



# History of Political Repressions in the Expositions of the National Museum of the Republic of Komi

Igor L. Zherebtsov – Svetlana V. Bandura

Igor L. Zherebtsov – Dr.Sci. (History)

Institute of Language, Literature and History, Komi Science Centre, Ural Branch,  
Russian Academy of Sciences, Chairman of Academic Council of the National museum of the Republic  
of Komi, Syktyvkar, Komi Republic, Russia.  
email: isaid@bk.ru, zherebtsov@mail.illhkomisc.ru

Svetlana V. Bandura – Cand.Sci. (History)

Deputy Director of the National museum of the Republic of Komi, Syktyvkar, Republic Komi, Russia.

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This paper introduces the history of 20th-century political repressions that had significant influence on the economic and social-cultural development of the Republic of Komi and provides a brief overview of museum collections connected with the Gulag system which created in the 1940s. It is shown how the history of political repressions was reflected in the expositions of the National museum of the Republic of Komi (leading museum in the European Northeast of Russia) since the first exhibitions which took place in late 1980s up to the present.

Keywords:

history, political repressions, Republic of Komi, Gulag, museum expositions, intelligentsia

In the late 1920–1950s of XX century the Komi Republic located in the extreme Northeast of Europe, had to go through severe times – to be one of the largest islands of Soviet “Gulag Archipelago”. History of the region, its economic and social development is inseparably linked with the formation of the system of “corrective-labour” camps. The idea of economic development of extensive territories of the North by forced labour use had arisen yet in 1921<sup>1</sup> when Political bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Bolsheviks Communist Party decided to organize a concentration camp for 10-20 thousand people on the Ukhta river and to send prisoners there from all Russia, so as to use their labour on oil fields and timber cuttings.

This idea began to be substantially realized on the boundary of the 1920–1930s when use of forced labour of subjected to repression had laid the basis of strategy of development of remote areas of the USSR. In 1929 “the accelerated variant” of the first 5-year plan was adopted. For its realization the concentration of manpower on the construction of large industrial and transport objects was required achieved thanks to forced labour. The same year the government of the Soviet Union

<sup>1</sup> ZHEREBTSOV, I.L. – TASKAEV, M.V. – ROGACHEV, M.B. – KOLEGOV, B.R. *Historical chronicle*. P. 105-106. (in Russian)



adopted the decision “On the use of work of penal-prisoners” that recommended to create large corrective-labour camps for «exploitation of natural riches by use of labour of deprived of freedom” in the remote sparsely populated areas. Then the collectivization accompanied by the hardest repressions began. According to the decision of the Central Committee of the All-Russia Bolsheviks Communist Party “On measures on liquidation of kulaks’ farms in areas of extensive collectivization» a part of the kulaks “was subject to deport to remote districts of the USSR”. The European Northeast which had promptly become covered by a network of “special settlements“ and camps<sup>2</sup> became one of such “remote” regions.

Already in 1929 the first camp in which by the end of the year there were more than 20 thousand prisoners, was formed near Ust-Sysolsk (since 1930 – Syktyvkar, capital of Komi). The same year a camp on the Ukhta river started to operate – the notorious Ukhtpechlag. Since next year a stream of prisoners going to Komi was added by tens of thousands of special settlers (“the dispossessed” peasants) that were used as labour force for the development of timber industry which had become “the main front of socialist industrialization of the Komi region». As a result by the mid 1930-s in some areas of the Komi the local “free” population made hardly more than half, and even minority of inhabitants. In the 1940-s there appeared new categories of special settlers in the region – the Poles, Jews and Germans, “soldiers of Vlasov’s army”, Lithuanians, etc.<sup>3</sup>

The wheel of repressions had also hard swept on the local population: in Komi they “dispossessed” peasants, imprisoned workers and engineers for “sabotage”, sent writers and scientists to camps for “nationalism”, tried communist leaders that quite recently had been in power.<sup>4</sup>

The system of camps and special settlements, dominating in the industry of Komi throughout two decades, started to be gradually curtailed since 1953, having existed to the second half of the 1950s and having left the deepest trace in the history of the region. Gulag “inheritance” can be found in all aspects of life of the republic – in economy, culture, settling system. However this obvious fact for a long time remained a preterition figure. Neither in publications, nor in expositions of museums of the republic for decades one could find no mentioning of the camp past of Ukhta, Vorkuta and many other settlements of the republic, about “stains” in the biography of many local leading men in economy, science, culture, medicine.

