

it would be worth noting this in the introduction as one of the serious social inequalities in the USSR.

My next suggestion would be to add in the next edition several interviews (if possible) with scientists who ended up in Chernogolovka in the 1970s and 1980s. Comparison of their histories with those of the founders of this town (from the 1960s) would be useful for building a dynamic picture of the evolution (development) of typical scientific non-closed or semi-closed towns in the USSR and how the privileged status of scientists in the USSR did or did not change from the period of the so-called “Thaw” (*Otтеpel’*) through to the end of the USSR.

However, this book is a good contribution to the library of the research on the everyday life of different social groups in the USSR. Moreover, this book is a nice guide for scholars who study different Soviet social groups, elites, and scholarly life; it would make a useful companion for example to the various series of notes and books about sociologists of that time that have been published in Russia and abroad. More broadly, it will have appeal for everyone who is interested in the history of Soviet everyday life and Soviet science in particular.

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Zuzanna Bogumił, *Gulag Memories: The Rediscovery and Commemoration of Russia’s Repressive Past*. Trans. from the Polish by Philip Palmer. Berghahn Books, 2018.

This book is devoted to a formative period for Gulag memory, from the collapse of the USSR to 2015, when the Russian Federation became actively involved in the formation of memory of the Soviet repressions. The chapters focus on the distinctive features of Gulag memory in four Russian regions (respectively the Solovetsky islands, the Komi Republic, Perm Krai, and Kolyma).

In the first chapter the author mainly analyzes the late Soviet and post-Soviet activities of memory actors on the three major

Solovetsky islands, in chronological order: beginning from the first, local Solovetsky Museum commemorative actions (with the 1989 “SLON” exhibition as a landmark memory event) which were supported and developed by the “Memorial” Society (since the 1989 August Days of Remembrance) and the Russian Orthodox Church. Zuzanna Bogumił has perfectly shown that these organizations have become actively involved in the creation of a secular (the Solovetsky stones) and religious (the memorial crosses) memory infrastructure not only on the islands, but also in the Karelia region (Sandarmokh) and Moscow (Butovo).

Considering commemorative practices on different levels, the author has shown the symbolic and social importance of memory markers through the conflicts which surround the process of their erection and repartitions of “spheres of influence” among the organizers of commemorative projects. By the end of the chapter the Church appears as a semi-government structure which implements the State’s will even by participation in the demolition of Gulag memory objects of the “inconvenient” past. Bogumił outlines clearly the process whereby the increasing influence of the Church has led to subjection (in the case of the local Museum) or indirect suppression (in the case of “Memorial,” which now organizes its own separate, limited scale Days of Remembrance on the Solovetsky Islands, and has moved to focus more on the Days at Sandarmokh in Karelia) of other memory actors on the Islands.

In the Komi Republic (discussed in the second chapter), we have a completely different situation. Here “Memorial” managed to create a strong network structure covering all the key points of the Gulag (Vorkuta, Ukhta, Inta, Pechora), supported by the subsidiary “Pokoyanie” Foundation, which operates here with the support of the state. It is here, however, that the difference in approaches and positions between the various branches of the “Memorial” movement operating on the territory of the Republic becomes obvious, because based on the program created on the initiative of the “Pokoyanie” Foundation, each town has its own action plan for memorializing the Gulag, including even different dates for the Days of Remembrance (in Vorkuta’s case).

The Church does not play a significant role as a separate actor here; instead, it takes part in the formation of the memorial infrastructure promoted by “Memorial” through the “Pokoyanie” Foundation, and even allows the presence (normally forbidden by the Church) of representatives of other confessions in places marked with Orthodox memory markers, which contradicts the practices established in memorable places of terror (such as the Butovskii shooting range).

The Gulag memory projects uncovered by the author in the Republic are incredibly diverse, including a wide range of infrastructure from basic memory markers that communicate condensed information to expansive multi-component memorial complexes with multi-faceted messages. Among the groups of markers identified by Zuzanna Bogumił, the most impressive are those that originally memorialized different events in the region’s history—such as the Pioneers of the North Memorial and the Pushkin Memorial in Ukhta, and the Water Tower in Inta, erected in memory of the regional effort during the Great Patriotic War—that have now been re-designed as Gulag monuments. Bogumił argues that the very existence of this category of markers “fully expresses Komi Republic’s dual history,” characterized by the existence of two parallel narratives: the victorious heroic narrative of progress and development of the European North, and the tragic narrative of repression and the Gulag. In our view, the existence of these re-designed monuments also shows the ability of Gulag memory to reinterpret the meaning of classical Soviet monuments and make room for its own discourse and development.

The third chapter is devoted to the Perm region, the place where the first OGPU industrial camp was opened in the late 1920s, and also the site where the “Perm Triangle” for the dissidents of the 1970s was established. As a result, Perm Krai was both one of the Gulag’s “cradles” and its last bastion, with the Perm-36 lager operating all the way through to the Gorbachev Era.

As might be expected, a central part of the chapter is devoted to the “Perm-36” museum. But it is here that Bogumił shows discrepancies between the different “Memorial” Society branches and how disagreements within the environment initially created by the

Society led to the creation of new commemorative projects such as the “Stvor” lager project where “the former lager’s grounds have been transformed by collective action” of volunteers that embody the idea of a “museum without walls.”

