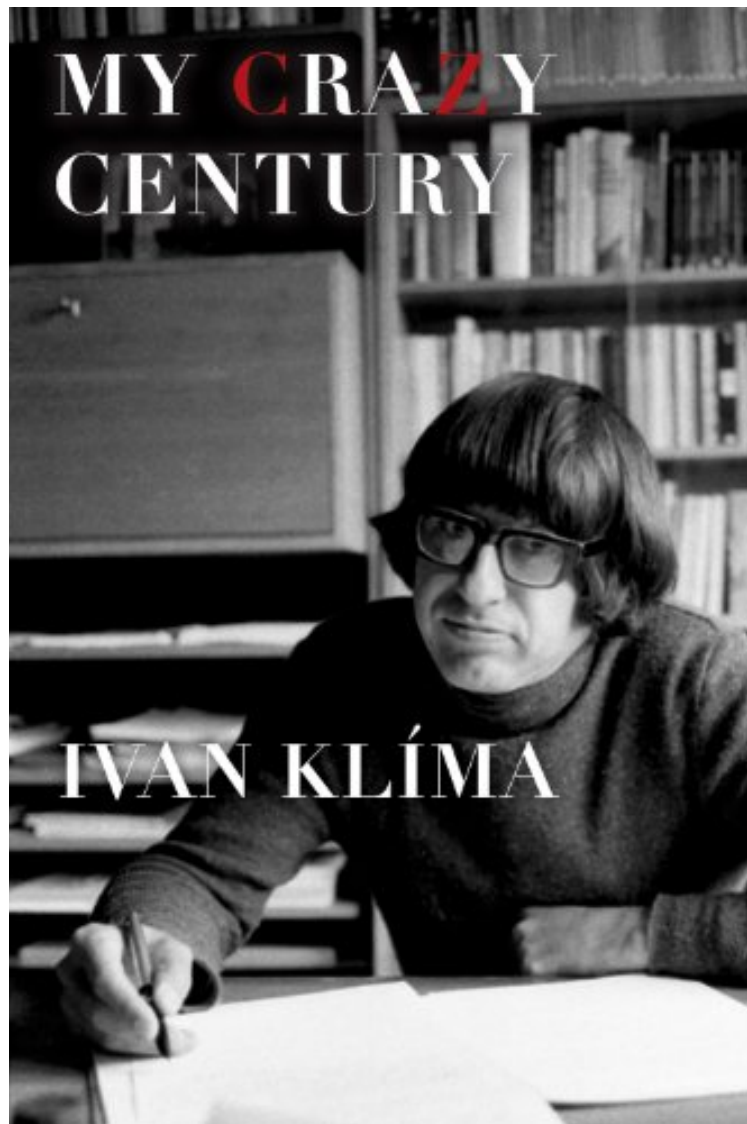


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My Crazy Century (English Edition)

Von Ivan Klíma

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Von Ivan Klíma : My Crazy Century (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised My Crazy Century (English Edition):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Good readVon KhandallahThis book concentrates on Klíma's life as a writer. With his writing style (translation) he distances himself from the experiences which he recounts - his time in the Terezin ghetto, his run-ins with the censors, the secret police, the "socialist machine". He describes events but seldom records his own personal reactions, inner feelings, in any detail. The book is more an "eye-witness" account of what it was like to live as a developing writer through Nazi

occupation, socialism, temporary "semi-exile" in the US and UK, the aftermath of the Velvet revolution, the Russian occupation and the increasing disintegration of socialist society / its downfall. I would highly recommend this book to anyone interested in (i) literature written under totalitarian regimes, and (iii) Czech / Slovak / East European culture and literature.

Kurzbeschreibung Spanning six decades that included war, totalitarianism, censorship, and the fight for democracy, *My Crazy Century* reflects on Ivan Klma's remarkable life while also looking at this critical period of twentieth-century history. From World War Two to the oppressive grip of Communism, from the brief hope of freedom during the Prague Spring of 1968 to the eventual collapse of the regime in 1989's Velvet Revolution, Klma's revelatory account contemplates the ways in which this crazy century led mankind astray and impacted the lives of not only Klma's generation but today's generations still grappling with totalitarian societies. Including an appendix of insightful essays that compliment each chapter - on topics ranging from social history and political thinking to love and liberty - *My Crazy Century* provides a profoundly rich and moving personal and national history.

Pressestimmen "In *My Crazy Century*, the renowned Czech writer Ivan Klma masterfully recounts, first, what it was like for him as a Jewish child confronting with his family the inhumanities of the Theresienstadt concentration camp situated at the edge of their hometown, Prague. Then, more fully, he painstakingly recalls what it was like for him and his countrymen after the Nazi thugs were driven out by the Soviet Army and replaced for four decades by the Communist thugs. How Klma and his Czechoslovakian colleagues among them some of the best writers in postwar Europe endured the relentless infraction of their fundamental rights is chronicled here through the private history of one who steadily stood up to his oppressors and who has thought deeply about the degradation and deformation conferred on a decent society by the lawless thuggery of Europe's twentieth-century ideological monsters, one who preached racial purity and the annihilation of the Jews, the other working-class purity and the annihilation of the wealthy, the bourgeoisie, and anyone capable of independent thought. In its telling, forthright intimacy Klma's book merits a place alongside such eyewitness accounts of the evils of totalitarianism as Eugenia Ginzburg's *Within the Whirlwind* and Solzhenitsyn's *Cancer Ward* and *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*." Philip Roth "My Crazy Century is the prizewinning memoir of a writer who, deprived of freedom for much of this life, never ceased to be free in his imagination, creativity, and art. Neither Nazi nor Communist rulers could rob Ivan Klma of his amazing ability and fierce determination to distill drops of truth from the sea of experience. Klma was a witness, and participant, in the most dramatic events in twentieth century Europe. This is his story, brilliantly, wittily and poignantly told." Madeleine Albright "My Crazy Century describes how a man lived without freedom and fought for it. . . . [Klma] offers a vivid telling of a courageous man's life and times, something that can speak to all of us." Washington Independent of Books "[An] absorbing memoir . . . The author relates all this with a mordant humor and a limpid prose that registers both the overt fear that repression engenders and the subtler moral corruptions it works in victims and perpetrators. . . . Klma's searching exploration of a warped era is rich in irony and dogged hope." Publishers Weekly "A sweeping, revealing look at one man's personal struggle as writer and individual, set against the backdrop of political turmoil." Booklist "From the Nazi concentration camps to the communist show trials, Klma shines a vibrant light on the machinery of oppression and the struggles of artists and intellectuals to subvert government control. . . . More than a memoir, the book is the intellectual history of a city and a memorial to its inhabitants, who, laboring underground, kept the idea of democracy alive after the Prague Spring. A fitting capstone to a distinguished literary life." Kirkus "Impassioned . . . [with a] mixture of witty anecdotes and descriptions of grand events . . . it seems almost inconceivable that totalitarian regimes were still in power, right at the heart of Europe, a mere 25 years ago. A reminder, perhaps, not to take our freedoms for granted." Daily Telegraph "A wonderful introduction to Czech literature and the comic genius of Ivan Klma. . . . The memoir is funny, bitter, hopeful, and raging." New York Journal of Books "A candid, illuminating memoir of a man who retained his humanity in inhumane times, and used the light of reason to resist an absurdist regime. Klma's account of living in the shadow of censorship and in the spotlight of Cold War events gives us intimate insight into the vicissitudes of literature in the Other Europe, and the exceptional courage required of writers in repressive epochs to speak simple truths to capricious power." Eva Hoffman