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SUMMARY

The article is devoted to the heritage of a historian S. Borovoy (1903-1980). It represents the analysis of the works of the scientist on Jewish culture and history. A great attention is paid to analysis of history of Jews in Ukraine in XVI-XVIII century.

Roman Serbyn

ECHOES OF THE HOLOCAUST IN JEWISH-UKRAINIAN RELATIONS: THE CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

In their short but penetrating essay, Howard Aster and Peter J. Potichnyj, two Canadian scholars – one of Jewish and the other of Ukrainian background – borrowed a metaphor from the Canadian writer Hugh MacLennan and characterized the relationship between their communities as that of "two solitudes."[1] The description is apt. As immigrants in a new land, both Jews and Ukrainians went through periods of hardships and discrimination, but being mostly hard workers, they achieved personal success and established thriving and prospering communities. Citizens of a multi-ethnic country, Canadian Jews and Ukrainian Canadians crossed paths in private and public life, and many formed close professional relationships and personal friendships. Within their own communities, they were more prone to evoke the checkered past of Jewish-Ukrainian relations in the "old country" and scrutinize personal experiences in the light of passed-down history, legends, and myths. However, all these stories belonged to another time and another continent, and had little bearing on the Canadian scene. As there was hardly any communication between the two communities, what interaction did take place was usually peaceful. This calm lasted until World War II.

The great global conflict changed all that. In Europe Jews and Ukrainians were thrown into the whirlwind of tragic events over which they had little or no control, but which pitted them against each other. When the war ended, refugees from Eastern Europe flocked to Canada, many of whom bore physical and psychological scars that have not completely healed to this day. As Canada took in some 40,000 Jews and a similar number of Ukrainians, the country became a reservoir of the traumas that the refugees had amassed back home. Jews brought with them memories of the Shoah, while Ukrainians could not forget the Famine-Genocide of 1932-1933. From their recent past the two persecuted groups brought out recollections of similar genocidal experiences, inflicted by different perpetrators. The Holocaust became the better known of the two genocides, and eventually cast a long and lasting shadow over Jewish-Ukrainian relations in the Western diasporas.

In the sixty years after the Shoah, the international Jewish community succeeded in making the Holocaust known and accepted by the whole world. Many people now regard it as the most significant event of the twentieth century and a pivotal point of world history. This is particularly true in North America, home to the most active post-war Jewish diaspora. American students are said to know more about the Holocaust than about any event in their own national history, and Canadian students are also well versed in the subject. In both countries the Holocaust has become a yardstick by which other genocides and crimes against humanity are measured. Sensitivity to this tragedy has influenced the way Jews are viewed by Canadians. In turn, the attitude of Canadian Jews towards Canada and its ethno-cultural communities tends to be based on the Jewish community's perception of how these

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[1] Howard Aster and Peter J. Potichnyj, *Jewish-Ukrainian Relations*. Oakville, Ontario, Mosaic Press. 1983.

groups behaved towards the Jews during WW II. Because wartime Ukraine was one of the killing fields of the Nazi war machine, it was inevitable that the Holocaust would become a factor in Jewish-Ukrainian relations.

In this paper I shall analyze two instances in which the Holocaust affected Jewish-Ukrainian relations in Canada. The first pertains to unmasking and bringing to justice of alleged Nazi war criminals purported to be hiding in Canada. The second concerns the preservation of the memory of the Shoah in the Canadian setting. In each case, Jewish endeavours had direct repercussions for the Ukrainian community. Some attempts were made to bring the leaders of the two communities together, but without much success. Each groups was preoccupied with lobbying the Canadian Government and trying to gain the support of the Canadian public. The two issues remained in the centre of Jewish-Ukrainian relations for twenty years.

A. Punishing the Perpetrators

Canada joined the crusade against Nazi war criminals only in the mid–1980s, and only after enormous pressure was exerted on the Canadian authorities from abroad. Until then, Canadians watched the spectacular hunt for Nazi war criminals in Europe, Israel, and the United States.[2] Some Canadians had heard of East Europeans being executed by the Soviet authorities for various war atrocities, including the killing of Jews. More was known in Canada about the UN-organized trials at Nuremberg, where some of the top Nazi war criminals were punished. In the 1960s, after Israel apprehended, tried, and executed Eichmann, it became clear that the world Jewish community was determined to bring to justice as many Nazi war criminals as it could, and that the campaign would be extended to all the countries where war suspects resided, and where it was possible to pursue them. Eventually the war crimes issue became very prominent in Western Europe and the United States, and Canadian Jews gained confidence that they too could instigate a search in Canada. Ukrainian Canadians were equally certain that this would not happen, and if it did, they had nothing to fear, since the Ukrainian Division "Halychyna" had been cleared before its veterans were allowed to come to Canada.

