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Stalin: Volume 1: Paradoxes of Power, 1878-1928. By Stephen Kotkin Allen Lane, 976pp, £30.00 ISBN 9780713999440 Published 30 October 2014

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Stephen Kotkin. Stalin, Volume I: Paradoxes of Power, 1878 ...

Stalin: Volume I: Paradoxes of Power, 1878-1928(2014) Armageddon Averted: the Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000(2001) Stephen Mark Kotkin(born February 17, 1959)[1]is an American historian, academic and author. He is currently the John P. Birkelund '52 Professor in History and International Affairs at Princeton University, where he is also Co-Director of the Program in History and the Practice of Diplomacy and the Director of the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies.[2]

Stephen Kotkin - Wikipedia

Volume One of Stalin begins and ends in January 1928 as Stalin boards a train bound for Siberia, about to embark upon the greatest gamble of his political life. He is now the ruler of the largest country in the world, but a poor and backward one, far behind the great capitalist countries in industrial and military power, encircled on all sides.

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In his biography of Stalin, Kotkin rejects the inherited wisdom about Stalin's psychological makeup, showing us instead how Stalin's near paranoia was fundamentally political and closely tracks the Bolshevik revolution's structural paranoia, the predicament of a Communist regime in an overwhelmingly capitalist world, surrounded and penetrated by enemies. At the same time, Kotkin posits the impossibility of understanding Stalin's momentous decisions outside of the context of the history of imperial Russia.

A magnificent new biography that revolutionizes our understanding of Stalin and his world It has the quality of myth: a poor cobbler's son, a seminarian from an oppressed outer province of the Russian empire, reinvents himself as a top leader in a band of revolutionary zealots. When the band seizes control of the country in the aftermath of total world war, the former seminarian ruthlessly dominates the new regime until he stands as absolute ruler of a vast and terrible state apparatus, with dominion over Eurasia. While still building his power base within the Bolshevik dictatorship, he embarks upon the greatest gamble of his political life and the largest program of social reengineering ever attempted: the collectivization of all agriculture and industry across one sixth of the earth. Millions will die, and many more millions will suffer, but the man will push through to the end against all resistance and doubts. Where did such power come from? In Stalin, Stephen Kotkin offers a biography that, at long last, is equal to this shrewd, sociopathic, charismatic dictator in all his dimensions. The character of Stalin emerges as both astute and blinkered, cynical and true believing, people oriented and vicious,

canny enough to see through people but prone to nonsensical beliefs. We see a man inclined to despotism who could be utterly charming, a pragmatic ideologue, a leader who obsessed over slights yet was a precocious geostrategic thinker—unique among Bolsheviks—and yet who made egregious strategic blunders. Through it all, we see Stalin's unflinching persistence, his sheer force of will—perhaps the ultimate key to understanding his indelible mark on history. Stalin gives an intimate view of the Bolshevik regime's inner geography of power, bringing to the fore fresh materials from Soviet military intelligence and the secret police. Kotkin rejects the inherited wisdom about Stalin's psychological makeup, showing us instead how Stalin's near paranoia was fundamentally political, and closely tracks the Bolshevik revolution's structural paranoia, the predicament of a Communist regime in an overwhelmingly capitalist world, surrounded and penetrated by enemies. At the same time, Kotkin demonstrates the impossibility of understanding Stalin's momentous decisions outside of the context of the tragic history of imperial Russia. The product of a decade of intrepid research, *Stalin* is a landmark achievement, a work that recasts the way we think about the Soviet Union, revolution, dictatorship, the twentieth century, and indeed the art of history itself. *Stalin: Waiting for Hitler, 1929-1941* will be published by Penguin Press in October 2017

An extensively researched portrait of the Soviet dictator covers his rise from humble origins, the inner power structure of the Bolshevik regime, and the early formation of Stalin's fabricated trial process.

