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Mapping the Holodomor Complex

Victimization, Sacralization and Demonization in the Memory Wars
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Figure 1 The memorial statue "Bitter Memory of Childhood" in front of the entrance to the National Museum "Holodomor Victims Memorial" in Kiev, Ukraine.

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Abstract

In the context of the ongoing memory and history war between Ukraine, Russia and the West, and the increased politicization of history displayed in museums, this thesis seeks to identify and analyze national narratives of the Holodomor in feature films, documentaries, monuments, and museums. The historical event of the Holodomor, which is called an artificial or man-made famine, occurred in Soviet Ukraine during the years of 1932–33. There is currently a debate concerning intentionality, number of direct deaths due to hunger and the role of the perpetrators where various numbers of dead range from 3.9 million to 10 million. The study itself can be characterized as part of Eastern-European Memory Studies and applies theories by Alexander Etkind, James E. Young, Astrid Erll and Aleida and Jan Assmann among others.

The thesis also includes the analysis of debates on the Internet concerning fascist aspects of the OUN (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists) and UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army), which allegedly collaborated with the Nazis in the massacre of Jews and Poles during the occupation of Ukraine in the Second World War. The narratives of the Holodomor and that of nationalist war criminality during the Second World War seems to be clashing. When one narrative is brought into use in for example film, the other is used to delegitimize and to some extent demonize the group deploying it.

Some of the findings show that the narratives employed in the film *Bitter Harvest* and the documentary *Harvest of Despair* are of nationalistic character and fronts the iconic number of 7–10 million. We see that the filmic depictions, and to some extent, the Holodomor Museum in Kiev are all set in an antagonistic mode of remembering, demonizing the Russian other and describing the famine as genocide against the Ukrainian people. Other findings worth noting is that of the recontextualizing of images from the 1921–22 Russian famine in *Harvest of Despair*. These images of famine victims, mostly children, are used as evidence for the Holodomor of 1932–33.

Further analysis of the Holodomor memorial complex shows that it is a modern and visually rich experience and that its online presence is up to date. Especially the virtual tour enables visitors from all over the world to experience the museum. Transnational monuments in North America are closely connected to the complex in Kiev and the pluri-medial context of the films, monuments and museums shows their potential to become powerful memory-making media.

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

"This provocative outcry about genocide ... has been elevated to the top government level in contemporary Ukraine. Does this mean that they have even outdone the Bolshevik propaganda mongers with their rakish juggling?" Solzhenitsyn[1] asked.

He added that "western people" - unlike Russians - had had little exposure to "monstrous lies", and were therefore more willing to believe historical errors. "They have never really got into our history. All they need is a loony fable," he wrote. (Harding 2008)

The above citations originate from an article published in *The Guardian* in 2008 by Luke Harding, which includes comments[2] from the famous Soviet dissident, novelist, and historian Alexander Solzhenitsyn on George W. Bush attendance in 2008 to a commemoration in Kiev of the victims of the Holodomor.[3] This context and Solzhenitsyn's statements will serve as an entry point and prism for this study as it perfectly captures one side of the debate on whether the famine constitutes genocide or not. More importantly, it illustrates how the words of an authority can be instrumentalized to shape public views of historical events. However, my main task will not be to ponder the question of genocide in relation to the famine, but instead look at its constructed images in various media. Furthermore, I look at the construction of the fascist image of western Ukraine in memory narratives because this image can be seen as the negative to that of the image of Ukrainians as victims of a "hidden Holocaust." The image as victims of foreign state terror and the mirror image as Nazi collaborators are important tools in what can be termed as a memory war between Ukraine and Russia that has only escalated since the Euromaidan revolution in Ukraine in 2014. Since the Orange Revolution the Holodomor narrative has been reconstructed in museums, monuments and even in a western film production. While Russia has been producing many big-budget films depicting the glorious battles and sacrifices in the Second World War in the last decade, we now see Ukrainian national film production starting to pump out their own depictions of their national heroes and even more importantly that of the nation's victimhood.

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[1] A short note on transliteration of Russian and Ukrainain names: I have used the more simplified version of the names. For example, Plokhy instead of Plokhii.

[2] The original article by Solzhenitsyn is titled 'Swallowing Shameless Lies' and found at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2008/apr/03/swallowingshamelesslies

[3] The Holodomor was a famine that struck Ukrainian SSR and other parts of the Soviet Union during the years of 1932 to 1933 claiming millions of dead in its wake.

THEME AND BACKGROUND

This study has emerged from my interest in Ukrainian and Russian memory and history, more specifically from my reflections on historical works on the Holodomor and the current crisis and conflict in Ukraine, which involves the Russian Federation and the West (North America and EU) in a geopolitical struggle. This study could be defined as entrenched in the eastern-European branch of memory studies,[4] though from a western media perspective.

As I began to develop my thesis I possessed limited knowledge of those topics but the deeper I immersed myself in them, the more complex and confusing it all became (and of course all the more intriguing). Upon first learning about the Holodomor back in 2009 through the memoir *Execution by Hunger: The Hidden Holocaust* by famine survivor Miron Dolot from 1985, it baffled me that such a cataclysmic event could be so unknown in our part of the world. It scared me that it was possible to cover up this staggering amount of dead for such a long period of time. Then on the other hand the faint possibility that this was a mad fairytale invented by an Ukrainian propaganda machine equally disturbed me. Indeed, the identification of the existence of a Ukrainian propaganda machine by Solzhenitsyn in the Guardian article was compelling. Usually when you hear the word "propaganda" you immediately connect it with Nazi Empire or the Soviet Union/Russia. What exactly makes the Ukrainian version different from the Russian, one might ask? Why would they need propaganda anyway, aren't they de-communizing their nation to tear away from their Soviet and Russified past? These are surely difficult questions to answer. Solzhenitsyn then lead me further into confusion when I coincidentally stumbled upon another quotation by him, this time inside the dust jacket of historian Robert Conquest's book *Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* from 1986:

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[4] Professor of History and Europe-Russia relations Alexander Etkind seems to be at the forefront concerning eastern-European memory studies. *The Journal of Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society* founded and edited by political scientist Andreas Umland is another valuable source in English for diverse studies on Russia and Ukraine.

"Conquest's excellently and professionally written book *The Harvest of Sorrow* investigates the most serious, although up to now least researched…crime of Leninist-Stalinist communism: its war against the peasantry of the U.S.S.R. which, before its destruction, constituted 82 percent of the entire population."

Apparently back in 1986 Solzhenitsyn did not call what Conquest termed a "terror-famine" a "loony fable". Earlier on I had questioned myself what the former Soviet dissident and Gulag-author had said about the Holodomor and I naively assumed that he would condemn it to the same level as other Stalinist crimes. While he did so in 1986, twenty years later his views had seemingly changed in favor of Putin's government. Or had they really? It is worth notifying that his harsh comments in *The Guardian* on the Holodomor where made with regards to a state-initiated commemoration, and not the more objective historical work of someone like Conquest. Even Conquest's work has been heavily criticized for relying too much on rumors, hearsay, and dubious witness testimonies. What then is the difference between the two narratives that made Solzhenitsyn spit vitriol for a global public and who do they belong to? Part of this thesis's goal is to illuminate exactly this. After reading more on the topic of Solzhenitsyn's vast work through reception and memory studies, in Elisa Kriza's illuminating doctoral work *Alexander Solzhenitsyn: Cold War Icon, Gulag Author, Russian Nationalist?* from 2014, my insight increased on the current Russian view on past Soviet crimes, like the controversial artificial famine in Ukraine. I then understood that to use Solzhenitsyn's work and views as a prism for understanding todays political climate would prove to be very fruitful.

Political and historical background

The contemporary political background for this study involves the two recent revolutions in Ukraine, the first one in 2004, named the Orange Revolution, and the second in 2014, the so-called Maidan Revolution. The latter eventually lead to escalated public outpouring of anger and frustration with the corrupt oligarch and pro-Russian leadership and culminated in a divided Ukraine with the west and center part waging war against the eastern part. Most relevant for this thesis is the violence against Soviet monuments of historic personas like Lenin, entitled *Leninfall* by Russian-American historian Serhii Plokhy (2017) and the construction of a Holodomor museum and monuments. Volodymyr Ihschenko (2011), a senior lecturer on sociology in Kiev, highlights the anti-Communist politics of Yuschenko's presidency and points to two main strategies employed in his politics of memory and following "war of memorials:" *Victimization*, linked to the emphasis on the Holodomor and the *glorification* of

interwar Ukrainian nationalist "freedom-fighters," who fought the Nazis on side and the Soviets on the other. These memory politics are part of what lead up to the revolution in 2014. This finally resulted in the controversial departure of President Viktor Yanukovych and was due to his policy in conjunction with Russia's leader Putin of trying to move Ukraine closer to Russia's influence, instead of signing an association agreement with the EU (Plokhy 2017). This was in stark contrast with some part of the Ukrainian peoples wishes and hopes for a better future by becoming integrated in the European Union. Divided as independent Ukraine ultimately did become, the western part and the center of the nation mostly stands for pro-EU and western ideals, while the eastern part feels strongly linked to Russia, and the most extreme view is to eventually secede from Ukraine and become part of Russia, or Novorosiia, which according to Ukrainian writer Yuri Scherbak can be described as:

> …a fictitious pseudo-state formation that has never existed, for the purpose of slicing the largest and most developed eight (sic!) oblasts from Ukraine. Capturing and annexing these oblasts under the banner of "*Russkii miir*" (the Russian World) would cut Ukraine off from the Black and Azov Seas, transforming it into a marginal non-viable stump of a former developed country. (Scherbak (2016:72)

The ideologically loaded rhetoric of Novorosiia then seems to be an invention of the Kremlin apparatus with roots in Russia's imperial past with the goal of reclaiming former parts of the empire, perfectly exemplified by the annexation of Crimea with the invasion of "the green little men" being soldiers allegedly from Russia, but not wearing any insignia on their uniforms. The Russian government and elite has long claimed that Crimea historically belonged to Russia, but one the methods used to take it back was to apply a highly aggressive propaganda and disinformation campaign (here we hear talk of "the black little men"):

> From day one of the conflict, Russia employed the poisonous weapon of mass disinformation, announcing that "the Ukrainian Nazis and banderites" who took power in Kyiv with the aid of the US and NATO allegedly wanted to destroy the Russian-speaking population of the Donbas, to forcibly Ukrainize this region, transforming the "glorious Russian Donbas land" into a field of bloody crimes. Rhetorically and methodologically this was typical Goebbels-like propaganda, extensively used during the Communist time, a popular appeal that employed the same old stereotypes, which targeted the Ukrainian national liberation movements, OUA and UPA, during and after the Second World War in western Ukraine. (Sherbak 2016:72)

While there might be some elements of truth in such conspiracy theories like that of the US and NATO installing Nazi and fascists to power in Kyiv, it arguably says more about the contemporary politics and mindsets in Russia, though of course not just there, Russian propaganda easily spreads this narrative to the West, where it is read and believed uncritically as well. Part of the reason why Russia acts in this aggressive way is the belief that it is surrounded by enemies who wishes to destroy its nation, and if you mix in a Nazi threat and the crucifixion of babies[5] you are henceforth allowed to do anything in self-defense. Here we see the use of a propaganda style stemming from the First World War where German soldiers were reported to have impaled children on their bayonets, cutting their hands off and even eating them.[6] This kind of fabricated horror stories were used to demonize the enemy, enrage the public and stir up lust for war. In the quotation above we saw Sherbak compare the Russian disinformation campaign to "Goebbels-like propaganda". In this manner Sherbak himself draws parallels between Russia and Nazi Germany, the point here is not that of Sherbak being right or not, but to illustrate the act of linking contemporary people or groups to criminal pasts. It is perhaps possible that these types of acts may divert attention from the real ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in eastern Ukraine, with 10 090 people killed and about 23 966 injured from April 2014 until May 2017, as reported by the UN.[7] The same report tells that about 1.6 million people has lost or fled their homes, crucial infrastructure damaged, not to forget the financial crisis making a hard life for normal people even harder. Also consider all the citizens, both young and middle aged, from both sides sent to fight and die against their fellow countrymen. These facts all gets a bit drowned out in the media hysterics speaking of fascists and Nazis from the past coming to eat your babies.

We may state that the past surely still is alive in the present, which takes us to the historical background of the Holodomor. While the famine that occurred in Soviet Ukraine is known as the Holodomor it is known in other terms such as *killer famine* or *terror-famine* as used by Robert Conquest in 1986 or more recently the term *red famine* can be found in the title of the

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[5] During the war in the Donbas (eastern Ukraine) region in 2014 the Russian state news channel "Channel One" reported on Ukrainian soldiers crucifying and executing a little boy to a wooden board in front of his mother's eyes. See for example an article on this in *The Washington Post* at:
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/04/08/russian-media-fabricated-story-about-a-child-getting-killed-by-ukrainian-shelling-the-bbc-says/?utm_term=.e0ca72d37ba3
[6] Political writer and activist Arthur Ponsonby wrote about such lies used by British propagandists in his book Falsehood *in War-time : Containing an Assortment of Lies Circulated throughout the Nations during the Great War* from 1928.
[7] Data taken from UN report, available at: https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/06/559322-conflict-ukraine-enters-fourth-year-no-end-sight-un-report

new book by historian Anne Applebaum from 2017.[8] The famine itself took place in the years of 1932 to 1933 when millions of people allegedly died. What is crucial to understand about the Holodomor are its complex causes. It has repeatedly been attributed the term "man-made famine", which points to its artificial nature. If it indeed was man-made is debated to this day. To get a well-informed overview one could for example read history professor Hiroaki Kuromiya's article *The Soviet Famine of 1932–1933 Reconsidered* from 2008. In it he looks at intentionality; was the famine deliberately created to starve millions in the Soviet Union opposed to collectivization? The other aspect looked at is ethnicity; was the famine directed solely at Ukrainians? Some of the sources laid out by Kuromiya is a book by historians of Soviet Agriculture R. W. Davies and S. G. Wheatcroft, who in unison wrote the book *The Years of Hunger: Soviet Agriculture, 1931–1933* in 2004. Their book apparently stirred up debates on the journal *Europe-Asia Studies* between said historians and historian Mark B. Tauger and economics professor Michael Ellmann. Kuromiya shows how Tauger has estimated that the crops of 1932 were exceptionally small, then he interferes to say that Taugers findings:" …does not preclude the man-made nature of the Great Famine: if the Soviet government had been willing to accept external aid or shifted trade priority, the famine could have been averted or would have been much more limited in nature." (Kuromiya 2008:663) This and other examples is given to illustrate what could have causes the famine and if there exists evidence of a premeditated plan of Stalin to inflict hunger and starvation on the Soviet Union. In his conclusion, Kuromiya writes:

> Although Stalin intentionally let starving people die, it is unlikely that he intentionally caused the famine to kill millions of people. It is also unlikely that Stalin used famine as a cheap alternative to deportation. True, the famine affected Ukraine severely; true, too, that Stalin distrusted the Ukrainian peasants and Ukrainian nationalists. Yet not enough evidence exists to show that Stalin engineered the famine to punish specifically the ethnic Ukrainians. The famine did not take place in an international political vacuum. The sharp rise in the foreign threat was likely to have been an important aggravating factor. (Kuromiva 2008:673–674)

Kuromiya's conclusion needs to be considered in my study as it shows that scholarly research cannot show to any definitive evidence of a plan to execute millions of people by starvation. While the aspects of intentionality and ethnicity are of significance, the demographic research

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[8] The full title is *Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine.*

and the varying death toll numbers plays an important factor. In fact, the numbers of dead due to starvation and the question of genocide is still a source of controversy todayin both the mass media and in scholarly literature.[9] This point is aptly illustrated by historian David R. Maples in his book *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine* from 2007. Denial of genocides is as we see not restricted to the Holocaust, though questioning the death-toll number of the Holodomor does not necessarily amount to absolute denial. Imagine if the current German government would deny and deny that 6 million was murdered during the Holocaust and question that the Jews as a race were singled out for extermination, there would undoubtedly be a great outcry and scandal. This is still not the case with denial of the Holodomor as that has been the attitude of Russia towards Ukraine since the famine culminated in millions of dead until today, and this has not stirred up great international uproars anywhere. To be fair, the contemporary Russian government or any serious historian do not deny that the famine ever took place in the Ukrainian USSR. But to some extent, denial of the Holodomor of 1932–1933 as an artificial famine directed specifically at the Ukrainian peasantry (or Ukrainian people) is still dominating Russian politics and is according to Marples (2017) the dominating view in North American academia. As of today, there is still no consensus on these numbers or on the genocide question. To further complicate the issue, the Holodomor is an event that is often likened to the Holocaust in its inhumanity and death toll but is at the same time overlooked in comparison and was denied by Soviet authorities from its occurrence until the late stages of *glasnost* (Sysyn 2015:8). In contrast to this, I discovered that education on the Holocaust is lacking in Ukraine, as shown by Swedish historian Johan Dietsch,[10] presumably because too much focus on such an iconic and sacred evil in Ukraine would minimize the evil of Holodomor. The thesis will take this point into consideration together with the downplaying of Ukrainian nationalist's involvement in Jewish massacres in Ukraine during the Second World War.[11] Here we perhaps arrive at the core of what can best be described as a memory war between Russia and Ukraine, which includes the rehabilitation of war criminals on both sides and on many discursive levels (monumental, political, filmic, mass media).

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[9] See for example Kulchytsky's articles on this subject available at https://day.kyiv.ua/en/article/topic-day/how-west-interprets-ukrainian-holodomor and https://day.kyiv.ua/en/article/topic-day/how-west-interprets-ukrainian-holodomor-2

[10] See examples of this in his article on the historiography of the Holodomor 'Struggling with a "Nuremberg Historiography" of the Holodomor.'

[11] See Cohen's article 'The Historian Whitewashing Ukraine's Past' for a critical look on Viatrovych and the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory.

To understand how and why the famine happened is without doubt a difficult historical inquiry and is not within the purview of the present study, still, I think it is important to have some basic knowledge on the topic. When you look at the sheer number of articles and books, ranging from scientific works to articles in newspapers and webzines on the Holodomor, you understand that it is a complex event studied from many different angles. On the amount of work done on the Holodomor and on the question of genocide the Ukrainian historian Stanislav Kulchytsky has written the following:

> The number of publications on the Ukrainian Holodomor is more than 20,000. It is one of the most researched subjects in the world historiography. Have the researchers convinced the public that the Holodomor was genocide? The findings the US Congress Commission on the Ukraine Famine made in 1988 say that it was genocide. However, the US government does not officially confirm this due to the position of the Russian Federation, which rejects this qualification of the famine. In November 2006 the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine declared the Holodomor as an act of genocide. Yet the UN General Assembly does not recognize this. (Kulchytsky 2015, not paginated)

I presume one can never come to a final conclusion on the subject unless we discover how to travel back in time and see with our own eyes what really happened. Until then, we can only study the reconstructions of the past by historians and other scholars using available data from archives and the data from the minds (memories) of witnesses. And here is the rub; historians who mainly uses demographic data to reconstruct the Holodomor event seems to differ in their conclusions with those who mainly rely on witness testimonials as source. I shall return to this point later in the text. Meanwhile we can say that the form of the historical monograph is the most recognized scientific way to reconstruct the past in a coherent narrative which then can be read and interpreted by an audience. But there are other and perhaps more powerful and imaginative ways of doing this and that is through fictional literature or film. Thus, on this historical and political background my initial aim is to study how the cultural and collective memory of the Holodomor is constructed through film, museums, monuments, and literature since the Maidan Revolution of 2014 (also known as the Revolution of Dignity), and in addition the transnational connection found in the monuments in North America (Canada and USA). Iconography in film and photographs, monuments and museums, webpages and literature are therefore my choice data for studying the production of the cultural memory of the Holodomor.

