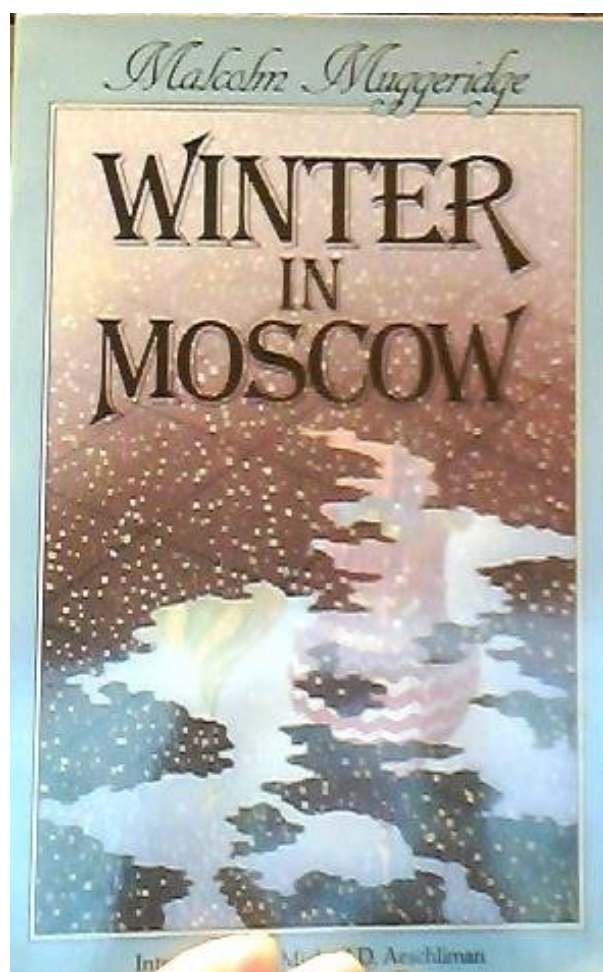
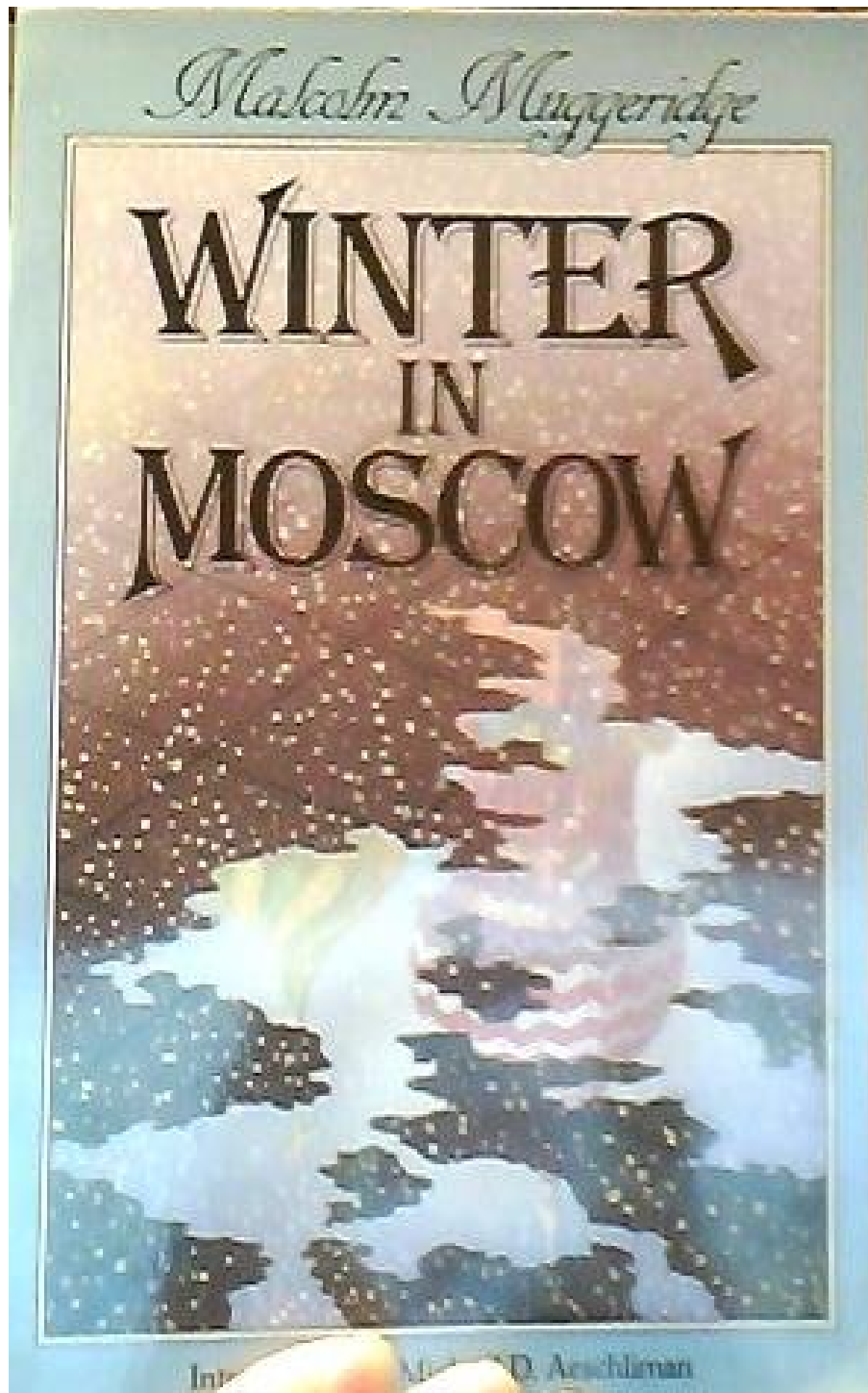