"Monumental." —The New York Times Book Review Pulitzer Prize-finalist Stephen Kotkin has written the definitive biography of Joseph Stalin, from collectivization and the Great Terror to the conflict with Hitler's Germany that is the signal event of modern world history. In 1929, Joseph Stalin, having already achieved dictatorial power over the vast Soviet Empire, formally ordered the systematic conversion of the world's largest peasant economy into "socialist modernity," otherwise known as collectivization, regardless of the cost. What it cost, and what Stalin ruthlessly enacted, transformed the country and its ruler in profound and enduring ways. Building and running a dictatorship, with life and death power over hundreds of millions, made Stalin into the uncanny figure he became. Stephen Kotkin's *Stalin: Waiting for Hitler, 1929-1941* is the story of how a political system forged an unparalleled personality and vice versa. The wholesale collectivization of some 120 million peasants necessitated levels of coercion that were extreme even for Russia, and the resulting mass starvation elicited criticism inside the party even from those Communists committed to the eradication of capitalism. But Stalin did not flinch. By 1934, when the Soviet Union had stabilized and socialism had been implanted in the countryside, praise for his stunning anti-capitalist success came from all quarters. Stalin, however, never forgave and never forgot, with shocking consequences as he strove to consolidate the state with a brand new elite of young strivers like himself. Stalin's obsessions drove him to execute nearly a million people, including the military leadership, diplomatic and intelligence officials, and innumerable leading lights in culture. While Stalin revived a great power, building a formidable industrialized military, the Soviet Union was effectively alone and surrounded by perceived enemies. The quest for security would bring Soviet Communism to a shocking and improbable pact with Nazi Germany. But that bargain would not unfold as envisioned. The lives of Stalin and Hitler, and the fates of their respective dictatorships, drew ever closer to collision, as the world hung in the balance. *Stalin: Waiting for Hitler, 1929-1941* is a history of the world during the build-up to its most fateful hour, from the vantage point of Stalin's seat of power. It is a landmark achievement in the annals of historical scholarship, and in the art of biography.

The magnificent new biography that revolutionizes our understanding of Stalin and his world. In January 1928 Stalin, the ruler of the largest country in the world, boarded a train bound for Siberia where he would embark upon the greatest gamble of his political life. He was about to begin the largest programme of social reengineering ever attempted: the root-and-branch uprooting and collectivization of agriculture and industry across the entire Soviet Union. Millions would die, and many more would suffer. How did Stalin get to this point? Where did such great, monstrous power come from? The first of three volumes, the product of a decade of scrupulous and intrepid research, this landmark book offers the most convincing portrait and explanation yet of Stalin's power, and of Russian power in the world. The book is as much about the Russia that Stalin inherits and reshapes as about the man himself. It gives a brilliantly nuanced picture of the sequence of catastrophes that disposed of the social structures, armies, rivals and close colleagues that should have stood in Stalin's way, as he emerged from obscurity to shoulder the terrifying responsibility of upholding Russian power in the world.

Featuring extensive revisions to the text as well as a new introduction and epilogue—bringing the book completely up to date on the tumultuous politics of the previous decade and the long-term implications of the Soviet collapse—this compact, original, and engaging book offers the definitive account of one of the great historical events of the last fifty years. Combining historical and geopolitical analysis with an absorbing narrative, Kotkin draws upon extensive research, including memoirs by dozens of insiders and senior figures, to illuminate the factors that led to the demise of Communism and the USSR. The new edition puts the collapse in the context of the global economic and political changes from the 1970s to the present day. Kotkin creates a compelling profile of post-Soviet Russia and he reminds us, with chilling immediacy, of what could not have been predicted—that the world's largest police state, with several million troops, a doomsday arsenal, and an appalling record of violence, would liquidate itself with barely a whimper. Throughout the book, Kotkin also paints vivid portraits of key personalities. Using recently released archive materials, for example, he offers a fascinating picture of Gorbachev, describing this virtuoso tactician and resolutely committed reformer as "flabbergasted by the fact that his socialist renewal was leading to the system's liquidation"—and more or less going along with it. At once authoritative and provocative, *Armageddon Averted* illuminates the collapse of the

Soviet Union, revealing how "principled restraint and scheming self-interest brought a deadly system to meek dissolution." Acclaim for the First Edition: "The clearest picture we have to date of the post-Soviet landscape." --The New Yorker "A triumph of the art of contemporary history. In fewer than 200 pages Kotkin elucidates the implosion of the Soviet empire--the most important and startling series of international events of the past fifty years--and clearly spells out why, thanks almost entirely to the 'principal restraint' of the Soviet leadership, that collapse didn't result in a cataclysmic war, as all experts had long forecasted." -The Atlantic Monthly "Concise and persuasive The mystery, for Kotkin, is not so much why the Soviet Union collapsed as why it did so with so little collateral damage." --The New York Review of Books

