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Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to the Soviet Union, 1921-1941

By Professor of History Michael David-Fox

Oxford University Press Inc, United States, 2014. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Reprint. 232 x 156 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.During the 1920s and 1930s thousands of European and American writers, professionals, scientists, artists, and intellectuals made a pilgrimage to experience the Soviet experiment for themselves. Showcasing the Great Experiment explores the reception of these intellectuals and fellow-travelers and their cross-cultural and trans-ideological encounters in order to analyze Soviet attitudes towards the West. Many of the twentieth century's greatest writers and thinkers, including Theodore Dreiser, Andre Gide, Paul Robeson, and George Bernard Shaw, notoriously defended Stalin's USSR despite the unprecedented violence of its prewar decade. While many visitors were profoundly affected by their Soviet tours, so too was the Soviet system. The early experiences of building showcases and teaching outsiders to perceive the future-in-the-making constitute a neglected international part of the emergence of Stalinism at home. Michael David-Fox contends that each side critically examined the other, negotiating feelings of inferiority and superiority, admiration and enmity, emulation and rejection. By the time of the Great Purges, these tensions gave way to the dramatic triumph of xenophobia and isolationism; whereas in the twenties the...


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Reviews

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