THESIS, SCOPE, METHOD AND STRUCTURE

Together with the inquires mentioned above I have as main question of this thesis how the tragic event Holodomor is constructed as a counter memory or counter monument to the iconic and hegemonic memory of the Holocaust. Therefore, narrative is at the core of this study. At a later stage in my study, while analyzing the film *Bitter Harvest* (Mendeluk 2017), a second question crystalized: What are similarities between mediated versions of the Holocaust and the Holodomor? Are we perhaps witnessing a form of *iconoclash* at work in the cultural memory space? Iconoclash is a term introduced by sociologist Bruno Latour in 2002 and is tied to an exhibition by the same name, with the intent to complicate the term *iconoclasm*. Iconoclasm is the conscious decision of destroying idols, monuments or icons and Latour (2002:16) thus defines iconoclash via iconoclasm:

> Iconoclasm is when we know what is happening in the act of breaking and what the motivations for what appears as a clear project of destruction are; iconoclash, on the other hand, is when one does not know, one hesitates, one is troubled by an action for which there is no way to know, without further enquiry, whether it is destructive or constructive. (Latour 2002:16)

Latour's term is intriguing and offers new ways to think about symbolic violence. In my case the deconstruction of Lenin monuments in Ukraine would be interesting to look at from that angle. However, the main focus of this analysis will be on *sites of memory* of the Holodomor, including cultural, transnational, and counter monuments. The term *les lieux de mémoire* originates from Pierre Nora. I will not use the term sites of memory in the exact sense that Pierre Nora thinks of these sites. Instead I think it is more fruitful to apply Professor Alexander Etkind theories. Etkind studies monuments and memories of Soviet state terror and has an interesting new theoretical perspective for studying monuments that is more in line with our information age:

> Monuments are inconspicuous if people are not talking and writing about them; mourning rites are incomplete if they do not crystallize in monuments. The interaction between texts and monuments makes the core of cultural memory, *but this interaction has not been adequately explored in memory studies*. (Etkind 2013:177, my emphasis)

Prompted by Etkind theory, I set out to explore the interaction between texts (soft cultural memory) and monuments (hard cultural memory). In this context I will include mediated

versions of the past such as film and view them as potential sites of memory. I propose to think of filmic representations of the past as *celluloid monuments,* this is inspired in some part by Etkind's distinction and interaction between soft and hard cultural memory (a more detailed description of my own theorizing is found in chapter 2). Professor James E. Young's definitions of counter-memorials are also taken into consideration as they seem to be applicable to the Holodomor memorial complex. Furthermore, I apply Astrid Erll's concept of pluri-medial networks (Erll 2010) to better illuminate the Holodomor narratives and modes of remembering in different media. For a critical discussion of memory study theories, I will take memory scholar Dagmar Brunow's (2015) discussion of transnational memories and the notion of the iconic turn into consideration. Prominent memory theorists Jan and Aleida Assmans theories of cultural and collective memories will of course be considered and Aleida Assmanns theory of global memory and icons as they are relevant when considering the global memory wars. All these theories, terms and their applications will be further explained and discussed in chapter two.

I must necessarily take the western viewpoint since that is where I have spent most of my life. This choice of view is also due to language restrictions and because a considerable amount of research and memory work and memory making on the famine was and is still being done by western scholars[12] and recently by film producers as well. To try to counterbalance this, I have used work done by Ukrainian and Russian scholars writing in English and other translated Russian and Ukrainian sources such as newspapers, webzines, and videos. Another important restrictions to this study is that I have not visited one of the main analytical objects, which is a museum located in Ukraine. Therefore, I'm restricted to analyzing information found on the Internet and virtual tour videos of the museum. A final note on this is the fact that my wife is from western Ukraine and that this fact may have an impact on my view of the topic, though I strive to uphold objectivity as an ideal, but I realize that this is much harder to achieve in reality.

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[12] See for example Anne Applebaum *Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine* from 2017; Timothy Snyder *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* from 2010; Robert Conquest *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* from 1986.

When it comes down to objects for analysis I will partly focus on semi-historical documentaries on the Holodomor produced by people from the Ukrainian diaspora [13] in Canada. The documentary I shall mainly focus on is *Harvest of Despair* from 1984, but I will briefly look at the newer documentary *Genocide Revealed* from 2009, but then through a secondary source since I have not yet watched it myself. Reception and discussion of these films is scarce, and the latter film doesn't even have an IMDb entry, is not to be found on any streaming services or YouTube and the only way to get it is to order it from the producer's own webpage. It is strange that there exists no online version of the documentary considering the aim of the producers is bringing the topic of the famine to a bigger audience. I guess the demand for the documentary is not that great and that funding for the project plays a part. Canadian Ukrainians produced both films and director Yuri Luhovny was involved in both (he was director for *Genocide Revealed)*. The latter documentary features newly shot eyewitness testimonies of famine survivors and was shot in Ukraine (which may be used for authenticating the genocide claims in a both a political and historical context). Concerning the *Harvest of Despair* documentary, one can find a lot of relevant data for narrative analysis on the webpage of The Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre (UCRDC). It has a vivid description of the Holodomor on their webpage, which begins as follows:

> It is called the forgotten holocaust - a time when Stalin was dumping millions of tons of wheat on Western markets, while in Ukraine, men, women, and children were dying of starvation at the rate of 25,000 a day, 17 human beings a minute. Seven to ten million people perished in a famine caused not by war or natural disasters, but by ruthless decree.[14]

This bit of text holds part of one of the Holodomor narratives which will be scrutinized further on in this text. The second item for analysis, a Hollywood-styled (though not produced in Hollywood) movie named *Bitter Harvest* was released in 2017 by Canadian director George Mendeluk which tells a fictionalized love story with the event of the Holodomor as historical background. I have earlier in my studies found that the possible objective of this film could be to depict the famine as genocide and ultimately showing Stalin and the Bolshevik leadership as evil agents and thereby implying that the current Russian Federation undermines genocidal acts

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[13] The Ukrainian diaspora consist of émigrés, some with background from the OUN (Organization of Ukrainian Nationaists) and the UPA (Ukrainian Insurgent Army), that fled to the West (Germany, Canada, USA) after the famines and Second World War. Many became part of the academic community of these countries and many seem to support the idea of the Holodomor as genocide. See historian Per Rudling's article 'Multiculturalism, Memory, and Ritualization: Ukrainian Nationalist Monuments in Edmonton, Alberta' for more background on this.

[14] http://www.ucrdc.org/Film-Harvest_of_Despair.html

of the past.[15] In effect, this establishes a link to the current crisis in Ukraine. Gong back in time we have the earliest film depicting the Holodomor, named *Holod-33* and directed by Oles Yanchuk, a Ukrainian production from 1991. In 2014, another Ukrainian film tackling the Holodomor was released, titled *The Guide* by Oles Sanin. These films will not be given much space in the analysis as they fall outside the time period of this study. Another reason is because I strive to focus on films and literature produced in the West. However, brief references will be made to them to compare to *Bitter Harvest*.

In the second and third chapter I will outline the most relevant literature and at the same time clarify definitions of the chosen theories and methods.

Chapter three contains the identification and analysis of Holodomor narratives in *Bitter Harvest* and *Harvest of Despair* and illustrates intertextual connections to famous Holocaust depictions.

The fourth chapter of this text then goes on to the analysis of what I propose to call the *Holodomor monument complex,* which also includes celluloid monuments and illuminates interactions between hard and soft cultural memory that are to be found on various locations in Ukraine as well as in the West. Narrative theory will be used in the analysis of the complex. In this regard, memory scholar Anette Kuhn (2010:298) points out that narrative is of high importance when it comes to cultural memory and the telling of memory stories, which is very relevant for studying a memorial museum.

In the conclusive chapter I will sum up the analysis of all objects. This is done to identify differences or changes in the Holodomor narrative and cultural memory since Ukraine's Orange Revolution of 2004-2005, still with most weight on the time period since the Maidan Revolution of Dignity of 2014. And with this in mind we can ask as a concluding question: What kind of story or narrative of the Holodomor is told by the Institute of National Memory of Ukraine or in the film *Bitter Harvest* and perhaps even more importantly, whose memories do they display? What group do they stem from?

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[15] [15] I did a small-scale analysis of the film *Bitter Harvest* for a term paper for HIF-3111—Manufacturing Monsters: Othering through Constructing Evil in the spring of 2017. On the one hand I looked at the pluri-medial contexts of the film and on the other at the construction of enemy images and images of innocence and victimhood of Ukraine

Relevance of study

Most people I ask here in Norway have never heard of the Holodomor, so my hope is that this thesis will create increased awareness on the topic, at least in the region of North Norway, which borders to the Russian Federation. Furthermore, I believe this study can contribute to the understanding of the political conflict in Ukraine on a different level and in addition show how the media and memory war operates through different representations not only limited to mass media platforms like TV-news, newspapers, and television, but also including documentaries, fictional films, and monuments. Perhaps of greatest importance when studying media representation of famines is to look away from the past and into the present and try to discern what exactly has changed in media reporting on humanitarian disasters. Take for instance the current threat of famine looming over the population of Yemen due to a military blockade. Will they receive much needed help in time or will they also become new iconic media representations of the past long after the event? Lastly, I believe, as a librarian and information worker that the literature referred to herein may be useful to others interested in the topic. I have surely benefited from studying the numerous bibliographical lists of journal articles and books. While there exist some previous studies from the angle of memory, media, and film studies on the Holodomor, they are few and scattered. This takes us to the subject of literature and existing research on the topic.

Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORETICAL MUSINGS AND DEFINITIONS

In this section I shall review and discuss relevant literature and terms connected to the topic of my study is starting with definitions of the Holodomor and existing memory work on the Holodomor before going on to literature on memory studies. But some clarification on geographical issues is first in order. First, when I use the term "the West" I speak of Northern America and the European Union. I needed to clarify this since it could be confused with the western part of Ukraine. Another important point is that during Soviet times Ukraine did not exist as an independent nation state, except for a few years after the Russian revolution (Conquest 1986:42). Since then Ukraine did not gain independence until 1991. Of course, this detail further complicates the question of genocide as Ukraine was submerged into the Soviet Union at the time of the famine.

MEANING AND ETYMOLOGICAL ORIGIN OF THE HOLODOMOR

I have found that Canadian-American history professor emeritus John-Paul Himka gives a very detailed explanation of the term Holodomor in his review article *Encumbered Memory: The Ukrainian Famine of 1932–33* where he focuses on four historical/memory works on the Holodomor. Therein he refers to historian Norman N. Naimark who names it the "Ukrainian killer famine" upon which Himka (2013:420) explains:" …is actually an approximate translation of *holodomor* (from *holod,* famine, and, *moryty, kill).*" Himka further notes that its origins are obscure, that it was coined by a writer named Ivan Drach and appeared in print in 1988, but then states that the term is older than that. Himka says it is found in the foreword of a novel about the famine from 1963 called *The Yellow Prince* by author Vasyl' Barka. Then he claims he has found evidence that it could be even older still; he says that in 1944 a Ukrainian nationalist used the word Holodomor as a pen name while in battle and because of that it may have a Western Ukrainian (Galician) origin:

> If it is indeed of Galician origin, I surmise that the word "Holodomor" arose under the influence of a satirical name for the old Austrian crownland, known in German as Galizien und Lodomerien; wags

renamed it Golicja I Glodomeria, which in Polish signifies a place where people go naked and die of hunger. (Himka 2013:421)

Adding to this, Himka notes that a testimony from 2007 includes the words of a woman who heard it being used by her father at the time of the famine but adds that such testimonies cannot always be trusted. Even though its origins go way back Himka notes that it only started to gain momentum from 1988 and onwards and that in 2007 it was in use everywhere.

Then we come to the significance of the scope of the Holodomor in its representation as memory text in film, monuments, and museum. By scope I'm referring to the aspects of time-periods and region that lies within its definition. It's on this point the term Holodomor often becomes unclear and inconsistent. This is due to the occurrence of not just one famine, but three in the periods of 1921–22, 1932–33 and 1946–1947,[16] which we will see is also manifested at the memorial complex in Kiev in the form of engraved text on the central monument on the site.

The images of nakedness and hunger can often be seen in photographs of the Holodomor where dead skeletal bodies lie strewn by the roadside to later be carried off by carts to a mass grave. The nakedness can also refer to that of being stripped of all material wealth, food, and property, which was the fate of the *kulaks*[17] during the collectivization and the following de-kulakization in the Soviet Union under Stalin's rule. This enemy image is of importance in this study as it is found in the narrative of the film *Bitter Harvest* and shall therefore need some further elaboration. In short, a kulak was a wealthy farmer which supposedly exploited the poor, for instance for work on their farmlands. The kulak was also rumored to be a saboteur of harvest machinery and actively undermining the agricultural revolution. They were therefore seen as a significant problem during the collectivization and five-year plan of Stalin. The communists in power, were then able to transform the term kulak into an elastic enemy image to label anyone who refused to join the collective, even though they were in fact utterly poor farmers. In a way the destruction of the kulak can be likened to that of the Jews but there were certain important differences. Both the Jew and the kulak were looked upon as vermin and treated as such. They

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[16] See the article 'Ukraine Suffered Three Terror Famines under the Soviets not just one' Available at http://euromaidanpress.com/2017/11/27/ukrainians-suffered-three-terror-famines-under-the-soviets-not-just-one-euromaidan-press/
[17] See for example Applebaum (2017) or Conquest (1986) for more detailed accounts on collectivization and the public enemy image of the kulak in the Soviet Union.

were both stripped of property and wealth and often sent to concentration camps (Gulag[18] in the Soviets Union) or executed on the spot. The main difference lies in that the Jewish people were persecuted for their ethnicity while a kulak could be of any race or nationality; the racial aspect was not of any great significance. In Stalin's war on the peasantry the kulaks were exterminated as a class, not as a people. If we then move on to the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada and the Ukrainian government, whose ultimate goal is to cement the Holodomor of 1932-33 as an ethnic genocide of the Ukrainian people, then we can see why they encounter such difficulties in this task, especially if they want it recognized as genocide in the eyes of a global public. If Stalin's war on Ukraine was not specifically directed at the Ukrainian people, but at the peasantry (or anyone specified as *kulaks*) as a class, the label of genocide cannot easily be applied to the Holodomor since in fact other ethnicities also suffered. This agenda is still important for Ukraine and during all the spectacle and political instrumentalization of history and memories, the victims who went through hell is still somehow lingering in purgatory. A good example of this is seen in an interview of the director of documentary *Genocide Revealed* from 2011 Yurij Luhovy, were he says that many of the famine survivors were reluctant to be interviewed because they were afraid of what would happen to them afterwards (Luhovy 2011:14:49-15:29). In a personal conversation I had with a person from Dnipropetrovsk in Ukraine (which was a area severely hit by the famine of 1932–33) who had spoken to a survivor that barely ever wanted to communicate memories, the person explained it was just too horrible a process to recall the trauma. This illustrates how big a role fear and horror play in the lives of famine survivors. They seem to be trapped in a bubble of the past were the perpetrators are still in power, ready to silence them if they should communicate their memories. Such witness testimonials in documentaries are therefore very important for documenting suppressed memories of subaltern genocides and later we shall see other examples of such memories struggling to disrupt the level set by the hegemonic Holocaust memories.

UKRAINIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY AND VICTIMIZATION

A lot has been said and written about memory studies and it is a vast transdisciplinary field which includes contributions from political science, media studies, psychology, literary studies, and others. Memory is furthermore connected with a wide range of phenomena. In my case the

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[18] Gulag was a network of labor and concentration camps throughout the Soviet Union. See for instance Anne Applebaum's *Gulag: A History* (2003) or Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* (1974) for detailed accounts.

phenomena under scrutiny are representations of the traumatic event(s) of the Holodomor(s).[19] But what makes memory studies distinctive from history studies? In the intro to the anthology *Collective Memory Reader* Olick and Levy observes that the study of memory is closely linked to the Holocaust and the production of films and literature depicting the Holocaust since the 1970s and the memory boom[20] (Olick et al 2011). One aspect that stands out in memory studies is the increased focus on visual representations. It also includes the study of memories rendered through historical fiction since such forms of memorization arguably has a strong impact on our view of past events. The French historian Pierre Nora writing about *sites of memory* said this about the relationship between memory and history:

> Memory and history, far from being synonymous, appear now to be in fundamental opposition. Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived. History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer…History, because it is an intellectual and secular production, calls for analysis and criticism. Memory installs remembrance within the sacred; history, always prosaic, releases it again. Memory is blind to all but the group it binds-which is to say, as Maurice Halbwachs has said, that there are as many memories as there are groups, that memory is by nature multiple and yet specific; collective, plural, and yet individual. History, on the other hand, belongs to everyone and to no one, whence its claim to universal authority. Memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images, and objects; history binds itself strictly to temporal continuities, to progressions and to relations between things. Memory is absolute, while history can only conceive the relative. (Nora 1989:8-9)

When Nora says that history belongs to everyone and no one in form of physical or electronic documents, does the same apply to memories that are recorded, either as a source in a history book or as witness testimonial in a documentary? That was just my thought when I recalled that Robert Conquests history book of the Holodomor *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* relies heavily on witness testimonies recorded by fellow historian James Mace, which of course owes to the unavailability of archives at the time. But when does memory seize to be memory and become

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[19] The famine that occurred in Soviet Ukraine during the early 1920s and during the Nazi occupation are often also included together with the Great Famine of 1932-33. A recurring problem, according to Himka (2013), is that documentaries such as *Harvest of Despair* recycle famine images from the 1920s and present them as evidence of the Holodomor of 1932-33. In this thesis the main focus is on the "second Holodomor" from 1932-33.

[20] The memory boom refers to the increased focus on memory in academia and society which began in the 1990s.

history? Is it when it is placed in the context of a history text and as such is reconstructed therein and now belongs to everyone to read and interpret? Nora (1989:9) goes on to say that history is "…perpetually suspicious of memory, and its true mission is to suppress and destroy it." But doesn't history writing often strictly need to rely on social memories, like in the example of Conquest and Mace? I would like to add that the dialectical relationship between memory and history is important. Memory can enrich and add details and thus update or create disputes and debates around published works of history. History could arguably have an impact on personal memories by the way of bringing other perspectives to mind. Another good point is that Nora and his group were studying cultural memory of monuments, museums, and memorial sites in France in a time without Internet (Etkind 2013:176). According to Etkind this meant that they overly focused on the sites of historical memory which are "static, self-contained, and unconnected" and not too much attention was given to "its temporal dynamics" (Etkind 2013: 176).

