

the Christian world is also seen to be in the throes of renewal, its traditions radically challenged from within and without, yet still showing its capacity to contradict both naive belief and facile unbelief. A Christianity with everything to give and nothing to receive has been learning that self-sufficiency is the ultimate obstacle to both giving and receiving. But the one world now inexorably in the making is beyond the control of any Communist Party or of any Christian Church. Our emphasis must be shifted from Christian converts to Christian values.

Four further pages suggest guidelines for a task of discernment yet to be accomplished. Our question has to be put into the context of both the total Chinese reality (seeing Mao Tse Tung in the perspective of vast stretches of China's past and future, and also refusing to overlook the millions regarded by Maoist orthodoxy as "non-people") and the total Christian reality (itself in a more or less traumatic transition to the new future God holds for it). Both China and the Christian Church are unfinished products as they stand. "Meaningfulness remains minimal not only because of closed unbelieving minds but even more because of closed believing ones." Christians must learn to reduce both their pretensions and their limitations.

So brief a review cannot do justice to the depth and daring of this creatively thoughtful essay. To it is appended not only a very useful survey of source material and 80 valuable footnotes, but also four highly interesting appendices, geographical, statistical and one listing over 50 significant dates.

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### From under the Rubble

ed. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Collins Harvill, 308 pp, £3.95.  
*Iz pod Glyb*, YMCA Press, Paris, 276 pp, no price indicated.)

"The phase in which Western Europe and the USA now find themselves is remarkably reminiscent of the 'Nihilist' era in Russia, that is, the period of a hundred years ago." That phase and the accompanying frame of mind led Russia to disaster – and now to a flickering moral recovery. So the Russians can – and must – "point the way out of the labyrinth in which mankind is now lost". At least such is the argument of this remarkable symposium, edited by Solzhenitsyn and written by himself and six other contributors, all but one of them still in the Soviet Union. They are dissidents and, like Solzhenitsyn himself, most of them are members of the Russian Orthodox Church. Mikhail Agursky, whose contributions to *RCL* written before he left the Soviet Union for Israel will be remembered, is a religious Jew who is very close to Christianity.

Their concern is for the future of their beloved Russia, as she comes

out "from under the rubble" and "breathing and consciousness return". Each of the writers has his own personality but they all write beautiful Russian and this has been translated into fine English by Michael Scammell and his team. The thought and style of the various contributors are sometimes so close to each other that it is difficult to remember who has written what.

All of them are concerned for the moral state of their country. Igor Shafarevich, a mathematician with a world reputation, writing on "socialism in our past and in our future", sees "socialism" as a human and moral disaster. "The force which manifests itself in socialism does not act through reason but resembles an *instinct* which threatens the very existence of mankind and at the same time paralyses its most reliable tool, reason." This alarming view is well argued but Shafarevich does not define socialism, except by implication; and surely one must distinguish between Leninism and other forms of socialism? In the book's final essay Shafarevich asks "Does Russia have a future?" a question that is now being asked with an insistence that would astonish both friends and enemies in the west.

The resentment of the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union against "Russian Colonialism" has, not surprisingly, fed the nationalism of the Russians themselves. "Class hatred could probably never again light the flame that engulfs our house in time of trouble – but national hatred easily could." Shafarevich points out, however, that the Russians themselves have suffered even more from Leninist oppression than the other peoples of the Soviet Union. He argues for a reconciliation rather than a separation. And his moving conclusion is that the only way forward is to ask for sacrifice. "We know how joyfully the early Christians sacrificed themselves. Russians must be ready to suffer for the right in exile, in prison and in mad houses. Then, and only then, right will prevail. If more than just a few individuals can rise to the pitch where they are ready to sacrifice themselves, souls will be cleansed and the soil prepared for religion to grow in." In modern Russia a political argument has a way of turning into a religious argument. This particular argument continues: industrial society in both east and west has come to an impasse. Mankind's plight is desperate. Yet Russia "still lives (or dies) without faith". But sacrifice prepares the way for faith, and it is through sacrifice that Russia can fulfil her mission "to find salvation from the senseless race of industrial society", for her own sake and for the sake of the whole world.

An adequate review of this symposium would need to be an essay as long as the contributions to the book itself. I do not agree with everything in *From under the Rubble* and – what is more important – not all religious Russians agree. But it is important in the way that the famous symposium *Landmarks (Vekhi)*, published before the Revolution was. Both books mark an epoch.