Alexander Solzhenitsyn: Historian of Decline and Prophet of Resurrection

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Introduction

In the well-established tradition of the Russian intelligentsia, Solzhenitsyn reflected on Russia's past, her relation with the West, and the crisis of modern civilization; but he departed from that tradition in significant ways. He did not propose a Russian leadership of the planet as sometimes done by the Slavophiles, the civilization theorists Danilevskii and the Eurasianists, certainly the Bolsheviks, and eventually the Soviet Union in mid-career until the optimistic reign of Khrushchev. Nor did he suggest joining hands with the West to assert leadership over the world as in the uninterrupted tradition of the Russian state as a colonial great power in the nineteenth century, as a centre of world communism during the caesura of the interwar years, as a superpower in the latter half of the twentieth century, or even as a "democratic" state of the perestroika years and early post-Soviet phase when many fantasized that a "liberal" and truly "Western" Russia had returned like the prodigal son to her home in the liberal West after shedding her Soviet and Asiatic dross. Russia, like post-War Europe, would become more self-contained, more civilized, and more liberal. Solzhenitsyn adumbrated the post-Soviet, post-Cold War, and presumably postmodern retreat of Russia into her shell, a shell in which she shall in seclusion but not isolation cultivate her priceless cultural and moral pearls and contain the baleful impact of modern (not necessarily Western) culture.

He traced the crisis of the modern world logically enough to the origins of the modern world; and he adhered to the venerable tradition by locating it in the European Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment. Man replaced God as the centre of the universe and became the measure of all things; and his subsequent Faustian career has led to the degeneration of the species and of the planet.[1] Having liberated himself from restraint of any kind, he uses his liberty to pursue his wants, his material well-being, and equality with others. The more he seeks to satisfy his wants, the more they become insatiable; and he has been trapped in the vicious cycle of satisfying and escalating wants without limit. The entire world has been sucked into this process, Russia of course included. It is not only Russians as individuals, but also the Russian state as an individual agent in human history, that has been enticed into this trap; and Solzhenitsyn had given himself the task of proposing the means to extricate Russia and Russians at least, if not all of humanity, from this abyss.

This reads like a fundamental rejection of modernity itself, of human history turning in the wrong direction as it headed toward the modern. Consistently, he rejected most of the elements of revolutionary modernity for its corrosive implications: rationalism denies or denigrates lived experience, atheism is pretension, abstract constructions of society are artificial and unfeasible, individualism atomizes the social organism, egoism destroys community and undermines the commitment to duty, the profit motive privileges sheer greed, equality leads to indiscriminate leveling, mass democracy could amount to a deceptive empowering of the masses, the drive to unlimited growth is suicidal, and much else in that vein. The diagnosis was two centuries old, assembled from numerous elements of the conservative and romantic critiques of modernity, whether European or Russian; but it was couched in an apocalyptic strain and charged with a moral fervour as revolutionary as that of the revolutionaries whom he ceaselessly castigated. He sought to rescue humanity from itself in the manner of a Tolstoy or a Dostoevsky. His thinking was utterly historical, that is, the theory of human existence must be constructed from the record of human action in history

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and cannot be derived from nature; in this respect he was like any Christian or a Marxist; and in his redemptive doctrine as in theirs all the evil and contradictions of modernity had accumulated to the point of crisis and regeneration. Of this condition of humanity, he was the historian, artist, and prophet.

This morally surcharged diagnosis of the ills of modernity illumined the condition of Russia in the twentieth century and prescribed a post-Soviet future for her. He set out his histories of Russia in the twentieth century, as fiction in *The Red Wheel*, as documentary record and memoir in *The Gulag Archipelago*, and through varied observations in numerous works of fiction, essays and interviews. They chronicled the idiocy of the Russian Empire plunging to its doom and the infamy of the Soviet regime that seized control thereafter, all accompanied by the endless malfeasances of the West that exploited the infirmities of the Empire and colluded in the villainy of the Soviet Union. The fascist (in fact Nazi) blight was so hideous and apparently so undisputed that it features in his works as a negative presence, a space left almost blank, akin to Tolkien's device of representing the absolute evil of Sauron through the single flash of the Eye across the plain in *The Lord of the Rings*.[2] These actions of imperial fools, Soviet scoundrels, fascist thugs, and Western knaves concentrated the evil in mankind with the density as it were of a Black Hole. But unlike the Black Hole, it prepared man for the redemptive exit into the light, as it did Dante after encountering Lucifer in the depths of Inferno, or as it did the Leninist Russian working class which condensed within itself all the contradictions of Russian capitalism to become the agent of revolutionary emancipation. Several centuries of Russian history culminated in the superlative evil and misery of the twentieth century; the overthrow of that evil shall inaugurate a new era of possible moral rejuvenation. Solzhenitsyn was the historian of a Russia that had the eagle tearing at its vitals for centuries; but that ordeal had readied her for the "moral blaze" of her own resurrection, of a revolutionary and Soviet Russia that girded herself for a post-Soviet Russia.

It required an unusual prophetic vision to cast himself in that role as he toiled in the Gulag for a decade and endured the usual forms of Soviet persecution during the height of Soviet greatness and worldwide power. But he entertained an exalted notion of genuine art as the truth, as Tolstoy and Dostoevsky had pronounced; and its revelatory power would be so immense that it would save the world, as Dostoevsky had once proclaimed. But more than that, artists were sometimes illumined by flashes of "revelation such as cannot be produced by rational thinking." If artists were indeed to be clairvoyant, they could not afford to be so pretentious as to imagine themselves creators as the conceit of revolutionary modernity would have it; for they were mere instruments, "apprentices under heaven", mediums through which the truth of the universe is communicated. When misfortune struck them, they did not lapse into despair and disorientation as happened to those who imagined themselves the creators; instead, they could absorb privation and see harmony,"in misfortune, and even at the depths of existence - in destitution, in prison, in sickness - his sense of stable harmony never deserts him." He thus explained how the artist in him maintained his equipoise by focusing on the truth in a world gone mad; he gazed into the depths and peered into the distance as he discerned a future of moral hope.[3]

His histories encompass at least four major themes: Self-Limitation by Russia; Nationalism; Democracy; and The Catastrophic Twentieth Century.

Self-Limitation

His doctrine of self-limitation was carried to extreme in his judgement on Russian history.[4] He complained that for nearly four centuries, the Russian state had imposed insupportable burdens on the country through adventures beyond its borders. The only worthwhile Russian conquests were, according to him, those for access to the seas to the north, the south, and the east, and for the recovery of Russian people trapped in servitude to foreign states, like those in Belorussia under the Polish crown. In short, Russia created an empire, engaged in great power politics, and eventually assumed the burden of a superpower, all to its detriment. Only from 1991, it would seem, had Russia acquired the discipline of self-limitation, concentration, and functioning at an optimal level.

Sweden perfectly illustrated his argument. She was decisively defeated by Russia at Poltava in 1709 and has ever since been confined to the northern extremity of Europe; but her capitalist prosperity has been enviable, her democracy is exemplary, and her welfare provisions a worldwide model, all while remaining neutral in great power conflicts during the twentieth century. Russia on the other hand compulsively extended her empire and dominion, plunged ceaselessly into wars, remained perpetually backward, never could evolve a democracy, and was subjected to the most unspeakable horrors through most of the twentieth century. He brushed aside all her European diplomacy and wars of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries as futile and wasteful. Nothing exasperated Solzhenitsyn so much as Russia's intrusion into Polish affairs, from Catherine II's putting Stanislaus Poniatowski on the throne to the partitions of the country. He considered Poland a useless appendix, whether friendly or hostile, and he could not understand why the Russian state was repeatedly embroiled in Polish politics. He accused Catherine II of succumbing to a sort of Roman Empire illness with her plan to recreate Dacia in what is now Romania; and her dream project of investing Constantinople and resurrecting the Byzantine Empire was an absurd fantasy which provoked the hostility of all Europe to Russia until 1917. Even the high moment of the Napoleonic wars and of Alexander I entering Paris as the liberator of Europe seemed to him an indulgence that should have been avoided. The whole of the Transcaucasian and Central Asian conquest and the Balkan imbroglio were unnecessary. He was unimpressed by the argument that Russia had to go to the aid of the fellow Christian country of Georgia or the Orthodox brethren in the Balkans; and he purveyed the typically conservative grievance that the only contribution of colonies was financial loss to the metropolis. Alexander III (1881-1894) is the only one who earned full marks for self-limitation; but his reign was tragically short, and that of his son Nicholas II was an unmitigated disaster.

With the onset of war, revolution, and totalitarianism in the twentieth century, he assumed a more censorious tone against the West without toning down his attack on the Imperial Russian, now Soviet, leadership. Instead of avoiding World War I Russia rushed to the aid of her western allies and sacrificed herself in the revolutionary holocaust. In 1915, Russia passed up the opportunity to make a separate peace with Germany and continued to sacrifice herself for the West. (But in 1917-1918 the Bolsheviks did make such a separate peace with Germany!) During the Civil War, Western governments repudiated the White armies and allowed the Bolsheviks their victories. In 1941, Russian armies protested against Soviet rule by retreating headlong along a 2000 kilometre front before the German advance. But the West abandoned the beleaguered Russian anti-communists and sustained the Soviet regime against Hitler by using Russian lives and resources to save themselves when they could have fought off Hitler on their own. The war helped Stalin consolidate his grip on the country when the West could have loosened it. In 1945, the West made peace with the Soviet Union instead of overthrowing the regime along with that of the Nazis. The West always failed to confront communism when it was the duty of every moral person or entity to have done so, over Berlin in 1953, Budapest in 1956, Prague in 1968 and so on.[5] The Soviet Empire was ruinous for Russians and for everybody else except its nomenklatura; and he famously welcomed the dissolution of the Union in 1991 for being an intolerable burden on Russia. With the non-Russian parts hived off, Russia could concentrate on herself and develop morally and otherwise, without external distractions and internal disruption. Russia, at long last, would be limited to herself.

