On the Question of Sin

Stalin and Human Nature

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Abstract

This article deals with one aspect of Joseph Stalin's unrecognised contribution to redefining human nature. The larger whole of such a redefinition was what may be called an Augustinian awareness of the depth and pervasiveness of evil. The specific aspect on which I focus is the question of sin within that larger whole. The key distinction concerning sin is between the detection of sin in others and in oneself. While the former was relatively easier, the internal process was the more difficult, for it entailed the need for 'criticism and self-criticism'—that is, admission, confession, repentance and, where necessary, punishment. The surprise of this emphasis, in which sin is understood in relation to the socialist project and the party, is that the personal dimension of sin was a new departure in a Russian Orthodox context, providing one element of the development of a socialist counter-tradition. The focus of this study is relatively rare in our times: careful and detailed attention to Stalin's texts and thought.

Key words

Joseph Stalin; human nature; sin; Augustine.

I, however, do not forget that there are many wicked men.[1]

One of the most significant, albeit unappreciated, contributions by Ioseb Besarionis Dze Jugashvili to the Marxist tradition concerns a new theory of human nature and thus a thorough revision of Marxist anthropology. This revision entailed two dimensions, the first of which concerns the glimpses of the new man and woman embodied in the Stakhanovites of the 1930s, who were regarded as harbingers of communism. The very possibility of such a new human being relied upon traditional Marxist assumptions concerning the inherent goodness of human beings. But it was also analogous to the Pelagian and indeed Russian Orthodox theological assumptions concerning basic human goodness (created in God's image), in which sin is a distortion or disfigurement of that goodness.[2] The second feature entailed the greatest innovation, a well-nigh Augustinian irruption into both the Marxist tradition and Russian Orthodox assumptions: human beings can be far more evil than either tradition assumed. Neither was able to account for such evil. However, Stalin and the Bolsheviks found through the extraordinary effort to construct socialism that human evil could be much, much deeper that they had

[1] Cited in Stalin 1934c, 33; 1934d, 32.

[2] For a detailed analysis of this Pelagian dimension of Stalin's thought, see Boer (2016).

anticipated. It was precisely that effort which generated the reality and the awareness. It may have been enough of a shock to realise that such evil existed in others, but the most difficult task was to recognise and deal with such evil within oneself. Let me be clear: I do not mean evil as part of some mythical eternal or universal human nature, but evil as part of the identification and construction of a new human nature which was a constituent feature of the socialist project.[3]

Stalin and Sin

In this article, my concern is with one aspect of this Augustinian understanding of human nature: the question of sin (*grekh* and *sogreshit'*). In particular, I am interested in the distinction between sin in others and sin in oneself. The Orthodox theological position on sin, which Stalin studied in some detail during his theological studies (1895-1899), held that sin involved "missing the mark" (Greek *hamartia*), that it is a failure to live up to God's expectation for human potential, which is to attain the deification (*theosis*) embodied in Christ. Other images also appear, such as an illness, deformation, imperfection and distortion of human nature. Thus, human beings do not inherit the guilt of sin or a state of total depravity, but rather we inherit the consequences and the freedom to sin—known not as "original" but as "ancestral" sin (Lossky 1978, 79-94; Romanides 2002; Bouteneff 2008, 94). This rather optimistic view of human nature, in which human beings are inherently good but this nature has been distorted, brings Orthodoxy closer to Pelagius in his debates with Augustine. Indeed, the latter offers a more pessimistic view. Human beings through concupiscence inherent the sin of Adam and Eve, so that we are born into sin and guilt (Augustine 1957, I, 9.42; V, 4.18). The outcome is that human beings are unable to exercise goodness on their own initiative and must rely completely on God's grace, through which sin can be overcome.

Stalin too makes frequent reference to sin, with a distinctly Augustinian rather than Orthodox tone. He expected those who worked for the government to be known for their "great, irreproachable moral purity," but too often people fell short, "staining" (*pachkaiut*) the honour of everyone else (Stalin 1920c, 381-2; 1920d, 368-9).[4] Yet, he clearly recognised that such behaviour was the reality of this "sinful earth" (Stalin 1908a, 100; 1908b, 97). The terminology of "sinning" appears most often when Stalin is talking about problems and defects in the party. These may be sins of omission, when the party fails to do enough on behalf of the proletariat, underestimates the strength of its enemies, or falls short in managing collective farms and grain procurement; this lack of sufficient activity entails a "great sin," *bol'shom grekhe* (Stalin 1906a, 272; 1906b, 269; 1933a, 238; 1933b, 232; 1939a, 412-13; 1939b, 330). They may also be sins of commission, such as the theoretical mistake of converting the forces of production and the relations of production into one another, which is to "most seriously sin" (*ser'ezneĭshim obrazom sogreshit'*) against Marxism (Stalin 1952a, 269; 1952b, 200).

