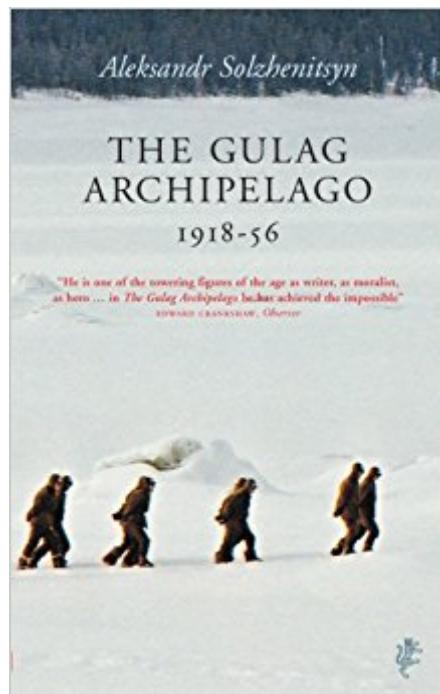


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The Gulag Archipelago



Synopsis

The Gulag Archipelago is Solzhenitsyn's masterwork, a vast canvas of camps, prisons, transit centres and secret police, of informers and spies and interrogators and also of heroism, a Stalinist anti-world at the heart of the Soviet Union where the key to survival lay not in hope but in despair. The work is based on the testimony of some two hundred survivors, and on the recollection of Solzhenitsyn's own eleven years in labour camps and exile. It is both a thoroughly researched document and a feat of literary and imaginative power. This edition has been abridged into one volume at the author's wish and with his full co-operation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"To live now and not to know this work is to be a kind of historical fool missing a crucial part of the consciousness of the age" -- W.L. Webb * Guardian * "The ferocious testimony of a man of genius" -- Stephen Spender * London Magazine * "What gives the book its value is the sound it gives out; the harsh roar give out by a wise and experienced animal as a warning that the herd is in danger" -- Rebecca West * Sunday Telegraph * "He is one of the towering figures of the age as a writer, as moralist, as hero... in The Gulag Archipelago he has achieved the impossible" -- Edward Crankshaw * Observer *

Aleksander Solzhenitsyn was born in Kislovodsk, Russia, in 1918. He was brought up in Rostov, where he graduated in mathematics and physics in 1941. After distinguished service with the Red

Army in the Second World War, he was imprisoned from 1945 to 1953 for making unfavourable remarks about Josef Stalin. He was rehabilitated in 1956, but in 1969 he was expelled from the Soviet Writers' Union for denouncing official censorship of his work. He was forcibly exiled from the Soviet Union in 1974 and deported to West Germany. Later he settled in America, but after Soviet officials finally dropped charges against him in 1991, he returned to his homeland in 1994 and died in August 2008, aged 89. He has written many books, of which One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, Cancer Ward and The Gulag Archipelago are his best known.

Although there is nothing inherently wrong with abridgements, books like this, and this book in particular, should never be abridged. I have read the 3 volume paperback version and it is worth the time...and some effort. I'm writing this review so people will know they are buying the abridged version and not as an attempt to trash this masterwork. This is a great book! Because of this it should be read in its entirety. Also, as an eBook there is no reason all 3 books could not be sold as one...after all, there is no weight to them. Happy Reading.

This book is a real page turner - I couldn't put it down. I think it's really important that people start educating themselves about the former soviet union and the real atrocities that occurred. There's been a lack of education in the US. I went to public schools and they basically told us a little bit about WWII and Nazi germany and left the soviet union entirely out of the conversation. The book smelled a little funny when it arrived but was brand new so I'm guessing just musty from storage.

I didn't care for the translation, but that is only because I read another so many times already that the differences are offensive to my memories. But I love this book more than any other. EDIT: The translation that I read, and loved, was by Thomas P. Whitney. It's an old paperback book, gray cover, blue font on cover.

I am in the middle of reading this. Had no idea of the vastness and extent of the soviet horror of gulags. Eyewitness account through author of his and others stories. So sad that Stalin did this monstrous thing, so hidden from the eyes of the rest of the world. Well written as it should be, a testimony to what happened.

This book put in words what many of my extended family members in the Soviet Union went through. And, to think that many here in North America want to replicate that evil system here.

This book not only reveals the immeasurable crimes committed against Russias' own people, but highlights the fact about communism: without it USA would have been a distant third in world economy had China & Russia not botched everything with following insane political ideology.-Jade

I read this book many years ago, when the author's books (especially this one) were being discovered and promoted far and wide. It was an official revelation and a trusted literary confirmation of what had been common knowledge about the horrors of the Soviet Union. Any person researching Russia 1919-1948 must read this book, among others. Like all Russian writers, AS 'talks' far too much. That is, he (and his characters) say and tell much too much about everything. AS and most other Russian and Polish writers over-tell their stories and descriptions. Where a Western writer of English might describe a passage in 300+ words; a Russian or Polish writer will need 1,500 words or more to convey the same thoughts. Over and over again. The book could (and should) be edited down to maybe 40% of the published version.

This book should be a mandatory part of every high school curriculum in all countries. Generation after generation we must know what we could face if we allow for any authoritarian regime to rise and rule again.

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