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This 1934 fictionalized account of Stalin's Moscow presents an Orwellian nightmare satirized, as Western journalists blithely overlook starving peasants and support the utopian claims of one of the bloodiest regimes in human history. 5 cassettes.

- Sales Rank: #885492 in Books
- Published on: 1987-07
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.30" h x 5.40" w x .80" l,
- Binding: Paperback
- 252 pages

Most helpful customer reviews

46 of 46 people found the following review helpful.

A Holocaust Hidden From Mankind

By A Customer

This book was ahead of its time in revealing the true nature of the Bolsheviks and those that implemented its horrors as never seen before in history. Much of what Muggeridge revealed was verified in the many publications of late from those authors in Yale University Press'Annals of Communism Series'.

Ironic how so little exposure these revelations have had in our media.

40 of 40 people found the following review helpful.

Muggeridge re Bolshevik Slaughter

By Gerard Reed

One of the few journalists to clearly see--and honestly report--conditions in Stalin's Russia was Malcolm Muggeridge, whose novel, *Winter in Moscow* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., c. 1987; first published in 1934 by Eyre and Spottiswoode, London), was based upon his observations as a correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian* in 1932 and 1933. Reared in a socialist home, married to the niece of Beatrice Webb (an eminent socialist who routinely praised and defended the Bolsheviks), Muggeridge arrived in Russia with great expectations, confident he'd find the dreams of himself and his father fully fulfilled. He even considered becoming a Russian citizen and devoting the rest of his life to the socialist cause. But he'd barely arrived before he was overwhelmed with the reality of what had happened, the misery of the "workers' paradise," the illusions of Marxist slogans. So instead of writing an encomium to the endeavor, he drafted one of the most searing indictments of the Soviet system written in his era. In his introduction to this edition, Michael D. Aeshliman notes that "A.J.P. Taylor, one of the finest English historians of our time, wrote in 1965 that this novel was 'probably the best book ever written on Soviet Russia'" (p. vii).

The novel is loosely structured around a corps of English visitors' and journalists' activities in Russia. Representative of the thousands of "political pilgrims" who toured the country was a woman, a devout feminist, who was delighted "to find that so many things she believed in had been put into practice--co-education, sex equality, humane slaughterer, family allowances, communal kitchens" etc. (p. 24). Another, an Anglican clergyman, "by nature mild and gentle," who had no faith in either the Thirty-Nine Articles or

the Virgin Birth he officially upheld, sought a better world in Russia and agonized over the "intolerance and cruelty" so amply evident under Stalin's rule, but he took comfort in the fact that every home "had its wireless, and its gramophone, and its shelves of revolutionary literature" (p. 38). Coming to Russia for a brief visit, knowing what they wanted to see and seeing what the tour guides chose to show them, they generally returned home with glowing testimonials for the communist system.