The chapter ends with a section entitled “Why Know History?” In this section one can see the changes in the memory politics of the Russian Federation that happened in the 2010–2015 period. At the same time the section shows an increasing state pressure against “Perm-36,” as one of the cornerstones of the “Memorial” memory infrastructure. This calls into question the future of other crucial projects of the “Memorial” Society.

Kolyma, one of the most emblematic pillars of the Gulag system, is discussed in the fourth chapter of the book. This region follows the pattern of the reawakening of Gulag memory common to the other regions examined in the book. This pattern comprises three stages: first, the sudden breaking of the wall of silence and the appearance of memories and publications relating to the Gulag; second, commencement of the process of rehabilitating and campaigning to secure the financial security of ex-prisoners; and third, debates over how to commemorate the Stalinist repressions. The primary difference between this region and former Gulag centers located in other parts of Russia, is the inaccessibility of the infrastructure. In Kolyma it is not dozens (as in the Komi Republic) but thousands of kilometers which separated objects from each other. Consequently, knowledge about most of Kolyma’s lagpunkts flows from secondary sources, mainly memoirs.

By focusing on the local inhabitants’ perceptions, Bogumil places the Magadan identity debate at the center of the chapter. Such an approach uncovers a tangled reality where members of the same community, on the one hand, supported the erection of a monument to Dal’stroi head Eduard Berzin and celebrated a Gulag tribute to the Soviet war effort during the Second World War, and, on the other hand, took part in lively debates over the construction of Ernst Neizvestny’s “Mask of Sorrow” which was designed as part of a triptych forming a Russian Triangle of Suffering and Redemption.

But maybe the most fascinating part of the Kolyma chapter is the section entitled “Yagodnoe and Debin—A Contemporary ‘Memory Repository.’” It starts with the story of Kolyma’s first monument commemorating prisoners repressed in the region (erected by Ivan Panikarov and Sviatoslav Timchenko in 1991), not far from the settlement of Yagodnoe. It tells the stories of independent individual memory actors who not only worked up their own concepts for their monuments and created their scale models (such as the monument designed by Sergei Golunov, unveiled in 1996 and consecrated in 1998), but also have their own unique commemorative agendas which may even include positive connotations to the figure of Stalin. This is especially true for Vladimir Neiman, inhabitant of Derbin who erected crosses, by his own initiative, at the sites of former camp cemeteries in Kolyma. His commemorative activity is religiously motivated, but also includes representations of Stalin as a leader that “was needed for a sense of equilibrium to appear in the world,” with the appearance of the Gulag depicted as “payment for the sins” of the forefathers. In this chapter, more than elsewhere in the book, one can see the role of personalities, because every monument owes its existence to the efforts of some individual.

The absence of a “black-and-white” local history has made self-identification a deeply uneasy task for Kolyma’s residents. This ambiguity is visually expressed in a swathe of the local landscape: the Mask of Sorrow on Krutaia Hill is within viewing range of the Eduard Berzin Monument, located in the city center in front of a local government building. According to the author, “since 2015, the principles of the official state policy on the commemoration of victims of political repressions, have been being implemented in Kolyma.” Here, unlike other regions, the implementation of state policy not only involves the employees of the local museum, but also individual memory actors such as Ivan Panikarov from Yagodnoe or the Orthodox Church authorities in Magadan.

While the main chapters of the text are concerned with the distinctive features of Gulag memory in four crucial regions, the first section of the conclusion focuses on finding “some common ground between these materials.” The author stresses the diversity of the “monuments and markers” meanings, and their fragmentary and

region-specific nature, since they “alluded to different historical events (the Gulag itself, deportations and collectivization).” The second section of the conclusion uses Foucault’s concept of counter-memory as a theoretical framework, and contains reflection on the “meaning of the Gulag memory-sharing process.” Here we are able to see three crucial points: firstly, that we can observe a “victory of the Orthodox counter-history” in present-day Russia; secondly, that “Memorial” has failed to develop its own coherent secular language; thirdly, that a state-church convergence has recently been underway in the field of memory politics (exemplified by the “GULAG History Museum” and *Historical Park Russia—My History*).

Every study, even such a profound one, has its limitations. The absence of the Gulag periphery (special settlements) memory (especially evident in the case of the Makarikha cemetery in Kotlas (pp. 134–36)), is one of them. Another serious limitation of the book is unveiled by the author’s remarks about “the former camp guard Kurguzov” (pp. 162–63). This brief note alludes to the existence of a wide range of so-called “museums of history of the penitentiary system” which are flourishing in today’s Russia with state and Church support. Unfortunately, the topic is only briefly mentioned in the monograph. And it is sometimes confusing when, in some parts of the text, the author talks about the “political camps” while in others the terms “Soviet” or “Gulag lagers” are used (pp. 111, 141, 156–60, etc.). This could be seen as a problem of translation both from Polish and Russian.

Some trivial shortcomings do not detract from the overall quality of the monograph. Its considerable value as a contribution to Soviet and post-Soviet memory studies is undeniable. Bogumił’s work should become a must-read for everyone who works in the field of the memory of political repressions.*

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