



Letters from the Gulag: The Life, Letters and Poetry of Michael Dray-Khmara

Oksana Dray-Khmara Asher (Author), Jon P. Speller (Editor)

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Now in stock! Letters From The Gulag: The Life, Letters, and Poetry of Michael Dray-Khmara by Professor Oksana Dray-Khmara Asher is a very important book on her father, the foremost Ukrainian poet of the last century, Michael Dray-Khmara. (1889-1939). Slavic and East European Journal said that Letters From The Gulag "is a vivid account on the Ukrainian poet Myxajlo Dray-Kmara written by his daughter now living in the U.S.A. The poet published only one small volume of his works, but this single book assured his long-lasting reputation...The title of Asher's book is symbolic in a sense: it presents the typical life of a Ukrainian poet under the Soviet regime in the 1930's. M. Dray-Xmara was arrested and deported to a Far East concentration camp where he died of starvation; his works were removed from all libraries, his name was dropped from all histories and annals..." Noted scholar and National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski commented on Letters From The Gulag: "These letters convey more compellingly and in a more personal sense than any general history the magnitude of the suffering that the Soviet system has inflicted on millions of individual human beings. Poignant in detail, moving conveying the affection of a deprived and incarcerated father for his young daughter and wife, these letters make the reader share the sorrow and longing of a lonely prisoner languishing in the Gulag. One cannot read these letters without a deepening sense of outrage and sadness. The book adds the vital human dimension to the history of the Soviet system and thus enriches our understanding what that system has done to the people living it." No book records on a human basis the tragedy that the Ukrainian nation suffered before regaining its independence after the peaceful implosion of the late, unlamented Soviet Empire. And the book was an important Cold War psychological stimuli input, as its Editor, Jon P. Speller, who supported Ukrainian independence as Editor of EAST EUROPE Magazine when it was not so popular to do so, wrote at the time: "Here is published for the first time, these letters of Michael Dray-Khmara - the first ever smuggled successfully out of a Soviet camp - that reveal the inhuman conditions in the Siberian concentration camps for the 'enemies of the state.'" Oksana Dray-Khmara Asher was born in the Soviet occupied Ukraine. She emigrated to the United States in 195, where she earned her MA. at Columbia University. She then earned her Degree of Doctor of Slavic Literature at the Sorbonne in Paris. She taught at Cornell University, Long Island University, and the Polytechnic Institute of New York. Her vibrant book on her great Ukrainian culture figure father, poet Michael Dray-Khmara, fully shows how "Soviet Justice" was, in fact, "Soviet Injustice. This book is must reading for any scholar on Communism, and any scholar interested in the Ukrainian nation and its history and culture. With independent Ukraine now on track for membership in NATO and the European Union as a full-fledged member of considerable importance in the European comity of nations, Letters From The Gulag - a milestone in Ukraine's successful struggle for freedom and independence - should be read by every friend of that great European nation.

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