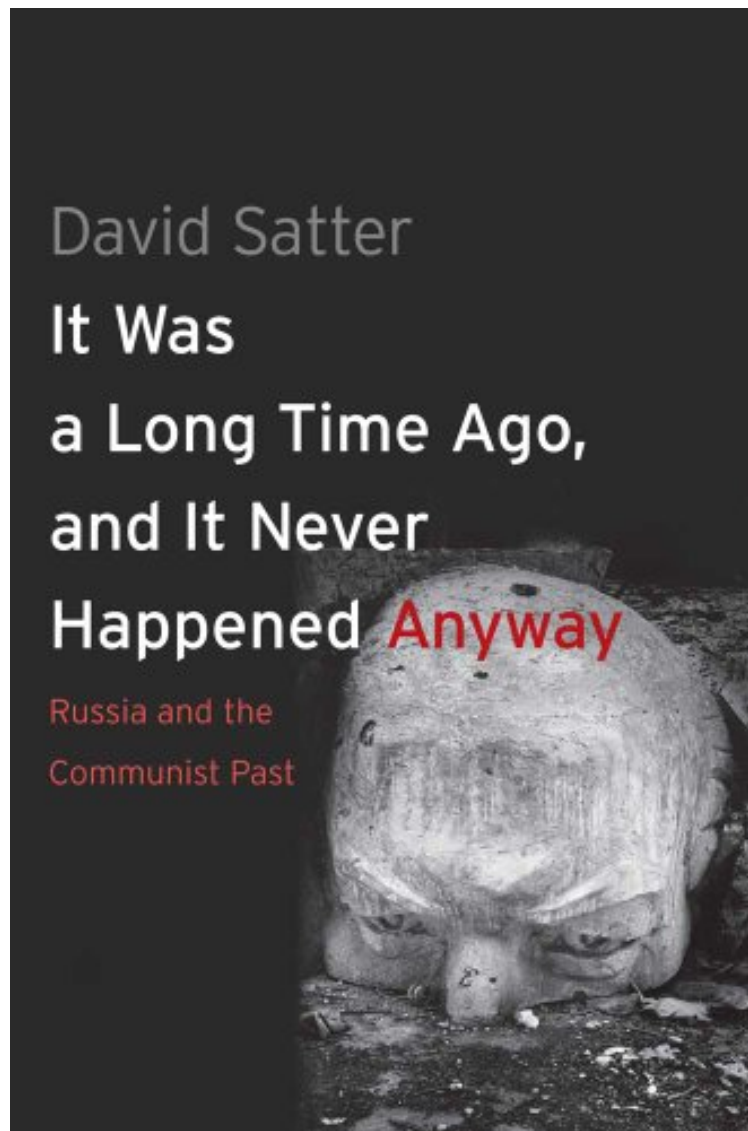


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It Was a Long Time Ago, and It Never Happened Anyway: Russia and the Communist Past

David Satter

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David Satter : It Was a Long Time Ago, and It Never Happened Anyway: Russia and the Communist Past before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised It Was a Long Time Ago, and It Never Happened Anyway: Russia and the Communist Past:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. You can better understand Russia after reading this book.By

DenisExceptionally clear, concise and original overview of the impact of USSR mores on contemporary Russian consciousnesses. The author does leap across time and places, as other reviewers mention, but he does that to make his points more clear. The book is well structured by topics. The book uniquely combines clear western perspective not poisoned by soviet propaganda with near-native view, as he spent years in the country. For example, chapter 3 gives insights on how authorities working in concordance with orthodox church distort national memory. That chapter was very revealing for me, who was borne in USSR and took some thing for granted. It feels, for westerners, chapter 5 might give the most elucidations. It explains the soviet mentality in very realistic way.Recommended2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. excellent review of modern RussianBy JohnDavid Satter's "It Was a Long Time Ago, and It Never Happened Anyway" provides an excellent recap of defining events in Soviet and modern Russian history with a common theme - the perplexing self-destructive behavior of Russian society.The author reviews historical examples of bad behavior, including the Holodomor, the Katyn massacre, and the Vorkuta labor camps. And the author reviews modern examples, including the FSB apartment bombings and the Nord-Ost siege.The examples are well described with accounts by people personally involved, thus providing interesting additional information for readers who have already studied these events.The author also reviews thoughts of prominent writers including Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov, and Shafarevich, and provides an understanding of the perverse mentalities of people within the Cheka/NKVD/KGB/FSB.The author believes that by allowing government zero accountability and complete immunity, Russian society condemns itself to more oppression. By covering-up and forgetting the past rather than exposing terrible events and making memorials to victims, Russian society condemns itself to more terrible events.Mr. Satter is hopeful that open recognition and critique of historical events could result in an improved society with a rational morality that values self-preservation.by John Christmas, exiled "Latvian Proxy Network" whistleblower and author of "Democracy Society"2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great read for all those w trying to understand the ...By Lee H.Great read for all those w trying to understand the Russians! Well written and well researched and great perspective added through out the book. Bought it because my kids are all in the military and Russia is flexing its military muscles again so....wanted to understand a bit more about this nation; its culture and social norms. I was not disappointed because their is lots of context here to explain how Russian society views the world, themselves and resulting interactions. Lots of good examples provided.

Russia today is haunted by deeds that have not been examined and words that have been left unsaid. A serious attempt to understand the meaning of the Communist experience has not been undertaken, and millions of victims of Soviet Communism are all but forgotten. In this book David Satter, a former Moscow correspondent and longtime writer on Russia and the Soviet Union, presents a striking new interpretation of Russia's great historical tragedy, locating its source in Russia's failure fully to appreciate the value of the individual in comparison with the objectives of the state. Satter explores the moral and spiritual crisis of Russian society. He shows how it is possible for a government to deny the inherent value of its citizens and for the population to agree, and why so many Russians actually mourn the passing of the Soviet regime that denied them fundamental rights. Through a wide-ranging consideration of attitudes toward the living and the dead, the past and the present, the state and the individual, Satter arrives at a distinctive and important new way of understanding the Russian experience.

"A book full of vivid and well-chosen anecdotes."—Financial Times