Holodomor, 1932-1933: A Visual Directory of Forbidden Photographs

May 12, 2020.rev · Lana Babij

SUMMARY

During the 1921-23 famine in the USSR, Soviet authorities had allowed photographers unprecedented and never to be repeated freedom to document starvation and human misery on Soviet soil. Over the ensuing decade, the authorities decided that in order to maintain control and achieve their goals, they needed to carefully manage the image of the USSR, both for local consumption and the outside world. A network of agencies was created to manufacture a virtual Soviet reality which in the 1930s included the concealment and blanket denial of the Holodomor. Censorship and a variety of restrictions made the discovery, documentation and reporting of the facts very challenging, particularly for photographers, as we learn from written accounts and other records.

This contextual overview is followed by a description of the Directory's "inaugural edition" in terms of the subject, geographical location, and time-frame of the photos selected and the featured photographers. The process of identifying and authenticating the photographs is briefly outlined, with some concluding remarks on future plans for the Directory.

I. THE CHALLENGES OF DOCUMENTING THE FAMINE

DOCUMENTING THE FAMINE OF 1921-1923

When famine broke out in 1921 in parts of Russia and Ukraine, Lenin grudgingly gave permission to Western relief organizations to feed the starving, first in Russia, and only later, under pressure from certain relief groups, in Ukraine.[1] However, each of those organizations understood the need to document the purpose, circumstances, and effectiveness of their relief efforts in order to raise funds and counteract often openly hostile public sentiment back home.[2] Hundreds of photos were taken – in turns heartbreaking, heart-warming, shocking – which were quickly utilized for reports and fund-raising promotions. We see carefully posed shots, especially of starving children in destitute living environments, in hospital settings, lined up for medical inspection, or being fed and cared for by aid workers. Photographs of naked corpses – on pallets, in morgues, piled high on the frozen ground in cemeteries – were also common. As Roman Serbyn succinctly summarized, "The relief agencies concentrated their photography on two things: the horrors of starvation and their work to alleviate it."[3] Because the aid organizations made agreements with the Soviets that allowed them considerable

[1] Serbyn, "The Famine of 1921-1923: A Model for 1932-1933?," 159–60.

[2] Mahood and Satzewich, "The Save the Children Fund and the Russian Famine of 1921–23," 58.

[3] Serbyn, "Photographic Evidence of the Ukrainian Famines of 1921-1923 and 1932-1933," 65.

autonomy in their operations, such photo documentation was not only permitted but encouraged. The photographs were widely distributed outside the USSR and later archived. As the relief mission came to a close, however, it became clear to certain Soviet officials that they needed to work on their image to the outside world.[4]

SOVIET VIRTUAL REALITY

Matthias Heeke points out that during the 1920s and 1930s, there were remarkably few foreign photo journalists in the USSR, compared to news writers.[5] The Soviet regime had developed a complex network of propaganda information agencies to create what Heeke described as its own "virtual photo world," [6] thus controlling what the outside world could see. Olga Kameneva, a director of one of the most important of these agencies, bluntly stated that the photographs would be rigorously controlled in order to create a favorable documentary "chronicle of our reality."[7] A formidable archive of approved photos by their own photographers was made accessible via the official agency Soyuzfoto and its affiliates in Western countries, as well as by Comintern's Agitprop Department.[8] These photographs were then featured in the USSR's many magazines published for an international audience, in travel advertising by the official Intourist agency, and even in numerous works by Western authors,[9] both scholarly and popular. Michael David-Fox describes an official directive in 1932 requiring that "bound leather albums with photographs, posters, and 'photo series'" be given to delegates on visiting tours, in order that they return home "with visual 'evidence' that might help shape their memories." [10] Similar tactics were employed for visiting dignitaries and influential opinion makers from abroad. As David-Fox explains, "the urge was simultaneously to heighten objectivity through the medium and to manipulate it," adding Bertolt Brecht's line: "the camera can lie just as well as the printing press."[11]

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[4] David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to Soviet Union, 1921-1941*, 33.

[5] Heeke, *Reisen Zu Den Sowjets : Der Ausländische Tourismus in Russland 1921-1941 ; Mit Einem Bio-Bibliographischen Anhang Zu 96 Deutschen Reiseautoren*, 509.

[6] Heeke, 509.

[7] David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment : Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to Soviet Union, 1921-1941*, 198.

