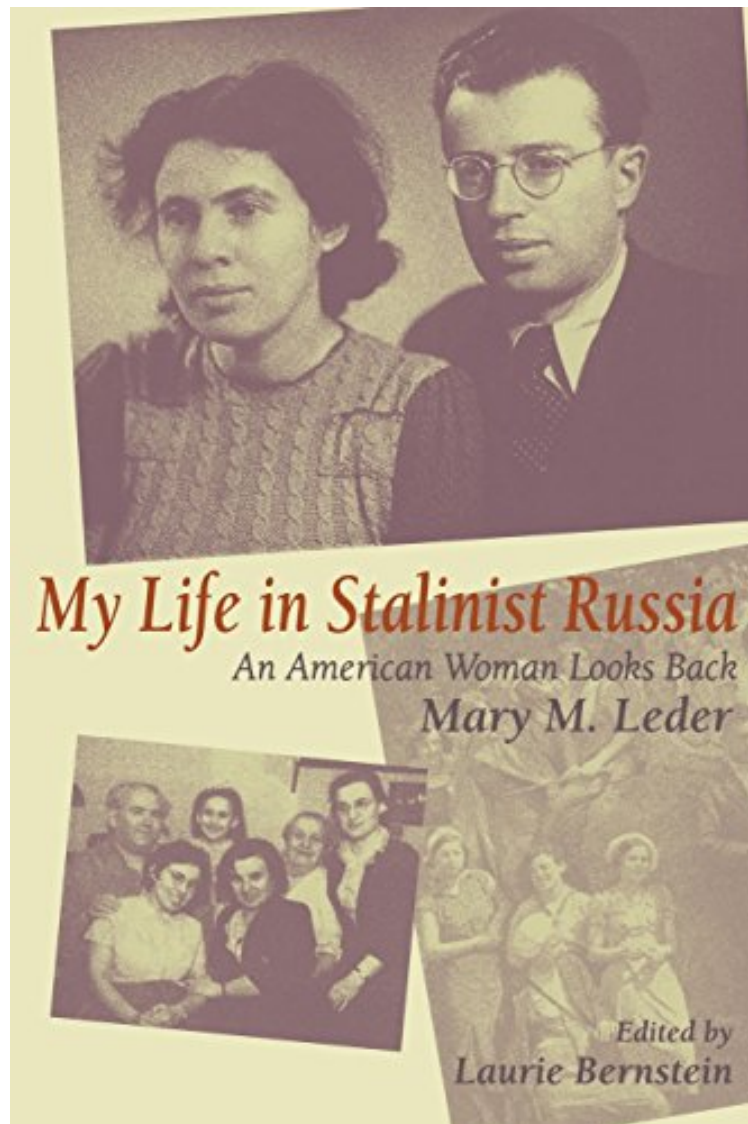


[Get free] My Life in Stalinist Russia: An American Woman Looks Back

## My Life in Stalinist Russia: An American Woman Looks Back

Mary M. Leder

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#2086178 in Books Mary M Leder 2002-02-01 2001-09-13Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.25 x 1.05 x 6.12l, 1.28 #File Name: 0253214424360 pagesMy Life in Stalinist Russia | File size: 44.Mb

**Mary M. Leder : My Life in Stalinist Russia: An American Woman Looks Back** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised My Life in Stalinist Russia: An American Woman Looks Back:

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Intriguing and InformativeBy A CustomerAlthough I have read a number of books on the Soviet Union, much to my surprise, I found myself totally absorbed by Mary Leder's odyssey. Starting with her travels across the US, and thence to Birobidzhan (Siberia), later asked to spy and, of course, spied upon, I believe Ms. Leder spins an eloquent and gripping tale. From Mary the dedicated communist to Mary the

disenchanted one, from Mary the factory worker to Mary the editor-translator, she paints a totally honest and courageous picture of herself and her travails and those of so many of her fellow citizens. I recommend this book highly. 5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. This fantastic book deserves a wider audience. By Zoltan Newberry I found Mary's book hard to put down, and not because I too am Jewish and my Mother's name is Mary. I really hope some of my progressive Jewish friends read it. It reads so well and is a very deep look into the sickness of the Russian soul and the dreary brutality and horrible corruption which accompanies all collectivism and redistribution. Please read this before you vote for another Democrat. 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Very humane and honest. By Roman Dubov A great account of how people lived in the Soviet Union during Stalin's rule. The advantage of this book is that it gives you the facts in such a way that it is up to you to decide whether or not the author is right in her conclusions. I strongly recommend this book for both academic and private reading for I believe it is one of the most unique books ever written about the lives of regular Soviet citizens.