The immigration of the veterans of the "Waffen SS Division Galitzien" turned out to be the first major test of the two ability of Jews and Ukrainians to maintain good relations. Efforts to bring to Canada Ukrainian veterans from Great Britain, where they were sent after their internment ended in Italy, began in 1947. By 1950, their admission had been approved by the Canadian government. This was adamantly opposed by Canadian Jews of both pro- and anti-Soviet leanings, and by the pro-Soviet Association of United Ukrainians (TOUK). Jews considered the Division a genuine SS organization; the SS had been condemned at Nuremberg, and Canada had no business providing a haven to people who had belonged to that outfit. Ukrainians, on the other hand, regarded the members of the Division as true Ukrainian patriots who had sacrificed their lives to rid their country of Soviet occupation. Only a small but vocal pro-Soviet Ukrainian minority supported the Kremlin's campaign against the so-called Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists and mad the Division a target for attack. Articles in the Jewish press, both Canadian and foreign, varied in tone and intensity, but were unanimous in their condemnation of the Division. An example of the extremist position can be found in the New York Yiddish daily, *Forward*, which fanned the fires of hatred with the outlandish charge that "the Galician

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[2] It should be noted that, while the Jewish and Ukrainian communities in Canada have close connections with their American counterparts, there are essential differences in the way the two Canadian groups relate to their American brothers, to each other, and to their new homeland. In the United States there is a huge demographic disproportion between the six million American Jews and the one million Ukrainian Americans. There is an equally glaring disparity in the influence the two communities wield in American politics, economic life, and the academic field. The two diasporas are more equally matched in Canada. Ukrainians are not as prominent as Jews in the upper echelons of the country's academic, economic, and political elites, but they make up for this to some extent by being two or three times more numerous. In the political arena, Ukrainians remain a force to be reckoned with. Ukrainians are well established in the western provinces where they are recognized as one of the "founding peoples." A major weakness of the Ukrainian community is the presence in its midst of a sizeable pro-Soviet minority. This split in the Ukrainian, prior to 1991, was a significant factor in the Ukrainian-Jewish conflict.

A useful description of the two communities can be found in Harold Troper and Morton Weinfeld, *Old Wounds: Jews, Ukrainians and the Hunt for Nazi War Criminals in Canada*. Markham, Ontario, Penguin Books, 1988.

Division of Ukrainians marched with Gestapo units from town to town through Nazi-occupied Ukraine and drove thousands of Jews to their destruction."[3] Jewish claims fell on sympathetic ears and gathered support from the Canadian press. The Canadian authorities, on the other hand, took a more critical stand. They saw no valid reason to block the Division's entry: the military unit had not been condemned at Nuremberg, it had been cleared by the British screening commission, and Jewish organizations failed to substantiate their claims of the Division's criminality. Ukrainians won the battle for immigration; over the next few years about 500 "dyviziinyky" made Canada their home and became active members of the Ukrainian community.

The conflict over the Ukrainian Division showed the gulf that separated the two communities. The multi-ethnic Canadian setting did not add to the hostility, but neither did it compel the two sides to forget their past grievances and seek reconciliation. A chance meeting of two old friends in downtown Toronto illustrates this point. A Ukrainian immigrant recognized an old Jewish acquaintance and swept the surprised fellow in an embrace. Before the war they had been colleagues in an educational institution in Lviv, and when the Germans came, the Ukrainian saved the Jew's life by giving refuge to him and his wife. But in Canada, to the Ukrainian's surprise, his Jewish friend pushed him away with the words: "I am sorry, I can never befriend a former member of the SS Halychyna. Our friendship is over." The Ukrainian's attempt to explain that he was no anti-Semite and was only fighting for his national cause was to no avail.[4] The Jewish immigrant did not reproach the Ukrainian immigrant with any personal wrongdoing; the fact of having served in the Ukrainian Division was sufficient for him to condemn an old friend and saviour. The two solitudes were firmly entrenched.

For both communities the 1960s and 1970s were years of rapid growth and consolidation. Jews were inspired by Israel's success in the 1967 war against its Arab neighbours. Ukrainians saw national revival in the growth of the dissident movement, and were particularly proud of Canada's new policy of multiculturalism, which they had so staunchly promoted. As the two communities began to feel more comfortable in the Canadian setting, some of their members felt that they might join forces to condemn oppression and defend human rights in the Soviet Union. It was soon discovered, however, that outside these two issues the agendas of the two communities were different, indeed incompatible. Ukrainians advocated complete independence for Ukraine and wanted democracy to replace Soviet totalitarianism. Jews could be satisfied with the existing Soviet empire as long as it gave Soviet Jewry guarantees of basic freedoms (including the right to emigrate to Israel) and assure them equality with other citizens in all spheres of public and private life. Ukrainians rejected all collaboration with the Soviet regime. Jews deemed indispensable a certain amount of cooperation with Moscow in order to obtain documentary proof against alleged Nazi war criminals. Jewish interests thus overlapped with those of the Soviets, who continued to denounce the Ukrainian veterans as traitors to the Soviet fatherland.