Slavophilism and Nationalism

His second overarching theme is of a pure Russia for Russians. He imagined a state of purity when Russia was unpolluted by alien, that is, Western, influences in the seventeenth century; he catalogued the manner in which Russia was degraded over the past three centuries and a half; and he looked forward to a restoration of that pristine condition after 1991. It started with the tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich's, virtually original sin of adopting western technology to defeat the Poles in mid-seventeenth century, after which everything western became "a sort of 'fashion'", down to altering the canon and inducing the permanent schism in the Church. But nothing could compare with the "wild whirlwind" of Peter the Great, who brutally transplanted western culture to Russia, pursued the "demented idea of splitting the capital," that is, of establishing St Petersburg as the new and "European" capital, and left a legacy of such loss and destruction. Anna's reign was "the darkest of all—for the complete domination of foreigners over Russia had summarily suppressed the Russian national spirit." Even if Elizabeth's reign was better in this respect, contempt for all things of the "Russian essence" remained ingrained in the ruling class throughout the eighteenth century. As for Peter III, not only did he "surround himself with men of Holstein and Prussia, but all of Russian policy was directed by the Prussian Ambassador Goltz." Strangely, he was not so damning about Catherine II's cultural impact and he concentrated on her foreign policy, which he found expectedly wasteful of Russian resources. Alexander I's western liberal training and western obsessions led him to neglect the internal development of Russia. His brother Nicholas I thought of himself as a Russian sovereign placing "Russian interests above the common interests of the European monarchs", but soon European temptations overtook him also. The imperial borderlands from Finland to Central Asia drained Russian resources, contributed proportionately less than Russians to defence and taxes, and distorted priorities in economic development and foreign policy.

If Russia until 1917 was in various ways permeated or dominated by foreign culture, foreign concerns, or otherwise enfeebled by the presence of foreigners, she was from 1917 under a species of foreign occupation. This alien was Bolshevism and Communism, which slaughtered about 66 millions in an internal war in less than forty years between 1918 and 1956.[6] The Soviet system placed "the weightiest yoke" on the Slavic Republics, and the chief economic burden of the USSR was borne by the Russian Republic. Russian budgets contributed proportionately more to the Soviet budget, and the internal terms of trade were weighted against Russian producers. "To undermine specifically the Russian people and to exhaust precisely *its* strength was one of Lenin's undisguised objectives." During Brezhnev's tenure the centre of Russia was once again impoverished, just as it had been during the late Empire. Three million Russians fled the alien Soviet regime into German captivity during the summer of 1941 alone, with "entire caravans of people" following the Germans in their retreat. The true "voice of the Russian people" was the Russian Liberation Army organized by Vlasov with German support against the Soviet regime. The entire Soviet edifice was an alien monstrosity which rightly came apart in 1991 at long last.

He squarely faced the prickly problem of the cohabitation of Russians and non-Russian Slavs. Russians are a part of the Eastern Slavs, along with the Ukrainians and the Belorussians. He preferred to see them together in a single state and country, but he was consistently democratic in not objecting to their remaining outside a union if they so desired. But this came with an important irredentist qualification. He spoke of peoples and not states; hence the lands settled by Russians in these other states would revert to Russia. This is the special problem of Ukraine where the eastern segment along with the Crimea is said to be Russian, and of Kazakhstan where the northern provinces are again wholly Russian. Soviet borders would have had to be redrawn, new states fashioned, and a pure Russia for the Russians would at long last rise from the ashes. The opportunity has come with the end of the Soviet Union.

He presented Russian history of the past three centuries as a vast mistake; but they are the centuries of what is understood as modern Russia, and without which we would not recognize Russia. But that possible critique merely spurred him on to discern the essential substance of Russia over which flowed these three centuries of another history. Russia consisted of the people and their Orthodox faith, and she had been betrayed and tormented over three and a half centuries by an alien element, the ruling establishment. If this establishment were genuinely Russian, it could not have taken the wrong turning at every conceivable fork in the road as it seems to have done. Thereafter Bolshevism, communism, or Soviet socialism, whichever the term used, was an infliction on Russian and non-Russian alike; it was not a Russian imposition on non-Russians; and the Revolution of October 1917 was not Russian but Bolshevik,[7] something that the Bolsheviks themselves had vociferously asserted. Russians suffered as much as non-Russians did under this international or supranational ruling aristocracy known as the nomenklatura. Russia in her Soviet captivity was ruled by ideologies that were entirely of European provenance and not native to Russia. If nothing else, Solzhenitsyn provided a sharp riposte to Europeans dismissing Soviet socialism as a uniquely, indeed chthonian, Russian phenomenon and nothing to do with Europe; to him, it was the exact reverse.But in this account Europe or the West emerged as the prime mover of Russian history, with Russian rulers as mere agents, a species of compradore if you will. It was a globalized vision of human history with Europe and the West as the centre, and Russia as a provincial appendage fated to endure the consequences of strategic decisions taken in the metropolis, the West, to emulate it as best it can, and fall short as is so often the destiny of imitators.[8]

He was ambivalent about whether he reposed his faith in the Russian tradition or in the ruling caste which had so violated that tradition since the seventeenth century. On the one hand he imagined the people and Orthodoxy, the bearers of tradition, as a sacred river Alph running through mysterious and measureless caverns to debouch spectacularly into the post-Soviet ocean of light. But in the almost uninterrupted lineage of the intelligentsia, be it of Belinskii or Chernyshevskii, Mikhailovskii or Lenin, his faith in the people amounted to no more than a conviction that they could attain the standards set by the intelligentsia. They were not privileged by virtue of their origins, an ideological position he deplored throughout his career, and he elaborated that detail through his character Spiridon, the janitor in *The First Circle*. The measure of virtue was the capacity to make individual moral choices and live with the consequences. On the other hand, as he repudiated the imperial ruling caste and the Soviet nomenklatura as aliens, he discerned creative possibilities in the imperial bureaucracy and nobility, and at times seemingly even in the nomenklatura.[9] In *The Red Wheel* he projected the imperial state as capable of survival if only it had found the wit to act with resolution and intelligence. He discovered that potential in Stolypin in *August 1914*, and throughout the work in Vorotynsky and others like him. They stood out from the benighted ruling establishment of the emperor and his court, and of the sundry imbeciles and charlatans who passed through the revolving doors of the ministries and general staff. This was a sustained polemic against the determinism of a Tolstoy who held that individuals could not alter the course of history,[10] and of those Marxists-Leninists to whom it had been virtually preordained. He denounced the Petrine reforms as exempla of brutality and mindless westernization; yet he mythologized such a vigorous carrier of that legacy in Stolypin. As if aware of the inconsistency, he resorted to singularly bad history by asserting that Stolypin was restoring the medieval solidity of Autocracy and not Europeanizing Russia.[11] As he chronicled the descent into tragedy in the subsequent volumes of *The Red Wheel*, he yearned for a Stolypin to rescue Russia in the manner that Churchill and De Gaulle had rallied Britain and France during World War II.[12] But he was surprisingly realistic and accurate in his judgement on that history. His epic works showed how the imperial state tradition of dynamic reform and a vibrant popular culture of local democracy and creativity in the zemstvo had all been reduced to ashes in the holocaust of the Revolution and asphalted over by the gulag. *The Gulag Archipelago* gave voice to the millions broken and crushed under the Stalinist juggernaut, and *The Red Wheel* was an immense sigh of regret for possibilities forever lost. Everything would have to be created afresh in the post-Soviet resurrection.

His history is not as bizarre as it may seem on first reading, for it is largely a provocative and morally driven version of much conventional history. The central charge that modernizing Russia has been inspired by European models, ideologies, and even personnel, is well established. While everything in Russia appears different from Europe, that does not alter the main proposition. Even for the Soviet period, while Europeans have been quick to absolve themselves of responsibility for anything Soviet, Lenin inscribed his life's work in a pan European socialist movement that repudiated so many Russian traditions. Stalin and his successors saw themselves as Soviet and socialist, not Russian; and Solzhenitsyn agreed with them in this respect. On the issue of imperial overreach he was on shakier ground in that there have not been many sweeping denunciations of this sort. We have only more limited critiques of failures like the Crimean War, the Russo-Japanese War, and of course World War I. With respect to Lenin, he faithfully reproduced a certain brand of Cold War Anglo-American historiography, especially the twin legends of the "sealed train" in which Germany returned Lenin to Russia in 1917 to foment revolution, and of German money having lubricated the Leninist revolution. To this representation of Lenin, Boris Souvarine gave a sober and extremely well-informed reply.[13] But for the later Soviet period it was common to deplore the Soviet Union's *folie de grandeur* as it competed with the USA for worldwide domination and eventually came a cropper. The thesis of the self-limitation of Russia to what Russia can reliably handle is a dissident, democratic, and liberal position of the perestroika and post-Soviet years. Solzhenitsyn has merely extended the argument backward in time to the eighteenth century to fit in with the rest of the general thesis that the rot had set in then, or shortly before, in the seventeenth century. It is a familiar polemical device to fortify an argument with the appearance of continuity and an appropriate pedigree.

His critique of the West as decadent and his expectation that Russia was possessed of the spiritual resources to dam that moral erosion may appear to be utterly Slavophile of the nineteenth century. But there is an important difference. Ivan Kireevskii for example claimed that the West was spiritually hollow but materially robust while Russia had reversed that combination by being spiritually superior and technologically retarded. Eventually, the conflation of Eastern spiritual radiance and Western material progress would spark an unexampled brilliance of moral and material creativity and potency that shall pulse through all of humanity.[14] In this utopian vision for the future, Kireevskii saw Russia harnessing the resources of the West for what amounted to a joint leadership claim over the human species. Russian technological backwardness did not hamper her onward march as the West would supply what was lacking; but the West, in its moral decay was incapable of establishing its sway. If Russia was the architect, the West was the engineer, and the two together would construct the brave new world.

Unlike his famous forbears, Solzhenitsyn entertained no such messianic illusions, and, utterly devoted as he was to Russia, he recoiled from assigning a leadership function to her. He did claim occasionally that the enormity of the Russian ordeal and her abiding religious faith had equipped her better than the crisis-ridden and irreligious West for the imminent moral revolution. Humanity stood on the brink of a tectonic shift akin to the transition from the medieval epoch to the Renaissance; as modern civilization was to be superceded by another, Russia was the "voice of the future" that would rescue a world in spiritual distress.[15] Russian technological inferiority should arouse no anxiety, for not only was her moral substance more than compensation, the pursuit of unrestrained technological development was ruinous. But he was keenly aware of the ambiguity of his position, for the spiritually enriched Russia needed the resources, both material and spiritual, of that same spiritually impoverished West for his moral crusade against the Soviet system and for the eventual eradication of that evil.[16] In sum, he was pointing to the moral inadequacies of both the West and of Russia, the different ways in which they were deficient, and the sources of renewal, both Western and Russian, and their interdependence.