The thoughtful memoirs of a disillusioned daughter of the Russian Revolution.... A sometimes astonishing, worm's-eye view of life under totalitarianism, and a valuable contribution to Soviet and Jewish studies." ?Kirkus Reviews In this engrossing memoir, Leder recounts the 34 years she lived in the U.S.S.R.... [She] has a marvelous memory for the details of everyday life.... This plainly written account will particularly appeal to readers with a general interest in women's memoirs, Russian culture and history, and leftist politics." ?Publishers Weekly In 1931, Mary M. Leder, an American teenager, was attending high school in Santa Monica, California. By year's end, she was living in a Moscow commune and working in a factory, thousands of miles from her family, with whom she had emigrated to Birobidzhan, the area designated by the USSR as a Jewish socialist homeland. Although her parents soon returned to America, Mary, who was not permitted to leave, would spend the next 34 years in the Soviet Union. My Life in Stalinist Russia chronicles Leder's experiences from the extraordinary perspective of both an insider and an outsider. Readers will be drawn into the life of this independent-minded young woman, coming of age in a society that she believed was on the verge of achieving justice for all but which ultimately led her to disappointment and disillusionment. Leder's absorbing memoir presents a microcosm of Soviet history and an extraordinary window into everyday life and culture in the Stalin era.

From Publishers Weekly In the depths of the Depression, Leder's parents, socialist, Russian-born Jewish immigrants, decided to take their family from the U.S. to the Soviet Union to help colonize a proposed Jewish homeland in Birobidzhan. Once arrived in a rural village in the Soviet Far East in 1931, Mary, a 15-year-old who shared her parents' politics, was appalled at the primitive living conditions and insisted on going to Moscow, where she began working at a factory with the help of her step-uncle. When her disillusioned parents returned to the U.S. two years later, Mary was unable to go with them: she had become a Soviet citizen because she had needed an internal passport to keep her job. In this engrossing memoir, Leder (Sonia's Daughters) recounts the 34 years she lived in the U.S.S.R., working at a motor factory, then as proofreader, editor and translator at the Foreign Workers' Publishing House. While attending the University of Moscow, she was recruited into a secret spy school, which folded during the Great Purge Trials. She married, had a child who died during the evacuation of Moscow during WWII and was constantly under surveillance as a foreigner. Leder has a marvelous memory for the details of everyday life, from living arrangements and survival during the terror to discussions of the law forbidding abortion in 1936 and the marriage "reform" law reintroducing illegitimacy in 1944, as well as for the many friends she made. She was particularly aware of the growing anti-Semitism after WWII, and that, coupled with her husband's death in the late 1950s, prompted her strenuous efforts to return to the U.S. in the 1960s. This plainly written account will particularly appeal to readers with a general interest in women's memoirs, Russian culture and history, and leftist politics. 8-page photo insert. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. Mary Mackler Leder was by no means a significant figure in Stalinist Russia, but readers will find that she writes an arresting observer's account of life in Russia over more than two decades. Sovietologists of the Stalinist era will find interesting anecdotes about Soviet life that confirm, revise, and in some cases authenticate the constructed sociology of the time. One example that constantly reappears is Leder's insistence on stating that she is an American, while the authorities both high and low, all across the Soviet Union, simply classify her as Jewish, with all the usual and stereotypical ramifications of that view. Two particular periods of the account are noteworthy?those about the purges in the 1930s and the war years, during which time her baby daughter died. Perhaps most remarkable is Leder's ability to recall her past with exquisite detail and precision so many years beyond the events. Upper-division undergraduates and above. January 2002 (C. W. Haury Piedmont Virginia Community College) About the Author Mary M. Leder has lived in New York since her return from the Soviet Union in 1965.