

reality. Many memoirs and personal narratives about life in the Gulag as well as archival research illuminate the structure, function, aims and atmosphere of this Soviet system of punishment that proved to be more fiendish, more horrible than Nazi methods of killing, because this was a prolonged process, killing every day a little at a time.

Indeed, during the last decade or so, valuable archival materials on the Gulag system have been published in Moscow under the general title of *Istoriya Stalinskogo Gulaga. Konets 1920-kh—Pervaya Polovina 1950-kh Godov. Sbranie Dokumentov v 7 Tomakh* (The history of Stalin's Gulag: From the late 1920s to the first half of the 1950s. Collection of documents in seven volumes). This massive publication documents and describes the Soviet policy of repression and punishment as well as all aspects of life in the prison camps. It is too little, too late to bring the main culprit and the petty perpetrators to trial for their crimes against humanity.

Yes, it is important to remember, to speak openly about that dark period of history, and particularly important for me, about that dark period of Armenian history, when Stalin and Beria, his head honcho in the Caucasus, viewed Armenians as a “threat” to their interests, and when the *crème de la crème* of our nation was systematically eradicated on the basis of a mere decree. The Stalinist persecutions in Armenia stripped the nation of its intellectual potential and halted the cultivation of the future generation of concerned leaders/intellecutuals, because, in the words of Armenak Manukyan, those purges paved the way for “all the sycophants, bootlickers,