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WHY DID THE UKRAINIANS DISAPPEAR ON KUBAN? FAMINE (HOLODOMOR)-GENOCIDE ON THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS (KUBAN) DURING 1932-1933-s

An issue, regarding famine (Holodomor) – genocide organization that was performed by the Soviet system on Kuban where the Ukrainians constituted majority, is considered in the article. The particular schemes of the deliberate policy oriented on physical annihilation of the Ukrainian population on Kuban, destruction of the national, ethnical and group (Cossacks') identity, cessation of national-cultural development, forced russification, all abovementioned are the characteristics of genocide, the main features of which were determined by a particular UN resolution in 1948. The authors provide the particular data that reveal a deliberate policy of the USSR aimed at annihilation of the Ukrainians on the Northern Caucasus (Kuban). Provided factual data is based on the wide range of archival sources, testimonies of witnesses, publications of the scientific studies. The authors' analysis permits to conclude that a deliberate policy was provided regarding the Ukrainians on Kuban that were an inherent part of the general Ukrainian national space during 1932-1933-s, namely the policy included mass physical annihilation via artificial famine, repressions, deportations as well as via different means of the Ukrainians' denationalization. The processes were on the territory of the USRR as well as in the places of high concentration of the Ukrainians beyond its borders, particularly on the Northern Caucasus. The specific implications of the work are to highlight the methods that the Soviet government used against the Ukrainians on Kuban at the abovementioned period, the authors consider the measures as genocide based on the UN resolution of 1948, moreover, the analysis of the statistical data is provided to prove the scale of physical loss of the Ukrainians on Kuban. Considering that the scientific issue of the history of the Ukrainians on the Northern Caucasus (Kuban) at the period of famine (Holodomor) during 1932-1933-s only begins to be reflected, the results of the article can be a base for the further studies and more deep consideration of one of the greatest disasters in the 20th century – Famine (Holodomor)-genocide of the Ukrainian nation.

Key words: *the Northern Caucasus; Kuban; famine; genocide; village; the Cossacks; the Soviet government.*

Introduction

Appealing to the history of the Ukrainians, who were living beyond the borders of the Ukrainian state, was always under the issue of establishing and functioning of the general Ukrainian national space. The specific features of different ethnical Ukrainian groups, their functioning, strategies of survival, peculiarities of national, cultural development are principally important for consideration of the Ukrainian nation's existence. The numerical and dense Ukrainian community of the Northern Caucasus plays a special role, particularly Kuban can be considered under this context. Its peculiarity is the fact that it was founded by the Cossacks of the former Zaporozhian Army who were managed to take root in new territory, reorganized into the Chornomorskaya Army, and into the Kuban Cossack Army from 1860. A constant flow of new settlers from other Ukrainian regions, close connections with "continental" Ukraine, its cultural figures, had secured an

establishment of a very powerful dense Ukrainian community on Kuban, which had been rapidly developing and playing a significant role in the Ukrainian space establishment from the Carpathian Mountains to the Northern Caucasus. The peculiarity of the Ukrainians was in their number, the main part of which was inherent in the Kuban Cossack Army that secured their mobility and had considerable military power. The territory of Kuban region became a platform for anti-Bolsheviks' struggle for good reason during the national liberation movement of 1917-1921, and the local Ukrainians created a state union – the Kuban Region (The Kuban National Republic) that demonstrated an unquestioning tendency to the union with the UNR as well as with the Ukrainian State of getman Skoropadskyi in a geo-political course, having opposed the Bolsheviks as well as the attempts to recreate the Russian empire. After the Bolsheviks' victory on Kuban in 1920, its population (particularly the Cossacks) was re-