[3] It should be noted that my argument is primarily theoretical, with a focus on Stalin's writings. Surprisingly, this is a rare venture in our time, with the vast majority of critics given to a form of archival fetishism that eschews careful attention to Stalin's texts. By contrast, I take seriously Stalin the thinker, seeking to understand rather than praise or condemn.

[4] He speaks here of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectors during the Civil War, who due to inexperience carrying out governing tasks had been given to pilfering and acting in domineering ways. "Stain" is a very Augustinian and non-Orthodox term (Augustine 1985, X, 3; XX, 26).

Blameworthiness of Others

> Only one thing could be said about them: Allah, forgive them their trespasses [*pregresheniia*], for they know not what they are talking about (Stalin 1927g, 364; 1927h, 354).

For my purposes, the main distinction on the question of sin concerns its detection in others and, more importantly, its detection in ourselves. The first is of course the easier and Stalin was an accomplished practitioner in this art. Already before the October Revolution, international forces were working frenetically to prevent the socialists from any revolutionary success, usually assisting opponents in Russia. From the Kornilov revolt, through The Brest-Litovsk Treaty and international support for the Civil War, to the blockade and economic sanctions of the Entente, it became perfectly clear to the Bolsheviks and to Stalin that the capitalist world and its bourgeois states were not going to leave them in peace.[5] "We are surrounded by enemies," he says. "The imperialist wolves who surround us are wide awake" (Stalin 1923a, 228; 1923b, 224). Indeed, it was one of the reasons for the formation of the USSR, which would in its economic and military dimensions be a "citadel against attacks by international capitalism" (Stalin 1922a, 147; 1922b, 144; see also Stalin 1924a, 23; 1924b, 23). With this ever-present awareness, it is no surprise that every congress report began with a discussion of the international situation and the threats it posed,[6] to the extent that socialism in one country could never be secure or complete in such a situation (Stalin 1925e, 119-20; 1925f, 118-19). All of this would receive extraordinary confirmation with the attack on the Soviet Union by Hitler in 1941,[7] or indeed by Winston Churchill's racist agenda and the effort to contain the Soviet Union behind an "iron curtain" (Stalin 1946a, 1946b). Ultimately, Stalin came to realise that the struggle for a new social system entailed "a painful and a cruel struggle, a life and death struggle," precisely because the new world had to defend itself against the efforts by the old world to restore its power. No wonder constant vigilance was required to "repel the attacks of the old world upon the new system" (Stalin 1934c, 35; 1934d, 33).

Let me say a little more concerning fascism, since this provides the best example of evil as other. We find an increasing awareness of the dangers of fascism as the 1930s unfold, but the greatest concentration appears during the war years, captured with an eerie immediacy in the orders of the day in volumes 15 and 16 of Stalin's *Works* and punctuated by longer addresses on May Day and anniversaries of the October Revolution. At one level, the depiction of fascists as "monsters and cannibals" (*izvergi i liudoedy*) may be seen as part of the rhetoric of war, in which one side must demonise the other (Stalin 1941a, 3; 1941b, 57). Thus, in his extraordinary speech of 1941 (1941c, 1941d),[8] which celebrated the October Revolution while the Wehrmacht was as the gates

[5] The references here are myriad, so I can give only a sample: Stalin 1917a; 1917b; 1917c; 1917d; 1918a, 47; 1918b, 46; 1919a, 273-4; 1919b, 263-4; 1920a; 1920b; 1920e; 1920f; 1921a, 119; 1921b, 117-18).