Nevertheless, acquisition of the museum collections connected with Gulag had involuntarily begun yet in the mid 1940-s when the Komi Republic was «a camp kingdom». All achievements of national economy of the region during that period were inevitably based on successes of effective utilization of prisoners’ labour and as a whole on successes of Gulag’s economy. The 1946 exhibition dated to the

<sup>2</sup> ZHEREBTSOV, I.L. – SMETANIN, A.F. Komi territory: *Sketches on ten centuries of history*. Syktyvkar : Komi book publishing house, 2003. P. 303-307. (in Russian)

<sup>3</sup> ZHEREBTSOV, I.L. – MAKSIMOVA, L.A. – IGNATOV, N.M. – SMETANIN, A.F. – TASKAEV, M.V. *Sketches on history of political repressions in Komi*. P. 112-117. (in Russian)

<sup>4</sup> POLESHCHIKOV, V.M. *A sealed book*. P. 130-153. (in Russian)



25 anniversary of Komi autonomy became reflection of these successes. Opened in Syktyvkar in a specially constructed pavilion in the style of Stalin's classicism, it showed only the best results in industry, agriculture and culture of Komi. All People's Commissariats (ministries), organizations and enterprises of local, republican and Union jurisdiction located in territory of the republic represented their production. After pavilion closing all showpieces were transferred to the Republican Museum of Local Lore.<sup>5</sup> So the museum collection was replenished by objects made by prisoners at the enterprises of Gulag system: a decorative ceramic plate "25 years of the Komi ASSR» (manufacturer Sevzheldorstroi of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Komi ASSR); a wooden casket of joiner's work "25 years of the Komi ASSR» (manufacturer Sevzheldorstroi of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR, Vorkuta), chess, carving on bone (manufacturer Ust-Vymtrest of the Ministry of Internal Affairs); collection of dolls made in Rakpassky workshop of Sevzheldorlag of People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR, etc.

However research of archival documents, collection of information on destinies of people subject to repressions and representation of these materials at expositions and exhibitions became possible only in the second half of the 1980-s. They started to speak about the repressive policy of the Soviet state in the late 1980. Separate materials and exhibits, and then exhibitions and expositions devoted to history of political repressions in the USSR began to appear in the city and regional museums of the Komi Republic. Most thoroughly this theme was reflected in the activity of the National Museum of the Republic of Komi, where there is a separate direction on studying the repressions, acquisition of collections and construction of exhibitions.

In the second half of the 1980s workers of the museum began to carry out prospecting and exhibition work on history of repressions in the Komi ASSR. In 1988 for the first time the documents on repressions against creative intelligentsia were represented at the exposition to the 100 anniversary of Victor A.Savin, writer, playwright, founder of the Komi national theatre (1888-1943). In 1937 Victor Savin was arrested and condemned under political article. He was sent to Vorkuta, then to Adak settlement on the Usa river of the Komi ASSR. He finished his life course in Siberia. Among museum relics there is V.A.Savin's last letter home from the camp: "July 1, 1943. Greetings, my dear! I am not in Adak any more, my destiny had thrown me far-far to Siberia - to Novosibirsk region ... I grew weak on the way ... It was especially bad with food and I got very thin, that's why my health suffered..." The letter written shortly before death in camp at Itaka station, Tomsk region, was transferred to the museum by writer's younger daughter Inessa Viktorovna Savina-Makarova.<sup>6</sup> Studying of documents on V.A.Savin and other representatives of the Komi culture (V.T.Chistalev, V.I.Lytkin, A.S.Sidorov, etc.) was continued

<sup>5</sup> SOVA, V.A. *History in events and persons. Pages of history of the National museum of the Republic of Komi*. Syktyvkar. 2011. P.90-91.

<sup>6</sup> SAVIN, V.A. 1888-1943. *To the 100 birth anniversary*. Compiled by T.A.Chistalyova. Syktyvkar. 1988. P.13. (in Russian)



in archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the declassified materials of the National archive of the Republic of Komi.

In 1989 the expedition of museum workers to the location of one of camps of Gulag system has for the first time taken place. From Vozhael settlement territory where since 1937 to 1960 there was the Ustvymsky labour camp, objects of camp life were brought: metal lattices, doors, barbed wire of pre-trial prison and penal centre, a bread baking dish, kettles, bowls, a washstand, a board with an inscription “Prohibited zone. No entry». Participants of the expedition made photos of camp constructions, mass burial places. The work on revealing the materials about subjected to repression and serving sentences in camps in the republic territory was continued in close cooperation with “Memorial society”, created in Syktyvkar in 1989.

