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**THE SITUATION OF THE PEASANTRY DURING THE HOLODOMOR THROUGH THE  
PRESS OUTSIDE THE SOVIET UNION (1932-1933)**

**Abstract. The purpose.** In this research proposal we will analyse the dramatic period that the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic -Ukrainian SSR- went through in the early 1930s, with the so-called Holodomor or Great Famine. Using various official Soviet documents, we will study how the authorities in Moscow applied collectivisation measures in Ukraine and how they affected the development of the daily life of the country's population. In doing so, we will reflect on the main consequences that this period had for the future of the Ukrainian SSR within the Soviet space and especially for the population.

**Conclusions.** In addition, once we have analysed the significance of this historical period, and through the newspaper archives of different international media, we will emphasise how this issue was dealt with outside the borders of the Soviet Union. With this research, we intend to provide evidence through newspapers such as *The Evening Telegram*, *The London Evening Standard*, *The New York Times* and Spanish newspapers that the Holodomor was known abroad, despite the fact that the Soviet authorities campaigned hard to prevent this event from spreading to the rest of the international community.

Although, as we will see through the study of various media, the reality of the Holodomor knowledge abroad was different, taking into account the different ideology of the journalists who wrote the chronicles exposing the events that were taking place in the Ukrainian SSR in 1932 and 1933.

**Keywords:** Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, Holodomor, press, Soviet Union, collectivisation, newspapers, Great Famine.

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## СТАНОВИЩЕ УКРАЇНСЬКОГО СЕЛЯНСТВА ПІД ЧАС ГОЛОДОМОРУ: ЗА МАТЕРІАЛАМИ ЗАРУБІЖНОЇ ПРЕСИ (1932-1933)

**Анотація.** *Мета* – проаналізувати драматичний період, який пережила Українська Соціалістична Радянська Республіка – УСРР – на початку 1930-х років, відомий як Голодомор або Великий голод. Використовуючи різноманітні офіційні радянські документи, дослідили, як московська влада застосовувала заходи колективізації в Україні та як вони вплинули на розвиток побуту населення країни. Проаналізовано головні наслідки цього періоду для майбутнього УСРР у межах радянського простору, особливо для її населення.

**Висновки.** Нами розкрито значення цього історичного періоду, а також через газетні архіви різних міжнародних ЗМІ, підкреслено, як це питання стріямалося за межами Радянського Союзу. У дослідженні наведено свідчення з таких газет, як *The Evening Telegram*, *The London Evening Standard*, *The New York Times* та іспанських газет, про те, що Голодомор був відомий за кордоном, незважаючи на те, що радянська влада проводила активну кампанію, щоб запобігти поширенню інформації про ці події серед решти міжнародної спільноти.

Досліджуючи різні ЗМІ, нами встановлено, що правдивість знань про Голодомор за кордоном була різною, враховуючи різні ідеологічні погляди журналістів, які писали хроніки, що викривали події, що відбувалися в УСРР у 1932-1933 роках.

**Ключові слова:** Українська Соціалістична Радянська Республіка, Голодомор, преса, Радянський Союз, колективізація, газети, Великий голод.

**Problem statement.** In the early 1930s, one of the events that marked the fate of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (Ukrainian SSR) took place with the so-called Great Famine, known as the *Holodomor*, literally “starvation”. During 1932 and 1933, the Soviet authorities implemented a policy of requisitioning in the different republics of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in order to carry out the collectivisation plans of Iosif Stalin’s government. However, the biggest victim of this policy was the Ukrainian SSR, which at the time comprised the following administrative regions: seven oblasts - Vinnytsia, Kyiv, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk and Odesa - and also the Moldavian Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic (Moldavian ASSR)<sup>1</sup>.

The final consequences of this period, although research and studies have increased in the last three decades, are not really known because of the interest of the Moscow authorities in hiding what happened inside and outside their borders. Despite this, and as we will see in the following lines, the news that a famine was taking place in some parts of the USSR managed to get out of its borders. Various international media reported that a period of famine was taking place in the Soviet Union, although not all of them provided the same data.

**The purpose of the article is** research analyse the dramatic period that the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic -Ukrainian SSR- went

through in the early 1930s, with the so-called Holodomor or Great Famine.