garded as extremely dangerous for the Soviet power existence. The powerful Kuban rebellious movement, rapid Ukrainization processes in educational institutions on Kuban, close connections with the processes of nativization-Ukrainization of the USSR had created the overall Ukrainian "front" that prevented the perspectives of communist dictatorship from realization. Consequently, the Soviet empire used all possible means for the Ukrainian movement's destruction on the territory of the USSR as well as on the places of dense Ukrainian population beyond its borders – particularly on Kuban. The authors' objective was to discover the circumstances of disappearance of the Ukrainian population on Kuban, the reasons of disappearance that happened according to censuses of 1927 and 1937, when was the population decline on Kuban where number of the Ukrainians had significantly decreased from a position of the dominant nation to a tiny minority? (Data are presented in the text). To analyze the ways of the Ukrainian nation's annihilation – is the main objective of the article. The urgency of the theme is subject to a war that began in 2014 and, unfortunately, has still continued. Manipulation of national issues, glorification of imperial (and soviet) practices, concealment of the Ukrainian tragedy during Holodomor, continuation of total russification and ignorance of national-cultural development in this war has played the main role. Returning to the historical truth, highlighting of the topics that have been concealed by the Soviet dictatorship as well as post-Soviet for decades, can be a crucial factor for consideration of the most difficult and tragic pages of the past 20th century that have impacted on the present day.

Sources and Literature

That theme was banned under the totalitarian regime in the USSR. Only at the beginning of 90-s the issue of artificial famine, and in fact Holodomor as a genocide, was studied at the academic level. One of the first works that highlighted the circumstances of Holodomor, repressions and russification of the Ukrainians on Kuban during 30-s of the 20th century was a book of D. Bilyi "The Crimson Flying Geese". Essays from the History of the Ukrainians on Kuban" (Kyiv, 1994). S. Kultchytskyi (2005; 2007; 2008; 2013; 2015), V. Sergiychuk (2015) addressed to that issue. The sufficient historiographical material is provided in the studies and the conclusions clearly present that Holodomor was a planned action against the Ukrainians (including the Ukrainians of Kuban) and their national self-assertion. The world community's attention to the issue of genetically annihilation of the Ukrainian nation was drawn by R. Conquest when he issued a book "The Harvest of Sorrow. Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine" in 1987 (Ukrainian issue – "Harvest of Desperation", Kyiv 1993). Much attention is focused on the circumstances and development of Holodomor on Kuban, the data about significant death toll of the Ukrainian population are presented. The term "genocide" was introduced into the scientific circulation by R. Lemkin in 1944, he was the author of the related UN Declaration in 1948 and claimed that the phenomenon was corresponded with the events against the Ukrainians in 1932-33 (Serbin, 2009).

Methods

While working under the presented study, the authors used the methods of historical demography aimed at dynamic study of the ethno-demographic data in the particular historical period, based on which we were managed to demonstrate the dynamics of reduction of the Ukrainian

population on Kuban, the methods that are used for a study of various types of identity, their revolutions and changes – under the particular issue of our article – regarding the practices of the forced change of national and ethnical identity, which were applied during 1932-33-s. The similar approach and methodology is considered to be necessary for a comparable study.

Research and Results

There are a lot of resources regarding a number of the Ukrainian population on Kuban during the 18-19th century. Simultaneously, the study about the most controversial period of the 20th century, when a catastrophic decline of the official number of the Ukrainians took place, are practically absent with some exceptions. The ethnicity of Krasnodar region of the Russian Federation has still been undefined. This issue demands a particular fundamental study. We are endeavoring to identify at least the main tendencies of ethno-demographical position of the Ukrainians on Kuban in the past century. According to the general Russian census of 1897 the population of Kuban region was 1911133 men (Makedonov, 1907: 546). Due to the data of census the Ukrainian-speaking population was 49.7% or 949833 men, and Russian-speaking – 39% or 745341 men (Makedonov, 1907: 570). The percent of the Ukrainian population was dominated in the regions situated on the Black Sea. For instance, it was 81.1% or 702931 men, where the Russians were 12.5% or 108443 men in Katerinodarskyi, Yenskyi, Temriutskyi districts (Makedonov, 1907: 571). Taken into account general national policy of the imperial administration oriented on cultural restrictions of national minorities, there are all reasons to suppose that a lot of the Ukrainians were regarded as "Russians" in the official census. A lot of Ukrainian scientists had some doubts about data objectivity after its publication in 1897. For instance, O. Rusov and P. Chubynskyi regarded that the Ukrainians constituted at least 60% of population of Kuban at the beginning of the 20th century (Rudnytskyi, 1923: 232). The rapid economic development of Kuban region influenced on the considerable growth of the local population. Agricultural census of 1917 demonstrated that the population of Kuban had increased to 2415089 men, where the Ukrainians where 56%, and the Russians – 36%¹. Three revolutions and civil war at the first quarter of the 20th century had influenced on the quantity level of Kuban's population to some extent, however they didn't change a traditional ethno-demographic situation in general.

