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## **GULAG AS A PART OF THE "GREAT TERROR": FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE FAMOUS EYEWITNESSES**

Stalin repressions brought to a long-term negative effect on liberalization of the society and economy. In that period the democracy in America and most of European states started to evolve. Education, culture, entrepreneurship gradually transformed from elitism to accessibility for all [5; 7]. But as for the Soviet Union it was led to a period of strict government control, mobilization, and terrorization of all its republics. Repressions were seen everywhere – in all the components of Soviet state. In the 1930s agriculture and industry suffered rude forced centralization. Cultural and educational activities in Ukraine were highly restricted too. In the result thousands of Soviet including Ukrainian educated, intelligent individuals deemed dangerous to the Stalin's Soviet state were eliminated [2].

The highest point of repressions is considered to be in 1938. More than 12 million people were arrested, under the accusation of "Enemy of the people" or "Enemy of the state." Many of Ukrainians at present know someone or have arrested and sent to Gulag relatives. One high school student from Ukraine (Kyiv) told Newsweek, "I know that my grand grandfather was arrested; they came for him at night. My grand grandmother never found out what happened to him. She didn't like to talk about it [3, p. 1023]".

The daughter of a former Ukrainian kulak, told National Geographic, "My father wasn't very clever. They arrested him for being a capitalist. In the group of his friends my father said, 'What do you want? He's (meaning Stalin) a dictator. This comment was reported he was sent to Kazakhstan and shot" [4, p. 48].

Ann Applebaum in her book "Gulag" writes a lot of tragic stories from lives of those repressed and suffered in different camps of Gulag. This book is a syntheses of practical, intellectual and philosophic knowledge of all those who experienced this great terror.

The term "gulag" was used to describe a vast network of hundreds of labor camps and prisons established mostly in Siberia, the Arctic, the Far East and Central Asia. Gulag is the Russian acronym for the "Main Administration of Corrective Labor Camps". It came to mean "camp" or more generally "the camps" [2].

Many former prisoners left deep and vivid memories of what they had experienced, but it is no coincidence that this book is full of quotes from Varlam Shalamov, Isaak Filyptinskyi, Gustav Gerling-Grudzinskyi, Eugenia Ginzburg, Lev Razgon, Janusz Bardakh, Olga Adamova-Sliosberg, Anatolyi Zhigulin, Alexander Dolgan and of course Alexander Solzhenitsyn. Some of these people are among the most famous former prisoners of the Gulag. Others are less well known – but all have one thing in common. Of the hundreds of existing memoirs their memories are not only a literary talent, but also the ability to penetrate the surface of everyday horror and reveal deep human truths.

Alla B. Shister is not so popular as the described heroes but her life story is present in this book. At the beginning of the Soviet history she was once an enthusiastic Stalin supporter. But after her first husband was killed in the great terror, another disappeared into a mental institution and she herself was sent to a labor camp she changed her opinion.

Stalin expanded the gulag system. At the beginning of his power 476 camp complexes existed, within which there were often dozens, sometimes hundreds of individual camps. From 1929, until 1953, 18 million people passed through the camp system. Six million more were exiled to isolated, police villages in Siberia or Kazakhstan or to special settlements known as special settlements (*spetsposelki*) [4].

Memories of Osip Mandelstam's wife Nadezhda, describing his arrest in May 1934 are valuable from the point of view of these awful historical events. She wrote: "In the evening the translator David Brodskiy turned up and then just would not leave. There wasn't a bit to eat in the house and Osip went around to the neighbors to try and get something for Akhmatova's supper...At about one o'clock in the morning, there was a sharp unbearably explicit knock on the door. 'They've come for Osip,' I said and went to open the door" [1, p. 345].

"Some men in civilian overcoats were standing outside - there seemed to be a lot of them. For a split second I had a tiny hope that this still wasn't it...Without a word or a moment's hesitation, but with consummate skill and speed, they came in past me (not pushing, however) and the apartment was suddenly full of people already checking our identity papers, running their hands over our hips with a precise well-practiced movement, and feeling our pockets to make sure we had no concealed weapons" [1, p. 346].

"Osip came out of the large room: "Have you come for me?" he asked. One of the agents a short man, looked at him with what could have been a faint smile and said, "Your papers!" M. took them out of his pockets, and after checking them, the agent handed him a warrant. M read it and nodded...After checking our papers, presenting their arrest and making sure there would be no resistance, they began to search the apartment" [1, p. 346].

The poet Mikhail Isayevich, a former Red Army, was arrested after saying that the roads in Germany were good (the conversation in which he said that had been recorded by a friend-informant). He told Newsweek, that after his arrest "they put me in a car. There were four of them who came for me. In the car they always offer a cigarette. As soon as the door shut, everything changed" [6, p. 206].

"After that I went to a cell; it was not a special prison. It was downtown Rostov-on-Don, in a district where there were meat warehouses. They turned the

warehouses into prisons. The average-size room was about 20 square meters. I was arrested in May. It was very hot, almost hard to breath" [6, p. 206].

"At the beginning of my interrogation I didn't say anything. They didn't torture us - no slivers under the fingernails or that sort of thing. But this is what they did: they prevented us from sleeping. And every night they would ask the same things: tell us about your anti-Soviet activities! I would start to nod off and they would shake me and say, 'Are you here to sleep or what?' Eventually I "confessed" to praising German roads" [6, p. 207].

For the crime of "praising life abroad" he spent six years at a labor camp in Siberia!

The important fact is that repressions and the gulags were central to Stalin's ambition to industrialize the Soviet Union. Gulag workers built roads, railroads, dams and factories free without labor payment. They worked in coal mines, set pipelines, developed oil fields. They fished for salmon, made missiles, clear timbered, slaughtered livestock and made toys. Stalin had hoped the gulags would turn a profit but they ultimately drained more than contributed to the Soviet economy. After Stalin's death the number of people sent to the camps was greatly reduced but what impressed more that they continued to exist right up until Gorbachev.

**Conclusions.** The investigation is based on the profound historical analysis of literature and documents from the world, European, Soviet and Ukrainian sources of information.

Realization of the fact that Stalin's repressions brought degradation and reduction in all spheres of peoples life: social, political, educational and economic make it possible to overcome some difficulties existing in Ukrainian community today and taking into account recommendations of both European and American experience looking forward into the future sustainable growth.

The importance of this problem determines the necessity of its continuous study. We think that special interest deserves the problem of investigation of Stalin's repressions influence into the Ukrainian system of education.

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**Резюме.** У статті здійснено характеристику сталінських репресій з точки зору видатних особистостей. Автором проаналізовано базові міжнародні, радянські та українські документи, пов'язані із репресіями у період з 30-50 рр. ХХ сторіччя.

**Ключові слова:** великий терор, Гулаг, очевидець, репресії, вороги народу, спецпоселення, деградація.