Museum collections began to be replenished by not numerous, but very valuable materials about concrete people, gone through camps of the Komi ASSR. Among them there is a collection about F.G.Voropaev (autobiography, certificate of release, a letter from camp, photos),<sup>7</sup> about A.S.Nikultsev,<sup>8</sup> etc., memoirs of the subjected to repression. The case of documents of Alexey S. Nikultsev (1900-1965) acquaints us with destiny of the outstanding doctor, who has made 11 thousand operations, Honoured Doctor of the Komi ASSR (1962) who got to the republic against his will.<sup>9</sup> In notorious 1937 A.S.Nikultsev was arrested and condemned by Special three of the Department of People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs for 10 years for «counterrevolutionary propaganda». He served sentence in Ustvymlag, working as a doctor in the camp hospital in Veslyana. In 1951 he was sentenced to exile to a settlement. He worked in Veslyana till retirement in 1963. Here we give some documents from doctor Nikultsev’s collection: *Receipt № 758 of 29.06.1937 of Leningrad pre-trial prison about acceptance from prisoner A.S.Nikultsev of the passport and the identity card;*<sup>10</sup> *Certificate № 9282/26420 of 7/25/1946 of Management of Ustvymsky corrective labour camp given to A.S.Nikultsev. about completion of sentence taking into account decrease in term of punishment for one year under the decision of Special Meeting at People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR of 7.10.1944;*<sup>11</sup> *Certificate № 4-U-056g. of 10/16/1956 about cancellation of decisions in relation to A.S.Nikultsev of Special three of the Department of People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs of 10/14/1937 and Special meeting of 4.07.1951 and dismissal of action in the absence of structure of a crime;*<sup>12</sup> *Letter of congratulations № 12/408 of 11/5/1962 to A.S.Nikultsev in connection with conferring him an honorary title of Honorary Doctor of the Komi ASSR, signed by Stepchenko, head of department of p.b. 243, and Ilyin, chief of the*

<sup>7</sup> National museum of the Republic of Komi (further – NMRK). KII 9464. (in Russian)

<sup>8</sup> NMRK. KII 10804. (in Russian)

<sup>9</sup> ZHEREBTSOVA, L.S. *Doctors//The Link of times*. Syktyvkar. 2000. P.411. (in Russian)

<sup>10</sup> NMRK. KII 10804/23. (in Russian)

<sup>11</sup> NMRK. KII 10804/24. (in Russian)

<sup>12</sup> NMRK. KII 10804/29. (in Russian)

*Political department of p.b. 243.*<sup>13</sup> The content of these documents testifies to the repressive policy of the Soviet state. In them are marks of history that had gone on destinies of many people: from 1937 – the year of the beginning of mass repressions to 1956 - dethronements of “cult of personality” and many others, such as the state award (conferring rank) to the one who was «the enemy of people».

Documentary sources prompt subjects of the exhibitions about repressions. Thus, an attempt of understanding of such categories as “punishment” and “rewarding” was undertaken in the exhibition project “The penalty, feat and award ... Destinies of scientists - winners of the Stalin award” (2010). The exhibition concept goes back to P.A.Sorokin’s early sociological work “The crime and penalty, feat and award”<sup>14</sup> in which Sorokin addresses to the psychological and social reasons of these phenomena. The Stalin award was instituted on December 20, 1939 in commemoration of the 60 anniversary of I.V.Stalin. The most part of winners of the Stalin award from the Komi Republic worked in Gulag system. By means of camps throughout several decades the country leaders solved the important strategic problem - colonization and development of natural riches of the North. By arrests «under the order» the requirement in specialists for development of deposits was provided. Thus in camps of the Komi ASSR there were geologists Andrey Ya.Krems and Albert E.Bernstein, electrical engineer Dmitry M.Krasheninnikov. Ukhtizhemlag which area made 50 thousand sq.km was the largest oil-producing camp in the country (1/8 part of territory of the Komi ASSR). A whole number of specialists from this camp in 1947-1949 got the rank of winners of the Stalin award of II degree. They were engineers-geologists awarded for discovery of Verkhneizhemsy - Voi-Vozhsky, Nibelsky oil and gas deposits: M.A.Bernshtejn, A.Ya.Krems, I.V.Nosakov, A.M.Sirotko, V.S.Panichev; developers of mine ways of oil recovery (for the first time in the USSR): P.M.Zvyagin, S.F.Zdorov, A.I.Adamov, S.M.Bondarenko, E.Ya.Yudin, M.M.Zotkin. Materials from collections of the National Museum of the Republic of Komi were presented at the exhibition (portraits of 1947 Stalin winners painted by known Komi painter Panteleimon M.Mityushov; personal things, awards, documents of the awarded), and from Ukhta Historical-Local Lore Museum with A.Ya.Krems’s office (objects from collection: a portrait, the diploma of the winner of the Stalin award, a portfolio, the manuscript, books, etc.). Autobiographies, reports about efficiency proposals, telegrams about discovery of deposits, schemes of Radium factory buildings of the Water industry from National archive of the Republic of Komi with a signature stamp “Top secret”, presented at the exhibition, characterize personal and production sides of winners of the Stalin award.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> NMRK. КП 10804/54. (in Russian)