It is hard to discern the relationship between memory and history, but when it comes down to the question of who does what in this context, it may look like the barrier between history and memory studies can sometimes blend quite fine. An example is historian David Marple's book *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine* where he states that he is looking at discourses in various texts on the famine. The work is a sort of historiography, but at the same time applies a variant of discourse analysis which is more often used in sociology or media studies. On the other hand, while discourse analysis is not restricted to one discipline, it may be considered a bit unusual for a work of historical inquiry. Perhaps an even better example is historian Himka's article *Victim Cinema: Between Hitler and Stalin: Ukraine in World War II - The Untold Story* where in the beginning of the text he says that "…this article explores the collective memory of World War II in the Ukrainian diaspora in North America." (Himka 2008:211) In his article *Encumbered Memory: The Ukrainian Famine of 1932–33* Himka looks at the documentary film *Genocide Revealed* (Luhovy 2011), maybe also unexpected material for historians to study. Himka reviews this documentary about the Holodomor alongside textual works in his article Here we can see the use of the word *memory* in the title of the article. By "encumbered memory" Himka probably refers to how the memories of both mass killings (Holodomor and the Holocaust) has truly complicated Ukrainian mental life and it needs to go through more serious scholarly study and to become free from its xenophobic and anti-Semitic traits. Himka's article may be the only study (to my knowledge) that specifically *Genocide Revealed.* Perhaps just as significant is the point that professor

Himka also takes part in the debate on Ukrainian nationalists (OUN – Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists) role in the Second World War as well as the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) collaboration with the Nazis[21] (which is a point we shall return to further on). Then we have Himka's own term *Victim Cinema,* by which he refers to the documentary *Genocide Revealed.* Basically, Himka defines Victim Cinema as a formula used over and over in documentaries on the Holodomor which usually involves talking heads intermingled with survivor testimony and documentary footage and usually made with a low budget. However, Himka goes on to say that Luhovy did make a good job of restoring archival material and that the survivors' testimonies are enlightening, but that the presentation is one-sided and formulaic, and we really learn nothing new about the famine that hasn't been said before. The same applies to the earlier documentary *Harvest of Despair* from 1984 in which Luhovy participated as producer. So, the question is: Why produce practically the same film twice? The new documentary really says nothing new about the famine that we didn't learn from the 1983 version. One reply to this question could be to look at it in its political context. If we take *Harvest of Despair* as an example*,* it came to light when the cold war and President Reagans *evil empire* discourse was in use. This was a good opportunity to demonize the Soviet Union in the eyes of the western world and to revive Ukrainian nationalism. I imagine one could say: Look, they were starving their own people to death and the elderly, women and children were among the victims. An interesting aside is that historian Robert Conquest was actually a speechwriter for British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, who together with Reagan condemned the Soviet Union for its black deeds. However, after the dissolvement of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the independence of Ukraine was a fact, attention decreased on the subject of the Holodomor, at least in the West, while in Ukraine the Holodomor has been used extensively for nation and identity building. As Marples (2007) shows in his book, Ukraine, since independence, needed to write a new national history and the Holodomor victimhood has apparently now been lifted to the state narrative level and applied for identity building. As we witness the emergence of a new cold war, Ukraine is again positioned between empire builders and we now see the production of another Holodomor documentary, a production that may prove useful in the ongoing memory wars. It seems to be valid for pedagogical purposes as well as there exists a shorter educational version to be ordered from the webpage[22], but whether it's been used for this purpose is not known. This leads us to some of the intricate obstacles for the Holodomor memory to enter the global

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[21] See one segment of the video debate series by Uketube (2016) titled 'OUN, UPA, Jews & Ukrainians: Himka Lozynskyj Debate Preview available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fF_U0vRkWwI
[22] The educational version is available at: http://www.genociderevealedmovie.com/product/gr-eng-edu/

genocide discourse. It is worth mentioning the tendency of current Holodomor memory work to avoid the issue of collaboration of the OUN with the Nazis during the Holocaust. This may perhaps be explained by the fact that the Holodomor preceded the Holocaust in chronology and historical works scrutinizing the famine cannot include something which occurred in the future. When we are discussing memory work and political memory though, we see that the controversial issue of Ukrainian Nazi collaboration is mostly blocked out but is also regularly forced into the public light by critical voices, as I will provide examples of later in the analysis.

Regarding iconic visuals, which I focus extensively on in my analysis, I have found that the Holodomor of 1932–33 does not provide a lot of photographic material since it was denied to such an extent and that Ukraine was pretty much isolated and sealed off from the rest of the World. We need to go further back in time and memory to the Russian/Ukrainian famine of 1921–22 (which did get extensive international attention and aid) to see a bigger amount of visual evidence of death by hunger. Our own Norwegian national polar hero Fridjof Nansen organized help to the starving populations in Soviet Russia, as did the Red Cross and most significantly Herbert Hoover from America. Millions still did perish during that famine as well, but not to the same degree as the Holodomor of 1932–33. So, regarding the first Holodomor, sociologist Fuyuki Kurasawa (2012) writes about how the images from 1921–22 famine became iconic humanitarian visuals that resonated with an international public and convinced people that there actually were millions threatened with death by starvation. Unlike the famine of 1932–33, this famine at that time was caused by a severe drought combined with the chaotic social circumstances after the revolution and subsequent civil war (Kurasawa 2012:67). In essence, Kurasawa argues that these images laid the visual foundation for all later humanitarian disasters. The images that became iconic were mostly that of starved and sick looking children, and arguably the most iconic one is that of a naked tiny and very thin girl leaning against a doorframe. Her image was used on a postcard made by the Union internationale de secours aux enfants (UISE) were its description read "poor little one." It was also featured on bulletin boards and pamphlets on the famine. Through these mediums she is constructed as a victim, Kurasawa says, and the way she is photographed implies her as helpless. Kurasawa then shows how British children funds used these images in what may be called sensational to urge people to give money for support, much in the same way we see today in humanitarian organizations fronting images of starving African children. Kurasawa features a quotation from one David Loyd George on the famine who says that it was the most terrible devastation for centuries (Kurasawa 2012:68). If we compare this with our current state of humanitarian affairs, we see

that what was said back then is basically the same they're saying in our year of 2018 about the looming Yemen famine. Journalist Amanda Erickson at *The Washington Post* in an article on the situation in Yemen, quotes that it has been called "the worst humanitarian catastrophe in the world" (Erickson 2017).

For images to become iconic then, they need to be shocking but should also play on our empathy. In the case of the Holodomor of 1932-33, the famine victims are not depicted as victims of drought and bad harvest coupled with social chaos, but as victims of Soviet state terror and of a premediated plan to crush Ukrainian nationalism and the peasantry as a whole. What we see in the current political climate in Ukraine is what professor of modern history Jie-Hyun Lim (2010) terms *victimhood nationalism.* He talks about the emergence of collective suffering and global victimhood where nation states compete about who suffered the most in the past. And where there are victims there naturally exists perpetrators. Regarding the Jedwabne genocide in Poland, Lim shows how the Laudański brothers,[23] who were sentenced to prison for the massacre, have gone through a victimhood metamorphosis. He says they have gone from being individual victimizers to be embraced under the umbrella of collective Polish victimhood (Lim 2010:140–141). This is exactly what seems to be the goal of the Ukrainian government, first under Yushchenko (2005 to 2010) and now under Poroshenko (2014 to present). Regarding this, lecturer of European studies Eleonora Narvselius, informs us in a very detailed account of the contested and conflicting memories in western Ukraine. She tells how the Ukrainian government elite under Yushchenko used victimhood for nation building, but just as much they apply the strategy of glorification of controversial historical figures like Stephan Bandera. Bandera, the wartime-leader of the OUN, has been the nexus around which past and recent debates has been circling since the late perestroika period (Narvselius 2012:471). The victimhood aspect is based on the claim that Ukraine was suffering on an enormous scale between the two totalitarian regimes of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. Since the history of Ukraine during the Nazi occupation is little known and researched, the dark memories of joining the Nazis in the Holocaust is not remembered to the same extent and keeps being buried under the acts of remembering the Holodomor and of remembering Bandera as a freedom-fighter who wanted to construct an independent anti-Soviet Ukraine. Ishchenko (2011) also outlines the memory politics of Yuschenko but focuses on civil socio-economic protests in post-Orange revolution Ukraine (his article is from 2011) at the grass-root level. Ishchenko's study

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[23] The Laudański brothers were part of the Polish group of perpetrators of the massacre in the town of Jedwabne were 1600 Jews were killed in 1941.

is significant because it shows that real problems of the people on the ground is not really cared about by politicians, and protests against illegal construction projects or environmental problems are mostly organized by local initiatives. The political elite groups instead focus on identity politics and the building of museums of the Holodomor and tries to unify the Ukrainian people around these historical issues, with lackluster result as the eastern part of Ukraine do not share the same view of the Holodomor as the western part.

GLOBAL MEMORIES AND THE HOLOCAUST AS FRAMEWORK FOR SUBALTERN GENOCIDES

The next thing we need to ponder is the term *global memory* as defined and discussed by memory scholar Aleida Assmann. This term is quite relevant when studying depictions of the Holodomor. In the chapter *The Holocaust – A Global Memory? Extensions and Limits of a New Memory Community* from the anthology *Memory in a Global Age* from 2010, Assmann traces the stages of the Holocaust went through to become a global memory. First, she asks if there can be such a thing as a global or universal memory when the two words contradict each other. Globalization and the advent of global communication technologies may be what could make memories global. We learn that similar to the Holodomor, the Holocaust memories were repressed for about three decades since the end of the Second World War but is now considered the paradigmatic site of memory of Europe, even if it was experienced differently by the its many nations. Because of the many national memory constructions, a unified Holocaust memory was effectively hindered. Its memory had to be more unified and this happened in the year of 1998 when a significant meeting took place in Sweden's capital Stockholm, and the subsequent founding of ITF (The International Task Force on Holocaust Education). This effort had the heads of many states collaborate on developing a better Holocaust education. In 2000 a common framework for commemorating the Holocaust came up for discussion. Thus, a universalized education and commemoration practice was important for carrying the memory across nation states. This was according to the ITF needed when the communicative memory of survivors would eventually fade away. Since then we have seen the building of a great many Holocaust museums, monuments, and memorials, which were strong factors in shaping the Holocaust as a global memory. Assmann points that just as important as public discourses and media representations of an event is the political decisions, organizational networks, and funding for creating a long-term national and supranational memory (Assmann 2010:103).

Perhaps most important for this study is how Assmann shows how sociologists Daniel Levy and Nathan Sznaider termed the Holocaust a universal, global, and cosmopolitan memory. They say that it is the mediatized memories of the Holocaust, like the diary of Anne Frank and TV-Series like *The Holocaust* (and I would add *Schindler's List)*, that has found the most resonance with a global public. It is such *celluloid monuments* as I call such mediatized versions of the past that has the strongest power to create global memories or *free-floating signifiers* as Assmann (2010:114) terms them. Next in Assmann's article, we find another piece of the puzzle to understand the Russian and Ukrainian memory sphere. Assmann notes that Russia is not part of the ITF and does not commemorate the liberation of Auschwitz in the same way as the EU and USA. For Russia that historic moment stands for the end of their victorious Great Patriotic War and the defeat of the fascist regime of Hitler, but they won't include the Jewish suffering into their own. It is via the myth of the Great Patriotic War that contemporary Russia draws a parallel to the current Ukrainian government, which their national media portray as fascists installed through a foreign coup. In this way Russia legitimize their aggressive behavior and likens the current crisis as a continuation of the battle against fascism.

But how does the Holocaust memory as a global memory influence other and lesser known traumatic memories? Assmann sees the Holocaust memory as a model for other nations to use to promote their past suffering and she speaks of these aspects further on in the article:

> Through representations such as images, films, books, events and discourses, The Holocaust has spread to become a universal symbol with a global resonance. Through the career of its worldwide acknowledgement and its status as a super-trauma of maximum prestige, the Holocaust has become the para-digm against which other historic traumas are framed. Representations of the Holocaust in museums and monuments have become a model and source for the representation of other historical traumas. References to the Holocaust are increasingly being used to call attention to other traumas and atrocities. (Assmann 2010:114)

I agree with Assmann on these points and I would like to add that we clearly see that new museums try to become more visual and now include more screens that can in effect show celluloid memories and monuments. The monuments and the museums can go viral so to speak in the new digital age. Perhaps the way historical traumas are represented in film may be used in these new "memory museums" as lecturer in German-studies Silke Arnold-de Simine calls them.

EXISTING RESEARCH ON HOLODOMOR REPRESENTATIONS IN FILM, MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS – STRATEGIES OF DEMONIZATION

I will now go through existing literature on museums and memory before looking at literature done on specific Holodomor museums and/or monuments and films.

Arnold-de Simine (2012) writes about how *intermediality*[24] becomes more important in the memorial landscape. She gives the very fitting example for this study of the The Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C, which may be labeled as a "memory museum" or "narrative museum". What signifies such a memory museum? Arnold-de Simine says they do not function in the same way as other history museum in that they are not really based upon the museum collection, bat rather upon stories or narratives. Instead of basing the museum-narrative on their collection, they first write the narrative and then try to fit that in the museum context. Holocaust iconography is of course an ingredient in representations in such museums and is used as a template for other memory museums to build upon. Arnold-de Simine says that these museums

> ...define themselves not just as just as sites of academic and institutional history but as spaces of memory, exemplifying the shift from the perceived authoritative master dis-course on the past to the paradigm of memory which supposedly allows for a wider range of stories about the past – a claim that needs to be critically interrogated. (Arnold-de Simine 2012:15)

In this sense these memory museums integrate more personal accounts that is easier for people to engage in, and they give room to alternative or untold stories of the past. She goes on to say that "…by granting a voice to what has been left out of the dominant discourses of history, diverse and some-times even incompatible narratives have supposedly been granted a locus in a museal space that claims to aspire no longer any totalizing synthesis, but to a mode of representation that has so far been in the domain of art, film and literature." (Arnold-de Simine 2012:17) She gives examples of how the The Jewish Museum in Berlin wants to be read as a text and of German writer W. G. Sebald's novel *Austerlitz* may be thought of as an alternative Holocaust museum. Here we can spot a connection to Etkind's (2013) talking of the literature of Solzhenitsyn as an example of textual monuments in the absence of physical monuments of Soviet state atrocities. Physical monuments of the Holodomor were absent until the beginning

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[24] The term intermediality in the context of museums may mean the increased use of different media to represent personal memories. Arnold-de Simine names an example of a song being partly sound and partly text (Arnold-de Simine 2012:16).

of the 1980s when a monument was erected in Edmonton, Canada in 1983. Before that Holodomor memory was mainly found in personal and communicative memory and in various Ukrainian/Soviet literature and cinema, as shown by associate professor Iryna Starovoyt (2016) in her article 'Holodomor, Amnesia, and Memory-(Re) Making in Post-War Ukrainian Literature and Film' from 2016. The unveiling of the Edmonton monument happened the same year the documentary *Harvest of Despair* was released, thus forging a double transnational monument in that it consisted of a physical monument and a celluloid monument. Such transnational monuments have been scrutinized by Swedish historian Per Rudling and I will now take a quick look at his article *Multiculturalism, Memory, and Ritualization: Ukrainian Nationalist Monuments in Edmonton* from 2011. This will be complemented with critical comments on the same article by professor emeritus of Political science Bohdan Harasymiw, at University of Calgary (again a professor with Ukrainian ties in Canada).

Rudling (2011) talks about out how Ukrainian nationalist monuments are dominating the public space of the Canadian city of Edmonton. The sites of memory consist of a 1973 monument to Ukrainian nationalist leader Roman Shukhevych, a memorial constructed to the Ukrainian *Waffen-SS* war veterans and, most significantly, a memorial to the victims of the 1932–33 Holodomor. Rudling names this memorial complex (excluding the Holodomor monument) "The Shukhevych Complex." He says that a central purpose of this complex, which he informs us was built as a youth complex, was to hinder too great an assimilation of the young into Canadian culture. He calls the commemoration practice of the Ukrainian community nationalistic. The background for this ethnic community and their monuments in Canada were the three waves of immigration by western Ukrainians in the years from 1891 to the 1950s, many of them escaping Soviet repression after the famine and the nationalist resistance during the Nazi occupation from 1941. Rudling identifies a nationalist narrative via these monuments where suffering, resistance, and redemption are keywords. The suffering part which refers to the famine is used to counter such claims that Ukrainians are inherently anti-Semitic and were represented in the ranks of Hitler's executioners (Rudling 2011:751). Rudling furthermore shows that the number of 7 million dead was used in connection with the monument and that of 3 million helpless children starved to death. He then writes that in answer to the unveiling of the monument the Soviet Government at that time described it as an attempt by war criminals like *Waffen-SS* veterans to demonize the USSR and its people. He, like professor Himka, also notes that the attempt to surpass the 6 million number of the Holocaust does little to increase understanding about the event. In conclusion Rudling writes:

> Through its support and funding of Ukrainian nationalist organization, official Cana-dian multiculturalism has helped create a culture of social and political acceptance of the nationalist narrative. The Ukrainian monuments in Edmonton are no less paradoxical than *Waffen-SS* veterans as fund raisers for genocide awareness: one pledges genocide awareness, another celebrates a mass murderer. This may seem schizophrenic, but the two cults are interlinked – the nationalists' focus on the 1932-33 famine was partially a response to allegations about Holocaust perpetrators within the Ukrainian community in North America. The initiative for the three monuments analyzed in this article originated with the same groups of nationalists. Remarkably, neither the monument to Shukhevych nor the *Waffen-SS* veterans have been scrutinized, debated or questioned. A cynic might add that in this regard official Canadian multiculturalism has been successful. Memorials to Hitler's auxiliaries were built with government support, and virtually no opposition, even from the local Polish or Jewish communities. (Rudling:756)

Here we see that much in the same vein as the Laudański brothers are covered under the Polish victimhood umbrella, as described by Lim (2010) above, Rudling states that the Ukrainian sacred victimhood blots out their own nationalist heroes alleged war crimes against the Jews. We should also remember the same Ukrainian nationalist also blamed the Jewish Bolshevism for their suffering. This is particularly striking as it looks as if these nationalists with their instrumentalization of the Holodomor tries to take the place of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust and possibly blames the Jews for Soviets regime of terror and famine.[25]

Through Rudlings study of diaspora nationalist monuments in Canada, together with fellow Swedish historian Johan Dietsch and Himka, we learn of an alleged Ukrainian participation in the Jewish Holocaust and other war crimes. Thus, we see that the fascist narrative of Russia has its supporters in the West, in this case in the academic field. Later in this text we shall look at the fascist narrative in other communication channels.

When blame and the label of fascist is pinned on one group it is often implies that the whole group falls under the shadow of this guilt. Harasymiw (2012:295) gives a response to Rudlings article in which he points to methodological problems and accusations of ethnic stereotyping. He even likens Rudling's claims to "…someone inferring a Jewish conspiracy to control the world from observing that there are Jews in prominent positions somewhere." Further on he

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[25] This is not unique to Ukrainian nationalists. Russian nationalist (at least he seems to have transformed into one right before his passing) Solzhenitsyn's very controversial book *200 Years Together* from 2002, were he wrote about Russian-Jewish relations in the years between 1795 and 1995. In it he claims that many of the people in charge of the Soviet state terror were in fact of Jewish origin. For this and certain descriptions of Jewish characters he was termed anti-Semitic (Kriza 2014).

underlines that terms such as "nationalism", "Nazi collaborator" and others are not defined and are being applied as labels (like in the media narratives of today, where such labels are thrown about without any explanation for what they actually mean). He says the historical background given is oversimplified and gives a wrong impression. A good point he makes is if you are not against the Nazi's, it automatically implies that you are for them and goes on to state this about Rudling's intentions:

> The author's task in this article is to demonstrate that making heroes of the Ukrains'ka Povstan Armiia [Ukrainian Insurgent Army] (OUN-UPA) actually resonates with people of Ukrainian extraction in Edmonton 70 years later, unless the real aim is to tar all Ukrainian Canadians, whatever their birthplace and personal history, with the same brush, as nationalist–fascist–Nazi collaborators. (Harasymiw 2012:296)

Here we see how intriguing it is to read two sides of a story. If you only read Rudling's article without any pre-knowledge whatsoever you will think that there is a large fascist nationalist element in the Ukrainian Canadian community, while in reality the story might be much more complex than all that. Harasymiw characterizes Rudling's view of Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union as "black and white" and gives examples of why this is so. In the context of the Ukrainian community in Canada and fascistic tendencies he notes that 26 000 Ukrainians made their way to Canada after the war and that Rudling's article gives the impression that every single one of them were Nazi collaborators (Harasymiw 2012:297). It is clearly blatant guilt by association and Harasymiw (2012:297) asks "The real question is, who among the public apart from its main purveyors still subscribes today to what the author calls the fascist brand of Ukrainian nationalism?" Furthermore, he assesses that Rudling has a very limited understanding of Canadian social history and politics and his discussion about multiculturalism is misguided and lacking. This, and other similar points are made to deconstruct Rudling's views and claims. The point in reviewing Rudling's article and Harasymiw's response lies in that they show how such complicated issues and debates is being forced to the fore. Later in the analysis we shall see more examples of such "iconoclashing" views and narratives.