He rejected any notion of sin and virtue being specific to geography or culture; his career was devoted to arguing that these attributes were determined by ideology; but most of all, the individual was responsible for making the ideological and moral choice without the right to an alibi, whichever the nation or culture he was located in. He distilled his reflections on his experience and observation of both himself and others into an eloquent *profession de foi*: "Gradually it was disclosed to me that the line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either—but right through every human heart—and through all human hearts. This line shifts. Inside us, it oscillates with the years. And even within hearts overwhelmed by evil, one small bridgehead of good is retained. And even in the best of all hearts, there remains . . . an unuprooted small corner of evil."[17] These articles of faith were not compatible with messianism; and as he retained his belief in the uniqueness of Russia and her capacity for spiritual regeneration, he evolved at best into a Slavophile in its minimalist variant, a Slavophile of political decline and retreat into the fortress, not one of exuberant expansion to disseminate the Word. But that did not make him a typical nationalist either.

His nationalism, like that of any nationalist, accorded primacy to Russians, their state, and to their culture in the territories inhabited by them; but he constructed his national state differently. The Russian state was imperial by constitution and its territory imperial or heterogeneous in composition until 1917; the Soviet state was multinational although from the 1980s it has been called imperial by some; and the post-Soviet Russian state was a reduced version of the Soviet one in that it was still polyglot and not purely Russian in composition. Russian nationalists pursued the usual European processes of nationalizing the Russian public through cultural homogenization, and attempted or dreamed of the extinction of other national cultures within the territory of the state, with ideologues like Mikhail Katkov being exemplars of such thinking in the late nineteenth century. But they have always faced the impossible task of creating a Russian national state in a territory that is so heterogeneous and can never therefore be national, unless of course all the non-Russians were to become Russian. For this reason, both the imperial and Soviet states were supranational states governed by the supranational principles of dynasticism and Soviet socialism respectively even as they intermittently exploited Russian nationalism without permitting it to dominate. Russian nationalism embraces the contradiction of supranationalism or the inclusion of non-Russians; by a purely nationalist logic this contradiction may be resolved only through Russification as in the late imperial period, or through ethnic cleansing and genocide, the preferred techniques of the twentieth century. Neither of these need happen, nor are they likely, but the tension is palpable and Russian nationalists must bear this particular cross inherited from their history.

Solzhenitsyn cut this Gordian knot by excising non-Russians and their territories from his ideal Russian construct. According to him, Russia should never have acquired non-Russian territories; he blamed the empire for being an empire and not a nation; and he sought to correct that error for post-Soviet times by redrawing the maps to exclude non-Russians and to include Russians trapped in other states like Kazakhstan and Ukraine. The accusation is anachronistic since nations and nationalism, with their attendant homogeneous cultural spaces coinciding with the political territory, began to appear at best only in the late eighteenth century and gathered momentum in the course of the nineteenth century in Europe. Dynastic empires like the Russian, Ottoman, or Habsburg, or for that matter any other, were never national even if a particular culture was dominant; rulers accumulated (and distributed) territories promiscuously and apparently irrationally as far as a nationalist was concerned, but utterly rationally in the eyes of a dynast. He missed or denied the principal logic of Russian imperial history of the past three centuries; but his purpose was to prescribe the timeless existence of a Russian nation, and in this he followed a well-established tradition of nationalist history writing the world over.[18] He thus departed from the traditions of both the Russian state of the past three centuries and from those of the nationalists of the past century and a half as he discarded a nationalism that harked back to imperial or Soviet domination. His was a post-Soviet nationalism for an exclusively Russian nation and state; it was a self-limiting nationalism without an imperialist or expansionist purpose; for that reason it was liberal in international relations however uncertainly liberal for its domestic politics.[19] As both Slavophile and nationalist he differed from the classical Slavophiles and from the typical nationalist.

His forms of self-limitation and nationalism were peculiarly attuned to the condition of Russia after 1991. He was often said to have lived in the world of ideas of the nineteenth century and to have been so marked by the Soviet experience that his significance ebbed with the Union. However, he turned out to be a prophet of post-

Soviet Russia rather than an incorrigible romantic or a despairing nationalist. He was not a mere pragmatic, regretting the defeat, disintegration, and reduction of the Soviet Union, and adjusting to the inevitable; he arrived at these conclusions from his understanding of Russian history over the past three centuries and its peculiar relation to the West. He was emphatic that in this post-Cold War globalized world Russia shall not be a leader since she had never been one in the first place; and if there was going to be a centre of power it must lie elsewhere. He presented the Russian rout in the Cold War and contraction thereafter as an opportunity for Russia to become truly herself again, which she had failed to be for three and a half centuries. He drew an astonishingly optimistic conclusion from a situation that most in Russia would have regarded as the gloomiest imaginable.

Like his fictional heroes immured in camps and hospitals and cultivating themselves spiritually to become freer than all their oppressors and their morally confused or inadequate fellow inmates, Russia shall nurture her self in the circumstances she found herself in. Kostoglotov, Nerzhin and Ivan Denisovich were not only models of conduct for individuals facing the severest trials of their lives, they were also metaphors for the new post-Soviet Russia. We may not agree with much of his history, but he has extracted from that history a thread which guides us into the post-Soviet world of Russia. Other, and I think, more convincing, explanations of Russian and European history are available; but none of them could secrete the promise of a more wholesome future for Russia. Instead of a defeated and further declining Russia, which is what my "better" explanations would lead me to, Solzhenitsyn painted the prospect of a Russia morally and culturally resurrected to a life in Orthodoxy and harmony. Much as he was product and victim of the Soviet century, he was the prophet to the post-Soviet age.

Democracy

The third major theme is the nature of democracy in Russia. He placed his faith in local democracy far more than on central or parliamentary democratic institutions. Both the Russian historical record and modern mass democratic politics seemed to justify that preference. Democracy appeared meaningful only on the foundation of vibrant local communities, and he discerned them as much in Russian history in the veche, the mir, Cossack self-government, and the zemstvo as in the cantonal and county politics that he experienced directly during his exile in Switzerland and America. Consistently enough, but imbued with a dreamy utopianism, he repeatedly called for nurturing vigorous local democratic institutions after the collapse of the Soviet Union. His commitment to democracy as the foundation of a modern politics remained unequivocal.

But he was wary of party politics and mass democracy as a fertile source of evil and totalitarian menace. He dreaded, and with good reason, the tyranny of the majority over the minority and the individual as foreseen or seen by John Stuart Mill and Alexis de Tocqueville in mid-nineteenth century. Universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage, had everything wrong about it. Universal and direct suffrage crushed the real inequality among individuals, "it represents the triumph of bare quantity over substance and quality", and it "assume[s] that the nation lacks all structure", that it is putty to be moulded at will. Secret voting favoured insincerity; and direct voting in national elections ensured that the candidates were unknown to their voters. Such mass democracy also entailed the domination of a minority over the majority, or elite rule; it engendered party politics, in which a party bureaucracy erased the individual, and whose mobilizing processes polarized society and split the nation; and it produced the professional politician, a "jurocracy" of lawyers who fattened themselves in the profession and were neither responsive nor responsible to their voters.[20] These familiar critiques of mass democracy, advanced at various times during the nineteenth century by liberals and conservatives, revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries, each after their own fashion, were revived and restated with vigour and passion by Solzhenitsyn in the late twentieth century; and it demonstrated, as with so many of his techniques and arguments, that what seemed *passé* in one part of the world could be very live in another.

With the searing experience of the twentieth century in mind, he placed his faith in a foundational local democracy and endorsed a limited authoritarianism for the post-Soviet transition. As he explained it, a secure democracy could not be established overnight after the totalitarian century, and any attempt at doing so would reproduce the evil it sought to eliminate. It must be built up from the base, brick by brick; and local democracy was the obvious foundation to this vast edifice. In the circumstances, even a limited authoritarianism at parliamentary levels could be contemplated, but not the reverse, of the absence of local democracy and an attempt at it at the apex. The reasoning was symmetrical with that for the "dictatorship of the proletariat" in the transition to the communist utopia; but he bolstered his argument with a romantic reach into Russian history, that "Russia too has existed for many centuries under various forms of authoritarian rule, Russia too has preserved itself and its health, did not experience episodes of self-destruction like those of the twentieth century. . ."[21] His concerns were utterly contemporary of the twentieth century; his thought processes belonged more to early Soviet Marxism than to any other ideological structure; but his legitimation arguments were romantically Slavophile.

Not surprisingly, his most detailed prescriptions concerned local democracy and its upward progression. It began with the basal zemstvo directly elected; these deputies would select the next level of deputies from among themselves; each level would continue to elect in this manner until it reached a national All Zemstvo assembly. All such deputies would be known and responsible to their electors unlike parliamentary deputies; and here he repudiated one of the central principles of parliamentary representation, first established in Britain and France in the late eighteenth century, by which a deputy is chosen by a territorial constituency but does not take further instruction from them on his conduct as a parliamentary deputy.[22] All of this bore an astonishing resemblance to the structure of revolutionary soviets before the Bolshevik dictatorship finally established itself over them.

