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Hammer and Tickle

By Ben Lewis

Paperback. Book Condition: New. Not Signed; The book that immerses the Cold War in the warm bath of nostalgia. Q: Why, despite all the shortages, was the toilet paper in East Germany always 2-ply? A: Because they had to send a copy of everything they did to Moscow. Communist jokes are the strangest, funniest, most enchanting and meaningful legacy of the 80 years of political experimentation in Russia and Eastern Europe, known as Communism. The valiant and sardonic citizens of the former Communist countries - surrounded by an invisible network of secret police, threatened with arrest, imprisonment and forced labour, confronted by an economic system that left shops empty, and bombarded with ludicrous state propaganda - turned joke-telling into an art form. They used jokes as a coded way of speaking the truth. HAMMER AND TICKLE takes us on a unique journey through the Communist era (1917-1989), and tells its real history through subversive jokes and joke-tellers, many of whom ended up in the gulags. It is also illustrated with a combination of rare and previously unpublished archive material, political cartoons, caricatures, photographs and state-sponsored propaganda. Humorous, culturally poignant and historically revealing, this is the story of a political system...



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