SACRALIZATION OF THE HOLODOMOR

We now move on to existing research specifically related to Holodomor depictions, monuments, and museums. Earlier on we already saw how Himka reviewed the documentary *Genocide Revealed* (2011) among other works on the Holodomor, but now we shall see how in

the same article he gives a short analysis of the National Museum Holodomor Victims Memorial in Kiev, Ukraine. Himka (2013) mainly looks at historical aspects of the works on the Holodomor he reviews as he is a historian. Still, his views on the museum may prove useful. However, before we look at that we should give some attention to the term *genocide,* which is addresses by Himka. The term originates from Polish-Jewish lawyer Ralph Lemkin. Lemkin stated that what happened in Ukraine in that era was a classic example of genocide (Applebaum 2017: xxvii). Applebaum says that since Lemkin invented the term it has been used in a more legalistic manner and become controversial, especially in the case of Ukraine-Russian relations. Himka (2013:424) notes how historian Naimark admits the term is problematic for use in historical studies but that scholars cannot refrain from taking part in the international discourse on genocide. Himka proceeds to ask:" Does not the legal definition of genocide, even if amended, reflect an overly simplified view of social action? (There is a dynamic between intention and opportunity, as debates over the origin of the Holocaust, for example, demonstrate.)" Himka shows here how difficult it is to apply the term to such a complex event as the Holodomor. What's more is that according to Himka this classifying term genocide may induce competition between mass murders and he calls this "victimhood theft", which is something often occurring in victim cinema and is when genocide become competitive (Himka 2013:425). An instance of this in found in *Genocide Revealed* where the narrative says that Russia specifically targeted the Ukrainian people through the famine. Russia is portrayed as Ukraine's "Other" and as the perpetrator in this case

Crucial for this study is what Himka calls "the genocide numbers game". He refers to Naimark (who is a professional historian) who gives the estimates of three to five million, while Luhovy (who according to Himka is a producer of victim cinema) in the documentary states that according to specialist the death toll was from five to twelve million (Himka 2013:426). Himka doubts that these "specialist" are specialist in demography as recent studies show number ranging from 2.9 to 3.9 millions. The numbers game is a really powerful tool and is used in many contemporary cases of tragic mass deaths or to estimate deaths about to happen. Most recently I could mention the mall-fire in Kemorov, Russia this year, where the official death toll as stated by numerous news channels was about 64, while many unofficial sources (social media and the like) started saying that the numbers could be as high as 300-400 and that the authorities is trying to cover them up so there will be no international investigation.[26] Finally,

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[26] See an article about this the Russian news outlet *Meduza:* https://meduza.io/en/cards/they-say-russia-is-trying-to-cover-up-the-real-death-toll-in-the-kemerovo-fire-is-it-true [Accessed 16.04.2018].

Himka writes that a final deficiency of the genocide term in relation to the Holodomor is that it is over- politized and under-intellectualized (Himka 2013:426). He quotes an Ukrainian scholar named Heorhii Kas'ianov, who has criticized the politicizing of the famine, on saying that the simplistic formula used in disseminating information about the Holodomor (perhaps this could refer to webpages on the Internet) is not difficult to understand and has an emotional appeal that works well as consumer goods in our "infotainment" society (Himka 2013:426). What Himka says next is also important for understanding the memory politics of Ukraine and the memorial complex in Kiev. He writes that:

> …Kas'ianov sees the Holodomor discourse as having developed into a civil religion. The aesthetics of its commemorative practices exhibit "cultic" features closely connected to Christian ritual. An example is the campaign, initiated in Ukraine 2006, to light a candle on the day of commemoration of the Holodomor every November. President Yushchenko himself appealed to the public to take part in this effort. The central structure of the new memorial complex in Kyiv commemorating the Holodomor is a building designed to look like a huge candle. (Himka 2013:427)

Himka further details how the Holodomor commemoration has become sacralized with the extensive use of Christian symbols together with Christian burial rites and martyrdom. Because of these aspects and that the Holodomor has been so mythicized makes it very hard to study, which explains a lot why I have had such a hard time to get to any nuanced understanding of the event. Himka (2013:427) also sees a link to the study of the Holocaust: "Sacralization polarizes, dichotomizes, tramples nuance, paralyzes questioning". The same then may be said of the mediatizing of the Holocaust and the Holodomor.

Later in the text Himka gives many examples of xenophobic, Russophobic and anti-Semitic aspects of those who promote Holodomor awareness though he does not mean that all who work with this share such views. An illuminating example is that of when president Yushchenko tried to cement the Holodomor in Ukrainan and global public memory he at the same time glorified OUN leaders Stepan Bandera and Roman Shukevych (Himka 2013:430). Another very relevant example is how under Yushchenko the Jewish victims usually commemorated at the Babi Yar ravine[27] close to Kiev were exchanged for the dead OUN members buried there. He notes that the same downplaying of the Holocaust is prominent in the Ukrainian diaspora in

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[27] The Babi Yar ravine was the place were 33 771 victims (Jews prominent among them) were killed during a mass-shooting carried out by Nazi *Einsatzgruppen* that only took two days in September of 1941 (Rapson 2014:139).

Canada and then gives the names of the biggest funders of Luhovy's *Genocide Revealed,* William Zuzak and Marco Levytsky. Both are active in defending the OUN leaders from alleged participation with the Nazis. Levytsky for example often speaks of how many Jews worked in Soviet secret state police (like NKVD). Himka (2013:431) states that: "Of course this is the same "Judeo-Bolshevism" argument the OUN itself used to incite and justify violence against the Jewish population of western Ukraine". He then tells of how a Soviet dissident by name of Levko Luk'ianenko thinks the Jews guilty for the Holodomor. So, it is not just a "victimhood theft" vis-a-vis the Jews, the Ukrainian diaspora and independent Ukraine additionally tries to shift blame on to them. This is condemned by Himka as anti-Semitic. These same aspects as well as Russo phobic ones is illustrated by Himka with Yuschenko's Security Service of Ukraine's (SBU) list of perpetrators, which includes many Jewish and Russian names, but Ukrainian ones that were partly guilty were not in that list. Anti-Semitism was growing during the famine of 1932–33 and reasons for this, Himka argues, were that Jews always seemed to have food and held positions in the Torgsin[28] stores in major cities in Ukraine (Himka 2013:433). At the end of his article Himka (2013:435) concludes that: "The four works under review reveal much more about this encumbered memory than about the famine itself." Himka's article is really helpful in providing a more nuanced look at the complexity of Holodomor memory, which is crucial to this study. However, since this study is going to focus on the memorial complex in Kiev, partly on its physical monuments and partly on its virtual manifestations, Himka's description of the National Holodomor Museum in Kiev is of some importance even though it is brief:

> The National Museum Memorial in Commemoration of Famines Victims in Ukraine is a profoundly sacralized space. It is situated in the Pechers′k district of Kyiv, not far from the most sacred spot in Ukraine, the Kyiv Caves Monastery. The entrance to the memorial museum complex is flanked by two angels, keepers of the souls. It seems that the main building, the candlelike structure already mentioned, was first conceived literally as a chapel, and many architectural features of that original idea have been retained.[26] The building has a large cross in front of it. Inside is a symbolic altar. Everyone has the opportunity to light a candle in memory of the victims. In this sanctuary of the Holodomor, the Knyhy pam″iati, with their testimonies and martyrologies, play their part. They are placed on lecterns around the inner sanctum, like prayer books, a holy scripture. (Himka 2013:428)

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[28] Torgsin stores in Ukraine were stores in which you could exchange valuables like gold and jewelry for money or food.

Himka criticizes the sacred and religious aspects of the complex and thinks that this hinders rational inquiry as it replaces it with a myth. Here we can again draw the parallel to my theorizing of celluloid monuments were iconic images and feature films establish a type of mythical and partly fictional monument which may hinder rational thinking about a subject. An example would be if we have seen a filmic representation of what happened during a certain period of time (like the Holocaust for example), we then agree it was horrible what happened, "they" were total evil people that killed millions of people for no good reason and the good guys put an end to it and that is the end of story. Celluloid monuments rarely encourages you to question why it happened, what were the actual causes that lead to mass slaughters, they just establish that it happened in this way, it was gruesome and anti-human and we must never repeat it, even though it is actually still happening right now as I write this in our contemporary world. Just take the famines in Africa and Yemen, and the terrible situations in Gaza and Syria. Still, the mythical events from the past, especially the Holocaust and their incomprehensible horrors somehow dwarfs whatever happens today.

We have now reached another relevant study by media and memory scholar Jessica Rapson with the title 'Babi Yar: Transcultural Memories of Atrocity from Kiev to Denver.' It is a chapter in the anthology *Transcultural Turn: Interrogating Memory Between and Beyond Borders* from 2014. While she mostly focuses on the transculturality of Babi Yar sites of memory, the Holodomor and the memorial complex and museum in Kiev is also addressed within her study.

As in Himka's study Rapson (2014) points to the neglect of the Ukrainian state of remembering the Holocaust, in this case, the Babi Yar atrocity. Since the mass killing took place at the ravine close to Kiev, this site of memory has been ignored by both the Soviet government and the Ukrainian since independence and is mainly visible by the absence of memorials. The area has apparently been used for dumping garbage and even a hotel was planned to be built on its grounds, but the project was abandoned due to protests from the Jewish community (Rapson 2014:140). She echoes Himka in illustrating how the Holodomor memory is a response to the claims of Nazi collaboration and as a vital element in national martyrology. She also gives a similar description of the National Holodomor memorial complex and she adds:

> The aims of the memorial is, inherent in the designs of the monuments, museum, and UINM publications sold in the small museum shop, are twofold: the provision of an appropriate space in which people may

remember and pay tribute to the suffering of *holodomor* victims; and the integration of the famine years as a central co-ordinate in the creation of contemporary Ukrainian national identity…The associated museum publications also give a voice to the victims by reproducing their testimonies, which are featured in a film projected on the museum's inner wall at timed intervals. (Rapson 2014:147)

The museum may be seen as an important site of memory for the building of the new national Ukrainian identity. Rapson also shows how the demonizing of Stalin as destroyer of the Ukrainian nation and architect of the Holodomor is central to this identity. This anti-Communism is a central element to the nation building which is also aptly illustrated by the de-communization laws of April 2015.[29] Rapson actually suggests that the memorial complex needs a more nuanced and expanded analysis since it marks a huge development in Kiev with the construction of such a "Westernized" memorial and museum.

We have been through Himka's professional take on works on the Holodomor and his analysis of the Holodomor memorial complex. Rapson has given us a limited analysis of the same complex and suggested the need of a broader analysis. However, my task is not just to look at the physical elements but to complement this with analysis of the virtual memorial site in the vein of Etkind's theories of hard and soft cultural memory. It is the interaction between these two types of memory that forms the core of this study. It has been pointed out that sites of memory or monuments do not mean anything by themselves, it is only when they are being debated and discussed that they are invested with meaning by the groups that make this effort. (REF??)

In the end of this section we need to address research done on famine representations in film. Except for Himka's review article the only other significant study that analyzes depictions of the Holodomor in film is done by PhD candidate Iuliia Kysla in the chapter 'The Ukrainian Famine of 1932–1933 on Screen: Making Sense of Suffering.' This chapter is part of a relevant book for those who are interested in lesser known genocides on screen titled *The History of Genocide in Cinema: Atrocities on Screen* from 2016. Kysla looks at the Holodomor in film, yet at the same time she includes examples of depictions the Irish Great Famine of the 1840s and of course, the Holocaust. It seems that most studies focusing on the Holodomor cannot ignore comparisons to the Holocaust. This shows that these events and their latest cinematic

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[29] See the chapter on memory laws in Ukraine in the book *Memory Laws, Memory Wars: The Politics of the Past in Europe and Russia* (2017) by N. Koposov.

representations are closely linked together. Since the Holocaust has gained the status as a global or international memory, its "success" in this context is used as a framework for other genocides. The films in focus for Kysla are two Ukrainian film: Oles' Ianchuk's *Holod-33 (Famine-33)* from 1991 and Oles' Sanin's *Povodyr (The Guide)* from 2013. She mentions *Bitter Harvest* by George Medeluk from 2017 by another title *The Devil's Harvest*, but it was not yet released at her time of writing. Both *Holod-33* and *Povodyr* were produced before the Maidan revolution of 2014, while *Bitter Harvest* came in 2017. It would be interesting to compare the two pre-revolution films to *Bitter Harvest.* The greatest difference of course is that the two former films are Ukrainian products while the latest is a western produced film, though strongly connected to the diaspora.

Kysla continues with laying out the factors of why there exists so few films depicting famines and why it so difficult to visualize such events. Kysla (2016:81) mentions "the limited capacity of representation" and asks, "is it possible to describe all the horrors and the scale of such an historical phenomenon as famine, and are there any limitations to our ability to understand and analyze such a dreadful event?" Then she says that these ethical and visual problems equally pertain to the representations of the Holocaust as well and refers to Eli Wiesel. Wiesel is an author of books about the Holocaust and gives lectures around the world on the subject. To ponder her questions, and I now use her reference to Wiesel as an opportunity to take professor of political science Norman G. Finkelstein[30] into this discussion, who is an critical opponent of Wiesel. In his controversial output *The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the Exploitations of Jewish Suffering,* first published in the year of 2000, Finkelstein is critical of Eli Wiesel's arguments and quotes Holocaust memory scholar Peter Novick on this:

> Dubbed by Novick the "sacralization of the Holocaust," this mystification's most practiced purveyor is Eli Wiesel. For Wiesel, Novick rightly observes, The Holocaust is effectively a "mystery" religion. Thus Wiesel intones that the Holocaust "leads into darkness," "negates all answers," "lies outside, if not beyond history," "defies both knowledge and description," "cannot be explained nor visual-ized," is "never to be

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[30] As an amusing aside, Finkelstein is not very positive about the "analytical category" of memory used by Novick in his seminal study *The Holocaust in American Life*:

> Novick's central category is "memory." Currently all the rage in the ivory tower, "memory" is surely the most impoverished concept to come down the academic pike in a long time. With the obligatory nod to Maurice Halbwachs, Novick aims to demonstrate how "current concerns" shape "Holocaust memory." Once upon a time, dissenting intellectuals deployed robust political categories such as "power" and "interests," on the one hand, and "ideology," on the other. Today, all that remains is the bland, depoliticized language of "concerns" and "memory." (Finkelstein 2003:5)

Yet, he still approves of Novick's study and its conclusions. Perhaps the only way to really study the Holocaust is to use as obscure a language as possible as not to offend anyone?

comprehended or transmitted," marks a "destruction of history" and a "mutation on a cosmic scale." Only the survivor-priest (read: only Wiesel) is qualified to divine its mystery. (Finkelstein 2003:45)

The reason for taking these mystical aspects of the Holocaust into consideration is the similarity to that of the mystification, mythification and sacralization of the Holodomor. These aspects as we heard about earlier in this text makes scientific enquiry all the harder as it implies that it cannot or should not be understood. The other reason for referring to Finkelstein is his introduction of the term "Holocaust Industry" which will prove of some relevance in my narrative analysis.

Further on Kysla notes how the reconstructions of such trauma can trivialize it and "making it enjoyable for the audience and exploitable for the media" (Kysla 2016:81). These certainly are some significant ethic problems such films must struggle with. She adds that we who live after the fact of these events and do not face acute hunger cannot fully understand what the victims go through. She goes on to show what makes the representation of famine different from the Holocaust is the lack of action and the dullness of death by starvation. This is true to some extent when you watch films like *Schindler's List* where you have the suspense of Nazi soldiers raiding the Jewish ghettoes. In that film you had actual people doing all the killing, either by shooting or gassing, while in the Holodomor, the famine was invisible, a force of nature that killed people slowly. Of course, in the latter case you also had perpetrators, but they only laid the groundwork by taking away food, closing borders and making travel from village to cities almost impossible.

Next, Kysla notes how *Holod-33* differs from Hollywood movies in that it is the opposite of such fast-paced and action-filled films. Then she identifies various factors for there being so few films tackling the Holodomor: "One has to do with the so-called "Holocaust-mania" and lack of international interest, within the cinematographic milieu as well, in other less publicized tragedies." (Kysla 2016:82) On the other hand, the Holocaust memory provides a language of universal suffering to be used by other victimized people. She adds the prolonged absence of commemoration also played a part, but the same could be said of the Holocaust as noted by A. Assmann (2010) and Alexander (2010) and since the early 1990s we have seen the production of a great deal of Holocaust films.

Later, Krysla (like Himka among others) speaks of the "over-politicization" and "sacral character" of the Holodomor. According to her this may imply that in the vein of the Holocaust, any critique of the Holodomor may come off as an act of denial. One last point she makes related to the lack of famine films is Ukraine's "lack of facilities" to produce large scale movies. This seems to be changing with many newly produced Ukrainian films.

In the case of the Narrative in *Holod-33* Krysla mentions that it contains anti-Russian rhetoric and she identifies this film and *Povodyr* as part of what she calls "national narrative" highlighting the romanticizing of the national Ukrainian past. As *Holod-33* is based on the novel *Yellow Knight* (1962) by émigré writer Vasyl' Barka, also with connections to the Ukrainian diaspora it doesn't give us a wider understanding of the event but re-uses the same discourse invented by the Ukrainian diaspora in the 1980s (Kysla 2016:83). This is a significant observation made by Krysla. This narrative or discourse created by the diaspora back in the 1980s does not change but is being reinstated at intervals in time or in "waves" according to the shifting political climate. A good point to bear in mind for the analysis of the National Holodomor museum.

CELLULOID MONUMENTS AND COUNTER MEMORIALS

Perhaps the greatest obstacle for the Holodomor to become a universalized trauma is the limited archive of visualizations and iconic images and the lack of *celluloid monuments* of the Holodomor. I have taken the term celluloid monument from the title of the book *Celluloid War Memorials: The British Instructional Films Company and the Memory of the Great War* by film scholar Michael Connely. In addition to that I build the term on a part of Tonje Sørensens doctoral thesis *The Second World War in Norwegian film: The topography of Remembrance* from 2015. In her study she says the following about monuments, commemorations, and film that is very relevant for my study:

> 'Commemoration' describes the act of affirming and honouring a particular historical event or person. It brings to mind images of monuments surrounded by serious men, with serious faces, laying down wreaths. There is a clear ritualistic aspect to commemoration, and it is a ritual that affirms the event or person as carrying a particular significance. It is a singling out of a specific point in history, and in this, it is also an act of selection. By its very act of choosing one over the other, commemoration implies an idea of value and, to some degree, acceptance. What is proposed within this work is that not only stone monuments, but also films, can work as acts of commemoration. This chapter will deal specifically with the noticeable

fact that the films with the strongest commemorative promotion and reception are usually the ones that have an affirmative approach to history. (Sørensen 2015:57)

I see celluloid monuments as films and images that "set in stone" visions of the past and that sometimes can replace or distort individual and collective memory. Another way of describing it would be like something that constructs a thin mantel, or let's say "film" over historical texts, making them, the celluloid monuments, landmarks for remembering historical events or persons. Is it possible that such monuments can take the place of objective historical literature and research, that they become a type of hegemonic reference point? Not that this needs to be viewed primarily in a negative way as they may provide a starting point for interest in historical literature and studies. But when it in any way distorts or simplifies history for political purposes it becomes more problematic. Yet we should keep in mind that according to professor Alexander Etkind monuments should not, in contrast to the historical museum, be judged by rational criteria in contrast to historical museums (Etkind 2013:183). Furthermore, I derive and build my thinking about the *celluloid monument* in part on professor and memorial expert James E. Young theories and his description of monuments and counter-monuments from an interview from 1998*:*

> Its [sic] a big rock telling people what to think; its [sic] a big form that pretends to have a meaning, that sustains itself for eternity, that never changes over time, never evolves — it fixes history, it embalms or somehow stultifies it. And since totalitarian regimes, like the former Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, especially loved monuments, they built whole cultures around monumentality. Which is not to say that American democracy hasn't built a culture around monuments, as Greek democracy did. But once the monument has been used as the Nazis or Stalin did, it becomes a very suspicious form in the eyes of a generation that would like to commemorate the victims of totalitarianism, and are handed the forms of totalitarianism to do it. (Young 1998:6)

Youngs way of thinking about monuments will be useful for looking at the Holodomor museum in Kiev. Notice that he says monuments fixes history, embalms it, and stultifies it. The same may be the case when speaking of celluloid monuments. This embalming of history Young talks of can be linked to the *mummy complex* film expert André Bazin spoke of in his influential article *The Ontology of the Photographic Image*. Further on, Young notes:

> For young German artists and architects in particular, there is an essential contradiction here. So they have begun to turn to forms which they believe challenge the idea of monumentality, and have arrived at something I'd call the "counter-monumental," or the "counter-memorial" — the monument that

disappears instead of standing for all time; that is built into the ground instead of above it; and that returns the burden of memory to those who come looking for it. (Young 1998:7)

Here Young defines *counter-monuments* as a monument that disappears, that is built into the ground instead of above it (this fits in a very literal sense to the National Holodomor museum in Kiev as the museum itself is built underground, while on top you have the traditional static monuments and sculptures). Still, Young's counter-monuments are more or less linked to the physical world, while my idea of celluloid monuments are liquid, morphing, holds a lot of images, moving or still shots, that forms a whole and which forms a statement on the past. An example of such a monument would be the feature film *Schindler's List* (Spielberg 1993). Spielberg's film is a perfect mix of representation of traumatic memories, accompanying texts in forms of subtitles, and fiction. An even better example is the monumental documentary film *Shoah* from 1985 by Claude Lanzmann, which documents many witnesses talking about their time in concentration camps. The French philosopher Georges Didi-Huberman (2008:93) shows how Lanzmann himself in an interview describes *Shoah* as a "monument." This statement is in relation to what Lanzmann says about archival footage from the Nazi extermination camps, that they cannot evoke thoughts and are without imagination. Thus, as I understand it, the work of memory that Lanzmann created with *Shoah* is, according to himself, the sole work that can bring any meaning to what happened during the Holocaust. What Didi-Huberman says next in regard to Lanzmann's statements is extremely interesting for this memory/history student. In short, Lanzmann states that the event of the Holocaust is incomprehensible, and that he would destroy any photographic evidence showing the gassing of people in the gas chambers if it should come into his possession and this does not need any explanation, it is self-evident why he would destroy them. Didi-Huberman does not agree how such evidence, and the examination of it, automatically should equate the refuting of reality, and then he says something very important:

> The questioning of the image does not only concern visual examination…it requires *the constant intersection of events, speech and writing.* It is difficult to see why working on archives should amount to depriving oneself of a "work of development," quite the contrary: the archive – an often unorganized mass at the outset – does not become meaningful unless it is patiently developed. This generally demands more time of a historian than it takes a filmmaker to make a film. *And why would constructing a "monument," as Lanzmann calls his own work, be equivalent to disqualifying "documents" without which the monument would be built on a void.* (Didi-Huberman 2008:93–94, my emphasis)

It is exactly that which is the point: To study the intersection of various documents, be it photographic documents, writing or oral documents, so that a fuller picture of what happened can emerge. With this in mind, I shall try to demonstrate the term of celluloid monument in relation to the film *Bitter Harvest* (Mendeluk 2017) and look at intertextual references to *Schindler's List* and the way Holocaust iconicity and narrative is to some degree mimicked by this flick.