[6] Again, the references are multitude: Stalin 1924c, 247-52; 1924d, 235-40; 1925e, 91-102; 1925f, 91-101; 1925g, 267-304; 1925h, 261-97; 1926a, 28-30; 1926b, 27-8; 1930e, 242-69; 1930f, 235-61; 1934a, 288-312; 1934b, 282-306; 1939a, 355-72; 1939b, 290-301. See also Stalin 1924e; 1924f; 1927a, 44-62; 1927b, 41-59.

[7] Seven years earlier, Stalin had presciently and graphically observed: "But those who try to attack our country will receive a crushing repulse to teach them in future not to poke their pig snouts into our Soviet garden [*svinoe rylo v nash sovetskiĭ ogorod*]. (*Thunderous applause*.)" (Stalin 1934a, 312; 1934b, 305).

[8] A sample of further references include Stalin 1942c, 42; 1942d, 104; 1942e; 1942f; 1943a, 85; 1943b, 157; 1943c, 150-3; 1943d, 170-3; 1944c; 1944d; 1945a; 1945b; 1945c; 1945d.

of Moscow, Stalin paints a macabre picture of the new devil of fascism. Bestial, cannibalistic, blood-sucking, evil—these and more describe the enemy, with whom other powers collude to crush socialism. Not unexpectedly, such terms become common in the statements that follow, but I suggest something more is at stake than conventional demonization of the enemy. Fascism was the distillation of all that opposed the first communist project in the world: "our country has come to death grips with its bitterest and most cunning enemy—German fascism" (Stalin 1941a, 4; 1941b, 58).[9] Even worse was the fact that it called itself "national socialism," which was nothing less than a travesty, through partial mimicry, of all that was socialist or indeed nationalist (Stalin 1941c, 16-17; 1941d, 77-8; 1942c, 42-3; 1942d, 104-5). It was and remains racist, anti-worker, and anti-peasant.[10] Above all, it was implacably anti-communist, slaughtering more communists in the invasion of the Soviet Union than any other single group during the war. It should be no surprise that from 1941 a constant, well-nigh liturgical refrain at the close of Stalin's orders of the day and speeches was "Death to the German[-fascist] Invaders" (Stalin 1941c, 19; 1941d, 79).[11]

Those to blame for attempting to wreck the first Soviet state were by no means restricted to international forces. As much, if not more, energy was expended in combatting the ever-changing oppositional groups within the Soviet Union, or even pre-revolutionary Russia.[12] To go into detail concerning such groups and individuals would take me too far from my path, although they are legion: Mensheviks, Kornilov, Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Bukharin, the Opposition, Kulaks, Trotskyites … Of these, two names stand out for their persistence in Stalin's texts, becoming ciphers for those who continually sinned and persisted in sinning against the Bolsheviks and the Soviet state. They are the Mensheviks and Trotsky, who gain an afterlife in the way they were invoked time and again even after their actual influence had long since passed. In whatever twist an opponent might take, Stalin espied a Menshevik or Trotskyite, or indeed a Menshevik-Trotskyite, tenor,[13] until at last they revealed their true nature,

[9] Some may wish to object that the Soviet Union signed a non-aggression pact—the 'Molotov-Ribbentrop' pact—with Nazi Germany on 29 August, 1939. Indeed, it is assumed that this signals the conjunction of Stalin and Hitler as two sides of the same coin. For a sober assessment of the pact as a move for Soviet neutrality in an expected European war, the context of the other non-aggression pacts signed by the Soviet Union at the time, as well as deep suspicions of the anti-Soviet motives of the United Kingdom and France, see Roberts (2006, 30-60). As for the *reductio ad Hitlerum*, see Losurdo (2008, 171-231, 248-53).

[10] Stalin explicitly contrasts fascist racism with soviet affirmative action (1942a, 31; 1942b, 97; 1942e, 58; 1942f, 124; 1944a, 394; 1944b, 198).

[11] The full closing lines would soon become, "Eternal glory to the heroes who fell in the fight for the freedom and honour of our Motherland! Death to the German invaders!"

[12] Losurdo (2008) interprets this tendency as a "dialectic of Saturn," in which the insurrectionary form of the Bolshevik seizure of power becomes its mode of exercising power. It should be no surprise, then, that plots against the government would continue to form. Stalin indicates an awareness of this dynamic (1926a, 51-2; 1926b, 48-9; 1927c; 1927d). Many are those who argue that the threats were "constructed" or "fabricated" for the sake of internal mobilisation, citing the exonerations of the Khrushchev and Gorbachev eras (Connor 1972; Chase 2001; 2005; Baberowski 2003).

