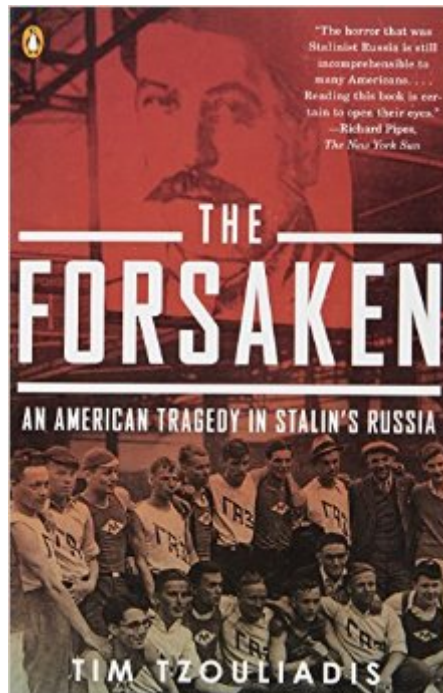


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The Forsaken: An American Tragedy In Stalin's Russia



Synopsis

A remarkable piece of forgotten history- the never-before-told story of Americans lured to Soviet Russia by the promise of jobs and better lives, only to meet tragic ends In 1934, a photograph was taken of a baseball team. These two rows of young men look like any group of American ballplayers, except perhaps for the Russian lettering on their jerseys. The players have left their homeland and the Great Depression in search of a better life in Stalinist Russia, but instead they will meet tragic and, until now, forgotten fates. Within four years, most of them will be arrested alongside untold numbers of other Americans. Some will be executed. Others will be sent to "corrective labor" camps where they will be worked to death. This book is the story of lives-the forsaken who died and those who survived. Based on groundbreaking research, The Forsaken is the story of Americans whose dreams were shattered and lives lost in Stalinist Russia.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book reflects a great amount of scholarship on the part of Mr Tzouliadis, he has done a remarkable job of research here to add to what is already known about the grim story of the gulags. This book is well written and engaging but it also is a fairly thorough survey of the literature on this general topic. I have discovered several good first hand sources that I did not realize existed. This book also sheds a good amount of light on the question of why the conditions in Russia were so little known in the 1930s. Basically, once a person was inside Russia, censorship of their communication was full and these people had their passports confiscated by the Russian

government so it was almost impossible to leave. The Russian government claimed that these American citizens had renounced their citizenships, resulting in the fact that the American state department was not able or very willing to help these poor people. In addition it appears that the treaties with Russia establishing diplomatic relations were not thoroughly drafted with safeguards for the protection of American citizens in Russia. The Soviets exploited these loopholes extensively. Mr Tzouliadis sketches in a number of missing pieces in the dynamics here. The Russian foreign ministry was deathly afraid of the NKVD, and so inquiries to the Russian foreign ministry were fruitless. The problem of helping these people could only have been addressed by the highest level of interaction meaning FDR to Stalin. However, unfortunately one of FDR's key sources was Walter Duranty, one of the most famous newspaper reporters of his time and unfortunately it appears that Mr Duranty was a very serious apologist for Stalin at the very least, and quite possibly was an agent of the NKVD as some defectors have alleged.

It is as Solzhenitsyn predicted in *The Gulag Archipelago*: "No, no one would have to answer. No one would be looked into." (Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1956*, 3:482; trans. Harry Willetts (New York: Harper and Row, 1978)). In this work, Tim Tzouliadis seeks to arouse an interest, to create an insight into the barbarities committed throughout the "socialist experiment" in Soviet Russia. Writing particularly to an American audience, Tzouliadis recounts the story of the lost thousands of American to the oppression of the Soviet state. Virtually unknown to Americans is that the existence of these thousands was well-known to U.S. government officials and journalists stationed in the Soviet Union during the 30's, 40's, 50's, and 60's, people who simply remained silent in the midst of their fellow-citizens' disappearance and murders. This book is a primer on the brutality of the Communist regime. For those unfamiliar with this history, it is an introduction. For those who have read Anne Applebaum, Robert Conquest, Vassily Grossman, John Haynes, Harvey Klehr, Elinor Lipper, the Medvedevs (Roy and Zhores), Richard Pipes, Edward Radzinsky, Varlam Shalamov, Vitaly Shentalinsky, Dmitri Volkogonov, and, of course, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the history is not new. But, the story of Americans who once played baseball in Gorky Park only to end up executed by the gun or hard labor in Siberia is news to most. Particularly of interest is the author's revelation of the betrayal of their fellow-citizens by government officials at the very top of the U.S. government.

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