Another and perhaps the most important inspiration and building block my thinking about celluloid monuments is Etkind's theorizing of hard and soft cultural memory which first appeared in the article *Hard and Soft in Cultural Memory: Political Mourning in Russia and Germany* from 2004:

> In culture, as in a computer, there are two forms of memory, which might be likened to hardware. *Soft memory* consists primarily of texts (including literary, historical, and other narratives), whereas *hard memory* consists primarily of monuments (and sometimes, state laws and court decisions). Of course, the soft and the hard are interdependent. Museums, cemeteries, commemorative festivi-ties, guided tours and history textbooks are complicated systems that demonstrate permanent, multilevel interactions between the hardware (sculptures, obelisks, memorials, historical places) and the software (guidebooks, directions, inscriptions, historical studies) of cultural memory. In memory, monuments without inscriptions are mute, whereas texts without monuments are ephemeral. (Etkind 2004: 39-40)

Etkind's breaking down of cultural memory into two types is useful for this study as it invites us to consider the interaction between monuments, museums, and texts. I will keep the main focus on visual media like films when considering soft memory. A film could in theory be viewed as a textual monument. I would therefore characterize film as a soft variant of cultural memory but further theorize it as a celluloid monument or like a visual site of memory. Then you may need to ask, can a film be a site of memory? Perhaps not if we view the term site of memory like James E. Young does, as strictly a physical historical place grounded in reality? Yet on the other hand, a film could contain shots of a physical site of memory or a place that resembles such a site, with actors re-enacting history and memories, but that would be more of a reconstruction and not the actual historical site, and as such it is detached from physical reality and can only be recorded by the camera lens. However, film as a celluloid monument also creates a statement about the past to be viewed over and over and with today's communication technology, it has potential to reach audiences all over the world and is not limited to a physical visit to the real memory site. If the monument contains written or spoken English text it becomes

easier to access and interpret for a global public. Such celluloid monuments become monuments of the past, available to all who have the possibility to watch, even if they are fictional representations. Considering these global aspects of media memory Etkind (2013:178) writes: "Printing and digital technologies have largely de-territorialized cul-tural memory." He then describes modern memory's temporal units as *memory events* which he defines as:" …acts of revisiting the past that creates ruptures with its established cultural meanings." I would certainly argue that in the context of the Holodomor event, its depictions in film, literature, monuments, and museums would qualify as memory events. For example, when the documentary *Harvest of Despair* was released in 1984, accompanied by a monument in Edmonton, and then the release of the memoir *Execution by Hunger* by Miron Dolot in 1985, surely signalized a rupture in the wall of denial of the Holodomor.

In his updated version of the hard and soft memory Etkind speaks of differences between historical events and memory events which is that memory events are secondary to historical ones, but that sometimes a memory event:

> …*attains the significance of a historical event*, therefore blurring the distinction between the two…Memory events unfold in many cultural genres, from funerals, to historical debates, from museum openings to court proceedings, from the erection or the destruction of a monument to archival findings, films, novels, exhibitions, and websites. Historical events tend to be singular while memory events rarely are. They repeat themselves in new, creative but recognizable forms, which circulate in cultural space and reverberate in time. Like waves, these events move across cultural space, and they are indeed often carried by waves. (Etkind 2013:178, my emphasis)

I would think it highly appropriate to apply Etkind's term when analyzing the Holodomor museum, debates surrounding it, its website, and other interlinked textual monuments. Etkind (2013:178-179) indeed goes on to describe memory events as multimedia products and feature:" …permanent interaction between "hardware" (sites, monuments, and so forth) and their "software" (historical, literary, and other texts)." I take it to mean that he includes films and documentaries as well in this context.

A bit like Etkind's theorizing is that of memory scholar Dagmar Brunow when she in her work *Remediating Transcultural Memory. Documentary Filmmaking as Archival Intervention* from

2015 seeks to complicate the uses of the term remediation[31] and to conceptualize it within memory studies. She (Brunow 2015:45) tells that: "…for memory studies the concepts of remediation and premediation prove highly useful in acknowledging the dynamics of cultural memory and mediatisation." She points to how these concepts have been adopted by Astrid Erll and fellow memory scholar Ann Rigney and tells that Erll views the term remediation as memorable events being represented over and over through different media throughout the times. The remediation process, according to Erll (as quoted by Brunow), tends to "solidify cultural memory, creating and stabilising certain narratives and icons of the past" Before I continue on that trail of thought, let us for a moment look at what cultural sociologists Jeffrey C. Alexander and Dominik Bartma´nski says regarding the iconic turn in cultural sociology, which is reminiscent of what Brunow and Erll just said:

> Contemporary icons occupy a wide range of cultural registers. Conventionally, they are associated with visual emblems, from evocative sculptures, paintings, and architectural constructions to sublime scenes from nature, yet the sensuous surface effects of contemporary icons actually range more widely, to popular songs, quintessential consumer products, brands and logos, celebrities, and perfumes that evoke lust. ***It is because they galvanize narratives*** that icons are not only aesthetic representations but also become full citizens of public discourse. In the iconosphere of society, the meanings of social life take on sensual form, whether by sight, hearing, touch, taste, or smell. (Alexander and Bartma´nski 2012:2–3, my emphasis)

We saw Erll say that remediation stabilized narratives and icons of the past, while Alexander and Bartma´nski saiys that icons galvanizes narratives and becomes a part of "public discourse." All what these authors say about icons and narratives is relevant for understanding how narratives and icons are being galvanized or remediated in Holodomor museums and films. Brunow (2015:45) notes that for representations of the past to keep their function as sites of memories they must be constantly represented in new ways. Next, she says that Bolter and Grusin do not consider the dynamics of remediation and that it is crucial to understand the concept of premediation, which can show how dominant media in a society provides frameworks for marginalized stories: "Transparency and immediacy constructed in memory media by multiplying other memory media." (Brunow 2015:45) The example by Erll which Brunow then shows is perfect for my study. The prime example Erll refers to is of Yad Vashem, a global online collection of photos, testimonies, and virtual tours of Holocaust memorials.

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[31] The term and concepts of "remediation" and "premediation" comes from the two authors Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin and their seminal work from 1999 *Remediation: Understanding New Media.*

Later on, Brunow (2015:200) speaks of the iconic turn and the increased focus on: "…moving archival images as well as photographs not only for the purposes of illustration, but as sources in their own right. Examples would be the Holocaust exhibition at the Imperial War Museum in London or the relaunched permanent exhibition at Bergen-Belsen." I would say that the same should be kept in mind when studying the National Holodomor Memorial Museum. Brunow points to some very relevant insights by Astrid Erll by bringing her and Bolter and Grusin into dialogue. Brunow then highlights other important issues of mediating cultural memory:

> I have argued for the need to take the mediation of memories into account and to provide a textual analysis which is not limited to the representation of content or thematic issues, but which looks at the formal-aesthetic means employed in specific media texts. The case studies have shown how media is not merely a vessel for memory, but actively constructs cultural memory, through aesthetic means such as framing and lighting, the use of music or the use of interviews, talking heads and testimonial witnesses. (Brunow:194)

This shows the need to look at other aspects of documentaries when you consider the big production of documentaries of various kinds, especially on the Second World War. On the other side we see an increased production of documentaries focusing on marginalized historical events, even including alternative histories. Consider also the remediation and increased circulation of such documentaries on YouTube and similar channels. If we look back at professor Himka (2013) labeling certain documentaries as "Victim Cinema" we saw that he, as Brunow suggested, did in fact study the production quality, identified talking heads, and pointed to witness testimonials as giving legitimate weight to the films thesis. It is very useful that a professional historian gives his take on such memory work since he has done extensive research on relatively unknown history from World War II. This may give us a different perspective of what historical documentaries set out to do. Maybe in the future we will see more transdisciplinary memory media analyses done by scholars from the field of history?

FROM COMMUNICATIVE MEMORY TO CULTURAL MEMORY OF THE HOLODOMOR AND PLURI-MEDIAL CONSTELLATIONS

During my own meager research and writing process I realized that my own work is actually an exercise in memory work itself. At the onset, you sit and read a lot of literature, watch films

and reminiscence your own personal memories. Then you start to write, and while you do your analysis and inner dialogues you automatically recall memories of what you have read and seen, and then try to reorganize it all into a coherent text or narrative. The thing is, how balanced am I able to make my own narrative? Ultimately you will have to choose what literature to focus on and you will necessarily give more weight to one narrative or view over another.

This leads us into the question of how we remember past events that are increasingly obscured by time and old age, but also by different biases, changing political climates and the change from one regime to another. In this text, I have tried to analyze reconstructions of traumatic events, which happened in a mythical past long before I was born. Then what is it that aids us to remember and better understand and relate to such traumatic events such as the Holodomor and the Holocaust? One memory that comes to mind is when I first encountered depictions of the Holocaust (I had never even heard of the Holodomor back then), which was through my teachers in school and through school textbooks and film screenings. The stories were thus orally mediated through teachers and in addition through various mediated versions. The teachers probably (hopefully) learned about the Holocaust from academic literature, but they must to some extent have been influenced by fictional books and movies. What struck me was that we were never directed or made aware of scholarly literature on the subject through the course of schooling. Even in upper secondary school any mention of quality literature of history was more or less absent, instead we used simplified school textbooks.

We can say then, like memory scholars Jan and Aleida Assmann, that memories of the past are recreated through text and speech, from person to person. An example could be my grandmother telling me about experiences from her hometown during the Second World War, thus directly mediating lived memories to me. This is what Jan Assmann terms communicative memory, which is passed on orally from one generation to the next. With the passing of the last living witnesses of these events, Erll (2012:232) then talks of a shift from communicative memory to cultural memory. This takes us to the issue of witnesses of the Holodomor and of the term cultural memory. I will start with cultural memory and go on to the connection of Holodomor witnesses. Erll (2008) gives an enlightening description of cultural memory and its workings:

> Cultural memory is based on communication through media…Cultural memory is constituted by a host of different media, operating within various symbolic systems: religious texts, historical painting,

historiography, TV documentaries, monuments, and commemorative rituals, for example. Each of these media has its specific way of remembering and will leave its trace on the memory it creates…Fictional media, such as novels and feature films, are characterized by their power to shape the collective imagination of the past in a way that is truly fascinating for the literary scholar (and somewhat alarming for the historian). (Erll 2010:389)

This applies to my study of documentaries, monuments and film and its impact on "the collective imagination" as Erll terms it. But whose collective imagination are we talking of in this case? Does there exist a notion of something like a *global* collective imagination? To answer that we may first have to look closer at the terms collective and cultural memory. In the book *The Transcultural Turn: Interrogating Memory Between and Beyond Borders* from 2014, Peter Carrier and Kobi Kabalek speaks of these terms and presents criticism of current memory studies and its many terms. In their conceptual analysis they describe four assumptions regarding memory studies (Carrier and Kabalek 2014:40). An interesting criticism is that the focus on "collective memory" in sociologists Jeffrey Olick's terminology is that it:" …sometimes causes scholars to treat literary texts, monuments, or rituals as "memories" instead of seeing them as articulations of a mediation between humans and "cultural tools."" (Carrier and Kabalek 2014:41). Further on they refer to Olick's criticism of some studies talking of memory as a "thing" but that instead it should be viewed as things we do or perhaps "acts" is a better word. Through this thinking we should not think of museums or similar institutions as storehouses of memory, but something that helps us remember, something that triggers memories in each individual person. The same could then be said about movies. They are not perfect replicates of the past, but they trigger memories, but they could also in their visual intensity replace real memories or at least "color" them, as noted by memory scholar Marita Sturken:

Cultural memory as a term, implies not only that memories are often produced and reproduced through cultural forms, but also the kind of circulation that exists between personal memories and cultural memories – the personal photograph for instance, that ends up in the public arena, or the Hollywood film that 'becomes' part of an individual's memory of an event. Thus, the personal photographs that are left at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial end up in a government archive or in coffee table books and, at the same time, the integration of film narratives into personal memories makes it difficult for survivors of historical events to separate their own memories of those events from the film images of them. (Sturken 2008:74-75)

I have tried to reflect in my term celluloid monuments the points made by Sturken. The process of consuming films may be linked to a sort of ritualistic mass behavior, or like a celluloid commemoration ritual. It is an activity people all over the world engage in, even during working hours, in cinemas or directly on their smartphones. This may be viewed as part of a practice of engaging yourself in collective memories or being part of the collective imagination. There may also be a link to the mass rallies at Nuremberg. This in turn links our fascination with the celluloid monuments on the screen with fascism and pagan rituals that Young (2016) talks of.

How then is do the theories of communicative and cultural memory apply to Holodomor memories? The horrific event itself happened about 84 years ago. Few people that witnessed and survived the famine are still alive today and they will not be able to share their stories with us forever. This indicates that the communicative memory of the Holodomor is in the process of fading into oblivion and that we from that point on can only depend on the cultural memory and mediated memories whether documented via film or orally in an educational setting. Since cultural memory partly relies on technologies of memory, like visual or literary media, this in turn means that such media may play an important role in shaping the perception of the Holodomor in the West and globally. Erll (2012:232) says that: "Over the past three decades or so, film seems to have become the leading medium of collective memory. Together with ubiquitous new formats of TV, movies about the past – often war films – have increasingly become the first, and possibly the most intensive, contact that people in Europe have with their history." She traces this development back to American television series such as *Holocaust* (Chomsky 1978) and blockbuster films like *Schindler's List* (Spielberg 1993) and states that: "Cinema plays a key role in the narrativization and iconization of war experience." (Erll 2012:232) She then refers to something called "basic narratives," which often are mythical in character and they:" …contain versions of national identity, shared values and norms. Memory is, of course, highly dynamic and counter-narratives, transformations and revisions of narratives are – at least in democratic societies – the rule and not the exception." (Erll 2012:233). Thus, it becomes increasingly relevant to study filmic representations of the past and this should be supplemented with their interplay with monuments and museums, this because new museums become more multimodal and available online than before. It is equally important to study the factors, and here we go more into detail of memory studies, which help create powerful media of memory, which Erll (2008) outlines in her article 'Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory.' In the article she looks at:

…their *intra*-medial "rhetoric of collective memory"; secondly at their *inter*-medial dynamics, that is, the interplay with earlier and later representations; and thirdly at the *pluri*-medial contexts in which memory-making novels and films appear and exert their influence. In short, I am concerned here with phenomena *within*, *between*, and *around* those media which have the power to produce and shape cultural memory. (Erll 2008:390)

The intra-medial aspects and the "rhetoric of collective memory" she divides into four "modes of remembering," which are all highly useful for studying the cultural and collective memory of the Holodomor in films and memorials. The modes are termed as the experiential mode (closely connected to communicative memory), the mythical, the antagonistic and the reflexive mode. Erll mostly gives literary examples for the experiential mode and refers to "life writing" as a good example. This mode of remembering can very well be applied for studying texts, films and oral histories that flourish within the National Holodomor Memorial in Kiev and narratives in films. The mythical mode also seems great for studying the films of the Holodomor. Of this mode she gives an example of how German soldier are turned into mythical figures in novels of the First World War and how the historical event of the Vietnam War is mythicized in the film *Apolcalypse Now* by Francis Ford Coppola. The antagonistic mode is again something that is relevant for this study as it focuses on how literary forms "maintain one version of the past and rejects another." (Erll 2008:391) The use of negative stereotyping in this mode of remembering the past can be used to see how Ukrainian nationalists are portrayed in different media, and on the other side, how Russian's are demonized in Holodomor depictions. The reflexive mode gives attention to processes and problems of remembering and is perhaps not so helpful to apply for this study, but examples could be historians pointing out problems with relying too much on one type of data, for example demographic versus oral histories, to reconstruct what happened in the Holodomor. These modes of remembering were part of the intra-medial strategy so if we now turn to the inter-medial strategy we will see how links this with the terms remediation and premediation. By remediation Erll refers to how historical events are being represented through many different media over a long period of time. An event that has been turned into a site of memory is not remembered as it happened, but through: "… a canon of existent medial constructions, to the narratives and images circulating in a media culture." (Erll 2008:392). These are also "transmedial" according to her and all these factors help create a strong site of memory and various techniques in film, like creating a documentary feel gives them more authenticity. Premediation is referred to as: "…cultural practices of looking, naming, and narrating. It is the effect of and the starting point for mediatized

memories." (Erll 2012:393) And they provide: "…schemata for future experience and its representation." Now we come to perhaps the most relevant tool or prism for looking at mediated memories. Erll (2008) terms this the pluri-medial network and pluri-medial constellations in another article from 2012. She detailed the strategies that potentially can make powerful memories, however:

> This potential has to be *realized* in the process of reception: Novels and movies must be read and viewed by a community *as* media of cultural memory. Films that are not watched or books that are not read may provide the most intriguing images of the past, yet they will not have any effect in memory cultures. The specific form of reception which turns fictions into memory-making fictions is not an individual, but a collective phenomenon. What is needed is a certain kind of *context*, in which novels and films are prepared and received as memory-shaping media. (Erll 2008:395)

She then points to a history boom in the German film industry, but that this boom is certainly not limited to Germany. This is true when you look at the Russian and Ukrainian film industry where the production of feature films and TV-series about history has seen a upsurge the last decade or so. It is thus the reception and network of knowledge production that exists that establishes certain films as memory-making media. Especially interesting are Erlls reference to controversies within academia. This point takes us deeper into the memory sphere and we shall now deal with constructed memories and Jeffrey Alexanders trauma theories, which gives another idea of how an audience can relate to a distant event in the past.