A crucial stage in the hunt for Nazi war criminals was the adoption of the 1977 Holzman Amendment by the American Congress, which sanctioned the investigation of alleged Nazi war criminals who entered the country by hiding their past. The task of finding them was entrusted to the Organization of Special Investigations (OSI), set up within the Justice Department. The OSI did not limit its search to Germans but looked at East Europeans as well. The work of the so-called Nazi hunters from the OSI received extensive publicity not only in the United States but also in Canada. The menace of the "quiet neighbours" was driven home by a televised "Holocaust" mini-series and other programs of "revelations" and "disclosures". The OSI's greatest success was the arrest and extradition of "Ivan the Terrible of Treblinka", who was tried, convicted, and sentenced to capital punishment by an Israeli court. The Ukrainian community was shocked and dismayed. Demjanjuk was portrayed as a notorious war criminal, and the media did not miss any opportunity to identify him as a Ukrainian. The entire Ukrainian community was tarred. The sympathy that Americans lavished on Ukrainians as victims of a totalitarian regime was quickly eroded by their new reputation of staunch defenders of war criminals, hiding in their midst.

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[3] Quoted in Troper and Weinfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 73.
[4] As related by Troper and Weinfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 339-40.

Ukrainian Canadians condemned the OSI and disapproved of the way the American judiciary handled the Demjanjuk case. This individual, previously unknown in the Ukrainian community, came to symbolize what they now felt was a complete travesty of justice. Ukrainians resented the court's reliance on evidence gathered in the Soviet Union, which they believed to be doctored. They were convinced that Demjanjuk's I.D. brought out by the pro-Soviet millionaire Armand Hammer was a fake. The Soviets would stoop to any subterfuge to deflect world attention from their own crimes against the Ukrainian people, notably the Famine-Genocide of 1932–1933, and to discredit Ukraine's struggle for independence. Many Ukrainians felt that the media's constant reference to Demjanjuk as a "Ukrainian" rather than as a "Soviet citizen" was not warranted. The man grew up under a regime that brutally stymied the growth of Ukrainian national consciousness; he was then drafted into the Red Army, which promoted Soviet patriotism filled with Russian, not Ukrainian, national content. The Israeli trial, held in a theatre and displaying the characteristics of a show trial, could not convince Ukrainians of its suitability for the education of schoolchildren, bussed in to gaze at the "caged" man. Ukrainians considered the trial an abhorrent spectacle and an exercise in hate rather than ethics.

The accusations against Demjanjuk roused many Ukrainian Canadians to come to his defence, even though some felt that the community should not become too closely involved with a man who, after all, was an unknown figure. Demjanjuk defence committees sprang up in various cities, and monies were collected. The trial had two unfortunate side effects: it drove a new wedge between the Jewish and Ukrainian communities, and it deflected energies and resources of the Ukrainian community away from more constructive work. The community became re-active rather than pro-active. What eventually allayed the almost sinister impact of the Demjanjuk affair on Jewish-Ukrainian relations was the 1993 decision of the Israeli Court of Appeals to overturn the earlier verdict and acquit Demjanjuk, and the fact that the defence lawyer who had won his release release was a Jew.

For several years, while Canadians watched the OSI at work in the United States, Canadian Jews pressured the Canadian government to initiate similar proceedings in Canada. Irving Cotler, professor of law at McGill University, president of the Canadian Jewish Congress and defence counsel for Anatoly Shcharansky, openly attacked the Canadian government for inaction, before Canadian and American audiences. Sol Littman, head of Canada's Simon Wiesenthal Centre accused the federal government of harbouring 3,000 Nazi war criminals, suggesting that the notorious Nazi doctor of death, Dr. Joseph Mengele, may also be hiding in the country. The pressure finally succeeded in wearing down the resistance of the powers that be in Ottawa. On 7 February 1985 Minister of Justice John Crosbie announced the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals. Headed by Justice Jules Deschênes of the Superior Court of Quebec, the Commission was instructed to ascertain if the alleged war criminals were hiding in Canada, and if so, to recommend appropriate action.[5]

This sudden initiative of the new Conservative government took the country by surprise. The Jewish community had traditionally voted for the Liberals and had close ties with Liberal governments, but when Liberal backbencher Robert Kaplan tried to introduce a private member's bill in 1978, he got nowhere. Two years later Kaplan was appointed Solicitor General in Pierre Elliot Trudeau's new cabinet, but he still could not persuade his colleagues that an all-out hunt for alleged Nazi war criminals would not be divisive for Canadian society. Ukrainians, on the other hand, had found a champion of their anti-Soviet cause in John Diefenbaker and tended to vote for the Conservatives. In the federal elections that brought Brian Mulroney to power, several Ukrainians were elected to Parliament on the Conservative Party ticket, and Ray Hnatyshyn (a Ukrainian) and Don Mazankowski (a Pole) became ministers. Sustained pressure from the Canadian and international Jewish communities, Brian Mulroney's own moral convictions, and his political shrewdness explain the Canadian Prime Minister's surprise move on the war criminals issue. Hnatyshyn, Mazankowski, and the other Eastern Europeans in the Conservative Party caucus would take care of any grumbling in their respective communities, while the Deschênes inquiry would score points with the Jewish

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[5] Text of the Order in Council in Boshyk, pp. 261-62.

community. Mulroney's gesture was also "a gift for their loyalty" to a group of Jewish friends who had stood by him after his defeat in an earlier party leadership race.[6]