### **The statement of the basic material.**

#### **1. The development of the *Holodomor* in the Ukrainian SSR**

With the implementation of the collectivisation measures, and after a difficult but productive 1931, the coming years were to endanger a large part of the Ukrainian population, especially the peasantry. In 1932, two new elements came together to make the harvest even worse: on the one hand, the increase in the state’s acquisition percentages and its poor management, and on the other hand, the bad weather, which had a negative effect on the harvest that year. Nevertheless, at the secret session of the Central Committee on 7 July 1932, devoted to organising the collection of the annual levy, Stalin decided that Ukraine would pay 7 million tons, as in the extraordinary - for good - 1930<sup>2</sup>. Thus, once again, Ukraine became the main target of government action and by the summer of 1932 70% of Ukrainian agriculture was in kolkhozs, compared to only 59% in Russia<sup>3</sup>.

The situation was further complicated when on 7 August of the same year a new decree was issued by Stalin: “On safeguarding the ownership of state enterprises, collective farms and cooperatives and strengthening public - socialist - property”<sup>4</sup>. In other words, the theft of even small amounts of food could be punishable by ten years in a forced labour camp or death<sup>5</sup>.

1 Wolowyna, Oleh *et al.* «Regional variations of 1932-34 famine losses in Ukraine», *Canadian Studies in Population* 43 (3-4 Fall/winter), 2016, pp. 175-202, p. 176. URL: <http://shevchenko.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Regional-variations-of-1932-1934-famile-losses-in-Ukraine.pdf> [accessed 23 March 2023].

2 Meyer, Jean. *Rusia y sus Imperios (1894-2005)*, Barcelona, Tus Quets Editores, 2007, p. 199.

3 Serbyn, Roman. «The causes and the consequences of famines in Soviet Ukraine». In N.a., *Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Famine-genocide in Soviet Ukraine 1933*, Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre, 1998, pp. 5-7, p. 6.

4 Ukrainian *Holodomor* Museum. «The legalization of genocide execution». URL: <https://holodomormuseum.org.ua/en/archive/the-legalization-of-genocide-execution/> [accessed 20 December 2020].

5 Applebaum, Anne. *Hambruna roja. La guerra de Stalin contra Ucrania*, Barcelona, Debate, 2019, p. 246.

In addition, the Ukrainian peasants themselves were unwilling to comply with the measures coming from Moscow, so they made sure that part of their resources were not collectivised by the state power. Faced with this dire situation in the Ukrainian countryside, a large part of the population saw only one possible solution to save their lives from the bloody famine: a mass exodus to the cities and other surrounding regions. This event, along with the high number of deaths that were occurring, began to worry the Moscow authorities about a possible shortage of labour in the countryside. The Ukrainian leadership even requested a reduction in grain procurement in the summer of 1932 as a result of the needs of their own people<sup>6</sup>, which did not improve conditions in the countryside.

Due to the low percentage of the quota reached in some of the regions of the USSR, internal personnel movements took place to ensure that the deadlines and quantities were met. On 22 October 1932, the Politburo<sup>7</sup> decided to send two extraordinary commissions, one led by Vyacheslav Molotov and the other by Lazar Kaganovich, to Ukraine and the North Caucasus in order to “speed up the harvests”<sup>8</sup>, and to achieve the collectivisation plan for the year 1932. A further step was taken on 8 November of the same year, when two telegrams were sent, clearly stating the Soviet intentions: “[...] individual and collective farmers in Soviet Ukraine who do not meet the objectives of the requisition will be denied access to the products of the rest of the economy”<sup>9</sup>. It was made official on 18 November with the publication of the “Politburo resolution on measures to strengthen grain procurement”<sup>10</sup>, which was to immediately ban all natural stocks stored on collective farms that do not comply with grain procurement schemes.

In addition to all this, as we have noted, there was the transfer of population from the countryside to the cities or to other regions of the Soviet Union and even beyond its borders.