He virtually replicated the arguments of the early Soviet jurists advocating the Soviet electoral structure over the parliamentary one; and not surprisingly, he warmly welcomed that most original, democratic, and revolutionary creation of the Russian revolutionary movement, the soviet. Like him, they denounced mass democratic parliamentary systems functioning through the so-called four tail suffrage of universal, equal, direct and secret voting. It generated professional politics run most often by lawyers, or an *advokatokratiia* akin to Solzhenitsyn's "jurocracy", and of course unknown to the mass of electors. Soviet publicists extolled the virtues of the lowest soviets of town and village as composed of deputies directly known to the people, and the hierarchy of soviets, with each level being elected by the one below, as satisfying this requirement of direct knowledge at each stage.[23] Ironically, Nadezhda Krupskaia, Lenin's wife, preferred exactly the same argument as Solzhenitsyn, that the deputies would be known to the voters and be in constant contact with them unlike other systems where everything ended with the election.[24] Like Solzhenitsyn, they deplored the atomization of the bourgeois individual; hence the voting process would represent the social organism, which in Solzhenitsyn's case was the community, and in the Soviet case, the productive unit or the working collective and the like.[25] By that same logic, both sought representation for professional groups and institutions, what Solzhenitsyn called *sosloviia* and the Soviet theorists called unions or associations.[26]

He dismissed the soviets of late Soviet times as so emaciated that they would have to be replaced by the zemstvo, which had themselves been replaced by the soviets in 1917-1918.[27] But the analogy between the zemstvo and the soviet is obvious, and he admitted to considerable respect for the early soviets before the Bolsheviks imposed their monopoly after the Fifth Soviet Congress and inaugurated the new constitution on 18 June 1918. When Tvardovskii, the editor of the journal *Novyi Mir*, expostulated in 1967 that Solzhenitsyn was too unforgiving of the Soviet regime, he protested "that he was fully in favour of the Soviet regime in its original form—freely elected deputies to independent workers' soviets—."[28] A few years later, in 1974, he publicly reaffirmed that faith through his *Letter to the Soviet Leaders* as he called for a resurrection of the genuinely soviet system in lieu of the one that had degenerated into an extension of the Party: "May I remind you that the SOVIETS, which gave their name to our system and existed until 6 July 1918 were in no way dependent on ideology: ideology or no ideology, they always envisaged the widest possible *consultation* with all working people."[29] This declaration in favour of the soviets, which embodied the revolutionary tradition as little else could do, came after his conversion in 1969 to the non-monarchist conservatism of the *Vekhi* and *De Profundis* miscellanies, and of the group around Berdiaev, all of which were so critical of the radical traditions of the intelligentsia.[30] He echoed the words of one he professed to despise, Trotsky, who defended himself at his trial that the soviet of St Petersburg in 1905 had been a non-party body, that it was a purely democratic body without a necessary ideology, and hence akin to the Duma or the zemstvo.[31] The soviet was indeed competitively democratic until 1918, although it had already excluded the bourgeoisie and *tsenzovyeelementy*, which restriction Solzhenitsyn endorsed, unlike the socialist critics in Europe led by Karl Kautsky.[32] He revisited these arguments in 1994, but now to plead the case for the zemstvo in almost the same terms as for the soviet.

He found the party monopolies odious, but not the principle of the soviet structure. Martov, an important victim of the Bolshevik dictatorship, had endorsed the limited Soviet franchise as typical of bourgeois democracies also, but he specified political competition within the soviet structure as indispensable to democracy.[33] Since contested elections to the soviets had indeed been held in November 1918 – March 1919,[34] and February – May 1920,[35] he sustained his faith or hope until 1920. As the Bolshevik monopoly became irrevocable thereafter, he resigned himself to the darkness that was descending on Russia. His faith now appears touching, but it is not so outlandish were we to transport ourselves to the vigorous electoral battles of the soviets before the Bolshevik dictatorship of 1918 and intermittently until mid-1920. Solzhenitsyn however imagined the curtain descending as early as July 1918. Had Martov survived into the thirties to experience the Nazi dictatorship rising out of universal suffrage and parliamentary democracy, he might have felt vindicated even as he would have despaired for humanity. Both saw that the soviet structure did not necessarily entail the Bolshevik dictatorship, that the Bolsheviks had perverted the democracy of the soviets, and that competitive electoral politics, otherwise known as democracy, was no guarantee of its own survival whether in soviet or parliamentary form. It is not so surprising that Solzhenitsyn's arguments seem to reproduce those of the early Soviet propagandists. But his argument on the genuinely democratic attributes of the revolutionary soviets establishes a discontinuity between the early Leninist revolution and the subsequent phases of both Lenin's regime and of course Stalinism; and this contradicts his passionately argued thesis of the continuity of Leninism and Stalinism.

The Catastrophic Twentieth Century

By far Solzhenitsyn's greatest obsession was the fate of Russia in the twentieth century, comparable in his mind only to the Holocaust and elaborated in his titanic works, *The Red Wheel* and *The Gulag Archipelago*. *The Red Wheel* was to tell the story of the War, the Revolution, and the Civil War until its denouement in the Soviet Union in 1922 in twenty volumes and five epilogues; but even a person of Solzhenitsyn's industry and stamina could manage only ten volumes of about 6000 pages of dense fiction and history up to April 1917.[36] *The Gulag Archipelago* takes the story up to 1956 as an account of how Russia became a prison camp, such that the "free" citizens outside the camps were as unfree as those inside. Often described as one of the most important books of the twentieth century, as the anti-epic that was a "surrogate" Nuremberg trial and the dossier for the Last Judgement on Soviet totalitarianism,[37] its metaphor of the Soviet Union as a prison camp can never be erased.

He presented the revolutionary myth through AgnessaLenartovich's words of Stolypin as the ultimate reactionary and of DmitriiBogrov, Stolypin's assassin, as a revolutionary saint. Through discussions by Agnessa and her circle, numerous saints of the revolutionary calendar flit across the pages, some famous historical figures like SofiiaPerovskaia, Kropotkin, or Zheliabov, others fictional ones, all living like Christian saints solely for the cause to which they have devoted their lives and ready to be martyred for it. He then set the record right by reversing their mythological attributes. Stolypin was morphed into the saint and Bogrov into the demon. Stolypin emerged as the bearer of the exemplary virtues of courage, foresight, devotion, and patriotism with a heroic genealogy that included Suvorov and Lermontov. During his four days in the agonies of death in 1911, his fevered mind was focused wholly on the future of Russia and the reform process that would now be aborted. His assassination collapsed the millennium of Russian history: it occurred in Kiev, "the cradle of Russia, the city in which Russia had its earliest roots;" the bullets portended the tragedy of Russia and of the dynasty, for "they were the opening shots of the fusillade at Yekaterinburg" (where Nicholas II and his entire family were shot, in 1918); and his death befitted the bogatyrs, those larger-than-life heroes of Russian myth, as he "went to meet his death as an equal. He passed like a sovereign from one kind of life to another."[38] Bogrov was turned into a noxious object emerging from the dark folds of the earth to perpetrate his heinous crime, with a sinister predecessor in D'Anthès, Pushkin's killer.

Solzhenitsyn drew, not real historical figures, individuals acting in particular situations, but idealized and demonized mythological figures, timeless and extreme in their virtues and vices. His characters did not belong to a historical time and place but to a mythic eternity where they cannot be particularized. He drew on the canon of socialist realism in order to turn it against itself; instead he has reproduced it in inverted form. Like critical realism, socialist realism exposed reality; but it exposed all forms of reality except its own, the socialist one of the Soviet Union, and thus perverted its aesthetic purpose. It generated hagiography: it was intrusively didactic, outrageously optimistic, woodenly formulaic; and it assembled mechanical heroes ceaselessly performing feats of impossible valour, overcoming every conceivable obstacle, and delivering endlessly Stakhanovite results. Solzhenitsyn had imbibed the socialist realist maxims of the revolutionary epoch, and his anti-socialist message of Stolypinist heroism was purveyed through an undiluted if inverted socialist realism of his own provenance.[39]

But as his epic work progressed, it imperceptibly shifted from fiction to dramatized history, and the protagonist Colonel Vorotyntsev receded in favour of the historical personalities. Leaders repeatedly failed to discharge their duties, leaving the way open to revolutionary evil, and even Vorotyntsev dallied with his mistress instead of attending an important meeting in St Petersburg in 1916. The gripping story of the chaos and frenzy takes us through the drama of the abdication, the Soviet of St Petersburg, the Provisional Government, and numerous other revolutionary events until Lenin took charge in April 1917. As Russia plunged into the abyss through *November 1916,March 1917*, and *April 1917*, her crust split open to reveal the flames of the revolutionary and Soviet inferno leaping up from the depths of the earth. The apocalypse of 1917 heralded its dreadful aftermath, the Soviet Union, which may be grasped only as a gulag, an archipelago of prison camps congruent with the limitless geography of Russia herself.

The Conservative

Solzhenitsyn professed to abhor revolution and anything akin to revolution after his ideological transformation and religious conversion in the camps in the late forties; subsequently he advocated a most controlled gradualism in the transition from authoritarianism to democracy in order to avoid the menace of revolution. He was well aware that the past could not be revived, and that any such attempt would have been as alienating as imposing Western culture, as Ivan Kireevskii had warned in his time. He projected himself as a conservative and Christian thinker, he licensed such an image of himself in both Russia and the West, and he welcomed his apotheosis as a prophet in the tradition of the Old Testament when Father Alexander Schmemann delivered his Easter Sermon in 1972: "And now this forgotten spirit of prophecy has suddenly awakened in the heart of Christianity. We hear the ringing voice of a lone man who has said in the hearing of all that everything that is going on—concessions, submission, the eternal world of the church compromising with the world and political power—all this is evil. And this man is Solzhenitsyn."[40]

His conservatism derived from his philosophic premise that man is imperfect, that the end of human existence was to overcome that inadequacy, that it could be achieved only through individual and inner self-examination and moral growth, that the manipulation of the external social environment cannot ensure these ends, but that external social institutions must reflect that striving.[41] He set himself off from the Left, and more generally from the tradition of the Enlightenment as he read it, which assumed the perfectibility of the human species and placed their utopian hopes on fashioning the ideal external environment in which humanity could blossom into perfection. Such utopian dreams of perfection is what he termed ideology; he was non-ideological in that sense; and conservatives claim that a conservative cannot in principle be ideological as they do not engage in any form of utopianism. In his Christian view of life, imperfection was understood as the sin and evil inherent in human beings. As he developed his views on these matters he drew upon important strains of conservatism within Russia, especially Slavophilism. He sought out that realm in public affairs where individuals could freely reflect on the morality of political action, and he discerned it as that which was free of the direct exercise of political power. It led to his proposing to Soviet leaders the radical disjunction between political power and public opinion, or between the state on the one hand and the spiritual and ethical domain on the other. At times he seemed to favour the familiar liberal dichotomy between state and public opinion;[42] but at other times the distinction seemed to be heavily indebted to his Slavophile reading of Russian history and especially to Konstantin Aksakov's redaction of it, as Professor Confino has well analysed it. In Aksakov's extreme and utopian dream, the power of the Autocrat would be wholly distinct from the opinion of the people, yet they shall function in perfect communion. Solzhenitsyn's vision of a Rousseauvian (he preferred to call it Athenian) direct democracy at the base effortlessly melding with an authoritarian but self-limiting central power reproduces Aksakov's ideal of the symbiosis of autocratic power and popular opinion.[43] On that ground he even upbraided Sakharov for engaging in the direct political game instead of the moral and passive resistance which he considered superior and necessary. "When asked in 1974, 'How can your compatriots and youth show their support for you?' Solzhenitsyn answered: "Definitely not by any physical acts but by rejecting the lie, and by refusing to participate personally in the lie.... In breaking with the lie, we are performing a moral act, not a political one, and not one that can be punished by criminal law."[44] The disjunction between inner and external freedom and the stress on the former, if necessary at the expense of the latter, is a concept familiar to European conservatism but attaining its height or drawn to its extreme in Russia in the Slavophilism of Ivan Kireevskii and Konstantin Aksakov and in Leo Tolstoy's doctrine of non-resistance.

