

L'URSS contre ses traîtres: l'épuration soviétique (1941–1945). By Vanessa Voisin. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2015. 514 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Figures. Tables. Maps. €35.00, paper.

In French, the word *épuration* has a very specific historical meaning and corresponds to the period at the end of World War II when, through legal or spontaneous, sometimes violent, actions, the former collaborators of the Nazi occupants were tried, punished and, more broadly, stigmatized within society. There is no specific word or expression in Russian to describe the repression against the Soviet citizens guilty of collaboration (of various degrees) with the occupants during the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945. Amir Weiner already dealt with that question in *Making Sense of War* (2002) but, until Vanessa Voisin's book, based on the author's dissertation, we knew very little about the repression of collaboration.

As Voisin shows, the end of occupation in the USSR is not thought of as a rebirth of the state—an emergence of something new, as was the case in France. On the contrary, the official discourse and practices put emphasis on the *continuity* of the State. The same Soviet state returned after liberation. Voisin demonstrates striking continuities in the forms, tools and categories of repression between the 1930s and the period she studies. She even calls this *épuration* “a typical Stalinist repression” (470).

For her exploration of the repression, both from above and below, Voisin uses sources from Moscow central archives and regional archives (mainly the Tver-Kalinin oblast). It allows her to contribute to what may be called the disenchantment of both the history of the war and of the Stalinist state. Not limiting herself to ideology and discourses, she shows the everyday work of both local and central authorities, including the way they tried to adapt, change their point of view, and their practices over time. She describes failures and losses of control. In describing the collaboration under German rule (chapter 2), Voisin pays much attention to unremarkable forms of collaboration, to the gray zones of behaviors motivated by survival strategies more than ideological convictions.

One of the main characteristics of this repression, as she shows, was the ambition of the authorities to control it. Above all, Stalinist authorities disliked and feared every form of spontaneity from the population, often qualified of *stikhiinost*. For them, the state has to organize the punishment, everything should be controlled and in order. The role assigned to the population leaves no room for spontaneity. The use of denunciations allows, for example, better control through indirect violence. In a very convincing section, Voisin analyzes the behavior of the masses in movies on trials and executions. They show mostly calm and tidy assistance, without any excesses. Of course, this was the main goal. Voisin also explains how uncontrolled violence occurred quite often, especially during the first period of the war, before 1942.

The precise and subtle attention that Voisin pays to chronology makes the book particularly interesting. She stresses the importance of the turning point of the war in 1942–43. The nature of repression at that moment changed: prior to this point, repression had been far more violent and directed toward petty criminals, as the most compromised persons had fled to the still occupied zones. During 1941–42, extreme violence, killings of “traitors” took place: Voisin even speaks of “dynamics of civil war” (120). Still, this violent, largely uncontrolled, repression is kept discreet. The Soviet population is supposed to be united against the enemy.

After 1942–43, as the war turned in favor of the Soviet Union, the repressive processes became far more effectively controlled. Voisin's analysis, for example in chapter 6, is nuanced and stimulating. She demonstrates how the authorities always need to arbitrate between the thirst for revenge and the necessity to put the

liberated territories, which were rapidly increasing in size and population at this time, back to work. They desperately needed administrators and trained personnel, and thus forgave easily some forms of collaboration. Voisin also shows how the Soviets adapted their policy to internal and international requirements. As a result, the tension between ideology and pragmatism, so characteristic of Stalinism in action at the grass-root level, is very well described.

In another very compelling section, Voisin argues that repression becomes even more complex to manage at the end of the war in a society supposed to be united in the same experience of suffering, but where people had actually very heterogeneous experience of war (occupation, resistance, evacuation). It was a source for tension and misunderstandings. Soviet society would wait for the general amnesty of September 1955 to end that period of the repression.

Although some parts of the book are less convincing (the well-known Kharkov and Krasnodar trials are rapidly reviewed), and the last chapters may repeat some already developed ideas, this is definitely a major contribution to the studies of World War II in Soviet Union and should interest a wide range of scholars working on repression and the end of the war.

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The Penguin Book of Russian Poetry. Ed. Robert Chandler, Boris Dralyuk and Irina Mashinski. New York: Penguin Books, 2015. xx, 572 pp. Appendix. Notes. Chronology. Index. \$12.99, paper.

Every anthology creates its own canon and readership. Robert Chandler, Boris Dralyuk and Irina Mashinski are not the first to put together a *Penguin Book of Russian Poetry*: that honor went to Sir Dimitri Obolensky, émigré scion of ancient Russian stock (On Obolensky, see his obituary in *The Guardian*, <http://www.theguardian.com/news/2002/jan/04/guardianobituaries.humanities>. Obolensky's 1962 anthology, later republished as *The Heritage of Russian Verse*, became a standard textbook and helped connect curious westerners to the world behind the Iron Curtain and to a vision of a vanishing literary past. Yet the anthology's format warns many potential readers away: Russian-language poems take center-page while literal translations cram modestly into the bottom third.

Chandler, Dralyuk and Mashinski's anthology represents a new era in the study of Russian literature, at a time when the electrifying polarities of the Cold War have given way to the more diffuse currents of globalization. All three editors bring to the anthology a deep awareness of the international world of translation and Translation Studies. Chandler, an established master translator, has teamed up with accomplished translator and scholar Dralyuk and gifted poet Mashinski, who is also chief editor for the Russian-language New-York-based literary press StoSvet. In fact, the three are experienced collaborators as the editorial team for literary journal *Cardinal Points*, which features a designated section on "The Art of Translation." This aspect is felt in translations and discussions of translation, in commentary by translators, and in a general awareness of how poems and translations themselves comprise interpretation: poem snippets inform biographies, poem selections advance the historical narrative, and the book even ends with English poems about Russia.

Their background enables the editors to speak more precisely to what is special about the Russian poetry tradition in a global context. As this volume makes clear, poetry dwells at—and perhaps even generates—the heart of Russian culture, despite