In order to prevent this population transfer from the countryside to the cities, in December 1932 the government created the internal passport to prevent peasants from moving to the cities<sup>11</sup>. Passports were issued to most people living in the cities, but not to peasants<sup>12</sup>. The rural population was unable to stay in the cities because they did not have a passport, which greatly increased the number of deaths from hunger from the beginning of 1933. In these circumstances at the beginning of the year, the protests of the population became increasingly violent because of the consequences of the famine, including assaults on state food stores. In addition, on 1 January 1933, Ukrainians were given an ultimatum by the resolution of the Communist Party of Ukraine - CP of Ukraine - to apply the most brutal repression to those who did not give up their bread. Condemning Ukrainians to starvation<sup>13</sup>.

Moscow's solution came on 19 January when they adopted the resolution “concerning the compulsory delivery of grain to the state by collective farms and independent farms”<sup>14</sup>. This meant that whoever failed to meet the harvest delivery deadlines would suffer food restrictions. But not only that, for it seems that Stalin wrote in his own handwriting a directive on 22 January 1933 on the prevention of the mass departure of peasants from the Kuban and Ukraine to the central agricultural region, the Volga region, the Moscow region, the western provinces and the Belarusian SSR<sup>15</sup>. For many of the peasants, this was a death sentence, given the dismal state of the Ukrainian countryside at the beginning of that year.

Subsequently, the harassment of the population in order to achieve full collectivisation of the peasant resources of the USSR made the situation even worse in the Ukrainian territory. The situation reached such a point that a law of 17 March 1933 stipulated that a peasant could not leave a collective farm without a contract from his future employers, ratified by the au-

6 Ellman, Michael. «Soviet repression statistic: some comments», *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 54 (7), 2002, pp. 1151-1172, p. 1171.

7 The name given to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

8 Werth, Nicolas. «La Gran Hambre». In Courtois, Stéphane et al. (Eds.), *El Libro Negro del Comunismo: crímenes, terror y represión*, Barcelona, Ediciones B, 2010, pp. 213-226, p. 217.

9 Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands. Europe between Hitler and Stalin*, New York, Basic Books, 2012, p. 40.

10 Ukrainian Holodomor Museum. «The legalization of genocide execution». URL: <https://holodomormuseum.org.ua/en/archive/the-legalization-of-genocide-execution/> [accessed 20 December 2020].

11 Cáceres, Gonzalo. «La hambruna de 1933 en la RSS de Ucrania», *X Jornadas Interescuelas/Departamentos de Historia*, 2005, p. 12. URL: <http://www.aacademica.org/000-006/495> [accessed 21 December 2022].

12 Ilie, Alexandra. «Holodomor, the Ukrainian Holocaust?», *Studia Politica: Romanian Political Science Review*, 11, 2011, pp. 137-154, p. 152. URL: <https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/handle/document/44589> [accessed el 23 December 2022].

13 N. a. *Спротив геноциду. Книга-каталог виставки*, Український інститут національної пам'яті, Львів-Київ, ТзОВ Часопис, 2015, p. 42.

14 Kulchytskyi, Stanislav V. «The Holodomor of 1932-33: how and why?», *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, Volume II (1), 2015, pp. 93-116, p. 107. URL: <https://ewjus.com/index.php/ewjus/article/view/Kul%CA%B9chyts%CA%B9kyi>, [accessed 30 March 2023].

15 Saunders, David. «Russia's nationality policy: the case of Ukraine (1847-1941)», *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 29 (1-2 Summer-Winter), 2004, pp. 399-419, p. 417. URL: <http://cius-archives.ca/items/show/1224> [accessed 4 April 2023].

thorities of the collective farm<sup>16</sup>. As a result, the Ukrainian famine reached its peak in the spring of 1933. It can easily be shown that the mortality recorded in the Ukraine in 1933 was enormous and far exceeded three times the levels of 1930 and 1931<sup>17</sup>.

Because of the point the famine was reaching in the Ukrainian SSR, certain measures began to be enacted which initiated a slow and mild recovery. To alleviate this situation, Stalin and Molotov ordered Soviet officials to suspend deportations and acute forms of repression throughout the country<sup>18</sup>, which took place in early May. Although it was not until October 1933 that a request received from Stanislaw Kosior, General Secretary of the CP of Ukraine, was approved in Moscow to reduce the contribution required from the Ukraine for the year 1934<sup>19</sup>. Nevertheless, after the severe consequences of the *Holodomor* - both demographic and ideological - the Ukrainian peasants had to accept the rules of the game, which the Russian peasants - historically accustomed to communal farming - had already accepted<sup>20</sup>. Thus, after a few agonising years, the Ukrainian population finally gave in to the fear implanted by Stalin and his anti-Ukrainian policies.