TRAUMATIC MEMORIES AS CULTURAL CONSTRUCTS AND THE ICONIC TURN

In the end of this theoretical chapter I want to briefly look at Jeffrey C. Alexander's (2004) trauma theories to better understand the western view and western cultural memory of the Holodomor as it continues to gain more prominence in the western imagination. I believe imagination is key in shaping our understanding of past events and I would again like to refer to the film *Schindler's List,* which is based on the novel *Schindler's Ark* by Thomas Keneally from 1982, as a good example of how film and literature can shape the collective memory and imagination. The film is very illustrative of mediated memories that humanizes the victims of the Holocaust and in turn helps us relate to what they are going through. On the other hand, there is also the blunt demonization of the Nazis depicted in the film. This film can thus be seen as a simplification of history in which there is good on one side and evil on the other or what we could call a Manichean black and white view. As such *Schindler's List* as a *celluloid*

monument could block out a more nuanced understanding of the Jewish genocide and also may overshadow other visual representations of subaltern genocides. If we then peer at this through Alexander's trauma theory, with his terms symbolic extension and psychological identification, we see how he argues how the trauma of the Holocaust could be a kind of cultural construct. He shows an example of the liberation of the Jews from the concentration camps and following reports about the atrocities where the worldwide audience did not immediately connect or identify with the victims because of their strange and ghastly appearance after being starved and mistreated in the camps. I want to argue that the Holodomor and its victims may seem even stranger than the victims of the Holocaust, and even more alien and incomprehensible to a western audience due to that it took place in a partially non-existing country at the time (Ukraine was engulfed in the Soviet Union during the famine and actually up until 1991) that is so distant from our own reality. The difference then may lie in that the Holodomor victims has not been humanized to the extent of the Jewish victims in *Schindler's List.* There are not many iconic celluloid faces that we connect with emotionally from the Holodomor. For we cannot really connect with the victims through factual history books or statistics. I can again point to the Ukrainian film *Holod*-33 as one example which gives faces to a family that lives through the famine, yet the film is in a foreign language, set in a newly independent country which has not cemented itself in the western consciousness. It is slow moving and would mostly resonate with the local Ukrainian audience, the diaspora or the special interested. Another reason for a lack of understanding this event could be, like said earlier, the issue of the famine being covered up and silenced by the Soviet government for many decades. The lack of knowledge on Ukrainian history in the western world (as stated by Solzhenitsyn) especially concerning the famine and Ukraine during the Nazi invasion in 1941 and the Holocaust makes it even harder for the event to manifest itself in public consciousness. Even knowledge of contemporary Ukraine is pretty limited in the western world. But the increase in visual media consumer culture through global channels like YouTube or Netflix may change the status of the Holodomor, for better or for worse. Intermixed with this, there rages a fierce and mind-bending propaganda/memory/media war between Ukraine and Russia with the aim of demonizing the other in the eyes of the West. It is a war of values, myths, and beliefs on the political level, as it always has been. A war between competing elites for power and wealth and using the people as instruments in this battle, as seen in the Maidan Revolution. This war is being waged on the Internet, television or through laws on the legislative level (Koposov 2017) and on regional levels in Ukraine through symbolic violence against monuments as shown by Plohkii (2017) where more than 500 Lenin monuments were removed during the years 2013 and 2014. Plokhy explains that memory wars

have been ongoing in Ukraine since the Orange Revolution of 2004 and identifies two conflicting narratives employed. One narrative belongs in the category of post-Soviet and the other is ethnonational, anti-communist and with anti-Russian elements (Plokhy 2017). The identification of these two conflicting narratives is useful when we now proceed to the narrative analysis of this study.

Chapter 3 CELLULOID HOLODOMOR MONUMENTS

As we saw above, global streaming services such as YouTube is an important platform to reinstate older documentaries to the current canon of visual debates on historical topics. Such recycling of older documentaries (such as *Harvest of Despair)* on a controversial topic in the present digital sphere could be called memory events (Etkind's term). We have learned that Russia does not agree that the Holodomor should be classified as genocide against the Ukrainian people, but rather insists that (in the vein of Solzhenitsyn) Russians together with other subaltern nationalities in the Soviet Union were mowed down by the famine as well, and that there were in fact Ukrainians among the perpetrators. If you visit YouTube, you can easily find and watch the full-length version of the Holodomor documentary *Harvest of Despair* and then find related videos in an instant. Does the re-instatement of that documentary in YouTube canon creature an established celluloid monument that reflects a nationalistic biased view of the event? I think we need to have a look at the narrative told in the documentary to see if that is the case. As such, *Harvest of Despair* provides a lens for looking at newer Holodomor narratives since 2014 and onwards.

HARVEST OF DESPAIR AND ICONIC VISUALS FROM THE 1921-22 FAMINE

As shown earlier *Harvest of Despair* is defined as victim cinema by Himka (2013) and is constructed as a slideshow of horrors of the Stalin era interspersed with survivor testimonies and "talking heads." The problem is that the visually entrenched genre as the documentary film necessarily needs to rely on archival footage. Such footage, as noted by Brunow, is often viewed as sources in themselves and gives an aura of authenticity to the claims made in the film. As noted before, such footage or iconic images barely exists from the 1932-33 Holodomor due to the Ukraine being closed off and foreign correspondents were usually shown the nicer parts of the country. To witness the famine unfolding foreigners needed to sneak off on their own and

manage to travel to the sealed areas. One example of this is author Arthur Koestler who witnessed areas stricken by the famine on his travel to Kharkov in Ukraine and wrote of this in the book *The God that Failed* from 1949, a collection of confessions of disillusioned ex-communists. Still, some brave souls managed to capture some of the truth on photography and smuggle them out, but not a lot and the images were perhaps to "discreet" compared to images from the former famine. Therefore, we can witness in *Harvest of Despair* the re-contextualization of older footage from the 1921–22 famine, that mainly raged in Soviet Russia. This is of course not without a striking effect on the audience as the images had gained the iconic status Kurasawa speaks of. Only this time these elder iconic images reappear not in a documentary covering that earlier catastrophe, but in a documentary from 1984 dealing with the latter Holodomor famine in Soviet Ukraine. These effective images of famished children and piles of dead bodies (some of them taken by Nansen, giving them extra weight of authenticity) are taken out of their original context and portrayed as proof for the Ukrainian Holodomor of 1932–33. Since this documentary is made long after the fact, the famine imagery is not used to promote a humanitarian cause, but for shock value and as taken-out of-context evidence of the Soviets crimes. If you as audience won't bother to check where the images (why would you if the production looks good?) stem from, you believe that they all belong to the same event.

Earlier in this text we saw how Kurasawa argued how the 1921-22 famine became a foundational event for future humanitarian catastrophes. The visual aspects stand strongest in this regard and is as such a visual benchmark for all subsequent famines and the like. But what of the language and terms used in the memory narratives of that event? Was the term "manmade famine" in use back then? I have said how the 1932-33 famine lacks in iconic images compared to the former famine, but I would like to suggest that the language used in in the contemporary media narratives concerning famines resembles the language used in the national Holodomor narratve. As a result, perhaps we see the level of iconic imagery set by the 1921-22 Soviet famine and the historical and memory narratives of the 1932-33 Holodomor is combined in today's media coverage of contemporary famines. However, the task set by my thesis is not to compare historical famines to temporary ones, therefore we should move on to the analysis of Holodomor narratives.

Here I would like to bring attention again to the numbers game and how this still is important in media and memory narratives found in news, websites, and museums. According to professor

of religious studies Oren Baruch Stier (2016:30) a number can become iconic, like in the case of the six million of the Holocaust. He says that such numbers try to appear as a scientific counting but usually drives from politics and bureaucracy. Take for instance the figure the official Ukrainian state narrative still today reproduces, which gives the number "seven to ten million" dead in the 1932-33 Holodomor. In this case it seems like the national state narrative has adopted the narrative from *Harvest of Despair* and not that of recent historical demographic research, as pointed out by Himka. This may be evidence of what Himka termed "competitive victimhood". This figure is the same the former Yushchenko administration's narrative stated and apparently, the current Ukrainian government headed by Petro Poroshenko does the same, while the latest academic research goes as "low" as 3.5 million.[32] This illustrates the existence of different levels of the Holodomor narrative and that they are not in sync. We then have identified one as the state political narrative and the other as the historical/academic narrative, just like Himka and Plokhy gave examples of. We can go further and define the state narrative as a type of elite political narrative that is aimed at the Ukrainian public and the international community with the goal of acknowledging the Holodomor as a unique event, a genocide, ultimately as the ethnic cleansing of Ukrainian people. Then on the other side we have an academic or historical narrative, which perhaps is directed more at scholarly communities consisting of scholars, teachers and students interested in the topic than at a public audience at large. This narrative varies, as should be expected when different scholars at different times pursue the subject. Take for example Conquest (1986) and his work *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine;* they did not have the access to archives we have today and had greater difficulties estimating numbers, still even back then, he arrived at an estimate no higher than around 5 million deaths due to the famine. Now, if we raise the question of which narrative has the biggest impact on the collective or public memory, we may assume that news on the internet or television and mainstream historical films has a larger audience than academic literature, where you need to immerse yourself in hundreds of pages instead of passively watching images of talking heads. Erll (2008) addressed this issue earlier when stating that films or TV documentaries may be the first contact people have with their own history. It is then possible to imagine that the former would have the greatest impact on perception of the Holodomor.

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[32] See Kulchytsky (2015:106) where he points to these numbers from various sources, ranging from 3-4 million and Sysyn (2015:8) tells of demographers reaching the number 4 million after gaining access to archives.

BITTER HARVEST

Here I would like to look at the feature film *Bitter Harvest* to study its iconography and to identify narratives. Earlier findings while studying the documentary *Harvest of Despair* will be used as a lens for analyzing *Bitter Harvest.* My initial question is therefore: Which recurring iconic and symbolic images are reproduced and how is this historical event re-enacted through this new feature film? Released in 2017 the film *Bitter Harvest* was produced in Canada and directed by Canadian George Mendeluk. According to the films homepage Ian Ihnatowycz from Toronto helped finance the project.[33] It is worth noting that filming also took place on locations in Ukraine, which makes it a transnational memory work in that Canadians and Ukrainians collaborated in this collective act of remembering the Holodomor. English is the main spoken language in the film though there are a few occasions where Russian is spoken, which is a point we will return to later in the analysis when considering aspects of "othering" and the antagonistic mode of remembering. I initially wanted to analyze this film because it was produced in the West and may give us a western outlook on the famine and the genocide question. While it's true that it was produced in Canada there are certain complications concerning the background of said producers.

Kuhn (2010:307) notes that "communities of remembering" could be grounded in ethnicity and shows an example of a Japanese photographic archive from the Second World War. How then could the producers of *Bitter Harvest* be said to ground their memory work of the Holodomor in ethnicity? I have already pointed out the partly transnational character of the film. Could it be stated that this movie fits in a Canadian-Ukrainian community of remembering by the fact that many of the producers have family ties to Ukraine? The family ties to Ukraine of the producers shows us that this was not a film produced by an unbiased group of people, but by people connected with the Ukrainian diaspora in Canada. On the films webpage we can read about the background of the producers. Director Mendeluk's mother had survived the famine before fleeing to Germany and then to Canada and the producer and financier Ian Ihnatowyczs family also had escaped Ukraine in the 1940s. Screenplay writer Richard Bachynsky-Hoover also has ties to Ukraine and after visiting Ukraine he became obsessed with telling the tale of the Holodomor. Then he was offered to write the script for *Bitter Harvest.* While they all are citizens of Canada their background could in some way color the vision of the film (and I guess that is unavoidable). They would never agree with the Russian agenda towards Ukraine. But if

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[33] http://www.bitterharvestfilm.com/

we now focus on the narrative of *Bitter Harvest* we can better identify if it belongs to the national/diaspora version or the historical version. To map the narrative and iconic images, we can start at the beginning of the film and then slowly but surely progress through the most significant parts.

I want to start with pointing to the end-credits of the film as they state that while it is based on a true historical event certain characters (I guess that would entail most of the characters, expect Stalin and other historical figures) and incidents have been invented or fictionalized. If we start at the very start of the film, we are shown images of the vast wheat fields of Ukraine assumingly set in pre-revolutionary times as the narrator (the voice of the main character Yuri Kachaniuk) talks of his childhood and the Ukrainian people's hopes for the future (see figure 5). As we mostly follow the events in the film through Yuri's eyes, this could perhaps be characterized as what Erll terms the experiential mode. She mentioned "life writing" and I guess memoirs fall under this category. It is as if we experience the memories of Yuri, some from his childhood and then the rest from adulthood where he lived through a terrible time. I see a possible links in this film to Dolot's memoir *Execution by Hunger* where he tells stories from his childhood and how he saw what happened in his local village during the famine. Consider the beginning of first chapter of Dolot's book:

> I GREW UP in a typical Ukrainian village, in the county of Cherkasy, some hundred miles south of Kiev, the capital city of Ukraine. My village stood on the north bank of the Tiasmyn River, one of the many tributaries of the Dnipro (Dnieper) River, and it was beautiful. Green hills rose in the south behind the river, and the rich tar-black soil of the plains stretched to the north. The plains were divided into strips of fields. Every spring and summer these strips would disappear beneath miles of wheat. Waves of rich grain, green in spring and golden in summer, gently rolled in the summer breeze. After the harvest, the fields again bared their soil as if in mourning for their lost beauty. Near the end of the year, the new cycle of color—winter's white— blended with the horizon of the plains into the gray-blue frosty sky. (Dolot 1985:1)

The beginning of *Bitter Harvest* also describes the aesthetics of Yuri's Ukraine and his village, not so much in words but through images of the fields and village structure. Dolot's book could be thought of as part of the inter-medial dynamics in the Holodomor monument complex. It is a certain interplay between the film and earlier representations. In Erll's conception of premediation these earlier representations provide schemes for future depictions.

The many stunning shots of Ukraine's vast fields of wheat could signify one of Ukraine's sources of wealth and food, and therefore also the source of conflict and battle for its natural resources. One can see that wheat is of high symbolic value for Holodomor depictions and it is worth noting that they are often seen in and at monuments of the Holodomor as they are used at national commemorations in Ukraine itself and abroad. In the film one can see a large bundle of wheat decorated with other wild flowers (see the images from the movie in figure 6 and 7). Other iconic imagery that is often used throughout the film is that of Ukrainian folkloristic and religious elements, like witches, national embroidery on clothing. These are aspects of the mythical mode of remembering.

After the film has ended we are shown a textual narrative overlaying an image of Holodomor artwork depicting a mass grave filled with starved human beings. The image resembles the type of historical photographs of famine victims found in the documentary *Harvest of Despair* and elsewhere. However, here the celluloid text, or what also could be termed a textual monument within the film, is of greatest importance and it part of it reads as follows:

> In 2003, Russia signed a U.N. declaration confirming that the Holodomor had taken the lives of between 7 and 10 million innocent people. Today the Holodomor is recognized as one of the great crimes against humanity.

This text is found in the Norwegian/Scandinavian DVD version, but in the German version there is more information. The German text renders part of the Joint UN declaration of 2003 where it states that the Russian Federation has signed and agreed together with many other nations that the Soviet Union was responsible for 7 to 10 million deaths during the Holodomor of 1932-1933. Then it goes on to tell that 16 nations recognizes it as genocide. I found it a bit strange that the text differs between the two versions. However, the German edition fails to tell us that Russia does in fact not recognize the Holodomor as a genocide against Ukraine.

Next thing is the numbers of victims. The numbers of 7-10 million needs to be highlighted as it falls under the definition of a Ukrainian state/diaspora narrative and is the iconic number of the politicized version of the Holodomor. As I mentioned earlier this number does not reflect the current research (which gives about 3 million direct deaths in Ukraine), and that is important since the line "based on historical events" is fronted on the DVD-cover. What is more important is that *Bitter Harvest* renders the same number as in the narrative of the documentary *Harvest*

of Despair. We also know that both productions are Canadian and includes people connected with the diaspora. We can conclude that the diaspora narrative is used again, but this time in a feature film. The question which then follows is: In what fashion is this done? Himka (2013) and Marples (2007) have shown how the Holodomor is often compared to the Holocaust in its terror and scale. Conquest (1986:3) in his time, compared the sealed of area of Ukraine and other areas to its east to "one vast Belsen," referring to one notorious Nazi concentration camp. This camp did not have gas chambers, but instead people died of hunger and diseases, making it an apt comparison. One year before Conquest, Ukrainian émigré Dolot (1985) living and working in the U.S, named the famine a "hidden Holocaust" in his memoir of the famine, similar to the narrative in *Harvest of Despair.* In the case of *Bitter Harvest* Holocaust similarities lies not solely within the iconic numbers game but are actually found in visual similarity and in intertextuality. To show this I have created a collection of screenshots from the film found below (figure 9). Not all screenshots are linked to Holocaust imagery though and I shall go through them one by one starting from the top left.

The first screenshot in the top left shows a painting that Yuri made at the art academy, portraying a starved child sitting by what presumably is its dead parent. This invokes resemblances to the iconic imagery from the 1921–22 famine that we learned from Kurasawa. The film does not show such starved children played by child-actors, only through this artwork within the film medium does it allude to them. We do actually not see that many starved people in the last phase of starvation in the film, we mainly see them pale-looking and dirty. In one scene Yuri observes starving peasants sitting outside begging for food while wandering the backstreets of Kiev. He gives them what food he has. Then he sees a little child sitting by his mother. The mother is lying dead on the ground and the child embraces her. The child doesn't look starved though, but well-clothed even if dirty. I guess it must actually be a very difficult thing to depict in film without actually starving actors for real. To achieve this effect, they would perhaps need to resort to CGI effects, which could work if done right. Still, we see heaps of people dead of starvation. The similarity to Holocaust depictions can be seen in these cases. Particularly with the pile of dead people stocked in the train cars. We also see images of the trains bearing the Soviet red star. These images could imply the likeness of the Holocaust and the Holodomor in the killings on an industrial scale which helped by the new transport networks of railroads. For example, in *Schindler's List* the train cars filled with Jews to be transported to their death were frequently shown and we were shown mounds of dead people being burned to cover up the Nazi crimes. A better example would be the train cars in *Shoah* or *Night and Fog*

by Alain Resnais from 1955. A very detailed study on such Holocaust icons like the train cars, Anne Frank and similar was published in 2015 by Oren Baruch Stier titled *Holocaust Icons: Symbolizing the Shoah in History and Memory.* He focuses on: "…the microlevel, on the building blocks of Holocaust remembrance." (Stier 2015: xiii) His way of looking at these icons together with Sturken's focus on the consumerism is highly relevant when analyzing Holodomor filmic representations and the Holodomor museum in Kiev.

In the bottom right corner, we see Yuri talking to a captured Soviet soldier. This particular line stands out and is almost a direct reference to *Schindler's List*: "If I can save one life, that's enough for me." Unfortunately, the film *Bitter Harvest* cannot compare in quality and emotional range to *Schindler's List.* You never feel the danger Yuri and the other characters are in, the acting is at points overly dramatic, and in the end, you just don't buy into the story. As such it does not generate the emotional connection to the victims which was so skillfully done by Spielberg. This may prove that representing the diaspora narrative in a fictional film is a real challenge, reasons for this is the aforementioned points by for example Himka (2013) and Kysla (2016). Perhaps by getting a director of Spielberg's caliber, and maybe try toning down the diaspora/national narrative could there be created a more worthwhile celluloid monument to the Holodomor.

Now, if we look at the second image (top right in figure 9) it shows a scene in a bar after the suicide of the character Mykola a friend of main character Yuri, who is assumed to be based on a real Ukrainian communist leader who allegedly committed suicide. Kysla (2016) pointed to the same instance in the beginning of film *Povodyr* and commented that suicide was the only redeeming option collaborators of the oppressive Soviet regime could choose. *Bitter Harvest* then, follows the same line in this matter. The same goes for the ethnic aspects identified in the narrative of the beforementioned bar scene. Throughout the film English is the main spoken language, except for a very few scenes where Russian is spoken. The scene shows Yuri and his friends mourning their dear dead friend Mykola in a bar where bandurists are playing Ukrainian folk music. Seated close by is a group of Soviet agitators who mocks everything Ukrainian and the leader suddenly bursts out: "Enough of that Ukrainian folk shit!" Then follows a fight between the two groups which ends with Yuri being imprisoned. In this case, the films narrative constructs an image of Ukraine's other. We see that Ukraine's oppressor speaks Russian and are portrayed as menacing villains. This type of "othering" clearly categorizes under the antagonistic mode

To conclude with the analysis of *Bitter Harvest* I would say that the film fits Etkind's description of a memory event.