<sup>14</sup> SOROKIN, P.A. *The Crime and penalty, feat and award. A sociological etude about the basic forms of public behaviour and morals.* St.Petersburg, 1914. (in Russian)

<sup>15</sup> *The Penalty, feat and award. Destinies of scientists - winners of the Stalin award. The information booklet to an exhibition.* Compiled by E.I.Morozova. National museum of RK. Syktyvkar. 2010. (in Russian)

Exhibition activity of the National Museum of the Republic of Komi “Gulag in the Republic of Komi” at the present stage is included in the long-term exhibition project «Memories of the subjected to repression» which is carried out in close cooperation with Komi Republican Charitable and Public Foundation of victims of political repressions “Repentance”. From the moment of the Foundation organization in 1998 more than ten exhibitions were held.

The project purpose is on the basis of personal objects (letters, diaries, memoirs, personal things) to show totalitarianism atmosphere in the Soviet society, ways and resistance forms in conditions of non-freedom, the strict control and dictatorship over the person. The problem of each exhibition is to show history of repressive policy of the Soviet state through different social and age categories of people: women and children; special settlers and camp prisoners; creative people - scientists, actors, painters who have gone through camps and exiles.<sup>16</sup>

In October, 2002 within the frames of the joint project the first exhibition “I have shared the lot of the country...” was constructed. Memoirs, documents and photos of those people who in 1930–1950 were children make its basis. They are children of “enemies of the people», «members of families of traitors of the Native land», they have passed through humiliation and violence, having lost their parents, having filled up children’s homes and children’s care centres, becoming orphans because of the state. Uniqueness of this exhibition was that children’s memoirs of heroes of the exhibition were all documented. In the National archive of the Republic of Komi and in archive of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary School of the Republic of Komi there were certificates from children’s homes of Tolik Slesarenko born in Pechorlag and tragically lost at the age of nine in children’s home; the Polish girl Marysya Tsuber, whose destiny will for ever remain connected with the Republic of Komi.

Materials from collections of the National Museum of the Republic of Komi were also presented at the exhibition: documents on children’s homes, children’s toys made by prisoners of Sevzheldorlag of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Komi ASSR. Adults and schoolchildren were greatly interested in the exhibition. It promoted fixing of memoirs, search of new documents and photos.

One more reference to “children’s” theme took place in 2007 at the exhibition «We are children of terrible years of Russia ...» (Children of Gulag). The exhibition purpose was to show political repressions through a prism of family mutual relations, to show family opposition as keeper of the universal values accumulated by generations, and the state which ideology was reduced to creation of the obedient person deprived of historical memory. The archival materials earlier stored under a signature stamp “Top secret” in the National archive of the Republic of Komi were presented for the first time: information of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the

<sup>16</sup> MOROZOVA, E.I. *Project «Memories of subjected to repression»//Museums and study of local lore. Proceedings of the National museum of RK. Issue 8. Materials of sci.-practical conf. “Cultural heritage and globalization. Experience, problems, prospects of preservation of cultural heritage in the modern world».* Syktyvkar. 2011. P.134-136. (in Russian)



Komi ASSR on quantity of children held in camps, norms of food for children of mothers-prisoners in baby houses, certificates on the death of children, inquiries about search of children and teenagers, etc. Considerable quantity of materials from personal archives was involved in the exhibition: E.V.Markova's – woman-prisoner of Vorkutlag, N.A.Morozov's - born in Intalag, I.E.Kulakov's - descendant of special settlers (Ichet-Di special settlement in the Troitsk-Pechora region), etc. The catalogue was prepared for the exhibition.<sup>17</sup>

The new research and exhibition direction was realized within the frames of the exhibition "Muses pass through locks..." (2004). Material telling about painters gone through camps and exile was shown for the first time. The main idea was the story about creativity in condition of non-freedom, aspiration to keep individuality contrary to system, to find the form of self-expression in conditions of dictatorship.<sup>18</sup> The National gallery of the Republic of Komi, municipal museums of the republic, the International Historical-Educational, Charitable, Human Rights society "Memorial" (Moscow) took part in the project. Along with works of known artists and sculptors (P.E.Bendel, N.P.Zhizhimontov, A.Ya.Vunder, N.A.Bruni, N.A.Miller, etc.) numerous works of the unknown artists gone through camps and exile in territory of the Komi ASSR were also presented.