## 2. Foreign knowledge of the *Holodomor* through the mass media

Despite what might appear to be Soviet attempts to conceal what had happened in the Ukrainian SSR outside its borders, there were reports of famine in this region of the Soviet Union. One of the first to publicise this situation was the Polish-born Canadian journalist Rhea Clyman, who, after her forced departure from the USSR, reported what was happening in the Soviet camps to the Toronto daily *The Evening Telegram* on 28 September 1932 with the headline: “Reporter expelled from Russia”<sup>21</sup>. Despite not having much international support, he continued to publicise the real situation of

the way of life in the USSR, and continued his public denunciation of the famine that was taking place within some of its regions. As with the news item published in the same newspaper on 10 May 1933, in which he warned: “He dares to discover the grim secret of Russia’s famine land”<sup>22</sup>. Meanwhile, the rest of the world did not seem to accept the news coming from a young reporter and a modest newspaper with no international reach.

In the US, acknowledging this fact implied problems that could jeopardise certain foreign policies that were being attempted at the time. The US at that time had no diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union - until November 1933 - and the State Department was under instructions to work to establish them<sup>23</sup>. Moreover, *New York Times* Moscow bureau chief, Walter Duranty, is remembered as one of the most notorious journalists in pushing Soviet propaganda “there is no real famine or hunger, nor is there likely to be”, and the reporters who wrote about it claimed to be liars and spread “evil propaganda”<sup>24</sup>. In fact, Duranty won the Pulitzer Prize in 1932. It was the Englishman Gareth Jones, after spending some time in 1933 travelling around the USSR and learning about the reality of the Ukrainian famine, who also made known everything that was happening in that territory, contradicting Duranty’s words. After describing his experience, his testimony was published in various newspapers, such as the *London Evening Standard*, which appeared on 31 March 1933 with the following headline: “Famine rules in Russia. The five-year plan has wiped out the bread supply”<sup>25</sup>. After hearing Jones’ statements, the American correspondent in Moscow himself, Duranty, was forced to anticipate and publish an article countering Jones’ words and minimising the extreme situation in the Ukrainian countryside, which appeared in *The New York Times* on 30 March

16 Conquest, Robert. *The harvest of sorrow. Soviet collectivization and the terror-famine*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 170.

17 Wheatcroft, Stephen G. «More light on the scale of repression and excess mortality in the Soviet Union in the 1930s». In Getty, Arch J. y Manning, Roberta T. (Eds.), *Stalinist terror: new perspectives*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp. 275-290, p. 282.

18 Kulchytskyi, Stanislav, Olynyk, Marta D. y Wynnycykj, Andrij. «The *Holodomor* and its consequences in the Ukrainian Countryside», *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 30 (¼), 2008, pp. 1-13, p. 5. URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23611463> [accessed 17 March 2023].

19 Applebaum, Anne. *Habrana roja...*, op. cit., p. 368.

20 Kulchytskyi, Stanislav, Olynyk, Marta D. y Wynnycykj, Andrij (2008). «The *Holodomor* and...», art. cit., p. 7.

21 Molesh, Omar (23 de noviembre de 2019). «Meet the Jewish Canadian reporter who interviewed Nazi leaders and blazed a trail for women journalists», *Toronto Star*. URL: <https://www.thestar.com/edmonton/2019/11/23/meet-the-jewish-canadian-reporter-who-interviewed-nazi-leaders-and-blazed-a-trail-for-women-journalists.html> [accessed 20 March 2023].

22 Ukrainian Jewish Encounter (19 de abril de 2017). URL: <https://ukrainianjewishencounter.org/en/new-chapters-ukrainian-jewish-relationship-explored-canadas-limmud-fsu-part-1-rhea-clyman/> [accessed 23 March 2023].