"Monumental." --The New York Times Book Review Pulitzer Prize-finalist Stephen Kotkin has written the definitive biography of Joseph Stalin, from collectivization and the Great Terror to the conflict with Hitler's Germany that is the signal event of modern world history In 1929, Joseph Stalin, having already achieved dictatorial power over the vast Soviet Empire, formally ordered the systematic conversion of the world's largest peasant economy into "socialist modernity," otherwise known as collectivization, regardless of the cost. What it cost, and what Stalin ruthlessly enacted, transformed the country and its ruler in profound and enduring ways. Building and running a dictatorship, with life and death power over hundreds of millions, made Stalin into the uncanny figure he became. Stephen Kotkin's Stalin: Waiting for Hitler, 1929-1941 is the story of how a political system forged an unparalleled personality and vice versa. The wholesale collectivization of some 120 million peasants necessitated levels of coercion that were extreme even for Russia, and the resulting mass starvation elicited criticism inside the party even from those Communists committed to the eradication of capitalism. But Stalin did not flinch. By 1934, when the Soviet Union had stabilized and socialism had been implanted in the countryside, praise for his stunning anti-capitalist success came from all quarters. Stalin, however, never forgave and never forgot, with shocking consequences as he strove to consolidate the state with a brand new elite of young strivers like himself. Stalin's obsessions drove him to execute nearly a million people, including the military leadership, diplomatic and intelligence officials, and innumerable leading lights in culture. While Stalin revived a great power, building a formidable industrialized military, the Soviet Union was effectively alone and surrounded by perceived enemies. The quest for security would bring Soviet Communism to a shocking and improbable pact with Nazi Germany. But that bargain would not unfold as envisioned. The lives of Stalin and Hitler, and the fates of their respective dictatorships, drew ever closer to collision, as the world hung in the balance. Stalin: Waiting for Hitler, 1929-1941 is a history of the world during the build-up to its most fateful hour, from the vantage point of Stalin's seat of power. It is a landmark achievement in the annals of historical scholarship, and in the art of biography.

An engrossing biography of the notorious Russian dictator by an author whose knowledge of Soviet-era archives far surpasses all others. Josef Stalin exercised supreme power in the Soviet Union from 1929 until his death in 1953. During that quarter-century, by Oleg Khlevniuk's estimate, he caused the imprisonment and execution of no fewer than a million Soviet citizens per year. Millions more were victims of famine directly resulting from Stalin's policies. What drove him toward such ruthlessness? This essential biography offers an unprecedented, fine-grained portrait of Stalin the man and dictator. Without mythologizing Stalin as either benevolent or an evil genius, Khlevniuk resolves numerous controversies about specific events in the dictator's life while assembling many hundreds of previously unknown letters, memos, reports, and diaries into a comprehensive, compelling narrative of a life that altered the course of world history. In brief, revealing prologues to each chapter, Khlevniuk takes his reader into Stalin's favorite dacha, where the innermost circle of Soviet leadership gathered as their *vozhd* lay dying. Chronological chapters then illuminate major themes: Stalin's childhood, his involvement in the Revolution and the early Bolshevik government under Lenin, his assumption of undivided power and mandate for industrialization and collectivization, the Terror, World War II, and the postwar period. At the book's conclusion, the author presents a cogent warning against nostalgia for the Stalinist era. "This brilliant, authoritative, opinionated biography ranks as the best on Stalin in any language."--Martin McCauley East-West Review "A historiographical and literary masterpiece."--Mark Edele, Australian Book Review "A very digestible biography, yet one packed with revelations."--Paul E. Richardson, Russian Life Magazine

A spellbinding new biography of Stalin in his formative years This is the definitive biography of Joseph Stalin from his birth to the October Revolution of 1917, a panoramic and often chilling account of how an impoverished, idealistic youth from the provinces of tsarist Russia was transformed into a cunning and fearsome outlaw who would one day become one of the twentieth century's most ruthless dictators. In this monumental book, Ronald Grigor Suny sheds light on the least understood years of Stalin's career, bringing to life the turbulent world in which he lived and the extraordinary historical events that shaped him. Suny draws on a wealth of new archival evidence from Stalin's early years in the Caucasus to chart the psychological metamorphosis of the young Stalin, taking readers from his boyhood as a Georgian nationalist and romantic poet, through his harsh years of schooling, to his commitment to violent engagement in the underground movement to topple the tsarist autocracy. Stalin emerges as an ambitious climber within the Bolshevik ranks, a resourceful leader of a small terrorist band, and a writer and thinker who was deeply engaged with some of the most incendiary debates of his time. A landmark achievement, Stalin paints an unforgettable portrait of a driven young man who abandoned his religious faith to become a skilled political operative and a single-minded and ruthless rebel.

CONTENTS: Introduction The Political Situation Replies to Questions Speech in Reply to Debate Reply to Preobrazhensky on Point 9 of the Resolution "On the Political Situation" Election Day We Demand! The Second

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