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THE SOVIET SUPPRESSION OF ACADEMIA, THE CASE OF KONSTANTIN AZADOVSKY,
By Ayse Dietrich*, Published by: Bloomsbury Publishing, written by Petr A. Druzhinin, translated by Sarah Vitali, Year of Publishing: 2022. Subject Area: The Soviet Suppression of Academia. Book Type: Russian History and Culture. Total Number of Pages: 261. ISBN: 978-1-3501-3613-7, hardback, \$103,50.

This book portrays the suppression and intimidation of intellectuals under the Soviet Union and the prosecution of the prominent philologist and translator Konstantin Azadovsky, a prisoner of conscience. It was originally written and published in Russian in 2016. The book is comprised of 18 sections.

In the Introduction, the author talks about the documents and the problems with accessing to them, the restrictions on the internal KGB documents related to Azadovsky's case; and explains that the documentary evidence for this book came from criminal case files, complaints, internal reviews, internal KGB documents etc. Afterwards, the author gives a brief history about the relationship between the Russian state and the cultural elite starting from the 18th century, and explains how the hostile relationship worsened during the Soviet Union owing to the intellectuals' dissonance with the communist system.

The book continues with Azadovsky's family life, his father's accusations of cosmopolitanism, his discharge from the Academy of Sciences, Konstantin's determination to live up to his father's legacy after his death, his university career, his literary interests, the Slavinsky Affair, the accusations by the KGB of his being a dissident due to the company he kept.

Later, the author gives information on how the police planted drugs in Azadovsky's flat to frame him and his future wife by charging them with possession of narcotic substances and their arrest. The book continues with the issues of Azadovsky's and Lepilina's trial and conviction, the KGB involvement in Azadovsky's case, the unending persecution, and the involvement of Azadovsky's compatriots' and foreign organizations like Amnesty International in his case. It then continues with

Azadovsky's transfer, Lepilina's life in *Khimia* and her release, Azadovsky's life in Kolyma's minimum-security facility, Azadovsky's punishment to an isolation cell due to his suicide attempt, his transfer to the sewing workshop and his release in 1982.

The author talks about his life after prison, his struggle to clear his name, spending his time writing complaints, attempting to contest his false character references, his discovery of documentary evidence confirming the the KGB's involvement in the criminal case against him and his wife, a journalist's investigation into the Azadovsky Affair, Azadovsky's letter to the editor of The Literary Gazette to begin its investigation, his litigation and public trial, how the case was dismissed due to lack of sufficient evidence and his final exoneration. Azadovsky also discusses his unsuccessful struggle to overturn his wife's sentence, the KGB investigation, and also the investigations conducted by the Prosecutor's Office's and Supreme Soviet Commission for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Political Repression.

In the conclusion, the author states that in the Soviet Union studying comparative literature was inherently risky due to its concern with cross-cultural connections, different languages and interaction with different people and cultures. He concludes by stating that people suffered for their refusal to praise all things Russian, and in today's Russia' intellectuals are still under attack.

This book provides a close-up view of what it was like to live under continuous KGB surveillance and repression, and sheds new light on the tenuous relationship between the state and intellectuals during the Soviet period.

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