



## **TSYN AND THE GULAG**

I will speak first of Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

His is a typical Soviet life. Born one year after the Revolution, he lost his father in World War I, studied mathematics in order to get a job, served as a soldier in World War II, was with the Soviet army in Germany, then was arrested in 1945 for writing disrespectful remarks about Stalin in private letters and received a “mild” sentence for this—eight years. At the end of his sentence in 1953 he was further sentenced to exile for life in southern Kazakhstan, at the edge of the desert. He contracted cancer there and nearly died from it, but was healed in a cancer clinic. In exile he taught math and physics in primary school and wrote prose in secret. He was rehabilitated in the de-Stalinization era and his first book was published in Russia in 1961. His other books were not published in Russia, but their publication outside Russia made him a troublesome celebrity for the Soviet authorities. In 1970 he received the Nobel Prize for literature, and in 1975 was forcibly exiled to the West, where until now he has continued to write novels and speak to the West about the meaning of the Soviet experience in Russia. In the course of his sufferings and imprisonment he came to Christian faith and is an Orthodox believer.

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