The specific data of number of Kuban's population is provided by all-union census of 1926. According to its results we can count the official number of the Ukrainians on the Northern Caucasus and particularly on Kuban. Some administrative changes were on Kuban at that time. The most territories of modern Krasnodarskyi region became a part of Kuban, Armavir and Mayikop districts after the reform of Kuban-Chornomorskyi region. Moreover, three historical Kuban districts: Yenskyi, Kushevskyi and Starominskyi were included into the Donskyi region. One of the consequences of such administration policy was a reduction of the general percent of the Ukrainian population on Kuban due to the exclusion of three districts with the dominant Ukrainian population (according to the data

¹ The State Archive of Krasnodar region. Fund P-234. List 1. File 73. Page 73.

of 1926: Yenskyi district – 74.2%, Izevskyi district – 78%, Starominskyi district – 85%)².

Determining the number of the Ukrainians on Kuban in 1926, we have counted data of Kuban, Armavir, Mayi-kop and Chornomorsk districts as well as added three abovementioned districts. As a result, the official number of the Ukrainian population within the borders of modern Krasnodarskyi region was 1644380 men or 54% of entire population in 1926. In general on a territory of Right bank of Kuban – area of the former Chornomorskaya Army (Kuban region, Yenskyi, Kushevskyi and Starominskyi districts) the Ukrainians constituted the vast majority – 1110352 men, or 73% of entire population³.

A great number of the Ukrainians among the local population should be mentioned. Generally, it constituted 27% or 153517 men. In some places it was rather high: Krasnodar – 30 %, Gariachyi Kluch – 35%, Prymorsko-Achtarsk – 64.5%, Temriuk – 32.5%, Yeisk – 41.6%, Kushevsk – 57%⁴.

The percent of the Ukrainian population considerably increased in rural areas and was 69.5% or 1490063 men (on the area of the former Chornomorskaya Army) on Kuban.

Generally, the Ukrainians of the Northern Caucasus constituted 3106652 men or 37.1%, among the rural population – 41% and they formed the biggest ethnic group in the Northern Caucasus region after the Russians (45.9%) only according to the official records in 1926⁵.

The census of 1926 had its significant shortcomings. In 1927 the official soviet publisher of the USSR – newspaper “Kharkiv news” issues a number of articles where “the Ukrainian issue” on Kuban was closely considered. They contained information that during the census of 1926 “the whole Ukrainian villages, districts, areas were regarded as Russians”. It was vividly depicted through a communication of a correspondent with a member of one the counting commission: “What is a percent of the Ukrainians in your district? – We didn’t count the Ukrainians. – How? – We have told with an instructor... and decided not to ask and to count them as the Russians” (*Lisovyj, 1927*).

According to the abovementioned information a reasonable question has been raised, why had the official number of the Ukrainians declined up to some percent in the following censuses?

In order to answer the question we need to follow collectivization influence, dispossession of kulaks, mass deportations and famine during 1929-1933 on the dynamics of Kuban population.

The policy of factual annihilation and denationalization of the Ukrainians on Kuban was caused by a deliberate policy, initiated by the highest levels of the USSR management. The fact is proved by the official orders. For instance, an order regarding deportation from the village Poltavaska was in a decree “About Bread Collection in Ukraine, the Northern Caucasus and the Western Region” of the Central Committee of the CPSU (b) and the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR: “...All inhabitants, excluding truly loyal to the soviet state and not participating into sabotage collective farmers and individual ones, are to be deported as soon as possible from the village Poltavaska (the Northern Caucasus) to the northern

regions of the USSR, and the village is to be inhabited by the diligent collective workers – the Red Army soldiers who have worked under the conditions of landless and unusable land in other regions, having transferred them all land and winter crops, buildings, tools and cattle of the deported people” (*Pyrig, 2007: 476*).