Both communities formally expressed confidence in the integrity of Judge Deschênes, but fears were soon raised in the Jewish community about his convictions, when it became known that he had called Nuremberg a trial of the vanquished by the victors, and had stated that it fell short of "the true measure of justice that should be meted out to victors and vanquished alike." The judge did not approve of the fact that "the statutes adopted at the London Conference prohibited the defence of "tu quoque" [charging an adversary with being or doing the same as oneself] albeit the German armed forces could not have monopolized all the wrongdoings."[7] This was precisely the position held by most Ukrainian groups. "Justice demands that all criminals be tried equally", a Montreal anti-defamation group reminded the Prime Minister. "Hunting out only Nazi war criminals is selective justice. It will bring Canada no honour to have a partial and selective approach to the problem of war criminals".[8] Ukrainians wanted the commission's purview to be extended to Soviet war criminals, who might also be found in Canada. In his reply the Prime Minister did not question the ethical side of the argument, but maintained that since "the [Deschênes] Commission is now well into its mandate, suggestions that it be extended at this time would not be practical".[9] The mandate of the Deschênes commission remained unchanged: to investigate Nazi war criminals – and only Nazi war criminals. The Ukrainian community continued to uphold the principle of equal justice for all, but for practical purpose it decided to adapt its tactics to the government's own limited agenda.

All things considered, the work of the Commission went quite smoothly. Two Jewish organizations (the Canadian Jewish Congress and the B'nai B'rith) and two Ukrainian groups (the Ukrainian Canadian Committee and the Brotherhood of the Ukrainian Division Halychyna) were granted official standing, which meant that they could advise Deschênes and, to some degree, monitor the Commission's work. Hearings were held across the country, and concerned groups and individuals were permitted to submit briefs. During the life of the commission Ukrainians were in the limelight, with the Galician Division as the main target. Most accusations came from such Jewish organizations as the Canadian Jewish Congress, the B'nai B'rith and the Canadian branch of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre. Both communities were represented by excellent legal teams: John Sopinka, Yaroslav Batiuk and John Gregorovich representing the Ukrainian community, and Irving Cotler, David Matas, and Kenneth Narvey – the Jewish community. It took more than two years for the commission to complete its work and for Deschênes to write his report.

The Commission's recommendations took into account the concerns of the two sides: neither was unduly slighted, and both gained some of the things they were fighting for. The commission had examined 800 names, but retained only 20 "serious cases" – all of which were detailed in the secret part of the report – for further action. Another 139 cases needed more investigation. No names of individuals were revealed; no community or group was singled out for condemnation. It is not known how many people on the lists were of Ukrainian origin. The Galician Division was cleared of all allegations of wrongdoing, which had been presented to the commission. "Charges of war crimes against members of the Galicia Division", wrote Judge Deschênes, "have never been substantiated, either in 1950 when they were first preferred, or in 1984 when they were renewed, or before this Commission. Further, in the absence of evidence of participation in or knowledge of specific war crimes, mere membership in the Galicia Division is insufficient to justify prosecution".[10] Much to the Ukrainians delight, the judge recommended that Canada not set up an organization similar to the American OSI. Instead, three ways were proposed from which the government could choose how to deal with war criminals on Canadian soil: a) prosecution in Canada, b) denaturalization and

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[6] Troper & Weinfeld, p. 146.

[7] Jules Deschenes, "Politics and the Rule of Law", quoted in Troper & Weinfeld. P. 180.

[8] Letter to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney from Roman Serbyn, Chairman of the Information and Anti-Defamation Commission of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee (Montreal Branch). 8 May 1985.

[9] Brian Mulroney to Roman Serbyn, 15 July 1985.

[10] *Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals. Report. Part I: Public*. Honourable Jules Deschênes Commissioner. Ottawa, Canada, 30 December 1986. P. 261. The judge also stated that the list of 217 officers of the Division, which Wiesenthal had sent, proved "nearly totally useless". P. 258.

deportation, and c) extradition. This recommendation left the door open to future problems for the Ukrainian community. When the report became known, each community gave a sigh of relief. Neither got all it wanted, but both realized that the results could have been worse.

Brian Mulroney's decision to launch the enquiry was precipitated by the hysterical outbursts from the Simon Wiesenthal Centre protesting the presence in Canada of the notorious Joseph Mengele. However, as it became clear that the "Doctor of Death" was nowhere to be found, the Canadian media's attention shifted to the Centre's other accusations. The accusation that Canada had become home to thousands of men from the notorious SS organization, universally recognized for their evil deeds during the war, and that these monsters had been knowingly accepted into the country, and were now freely living among honest Canadians, was a sensational allegation that promised much more for the media meat grinders than Dr. Mengele. The Canadian media focused on the Ukrainian Division, gave deceitful reports on the work of the Deschênes Commission, and conducted some amateurish investigations on its own. Stories about the Division were filled with unsubstantiated information and biased interpretations. Depiction of the war on the Ukrainian soil and of the activities of the Ukrainian nationalists was replete with disinformation culled from Soviet and pro-Soviet sources. The struggle for the Ukrainian national independence became identified with Ukrainian nationalism, and nationalism with fascism. The media was solidly on the side of the accusers, and the more the Ukrainian community protested against misrepresentation, the more the media became insensitive to their arguments.[11]

