

1. Record Nr.	UNISA996248039703316
Autore	Halfin Igal
Titolo	Terror in my soul : Communist autobiographies on trial // Igal Halfin
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge, Massachusetts : , : Harvard University Press, , [2003] ©2003
ISBN	0-674-27330-3
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xi, 344 p.) : ill. ;
Disciplina	335.4301
Soggetti	Political purges - Soviet Union Language and languages - Political aspects Soviet Union Politics and government 1917-1936 Soviet Union Politics and government 1936-1953
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (pages [285]-339) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Preface -- Introduction -- CHAPTER 1 Good and Evil in Communism -- CHAPTER 2 A Voyage toward the Light -- CHAPTER 3 The Bolshevik Discourse on the Psyche -- CHAPTER 4 From a Weak Body to an Omnipotent Mind -- CHAPTER 5 Looking into the Oppositionist Soul -- Epilogue: Communism and Death -- Notes -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	In this innovative and revelatory work, Igal Halfin exposes the inner struggles of Soviet Communists to identify themselves with the Bolshevik Party during the decisive decades of the 1920s and 1930s. The Bolsheviks preached the moral transformation of Russians into model Communists for their political and personal salvation. To screen the population for moral and political deviance, the Bolsheviks enlisted natural scientists, doctors, psychologists, sexologists, writers, and Party prophets to establish criteria for judging people. Self-inspection became a central Bolshevik practice. Communists were expected to write autobiographies in which they reconfigured their life experience in line with the demands of the Party. Halfin traces the intellectual contortions of this project. Initially, the Party denounced deviant Communists, especially the Trotskyists, as degenerate, but innocuous, souls; but in a chilling turn in the mid-1930s, the Party came to

demonize the unreformed as virulent, malicious counterrevolutionaries. The insistence that the good society could not triumph unless every wicked individual was destroyed led to the increasing condemnation of Party members as helplessly flawed. Combining the analysis of autobiography with the study of Communist psychology and sociology and the politics of Bolshevik self-fashioning, Halfin gives us powerful new insight into the preconditions of the bloodbath that was the Great Purge.