Having only limited number of the particular statistical data regarding ethno-demographic changes in that time, we can present only approximate figures related to a content of the Ukrainian population on Kuban.

The most accurate statistical data about dynamics of the Kuban population during 1929-1933-s that the authors have, are regarding Slovianskyi district of Krasnodar region⁶. Based on the data, we can extrapolate the fluctuations in population numbers on the rest of Kuban districts.

The known census data of 1923-1926-s permits to count an approximate population number, taking into account the official average population growth of 11.5% in 1929.

The number of population had dramatically declined during 1932-1933-s when famine was on the highest level. The general depopulation of Slovianskyi district in Kuban region was 80500 men, taking into account its growth of 57.3%. During 1929-1933-s Slovianskyi district was officially in a black list (on a “black board”), namely food stocks were exported, it was surrounded by the GPU Army, therefore the inhabitants were condemned to starvation. The village Poltavaska was completely deported. Having known the other regions that were in the blacklist, we can determine an average percent of vanished population. The blacklisted districts were: Nevynomytskyi, Slovianskyi, Ust’-Labynskyi, Briuchovetskyi, Kushevskyi, Pavlivskyi, Kropotkinskyi, Enskyi, Krasnodarskyi, Korenivskyi, Otradnenskyi, Tychoretskyi, Armavirskyi and Tymashevskyi (*Levchenko, 1969: 55*).

As we can see practically all Kuban region and districts that were densely inhabited by the Ukrainians, were in the toughest position. Moreover, 13 Kuban villages were under the severe punitive sanctions and almost deported. There were Kuban villages: Poltavaska, Vedmedivska, Urupska, Umanska, Nezamaevska, Temirgoivska, Ladoz’ka, Novo-Rozdestvenska, Novoderev’ankivska, Staroderev’ankivska, Staroscherbynivska, Platnyrivska (*Churkyn, 1991: 141*).

If we have taken the average level of depopulation of 45.8% in Slovianskyi district without any significant growth that the huge territory with approximate population number of 1963700 men was condemned to extinction. The Ukrainians constituted 57% or 1133700 men among that population, if we supposed their number hadn’t been changed since 1926.

The population had declined to 1064300 men till the end of 1933; nevertheless, we have all reasons to consider that the mortality rate was rather higher.

In fact famine (Holodomor) encompassed all territory of Kuban and a number of population decline in different regions fluctuated from 25% to 70-60%. The minimal number was in Zakuban villages, Maikopskyi and Araviyskyi districts, where a rate of bread collection was not so high as in the Ukrainian villages of Kuban region where a number of population decline was the highest. For instance, from 17 districts in a black list, 11 predominantly had the Ukrainian population; a number of the Ukrainians in others was also high. Furthermore, the vast

² The Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine. Fund 1. List 20. File 2894. Page 79.

³ Ibid. Fund 1. List 20. File 2894. Page 68 - 82.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid. Fund 1. List 20. File 2894. Page 82.

⁶ The State Archive of Krasnodar region. Found P-580. List 1. File 521. Page 26.

majority of Kuban villages doomed to deportation by the separate decree of the Central Committee of the CPSU (b) contained the absolute majority of the Ukrainian population. Up to 80-90% of inhabitants of those villages were vanished or deported despite the fact that a part of the villages was not included in the black list (Vedmedivska, Umanska villages, etc.). There is evidence that the population of Starokorsunskaya village had decreased from 14000 to 1000 men, namely by 93% during famine, the same data were about Voronezivskaya and Donskaya villages. In Labynska village 14000 men died from 24000, namely 58.3%, in Paschkivska village a number of population dropped from 7000 to 3500, namely to 50% (*Conquest, 1993: 312*).

From the other sources it is known that the population of Ust-Labynska village declined from 24000 to 10000 men, Dmytrivska – from 6000 to 2000, Il'ska from 3000 to 1500 (*The Foreign Office and the Famine, 1988: 186*).