Canadian authorities did not intend to target the Ukrainian community, but by limiting the Commission's mandate to perpetrators of war crimes committed on the Nazi side only, Mulroney's government created a situation that was conducive to such unwarranted action by the media. Deschênes, in a previously published essay, had been right to insist that crimes were committed on all sides, and that the victors should not be exempt from punishment. Unfortunately, the judge did not insist that the Canadian Government apply this principle to the mandate of his commission, before accepting his appointment. The expansion of the mandate would not have thwarted the Jewish community's concern for seeking out Nazi war criminals, but would have broadened the scope of the hunt and given the media other trails to explore. The recent wars for the Yugoslavian succession and the ethnic wars in Africa clearly demonstrate that the only true justice is to condemn and treat equally the war crimes committed on all sides. This basic idea seems to have been accepted by everyone concerned. The B'nai B'rith lawyer stated that even though his "report looks at the particular problem of bringing Nazi war criminals to justice, all criminals against humanity should be brought to justice".[12] The glaring injustice of unequal dispensation of justice, so strongly felt by the Ukrainian community at the time of the Commission's work, was partially remedied in Judge Deschênes recommendations outlined above. But the harm to Ukrainian-Jewish relations had already been done.

B. Remembering the Victims.

There is Montreal has a monument known as "La Réparation" (roughly translated as "Redress" or "Amends") that is unique in its genre. Erected by the city on the initiative and with financial help from the Armenian community, it embodies an original concept of a French-Canadian artist. The imposing structure consists of two large, solid slabs of white marble, standing vertically in close proximity to each other. The inner side of one of the panels carries an inscription engraved in French with a dedication "to all the peoples, victims of genocide in the XX th century". Eleven nationalities are named specifically, amongst them Armenians, Ukrainians, and Jews. The inscription, which is not easily accessible, reflects the artist's belief that information about genocides remains largely hidden

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[11] Roman Serbyn, "Alleged War Criminals, the Canadian Media, and the Ukrainian Community", in Yury Boshyk (ed.), *Ukraine during World War II: History and its Aftermath.* Edmonton, C.I.U.S., 1986. Pp. 121-130.
[12] David Matas, *Bringing Nazi War Criminals in Canada to Justice*. Toronto, 1985. P. 98.

from the outside world. Unveiled in 1998, the monument is a noble gesture of one grieving community reaching out to all of Canadian society with a call to share memories.

Jews have been second to none in preserving the memory of the Holocaust. In many ways it has been much easier for them to do so than for the victims of other genocides. Nazi Germany was defeated before traces of her crimes could be hidden. Material evidence that fell into the hands of the allied forces ended up in museums throughout the world. Thus, no serious voice could be heard to negate the Holocaust. Holocaust museums were built and monuments erected, not only in Israel but also in the United States (Washington Museum), Germany (Berlin Museum), and other countries. There are many organized Holocaust sections in Jewish community centers in Canada. There is no Canadian national museum devoted to the Shoah, but this is not for lack of effort by the Jewish community to have such an institution established.

The question of a Canadian Holocaust museum has been discussed for several years now. It was raised when the Canadian War Museum was slated for renewal and expansion. At that time it was recommended that a Holocaust wing be added to the museum. This may have pleased some Canadian Jews, but others preferred a completely separate institution. In any case, Canadian veteran organizations objected, and the idea was dropped. The Canadian Jewish Congress then lobbied for a separate Holocaust museum in Ottawa. They evoked precedents in other countries and argued that such a museum was necessary for commemorative and educational purposes. But the Jewish project did not meet with approval from other ethno-cultural communities whose histories also included the horrors of genocide, and who preferred a solution along the lines of the Montreal Redress monument, i.e., a museum dedicated to *all* genocides. Did Canada have any particular obligation to put up a Holocaust museum? It did not seem so: Canadians were neither victims nor perpetrators of the Holocaust, and the catastrophe did not take place on Canadian soil. Unlike indigenous Canadian tribes that had suffered genocidal acts at the hands of white colonists, these other genocide victims hailed from other lands, far from Canadian shores.

Ukrainians have several monuments dedicated to the 1930s Famine (Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto). But their genocide is still little known, even in Canada with its sizable Ukrainian population. Some members of the Ukrainian community were willing to settle for a spot in the Holocaust section of the renovated War Museum or of the proposed Holocaust museum. They only wanted to ensure that not only WW II atrocities against the Ukrainian people were depicted but also the Famine-Genocide. However, the prevalent feeling among Ukrainians was that the Ukrainian genocide should be in a common Canadian museum dedicated to the phenomenon of genocide. Unlike the Jews, Ukrainians would find it difficult to fill a whole museum with other than written testimony. Little photographic evidence from the 1933 famine has survived, as probably not many photos were taken at the time. It could not be expected otherwise in the case of a hidden crime denied by its perpetrators. The Nazis were caught red-handed, but the Communists held on to power for two more generations after their misdeeds. Enough time elapsed to wipe the crime from the memory of many of the aged survivors. For these and other reasons, an inclusive museum made sense to the Ukrainians, and they became its main proponents. Others – Armenians, Cambodians, Rwandans and even many Jews – agreed with this approach.