[8] David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment : Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to Soviet Union, 1921-1941*, 43. The AgitProp Department of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, the Communist International, focused on communist publications abroad.

[9] Heeke, *Reisen Zu Den Sowjets : Der Ausländische Tourismus in Russland 1921-1941 ; Mit Einem Bio-Bibliographischen Anhang Zu 96 Deutschen Reiseautoren*, 508–9.

[10] David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment : Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to Soviet Union, 1921-1941*, 104.

[11] David-Fox, 197.

The photographs that did appear in US newspapers during the Holodomor years tended to be shots of US and other foreign dignitaries posed in front of large new factories and impressive projects such as the mammoth Dnipro dam - all showcasing Soviet industrial progress. In his memoir, Fred Beal commented on the apparent "historic record of coverage of Russia in the American press. The great construction projects, the involvement of many American companies and individuals in them, contrasted with the United States, which was suffering decline in the economy and massive unemployment."[12]

CENSORSHIP AND DENIAL OF THE HOLODOMOR

Knowledge of the high levels of mortality and suffering due to starvation was widespread and accepted among Soviet officials. Although discussed informally, it was off limits to acknowledge famine in any official communications or in the press, which was the official mouthpiece of the Soviet communist party. Soviet officials would deny any suggestion of famine by foreign officials and visitors. Any mentions of hardships in the countryside were blamed on farmer laziness, bad attitude, inept managers, or the influence of internal and external "enemies of the people."

"There is any amount of such pamphlets full of lies circulated by the counter-revolutionary organizations abroad who specialize in work of this kind. There is nothing left for them to do but spread false information and forge documents."

Soviet Foreign Commissar Maxim Litvinov, January 3, 1934, to US Congressman Herman Kopelmann of Connecticut, upon receiving from him a memorandum on the famine by the Ukrainian National Women's League of America.[13][14]

Foreign correspondents, who were required to operate out of Moscow and whose reports had to receive the censor's approval prior to publication, were forbidden to mention famine or any other events not reported first in the Soviet press. Significantly (though most changed their views later), a majority of the resident foreign correspondents came to their assignments predisposed to favor what they considered the great Russian experiment. As David Engerman writes, they expressed "great enthusiasm" for the Soviet program of modernization, realizing it would come at great cost. However, their "calculations of these costs were discounted by their low estimation of Russian [i.e., any resident of the USSR] national character. Western journalists disparaged the peasantry almost as much as the Soviet officials did." And this view was presented to their readers in their reporting throughout the famine.[15] Few ventured out

[12] Beal, *Proletarian Journey: New England, Gastonia, Moscow*, 252.
[13] Solovei, *The Golgotha of Ukraine. Eye-Witness Accounts of the Famine in Ukraine ....*, 3–4.
[14] Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow : Soviet Collectivisation and the Terror-Famine*, 312–13.
[15] Engerman, "Starving Itself Great," 197.

beyond the relative comfort of Moscow except for the grand openings of major new industrial sites.[16] An early exception was an intrepid Canadian, Rhea Clyman, who was the Moscow correspondent for the *London Daily Express* and the *Toronto Telegram*. Clyman, who spoke Russian well, traveled extensively in the Soviet Union and published her observations. However, in September 1932, she was given two days' notice to exit the USSR for publishing "malicious" articles, including one on "uprisings and hunger rebellions," making her the first foreign correspondent expelled from the country.[17]

In February 1933, Moscow officials strictly banned travel to the countryside by all journalists following a number of negative reports in US and German newspapers that had appeared early that year.[18] The most forthright reporting, based on an "extensive" unaccompanied walking tour of Ukraine in March 1933, came from the Welsh reporter and diplomatic attaché Gareth Jones. In a series of twenty-one articles he expresses both alarm and great sympathy for the starving rural population, while placing blame for the situation in the country on the punitive and repressive policies of the Kremlin. The series began publication in late March upon his departure from the USSR.[19] No photographs, except for author portraits in some instances, accompanied any of those articles.

Officially, visits to the countryside were not permitted without a Soviet guide, and tour groups followed carefully planned itineraries that focused on model schools, hospitals, collective farms, and factories. Numerous accounts describe how Soviet officials spared no efforts to create scenes of prosperity to impress particularly influential visitors: Foods were shipped in for temporary display in storefronts and restaurants; streets were cleared of homeless children and dying migrants from the countryside. The staging for the visit of former Prime Minister

[16] Bassow, "Concealing Stalin's Famine," entire chapter; Applebaum, "The Cover-Up," entire chapter.

