

# Topography of Terror: Mapping Sites of Soviet Repressions in Moscow

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The city of Moscow was at the epicenter of the state terror campaigns of the Stalin era, and yet these events left remarkably few visible traces on the urban landscape. Everyday popular knowledge of the specific sites linked to the repressions is generally very low. But in recent years Muscovites have been rediscovering their city's history. In this article we introduce the project "Topography of Terror," a grassroots initiative aimed at uncovering and mapping Moscow's sites of memory.

"Topography of Terror" is the name of the website ([topos.memo.ru](http://topos.memo.ru)) that has been produced based on the extensive research conducted as part of the International Memorial Society project "Moscow: Sites of Memory" that began in 2013. The website is aimed at representing Soviet repressive policies on the contemporary map of Moscow. Our project team consists of International Memorial researchers and a range of volunteers, including students, photographers, cartographers, graphic designers, and programmers. Prominent experts in Soviet history (Arsenii Roginskii, Nikita Petrov, and others) have also provided generous assistance.

The concept of mapping sites of memory is closely related to the rediscovery and reclaiming of Moscow's urban environment that is currently underway. Recently, during the mass protests in Moscow in 2011–2012, this idea became very popular. Nowadays, civil society is rarely consulted on issues of Moscow city planning, and this has increasingly meant that people who live in the city have to put up with decisions taken by the local and federal government—