The main arguments in favour of an inclusive genocide museum:

1. *To Commemorate all Victims.* The twentieth century alone has witnessed several major genocides. All these genocides had one thing in common: they destroyed great masses of human beings belonging to various nationalities, even though none of the target groups were completely annihilated. All these crimes were equally reprehensible, and all the victims have equal claim on our memory. If we accept the argument that to neglect the memory of Jewish Holocaust victims is to submit them to a new outrage, then we must recognize its validity for the victims of other genocides. The very idea of grading genocides, or setting up a "hierarchy", is objectionable and unworthy of Canadian society.

2. *To Teach about All Genocides.* In order to fully understand the nature of genocide, it is imperative to study the crime in its various manifestations. There is no prototype for genocides, and if

the younger generations are to be educated, it is not enough to familiarize them with just one genocide. The claim that the Holocaust was a unique historical occurrence is an indication that precisely for this reason the value of the Shoah, like that of any other genocide, is limited. The Holocaust teaches much about man's inhumanity to man, but it does not show the various forms this cruelty can take. What, for example, does the Holocaust teach us about the use of famine as a weapon of annihilation?

3. *To Reflect the Concerns of All Canadians.* Canada has given shelter to refugees from many countries ravaged by genocide. These immigrants have become Canadian citizens and are contributing to the cultural, political, and economic enrichment of their new homeland. They have a right to be treated as equal citizens. A national museum, which would choose among the major tragedies, runs the risk of appearing discriminatory. It would provoke resentment among those citizens whose own genocides were ignored. The measure would prove divisive for Canadian society. It would also deprive the rest of the Canadian population of more encompassing information on genocide to which it is entitled. The exclusion of other genocides from a Canadian Holocaust Museum is objectionable for ethical and political reasons: it offends the memory of countless victims, and creates resentment.

4. *To Assure a Specifically Canadian Approach.* No one can reasonably object to a Canadian museum that would commemorate all genocides with dignity. Such an institution would be specifically Canadian, reflecting Canadian society and promoting the Canadian way of solving significant issues. Just like the Montreal "Redress" Monument is unique, so the Canadian Museum of Genocide would be the first of its kind. It could serve as an inspiration and model for other institutions around the world. The big challenge for Canada is not to put up a museum, but to create an institution that would transcend narrow group interests and encompass the concerns of the whole society. [13]

As plans for a national Canadian Holocaust museum quietly faded from public attention, the Winnipeg media and multimillionaire Israel Asper came up with another project. An active member of the Jewish community and a staunch and dynamic defender of the State of Israel in the Western media, Asper proposed to create a Canadian Museum for Human Rights, which would be a joint venture backed by corporate and government funding. Communities whose ancestors had suffered major abuses were invited to join in financing and organizing this museum. According to the President of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Eugene Czolij, his preliminary discussions with the representatives of the project left him with the impression that the Ukrainian famine would have its proper place in the museum. This seems to be as close as Canadian society has managed to get to the idea of a comprehensive museum.

And yet, in Canadian academic institutions it is a groowing practice to analyze the Holocaust alongside other genocides. Canadian universities have been doing research and offering courses in comparative studies of genocides for some time now. For example, the Montreal Institute of Genocide and Human Rights Studies (MIGS) was created at Concordia University in 1986. The centre was the outgrowth of a very successful and still ongoing course on genocides, taught by a duo of professors: a historian, Frank Chalk, and a sociologist — Kurt Jonassohn. In 1983 they participated in an international conference on the Ukrainian famine held at Université du Québec à Montréal, where they gave a paper on the conceptualization of genocide.[14] Further research and reflections led to a systematic examination of specific historical cases, including the Ukrainian famine.[15] The Montreal Institute of Genocide and Human Rights Studies has become a meeting place and forum for the exchange of information and ideas on human rights abuses, crimes against humanity, and genocides. Questions on the nature and scope of the Ukrainian famine are sometimes broached, and are not without effect on the participants of these discussions. In his pioneering book on genocide, Professor Leo Kuper, mentioned only in passing "the many millions of peasants starved to death in the

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[13] For a more complete presentation of these arguments, see: Roman Serbyn, "Four reasons Why We Need a Canadian Museum of Genocide." The whole text can be read on the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association Web site: <http://www.uccla.ca/issues/genocide/i_gncd_002.html>

[14] Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, "Conceptualizations of Genocide and Ethnocide". in Roman Serbyn and Bohdan Krawchenko (eds.), *Famine in Ukraine 1932-1933.* Edmonton, CIUS, 1986. Pp. 179-189.

[15] Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn. *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990.

artificially induced man-made famine of 1932-1933".[16] After a visit to Concordia University and a discussion on the subject, Kuper stated in a subsequent publication: "Currently, it is being argued that this artificially induced famine was in fact an act of genocide, designed not only to crush peasant resistance to collectivization but also to undermine the social basis of a Ukrainian national resistance".[17]

To my knowledge there has never been a conference to examine the Holocaust and the Holodomor on a comparative basis. No academic institution in Canada ever took up such a challenge. Jews and Ukrainians shy away from the idea, perhaps each side doubting the other's ability to face the issue objectively. The idea was raised at a major Jewish-Ukrainian conference held in 1983 in Hamilton. By then hostility had built up between the two communities over the issue of alleged war criminals, and in order to diffuse the tension, Peter Potichnyj and Howard Aster organized a four-day historical conference on Ukrainian-Jewish relations, at MacMaster University. Some two dozen papers were read, one of which dealt with the Holocaust and analyzed the bahaviour of the Ukrainian population.[18] There was no corresponding paper on the Holodomor. During the discussion, I suggested that we would have a fuller picture of Ukrainian-Jewish relations if another paper had examined the Ukrainian genocide and the behaviour of the Jewish population [19].