23 Conquest, Robert. Op. cit., p. 311.

24 Wolny, Philip. *Holodomor. The Ukraine famine-genocide*, New York, Rosen YA, 2018, pp. 41-42.

25 Applebaum, Anne (13 de octubre de 2017). «How Stalin hid Ukraine’s famine from the world», *The Atlantic*. URL: <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/10/red-famine-anne-applebaum-ukraine-soviet-union/542610/> [accessed 22 March 2023].

1933: “The Russians are hungry, but they are not starving”<sup>26</sup>.

There were also other demonstrations reporting on what was happening in the Ukrainian SSR, although like those by Clyman or Jones, they did not have the support necessary to give credibility to their words. This was the case with Malcolm Muggeridge, who was there in the winter and spring of 1933, as Moscow correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*. He was one of the few Western journalists who circumvented Soviet restrictions and visited the famine regions, and then reported honestly on what he had seen<sup>27</sup>. Although, as we have shown, other informants encouraged the disinformation campaign by the USSR government, Muggeridge, managed to convey his experience during his stay in some Soviet areas: “On a recent visit to the North Caucasus and the Ukraine, I saw something of the battle being fought between the government and the peasants. On the one side, millions of starving farmers, their bodies often swollen from lack of food; on the other, soldiers, members of the Unified Political Directorate of the State - OGPU - carrying out the instructions of the dictatorship of the proletariat”<sup>28</sup>. However, the importance of their testimonies was not recognised at the time.

In connection with the news published in Spain - at that time the Second Republic was in place in the Iberian country - there were also reports on the famine situation in the USSR between 1932 and 1933. One of the first reports on the subject was published in *El Heraldo de Madrid* on 23 March 1932, which carried the headline: “Soviet peasants against the red forces and Stalin’s iron fist”. It was summed up in the following words: “From a report by Geo London we learn the following about the hardships suffered by the depleted and impoverished Russian peasants: In 1931, 341 Russian families managed to escape from the Ukraine to Romania. So far in 1932, the number of escaped families reached 359, taking refuge in Tighina<sup>29</sup>, where they were precariously cared for by the

Romanian authorities. These families arrived in Romanian territory in a state of appalling misery. The orders of the Red Army, which had cut the bridge over the Dniester, were: “Fire on anyone who tries to cross the river”! However, the ice favours escape during the night”<sup>30</sup>.

A few days later, on 28 March, in the daily *La Voz*, under the headline: “Chronicle. Blood on the ice”, the initial situation of the Ukrainian SSR was described: “And it was agreed to take communism to the countryside, to break through the almost impregnable citadel of the conservative instinct of the villagers. And it was agreed that it was for the Ukraine that the battle was to be fought with the greatest violence and resolution [...] The poor very poor accepted. They did not lose much. But the kulak refused. And they persecuted him. And they deported him to Siberia. And they imprisoned him. And they hanged him. Thousands and thousands of families lost everything they owned, the Ukraine, which had resisted wars and invasions, could not withstand the forced collectivisation of the kolkhozs without economic collapse”<sup>31</sup>.

As early as March 1933, the newspaper *La Luz* published a story with the headline: “In Soviet Russia. The struggle of town and country”, which explained: “It is precisely the most collectivised regions, the Ukraine, the Lower Volga and the Caucasus, which produce the least wheat and are the most resistant to the storage of grain [...] For Stalin there is no doubt that the difficulties are due to the fact that the counter-revolutionary elements which previously operated outside the collective farms have surreptitiously entered the heart and even the head of these Soviet institutions in order to sabotage the regime more effectively”<sup>32</sup>.

On 20 April of that year, a short headline in the daily *La Voz* reported the situation in the Ukrainian SSR: “Hunger in Ukraine. News from Russia says that in the Ukraine numbers of inhabitants are leaving the fields, where hunger reigns. Much of the land is uncultivated and the seeds have been used for food. It also seems that

26 Applebaum, Anne. «How Stalin hid Ukraine’s...», *art. cit.*

27 Carynyk, Marco (29 de mayo de 1983). «Malcolm Muggeridge on Stalin’s famine», *The Ukraine Weekly*, p. 7. URL: [http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1983/The\\_Ukrainian\\_Weekly\\_1983-22.pdf](http://www.ukrweekly.com/archive/1983/The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1983-22.pdf) [accessed 30 March 2023].