[13] The pieces by Stalin on opponents internal to Russia and the Soviet State are simply too many to cite. While the Kornilov conspiracy of 1917 gains perhaps half a dozen pieces in volume 3 of the *Works*, and while the concern over kulaks begins in the mid-1920s (volume 7) and rises to a crescendo with early stages of the collectivisation campaign (1928-1930 in volumes 11-12) to eliminate the kulaks as a class, the struggle with Mensheviks and 'Menshevism' runs through thirteen volumes, for three decades from 1906 onwards. Yet the omnipresent Mensheviks are outdone by Trotsky and the related Opposition, who first appears briefly in 1907—as "pretty but useless [*krasivoĭ nenuzhnost'iu*]" (Stalin 1907a, 52; 1907b, 51)—but

working together with international anti-communist forces as part of a 'fifth column'.[14] If anyone embodied all that Stalin found evil within the Soviet Union it was Trotsky and the movement his name came to mark – the "monster," "fiend," "venal slave," fascist agent, spy, provocateur, assassin, saboteur, and outright enemy of the toiling masses (Stalin 1937a, 244; 1937b, 153; 1939a, 395; 1939b, 319-20).[15]

Blameworthiness of Oneself

> Nobody in our Party is absolutely "infallible" [*bezoshibochnykh*]. Such people do not exist (Stalin 1926a, 78; 1926b, 74).

The crucial feature of sin is not so much to accuse another of sinning but of admitting one's own sin. In order to be effective, admission, if not confession, requires not only self-examination but also the perspective of others who are able to see what we are not able to see for ourselves. Therefore, acknowledgement of sins requires both external and internal input, both inspection and introspection. In this context we may understand the emphasis on what was conventionally called "criticism and self-criticism,"[16] which comprised a constituent feature of Bolshevik programs but gained intensity during campaigns emphasising the need for such criticism—most notably as part of the First Five Year Plan and massive industrialisation drive.[17] The dual term was used consistently to refer to both external, collective processes and individual self-examination (Kharkhordin 1999, 149-54). External and public criticism is more conventional, encouraging workers and farmers—both party and non-party—to criticise ruthlessly the party's activities, so much that Stalin warns party members not to be afraid of having their sins revealed (1924g, 333-4; 1924h, 319-20).[18] This openness to criticism—in front of the whole people—is a sign of strength and not of weakness: "A party which hides the truth from the people, which fears the light and fears criticism, is not a party, but a clique of impostors, whose doom is sealed" (1925e, 123; 1925f, 122; see also 1927g, 343-4;

then dominates Stalin's thoughts until the end of volume 14, in the late 1930s and in the context of the Red Terror. Throughout, the reader is struck not by the brutality of "crushing all the enemies of the proletariat" (Stalin 1920g, 402; 1920h, 389), but by the sheer leniency which allowed them to continue for so long (Stalin 1926c; 1926d; 1927e, 196; 1927f, 189-90).

[14] The argument for a fifth column first appears in 1926: "Thus the logic of the factional struggle of our opposition has led in practice to the front of our opposition objectively merging with the front of the opponents and enemies of the dictatorship of the proletariat" (Stalin 1926a, 57, see also 72-77, 1926b, 55, see also 69-70). It would of course become a crucial concern during the Second World War (Stalin 1941a, 6, 1941b, 60).

[15] Debate continues as to whether the plots uncovered, especially at the hands of Trotsky, had substance or not, although it is not my task to take sides in such a debate. That Trotsky and his followers were indeed involved organising to overthrow Stalin is clear; that Stalin deployed guilt by association to impugn others is also clear.

[16] Another feature was "unmasking," especially for those who sought to efface former ruling class origins (Fitzpatrick 2005, 91-113).

[17] Tellingly, Stalin launched a wave of criticism and self-criticism at the Fifteenth Party Congress in 1927, the same in which he announced the end of the NEP and the beginning of the First Five Year Plan (Stalin 1927g, 337-43; 1927h, 329-33). Elaborations on the theme appear frequently in volume 11 of the *Works*, of which only a sample can be cited here (Stalin 1928a, 31-42; 1928b, 28-38; 1928c, 75-8; 1928d, 70-4; 1928e, 1928f).