Famine had decreased population of the Northern Caucasus that suffered much more than other cities of the USSR at that time. For instance, approximately 40000 people died from all population of Krasnodar that was 230000 men, 50000 died in Stavropol from the total population of 140000 (*The Foreign Office and the Famine, 1988: 301*).

There is no particular data regarding the loss of the Ukrainian population on Kuban during 1930-1933-s. One of the most famous foreign researchers of this issue Robert Conquest considers that at least 1 million died from famine in the Northern Caucasus during 1932-1933-s (*Conquest, 1993: 337*). Nevertheless, if we take into account victims during different rebellions, deported and repressed people of Kuban, the number will significantly increase.

We are endeavoring to count at least approximately loss among the Ukrainian population on Kuban at those years.

Taking into account terror and famine that were introduced against the Cossacks, the Ukrainians constituted the majority among them, and against the districts where the Ukrainians were dominated, hence the loss of the Ukrainians of the Northern Caucasus was considerably greater than among other population. Counting that famine had primarily expanded the Ukrainian districts of Kuban, the loss of the local population was at least 50-60% there. The data corresponds to the evaluation provided by the foreign researchers of famine on the Northern Caucasus and Kuban. According to the materials stored in the Hoover archive at the Stanford University (USA), 2 million people were deported from Kuban or died during 1932-33-s. Approximately 250 thousand people were executed or died in prison (*Eidelman, 1990: 28*).

There is no accurate data regarding a number of the deported people from Kuban. It is only known that 100 thousand people had been deported north by the units of the 1st brigade of convoyed army of the USSR from January to April 1933 (*Churkin, 1991: 143*).

Consequently, the loss of the Ukrainian population on Kuban is not less than 1 million 200 thousand persons during 1929-1933-s.

All facts have revealed that the soviet government had deliberately been changing an ethnical situation on Kuban during famine and mass deportations, a decree of December 20th 1932 was issued from the deputy of people's commissar of military and naval affairs M.N. Tuchachevskyi where it was ordered to begin an occupation of the deserted Kuban villages, primarily Poltavska

village, by "the politically reliable cadets and junior commanders from the soviet collective workers... with a mandatory condition that a total number should constitute at least 45% of communists and 20% of komsomol members". It was particularly underlined that "the inhabitants of the Northern Caucasus and Ukraine cannot be recruited" (*Churkin, 1991: 145*).

Thus, the targeted process of Kuban occupation by the Russians instead of the vanished Ukrainian population began. For instance, Poltavska village that had almost totally been inhabited by the Ukrainians was occupied by the terminated before the term demobilized soldiers of the Red Army from Leningradskiyi, Bilorusskiy, Moskovskiy, Pryvolzskiy military districts. Village Platnyrivska was inhabited by 22 families of the Red Army soldiers from Gorkivskiy region, 31- from Leningradskiy region, 270 – from Uralskiy region, 65 – from Moskovskiy region, 41 – from Ivanovskiy region (*Churkin, 1991: 144*).

Kuban inhabitants, who were alive, were deported from their houses into the suburbs, and newcomers were densely settled in the central parts. The Ukrainian toponyms were also changed. Poltavska village was renamed into Krasnoarmeyska, Umanska into Leningradska. Therefore ethno demographic situation on Kuban had been changing.

After 1933 all Ukrainians on Kuban were written as the Russians in the official documents, all Ukrainian publishing houses, schools, pedagogical colleges and high educational institutions were forced to use Russian language in learning. (*Bilyi, 2020: 7*).

A question has been raised whether the soviet government was successful in changing the ethnical picture of the Northern Caucasus and whether genocide at the beginning of 30-s had reached its aim of annihilation the Ukrainians as a dominant nation on Kuban.

Despite all colossal and terrible loss, a factual number of the Ukrainians on Kuban and the Northern Caucasus had remained rather high: in general approximately 50.5% on the Northern Caucasus as well as on Kuban.

