

HEIN

◆ Telling the Truth, and Telling the World

Heinrich Dyck (1913-2001)

“

When we went through this atrocity,
we men talked about it among ourselves.
We said, 'The world will never know
what we are going through.
Our stories will die with us,
and the world will never know.'
But this man is telling the truth,
and he is telling the world.”

Hein Dyck, in Canada in 1986, upon reading *The Gulag Archipelago*

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Hein never spoke freely about his life in the Gulag and in Kyrgyzstan. Having lived for so long under an oppressive and capricious regime, he was cautious in what he shared, but he found his own experience in the work.



Hein singing on one of his trips to Canada.

THE GULAG ARCHIPELAGO

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* is one of the most significant works written on the Soviet prison camp system. Its three volumes deal historically and philosophically with the cruelties imposed on millions of innocent political prisoners in the Gulag. It has been called “the voice of all those who suffered,” and has had a profound impact internationally.

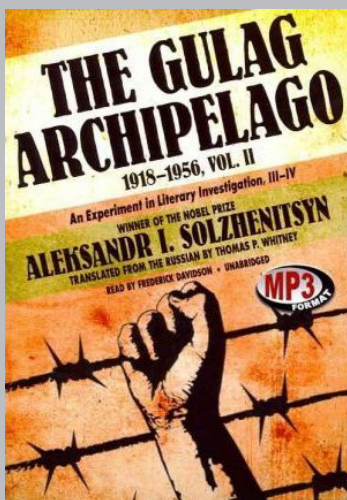
Solzhenitsyn hid portions of his manuscript in friends' homes while writing it in secret in Moscow between 1958 and 1967. He never had the entire manuscript in front of him at

once. Friends smuggled it out of Russia, where it was first published in the Russian language in France in 1973, and in following months quickly translated into many other languages. The KGB forced Solzhenitsyn into permanent exile in 1974.

Based on Solzhenitsyn's own eight years of imprisonment in the Gulag, first-hand testimony of 256 fellow prisoners, and primary documentation, *The Gulag Archipelago* brings to light the horrors of the Gulag, and speaks for many who suffered and perished there. It describes the experience of zeks (inmates) as they were herded through their arrests, show trials, and transport to prison camps. Once there, it tells how they were frozen, starved, tortured, mistreated, and enslaved.

Solzhenitsyn broke new ground in tracing the camp system all the way back to Vladimir Lenin in 1918, rather than Stalin. He argued that the threat of imprisonment, exile, and slave labor was fundamental to communism from its inception.

The book was widely read in the West and circulated underground in the Soviet Union until 1989, when it was published there for the first time. It has sold over 30 million copies in 35 different languages. Royalties from the book were put into the Solzhenitsyn Aid Fund, which helped former prisoners during the 1970s and 1980s.



The word “Gulag” comes from an acronym from the Russian name for “Chief Administration of Corrective Labor Camps,” “Glavnoye Upravleniye ispravitelno-trudovyyh Lagerey.” “Archipelago” was Solzhenitsyn’s metaphor for the vast system of camps spread like a chain of islands across the USSR, unified in their isolation and their horror.