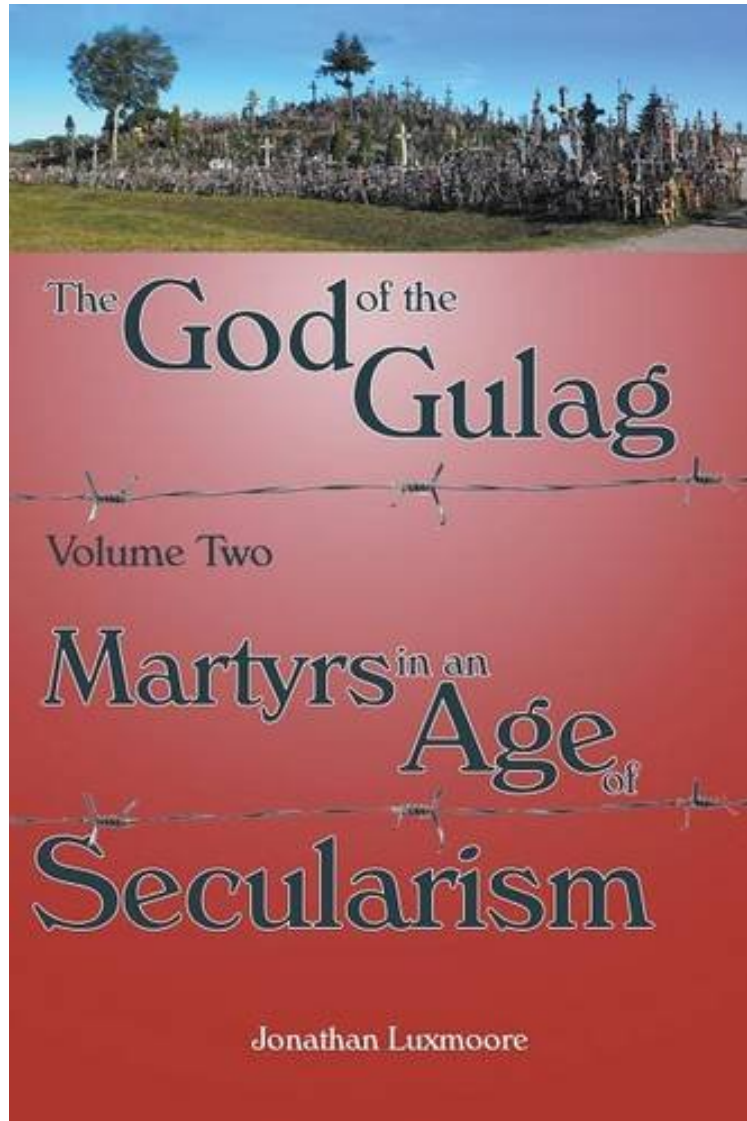


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## The God of the Gulag, Vol 2, Martyrs in an Age of Secularism

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By the end of the 1950s, more than four decades had passed since Lenin and his Bolshevik followers had first seized power in Russia. Open brutality and terror had given way to administrative forms of repression and control. But the aim of communism was still very much alive—to create an egalitarian society ruled by the working class under the direction of the Party avant-garde. Intimidation and coercion by the secret police were still indispensable tools for pursuing that aim. Hostility to the Church and contempt for religious faith were still fundamental to the communist programme. This second volume of *The God of the Gulag* details the continuing campaign against the Church and its members, as the age of revolution gave way to an age of secularism, and new efforts were made to impose scientific atheism and rid the world of religious superstition. Drawing on accounts and documents in many languages, it shows how the requirements of Christian witness evolved as the policies and tactics of the one-party state developed, and how Church leaders sought new ways of sustaining religious life after the 1962-5 Second Vatican Council. It recounts how growing dissent was strengthened by the shock-election of a Polish Pope in 1978 and the rise of the Solidarity movement two years later, and how the bitter and protracted endgame of communist rule was played out in the 1980s. It assesses the lessons to be learned by the Church and its opponents from this modern era of persecution and martyrdom; and it looks at how the heroic testimony of the twentieth-century martyrs should be recognised and commemorated.