[18] Even the much-decried Opposition of the 1920s could play such a role. For instance, when the Opposition accused the Central Committee of "mortal sins," Stalin was not averse to admitting that the Committee could indeed be guilty of sinning by not following the party line as it should (1923e, 367; 1923f, 359; 1923g, 380-1; 1923h, 371-2). Criticism often extended to citizens denouncing others (Kharkhordin 1999, 130-1, Fitzpatrick 2005, 205-39).

1927h, 335). This type of criticism was usually promoted as a very practical and democratic mechanism for ensuring that mistakes were corrected and that the Party did not become too comfortable.[19] Without criticism, the result would be "stagnation, corruption of the apparatus, growth of bureaucracy, sapping of the creative initiative of the working class" (Stalin 1930a, 179; 1930b, 173). A caveat applied, however: one may engage in criticism—called "honest"—that strengthens the party, its project and the country as a whole; by contrast, criticism that seeks to undermine and destroy the party and thereby the country was out of the question. Criticism yes, but only of a certain type (Stalin 1927g, 343; 1927h, 334).

At this point, one may be tempted to see analogies with Christian practices of confession, especially in light of Foucault's claim that confession was crucial to the development of the exercise of power in Western Europe (1981, 2014a; 2014b). Apart from the fact that Foucault's genealogies tend to over-reach themselves, he fails to distinguish between Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox practices. In the first two, private confession developed as the primary practice, the one to a priest (and thereby through the church) and the other to God. By contrast, in the Orthodox traditions public and full confession (*exomologesis*) became the main form. It was developed from the early Christian theologians, Irenaeus and Tertullian, entailing a full and prolonged exercise of penance and verbal confession. Eventually it was codified in the twelfth century into four steps by Gregory Thaumaturgus (or the Neo-Caesarean), moving from outside the church building to mixing with the faithful.[20] Enmeshment with the state's court system meant that the penance remained a very public affair (Kharkhordin 1999, 63-73). In first sight, it would seem that the public practice of criticism by the Bolsheviks was a secularised version of this Orthodox practice. Unfortunately for such an argument, two factors trouble the easy connection. To begin with, during the nineteenth century, public confession waned in the Orthodox Church, although one may argue that the Bolsheviks "restored" such a practice. More significantly, however, they made full use of private confession, or self-examination and confession of one's failings and shortcoming in reshaping oneself in light of the socialist project.[21] This development may be understood in two related ways: the irruption into a Russian context of a Latin and Western European approach that has strong theological dimensions; and the effort to create a counter-tradition within a Russian situation.

Indeed, the most important form of criticism was internal, undertaken upon one's own self—collective and individual. This was the primary sense of *samokritika***.** The best example in Stalin's case is his response to accusations of earlier vacillations and sins, when he was quite willing to admit his own failings:

> I have never regarded myself as being infallible, nor do I do so now. I have never concealed either my mistakes or my momentary vacillations. But one must not

[19] "They shall not conceal evils [or: ulcers, *iazv*], but, on the contrary, help us to expose our mistakes, to rectify them and to conduct our work along the line now laid down by the Party" (Stalin 1925a, 22; 1925b, 22; see also Stalin 1925c, 31; 1925d, 31).

[20] In detail, there were the weepers, who stood outside the church and begged the parishioners to let them in; the auditors, who could listen to the liturgy near the entrance; the genuflectors, who kneeled in front of the auditors, but like them had to leave before the Eucharist; the bystanders, who could stand with the faithful but were not permitted the Eucharist (Erickson 1991, 26).

[21] For strange theoretical reasons (based on the slippery distinction between "East" and "West"), Kharkhordin suggests that the Bolsheviks were not interested in confession of any type, preferring the lived example of a new life (1999, 73-4). The evidence here indicates otherwise.

