



Hammer and Tickle: A Cultural History of Communism

Ben Lewis

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A daringly fresh look at the history of communism.

Communist humor is the strangest, funniest, most enchanting and meaningful legacy of the eighty years of communism in Russia and Eastern Europe. The valiant and sardonic citizens of the former Communist countries?surrounded by secret police, threatened with arrest, imprisonment and forced labor, a failed economic system, and bombarded with ludicrous propaganda?turned joke-telling into an art form, using them as a coded way of speaking the truth and coping with the absurdity of the system. In this poignant and historically revealing book, rare and previously unpublished archival material, including cartoons, caricatures, photographs, and oral transcripts take the reader on a unique journey through the real experience of the Communist era. 16 color photographs

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