In 2006 the creativity theme in conditions of non-freedom was continued by the exhibition «Flowers of Seva Gorodetsky» which materials showed the destiny of Vorkutalag prisoner Vsevolod Gorodetsky. The most part of the unique collection of his camp drawings from collections of the National Museum of the Republic of Komi are flowers: violets, poppies, cornflowers, roses, narcissuses. In them you find the quivering «far from the camp reality» world of Seva Gorodetsky - artist-prisoner.

In 2005 the exhibition "And traces were lost in snow ..." (Gulag - Abez) devoted to Abez - the largest centre of Sevzheldorlag was held in the Department of History of the museum. Its materials traced the 27-year history of Abez – the camp place which prisoners constructing the North Pechora railway, had made great contribution to industrial development of the Komi territory.<sup>19</sup> Unique documents allowed to show the human feat and human tragedy in the history of construction of the trunk-railway Kotlas - Vorkuta. The album "Construction of Northern trunk-railway Kotlas-Vorkuta. Abez region» is stored in the museum.<sup>20</sup> The settlement Abez became also known as the largest invalid camp in which world renowned people were kept: philosopher L.P.Karsavin, critic N.N.Punin, general of the Lithuanian

<sup>17</sup> "We are children of terrible years of Russia..." (Children of Gulag). The Exhibition catalogue. Syktyvkar, 2007. (in Russian)

<sup>18</sup> "Muses pass through locks..." (Devoted to artists gone through camps and repressions). The Exhibition catalogue. Syktyvkar, 2003. (in Russian)

<sup>19</sup> "And traces were lost in snow..." (Gulag - Abez). Booklet to an exhibition. Syktyvkar, 2005. (in Russian)

<sup>20</sup> NMRK. КП 10601. (in Russian)





army I.V.Iodishus, egyptologist M.A.Korostovtsev, captain of the national football team “Spartak” A.N.Starostin, etc.

Long duration of the project allowed to obtain wide experience in understanding the difficult historical theme. The inclusion of materials from different (state and municipal) museums and republican archives allowed to make the project “Memoirs of the subjected to repression” more informative.

In 2009 the exhibition «I will create the light world» (devoted to women gone through Gulag), was held in the museum. It showed a special layer of camp culture - female creativity: embroidery, knitting, a congratulatory card beautifully made on brown paper, a ballet pack from gauze. After all, women could create beauty and cosiness practically from nothing. Artists, actresses, poetesses, sportswomen ... They created their own world in which there was no place to violence. Their creativity was the action of spiritual resistance to the regime.<sup>21</sup> One of exhibition sections is based on materials of Inta Museum of Local Lore telling about women-prisoners of women departments of Mineral camp. Cards, embroideries, lacy napkins, letters embroidered on cloth - all these caused huge interest and admiration in visitors of the exhibition.

In 2012 the museum addressed to little-known and little-studied theme “The name of the classic of the Russian literature in dimension of repressive policy of the Soviet state”. Influence of Pushkin’s creativity on Russian culture of XIX-XX centuries is great enough. However Pushkin’s name, his creativity became a part of “camp culture” in the 1930-1950s, with the expression “Pushkin is our all”. The documentary and material sources telling about stagings on Pushkin’s works at theatres of Gulag, poetic evenings, hand-written books, etc. are kept in the museum. The major landmarks in the history of culture of the Komi Republic are connected with Pushkin’s name: opening of Republican Musical Theatre by “Evgenie Onegin” opera in 1958. In 1937 the monument to the poet executed by Nikolai A.Bruni, prisoner of Ukhtpechlag, was opened in Ukhta to 100 anniversary of Pushkin’s death. Not only destiny of the son of the known architect is connected with Gulag; traces of the great-grandson of professor Ya.I.Kartsov – one of Pushkin’s teachers in Tsarkoselsky lycée are lost in Ukhtizhemlag. The descendants of the classic of the Russian literature also suffered from Stalin repressions. The exhibition “Subjected to repression Pushkin” combined the materials from depositories of the state and municipal museums of the Republic of Komi, “Memorial” society (Moscow), Foundation of victims of political repressions “Repentance” (Syktyvkar), A.S.Pushkin Literary museum (Moscow), archives of the republic.<sup>22</sup> Three descendants and relatives of Pushkin’ family were presumably kept in camps in territory of the