[17] Balan, "Rhea Clyman: A Forgotten Canadian Eyewitness to the Hunger of 1932 (Orig: Репортажі Ріа Клайман з Подорожі По Східній Україні і Кубані Наприкінці Літа 1932 р.:Ріа Клайман: Забута Очевидиця Голоду 1932-33," 1.

[18] Both Eugene Lyons of the UP news agency and Malcolm Muggeridge of the *Manchester Guardian* received copies of local news reports from the Kuban (a region of the North Caucasus near the Ukrainian border with a largely Ukrainian population), boasting that "all the inhabitants of three Cossack towns in the Kuban, North Caucasus, [were] packed into cattle cars and shipped…to the Arctic forests."Lyons,Assignment in Utopia, 545 Lyons took advantage of a visit to Berlin to release his articles about the deportations via the Berlin UP office, which led to their appearance in several German newspapers. William R. Stoneman of the *Chicago Daily News* and Ralph W. Barnes of the *New York Herald Tribune* struck out on their own to follow up on that report and wrote of starvation and of Kulaks being herded onto freight cars from Rostov on Don in the Kuban. The dispatches were smuggled out of country via a couple of German merchants.Bassow 67-8 Muggeridge evaded Soviet guides and also visited the area in early February, and wrote similar eyewitness stories for the *Guardian.* These were not printed until the end of March,Gamache 130 at which time Muggeridge had permanently left the USSR.

[19] Gamache, *Eyewitness to the Holodomor*, 152.

Eduard Herriot of France to Ukraine in 1933 was especially well documented.[20] Foreign consultants, workers and visitors who were allowed in certain restricted regions often had to sign affidavits denying that they saw famine or other adverse conditions in order to avoid harassment, long delays, or outright punishment before returning to their homelands.[21] Soviet denial was made easier by the fact that so few visitors – whether correspondents or consultants or tourists – knew either Russian or Ukrainian, and thus were oblivious to any misrepresentations by their translators.

RESTRICTIONS ON PHOTOGRAPHY

"Olga [the Intourist guide] turned to me: 'They have found your camera in the carriage and they accuse you of taking photographs out of the train window.'

"The accusation was absolutely false. While I would dearly have liked to photograph some of the sights I had seen from the train, especially the freight cars full of Kulaks and the children eating grass and the miles of weeds, I had given Olga my word of honor not to break that law of the Soviets which prohibits photographs in the neighborhood of railway stations. After protesting my innocence, the offending camera, which was lying on the Commandant's desk, was opened and the unexposed roll of film destroyed…"

July 26, 1932 diary entry of Zetta Wells, who, with her husband Carveth, was traveling by train through Ukraine at that time as part of a longer journey from northern Russia to Armenia.[22]

Given the obsessive determination of the Soviet regime to control their image to the outside world as well as to manipulate it domestically, the use of cameras was strictly monitored. Several accounts exist of Soviet officials restricting the photographing of certain subjects by visitors in the 1920s. As the decade wore on, the regulation of photography and what could be transferred out of the country became more formalized and even more stringent; e.g. no exposed but undeveloped film could leave the country.[23] James Abbe writes that "even with an official photo permit," the list of forbidden subjects was long : Bridges, "railway stations, trains, tracks, breadlines, meatlines, any sort of queue for food, fun or foolishness, accidents, streetcars, automobiles, airplanes, all are taboo; the world might jump to the conclusion that

[20] Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow : Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine*, 314–15; Carynnyk, Luciuk, and Kordan, "Visit of Monsieur Herriot to Soviet Union: Edward Coote (Moscow) to Sir John Simon, 11 September 1933," 297–302.

[21] Margulies, *The Pilgrimage to Russia: The Soviet Union and the Treatment of Foreigners, 1924-1937*, 159–64;

[22] Wells, *Kapoot: The Narrative of a Journey from Leningrad to Mount Ararat in Search of Noah's Ark*, 128–29.

[23] Heeke, *Reisen Zu Den Sowjets : Der Ausländische Tourismus in Russland 1921-1941 ; Mit Einem Bio-Bibliographischen Anhang Zu 96 Deutschen Reiseautoren*, 507–13.

proletarian dictatorship is not efficient. Banquet photos are also prohibited; it would never do for starving peasants to run across a shot of Bolshevik officialdom getting a square meal…"[24] Additional unspecified prohibitions applied to any conditions supposedly nonexistent in the USSR, including massive famine.

