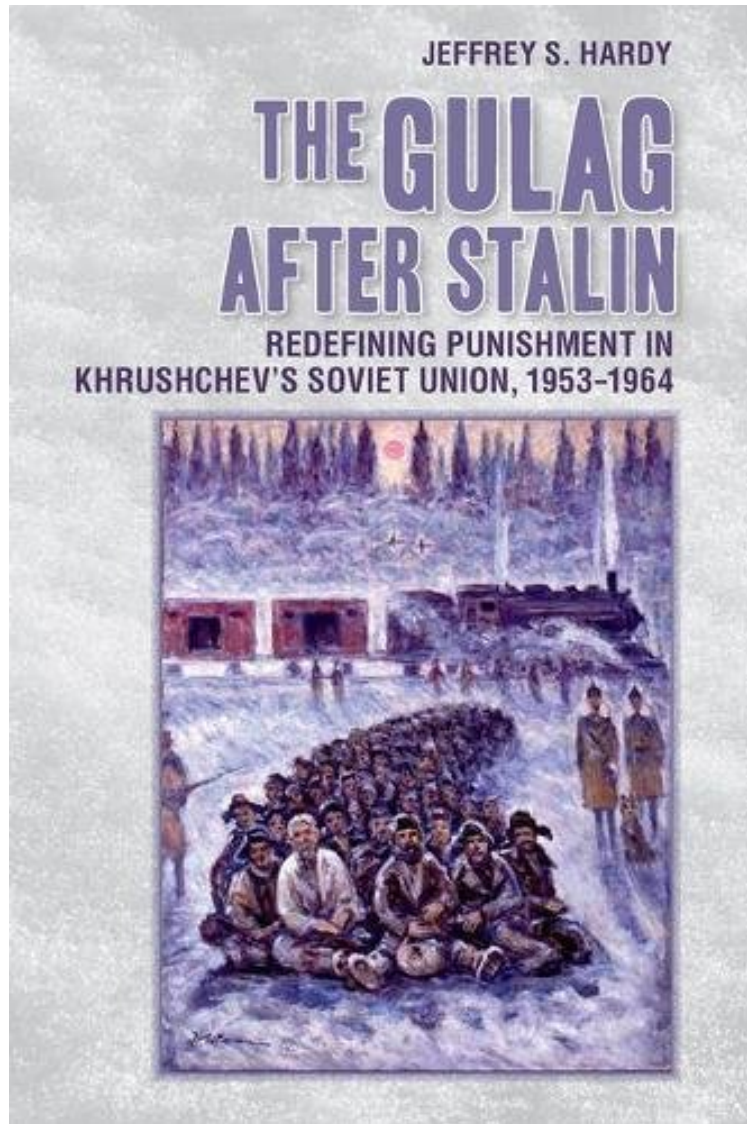


[Download] The Gulag after Stalin: Redefining Punishment in Khrushchev's Soviet Union, 1953-1964

The Gulag after Stalin: Redefining Punishment in Khrushchev's Soviet Union, 1953-1964

Jeffrey S. Hardy

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In *The Gulag after Stalin*, Jeffrey S. Hardy reveals how the vast Soviet penal system was reimagined and reformed in the wake of Stalin's death. Hardy argues that penal reform in the 1950s was a serious endeavor intended to transform the Gulag into a humane institution that reeducated criminals into honest Soviet citizens. Under the leadership of Minister of Internal Affairs Nikolai Dudorov, a Khrushchev appointee, this drive to change the Gulag into a "progressive" system where criminals were reformed through a combination of education, vocational training, leniency, sport, labor, cultural programs, and self-governance was both sincere and at least partially effective. The new vision for the Gulag faced many obstacles. Reeducation proved difficult to quantify, a serious liability in a statistics-obsessed state. The entrenched habits of Gulag officials and the prisoner-guard power dynamic mitigated the effect of the post-Stalin reforms. And the Soviet public never fully accepted the new policies of leniency and the humane treatment of criminals. In the late 1950s, they joined with a coalition of party officials, criminologists, procurators, newspaper reporters, and some penal administrators to rally around the slogan "The camp is not a resort" and succeeded in reimposing harsher conditions for inmates. By the mid-1960s the Soviet Gulag had emerged as a hybrid system forged from the old Stalinist system, the vision promoted by Khrushchev and others in the mid-1950s, and the ensuing counterreform movement. This new penal equilibrium largely persisted until the fall of the Soviet Union.

"Based on in-depth archival research that would rival almost any book, *The Gulag after Stalin* draws on a breadth of historical thinking and a scholarly imagination that will allow the book to make highly original and significant contributions to a number of different spheres of scholarly inquiry. Jeffrey S. Hardy's in-depth and nuanced exploration of policy making in the Khrushchev years casts light on Soviet history, the history of the Gulag, the history of forced labor, the history of punishment and penal systems, and even broader interdisciplinary inquiries into penology and the politics of punishment and incarceration."—Steven A. Barnes, George Mason University, author of *Death and Redemption: The Gulag and the Shaping of Soviet Society*"*The Gulag After Stalin* is an illuminating, meticulously researched book that will reinvigorate the discussion on the very nature of the Soviet system."—Nanci Adler, NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust, and Genocide Studies/University of Amsterdam"*The Gulag after Stalin* is not simply the definitive work on the fate of the Soviet prison system in the post-Stalin era. It also makes a convincing case that the Gulag must be understood primarily as a penal system with competing aims of economics, reeducation, and security. By placing cutting-edge archival research into the broader context of modern prison systems across the globe, Hardy generates new insights into what was (and what was not) distinctly Soviet about the Gulag, and by extension, the system in which it was embedded."—Alan Barenberg, Texas Tech University"*There is very little known about the fate of Stalin's notorious Gulag after his death. Jeffrey S. Hardy makes use of an impressive body of documents to show us how Stalin's camps transformed. This book is not just about crime and punishment, or the changing penal system in the USSR; it is an insight into Soviet life in general, in which state violence always played too big of a role.*"—Oleg Khlevniuk, National Research University Higher School of Economics About the Author Jeffrey S. Hardy is Assistant Professor of History at Brigham Young University.