Western journalists too gave Stalin support. They were epitomized by a man Muggeridge called "Jefferson"-clearly the celebrated, Pulitzer Prize winning New York Times correspondent Walter Duranty, who (while millions of peasants died) merely acknowledged that there was "'a shortage of some districts'" that might in "'certain very rare'" cases be called "'a famine. But, as I said in a piece I sent a few days ago, you can't make omelettes without cracking eggs'" (p. 90). Years later, Muggeridge would say that Duranty was "the greatest liar of any journalist I have met in fifty years of journalism" (p. xix). Evaluating another journalist, who solemnly praised Duranty, Muggeridge said: "The old man embodied in himself the character of his age. He was the decadence of European civilization getting a last sensation out of the establishment of Asiatic barbarism in Russia. Lines on his face traced out a record of the world to which he belonged. Co-education in creases round his nose. Votes for women wrinkling his forehead. Pacifism the slobber of his lips" (p. 93). He was, in short, "bloated, inflated, but with no core" (p. 93).

One of the characters, Wilfred Pye, representing Muggeridge, "had a simple mind" and went to Russia intent on finding the truth. "Obviously, Pye thought, I must see where people eat; how they eat, and what they eat" (p. 127). He'd always sided with the poor and dispossessed, and Bolshevism seemed to him a fully admirable movement. "It was the future; hated by all save the far-seeing and the pure of heart; hated by all save Pye and his great English Liberal newspaper" (p. 128). To him the helpless were always righteous, the impoverished were always victims, and the pursuit of justice required the transformation of society. He was proud of standing up for the "weak and oppressed, [and] when he looked at a map it was not countries he saw, but wrongs sprawling across five continents" (p. 128).

Arriving in Russia expecting to find a paradise, Muggeridge had to do little more than stroll about Moscow to see its refutation. "He saw hunger everywhere" and wondered how the Dictatorship of the Proletariat could feed him and Western journalists while allowing masses of Russians to go hungry. Determined to see more of the country, he traveled extensively and discovered, to his horror, that famine was everywhere and, worse yet, "it was organized from within" (p. 138). Peasants were dying in what had once been the bread basket of Russia, and it was clearly an officially-orchestrated starvation of the people. As Pye analyzed it, he realized that: "Marxism, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat's religion, is the most urban religion that has ever existed. It was born in underground printing presses, in dingy lodgings and cafes and hotels. Its prophets were wanderers from one European capital to another whose dreams, like themselves, were rootless" (p. 138). In the deepest sense, the Bolsheviks warred against the "earth; with the nature of things and people; with life itself, that their embodiment involves" (p. 139). In the service of an abstract ideology, Marxists easily denied both God and Reality and sought to destroy all created goods that challenged their agenda.

Muggeridge rapidly discarded his illusions in the face of the monumental evils he witnessed. One of his characters finally concluded: "Every tendency in himself, in societies; the past and the future; all he had ever seen or thought or felt or believed, sorted itself out. It was a vision of Good and Evil. Heaven and Hell. Life and death. There were two alternatives; and he had to choose. He chose" (p. 226). He chose to deal honestly with reality rather than blind himself with ideological rhetoric, to tell the truth rather than toe the party line. Walking about the decaying city of Moscow, he realized that the "litter of ideas in his own mind was the litter of ideas outside. Rootless, unreligious ideas. What a blight they had been! Piling up into shadows whose darkness cloaked a reversion to savagery. Piling up into a Dictatorship of the Proletariat" (p. 232). Under the Bolsheviks utopia had triumphed, consummating "all the dingy hopes that have echoed and re-echoed over Europe for a century" (p. 234).

When he tried to publish what he saw in Russia, his articles were disbelieved and he was called a liar. The Guardian fired him and when he returned to England he was blacklisted and virtually unemployable! Only celebrations of Stalin were allowed! But *Winter in Moscow* was published and remains for us one of the few

truthful descriptions of what life was really like in those years.

15 of 16 people found the following review helpful.

Prescient but ignored.

By Patrick

I bought this because it was mentioned in the introduction to a book by Wassily Grossman (the author of *Life and Fate*, one of the great books of the 20th century).

I was initially disappointed that it was fictionalized, and that I am not familiar enough with the figures of the time to have the fun of identifying them,

but it turned out to be a very good and easy read. It is a bit depressing knowing the lack of influence it had, an extraordinarily searing account of the repressions of Lenin and Stalin, the architects of the murders of millions. Most of the authors' disgust is really for the Western fellow travellers, the "useful idiots", some of whom unfortunately remain. I presume this is not actually stocked by Amazon (a form of censorship) because the author clearly has considerable distaste for the Russian and German Jews who he implicates as both participants and beneficiaries of the October "revolution".

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