of the village and the mass repressions against the Ukrainian intelligentsia led to the dominance of assimilationist tendencies in the development of Ukrainian national culture, constricting and deforming it. The genocide of the Ukrainian people made its culture increasingly one of a national minority, regarded as inferior to Russian culture and closed off from connections with the outside world. Important social institutions of Ukrainian culture, such as the Academy of Sciences, universities, creative associations and organizations, the press and radio, were increasingly denationalized. They lost significance as bearers of national cultural traditions and the aspirations of their people and were de facto turned into tools for the denationalization, Russification, and neocolonial exploitation of Ukraine.

Translated from the Ukrainian by Marta D. Olynyk

³² P. P. Postyshev, "Borot'ba KP(b)U za zdiisnennia lenins'koï natsional'noï polityky na Ukraïni: (Z dopovidi pro robotu TsK KP(b)U na XII z'izdi Komunistychnoi partii bil'shovykiv)," *Chervonyi shliakh*, 1934, nos. 2–3: 171.

³³ R. Ia. Pyrih, comp., *Holodomor 1932–33 rokiv na Ukraïni: dokumenty i materialy* (Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy Press, 2007), 12.