



Inventing the Enemy: Denunciation and Terror in Stalin's Russia

By Wendy Z. Goldman

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Stalin's terror shaped the lives and behavior of people in every Soviet work place. Communist Party leaders strongly encouraged ordinary citizens and party members to "unmask the hidden enemy." People responded by flooding the secret police and local authorities with accusations. This book examines the terror in Moscow's factories, revealing the terrible dilemmas people confronted in their struggles to survive.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This is a book about ordinary people caught up in an extraordinary event. In a masterful summary of the Terror and writings about it, which will be useful to specialists and nonspecialists alike, Wendy Goldman takes us into the factories to hear the voices of the people who worked there. These are not Stalins or Molotovs; they are Ivans and Petyas and Katyas who, despite being plain people, were anything but simple. Goldman shows us how they lived multifaceted lives as workers, activists, family members, lovers, defenders and betrayers, victims and perpetrators all at the same time. She introduces us to the nuances of their language and their silences, their belief in the state and their fear of it. Goldman's human microhistory gives much needed color and texture to a tragedy often described through dry documents and is essential to understanding the terror as a whole."

Arch Getty, University of California, Los Angeles

"Wendy Goldman's *Inventing the Enemy* describes how the Terror developed within the local grassroots Communist Party organizations of five Moscow industrial enterprises, some of the USSR's most important factories. She carefully reconstructs how individuals, loyal Party workers and activists, became sucked into a vortex of accusation and counteraccusation, concealment and betrayal, belief and doubt. The lines between victims and perpetrators became completely blurred, not just because of the well-documented practice of self-protection, denouncing others before you became denounced yourself, but because the Bolshevik Revolution and the rapid and dramatic social changes brought about by Stalinist industrialization left no one with a 'pure' Bolshevik (or Stalinist) pedigree. The most loyal Stalinists had family and political ties to individuals and groups singled out for repression and elimination by the Terror, ties that left everyone vulnerable. Goldman's characters come vividly to life, almost as if they were characters in a novel. But this is no piece of fiction. It is a tale that is grimly true, and it forces all of us to think how we might have behaved had we been there."

Donald Filtzer, University of East London

"Mining a rich new seam of archival sources, Wendy Goldman has written a fascinating study of the Terror's impact on ordinary people. By following individual stories, she shows how Soviet citizens were both agents and victims of the purges, caught up in a tragic logic; hers is a 'history without heroes'. Written in a clear and accessible style, Goldman's book is essential reading for anybody seeking to understand Soviet society during the repressions."

David Priestland, University of Oxford

"... a fine piece of scholarship which fills in another part of a massively complex picture."
Francis King, European History Quarterly

"Goldman's new book elucidates the escalation of the Great Purges on the local level, highlighting the role of denunciations and mutual recriminations. We now have an up-close portrayal of how rank-and-file party members experienced, abetted, and in many cases were consumed by this massive wave of repression."
David L. Hoffman, Ohio State University, Slavic Review

"... essential reading for understanding crucial questions about different levels of responsibility during the Great Terror and how it was not only the Soviet elite, but groups of ordinary people, who actively engaged in their own destruction."

About the Author

Wendy Z. Goldman is Professor in the Department of History at Carnegie Mellon University. She has contributed articles to numerous edited collections and journals, including Slavic Review and the American Historical Review. She is also the author of several books, including Terror and Democracy in the Age of Stalin: The Social Dynamics of Repression (Cambridge University Press, 2007), Women at the Gates: Gender and Industry in Stalin's Russia (Cambridge University Press, 2002) and Women, the State and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy in Social Life, 1917-1936 (Cambridge University Press, 1993).

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