Determined photographers did of course attempt to capture forbidden images, no mean feat when professional quality cameras were still relatively bulky and slow. Samara Pearce, great-granddaughter of Austrian photographer Alexander Wienerberger, demonstrates in a taped interview what he might have done to make his picture-taking less obvious while documenting life and death in Kharkiv in 1933.[25] If photographers succeeded in capturing an image, they still faced the challenge of getting any developed photos, negatives, or exposed film past border guards. In the case of Wienerberger, his biographer Josef Vogl states that the Austrian envoy to the Soviet Union, Heinrich Pacher, had Wienerberger's photos brought to Austria in October 1933 via diplomatic mail, to avoid the risk of confiscation "by the greedy hands of the GPU."[26]

"The long-coated individual with the revolver in his hand is a GPU man. The protesting workman at whom the revolver is pointed, I learned a little later, had been suspected of sabotage. Hastily drawing my camera from its holster, I was almost ready to shoot what looked like an impromptu execution – when my guide grasped my camera wrist with a grip of steel."

James Abbe recalling a scene on top of the Dnieperstroy Dam, 1932.[27]

James Abbe, who was arrested three times in 1932 for taking forbidden photographs in the USSR, smuggled out his photos and negatives through a combination of skillful strategy and luck. Later that year, he managed to smuggle out a batch of his small negatives, he wrote, "sewed in the trousers of my youngest son."[28]

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LOCAL RESIDENTS

Ownership of cameras by local residents was very limited, particularly outside the major cities. Residents were subject to the same restrictions as foreigners with regard to censorship; moreover, the costs of breaking the rules were much higher: not only confiscation of camera and photographs, but arrest, sentencing to hard labor in the gulags or possibly execution.

[24] Abbe, *I Photograph Russia*, 33.
[25] *How Ukraine's Holodomor Famine Was Secretly Photographed*, secs. 00:01:32-01:50.
[26] Vogl, "Alexander Wienerberger – Fotograf Des Holodomor," 263.
[27] Abbe, *I Photograph Russia*, 323–24.
[28] Abbe, *I Photograph Russia*, 282.

Historian and editor Ihor Shuyskiy comments in a published interview[29] that photographing Holodomor-related scenes was strictly prohibited. As an example he mentions an official report documenting the detention of a certain Vladimir Puzikov together with a friend for photographing people lined up for commercial bread. The charge was "anti-Soviet agitation."[30]

At this time, we know of only one local Ukrainian photographer, Nikolai Bokan, who documented his family's experience of the Holodomor and, notably, the death of one of his sons from starvation. His haunting photographs offer a uniquely personal perspective on the experience of famine, and speak to the famine's devastating impact on family dynamics amid broader social and political transformations. Bokan was arrested in 1937 and charged with anti-Soviet agitation, and it is through his criminal case file – held at the Archive of the Security Service of Ukraine – that his photographs came to light.[31]

Another Ukrainian, Marko Zalizniak of Udachne in Donetsk oblast, was offered a position as a photographer with the NKVD in 1932, which he declined.[32] However, as an avid photographer of everyday life, he left a stark visual record of collectivization campaigns, dekulakization, and requisitioning during the early 1930s in the vicinity of his village. This documentation was not forbidden because the local authorities encouraged and accepted it as a record of Soviet progress and of the rightful dispossession of "enemies of the people." On the other hand, very few of the photos presented in his recent biography[33] and on the site of the Pshenychny Central State CinePhotoPhono Archives of Ukraine (TSDKFFA)[34] provide evidence of starvation, although he quite explicitly described in written accounts how he and his family of seven struggled to survive during 1932-1934. Zalizniak's Holodomor-related photographs are not part of this Directory at this time; however, they beg further study and accessibility.

