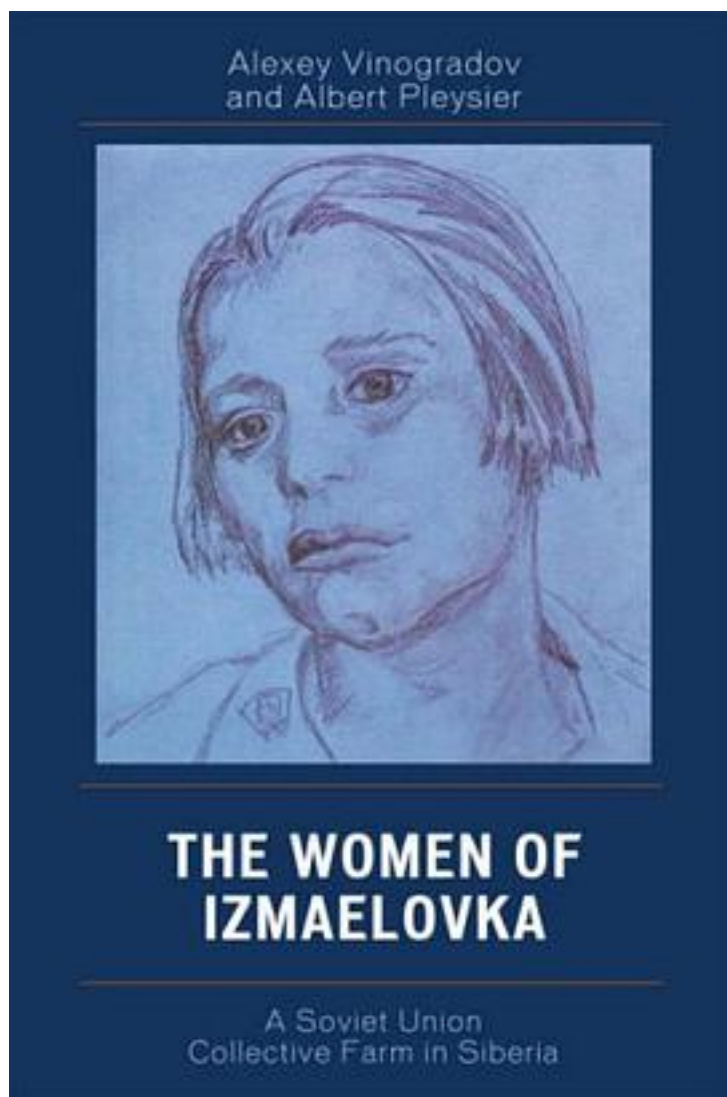


The Women of Izmaelovka



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The Women of Izmaelovka documents the lives of seven women who are residents of a Siberian village located on the steppes of the Ural region. The village was turned into a collective farm in 1929. As the women reflect on their lives, they discuss significant events such as collectivization, Joseph Stalin's acts of repression, the Great Patriotic War, de-Stalinization, Nikita Khrushchev's agricultural programs, the Brezhnev years and the fall of the Communist Party. Various stages of the women's lives are explored, including the years of educational experiences, marriage, motherhood, and assigned work. The daily routines of domestic duties, activities in the Village Club, and village traditions are also discussed. Having little control of their destinies and sacrificing much in order to survive, the women endured long hours of tedious labor under difficult situations. They detail having worked as milkmaids, pig herders, tractor drivers, combine operators, nurses, librarians, and Village Club coordinators. The women describe the ideological influence that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union brought into Izmaelovka through socialist competitions, propaganda, and youth organizations. Arguing that this rigid indoctrination taught them to believe that honesty, hard work, and Communism would achieve a better life and society, the study examines the effects of the Communist ideology on the women who sacrificed everything for it.

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