Fascistic aspects in the memorial culture of Ukraine

According to memorial expert James E. Young (2016), monumental and memorial practices abounded during Hitler's Nazi Germany, even if such practices stem from time immemorial, and its aesthetics is still applied in contemporary monuments and memorials. As we have seen Himka (2013) and Rudling (2011) links the Holodomor commemorations and glorification of OUN leaders to fascism and anti-Semitism and Applebaum (2017) has argued that the groundwork for the contemporary Ukrainian fascist image used by Russian media was laid by author Douglas Tottle, who published the book *Fraud, Famine and Fascism: The Ukrainian Genocide Myth from Hitler to Harvard* in 1987. To the extent this national version of the Holodomor narrative may be called a myth, this mythicized narrative produced in the West by Ukrainian-Canadians in 1984 seems to be recycled in a fictional film of 2017 and results in heated debates on the Internet between scholars with differing views on the topic. The genocide debate of the Holodomor is interlinked with the fascist/Nazi collaboration debate and the former forces the latter into public light. We shall now see and analyze some examples of such debates occurring on the Internet. Especially with a platform like YouTube, anyone can now view, and to some extent, partake in scholarly debates formerly limited to location. The following debates do not address the film *Bitter Harvest* directly but is rather tied indirectly to it via the National Holodomor Victims Memorial Complex in Kiev. I would like to argue that this memorial complex is functioning as a central node in what may be called the Holodomor monument complex, also involving transnational monuments abroad, which fuels and pushes to the fore related controversial issues and creates debates on the Internet's global discursive space. This in turn may result in increased attention to the Holodomor and Ukraine, even if this means that negative aspects of the past come to the fore.

We can start to say something about the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance and its director Volodymyr Viatrovych who's received negative reactions to his memory work and drafting of memory laws in Ukraine. Political commentator Josh Cohen (2016) has accused Viatrovych for downplaying Ukrainian Nationalists involvement in the slaughter of Jews and Poles in Ukraine during the Nazi occupation that began in 1941. This he claims has been done

by whitewashing of historical documents in the newly opened archives in Ukraine, which was opened for access by Viatrovych and his team of historians. In a response to Cohen's article political scientist Alexander J. Motyl did an interview with Viatrovych, found in the article 'National Memory in Ukraine - What the West Gets Wrong About Liberals and Nationalists' from 2016, which tries to bring a balance to the debate and Cohen's claims, but I guess it is words against words, unless someone makes a real effort to prove the manipulation of documents. Through Motyl's interview we learn that the Institute of National Memory is not exactly swimming in money funding and that they reside in an old office building from 1912. I want to quote the beginning of the interview as it points to and sheds light on some of the issues I study in this thesis:

> "Are you a fascist?" I ask. "And are you an anti-Semite?"
>
> Volodymyr Viatrovych, the 39-year-old director of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, in Kiev, whose critics in the West demonize as an apologist of fascism and anti-Semitism, laughs. "Under no circumstances! I consider myself an anti-fascist. I value freedom, above all, and have the greatest respect for Jews. Indeed, I consider the Jewish struggle for liberation and equality to be a model for Ukrainians."
>
> "Well," I continue, "are you a Banderite?" The reference is to the followers of Stepan Bandera, the controversial leader of the radical wing of the organized Ukrainian nationalist movement from the mid-1930s until his murder by a Soviet assassin in 1959.
>
> "That depends on what you mean by 'Banderite,'" Viatrovych answers. "According to Russian propaganda, every nationally conscious Ukrainian is a Banderite. In that case, so am I. If by Banderite you mean a supporter of an interwar form of nationalism, then no." (Motyl 2016)

It is noteworthy that Viatrovych refers to the Jewish liberation as a model for Ukraine since the Holodomor narrative imitates aspects of the Holocaust. We also see the reference to the contemporary Russian enemy image of the "Banderite" as Viatrovych apparently been labeled. In a connected way we see a bleak outlining of Viatrovych and the national memory institute by Cohen (2016:1): "Under Viatrovych's reign, the country could be headed for a new, and frightening, era of censorship. *Although events of 75 years ago may seem like settled history, they are very much a part of the information war raging between Russia and Ukraine* (my emphasis)." A third party has commented on this debate, as shown in an article on the online newspaper *Euromaidan Press* by Mariya Schur. According to her a Czech historian named David Svoboda says that: "…both sides are making incorrect interpretations." (Schur 2016)

Svoboda states that some Ukrainian historian are glorifying the national movement and UPA, while Cohen and others are engaged in demonizing them. There seems to be no middle ground in these questions. In response to Cohen's accusations Viatrovych says he does not know what Cohen is referring to and that the archives are open to anyone who wants to check for falsification. In the end of the article Schur notes:

> As for the accusations challenging him and the institute, Volodymyr Vyatrovych says he is not surprised when criticism of the "anti-totalitarian laws" comes from Eastern sources, but finds it hard to understand Western scholars who now "sound the alarm about alleged threats related to these laws, but remained silent in the past when the archives were closed and when historians were persecuted." (Schur 2016)

This example of debate shows that Ukrainian nation building, and memory work is not only criticized by Russia but also by actors in the West. The next debate I want to show examples from is not just done through other mediators in written text, but through live video chat on Skype. The debaters are historian John-Paul Himka, who we met earlier, and an American attorney (and former president of the Ukrainian World Congress) named Askold Lozynskyj. We know Himka's position about the Holodomor, but where does he stand regarding the OUN/UPA? He has done historical research on this topic and has found various evidence for Nazi collaboration. As for Lozynskyj, who has written many articles in the *Kyiv Post* (Ukraine's global voice) on many topics, including the Holodomor, does not see the OUN/UPA as anti-Semitic or fascist. The most interesting and revealing aspects in the debate is the terminology used by Lozynskyj. Basically, he begins with talking about the OUN/UPA and his position on the subject of Nazi collaboration. Then he moves on to accuse Himka of being sponsored by "the Holocaust industry," seemingly referring to Norman Finkelstein's book. Next thing he says is that Himka is unfortunately a self-loathing Ukrainian and is a hired gun of said industry. He admits that he is not familiar with much of Himka's work, but that since he has not done much work on the Holocaust should not be trusted as an authority on the topic. This is quite some interesting language being directed at Himka. Usually one can hear the phrase "self-hating Jew" being pinned to Jews who is critical of Israel's policy (like Finkelstein) or of the Holocaust industry, but here we see it being turned around and used by someone who is advocating alleged war criminals. I must note that it is quite rare to see such terms being used in this context.

All these examples of debates show that history and memory is constantly used in the information war and that this war is not just waged through mediums like Facebook, television

or in news discourse, but also through constant revisionism in historical works, through the destruction of Soviet monuments in Ukraine, complemented with the building of the National Holodomor Memorial and production of celluloid monuments like *Bitter Harvest*. This last point we shall delve into in the following chapter.

Chapter 4 MONUMENTAL MANIFESTATIONS OF THE HOLODOMOR IN THE WEST AND IN UKRAINE

In this chapter I will analyze transnational Holodomor monuments in Canada and the U.S but the greatest focus will be dedicated to the Holodomor memorial complex in Kiev. During my research on Holodomor monuments and memorials I discovered that the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory had requested a database of all Holodomor monuments in Ukraine.[34] The finished database consists of a map of Ukraine with images of the monuments of all the memory sites. Most of the monuments are small and often paid and erected by the local communities. However, what I am most interested in is the ones funded by the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory, this since its memory work is bound to have greater impact on the global collective imagination via the globalized image flow that speeds along the Internet information highway and the mediated memory sphere.

Regarding monuments in the West (most of which are found in Canada) there exists a detailed list on Wikipedia.[35] I hope to fill in some gaps and more details with the analysis and mapping of the Holodomor monument complex. We can begin with mentioning the new physical monument and memorial that was erected in 2015 in Washington D.C. It shows that it is not only in Canada that has a significant Ukrainian diaspora, but one exists in the U.S. as well. The fact that George W. Bush did take time to attend a Holodomor commemoration in Kiev shows that Ukraine has other strong allies in North America in the memory war. Though if we look more closely we see that this picture is more nuanced than the whole of the West being on Ukraine's side against the Russian Federation. Russia has its apologists as well in North America, which was very much the case during the famine of 1932–33, the prime example being New York Times foreign correspondent in Moscow, Walter Duranty, who denied that a large-scale famine took place in Ukraine (Conquest 1986; Applebaum 2017). In the Washington monument we see a large rectangular form portraying a field of wheat made of bronze. The wheat and grain symbolism are a recurring theme in Holodomor monuments and narratives. In large letters under the bronze wheat we can read "Holodomor 1932–33." To the side of that we see a plaque with a memorial text: "Famine-genocide in Ukraine. In memory of **the millions of innocent victims** of a **man-made famine** in Ukraine **engineered and implemented** by Stalin's

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[34] http://www.holodomor-monuments.org/ See figure 3 for snapshot of the frontpage of the webpage.
[35] See the list at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Holodomor_memorials_and_monuments#Canada

totalitarian regime (my emphasis)." I am not sure if the monument is a free-standing monument or if its connected to a nearby museum, but if we focus on the monument we see that it is a classical physical monument in granite and bronze complemented with a textual monument. Just the existence of the monument in Washington D.C. shows that other transnational traumas are slowly getting their own place in a Holocaust saturated memory culture. Regarding the narrative told by the textual Holodomor monument we see that it reflects the diaspora/national narrative in that it calls the famine a definitive genocide engineered and implemented by Stalin as main perpetrator. The greatest difference from most other official Holodomor monuments lies in a small but very significant detail in this author's eyes. The plaque shows "the millions of innocent victims." It does not state more specific iconic numbers like that of 7–10 million and does therefore not engage in outdoing of the iconic 6 million number of the Holocaust. This is probably because it is situated in the homeland of Holocaust culture. Still this may show that the cultural landscape of the Holocaust is becoming more inclusive and works as a framework for other lesser known mass killings.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM MEMORIAL TO HOLODOMOR VICTIMS

If we now move overseas and travel to Ukraine, we can find the largest and most detailed memorial site of the Holodomor. The memorial complex is beautifully located high on the Pechersk hills on the right bank of the river Dnieper in the city of Kiev, Ukraine (see figure 10 for a bird view of the complex).[36] The museums website names it "The National Museum Memorial to Holodomor Victims". This site of memory or memorial space (a better fitting term since most deaths due to famine did not occur in the city of Kiev, but in the countryside) will receive the greatest focus as it seems to be by far the richest and multimodal museum experience for remembering the Holodomor, both in reality and online. You get the impression that a good deal of money was spent on this memorial site, both for its physical architecture and for the virtual version. Regarding the virtual part of the museum one can take an interactive online 3D-Tour on the memorials webpage,[37] which is quite an extensive experience and forms part of the analysis. If you scroll down below the 3D-museum tour section, you can explore a 3D-version of the memorial statute "Bitter Memory of Childhood." Here we can observe the word *bitter* and *memory* in the title of the statue, which resembles the title of the film *Bitter Harvest*, which

[36] More information to be found at:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Museum_%22Memorial_to_Holodomor_victims%22
[37] Visit the museums virtual tour at their official website: http://memorialholodomor.org.ua/eng/

in turn reminds us of the titles *Harvest of Despair* and *Harvest of Sorrow*. This could perhaps reflect the notion of bitterness of Ukraine towards their Soviet/Russian oppressors. The website of the memorial itself seems professionally crafted with all pages in Ukrainian, Russian, and English, and the staff is multi lingual making it compelling for international tourists. The website itself looks in line with our digital times and stores a wealth of information, documents, and images of the Holodomor all too be read in English. You can read on the memorials webpage that it was a state funded project and that the artistic idea for the complex came from the Ukrainian national painter Anatoliy Gaydamaka. If we apply Etkind's definition of sites of mass terror to the memorial in Kiev we see that it fits: "Memorials at the sites of mass terror usually consist of two parts, a museum and a monument." Next, he says more important things to keep in mind when analyzing museums, monuments, and texts:

> The museum tells the story and displays the material traces of the events. Producing a coherent narrative, a museum is available to discursive analysis and rational criticism, like a lecture or a book. In contrast to a historical museum, a monument should not be judged by rational criteria. Generating emotional responses, monuments are pieces of art, and they do not make truth claims. The typical monument is usually a tower, obelisk, or another secular, abstract symbol, visible from all around…Monuments do not reproduce historical reality but rather comments upon it, emotionally and judgmentally. (Etkind 2013:183)

This is all well and good and that is exactly what the many monuments in Kiev does, but what if the museum represents a memory narrative instead of a historical? What if the accompanying texts that exists in physical engravings at the memorial site and inside the museum part does not represent historical research? These questions will be addressed further on in the analysis of this memorial site. Now, to continue the description of the site and the analysis let's start by focusing on physical monuments and texts at the site.

ICONIC IMAGES AND MEMORY TEXTS AT THE PHYSICAL MEMORIAL SITE

On the physical memorial site of nation museum there are many sculptures and monuments, some of which are rich in details and ornaments. I will begin with the statue "Bitter Memory of Childhood" (figure 3) which was created by Ukrainian artist Petro Drozdovskyi. If we study this statue situated in front of the largest structure, "The Candle of Memory", we see that it portrays an unhappy sickly thin girl holding a wreath of grain. She is constructed so that visitors can put flowers or real stalks of grains in her hands, which is often done at official

commemorations. The structure "The Candle of Memory" (seen behind the girl on figure 3) is placed on top of the national museum, which is located underneath its structure. Again, we observe the symbolic wreath of wheat only this time physically manifested in a sculpture. There are built in lights on the foundation the girl is placed on which illuminates her even in the darkness of night, the same goes for the monument Candle of Memory (see figure 1). At official commemorations attended by the President of Ukraine himself, you can see apples being placed at the feet of the girl as well as the symbolic wreath of wheat. It seems to be customary at the commemoration for the President to kneel in front of the girl sculpture and remember the victims in silence together with the gathered crowd. Lights are lighted all over the memorial grounds and the sacredness and religious aspects of the ceremony is fulfilled by the presence of priests. Speaking of the symbolic wheat seen at the complex I must note the importance of this as well. Mounds of grain for example, can also be seen inside the museum itself and symbolizes the many dead of famine, "25 000 corpses a day." The circle of 24 millstones (symbolizing 24 hours in a day) that forms around the girl statue is also said to represents 25 000 dead of hunger every day. The aspects of these unbelievable numbers of dead is something you can find written many places on the museums website. The iconic number of 7–10 million is often repeated within the virtual complex and shows that it does not reflect the most updated demographic research. The most gruesome aspects of the Holodomor were the suffering of children, which is a central element in the complex and The Bitter Memory of Childhood statue represents this side of the story. Part of the story was that children often stalked the fields after harvesting to pick up some left-over wheat. The problem was that this was an illegal act seen as theft of the states property and you could be sentenced to death or prison from 10 years. This sounds quite unbelievable, but it was in fact the law of that time and part of the collectivization and de-kulakization process. A three-part video (it is like a virtual museum tour intercepted by interviews) about the memorial complex produces by UATV, a Ukrainian online news broadcast aimed at an international audience, includes re-enactments of this process.[38] Some scenes from this re-enactment shows children being shot for this crime and of agents of the state taking away food from the peasant's property, beating them if unwilling to comply (see figures 15 and 16). The same video states that the statue of the girl has become a symbol of the Holodomor. The statue could be said to be an amalgamation of all the iconic images of starving children stemming from the famine of 1921–22, where the most iconic pictures are found. The national memorials instrumentalization of victimized children may resemble the way the iconic

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[38] Holodomor, Part 1 Virtual Museum Tour at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZTlnIj8PBRs

famine images of 1921–22 were used to get attention from an international audience. This is not problematic unless the photographs from the first famine are used in the museum in the context of the 1932–33 Holodomor. To my knowledge, only images from the 1932–33 famine appear at the physical museums and its website, but it is hard to know because of the abundance of images found in the museum. After doing a quick search with the term 1921–22 in the website search engine it only returned one article about a conference held on artificial famines in those years and 1946–47. But these years are physically engraved in stone on the monument the Candle of Memory. All three famine periods are represented on this monument, but the museums greatest focus lies the Holodomor of 1932–33 since that famine was directed at the Ukrainian people. While there may be no still photographs from the first famine presented as proof of the Ukrainian Holodomor there is the issue of celluloid monuments found in the museum. The museum is truly a multimodal and intermedial experience and consists not only of physical monuments, exhibitions, archives, and literature, but also of videos being projected on the walls where documentaries on the Holodomor are being showed. On the webpage you can find a list of all films and documentaries made on the Holodomor in Ukrainian and English language. Many of the films can be viewed directly on the webpage, but many of the Ukrainian ones are not subtitled in English. It is an impressive collection with many obscure films I had never heard of. *Harvest of Sorrow* is of course included here, and another similar documentary called *Bread Guillotine* (2008 Igor Korbyn). I'm not sure if *Harvest of Sorrow* is shown at the museum to visitors, but in the virtual tour video by UATV there are clips from it displayed alongside other documentaries (see figure 11). As *Harvest of Sorrow* shows footage from the first famine to authenticate the Holodomor it becomes problematic to display it in a museum setting. Unless the museum staff informs its visitors about such issues and makes them aware of such historical recontextualization of documentary footage. As the images from Russian famine are the most heart rendering depictions of starved children, it makes sense to use them as evidence of the evil deeds of the Soviet Union, and it becomes effective for use in the memory war if Russia is implicitly connected with the crimes. Further on in the video by UATV images from another documentary showing Putin is shown together with documentary footage of Stalin, drawing a parallel between the Holodomor and current political affairs (see figure 12). In this context, the Holodomor memorial complex in Kiev is at the epicenter of the memory and history war being waged, where Ukraine and its Western allies is on one side against Russia and its Western allies on the other. What is important to note here is that in this kind of cultural warfare, if we may call it that, is between constructed narratives, aimed at an international public where the side with the most appealing story wins the publics approval. It is not without

reason that so much money is being spent on media in both Russia, Ukraine, and the West. One may perhaps view the Russian media as outdated or not up to the standards of the West, but nothing could be further from the truth. British journalist Peter Pomerantsev, who worked for years inside Russia's media machinery, details its workings in his book *Nothing is True and Everything is Possible: The Surreal Heart of the New Russia* from 2014. He tells how Russia's media has made an art of merging fiction and reality, and how Putin presidency is represented like a movie with Putin starring in many different roles, making the audience engaged in the narrative it spins. Whether everything told in this book is true or not Russia and its power asserted through the screen should not be underestimated in this media war. The same may apply to the Holodomor narrative told in the museum and through various filmic depictions. If the memorial complex and its museum is more of a memory museum than a historical one, as described by Arnold-de Simine and Etkind, then it will give more weight to witness testimonials and oral histories than historical research. The museum website addresses this issue on one of their pages where the context is an academic conference held at a university in Ukraine titled "Problematic Issues of the Holodomor Study in the 21st Century: Figures, Sources, Conclusions". They website writes for example: "The Holodomor research is impossible to conduct without eyewitness accounts and oral histories: although the famine took place in different regions of the former Ukrainian SSR, their experience of genocide was identical." (National Museum "Holodomor Victims' Memorial" 2017) The museum thus voices its stance on the importance of these alternative sources for writing a complete history of the Holodomor. This adds to the confirmation of the museum as a memory museum which allows other voices than that of historians to take center stage. The conference included speeches by many scholars from a varied range of disciplines who gave their views on the numbers of victims. The website's text disagrees with many of conference participants, especially on the diasporas influence and alleged manipulation of numbers. Here is one example from the memorials website:

> The speech by **Oleksandr Hladun** (Doctor of economic sciences, Deputy Director of Scientific Work at the *Institute* for *Demography* and *Social Studies* of the *National Academy* of *Sciences* of *Ukraine named after Ptukha*) was dedicated to the issues of so-called "manipulations" of the number of losses and the "politicization" of the Holodomor "due to the influence of the diaspora." He spoke negatively of the well-known Canadian attorney, community and political activist **Bohdan Onyschuk** who established 7 million as the number of Holodomor victims. "It is essential that the diaspora stop supporting scholars who maintain the number of 7 million victims." Unfortunately, O. Hladun did not mention the representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora from Canada and USA , who have the opposite view of assessing the losses

from the Holodomor and which he, selectively, does not consider to be false. It is important to note that he contends that those who support the 7 million mark are doing this intentionally to compete with the Holocaust numbers, which is absurd. *There are numerous testimonies that established the number of 7 million prior to the Holocaust. Germany's Consul General in Kharkiv, K. Walter, J.V. Sapsai, Officer of the German Embassy's committee on agricultural affairs Otto Schiller, Dorota Federbush, and many others confirm these findings.* (National Museum "Holodomor Victims' Memorial" 2017, original emphasis in bold, my emphasis in italics)

It is a bit hard to discern what is the websites own comments and that of the speech holders, but here it seems that the museum gives weight to witness testimonies to establish the number of 7 million number over demographic research. Testimonies are important in establishing what happened, but how can they establish how many died during the famine? The demographic studies were also done by Ukrainian scholars and the website goes on to questions the intentions of the employees of Institute of Demographic research and asks if they are involved in science or ideology. The same speech holder from the quote above, Oleksandr Hladun, did praise the museum for its national memory work, but raises the same questions to them about the manipulation of data. All of this illustrates how embedded in memory work the museum is and how strong its connections to the overseas diaspora are. The fact that the museum refers to a Canadian attorney and political activist named Bohdan Onyschuk for authenticating the 7 million number bears a slight connection to the debate between the historian Himka and the attorney Lozynskyj. This is because Lozynskyj also believes that this iconic number of the Holodomor is the correct estimate.[39] The museum has also signed a partnership and shares knowledge with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, and the conference above was organized in partnership with Ukrainian Genocide Famine Foundation of the USA. Historian Stanislav Kulchytsky was also present at the conference and he too addressed the importance of survivor accounts since they confirm the artificial nature of the famine and that Stalin supervised the hunger. These accounts tell that not only bread was taken away from households, but all types of food were confiscated by government agents. What is most interesting is that he mentions Applebaum's recent work *Red Famine: Stalin's War on Ukraine* as an example of a lack of understanding by foreigners of the criminal aspects of the famine. This sounds awkward, but it shows that Applebaum's work is not intent on proving that the famine was genocide at all costs.