Furthermore, despite the factual annihilation of the Ukrainians, the policy of deliberate census falsifications was provided. The census of 1939 demonstrated that the Ukrainians constituted 4.3% on Kuban according to the official data⁷.

The insignificant number of the officially registered Ukrainians was according to the census of 1959: the Ukrainians – 3.9% (145592 men), the Russians – 89.4% (*The results of all-Union census..., 1962: 120; 124*). The census of 1989 demonstrated the same situation: the Ukrainians – 3.8% (195883 men), the rest were the Russians (*Zastavnyy, 1992: 75*), the census of 2002 – a number of the Ukrainians had declined to 2.57% (*Rakachev, 2006: 53*).

Conclusions

As a result we come to a conclusion that a deliberate policy of physical annihilation of the Ukrainians on Kuban and russification of those who were alive was provided by the highest levels of the Soviet management during 1932-33-s. The particular statistical data provides an opportunity to see a terrible blow that was oriented on the Ukrainians of the Northern Caucasus during 1932-33-s. The means of destruction and denationalization of the Ukrai-

⁷ The State Archive of Krasnodar region. Fund P-1547. List 1. File 4. Page 3.

nian population on Kuban include physical annihilation via artificial mass famine as well as deportations, repressions, forced russification, therefore the tragedy can be completely considered as genocide. It should be particularly mentioned that the departed and dead of famine Ukrainians were substituted by the representatives of other nations, consequently a deliberate change of ethno-demographic situation occurred in the region. Simultaneously, we can determine that a real number of the Ukrainians of Krasnodar region is 10 times higher than the official statistics that was under total control of the state communist policy and ideology after 1933. The historical truth of the Ukrainians on Kuban has been closed till nowadays as neo-Stalinist ideology has prevailed in the modern Russian Federation.

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КУДИ ПОДІЛИСЬ УКРАЇНЦІ КУБАНИ?

ГОЛОДОМОР – ГЕНОЦИД НА ПІВНІЧНОМУ КАВКАЗІ (КУБАНИ) В 1932 – 33 рр.

У статті розглядається питання про практику здійснення Голодомору – геноциду, який організував та здійснив комуністичний тоталітарний режим на Кубані, більшість населення якої склали українці. Конкретні схеми проведення свідомої політики по фізичному знищенню українського населення Кубані, ліквідацію його національної свідомості, етнічної та станової (козацької) ідентичності, припинення національно-культурного розвитку, насильницька русифікація уповні вкладаються у практику геноциду, основні ознаки якого були визначені в 1948 році окремою резолюцією ООН. Автори подають конкретні дані, які свідчать про цілеспрямовану політику очільників комуністичного тоталітарного режиму, спрямовану на знищення українців на Північному Кавказі (Кубані). Наведені у статті фактологічні дані спираються на широке коло архівних джерел, свідчення очевидців та публікації у наукових дослідженнях. Авторський аналіз дозволяє зробити висновок, що в 1932-33 роках проводилась цілеспрямована політика по відношенню до українців Кубані, як складової частини загальноукраїнського національного простору, яка поєднувала як масове фізичне знищення, шляхом штучно організованого Голодомору, репресій, депортацій, так і різноманітні заходи з денационалізації українців. Ці процеси відбувалися як на території УСРР, так і в місцях компактного проживання українців за її межами, зокрема на Північному Кавказі. Конкретними наслідками цієї роботи є висвітлення заходів, які застосовував комуністичний тоталітарний режим по відношенню до українців Кубані у вищезгаданий період, які автори розцінюють як геноцид, спираючись на резолюцію ООН 1948 року, аналіз статистичних даних, які доводять масштаб фізичних втрат українців Кубані. Вважаючи, що наукова проблематика історії українців Північного Кавказу (Кубані) в період Голодомору 1932-33 років тільки починає осмислюватись, результати цієї статті вони порпонують як основу для подальших досліджень та значного більш глибокого розуміння однієї з найбільших катастроф ХХ ст. – Голодомору-геноциду української нації.

Ключові слова: Північний Кавказ; Кубань; Голодомор; Геноцид; станиця; козацтво; радянська влада.

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