II. SCOPE OF THE DIRECTORY

SUBJECT MATTER

[29] Strelnik, "Na Khar'kovshchine Vyshla Vtoraya Kniga Pamyati."
[30] "No. 25. Raport Inspektora Militsiyi pro Zatrymannya V. O. Puzykova Ta V. H. Lyushnenka Za Sprobu Fotohrafuvannya Cherhy Za Komertsiynym Khlibom u m. Kharkovi; 6 Bereznya 1933 r. N-Ku Adm. Otd. Khar'k. Obl., Ray-Ynspektor Otd. Mylytsyy Buznavskyy 6/III 1933 h., Khar'kov."
[31] "75489 Фп (п1912): Речові докази до архівно-кримінальної справи No. 36664 стосовно Боканя Миколи Федоровича та Боканя Бориса Миколайовича, 1930-1937."
[32] Zalizn͡iak and Mykhed, *Z Anhelom-Okhoront͡sem i Foto Po Zh͡yttiu / З Ангелом-Охоронцем і Фото По Життю*, 79.
[33] Zalizn͡iak and Mykhed, *Z Anhelom-Okhoront͡sem i Foto Po Zh͡yttiu / З Ангелом-Охоронцем і Фото По Життю*. A touching photo, dated March, 1933, of his youngest daughter holding a loaf of bread made of corn cobs and rotten potatoes is shown on p. 117.
[34] "Контекст Трагедії (1929-1933): Офіційні Фотодокументи."

The limited body of photographs known to exist from the Holodomor era determined the scope of the subject matter for this first edition. Thus, the subjects included here comprise any aspect of Soviet life that the authorities did not want outsiders to see as pertains to the famine. It was also decided to include any available photographs that illustrate the pervasive deprivation of basic human necessities during this time, pictures that were rarely seen then or now. For contrast, a handful of pictures taken by the featured photographers depict monumental edifices constructed during the early Soviet period that held the outside world in awe as well as a model collective farm and industrial sites; one offers a rare glimpse into the life of Party elites while hosting outside visitors. But in each case, an ironic context is presented either in the image or the caption.

As explained above, denial, censorship, and myriad restrictions made attempts to document the famine in the 1930s a vastly more difficult experience from that of the 1920s. As a result, the body of relevant photographs that has come down to us today is exceedingly small.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

The initial release of the Directory is limited to photographs from Ukraine as defined by its political boundaries in the early 1930s. The only exception is within the "Collection of select 1920s famine photos" which consists of a few examples of photographs taken both in Russia and in Ukraine that are commonly misused to this day to represent the Holodomor of the 1930s. Future updates to the Directory may include photographs from the Kuban region of the North Caucasus. Photographs potentially from that region are still being evaluated for authenticity. The Kuban region in Russia borders Ukraine and had a majority ethnically Ukrainian (and other non-Russian) population at that time; it was the area outside Ukraine's borders, besides Kazakhstan, that was most heavily affected by mass deportations and policies that resulted in famine-related mortality comparable to that of the hardest hit areas in Ukraine.

TIME-FRAME

Except for the 1920s collection and some examples from the Bokan collection, the photographs in this first edition of the Directory were taken in 1932 and 1933. The 1932-33 range was not a goal but rather reflects the availability of photographs depicting aspects of the Holodomor in general and the famine in particular. There are in Ukraine's archives other relevant photographs that are not famine specific and that span a broader range of years. However, these photos are not included in the Directory at this time (see Goals, below).

THE PHOTOGRAPHERS

The Photographers whose work is represented in this first release of the Holodomor Photo Directory include the following:

James Abbe, an American who built his reputation as a photographer of glamorous celebrities before turning to documentary journalism. The first Western photographer to have a private photo session with Stalin in 1932, Abbe also succeeded in capturing numerous scenes, particularly in Ukraine, that exposed the cruel hypocrisy of the "worker's paradise." Several of these photos were later published in a memoir in 1934.[35]

Nikolai Bokan, a resident of Baturyn, Chernihiv oblast, and the sole local photographer represented in this collection. A photographer by profession, Bokan captured and disseminated photographs of his family's experience of famine, which figured in his arrest, conviction, and ultimate death in a concentration camp.

Alexander Wienerberger, an Austrian engineer who spent nearly two decades in the Soviet Union. This included much of 1933 in Kharkiv, where he captured numerous scenes of everyday life and death in the city. Since their re-discovery decades later, many of his photographs have become among the most widely known Holodomor related images today.

Whiting Williams, a well-known American labor management consultant, who traveled to Ukraine in 1928 and again in the summer of 1933. During his second visit, he managed to capture some images of a grim Soviet reality previously undocumented in the Western press, photos that he hoped in vain to have published in the US upon returning home.