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[39] See his views on this in his article at *Kyiv Post*: https://www.kyivpost.com/article/opinion/op-ed/askold-s-lozynskyj-another-attempt-at-counting-the-number-of-holodomor-victims-420467.html

This connects us to others finding in the analysis, which is the transnational replicas of the Bitter Memory of Childhood statute in Canada, of which there are three. Regarding the connection, one replica statue is found inside the Canandian Museum for Human Rights, which also houses an exhibit about the Holodomor named "Breaking the Silence." An international memorial ritual exists where people light a candle in the memory of the victims every 24th of November and was agreed upon by this museum. The next statue is in Winnipeg and is placed right next to a statue of the Ukrainian national poet Taras Shevchenko making the site a transnational Ukrainian site of memory. The statue in Winnipeg was sponsored by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress – Manitoba Provincial Council and was unveiled in 2014 on the grounds of the Manitoba Legislative Building. Pictures from the unveiling show that it was a deeply sacralized ceremony with blessings made over the monument by a priest from the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Winnipeg. The third statue is also located outside in the Wascana Centre which lies in Regina in Canada. The website of the Wascana Centre has a page about the statue and the Holodomor.[40] It says that the statue was erected in 2015 close to the city's legislative building. The short text on the webpage does mention the term man-made, but not that of genocide. The 7 million number is absent, but it states that millions of Ukrainians and Cossacks died during this famine. On an image of the statue found on a Wikipedia page about Wascana Centre we can spot the term genocide on the memorial plaque close to the statue, but not that of the 7 million death toll number. This shows that this iconic number is not manifested at all memorial sites of the Holodomor. I still must point out in this context that I have not found many such sites that uses the lower numbers from the latest research, if any. It is either the general "millions of victims" or "seven to ten million."

Earlier in the analysis we saw examples from the videos created by UATV, which partly was a virtual tour of the Holodomor museum that gives great insight in the essence of the music with a lot of beautiful footage of the complex and even re-enactments of memories of the Holodomor. The museum itself is very up to date and has potential to reach large audiences on the web and I now want to briefly focus on the interactive virtual tour available at the museums own website. Everything at this complex is very visual and graphic, with videos being shown to visitors, large framed documentary photographs placed around and many monuments and texts to read and almost all of this can be experienced through your own computer at home. When you first enter the virtual tour, you are shown the inside of the museum complex from

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40 http://wascana.ca/things-to-see-and-do/monuments-and-memorials/holodomor-statue

above, (the viewing mode is called "Dollhouse") (see figure 13) and you can pan the view and zoom in and out. If you click on the entrance of the museum you are sent there and the view switches to first-person (floor plan mode) (see figure 14). You can now move around inside the museum, but not freely like a real first-person computer game, but more like the street-view mode in Google Maps. All the items in the virtual museum world is clickable and provides a link to the museums webpage that covers the items history. Everything is in English, so it is accessible for a global public. All in all, this kind of digital memory work this museum engages in is quite impressive and you can immerse yourself in a lot of histories from the Holodomor event. It certainly looks professionally and skillfully done, just like the virtual video tour produced by UATV and it shows that the people who does this work really cares about the subject. The museum can be characterized as memory museum for the most part and it certainly allows many voices inside within its walls. It has an educational branch were school classes are given lectures and survivors are scheduled for appearances and tells their stories from the famine.

The last piece up for analysis from the Holodomor memorial museum is a part of their webpage that refers to a mapping project called "The Digital Atlas of Holodomor"[41], done by scholars of the Ukrainian Institute of Harvard University in North America. Serhii Plokhy is one of the historians responsible for this project. The museums site has published a site about this with a short text with information about the project and the line: "The Maps of Atlas demonstrate and prove that Holodomor was organized by the leadership of the Soviet Union." It provides a link to the Harvard site where you are sent to an interactive map of the Holodomor. A text pops up in front of this map telling about the demographic losses due to the famine. Here the number given is that of the latest academic studies which is 3.9 million direct losses. So at least the museum website directs its visitors to sources that do not always comply to the 7 to 10 million figure and does as such not exclusively front the national/diaspora narrative, though that seems to be the main story focused on.

THE HOLODOMOR COMPLEX IN A GLOBAL AND PLURI-MEDIAL CONTEXT

After the analysis we can see that the Holodomor memory has increasingly become more global and universalized, especially after the opening of the memorial complex in Ukraine. With the

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[41] http://memorialholodomor.org.ua/eng/holodomor/digital-atlas-of-the-holodomor/

production of videos in the English language, like the virtual tour video by UATV, a global audience can get more into the Holodomor story, even if it doesn't reflect the whole story or the latest research. To use Erll's terminology, I think the museum's way of displaying and narrating the historical event could be characterized as being somewhat in an antagonistic mode of remembering, because it too such an great extent employs the national/diaspora narrative and that it only includes Soviet/Russian in the list of perpetrators, while people in the Ukrainian leadership partook in the crimes. If we look at the pluri-medial network I think it is safe to say that the film *Bitter Harvest* is certainly debated and talked about, since it is the only film about the Holodomor in English language out there. But other elements must also be included to make it a "memory-making" film:

> Scrutinizing the cultural practices surrounding history movies we determined that it is not in the first place the medial and inter-medial strategies that turn a "film about history" into a "memory-making film," but instead what has been established around them: A tight network of other medial representations (and medially represented actions) prepare the ground for the movies, lead reception along certain paths, open up and channel public discussion, and thus endow films with their memorial meaning. (Erll 2008:395–396)

We have seen that both *Bitter Harvest* and the memorial complex builds on earlier representations like Dolot's *Execution by Hunger* and the documentary *Harvest of Despair* and it is being remediated via YouTube. There is also an intertextual connection between the titles of *Bitter Harvest, Harvest of Despair* and *Harvest of Sorrow*. We can say that these representations make each other into powerful memory making media and helps solidifying the narratives in the global collective imagination. Perhaps we are even witnessing the emergence of a "Holodomor Industry" with the transnational network of museums, monuments, and films? While all of these are national reconstructions of the past they provide a window into beginning to comprehend the event. The digital and modern infrastructure of the National Holodomor Memorial has strong potential to increase international awareness.

Chapter 5 CONCLUSION

Through the analyzes of films, monuments, websites, and online debates we can begin to arrive at some preliminary answers on the question we asked earlier. The documentary and feature film *Bitter Harvest* certainly constructs a national Ukrainian narrative and is closely tied to the diaspora. *Bitter Harvest* may become a celluloid monument of the Holodomor and many people in the Western world will probably learn about the famine through such depictions. Since this celluloid monument screens the iconic number of 7–10 million dead by hunger in the end credits, many will maybe believe this to be the correct estimate and perhaps consider this a worse crime than the Holocaust but may not be aware that the film uses representations of the Jewish genocide as a framework. This is all part of a victimization strategy (as pointed out by Ishchenko and Himka). This strategy is also illuminated by the use of iconic images from the famine of 1921–22 in the context of the Holodomor of 1932–33. I have found that *Bitter Harvest* is partly in an experiential mode as we see the event mostly through Yuri, the main character of the film, recalling the effect of survivors giving testimony of the event. The film seems to be antagonistic in that it fronts a nationalistic and ethnic view of the event and by doing that, cancels other complexities, namely that the famine also claimed victims from other nationalities. It is also antagonistic in that it demonizes people who speak Russian as they are depicted as the perpetrators of the crime who uses hunger as a weapon to quell the Ukrainian nationalism. These aspects are part of a demonization strategy used by Ukraine's leadership and we have also seen examples of how Russia employs the same strategy. Another thing which has been pointed out is the use of the Holocaust memory as a framework. This is found in text, titles of works (i.e. "The Forgotten Holocaust") and for example through visual, intertextual, and iconic similarities between *Bitter Harvest* and *Schindler's List.* But on the other hand, we have seen how too much focus on the Holocaust in Ukraine casts light on the darker side of the nations history, which leads to heated debates online and in academia. In the last part of the analysis I have studied various transnational Holodomor monuments located in North America (mostly Canada). The monument in Washington D. C. shows that a lesser known atrocity has gotten a nation where the Holocaust memory is hegemonic. By analyzing the National Holodomor Victims Memorial, I have found that the museum part of the complex is more of a "memory museum" than a historical one. Through various examples from its websites and virtual tour we see that it relies heavily on witness testimonials and appears to give little room

to recent demographic research. The museum is connected to the overseas diaspora and seems to incorporate and build on its national narrative, which is the same found in *Harvest of Despair* and *Bitter Harvest.* The iconic number of 7–10 million dead of starvation is therefore also used in the museum, though it has links to other academic projects which shows to the lower number of 3.9 million. Via analysis and visual examples from the museums virtual tour we see that the museum is connected to the digital information age, allowing a global audience to experience it directly from their own homes. This aspect coupled with other interconnected representations like films, texts and monuments imbibes it with great potential as "memory making media" and we will probably see even more powerful physical and celluloid monuments in the future.

To conclude I would like to say that the initial mapping of the Holodomor Monument Complex is far from complete. There are many other elements that could be included, but space and time restricted this. This study could be extended into a doctoral project where for example other new museum projects in Kiev could be included too compare narratives. One example would be the memorial museum for the Babi Yar massacre under construction in Kiev. I would like to visit the National Holodomor Victims Memorial in the future, and after carrying out this analysis of the virtual part of the museum, and reading about the background of the famine, it will probably be extra rewarding to see it all in real life.

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Figure 2 Overview of Holodomor monuments in Ukraine taken from http://www.holodomor-monuments.org/

Figure 3 The statue "Bitter Memory of Childhood" by sculptor Petro Drozdovskyi

Figure 4 Girl sculpture holding wheat stalks

Figure 5 Fields of wheat

Figure 6 Decorative and symbolic wheat stalks

Figure 7 Close-up of wheat stalks

Figure 8 Close-up sunflower and bee (symbolic of Ukraine)

Figure 9 Assemblage of screenshots from the film Bitter Harvest

Figure 10 Bird view of the Holodomor complex in Kiev

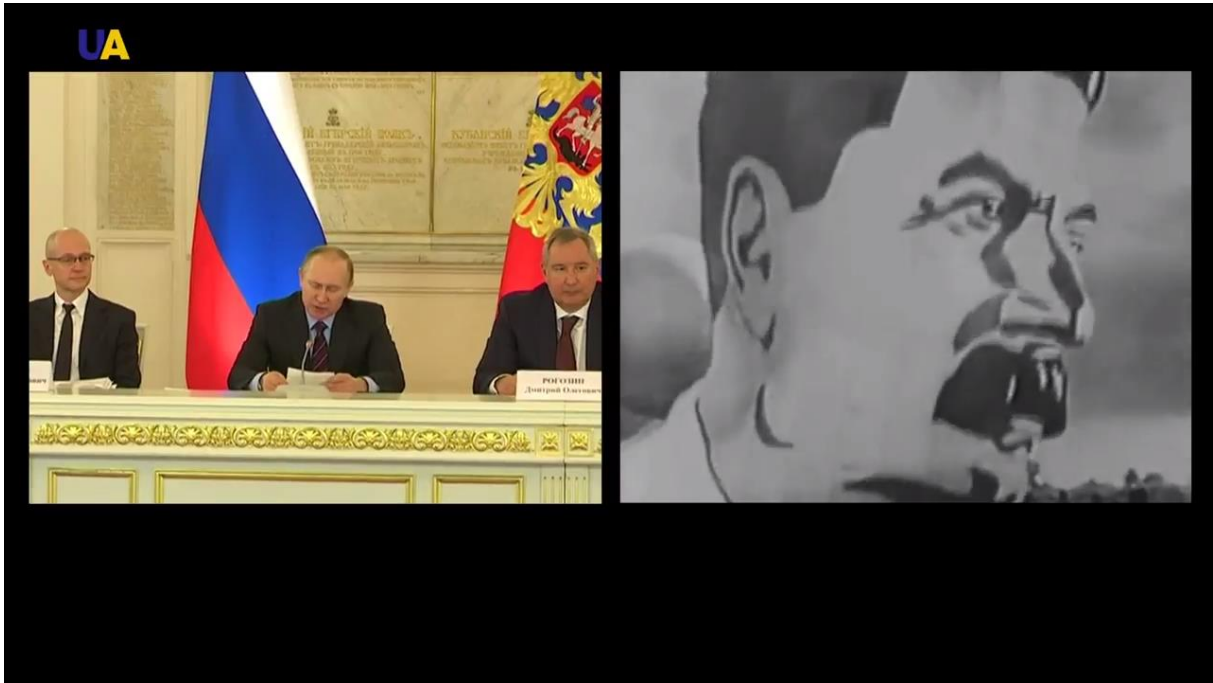*Figure 11 Holodomor documentaries in the virtual tour video by UATV*
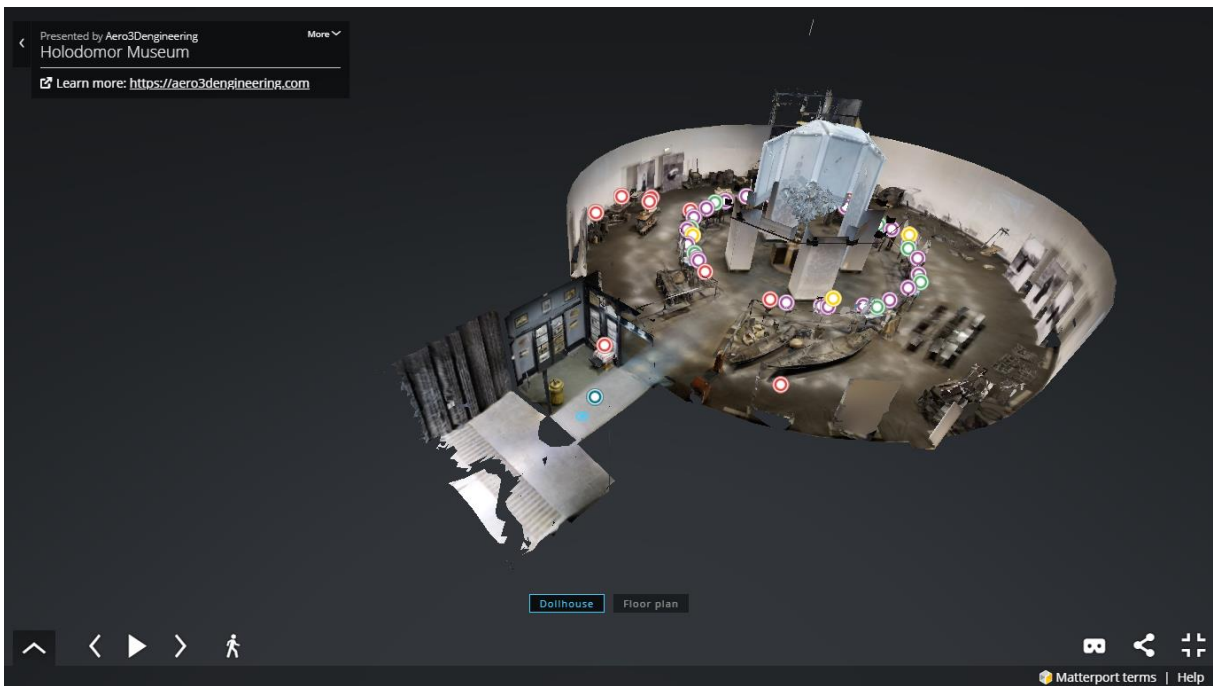
Figur 12 Putin and Stalin

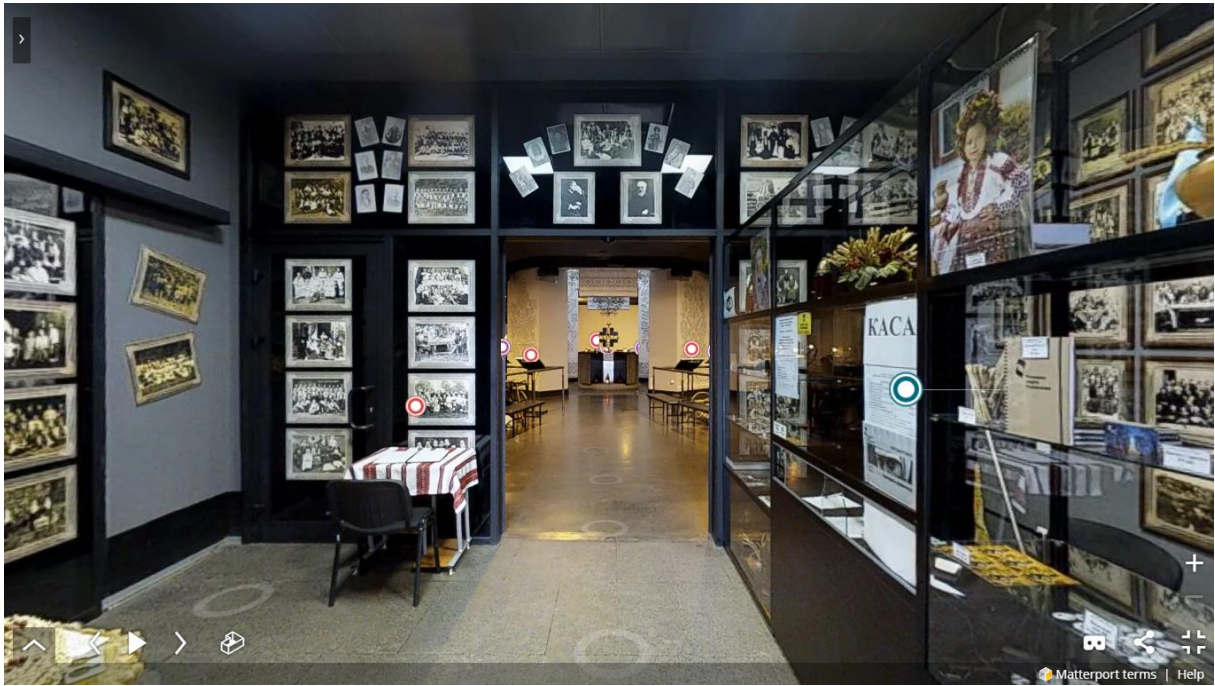*Figure 13 Virtual tour – Dollhouse view*

Figure 14 Virtual tour – Entrance (floor plan view)

Figure 15 Re-enactment of boy being shot

Figure 16 State agents beating up a villager