Certainly, the cultivation of inner freedom for moral self-perfection whatever the external circumstances is one of the grand themes of Solzhenitsyn's *oeuvre*. In the gulag, the relations of power were raw in the extreme, and he paraded all the moral choices available. It was always possible not to succumb to the Great Lie that was perpetrated daily and to think through the fundamental questions of life, however searing the answers they threw up. The *zek* (prisoner) who has lost everything and has nothing to lose, like the proletarian of the Marxian imaginary, is the freest person. Prisoners' minds could range over fundamental issues freely without anxiety about losing their "liberties."[45] They could live more deeply, more fully, and engage with life in its many dimensions. As they do so, they endure their travails and privation with a growing moral fortitude that is so often unavailable to those who are "free." But they go beyond mere endurance. They do not struggle and revolt, nor do they fall into despair; they neither resist nor become passive. Like the martyred saints of Christianity, they grow in moral beauty, and having passed through the many circles of the nether world they approach the gates of Paradise. Such Christian ascetics gain knowledge of the self, of Creation, and of Christ through participation in the Passion; and prison and its suffering is the "martyrdom [that] facilitates one's eschatological quest for enlightenment."[46]Without degenerating into masochism or naïve optimism, Solzhenitsyn discerned the potential for moral regeneration in the prison experience which may have been denied the free person outside; he understood why Tolstoy dreamed of being in prison; and both Nerzhin and Solzhenitsyn "blessed" the experience for the enlightenment that it had bestowed upon them. Like Socrates being freer in prison than the despots who had thrown him in there, so Solzhenitsyn's protagonists nurtured their freedom in the gaols of their enslaved tyrants.[47]

These multiple processes of self-discovery have been brought together in his fictional masterpieces. As Dante was guided through the many circles of Inferno by Virgil, Gleb Nerzhin (Solzhenitsyn) accumulated spiritual capital through his engagement with Sologdin, the Virgil of *The First Circle.*[48] InnokentyVolodin, a diplomat who enjoyed the best of everything Soviet is more and more disturbed by the immorality of the system in which he worked. In his self-examination, he likened Stalinism to Epicureanism of all the unlikely philosophies, on the ground that the latter was materialist and hedonist, that its materialism caused it to deny the immortality of the soul, and that its hedonism allowed both accommodation to reality and the avoidance of public affairs. It was through such an unusual philosophical detour that Volodin decided to act morally. (Epicureanism was officially favoured in the Soviet Union and Marx had written his doctoral thesis on Epicurus, hence this unusual polemic). He telephoned the American Embassy to warn that their nuclear secrets were being transmitted to the Soviet Union.[49] The call was recorded of course and Stalin demanded a machine that could identify the caller. The research job was given to these highly educated prisoners; but Nerzhin retains his independence of mind, refuses to work on cryptography, and is bundled off in a Black Maria to a grim and dark fate. On the other hand, the true believing communist, Rubin, amiable and kindly though he was, ceaselessly validifies the perversions of Stalinism on the ground that it served a higher cause; and he willingly invented the voice-recognizing machine that led to the arrest of Innokentii Volodin. *Cancer Ward,* perhaps his most accomplished work of fiction, ceaselessly revisits the theme of agonized reflection on what had always been taken for granted. Before his entry into the cancer ward, Oleg Kostoglotov had already revised his opinion of Stalin after the Finnish War of 1939. He objects to doctors deceiving him on the extent of his illness, yet he himself conceals the ominous detail from the Proska, justifying it by his own age and experience. He is certain that there is no life without reproductive capacity and objects to treatment that might lead to impotence; yet when he is spiritually attracted to Vega he reconsiders his belief that doctors must not take decisions for their patients. He permits her to administer the therapy that results in his loss of virility, and he prolongs his life in the knowledge that he can no longer reproduce it. He imagined a purely spiritual partnership with Vega and feels fulfilled thereby; but he realizes he cannot make her happy without sensuality, abandons the plan, and is once again fulfilled by the fresh awareness. As he hears of Elizaveta Anatol'evna's troubled life, his own anxieties over his sexual inadequacy subside in the presence of such untold suffering. He ponders the paradox that Chance is utterly arbitrary and irrational and can visit cancer and death randomly on anybody; but monstrous bureaucracies have raised their rational structures of repression that denies life everyday by rational choice. As he accepts that fatal disease does not make a rational choice of victims in the manner that tyrannical bureaucracies do, and that death is inevitable, he feels liberated from fear and from the compulsion to adjust to the rationality of a vicious bureaucracy. Thus the party hack's life of uninterrupted moral compromise seems to have caused Shulubin more misery than incarceration had to Kostoglotov. Shulubin had ceaselessly lied in order to protect his wife and family; but his wife was dead and his children were repulsive, and he was left with just himself and his body, a "sack full of shit." Kostoglotov gives thanks that he has been able to cherish whatever has been given to him in life without his having accommodated himself to injustice, while Shulubin participated passively in such Stalinist iniquity. Kostoglotov could not reproduce himself after his operation, yet he felt that something in him would live on forever thanks to the universal in him. After his prolonged imprisonment he emerges into the free world only to discover how alien he is to its philistine triviality.

Solzhenitsyn was concerned with the need for a relentless re-examination of one's most cherished beliefs, not necessarily for altering them. Thus Kostoglotov's radiologist, Dr Dontsova, is deeply troubled by his questioning her absolute authority to treat him, and she reviews her firmly held conviction that doctors could decide. But when she herself falls victim to the cancer, she reaffirms her position and refuses to question her doctors' decisions on her own treatment. Hers was a conviction arrived at after deep cogitation; it was not a naïve or blind faith. Only Rusanov the apparatchik seemed incapable of such critical reflection; owing to his addiction to the narcotic of communist ideology, and he could think, if thought it was, only in clichés, slogans, and formulae, in what has been called "speaking Bolshevik."

With the psychological insight available to the conservative perhaps more than to others, Solzhenitsyn penetrated the depths of individual suffering and its consequences to a degree that is exceptional even in such literatures of suffering. Both Kostoglotov and Azovkin condense in themselves all possible forms of exile and liminality. Kostoglotov's political exile banished him from the world of the familiar to the margins; his illness exiles him from the world of the healthy to the closed world of the cancer ward; his impotence after his operation banishes him from his own body; when he is released into the outer world, he experiences it as alien and as yet another exile. Azovkin has been similarly exiled into the ward; his pain is so acute he cannot speak or communicate with fellow patients and he can only distort his body and grimace wordlessly as he doubles up in agony; he, like so many others in pain, cannot communicate the nature and intensity of his pain, which exiles him from medics who engage in the technology of treatment rather than those in healing; the intensity of his pain exiles him from his own body which he wishes to be rid of in order to assuage the suffering; his illness is incurable and his doctors are to release him to his own home, which is no longer a home but another exile, an exile from the ward where he was being treated. These multiple forms of exile coalesce in each person into a single overpowering experience of pain, suffering, exile, and liminality, a frequent condition of human beings and the real one of Soviet society. Only the ultimate revolutionary commitment could have led to Lenin's imagining all the contradictions of capitalism in Russia sedimenting in the proletariat and ordaining it for revolution; and it required a conservative's awareness of human imperfection to plumb the depths of exile in the human condition and to conflate it with the fate of Soviet society.[50]

The entire novel is shot through with ambiguity. Is it life-denying because Kostoglotov lost his potency as the cost of his cure; or is it life-affirming because his moral substance survived every ordeal? The doctors were omnipotent, yet they themselves were often exiles and unfree. Is the cancer ward a metaphor of Soviet society which had to be cured of sickness by its omniscient doctors, the Soviet state and Communist Party; or was the Soviet state and Party itself cancerous and undergoing treatment through de-Stalinization, the first signs of which were visible in 1955 when the novel was written? Was the cancer a species of bourgeois corruption or communist speak; which was the cancer ward, the Party or the prison; who were the doctors, the partocrats or independent citizens; and was exile and liminality the fate of the people or of the bureaucrats? Everything demanded re-evaluation and inner self-examination.[51]

However, the commitment to self-purification was not peculiar to the conservative; it was carried to extremes in the Russian revolutionary tradition; and Solzhenitsyn, despite himself, was drawing as much on the Russian revolutionary heritage as he was on Tolstoyan, Slavophile, conservative, or medieval Christian precepts. Russian revolutionaries have been famously admired and derided for being a community of apostles, ascetics and martyrs like Christian saints and missionaries. Such radicals laboured strenuously to perfect themselves spiritually and morally to undertake the daunting task of emancipating the Russian people. They demanded of themselves the purity of motivation and absolute integrity of medieval knights *sans peur et sans reproche*. They pursued the most exacting theoretical studies like hermits at their rigorous ascetic exercises; and both species gained access to superior knowledge which they might or might not have been able to share with the rest of their fellows.They endured endlessly hellish experiences in prison and exile, becoming more and more aware or "conscious", and eventually creating a heavenly community on earth through the camaraderie of the discussion group of like-minded persons (the *kruzhok*). Iconic radical fiction from Chernyshevskii, Gorkii, Gladkov and others provided just such models, especially Rakhmetov in Chernyshevskii's *What is to be Done?*[52] In real life, the Chaikovskii circle attained heights of self-perfection that became an inspiring myth to generations of revolutionary intelligentsia: they represented that perfection of inner development that Solzhenitsyn himself demanded from his characters. They sacrificed their biological families to nurture their revolutionary families, and persons like Sofiia and Perovskaia slept on bare boards if not on nails.[53] Indeed many of the heroes of the resistance in the Gulag were themselves revolutionaries who had undergone just such a spiritual awakening in the revolutionary movement before 1917, including among them Trotskyites, whom he otherwise contemned.[54] As Solzhenitsyn-Nerzhin engaged in animated discussion and argument with Sologdin and Rubin in his sharashka and slowly converted from his youthful Marxism to his own version of religious faith and individual self-perfection, he seemed at times to be describing the Russian radical intelligentsia's self-education groups, the *kruzhki*, and at times the spiritual exercises of Christian martyrs in the catacombs or of monks in their cells. He conflated the two sources of inspiration, but the more proximate and palpable one is of Russian revolutionaries themselves.