Perhaps because of the recent mass killings in Africa, many Canadians have become more receptive to information about previous genocides on the European continent. For several years the Armenian university students of Montreal organized conferences commemorating the Armenian genocide. Invitations were extended to experts on other genocides: the Jewish Holocaust, the Cambodian killing fields, the Rwandan massacres, and the Ukrainian Holodomor. The Ukrainian community staged its 1999 commemoration of the Holodomor against the background of the Armenian "Redress" monument, and invited the Armenian, Rwandan, Cambodian, and Jewish communities to send representatives. All accepted the invitation their delegates read messages of sympathy at the gathering. The Ukrainians particularly appreciated the two messages from the Jewish community: one from B'nai B'rith and the other from the Canadian Jewish Congress.

Before the Deschênes Commission's work was over, a new publication hit the bookstands. The book's title: *Fraud, Famine and Fascism: The Ukrainian Genocide Myth from Hitler to Harvard* linked the Jewish Holocaust and the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide in a sinister manner and made it quite clear that the publishers intended to add new fuel to the Jewish-Ukrainian controversy. The book was well written, richly illustrated, and skillfully documented. It was a slick piece of propaganda and could never have been written by its alleged author, whose colourful career had earned him the reputation of "jack of all trades".[20] The book's main thrust was to prove that Ukrainian war criminals had launched a "famine-genocide campaign" in order "to divert investigations of war criminals".[21] The work did not go unnoticed. In January 1988 the New York *Village Voice* relied on it for a sensationalist feature article.[22] The article did not dispute the existence of the famine, but quoted university professors (Alexander Dallin, Moshe Lewin, and Lynne Viola) to dispute the claim that it was a genocide. Four months later the pro-Soviet newspaper *The Ukrainian Canadian* gave Tottle's book a glowing review.[23] Written by the paper's editor, the article was an uninspiring rehash of the *Village*

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[16] Leo Kuper, *Genocide*. Penguin Books, 1981. P. 148.
[17] Leo Kuper, *The Prevention of Genocide*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1985. P. 150.
[18] Aharon Weiss, "Jewish-Ukrainian Relations in Western Ukraine During the Holocaust", in Peter J. Potichnyj and Howard Aster (eds.), *Ukrainina-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective*. Edmonton, C.I.U.S., 1988. Pp. 409-420.
[19] Potichnyj & Aster. *Op. cit*. P. 485-486.
[20] Petro Krawchuk, a long-time TOUK activist, shows Soviet involvement in the publication of the book. Although Krawchuk does not disclose the author's true identity, he reveals that directors of three academic institutes recommended it for publication: A. M. Shlepakov, V. I. Yurchuk, and Yu. Yu. Kondufor. Petro Krawchuk, *Bez nedomovok, spohady*. Kyiv, *Literaturna Ukraina*, 1995, p. 244.
[21] Douglas Tottle, *Fraud, Famine and Fascism: The Ukrainian Genocide Myth from Hitler to Harvard*. Toronto, Progress Books, 1987. P. 121.
[22] Jeff Coplon, "In Search of a Soviet Holocaust: A 55-Year-Old Famine Feeds the Right," *The Village Voice*, 12 January 1988.
[23] Wilfred Szczesny, "Fraud, Famine and Fascism," *The Ukrainian Canadian*, April 198, pp. 22-24.

Voice piece. It no longer reflected the position of some of the other leaders of TOUK, and a critique of the book was invited from the outside.[24]

Before the year was out, two Montreal university newspapers picked up the attack on the "famine-fraud."[25] They shortened and somewhat reworked an article that was published a year earlier in a Winnipeg student paper.[26] The articles purported to expose the misrepresentation of historical facts in *Harvest of Despair*, a documentary film on the 1933 famine. The makers of the film were accused of using photographs from a natural Russian famine of 1921 as proof of a deliberate genocide against the Ukrainians in 1933. The author drew attention to a 1934 German publication that used the same photographs to claim famine in the Soviet Union.[27] The insinuation of a Nazi connection was clear. The article in the *McGill Daily* outraged Professor Morton Weinfeld, Chairman of McGill's Sociology Department and one of the authors of *Old Wounds*. His short letter deserves to be quoted in full for it gives some idea of the state of Jewish-Ukrainian relations at that time in the academic milieu. Morton Weinfeld wrote:

"The article entitled 'Famine: Fact or Fiction' in the *McGill Daily* of Nov. 21 requires some comment. The very title of the article suggests that the historicity of Ukrainian famine of 1932-33 is somehow in doubt.

