

camps, he celebrated his reinstatement as a member of the Communist Party with great delight in 1955.²⁷

That point of view is perhaps the most pronounced difference with my father's perspective and makes his memoir stand out. While there was little or no criticism of communist ideology in memoirs that came out of Soviet Armenia or the former Soviet bloc (Solzhenitsyn is an exception), my father used every opportunity to show the corruption, the bankruptcy, the immorality, the impracticality and the worthlessness of that ideology or the way it was laid down in the Soviet Empire.

As another common feature of those memoirs, there were always those among the prisoners who were unaware of Stalin's hidden agenda and who strongly believed that "the father of all nations" was uninformed about the mistreatment and the violations of basic human rights, otherwise he would have stopped them. Suren Ghazaryan, himself an Old Bolshevik and a seasoned Chekist, wrote multiple times to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, describing his situation and asserting that his incarceration had been a mistake since he had always served the Party with utmost fidelity and had never departed from the Party line in all his activities. He was convinced that once Stalin received the news of his incarceration and his report on the circumstances, he would order his release.²⁸

A high-ranking Russian judge in the transit camp

27 Alazan, «Տառապանքի ուղիներով» (Through the roads of suffering), p. 239. Written between 1961 and 1965 but only published in 1990, Alazan's memoir concludes with a description of that momentous occasion.

28 Ghazaryan, «Ինչպես չպետք է կրկնվի» (That should not be repeated), pp. 129–130.