III. IDENTIFICATION AND AUTHENTICATION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE DIRECTORY

PROCESS OF DISCOVERY AND AUTHENTICATION

The project began with an examination of already known sources of photographs of the time, including newspaper articles and books published primarily in the English and German languages. Monographs, articles, booklets, and bibliographies published by Western academics and Ukrainian diaspora academics and non-academics alike were consulted for references to photographs of the period. All of these resources were scrupulously examined for use of 1920s famine photos or for characteristics that raise doubts about authenticity. In addition, memoirs and reports of North American and European travelers, diplomats, industrial consultants, and other specialists who spent time in the Soviet Union were consulted, as were the families of some of the featured photographers.

This initial edition of the Directory contains no "anonymous" photographs. All photographs were verified, taking into consideration the photographer's claims to having taken the photograph, confirmed dates of travel or residence in Ukraine, and actual publication dates or

[35] Abbe, *I Photograph Russia*.

archival dating. Any doubtful photographs in terms of attribution, date, or country have not been included.

Each photograph is accompanied by a date-limited record of publication and the identification of any known major archival holdings of original prints. For the 1920s photo selection, this is particularly significant because it provides evidence of their pre-Holodomor provenance. For the 1930s photos, the record of publication is limited in range from date of photograph to the start of WWII in 1939. It serves as a bibliography of how and where these authentic photographs were used during and shortly after the peak years of the Holodomor.

AUTHENTICATION: FURTHER WORK

Some visitors to the Directory may be familiar with photos that appeared in the *London Daily Express* series on the Soviet famine from the fall of 1934 and the similar 1935 Hearst newspaper series, as well as in *Human Life in Russia*, and a number of German publications. Several of these photographs have been confirmed as having been taken and published in the early 1920s and are included in our Collection of 1920s photos. Other individual photographs have been attributed to multiple different photographers and locations, some of which may indeed turn out to be legitimate, particularly for representing Kyiv in Ukraine and the Kuban region of the North Caucasus in Russia. Work continues on sorting out the evidence and finding conclusive proof to support a claim of authenticity. Any newly verified photographs will appear in subsequent updates of the Directory.

Additional archival work is needed, in particular in the National Archives of the US and various national archives in Europe and in countries of the former USSR. Further research in the personal archives of notable visitors, diplomats, businessmen, agricultural specialists, and journalists who spent considerable time in the Soviet Union may yet yield more "forbidden photographs."

IV. PHOTOGRAPHS NOT INCLUDED IN THE DIRECTORY AND FUTURE GOALS

The scope of this Directory at this time is clearly limited to photos that were taken surreptitiously and that provide evidence that contradicts the Soviet official position denying the famine. However, we see this Directory as a first step and a possible template.

For example, this Directory does not include any "official" photographs that were taken by members of the Soviet Photographic Trust (Soyuzfoto) and by other approved photographers which were then retained for documentation, news/propaganda and indoctrination purposes.

These huge collections became part of the official government archives in Kyiv and elsewhere of the former USSR and are in fact resources of great research value today.

Many of those photographs provide insight into the ideal vision of Soviet life that was promoted both at home and abroad. Moreover, a large number also document the numerous actions that were decreed by the Soviet state in order to accomplish the destruction and reconfiguration of the existing way of life, including the dispossession, punishment, and expulsion of perceived enemies of Soviet progress. These include photos of mass mobilizations, collectivization campaigns, grain collection drives; indoctrination at all levels about the "enemies of the people;" desacralization of places of worship; trials in formal and informal settings; the eviction of kurkuls and the sale of their dispossessed property; and the search and seizure of stored food and grain from the homes of the rural population. While many of these actions occurred in varying degrees throughout the Soviet Union, some were primarily confined to Ukraine and the Kuban, such as the seizure of a family's last food supplies. A great number of these photographs illustrate the implementation of the Holodomor in its broadest sense. It would be "a great mistake," stated Hennadii Boriak, former Head of the State Committee on Archives of Ukraine , "to underestimate [their] value….they reproduce the frightening ambience in which the tragedy of the Ukrainian village took place."[36]

Resources such as posters, book illustrations, original art works, and even films created at that time provide an extraordinarily rich reserve of visual materials that are now being researched and made available to the public. As in the case of photography, the direct depiction of famine and deprivation is rare. However, non-photographic art offered greater opportunities of visualization through metaphor and symbolism. And in all cases, the broad range of visual representation invites further exploration of the interpretations and accommodations made during that time, both in ideological communication and creative expression.

It is hoped that our colleagues in Ukraine will create comparable directories of their visual resources that can all be affiliated for greater visibility and ease of access for researchers and the general public alike.

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[36] Boriak, "Sources and Resources on the Famine in Ukraine's State Archival System," 36.

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