The Revolutionary

Solzhenitsyn's instincts and temperament were revolutionary, and despite his professions and convictions, he endorsed extreme forms of action that included murder and terror. He accorded primacy to moral revolution; but his moral revolution was pervasive, it embraced all power structures, it was not segregated into an autonomous sphere of its own. Kostoglotov of *Cancer Ward* could come to the conclusion that "You are alive only when breaking rules." Quite unlike his non-resisting Tolstoyan fictional characters, Solzhenitsyn enthusiastically welcomed conventional revolutionary action when a reasonable opportunity seemed to present itself in the gulag. The *Gulag Archipelago* opens with the question why people did not fight off such iniquity, and after numerous reflections and narratives the work swells to the climacteric of the great rising at Kengir in 1954. It is a vast phenomenology of incarceration and an epic of endurance and revolt; but it is as much an optimistic affirmation of the capacity of human beings to resist injustice in mind and body should the choice be made to do so. Consistently enough, he regarded it as a moral choice of the individual to resist violently as long as it was arrived at freely. In the overture to his account of the rising at Kengir he reflected on violent resistance. His own words say it well:

> Now as I write this chapter, rows of humane books frown down at me from the walls, the tarnished gilt on their well-worn spines glinting reproachfully like stars through the clouds. Nothing in the world should be sought through violence! By taking up the sword, the knife, the rifle, we quickly put ourselves on the level of our tormentors and persecutors. And there will be no end to it. . .
>
> There will be no end. . . Here, at my desk, in a warm place, I agree completely.
>
> If you ever get twenty-five years for nothing, if you find yourself wearing four number patches on your clothes, holding your hands permanently behind your back, submitting to searches morning and evening, working until you are utterly exhausted, dragged into the cooler whenever someone denounces you, trodden deeper and deeper into the ground—from the hole you're in, the fine words of the great humanists will sound like the chatter of the well-fed and free.[55]

He recalled how murders of traitors became utterly normal, how prisoners would ask each other every morning whether anybody had been killed, how "In this cruel sport the prisoners heard the subterranean gong of justice,"[56] and how these terrorist acts were profoundly liberating:

> Out of five thousand men about a dozen were killed, but with every stroke of the knife more and more of the clinging, twining tentacles fell away. A remarkable fresh breeze was blowing! On the surface, we were prisoners living in a camp just as before, but in reality we had become free—free because for the very first time in our lives, we had started saying openly and aloud all that we had thought! No one who has not experienced this transition can imagine what it is like![57]

As he warmed to the theme he uttered this paean to the glory of violent resistance and how the land of the free had been created within the confines of the labour camps:

> A time such as we had never experienced or thought possible on this earth: when a man with an unclean conscience could not go quietly to bed! Retribution was at hand—not in the next world, not before the court of history, but retribution live and palpable, raising a knife over you in the light of dawn. It was like a fairy tale: the ground is soft and warm under the feet of honest men, but under the feet of traitors it prickles and burns. If only our Great Outside were as lucky, the Land of the Free, which never has seen and perhaps never will see such a time.[58]

These were akin to the revolutionary soviet governments during the revolution of 1905 setting at naught the writ of the tsarist state within the "liberated" territories; and like those revolutionary soviets, the Kengir rebels set up an entire bureaucracy and governmental structure to run their own liberated space.[59] The Camp Administration regarded this as "gangsterism", but he saw it as "political", like any revolutionary of tsarist times.[60] He went on to recount the heroic resistance at Kengir in which eventually 6000–7000 prisoners were killed.61 And, in his enthusiasm, he uttered the forbidden word, that this was indeed a "revolution", a high moment of which was on the anniversary of one of the most sacred days of the revolutionary calendar, on 9 (22) January, a Bloody Tuesday in 1952 instead of the Bloody Sunday of 1905.[62] His apostrophe to the Kengir heroes seems to be in flat contradiction with his preaching of inner concentration and non-violence.

But it is nowhere written that a person must be consistent; and we have often been cautioned against the myth of coherence in our effort to understand human action.[63] If heterogeneous elements go into constituting a discourse among a community of people, they do so in the body of thought of a single person also. Solzhentisyn detested revolution and violence, but he also felt that an atrocity like the Soviet Union could justify revolution; he favoured self-perfection above all else, but he could see that it ensured only the necessary but not the sufficient condition to the outcome of the power struggle he was engaged in and to which he summoned everybody with a conscience. By his own prescriptions, it would have been irresponsible and immoral on his part not to have saluted the martyrs of Kengir. Susan Richards has shown well how these ambiguities flowed from uncertainty, the refusal to judge, and from debate with himself, for the questing mind could not take an absolute position on many matters.[64] And Georges Nivat, one of the most acute and eloquent scholars of Solzhenitsyn, has presented it as a contradiction that need not be resolved: "This apostle of a certain non-violence is also a fighter of extraordinary combativeness. The hymn of Kengir remains one of the most beautiful hymns of revolt written in this century. But how is Kengir to be related to Matriona?"[65]

Solzhenitsyn realized how far he had gone, and for the American edition, he deplored terrorism while justifying it as the consequence of the forty-year terrorism of the state, that evil begets evil, that it may be necessary to resort to "evil ways even to escape it."[66] This is the most ancient excuse or argument, but, from within the traditions of Russian politics, it belonged unequivocally to the lineage of the radical intelligentsia, its revolution and terror. His account could have passed effortlessly into the pages of the *Revoliutsionnaia Rossiia*, or any other publication of the Socialist Revolutionary party before 1905, a party that carried its revolutionary action to the extremes of possibility, called upon its following never to let a single humiliation pass unanswered, gloried in terror and vengeful violence, and saw only cowardice and hypocrisy in the Bolsheviks. Bakunin and Chernov, Narodniks and the NarodnaiaVolia, the Socialist Revolutionary Party, its sundry offshoots, and even the Anarchists, all of them could have hailed him as a kindred spirit after reading the fifth part of *The Gulag Archipelago*. The Socialist Revolutionary Party asked how the people were to respond to the terrorism of the tsarist state, to beatings, lashings, shootings, and torture, the humiliation of women, or being ridden down by Cossacks, and the answer was that it should come "in burning letters etched into the consciousness of tsarist oprichniki."[67] The Social Democrats responded warmly to the faultlessly revolutionary instincts of the terrorists while rejecting the action as wrong-headed, for which they earned the undying contempt of the Socialist Revolutionaries. Even Petr Struve, when launching his new liberal journal, *Osvobozhdenie*, in 1902, addressed primarily to a non-revolutionary public, employed the identical argument, that "Government terror begets revolutionary terror."[68] It routinely reported the dying declarations of heroic terrorists trudging to execution, and it happily noted that the Western press agreed that the "red terror is engendered by white terror."[69] The Socialist Revolutionaries were comfortable in their revolution; they assaulted the imperial state without equivocation or apology, and they fervently advocated every means of struggle, including individual terror.[70] Solzhenitsyn was just as absolute in his repudiation of the Soviet state; but given the origin, history, and legitimation processes of that state, he pursued alternatives to revolution through inner self-development and non-violence, while being drawn to revolution and even terror. Revolution and non-violence were tactics, not dogmas, and he pursued both equally. In the event, he proved himself an enthusiastic legatee of the most violent of Russian revolutionary traditions, which he also repudiated in his conservative *Vekhi* moment.

Unlike a conservative and like a good revolutionary, he sought to construct society anew, from its foundations, to undo error and to scrape off the carbuncles. He firmly rejected rationalist constructions of society as wholly artificial, and he stood with the Slavophiles and conservatives in general to demand that society must evolve from its own lived experience, that it cannot spring from the pages of a book. But he dismissed more than three centuries of Russian history, that is, the Petersburg or imperial period and the Soviet Union, as misbegotten deformities that had grown more grotesque by the decade; and he looked forward to wiping the slate clean and constructing a new Russia according his own theories of local democracy, Russian culture, and central political institutions. He claimed inspiration from the traditions of popular democratic Russian culture; but he was well aware and it was obvious to others that what he proposed lacked continuity with those political traditions which had atrophied in tsarist times and had been extinguished thereafter. He was prescribing innovation on a scale that was revolutionary for his epoch, the late Soviet one. He was, despite himself, constructing his new Russia from the pages of a book.