> ignore also that I have never persisted in my mistakes, and that I have never drawn up a platform, or formed a separate group, and so forth, on the basis of my momentary vacillations (1927a, 64; 1927b, 61; see also 1926a, 78-9; 1926b, 74-5).[22]

As Stalin suggests here, admitting one's sins is the basis for forgiveness, albeit granted with due repentance. The theme of repentance (*pokaianie* and *raskaianie*) runs strongly through Stalin's texts, as also during the days of the Red Terror.[23] Sins confessed and repented are to be forgiven, such as the comrades who violated a decision of the Central Committee during the vital days of 1917, who were forgiven on the basis of their admission and repentance (Stalin 1925g, 395-7; 1925h, 384-6). At this point should be located the theory and practice of labour camps in remote areas, the "deprived" or "disenfranchised" (*lishentsy*), as well as the relocation of some national groups deemed to be less than enthusiastic about the socialist project. No matter how much they made things up as they went along, no matter how much they fell short in so many ways, their aim was to re-educate those sentenced so that they would become full participants in the new society (Getty 1993, 50-1). Many did so, with rights granted in light of evident self-transformation, loyalty and especially productive labour.[24] Repentance also entails that one makes the utmost effort not to persist and repeat the sins in question (Stalin 1923c, 312; 1923d, 305). For instance, in relation to the various phases and forms of opposition groups from within the Bolsheviks, Stalin both praises those who have admitted their sins and returned to the fold while lambasting those who continue in their sins (Stalin 1926a, 78-82; 1926b, 74-8; 1934a, 353-5; 1934b, 347-8). Or during the over-confidence of the early phase of the collectivisation drive, he speaks of the "courage to acknowledge one's errors and the moral strength to eliminate them as quickly as possible" (Stalin 1930c, 219; 1930d, 213). To reinforce his point and in response to the earlier tendency to make sons and daughters pay for the class sins of their parents and grandparents, Stalin famously invoked the prophet Ezekiel: "A son does not pay for the sins of his father."[25]

Towards the Red Terror

What is the response to sins not repented and not amended, especially if one fails to do so when given the opportunity or indeed if one repents, is forgiven and yet continues to

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[22] At this point, some may be tempted to refer to Stalin's much decried "sins": the Katyn "massacre," the Ukrainian "genocide," the gulags, the Red Terror and so on. The founding works in such a tradition of demonization are by Robert Conquest (1986; 2015), the erstwhile intelligence agent and employee of the IRD (Information Research Department), which was tasked with providing anti-communist propaganda. For careful assessments of Conquest's dubious methods based on émigré hearsay, see Getty (1985, 5, 222), Thurston (1986), and Furr (2013).

[23] Evgenia Ginzburg writes: "Great concert and leisure halls were turned into public confessionals. Although absolution was not easy to come by—expressions of contrition were more often than not rejected as "inadequate"—the torrent of confessions grew from day to day" (1967, 17).

[24] The secondary work on the re-education project is immense, with some memoirs and detailed examinations revealing how extensive the rehabilitation process was (Andreev-Khomiakov 1997, Fitzpatrick 2000, 120, 124, 129; Alexopoulos 2002). However, the tendency in some scholarship is to decry yet further signs of Stalinist brutality, if not to link them—through the *reductio ad Hitlerum*—to the Nazi Concentration camps (Fitzpatrick 2005, 91-101; Viola 2007). Losurdo (2008) provides the most telling rebuttal of this effort.

[25] The comment was an impromptu response, made towards the end of 1935, to the speech of a Stakhanovite who claimed that due recognition had been denied him since his father had been a dekulakised kulak. It was published in *Komsomol'skaia Pravda*, 2 December, 1935, p. 2 (see Fitzpatrick 2000, 130).

sin as a "double-dealer" (Stalin 1930g, 10-12; 1930h, 10-11)?[26] Quite simply, these sins must be "punished with the utmost severity" (Stalin 1920c, 38; 1920d, 368). Such punishment is well-deserved for the "heinous sins" committed (Stalin 1912a, 271; 1912b, 264). By now we can see how the myriad opponents to the socialist project—as understood by the Bolsheviks—could be punished severely for their odious sins. However, it is easy to punish others for their sins, but the question is how one deals with the evil within. I have already indicated that such a shift to the internal, in both collective and individual senses, constituted a distinct departure from the public practices of Russian Orthodoxy, so much so that one can speak of a socialist counter-tradition. Its Augustinian tenor was also a departure from the Marxist tradition's Pelagian understanding of human nature. How distinct it really was would become clear only with the Red Terror of the 1930s, which provided the answer to the question as to how one dealt with and, if necessary, punished the sin within a transformed human nature.

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[26] "Double-dealing" was regarded as particularly egregious in the context of the trials of 1936-1938 (Chase 2005, 234-35, 241).

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