

POLITINIŲ REPRESIJŲ AUKŲ ATMINIMO KNYGA

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It's indeed evident in XXth century that history is always a trauma; only traumatizing experience makes writing the history possible as well as necessary. The metaphor of *Eden's garden* expresses tranquility of the time-without-history very well. The fall of man became not only a moment when morality appears but also it is *conjectural beginning of human history*.

Russian history knows a number of such man's fallings therefore it's fruitful and consequently *real* history. Dialectics of *crime and punishment* in Russian history will feed imagination of historians for long time, providing them with the diverse materials for analysis. Real and imaginary crimes, deserved and unjust punishments, delayed and frustrated rehabilitations create a space of human fates, and if we forget those fates we add one wrong judicial verdict by another one – historical sentence. There are multivolume “Memory Books of political repressions

victims”, which should rehabilitate in the human memory those people who innocently suffered from the Soviet political repressions.

The Kaliningrad region is young and small part of Russia which finally entered the process of returning the good memory about compatriots. This volume includes information about more than 3000 victims of repressions who lived or live in the Kaliningrad region nowadays. After-war repressions in this small area didn't turn into that catastrophe which tinctures in the gloomy tones the whole historical epoch. The Memory Book consists of one volume while in some Russian regions such a volume would include not more than one or two letters of alphabet. The Martyrolog is divided in two parts. The first one represents data about people subjected to repressions directly in the Kaliningrad region in 1945–1983 (630 persons). Majority of them was sentenced for different periods of the imprisonment according to the sadly known article 58 of the Penal code in 1945–1953. The meager lines of the biographical articles contain – as far as it's possible – data about origin of a person, his or her sentence and rehabilitation (which was implemented by two waves in 1950s and 1990s). We can meet among repressed people migrants who came to this new Soviet region as well as German inhabitants from the former East Prussia (usually they defined in documents as “German subjects”, “*nemetskie poddannye*”). There are not only Russians and Germans but also the whole International fallen under the roller of repressive machine: Jews, Lithuanians, Polish, Estonians...

The second list is larger. It includes data about repressed citizens living now in the Kaliningrad region. Usually sentences were passed out by the courts in other Soviet regions but victims and their families (according to the Federal law “On rehabilitation of political repressions victims”) “on the place of residence” fell in touch with the Kaliningrad regional non-governmental organization for protection of rights of political repressions victims. Memory book appears to be one of directions of these organization activities (others are described in the Applications to this book).

Composition of the book can be considered as successful: the meager lines of the Martyrolog are accompanied by the impassive historical survey, added with archive material of the courts’ reports; as if we hear the voice of the cold-blooded accusers behind the rustle of pages of criminal cases. Further there are voices of the victims themselves – via memoirs of their relatives, interviews, letters <...> Some data were published earlier in the regional newspapers; other ones are published for the first time. Endurances from the Penal code are applied (including all the paragraphs of the article 58) as well as other documents wreaking human fates in that time. There are many copies of the documents and photos of the victims – we have a chance to see their faces, to become the unique witnesses of their defense through such external acquaintance. The polyphony of the book is without doubt its merit.

Authors drew up a contradictory portrait of the contradictory epoch. Not everybody was condemned: some documents talk about those who were justified owing to absence of crime’s components even by the Stalin’s court (one justifying sentence is published on the p. 370 – one witness wasn’t enough to condemn). Cases for repressions were diverse: “counter-revolutionary slander against the Soviet government” (p. 364), cohabitation with “the patricide” (p. 367), “clearly harmful instructions for sowing of the cereal crops” (p. 369), systematic hearing of the foreign radio broadcasts (p. 377) <...> In the first after-war years of the history of the Kaliningrad region both migrants and their neighbors – Germans were allegedly involved into anti-Soviet propaganda. *The Big Brother* was watching everybody: ones discussed life in *kolkhozes* and abroad, others read and wrote anti-Soviet verses or sang songs <...> There were very exotic ways to base and express the views of the people who got to know *war and peace* in their experience: one of convicts “asked one worker [to give him] 13 matches [and] laid out the number 666, after that he explained the meaning of this number and laid out names of the party and Soviet government leaders, declaring that one of them is already dead and the other should be murdered” (p. 373).

What stimulated those people to enter the way of open – at least verbal – resistance to the Soviet authorities, to the Stalin’s regime? Evidently, not all of them were consecutively critically disposed towards the authorities, for some people it was only misunderstanding. Some of them are amazingly naive: “the defendant Malinauskas does not deny the facts of the anti-Soviet statements but declares that he would like to be explained what his mistakes are and why” (p. 372). The price of his desire was ten years of prison. The naivety is not a safe feature for a human body, especially in so stormy time. Resolutions of meetings and “letters of working people» are quoted in archive documents: the doctors-wreckers should be put into cages and «carted around the cities and *kolkhozes* to be shown to all the Soviet people as bandits-scientists, as beasts in the appearance of man” (p. 334).