<sup>21</sup> «*I will create the light world*» (Devoted to women gone through Gulag). Booklet to an exhibition. Syktyvkar, 2009. (in Russian)

<sup>22</sup> *The subjected to repression Pushkin*. Booklet to an exhibition. Compiled by E.I. Morozova. Syktyvkar. 2012. (in Russian)





Komi ASSR. One of them was Boris Yu.Kozlovsky, geologist, geophysicist.<sup>23</sup> He was arrested and sentenced to five years of imprisonment in labour camps in December, 1934. As a prisoner he continued to conduct gravi-surveys in the area of Chibyu. He was released early. Before his release the main geologist of Ukhtpechlag, also subjected to repression, N.N.Tikhonovich characterized Yu.B.Kozlovsky as “rather good expert in gravimetry”, he even requested to make him stay in Gulag system as a civilian worker.

In polar Vorkuta, notorious Vorkutlag, prisoner Pierre Danzas, descendant of A.S.Pushkin's second Konstantin Karlovich Danzas, worked as unskilled worker at drama theatre. Here is saying from the letter of artist Konstantin Ivanov: “... We named him either Peter or Frenchman, while women always named him “Danzasik”. He was thin, almost two-meters high, this big fellow-Frenchman. The relative of a Frenchman Danzas – Pushkin's friend - known in Russia. He was the distant relative of de Gaulle. He got to Vorkuta and served term in different camps and on different jobs thanks to his excessive inquisitiveness to the Soviet Union, to Russia (he was sentenced for espionage). Thanks to kind people he got a job of unskilled worker at the theatre ... After different camps the work at the theatre was rest. He was mainly engaged in theatre cleaning ... I never had time ... Therefore I came to work to the theatre earlier than all others. But always, there has already been a “Frenchman” there. He methodically, slowly, cleared away from snow drifts the ways to the theatre ... “. Theatre programme with repertoire of Pushkin's works staged by camp theatres is an original fanciful link of times, a hidden thread between “gold” XIX and severe XX century.

In 2013 the materials devoted to repressions got multimedia implementation: the electronic map “Gulag in the Republic of Komi” was prepared. The project purpose is to visually represent the history of terror in the Komi Republic territory most fully, to help to estimate today's memory state about him. The electronic map shows the locations of camps and special settlements, their characteristic and statistical data is given. The map allows to see “visual history” of Gulag: office buildings of camps, barracks for prisoners, pictures of the necropolises, memorable signs, portraits of prisoners etc. Along with materials from collections of the National Museum of the Republic of Komi one can see virtual expositions of municipal museums of our republic devoted to political repressions. In the section “The Komi Republic Martyrology” the lists and curriculum vitae on subjected to repression in the 1930–1950s are presented created during huge research and search work of the Komi Republican Charitable Public Foundation of victims of political repressions “Repentance”.

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<sup>23</sup> MOROZOVA, E.I. Subjected to repression Pushkin. In: *Komi Republic Archives: from the past to the future*. Materials of sci.-practical conf. October 23-24, 2012. Syktyvkar. 2012. P.153-157. (in Russian)





The electronic resource “Gulag in the Republic of Komi” is to become an original compass in search of the lost roots, establishment of names, places of detention, tombs of the family who has gone through a hearth of mass repressions.

## History of Political Repressions in the Expositions of the National Museum of the Republic of Komi

Igor L. Zherebtsov – Svetlana V. Bandura

### Summary

Between 1920 and 1950, the Republic of Komi became one of the largest islands in the Soviet Gulag archipelago. The effects the Gulag system can still be felt to this day in the nation’s economy, culture and geography. Acquisition of museum collections connected with the Gulag began – on an involuntary basis – as early as 1940s. In the second half of the 1980s, employees of the National Museum of the Republic of Komi began to carry out field research and organize exhibitions on the history of repressions in the Republic of Komi. In 2013, these materials were collected and digitized in the electronic work titled “Gulag in the Republic of Komi”. This map is to become an original compass in search of lost roots and tracing the fate of victims through places of detention and burial places.

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