

Incarceration and exile to Siberia remained the same, from the days of Hamo Ohanjanian to the days of Garegin Nzhdeh.

My father Baghdassar (Baghdik) Minassian was one of those voices, and his life story is worth recording, not only to highlight a valuable human life, that of MY DAD, victim of inhumanity, but because the oppressive policies that created and ran the Gulag system still exist. Indeed, if the end of World War II was also the end of Nazi concentration camps, it paradoxically marked the expansion of the Soviet Gulag which continued to “thrive” at least until Stalin’s death, following which some of the labor camps were dismantled.

The labor camps may have been dismantled but the Gulag mentality persists, long after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The world nonetheless chooses not to see the truth about Russia and all the former Soviet states’ internal policies, with their insensitivity to individual human rights and the iron fist of the secret police still in command, callously crushing any opposition. The world fails to recognize the role Russia plays in today’s volatile peace where extremists have gained the upper hand. Russia has not faced its past, the Soviet past, since its change of course has not been all that significant.

With these overwhelming thoughts engulfing my mind, I could now see the signs loud and clear. I had to embark on the long overdue introduction of my father to the world and especially to his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren and the generations to come.