The Memory Book is an important and necessary element of contemporary historiography of the Soviet history; it’s impossible to overestimate its scientific and moral value. The merit of this edition is not only a lot of new data, presented in this edition. This book makes us to think about some exceptionally important issues of our historical and legal consciousness; it becomes a cause for the serious talking.

The definition itself “victims of political repressions” is problematic. The historical survey about 1946–1953 (and applied documents) let us understand that exactly these first after-war years are in the focus of the researchers’ attention. The point is civic German and Soviet population of the Kaliningrad region which was subjected to repression mainly on the ground of the “political” article 58. However a reader may meet also another people in the list of victims: some soldiers of *Wehrmacht* were already arrested in summer, 1945 (for example, p. 14); some Soviet citizens were subjected to repression after Stalin’s death and later, in 1970 (p. 9) or 1983 (p. 49). The question is as follows: who should be included into this sorrowful list? Do the warden collaborated with the Nazis on the occupied area has a right to be there? Or a Nazi himself who fought against Red army? The accidental – not political – prisoner condemned under the article 58 for the illegal crossing of border? There are two ways to define a victim of repressions: the first is to publish data about all repressed people (repression is emphasized), the second is to limit the circle by the innocently injured people (victim is emphasized). The first way would demand more thorough work; the second way means to be daring enough to dispense justice for the second time. But there are different people with different fates in this list. One Ukrainian who crossed the border from Poland (p. 10) adjoins on the page with a German soldier of *Wehrmacht* who was shot in February, 1945 (p. 52). Lidia Balaban in her article emphasizes that there were “a number of fascists accomplices” (p. 326) among people condemned under the article 58, moreover majority of them “were punished not for imaginary crimes but for real collaboration with the Nazis” (p. 330). Among them were Hans Dreier and Maks Heumann (p. 338–339). Dreier was a member of NSDAP, an active participant of struggle against partisans on the occupied areas; Heumann was an organizer of exploitation of workers and prisoners of war in the railroad-car building plant in Königsberg. Both were condemned under the article 58, and Dreier has got a larger period of imprisonment (data about their rehabilitation are absent). But only Dreier found his place in this list of victims. Can we be sure that sentences were based on the proofs of the real fault? Should we include those persons into the Memory Book? Is it correct to include ones and exclude the others?

Similar problems exist also in other Russian regions: what should one do with the official of NKVD who was personally responsible for illegal repressions of citizens and later was subjected to repression himself under the article 58 and subsequently was rehabilitated? The Krasnoyarsk historians didn’t include data about such persons into the Memory Book, but didn’t they infringe the principle of the edition? From the point of view of the legislation a victim is a person who was subjected to different measures of the coercion from the part of the state due to political reasons or who was restricted in their rights under the same reasons as well as their children (art. 1–2 of the Russian federal law “On rehabilitation of the victims of political repressions”). This legislatively fixed criterion doesn’t reserve any possibility for a researcher to limit circle of victims according to his own point of view.

The survey of the repressions’ history in the Kaliningrad region is made till 1953 only and it’s not very correctly. Repressions – perhaps not so scaled – were continued till Perestroika in USSR, and it’s proved by published lists of victims. However the article of Lidia Balaban doesn’t trace any evolution of repressive mechanism; the only material which exceeds the frames of Stalin’s period (written by Evgeni Maslov) is devoted to pursuit of believers generally recognized as “one of the main objects of repressions” (p. 387) notwithstanding the great lack of the documentary evidence and statistics. Of course, characteristics of the time between 1953 and 1985 would require additional work and would be rather harmful for any living today people who participated in political

repressions. But the picture of “the arbitrariness of the totalitarian state” is not completed and consequently is far from objective.

The work has just started. The volume of the actual data in the book probably could be more imposing and any future researcher will have a chance to add information in this book. One could write also about Soviet soldiers and officers repressed during East-Prussian operation (including Alexander Isayevich Solzhenitsyn and Lev Zinovyevich Kopelev who were subjected to repression outside an area of the future Kaliningrad region); we should find out here also the data about people who were condemned in the other regions but became prisoners in this western part of the Soviet union (for example, well-known human rights activist and general Piotr Grigorenko, condemned in Tashkent and placed into the psychiatric hospital in Cherniakhovsk town of Kaliningrad region).

This kind of victims’ registers is very important. The data on such people being victims of repressions have to meet two requirements – completeness and accuracy. However there is no complete accordance between the published text and lists of victims – it depended on editors. Some people mentioned in the documents are not found in the lists of victims (Nikolayev – p. 328; Karina – p. 330; Kozlowski – p. 337; Gilda Link – p. 338; Possible – p. 344; Oat – p. 345; Alike – p. 347; Tsekhmistrova – p. 361, etc.). One can come to the conclusion that authors decided to exclude any incomplete information about any people, but this assumption is disproved by the content of some references, for instance: “LORKE Siegfried. Rehabilitated on the 15.02.2000” (p. 47). Of course, it would be more vantage points for this book if this list was added even with incomplete data from the official documents witnessed about victims of repressions.