"In fact, there is no doubt among serious scholars that millions of lives were lost in Ukraine as a result largely of deliberate policy; and that it served to weaken Ukrainian national opposition to the new Soviet state.

"Whatever the motivation of the author of the article in writing it, and the Daily for printing it, its effect is clear. It contributes to a form of historical revisionism similar in many ways to the slicker version of Holocaust denial literature.

Feeling that it was up to Ukrainians to send a more detailed rebuttal, Professor Weinfeld informed me of the piece in the *Daily* and urged me to respond.[28] While preparing my paper for this conference, I paid Morton Weinfeld a visit, and we discussed Jewish-Ukrainian relations then and now. He spoke of the unintended negative consequences of the Deschênes Commission and the continuing lack of knowledge of things Ukrainian on the part of Canadian Jews, and Jews in general. Jews know little about the Ukrainian famine. "Is there an equivalent to Yad Vashem in Ukraine?" he asked. Weinfeld's evaluation of dialogue between Jews and Ukrainians, and the understanding of the Ukrainian genocide by Jews, was echoed in another meeting, this time with Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn. They also send their greetings and best wishes to this conference, in the conviction that good relations between Jews and Ukrainians are contingent on adequate knowledge of each other, both in Canada and in Ukraine.

Conclusion:

In the sixty years that have passed since the Holocaust, Jewish-Ukrainian relations in Canada have gone from resentment to hostility to toleration. The cataclysmic upheavals suffered by both peoples in Europe did not bring mutual compassion in their new homeland. There were too many obstacles to joint commiseration. Nazi Germany was the cause of Jewish woes, and the Ukrainians blamed Communist Russia. But more importantly, each community blamed members of the other group for siding with its tormentor. Struggling against Holocaust denial, Jews rejected any comparison with, or even reference to, the Holodomor as being an indirect way of undermining the memory of the Shoah. Ukrainians, on the other hand, resented Jewish unwillingness to recognize the magnitude of the famine and its genocidal nature. Another stumbling block to good Jewish-Ukrainian relations was the Soviet Union: not only did it continue to deny the famine, but also took advantage of the hunt for Nazi war criminals to depict members of the Ukrainian diaspora as Nazi sympathizers. Jews were thankful

[24] Roman Serbyn, "The Last Stand of the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide Deniers," *The Ukrainian Canadian*, February 1989.

[25] Donne Flannagan, "Film clouded by controversy, Famine: Fact or Fiction". The article was published by the *McGill Daily* (Nov. 21, 1988) and the Concordia *Link* (Nov. 22, 1988).

[26] Donne Flannagan, "Harvesting the Despair of Credibility," *Manitoban*, 21 September 1987.

[27] Ibid. The film did contain visual material from the 1921-23 famine, but most of it was from Ukraine.

[28] Roman Serbyn, "Coming to Grips with the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide," *The Link*, 5 December 1988.

to the Soviets for providing evidence against alleged war criminals; Ukrainians rejected these documents as fraudulent.

The great success that the Jews achieved in making the Holocaust known and accepted in the West encouraged the Ukrainian community to emulate their example and renew efforts for the recognition of the Holodomor. The turning point came when the famine-denying Soviet regime collapsed and the Soviet archives were opened. Hidden famine documents were now open to public scrutiny. The Ukrainian genocide could no longer be brushed aside as so much anti-Soviet propaganda. Furthermore, since the Holocaust had by then become well established and unassailable, the Jewish community became more open to the idea that the Ukrainian famine was also a genocide.

In closing I would like to congratulate the Dnipropetrovsk Jewish community for organizing this conference and to extend my sincere wishes for the speedy completion of the projected Holocaust museum. It is fitting that such a museum be built here, in Ukraine, because this country witnessed some of the horrors of this great catastrophe. I am confident that the museum will serve the Jewish community well, that it will provide them with a true reading of a sad page in their own history, and make them that much more sensitive to the other great catastrophe that took place in Ukraine – the Famine-Genocide. The museum will undoubtedly give the rest of the population a better understanding of the Jewish people's suffering during the Second World War. Finally, the museum should be an inspiration to the Ukrainian state to emulate the Jewish examples of Yad Vashem and the Dnipropetrovsk Holocaust Museum, and a challenge to build a befitting National Museum and Research Centre dedicated to the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide.

РЕЗЮМЕ *

Вплив Голокосту на взаємини між єврейською та українською діяспорами в Канаді зосереджено на двох полях діяльності: 1) праці Комісії Дешена в справі викриття воєнних злочинців; 2) створення державного музею Голокосту. Обмеження мандату комісії до пошуків за гаданими злочинцями лише по боці нацистів та безпідставні звинувачення Візентальського центру проти української Дивізії «Галичина» стало причиною ворожнечі між єврейською та українською громадами в Канаді в 1980-х та 1990-х роках. У зв'язку з домаганнями єврейської спільноти, щоб Канада створила музей Голокосту, українські канадці вийшли з альтернативною пропозицією про створення державного музею, присвяченому усім геноцидам XX століття. До напружених стосунків між євреями та українцями спричинилися радянські підкидання фальшивої літератури. Після краху Компартії і розпаду Радянського Союзу відносини між двома канадськими громадами значно покращались.