As soon as the Soviet Union collapsed he composed just such a book.[71] Here he lovingly outlined his vision of a new Russia, built upward from the local democracy of the zemstvo to the parliamentary institutions of the All

Zemstvo Assembly, drawing his inspiration and models from early Soviet democracy, the zemstvo reform of 1864, and Swiss and American local government which he had witnessed at first hand and come to admire. He argued or realized that after such a prolonged dictatorship it would be too severe a shock, indeed revolutionary, to institute the mass democracy that had spread over the West; and, like the early Soviet Marxist theorists prescribing a dictatorship of the proletariat until the utopian withering away of the state, he also propounded a benign authoritarianism for the transition to his perfect moral, just, and democratic political dispensation of the future. He redefined the contours of his new Russia, drew borders anew to lop off the non-Slavic parts, and left it open to the Ukrainians and Belorussians to choose to be in one state with Russia. He suggested that Kazakhstan be broken up and that the northern Russian districts be merged with Russia. It may require a species of black humour to compare Solzhenitsyn with Stalin, but identities are often found in the unlikeliest of places, as between Hitler's New Order for Europe and Schumann's plan for post-War co-operation between France and Germany, which culminated in the European Union.[72] Through some of the darkest chapters of *The First Circle,* the insomniac predator from the Caucasian ravines padded nightly through the halls of the Moscow Kremlin, tore into entire nations and peoples, and scattered their dismembered parts across the Eurasian landmass. Stalin was solving his political problems by inflicting punishment and destruction on a scale that may have defied the imagination until then; Solzhenitsyn was solving *his* problem of establishing justice and morality through the wholesale restructuring of nations and states across that same Eurasian plain, unaware of the enormous misery and dislocation of such vivisections and grafting. More than the specific proposals, the tone of his work betrayed the mind of the utopian dreamer exercising his option when history provided it, but to which he had also applied himself so intensely over the decades. Revolutionaries and Solzhenitsyn equally believed that the world could be remade, whatever its past history: that was the mood in which Lenin, who had endlessly dreamt of the Revolution and the socialist ideal, stepped up to the podium of the Second All Russian Congress of Soviets in the evening of 25 October 1917to declare matter-of-factly, "Now we shall proceed to construct the socialist order."[73]

He resorted to one more revolutionary instrument against the Soviet Union and Marxism that may not have sat comfortably with his conservative ideal of moral self-perfection in a stable community and nation at peace with itself and with the world. After his forced emigration to the West in 1974 he repeatedly called for an end to the dÈtente with the Soviet Union, accusing the West of being ensnared by Soviet intrigues in a pseudo-détente. He justified himself against charges of being a warmonger by claiming that he sought a genuine détente, not one that merely reinforced the Soviet tyranny. But his genuine détente, as he defined it, amounted to dismantling the Soviet system through curtailing the Soviet state's domestic powers of control, introducing parliamentary democracy, and putting an end to the international ideological contest; and all the changes were to be introduced by the Soviet Union alone, not by the USA.[74] He saw the Cold War for what it was, another world war and a continuation of the incomplete World War II; he berated the Western democracies for allying with and thereby reinforcing Stalin's totalitarianism to fight off Hitler's; and he demanded that they should have engaged in the serial destructions of totalitarianisms on their own, first the Nazi, then the Soviet Communist, and then on to the Chinese Communist.[75] He chased the dream of overthrowing the Soviet regime by international war as much as by domestic revolt and moral refusal to submit to the Great Lie. Like his revolutionary predecessor and antagonist Lenin, he refused to succumb to what appeared to him as putrid appeals to loyalty and patriotism, and he cannily exploited the Cold War as he headed westward with his one-way ticket in a "sealed aircraft."

He was converted to a conservative and religious view of life during his gulag days and he glorified Stolypin, but the most potent presence in his life, looming over him and shaping him psychologically and intellectually, was Lenin. Lenin was a major character in *The Red Wheel,* naturally enough, and Solzhenitsyn excerpted the Lenin portions of his opus to publish them as a separate book, *Lenin in Zürich,* long before the rest of the work was completed. The portrait of the monologic ideologue and a leader who shall not be crossed was sharply drawn and by no means laudatory, but it was not perverse and unsympathetic.[76] He seemed to enter so deeply into Lenin's mind and imagination, employing his usual technique of *erlebteRede* or "narrated monologue," of both third person narrative and direct speech,[77] that Vladimir Krasnov has proposed Lenin as a co-author.[78] His Lenin was "a fully realized, three-dimensional character with believable motives who bears moral responsibility for bringing much evil into the world."[79] As an iconoclast and prophet, so much did he "quiver with the intoxication of struggle" that his portrayal of Lenin was perhaps a means of releasing the immense violence dammed within. He was attracted to rebellion and dissent, as in the Old Believers, Stenka Razin and Pugachev, or the Populists who sacrificed themselves in the nineteenth century, or for that matter Zwingli to whose statue in Zürich he bowed in homage; like Lenin he despised the liberals, as also Plekhanov, the "Marxist grand bourgeois" of Swiss villas.[80] He seemed to blame Lenin for the Revolution less than his evil genius Parvus, the Satan and the tempter, the Peter Verkhovenskii to Stavrogin. He wrote eleven chapters or 300 pages on Lenin against a mere five chapters on Stalin in *The First Circle*;[81] and his portrait of Lenin revealed respect and fascination for the founder of the Soviet state, not the hatred and contempt that he reserved for Stalin. He laboured hard to prove the continuity between Lenin and Stalin against those who claimed that Stalin had perverted Leninist ideals. He did so by assembling a vast array of the facts on the origins of terror during Lenin's reign. But as he did so, he diminished Stalin into an evil midget, a mere product of his times, incapable of being the demiurge of the epoch that was known by his name,[82] and Lenin emerged the incomparably greater man, the creator of the conditions that bred a Stalin. Michael Scammell summed it up well: "Solzhenitsyn's portrait of Lenin was highly personal, with autobiographical overtones. The picture of a lonely and unheeded prophet, self-centred, short-tempered, miserly with his time ('a single wasted hour made Lenin ill'), suspicious of others, virtually friendless, cut off from his homeland, and dreaming of leaving his wife for another woman seemed uncannily close to certain biographical details in the life of the author—breathtakingly so to those who knew him well—and there was much comment among Russian readers about Solzhenitsyn's psychological identification with his revolutionary predecessor and ideological opponent."[83] In 1976 he was asked by his BBC interviewer whether he admired Lenin; revealingly, he refused to answer. He also admitted to Nikita Struve: "Lenin is one of the central figures in my epic and a central figure in our history. I have been thinking of Lenin from the very moment I conceived the idea of my epic, for forty years already, and have collected every crumb and fragment that is known about him, absolutely everything. . ."[84] It was a compliment he did not pay to anybody else.

Conclusion

The three levels of personal integrity, domestic rebellion, and international war, albeit of the Cold War variety, belonged to a seamless strategy of inaugurating justice and morality in this world. Solzhenitsyn stressed personal development above all else owing to his personal experience of the gulag, but as much because the overwhelming might of the Soviet state made internal self-perfection for long the only course of action open, not only to prisoners, but even to "free" Soviet citizens. Like his younger contemporary, Foucault, he ceaselessly reflected on the carceral condition of humanity, in prison and out of it, through the multiple levels of discourse, scientific discipline, and physical coercion; like him he investigated the manner in which this was peculiar to modernity, to the Soviet version of it in particular; and again like him he sensed that he was witness to the imminent end of this form of modernity and of the "modern episteme" that had invented man at the end of the eighteenth century.[85] Two wholly divergent experiences, the one of "saturation with freedom" in the West,[86] the other of being walled into the Gulag, yielded comparable reflections on servitude in modern times with intimations of the mortality of modernity, each according to his own experience of it.

The conservative preceptor's preaching of inner concentration was complemented by strategies of revolutionary politics and international warfare. His sustained anti-Soviet, anti-revolutionary, and anti-liberal Western rhetoric, has blinded us to the depth of his revolutionary message. Like a revolutionary of the eighteenth century, he sought to construct society from his own books of theory. In the tradition of the revolutionaries of Russia he gained "consciousness" in the *kruzhok* or study group of like minded seekers; he was inspired by the democracy of the early revolutionary soviets; he drew heavily on both critical realism and socialist realism to compose his two epic works; he endorsed revolutionary assault and terror as the only means of responding to the terror of the state; and he worked to overthrow the Soviet state initially through a new party organization when he was still a young army officer, and later, in his maturity, through the international Cold War.

Of the four ideologies on offer in the Russian nineteenth century, he discarded liberalism and Marxism and resurrected in different ways the two long submerged traditions of Slavophilism and Narodnichestvo without explicitly saying so. From the Slavophiles he drew on the dream of a pristine Russian culture and the democracy of robust local communities; and from the Narodniks he took the rising of the people against the state as a purely democratic commitment without the class analyses so beloved of liberals and Marxists. Those conservatively inclined would applaud his Slavophilism; those radically disposed and critical of the development excesses of industrialism and the omnipotence of the modern state would welcome his Narodnik leanings and fondly recall the eschatological inspiration of the people's final contest with the state. He projected himself as the prophet to a post-Soviet and reduced Russia, when Russia shall not aspire to lead, where the centre of power in the world shall lie elsewhere, and Russia shall be delicately balanced between independence and subordination to that centre, in the manner of Europe. He presented it as an opportunity, not as a loss; as hope, not despair; as an aspiration, not reconciliation to a miserable fate, and the conflation of these multiple prescriptions may set the course for a Russia writhing to slough off her imperial and Soviet skin. He remained a revolutionary who detested the idea of revolution; he yearned to be a conservative in a Soviet world which he did not wish to conserve; he dreamt of his ideal Russia of the future which he must build from scratch like a revolutionary; and his iconoclasm could be accommodated, only in the plural world of liberal capitalism which he despised for its addiction to both excess and compromise. He repudiated the three great competitive ideological systems of the twentieth century, communist, fascist, and liberal capitalist as he prefigured the twenty-first century, the post-Soviet epoch, and perhaps postmodernism, with all their maddening uncertainties; and he wandered a lonely prophet and artist whose mixed bag of offerings attracted acolytes, provoked outrage, and exasperated ardent admirers.