It’s really hard to work with documents because their condition; that’s why authors failed to get know how to decipher names of East Prussian villages; some German surnames were spelled in different ways. But too many surnames mentioned in the published documents are not similar to surnames in the lists of victims. <...> it would be reasonable to add also a glossary of geographical names (there are German as well as Russian names of cities and villages, and some of these German names are not identified).

One more – simultaneously scientific and moral – question appeared while publishing surnames of concrete people mentioned in the documents. Authors disclose names of victims – condemned and justified people. At the same time names of officers of the NKVD are encoded by the initials (a document narrates about Lieutenant Colonel G., who insulted a detained person and was warned about inadmissibility of such behavior by chief of MGB department, p. 354; by the same way the authors defense other officers of police and witnesses, whose evidences were the ground of accusation). Meantime names of procurers and judges, who undersigned references and reports, are published completely. It’s interesting that *vice versa* in some places initials encode names of communists and VLKSM activists who were subjected to repression on political reasons (turned out of the Communist party or dismissed from their posts). Authors explain it by norms of the federal law “On information, informatization and information protection” of 1995 about obligations to keep confidentiality of personal data (p. 399). But the mentioned law became invalid in 2006; instead of it two other laws came in force on July 27, 2006 – “On information, information technologies and information protection” and “On personal data”. But is it lawful to support on those laws in such delicate question? Article 6 of the latter law defines conditions of personal data treatment without consent of their subjects: “in the aims of professional activities of journalist or in the aims of the research, literary or other creative activities under condition that rights and freedoms of the mentioned subject are not disrupted” (Item 6). This law provides a researcher with rather large powers

with regard to establishing the fact of people rights' disrupting. If disclosing of any person's name from any official and public document breaks his or her rights and legal interests? Is it lawful to disclose personal data of one group of people and to protect personal data of other people in the framework of the same research project? Where are borders of security? Does this norm apply to the leaders of the party and of the state, secretaries of regional committees of the Communist party in that time? Probably this problem can't be solved so easily, it requires to be solved by every researcher personally. But, no doubt, one united principle must be maintained in publishing of personal data in the same edition.

And nevertheless with all these inaccuracies this book became the terrifying sentence to Stalin's repressive system. The state of workers and peasants which have won the Great War continues their own struggle against their enemies. And who are those enemies? They are far from exploiter classes: workers, collective farmers, confectioners, cleaning women, streetcar operators <...> That is professional composition of people who suddenly and by unknown reasons found themselves in the hands of investigators. Even if we exclude from this list people suffered indeed by chance, we will find also those who were critically imposed towards Soviet authorities. What made them to write anonymous letters to the party and state leaders? What encouraged them to sing anti-Soviet songs and to glue leaflets on the notebook leaves? Why F. Reznikov stated in 1951 in the office of the secretary of the *raykom* (district committee of the CPSU) that "the party in its policy reached a deadlock, from which there is no output" (p. 374)? "For what?" – So was titled a chapter of the book which consists of repressed people recollections (p. 441–442).

The Memory Book gives us a lot of information to think about. It serves simultaneously to the different educational goals. Such books help us to study history of our own people but also they have also an educational meaning. Resistance is not always the armed riot. Sometimes resistance is a word which was said in wrong time; it's a radio broadcast which was heard not in time; it's merciful relation to the incorrectly accused. It's possible to destroy the routine of the things in different, sometimes funny, ways. One secretary of *raykom* procures a cow and tried to milk her. "<...> The cow was obstinate, so to avoid kicks and get all the milk, he tied a shawl as a woman <...> some sympathized to him, and others chuckled themselves, recommending him to dress skirt besides the shawl, and sometimes he did it <...>" (p. 379).

Writing the history is not only caused by trauma but also helps us to overcome it. This overcoming is possible under fulfillment of some conditions: to aim to publish the truth only, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Therefore researchers have to refine details, collect new data, a lot of reprints of this Memory Book of political repressions victims. And probably the time will come when we'll be able to publish all names of victims and their families' members, of hangmen and their participants.

Zoya Aleshnikova, a member of the regional commission for restoration of repressions victims' rights, regrets in her article: "There is no such a place in Kaliningrad where one may bring flowers in memory of our parents and relatives who disappeared in the prisons, GULAG, places of deportation. It's necessary for us to have a memorial sign or the stone symbolizing the common grave <...>" (p. 405). No doubt, a sign is necessary. But *lieu de memoires* are not only the points on the map. This book published in Kaliningrad has already become such a place: we believe that thanks to the selfless work of its authors this memory won't be lost.