28 Conquest, Robert. *Op. cit.*, p. 260.

29 The city is also known as Bender and is located in the present-day Republic of Moldova. In the 1930s it belonged to the Kingdom of Romania, as it was located on the right bank of the Dniester River that runs through the city.

30 N. a. (23 de marzo de 1932). «Los campesinos soviéticos contra las fuerzas rojas y la mano férrea de Stalin. Los empobrecidos trabajadores solo pueden esgrimir como arma la huida; pero el Ejército Rojo tiene esta orden: “¡Fuego sobre toda persona que intente atravesar el río!”», *El Heraldo de Madrid*, p. 11.

31 Vidal, Fabián (28 de marzo de 1932). «Crónica. Sangre en el hielo», *La Voz*, p. 1.

32 N. a. (4 March 1933). «En la Rusia soviética. La lucha del campo y la ciudad», *La Luz*, p. 9.

acts of vandalism have been reported in Odessa and other cities”<sup>33</sup>.

A few days later, on 28 April, another gazette called *El Financiero* published an editorial section entitled: “For the “Friends of the Soviet Union”” in which was inserted an article by the journalist Alcalá Galiano containing a letter from Lev Tolstoy’s daughter: “The Russian people no longer have the strength to endure their sufferings. Rebellion is beating everywhere: in the factories, in the workshops, in the villages and even in whole regions. The peasants, ruined and starving, are fleeing from the Ukraine by the thousands. And what is the Soviet Government doing in the meantime? It issues decree after decree to drive thousands of inhabitants out of Moscow and other big cities, at the same time pacifying the rebellious peasants by banishment and firing squads”<sup>34</sup>.

However, there were also publications denying the famine or attributing the problem to counter-revolutionary elements. On 16 August 1933, the newspaper *La Luz* published an article entitled: “Letter from Moscow. Difficulties and efforts - good harvest - famine. The collective peasants will soon become rich. Cessions of the Government to the Trade Unions” signed by the journalist Luis Fischer. In this text the author explained: “In the North Caucasus, in the central Volga districts and in the south of Ukraine the harvest has already begun. According to a newspaper report, in an Odesa Collective it has been so abundant that each member of the Commune was able to receive no less than 18,000 pounds of grain, which he can dispose of freely. “But how can so much be distributed among the villagers?” the communist leaders of the Collective asked themselves, deciding to convince the happy *muzhik*<sup>35</sup> that they should prove their adherence to Bolshevism by handing over to the state more grain than it demanded as a tax. “Such a manifestation of excessive zeal has been condemned out of hand,” reports *Pravda*”<sup>36</sup>.

Only one day earlier, on 15 August, the newspaper *La Voz* published a news item

exposing an uprising in the Ukrainian SSR, with the headline: “The Soviets. It is said that a serious uprising against the Soviets has broken out in the Ukraine”. This can be seen as a way for the Soviet government in Moscow to try to cover up or justify the high number of deaths that the famine had caused in recent months. The news item reads: “Uprisings against the Soviets are said to have broken out in the Ukraine and other regions of South Asia. Red troops are firing on the peasants unceremoniously. It is added that all railway lines leading to the Ukraine are occupied by military trains carrying large numbers of troops. Further details are lacking, but it is stated that we are facing great events”<sup>37</sup>. In addition, the second paragraph of the news item justified the Stalin government’s ban on foreign journalists leaving the Soviet borders in mid-August 1933: “The newspaper *Aftonbladet*<sup>38</sup> says that it seems that the reason the Soviet government has banned foreign journalists from leaving Moscow without express authorisation is that serious disturbances have occurred in the Ukrainian region and neighbouring areas”<sup>39</sup>.

Curiously, a national newspaper such as *ABC* did not have much information about what was happening in Ukraine either. A search of the newspaper archives revealed only small texts on the USSR referring to this republic. In fact, it was not until 1933 when information began to reach this newspaper with a first article mentioning the situation of famine, robbery and “banditry” in several Ukrainian cities, such as Odesa, that was to be found in the newspaper<sup>40</sup>. A few months later this newspaper also referred to the uprisings in the Ukraine on 30 August 1933: “When the collectivisation of farms was decreed, the fierce resistance of the peasants took on the proportions of a national struggle. Terrorist repression has decimated the population and sowed misery and hunger in the Ukraine”<sup>41</sup>.