NOTES

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2. J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings* (Great Britain: Harper Collins, 1994), book 6, chapter 3.
3. *Nobelevskaia Lektsiia*; Wayne Dowler, "Echoes of Pochvennichestvo in Solzhenitsyn's August 1914", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 34, No. 1, (Mar., 1975), pp. 109-122, here pp. 119-121.
4. The following sections on self-limitation and Russia for Russians are summarized from Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *The Russian Question at the End of the 20th Century*, translated from the Russian by Yermolai Solzhenitsyn (London: The Harvill Press, 1995).
5. Solzhenitsyn, *The Mortal Danger. How Misconceptions about Russia imperil America*, translated from the Russian by Michael Nicholson and Alexis Klimoff (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1980) pp. 39-46.
6. Daniel J. Mahoney, *Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn: The Ascent from Ideology* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001), p. 3.
7. Solzhenitsyn, *The Mortal Danger.*
8. Confino, "Solzhenitsyn," p. 614, citing *Vestnik russkogo khristianskogo dvizheniia*, 111 (1974), 69.
9. As in his *Letter to Soviet Leaders.*
10. Vladislav Krasnov, "Wrestling with Lev Tolstoi: War, Peace, and Revolution in Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's New Avgust Chetyrnadtsatogo", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (Winter, 1986), pp. 707-719, here pp. 711-713, 719.
11. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *Krasnoe koleso. Povestvovanie v otmerennykh srokakh*, uzel 1, *Avgust Chetyrnadtsatogo*, kniga 2, *Sobranie Sochinenii*, vol. 8 (Moskva: Vremia, 2006), p. 104.
12. Mahoney, *Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn*, pp. 90-92.
13. Boris Souvarine, "SoljÈnitsyne et LÈnine", *Est & Ouest*, 1-15 April 1976, 28e annÈe, no. 570, pp. 1-16.
14. I. V. Kireevskii, "O neobkhodimosti i vozmozhnosti novykh nachal dlia filosofii" (1856), *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii I. V. Kireevskago v dvukh tomakh*, ed. M. Gershenszon, vol. 1, pp. 222-264, here p. 242.
15. Interview to Janis Sapiets of the BBC Russian Service in 1974, letter to the *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Devizheniia*, no. 116, 1975, and again in a BBC interview of 1976, cited in Scammell, *Solzhenitsyn*, pp. 899, 920-921, and 935 respectively.
16. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, "Nobel Lecture in Literature, 1970", November 2008, section 5.
17. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *Arkhipelag Gulag 1918-1956. Opyt khudozhestvennaia issledovaniia* (Ekaterinburg: Izdatel'stvo "U-Faktoriia", 2006), part IV, p. 500, translations from Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago 1918-1956. An Experiment in Literary Investigation*, [vol. 2], translated from the Russian by Thomas P. Whitney (London: Collins & Harvill Press, 1975), part IV, p. 615; Edward J. Ericson Jr; Alexis Klimoff, *The Soul and the Barbed Wire. An Introduction to Solzhenitsyn* (Wilmington, Delaware: ISI Books, Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2008), pp. 186-187; Mahoney, pp. 50-51, 105-106.
18. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), p. 31 and passim.
19. David G. Rowley, "Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Russian Nationalism", *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Jul., 1997), pp. 321-337.
20. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *Rebuilding Russia. Reflections and Tentative Proposals*, translated and annotated by Alexis Klimoff (New York: Ferrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1991) pp. 63-82, esp. p. 76.
21. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, "As Breathing and Consciousness Return," in Alexander Solzhenitsyn et al, *From Under the Rubble* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975, pp. 3-25, here, p. 23; see also Solzhenitsyn, *Letter to Soviet Leaders*, p. 52.
22. B. N. Chicherin, *Obshchee gosudarstvennoe pravo* (Moskva: izvo "Zertsalo", 2006, orig. edn 1894), pp. 173-179.
23. S. M. Brodovich, *Sovetskoe izbiratel'noe pravo* (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1925, p. 16.

24. N. Krupskaia, *Konstituttsiia rossiiskoi sotsialisticheskoi federativnoi sovetskoi respubliki* (Moscow: izdatel'stvo VTsIK, 1918), pp. 13-14.

25. M. Vladimirskii, *Organizatsiia sovetskoi vlasti na mestakh* (Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1921), pp. 32-36; Brodovich, pp. 61-71; Prof. G. S. Gurvich, *Osnovy sovetskoi konstitutsii*, 5th edn (Moskva-Leningrad, 1926), pp. 105-108; G. S. Mikhailov, *Mestnoe sovetskoe upravlenie. Konspekt i materialy. Uchebnoe posobie dlia komvuzov* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo kommunisticheskogo universiteta im. Ia. M. Sverdlova, 1927), pp. 64-65;
26. M. A. Reisner, *Osnovy sovetskoi konstitutsii* pp. 184-187; Gurvich's critique of Reisner's proposals in Prof. G. S. Gurvich, *Istoriia Sovetskoi konstitutsii* (Moskva: Izdanie Sotsialisticheskoi Akademii, 1923), pp. 28-32, separate pagination
27. Solzhenitsyn, *Rebuilding Russia*, p. 85.
28. Michael Scammell's words, see Scammell, *Solzhenitsyn*, p. 579.
29. Solzhenitsyn, *Letter*, 53.
30. Scammell, *Solzhenitsyn*, pp. 666-667.
31. Leon Trotsky, *1905* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), pp 382-83, 384; *Obvinitel'nyi Akt o chlenakh soobshchestva prisvoivshiiusia sebe naimenovanie: S.Peterburgskii obshche-gorodskoi 'Sovet rabochinkh deputatov', s predisloviem L. M.* (S. Peterburg, 1906).
32. Karl Kautskii [Kautsky], *"Diktatura proletariata"*, in Karl Kautskii, *Diktatura Proletariata. Ot demokratii k gosudarstvennomu rabstvu. Bol'shevizm v tupike*, [orig. German edn 1918, Russian trans. 1919] (Moskva: AOZT, "Antidor", 2002), pp. 74-75; Bruno Naarden, *Socialist Europe and Revolutionary Russia: Perception and Prejudice, 1848-1923* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1992).
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34. Vladimir N. Brovkin, *The Mensheviks after October. Socialist Opposition and the Rise of the Bolshevik Dictatorship*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell Univ. Press), 1987, chapter 5.
35. Vladimir N. Brovkin, *Behind the Front Lines of the Civil War. Political Parties and Social Movements in Russia, 1918 – 1922* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 1994), chapter 7.
36. Ericson Jr; Alexis Klimoff, pp. 151-152.
37. Martin Malia, "A War on Two Fronts: Solzhenitsyn and the Gulag Archipelago", *Russian Review*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Jan., 1977), pp. 46-63, here p. 53.
38. Solzhenitsyn, *Avgust Chetyrnadtsatogo*, kniga 2, *Sobranie Sochinenii*, vol. 8 (Moskva: Vremia, 2006), chapter 65 especially on Stolypin's character and programme, quotes on pp. 272, 225, 274, translations from Solzhenitsyn, *The Red Wheel*, pp. 614, 573, and 616 respectively.
39. I have followed the analysis in Glenn Allen Davis, "Myth, History, and Solûenicyn's Krasnoe Koleso: Avgust ûetyrnadcatogo", *The Slavic and East European Journal*, Vol. 36, No. 1, (Spring, 1992), pp. 84-100, and on socialist realism, Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1981) and Luellen Lucid, "Solzhenitsyn's Rhetorical Revolution," *Twentieth Century Literature*, Vol. 23, No. 4, (Dec., 1977), pp. 498-517.
40. Ericson Jr; Klimoff, pp. 202-203; Scammell, *Solzhenitsyn*, p. 769. Father Schmemann was Dean of the St Vladimir Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York State and a regular broadcaster on religious issues to the Soviet Union over Radio Liberty.
41. Edward E. Ericson Jr, "Solzhenitsyn, Russell Kirk, and the Moral Imagination," *Modern Age*, vol. 47, no. 1, Winter 2005, pp. 8-18, especially pp. 14-15.
42. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, parts V-VII, [or vol 3] pp. 79-81, 344.
43. K. S. Aksakov, "Ob osnovnykh nachalakh russkoi istorii" (1849), in K. S. Aksakov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii Konstantina Sergeevicha Aksakova*, ed. I. S. Aksakov, vol. 1 (Moscow: Tipografiia P. Bakhmeteva, 1861), pp. 1-16 composed in two sections, with the second titled "O tom żhe"; Confino, "Solzhenitsyn," pp. 611-636, here p. 618.
44. Quoted in Confino, "Solzhenitsyn, the West, and the New Russian Nationalism," p. 619.
45. He experienced this personally in the Marfino sharashka through his uninhibited discussions with his friends Dmitrii Panin and Lev Kopelev, see Scammell, pp. 238, 497-498.
46. Svitlana Kobets, "The Subtext of Christian Asceticism in Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich", *The Slavic and East European Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 4, (Winter, 1998), pp. 661-676, here p. 666.
47. See chapter 1 of Part IV, "Voskhozhdenie" ["The Ascent"] in Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *Arkhipelag Gulag 1918-1956. Opyt khudozhestvennaia issledovaniia* (Ekaterinburg: Izdatel'stvo "U-Faktoriia", 2006); David M. Halperin, "Continuities in Solzhenitsyn's Ethical Thought", in John B. Dunlop et al, eds, *Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn: Critical Essays and Documentary Materials*, pp. 267-283; Georges Nivat, "Solzhenitsyn's Different *Circles*: An Interpretive Essay", in John B. Dunlop, Richard S. Haugh, Michael Nicholson, eds, *Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn: Critical Essays and Documentary Materials* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1985), pp. 211-228; Gary Kern, "Solzhenitsyn's Portrait of Stalin", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 33, No. 1, (Mar., 1974), pp. 1-22; Susan Layton, "The Mind of the Tyrant: Tolstoj's Nicholas and Solûenicyn's Stalin", *The Slavic and East European Journal*, Vol. 23, No. 4, (Winter, 1979), pp. 479-490, here pp. 483-485; Robert Boyers, *Atrocity and Amnesia: The Political Novel Since 1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 104-105. Even soldiers of the victorious Red Army were prisoners to their fears and prejudices of the archetypical "Germany" they looted and raped in their race to Berlin in 1945, see Kenneth N. Brostrom, "*Prussian Nights*: A Poetic Parable for Our Time", in Dunlop et al. eds, *Solzhenitsyn*, pp. 229-242, here p. 232.
48. Nivat, *SoljÈnitsyne*, pp. 50-51; Edward E. Ericson Jr, "Solzhenitsyn, Russell Kirk, and the Moral Imagination," *Modern Age*, vol. 47, no. 1, Winter 2005, pp. 8-18, here p. 15.
49. Helen Muchnic, "Solzhenitsyn's 'The First Circle'", *Russian Review*, Vol. 29, No. 2, (Apr., 1970), pp. 154-166; Daniel J. Mahoney, "The Moral Witness of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn," *First Things*, 2009 pp. 44-48; David M. Halperin, "Solzhenitsyn, Epicurus, and the Ethics of Stalinism", *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 7, No. 3, (Spring, 1981), pp. 475-497.
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