



Famine in Soviet Ukraine, 1921–1922: Precursor of the Holodomor?

ABGESAGT!

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The famine in Soviet Russia in 1921–22, which claimed six million lives, is often referred to as the Volga famine because the Volga River Valley was the scene of mass starvation. But the famine ravaged other regions of the country as well. In southern Ukraine, where the steppe descends into the Black Sea, millions faced starvation in the winter and spring of 1921–22. Yet the Soviet government initially sought to prevent foreign relief organizations from operating in Ukraine. At the same time, Moscow attempted to bolster Ukraine's reputation as the "granary of Russia" by exhorting the people there to come to the aid of their famishing brethren on the Volga and then publicizing purported examples of such generosity. Bertrand Patenaude, a specialist on the 1921 famine and foreign relief efforts to combat it, explores what the treatment of famine-stricken Ukraine by the Soviet government under Lenin might tell us about the origins of the Holodomor a decade later under Stalin. Organizer: Wolfgang Mueller