But there were also news items highlighting the means and mechanisms imposed by the Soviet government in Moscow to prevent the famine that was being seen in some regions of the USSR from becoming public knowledge. In this

33 N. a. (20 April 1933). «El hambre en Ucrania», *La Voz*, p. 5.

34 N. a. (28 April 1933). «Para los “Amigos de la Unión Soviética”. La hija de Tolstoy y Kerensky les dejan en ridículo», *El Financiero*, p. 651.

35 A term that was used to refer to Russian peasants who did not own property.

36 Fischer, Luis (16 August 1933). «Carta de Moscú. Dificultades y esfuerzos -buena cosecha-carestía. Los campesinos colectivos llegarán a ricos en poco tiempo. Cesiones del Gobierno a los Sindicatos», *La Luz*, p. 6.

37 N. a. (15 August 1933). «Los Soviets. Se dice que en Ucrania ha estallado una grave sublevación contra los soviets», *La Voz*, p. 5.

38 Swedish daily newspaper founded in 1830.

39 N. a. (15 August 1933). «Los Soviets. Se dice que en Ucrania ha estallado una grave sublevación contra los soviets», *La Voz*, p. 5.

40 N. a., (20 April 1933). «Rusia. Hambre en Ucrania», *ABC Madrid*, p. 35. URL: <https://www.abc.es/archivo/periodicos/abc-madrid-19330420-35.html> [accessed 11 April 2023].

41 N. a. (30 August 1933). «La situación en Rusia», *ABC Madrid*, p. 27. URL: <https://www.abc.es/archivo/periodicos/abc-madrid-19330830-27.html> [accessed 11 April 2023].

case it was published in another Spanish daily *El Sol*, which on 16 September 1933 stipulated: “Production and consumption. Soviet concerns”, which stated: “There is hunger in the Ukraine, in the North Caucasus and in certain provinces of the Volga. This is the truth, which the Council of People’s Commissars does not allow to be spread, not even abroad, but not even in the other districts of the vast country”<sup>42</sup>. And finally, to conclude this review of different news items related to the *Holodomor* abroad, at the end of 1933 the independent republican newspaper *La Libertad* in Madrid carried a front-page story entitled: “Freedom” in Moscow. After the revolution, evolution” and which read: “And production is very low. Even in the Ukraine, once reputed to be the granary of Europe, there is a lack of wheat. The land is badly tilled; the peasants, before going to the collective farms, slaughter their cattle so that they do not pass on to the state. In about two years, the number of livestock has been reduced by 52%”<sup>43</sup>.

**Conclusions.** Ultimately, these facts, after observing the policies carried out by Stalin to achieve the collectivisation of land, and the serious effects they had on the Ukrainian ter-

ritory, completely changed the outlook of the population. Fear became a key element of Stalin’s cult. His internalisation as a ruthless father with overwhelming power took a decisive step as a consequence of the cruel and massive use of starvation to “teach a lesson”. Although the main fear of the Soviet government in Moscow was that knowledge of the *Holodomor* would spread beyond its borders, foreign media echoed what was happening inside the USSR. However, there were also voices rejecting reports of a Great Famine in the Ukrainian SSR and other Soviet regions.

News from outside the USSR from this period of famine was scarce, and as we have observed, those that did arrive were easily denied, or even denied by Soviet propaganda. Consequently, and due to the concealment and cover-up of the events in the Ukrainian SSR by the Soviet authorities led by Stalin and also by his successors - almost until the end of the communist period - the final consequences are not really known, especially with regard to the number of deaths caused by the famine, hence the varying estimates among authors.

42 N. a. (16 September 1933). «Producción y consumo. Preocupaciones soviéticas. Ante una probable cosecha de cereales satisfactoria, el hambre sigue cerniéndose sobre diversas comarcas rusas», *El Sol*, p. 6.

43 Armand, Pierre (30 December 1933). «La “Libertad” en Moscú. Después de la revolución, la evolución», *La Libertad*, p. 1.

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